



Quetzal  
(*Pharomachrus  
mocinno*)



## Activities

- The Thematic Working Group of the SSTN had its first meeting in Costa Rica, on August 28<sup>th</sup> - September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006.
- On September 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the workshop "Bridging Genomics and Biodiversity" will take place in Bogota-Colombia, organized by the University of Potsdam, Germany.
- Iquitos, Peru will be the venue for the 13<sup>th</sup> Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) of which IABIN is an active member. This event will take place on October 1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup>, 2006; where representatives of some IABIN countries that also belong to GBIF, members of the IEC, CIs and TNs, as well as the IABIN Secretariat, will participate.
- The First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Sustainable Development will take place in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, on October 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006.
- GBIF will have its 3<sup>rd</sup> Ecological Niche Modeling workshop on November 13-17 2006 in Bangalore, India. Members of IABIN may nominate someone to attend the event and benefit from the training offered. GBIF will sponsor some people selected among those nominated. Interested people must contact Bonnie Carroll [bcarroll@iiaweb.com](mailto:bcarroll@iiaweb.com) of IABIN, before September 10. Nomination forms were distributed by Bonnie through IABINfriends.

## Editorial

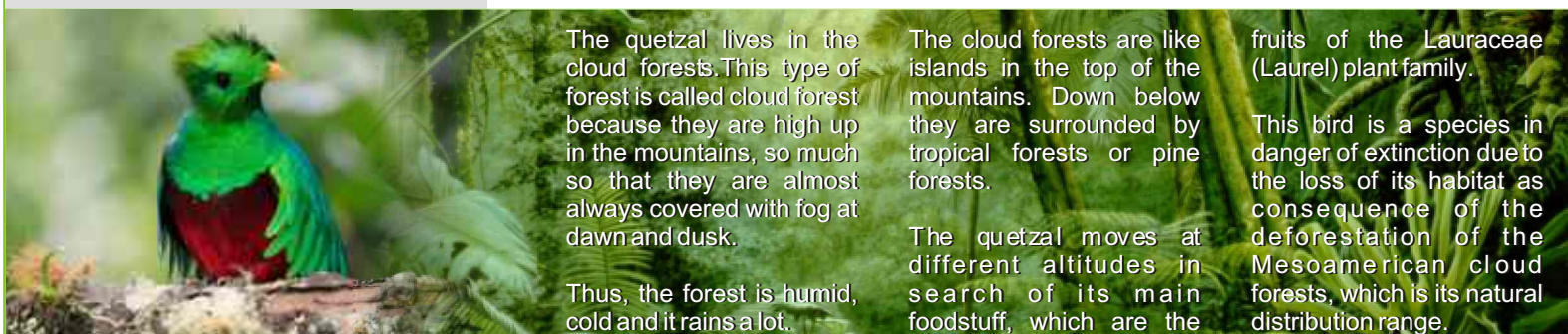
The Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) is an effort of the Western Hemisphere countries who want to share data and information about biodiversity that can be used in the process of decision-making and education. Particularly, IABIN is to promote the sustainable development and the conservation of biodiversity in the Americas. During last ten years, representatives of the countries of the Americas and organizations and individuals in different places have actively worked in the establishment of the network. In this opportunity we can inform you with pleasure that we are in the second phase of the implementation of IABIN with the formalization and development of the different Thematic Networks (TNs) (species and specimens, pollinators, invasive species, protected areas and ecosystems) of our initiative. We have also strengthened our leadership in the integration of biological with geo-spatial information with the purpose of designing, spreading, and promoting the use of tools for decision-making by means of a geo-spatial network that is being implemented, as a pilot project, in Mesoamerica and the Caribbean with funds from the World Bank.

As part of this new phase, we are convinced that there is need for maintaining all the organizations, individuals, and partners of IABIN informed of the actions and activities that the network is carrying out, particularly in the development of the TNs. That is why we include the information of the different institutions that have been selected as Coordinating Institutions (CIs) of the TNs and their partners, so that you become aware of and have access to their work plans. This is an effort to ensure more people get involved in and participate in the activities that are being planned and taking place for the establishment and development of the different TNs of IABIN.

We consider that one of the most effective ways to disseminate this information and of keeping the communication with all of our associates and collaborators is through this Newsletter, which will be published bi-monthly. With this tool we wish to promote the exchange of data and information not only of what is done by the Secretariat of IABIN, in the establishment of the network, but also of the actions of the countries that form part of our initiative. The idea is to share announcements, news, activities, and other subjects of interest related to biodiversity information. In this sense, we appreciate your collaboration requesting that you send us any relevant information two weeks before the closing of the next edition of this newsletter (by 15<sup>th</sup> October of 2006).

This newsletter complements other tools such as IABINfriends, the IABIN Website ([www.iabin.net](http://www.iabin.net)), and the specialized WebPages of TNs that will soon be available.

We hope this initiative serves to motivate the participation of our Focal Points (FPs), associates, CIs, and Friends of IABIN, keeping fluid, constant channels for exchanging information.



The quetzal lives in the cloud forests. This type of forest is called cloud forest because they are high up in the mountains, so much so that they are almost always covered with fog at dawn and dusk.

Thus, the forest is humid, cold and it rains a lot.

The cloud forests are like islands in the top of the mountains. Down below they are surrounded by tropical forests or pine forests.

The quetzal moves at different altitudes in search of its main foodstuff, which are the

fruits of the Lauraceae (Laurel) plant family.

This bird is a species in danger of extinction due to the loss of its habitat as consequence of the deforestation of the Mesoamerican cloud forests, which is its natural distribution range.



## News

### THEMATIC NETWORKS

At present, all the TNs (species and specimens, pollinators, invasive species, protected areas and ecosystems) have their CI. The CIs were selected through a wide and transparent process in which the Organization of American States (OAS), the IABIN Executive Committee (IEC), and the IABIN Secretariat were involved. Four of these networks are currently carrying out their annual work plan and two are developing theirs. The network of invasive species (I3N) is the TN that has carried out more activities during this year, followed by the species and specimens and the protected areas TNs. Updated information on each one of the TNs is found below. Additional information on the TNs (e.g. work plans, technical proposals, and agreements) can be obtained in the section dedicated to the TNs in the IABIN webpage.

### INVASIVE SPECIES (I3N)

The CI of this TN is the National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII) of the US Geological Survey (USA), together with a group of institutions from the following countries: Argentina, Bahamas, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, USA, and Uruguay. Some activities carried out by I3N:

Training Workshops in the use of the I3N digitizing tool were offered in Chile, Paraguay, Ecuador, and Venezuela.

Capacity building needs have been identified and have been included in the I3N Capacity Building Plan.

The I3N cataloging and searching tool has been updated.

### SPECIES AND SPECIMENS (SSTN)

The leading institution of the consortium of this TN is the National Institute of Biodiversity (INBio) from Costa Rica. The TN is supported by the following institutions: Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales, Red de Herbarios de Mesoamerica y el Caribe, NatureServe, and the Instituto Alexander von Humboldt.

As part of their work plan, this CI and its partner organizations have produced a draft proposal on standards to be used by the TN. This document was discussed and approved during the meeting that took place at the end of August in Costa Rica.

### PROTECTED AREAS (PATN)

Fundação O Boticário de Proteção à Natureza (Brazil) leads the consortium that coordinates this TN. Boticario works with ECOSCIENCIA, The Nature Conservancy, The Instituto Alexander von Humboldt, WWF, UICN-Sur, WICE, and UNEP-WCMC.

The consortium organizations had their first technical planning meeting in Curitiba, Brazil, during the COP-8 meeting.

At present, the CI is defining its standards and carrying out activities to develop the TN's webpage.



### ECOSYSTEMS (ETN)

This TN has as leader of the consortium the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (USA / Panama), which together with INBio, Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales, The Nature Conservancy, NatureServe and Fundação O Boticário de Proteção à Natureza is implementing the network's work plan.

The Memorandum of Collaboration (CI) between STRI, as leader of the consortium, and the IEC was signed a some days ago, officially initiating the ETN activities.

### POLLINATORS (PTN)

The Co-Evolution Institute (USA) is the leader of the consortium for this TN, and with it the following organizations: University of Sao Paulo, Centro de Referência em Informação Ambiental (CRIA), NBII of the US Geological Survey, and the Integrated Taxonomic Information System (ITIS). This TN has developed its work plan and established coordination mechanisms with consortium members. It is working, particularly, in establishing synergies with GBIF and other regional and global initiatives in the area of pollinators, by highlighting the establishment of the PTN in relevant international meetings.

### CATALOG SERVICE

The CI of the Catalog Service is the NBII of the US Geological Survey. The IABIN Catalog Service will search through the TNs and the geo-spatial network, using a tool called Biobot. The first version of the

Biobot was developed by NBII. At present, the process to develop the second version of this tool has started and it will include a controlled vocabulary and integrated information provided by all the TNs and the geo-spatial network.

### MEETING OF THE IABIN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, WASHINGTON DC, JUNE 14<sup>TH</sup>-15<sup>TH</sup>, 2006.

The first meeting of the IABIN Executive Committee (IEC), under the auspices of the IABIN-GEF project and organized by the IABIN Secretariat, was held in Washington DC on June 14-16, with the support of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the office of the Chair of the IEC. The IEC meeting was convened to discuss the progress and immediate future actions and long-term direction of IABIN. The participation of eight (Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, United States, Uruguay, and GBIF) out of the nine members of the IEC indicated considerable commitment from the member countries to the development of the network and the execution of the IABIN-GEF project.

The following are some highlights within the agreements and decisions of this meeting:

The FPs are the network communication agents and they need to be updated about the initiatives carried out in the different IABIN TNs. In this sense, it was requested that the Secretariat facilitates the mechanism of communication between the CIs and the FPs and the development of effective tools to communicate the actions of the network. This will help the FPs so they may effectively explain to potential IABIN partners, what are the benefits of participating in this initiative.





## News

Effective mechanisms must be established that promote the participation of country organizations in the development of the different TNs. Thus, it was requested that the CIs actively involve these IABIN members and the FPs in the activities being implemented. The idea is to incorporate these key players into the TNs development process.

On the other hand, the IEC recommended that the next meeting of the IABIN Council take place in July or August 2007 in a Southern Cone country to promote participation of all regions.

The agenda, objectives, scope and agreements of the IEC meeting may be read in [www.iabin.net](http://www.iabin.net)

### COORDINATION MEETING BETWEEN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EXPERTS OF THE COORDINATING INSTITUTIONS, WASHINGTON DC. JUNE 11-13, 2006

The first "Coordinating Institutions Information Technology Experts Meeting" was organized by the Secretariat and held in Washington D.C., from June 11 to 13 with the support of the OAS and the IEC Chairperson. This meeting was held to establish a common framework for all Thematic Networks and the Catalog Service regarding the infrastructure to be used across IABIN, the design of common elements, an understanding about IABIN and its goals and data exchange between TNs and other initiatives. Additionally, at this meeting the IABIN Information Technology Working Group was established (ITWG) was formally established. The ITWG is made of one representative from each CI and by the Secretariat's Thematic Network Coordinator. This group's mandate is to support the development processes of the network's architecture, insuring interoperability among the different TNs.

### INITIATIVES

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006 the IABIN Secretariat and the OAS submitted to the World Bank and the IABIN Council their 3<sup>rd</sup> Semester Report, corresponding to the first semester of 2006. This report will be available to all our members in the IABIN Webpage in English and Spanish. In the report you will find information on the advances in the implementation of the IABIN-DGF project.

### FOCAL POINTS

The information on the 34 IABIN FPs is being updated because in some cases contacts have changed for different reasons. It is in our best interest to keep a constant communication with the FPs in order to guarantee that they know about the diverse activities of the network. For this reason, we will appreciate it if you send us any change in your contact information in order to update our database.

### IABIN PARTNERS

Meetings were held with potential data providers in Argentina, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Uruguay. These meetings were organized and hosted by the IABIN FP in each country. In these meetings the participants are updated on the advances of IABIN and about the functions of the FPs, the standards and protocols adopted by the network and about the calls for proposals for seed funds for the digitalization of data. There are also presentations by the participants about the data their organizations have, which they will make available through IABIN.

These meetings of potential data providers strengthen the communication between institutions at the national level as well as encourage their participation in the IABIN TNs. In the next few months we will have data providers meetings in Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, and Peru.

The FP of Uruguay, who is part of the IEC, is carrying out the mandate of keeping all the national organizations informed: she has made two reports regarding IABIN activities in which Uruguay has been involved.

### IABIN OUTREACH

- The IABIN Secretariat participated at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ibero-American Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Panama in November 2005, with a presentation on IABIN advances and the importance of our initiative for the sustainable development of the region.

- IABIN general posters as well as a poster on I3N were presented at the Conference of the Ecological Society of America, in Merida, Mexico, in January 2006.

- On January 2006, a presentation on IABIN was given to scientists and support personnel of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI). In this activity we highlighted the importance of establishing collaboration between IABIN and STRI scientists who study biodiversity of tropical ecosystems. As a result, various scientists stated their interest of collaborating with IABIN by, for example, becoming part of the TNs expert groups.





## News

● The Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI) had a meeting on January 16<sup>th</sup> 17<sup>th</sup>, 2006, in Costa Rica. In this event IABIN shared its experience in the development of networks and the need for establishing standards and strengthening local capacities. In order to guarantee the interoperability between our initiatives and establish channels of collaboration, the advances of the network of species and specimens of IABIN (SSTN) will be made available to WHMSI.

● A workshop to establish the "Gateway for Environmental Information" (EcoMundus) initiative, sponsored by UNEP, took place in Curitiba, Brazil, on June 6<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006. In this workshop we explored the possibility that IABIN be appointed as EcoMundus regional lead institution in the area of biodiversity information.

● IABIN participated in the FAO Workshop on the Global Land Cover Network (GLCN) that took place in San Jose, Costa Rica on 5-9 December, 2005. During the workshop the possibility to adapt FAO's Land Classification System to the IABIN ETN was explored.

● An IABIN workshop was carried out at the IX Latin American Botanical Congress in Dominican Republic in June, 2006. This workshop was attended by over 31 botanical scientists from the Americas and Europe who are potential IABIN data providers. They showed support for our initiative and in conjunction with IABIN drafted a resolution proposed to the plenary of the Congress requesting support for biodiversity informatics, promotion of biodiversity information sharing, and the work that is being made in this area by scientist, institutions and initiatives such as IABIN. In addition, Marina Hernández, Dominican Republic FP, helped organize a meeting of local, potential data providers in which members of the scientific community and officials of government institutions related to the subject of biodiversity participated.

● The Secretariat has collaborated with the City of Knowledge, who is IABIN host, and with the International Center for Sustainable Development (CIDES for its Spanish acronym) in establishing a Knowledge Network. Similarly, the Secretariat is part of the Environmental Cluster of the City of Knowledge.

## Announcements

### SEED GRANTS FOR THE DATA DIGITIZING

Through the IABIN invasive species network (I3N) the first seed grants have been given for Digitalization of high quality data. After a competitive process, five organizations from the following countries were chosen: Argentina, Jamaica, Paraguay, and Uruguay, who will digitalize new information on alien invasive species.

The other IABIN TNs are in the process of defining the necessary standards for the digitalization of information. Soon they will be doing their calls for proposals for digitizing high quality data in their areas of competence. The following is the tentative calendar for these calls for proposals:

- I3N, October 2006
- Specimens, October 2006
- Species, December 2006
- Protected Areas and Pollinators, April 2007

The calls for proposals will be published in [www.iabin.net](http://www.iabin.net) and through IABINfriends.

### OTHER

Early this year, the National Commission on Environment of Chile published the book "Biodiversity of Chile: Heritage and Challenges". The book gives an overview of Chile's biodiversity incorporating its genetic and ecosystems dimensions. Also, the country's biodiversity is analyzed in the context of its interaction with human activities and its conservation status. In IABIN we feel very proud of this book, not only for its great value in promoting the distribution of biodiversity information but also because Dr. Karin Molt, Vice-president of the Council and of the Executive Committee of our network and Focal Point of Chile, is co-author of the section on Protected Areas of Chile. Congratulations.



## Contacts