



Central African Regional Program
for the Environment

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Abstract

SOS Fund number - # 6d.07

Proposal Title: *The Sangha River Network Website
and Research Forum*

Start date: 3/1/99
Duration: 18 months
Total Grant amount: \$47,955


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Established in September 1997, the Sangha River Network (SRN) bridges information gaps and facilitates innovative research initiatives among stakeholder groups and academic specialists active in the Sangha River Basin tropical forest region of central Africa (where Central African Republic, Cameroon, and Republic of Congo meet—see map). The SRN combines local representatives from the area, government officials from the three nation states who share it, as well as independent researchers, industry representatives, and conservation and development practitioners. To date the network has functioned primarily through alternating conferences and smaller work sessions, sponsored by conservation-related initiatives of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID; CARPE and BSP), and by the French Institute of Research for Development (IRD-ORSTOM) Forests Research Program at University of Orléans, France. Support has also come through academic initiatives such as the Ford Foundation “Crossing Borders Initiative for Revitalizing Area Studies” and a variety of Programs and Departments within Yale University.

The bilingual website project furthers information exchange, in response to results from a questionnaire administered to network members who elected development of an Internet Web Site as a principal means of network and inter-disciplinary communication. Funding for our initial website was secured through conference development funds, and we are currently developing a visually sophisticated site. This proposed work seeks funding for further elaboration of the Sangha River Network Website as a crucial forum for network development through international and inter-institutional dialogue about policy issues; interdisciplinary communication on crucial scientific questions, and educational opportunities for a variety of researchers, students or professionals. The specific objectives for which this proposal seeks support include:

- Internet access for colleagues and community members in Africa;
- online conference and working paper opportunities for the network’s thematically organized, multi-disciplinary and international working groups;
- monthly website updates on relevant news, scientific results, and project/government reports;

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- payment of language students from the various member universities to translate documents posted on the website into French or English.
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