

SUMMARY OF IABIN PROJECTS

Ongoing IABIN projects

- **IABIN Invasives Information Network (I3N) Project.** I3N is building a distributed network that will provide web-accessible information on invasive species. The USGS, with support from the Environmental Diplomacy Fund of the U.S. State Department, is distributing \$12,000 grants to 11 IABIN countries to participate in the project. Each organization will locate, systematically document, and provide electronic access to metadata on the taxonomy, distribution, ecology, impacts, control, and management of alien invasive species. This project builds on two earlier IABIN projects.
- **Latin American Invasive Species Information Hub.** The U.S. State Department, through the U.S. Geological Survey, is providing funds to CONABIO, the Mexican National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity, to establish an invasive species information hub for Latin America and the Caribbean. This hub will facilitate discovery of and access to datasets and tools needed for the management and control of invasives species, including an early detection/rapid response capability. The Mexican hub will be networked with a similar hub in South Africa, which will interlink invasives information from southern Africa. This project builds on two earlier IABIN projects.
- **Financial Sustainability Study.** One of the biggest challenges to any international cooperative undertaking is its ability to become financially sustainable. Although IABIN will not have a major central operation, costs are associated with coordinating and supporting even decentralized and voluntary participation. While IABIN was mandated by the Summit of the Americas process, no accompanying budgeting mechanism was established. Messrs. Miguel Pellerano and Fernando Frydman, both residents of Buenos Aires, Argentina, have been contracted to investigate and recommend a financial sustainability strategy for IABIN.

COMPLETED IABIN PROJECTS

- **Invasive Species in the Americas Project Plan Development.** USGS, The Nature Conservancy, and the University of California, with assistance from CONABIO and a number of independent experts, hosted a workshop of invasive species and database specialists at the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis at the University of California at Santa Barbara, in October 1998, to develop more detailed recommendations for developing plans for two pilot projects on invasive species -- one on vascular plants and one on freshwater fish -- which when implemented will prove the concept of an inter-American information network. The United States Agency for International Development (U.S. AID) provided funding in 1998 for the preparation of this study. The I3N and the Invasives Hub projects build on this project.
- **Invasive Species in the Americas Prototype Development.** Development of a prototype on-line data system for invasive species information in the Americas, based on the recommendations from the pilot project described above. Objectives are to provide a distributed information framework,

develop a shared data vocabulary, and populate a prototype data set with information from at least 6 countries. This activity was funded in 1999 and 2000 by the Netherlands/World Bank Partnership for the Consolidation of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor. The I3N and the Invasives Hub projects build on this project.

- **Harmonizing Metadata Initiatives Throughout IABIN.** An examination of metadata standards as they relate to biological datasets and development of information clearinghouses. The results of this project are posted at <http://isite.ciceana.org.mx/> (click on "Catálogo", then click on "Mesoamérica"). This activity was funded in 1999 and 2000 by the Netherlands/World Bank Partnership for the Consolidation of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor.
- **European Collections of New World Vertebrates.** A rich store of information on Neotropical biodiversity is held in the museums and research institutes of Europe. Whereas the holdings of some, such as the British Museum, are well known, significant numbers of specimens from the New World are held in small- to medium-sized collections throughout Europe. The project developed an Internet-based directory of New World (primarily vertebrate) holdings in European collections. The database contains information on 114 collections from 50 institutes in 23 European countries. This activity was funded in 1999 and 2000 by the Netherlands/World Bank Partnership for the Consolidation of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor.
- **Training in Distributed Database Technology and Synthetic Analytical Applications** Training for Latin American specialists on the use of The Species Analyst. Seven trainees, selected via an application process, attended the training course from 1-13 November 1999. This activity was funded in 1999 and 2000 by the Netherlands/World Bank Partnership for the Consolidation of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor.

POTENTIAL IABIN PROJECTS:

PROJECT IDEAS FROM FIRST COUNCIL MEETING

A. Science-oriented Projects

- A-1. Build and Expand on Invasive Species Pilot
- A-2. Migratory Birds
- A-3. Pollinators
- A-4. Coastal Erosion and Biodiversity
- A-5. Coral Reefs
- A-6. Neotropical Flora
- A-7. Amphibian Decline in the Americas
- A-8. Projects on River Basins and Watersheds (includes Tropical Freshwater Fishes)

B. Biodiversity Management-oriented Projects

- B-1. Protected Areas (includes Inventory of Protected Areas and Establishment of Corridors)
- B-2. Expanding the GAP Analysis to other Countries
- B-3. Andean Region Strategy for Endangered Species
- B-4. Develop Standards for Ecoregional Analysis in the Continent

C. Network Implementation Projects (policy, standards, tools, etc.)

- C-1. Legal Issues Regarding Network Information
- C-2. Strategic Plan to Establish IABIN Information Systems
- C-3. IABIN Participation of Institutions Holding Biological Collections from the Americas (e.g. Repatriation of Information)
- C-4. Directory of Taxonomists and Institutions in the Americas with Expertise on Biodiversity
- C-5. Assessment of Remote Sensing Sources of Information for the Americas
- C-6. Tracking Ongoing Collaborations within IABIN
- C-7. Database of Potential Collaborations
- C-8. Agreement on Metadata (Geo-referenced, Taxonomy, Subject Control) Format for IABIN Information
- C-9. Strategy for Developing a Catalog of Life for the Americas
- C-10. Environmental Education (USAID proposal)