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NATURAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE (NRIC) ANNUAL WORKPLAN: FY 2007

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INTRODUCTION

This workplan describes seven task areas that the Natural Resources Information Clearinghouse (NRIC) will provide to the USAID Natural Resources Management (NRM) program in FY 2007 (01 October 2006 to 07 March 2007) through project close-out. NRIC will provide the NRM Office technical services related to research, analysis, knowledge management, and communications. Specifically, NRIC will provide support for seven tasks for the NRM Office and its four technical teams. They are:

Task 1: Produce Reports and Other Publications

Summarize information and draft sections for the *USAID Annual Report*. Research, write, and publish reports related to USAID biodiversity, forestry, land, and water activities as appropriate. Produce and distribute other reports as requested by the NRM director and/or technical team leaders.

Task 2: Collect and Manage Information

Collect data and manage information related to NRM activities and expenditures. Provide technical support and analysis related to projects and activities worldwide. Maintain a data set of global water obligations and funding levels. With the Water Team, produce a report to Congress documenting USAID's investments in twelve sub-sectors of water resources management. Produce a compilation of water profiles for countries where USAID has ongoing program activities for use in the annual planning process.

Task 3: Design, Produce, and Maintain Web Sites

Continue to expand web content on www.usaid.gov, particularly for the land, water, biodiversity, and forestry sectors. Maintain and develop content on the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade (EGAT) Intranet. Migrate content from www.nric.net's Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Tourism pages to USAID's public site (www.usaid.gov). These pages will also most likely be hosted on another web site, where they will retain their technical content. The exact host is yet to be determined.

Task 4: Acquire, Organize, and Archive Information

Ensure transfer of NRIC online and hard-copy library materials and associated databases to a USAID-approved location in anticipation of project close-out.

Task 5: Strategic Planning

Support the NRM Office and its teams in developing strategies and plans. Continue to provide support to development of an NRM communications strategy and help the office prepare new products, including a fact sheet describing the NRM Office and key initiatives.

Task 6: Assist with Conferences, Training, and Communications

Prepare outreach, display, and public relations materials for relevant events. Provide logistical support for conferences, workshops, training sessions, and other public events. Develop materials and coordinate a workshop, if appropriate, for the Conservation and Human Rights Special Initiative. Ensure transfer of photo library, with appropriate caveats and instructions, to USAID/NRM Office

Task 7: NRIC Project Planning, Monitoring, and Reporting

Manage remaining funds in NRIC contract budget to ensure that staff and projects/products are funded through project close-out. Retain and supervise contracts and contractors for any new initiatives that arise. Modify plans and respond to problems, opportunities, and new initiatives as

defined by the NRM Office. Provide regular quarterly reports and financial statements. Produce a final close-out report on NRIC activities for the life of the project.

TASK 1: PRODUCE REPORTS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

NRIC staff will help the NRM Office and its technical teams to research and write reports, case studies, and other informative documents; and to produce these materials for distribution.

USAID Internal Reports: *Annual Report*. As in past years, NRIC will gather information and compile content for the internal USAID *Annual Report*. In FY 2007, the NRIC technical specialists will help compile information and draft sections for the NRM component of the USAID *Annual Report* for FY 2006.

Programmatic Reports by Sector. The NRIC staff will help produce technical reports for the NRM Office and its technical teams. These reports will address obligations and activities of USAID's biodiversity, forestry, land, and water programs. Specifically, they include the *Section 118 Tropical Forestry Report*, the *Annual Biodiversity Report*, and the Water Team's *FY 2006 Report to Congress*. NRIC technical specialists will assist with research and writing, while editors and design specialists will manage the editing, layout, design, and production of reports. NRIC staff will also assist with report distribution, including mailing reports to USAID Missions and partners, converting reports to PDF format, and making them 508-compliant for the web.

Technical Reports and Special Initiatives. NRIC staff and contractors will help the NRM Office and technical teams prepare technical reports, analyses, and cases studies for special initiatives. In the first half of FY 2007, NRIC staff will complete the following special initiative projects before project close-out:

- **Conservation and Human Rights.** A summary of human rights and governance issues related to conservation areas. The paper, currently undergoing peer review, focuses on the Congo Basin, but will be relevant to comparable issues around the globe. It may be printed for distribution.
- **Poverty Reduction.** A draft synthesis of the FY 2004–FY 2005 Poverty Reduction and NRM series conducted for the Land Team was prepared. The paper, currently undergoing final review, will be printed and copies delivered to expert presenters at the seminar series.
- **Sustainable Tourism.** A report merging the proceedings from a USAID/World Bank/UN-World Tourism Organization-sponsored e-conference and discussions from a USAID-sponsored follow-on seminar series will be produced for distribution at the October World Congress for Communication in Development in Rome.

TASK 2: COLLECT AND MANAGE INFORMATION

Under Task 2, NRIC staff will collect data and manage information related to NRM activities and expenditures. They will also provide technical support and analyses related to projects and activities and maintain data sets for these activities.

Water Activities and Expense Information. During the past five years, the Water Team has systematically gathered and organized data about the activities and expenses in the water

sector. Data acquisition for the water sector will continue in FY 2007, along with analysis and reporting of this information. To achieve these objectives, NRIC staff will maintain a comprehensive data collection of all water obligations in 12 sectors. NRIC anticipates updating data based on input from the Congressional Budget Justification and surveys to field Missions around the globe. They will also provide analyses and reports to the Water Team as requested.

TASK 3: DESIGN, PRODUCE, AND MAINTAIN WEB SITES

Under Task 3 NRIC staff will design, produce and maintain web pages for the NRM Office and technical teams.

NRIC now produces and maintains web pages for the NRM Office and teams on three web sites: (1) the USAID public site; (2) the EGAT Intranet; and (3) the NRIC public site. Since the start of the project, NRIC staff have developed 86 pages and 27 modules for www.usaid.gov, and have developed and maintained 17 pages and 14 modules for the NRM Office on the EGAT Intranet. In addition, NRIC produced a database of all USAID/NRM projects from FY 2000 to the present. This database is available on the www.nric.net public site and contains search and reporting functions, including clickable maps to find projects in specific countries. To evaluate the value of the site, NRIC staff will systematically track usage patterns and numbers of visitors to each page.

USAID public site: www.usaid.gov. In FY 2007, NRIC staff will collaborate with the NRM Office and all four teams to produce additional content and periodically update the natural resource pages on USAID's public Internet site: www.usaid.gov. In this context, NRIC will add content related to USAID's biodiversity, forestry, land, and water sectors. Information and products resulting from special initiatives of the NRM Office will be added as well, including migrating modified content from the Poverty Reduction and NRM seminar series and Sustainable Tourism web pages, currently available on www.nric.net.

Internal web pages: USAID/EGAT Intranet. In FY 2006, NRIC staff continued to update information for the NRM Office and teams on the EGAT Intranet. These include pages describing the Office and teams, a staff directory with biographies, links to critical reports and publications, and 29 Users' Guide pages describing contract mechanisms managed by the NRM Office and teams.

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 through the end of its contract.

NRM online library: www.nric.net. NRIC staff have compiled detailed information about USAID natural resources projects and related cross-sectoral activities, and helps distribute this information over the Internet. Information includes project summaries, lessons learned, methodologies and tools, and information about partner organizations. The information is accessible over the public Internet at www.nric.net. Searching for project information or reports by USAID region, countries, or thematic sectors is facilitated by clickable maps.

By FY 2006, NRIC staff had gathered baseline information about USAID worldwide natural resource projects that were active between 2000 and 2005. In FY 2006, NRIC staff updated records for existing projects and added records for new projects. As of 30 September 2006, the

NRM online library had information for 578 projects and 4,110 documents. The information includes descriptions of activities, summaries of results, reports, photos, and other products resulting from USAID projects. The library also provides links to books, articles, and papers that are of particular use to the NRM Office and teams. In July 2005, for the first time, NRIC “rolled out” the www.nric.net web site and its online library to the public with a marketing campaign that included an e-flyer and public presentations. To encourage widespread use of this web site and online resource, in FY 2006 NRIC staff registered the site with the Google search engine to potentially increase its visibility with interested parties.

In addition, information from the Poverty Reduction and NRM seminar series and Sustainable Tourism sections currently available on the site will be revamped and branded to comply with USAID’s technical and content guidelines for posting on USAID’s public site under the Land Management sector.

TASK 4: ACQUIRE, ORGANIZE, AND ARCHIVE INFORMATION

Under Task 4, NRIC staff will compile information about USAID natural resource management projects and distribute relevant technical information over the Internet and in written reports and summaries.

Online information about USAID natural resources projects. As described in Task 3: Design, Produce, and Maintain Web Sites, NRIC staff produced a database of USAID NRM projects worldwide and maintained the www.nric.net web site to make it available online. In FY 2007, NRIC will: (1) maintain the projects database and library; (2) update information about ongoing projects; and (3) add records for new projects and new reports. Short-term consultants may contribute to data acquisition, processing, or system upgrades. These activities will result in more complete descriptions of project results and lessons learned, more thorough capture of unpublished reports and tools, and other information related to project implementation.

In FY 2007, NRIC staff will also expand the search and reporting functions to facilitate access to increasingly detailed information.

It is projected that NRIC staff will transfer all resources available through its databases and library holdings to a third party or to USAID once a decision has been made by the NRM Office.

TASK 5: STRATEGIC PLANNING

Under Task 5, NRIC will support the NRM Office and technical teams to plan strategic initiatives, new programs, and related performance indicators.

Strategic framework. In FY 2005, NRIC staff and contractors worked with the NRM Office to outline a strategic framework and to define a strategic objective and four intermediate results. In FY 2006, NRIC continued to support the implementation of the strategic framework by tracking indicators as defined by the NRM Office, and contributed to white papers, position papers, and other information products targeted to selected audiences. It is anticipated that this work will continue in FY 2007.

Communications strategy. A coherent communications strategy for the NRM Office and teams was not realized in FY 2006, and it is unlikely that it will develop in FY 2007. Individual products, such as a fact sheet describing roles and functions of the NRM Office, may be developed.

Special initiatives. NRIC staff will be available to assist technical teams in planning and implementing new activities related to emerging issues in the biodiversity, forestry, land, and water sectors. No specific new activities have been identified at this point.

TASK 6: ASSIST WITH CONFERENCES, TRAINING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Under Task 6 NRIC staff will prepare materials and provide logistical support for conferences, planning workshops, and training activities. NRIC will also implement the communications program defined in Task 5: Strategic Planning.

Conference support. In previous years, NRIC staff prepared brochures, displays, photo exhibits, training content, and briefing materials for several national and international conferences and training events related to NRM activities. Also, NRIC staff participated in conferences to support and/or represent Agency programs and initiatives to other organizations. In FY 2007, NRIC staff will continue to support the NRM Office in all phases of training, workshop, and conference design, development, and delivery as appropriate.

Sustainable tourism training modules. In FY 2006, NRIC staff assisted with the design, development and delivery of a seven-day Sustainable Tourism training course for USAID field staff and their in-country partners. Based on the success of this pilot training, it is hoped that funding and/or manpower resources will become available—possibly through the new Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance—to conduct additional training in other USAID regions

Conservation and Human Rights. It is anticipated that NRIC will provide assistance to the NRM Office in the organization and delivery of a workshop covering the concepts addressed in the draft paper. Support will include all workshop logistics, research and development of any materials to be distributed at the workshop, and web-posting of proceedings following the event. These activities are dependent on the review of the completed report. Other potential follow-on activities include development of short communications pieces based on the report.

Outreach and communications for selected audiences. (see Task 5, communications strategy, above)

Brochures, PowerPoint presentations, news flashes, and other presentations. On an as-needed basis, NRIC will assist the NRM Office and teams with writing and producing a variety of communications pieces, including: (1) printed products; (2) PowerPoint presentations; (3) written speeches; (4) brochures; and (5) public exhibits. NRIC staff will also continue to prepare and submit news articles for inclusion on USAID web sites.

TASK 7: PROJECT PLANNING, MONITORING, AND REPORTING

NRIC staff will provide project management services and deliver regular financial reports to the NRM Office. Also, NRIC staff will adapt to changing challenges and opportunities and provide technical and support services as defined by the NRM Office and technical teams.

Quarterly reports and financial statements. The NRIC director will provide regular quarterly reports that describe progress, activities, and any problems related to the six tasks described above. Quarterly reports will also include financial information, and additional budget and financial data will be provided upon request of the Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO).

Close-Out Report. NRIC will produce an approximately 15- to 20-page close-out report for USAID. The report will focus on the accomplishments, challenges, and solutions of NRIC core activities and special initiatives. A summary of funding over the life of the program and a self-evaluation of project successes and lessons learned will also be provided.

Response to changes. NRIC anticipates working with the NRM Office and technical teams on tasks that will become evident as the year progresses. Periodic meetings between NRIC staff and the NRM Office and team leaders will provide NRIC with additional feedback and opportunities to discuss changes to the work plan over the course of the five months preceding project close-out. Additional publications may be written and produced, and workshops and/or training modules may be added to the work plan. The flexibility to integrate these changes is a key feature of NRIC's service to the NRM Office.