

THE DISSEMINATOR



News from the Clearing-House Mechanism

National and Regional Focal Points

To date 135 CHM National Focal Points have been nominated, out of which 73 have e-mail access. 29 web pages have been created by the CHM NFPs. An electronic listserv for the officially designated CHM National Focal Points to disseminate information on the new and recent developments regarding the CHM at the national, regional and international levels has been established.

AUSTRALIA

Under the chairmanship of Veronica Blazely, Australia has set up a Steering Committee to oversee the development of its CHM. They have also established a list server to promote the transfer and exchange of information on the "conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity" to the various key stakeholders in the country. Visit them <http://www.biodiversity.environment.gov.au/biocon/biolink.htm>

BELIZE

Mr. Richard Belisle of the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment has been nominated as the CHM NFP.

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The EC has given the mandate to the European Environmental Agency to develop the CHM for the European Commission. The first Task Force meeting will take place 10-11 April (Copenhagen). For more information you may wish to contact Ulla Pinborg (ulla.pinborg@eea.eu.int) or Carlos Martin-Novella (carlos.martin-novella@dg11.cec.be)

GERMANY

The CHM-Balloon-Mailing-List is the free electronic mail service provided by the German Clearing-House

Mechanism-Secretariat and can be subscribed at: <http://www.dainet.de/cgi-bin/chm-balloon-news>. The German CHM National web site can now be accessed via: <http://www.biodiv-chm.de>

KENYA

Has nominated the National Environment Secretariat of the Ministry of Environmental Conservation as its CHM - NFP. Email is mec@arcc.or.ke

MALI

The new e-mail of the Mali focal point is: bathkone@datatech.toolnet.org

MALTA

Has designated Mr. Darrin Stevens as the CHM - NFP. Information on their developments can be found at: <http://environment.gov.mt/>

NAMIBIA

Visit their newly established web site at: <http://dea.met.gov.na/>

NORWAY

Jon Barikmo has informed us about their new CBD web site. Visit them at <http://chm.naturforvaltning.no/>

COLOMBIA

The Alexander Von Humboldt Institute hosted a meeting at the end of 1998 with representatives of the German government (GTZ) to bring into practice bi-lateral cooperation to develop their CHM. Their activities have started with 9 entries on "research ideas" by which Colombian and German scientists are invited to interactively locate an idea and find a cooperation partner. For more information please visit them: www.dainet.de/bmu-cbd/new/colomb.htm

NEPAL

The National Biodiversity Secretariat was set up in July 1997. It works both as the Secretariat for the National Biodiversity Steering Committee and as the designated NFP for the CHM. For more information you can contact Mr. Lok Nath Pathak at: mfsc@singdbr.mos.com.np

NIGER

Forging a dynamic CHM Partnership Niger has recently launched its web page (available in French and English) with the assistance of the Belgian CHM National Focal Point. Go to: <http://www.kbinirsnb.be/bch-cbd/home.htm> to see more.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The Russian Conservation Monitoring Center as the NFP is promoting information support for biodiversity conservation. Among their main tasks they include: capacity building by the creation of a network of users (Biodiversity Data Network) and training in computers, GIS technologies, and information management. For more information visit them at: http://www.ihst.ru/org/rcmc/english/main_e.htm

SWITZERLAND

Housed at the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL), this focal point in collaboration with UNEP-Grid Geneva has developed a prototype website for the CHM. Their URL address is: <http://www.admin.ch/buwal>

TURKMENISTAN

We welcome the Turkmen Environment Society as the recently appointed CHM

National Focal Point. They can be reached at nature@cat.glasnet.ru

VANUATU

New hardware and software enables Vanuatu to improve their e-mail facilities and also have enabled them to obtain taxonomic and specialists' information from organizations in the region. Training activities on the use of the Internet are currently under way.

IABIN

The Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) will hold its launching and technical meeting in Brasilia on April 15-18. Additional information for this meeting can be found at <http://www.bdt.org.br/bdt/iabin>

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE CHM PILOT PHASE

The pilot phase of the CHM ended on December 31, 1998. Consequently, as of January 1999, the CHM staff has begun the preparations for the independent review of the pilot phase. The independent review together with a longer-term programme of work for the clearing-house mechanism, will be considered at SBSTTA 5 and at COP 5. More you will find at <http://www.biodiv.org/chm/Review/>. A call for tenders is posted at <http://www.biodiv.org/chm/Review/tender.html>. With the generous additional voluntary contribution of Canada, a CHM Strategic Plan is also currently being developed. This strategic framework will assist the process of preparation of the medium and long-term programme of work of the CHM.

GEF SUPPORT TO DEVELOP THE CHMs

A total of 57 developing countries and countries with Economies in Transition have applied for the CHM add-on module under the Enabling Activities of the GEF. This add-on module constitutes an initial support for countries to get started with equipment and training as a first step to assist them in the development of their national clearing-houses. On average countries have received US\$ 12,000 for those modules. As per COP3 & 4 decisions Parties can also apply for country-driven pilot projects and capacity building activities. Further details explore at

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

CHM INFORMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Secretariat also operates a listserv for the members of the IAC. The IAC is fully involved in the independent review of the pilot phase of the CHM and in the elaboration of the CHM Strategic Plan. An IAC was held at BSWG6 in Cartagena and a next IAC meeting back-to-back with SBSTTA4 is under consideration.



NEW CHM BROCHURES NOW AVAILABLE IN LANGUAGES

The revised version of an informative and awareness-raising brochure on the CHM, which is now available in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#), has been produced and is available for download in pdf format on our website.



ELECTRONIC DATABASES AND SEARCH ENGINES

An electronic database on scientific and technical co-operation and a biodiversity-related search engine [BIOSEEK](#) has also been developed for the Internet website of the Secretariat. In addition, on-line databases on rosters of experts (marine and coastal biodiversity, agro-biodiversity, etc.) and focal points are underway.

NEW CHM WEBPAGES

In response to the requests of the Parties, both the Secretariat and the CHM home pages have undergone considerable updating and development. A number of new web pages have been created to facilitate the easy and quick access to information on National Reports, Agro-

biodiversity, Sustainable Use, Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing. Furthermore, the Biosafety web page is now up and running. The [Biosafety Clearing-House](#), as a component of the CHM, is under development to specifically address the requirements of information relevant to the operations of a Biosafety Protocol. The web page for [SBSTTA4](#) is operational now in English, French and Spanish.

CHM TOOL KIT and CD-ROMS

With the additional contribution of the Government of Canada, the CHM is, inter alia, developing a CD-ROM-based tool-kit to assist NFPs to develop their CHM at the national level. CHM Focal Points and partners will test the beta version in April 1999, the tool-kit launching is scheduled for SBSTTA4. In support of those Parties without adequate Internet access, the CHM is also developing a CD-ROM project with the aim to disseminate the official documents of the CBD meetings (ICCBD, COP, SBSTTA, BSWG, Indigenous Knowledge, etc.) in all six UN official languages. These documents will be distributed to all CBD Focal Points and other interested parties in a CD-ROM format.

Feedback

If you have any questions on the CHM or if you would like to receive a free copy (printed or electronic) of this newsletter, kindly send us a message to:

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CHM Brochure:

http://www.biodiv.org/chm/brochures/brochure_eng.pdf

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