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El Salvador: Environmental Organizations Blame War For Ecological Devastation

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On June 5, 19 environmental organizations pertaining to the Salvadoran Ecological Unity (UNES) submitted a proposal for nation-wide environmental rehabilitation to government officials, political party leaders, the diplomatic corps, and to representatives of the Church and international organizations. The 20-page document said that the civil war of the past decade has been a major cause of environmental devastation. UNES demanded the end of the war as a first step in dealing with the country's ecological crisis. UNES director Ricardo Navarro said that the mode of economic development adopted in El Salvador has also been responsible for environmental destruction. The UNES proposal said 80% of Salvadoran territory is affected by one or more of the following: serious erosion, low fertility, pollution, and absence or severe deficiency of plant ground cover. Next, ground water depletion averages one meter per year. Recent studies indicate that potable water sources for San Salvador may disappear within the next two decades unless immediate action is taken to stop ground water depletion. The UNES initiative is supported by West Germany's Friederich Ebert Foundation. (Basic data from AFP, 06/05/90)

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