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Project Overview

Duration: 5 years starting March 2016

Implementing Institutions:

Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources - MARN
Japan International Cooperation Agency - JICA

Project Area: Wetlands in the lagoons of Olomega and El Jocotal and surrounding areas.

Overall Goal of the Project:

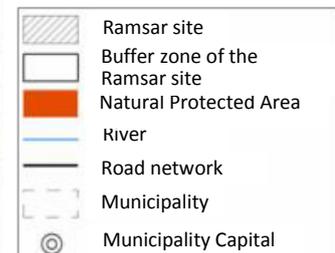
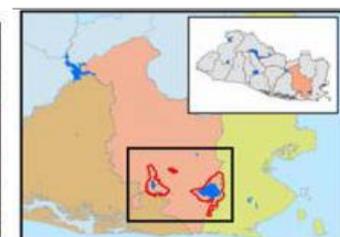
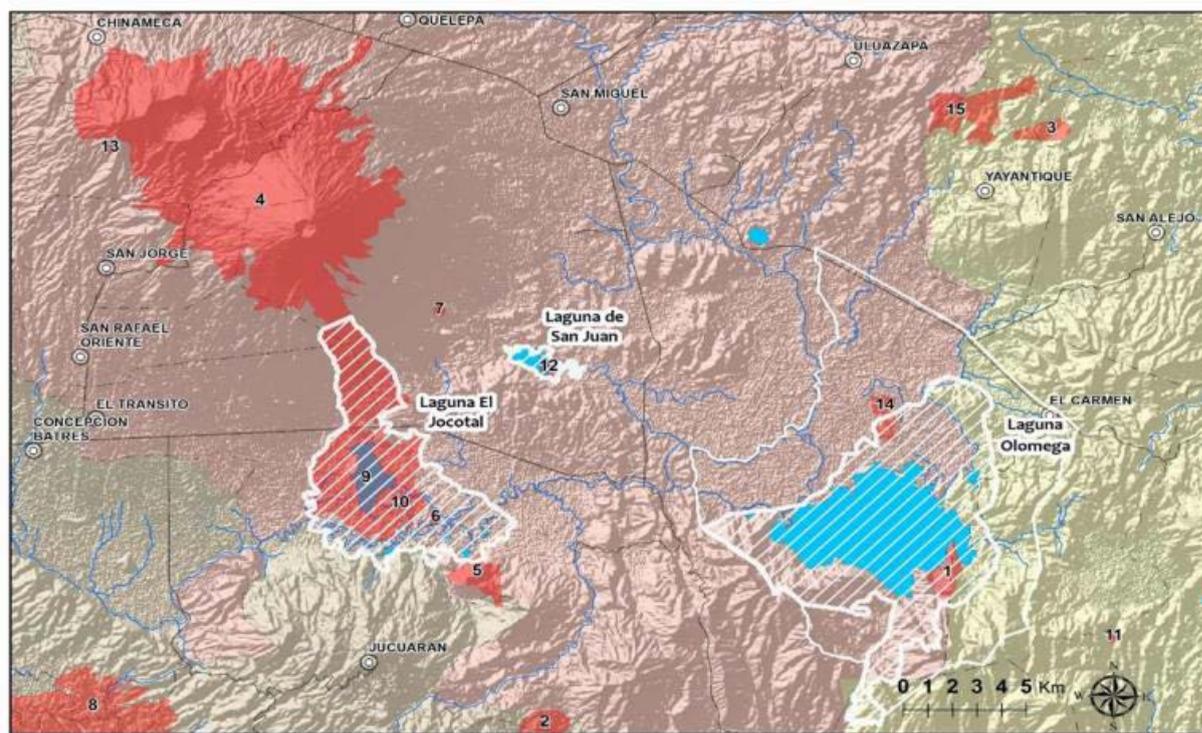
The model approach developed based on experiences at Olomega and El Jocotal Lagoons is actually applied in practice in El Salvador.

Project Objectives:

An institutional framework to ensure integrated management of Olomega and El Jocotal Lagoons is developed, as a model approach, to promote conservation and wise use of wetlands in El Salvador.

Expected Results:

1. An institutionally cross-cutting wetland management mechanism with the Wetland Unit of MARN as the central coordination body is strengthened.
2. Wetland Management Plans including zoning with the local communities around Olomega and El Jocotal Lagoons are developed.
3. Pilot activities based on the characteristics of Olomega and El Jocotal Lagoons are implemented as partial implementation of the management plans.
4. Networking is enhanced with stakeholders concerning other wetlands in and outside of El Salvador through dissemination of knowledge and experience gained in the Project.



Áreas Naturales Protegidas			
No	Nombre	No	Nombre
1	Tierra Blanca	9	Laguna El Jocotal
2	Buena Esperanza	10	Casamota y La Pezota
3	El Socorro II	11	El Cipres
4	Volcan de San Miguel	12	San Juan Mercedes Silva
5	Chilanguera	13	La Ortega
6	El Paso Las Iguanas	14	San Antonio Silva
7	San Antonio La Pupusa	15	El Socorro
8	Manglar Bahía de Jiquilisco		

Project Target Area

Letter of Understanding (6.22.2016)

A Letter of Understanding of the framework of the Project was signed by MARN and five municipal mayors which has the jurisdiction of Olomega and El Jocotal Lagoons area.

The signing event was chaired by MARN Minister Ms. Lina Pohl; The attendees are Mr. José Napoleón Duarte, the Minister of Tourism; Mr. Orestes Ortez, the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock; Mr. Carlos Castaneda, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs; Mr. Kazuo Fujishiro, the Chief Representative of JICA in El Salvador; and the Municipal Mayors of San Miguel, Mr. Miguel Pereira; El Carmen, Mr. Francis Edgardo Zelaya; El Tránsito, Roel Werner Martínez; Jucuarán, Mr. José Boanerge Carranza; and Chirilagua, Mr. Manuel Antonio Vásquez Blanco.



Signing of the Letter of Understanding

Launching event of the Project (7.17.2016)

A launching event of the “Project for the integrated management on El Jocotal and Olomega Lagoons” was held with the various stakeholders of the conservation of Ramsar sites in the country. In the event, the project overview was explained and clarified by discussion. It was agreed that the project area covers the departments of La Unión, San Miguel and Usulután.

In the event, the target institutional framework for the integrated management of wetlands at the local and national level was also discussed, and it was agreed to ensure the participation of stakeholders, such as Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Ministry of Tourism, the five municipalities that share the Lagoons, the sector dedicated to the cultivation of sugarcane, among others.

Inauguration ceremony of renovation of the El Jocotal office (10.23.2016)

On October 25, Ms. Lina Pohl, the Minister of MARN and Mr. Kazuo Fujishiro, the representative of JICA in El Salvador, and the local stakeholders, had an inauguration ceremony of renovation of the MARN regional office in El Jocotal Lagoon. The office of El Jocotal was renovated with financial support from JICA, and changed to a comfortable work place. This renovated office will be used by the guards of the natural protected area of El Jocotal, and the technical personnel of MARN who carry out monitoring and studies on wetland, and the implementation of pilot.



Launch event of El Jocotal office

Issues of the Lagoons

Due to the consequences of anthropogenic activities and the effects of climate change, the water hyacinth of the invasive species (*Eichhornia crassipes*) found in most of the lagoons of the country. The water hyacinth reproduces faster than the other species, and covers the large area of the lagoon surface at once. This increase of the water hyacinth has negative affect on some of the aquatic and terrestrial species, and fishing and tourism activities. In El Jocotal lagoon, based on the National Plan for the Improvement of Wetlands, MARN is promoting activities to contribute to solve this issue jointly with the Associations of Community Development and local governments, and NGOs.



El Jocotal Lagoon

Preparation for the establishment of the local committees (9.20.2016)

The technical team of MARN-JICA Project is working on the establishment of local management committees for the Olomega and El Jocotal wetlands.

Mr. Shinichiro Tsuji, the Japanese expert in community organization and livelihoods and Ms. Flavia Cuenca, a local consultant on wetland management and policies, in coordination with MARN technical officer, visited the relevant municipalities, El Tránsito, El Carmen and San Rafael Oriente and communities to explain the importance and roles of the local wetland management committees and plan of establishment of the local committees. They had a consultation with the various local actors to define the necessary framework and guidelines for the creation of the local committees.

The committees will be responsible for collaborating with MARN and other government entities for planning, management and sustainable development of the wetlands. For example, the committee will contribute to

seek for financial source for the planned activities for the wetland management, and promote environmental awareness raising campaign.



Meeting with the communities of El Jocotal and Olomega

First local workshop for establishment of the local committees (9.27.2016)

On September 27, 2016, the first workshop for socialization of the establishment of the local management committees of the wetlands Olomega and El Jocotal.

The objective of the workshop was to present the documents developed for formation of the local wetland committees such as “Guidelines for the Formation of Local Ramsar committees and other Wetlands of El Salvador” and Draft Agreements establishing the local committees of Wetlands of Olomega and El Jocotal Lagoons.

The wetland management committee is the implementing and coordinating body, consisting of the representatives of municipal governments, social leaders and the private sector. They will have regular meeting to discuss the issues and problems related to wetland management.

This committee will be the main actor for the implementation of the wetland management policies, which will be developed in the Project. It is expected that the committee will contribute to the wise use and sustainable management of the ecosystem of the Ramsar sites.

Daily life in El Jocotal

The daily activities in the wetland of El Jocotal Lagoon depend on a great extent on the natural resources. The lagoon is an important livelihood for fishermen and their families. The natural beauty of the lagoon attracts the local and international tourists.



El Jocotal Lagoon

El Jocotal lagoon also provides place where both children and adults can have fun, run, swim and relax. Since the lagoon plays an important role for human to provide a place for rest and relax, it is important to raise awareness of the importance of conservation of this precious natural resource for the present and future generations.



El Jocotal Lagoon, a place where children and adults can have fun

First national workshop for establishment of the local committees (11.23.2016)

On November 23, MARN and JICA held a socialization workshop for the establishment of local Ramsar committees in El Jocotal and Olomega lagoons, Jiquilisco Bay, Güija and Jaltepeque complexes, Cerrón Grande and Barra de Santiago reservoirs.

The attendees are the representatives from government institutions, municipalities, ADESCOS, fishermen's cooperatives and farmers, and other forms of producer organization participated in the activity; as well as Water committees, NGOs and private companies related to these wetlands.

In the workshop, the experience of establishment of the local committees of the El Jocotal and Olomega lagoons was shared. The project seeks to develop an institutional framework which ensures the integrated management, as a model approach applicable to the conservation and sustainable use of other wetlands in the country.



First National Workshop in San Salvador

This newsletter is issued by the MARN-JICA project. More information is available from:



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