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# NATURAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE PROGRESS REPORT

FOURTH QUARTER FY 2006, JULY–SEPTEMBER 2006

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## **ACRONYMS**

<b>BIOFOR</b>	Biodiversity and Sustainable Forestry
<b>CBJ</b>	Congressional Budget Justification
<b>CoP</b>	Chief of Party
<b>CTO</b>	Cognizant Technical Officer
<b>EGAT</b>	Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade Bureau
<b>FY</b>	Fiscal Year
<b>LPA</b>	Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs
<b>NRIC</b>	Natural Resources Information Clearinghouse
<b>NRM</b>	Natural Resources Management
<b>NRMO</b>	NRM Office
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>USAID</b>	U.S. Agency for International Development

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## SUMMARY

This document serves as the Natural Resources Information Clearinghouse's (NRIC) progress report for the fourth quarter of fiscal year (FY) 2006, the 16<sup>th</sup> quarter of operation (July through September 2006). It details the NRIC products and activities for this quarter and describes tasks performed to support the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Natural Resources Management Office (NRMO). It also summarizes NRIC project planning, monitoring, and reporting activities and projects likely activities for the next quarter. In the last section, the report summarizes financial information.

As NRIC moves toward project completion in March 2007, the chief of party (CoP) worked with the USAID cognizant technical officer (CTO) and NRMO director to sustain the program and prioritize activities as the close-out date approaches. NRIC administrative staff provided budget projections and estimates for the remainder of the project. USAID agreed to fund the program "status quo" until completion and obligated additional funds during the fourth quarter as part of that commitment.

NRIC staff continued to maintain natural resources management (NRM) web sites and updated online databases to track NRM projects and activities. The NRIC webmaster posted new content and continued maintenance on the public web site.

During the fourth quarter, NRIC staff helped produce several communications products for NRMO, including technical reports and communications materials. For example, NRIC staff completed a report titled *Issues in Poverty Reduction and Natural Resource Management*, for the Land Team. NRIC also retained a biodiversity conservation expert to revise the draft background/issues paper on biodiversity conservation and governance (during this quarter, the paper's focus was changed to biodiversity conservation and human rights). For the Biodiversity and Forestry Teams, the NRIC biodiversity and forestry technical specialist helped produce the *Biodiversity and Forestry Programs, FY 2005* report, and the *Foreign Assistance Act, Section 118: Tropical Forests FY 2005* report. The land resource technical specialist coordinated a seminar series, *The Role of Communication in Sustainable Tourism Development*. The water technical specialist completed *USAID's Investments in Addressing Land-based Sources of Marine Pollution* report for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Global Programme of Action's Inter-governmental Review meeting in Beijing in October.

Staff changes:

- The senior editor's level of effort was increased to provide additional support through October 10, 2006. Her involvement will be re-evaluated at that time.

This quarterly 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.*

In the fourth quarter, NRIC staff helped NRMO technical teams complete several reports. Before printing, each report receives a formal approval from the team sponsor, followed by review and approval from the Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA). Reports worked on during the fourth quarter include:

- ***Foreign Assistance Act, Section 118: Tropical Forests FY 2005.*** In May, new guidance was received from the Director of Foreign Assistance Office on the content and format of Congressionally mandated reports such as the Section 118 report. NRIC staff worked with members of the Biodiversity and Forestry Team and other USAID staff to interpret and apply this guidance to the Section 118 report. 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 and Forestry Programs Report, FY 2005.*** 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 temporarily 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 have been integrated and the report awaits final LPA approval.
- ***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. 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.
- ***Conservation and Governance.*** 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 which 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.

- **Water Reports and Fact Sheets.** The water technical specialist completed *USAID's Investments in Addressing Land-based Sources of Marine Pollution* report for the UNEP Global Programme of Action's Inter-governmental Review meeting in Beijing in October. More than 400 participants representing countries from all over the world will be in attendance. The report documents the more than \$1.2 billion investment made by USAID from FY 2001 to FY 2005 in five areas to address land-based sources of marine pollution. These areas are: (1) wastewater treatment; (2) watershed management and integrated water resources management; (3) coastal resources management; (4) clean production and pollution control; and (5) water management for agriculture and aquaculture. The water technical specialist also updated the Water Team's staff biographies and Team brochure as outreach materials for the World Water Week in Stockholm in August.

## **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.*

### **Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act**

The water technical specialist reviewed the Congressional Budget Justification (CBJ) in preparation for the annual cycle of water-related obligations data-gathering, which will begin in October. The water technical specialist discussed with the Water Team the advantages of creating a database combining the water obligations data from FY 2000 through FY 2006. This will be essential for conducting a multi-year analysis of trends in USAID investments in the Water sector. The changing USAID framework will entail significant re-coding of obligations data based on the new reporting indicators.

## **TASK 3: WEB MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

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

NRIC's webmaster continued to maintain web pages for NRMO on three different web sites: the public web site ([www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)), the NRIC web site, and the EGAT Intranet.

### **Public web site**

NRIC's webmaster continued to provide support to NRMO by submitting updates and new content to LPA for USAID's public site. The majority of changes made were predominantly for the Water sector, along with some minor modifications to the Biodiversity, Forestry, and Land Management pages.

During this quarter, NRIC's webmaster and water technical specialist developed new content for the Water sector on USAID's public site. Specifically, 18 new pages and two new associated modules were posted regarding USAID's approach to integrated water resources management and water activities that have cross-sectoral linkages. In addition to continued maintenance of existing content, a new proceedings report, *Lessons Learned in Recovery: Post-Tsunami Relief and Reconstruction for Sustainable Coastal Development* (2006), was added to the technical publications page. At the end of the fourth quarter of 2006, there were 29 pages for the Water

sector, with a projected suite of pages describing technical sub-sectors for Water to be developed for the upcoming first quarter in FY 2007.

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. Meta tag information for all content for Biodiversity, Forestry, Land Management, and Water pages were also updated per LPA's request.

#### **NRIC web site**

During this quarter, NRIC's webmaster continued to update and maintain the NRIC web site. New content was added to the Sustainable Tourism pages. A resource directory, consisting of 19 new pages, was developed 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. It includes listings for major sustainable tourism contractors, nongovernmental organizations, and other partners and collaborators who are actively involved with international tourism development activities. In addition, 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. Additional updates and modifications to the site continued during the fourth quarter.

In addition, a bi-monthly WebTrends report for the site was submitted to NRIC's CTO for the period June 1, 2006–July 31, 2006.

#### **USAID Intranet**

During this period, no changes were made except that draft text provided by NRIC's biodiversity and forestry specialist on 118/119 analyses was submitted to NRMO for posting.

### **TASK 4: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

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

In the fourth quarter of FY 2006, NRIC updated 30 project records in the NRM Online Library, leaving the total number of project records unchanged at 578. NRIC added 48 documents to the library, bringing the total number of documents to 4,110. The number of images remained the same (380).

NRIC responded to information requests on how to implement tourism projects in Egypt and Turkey. Additional responses were also provided to individuals seeking documentation on the Jaragua National Park of the Dominican Republic and the Wula Nafaa project in Senegal.

## **TASK 5: PLANNING**

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

The NRIC team provided no significant planning activities during the fourth quarter of FY 2006.

## **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.*

### **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.

### **Sustainable Tourism**

NRIC provided organizational support for the summer speaker series, *The Role of Communication in Sustainable Tourism*, sponsored by the World Bank, the United Nations World Tourism Organization, and USAID that took place in July and August. NRIC posted PowerPoint presentations and readings from the series onto the nric.net Sustainable Tourism web pages. In addition, NRIC revised and edited a World Bank-produced draft summation of the e-forum that preceded this speaker series, and merged content from the two events for a publication to be supplied to the October World Congress on Communication for Development in Rome. A second printing of 1,000 USAID and Sustainable Tourism bookmarks was run to supply unexpectedly high demand.

### **Other Communications Products**

A final, full-color version of the Biodiversity Team's Global Conservation Program brochure was printed and distributed.

## **TASK 7: NRIC PROJECT PLANNING, MONITORING, AND REPORTING**

During the fourth quarter, the NRIC CoP continued to work with his USAID CTO counterpart to plan budget scenarios for the final months of the NRIC contract, scheduled to end in March 2007. It is anticipated that the current staff will remain with the project at their current LOE until March 2007. The CoP had preliminary discussions with the CTO regarding project close-out and disposition of the NRM Library and other NRM materials currently housed in the NRIC office, and to determine a vision and schedule for the NRIC Final Report.

## NEXT QUARTER

In the first quarter of FY 2007, NRIC will support technical teams with ongoing activities. No new activities are anticipated, but support will be available if needed. Important activities include:

- **NRM Office**

The office-wide communication strategy will be revisited. An office-wide newsletter that was previously approved by CJ Elron and Team Leaders has changed into a proposed, one-time-use fact sheet. The new format was chosen due to the approaching close-out of NRIC and the uncertainty of any NRMO core staff time being available to coordinate publication of future editions of a newsletter. Format and content are under discussion.

Following preliminary discussions with the CTO in the fourth quarter of 2006 regarding project close-out, the NRM library and other materials housed in the NRIC office, and the NRIC final report, the NRIC CoP anticipates further discussions on these items in the first quarter of FY 2007. NRIC plans to begin drafting the final report during that quarter.

- **Forestry and Biodiversity Teams**

The forestry and biodiversity specialist will work with the Biodiversity and Forestry Team to: (1) print and distribute to appropriate Congressional staff the *Foreign Assistance Act, Section 118: Tropical Forests FY 2005* report; (2) print and distribute the *Biodiversity and Forestry Programs, FY 2005* report; (3) update all content on the Biodiversity and Forestry external web site; (4) review, edit, and prepare for distribution as appropriate an issues brief for on the Biodiversity Code and Agriculture-Biodiversity linkages; and (5) work with Forestry Team members to re-initiate the Extended Forestry Team monthly presentations.

- **Water Team**

The water technical specialist plans to: (1) ground-truth CBJ estimated obligations as part of the Congressional reporting process; (2) convert the water obligations records from spreadsheets to a single database; (3) complete five facts sheets; (4) complete 15 new web pages for the public USAID web site; and (5) begin transferring files and publications to the contractor responsible for follow-on work supporting the Water Team after the NRIC project ends.

- **Land Team (and Tourism)**

The land technical specialist will work with NRIC's webmaster to complete posting of the summer seminar series presentations and to post a summary document reflecting dialogue at the e-forum that preceded this live speaker series. This summary document is being produced for the October World Congress on Communication for Development in Rome. NRIC will continue to investigate partnering and co-funding opportunities to support future sustainable tourism training deliveries in other USAID regions, building on the success of the Tanzania pilot delivery, and will

provide support as requested to the start-up of the Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance.

In the next quarter, the NRIC land specialist will continue to work with the Land Team to define and produce relevant communications, outreach, and training materials, including a seminar series or training event follow-on to one of the recent Land Team Special Initiatives. Other work may include a fact sheet on long-term trends in agricultural sustainability in the Sahel.

NRIC staff plan to incorporate USAID comments on the revised report, *Human Rights and Responsibilities in Biodiversity Conservation Settings: Issues and Opportunities*, and to produce a third draft for further review, and possibly a final copy of the report for printing.

In the first quarter of 2007, NRIC will deliver 50 copies of the final report, *Issues in Poverty Reduction and Natural Resource Management*, to the FRAME conference occurring in October, per USAID's request. During this quarter, NRIC anticipates printing several hundred copies of the report for distribution to a wider audience.

- **USAID Public Site ([www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov))**  
NRIC's webmaster will continue to work with the NRIC technical specialists to provide cross-sectoral linkages for current and upcoming content. For the next quarter, a suite of pages on technical sub-sectors for Water will be developed.
- **NRIC Web Site**  
It is projected that the web content for Poverty Reduction and for Sustainable Tourism currently available on [www.nric.net](http://www.nric.net) will be revamped and USAID-branded for integration onto [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) to supplement the web presence for Land Resources Management.
- **USAID Intranet**  
It is projected that during the first quarter of FY 2007, the staff directory pages will be updated to reflect the newly combined Biodiversity/Forestry Team. Existing content may also be updated.