



The Disseminator

NEWSLETTER OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

News from the National Focal Points

• AUSTRIA

Austria has connected its web page to the SCBD's home page. They are also planning a special Austrian CHM page by the end of the year which will provide links to the Austrian Ministry of Environment, to the national report, biodiversity strategy, roster of experts and others. They will also invite the private and public sectors and NGOs to establish hotlinks with their web site. Visit the Fed. Environment Agency at:

<http://www.ubavie.gv.at/>

• CHILE

The Environmental Information System of Chile (SINIA) has recently established their metadata and bibliographic database services. They expect to expand their services to other areas of interest. Visit their site at:

<http://www.conama.cl/bdm>

• CZECH REPUBLIC

Financial support has recently been obtained from the Enabling Activities project of the GEF to assist them in the establishment of their national CHM. They will develop a web site which will contain information on biodiversity conservation, and will establish links with relevant national and international databases.

• D.R. of CONGO

In line with COP Decisions of promoting partnering roles, the Clearing House of the Democratic Republic of Congo has recently been launched with the active support of Belgium. Among their goals we can mention the need to further

develop and promote: capacity building, long-distance learning, visualization of country-based meta-information, scientific, technical and technological cooperation, and public awareness in matters related to the CBD.

For further information contact:

Prof. Jonas Nagahuedi Mbongu-Sodi
Coordinator and Biodiversity Focal Point
Ministry of the Environment

Av. Papa Iléo 15

12348 Kinshasa. D. R. of Congo

Tel.: +243-12-33 421 /+243-12-33 748

Fax: +243-88-43 675

Visit their web site at:

<http://www.kbinirsnb.be/bch-cbd/congodr/cdr-eng/home.htm>

• GERMANY

The German Clearing-House Secretariat together with the German Initiative "Schools on the Net" is developing further the concept called "Nature Detectives on the Web". The initiative is linked to Article 13 of the Convention on Public Education and Awareness, opening an additional window to transport the objectives of the Convention into schools. Through this project, direct field observations in nature will be interactively linked with the Internet. More information can be directly obtained from the German CHM Secretariat at:

<http://www.dainet.de/bmu-cbd/>

• NAMIBIA

The launching of Namibia's National Biodiversity web site has been scheduled for November 30. This effort of the Directorate of Environmental Affairs will contain key information on biodiversity case studies, databases, roster of experts, bio-technology studies, policy documents and legislation as well as hotlinks to governmental, the private sector, universities, and NGO web sites. For information on Namibia's biodiversity get the National Museum of Namibia: <http://www.natmus.cul.na>

For more information contact Dr. Phoebe Barnard (pb@dea.met.gov.na)

• PERU

Peru is going to establish a technical group to launch its national CHM in early October. They are starting their work with the establishment of a web site: <http://www.conam.gob.pe/endb/index.htm>, which in turn will be connected to other national institutions and thematic networks.

• PHILIPPINES

The CHM-NFP of the Philippines provides information on the country's National Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan, and relevant legislation. It also provides links to many important sources of information on biodiversity. A leaflet has been produced to inform a wide audience and raise awareness on the role and functions of Philippines' National CHM. For more information:

<http://www.psdn.org/ph/chmbio.org.ph>

• NORWAY

The first version of Norway's national CHM, established under the Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management, will be presented before the end of 1998. It will contain links to other home pages and databases on species and protected areas. For more information contact Jon Barikmo (jon.barikmo@dirnat.no)

Regional News

• European Union

A call for tenders to establish the CHM for the European Union is in effect. It will address prototypes of public web sites, extranet-based documents, and capacity building activities, among others.

VISIT THE SECRETARIAT'S CHM SITE AT :
<http://www.biodiv.org/chm>

• IABIN

The Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) is an exciting example of a regional initiative which will contribute to the development of the Clearing-House Mechanism. IABIN focuses on the implementation of an Internet-based network for the access, communication and exchange of biodiversity information to support decision-making and education throughout the Organization of American States' member states. A technical meeting for IABIN's establishment has been scheduled for December 1-4, 1998, in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. A web site for this meeting is being designed: <http://www.bdt.org.br/iabin>.

• NABIN

An internet search engine was created to access multiple taxonomic databases residing in remote and separate servers by the North American Biodiversity Information Network (NABIN). This search engine aims to resolve the problem of data organized under different taxonomic criteria and held in different computer platforms. To date, users can search at least 15 major bird taxonomic collections located throughout North America. This system is also configured with geo-spatial software, giving users the capabilities to obtain information on species distribution, migratory patterns, biogeography, etc.. Public access and use of this system will be soon made available.

NABIN is a project of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation under the NAFTA Agreement of Canada, Mexico and the USA.

For further information contact: Marcos Silva at: msilva@ccemtl.org

<http://www.cec.org>

• OECD

A paper on the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) is now available at (<http://www.eionet.eu.int/gbif/gbif-implementation-latest.html>) The paper identifies the capacity to produce home pages for all species of organisms as the main goal of GBIF, where homepages are dynamically derived from online databases. This initiative supports the OECD Megascience Forum for Biological Informatics efforts.

• REC

A new list-server covering the implementation of the Sofia biodiversity initiative in Central and Eastern Europe has been established. It is moderated by the Biodiversity Secretariat at REC (Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe) and it is intended to serve as a tool for fast, up-to-date information exchange. New users can subscribe to the list by sending an email message to BIODIVCEE-L@rec.org with the word SUSCRIBE as the subject. Visit their site at: <http://www.rec.org/REC/Databases/BIODIVCEE-L>

• SADC

Some ten countries, constituting the Southern Africa Developing Countries, are planning a regional CHM meeting for early 1999. More details to come.

Sister Conventions

• CMS

The Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) announced the complete renovation of its web site. The site contains official documents and updated information on CMS activities and those of its related agreements. Other novelties available include a 'FAQ' section, information on 'News/Events' and the possibility to request official documents on-line. The renovation has concentrated on the English version of the site, which can be found at:

<http://www.wcmc.org.uk/cms>

• Bonn Meeting

Representatives from the Conventions on Biodiversity, CITES, Climate Change, Desertification, Migratory Species, RAMSAR and World Heritage held a meeting in Bonn (6-7 October) to discuss ways to promote synergies and harmonize BD-related information. A closed listserv has been established, their web pages will be harmonized, and a common Thesaurus will be developed and work to standardize documents is envisaged. UNEP/ROE and WCMC were also present.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT:

<http://www.biodiv.org/chm>

CHM News

• URL-DATABASE

The rapidly expanding "Clearing-House URL-Data base on Scientific and Technical Co-operation in Biodiversity" is now available. To date we have catalogued close to 250 sites on scientific and technical cooperation in biodiversity. You are invited to explore: <http://www.biodiv.org:8080/relinks/search.htm>

• CD-ROM TOOL KIT

With the generous financial support of Canada, the Secretariat is producing a CHM tool-kit prototype. This tool-kit contains key information to build the national CHMs by the National Focal Points. This project draws upon decision IV/2, the recommendations of the regional workshops and the inputs of the Informal Advisory Committee.

• GEF UPDATE

New CHM add-on-modules have been approved for Jordan, Paraguay, South Africa and Sudan. To date 49 projects have been funded (average sum US\$ 11,818/project) totaling US \$ 579,092

• VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The CHM Unit of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity needs an experienced Computer Operations Officer (P-2 level). For more information visit us at: <http://www.biodiv.org/P-2post.pdf> (available in PDF format).

Remember you always find the latest CHM news at:

<http://www.biodiv.org/chm/what-new.html>

Send your information, comments and queries to

- Marc Auer
(marc.auer@biodiv.org)
- Beatriz Torres
(beatriz.torres@biodiv.org)
- Stephane Rey-Coquais
(stephane.rey@biodiv.org)