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# NATURAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 2005 – SEPTEMBER 2006

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## **ACRONYMS**

BIOFOR	Biodiversity and Sustainable Forestry
CBJ	Congressional Budget Justification
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer
EGAT	Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade Bureau
FY	Fiscal Year
GCP	Global Conservation Program
LPA	Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NRIC	Natural Resources Information Clearinghouse
NRM	Natural Resources Management
OPIN	Online Presidential Initiative Network
UN	United Nations
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

## Overview

In fiscal year (FY) 2006, the Natural Resources Information Clearinghouse (NRIC) performed analysis, communications, knowledge management, and training tasks for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Natural Resources Management (NRM) Office. During this year, NRIC staff helped produce several notable products for the NRM Office, including technical reports and communications materials. For example, NRIC helped the Biodiversity/Forestry Team produce the *Section 118 Forestry Report* and a combined *Biodiversity and Forestry Programs Report*. In addition, staff maintained web sites to inform NRM stakeholders, updated databases to track NRM projects and activities, and developed numerous new content pages on [www.nric.net](http://www.nric.net) to reflect expanded activities in the sustainable tourism sector. For the Water Team, NRIC information specialists maintained budget information in twelve categories for worldwide USAID programs and performed data analysis and provided reports about this information to Congress and United States Government agency staff. NRIC staff worked with the NRM Office and partners to develop and deliver a seven-day training course for USAID field staff and in-country partners in Sustainable Tourism in Tanzania in February 2006, and coordinated a summer speaker series on the role of communication in sustainable tourism development. NRIC staff also helped prepare the FY 2005 Annual Report for the USAID office. The project director and technical specialists for Water, Land, and Biodiversity/Forestry Teams participated in regular office meetings and helped the NRM Office and its teams in many support functions.

This report provides further details in seven task areas:

- Task 1: Reports, publications, and research
- Task 2: Activity and project tracking
- Task 3: Web maintenance and management
- Task 4: Information management
- Task 5: Planning
- Task 6: Conference, training, and communications support
- Task 7: NRIC project planning, monitoring, and reporting

### **Task 1. Reports, publications, and research**

*NRIC assists the NRM Office and technical teams to research, write and produce reports, case studies, brochures and other informative documents*

**NRM Office Reports.** NRIC staff helped write reports for the NRM Office related to overall program management and Agency-wide reporting. NRIC staff:

- Compiled information and outlines for USAID's annual report and disseminated the report to NRM teams, and helped to complete and submit the NRM contribution to the report
- Provided support in the development of common USAID indicators for environment and related program components.

**Obligations Tracking and Reports.** NRIC completed FY 2005 end-of-year reporting on the Water for the Poor Initiative for the Online Presidential Initiative Network (OPIN). This entailed surveying 100 operating units in USAID and compiling information from 82 respondents on the

16 indicators monitored under the Initiative. The data from the FY 2005 report were used to prepare the FY 2005 obligations toward the \$200 million Drinking Water Earmark.

- NRIC completed *USAID Investments in Drinking Water Supply Projects and Related Activities: Fiscal Report to Congress, Fiscal Year 2005*, a summary report on the achievements of the three-year Water for the Poor Presidential Initiative. (125 copies produced, posted to web)

**Brochures and Fact Sheets.** NRIC developed Water Team fact sheets and an updated Water Team Biographies fact sheet.

- NRIC developed a poster, bookmarks, and a series of five fact sheets on USAID sustainable tourism portfolio and activities for a State Department Earth Day event and for an EPA Sustainable Design Expo.

### **Water Team**

In FY 2006, NRIC assisted the Water Team with *USAID's Investments in Addressing Land-based Sources of Marine Pollution: Report Prepared for the Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the Global Programme of Action (GPA), Fiscal Years 2001 to 2005*.

### **Forestry Team**

- **Section 118 Forestry Report.** NRIC submitted a near-final draft report for review in September 2006. New guidelines for congressionally mandated reports such as the 118 report were received in May 2006. The forestry report, which included details on Agency biodiversity activities, was restructured according to the new guidelines. The NRIC biodiversity/forestry technical specialist and editor worked with Biodiversity/Forestry Team staff and USAID's Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) to interpret the guidelines and write a new report that satisfied those guidelines. A 25-page report was drafted and submitted for review by various technical staff within USAID, up to and including the director of the Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade (EGAT) Bureau. Comments were received and integrated, and the report was submitted to LPA by the end of the fourth quarter.

### **Biodiversity Team**

- **Biodiversity and Forestry Report.** The NRIC biodiversity/forestry technical specialist and editor worked with Biodiversity/Forestry Team staff to write and lay out a 100+ page report detailing the FY 2005 Agency activities, accomplishments, and budgets in biodiversity and forestry programs. With the new guidance on Congressionally mandated reports released in May, the full version of the biodiversity and forestry report (in near-final version at the end of the third quarter) had to be put on hold. However, due to the strong support that this report received during its initial review process, leadership within the Agency recommended that the full version of the report be published as soon as the Section 118 report was released to Congress. NRIC staff worked with members of the Biodiversity and Forestry Teams to make final edits. The report was re-submitted for review by technical specialists within USAID. Their comments were integrated and the final report awaited approval to print at the end of FY 2006.

- The NRIC biodiversity/forestry specialist wrote and laid out an updated, USAID branding guideline-compliant, full-color version of the Biodiversity Team's Global Conservation Program (GCP) brochure. Five hundred copies of the brochure were printed and delivered to USAID and the GCP partners.
- Outreach material in the form of a postcard providing information on USAID's FY04 biodiversity annual report (119 report), and the Biodiversity Guide was produced for the Biodiversity Team.

### Land Team

- See Special Initiatives – NRIC supported multiple Sustainable Tourism activities and products in FY 2006.

### Special Initiatives

**Sustainable Tourism.** NRIC and USAID staff, as well as nongovernmental organization (NGO) partners, collaborated to design and develop a seven-day training course in sustainable development for USAID field staff and their in-country partners. NRIC produced all training materials and PowerPoint presentations, and coordinated all course delivery logistics. The course was delivered by a team of USAID, and NGO and consultant partners, with 12 additional sidebar presentations by U.S. and Africa partners engaged in sustainable tourism, and included two full-day field trips to discuss sustainable park and eco-lodge development at Lake Manyara and Tarangire National Parks. Following delivery of the course (February 2006, Arusha, Tanzania), Trainer Manuals and Participant Workbooks were edited and revised to reflect changes and adjustments made during delivery; copies were printed for archives and for the core presentation team. All training materials were posted to the tourism pages on [www.nric.net](http://www.nric.net), and archive copies were burned onto CD-ROMs.

In April, NRIC researched and developed a series of five fact sheets on USAID activities in sustainable tourism, as well as a bookmark advertising USAID's sustainable tourism web site on [www.nric.net](http://www.nric.net), for a State Department Earth Day event and for EPA's Sustainable Design Expo.

In May 2006, USAID, the World Bank, and the United Nations (UN) World Tourism Organization collaborated in an online forum, *The Role of Communication in Sustainable Tourism Development*. As a follow-on, NRIC supported the development of a Washington, DC, summer speaker series to further explore the ideas raised in five e-conference sessions (since posted to [www.nric.net](http://www.nric.net)), and then prepared and produced a document merging the summaries from the e-conference with new material from the speaker series for distribution at the October 2006 World Congress on Communication for Development in Rome.

Over the summer months, NRIC completed a survey of government, NGO, and private sector organizations to develop a resource directory providing information on and links to public- and private-sector sustainable tourism experts that USAID missions and field offices can access for assistance with the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of successful and sustainable tourism projects. The information contained in the directory includes listings for major sustainable tourism contractors, NGOs, and other partners and collaborators who are actively involved with international tourism development activities. This information has been posted to [www.nric.net](http://www.nric.net).

**Conservation and Governance.** Working with the USAID Land Team, NRIC staff prepared a Scope of Work to complete a background paper on protected area legal issues. NRIC selected

an environmental/human rights lawyer in March to write the background paper. The lawyer began working on the project on 24 April 2006. A first draft report was completed in June for submission to the Land Team for review and comment. Based on Land Team comments on the initial *Conservation and Governance* report, NRIC retained a biodiversity conservation specialist to prepare a revised draft of the paper, which now focuses on conservation and human rights and is titled, *Human Rights and Responsibilities in Biodiversity Conservation Settings: Issues and Opportunities*. This first draft of the revised report was delivered to USAID in September.

**Issues in Poverty Reduction and Natural Resource Management.** NRIC staff worked with the Land Team to complete a draft report based on a series of presentations delivered in 2004 and 2005. LPA approval was received for the report and staff worked with a graphics designer to finalize layout. In September, USAID requested fifty printed copies of the final report for delivery and distribution at the FRAME Natural Products conference in early October. Additional copies of this report will be printed for distribution to a wider audience.

## **TASK 2. Activity and project tracking**

*Under Task 2, NRIC collects data on NRM-related activities and expenditures, tracks field support provided by the NRM Office, and provides analysis and reporting based on these data.*

In FY 2006, NRIC staff continued to gather and organize data about USAID activities and expenses in the Water sector. Using the Congressional Budget Justification (CBJ), the water specialist prepared initial estimates of USAID expenditures in 13 water-related categories. The water specialist conducted the final survey of missions and bureaus to verify the estimates that are related to the Presidential Water for the Poor Initiative and the Congressional earmark for drinking water supply and related activities. Through the survey, the water specialist collected information on budget obligations as well as 16 indicators required by OPIN. In FY 2006, NRIC staff completed the end-of-year ground-truthing for FY2005. NRIC staff used the estimated obligations and program information to prepare reports listed under Task 1 and to respond to information requests as needed. NRIC staff also prepared a manual describing the methodology used for tracking USAID's water obligations.

**Sustainable Tourism meeting preparation.** NRIC researched and updated information in USAID's sustainable tourism database as support to a USAID presentation at the October World Congress for Communication and Development in Rome.

## **Task 3: Web maintenance and management**

*NRIC designs, produces, and maintains web sites and pages for the NRM Office.*

In FY 2006, NRIC continued to support the NRM Office's Web presence via EGAT's internal and public sites at [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) and [www.nric.net](http://www.nric.net).

### **[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)**

NRIC continued to support the NRM Office by developing new pages and submitting modified files to LPA for posting to USAID's public site throughout FY 2006.

NRIC's webmaster and water technical specialist restructured some of the Water sectoral content. Due to the restructuring, several individual pages and a couple of their associated images were retired. Specifically, content for the *Case Studies* and *Success Stories* pages were

consolidated into one page. The *Technical Publications* page also was revamped to incorporate content from the *Environment Notes and Brochures, Booklets* pages, and one new page on *USAID Partners in Water Resources Management* was created and posted to the live site. In regards to new content, a total of 18 new pages and three new associated modules were posted, of which the majority relate to USAID's approach to integrated water resources management and water activities that have cross-sectoral linkages.

In addition to new content developed for the Water pages, NRIC's webmaster continued to make minor modifications to the Biodiversity, Forestry, and Land Management pages. Updates included modifying a number of modules' headers for color correction, as well as adding new links to sites and publications, and making URL changes to reflect Development Experience Clearinghouse's (DEC) new subdomain name, and adding links to search USAID NRM projects available through [www.nric.net](http://www.nric.net). Meta tag information for all content for Biodiversity, Forestry, Land Management, and Water pages were also updated per LPA's request. For the Biodiversity sector, one new page, *USAID's Definition of Biodiversity Programs*, was developed.

As of September 2006, there were 86 content pages, 58 images, 27 modules, 27 module images, and 55 publications that showcase the NRM Office's portfolio on USAID's public site. The breakdown is as follows:

Sector	HTML Content	images	Modules	Module images	Publications
Biodiversity	27	24	6	6	4
Forestry	28	24	13	13	10
Land	2	1	2	2	2
Water	29	9	6	6	39

In addition to continued maintenance of existing content, several Section 508-compliant PDFs were submitted to LPA for posting. They include a *Biodiversity 119 Congressional Report (FY 2005)*, a new *Nature, Wealth, and Power* publication for Land Management, and the *Congressional Final Report for FY 2005 on Water Activities*. A new proceedings report, *Lessons Learned in Recovery: Post-Tsunami Relief and Reconstruction for Sustainable Coastal Development (2006)*, was added to the Water technical publications page. A number of fact sheets for the *World Water Forum* page were updated and posted.

At the request of NRIC's Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO), a report summarizing NRIC's web activities in support of the NRM Office was submitted. The report includes descriptions and purposes of web sites as well as some minimal user data statistics on sectoral pages on [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov).

NRIC's water technical specialist and webmaster are currently developing content that explains USAID's approach to Integrated Water Resources Management by technical sub-sector, and will make arrangements to have them posted to the live site in the next fiscal year.

[www.nric.net](http://www.nric.net)

During FY 2006, NRIC continued to maintain and expand [www.nric.net](http://www.nric.net). A new GCP presentations page was created to highlight GCP partners' presentations given at the annual GCP meeting held in May 2005, and new content was added to supplement the Sustainable Tourism pages.

Materials from the Sustainable Tourism training conference held in February 2006 in Arusha, Tanzania, were incorporated into the NRIC web site. New pages include *Overview*, *Course Schedule*, *Core Delivery Team Bios*, *Participants*, *Introductory Remarks by DAA Jackee Schafer*, PowerPoint presentations for all of the core module presentations and sidebar presentations by outside experts, and a virtual library to share documents among tourism practitioners. Fact sheets created for the *April 2006 Department of State Exhibition on Sustainable Tourism* were also posted.

A resource directory, consisting of 19 new pages, was posted to provide information on and links to public and private sector sustainable tourism experts that USAID missions and field offices can access for assistance with the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of successful and sustainable tourism projects. The information contained in the directory includes listings for major sustainable tourism contractors, NGOs, and other partners and collaborators who are actively involved with international tourism development activities.

Five 508-compliant PowerPoint presentations and links to readings from the Summer 2006 Speaker Series, *The Role of Communication in Sustainable Tourism Development*, were posted to the tourism section of the site. A new *Current Events* page was also added.

The extensive web coverage on USAID's sustainable tourism activities has generated a number of requests from private sector organizations and individuals interested in information and support to implementation of sustainable tourism projects in their home countries, and from other individuals seeking additional information on particular USAID projects from the online sustainable tourism projects database.

NRIC continued to perform general maintenance of the web site by updating URLs to reflect the new subdomain name change of DEC and the readings list for Seminar 1 of the Poverty Reduction and NRM seminar series. Additionally, a disclaimer statement at the bottom of every page on the site was inserted to comply with the Office of Management and Budget's requirement for all externally hosted web sites outside USAID's firewall. A Section 508-compliant PDF version of the *USAID and Sustainable Tourism: Meeting Development Objectives* report was posted as well.

As a follow-up to NRIC's roll-out campaign of the NRM Online library during FY 2005, this site was registered with the Google search engine to potentially increase its visibility with interested parties.

Bi-monthly WebTrends reports for the site were submitted to NRIC's CTO for the periods of February 1, 2006–March 31, 2006; April 1, 2006–May 31, 2006; and June 1, 2006–July 31, 2006.

At the end of FY 2006, [www.nric.net](http://www.nric.net) had a total of 77 content pages.

**EGAT Intranet**

For the EGAT Intranet, NRIC worked with the NRM Office to revise and update some of its content.

NRIC submitted to IRM Web Services a number of modified files for posting to EGAT's Intranet, which included some minor modifications to the Biodiversity pages, the "What's New" module, and updated staff directory information for the Biodiversity and Water Teams as well as the *Biodiversity Code* page.

NRIC's webmaster met with the EGAT webmaster and NRIC CTO to discuss NRIC's role in the continued maintenance of the Users' Guide pages for the NRM Office due to the pending EGAT Intranet redesign process. It was decided that the update and review process already in place with the NRM Office, NRIC, and EGAT webmaster would remain unchanged and that NRIC's Webmaster would be given access to incorporate updates as appropriate to the Users' Guide pages.

However, NRIC received word that due to privacy and security concerns raised by the Agency's Information System Security Officers (ISSO) and Privacy officers, the Users' Guide database was taken offline at the end of March 2006. It is not known if NRIC will continue to support the NRM Office in this capacity until the end of its contact.

In addition to general web maintenance, three Newsflash articles for EGAT's Intranet were submitted to EGAT webmaster for posting. One article highlighted the new *Biodiversity 119 Congressional Report*, the USAID Sustainable Tourism training event that was held in Arusha, Tanzania, and the Sustainable Tourism communications e-forum.

**Web site tracking.** During FY 2006, NRIC's Webmaster was able to obtain monthly *WebTrends* reports from USAID's IRM Web Services for the sectoral pages on the public site.

**TASK 4: Information management**

*NRIC collects, organize, and archives information about USAID natural resources projects and related cross-sectoral activities. Also, it distributes information, lessons learned, and other tools over the Internet.*

In FY 2006, NRIC worked to keep project information in the online NRM Library current by using the 2006 CBJ, DEC, and mission and contractor web sites. NRIC added 21 NRM projects and their associated documents to the database. The total number of projects in the database at the end of FY 2006 was 578. The total number of documents was 4,110.

**TASK 5. Planning**

*Under Task 5 NRIC supports planning and special project activities within the NRM Office and teams.*

**Communications Strategy.** The Communications and Knowledge Management Committee (members from NRMO and NRIC) was on hiatus during FY 2006, but NRIC staff moved forward with a detailed proposal for a periodic NRM Office-wide newsletter, and began research for a lead article on NRM-related tsunami response. Given that NRIC' services will no longer be

available after March 2007, and lack of NRMO staff time to commit to future issues, the proposal has since shifted to production of an NRMO fact sheet (currently being discussed).

**Biodiversity Strategic Budgeting Exercise.** NRIC supported the Biodiversity Team's strategic budgeting exercise by hiring a contractor to develop a geographic information system that prioritized USAID biodiversity investments under varying scenarios.

#### **TASK 6. Conference, training, and communications support**

*Under Task 6, NRIC prepares materials and provides logistic support for conferences, meetings, workshops and training activities. Also produces communications and outreach materials for the NRM Office and teams.*

**Sustainable Tourism.** Under the Sustainable Tourism special initiative, NRIC and USAID staff, as well as NGO partners, collaborated to design and develop a seven-day training course in sustainable development for USAID field staff and their in-country partners. NRIC produced all training materials and PowerPoint presentations, and coordinated all course delivery logistics. The course was delivered by a team of USAID, and NGO and consultant partners, with 12 additional sidebar presentations by U.S. and Africa partners engaged in sustainable tourism, and included two full-day field trips to discuss sustainable park and eco-lodge development at Lake Manyara and Tarangire National Parks. Following delivery of the course (February 2006, Arusha, Tanzania), Trainer Manuals and Participant Workbooks were edited and revised to reflect changes and adjustments made during delivery; copies were printed for archives and for the core presentation team. All training materials were posted to the tourism pages on [www.nric.net](http://www.nric.net), and archive copies were burned onto CD.

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**Global Conservation Partnership Annual Meeting.** The biodiversity and forestry technical specialist supported the Biodiversity Team's GCP annual partners meeting. The Biodiversity Team asked NRIC to facilitate greater collaboration among the GCP partner organizations' learning initiatives. This entailed working with representatives of the six partners in advance of,

and during, the annual meeting. NRIC liaised with GCP partners to develop and distribute brief proposals on the learning initiatives that partners were most interested in funding in FY 2007. The biodiversity and forestry technical specialist facilitated a day-long session at the annual meeting to discuss the proposals with the Biodiversity Team and GCP partners, to begin to narrow down which proposals would move forward. NRIC also wrote and distributed the notes for the annual meeting.

**Biodiversity/Forestry Team Retreat.** NRIC staff assisted the Team Lead of the newly merged Biodiversity/Forestry Team to identify and contract short-term technical assistance to facilitate the Biodiversity/Forestry Team retreat. The contract was processed by NRIC, and the NRIC biodiversity and forestry specialist worked with the facilitator to coordinate meeting times with Biodiversity/Forestry Team members, and to prepare the meeting space.

**World Water Forum 4.** The water technical specialist developed communications materials for the World Water Forum 4 in Mexico City in March 2006. These materials included five banners on water-related Global Development Alliance partnerships, as well as updating five existing, and two new, facts sheets. Fact sheets included: (1) Global Development Alliances; (2) Community Water and Sanitation Facility; (3) Safe Drinking Water Partnerships; (4) Community-Watersheds Partnership Program; (5) White Water to Blue Water; (6) West Africa Water Initiative; and (7) U.S.-Japan Clean Water Initiative.

**Global Programme of Action Intergovernmental Review (IGR-2).** The water technical specialist developed *USAID's Investments in Addressing Land-based Sources of Marine Pollution: Report Prepared for the Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the Global Programme of Action (GPA), Fiscal Years 2001 to 2005*, for IGR-2 in Beijing, October 2006.

**Photo database.** NRIC staff compiled photos from missions and NGOs, including Conservation International, World Wildlife Fund, World Conservation Society, and Enterprise WorldWide. Staff used these photos for multiple reports and Web sites, including the FY 2005 reports on tropical forests and biodiversity, and the sustainable tourism web pages. Staff also responded to photo requests from staff in USAID's Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean

## **TASK 7: NRIC Project planning, monitoring, and reporting**

*Under Task 7, NRIC records administrative, personnel, and reporting activities required for contract management.*

**Staff changes.** NRIC staff turnover in FY 2006 included:

- The information manager, Joanna Smith, left NRIC to work for AmeriCorps in June. The information manager position will remain vacant until the end of the contract.
- Steve Swierenga resigned as a junior level information manager in October 2005.
- A senior editor, Kelly Scannell, joined the NRIC staff in March on a part-time basis. She will continue to work on this contract until October 2006, at which point her involvement will be re-evaluated with the CTO.

**Meeting attendance.** The NRIC director and technical specialists continued to participate in the regularly scheduled meetings of the NRM Office and Teams.

## **ACTIVITIES FOR FY 2007**

In the coming year, NRIC staff will provide support to the NRM office consistent with previous activities and priorities. These include regular publications such as the *Section 118 Forestry Report* and the *Biodiversity Report*, plus the normal reporting activities required for the related to the Water for the Poor Presidential Initiative. The NRIC team will also complete publications related to Natural Resources and Poverty Reduction and Conservation and Human Rights and will support the office in a follow-on workshop under the Conservation and Human Rights activity. NRIC will also continue to maintain three websites for the NRM office, but will prepare for and anticipate any Agency-wide changes related to web-based communications.

As the project nears completion in March 2007, the NRIC team will carefully monitor budget levels and priorities to ensure the most efficient use of funds allocated over a four year period. In this context, we hope to initiate regular dialogue with the CTO and Office Director about additional products and services that use remaining funds wisely. We will actively engage the CTO in briefings about remaining funds and options to allocate them in projects that fall within the scope of the work plan. For example, we may wish to engage short-term consultants to conduct studies, reviews, workshops, and training sessions related to conservation and human rights. In this way, we will bring the project to a smooth conclusion and anticipate special needs that arise with the completion of the Task Order.