

Joint Declaration

between

**The National Aeronautics and Space Administration
of the United States of America,**

**The Central American Commission
on Environment and Development**

and

The World Bank

for

**COOPERATION IN SUPPORT OF PROVIDING STRATEGIC INFORMATION ON
THE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE CENTRAL AMERICAN COMMISSION ON
ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT'S MANAGEMENT OF THE
MESOAMERICAN BIOLOGICAL CORRIDOR**

The Central American Commission on the Environment and Development, whose membership consists of the Governments of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama, ("CCAD"), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration of the United States of America ("NASA") and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development ("The World Bank"):

SHARING an interest in supporting the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor ("MBC") initiative established in 1997 by the Presidents of the seven member countries of CCAD as a concept integrating conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity within the framework of sustainable economic development;

RECOGNIZING that the MBC initiative links ecosystems, indigenous communities and private lands throughout eight member countries of the World Bank, extending from Panama to the southern states of Mexico, and that it encompasses joint efforts by Governments, civil society and the private sector to harmonize environmental conservation with economic development objectives, in what has become a unique multinational sustainable development initiative;

RECOGNIZING the need to better define the concept of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor and its geographical parameters and to develop visual and other essential tools necessary to improve decision-making on strategic environmental matters within the MBC and the distribution of public information on such matters;

RECALLING that NASA and CCAD have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding For Cooperation In Support of The Development of a Mesoamerican Biological Corridor which provides NASA's Earth remote sensing technology and expertise to study and improve the understanding of the MBC;

RECALLING ALSO the existing collaboration between the World Bank and CCAD in supporting, at both national and regional levels, the MBC initiative as a unique ecosystem approach for conservation and sustainable development;

RECOGNIZING the importance of integrating spatial datasets and ancillary data developed in each of the eight countries within the MBC (covering such matters, among others, as soils, transportation networks and biodiversity indicator maps) so that they may function as a "virtual dashboard" for monitoring the MBC; and of providing critical tools to support decision makers in the MBC region;

ACKNOWLEDGING that this strategic information on environmental matters will empower communities to better manage their natural resources and provide improved public information to all sectors of society (including, but not limited to, the private sector, the media and educational institutions); and

NOTING the importance of establishing a regional network with a coordination hub within CCAD's institutional framework to standardize data and information, provide regional overviews on common resource management problems and integrate the basic parameters that link socio-economic and environmental processes;

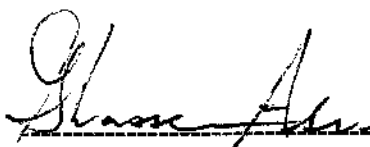
DECLARE their commitment to endeavor to align their activities that support the MBC initiative so as to promote, in the most cost-effective manner, the sustainable well-being of the people of Mesoamerica which depends in great measure on the integrity and rational use of the MBC's renewable natural resources;

AGREE to pursue the possibility of working together towards the development of a regional monitoring and visualization system of strategic information on the environment in the MBC; and

FURTHER AGREE to consult with each other regarding public statements or press releases concerning this Joint Declaration and the collaboration it represents when such statements or releases directly address the participation of the others.

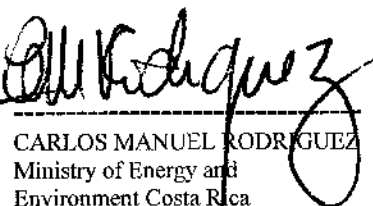
Done at Washington, D.C. in triplicate, in English on December 9, 2002.

**FOR THE NATIONAL
AERONAUTICS AND
SPACE ADMINISTRATION**



GHASSEM R. ASRAR
Associate Administrator for
Earth Science

**FOR THE CENTRAL
AMERICAN COMMISSION
ON ENVIRONMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT**



CARLOS MANUEL RODRIGUEZ
Ministry of Energy and
Environment Costa Rica
President Pro-Tempore CCAD

**FOR THE
WORLD BANK**



DAVID DE FERRANTI
Vice President
Latin American and the
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