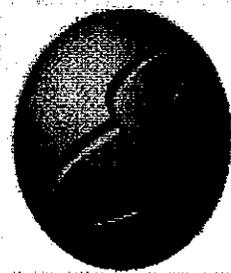


PD-ABX-757
1/8846



EISN Annual Review

Environmental Information
Systems and Networks

Introduction to Environmental Information Systems and Networking

Over the last two years, EISN has worked to find solutions to the lack of environmental information in Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States. USAID's Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) division of its Europe and Eurasia (E&E) bureau created the Environmental Information Systems and Networks (EISN) project to help provide solutions that lead to better environmental management in the region based on sound environmental research and information. Through this contract, DevTech Systems assists USAID in ensuring that lessons learned are shared internally, externally, and regionally 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 internal web sites for various working groups and a calendar system. EISN provides consultants for quick-response information demands and other information-related needs. Project staff are also available to 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. EISN has created external web sites, www.EE-environment.net, that provides access to past project documents for environmental professionals in the field and www.EcoLinks.org, which provides information on grants, financing, pollution prevention, and trade opportunities to firms and associations in the region. EISN staff have updated the rankings of environmental progress by each country as an update to "Measuring the Environmental Transition in Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States" Report, and plan to update the country overviews over the upcoming year.

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. EISN provides state-of-the-art solutions for information dissemination, helping USAID reach more broadly with less money. 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.

We hope over the next two years, we will continue to provide the latest information dissemination techniques and up-to-date information to USAID and its partners.

HIGHLIGHTS

WWW.Envirodialogue.Net

The Tenth Anniversary offered an opportunity to look at key areas that affect growth of civil society, environmentally sound economic development and the ability of countries to sustain environmental progress from within. EISN created an Internet dialogue web site in order to use this opportunity presented to USAID as a catalyst for policy, economic and participatory discussion. The Anniversary project did not intend to focus on an evaluation of past AID assistance programs or specific future financial aid packages from the west.

Overall goal of the EnviroDialogue project was to:

- Facilitate an expert dialogue on sustainable environmental and economic progress and on challenges that lie ahead
- Examine what the priority issues are that face countries in the region
- Provide input for policy and decision-makers designing future assistance programs
- Use a website as venue for the entire project

Eight essays were posted on the website for review; four bulletin boards were created for discussion purposes; and on December 7th a live Q&A session with the authors of the essays was conducted. A theme threading through the entire dialogue was how to build a sense of personal responsibility among citizens and communities in the countries of the region. Churches in particular, also political parties and communications were considered as potential mechanisms to foster personal engagement and ethical behavior leading to more environmental protection, less corruption, more responsible law enforcement. Another issue was the interfacing of small-scale NGO projects and community solutions with large scale, high cost projects needed to reduce industrial pollution. How could NGO funds compliment those of multilateral banks? Should funding begin at the grass roots level or the national level? The discussion also focused on the need for economic reconstruction and environmental sustainability and the difficulties in obtaining those goals. Examples from vastly different countries were introduced to make a point and present options. The session ended with enthusiastic endorsement by participants and a request for further website dialogues on specific topics. A transcript of the Question and Answer Session may be found at <http://www.envirodialogue.net/transcripts.html>.

Ranking of Environmental Progress - Updated

In 1998, HIID finished the "Transition Report" which ranked 25 countries in CEE and NIS regions. The objective of this exercise was to enable cross-country comparisons of the conditions for environmental improvement elaborated in the Strategic Objective (SO) 1.6 framework. Because the HIID ranking system was not easily reproduced and did not report on all of the intermediate results in SO 1.6, the index was reworked. The new index was constructed to reflect all of the intermediate results under SO 1.6 with each IR receiving an individual score comprised of three indicators. The indicators were combined into an IR score using the same methodology as the Human Development Index. All indicators are from secondary sources such as the World Bank, EBRD and the

World Resource Institute. Most indicators are collected annually, making the index easy to update. The Overall Score for each country is a simple average of all IR scores. Despite the difference in the construction of the IR scores, both the new index and the HIID index are highly correlated. The next update of the scores will occur in fall of 2000 when EBRD, World Bank and WRI update their data sets. (See Appendix for the Rankings)

Caspinfo

Caspinfo is a free information service that disseminates to subscriber's information on environmental issues related to the Caspian Sea Basin. Since May 1999, Caspinfo has produced 10 information bulletins. Each bulletin provides a list of articles, short informational pieces and announcements on Caspian-related events, publications and brief information. Each piece of information listed in the bulletin is numbered and is part of the archival system. Any subscriber interested in finding out more about a given piece of information simply writes to Caspinfo and provide the archival number and the document will be sent to them automatically. Caspinfo currently has 42 subscribers and has disseminated 180 requests through this automatic archival system.

EcoLinks Website: Case Studies and Links Page

Over the last year, EISN has worked with the overall EcoLinks family to produce methods of collecting and disseminating information to the public about pollution prevention and environmental technology. EISN designed the basic website for the project, including grant applications and basic information about the project. Over the year, a links page with over 500 links was added to help direct the public to reliable sources of information on the Internet about pollution prevention and other related topics. In addition, EISN has produced 18 USAID pollution prevention case studies to be used as input into a case study database. Over the next year, EISN will create a web-based, searchable database to store case studies as they are researched and written.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR NEXT YEAR

EcoLinks Conference/Communications Strategy

EISN is currently working with ENR to create an agenda for the upcoming EcoLinks conference. EISN will be heavily involved in creating an annual report for EcoLinks, hiring facilitators for the conference, setting up rooms and conference rooms for the conference, and providing computer training at the conference. A work plan for EISN's portion of the EcoLinks will be developed from the strategy agreed upon at the conference.

CENN Funding

EISN is currently in negotiations with CENN to assist them with their list serve, information collection, and training activities in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. CENN has recently lost funding from the foundation that was supporting their efforts. EISN hopes that an agreement of assistance will lead to sustainability of the service.

Training for Field Missions

The target for Result One is "seven field teams trained on the internal information systems." However, the EISN team has not had the invitation or opportunity to go out to the field and train mission teams or other USAID partners. We hope to work with ENR to find such opportunities in order to complete this contractual requirement, either through attending USAID conferences or creating an interactive website that allows field teams to be trained via the Internet.

Country Reports for the Update of the Transition Report

The update of the Transition Report has taken several major turns in the development of the report. While we are "on schedule" since the country rankings have been update (though no one has officially approved the ranking system), the country reports are currently in limbo. EISN hopes to work towards and agreement with ENR about how to proceed with the report.

Update of the ENR Web Site

The information systems that EISN has constructed over the last two years have been extremely useful in providing people with summaries of USAID projects, case studies, reports, event information, and other documents. However, in the last few months of 1999, there was a drop in the amount of information coming to the EISN staff. Because there is no requirement to provide our contract with documents and information and the EISN contract does not have a field presence, we rely on the forward thinking of those at ENR and the mission to supply us with information. Over the next few months, we ask for ENR's cooperation to help us update our information, help us extract information from the field, and help us understand their information needs for the coming year. EISN looks forward to working with ENR to update our systems.

RESULTS REVIEW

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"

Internal Information Systems in place include, the internal web site for ENR on the USAID internal web site, EcoLinks internal website, the 216 compliance web site for USAID field missions, and the Caspian Working Group website. All missions with Intranet access have the ability to log into these sites.

ENR Internal Site:

Documents on site were updated as EISN received new documents
Calendar systems tested on the site
Obtained SmartGate direct access to the site
Changed the name of the site to reflect the Bureau's name change
Updated list of events on the site regularly

EcoLinks Internal Site:

Designed and created a custom internal site
Developed mailing list
Bulletin Board established
Customized and installed a calendar

7
Follow-up
with Cal/Intranet
2/16

216 Compliance Site:

Designed and created site

Further refined interface

Changed documentation on site; update files as needed

Programmed prototype for searchable 216 database

Caspian Sea Working Group Site:

Designed and created a site to keep the working group informed on meetings and research relevant to their working group

Updated files as needed

EISN has provided ENR staff with training on these sites as needed. However, no field missions have been trained. Over the next year, EISN looks forward to working with and training ENR staff, Mission officers and USAID partners.

Result Two – System for Quick Response

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

Under this result, EISN responds to the quick turn-around demands of the ENR staff. Activities include, scheduling meetings, writing up notes for meetings, searching the Internet for events and news articles of interest to the staff, printing materials, etc. EISN staff have helped track down information on the Internet and written draft reports for the ENR staff.

These activities have lead to a system of information for the staff. News articles and events are distributed to the staff on a regular basis, the latest updates on field programs are available to them on the stand-alone computer, and briefing materials are available to them in the EISN cubicle in the ENR space. In addition, EISN has provided training on demand for software applications and use of the stand-alone computer. To date, most of the staff have been trained or made aware of the fact that training is available. We encourage anyone who is unaware of the information available to them on the ENR Intranet site and the stand-alone computer to contact EISN.

List of regular activities under this result in 1999:

Update of environmental events page

Helped with information requests as needed

Assisted ENR staff in searching for documents

Emailed environmental news from region to ENR staff members

Coordinated EcoLinks and Caspian Sea meetings

Maintained stand-alone computer; purchased software as needed

GATHERING AND SHARING INFORMATION WITH THE PUBLIC

SINCE USAID ASSISTANCE to the E&E 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 web sites, 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)"

At the beginning of 1999, the decision was made to focus on a few countries every year and write in-depth reports on environmental progress in those countries in addition to creating an index to rank each country.

The Index:

EISN staff member Casey Delhotal created an index to replace the HIID index in the Transition report. The index was composed of indicators such as emissions from industrial processes that are regularly updated, from a reliable source, could be easily quantified and fit the graduation criteria created by ENR for the SO. The ranking methodology is similar to that of the Human Development Index created by UNDP. When compared to the HIID index, the index was similar in most areas. The index was submitted to the SO team in September 1999, but has not received official approval from the team. The index will be updated again in 2000 once the World Bank has released the latest version of its world indicators, WRI has released its new data sets, and the EBRD has released the 2000 Transition Report.

The focus country report:

A social research scientist was hired to design a methodology for the focus country reports in order to collect the overwhelming amount of information needed to answer the questions posed by the SO 1.6 graduation criteria. After presenting the methodology to the SO team and receiving their input, the consultant and members of the EISN staff went out to the field to hire the consultant who would actually collect and write the reports. Bulgaria was the trail country.

After several months of working with the field consultants and rewriting the various reports sent to Washington by the field consultants, the EISN staff submitted the Bulgaria report to ENR. The report was found to be too broad (as the criterion it was based on was too broad) and the information gathered in the field was questioned.

From this, the usefulness of this type of report was questioned. Because of this, EISN and ENR agreed to scale back the reports to a few pages per country, set a more realistic outline for the reports, and closely link the reports to the index created. A mock report for Bulgaria will be submitted to ENR by the first quarter of 2000 for comment and approval before proceeding with other countries. Attached to this report is the draft format of these country overviews.

Result Four – Share Lessons Across ENI Borders

Performance Standard over the four-year period: "Four events"

Under this result, EISN has proven itself to be flexible and creative in responding to the needs of USAID in the E&E region. While the original intention of this result was to organize conferences to help USAID and partner organizations share lessons learned, the lack of travel funding for everyone involved limited what could be successfully accomplished under this result. Because of this, EISN has turned to technology to bring people together to share their ideas and their successes.

The Tenth Anniversary offered an opportunity to look at key areas that affect growth of civil society, environmental economic development and the ability of countries to sustain environmental progress from within. The Anniversary project did not intend to focus on an evaluation of past AID assistance programs or specific future financial aid packages from the west.

Overall goal of the EnviroDialogue project:

- to facilitate an expert dialogue on sustainable environmental and economic progress and on challenges that lie ahead
- to examine what the priority issues are that face countries in the region
- to provide input for policy and decision makers designing future assistance programs to use a website as venue for the entire project

On December 7, the Question and Answer Session with authors and about 40 outside participants was held from 8 – 10:00 AM EST. Typed questions from participants that registered for the session were channeled to the authors through a moderator. Authors typed answers and throughout the session a lively dialogue on a range of issues was held. Key issues that were discussed included: individual responsibility for the environment, interfacing of small scale NGO projects and community solutions with large scale, high cost projects needed to reduce industrial pollution, and the need for economic reconstruction. A transcript of the session is attached. Participants were asked to provide feedback on the session on a brief questionnaire. Results from the survey are summarized in the Envirodialogue.Net Report.

Result Five – LD Learning & Change to Demand Driven Consultants

Performance Standard over the four-year period: "research projects"

Consultant work done under this result in 1999:

- Kevin Bliss attended a conference in Baku
- Nancy Diamond hired to work in Georgia and help Angela Crooks with project surveys
- Glenn Morris was hired to do finance studies
- Many other consultants were hired under other results for projects or activities directly related to that result.

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 ENI, 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 – Case Studies

Performance Standard over the four-year period: "10-20 case studies written per year"

This result was changed in 1999 to reflect the need for case studies of environmental successes in the E&E region. EISN fulfilled this result by hiring two consultants to write USAID success stories. 18 case studies have been written and are waiting final approval before being posted on the EcoLinks website. As case studies are added to the website, a search engine will be designed to make access easier and user friendly. Until then, the case studies will be listed in a drop-down menu.

In 2000, EISN will add case studies to the database either through a consultant agreement or by writing these studies in house once the chief-of-party is hired. One

case study will be written per month, submitted for approval and posted in the EcoLinks database.

Result Seven – Information Training

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

EISN currently funds three training projects managed by ISAR in the NIS region. The training projects are:

Caspian Sea NGO Internet Training

This activity focuses on training 30 NGO's in the Caspian Sea area on how to hook up to the Internet, use the Internet for research purposes, and disseminated information over the internet via email. To date, 15 of the NGO's slotted for training have completed their training.

Caspinfo & Rusinfo

These two related information dissemination training programs are creating environmental information repositories and dissemination centers for environmental issues in the Caspian Sea area and Russia. Information coordinators are trained to collect information, effectively use list serves and web sites to disseminate information, and manage computer hardware. The end result is two list serves and two web sites effectively managed by trained staff to disseminate information to NGO's in these areas. The Caspinfo coordinator has been trained and the list serve and website established. The Rusinfo coordinator has just begun training.

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."

EISN has created or are in the process of creating several electronic networks under this result. These include the:

1. External ENR web site hosted on the external USAID web site,
2. EcoLinks web site,
3. EcoFund web site,
4. CaspInfo list serve and web site, and
5. Rusinfo list serve and web site.

ENR External Web Site:

Documents from ENR contracts added to the website as provided to EISN
Search Engine created and added to website

EcoLinks Web Site:

Website designed and posted
Links page created and posted

EcoFund Web Site:

EISN has hired a consultant in Czech Republic to coordinate with the EcoFunds in CEE and send website requirements to EISN staff for an umbrella website for the EcoFunds. The consultant was hired in November, however, the website requirements have not been sent to Washington. Once these requirements have been sent to EISN, the web designer can proceed with designing the site or recommend further follow-up with the EcoFunds.

Caspinfo List Serve/Web Site (www.ecoline.ru/caspinfo):

EISN, under a subcontract with ISAR, helps fund the Caspinfo service. The service was launched in April 1999, following ISAR's Baku conference. All conference participants with email (42 in total) subscribed to the service. Currently, the Caspinfo bulletin is distributed to more than 130 addresses. The Bulletin is distributed in Russian (93 subscribers) and English (30 subscribers).

In 1999, 16 bulletins were published and 460 documents were stored on the systems Internet database. The database received approximately 20,000 hits and nearly 3,500 requests for files. These files are automatically sent to the subscribers by the system.

Rusinfo List Serve/Web Site:

EISN contracted with SEU in Moscow to create this site in October 1999 to set up a service similar to the Caspinfo service, but focusing on Russian environmental issues. It is too early to see tangible results.

List of Results under the EISN contract

Result and Title	Performance Standard
Result One – Internal Info System (EcoLinks Internal website, ENR internal website, etc.)	Performance Standard over the four year period: "Seven Field Teams connected to electronic system and have received orientation on its use"
Result Two – System for Quick Response (216 Compliance, Briefing Materials, etc.)	Performance Standard over the four year period: "100% of staff trained in the quick information systems"
Result Three – Updating of the Transition Report	Performance Standard over the four year period: "Two rankings (every other year)"
Result Four – Share Lessons Across ENI Borders (Website Conference, Q&A internet sessions, other conferences)	Performance Standard over the four year period: "Four events"
Result Five – Provide Technical Expertise for Short-Term Research Projects and Presentations (Caspian Oil Report, Georgia Strategic Plan, etc.)	Performance Standard over the four year period: "Eight reports"

<p>Result Six – Articles Published in U.S. & Through Electronic and Published Media to be Changed to Case Studies produced</p>	<p>Performance Standard over the four year period: "Eight mainstream articles – twenty-four internal publications" This has recently been changed to "24 Case Studies"</p> <p>Note: "mainstream publications is defined as major newspapers or magazines or on electronic bulletin boards, e-mail, the Internet, videos, satellite and/or teleconferencing."</p>
<p>Result Seven – Information Training (Training in CAR, the Caspian region, Moscow on internet and electronic information services)</p>	<p>Performance Standard over the four year period: "Four (regional) organizations trained"</p>
<p>Result Eight – Creating Networks (ENR external site, EcoLinks external site, listserves, EcoFund website, etc.)</p>	<p>Performance Standard over the four year period: "Five networks" <u>Note:</u> 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."</p>

Who Does What on the EISN Contract

Ken Rogers, Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Contract Changes and Modifications▪ EcoLinks
Casey Delhotal, Environmental Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Transition Report update▪ Hires and manages (if needed) consultants for research projects▪ Manages conference setup▪ Manages large scale events▪ Sets up training events
Sandy Smith, Web Master	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Creates and maintains websites and external networks▪ Creates and maintains internal information systems such as the calendar system, media center, etc.▪ Computer training
Stephanie Merkens, Environmental Associate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Responds to requests for information▪ EcoLinks PR materials▪ Writes articles for the newsletter▪ Creates briefing materials▪ Backstop for conference logistics and promotional materials▪ Sets up meetings (TAG, ENR meetings), distributes notes from meetings and materials

Environmental Information Systems and Networking Summary of Activities

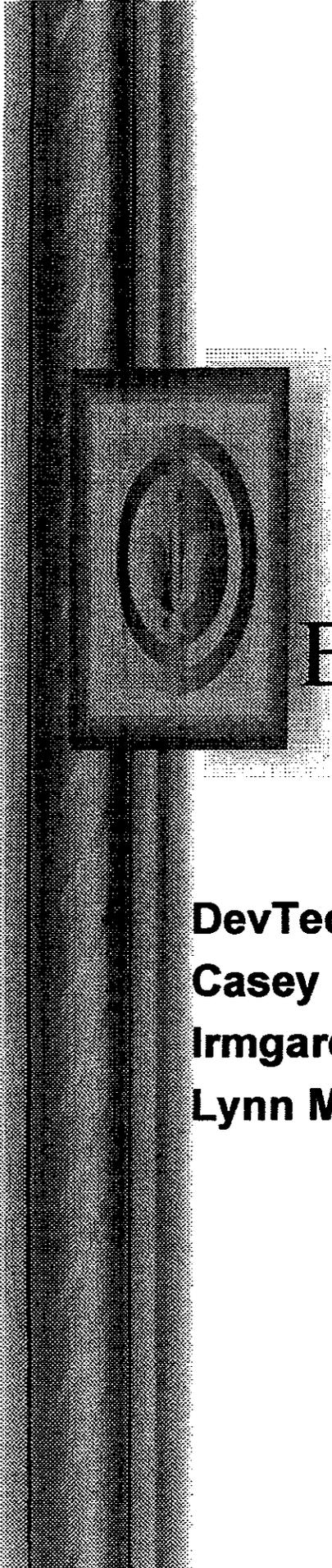
Title	Result No.	Requestor/Date	EISN staff/consultant	Deliverable	Schedule	Status
216 Compliance Website	1	Carl Mitchell/Carl Maxwell (as new Bureau Environmental Officer)	Sandy	Create decision tree; possibly create a database of IEE's	Need to discuss with Carl Maxwell	Sandy is working on a database for the actual IEE documents; the website is currently up and running
Calendar System for ENR	1	Carl Mitchell	Sandy	Calendar System installed on EISN server and ENR staff trained on its use.	Up and running. Training will be announced at the Jan. 19th staff meeting.	Software installed; Sandy creating login IDs for ENR staff. Training will be done in January and February.
EcoLinks Internal News Letter and Case Study overview for website	2	John Butler	Stephanie	A monthly newsletter and language for the website	Drafts submitted the week of 1/10; waiting for feedback	Waiting for feedback.
Translation of text into Russian for Caspian Project run by Abt Associates	2	Carl Mitchell	Woods Hole Group (Casey)	Translation of scientific documents into (and out of) Russian	until Feb. 2000	Translated 20 out of approximately 450 pages
Cross Country Index	3	In contract to update HIID ranking system	Casey	Ranking system	Next update July 2000	Ranking for 1999 will be revised based on comments from POT 1.6

Short 3 page reports on each of the CEE and NIS countries	3	Loren Schulze	Casey Delhotal	Decision was made that the HIID report update should be three page summaries of each country instead of longer report	Mock report for Bulgaria submitted by Jan. 31st	Draft format completed. Will create a mock report of Bulgaria as an illustration in January and then will meet with ENR for approval.
Website Colloquium	4	Loren Schulze	Casey Delhotal/ Irmgard Hunt and Lynn Murphy	Bring together experts in the field of environment and hold an internet Q&A session.	Draft report submitted Jan. 12th, awaiting comments.	Final report will be submitted with Annual Review at the end of January. Draft report submitted to DevTech Dec. 22nd, 1999.
Materials for EcoLinks Project	4	John Butler	Casey Delhotal; iie and gtn input	Conference Booth and graphics	Finished map done by early Feb.	Sketch of map ready, awaiting approval for final poster
EcoLinks Conference	4	John Butler	Casey Delhotal/ Ken Rogers	Help coordinate conference including agenda, rooms, equipment, etc.	March 22nd.	Reserved conference rooms, wrote draft agenda
Environment Investment Case Studies	5	Loren Schultz	Glenn Morris (Casey Delhotal)	2 or 3 case studies on successful application of methodologies for quantification of environmental investments used for economic and budget decision-makers in the region.	Consultants draft due to DevTech Feb. 10th, DevTech's economist will review, USAID will receive final version 2/18	Consultant has had several meetings with USAID and the World Bank; still in research process
EcoLinks Case Studies	6	John Butler	Kirsten Oldenburg and Nick Cheriminoff (Casey)	10-20 USAID case studies for EcoLinks website on Pollution Prevention	Case studies completed, Mr. Rogers reviewing. If case studies review compiled by 2/18, Sandy will post by 2/21	Mr. Cheriminoff has completed 11 case studies; Ms Oldenburg has completed 7.

Training in the Caspian Sea Area	7	Jennifer Karp	ISAR (Casey)	Internet training for NGOs in the Caspian Sea Region	until 6/00	first 15 training sessions completed
Information Dissemination Training in Caspian Sea Area and List Serves	7 & 8	Jennifer Karp	ISAR (Casey)	Training and creation of list serves to disseminate environmental information in the region	until 10/00	Only recently started; results should be evident in the next few months.
Information Dissemination Training activity in Russia	7 & 8	Jennifer Karp	ISAR (Casey)	Training and creation of list serves to disseminate environmental information in the region	until 6/00	42 participants; over 250 documents on system; training almost completed
EcoFunds Website	8	Angela Crooks; John Butler	Lubomir Pahroma	Content for the EcoFund Website that will be created by Sandy	Sandy will meet with Mr. Pahroma in March to discuss final design of website.	Mr. Pahroma has not yet turned in his first monthly report

Environmental Information Systems and Networking Ongoing/Continuous Activities under the EISN Project

Title	Result		EISN	
	No.	Requestor/Date	staff/consultant	Deliverable
Internal website	1	ENR	Sandy	Update and maintain internal ENR pages on USAID website
EcoLinks Internal Website	1	John Butler	Sandy	Update and maintain internal pages on the EcoLinks website
Caspian Working Group Website	1	Carl Mitchell	Stephanie	Update and maintain information on website for the working group
Contact Management System	1	Carl Mitchell	Stephanie	Collect contact information from TDY's; enter into contact management database
Information Dissemination	2	Jennifer Karp the first to suggest it	Stephanie	Collect news articles, conference information, etc. and pass around to ENR
Media Center and Software	2	Melody Bacha asked for it	Sandy	Maintain color printer and software that can not be loaded onto USAID network
Caspian Sea Initiative	2	Carl Mitchell	Stephanie	Coordinate meetings; write up notes
EcoLinks Meetings	2	John Butler	Stephanie	Coordinate meetings; write up notes
Collection of electronic and hard copy materials	2	Carl Mitchell	Stephanie	Asks those returning from TDY's for materials for the library
EcoLinks links page	5	John Butler	Burt Hamner (Casey Delhotal)	Update and maintain EcoLinks links page
ENR external website	8	ENR	Sandy	Maintain external website on USAID's external website



EnviroDialogue.Net

DevTech Final Report
Casey Delhotal
Irmgard Hunt
Lynn Murphy

DRAFT

Report on the EnviroDialogue website Anniversary Project: Mapping the Future

The USAID Division of Natural Resource and the Environment for Europe and Eurasia initiated the web-based EnviroDialogue project to mark ten years of environmental assistance to the region. Since 1990, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union have undergone profound cultural, social and economic changes, moving in most cases towards more democratic societies and market-based economies. During this period, the environment has been an area of dynamic change and will remain in the foreground of regional development strategies.

The Tenth Anniversary offered an opportunity to look at key areas that affect growth of environmentally sound economic development and the ability of countries to sustain environmental progress from within. The Anniversary project did not evaluate donor assistance over the last ten years, but addressed the future of environmental development.

Overall, the goal of the EnviroDialogue project was to:

- facilitate an expert dialogue on sustainable environmental and economic progress and on the challenges the lie ahead**
- examine what the priority issues are that face countries in the region**
- provide input for policy and decision makers designing future assistance programs**
- use a website chat room as a venue for cross-boarder communication**

Concept and Design

Planning for the project was led by an eight member international Steering Committee. A three-pronged approach was instituted based on recommendations from DevTech and the consultants responsible for participation in the event and approved by the Steering Committee.

- **Eight leading environmental thinkers and practitioners were invited to submit essays on a range of three topics:**
 - **policy and legislative reform**
 - **environmental economics**
 - **public participation**
- **A real-time Question and Answer Session with the authors above and invited audience members was conducted on December 7, 1999.**
- **A website posted on December 1, 1999 served as the repository for the essays and hosted a bulletin board for continuing discussion of the issues.**

The project was a path-braking experiment in the use of the Internet for serious discussion across regions and borders. Utilizing this technology eliminated the need for costly, time consuming international travel. It allowed for complete transparency and inclusiveness.

Essays

Twelve prominent environmental experts were approved by the Steering Committee. The essays addressed issues in three separate areas that are crucial for the development of a countries ability to efficiently and methodically address its own environmental issues.

- 1 **Public, legislation and regulation -- including structure and institutional capacity, implementation, compliance, transparency, citizen's access and open debate.**
- 2 **Economic development -- including economic incentives, investment and financial instruments, infrastructure, taxation, and privatization**
- 3 **Public participation -- including community involvement, transparency and freedom of information, media engagement, strength and role of NGOs.**

For each area, one primary essay was written. Additional essays were in reaction to the primary essay. Authors and commentators were asked to express their views on past developments and on new directions and initiatives that would result in continued positive environmental change and sustainability in the region.

Continual communications with the authors, timely input and approval from the Steering Committee and English language edits (not stylistic edits) assured that the essays were written within a tight time frame and were posted on the EnviroDialogue website on December 1, 1999.

Website

- **Www.EnviroDialogue.net was developed in-house by DevTech Systems, Inc. Environmental Information Systems and Networking (EISN) project.**
- **The website hosted both a commercial, of-the-shelf chat room and a bulletin board for discussion of the essays.**
- **On December 7, 1999, four authors answered questions from an audience of 45 invited guests from the U.S. and the CEE and FSU region. The Q&A session was held from 8am to 10am EST in order to accommodate various time zones. A guest moderator led the discussion while a second moderator helped welcome audience members and answer questions about the chat room software. A lively dialogue on a range of issues ensued. The discussion raised important, concrete issues of importance to the region. Many of the participants expressed an enthusiastic interest in future website discussions on focused topics.**
- **In order to make the chat room successful, several test runs were conducted with the moderators and authors to help all participants feel comfortable with this relatively new technology.**
- **In addition, the bulletin board was utilized for discussion of the topics. Four messages relevant to the essays of the topics were posted soon after the Q&A session. However, no follow up since mid-December has occurred.**
- **An survey about the usefulness of the chat room was also hosted on the website. We received ten surveys from participants in the Q&A session. However, only eight were deemed complete or not duplicates.**

Suggestions and Lessons Learned about using the Website

- **Essays and resource materials should be posted BEFORE advertising the website or providing the website address. "Under Construction" or "To be Posted" notices annoying potential participants and turns them off of the project.**
- **Q&A sessions should be focused on only one topic so that a topic may be thoroughly explored in the time available.**
- **A strategy for sustaining interest in the website and the project should be developed during the planning process. This plan should include:**
 - **an environmental specialist monitoring the site and contributing in writing opinions and expertise to "prime the pump" and keep discussion going.**
 - **Periodic update and refreshing of the sites content (essays, etc.)**
 - **Continued publicity to encourage return visits and new users.**
- **Survey should come up on the screen as participants exit the chat room. The lack of survey responses may be due to not having seen the survey button.**

Lessons Learned:

- **Test runs with key participants are crucial to the success of the discussion. The typed word as a means for conversation flows at a different pace than meetings. Test runs are useful to help participants overcome hesitations, put down their thoughts quickly (ignoring typo's) and adjust to the slower pace.**
- **Backup plans must be made so that technical glitches do not shut down the discussion. This experience may turn off potential participants who become frustrated when the technology does not run smoothly.**
- **Occasional interruptions in the flow of the conversation are unavoidable as some modems and internet services are faster than others.**
- **A strong moderator is key for the chat room and bulletin boards to run successfully.**

Promotion of the Site

The promotion of the website was conducted mainly through electronic outreach. Lists of audiences that received email information on the event included government agencies, think tanks, academics, NGOs, foundations, and the business community both in the US and in the region. Steering Committee members utilized their own outreach channels as well. A few printed announcements were passed out at international conferences the staff and Steering Committee members attended. Three links with relevant websites were established to attract those with environmental interests in the region.

Lessons Learned:

- Email based promotion of the event reached an audience that, while interested in the topics, was not yet familiar with internet-based conferences. This resulted in difficulties with the process of using a chat room, including an intimidation factor for novice internet users. As chat rooms become more popular with non-computer addicts, this trend will change. Instructions should be kept simple and be sent out as an email so that they may be easily printed and referred to during the chat room session.
- Promotion strategies should be based on a tight, well designed topic or agenda. A moderator familiar with moderating chat rooms is key to keeping the discussion moving forward. Broader participation may confuse the situation.
- Guests are more likely to participate if they have received a personal invitation and are closely related to the topic being discussed. This "closeness" to the topic allows novice internet users to overcome their fear of technology.
- Once participants have tried the using the technology for discussions, they become very excited about the possibilities of the technology. Once the initial psychological barrier is overcome, the enthusiasm is overwhelming.
- Promotion of the site should include registering the site with search engines and posting regular events (like advertisements) on the website as well as other related websites.

Results

Familiarity with the full capacity of the Internet is becoming a prerequisite for effective communications among business people, policy makers, NGOs, academics and others who are in a position to forge change. The EnviroDialogue project showed that serious exchange of ideas across vast distances is possible.

- **An ongoing website with a bulletin board and chat room was created and successfully tested as a tool for targeted, serious dialogue among interested parties world wide. The website has received over 1,500 visitors from 18 countries since its launch.**

Survey Results:

- ✓ **100% of the respondents found the topics and the content of the session useful and would like to see these and/or other topics addressed in depth.**
- ✓ **6 out of 8 suggested using a chat again. 7 out of 8 suggested using a bulletin board for the future format.**
- ✓ **7 out of 8 rated the Q&A discussion flow as Good; 7 out of 8 rated the quality as good or excellent.**
- ✓ **50% said the participation was too few while the other 50% said the level of participation was just right.**
- ✓ **2 of 8 thought the topics were too many, while 5 out of 8 said the number of topics was just right.**
- ✓ **6 of the 8 respondents said this was their first time in a chat room.**
- ✓ **50% said that chat rooms could replace meetings.**
- ✓ **6 out of 8 respondents felt chat rooms could be used to prep for meetings and 7 out of 8 respondents felt chat rooms could be used to follow up after meetings.**

Key Issues Discussed

- **A theme threading through the entire dialogue was how to build a sense of personal responsibility among citizens and communities in the region. Churches in particular, also political parties and communications were considered as potential mechanisms to foster personal engagement and ethical behavior leading to more environmental protection, less corruption, and more responsible law enforcement.**
- **Another issue was the interfacing of small scale NGO projects and community solutions with large scale, high cost projects needed to reduce industrial pollution.**
 - **How can NGO funds compliment those of the multilateral banks?**
 - **Should funding begin at the grass roots level or the national level?**
- **The discussion also focused on the need for economic reconstruction and environmental sustainability and the difficulties in obtaining those goals. Examples from vastly different countries were introduced to make a point and present options.**
- **The session ended with enthusiastic endorsement by participants and the request for further website dialogues on specific topics.**
- **A transcript of the session can be found at <http://www.EnviroDialogue.ent/transcripts.html> or see the Appendix.**

Future Directions

- **The EnviroDialogue site offers a logical and immediately available training ground in state of the art electronic communication for stakeholders. Use of this tool may well enhance the effectiveness of future AID environmental assistance programs.**
- **Given the potential of website dialogues for information flow and for creating new links and networks among with similar issues, the future uses of chat rooms, bulletin boards, and websites should be explored thoroughly. The initial investment made in this project should be leveraged by frequent and increased future dialogue projects. The more use the website gets the more cost-effective it will become.**
- **Recommendations for future use:**
 - **Use the website to substitute for cross-boarder meetings. For example, many cross-boarder organizations find it costly to meet because of the travel expenses. With minimal training (that could be done in-house plus travel expenses) these organizations could “reserve” the chat room and conduct meetings free of charge. Possible candidates whom already possess some internet experience: The Danube Environmental Forum, the ISAR Caspian Project, and the Caucasus Environmental NGO Network.**
 - **The dissemination of lessons learned across boarders could be enhanced by use of the chat room or bulletin board. An innovative use of a Q&A session would be to hire an environmental consulting firm to answer questions on line about environmental problems. Two consulting firms (considered USAID success stories themselves) are Atmoterm and LEM. The could answer questions from firms or municipalities in the rest of the region. This would provide regional tried and true information about specific topics to countries who are not as far along as Poland in addressing environmental issues.**

Steering Committee Members

- **Winston Bowman**
 - Institute of International Education (IIE), Director of EcoLinks Grants
- **Casey Delhotal**
 - Environmental Specialist on the Environmental Information Systems and Networking Contract, Website Project Manager, DevTech Systems, Inc.
- **Eliza Klose**
 - Executive Director, Initiative for Social Action and Renewal in Eurasia (ISAR)
- **Irmgard Hunt**
 - Senior Consultant, DevTech Systems, Inc.
- **Lynne Murphy**
 - Communications Consultant, DevTech Systems, Inc.
- **Viatcheslav Pankov**
 - Director, Russian Green Pages (ISC Project), Moscow, Russia
- **Loren Schulze**
 - USAID, Division Chief for Environmental and Natural Resources for Europe and Eurasia Bureau
- **Lea Swanson**
 - USAID, Senior Regional Environmental Advisor for Europe and Eurasia Bureau, Budapest, Hungary

SO 1.6 Environmental Index: SUMMARY

The objective of this exercise is to enable cross-country comparisons in CEE/NIS of the conditions for environmental improvement elaborated in the SO 1.6 framework. It is important to note at the outset that the index and ranking exercise is distinct from many of the more commonly known environmental ranking exercises. The primary distinguishing feature of this ranking exercise is that it tries to examine progress with respect to the enabling conditions rather than observable changes in environmental quality. This focus on enabling conditions implies an effort to assess conditions that are often not quantifiable. Even where they are quantifiable in theory, the data may not exist.

The index is constructed to reflect the intermediate results (IRs) of the SO 1.6 framework. Each IR received an individual score comprised of three indicators. All indicators are from secondary sources such as The World Bank, EBRD, and World Resource Institute. Most indicators are collected annually, making the index easy to update. The Overall Score for each country is a simple average of all IR scores. Each score is the average percentage of the maximum value of each indicator.

Ranking	Country	Score
1	Hungary	0.80
2	Czech Republic	0.72
3	Slovakia	0.67
4	Poland	0.64
5	Estonia	0.62
6	Slovenia	0.60
7	Lithuania	0.55
8	Croatia	0.53
9	Bulgaria	0.53
10	Latvia	0.50
11	Moldova	0.49
12	Romania	0.48
13	Ukraine	0.47
14	Russia	0.46
15	Armenia	0.45
16	Uzbekistan	0.42
17	Kyrgyzstan	0.42
18	Macedonia	0.41
19	Georgia	0.41
20	Azerbaijan	0.38
21	Kazakhstan	0.37
22	Belarus	0.35
23	Albania	0.33
24	Tajikistan	0.23
25	Turkmenistan	0.20

This effort is built upon the efforts made in the C4EP/EPIQ report "Measuring the Environmental Transition in Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States." The methodology and scope of the index has changed, but the indexes are comparable to some extent. In the Annexes below, three of the intermediate result scores have been compared with the C4EP/EPIQ scores from the year before. Both sets of scores are correlated. (See Annex for Graphs)

Methodology for Index

The construction of the index is based on the same methodology as the Human Development Index from UNDP. The index is comprised of indicators for which there is a minimum and maximum value. These minimum and maximum values are the minimum and maximum value of the data in the dataset. For example:

Country	CO2 Emissions (kg/US\$ of GDP)
Kazakhstan	8.68
Poland	2.83
Bulgaria	4.69

In this data set, the minimum value is 2.83, and the maximum value is 8.68. Bulgaria's score would be based on the percentage of the maximum score using the following equation:

$$\text{Score} = (\text{Actual value of country X} - \text{minimum value of dataset}) / (\text{maximum value of dataset} - \text{minimum value of dataset})$$

or

$$\text{Bulgaria's score} = (4.69 - 2.83) / (8.68 - 2.83) = 0.32 \quad \text{Note: this is just an example}$$

In this way, all scores are relative to the other countries. This also provides a common calculation method for all indicators. The final IR scores are a simple average of the indicators within the IR. The final SO score is a simple average of the IR scores.

List of Criteria and Indicators used in the Index

The indicators were chosen based on the criteria for each IR under the SO 1.6 framework. Indicators under each IR represent most, but not all, criteria. The indicators were also chosen based on current availability and regular updating. Some data was left out because it would not be reproducible if the index is updated at a later date.

IR1: Policy, Legal and Regulatory Framework

A. Status of NEAP or equivalent, 1997

Criteria: Statement of goals and rights in a framework law or strategic plan

Indicator: Presence of a NEAP or equivalent

2 means prepared or under implementation

1 means planned or under preparation

0 means not considered

Score is the percentage of the maximum value (See Methodology Notes below)

Source: "Transition Report 1997: Enterprise Performance and Growth," EBRD, 1997. Can be updated annually.

B. International Treaties, 1999

Criteria: Signatory of major international agreements.

Indicator: Percent of major international agreements signed and ratified.

Score is the percentage of the 28 treaties ratified

Source: "Yearbook of International co-operation on Environment and Development," Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Norway (Earthscan Publications Ltd, London, 1998/99). Updated every two years.

C. EBRD Standards Index, 1997

Criteria: Presence of environmental framework laws with standards and regulations in place

Indicator: Air and water ambient and emission (effluent) standards system

3 means essentially new standards system in place, often following EU requirements

2 means a new system is being introduced, either as an evolution of MPC or in order to meet EU requirements

1 is the maximum permissible concentrations (MPC) system in place, broadly based on the former Soviet system

Score is the percentage of the maximum score.

Source: "Transition Report 1997: Enterprise Performance and Growth," EBRD, 1997. Updated every two to three years.

Note: For EIA and public participation information, see IR5

IR2: Environmental Trade, Finance and Investment

A. Average annual trade in environmental goods with the U.S. (1993-1998)

Criteria: Environmental trade is encouraged by national laws and policies and is increasing.

Indicator: Average annual environmental trade growth.

Average annual percentage given for each country converted into a percentage of the maximum value of trade growth for the region.

Source: USDOC data. Calculated by SITC codes. USAID's Economic and Social Data Services calculations. Can be updated annually.

B. EBRD Status of financial instruments for the environment, 1997

Criteria: Indigenous mechanisms exist for remediation of environmental problems.

Indicator: Financial instruments in place to collect money for environmental remediation.

1 means three or more financial instrument are in place to collect money for the environment (e.g. environmental funds)

0 means less than three financial instruments in place

Score is converted into a percentage of the maximum score

Source: "Transition Report 1997: Enterprise Performance and Growth," EBRD, 1997. Updated Occasionally.

C. Banking and Securities Markets Reform, 1998

Criteria: Indigenous mechanisms exist for debt and equity financing of projects leading to prevention of environmental problems.

Indicator: Status of the banking system and securities market.

The score is an average of two indicators from the EBRD Transition report. These scores are an indication of the strength of loan and investment mechanisms in each country.

1. *Banking reform & interest rate liberalization*

What the scores mean:

4 – Significant movement of banking laws and regulations towards BIS standards; well-functioning banking competition and effective prudential supervision; significant term lending to private enterprises; substantial financial deepening

3 – Substantial progress in establishment of bank solvency and of a framework for prudential supervision and regulation; full interest rate liberalization with little preferential access to cheap refinancing; significant lending to private enterprises and significant presence of private banks.

2 – Significant liberalization of interest rates and credit allocations; limited use of directed credit or interest rate liberalization ceilings.

1 – Little progress beyond establishment of a two-tier system.

2. *Securities markets & non-bank financial institutions*

What the scores mean:

4 – Securities laws and regulations approaching IOSCO standards; substantial market liquidity and capitalization; well-functioning non-bank financial institutions and effective regulation.

3 – Substantial issuance of securities by private enterprises; establishment of independent share registries, secure clearance and settlement procedures, and some protection of minority shareholders; emergence of non-bank financial institutions (e.g. investment funds, private insurance and pension funds, leasing companies) and associated regulatory framework.

2 – Formation of securities exchanges, market-makers and brokers; some trading in government paper and/or securities; rudimentary legal and regulatory framework for the issuance and trading of securities.

1 – Little progress.

Source: "Transition Report 1998: Financial Sector in Transition," EBRD, 1998. Updated annually.

IR3a: Urban and Industrial Environmental Management Practices

Industry:

Criteria: Industries are complying with regulations and adopting pollution prevention as well as end of pipe technologies. In order to measure this, the indicators show what is the effect of industry efforts towards these results.

Indicators:

A. Energy Efficiency

GDP per unit of energy use (1995 US\$ per kg of oil equivalent). Data is for 1996.

Score is the percentage of the maximum score.

Source: World Bank Development Indicators, 1999. Updated annually, but data is lagged by three to four years.

B. Emissions from Industrial Processes

CO2 emissions from industrial processes expressed in kg per 1995 US\$ of GDP. Data is for 1996.

Score is the percentage of the maximum score subtracted by 1.

Source: World Bank Development Indicators, 1999. Updated annually, but data is lagged by three to four years.

C. Waste Water Treated

Wastewater treated expressed in percentage.

Score is a percentage of the maximum score

Source: World Resources Institute, 1998/99. Data is collected sporadically. Data is for 1993 or latest year.

Local Government:

Criteria: Local government budgets include provisions for environmental infrastructure investment and local governments adopted EMS. Because this can not be measured directly with the data available, the indicators are based on the result of these actions.

Indicators:

A. Access to sanitation

Proportion of urban population with access to sanitation in the capital city. Data is the latest available data. Score is the percentage of the maximum value.

Source: World Resources Institute, 1998/99. Data is collected sporadically.

B. Access to safe water

Proportion of urban population with access to safe water in the capital city. Data is the latest available year. Score is the percentage of the maximum score.

Source: World Resources Institute, 1998/99. Data is collected sporadically.

C. Households with garbage collection

Households with garbage collection in the capital city expressed as a percentage. Data is the latest available year. Score is the percentage of the maximum score.

Source: World Resources Institute, 1998/99. Data is collected sporadically.

IR3b: Management Practices for Natural Resources & Biodiversity

Criteria: Successful and replicable models exist for sustainable natural resource-based economic activities and government agencies responsible for enforcing natural resource laws and regulations are able to carry out their mandates effectively. Because this can not be measured directly with the data available, the indicators are based on the result of these actions.

A. Protected Systems under International Classification

Total number of areas under international classification divided by land area (in order to compare Russia to the other countries). Score is a percentage of the maximum value.

Source: World Resources Institute, 1998/99.

B. Percentage of area classified as a protected area

Percentage of land area protected and managed. Score is the percentage of the maximum value.

Source: World Resources Institute, 1998/99.

C. Average annual percent change of forestation

Average Annual percentage change in forestation between 1990 and 1995. Score is the percentage of the maximum value.

Source: World Resources Institute, 1998/99.

IR4: Institutional Capacity

A. Central Government Budget for the Environment

Criteria: Key environmental protection and natural resource management bodies have the necessary resources to ensure and monitor compliance with applicable laws/regulation and/or to ensure sound management practices.

Indicator: central governments budget for the environmental as a percentage of GDP. Data is from 1995. Theoretically, the data is available annually with a three to five year time lag.

Sources: Various REC publications (see website); UNDP reports; World Bank reports.

B. Electricity tariff as an indicator of full price for utilities, 1997

Criteria: Utilities charge full cost price for environmental services.

Indicator: electricity tariff in US cents/kWh as a proxy for environmental services in general. Data is collected annually. Score is the percentage of the maximum value.

Source: "Transition Report 1998: Financial Sector in Transition," EBRD, 1998.

C. Collection ratio of electricity tariffs as an indicator of government ability to collect money, 1997

Criteria: Fees and Fines are collected from user of environmental services or violators of environmental regulations.
Indicator: collection ratio (in percentage) of electricity tariffs as a proxy for collection of fees for environmental services.

In general, electric power plants are the last utilities to be privatized and the last ones to be cut off from subsidies. Data collected annually. Score is the percentage of the maximum value.
Source: "Transition Report 1998: Financial Sector in Transition," EBRD, 1998.

IR5: Public Participation in Environmental Decision-Making

A. Public Participation in Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)

Criteria: EIA requirement with public participation and information.
Indicator: matrix of public participation in EIA's. Variables include 1) early and adequate notification, 2) public participation in identification of scope of EIA, 3) public participation in the EIS review, and 4) independent evaluation of public comments. Each variable is scored in the following way:

- 3 = Formal system, adequately implemented in practice
- 2 = Formal system, partially implemented in practice
- 1 = inadequate formal system
- 0 = no known formal system or practice

Final score was a percent of the maximum total score.

Source: "Doors to Democracy" REC, 1998.

B. Public Participation in Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Processes

Criteria: public participation in environmental planning.
Indicator: matrix of public participation in SEAs. Variables include 1) early and adequate notification, 2) public participation in identification of scope of SEAs, 3) public participation in the SEA review, and 4) independent evaluation of public comments. Each variable is scored in the following way:

- 3 = Formal system, adequately implemented in practice
- 2 = Formal system, partially implemented in practice
- 1 = inadequate formal system
- 0 = no known formal system or practice

Final score was a percent of the maximum total score.

Source: "Doors to Democracy" REC, 1998.

Annex 1: List of 28 Major International Treaties

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES
Distribution and Use of Pesticides
Dangerous Goods by Road

**Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents
Basel Convention**

ATMOSPHERE

Ozone Layer Convention
Montreal Protocol
London Amendment
Copenhagen Amendment
Climate Change (UNFCCC)
Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP)
1994 Sulphur Protocol
NOx Protocol
VOC Protocol
Aircraft Engine Emissions

NATURE CONSERVATION AND TERRESTRIAL LIVING RESOURCES

Antarctic Treaty
Madrid Protocol
World Heritage Convention
Biological Diversity
Migration of Species of Wild Animals
CITES
Ramsar Convention
Desertification
Plant Genetic Resources

NUCLEAR SAFETY

Assistance Convention
Notification Convention
Nuclear Safety
Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage

TRANSBOUNDARY FRESHWATERS

Transboundary Watercourse and International Lakes

**"Expanding and Extending Caspinfo:
the Information Service for ISAR's Caspian Program"
A Proposal from ISAR to Devtech, Inc.
September, 1999**

INTRODUCTION:

ISAR seeks to renew its support from Devtech, Inc. which has enabled ISAR-Moscow and CCI to establish and administer Caspinfo, an e-mail and on-line service that provides much needed information about environmental topics to NGO activists in the Caspian Sea region. The project complements ISAR's three-year Caspian project, funded by USAID and administered jointly by ISAR-DC, ISAR-Almaty, ISAR-Baku and ISAR-Moscow. The project activity currently takes place in Moscow, with an eventual transfer of skills and expertise to project coordinators in Atyrau, Kazakhstan.

In ISAR's initial proposal to Devtech, we anticipated operating Caspinfo from Moscow for six months and then transferring the project to Atyrau, Kazakhstan, where ISAR is opening a resource center for local NGOs. We planned to send the technical staff from Moscow to Atyrau to train the information officer there to take over administration of Caspinfo in October 1999. We still plan to make the transfer to Atyrau; however it has become clear that to move the service now would undermine the efforts we have undertaken thus far to ensure a strong network with consistent subscribers and contributors. Caspinfo now has a strong base of support, as is described below, but the service is still relatively new and we believe that moving it now would cause confusion among local NGOs. Additionally, the Atyrau resource center is only now being set up (the coordinator of the center moved to Kazakhstan in early September and will spend several weeks training in Almaty before heading to Atyrau). We believe that in order to ensure the continued high quality of the service, we should continue to operate Caspinfo from Moscow for an additional year until the subscriber list is solid, and the infrastructure of the Atyrau office is sufficiently established to handle the move without service interruption. Additionally, we propose new activities as part of the service, which are designed to increase the subscriber base and provide important information to regional environmental NGOs interested in Caspian issues.

BACKGROUND:

For the past year, ISAR has implemented a USAID-funded program that brings together NGOs from around the Caspian basin working on issues crucial to environmental protection and human health. Because NGOs in the countries bordering the Caspian are separated by vast distances and hampered by poor communications, infrastructure problems and lack of access to information, they have had little opportunity to join forces to address their common problems. ISAR's program—including the Devtech-sponsored Caspinfo—has had a profound positive effect on the ability of NGOs to share ideas and implement strategies to effect change in their environment.

Through this three-year program, ISAR will increase opportunities for communication among NGOs and support joint projects among environmental activists in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan. The program has four main elements: an environmental conference, a cooperative grants round supporting joint environmental projects, the development of an e-mail and information sharing network around the Caspian basin and a series of topical workshops.

The program was launched with a conference for green NGOs in Baku, Azerbaijan April 20-23, 1999, which provided activists with the opportunity to meet one another, discuss common problems and work on developing solutions. Fifty-two NGO activists from the FSU attended the conference, plus one US activist familiar with Caspian issues and one Iranian NGO representative. Conference participants developed a memorandum of understanding, identifying key Caspian issues, and selected the topics for ISAR's 4 follow-on seminars. (See the attached proceedings for more information on the conference.)

RESULTS TO DATE:

Caspinfo is a free information service that disseminates to subscribers (primarily from the environmental NGO community in the FSU) information on environmental issues related to the Caspian Basin. Since May 1999, Caspinfo has produced 10 information bulletins that were sent out to all subscribers. The bulletin provides a list of articles, short informational pieces and announcements on Caspian-related events, publications and brief information. (See attached for further clarity.) Each piece of information listed in the bulletin is numbered—part of the archival system of Caspinfo. Any subscriber interested in finding out more about a given piece of information simply writes to Caspinfo and provides the number of the article or information in which s/he is interested, and it will be automatically sent to him/her. This system saves time and resources—both for the subscriber and Caspinfo—because each subscriber only obtains that information which is interesting and/or important to himself/herself. Particularly in the former Soviet countries, where e-mail access and time on line can be very expensive, it is a great benefit to subscribers to only receive that information which they request (saving unnecessary time on-line). Caspinfo has received approximately 180 requests for additional information.

Who Subscribes?

Participants from ISAR's Baku conference for NGOs interested in the environmental issues of the Caspian were the first to subscribe to Caspinfo. All participants with e-mail—42 in total—subscribed to the service as soon as it was offered. As of the end of August, 75 subscribers receive the service. The bulletin is produced in both Russian and English (beginning with the third issue of the bulletin, ISAR-DC began translating the Russian into English, and it is now distributed to English-speaking subscribers). Finally, the service can be accessed via the Internet: www.ecoline.ru/caspinfo. The Russian-language version is available from May, the English-language version from August.

Additional Features

In addition to the bulletin, Caspinfo has created a database that holds approximately 90 files, with over 250 documents. This information is collected through ISAR's information team, which consists of staff members in ISAR-Moscow, ISAR-Almaty and ISAR-DC. The information team members send all information to ISAR-Moscow, where it is included in the Caspinfo bulletin and entered into the database. ISAR's information team has conducted research within the environmental NGO community in each of the countries involved in the Caspian program to determine what types of information are most useful and most necessary. Based on this research, the team is gathering information on oil and gas regulations in each country, comparable systems in other oil-rich parts of the world, case studies of successful and unsuccessful cooperation between NGOs and business, and basic environmental data on the Caspian Basin. All of the information gathered by the information team is organized, catalogued and placed in Caspinfo by

the Caspinfo coordinator, Aleksey Knizhnikov, of ISAR-Moscow. Aleksey manages the service, chooses the information to be included, writes the bulletin and sends it out to subscribers. He and his assistant also manage the database and hard copy files related to the program.

EXPANSION OF THE SERVICE:

Adding to the Information Team:

In the coming year, ISAR proposes to continue the activity of Caspinfo, supporting the project with our information team, and through submissions from contributors from the NGO community. We also propose to expand the information team to include one member each from Azerbaijan and Georgia. To date we have covered activities from those countries with our three-person team; however, the increase in requests for information from the NGO community indicates that we will need a contact in each of those countries. One staff member from ISAR-Azerbaijan and a staff person from ISAR's partner in the Republic of Georgia, Horizonti, will play the role of information gatherer. They will send relevant articles, information about Caspian-related environmental events and activities in their country, and news from the NGO, government and business sector to ISAR-Moscow, which will include the information in Caspinfo. We have also included a half time assistant to the Caspinfo coordinator in Moscow who will assist with information gathering and communicating with the growing number of interested NGO representatives who contact the office about the service. *With the exception of the half-time coordinator, ISAR will cost-share the new information team salaries.*

Producing a Caspian Catalog:

In response to the large numbers of requests for information—both about Caspian-related activities in general and ISAR's Caspian program specifically, ISAR plans to produce and disseminate a hard-copy catalog of documents stored in the database of Caspinfo for wide distribution among regional NGOs. The catalog will contain not only information about the documents stored in the database, but also a list of subscribers with contact information, and summary information about ISAR's Caspian program in general. This will include brief transcripts of our conferences, seminars and training sessions, as well as information about ISAR's cooperative and e-mail grants programs. Finally, it will provide information about upcoming activities such as e-mail and computer trainings, seminars and other relevant programmatic details.

The catalog will raise awareness not only about ISAR's program, but also about the activities of NGOs working in the region, and it will increase the number of subscribers as more organizations learn about the service. The catalog also benefits those NGOs without e-mail by providing them access to information otherwise only available on-line. The catalog will be disseminated through ISAR-Moscow's existing network and mail system, as well as through the systems of ISAR-Almaty, ISAR-Azerbaijan and Horizonti. And, of course, the catalog will also be distributed via email and available on-line.

Spreading the Word:

In addition to advertising the program over the Internet and through the Caspian Catalog, ISAR also proposes sending one staff person (the Caspinfo coordinator) to regional environmental events throughout the Caspian region where NGOs could learn about the service and how to subscribe. Gatherings such as environmental education conferences, the upcoming Day of the

Volga (in Nizhny Novgorod), and other similar events attract environmental NGO representatives from around the region—many of whom are interested or involved in Caspian-related activities. The Caspinfo coordinator could train conference attendees in accessing Caspinfo, disseminate the catalog and put up a booth describing Caspinfo, thus increasing the number of subscribers to the service. ISAR requests funding from Devtech to travel to two such events and will cost share the other trips (approximately 3).

TECHNICAL ISSUES:

Caspinfo will continue to be managed from ISAR-Moscow, with technical support donated by CCI. The interface has been developed and will continue to be managed by ISAR. With additional staff in Moscow and information team members in Baku and Tbilisi, the quality and quantity of information will continue to grow dramatically. The ISAR-Almaty and ISAR-DC information team members will continue to contribute to the program (their salaries should also be considered a cost-share as they are paid from other budgets).

In Spring 2000, ISAR-Moscow Caspinfo staff will begin working with the Atyrau coordinator to plan a transfer of the service from Moscow to Atyrau in September 2000. Over the course of the summer the coordinators in each office will develop a plan to move the service, including a training program for Atyrau staff and announcements to the public about changes in address, etc. to ensure a smooth transition and no loss of subscribers or contributors.

FOLLOW-ON ACTIVITIES TO CASPINFO:

In Summer 2000, as Caspinfo begins the transfer to the Atyrau Resource Center, ISAR-Moscow will begin to phase in Rusneftinfo, a new information service for NGOs interested in Russian oil issues—not only in the Caspian Basin, but throughout the Russian Federation, including Tyumen oblast, the Russian Far East, and the Far North of Russia, where oil exploration is underway. Rusneftinfo will be a service similar to Caspinfo, and one that will attract a similar base of subscribers who are interested in sharing information and experience with NGOs working on Caspian-related issues. ISAR hopes that both services will provide NGOs with needed information, networking tools and a mechanism for sharing ideas, experiences and data. With the experience of managing Caspinfo, ISAR will be in an ideal position to provide an additional service—without duplicating the efforts of Caspinfo or other existing information services within the FSU. Rusneftinfo will also ensure that as Caspinfo moves to Atyrau, there will be no loss of locally based information available to NGOs on oil activities in the Russian Federation. ISAR has begun to fundraise for Rusneftinfo, which will be a cooperative effort between ISAR-DC and ISAR-Moscow, with additional support from ISAR-Siberia and ISAR-Far East.

CONCLUSION:

By continuing and expanding Caspinfo, ISAR aims to widely disseminate relevant information on Caspian-related environmental NGOs throughout the Caspian Basin. As is evident thus far, the service is widely used, and subscribers and contributors increase daily. Increasing our capacity in the Caucasus, and strengthening our infrastructure in Moscow will provide better service to Caspinfo subscribers and enable us to produce a catalog of services and information, not only for subscribers but for the broader environmental NGO community. By continuing a stable service from Moscow for the next year, we ensure that the transition to Atyrau to a sustainable local resource center will allow for the maintenance of the service, without interruption or a decrease in

quality. ISAR is grateful to Devtech for your strong support of our Caspian program and we hope to continue our relationship.

WORKPLAN FOR CASPINFO, PHASE 2:

October-December, 1999

1. Compile information for first Caspian Catalog.
2. Acquire information from new Caspinfo Information Team members in Baku and Tbilisi.
3. Attend conferences in Astrakhan and Nizhny Novgorod to distribute information about Caspinfo and find new subscribers.
4. Continue to produce the bulletin and send out information to subscribers in Russian and English.

January-March, 2000

1. Produce Caspian Catalog and distribute to NGOs throughout the region.
2. Continue to produce bulletin and send out information to subscribers in Russian and English.
3. Continue acquiring information from new Caspinfo Information Team members (as well as existing members).
4. Finalize a strategy for gathering information for the duration of the project.
5. Attend conference in the region to distribute information on Caspinfo.

April-June, 2000

1. Continue activities 1, 2, 3 above.
2. Begin working with Atyrau Resource Center to plan a strategy for transferring Caspinfo.
3. Begin working on developing Rusneftinfo Workplan.
4. Attend second regional conference to distribute information on Caspinfo.

July-September, 2000

1. Continue activities 1, 2, 3 above.
2. Transfer program to Atyrau, including a trip to Atyrau to train the resource center coordinator.
3. Begin Rusneftinfo from ISAR-Moscow.

CAUCASUS ENVIRONMENTAL NGO NETWORK (CENN)

Project proposal

The Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CENN) is voluntary, grass-roots effort to foster their lasting involvement in regional cooperative projects by means of improved communication among environmental organizations in the Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and partly Russia and Turkey). CENN is open, horizontally integrated structure aimed at supporting positive, productive communication and cooperation on environmental protection projects and issues. The aims of CENN are to improve the effectiveness of solutions of environmental problems in the Caucasus, establish and maintain an easily accessible environmental information space, and coordinate efforts in the development of compatible environmental strategies and policies in countries of the Caucasus. In order to achieve these goals CENN address the following issues:

- to increase information exchange between NGOs, governments, international organizations and the general public in the field of environmental protection in the Caucasus;
- to improve communication and seek out ways for efficient collaboration;
- to support organizations enrolled in the Network through equipment grants (for internet and e-mail access), seminars, workshops, training, and other activities;
- to conduct purposeful lobbying on various environmental issues of the region;
- to prepare joint projects and find financial sources for their implementation.

CENN was established in 1998 by the Georgian Center for the Conservation of Wildlife (GCCW) and Sacred Earth Network (SEN) with the financial support of the Wallace Genetic Foundation.

During the period of first year (June 1998 – June 1999), reliable electronic network – CENN was established in the Caucasus. Through the diverse activities: meetings in the Caucasus countries (Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia), creation and adoption of the CENN charter, work of local coordinators, e-mail discussions between various Caucasus environmental NGOs, preparation and distribution of bilingual monthly electronic bulletin – Caucasus Environmental News, maintaining and updating web-page, CENN established its place in the region and became one of the reliable and strongest communication tools in the Caucasus.

Second phase of the project (June 1999 – December 1999) was aimed to expand the Network incorporating new environmental groups from the North Caucasus – Russian Federation and Turkey and make started communication work deeper and long-lasting. Efforts were directed to bring Georgian, Armenian and Azeri groups in joint initiatives to make solution of environmental problems in the region more efficient. Main emphasis was put on building of transboundary and intersectoral collaborative links and capacity of environmental NGOs, as well as government via dissemination and promotion of urgent regional environmental issues in the Caucasus and search for the common ways for their effective addressing and solution.

Currently, the Network consists of more than 130 environmental NGOs and individuals from the Caucasus and around 220 bulletin recipients throughout the world. More information about the CENN is available at: <http://post.net.ge/cenn> or <http://cenn.virtualave.net>.

In order to continue started activities and make CENN more effective, the following projects are proposed to USAID's Environmental Information Systems and Networking (EISN) program implemented by DevTech Systems Inc. for support.

Although the proposed projects accompanied to CENN networking activities are independent, they have strong links and the results of any of them will influence success of others and increase effectiveness of the network highly.

Projects are established on 12 months bases, which could be repeated. The budgets are given for this period (12 months), but they are flexible and could be changed in order to make their financing available.

1. Production and distribution of the monthly electronic bulletin "Caucasus Environmental News"

CENN implemented the first project within the context of the Caucasus Network. During the summer 1998, CENN selected three Information Coordinators (one in each country) to help gather information, and developed a regional environmental e-mail bulletin, entitled, "Caucasus Environmental News". At present, CENN has produced fifteen (15) editions of the bulletin in English and Russian and distributed to over two hundred (200) organizations and individuals in Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Turkey, the US and Europe. All issued bulletins in both English and Russian languages are available on CENN web page. The bulletin has several objectives: to keep informed Caucasus environmental NGOs, government agencies, and general public about environmental issues and ongoing activities in the Caucasus; to encourage regional cooperation; to develop environmental NGO sector in the Caucasus by advertising their activities broadly in order to find international partners and donors.

Seven person staff works on production and distribution of the bulletin. Three information collectors (one in each country), coordinator/editor, translator, environmental consultant and IT specialist. The following organizations work on the bulletin:

- **Georgian Center for the Conservation of Wildlife** – overall coordination, information collection in Georgia, editing, translation;
- **ISAR-Baku** – coordination and information collection in Azerbaijan;
- **Bars-media** – coordination and information collection in Armenia;
- **Eco-XXI Century** – maintenance of the mailing lists and web page.

The bulletin is produced monthly and includes the following information:

- ongoing activities in environmental field in the Caucasus;
- planned projects and initiatives;
- environmental legislation of the Caucasus countries;
- NGOs presentations;
- international conservation news;
- information on international, regional and national conferences, workshops and seminars;
- fundraising opportunities;
- essays on separate environmental topics;
- discussion themes.

In order to simplify communication among environmental groups participating in the Network, CENN developed five list-serves. These single e-mail addresses automatically send e-mail messages to all the members of each particular list, simultaneously. There are separate lists for Armenian, Azeri, Georgian, and International (not from the Caucasus) CENN participants, and there is also a single list for all CENN participants.

CENN has developed its web page where information on CENN, its Charter, issued bulletins in both English and Russian languages, CENN mailing lists and organizations (with their mission statements) enrolled in the Network are presented. As it was mentioned above, web

page is available at the following addresses: <http://post.net.ge/cenn> or <http://cenn.virtualave.net>

Budget (for 12 months):

Activity	Amount per month USD	Total amount USD
Staff	1,500	18,000
• Coordinator/Editor	400	4,800
• Information collectors	3X200	7,200
• Environmental Consultant	200	2,400
• Translator	150	1,800
• Computer specialist	150	1,800
Distribution Expenses	200	2,400
• internet access expenses	200	
Equipment		
• a computer station		1,500
• office supplies	50	600
Web-site maintenance and upgrading	100	1,200
Reporting		200
TOTAL	1,850	23,900

2. Regional Workshops

In addition to the communication via e-mail, the regular workshops on different environmental topics will help to promote regional collaboration and solve common problems in the Caucasus. Several face-to-face meetings of Azeri, Armenian and Georgian environmental NGOs have been already organized in 1998-99 and results are always very positive.

Currently, it is planned to organize two workshops:

1. Implications and Enforcement of Aarhus Convention in the Caucasus

(International Convention on Public Participation in Environmental Decision Making Process and Access to Environmental Information)

In 1998, new International Environmental Convention was signed in Aarhus. All three Caucasus countries signed it, however ratification process is going hardly due to bureaucracy in government's executive and legislative bodies and some other unclear reasons. It is believed that the Convention will become powerful tool for solving environmental issues making the information more accessible and increasing public participation in decision making process.

NGOs should play crucial role to achieve the objectives of the Convention. However, there are several issues. The awareness about the importance of the Convention is low among most Caucasus NGOs and the public. Most of NGOs do not know what is the Convention about, what kind of opportunities it gives, how it is possible to participate in implementation and monitoring processes, etc. NGO lobby will be essential for ratifying Convention in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. There are no initiatives yet to organize such a lobby, and common regional approach will make the process more successful.

During the workshop preparation process, the full text of the Convention will be translated and published in Azeri, Armenian and Georgian languages.

Another topic for this workshop will be the improvement of information exchange and communications among Caucasus environmental groups. Current situation will be assessed and future activities will be planned.

Six most active environmental NGOs and officials from the Ministry of Environment from each country will be invited to participate in the workshop, and the meeting will be facilitated by the international consultant dealing with the Convention.

2. Wetlands Conservation and Sustainable Use in the Caucasus

Freshwater and coastal wetlands are one of the important ecosystems for biodiversity. Wetlands in the Caucasus represent one ecological and functional systems connected by the river basins, contiguous location of lakes and migratory animals (particularly birds). This system works as the whole living entity from the Black Sea to Caspian Sea and from the Greater Caucasus to the Caucasus Minor. Habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation are main threats to the wetlands in the Caucasus provoked by urbanization and agriculture

development (about 30% of wetlands are already lost, and more than half is damaged). Unsustainable and uncontrolled use of wetland resources (water, fish, and waterfowl) makes the situation more dangerous. Most of lakes are inhabited by alien fish species, no regulations for waterfowl harvest, uncontrolled water use for irrigation, and so on. The issues are similar in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia and the similar approaches are necessary for solving them. For conservation of wetlands in the Caucasus, it is essential to create regional policy and action plan and implement it. Currently, several important programs are going in the Caucasus related to water ecosystem conservation and management issues. For example, regional Black Sea Environmental Program and Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Georgia (GEF/WB/Tacis), regional Caspian Environmental Program's part in Azerbaijan (Tacis/WB), Inland water Management programs in Armenia (WB/UNDP/GEF/Tacis). Unfortunately, the links between these programs do not exist, or are extremely weak.

The goal of the workshop is to initiate regional program on wetland conservation. Interested NGOs, government agencies, and academia from Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia will be invited to attend this workshop. Initial commitment to participate in such initiative is already exist from all these countries.

Budget

Activity	Amount USD
1st workshop	9,400
• preparation (including Convention's text translation and publishing)	3,000
• travel expenses	3,000
• accommodation	2,000
• conference space (2 days)	400
• materials	300
• facilitator	500
• reporting	200
2nd workshop	6,900
• preparation	2,000
• travel expenses	2,000
• accommodation	1,500
• conference space (2 days)	400
• materials	300
• facilitator	500
• reporting	200
TOTAL	16,300

3. Communications Equipment Grants

Many environmental organizations (NGOs, academia, government) in the Caucasus countries still lack access to e-mail and Internet, which creates problems for communication and information exchange. Local groups that are active in environmental field but do not currently have access to a computer will have opportunity to receive computer equipment enabling them to communicate via e-mail and use Internet. Priority will be given to applicants who will demonstrate their environmental orientation, willingness to regional cooperation, and concern to make CENN more effective. In addition, small grants for communication expenses will be given to organizations in the event they cannot meet e-mail and related communications expenses, but have computer equipment.

Two rounds of equipment and communication grants will be announced and a selection committee (including country coordinators) will be established for applications review.

Budget (for two rounds):

Activity	Amount per unit USD	Total amount USD
Equipment grants 6 grants	1,200 X 6	14,400
Communication expenses grants internet access expenses, 10 grants	200 X 10	4,000
Technical Support	500	1,000
Selection committee	500	1,000
Reporting		200
TOTAL	10,200	20,600

SD