



## SUCCESS STORY

# A Holistic Approach to Development

### Effort aims to align resource management and economic progress



Photo: USAID/Madagascar

The Eco-Regional Alliance uses a landscape approach at the regional level to pinpoint the major development challenges.

***USAID's Eco-Regional Alliance unites both environmental conservation and economic development activities in priority regions.***

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As a biodiversity hotspot, Madagascar is a top international conservation priority. The Government of Madagascar, in conjunction with many international development agencies and non-governmental organizations, strives to preserve the country's natural riches. However, these extensive natural resource management and conservation activities do not occur in a vacuum: human activity is the key threat to Madagascar's biodiversity.

USAID has spearheaded a movement, the Eco-Regional Alliance, to unite conservation and development activities in priority regions. Teaming up with major stakeholders in health, environment and economic development, individual Alliance members are plugged into the larger universe of aid actors and issues. Working on the "big picture" of regional sustainable development, the Alliance promotes a deeper understanding of the connections in development work, especially forest conservation and economic development of the adjacent rural areas.

Progress towards the goal of conservation and development is achieved through active information-sharing, mobilization, and coordination of activities. Although each member has its own focus area and expertise, the Alliance unites the diverse actors in their commitment to conserving Madagascar's natural resources and improving Malagasy livelihood. By joining forces, Alliance members hope to capitalize on each other's strengths.

Regular Alliance meetings provide USAID and its partners a chance to touch base, share information, and plan future activities. Following the decentralization impetus of the national government, the Alliance continues to shift further towards the grassroots by supporting communal development plan implementation. By advocating integrated and comprehensive development packages implemented at the local level, Alliance members work to ensure that local communities receive direct benefits.