



# REPORT ON THE NATIONAL WORKSHOP TO PRESENT AND DISCUSS THE DRAFT CENTRAL AMERICAN RURAL TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (ECADERT) IN BELIZE

Central Farm, Belize

November 10, 2009



## TABLE OF CONTENT

Date, venue, and officials in charge.....	2
Objectives of the consultation .....	2
Participants.....	3
Methodology .....	3
Results .....	3
Follow-up actions .....	4
Annex 1 – Agenda.....	5
Annex 2 - List of participants.....	6
Annex 3. Methodological proposal.....	8
Annex 4. Presentation on the formulation of the ECADERT proposal .....	9
Annex 5. Presentation of content of the ECADERT proposal .....	9
Annex 6 Summary of organization for implementation.....	10
Annex 7. Suggestions regarding components No. 1 through 5 .....	13
Annex 8. Press release .....	18

# REPORT ON THE NATIONAL WORKSHOP TO PRESENT AND DISCUSS THE DRAFT CENTRAL AMERICAN RURAL TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (ECADERT) IN BELIZE



## **Date, venue, and officials in charge**

The National workshop to present and discuss the draft Central American Strategy for Rural Territorial Development (ECADERT) was held at the University of Belize Conference Room, Central Farm Campus, in Cayo District, Belize, on November 10, according to the attached agenda (Annex 1). The workshop was organized by the two representatives of Belize to the Technical Intergovernmental Group of ECADERT, Mr. Barry Palacio and Mr. Francisco Tzul.

The meeting began at 9:40 a.m., and ended at 3:30 p.m. The proceedings were conducted by Barry Palacio, District Coordinator of the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries for Toledo District. At the head table were Mr. Gabino Canto, CEO of the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries; Mr. Ernest Banner, Rural Development Coordinator at the Ministry of Labour, Rural Development and Local Government; Manuel Jiménez, of the Executive Secretariat of the Central American Agricultural Council; Gabriel Rodríguez, IICA Representative in Belize, and Mario Samper, coordinator of the drafting team and Regional Specialist in Rural Development for IICA's Central Region.

The opening remarks were made by Mr. Gabino Canto, who highlighted the significance of the ECADERT process for Belize and the importance attached by the Ministry to the Central American Strategy for Rural Territorial Development.

## **Objectives of the consultation**

### ***General objective:***

To share the ECADERT proposal with the individuals, institutions and organizations of each country that were involved in the initial consultations, both national and Central American, to review, validate or improve its content, in a participatory manner, with respect to key aspects, both general and pertaining to its five components and three cross-cutting themes, with their respective lines of action, as well as the proposed organization for implementation of the Strategy.

### ***Specific objectives:***

1. For stakeholders and institutions involved in the initial consultations, and who will play a role in the implementation and monitoring of the Strategy, to take ownership of the proposal.
2. To make specific recommendations to enrich the Strategy proposal.
3. To prioritize lines of action for implementation of ECADERT in the country.
4. To make recommendations regarding mechanisms for participation of stakeholders and institutions in the implementation and monitoring of the Strategy in the country.
5. To identify the following steps to continue the process in the country.

## **Participants**

The individuals, organizations and institutions involved in the initial consultations were invited to attend, together with relevant line ministries and other institutions whose areas of responsibility have a bearing on rural development.

22 representatives of public sector institutions, civil society organizations, research and learning centers and the private sector attended the meeting. The complete list of participants is in Annex 2.

## **Methodology**

The methodological proposal foresaw the establishment of several working groups, but the participants decided to conduct the whole exercise as a single plenary session, discussing all five components of the proposal (original instructions for group facilitators in Annex 3).

Mr. Palacio explained the mandate for ECADERT by the Central American heads of State and the role of the Central American Agricultural Council, the establishment of the Technical Intergovernmental Group and the Group of Experts, the consultation process and the drafting of the ECADERT proposal to be discussed at this meeting (presentation in Annex 4).

Mr. Samper explained the content of the ECADERT proposal, including the main concepts and general aspects, the Vision, Mission, and General objective, the five components and the three cross-cutting themes (presentation in Annex 5). The organization for implementation (summary in Annex 6) was explained and discussed in the latter part of the meeting.

The plenary reviewed each component, its strategic objective and its several lines of action. Changes to the text were highlighted, and additional comments were reflected in the column to the right of the original text. Priorities were recorded whenever a decision was reached on high-priority lines of action.

## **Results**

The meeting discussed each of the five components, and also verified that the cross-cutting themes – especially social inclusion- were reflected in them. It prioritized certain lines of action for specific topics, linkages among several lines of action, and sequential relationships, inasmuch as some lines of action were deemed to be outcomes of other, prior actions. The specific suggestions regarding each component of the proposal are in Annex 7.

The meeting also addressed the implementation of ECADERT in Belize, especially in connection with the process to prepare a Belizean Rural Development Strategy, set in motion after the initial consultation for ECADERT.

The group discussed how to avoid exclusion of other social groups in the language of the proposal while making visible the need for differentiated actions regarding specific historically excluded social groups. While it is necessary to mention or exemplify specific groups, the wording must include phrases to encompass other social groups.

Participants in the meeting expressed that many sectors and institutions should be involved in the rural development process. The ECADERT initiative in Belize was launched by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and the Ministry of Labour, Rural Development and Local Government is now taking a leading role. Both Ministries will continue to work together in the formulation of the national strategy, and other line ministries and institutions are invited to participate.

## **Assessment of the methodology.**

The start of the meeting was somewhat slow due to the need to explain the mechanism to make suggestions regarding the proposed text for ECADERT. This was clarified by an example from another Central American country.

Working as a single group facilitated identification of connections among lines of action in different components and identifying inconsistencies or attaining greater consistency. This is feasible only with a relatively small group. Working continuously in plenary is somewhat tiring, and would require more frequent breaks, as well as occasionally changing from one activity to another.

Language was an issue because only part of the document was available in English, and the translation of certain terms required discussion and clarification.

Some participants expressed their doubts regarding the feasibility of commenting on a Central American strategy before Belize has developed its own. These concerns were addressed by explaining linkages between both processes, and the fact that the issues identified in the ongoing Belizean process, derived from consultations in this country, are similar to those in the regional strategy. This is partly due to the fact that the regional proposal is based on recommendations made during the initial consultations in the countries.

Despite uncertainty as to whether it would be possible to address all five components in the plenary, the group was able to discuss them all, although this required more time than was originally foreseen. The discussion of whether the cross-cutting themes were appropriately reflected in each component was uneven, dealing more with social inclusion than with education and knowledge management, partly due to lack of time. The workshop should be allotted a full day.

Discussion of the components evolved from organizing and prioritizing the lines of action, at the outset, to in-depth discussion of each line of action in the following components.

## **Follow-up actions**

The group discussed linkages between the ECADERT process and the ongoing process of preparing a national rural development Strategy in Belize. An interinstitutional working group has been meeting for the latter, and a symposium is planned for November 26<sup>th</sup>.

This report on the results of the meeting to discuss the ECADERT proposal will be sent to all participants in the initial consultation for ECADERT and all invitees to this meeting. Francisco Tzul will undertake this responsibility.

A video should be prepared, with an English version, to explain ECADERT and its linkages with ERAS and PACA. This should be part of a communication strategy for the launching of ECADERT.

The Strategy, once approved, must be translated into English as soon as possible.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries will use the Central American Strategy as a basis for its proposals and immediate actions in connection with rural development.

## Annex 1 – Agenda



### NATIONAL MEETING FOR THE PRESENTATION OF ECADERT's PROPOSAL

#### AGENDA

Time	Activity
8:30 to 9:00	Opening Session
9:00 to 9:20	Presentation of the consultation process, the systematization of results and the process of drafting the document. (Mr. Barry Palacio, Country Representative)
9:20 to 9:40	General explanation of the proposed Central American Strategy for Rural Development Planning (Dr. Mario Samper, Drafting Team Coordinator)
9:40 to 10:00	Questions and general comments about the process and the proposal ECADERT
10:00 to 12:00	Work in groups to compile the comments, suggestions and follow up
12:00 to 1:00	Lunch
1:00 to 2:00	Closing Plenary (Mr. Barry Palacio)



## Annex 2 - List of participants

Names	Organization	E-mail	Telephone
Carlos Tzib	MAF		625 7628
Catherine Hob	MAF	<a href="mailto:catherinemereley@hotmail.com">catherinemereley@hotmail.com</a>	662 3053
Gabriel Rodriguez Marques	IICA	<a href="mailto:gabriel.rodriguez@iica.int">gabriel.rodriguez@iica.int</a>	822 0222
George Duek	Mayflower	<a href="mailto:georgedueck@yahoo.com">georgedueck@yahoo.com</a>	674-0405
Nacia Carrillo	Min. Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade	<a href="mailto:nacia_carrillo@hotmail.com">nacia_carrillo@hotmail.com</a>	627 5437
Gregorio Castillo	Hopkins Farmers Cooperative	-	660 5648
Francis Lewis	Hopkins Farmers Cooperative	<a href="mailto:hpcs44@yahoo.com">hpcs44@yahoo.com</a>	503-7212
Stephen Serrano	Southern Region Development Alliance	<a href="mailto:stephenseranosr@yahoo.com">stephenseranosr@yahoo.com</a>	623-1859
Rudolph Serrano	Agriculture Department		610 0905
Maria Dolores Edeso	RUTA	<a href="mailto:ledeso@ruta.org">ledeso@ruta.org</a>	
Roxanna Alvarez	Tumul K'in Center of Learning	<a href="mailto:tumulkindevelopment@yahoo.com">tumulkindevelopment@yahoo.com</a>	669 6490 / 666 1071
Isidro Sho	Tumul K'in Center of Learning		666 1071
Francisco Tzul	RUTA UTN Coordinator	<a href="mailto:ftzul@yahoo.com">ftzul@yahoo.com</a>	822 2672
Abraham Gonzales	MAF/ Stann Creek	<a href="mailto:gonzalesabraham@yahoo.com">gonzalesabraham@yahoo.com</a>	502 2514
Mathew James	GSC Stann Creek	<a href="mailto:GSCstanncreek@gmail.com">GSCstanncreek@gmail.com</a>	668-9341
Marvin Blades	MAF	<a href="mailto:marvin-blades@yahoo.com">marvin-blades@yahoo.com</a>	669-4583
Kathy M. Dalip	CARDI	<a href="mailto:kathyemmdee@gmail.com">kathyemmdee@gmail.com</a>	824 2934

<b>Names</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
Ernest Banner	Min. Labour, Rural Development and Local Government	<a href="mailto:coord.rural.dev@labour.gov.bz">coord.rural.dev@labour.gov.bz</a> <a href="mailto:ernest_banner@gmail.com">ernest_banner@gmail.com</a>	
Gabino Canto	CEO MAF	<a href="mailto:gabinocanto@yahoo.com">gabinocanto@yahoo.com</a>	
Miguel Balam	Extension Officer, MAF		
Amy Roches	UB Central Farm	<a href="mailto:rochesamy@yahoo.com">rochesamy@yahoo.com</a>	660 2508
Orlando Dawson	NAVCO		822 0253 / 668 4936
Manuel Jimenez	SE-CAC	<a href="mailto:majimenezcr@gmail.com">majimenezcr@gmail.com</a>	506- 22160303
Mario Samper	IICA	<a href="mailto:mario.samper@gmail.com">mario.samper@gmail.com</a>	
Barry Palacio			

### Annex 3. Methodological proposal

#### Working group instructions

(for use by the facilitator) (rev.11-6-09)

- a. Total time foreseen: approximately two hours (up to 2:30, including part of the lunch period, or a maximum of 3:00 if coffee breaks are included).
- b. Each group addresses one of the five components of the Strategy, and also addresses the three cross-cutting themes of ECADERT, *only insofar as they pertain to that component*.
- c. At the outset, each group must appoint a rapporteur.
- d. There will be a facilitator appointed by the organizing committee in each working group, to guide its work, provide methodological support, and keep track of the time for each task.

There will also be one person per group with a laptop or PC and the files with the tables already installed when the group work begins, so as to record the group's consensus.

- e. Time allocation:
  1. Self-introductions (10 min.): Name, organization or institution, initial consultation attended, if any. The person in charge of the computer records the list of group members.
  2. Review and discussion of the component and the lines of action proposed for it
    - a. Individually read the strategic objective, the description, the transformations required and the lines of action (10 min.)
    - b. Present and discuss specific suggestions, including adjustments to the proposed text and prioritization for the country (up to 20 min.)

Please highlight any change suggested regarding the strategic objective, or state your agreement with it.

With respect to the lines of action, the group has the option of copying and pasting it in the right hand column, highlighting the changes they suggest, or to write alternate text there, or to explain in detail the modification they propose.
  3. Review and discussion of the three cross-cutting themes *insofar as they pertain to the component addressed by the group*:
    - a. Read out loud only the English-language description of each cross-cutting theme (10 min.). Group members may have the explanation of transformations required and lines of action at hand (in Spanish) for perusal, but they are *not* asked to review each one, but rather to verify whether the cross-cutting theme, as a whole, is appropriately reflected in the respective component, and to point out duplications.
    - b. Present and discuss specific suggestions to ensure that the cross-cutting themes are in fact reflected in the component addressed by the group (up to 15 min. in all). The group may decide to subdivide so as to verify that each of the cross-cutting themes is in fact reflected in the component.
  4. Comments on organization for implementation of ECADERT:
    - a. Review of the summary provided together with the diagram 'Organization for implementation ECADERT' (10 min.)
    - b. Group discussion (up to 20 min.) on:
      - i. mechanisms for participation by stakeholders and institutions in implementation of ECADERT
      - ii. ongoing processes or porocesses derived from ECADERT
      - iii. following steps or immediate actions.
    - c. Recommendations for submission to the plenary (up to 10 min.)

#### **Annex 4. Presentation on the formulation of the ECADERT proposal**

Separate document

#### **Annex 5. Presentation of content of the ECADERT proposal**

Separate document

## **Annex 6 Summary of organization for implementation**

ECADERT has set forth specific mechanisms to institutionalize the Strategy at the regional, national, and territorial levels. Implementation of the Strategy and the plans will be assessed by means of social audits, followup and evaluation, enabling adjustments to be made during its implementation. This will also allow the Strategy to be revised as necessary over time, and to assess the attainment of objectives, results, and impacts. Institutional and citizen responsibility is crucial for this, together with an appropriate information flow in the territories, in each country, and in the Region. Relations among levels and processes can be seen in the following diagram.

### **Institutionalization and implementation of ECADERT**

#### ***a. Regional level:***

The Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) will be the SICA body in charge of implementing the Strategy. The Council of Ministers of CAC will establish a Regional Committee for implementation of ECADERT.

Intermediate (triennial) Regional Action Plans will translate the general strategic guidelines of ECADERT into specific actions for a given period. These Plans will be prepared under the leadership of the countries' representatives in the Regional Committee. The civil society Advisory Committee of the Central American Integration System (SICA) will be involved in this process, together with relevant regional institutions.

The Central American Network of Territorial Action Groups and similar organizations involved in the management of territories will be strengthened, as a valuable mechanism for exchange of experience and horizontal cooperation among Central American territories.

#### ***b. National level:***

Each country will establish a National Committee for implementation of ECADERT, constituted by high-level representatives of the public institutions involved in rural development, as well as national organizations of local governments and civil society. The National Committee will be summoned and chaired by the governing body for Rural Development in each country.

The general functions of the National Committee will be.

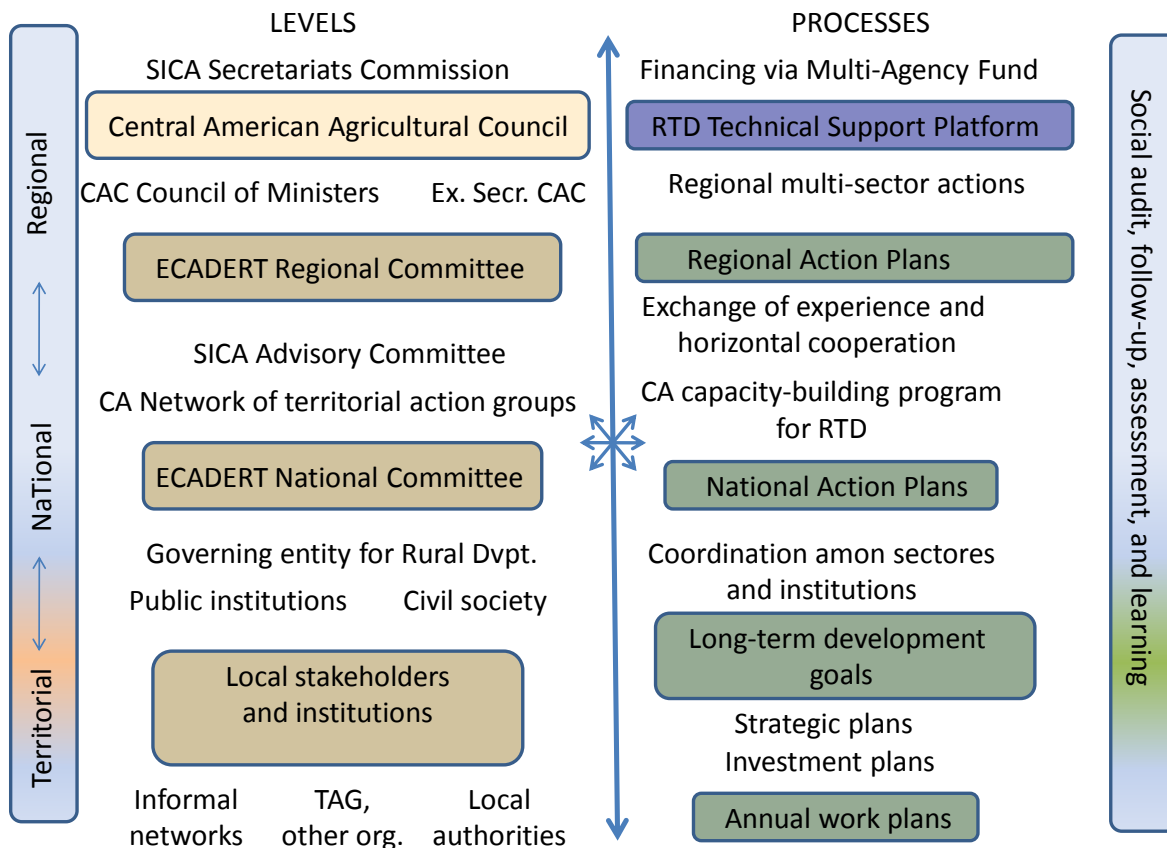
- i) to appoint the two country representatives (one from the public sector and one from civil society) as members of the Regional Committee for implementation of ECADERT,
- ii) to define the focal territories where inter-thematic and inter-institutional efforts will be centered during the initial phase of implementation of the Strategy,
- iii) preparation of the National Action Plan for implementation of ECADERT, taking into consideration the Regional Action Plan for the respective period,
- iv) to identify and commit available resources for implementation of the National Action Plan,
- v) to assess progress and difficulties in the process of implementing the National Action Plan,
- vi) to submit annual reports on country-level implementation of ECADERT

#### ***c. Territorial level:***

Local governments, Territorial Action Groups or similar territorial management organizations, together with other stakeholders and institutions in each territory, will prepare proposals for development of the respective territory, with a comprehensive and long-term view. These, in turn, will give rise to strategic plans and medium-term investment plans, as well as annual work plans, constructed in a participatory manner.

Focal territories will serve as pilot experiences that, once they have been systematically summarized and shared by means of exchanges and other knowledge management tools, can serve as models for development processes in other territories.

## Organization for implementation of ECADERT



The Strategy proposes a number of transformations and strategic action lines for each component and cross-cutting theme. Those transformations and lines of action will translate into basic and complementary measures in the Regional and National Action Plans. During the initial stage of the Strategy, the States will define a limited number of 'focus territories', where they will carry out inter-thematic and inter-institutional efforts to generate experience and systematic learning for exchanges with other territories involved in the respective regional or national processes. This will enable: a) opportunities to exchange knowledge and life experience; b) settings for capacity-training; c) a framework to develop practical experience in social stewardship of territories; d) a practical laboratory for scaling-up of experience toward public policies; e) a period for participatory fine-tuning of institutional mechanisms for successful implementation of the Strategy.

The number and quality of partners and resources for implementation of ECADERT, as well as strong alliances based on shared objectives, are crucial for success of this Strategy. Stakeholders and institutions in the territories must take the lead responsibility in their own development, together with the country's public institutions and other national stakeholders, with support from a network of technical and financial cooperation agencies. The countries must allocate substantial resources in their national budgets to investment in public goods and processes that are conducive to territorial rural development. The bodies of the Central American Integration System must mobilize international resources and support regional and cross-border efforts, as

well as initiatives encompassing territories with similar characteristics, problems and potential in several countries. The Strategy invites bilateral and multilateral donors, global funds, Integration bodies, States and civil society organizations to establish a 'Society for development' in the Region, to mobilize the necessary resources to strongly propel the requisite transformations.

## Annex 7. Suggestions regarding components No. 1 through 5

### Component # 1: Institutions for Rural Territorial Development

**Strategic Objective:** To renew and strengthen the institutional framework for the organization of the social stakeholders and for social management of policies on RTD.

<b>Lines of action for Component # 1: Institutions for Rural Territorial Development</b>	<b>Specific suggestions or approval</b>	<b>National priority for execution</b>
1. Establishment of an inclusive and flexible regional institutional framework for ECADERT, respecting the sovereignty of the individual countries.	<i>Over-arching</i>	<b>2</b>
2. Innovation and reconstruction of public institutionality at national level	<i>Outcome of 6</i>	
3. Design and strengthening of territorial institutional bodies	<i>Action, outcome of 6.</i>	
4. Strengthening capabilities for social management of the territories	<i>Outcome of 6</i>	
5. Improvement of institutional capacities to facilitate access of excluded populations to productive resources and assets to achieve their full social inclusion	<i>Linked to strategic objective</i>	
6. Public-private consultation, social participation in the formulation of public policies and dialogue between territorial and national stakeholders	<i>Initial action</i>	<b>1</b>
7. Promoting the participatory adoption, implementation and evaluation of territorial management policies	<i>Outcome of 6</i>	

## Component # 2: Social fabric and territorial cooperation networks

**Strategic Objective:** To enrich and strengthen the social fabric for innovative management of the territories based on dialogue and consensus on policies, strategies and actions, involving all relevant stakeholders and mobilizing the informal networks and formal organizations of the territories for the required transformations.

<b>Lines of action for Component # 2: Social fabric and territorial cooperation networks</b>	<b>Specific suggestions or approval Action: Develop criteria for inclusion of rural stakeholders in territorial decisionmaking.</b>	<b>National priority for execution</b>
1. Innovation and strengthening of traditional and emerging networks and organizations in the territories of the Region	<i>Mapping of existing networks and organizations as an early step in the process.</i>	
2. Strengthening of collaborative networks within and between territories		
3. Integration and active involvement in decision-making of youths and women in the territorial organizations.	<i>Linked to number 4.</i>	
4. Participation of indigenous and Afro-descendant communities and other ethnic groups in decisions that affect the territory		<b>1</b>
5. Sustainable, constructive integration of local social support networks with territorially differentiated supply of basic services provided by States		

### Component # 3: Territorial rural economy

**Strategic Objective:** To strengthen in an inclusive manner the rural economy of the territories, based on their potential and in order to improve the economic base of the territorial development and the rural families.

<b>Lines of action for Component # 3: Territorial rural economy</b>	<b>Specific suggestions or approval Human capacity building, knowledge and expertise, developing human resources for rural community empowerment</b>	<b>National priority for execution</b>
1. Enhancing the enabling environment , including infrastructure and support services to the rural economy by the countries	<i>Wells, drainage, irrigation, bridges, farm roads, access roads, production machinery, storage, drying, packaging, processing facilities, electrification (including microhydroelectric plants, renewable energy sources...), financing and equipment.</i>	
2. Promoting value chains based in the rural territories	<i>Approved.</i>	
3. Socially inclusive access to assets and basic services in accordance with the conditions of the territories	<i>Approved</i>	
4. Improvement of the enabling environment for market access and participation of small-scale commercial farming	<i>Linked to number 1.</i>	
5. Strengthening of family farming with both subsistence and market-oriented activities, and assessment of its contribution to food security and the TRD	<i>+ Communally regulated farming</i>	
6. Promotion of economic diversification in the territories through new types of non-agricultural activities		
7. Promotion and strengthening of rural businesses and entrepreneurship		
8. Public policies to promote associative forms of organization	<i>Collaborative farming Communal marketing Cooperatives</i>	

#### Component #4: Cultural identity of the territory

**Strategic Objective:** To respect the multiculturalism of the region and strengthen the transmission of traditional values and knowledge from one generation to another in order to enhance and guide the development processes of rural territories.

<b>Lines of action for Component # 4: Cultural identity of the territory</b>	<b>Specific suggestions or approval</b>	<b>Priority for execution in the country</b>
1. Inventory and promotion of cultural assets and values of rural territories		
2. Recognition and appreciation of ethnic diversity and multiculturalism, local forms of social organization, collective management and governance	<b><i>Outcome of no. 1</i></b>	
3. Cross-generational transmission of values and knowledge inherent to the cultural identity of the territory	<b><i>Outcome of no. 1</i></b>	

## Component # 5: Nature and territories

**Strategic Objective:** To guide transformation of the environmental management of the territories, adapting best practices for the renewal of ecosystems.

Lines of action Nature and Territoris	Specific suggestions or approval	Priority for execution in the country
1. Establishment and enforcement of standards and mechanisms to encourage sustainable management of shared and cross-border natural resources	<b><i>Approved.</i></b> <b><i>Needs to be enforced.</i></b>	
2. Strengthening the human resource capacities in environmental management, with an emphasis on water resource management, soil management, risk management and natural disasters in rural territories	<b><i>In Belize, NEMO and Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment.</i></b>	
3. Promotion of regulations or policy guidelines to regulate the land and water utilization		
4. Promoting sustainable agroforestry/reforestation with indigenous species	<b><i>Review the policies and legislation with respect to reforestation, extraction of natural resources, and taxation</i></b>	
5. Associative local systems for stewardship of natural resources to generate collective environmental services	<b><i>Highlight encouraging community-based management of natural parks and reserves</i></b>	
6. Autonomous local mechanisms for "environmental audits"	<b><i>Community participate in the whole process of decisionmaking. Link to component No. 2, item 4.</i></b>	

## **Annex 8. Press release**

### **Belizean workshop discussed the draft Central American Strategy Rural Territorial Development**

The National workshop to present and discuss the draft Central American Strategy Rural Territorial Development (ECADERT) was held at the University of Belize Conference Room, Central Farm Campus, in Cayo District, Belize, on November 10, 2009.

The purpose of this consultation was to share the ECADERT proposal with the individuals, institutions and organizations of each country that were involved in the initial consultations, both national and Central American, to review, validate or improve its content, in a participatory manner, with respect to key aspects, both general and pertaining to its five components and three cross-cutting themes, with their respective lines of action, as well as the proposed organization for implementation of the Strategy.

Participants included representatives of public sector institutions, civil society organizations, research and learning centers and the private sector.

The meeting, working as a plenary, discussed each of the five components of ECADERT, including its strategic objective and lines of action. The group also verified that the cross-cutting themes –especially social inclusion- were reflected in them. It prioritized certain lines of action for specific topics and linkages among several lines of action.

The meeting also addressed the implementation of ECADERT in Belize, especially in connection with the process to prepare a Belizean Rural Development Strategy, set in motion after the initial consultation for ECADERT.

