INFORAT

RENEWABLE NATURAL RESOURCES INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION CENTER FOR TROPICAL AMERICA

Proposal to be presented to different donor agencies in application for financing to continue and reinforce this service unit's activities during the period 1988 - 1993

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SUMMARY

The factors hindering production, distribution, collection and processing of forestry information in Latin America are established. Faced with the existing problems, the Tropical Agriculture Research and Teaching Center (CATIE) and the Swiss Development Cooperation (COSUDE) signed a cooperative agreement for the formation of the service unit Forestry Information and Documentation for Tropical America (INFORAT) which started work in July 1979.

INFORAT was set up with two basic objectives: to publish forestry information generated by DRNR and assemble forestry information produced in Latin America for processing and distribution.

INFORAT's achievements in the areas of bibliographic information processing and production of publications is mentioned. Based on an appraisal of INFORAT's current situation, a general and three specific objectives for the new phase are defined.

- 1. Coordinate actions and unify criteria for bibliographic information processing among documentation centers and libraries for renewable natural resources within Latin America.
- 2. Retrieve bibliographic information on renewable natural resources in the Tropics and distribute it to INFORAT users.
- 3. Encourage the production and distribution of publications on renewable natural resources in the Central American and Caribbean sub-region.

For each specific objective, the expected products, activities to be developed to achieve them and the schedule for their execution are given. Cooperation networks are established with related institutions in the Central American and Caribbean sub-region and also a coordination framework with the Forestry Information Network for Latin America and the Caribbean (RIFALC). INFORAT will assume the coordination of RIFALC's activities within the sub-region (nine countries).

The budget needed to give continuity to INFORAT's activities over two three year periods, economic support from CATIE and the balance to be financed by a donor are also included. The total cost of the project over six years will be \$1,315,500, of which CATIE will contribute 12.2 percent (US\$169,100). External financing of US\$1,146,400 will be needed, US\$763,800 of which will be for the first three year phase.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this proposal is to obtain funding, from one or several donors, to finance the activities of INFORAT, the information and documentation unit of the Department of Renewable Natural Resources (DRNR) in the Tropical Agriculture Research and Teaching Center (CATIE). This information unit has been functioning for eight years with funding from the Swiss Development Cooperation and contributions from CATIE.

The proposal intends to continue activities already funded and encourage new ones to reinforce the role of information and documentation in renewable natural resources within the countries of Latin America.

Funding is sought for two three year periods from the beginning of January 1988. It is hoped that during this period production mechanisms, dissemination and information retrieval from libraries and documentation centers working on renewable natural resources in Latin America will be consolidated.

The project will be carried out by CATIE at its headquarters in Turrialba, Costa Rica, but specific activities will be carried out within the Latin America Forestry Information Network (RIFALC). INFORAT will coordinate the Network's activities in the Central American and Caribbean area.

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Situation of forestry information in Latin America

Previously, it has been found that there is no communication between forestry professionals of Latin America and that forestry documentation centers act independently, not following compatible methodologies, and give their users different services. This 'non-communication's is a result of:

- a) very little written material produced by forestry specialists;
- b) institutions where these specialists work do not disseminate the information;

- c) existent forestry documentation centers do not have the mechanisms for acquiring written information, or if they do, this only occurs within each country;
- d) there have been wide gaps regarding the actions of the worlds's large forestry information centers and those operating in the so-called third world.

Forestry activity is an important factor in the development of Latin American countries; because of this, the creation of an organization to deal with forestry information retrieval, processing and distribution was considered neccessary within Tropical America and Central America as a primary goal and throughout Latin America as a secondary goal. It was considered that the Natural Resources Department of CATIE had a wide research and postgraduate teaching trajectory in Latin America and for this reason it was decided that a service to stimulate dissemination of forestry information related to Tropical America should be created.

Creation of INFORAT

The problems of low production and lack of distribution for forestry information led the Tropical Agriculture Research and Teaching Center (CATIE) and the Swiss Development Cooperation (COSUDE) to devise a cooperative agreement in July 1979, to plan financial support from CATIE to the Renewable Resources Department for three specific projects. One of these was established under the name Forestry Information and Documentation for Tropical America (INFORAT).

Two fundamental objectives were assigned to INFORAT: (1) dissemination of forestry information produced by QRNR personnel; (2) rationalization of production, retrieval, processing and distribution of forestry information among a number of qualified users.

The long term aim of INFORAT was to act as a catalyst in documentation processes for forestry sciences, promoting fast and timely dissemination of useful information on forestry topics, specifically within Tropical America. As a corollary to this aim, it is hoped that there will be an attitude change, at different levels, toward the rational use of renewable natural resources.



INFORAT's achievements during eight years of operation

As a result of eight years activity, INFORAT has crystalized certain significant achievements:

In the documentation area:

- INFORAT has an information bank available including 1500 publications produced by DRNR personnel and three collections specializing in agroforestry (1600 documents), firewood and alternative energy sources (1700) and neotropical forest fauna (1200).
- A list of the principal users in Latin America has been drawn up with a significant number of entries (1400 between institutions and individuals) whose names, addresses and area of interest have been computerized by precoded criteria.

In the publication area:

- Two specialized bibliographies have been published: one on renewable natural resources with 5236 references and a user guide, the other on agroforestry with 680 references (English and Spanish language versions). A Spanish language supplement to the agroforestry bibliography has recently been published including 1000 bibliographic references. Furthermore, the publication of thesis summaries from 114 students in natural resources (CATIE) is an important source of information for forestry professionals.
- A directory listing documentation centers and libraries working on renewable natural resources in the Central American region has been published and distributed.
- Up to date lists of publications available in INFORAT are periodically produced.
- Manuscripts produced by DRNR receive careful editorial revision (manuscript style and organization) in order to improve publication quality.
- Two specialized periodicals are published; the Silviculture Program technical bulletin, <u>Silvoenergia</u>, appearing monthly and including a single article, and the Watershed Management Program bulletin, <u>Manejo de Cuencas</u>, published every three months, containing information produced from the Program. These

- publications are financed, respectively, by the Madeleña Project and the Regional Watershed Management Program, both within DRNR.
- Since the beginning of 1982, INFORAT has produced an information bulletin, <u>El</u> <u>Chasqui</u>, every four months. Up to 1985, this bulletin has acted as a link between the projects sponsored by COSUDE in Latin America. Since 1986, it has become the information bulletin of the Natural Renewable Resources Department.

Unifying bibliographic methodologies and criteria

The lack of coordination between forestry documentation centers in Latin America continues to affect the advance of these centers as a group; especially at this moment when microcomputers are appearing in the international markets and are making rapid advances in the automation of bibliographic information. However, these advances must be coordinated so that bibliographic data input to microcomputers follows the same, or compatible, procedures. If this is not the case, the products (subject reference lists or data bases) will not be uniform or complementary. This will result in a greater dispersal in criteria related to user service and an even more pronounced distancing between forestry documentation centers than already exists.

1. Actions initiated by INFORAT to achieve unification of methodologies

INFORAT has attempted to overcome the problems of dispersal of operating criteria and modes in forestry documentation centers by training 18 CATIE documentalists in program use for the CDS/ISIS Mini-Micro, for bibliographic information management in microcomputers. Also, a meeting of specialists in Latin American forestry information is being organized to discuss a unification of methodologies to determine the availability of forestry information to Latin American libraries and to make the structure of data bases compatible.

2. Forestry Information Network for Latin America and the Caribbean

In October 1985 a meeting of representatives from various national systems of forestry information took place in Resistencia, Chaco, Argentina. The Forestry Information Network for Latin America and the Caribbean, known as RIFALC, was created at this meeting. The network's objective is to coordinate and integrate activities developed by national entities at a regional level, with the specific

aim of combining forces to apply rational methods for processing forestry documentation, offering the possibility of compatible systems throughout the region.

Practical functioning of RIFALC requires that there is a head institution in each country acting as a link between libraries and documentation centers of the country. At the same time, the countries will be grouped into sub-regions, according to geographic proximity, and one institution within each sub-region will be assigned coordination of RIFALC's activities. INFORAT aims to be a coordinating body in the Central American and Caribbean sub-region, for a total of nine countries.

In spite of the efforts that have been mentioned, the problems of interinstitutional coordination and communication between professionals persits in Latin America. For this reason there is a need to reinforce the initiatives of RIFALC at a Latin American level and of INFORAT at a Central American and Caribbean level, specifically.

OBJECTIVES OF PROPOSED PROJECT

General objective

To reinforce the transference of knowledge between professionals involved with renewable natural resources in Latin America, with the aim of contributing to technology generation and transference within this field.

Specific objectives

- 1. To coordinate actions and unify criteria for bibliographic information processing between documentation centers and libraries in renewable resources in Latin America.
- 2. Retrieve bibliographic information on renewable natural resources in the tropics and distribute it to INFORAT users.
- 3. To encourage production and distribution of publications on renewable natural resources in the Central American and Caribbean sub-region.

EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Coordination between documentation centers and libraries:

- 1.1 A cooperative network of documentation centers and libraries on natural resources in Latin America, with defined activities and responsabilities.
- 1.2 Working groups of libraries and documentation centers within the Central American and Caribbean sub-region to strengthen RIFALC's actions.
- 1.3 A catalog listing the main documentation centers and libraries interested in natural resources of Latin America, for the use of RIFALC members and their users (other institutions and individuals).
- 1.4 A realistic survey of the state of documentation centers and libraries interested in natural resources, to be used as a basis for establishing future policies and coordination strategies.
- 1.5 CDS/ISIS Mini-Micro and other programs used by RIFALC members made compatible.
- 1.6 Use of CDS/ISIS Mini-Micro program and entry/exit formats made uniform within documentation centers and libraries of the Central American and Caribbean subregion.
- 1.7 A controlled Spanish language forestry vocabulary for use in documentation centers and libraries of countries covered by RIFALC.

Information retrieval and dissemination:

- 2.1 Specialized search service to INFORAT users.
- 2.2 INFORAT bibliographic store considerably amplified and electronically regulated.
- 2.3 Easy access to information generated by Central American and Caribbean professionals for those working in renewable natural resources in Latin America.
- 2.4 Published bibliographies for specific subjects, covered by project collections.

Publication production and distribution:

- 3.1 Technical and scientific publications and disclosures conforming to international publication standards.
- 3.2 Active distribution of publications to professionals working in renewable natural resources within Latin America.

The activities programed to achieve these results appear in the schedule (Annex 1).

BUDGET AND EXPENSES

The project budget is divided into two three year stages. The total cost for the first three years will be US\$ 770 300; CATIE will contribute US\$ 114 600 (15% of the total cost) through various DRNR projects, so that the financing needed will be US\$ 655 700. For the second three years US\$ 560 300 will be required; CATIE will contribute US\$ 54 600 (9.7%), leaving US\$ 505 700 for which financing is needed.

In summary, the functioning of INFORAT during 1988-1993 will cost US\$ 1 330 500, of which CATIE will contribute 12.7% (US\$ 169 100). US\$ 1 161 400 external financing will be needed.

Budget details appear in Annex 2.

EXECUTION OF THE PROJECT - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The general coordination of the project at the level of Central American and Caribbean sub-regions will be carried out by CATIE, through INFORAT. It is understood that INFORAT will work within the framework of RIFALC; in this sense it will promote, coordinate and carry out the appropriate actions for strengthening the network within the sub-region.

One of RIFALC's programed activities is the setting up of a controlled forestry vocabulary for use throughout the network. Periodically, INFORAT will

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introduce new terms for inclusion and also finance consultation with an international expert. It will also sponsor a meeting for Latin American experts to evaluate and improve work carried out.

The coordinating institutions will need the support of the other institutions that are involved in the country. Firstly, a short seminar will be called in each country to demonstrate the achievements and expectations of the work, and also the advantages that will be gained by each institution in joining the team. Later, each team, with INFORAT's participation, will implement the mechanisms of coordination most appropriate to each country.

ANNEX 1. SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Objective 1. To coordinate actions and unify criteria for bibliographic information processing among documentation centers and libraries dealing with renewable natural resources in Latin America

Product 1.1 A cooperative network of documentation centers and libraries on on natural resources in Latin America, with defined activities and responsibilities

Activities

1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994

1.1.1 To organize, within RIFALC's framework, an international meeting to coordinate activities, define functions and assign responsibilities

1.1.2 To maintain contact with the coordinators of RIFALC's other sub-

regions to ensure network functioning

Product 1.2 Library and documentation center work groups within the Central American and Caribbean sub-region

Activities

- 1.2.1 Assign specific tasks to documentation centers and libraries in the sub-region
- 1.2.2 Coordinate RIFALC's activities in the interior of the sub-region

Product 1.3 A catalog of the main documentation centers and libraries interested in natural resources in Latin America for the use of RIFALC members and their users (other institutions and individuals)

Activities

1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994

1.3.1 Prepare a list of documentation centers and libraries in natural resources to identify the main subject areas and geographic coverage of the service that each gives

1.3.2 Submit this list to a preliminary sounding in order to select a head institution per country

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Product 1.4 A realistic survey of the state of documentation centers and libraries interested in natural resources, to serve as a basis for establishing coordination policies and strategies for the future

Activities

1.4.1 Compile information from documentation centers and libraries in natural resources by means of a question-naire

1.4.2 Support a documentation center in each country so that the question-naire is applied

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Product 1.5 CDS/ISIS Mini-Micro and other programs used by RIFALC members made compatible

Activities

1.5.1 Determine compatibility of CDS/ ISIS Mini-Micro program with those used in other RIFALC subregions

1.5.2 Write a bridging program for exchanging information with non-compatible programs

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Product 1.6 Use of CDS/ISIS Mini-Micro program an entry/exit formats made uniform in documentation centers and libraries of the Central American and Caribbean sub-region

Activities

1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994

- 1.6.1 Endow selected documentation centers in certain countries with-in the sub-region with computer equipment neccessary for implementing the CDS/ISIS Mini-Micro program
- 1.6.2 Recommend and distribute the CDS/ISIS Mini-Micro program and entry/exit format used by INFORAT, for mananging small collections, to documentation centers and libraries in the subregion
- 1.6.3 Encourage the installation of the CDS/ISIS Mini-Micro package in the sub-region, in conjunction with the Board of the University of Central America (CSUCA) and other interested institutions
- 1.6.4 Train documentalists in information processing techniques with the aim of developing data bases, from document indexing to information input on the micro
- 1.6.5 Give training to documentalists in application and management of CDS/ISIS Mini-Micro computer programs and bibliographic reference indexing and editing
- **Product 1.7** A controlled Spanish language forestry vocabulary for use in documentation centers and libraries in countries covered by RIFALC

Activities

- 1.7.1 Support RIFALC in drawing up a controlled vocabulary to create internationally valid data bases
- 1.7.2 Encourage adoption and application of the controlled forestry vocabulary within the sub-region's libraries and documentation centers

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Objective 2. Retrieval of biobliographic information on renewable natural resources in the tropics and its distribution among INFORAT users

Product 2.1 Specialized search service
for INFORAT users

Activities	1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994
2.1.1 Search international bases at the request of INFORAT users	
2.1.2 Define a policy to include charges for specialized search services	
Product 2.2 Considerably increase INFORAT's bibliographic store and regulate it electronically	
Activities	·
2.2.1 Periodically consult data base to enrich INFORAT's bibliographic store	
2.2.2 Up-date existing collections and set up others in subject areas not already covered by INFORAT and which have a proven importance for the integral development of the Latin American tropics	
2.2.3 Exchange computarized bibliographic information blocks with RIFALC's documentation centers and libraries	
Product 2.3 Easy access to information produced by Central American and Caribbean professionals for professionals working in renewable natural resources in Latin America	
Activities	
2.3.1 Provide services in retrospective search, selective distribution of information and short bibliographies to interested users	

Product 2.4 Printed bibliographies on specific subjects covered by project collections

Activities

2.4.1 Publish and distribute bibliographics on subjects covered by the collections

Objective 3. Encourage the production and distribution of publications on renewable natural resources in the Central American and Caribbean sub-region

Product 3.1 Technical, scientific and informative publications conforming to international publication standards

Activities

- 3.1.1 In conjunction with the editorial committee of CATIE, set up series to cover the information needs of INFORAT users
- 3.1.2 Continue publication of DRNR's information bulletin (El Chasqui) and technical bulletins (Silvoenergía and Manejo de Cuencas). Create two new technical bulletins (agroforestry and forest areas) and a scientific magazine on natural resources in Tropical America
- 3.1.3 Cooperate with CEC in establish ing operative methodologies for publication production and definition of criteria for the content analysis of manuscripts, formats, print media and institutional identification
- 3.1.4 Publish relevant works on renew able natural resources and translate others written in foreing languages, where they are related to INFORAT's field of interest

1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994

ACTIVITIES	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
3.1.5 Train editors from selected institutions in publication production							
3.1.6 Train sub-region professionals in technical editing							
Product 3.2 Active distribution of publications to professionals working in renewable natural resources in Latin America							
Activities							
3.2.1 With CEC, define a policy for free distribution and sale of publications							
3.2.2 Establish a reasonable annual fee so that users value the service offered and provide a circulating fund to avoid using up INFORAT's economic resources							
3.2.3 Restrict entry to the user list so that it is not over-subscribed with passive users and annually assess interest in remaining on the list							

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PROJECT DETAILS

Personnel

- The principal component of the project is information and documentation. For this reason a specialist in this field is needed to take over coodination of the project, full-time during the six year period (\$40,000 per year)
- The technical editor will be in charge of production and editing of publications and offer training in these fields over six year (\$10,000 per year)
- The three documentalists, gradually being reduced to one full-time and one part-time, will be in charge of setting up data bases, managing specialized collections and offer training in indexing the ISIS program (\$8,500 per year per person).
- A programing analyst with experience in the use and application of computer packs for bibliographic data processing and exchange (\$10,000 per year) for eight months of the three year period.
- The following are needed for administrative support:
- a) two secretaries (\$5,500 per year per person)
- b) workshop manager (2) (\$6,500 per year per person)
- c) graphic artist (\$7,000 per year)
- d) head of adquisitions and shipping (\$6,000 per year)
- e) keyboard operator (\$6 500 per year)

These will all be needed full-time for the six year's duration of the project.

- The cost of an international consultant is from \$7 500 a month including travel and expenses. His/her services would be needed for three months during the first three year period and for one month during the second to create controlled and other non-specified vocabularies.
- A national consultant will be contracted to produce and analyse surveys for two
 months during the first year. The cost of a national consultant is \$1 500 per
 month.

- For editing and publishing specific works, it is possible that the services of external editors may be contracted on a piece rate basis. \$1 800 per month for three months of the six year period has been designated for this.

Training

The participants travel and expenses are included. Three training activities at the sub-regional level have been programmed to take place in Costa Rica. The other three are at a national level in each of the countries. INFORAT will offer logistic support to these activities.

Short courses

- Indexing and editing of bibliographic references.

The regional alternative will take place during the second semester of the first year. It will last for one week and two people from each of a total of nine countries will participate. For a total of 18 participants, at \$828 per person, the total cost will be \$14,900.

The national alternative will held for one week at the beginning of the second year. There will be 20 participants per country and the instructors will be trained at the regional course: cost \$3,000/course/9 countries.

In-service training

- Bibliographic data base

This will be coordinated by a programing analyst and supported by the documentalists. It will last three weeks and two people per country will participate. This training will be given at CATIE during the second and third years. Cost: \$1,350 per person, \$2,700 per country.

Publication production

This will be coordinated by the project editor. Participants will be those in charge of document publication at selected institutions in the sub-region's countries. It will take place at CATIE during the second and third years and be offered to one person per country for two weeks. Cost: \$1,000 per person.

At a national level, those trained at CATIE will each give and third years. Cost: \$600 per country.