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**REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL  
RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTRE**

**DRAFT FINAL REPORT**

**SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE  
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

**17th JUNE 1991**



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DRAFT FINAL REPORT

REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL RESOURCES INFORMATION  
CENTRE

(DRAFT)

17th June, 1991

A Mid Term Review of the Regional Environmental & Natural Resources Information Centre (RENRIC) was conducted during the last week of February, 1991. The following were present at the Review Meeting held at the SACEP Secretariat.

1. Mr. Ali M Azimi - Environment Specialist  
Asian Development Bank
2. Mr. A M S Hoque - Director/SACEP
3. Dr. R D Deshpande - International Consultant  
RENRIC
4. Mr. Harjit Singh - Adviser / Ministry of  
Environment & Forests,  
New Delhi, India, who  
participated by invitation  
as the Chairman of the Mid  
Term RENRIC Workshop.
5. Dr. Leslie Herath - Senior Consultant  
RENRIC.
6. Mr. P N D Abeyegunawardene - Consultant/SACEP, who  
acted as the Secretary to  
the Meeting.

The Minutes of the Meeting is given in Annex.1. At this Meeting, Dr. Leslie Herath, the Senior Consultant presented a



Progress Report for the period from July 1990 to February 1991 - Please see Annex.2. He stated that a Progress Report for the period from July to end December 1990 was circulated to the Consultative Committee in January 1991. Mr. Harjit Singh, Adviser to the Ministry of Environment & Forests of India who officiated as the Chairman of the Mid Term Workshop stated briefly the proceedings of the Workshop.

The Workshop was attended by five of the six active participants in the Project. Mr. Harjit Singh was of the opinion that the Workshop was a success and he outlined the main recommendations of the Workshop - Please see Annex. 3. The Meeting was quite appreciative of the difficulties faced in the initial phase of the Project and the need to restructure the Project if an extension is contemplated as recommended by the Workshop. It was noted that prior to the approval of the Inception Report by the Consultative Committee in September 1990, no country visits could be undertaken. Any meaningful action on data collection commenced only after early December 1990 when the Analyst Programmer returned from training from the Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok at the end of November. The constraints experienced in the implementation of this Project was briefly outlined. Mr. Ali M Azimi was most sympathetic towards the difficulties experienced and he suggested that a course of action to be taken in the remaining four months of the project viz. March to end June 1991 on certain guidelines given by him so that the extension of the Project as



requested by the member countries represented at the Workshop would be considered at the Meeting Scheduled to be held in early July 1991. Please see Annex. 3 for the 4 month work programme.

An extract from Annex. 3 is reproduced below :

#### QUOTE

##### "Constraints Experienced

RENRIC is a project for the building of an infrastructure network in the South Asian Countries. It was fully appreciated that institution building is a vital component in development. Unlike building of a dam or a road, institution building in essence is time consuming and is more so in developing countries because of the endemic lethargy inherent in the system.

All the Workshop participants, some of whom were professionals in the area of information were referring to the successful Indian experience that has taken nearly ten years to mature to its present state. It was felt that RENRIC could use the Indian experience to accelerate it's work programme and reduce the period for its maturity.

The RENRIC Project has a duration of one year which in fact is just enough time to get the act together. Other than five broad objectives given in the report, no





modalities of operation were outlined for the Project. The man power to implement this Project was confined to one local consultant and the secretarial support from the existing staff of SACEP. However, an Analyst Programmer was recruited and her training was completed in December 1990 at the Asian Institute of Technology. It will then be noticed that :

- 1) Equipment could only be bought in August as funds were available only at that point of time.
- 2) Full implementation could take place only in September when all the approvals were granted.
- 3) Any data analysis could commence from early December 1990 after the return of the Analyst Programmer after training.

Although the Inception Report of this project was written in July 1990, the Project commenced operations proper in December 1990 with the return of the Analyst programmer after training."

UNQUOTE

On the advice of Mr. A. Azimi of the ADB, a series of activities were proposed to be undertaken by June 1991 (end of the current Project) and they are listed in Annex 3 -, under "Proposed activities up to end of the current Project". The progress so far achieved of each activity outlined is given in the order appearing in Annex 3.



A second visit was undertaken to India by the Senior Consultant during the 3rd week of March. Mr. Harjit Singh, Adviser of the Ministry of Environment & Forests arranged a number of meetings with Senior Officials of the Ministry of Environment & Forests and related institutions including the NGO's such as World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Tata Energy Research Institute (TERI) and Development Alternatives, etc. They all re-iterated their willingness to assist in the establishment and implementation of an expanded RENRIC Project. The Government of India through the Ministry of Environment & Forests re-affirmed their willingness to assist in training and information exchange through their existing networks. In the event a decision is taken to extend the project beyond June 1991 the indian officials were strongly of the opinion that the second phase should follow the recommendation of the RENRIC Workshop held in February 1991 where the focal points are recommended to be strengthened by providing basic component of hardware, software, training and some institutional support so that they could be active participants of the future RENRIC activities. An extract from the recommendations of the Workshop is given below.

**QUOTE**

"The participants were unanimous in their request for RENRIC to seek assistance from various sources for



the establishments of "nascent cells" in their member countries as the "germ" for a comprehensive network. Participants were of the view that if such initial "seed" funding should be found for such a unit for the acquisition of basic equipment such as a computer, printer, and possibly support for at least one professional, the countries themselves would then be able to provide the required office equipment, office space, furniture and the support staff to initiate the working of the cell. It was emphasized that the creation of the information cells at the focal points, would facilitate both the collection and dissemination of information within the country, support the RENRIC network and other networks in or outside region.

While it was felt that the hardware/software could be purchased with relative ease, the training of the professional staff could pose a problem. The Indian delegate informed that his country had adequate facilities for training purposes. Participants suggested that the Indian Regional Service Centre of INFOTERRA should be requested through INFOTERRA PAC, Nairobi to organise a training programme/workshop out of funds already allocated by UNEP.

In order that RENRIC could emerge as a viable unit for effective collection and dissemination of information, the participants were unanimously of the view that the



duration of the project should be extended five years. In this context reference was made to the observation made by the Hon. Minister of Environment and Parliamentary Affairs of the Government of Sri Lanka in his inaugural speech. After detailed discussion and keeping in view norms applied by international donor agencies, it was considered that assistance be sought for a minimum period of two years (that is July 1991 to June 1993). This would enable the member countries to operate these information centres on the completion of this two years period with their own resources. This will also provide the opportunity to the countries concerned to evaluate the usefulness of this exercise and to make necessary provisions in their national plan/budget. It was recommended that SACEP should similarly provide funds within its budget for the continuation of the Project after the second phase."

UNQUOTE

The Ministry of Environment & Forests of India will continue to be the Focal Point for RENRIC. The Ministry has the necessary technical man power and the hardware and software to undertake this responsibility. Mr. Harjit Singh who is designated as the contact person for the RENRIC focal point is an expert in communication and information and has considerable experience in the field.

The Senior Consultant visited Bhutan during the 4th week of March. Mr. D. K. Chhetri, Joint Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs arranged a comprehensive





programme for him to meet the Senior Officials in various development ministries and two Deputy Ministers responsible for Planning and NGO activities. All officers he met were fully conversant with the activities and objectives of RENRIC and they were completely in favour of implementing the recommendations of the Workshop (Please see Annex 3).

One of the objectives in visiting Bhutan was to locate a suitable focal point for the RENRIC project having the capability to undertake implementational responsibilities. This subject was discussed with the Deputy Minister of Social Services Mr. Dato Paljor J. Dorji who is also the President of the Royal Society for the Protection of Nature (NGO) under whom the very successful WWF is operating. While Mr. Dorji welcomed the idea of his organisation acting as the focal Point for RENRIC, he felt that the newly formed National Environment Secretariat (NES) where he is a member of the NES High Level Committee would be a better location for the RENRIC Focal Point as it could then draw resources both from the governmental and non-governmental agencies. The Senior Consultant met with the Deputy Minister of the Planning Commission who agreed that the focal point for RENRIC should be with NES. The following is quoted below from a letter dated 1st April 1991 from Mr. TSHERING TASHI, head of the NES:



## QUOTE

1. NES was established in 1980 by the Royal Government of Bhutan as part of the planning Commission, with Technical and Financial support from DANIDA, the Danish Development Agency.
2. Its work is guided by a high level National Environmental Committee with the Deputy Minister, Planning Commission, as Chairman.
3. The overall goal of the National Environmental Committee is to establish and define policies, plans, organizations and actions whereby the sustainability of resource is fully integrated with every aspect of the country's social and economic development.
4. The objectives of the NES are to enhance the ability of the Planning Commission and other relevant agencies to secure the sustainable development of Bhutan.
5. More specifically :
  - a) To formulate a national environmental strategy
  - b) To institutionalize environmental impact assessments.
  - c) To build up a documentation centre as a focal point for relevant data
  - d) To enhance the knowledge and understanding of environmental matters and sustainability in the Bhutanese community.



We hope that NES will soon be equipped in such a way that it would be a natural focal point for RENRIC.

The kind offer of RENRIC to support this work would therefore seem most welcome and timely. It is critically important that whatever documentation is attempted, it is stored in such a form that it is easily retrievable and fully compatible with other similar centres."

UNQUOTE

Mr. ARNE SCHIOTZ, Senior Technical Advisor to the NES under Danish Assistance (DANIDA) was also associated with the discussions that the Senior Consultant had at NES. He was very supportive of an extended RENRIC Project and was willing to top up the required funds to supplement the contribution from ADB if extra funds are required to equip fully the RENRIC focal point in NES.

The Senior Consultant visited Bangladesh from 30th March to 2nd April. His visit was co-ordinated by Dr. Kamal Siddiqui, Director General of the Department of Environment. Meetings were arranged with Senior Officials of the Ministry of Environment & Forests. They re-iterated the recommendations given in the Workshop regarding the future of the RENRIC Project (See Annex. 3).

Discussions were held with Dr. Kamal Siddiqui, regarding the need to appoint a suitable focal point in the event that this Project is extended. It was fully appreciated that the focal point should have the necessary technical capacity to



implement the extended project. He felt that an association with NGO in this instance would be useful and he introduced the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS), to the Senior Consultant.

Dr. Saleemul Huq and Dr. Atiq Rahman of the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies were contacted and they agreed to cooperate with the Department of Environment to act as the focal point for the RENRIC Project in the event that a decision is taken to extend its period. Please see Annex 4 for a brief background of the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies and a budget to function as the Focal Point for RENRIC. The budget could be trimmed to a lower figure. BCAS indicated that they are in a position to solicit support to top up the fund requirements from other donors if ADB does not come up with all the required funds.

From Dhaka the Consultant visited Bangkok where he met with the officials of UNEP and AIT. The UNEP who helped financially for the organisation of the first RENRIC Workshop in February 1991 was willing to continue their cooperation if the RENRIC Project is extended. The modalities of this cooperation could be discussed after a decision is taken for the extension of the Project.

The Asian Institute of Technology very kindly consented to arrange a training course for the RENRIC personnel. The course content and cost is given in Annex 5.





The Ministry of Environment and parliamentary Affairs of the Government of Sri Lanka fully contribute to the recommendation embodied in the RENRIC Workshop report. The Honorable Minister's inaugural address at the RENRIC Workshop succinctly describes the macro-concept of this Project and the direction it should proceed. Given below is an extract from his address.

**QUOTE**

"I am aware that there have been several operational problems which is a common feature in early phases of project implementation. In view of this and the very nature of this project the duration of this project has to be extended in order to get any meaningful results. I have no doubt that if assistance could be granted to continue this project for a reasonable length of time, the SACEP countries would adopt it as one of its continuing functions. This I think should be the long term objective of this project."

**UNQUOTE**

The Senior Consultant discussed with the Secretary to the Ministry of Environment and Parliamentary Affairs of Sri Lanka with a view to identify a suitable focal point for this Project, processing the required technical man power and other input. The Institution of Engineers of Sri Lanka was contacted regarding this assignment. They have the necessary technical man power and the hardware as



back up for this activity. They have indicated their willingness to participate with RENRIC under the guidance of the Ministry of Environment and Parliamentary Affairs. The details of the cooperation will be discussed with the Ministry of Environment and Parliamentary Affairs, Institution of Engineers and SACEP at a suitable time.

A request was made in March 1991 to the ADB to provide to RENRIC available diskettes on environment profiles of SACEP countries, where ADB is supporting development programs having important environmental components. ADB has replied that they are in the process of preparing those diskettes and that they would be sent to SACEP as soon as they are ready.

Publicity has been given in India, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka regarding the role of RENRIC and an advertisement as appearing in the Annex 2 and the report of the Workshop has appeared in journals and Newspapers in the above four countries.

Requests have been made to international, bilateral and multilateral agencies to share with RENRIC any country profiles they process of the SACEP countries. RENRIC is now in the process of receiving these information.

Requests have been made to all donor agencies to collect,

- \* Inventory of all Government publications (to start with) such as Technical reports, Annual reports, Conference proceedings;



- \* Government sponsored Research Titles
- \* Ongoing and completed research.

RENRIC has contacted the following institutions with the assistance of Environmental Information System (ENVIS) of India to have a link-line/acquire international databases of the following.

-DIALOGUE Database containing several environmental and natural resources databases such as ENVIRONLINE, BIOSIS, POLLUTION CONTROL

- MEDLINE/MEDLARS of USA
- TAGRIS, CARIS, AGRICOLA etc. Aquatic services and Fisheries Information system (ASFIS) of RAO
- IRPTC, Geneva
- GEMS (of UNEP, WHO and others)
- NNRMS (National Natural Resources Management System) of India
- CAB International Oceanographic Commission (IOC)  
Databases (Marine database, Ocean Resources)
- CNRS
- EPA Scientific and Technical Databases

Responses for these requests have been poor and we are now seeking the assistance of UNEP to attain this objective.

RENRIC has in fact completed the work programme for the four month from March to June as given in Annex 3.



RENRIC has published six monographs. .

- 1) Database - Environmental Expertise
- 2) Database - Environmental Training/Research  
Institutions
- 3) Database - Environmental Legislation
- 4) Environmental Information System (ENVIS) of INDIA
- 5) A South Asian Experience on Appropriate Research &  
Development - National Engineering Research &  
Development Centre (NERD), Sri Lanka.
- 6) Social Forestry, A novel approach to the IPIL, IPIL  
Component - Sri Lankan Experience.

In accordance with the recommendation of the 1st Workshop (See Annex 3) and the minutes of the Review Meeting (See Annex 1), a budget to cover a work programme for a period of two years is proposed.





TENTATIVE BUDGET

	<u>US \$</u>
International Consultant	29,000 -----
Remuneration	18,000
Per diem	3,000
International Travel	8,000
Consultancies	25,000 -----
Senior Consultant	96,000 -----
Remuneration	72,000
Regional Travel	15,000
Per diem	9,000
Equipment	20,000 -----
Workshop	20,000 -----
Presentation/Printing	85,000 -----
Focal Point Support	3,50,000 -----
Local Staff Support	20,000 -----
Training	75,000 -----
Contingency	30,000 =====
SACEP Contribution	- US \$ 50,000
Focal Point Contribution	- US \$ 3,00,000



## EXPLANATION OF THE BUDGET

### International Consultant

International Consultant will assist in the implementation of the Project by visits to the SACEP Secretariat during Workshops and any other time considered necessary. He will be responsible alongwith the senior Consultant for the preparation of the final report.

### Consultancies

The need to supply short term consultant at short notice recruited predominantly from within the member countries of SACEP came up for detailed discussion at the Workshop. It was generally appreciated that short term consultant for specific assignments in the related areas of information and communication from member countries can be hired for a payment of token honourarium which could be most effective and enhance the co-operation spirit of technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (TCDC).

### Senior Consultant

The Senior Consultant will be responsible for the day to day implementation, once the basic format for the implementation of the Project is approved by the Consultative Committee of the SACEP and the ADB. He will supervise the procurement of hardware in association with the focal points and draw up a work programme for each of the focal points obtaining assistance if necessary from a Consultant. The Senior



Consultant will monitor the expenditure in accordance with the budget and keep budgeting control in consultation with Director/SACEP. He will be responsible for the overall implementation of the project in consultation with the International Consultant. Director, SACEP will be kept informed of the progress of the Project.

#### Equipment

The secondary storage capacity of the present computer (30 MB) is insufficient. It will be necessary to increase the existing storage capacity or purchase a new computer with a larger storage capacity. A Computer System which has some advanced features such as 80386/80486 Processor, VGA, 2MB RAM, 120 MB hard disc and Modem will be required to carry out the future data processing activities of the RENRIC Project.

A Desk Top Publishing software package with a laser printer together with a scanner is also a necessary requirement.

#### Workshops

Two Workshops are envisaged during the Project period, one at the beginning of the Project and another at the conclusion of the Project.

#### Presentation/Printing

This will be one of the key outputs of the project. Partial financial support may have to be given to the focal points at this phase of the project.



### Focal Point Support

Focal Point Support was one of the key recommendations that came out of the Workshop (See Annex 3). This aspect is considered as a core component in the second phase of the Project. It is suggested that each focal point is provided with hardware to the value of US \$ 50,000 over the two year period. The sum would include the salary of one professional staffer at each of the focal points. Staff support has been a perennial bone of contention in the implementation of foreign aid project. In view of its vital importance and the small sums of money involved this provision is strongly recommended.

### Local Staff Support

While SACEP would provide secretarial and other support staff, it will be necessary for RENRIC to hire one or two professional staff on a contract basis.

### Training

Training is a key element in the second phase of the Project. Cost of training was obtained from the Asian Institute of Technology (See Annex 5).

### Contingencies

Contingencies that is proposed is less than 5% of the total project cost.





### Counterpart Contribution

SACEP would make contribution amounting to US \$ 50,000 by providing transport, office space, office furniture, secretarial and other clerical support to the Project.

The focal points have consented to provide similar support as above plus backup hardware and administrative support to the Project.

### Intended Output

Each focal point will collect all documentation relating to relevant projects and programmes that have been implemented in a given country and also those documentation pertaining to projects and programmes that have been implemented during the last twenty years. The focal points of RENRIC will also make an inventory of all government publications, annual reports, technical reports, government and private sponsored research, both completed and ongoing. All reports of relevant Conferences, Seminars and Workshops etc. held during the last decade will be collected. These documents should be analysed, summarised and stored in a retrievable form. the methodology for such storage and retrieval will be made available to the focal points either through training programmes or consultancy services.

The summarised information gathered by each of the focal point will be sent to RENRIC office in Colombo for storage and reference by other member countries.



Each focal point will be in a position to supply to individuals and institutions, information on ;

- Projects implemented in a country on a given subject during the last ten years.
- Details of costs, implementing agency and donors, etc.
- Degree of success and failures
- Lessons learnt during the implementation phase
- Other relevant information on the projects and programmes that had been implemented and those under implementation.
- The focal point will be in a position to provide information on Conferences, Seminars, Workshops held in the country during a given period. It will also provide the objectives, outcome, recommendations and attendance, etc. of these meetings. This information would be most useful in organising Conferences, Seminars and Workshops, etc. so that their work programmes could be made most effective.

The national focal point can decide to provide this service free of charge or for a fee depending on general policy of the individual institutions in their respective countries.

The RENRIC Cell in Colombo will organise an exchange programme within focal points on selected summarised



information by using diskettes or modem/ID line. This will form a regular feature in order to update the database of the given focal point so that they could profit by the experiences, expertise and training facilities, etc. available in the member countries of SACEP.

RENRIC will also provide on request to member countries and international institutions, details about Conferences, Seminars and Workshops that were held on a given subject in South Asia and eventually in Asia and other parts of the world so that future meetings could be more effectively organised.



MINUTES OF THE  
MID TERM REVIEW MEETING OF RENRIC PROJECT  
HELD ON 25TH FEBRUARY 1991  
AT THE SACEP SECRETARIAT, COLOMBO, SRI LANKA.

PRESENT :

Mr. A M S Hoque	- Director/SACEP
Mr. Ali M Azimi	- ADB
Mr. Harjit Singh	- Chairman, Workshop
Dr. R D Deshpande	- International Consultant
Dr. Leslie Herath	- Senior Consultant
Mr. P N D Abeyegunawardene	- Secretary to the Meeting

The Senior Consultant Dr. Herath handed over the final report of the Workshop to Mr. Azimi, who then after pursuing the Report requested Dr. Deshpande to state the accomplishments and the difficulties encountered in the implementation of RENRIC in the context of the objectives set out in the Inception Report. He also requested ideas and thoughts on how to optimise these objectives.

Dr. Deshpande gave an outline of the Project on these lines and said that RENRIC acquired the necessary equipment in August 1990 and the Project became fully operational only in September 1990. He explained the difficulties experienced by the two consultants in mobilising the support of the focal points which is a vital element for the success of this project.





Dr. Herath spelt out the achievements of the RENRIC Project in spite of the numerous constraints and the fact that the work in fact could commence only after the ESCAP Ministerial Meeting on Environment which was held in Bangkok in October 1990, where the Senior Consultant got an opportunity to meet with Senior Officials of the SACEP member country focal points. He said the Workshop has sensitised the Focal Points to undertake numerous activities including the establishment of individual networking in their respective countries similar to that of ENVIS in India.

Mr. Harjit Singh who represented India at the Workshop said that Indian Institutions can be used to train RENRIC personnel and the modalities of this co-operation could be discussed at an appropriate time.

Dr. Herath also stated the reason behind organising this Mid-Term Workshop, instead of the originally proposed Workshop at the end of the Project, was to make it known to the participating countries the objectives and their obligations for implementation of RENRIC. The Workshop achieved these objectives.

Mr. Harjit Singh who was requested to be present in order to brief the Meeting regarding the Workshop, said that the Workshop was well organised and the attendance was very satisfactory. He outlined briefly the recommendation of the Workshop which is given in detail in the Report of the



Workshop. He felt that the one year duration for a Project of this nature is absolutely inadequate and he felt that the Bank was considering the one year Project as a starting point. He felt that with the given constraints the Project has done well and is ready for a launch. He felt a Project of this nature would require a minimum of five years to be fully operational and that RENRIC has got off to a good start.

Dr. Herath added that this Workshop had served a very useful purpose in making aware and sensitising the participating countries the advantages of such a programme. He was confident that this Project could become self supporting, that is through SACEP member funding, if properly nurtured over time.

Mr. Azimi appreciated the difficulties faced by RENRIC in its early stages and said that it should now set out comprehensive programmes in the coming four months in order to justify its future existence. The activities in essence should be :

- a) To expand the list of networks contacted as cited in the Progress Report and to contact as many networking units in the region and in the world in order to strengthen the RENRIC database as well as to avoid any duplication. This could ideally be done through some form of agreements.



- b) Generate a greater awareness among the Focal Points and in the countries about the existence of RENRIC and its work programme.
- c) Collect documents available of country studies in various institutions including ADB and make them available in a systematic way to agencies undertaking development activities.
- d) Attempt to create a mechanism for the provision of information on Environment and Development for a given country who are members of RENRIC.
- e) In view of the large potential of this Project, the need to give certain incentives to the Focal Points such as ;
  - funds
  - appropriate equipment (including hardware and software
  - international recognition
  - publicise the achievements, etc.
- f) The maximum utilization of available information.
- g) In the selection of Focal Points, NGOs with a track record to be taken into consideration.
- h) Invite donors involved in sub regional, regional and global networking for a donor meeting in order to harness more muscle for the Project.



Mr. Azimi wanted the work programme for the coming four months taking into account the discussion at the meeting. He also wanted an outline for a work programme along with the tentative budget in case this Project is extended for a further period.

P N Dias Abeyegunawardene  
Secretary to the Meeting

CC : Dr. R D Deshpande

Dr. Lelie Herath

Mr. Harjit Singh

Mr. A M S Hoque





A N N E X - 2

REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTRE

Progress Report

July 1990 - January 1991

The "RENRIC" project was completed seven months of operation by the end of January, 1991. The Project implementation has encountered numerous problems as is common to the initial phase of all Projects. The Senior Consultant assisted the International Consultant in the preparation of the Inception Report from the 25th June to the 3rd July. The Inception Report was presented to the Asian Development Bank by the Senior Consultant. The Report was accepted by the Bank with minor alterations. These alterations were incorporated during the 3rd week of July and was immediately couriered to the ADB. I had intimation in the last week of July from the International Consultant that the Bank had accepted the corrected version and that the project could now commence its operation. During the month of July, I contacted all the Focal Points informing them about the RENRIC Project, its objectives and what SACEP would expect from the Focal Points. Up to the end of July no funds were transferred to the RENRIC account due to some formalities with the Central Bank. Unfortunately the Director SACEP was on emergency leave during the preparation of the Inception Report and on his return to the island he wanted certain clarifications from the bank vis-a-vis the Inception Report including the acceptance of the Report in full by the bank due to certain altered strategies adopted in it.



I quote extracts of my report sent to Mr. Hoque, Director SACEP on the 3rd of September 1990.

QUOTE

"during the month of August we have gone through the available data in the SACEP Library. We have found that there are number of networks operating where some of the Member Countries of SACEP are participants. We have written to the following Organizations requesting them to send whatever material they have on the networks operating in the region.

ESCAP

UNEP

AIT

FAO/RWEDP

The relevant letters are attached for your information and record.

As expected, our primary difficulty in the implementation of this Project will be the obtaining of prompt replies from our Focal Points. In this context I have written personal letters to some of the Focal Point members who are known to me. I thank you for volunteering to write to the Bangladesh Focal Point on this subject. I am attaching the letters that I sent for information and record.

There are certain concerns raised by you vis-a-vis the Inception Report and in turn by the Consultative Committee on your brief to them. I have naturally withheld going full throttle in the implementation of the



Project awaiting an official clearance by you and the Consultative Committee. Unfortunately, the meeting due to be held on the 14th August to discuss the Inception Report has to be postponed as I and the Indian Member were not available on that day. I shall be grateful if you could arrange a meeting very early to accept the Report and commence full implementation."

UNQUOTE

Funds were received by ADB after completion of the formalities in June but transferred to the RENRIC account in early August and the following equipment was bought on the specifications and makes recommended by the ADB in their Aid memoire.

Canon NP 3325 (Copier)

Canon AP 6300 (Word Processor)

Canon 450 (Fax)

IBM PS/2 Model 30-f31

PS/2 Monochrome Display 8503

IBM Proprinter XL24E

IBM Printer Cable

Word Perfect Ver 5.1

The ID line was installed in September. The consultative committee formally approved the Inception Report on the 28th September. The Director SACEP had received the necessary clarification confirming the Inception Report was accepted in full by the Bank. The Analyst Programmer was recruited in September. The Project was now fully operational. During



the month of September we contacted the focal points for the third time giving them the approved inception report but the responses were still very poor. In the meantime we contacted and received following data from a number of institutions which would be most useful for our data network.

#### Institutions contacted

1. Institute of Fundamental Studies - SRI LANKA
2. University of Colombo - SRI LANKA
3. UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme - THAILAND
4. AIT - Asian Institute of Technology - THAILAND
5. ESCAP - Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific - THAILAND
6. FAO/RWEDP - Food and Agriculture Organisation/ Regional Wood Energy Development Programme - THAILAND
7. UNESCO - United Nations Educational Scientific & Cultural Organization - FRANCE

#### Documentations received

1. Publications (26 nos.) from RWEDP, Thailand
2. Publications and pamphlets from AIT, Thailand
3. Computer diskettes of Mailing List and Bibliographic Information Databases from RWEDP, Thailand
4. Publications from ENVIS, India
5. Publications from the Tata Energy Institute, India
6. Publications from the Ministry of Environment & Forests, India

#### Network memberships

RERIC (Regional Energy Resources Information Center) and  
ENSIC (Environmental Sanitation Information Center)





memberships from AIT, Thailand for all 7 focal points. In view of the fact that responses from the Focal Points were poor, I in consultation with the Bank and the Director SACEP attended the ESCAP Ministerial Level Conference on Environment and Development in Asia & the Pacific held in Bangkok. One of the objectives of my attending this meeting was to meet all the Senior Officials of the Focal Points of SACEP who would attend this meeting. This was a successful meeting as SACEP & RENRIC was concerned as I was able to personally meet with the Senior Officials and discuss the modus operandi for the implementation of the Project and the benefits that would accrue to the member countries in the long run. Unfortunately Bangladesh and Afghanistan were not represented at this meeting.

I met with Dr. Bindu Lohani, Acting Assistant Chief, Office of the Environment of ADB, at this meeting and impressed on him of the need to bring officials of the Focal Points for a workshop for a better understanding of this Project. He agreed to the idea. Funds from the contingency vote could be used for this Workshop and that Dr. Lohani gave the necessary approval.

I contacted Mr. Goh Kiam Seng, Director & Regional Representative of Asia & the Pacific of UNEP and requested him for assistance to conduct the RENRIC Workshop and thereby renew the contacts with SACEP to which he agreed. He wanted



certain details of the workshop to be discussed with Mr. Onagawa the Deputy of Mr. Goh Kiam Seng. .In this context, I quote a fax sent to Mr. Goh Kiam Seng.

QUOTE

"I met with Mr.Onagawa and discussed possible areas of co-operation with RENRIC/SACEP and UNEP/ROAP. Please refer to my fax R/UNEP/90/3 of 23rd October 1990, where I have given the breakdown of the funds requested from you, viz US \$ 4,378/- for the RENRIC Workshop. I had a very successful visit to India where they have consented RENRIC to use the Database available in WWF Secretariat, Development Alternatives Institutes headed by Dr. Kosla, former director of Infoterra, TATA Engineering Research Institute and UNEP South Asia Centre of Infoterra which is housed in the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

They are proposing to send at their cost Dr.Koshoo, former Secretary of Ministry of Environment and Forests as a Resource person. Mr.Harjit Singh, Advisor to the Ministry of Environment and Forests and one other will participate at the Workshop and they have promised to present a comprehensive set of Indian experiences for discussion and adoption at the Workshop. pakistan, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka indicated their willingness to participate at the



Workshop. We are still to hear from Bangladesh and Afghanistan. The Schedule of the Workshop tentatively will be :

Day 1

09.00 - 11.00 A.M.	Inaugural Sessions
11.30 - 13.00 P.M.	Election of Office Bearers & Introductory Address by a Resource Person, either by Dr. Vespry of AIT or Dr. Koshoo of India.
14.00 - 17.00 P.M.	Presentation of Indian Experiences by Mr. Harjit Singh
14.00 - 17.00 hrs.	

Day 2

08.30 - 13.00 P.M.	Presentation of Sri Lanka/Pakistan experiences
14.00 - 18.00 P.M.	Field Trip to National Engineering & Research Development Centre

Day 3

08.30 - 10.00 A.M.	Discussions of the Presentations made
10.30 - 12.00 Noon	Discussions on the future of the RENRIC Project



12.00 - 16.00 P.M. Free  
16.00 - 17.00 P.M. Adoption of the Report  
Closing session

Following institutions would participate at the Workshop.

SACEP Secretariat

Asian Development Bank - ADB

Asian Institute of Technology - AIT

United Nations Environment Programme - UNEP

UNDP Resident Representative, Sri Lanka and

A no. of Local Government and NGOs " UNQUOTE

Responses were received from all the Focal Points contacted. It was realised that our "man power resource base" is very limited to implement in any meaningful way a network programme like that of RENRIC having very ambitious objectives. In this context I quote an extract of a letter addressed to Dr. B. N. Lohani, Acting Assistant Chief, Office of the Environment, Asian Development Bank.

QUOTE

"In my discussions with various networking arrangements I noticed that most of them were in association with a University or an Institute that has resource personnel covering different disciplines. This indeed is most convenient as an





organisation such as SACEP has very limited resource capabilities. I have therefore taken the liberty to discuss with the University of Colombo a possible symbiotic association, specially the Institute of Computer Technology. Their initial responses were very favourable and they obviously wanted to know the nature of the relationship and our mutual obligations. I thought I would respond to them after discussing this with you and possibly getting some guidelines regarding the nature of our relationship if this exercise should be a meaningful one. I shall be most grateful to have your reactions to this proposal. I am sending the brochures etc. of the University of Colombo and the Institute of Computer Technology.

Please find a photocopy of a fax message that I received from Director UNEP/ROAP which is self explanatory. They will bear some of the Workshop costs.

Dr. Vespry of the AIT kindly volunteered to train the RENRIC officer assigned for data input without any charge. I have persuaded the Officer concerned to pay the travel cost and RENRIC will pay 16 days per diem at US \$ 40/- the sum recommended by ADB. This will be paid from the contingency allocation in the budget."



## UNQUOTE

A very positive response was received from the ADB to the above suggestion. Discussion is now under way to arrive at a working relationship with the University of Colombo.

The Analyst programmer of the RENRIC Project, Miss K.G.R.Kariyawasam participated in the training programme on ADVANCED MICRO CDS/ISIS Software Package (which is used for the implementation of the RENRIC databases), conducted by the Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand during month of November.

During the months of October, November and December we have conducted a complete bibliographic search of the Focal Points under reference in the area of ;

Environmental Expertise

Environmental Research & Training Institutes

Environmental Legislation

The first two items were completed while the third is in progress. Our findings were sent to the respective focal Points for their comments and upgrading. Two documents viz Environmental Expertise and Environmental Training/Research Institutions are now published and the document on Environmental Legislation will be ready by the 20th of March.



At the invitation of the Government of India the International Consultant and I visited Delhi from the 8th to the 14th of December 1990. The following meetings were arranged.

- With Mr. Harjit Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment & forest.  
There were separate meetings with his staff.
- With Mr. Ashok Kosla, former Director of Infoterra, UNEP and present Chairman of Development Alternatives. Separate meetings were arranged with his staff.
- With Mr. Rajendra K. Pachauri, Director TATA Energy Research Institute and his staff.
- With Mr. Thomas Mathew, Secretary General, World Wide Fund for Nature, India (WWF).
- With Mr. Mahesh Prasad, Secretary to the Ministry of Environment & Forest.

The Ministry of Environment & Forest in India was most cooperative. The WWP of India, Development Alternatives, TATA Energy Research Institute and Solar Energy Society of India consented to give RENRIC access to their huge data banks collected over the year at great cost. RENRIC in consultation with the respective institutions will have to develop modalities for access to their information which will be a subject of discussion at the forthcoming Workshop. The Ministry of Environment and Forest will designate Harjit Singh, Joint Secretary/Advisor a senior professional in the field of information and communication to act as a Resource



Person for the duration of the RENRIC Project. He will present two case studies at the Workshop, viz

- The development of the anatomy of the very successful ENVIS network for possible simulation in the member countries of SACEP.
- The methodology applied in India for the balance utilization of NGO efforts.

The Ministry of Environment & Forest will allow RENRIC to use their Infoterra Data bank free of charge including the cost of postage for answering of queries. The enclosed advertisement (annex 1) will appear in Sri Lankan News papers as a first instance and in the regional papers if the responses are favourable. The Ministry of Environment & Forests consented to arrange training courses on information and communication in institutes in India if a well planned request is made to them by RENRIC.

The Honourable Minister of Environment & Parliamentary Affairs of the Government of Sri Lanka has kindly consented to appoint a very Senior Officer of the Ministry to assist in the "Collation & Collection of data" with a view to assist the RENRIC Project. I quote extract from his letter.





QUOTE

"I am sure that with some extra efforts, we could improve the performance of this and similar sub-regional projects through greater co-operation among member countries. This is also perhaps one aspect which we need to strengthen for increasing the bargaining position of South Asian countries at the forthcoming sessions of the UNCED Conference during 1992 in Brazil.

However, in regard to the Inception Report of the RENRIC Project, my Ministry will be willing to assist you and this Project in whatever way possible to make it a success. In this connection I am also herewith attaching a list of activities that we propose to launch during 1991, which will also be most relevant and useful for your Data Bank.

I am also seeking assistance from other international agencies for this purpose. With a view to supporting some of the key programmes of SACEP, I am agreeable in the first instance to assign a Senior Officer to co-ordinate the RENRIC project activities from this end for a period of six months from 1st January, and to review its continuation after this period."

UNQUOTE

The project was rather inactive during the first three months due to a variety of reasons. However during the



second quarter it has picked up a satisfactory momentum and the project will have to be evaluated at the "Mid-term review meeting" due to be held in February 1991 in order to determine its future course of action.



INFORMATION

KEY TO DEVELOPMENT

Regional Environmental & Natural Resources Information Centre (RENRIC) a Project funded by the Asian Development Bank in collaboration with the UNEP funded INFOTERRA sub regional centre of South Asia situated in New Delhi and in association with our data bank will attempt to answer all queries on the following subject matter areas related to the environment.

ENERGY AND TRANSPORT

FOREST AND WILD LIFE

TOXIC WASTE

COASTAL MANAGEMENT

LEGAL ASPECTS

HUMAN SETTLEMENT

POLLUTION CONTROL

AGRICULTURE

URBANIZATION

POLLUTION

OR

any other in the field of environment.

This service is rendered free of charge. Please send your queries with a self addressed stamped envelope to;

DR. LESLIE HERATH, SENIOR CONSULTANT,  
RENRIC PROJECT,  
SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME  
84, LORENSZ ROAD,  
COLOMBO 04, SRI LANKA.

Fax No. 589369

If the queries have to be referred to the Infoterra Centre in New Delhi, it would take approximately six weeks to get your answers.

ADB/SACEP Project



ANNEX - 3





SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE  
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME  
No. 84, Lorensz Road,  
Colombo 04, SRI LANKA.

Tel : 582553, Fax : 589369, Cable: SACEP Tlx 21494 Global CE  
-----

27th February, 1991.

Dear Mr. Azimi,

Reference the discussion that Dr. Deshpande and I had with you yesterday, I am giving below the achievement of this Project to date, constraints experienced and a work plan for the coming four months.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

Leslie Herath

Senior Consultant/RENRIC

CC : Dr. Deshpande, Consultative Com. Members  
International Consultant/RENRIC

BACKGROUND

The Inception Report of the RENRIC Project was approved by the ADB in mid July 1990 and was cleared for implementation by SACEP in September 1990. Even the funds sent by the ADB in July was available only in August for the RENRIC Project due to some formalities expected of SACEP by the Central Bank. All the focal points, however were contacted in July 1990, but their



responses were poor. The focal points of the RENRIC Project were met at the Ministerial Meeting held by ESCAP in Bangkok during October 1990. It transpired that most of the focal points were unaware of the objectives of this project and their obligations in return to RENRIC. The reasons for the time slippage in the launching of RENRIC are endemic not only in the South Asian Region but also other parts of South East Asia and the Pacific where simple environmental data/information gathering has to be done not through communications but using very often consultants.

Due to the lack of awareness of this Project amongst the focal points, approval was obtained from the ADB to hold a Workshop with the objective of briefing the focal points regarding the RENRIC project and to obtain their views regarding the direction of its future course if this Project is considered useful. Annex I gives the "Recommended Course of Action".

#### Achievements of RENRIC

1. Conducted a complete bibliographic search of the focal points under reference and the following documents were produced.

- a) Environmental Expertise
- b) Environmental Training/Research Institutions
- c) Environmental Legislation (in print)

These databases are computerised using CDS/ISIS software and made available also in print form. The databases can



be periodically updated and sent in the form of floppies/print form to member countries.

2) Contacted the following institutions and they have consented to make available their data for the use of RENRIC.

- a) INFOTERRA Sub Regional Centre situated in Delhi, India.
- b) ENVIS Network of India
- c) Development Alternatives, India
- d) Tata Energy Research Institute, India
- e) World Wide Fund for Nature, India
- f) Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand
- g) ESCAP
- h) FAO/RWEDP - Regional of Wood Energy Development Programme, Thailand
- i) World Press Centre - Ocean Service
- j) UNESCO, etc.

3. The following documents were received by RENRIC

- a) Publications (26 nos.) from RWEDP, Thailand
- b) Publications and pamphlets from AIT, Thailand
- c) Computer diskettes of Mailing List and Bibliographic Information databases from RWEDP, Thailand.
- d) Publications from ENVIS, India.
- e) Publications from Tata Energy Research Institute, India
- f) Publications from the Ministry of Environment and Forests, India



It was generally felt that the conducting of a well attended Workshop created an awareness regarding the usefulness of an organised information network and the member countries were keen in establishing their individual network similar to ENVIS of India so that relevant information could be disseminated within the country and among the member countries via RENRIC. They requested "Seed" funding for this activity. Please see Annex I for details.

The member countries identified some of the monographs that they would like published arising out of the Workshop.

RENRIC has got the assurance from the Ministry of Environment and Forests of India to train RENRIC Personnel. The modalities of this co-operation will be discussed at an appropriate time.

#### Constraints Experienced

RENRIC is a Project for the building of an infrastructure network in the South Asian Countries. It was fully appreciated that institution building is a vital component in development. Unlike building of a dam or a road, institution building in essence is time consuming and is more so in the developed countries because of the endemic lethargy inherent in the system. All the Workshop participants, some of whom were professionals in the area of information were referring to the successful Indian experience that has taken nearly ten years to





mature to its present state. It was felt that RENRIC could use the Indian experience to accelerate its work programme and reduce the period for its maturity.

The RENRIC Project has a duration of one year which in fact is just enough time to get the act together. Other than five broad objectives given in the report no modalities of operation were outlined for the Project. The man power to implement this Project was confined to one local consultant and the secretarial support from the existing staff of SACEP. However, an Analyst Programmer was recruited and her training was completed in December 1990 at the Asian Institute of Technology. It will then be noticed that :

- 1) Equipment could only be bought in August as funds were available only at that point of time.
- 2) Full implementation could take place only in September when all the approvals were granted.
- 3) Any data analysis could commence from early December 1990 after the return of the Analyst Programmer after training.

Although the Inception Report of this Project was written in July 1990, the Project commenced operations proper in December 1990 with the return of the Analyst Programmer after training.



#### PROPOSED ACTIVITIES UP TO THE END OF THE CURRENT PROJECT

- Visit the member countries that have shown interest in establishing networking mechanisms and identify active focal points either from Government or from Non Governmental organizations. This activity will be done in consultation with country focal points.
- An immediate request will be made to the ADB for providing diskettes on the environmental profiles of SACEP countries and on development activities supported by the ADB in these countries having an important environmental component.
- Action will be taken at the national level, of each RENRIC focal point to give wide publicity through journals, Newsletters and newspapers about the RENRIC Activities. Whatever action that is feasible to increase the visibility of RENRIC Project will be undertaken. The beginning on these lines has already been made in Sri Lanka.
- An attempt will be made to collect country profiles of all the SACEP Countries that are available with the international agencies and bilateral donors. This information will at a later day form the basis to prepare diskettes/monographs and distributed via National Focal Points to user institutions.



- RENRIC will seek the following information from member countries on a regular basis.

\* Inventory of all Government publications (to start with) such as Technical reports, Annual reports, Conference proceedings;

\* Government sponsored Research Titles

\* Ongoing and completed research.

Development of a computerised data bank will be initiated after analysis of the data collected. The clearing house thus should be in a position to enhance the intellectual aspect of access to information. Efforts to improve this area of access will work towards greater economy and efficiency in bibliographic and subject identification and analysis of documents, centralised recalls of location, etc.

- RENRIC will make an attempt to have a link-line/acquire international databases such as :

- DIALOGUE Database containing several environmental and natural resources databases such as ENVIRONMENTAL, BIOSIS, POLLUTION CONTROL.

- MEDLINE/MEDLARS of USA

- TAGRIS, CARIS, AGRICOLA, etc. Aquatic services and Fisheries Information system (ASFIS) of RAO

- IRPTC, Geneva



- GEMS (of UNEP, WHO and others)
- NNRMS (National Natural Resources Management System) of India
- CAB International Oceanographic Commission (IOC) Databases (Marine database, Ocean Resources)
- CNRS
- At an appropriate time RENRIC will approach the international organisations and bilateral donors to acquaint them of the work done by holding a one day meeting if the activity could generate considerable support and interest for RENRIC.

RENRIC Clearing House will be designed so as to complement, and not replace the information sources of the more mission oriented agencies. It should concentrate on answering general subject inquiries leaving the other agencies (specialised) in member countries to handle the specialised questions in their respective fields. The clearing house thus should serve as a starting point for inquiries and thus it should form a core resource to the more specialised information centres as well as for the public.

The motto of RENRIC is indeed to avoid the "RE DISCOVERY OF THE WHEEL."





## RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION

The participants welcomed the initiative taken by SACEP for the formulation and implementation of the RENRIC Project with the assistance from the Asian Development Bank. The suggestions contained in the Inception Report and the need for further strengthening of the project were endorsed by the Workshop. This will enable RENRIC to meet specific information requirements of member countries and also collectively of the sub-region. Taking into account the activities of the international organisations such as UNEP, FAO etc. in the field of environmental information, it was suggested that RENRIC would work in close co-operation with these organisations and seek their assistance and co-operation whenever required so as to avoid any duplication. RENRIC would thus emerge as an effective supplementary mechanism for meeting specific information needs of SACEP countries.

Country presentations other than that of India indicated very strongly that their countries do not possess an adequate environmental information gathering and dissemination mechanism. In this context the participants felt that, RENRIC could play a very crucial role in strengthening the existing information nodes in



the individual countries, and eventually create an effective network among these nodes. The role played so far by RENRIC has galvanised member countries of the need to establish an information network as it constitutes an important parameter in the activities contemplated in the areas of environment and development by the respective countries.

The participants were unanimous in their requests for RENRIC to seek assistance from various sources for the establishments of "nascent cells" in their member countries as the "germ" for a comprehensive network. Participants were of the view that if such initial "seed" funding should be found for such a unit for the acquisition of basic equipment such as a computer, printer, and possibly support for at least one professional, the countries themselves would then be able to provide the required office equipment, office space, furniture and the support staff to initiate the working of the cell. It was emphasized that the creation of the information cells at the focal points, would facilitate both the collection and dissemination of information within the country, support the RENRIC network and other networks in or outside region.

While it was felt that the hardware/software could be purchased with relative ease, the training of the professional staff could pose a problem. The Indian



delegate informed that his country had adequate facilities for training purposes. Participants suggested that the Indian Regional Service Centre of INFOTERRA should be requested through INFOTERRA PAC, Nairobi to organise a training programme/workshop out of funds already allocated by UNEP.

In order that RENRIC could emerge as a viable unit for effective collection and dissemination of information, the participants were unanimously of the view that the duration of the project should be extended five years. In this context reference was made to the observation made by the Hon. Minister of Environment and parliamentary Affairs of the Government of Sri Lanka in his inaugural speech. After detailed discussion and keeping in view norms applied by international donor agencies, it was considered that assistance be sought for a minimum period of two years (that is July 1991 to June 1993). This would enable the member countries to operate these information centres on the completion of this two year period with their own resources. This will also provide the opportunity to the countries concerned to evaluate the usefulness of this exercise and to make necessary provisions in their national plan/budget. It was recommended that SACEP should similarly provide funds within its budget for the continuation of the project after the second phase.

The participants appreciated the efforts of RENRIC in bringing out the following monographs:



1. Database - Environmental Expertise
2. Database - Environmental Institutions              Training/  
   Research
3. Database - Environmental Legislation  
   (Under print)

The participants commended this activity and urged that this be continued and that additional monographs be brought out on specific topics of information relevant to the countries. The participants desired that the presentation made by Dr. A N S Kulasinghe for the utilisation of renewable energy resources such as biomass, wind and solar be printed for distribution among the member countries as some of the devices were not adequately known in other countries in the region. Similarly experience of the Environmental Information System of India (ENVIS) presented by Mr. Harjit Singh was recommended by the participants for publication as a monograph, as it would provide a guideline framework for similar efforts in the member countries of SACEP.

It was considered that RENRIC should take necessary initiatives to obtain the services of consultants from resources of other international agencies for this project. It was suggested that SACEP also should be an avenue through which member countries could obtain Consultancy services for the establishment of the information network and other information activities. Money could be allocated from the RENRIC project so that member countries could release experts on request by



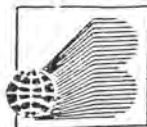


other countries within the region on the payment of a nominal honorarium. This would be a very cost effective method of obtaining pertinent expertise. It was suggested that the SACEP Newsletter be used for publishing the activities of RENRIC without initiating a separate Newsletter for this RENRIC Project.

The participants and the Director, SACEP commended the work done by the International Consultant and the Senior Consultant in getting this project implemented given the number of constraints encountered and the unavoidable problems common in the commencement of a new project. It was specifically stated by the delegates that the joint experiences both nationally and internationally of the two consultants is invaluable for further implementation of the project.

The delegates wanted to place on record their appreciation of the financial assistance given by UNEP Regional Office for Asia and Pacific in meeting part of their travel cost. Participants concluded by thanking RENRIC and SACEP for the excellent arrangements made for this Workshop and ADB for the generous support given to the SACEP countries.





# BANGLADESH CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES

620 Road 10 A (New) Dhanmondi, GPO Box 3971 Dhaka 1205 Bangladesh  
Tel : 315793, 310538, 815829 Tlx : 657634 642940 Fax : (880 2) 833379, 833664

1 April 1991

Dr. Leslie Herath  
Senior Consultant-Renric  
C/o. SACEP  
84, Lorensz Road  
Colombo 4, Sri Lanka.

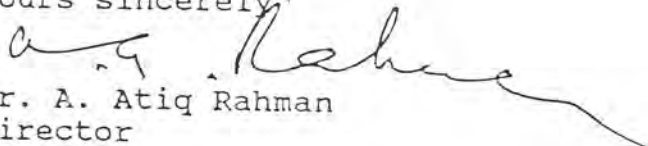
Dear Dr. Herath

Further to our recent meetings in Dhaka and your visit to BCAS on April 1, 1991 enclosed please find a short letter of interest, an introduction to BCAS and a tentative budget.

The RENRIC approach is very similar to our approach and felt needs in environment information management in Bangladesh and in the South Asian Region. As such BCAS would be most interested to work as the Bangladesh Focal Point of RENRIC.

I look forward to hearing from you soon and working together in the near future.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. A. Atiq Rahman  
Director

F-Leslie  
D-354/91



**BANGLADESH FOCAL POINT  
OF  
REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL  
AND  
NATURAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER**

**SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME  
(SACEP)**

APRIL - 1991

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**BANGLADESH CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES**

620 Road 10 A (New) Dhanmondi, GPO Box 3971 Dhaka 1205 Bangladesh  
Tel: 315793, 310538, 815829 Tlx: 657634 642940 Fax: (880 2) 833379, 833664



## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1. BCAS and Environmental Information

Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) has emerged as the leading centre in Bangladesh for dissemination of environment information both nationally and globally. It has been publishing the Bangladesh Environmental Newsletter, several books including (a) Environmental Aspects of Agricultural Development in Bangladesh, (b) Environment Aspects of Surface Water System of Bangladesh (c) Bangladesh Environmental Profile (d) Inland Fisheries Management in Bangladesh (e) Trees and Tenure in Bangladesh (f) Forest Resource Management in Bangladesh (g) Creative Development : An unfinished saga of human aspiration in South Asia and many reports and monographs on Resource Management, Environment and Development (RMED) issues.

Besides it has been working closely with many regional, particularly in South Asia and global institutions and large number of local, regional and international NGOs and also acts a focal point for several environmental, information and development networks. BCAS has its own basic infra-structure and expert manpower to conduct in a limited way this role of environmental information dissemination.

### 2. Bangladesh Focal Point

BCAS considers it of utmost importance that the environmental information be accessed more efficiently and disseminated more effectively both in the country to the government, NGOs, private sector and international organisations and globally. BCAS would be most interested to act as the Bangladesh Focal Point of the Regional Environmental and Natural Resource Information Centre, (RENDRIC) SACEP.

Enclosed below is a short summary of BCAS activities and a tentative budget requirement to undertake these activities and extend the environmental information network.

## II. BANGLADESH CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES

### Introduction :

3. Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) is an independent, non-profit making, non-government research organization serving as :

- a) a leading Bangladesh organization working on Resource Management, Environment and Development (RMED) issues.
- b) a focal point of the existing, but often diffused intellectual and scientific energy and manpower to develop national capability to address and focus on RMED issues particularly in multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary areas;
- c) a forum to develop appropriate scientific methodologies to address the long term planning and people's issues;





- d) an electronic data bank to develop a data base on RMED; and
- e) a think tank or a policy institute to address RMED issues.

4. BCAS is staffed by high level professionals mostly with training, research and working/academic experience in the western education and universities. It raised its first issues (Environmental Aspects of Agriculture and Surface Water Systems) in 1986, started its follow-up activities and raised two other issues (Social Forestry and National Conservation Strategy) in 1987 and started having some full time staff from October 1987 and expanded its activities.

## BCAS ACTIVITIES

5. Following are the ongoing programmes of BCAS in RMED, though it is working on other programmes on national policies, publications, environment development interaction, basic science amongst others:

### Environmental Aspects of Agricultural Development and Surface Water Systems

6. Having identified and raised this as a major national issue in 1986. BCAS is conducting the following research programmes on Bangladesh.

- Impact on selected flood control, drainage and irrigation projects (FCDI)

- Impact of ground water abstraction

- Impact and optimization of shrimp farming in Bangladesh coastal area

- Role of nutrition and women in agricultural decision making (at the macro and micro levels)

- Depressed basin ecosystem and aquatic productivity

- Status of pollution

- Domestic/sanitation pollution

- Agrochemical pollution

- Industrial pollution

### Social Forestry Issues

7. Working with local experts, local groups and some international input (Universities of Yale and Berkeley, California, USA). Main focus is on :

- Trees and tenure (five on-going research projects)

- Trees and women

- Homestead forestry

- Trees and conflicts

- National capability and training in social forestry

- Forestry Policy issues.



## Fisheries Policy and Sustainability

8. BCAS is the Monitoring Unit of the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) New Fisheries Management Policies for open water, common property fisheries. In this BCAS is working with GOB, fishermen, NGOs and ICLARM, Manila. BCAS is also working with ODA, Universities of Bath and Sterling in U. K. on aquaculture, its methodologies and monitoring.

## State of the Environment Report (SOER) : A Citizens Report

9. BCAS is the coordinator and the implementing agency of this peoples report funded by the Consortium of 23 national NGOs and addressing people's perception and definition of :

- their environment
- their own needs
- their own priorities and
- indigenous technology and knowledge
- Urban Environment and Urban Health

## Urban Environment and Urban Health

- Health services and their accessibility
- Status of Urban health
- Perceptions of consumers of health services about
- Health professionals and vice-versa
- Environment health issues in the Metropolis
- Environmental health issues in the smaller cities.

## Energy

- Biomass and agro-forestry
- Rural electrification and its impacts (A USAID supported study has been completed).

## Entrepreneurship

- Rural Entrepreneurship
- Micro Entrepreneurship

## Global Climatic Change and Bangladesh

10. Science and Background knowledge (from leading international agencies and research centres through linkages).

## Impacts on Bangladesh

- Sea level rise
- Productivity
- Ecosystems
- Climate and natural hazards

## Responses

- Global
- Government and Institutional
- People's



## Natural Hazard Management

People's coping strategies  
People's perceptions  
Scientific and Policy issues

## Organization and Management

11. It has a small core activity (two full time directors, approximately ten professionals, a dozen full time field researchers and another dozen computer/information and logistic staff). But BCAS's main strength is the FELLOWS of BCAS who are experts working in the universities, the research centres, national and international agencies, NGOs and the private sector. Seventy (70) to two hundred (200) of these national fellows work with varying degrees of time commitment in different interdisciplinary groups (of usually 6 to 10). Besides, there is a large body of INTERNATIONAL FELLOWS who work or have expertise (some of the time with the BCAS national fellows) in RMED issues or in Bangladesh. They are usually recognized as international experts working in the leading universities, research centres, NGOs and other agencies in many countries all over the world.

12. BCAS raises RMED issues of national importance, through brain storming and wide ranging consensus building, identifies research agenda, priorities and develops appropriate interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research projects and research methodologies. These projects are carried out by BCAS Fellows who are drawn from different disciplines including natural, social, engineering and health science and from many different institutes from over Bangladesh and abroad.

13. BCAS works closely, with a number of national and international agencies including the Government of Bangladesh and its agencies, national and international NGOs, other development agencies (Ford Foundation, NORAD, USAID, Danida, CIDA, WHO, UNDP, ADB amongst others). But so far funding has been very limited and all existing funding is project or soft funding.

14. Project by project BCAS links up with varying degrees of interaction with centres of excellence all over the world which have relevant and appropriate experiences, methodologies and knowledge base. Examples are, BCAS is working closely in Social Forestry with Universities of Berkeley and Yale in USA, Agriculture University, Norway, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute, Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council amongst many others. Another example is that on environmental issues BCAS works with the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), London, Centre for Environmental Management and Planning (CEMP), Aberdeen University, UK, World Resources Institute (WRI), Washington D.C., IUCN and WWF amongst many others.

15. At the national policy level the BCAS Fellows interact closely with policy planners, government agencies, donors and NGOs so that the results of BCAS research can be used at both policy and implementation levels. BCAS also works on peoples developmental and environmental issues and attempts to incorporate these to the national policy and planning.



TENTATIVE BUDGET

Facilities	Support from RENRIC (US \$)	Support offered BY BCAS (US \$)
1. Hardware (1 unit)	12,000	12,000
1.1 C.P.U 80386 IBM compatible with V.G.A., Modem & 120 MB Hard Disc		
1.2 Laser Printer	3,000	3000
1.3 Photocopier (High speed)	6,000	3000
1.4 Fax	4,000	Operational costs
1.5 Telex	3,000	
2. Softwares		
2.1 ICIS	3,000	PC-TALIC
2.2 Word Processor	1,000	COM-BASE
2.3 Desktop Publications	1,500	Wordstar
		Wordperfect
		Operational costs
3. Communications/ Electronic Mail system		
IDD line	3,000 (installation)	Operational cost
4. Personnel (2 years)		
4.1 Coordinators 2mm x 2 years=4mm	10,000	--
4.2 Project Manager : 0.5 x 24=12mm	12,000	12,000
4.3 Documentation officer 0.5 x 24=12 mm	6,000	6,000
4.4 Secretarial Services	--	12,000
5. Publications Printing etc	10,000 (L.S)	2,000
6. Establishment		
6.1 Office space 2 rooms	--	6,000
6.2 Library space	--	4,000
7. Contingency	1,000	--
<b>Total =</b>	<b>US \$ 84,500</b>	<b>US \$ 60,000 + Services</b>







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Library and Regional Documentation Center  
Facsimile Transmission

To : Dr. Leslie Herath, Senior Consultant  
RENRIC - SACEP Program, Colombo, Sri Lanka  
Fax no. 94 - 1 - 57 47 61

From : Mr. H. Arthur Vaspry, LRDC Director *H. Vaspry*  
Fax Nos. (662) 524-5870, 516-2126

Re : Program Brief of Proposed Basic Training on Database  
Management and Preparation of Information Products  
for Information Officers of SACEP Focal Points

Date : 23 April 1991

Ref. : LRDC/T-Fx165

Your inquiry about a customized training program for SACEP's Information Officers is greatly appreciated.

In this connection, please find, the Program Brief of an 8-week Basic Course on Information Products Preparation and Database Structuring and Application at the LRDC for ten (10) Information Officers of SACEP Focal Points in Asia.

The programming of this 8-week course was based on the information you gave in terms of basic training needs namely the preparation of abstracts, indexes, and bibliographies and the use of CDS/ISIS.

Since the trainees will be working with computers, we believe it essential that they be trained to use other software packages for machine and database maintenance such as PC Tools, Norton Commander. We will try to compress these into the present timeframe but I would prefer to give the trainees a bit more time if you can finance it.

The coverage of the specified important subjects of the course can be adjusted depending on the trainees' knowledge level and experience.

Please let us know if you need more information. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you and my best personal regards.



Asian Institute of Technology  
Library and Regional Documentation Center

Basic Course on Information Products Preparation and  
Database Structuring and Application

Program Brief

General Objectives:

- To train Information Specialists of SACEP Focal Points:
- o To prepare information products specifically indexes, abstracts, and bibliographies using the CDS/ISIS program,
  - o To define and set-up a network database suited to the needs and resources of the program and their organization, and
  - o To retrieve, for efficient information dissemination, from the the database constructed.

Syllabus:

Subject	Schedule of Coverage
Principles and Techniques in Database Structuring, Worksheet Design and Completion for Networks	Week One
Introduction to Microcomputers	Week Two
Applications of Database Management Software: Micro CDS/ISIS	Week Three to Week Six
Principles and Techniques in the Preparation of Information Products namely, Indexes, Abstracts, Bibliographies, and In-house publications eg. newsletters using Desktop Publishing	Week Seven and Week Eight

Methodologies

- o Lecture-discussion
- o Hands-on through individual and group exercises and projects
- o Tutorials: Supervised and Self-study using VTR and Diskettes

Note: Each trainee will have a personal computer for their exclusive use for the duration of the course.

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## Duration

Eight (8) weeks consisting of forty (40) actual training days at six (6) hours/day formal classroom session with after-class supervised tutorials as needed/desired by the trainees and self-study sessions using the VTR/diskettes.

Tentative Schedule: January 15 to February 28, 1992

## Evaluation Provisions

Trainee Evaluation Points : Attitude, Skills Application  
Strengths, Areas for Improvement

Program Evaluation Points : Content areas, Trainers, Materials,  
Methodologies, Schedule

Evaluation Reference Points:

- o Quality of Trainee's Outputs
- o Quality of Participation in the Program

Evaluation Activities & Materials:

- o Guided practical sessions
- o Consultation sessions
- o Questionnaire before, during, and at the end of the 8-week course.

## Cost

Course Fee (includes tuition, materials,  
computer time, accident insurance)

US \$ 2,600/trainee x 10 trainees

US \$ 26,000

Notes:

o Per diem rates depend on the sponsoring agency. The rates applied to trainees at AIT range from US \$ 33 to 40/day/trainee which includes: accommodation, meals, and incidentals.

Cost of accommodations on and off campus range from US \$ 15 to 13/person.

AIT - LRDC/RCC, P.O. BOX 2754 PANAMA

