

PD-ARX-752  
148241

**Environmental Information Systems &  
Networking Project**

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May 3, 2000

Mr. John Butler  
Contracting Officer's  
Technical Representative  
United States Agency for  
International Development  
Office of Europe and Eurasia  
(E&E/EEST/ENR)

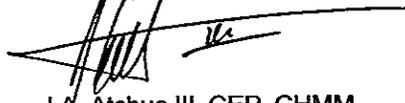
**Subject: Submission of the First Quarterly Report for 2000**

Dear Mr. Butler:

I have attached a copy of the first quarterly report for your review. As we discussed, I will make a presentation of our results for this quarter at your office on May 4, at 1:30 PM. I would appreciate it if you could have an overhead projector available for my presentation.

As you and I also discussed, I will be modifying the format of the report to include contract and other information. I will submit a draft format to you at the end of this month. The report for this quarter reflects the current format.

Sincerely,



J.A. Atchue III, CEP, CHMM  
Project Manager, EISN

Cc: File

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## **Introduction to Environmental Information Systems and Networking**

A key element in finding solutions to the serious environmental situation in Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States is the sharing of environmental information. USAID's Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) division of its Europe and Eurasia (E&E) bureau created the Environmental Information Systems and Networking (EISN) project. Through this contract, DevTech Systems, an institutional contractor, assists USAID in ensuring that lessons learned regarding solutions to these problems are shared in several areas: internally, externally, and regionally. Under the direction of ENR, EISN addresses environmental information needs of both USAID development professionals-in the Missions in the E&E region and in Washington-and environmental professionals throughout the region and in the United States by developing a system for managing and disseminating environmental information.

EISN creates systems to share and publicize information within USAID as well as raising awareness of ENR activities. DevTech Systems staff facilitates information sharing among ENR and USAID Missions in the E&E region, such as through the creation of an internal web site and calendar system. They provide consultants for quick-response information demands and other information-related needs. Project staff also train ENR and Mission staff in the use of these systems to ensure their day-to-day utility for USAID professionals.

The project informs the U.S. public and professionals in the E&E region of USAID activities, successes, and regional environmental issues. It has created an external web site, [www.eni-environment.net](http://www.eni-environment.net), that provides access to past project documents for environmental professionals in the field. The EISN staff developed presentations and training materials for briefings and cross-border workshops, and they will help ENR conduct four such workshops to share lessons learned in past USAID projects. Project consultants will also update the "Measuring the Environmental Transition in Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States" Report, to assure continued relevance to the initial report.

EISN also facilitates the exchange of information among professionals within the region and with their counterparts in the United States through the creation of networks, thus increasing their capacity to manage and use environmental information. DevTech Systems staff and consultants provide technical assistance to regional environmental organizations on information transfer technology and work to strengthen regional networks of environmental professionals.

## INTERNAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONALS working in the E&E region face several obstacles. Despite the re-engineering and team building process, information sharing among relevant staff only takes place either on an ad-hoc, individual basis or as part of the annual budget process. USAID staffers need regularized, streamlined ways of sharing environmental information. Additionally, they need the capability to quickly access and assemble this information in graphic formats for the many reports, information requests, and presentations that normally are required.

EISN addresses these needs in two results of its contract. First, it is creating a way to share important information among environmental professionals in ENR, Global, and the Missions. When completed, USAID staff in relevant divisions and Missions will be oriented and trained on its use. EISN is also making the retrieval of this and other important division information easier and quicker. Second, the project is creating a quick information response capability and training ENR personnel in its use. In the first year, this quick response effort has focused on providing the office with up to date technology for presentations and filing systems and designing interactive tools to help missions make decisions on environmental compliance policy requirements.

### **Result One – Internal Info System**

Performance Standard over the four-year period: “Seven Field Teams connected to electronic system and have received orientation on its use”

To Date: ENR trained; EcoLinks trained; Caspian Team trained.

Results this quarter:

#### Internal Website

- Added several new documents to the internal website
- Adjusted internal site to match IRM/LPA guideline changes
- Completed migration to new server
- Provided occasional technical support to ENR staff
- Performed routine maintenance and log analysis on websites and server

#### Ecolinks Internal Information

- Construction and distribution of monthly EcoLinks newsletters
- Arrangements for monthly EcoLinks meetings and drafting of minutes
- Update events and articles on EcoLinks website
- Implemented new calendar and discussion group for internal website
- Updated internal website for and after conference
- Presented website and facilitated discussion at EcoLinks conference

Caspian Website

- Arrangements of Caspian Environmental Working Group meeting in coordination with US Energy Associations hosted visit of Georgian delegation

**Result Two – System for Quick Response**

Performance Standard over the four-year period: “100% of staff trained”

To Date: Staff Trained on existing systems.

Results this quarter:

Information Dissemination

- Distribution of regional environmental news emails
- Preparation of PowerPoint presentations

216 Compliance Information

- Finished 216 database-management program

Media Center

- Update of CardScan database
- Maintained EISN computers (reinstalled Windows)
- Provided occasional technical support for EISN staff

## **G**ATHERING AND SHARING INFORMATION WITH THE PUBLIC

SINCE USAID ASSISTANCE to the ENI region is meant to be transitional, information services are needed to assist the closeout process and help ensure sustainability of environmental progress. In order to make this information useful beyond USAID presence in a country, this information will then need to be transmitted across borders on websites, through conferences and workshops, and in printed materials. To meet these needs, EISN will update the Environmental Transition report, hire consultants to research priority environmental topics, publish information electronically and hold cross-border conferences and workshop to disseminate lessons learned.

### **Result Three – Transition Report**

Performance Standard over the four-year period: “Two rankings (ever other year)”

To Date: One ranking completed.

Results this quarter:

- Drafted and submitted a country brief on Bulgaria; waiting for response.
- Ordered data for index update; data will be available mid-summer for the next update.

### **Result Four – Share Lessons Across ENI Borders**

Performance Standard over the four year period: “Four events”

To Date: Two events: EcoLinks annual conference and the website colloquium. Two more events will be held summer 2000 in the Caucasus.

Results for this quarter:

#### Website Colloquium

- Wrote final report for the colloquium and submitted the report to ENR for comment.

#### EcoLinks Conference

- Organization of logistics for EcoLinks 2000 Conference including the reservation of hotel rooms, conference room spaces, contact with catering services, tour guide arrangements, etc.
  - Duties while in Dubrovnik included catering and dinner arrangements, participant check-in, note-taking during three day conference and Trade and Investment meeting and break-out session facilitation
  - Summarized notes from break-out sessions and presentations and
  - Drafted Conference Report outline

#### Preparation of Briefing Materials for Ecolinks

- Draft of the Annual Report introduction and new brochure

Caucuses Environmental NGO Network

- CENN has begun negotiations with NGOs from all three Caucuses countries to settle on dates for two workshops: one on biodiversity and one on the Aarhus convention. The workshops will share lessons learned across the borders of this region.

**Result Five – Demand Driven Consultants**

Performance Standard over the four-year period: “two research projects per year”

Results this quarter:

- Glenn Morris, along with three other consultants are in the process of completing the “stock taking report” requested by Loren Schulze.

## **Improving Outreach and Networking**

Both the U.S. public and E&E environmental professionals suffer from a lack of environmental information, albeit in different ways. The U.S. public is unaware of foreign aid programs in general and USAID assistance in particular. Environmental professionals in E&E, on the other hand, have been conditioned to keep, rather than share, information. Thus informal networks of information, either with compatriots or foreigners, are rare in transition societies.

EISN is tasked to publicize USAID environmental work in the E&E region to mainstream media outlets in the US. It will also raise awareness within USAID of ENR activities. To facilitate information sharing in the region, it is in the process of improving the capacity of regional NGOs to utilize and share information. Finally, EISN has also created electronic networks among environmental professionals within the region and between regional organizations and environmental professionals in the US.

### **Result Six – Articles Published in U.S. & Through Electronic and Published Media**

Performance Standard over the four-year period: “18 to 20 case studies produced per year for the last three years of the contract”

To Date: 17 case studies produced last year.

Results this quarter:

- Reviewed the 17 case studies.
- Worked with USAID to decide on what the direction of the Case Studies.

### **Result Seven – Information Training**

Performance Standard over the four-year period: “Four (regional) organizations”

To Date: in the process of training four regional organizations (two teams on environmental assessments and two information distribution teams – one each in Russia, and the Caspian area)

Results this quarter:

- Working with the Bureau Environmental Officer to set up training on environmental assessments.
- Working with ISAR to train information coordinators in Russia and the Caspian area.

## **Result Eight – Creating Networks**

Performance Standard over the four-year period: “Five networks”

Note: networks is defined as groups of U.S. professionals and ENI professionals which have the “capacity to share information... through various means including articles in major newspapers or magazines, or on electronic bulletin boards, e-mail, the Internet, videos, satellite and/or teleconferencing.”

Two websites already have been established (EcoLinks and the ENR website). An additional three websites are in development (RusInfo, CaspInfo, and a website supporting the regional EcoFunds).

Results this quarter:

### ENR external website

- Added several new documents to the external website
- Adjusted external site to match IRM/LPA guideline changes
- Completed migration to new server
- Performed routine maintenance and log analysis on website and server

### ECOLINKS external website

- Updated pages as needed
- Managed consultant who collected all emails of webmasters that links page links to and emailed them asking for reciprocal link
- Wrote portions of a program to automate the batch emailing process
- Fixed year-rollover-related bugs to programs already on site
- Added search engine to the site
- Added the capability to publish news to other sites (EcoLinks now available on my.netscape.com) and to read news from other websites
- Ran link checks and posted updates to links page

### ISAR Support

- ISAR reports that development of RusInfo and CaspInfo websites is progressing.

### EcoFunds Website Development

- The consultant has visited about half the necessary people and believes he will finish by the end of May.

### Caucuses Environmental NGO Network (CENN)

- EISN now funds the website and email distribution service of CENN.
- CENN continued setting up the two regional meetings it has scheduled for this year.

# Environmental Information Systems and Networking Project

DevTech Systems Inc.  
First Quarter Review, 2000

# Result 1 - Internal Info System

## **Internal ENR Website**

- Added several new documents to the internal website
- Adjusted internal site to match IRM/LPA guideline changes
- Completed migration to new server

## **EcoLinks Internal Website**

- EcoLinks newsletters
- Implemented new calendar and discussion group

## **Caspian Working Group Website**

- Continued support of Caspian Environmental Working Groups

# Result 2 - System for Quick Response

## Information Dissemination:

Distributed regional environmental news emails

Prepared PowerPoint presentations for Conference

## Media Center and Software:

Reinstalled windows on the RRB Computer

# Result 3 - Transition Report

## Cross-Country Index

Ordered data for index update

## Bulgaria

Drafted and submitted a country brief on Bulgaria



*Draft -- he more relevant*

# Result 4 - Share Lessons Learned Across Borders

## Website Colloquium

Wrote final report for the colloquium submitted for comment

## Briefing Materials for ENR and EcoLinks

Annual Report outline and introduction

## EcoLinks Conference

Supported and implemented all aspects of the conference

## Caucuses Environmental and NGO Network

Signed two contracts with CENN to support internet activities  
and two multi-national meetings

← Alexander took over from Leon

## Result 5 - Research Consultants

Glenn Morris, along with three other consultants are in the process of completing the “stock taking report.”

# Result 6 - Articles Published/Case Studies

## Case Studies:

Reviewed all draft case studies

Worked with USAID to decide on their direction

## Result 7 - Information Training

Working with the Bureau Environmental Officer to set up training on environmental assessments  
ISAR training in Caspian Sea Area in CAR continues

Information Dissemination Training activity in Moscow in progress

# Result 8 - Creating Networks

## ENR external website

Completed migration to new server

## List Serves: (1) Caspian Sea and (2) Russia

ISAR reports that these sites are operating and developing

## EcoFunds Website

Added search engine to the site

Added the capability to publish news to other sites (EcoLinks now available on my.netscape.com) and to read news from other websites

# Administrative Activities

## We've Moved!!

Finalized decision on office space

Submitted lease to CO

Entertained bids on new telephone system

Packed and moved on April 29

## Hiring and Searches

Hired an administrator

Looking for a new environmental associate

# Potential & New Work

Begin work on updating the EcoLinks web site (R4&8)

Finish Country Pages

Work on new look and content for the page

Data gathering EcoFunds web page completed and web page design should commence (R4)

Potential to support ISAR in regional meeting of NGOs (R7)

Evaluating new approaches for the "case studies" (R6)

Supporting modification of EA Training Materials (R5&7)

Working on new quarterly report format

Discussing analytical work supporting EcoLinks