

## **First IABIN Council Meeting Project Summary The Invasive Species in the Americas Pilot Project**

Summary of activities July-November 1999

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The strategy for this project was presented at the Technical Meeting for the Establishment of IABIN in Brasilia, Brazil, on April 15-18, 1999, and is described in two on-line documents ([http://www.nbio.gov/iabin/meetings/invs\\_fr.htm](http://www.nbio.gov/iabin/meetings/invs_fr.htm) and [http://www.nbio.gov/iabin/meetings/tech\\_fr.htm](http://www.nbio.gov/iabin/meetings/tech_fr.htm)). The World Bank agreed to support a pilot project on information sharing on invasive species issues proposed by the U.S. Geological Survey to apply this strategy to invasive species in 6-8 IABIN partner countries, and funds to support the work have recently been allocated.

In the interim period, the University of California at Davis has been prototyping the expert registry, data registry, species of concern, and species occurrence database elements described in the reports, using data from a variety of invasive species programs in California, including those from the California Exotic Pest Plant Council (<http://www.caleppc.org/>), the California Interagency Noxious Weed Coordinating Committee, the CalFlora (<http://elib.cs.berkeley.edu/calflora/botanical.html>) and CalWeed (<http://endeavor.des.ucdavis.edu/weeds/>) databases, and a variety of programs under the California Biodiversity Council (<http://ceres.ca.gov/biodiv/>). Data structures for the critical thesaurus elements are being tested in cooperation with the CERES Thesaurus project (<http://ceres.ca.gov/thesaurus>), sponsored by NBII and the California Resources Agency.

The first stage of the IABIN-supported work will be to assemble strawman multi-lingual database-thesaurus applications as described in the technical reports, and to distribute them to collaborators in 6 participating country "nodes" for review and modification to better address existing data structures and user needs. The participants will then assemble for a workshop in California to test the prototypes and direct programmers at the nodes on steps needed to produce a working on-line pilot data system.

This work is currently being coordinated with several working groups on invasive species information in the U.S., Mexico, and Canada, and follows strategic approaches of related clearinghouse efforts, including BDT, MabFlora and MABFauna, and the IUCN Protected Areas programs.

We expect additional support from the Commission on Environmental Cooperation (specifically the North American Biodiversity Information Network, NABIN) to apply the tools developed in the Species Analyst Project (<http://www.iabin.net/council/sanalyst>) to invasive species.

We expect the first public data to be on-line in early spring, 2000, and the full pilot to be completed before the end of the year.