

IRG Project Profiles



INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OF THE PANAMA CANAL WATERSHED

Often, effective management of a natural resource depends not only on the specific program implemented by a country, but also by the quality and quantity of information shared by those who depend on the same resources. To that end, communication is key, whether it be through discussion among the various entities concerned with resource management or through sharing data collected about the effects of reforms and management already in place.

Activities

IRG provides policy development and institutional strengthening support for management of the Panama Canal Watershed (PCW), working closely with the Inter-Institutional Commission for the Panama Canal Watershed (CICH), which coordinates environmental management.

Analysis. IRG analyzed the legal basis for PCW management and identified shortcomings in legislation regarding watershed land and water resource use. These findings led to a refinement of laws implementing regulations.

Tools. IRG helped the National Environmental Authority develop norms and standards to reduce pollution and contamination for six industrial sectors, including voluntary production audits. To facilitate effective collaboration among organizations concerned with PCW management, IRG also developed inter-institutional agreements and an inter-linked system of databases for sharing information on ecological, hydrological, and demographic parameters. Other accomplishments include a strategy for sustainable financing of the CICH and a blueprint for its operational structure. CICH adopted these measures and has benefited from them.

Region: Latin America and the Caribbean
Country: Panama
Sector: Water
Duration: August 1999–September 2002
Client: USAID

Key Accomplishments

- ◆ Refinement of laws implementing regulations
- ◆ Development of norms and standards to reduce pollution/contamination for six industrial sectors
- ◆ Development of inter-institutional agreements and an inter-linked system of databases
- ◆ Development of a methodology to determine spatial and economic impacts of urban development
- ◆ Development of a strategy for sustainable financing

Training. IRG also conducted training courses for CICH-member organization staff on participatory watershed management. A seminar was held on marketing “green” investments for inverted territories in the PCW, and workshops

examined carbon sequestration potential within the watershed. Training also addressed an IRG-developed methodology to determine spatial and economic impacts of urban development.



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