

Fundamentals

NEWS FROM THE ENVIRON FOUNDATION



THE ENVIRON
FOUNDATION

MARCH 2006

Foundation announces awards

The ENVIRON Foundation accepted eighteen applications for funding between June and October 2005, its initial period of activity. In September 2005, the Foundation made its first award to Powerful Information, a UK-based NGO. The funded program is highlighted on the Foundation website (<http://www.environfoundation.org/>).

On January 31, 2006, ENVIRON's Board of Directors approved funding for four additional programs that the Foundation Committee had recommended upon reviewing all applications received.

Pesticide Services from Natural Habitat near Farmland

One of the newly funded programs, entitled *Pesticide Services from Natural Habitat near Farmland*, is being conducted by Rebecca Chaplin, a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Environmental Science, Policy & Management, Division of Insect Biology, University of California, Berkeley, California. The goal of the proposed program is to reduce agriculture's dependency on pesticides by developing a better understanding of natural pest control. A major focus for the Division of Insect Biology at Berkeley is Integrated Pest Management (IPM)—the development of methods to contain pest

populations through management of the whole ecosystem.

Current IPM strategies aim at conserving the natural enemies of agricultural pests, often through habitat modification at the farm scale (e.g., weed-strips, intercropping, and hedgerows). Although successfully implemented in several cases in Europe and Asia, these approaches have not been consistently effective. These small-scale modifications may be insufficient for natural enemies of the pests that also require larger-scale off-

farm resources such as may be provided by natural areas of sufficient size near agriculture. If natural habitat is necessary to serve as a source population of natural enemies, then habitat modifications at within-crop and within-farm scales may function poorly in providing pest control, unless a sufficient quantity of natural habitat is also present. To improve pest management, it is necessary to understand what constitutes a "sufficient quantity" of natural habitat in order to provide beneficial insects to farms. That understanding is the goal of the proposed research.



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Foundation Announces Awards

The ENVIRON

Foundation is

pleased to announce

four awards approved by the ENVIRON Board of Directors on January 31, 2006:



- **Pesticide Services from Natural Habitat near Farmland**
- **Identifying and Treating Arsenic Contamination in the Mekong River Delta**
- **Environmental Certification Program for Lead Battery Manufacturing**
- **Sustainable Waste Management in Rural Communities in Azerbaijan**

About the ENVIRON Foundation

In recognition of ENVIRON's longstanding heritage, The ENVIRON Foundation provides financial assistance to endeavors that promote protection of human health and the global environment, particularly related to the impact of industrial chemicals. The Foundation will fund relevant education, training, applied research, and direct initiatives by not-for-profit organizations. The Foundation encourages efforts that result in governmental and business decision making that is informed by scientific principles and by public engagement.

We present in this issue information about these opportunities, as well as application procedures.



Mekong River Delta from space, February 1996

Identifying and Treating Arsenic Contamination in the Mekong River Delta

Another of the newly funded projects is entitled *Identifying and Treating Arsenic Contamination in the Mekong River Delta*, a research project being conducted by Professor Benjamin Bostick and his students at the Department of Earth Sciences, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire. This program will research the arsenic contamination risk in Southeast Asia, specifically in the Mekong River Delta. In contrast to Bangladesh, where the arsenic problem has been recognized for some time, the extent and source of arsenic contamination in the Mekong River region is not well understood. However, the Mekong River Delta in Cambodia and Vietnam is similar to Bangladesh in that the arsenic is derived

from natural sediments, rather than industrial contamination; little is known about the processes by which arsenic is released from these sources.

The proposed study will compare the chemical conditions in Cambodia with those in Bangladesh in an effort to identify the mechanism by which arsenic mobilization occurs, and more specifically, to enable an evaluation of current theories concerning the connection between irrigation, well drilling, and arsenic levels. The Mekong Delta region has received very little study due to its political instability related to international conflicts and civil war, which destroyed much of the infrastructure. Access to a safe water supply is a key to recovery and economic development. The current political stability in the region now makes research possible.

The program strives to produce a model capable of predicting arsenic concentrations, allowing forecasting of the distribution of arsenic contamination at the village scale, and identifying regions for government officials and others to focus their efforts in water well installation, which is fast developing as rural villages seek cleaner water supplies. The proposed work has the potential to enable examination of arsenic contamination *before* the wells are installed so that they can be installed in locations and at depths at which arsenic contamination is not likely to cause problems. This preventive approach will contribute to the long-term maintenance of water quality in the region.

Environmental Certification Program for Lead Battery Manufacturing

The third newly funded program is the *Environmental Certification Program for Lead Battery Manufacturing* being conducted in India by Occupational Knowledge International (OKI), a San Francisco-based NGO. OKI is promoting a certification program to improve the performance of the lead battery industry in order to reduce emissions from lead battery plants and to encourage more environmentally sound battery recycling, through an incentive program to certify plants that meet minimum standards for emissions and product stewardship. The UN Environment Program (UNEP) and the World Bank (IFC) have also agreed to support the OKI program and a multi-stakeholder process to set the certification standards.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 120 million people are over-exposed to lead, with 99 percent of the most severely affected people in the developing world. Among those most severely affected are children residing near battery

plants in developing countries and workers in those plants. Battery manufacturers in these countries generally do not collect used batteries for proper recycling. As a result, backyard smelters for recycling batteries operate throughout the developing world, further contributing to lead poisoning and environmental contamination.

The OKI program is designed to restructure the incentives that drive industry behavior, and at the same time create a new revenue stream. The approach is to work in partnership with the battery industry to adopt improved pollution control measures by offering a product certification program as an incentive. Participating companies will agree to meet minimum emission standards and to take back batteries for proper recycling. Once established, the program will be sustainable by generating revenues from licensing fees for displaying the certification label based on production volume.



Sustainable Waste Management in Rural Communities in Azerbaijan

The fourth program that the Foundation will be supporting is entitled *Sustainable Waste Management in Rural Communities in Azerbaijan*, a program being run by HAYAT, one of the oldest and largest NGOs in Azerbaijan. HAYAT became aware of the Foundation through Alan Fowler of

ENVIRON's Bath, UK, office, who has ongoing project work in Azerbaijan. This demonstration project aims to improve the collection, transport, and disposal of domestic and medical wastes in one or more communities along the route of the BTC Pipeline in Azerbaijan. The BTC Pipeline is an enormous project that has had, and will continue to have, a large impact across a broad area in rural, un- or under-developed Azerbaijan. Although the pipeline will bring some very positive new opportunities for economic development, the size and pace of the project will also bring enormous challenges to an area with little or no infrastructure.

HAYAT has identified waste management, specifically domestic and medical waste management, as an important challenge to the sustainable development of the region along the pipeline route. Although some industrial waste landfills and treatment facilities have been constructed in association with the growth of the oil industry in the region, it does not appear that any agency or entity has begun to address waste management issues in the communities, especially the smaller communities, along the pipeline route. Currently, the wastes from

such communities are simply dumped in or around the villages, resulting in soil and water contamination. The problem is expected to grow dramatically as these communities begin to experience pipeline construction- and operation-stimulated growth.

The BTC Company has a Community Investment Program (CIP) and has, upon application, begun to invest in schools and clinics along the pipeline route. According to the BTC Social Manager, the CIP is likely to provide matching funds for programs such as that proposed by HAYAT. Therefore, the Foundation monies are likely, in the near term, to be leveraged to further support the demonstration phase of the project. With the successful completion of the proposed program, the HAYAT demonstration project will provide the basis for pursuing a route-wide strategy for dealing with community and medical wastes.

By any relevant measure, the Foundation is off to a great start. We have funded five diverse projects, each of which has the opportunity to have real impact. We will be receiving status reports from these programs and will update you periodically on their progress.



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Funding Opportunities

The Foundation funds not-for-profit, non-partisan education, training, applied research, and direct initiatives consistent with its mission. Programs designed to advance both the state of knowledge and society's ability functionally to apply that knowledge to informed decision making receive priority consideration.

Awards are targeted to programs that address significant issues over a limited time period, rather than to ongoing programs that require sustained support. The Foundation is particularly interested in opportunities to provide "seed" money for new initiatives and programs. Individual awards typically range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 per annum, with two renewals possible, for a maximum of three years of funding.

While The Foundation does not provide scholarships, funding may be awarded to support research on relevant topics, particularly that of graduate students where the award can be made to the host academic

institution. For research and policy-related activities, The Foundation will give priority to work with a significant potential to effect change and produce lasting improvements, such as efforts to develop environmental regulatory systems grounded in sound science and good engineering practice in developing countries and scientific "boot camps" for local and state government officials (e.g., planning boards, city councils, legislators).

The Foundation will not consider funding:

- Individual travel assistance
- Cultural exchanges
- Capital campaigns or endowments
- Debt reduction
- Ongoing operational expenses
- Scholarships
- Humanitarian aid
- Land acquisition
- Museum/library acquisitions
- Lobbying

The Foundation prefers not to fund overhead or indirect costs. Award recipients will be expected to sign an agreement that outlines the Foundation's expectations for status reporting and budget management. Further, the Foundation's support must be prominently acknowledged where applicable—at a minimum in all publications and promotional materials produced as part of the project for which funding is being provided.



How to Apply

In 2005, the initial year of operation, The Foundation will accept requests for support from June through the end of October. Beginning in 2006, requests for support will be accepted twice a year, during the first week of April and the first week of October.

The application process begins with the submittal of a short (2 to 4 page) Letter of Interest co-signed by the head of the organization that will conduct the program, project, or initiative (Dean or Department Chair for academic programs) and the individual who will be responsible for the activity for which funding is being requested. The Letter should include:

- The name of the organization, contact information (address, phone, fax, email, website, as applicable), and a statement of the organization's mission and goals.
- A brief biography of and contact information for the individual within the organization who will be responsible for the activity for which funding is being requested; this should focus on the qualifications of the individual to lead and manage the activity successfully.
- For the program/project/initiative for which funding is being requested
 - Its name;
 - Its nature and purpose;
 - Its relevance to the mission of the parent organization;
 - Its relevance to the mission of The Foundation;
 - Why it is important and different from other similar initiatives;
 - Its geographic location;
 - The population that will benefit;
 - Public policy implications and how the results will be communicated;
 - How the effectiveness will be monitored, evaluated, and reported to the Foundation (quarterly reports will be required);
 - The full period over which the program/project/initiative is expected to be active and the period for which funding is being requested;
 - The estimated budget for the full program/project/initiative and the amount of funding requested from The Foundation;
 - Plans for obtaining sustained support if the full program/project/ initiative will extend beyond the period of requested funding from The Foundation; and
 - Will the program/project/initiative provide an opportunity for donor recognition?

The Foundation will acknowledge receipt of each Letter of Interest. If there is no realistic possibility of funding, The Foundation will promptly indicate that decision so that the applicant can pursue other sources. If the application might qualify, a representative of The Foundation will contact the designated individual in order to discuss what additional information will be needed to complete the application and allow a decision on funding to be made.

IN TOUCH

The **ENVIRON Foundation** will again be accepting applications for funding during the first week of April 2006. We request that each of you help us to get the word out that The Foundation exists and is ready to fund projects and programs that are judged to fit well with the articulated Mission of The Foundation. Thank you for your help.

Please contact a member of the Foundation Committee with any questions or recommendations you may have:

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Supporting endeavors that advance the protection of human health and the global environment.

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