

**NATIONAL SERVICE OF TERRITORIAL STUDIES  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Paper work**

**FLOOD AND TERRITORIAL PLANNING IN THE LOWER LEMPA RIVER  
VALLEY IN EL SALVADOR**

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**BACKGROUND**

The Lempa river basin is 422 km large and it is shared for the three countries in Central America: Guatemala, El Salvador y Honduras. It begins on the mountains of Guatemala in a elevation of 1500 meters over the sea level. The entire basin covers a total of 17,790 km<sup>2</sup> and 10,082 belongs to Salvador Territory it is 47.91% of the total territory of El Salvador. And 70% of the total surface drainage water enters to El Salvador area of Chalatenango and reach the Pacific Ocean in the area of Usulután. (map 1)

In El Salvador the Lempa River basin covers 151 municipalities (261 total) including the metropolitan area of San Salvador (The capital). The basin total is conform by 50 small basins; which are divided in three big segments: High, medium and low basin the experiences developed in this three areas will be share and mainly what is being done related to activities of development and its impact over the areas of flooding that happens mainly in the lower valley. Describing the evolution and development of areas that had been affected historically by flooding.

The middle and upper reaches of the river can be found in neighboring Honduras y Guatemala as well as in El Salvador. Extensive deforestation has been prevalent in upper and middle basin areas. Thee major hydroelectric facilities are located in the middle basin, providing an important part of El Salvador's electric supply.

