

GEN

Global Ecolabelling Network Annual Report 2004



Message from the GEN Chair

I would first like to extend a formal welcome to the GEN's two newest members, Living Planet (Ukraine) and the Hong Kong Federation of Environmental Protection. They joined us this year, bringing our GEN membership total to twenty-eight.

This was a successful and fruitful year for the Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN). The GEN and its members made great progress in the areas of mutual recognition agreements (MRAs), common core criteria development, advancement and initial implementation of a "GEN Internationally Coordinated Ecolabelling System (GENICES)", and international and national promotion of green procurement. I wish to highlight some of the most significant 2004 GEN activities and achievements.

A number of bilateral mutual recognition agreements were developed in 2004, predominantly involving Australian-Asian countries. Regarding common core criteria development, through multilateral collaboration and the strong efforts of certain member officials in Taiwan, Japan, Korea and Thailand, criteria for digital video disk (DVD)/video compact disk (VCD) devices, televisions and computer printers were finalized and adopted. GEN officials served as "facilitators" and advisors for these initiatives and work projects, while members' officials took leading roles and carried out the substantial work.

On October 8-9, 2004, GEN officials conducted their Annual General Meeting (AGM) and a 10th Anniversary Celebration in Tokyo, Japan. Attendance at this Event included 57 delegates from 28 organizations.

Co-incidentally, GEN officials collaborated with Japan Green Purchasing Network (JGPN) officials in organizing and staging a successful "Special Group Discussion" session of "The First International Conference on Green Purchasing in Sendai", with participation in the session exceeding 100 delegates. At this Conference, and in other instances throughout the year, GEN officials' considerable efforts to broaden international recognition and acceptance of the role and value of ecolabelling criteria and compliance verification in green procurement initiatives was recognized and appreciated. I believe it was for this reason that GEN officials were first invited to help coordinate the Sendai Conference, and subsequently invited to join and actively participate in a newly launched international association, the International Green Purchasing Network (IGPN).

In follow-up to a significant 2003 AGM resolution to develop and promote the Global Ecolabelling Network Internationally Coordinated Ecolabelling System (GENICES), a GENICES working group was formed in early 2004. Meetings were convened in May and September to formulate "Principles and Processes", and an Implementation Plan. Conclusions drawn and outputs from these meetings were presented and accepted at the 2004 AGM in Tokyo.

A Project Proposal for substantial implementation of the GENICES was also completed near the end of 2004, including a detailed methodology for "Multilateral Mutual Trust (MMT)" development. Two major project goals are: (1) processing and review of fifteen applications from member organizations for MMT; and (2) development of twelve harmonized or common core criteria sets within three years. In order to secure extra funding to accelerate and accommodate this GENICES implementation project, the Project Proposal has been presented to and well received by several governmental and international funding agencies.

The most important GEN task in 2005 will be the continuing promotion and implementation of the GENICES. To kick-start the Panel Review process for MMT development, two member organizations - the Environment and Development Foundation of Taiwan and the New Zealand Ecolabelling Trust - have volunteered and been selected to complete and submit the first two applications on a "pilot" basis. The first Panel Review meeting is scheduled to occur in May 2005. Subsequently, representatives of all other GEN members will be invited to complete and submit applications for processing.

Finally, this is my second year as the GEN Chair and I am greatly indebted to my Board colleagues, all the member officials, and the staffs of the Secretariat and the General Affair Office. Without their support, advice and participation, none of the above mentioned accomplishments could have been achieved.

Let us cooperatively and proudly keep moving forward, and achieve even greater accomplish

Yours truly,
Ning Yu, Chair





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The Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN)

1. The Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN)

Ecolabelling

"Ecolabelling" is a voluntary method of environmental performance leadership labelling and verification that is practised around the world¹. An "ecolabel" is a label which identifies overall environmental preference of a product (i.e. good or service) within a specific product category based on life cycle considerations². In contrast to environmental/"green" symbols or claim statements developed by manufacturers and service providers, an ecolabel is awarded by an impartial third party in relation to certain products that are independently determined to meet environmental leadership criteria.

1.1 Mission

The Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN) is a non-profit association of third-party, environmental performance labelling and certification organizations and pro-ecolabelling "associates" founded in 1994 to improve, promote, and develop the ecolabelling of products (i.e. goods and services).

The mission of the GEN is to:

- serve its members, associates, other ecolabelling programs/schemes, other stakeholders, and the public, by improving, promoting and developing the ecolabelling of products, the credibility of ecolabelling programs worldwide, and the availability of information regarding ecolabelling standards from around the world;
- foster co-operation, information exchange and harmonization among its members, associates, and other ecolabelling programs with regard to ecolabelling;
- facilitate access to information regarding ecolabelling standards from around the world;
- participate in certain international organizations in order to promote ecolabelling generally; and
- encourage the demand for, and supply of, more environmentally responsible goods and services.

More information on the GEN and its activities is available in the subsequent sections of this *Annual Report*, and on the GEN Internet Website at: www.gen.gr.jp.

1.2 Participants

As of the end of 2004, the GEN included 28 member organizations that operate ecolabelling programs/schemes around the world. Also, a non-ecolabelling program delivery organization - the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling (ISEAL) Alliance - held formal "associate status"³.

Table 1 provides summary information on the GEN member organizations. It is noteworthy that several are responsible for the delivery of more than one ecolabelling program/scheme. *Appendix A* identifies the GEN member and associate organizations.

While membership and associate status are restricted to organizations that share the GEN's objectives and meet basic criteria, much of the information collected and many of the meetings are open to a broader audience.

1.3 Management and Administration

GEN activities are managed by a Board of Directors (refer to the box below for a listing of the Directors of the Board), while day-to-day operations are administered jointly by a General Affairs Office (GAO) and Secretariat.

¹ A list of countries and multinational regions that have ecolabelling programs is provided in *Appendix B*.

² Consequently, consumers can rely on ecolabels to identify certain products that are environmentally preferable. However, since participation in ecolabelling programs is voluntary, it should not be assumed that only products bearing ecolabels are environmentally preferable.

³ Associate status is obtainable for not-for-profit organizations that formally support ecolabelling principles and goals, though they are not ecolabelling practitioners.



2004 GEN Board of Directors

Term on Board:

Dr. Ning Yu, Chair	Environment and Development Foundation, Taiwan, ROC	Chair since October 2003; Director since October 2001
Seiji Taguchi, Treasurer	Japan Environment Association	since October 1998
Eva Eiderstrom	Swedish Society for Nature Conservation	since October 2003
Lisbeth Engel Hansen	Ecolabelling Denmark, Denmark	since October 2001
Robin Taylor	New Zealand Ecolabelling Trust	since October 2003
Wolfgang Lohrer	Federal Environmental Agency, Germany	since November 2000

The GAO is situated and operates in the offices of the Japan Environment Association. The Secretariat is set up in the offices of TerraChoice Environmental Marketing Inc. [formerly TerraChoice Environmental Services Inc.] of Canada. GAO and Secretariat officials report to the Board of Directors, and collaborate in providing GEN administrative support. [Contact information for both administrative offices is provided below.]

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2004 GEN Workshop and AGM, Tokyo, Japan



Table 1: GEN Member Organizations: 2004 Summary Information

ORGANIZATION(S)	PROGRAM DELIVERED	STANDARDS/ CRITERIA SETS	LICENSES ISSUED TO COMPANIES	CERTIFIED PRODUCTS /SERVICES
Asociacion Espanola de Normalizacion y Certificacion -- AENOR [Spain]	AENOR Medio Ambiente	13	52	275
Associaçao Brasileira de Normas Técnicas -- ABNT [Brasil]	Certificado do Rótulo Ecológico ABNT - Qualidade Ambiental	--	--	--
Australian Environmental Labelling Association -- AELA, Inc.	Australian Ecolabel Program	24	26	280
Central Pollution Control Board -- CPCB [India]	Ecomark Scheme of India	16	6	9
Clean & Green Foundation, Inc. [Philippines]	Green Choice Philippines	7	2	2
DG Environment (DG3), European Commission + AENOR [Spain] / Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs [United Kingdom] / Ecolabelling Denmark / Ecolabelling Norway / Ministère de l'Environnement, Luxembourg / Ministry of the Environment, Czech Republic / Ministry of the Environment and Physical Planning, Greece / SIS Ecolabelling AB [Sweden] / Umweltbundesamt [Germany]	European Eco-label / "The Flower"	23	231*	--
Ecolabelling Denmark / Ecolabelling Norway / SIS Ecolabelling AB [Sweden]	Nordic Swan	59**	~700 companies <u>/1,067 licenses**</u>	>3,000**
Environment and Development Foundation -- EDF [ROC(Taiwan)]	Green Mark	88	551	2,556
Federal Environmental Agency [Germany]	Ecolabel Blue Angel	86	571	3,359
Green Council [Hong Kong]	Hong Kong Green Label	41	7	20
Green Seal Inc. [USA]	Green Seal	43	99	493
Hong Kong Federation of Environmental Protection (HKFEP)	Environment Label Certification	16	6	16
Japan Environment Association -- JEA	Eco Mark Program	45	1,765	5,074
Korea Environmental Labelling Association -- KELA	Environmental Labelling Program	102	448	1,765
Living Planet [Ukraine]	Program for Development of Ecological Marking in Ukraine	13	68	63
Ministry of Environmental Protection and Physical Planning, Republic of Croatia	Environmental Label of the Republic of Croatia	40	12	18
Ministry of the Environment & Czech Environment Agency, Czech Republic	National Program of Labelling Environmentally Products	39	72	176
The New Zealand Ecolabelling Trust -- NZET	Environmental Choice New Zealand	23	13	207
Singapore Environment Council --SEC	Singapore Green Labeling Scheme -- SGLS	35	32	130
Swedish Society for Nature Conservation -- SSNC	Good Environmental Choice	13	223	786
TCO Development [Sweden-based; international]	Quality and Ecolabelling Program	10	67	2,302
TerraChoice Environmental Services, Inc. -- TESI [Canada]	Environmental Choice ^M Program	160	230	>3,000
Thailand Environment Institute -- TEI	Thai Green Label Program	39	30	162

* While only the GEN member organizations which deliver the European Eco-label are identified, the "licenses issued to companies" statistic is a program total and involves companies licensed by non-GEN member organizations as well.

** Delivered by the GEN member organizations and other (non-GEN member) organizations. The statistics are program totals.





2004 Operations and Activities

2. 2004 Operations and Activities

This section highlights GEN operations, strategic planning and major work plan activities, and provides an annual financial statement.

2.1 Overview

In accordance with the GEN Bylaws, the Board of Directors manages efforts and initiatives in various business and work plan areas. The Board met twice in 2004, May 11th in Berlin and October 4th (immediately before the 2004 Conference, Workshop and Annual General Meeting) in Tokyo, to formulate and review strategies, work plans, initiatives and budgets. As well, electronic means were used throughout the year by the GEN Directors to consult and conduct routine GEN business. A Working Group of the Board also met for a special Global Ecolabelling Network Internationally Coordinated Ecolabelling System (GENICES) design and development working session on September 6th and 7th in Gothenburg, Sweden.

On an on-going basis, General Affairs Office (GAO) and Secretariat officials collaboratively performed the following tasks:

- handled and responded to internal and external requests, and communicated with and forwarded information of interest to members and others (refer to *Table 2* for statistics and some specifics);
- participated in the planning, organizing and staging of the Annual General Meeting (AGM)¹;
- provided secretariat services to the Chair (and other Directors serving on the GEN Board);
- maintained and enhanced a GEN filing system;
- invoiced and collected annual membership and associate fees;
- maintained and updated the GEN Website² and various information documents;
- established, maintained and updated contact lists;
- co-ordinated selected GEN projects/programs (e.g. the Technical Assistance Program);
- provided support to GEN representatives participating in international events and initiatives;
- conducted research projects/surveys³ and prepared information reports; and
- performed other related activities as directed/requested⁴.



Board of Directors Meeting in Copenhagen, May, 2005

¹ With the 2004 Annual General Meeting and related events staged in Japan, the General Affairs Office played a substantial and critical role in the success of the Event.

² Throughout 2004 and on a routine basis, the Website was updated and new information added (e.g. "Presentation Materials of the Special Group Discussion in "The 1st International Conference on Green Purchasing in Sendai on Oct. 6, 2004"). During the year, the GEN Website was also accessed considerably by both GEN member officials and other interested parties. The most frequently accessed sections were: the "Members List" page [an average of 838 visitors per month], the "What is Ecolabelling?" page [617 visitors per month], the "What is GEN?" page [615 visitors per month], and the "Product Category List of Ecolabelling Worldwide" page [546 visitors per month]. Also of note, GEN members' and administrative officials accessed the "Members' Only" section an average of 205 times per month.

³ A 2004 membership survey was devised and administered by the Manager of the Secretariat relating to ecolabelling program participation fees. Responses were received in late 2004 and were to be reported upon in early 2005. Based upon direction given at the last Board meeting in 2004, the Secretariat Manager also initiated work on designing a simple survey on GEN members' criteria development and review work planned and underway in 2005 and beyond. The survey is to be administered on a regular basis (e.g. twice annually), and reported upon to the GEN membership for information sharing purposes.

⁴ A funding request proposal was prepared and submitted in response to an invitation by German Government officials. Due to certain developments, funding was not forthcoming. However, GEN officials were invited and encouraged to consider re-applying for funding support in the future.



**Table 2:
REQUESTS HANDLED BY THE SECRETARIAT
AND GENERAL AFFAIRS OFFICES**

Requests From:	Handled in 2004	Handled in 2003	Handled in 2001 and 2002
Members	83	157	117
Associate	31	28	*
Potential Members (9) ¹	23	27	50
And Potential Associates (4) ²	6	3	19
Academic Sources	13 ³	21	27
Industry Sources (associations & individual companies)	13 ⁴	8	28
Media Sources	13 ⁵	12	11
National, Regional and Municipal Government Sources	13 ⁶	22	8
Multinational [Governmental] Organizations	18 ⁷	8	*
Other Sources (non-governmental organizations, individuals, others)	16 ⁸	32	48
Parties Interested in Linking Websites	4	2	*

Information Received and Disseminated To GEN Members (and Others)	2004	2003	2001 and 2002
General	316	221	*
Announcements of External Relevant Conferences and Events	105	106	55

* Statistics not recorded in 2001 and 2002.

2.2 The Strategic Plan

The adoption of a first five-year GEN Strategic Plan at the end of 2000 provided significant guidance and direction to the GEN Directors, officials and members in planning and undertaking actions and initiatives between 2001 and 2004. Subsequently, the second five-year plan -- *GEN Strategic Plan 2004 - 2008* -- has provided guidance and direction in 2004 and will remain relevant and significant in the GEN work planning and implementation exercises over the next few years. *Table 3* provides a summary of the objectives and action areas outlined in the Strategic Plan.

¹ Two gained GEN membership status. Several expressed interest in technical assistance and guidance.

² One in the process of establishing an environmental performance recognition scheme, one sustainable resources certification organization, and two sustainable tourism organizations.

³ From Austria, Canada, Germany, India and the United Kingdom. The questions included: general inquiries about GEN and select national and regional programs, a request for a comparison of "GEN members' programs" and "ISO14024 Type I programs", and a request to incorporate GEN's "Introduction to Ecolabelling" in an "Environmental Studies and Business" course.

⁴ From Canada, Hong Kong, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the USA. Information provided, included: ecolabelling criteria in certain product categories, foreign ecolabelling organizations' contact names and information, and comments on market demand and acceptance of ecolabels.

⁵ General inquiries were received from two American media sources while most inquiries came from Japanese sources relating to the 2004 Annual General Meeting and related events in Tokyo and Sendai.

⁶ From American, Chinese, Iranian, Israeli, Japanese, New Zealand government officials and related mostly to "green procurement" issues.

⁷ WTO officials sought authorization to disseminate the GEN's "Ecolabelling and Trade" information paper; OECD, UN and other international officials sought general information on GEN and ecolabelling.

⁸ Several eco-tourism and green hotel associations/programs sought information on GEN and ecolabelling, including marketing and promotional strategies. Consumers International - Asia/Pacific officials sought general and contact information for international and regional ecolabelling organizations.



Table 3:
GEN Strategic Plan Summary

Strategic Objectives	Specific Objectives	Strategic Action Areas
Capacity Building	<p>Existing ecolabelling programs evolve and become more effective and efficient</p> <p>Ecolabelling activities are expanded to new geographical areas and to an ever broadening scope of goods and services</p>	<p>Expand, enhance and manage the Technical Assistance Program (TAP)</p> <p>Prepare, publish, review and revise ecolabelling resource materials</p> <p>Establish/maintain an ecolabelling resource bank</p> <p>Invite potential members and associates to GEN meetings and events</p>
Internal Co-operation	<p>Comprehensive, effective and efficient information exchange mechanisms are in place and utilized by the membership.</p> <p>High levels of co-operation between ecolabelling entities are achieved as manifested by: (i) increased technical assistance efforts among members; (ii) joint drafting of criteria; and (iii) formal co-operation (e.g. mutual recognition) agreements</p>	<p>Develop, supplement, revise and enhance information exchange mechanisms</p> <p>Promote and facilitate/aid in enhanced co-operation between participants</p> <p>Facilitate joint development of new and revision of existing criteria</p>
External Promotion and Relations	<p>Governments, international organizations and industry recognize and use ecolabelling as a valuable environmental policy tool</p> <p>Ecolabelling of products becomes more recognized and accepted, on an international scale, as a marketing tool in improving competitiveness and continuous environmental improvement</p>	<p>Maintain and enhance a GEN Website with information on GEN initiatives, member programs and product criteria</p> <p>Produce, record and distribute <i>GENews</i> on a regular basis</p> <p>Plan and stage workshops and seminars on the benefits of ecolabelling</p> <p>Implement an international communications/promotion plan, and represent ecolabelling in international fora accordingly</p> <p>Promote ecolabelling as a policy and/or environmental management tool to public and private sector audiences, including industry</p>



Breakout session at 2004 GEN Workshop, Tokyo, Japan



2.3 Major Initiatives Undertaken

The success of the GEN depends to a large extent on the involvement and efforts of its Chair, Directors, and officials of the member and associate organizations. In 2004, major initiatives undertaken on behalf of the GEN, included the initiatives described below. At the end of this section, *Table 6* highlights 2004 Work Plan activities and accomplishments.

2.3.1 Development and Launch of the Global Ecolabelling Network Internationally Coordinated Ecolabelling System (GENICES)

The GEN was initially conceived and established as a forum for information exchange and cooperation among organizations operating ecolabelling programs. More recently, GEN officials and/or its members' officials, have:

- developed a mutual recognition approach specific to ecolabelling;
- developed mutual recognition agreements on bilateral and/or regional bases;
- developed common core environmental performance criteria for certain products;
- begun exploring the development of harmonized criteria;
- been actively represented at ISO meetings and adopted ISO 14024 as a "code of good practice";
- made presentations on ecolabelling to a range of international inter-governmental bodies; and
- provided technical assistance to countries seeking to develop ecolabelling programs.

In May 2003, a Board-appointed Working Group convened a special working session to formulate a proposal for consideration and adoption of a formal evolution strategy involving the development and implementation of a GEN internationally coordinated ecolabelling system ("GENICES"). At the 2003 AGM, the following resolution was made and adopted:

Within the context of the principles of simplicity, relevance, credibility, inclusiveness and flexibility, and while continuing the important work related to the development of common core criteria, to include in the GEN work program the development of GENICES (GEN Internationally Coordinated Ecolabelling System), beginning with an accreditation system and a logo approach.

During 2004, GENICES Working Group members devised a GENICES development and implementation work program and undertook various activities under the work program, including:

- formulation of five principles to guide GENICES development and implementation efforts (refer to *Table 4*);
- development of a "multilateral mutual trust (MMT)" mechanism incorporating application submission and peer review components (instead of pursuing the development of a more complicated and costly accreditation system);
- drafting of the MMT application form and supporting documentation including a checklist based upon ISO guidance documents;
- review and formal support of the common criteria development process being used by Asian members as a framework for future GEN-lead common criteria development initiatives;
- establishment of a "product category classification system" to help guide consideration and selection of product categories for potential common criteria development work and adoption;
- commitment to and consideration of posting GENICES status reports and work documents on the GEN Website for reference in order to keep members informed and aware of developments and to seek and secure membership input and feedback;
- initiation of an international fund-raising strategy related to aggressive GENICES implementation and advancement in 2005 and beyond; and
- ongoing consideration of other operational factors.

Prior to the 2004 Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Tokyo, a one-day GENICES Workshop was staged to enable the Working Group members to present their status report and 2005 GENICES Work Program proposal, and to secure membership input and feedback (refer to *Section 2.4* for more details). At the 2004 AGM, the Working Group was given support for proceeding with its work plan, including the pilot-testing of the MMT application and panel review process and fund-raising efforts.



**Table 4:
GENICES PRINCIPLES**

<p>The GENICES is to provide a mechanism for enhanced multilateral co-operation and collaboration in criteria development and review. Another intent is to develop a process to enable GEN members' customers to have access to other GEN members' programs.</p> <p>GENICES participation is voluntary and open only to GEN members.</p> <p>A formal methodology will be required, developed and adopted to achieve multilateral mutual trust (MMT).</p> <p>A formal methodology will be required, developed and adopted for common criteria formulation.</p> <p>The GENICES is to remain for an indefinite period of time, but continue to evolve.</p>

2.3.2 Multilateral Enhanced Co-operation and Common Criteria Development

In late 2001, officials of four Asian member organizations -- the Environment and Development Foundation (EDF) of Taiwan/ROC, the Japan Environment Association (JEA), the Korea Environmental Labelling Association (KELA), and the Thailand Environment Institute (TEI) -- sought and secured GEN "seed funding" and support for a multilateral, multi-year project. The project design called for collaboration, negotiation and establishment of a mutual recognition framework and cooperative process through which sets of common ecolabelling criteria could be formulated. [Table 5 presents the general framework developed and refined over the past few years.] The ultimate project goal has been to finalize and adopt common criteria and encourage other GEN members to join in the multilateral project work and/or reference the common criteria in their respective ecolabelling criteria documents.

**Table 5:
COMMON CRITERIA DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND PROCEDURES**

Procedure	Descriptions
Initial Research Report	Gather product information on technical characteristics and global development trends, conduct initial LCA, and compare existing global criteria.
Determine Product Scope	Determine all sub-product categories covered in core criteria. (For example, divide washing machines into categories of commercial and residential.)
Identify Core Elements	Classify elements of existing criteria into "core" and "non-core" portions. (For example, power consumption is the core element of criteria for televisions.)
Develop Detailed Specifications	Determine detailed specifications/requirements for each core element. (For example, identify power consumption specifications at TV's "ON Mode", "STANDBY Mode", and "OFF Mode".)
Devise Verification Method	Determine testing and verification methods for each specification. (For example, decide how to verify mixing ratios of recycled materials.)
Complete Common Core Criteria and Propose Action Plan	Submit completed criteria report, then encourage all members to adopt the criteria as national standards and to sign mutual recognition agreements with other member organizations.

"Phase I", under the coordination and lead of TEI officials, focused upon development, testing and refinement of the mutual recognition framework, and development and adoption of common core criteria for paints and toner cartridges. "Phase I" development work was finalized in March 2003.



"Phase II", under the coordination of KELA officials, was launched in June 2003. It involved officials from the same four GEN members along with observers from several other GEN member organizations. The GEN Board endorsed the project and approved minor funding assistance. Work focused on refinement and further testing of the mutual recognition framework, and development of common core criteria for televisions, video players and computer printers/multifunctional office equipment. The work was completed in late 2004.

For both Phases, GEN officials served as "facilitators" and advisors while members' officials took leading roles and carried out the substantial work. This approach is expected to remain in place for future collaborative work among GEN members.

Going forward, a list of candidate product categories for common criteria development has been prepared under the GENICES work program, and will likely help guide future work in this area. At the 2004 AGM, Dr. Yu, on behalf of EDF, proposed to take the lead in the next Phase of common criteria development work and invited all other GEN members to join in the exercise. In late 2004, the process of selecting appropriate product categories was initiated.

Several member representatives reported at the 2004 AGM that their organizations had established, initiated or begun negotiating bilateral agreements/arrangements with other members regarding comparable criteria sets and/or cooperative compliance verification and testing procedures for select product categories. For example, Asian participants described their shared attempts to develop and adopt regional mutual recognition agreements relating to the common criteria.

Lastly, some members' officials not directly involved in the common criteria development exercises identified their intentions to incorporate the common criteria in their organizations' pertinent future criteria review exercises.

2.3.3 Participation in International Forums, Conferences, Activities and Events

Throughout 2004, GEN officials were invited to and participated in a number of important international forums, meetings and events, including:

- **"A" External Liaison Organization Participation in the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Environmental Management and Labelling Area**

For a number of years, GEN officials have participated in ISO Technical Committee 207 meetings and events relating to guiding principles and practices for environmental labelling, and most significantly, the development of the ISO 14024 voluntary standard for Type I (i.e. "ecolabelling"). Having attained and retained "'A" External Liaison Organization' status, GEN representatives have attended and participated in various working group meetings and events, and provided an annual "status of GEN and ecolabelling" report at the Sub-committee level.

With the decision taken last year for ISO officials not to initiate a significant review and potential revision of the ISO 14024 standard, GEN officials elected not to attend and participate in the 2004 meetings. Nevertheless, the Chair and Secretariat prepared and submitted a "Status of GEN and ecolabelling" report to ISO officials for dissemination during the ISO sub-committee meetings.

GEN officials intend to remain active in the ISO process and input when and as appropriate, while monitoring developments in environmental labelling (e.g. Type III labelling) and other ISO work areas of interest (e.g. life cycle assessment, certification and accreditation, corporate social responsibility, etc.).

- **Participation in the 1st International Conference on Green Purchasing in Sendai (ICGPS)**

The GEN and its members were invited to participate in the planning, staging and organizing of this conference due to the recognized and acknowledged strong link between green procurement strategies, processes and ecolabelling. GEN officials provided general input and guidance as well as taking the lead in organizing and staging a Special Discussion Group session on "Environmental Labels in the World". This Session included speakers from both GEN member and non-GEN member environmental labelling organizations.

The one-day session was well attended by GEN member representatives and other local and international interested parties. Besides serving as a good regional information-sharing and awareness- raising event, it provided an opportunity for GEN officials to inform others about the GENICES initiative underway.



The broader conference was also well attended, and succeeded in identifying the nature and positive merits of green purchasing around the world and beginning the formation of an international network of international, regional and national green purchasing entities.

- **Input to World Trade Organization (WTO) Work on Consideration and Determination of "Green Products"**

Throughout 2004, WTO officials and various national delegations made efforts to investigate and advance work in this regard. While GEN officials were not invited to participate directly in high-level meetings, GEN documentation (i.e. notably the GEN paper on "Ecolabelling and Trade") was invited and submitted through relevant channels for dissemination to WTO delegations. EU officials, in a significant submission/proposal paper, suggested that "ecolabels" might be considered as credible and reliable identifiers of "green products" internationally.

- **Involvement in the Advisory Group to the World Bank (and Other Multilateral Development Banks and United Nations) on Environmentally Responsible Procurement Strategies, Instruments and Practices, and Corresponding Work on International Ecolabelled Products and Certification Criteria Lists/Databases**

Since 2001, World Bank officials have annually hosted a one-day meeting on Environmentally Responsible Procurement (ERP). Participants in the meetings have included representatives from the multilateral development banks (i.e. the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and others), United Nations organizations, and a variety of non-governmental organizations including the GEN.

In late 2002, World Bank officials announced their intention to seek out and procure "certified green products", and consequently, to search for and request credible and appropriate lists of such products (and corresponding criteria) that their procurement officials could reference. In 2003, GEN officials prepared a preliminary list that addressed products certified and ecolabelled in eight product category areas. At an Advisory Group meeting in July 2003, the GEN Chair tabled the Preliminary List, requested feedback on it, and spoke more broadly on the subject of using ecolabelling product lists and criteria in green purchasing initiatives.

While no significant feedback was received in the latter part of 2003 or in 2004, further considerations occurred and work on the List was undertaken. Japan Environment Association (JEA) officials offered and agreed to expand and maintain the List in a ".pdf" format and subsequently posted it on the GEN Website for reference and downloading. Besides providing product listings for select product categories, internet links to the product certification criteria and listings available on the Websites of various GEN members have also been incorporated. Several Interagency organizations (e.g. the World Bank and others) were notified of this development and asked to consider providing some funding for the further development, enhancement and maintenance of a listing or database system.

- **Liaison and Interaction with the ISEAL Alliance**

For several years, GEN officials have communicated and interacted with International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling (ISEAL) Alliance officials. The ISEAL Alliance is a collaboration of leading international standards setting, accreditation and labelling organizations that are concerned with social and environmental criteria in product and renewable resource management certification. While there is no overlap in membership between the GEN and the ISEAL Alliance, goals and objectives are somewhat complementary. Also, many operational strategies, processes and procedures used by members of both organizations are comparable. At the 2002 GEN Annual General Meeting, the ISEAL Alliance was approved as one of the GEN's first "associates" (and now remains its lone associate).

While GEN officials didn't participate directly in 2004 ISEAL Alliance meetings and workshops due to scheduling conflicts and budget restrictions, GEN officials stayed informed of meeting outcomes and initiatives underway, and provided input and comments to the ISEAL Alliance exercises.

Of considerable interest to GEN officials are initiatives underway relating to the advancement and adoption of a "Code of Good Practice for Standards-Setting" and the establishment and application of common accreditation systems and processes. Outcomes and processes implemented in both of these areas could prove interesting and potentially quite useful for GEN officials and members in undertaking comparable GEN exercises as part of the GENICES initiative [Section 2.3.1].

[For more information on the ISEAL Alliance, its members, and its initiatives, please visit the following Website: www.isealalliance.org.]



- **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Consultation Sessions**

In response to an invitation forwarded by OECD officials, the GEN Board, through the Secretariat, provided comments and suggestions on the proposed agenda for a 2004 meeting and potential future meetings. While the 2004 agenda was not of great interest and subsequently the Board elected not to send a representative, it is expected that GEN will participate in future meetings to input on matters of interest and as a forum to continue GEN information-sharing, awareness-raising and promotion.

2.3.4 Fund-raising

Based upon a decision taken at the 2004 Annual General Meeting, fund-raising efforts were planned and initiated in late 2004. The strategy adopted was for the GEN Chair and former GEN Chair to arrange and undertake face-to-face meetings with officials of select international and national organizations and agencies around the world. These meetings would provide an opportunity for the GEN officials to raise awareness of GEN initiatives and proposals with key officials while seeking funding support to accelerate implementation of the GENICES. Due to GEN budget restrictions, it was understood and acknowledged that related costs would need to be kept to a minimum through trying to coordinate these meetings with other non-GEN business activities and travel.

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**Table 6:
2004 WORK PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Capacity Building

Efforts and achievements in this strategic objective area included:

- Updated Technical Assistance Program (TAP) documentation and forwarded two application packages to organizations operating in Sri Lanka and South Africa
- Continued to reference TAP in presentations given at international forums, workshops and other events
- Completed and posted on the GEN Website the public information document -- "Introduction to Ecolabelling"
- Staged a GEN workshop as part of the October 2004 GEN Event in Japan that was attended by GEN member representatives and other invitees
- GEN Chair and other representatives participated in international events staged by others in order to do some capacity building and promote GEN and ecolabelling

Internal Co-operation

Efforts and achievements in this strategic objective area included:

- Finalized and implemented the GEN 2004 - 2008 Strategic Plan
- Maintained and enhanced the GEN Website, including installing the "Product Category List of Ecolabelling Programs Worldwide" and links to members' product category and criteria lists
- Continued to encourage and assist members in facilitating bilateral and multilateral agreements and arrangements
- GENICES Working Group proposed and received approval for proceeding with pilot-testing of a multilateral mutual trust (MMT) process involving "Panel Review" of members' applications
- Final report on the common criteria development and adoption framework/processes prepared by Asian officials and posted on the GEN Website
- Decision at the 2004 AGM to incorporate the existing common criteria development and adoption framework/processes into any future relevant work under the GENICES work program
- GEN Preliminary Chemical Substances data base posted on the GEN Website for membership reference and feedback
- Membership survey on fee strategies, structures and processes completed and findings report under development for dissemination to membership
- Work initiated on preparation and installation of a routine membership survey on criteria development and review for regular results posting on the GEN Website



External Promotion and Relations

Efforts and achievements in this strategic objective area included:

- One issue of GENews was produced and posted on the Website in April
- The "Product Category List of Ecolabelling Programs Worldwide" was posted on the GEN Website and hard copies circulated to select officials of international bodies involved with "green procurement" initiatives
- Helped plan and organize, and participated in an International Conference on Green Purchasing in Sendai as an opportunity to raise awareness of and promote GEN and its members
- Distributed hard copies of the 2003 GEN Annual Report at the 2004 GEN Event in Japan and at other international events subsequently
- Continued to liaise with officials of non-GEN ecolabelling organizations and encouraged them to join GEN
- Promoted GEN associate status to officials of various non-ecolabelling organizations who had expressed interest in the GEN objectives and work program
- Maintained "Liaison Organization" status in the ISO and provided a written annual GEN status report for dissemination at the appropriate ISO Sub-committee meeting
- Retained associate status in the ISEAL Alliance and participated when and as appropriate
- Continued dialogue with established and new contacts in the UN, World Bank, OECD, WTO, etc. in order to encourage them to favourably consider ecolabels and/or ecolabelling criteria in their policies
- Authorized World Trade Organization (WTO) officials to circulate the GEN's "Ecolabelling and Trade" discussion paper to WTO delegations
- Sent GEN representatives to participate in other multinational forums in response to appropriate invitations

2.4 Annual General Meeting and International Workshop

The GEN Annual General Meeting (AGM) and its related events and activities, are recognized by members and invitees as some of the best venues for the exchange of views and advice on addressing challenges and opportunities related to ecolabelling. The formal meeting facilitates exchanges among members, while supplemental (and less formal) meetings generally occur on a bilateral and multilateral basis. The chance to "compare notes" with other ecolabelling practitioners, and notably the opportunity to find out "why" rather than just "how" certain members have undertaken specific activities, has proven useful and informative over the years.

2004 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Dates:	October 8 th - 9 th , 2004
Location:	Mipro Exhibition Hall (Sunshine "World Import Mart" 6F), Tokyo
Host Organizations:	Japan Environment Association and the GEN
Participants:	53: including 25 representatives of 18 member organizations, senior Japanese Government and Japan Environment Association officials, General Affairs Office and Secretariat officials, and 24 invitees/observers from China, Indonesia, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, New Zealand, Taiwan and Vietnam

This year marked the 10th anniversary of the GEN. This milestone was recognized and celebrated at the beginning of the formal AGM and in related events prior to the AGM. The Meeting was opened with welcoming comments and some thoughtful points raised in presentations by Mr. Hiroshi Kamagata (Director of the Environment and Economy Division of the Japanese Ministry of the Environment) and Mr. Mutsumi Kato (Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Japan Environment Association). Dr. Ning Yu, as GEN Chair, extended greetings to the participants and thanked Japanese officials for planning, organizing and staging this meeting and the related events during the rest of the week. During the regular agenda of the Meeting, several significant issues were discussed and decisions taken, including:



- (i) the Hong Kong Federation of Environmental Protection and Living Planet of Ukraine were approved as the two newest GEN members;
- (ii) the GENICES development and implementation work program, including pilot-testing of the "multilateral mutual trust application and review process" in 2005, was accepted with input and recommendations for the consideration of the GENICES Working Group;
- (iii) once publicly available, the EU/Nordic Detergent Ingredients Database/Chemicals List was to be posted on the GEN Website (or a link to it on the EU or Nordic Council Website provided);
- (iv) full implementation of the GEN 2004-2008 Strategic Plan was acknowledged;
- (v) continuing active participation in ISO TC207, as well as other international appropriate events, forums and initiatives, was encouraged and endorsed;
- (vi) Asian members will continue to lead and co-operate in the development and adoption of common criteria for select product categories, with other members invited to join in the exercise and/or reference the common criteria in their own development exercises;
- (vii) due to funding limitations, preparation and production of the 2004 Annual Report would be undertaken internally and result in the generation of an electronic version for downloading and printing although a reduced internal print-run would still occur;
- (viii) all six members of the 2004 Board of Directors were re-elected to serve on the 2005 Board; and
- (ix) external fund-raising to support the GEN work program was to be undertaken and led by the GEN Chair in 2005.

The final part of the meeting involved information-sharing presentations by members and some invitees, focused primarily on the topic of "Relations with Retailers and Distributors: Challenges, Opportunities and Successes".

2004 International GENICES Workshop

Date:	October 5th, 2004
Location:	Mipro Exhibition Hall (Sunshine "World Import Mart" 6F), Tokyo
Host Organizations:	Japan Environment Association and the GEN
Participants:	55: including 33 representatives of 19 GEN member organizations, General Affairs Office and Secretariat officials, and invitees/observers from China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, New Zealand, ROC(Taiwan), and Vietnam

The Workshop began with presentations by the Global Ecolabelling Network Internationally Coordinated Ecolabelling System (GENICES) Working Group members on the background and status of the work program and proposed ongoing work. Workshop participants raised a number of insightful questions regarding the objectives and planning and development work to date. GENICES Working Group members responded immediately to some of these questions and deferred some responses to the next part of the Workshop -- Break-out Discussion Group Sessions. For the break-out sessions, Workshop participants were divided into three groups for discussion of opinions, concerns, areas of confusion and misunderstanding, and recommendations relating to the GENICES. The event was useful for the Working Group members to get sincere and thoughtful input and reaction to their plans, proposals and early work program outputs; Workshop participants gained a better understanding and appreciation for the GENICES and how they might participate and benefit through such participation.



2.5 2004 Financial Statement

Table 7 provides a summary financial statement. A formal and internally reviewed 2004 financial statement is to be prepared and considered for acceptance by the GEN membership at the 2005 AGM in New Zealand.

Table 7:
GEN 2004 Budget and Actual Expenses
(Unaudited; all figures in US\$)

	Budget	Actual
Income		
Membership Fees	79,500	68,594
EAJ and JEA Contribution	24,000	24,000
Carryover from 2003	15,000	23,872
Other (e.g. bank interest collected, etc.)	0	153
	-----	-----
TOTAL	118,500	116,619
Expenses		
Personnel: Chair	10,980	10,980
Personnel: Secretariat	35,000	35,000
Personnel: GAO	21,000	21,000
Honoraria & Consultants	4,000	0
Travel	21,500	23,075 ¹
Annual GEN Conference/Workshop	10,000	10,000
GENews (Web) and Annual Report	11,000	7,024
2003 Financial Statements Review and Legal Fees	2,950	2,083
Miscellaneous - postage and bank charges, etc.	1,500	1,250
	-----	-----
TOTAL	117,930	110,412
Carry-over to 2005		6,207

¹This higher actual expenditure level resulted from a late year decision to stage a GENICES Working Group Meeting which had not been budgeted for at the beginning of the year.



Mr. Seiji Taguchi presented a souvenir to Dr. Ning Yu at 2004 GEN AGM, Tokyo, Japan





2005 Priority Action Areas and Initiatives Planned

3. 2005 Priority Action Areas and Initiatives Planned

Consistent with the strategic objectives and priority action areas identified in the *GEN Strategic Plan*, and in follow-up to initiatives and activities undertaken in 2004, the *2005 GEN Work Plan* proposes the following major action areas and initiatives for 2005:

Capacity Building

Technical Assistance Program Documentation, Promotion and Funding Support

- Encourage GEN and non-GEN organizations to apply, approve worthy applications, reference the Program in presentations given at multinational forums/workshops/other events, and seek additional funding from international funding agencies (if specific project proposals necessitate the seeking of third-party funding)

International Conference / Workshop for Members and Potential Members

- Plan and stage a conference and/or workshop to coincide with the Annual General Meeting, and invite GEN members and other interested parties to participate in these events
- Support, input to, and participate in other conferences/workshops arranged by individual members or other parties

Replace the “Ecolabelling Guide”

- Prepare a new and updated GEN guide on establishing an ecolabelling program, including the need for and benefits of such a program, and details on the key tasks required

Internal Co-operation

Enhanced Web Page Contents and Features

- Maintain and further enhance the Website and especially the "Members' Only" section, routinely update and post GEN documents/announcements/etc. for reference and downloading

Mutual Recognition Agreements and Peer Review Among GEN Members

- Encourage and assist in facilitating bilateral and multilateral agreements
- Finalize the design of and launch the GENICES Multilateral Mutual Trust (MMT) application and panel review process
- Pilot-test the MMT process with the voluntary cooperation and participation of EDF and NZET
- Encourage GEN members to submit applications for Panel Review

Co-operative Development of Common Core Criteria

- Endorse process developed by Asian members
- Encourage, promote and contribute to new co-operative common criteria development efforts led by individual GEN members
- Post relevant status reports and draft criteria review documents on the GEN Website for reference

Common/Shared Lists and Data Bases

- Update and expand upon the "Product Categories and Criteria Documents of Ecolabelling Programs Worldwide" posted on the GEN Website
- Update and expand upon the "International Ecolabelled Products List and Direct Links to Ecolabelled Products Information" posted on the GEN Website
- Post the "EU/Nordic Harmonized Detergent Ingredients Database" list in the Members' Only section of the GEN Website
- Maintain the preliminary "GEN Chemical Substances Database [relating to ecolabelling criteria around the world]" in the Members' Only section of the GEN Website
- Encourage members to submit and/or share lists and databases of potential common interest with other members



External Promotion, Relations and New Participants

GENews

- Prepare newsletter issues and post on the GEN Website
- Announce latest issues to members and external parties

GEN Annual Report

- Issue 2003 Report to interested parties until 2004 Report is available
- Produce 2004 Annual Report and print limited copies
- Distribute printed copies to select recipients
- Provide electronic copies and/or encourage stakeholders and other interested parties to reference the Report on the GEN Website

Relations with Non-GEN Environmental Labelling [and Other] Organizations

- Establish and/or maintain contact with non-GEN ecolabelling organizations around the world, and encourage them to join GEN
- Liaise with other types of environmental labelling organizations and encourage them to join GEN as "associates"
- Distribute, receive, process and approve applications for membership and associate status

Contacts with Important Institutions for Information-sharing/Fund-raising/Awareness-Raising

- Maintain and increase dialogue with established contacts in order to encourage them to consider ecolabels and/or ecolabelling criteria in their policies, work programs and initiatives
- Initiate and take advantage of invitations to dialogue with other appropriate institutions
- Use meetings and communications opportunities for fund-raising and awareness-raising purposes

Participation in Multinational Forums

- Maintain ISO "Liaison Organization" status and remain active in ISO TC207 events and initiatives
- Retain "associate member" status in the ISEAL Alliance and maintain good and regular communications between officials of the two organizations
- Continue to participate in and contribute to the "Greening of the World Bank and other International Institutions" initiative
- Apply for and secure "consultative status" in the United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development work program
- Send GEN representatives to other multinational forums in response to appropriate invitations
- Post GEN information on data bases/Websites of other international bodies when invited to do so
- Encourage and support members' promotion of GEN at other events which they participate in



Boat trip at Matsushima, Sendai, Japan



Opening Ceremony of Sendai Conference


































appendices

APPENDIX: 2004 GEN PARTICIPANTS*

MEMBERS

	Asociacion Espanola de Normalizacion y Certificacion (AENOR) Medio Ambiente [Spain]		Korea Environmental Labelling Association – KELA
	Associascao Brasileira de Normas Technicas -- ABNT [Brasil]		Living Planet [Ukraine]
	Australian Environmental Labelling Association -- AELA, Inc.		Ministère de l'Environment, Luxembourg
	Business and Environment Program, Thailand Environment Institute -- TEI		Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction Environmental Protection Division, Department for EU Integration and International Projects, Republic of Croatia
	Central Pollution Control Board -- CPCB [India]		Ministry of the Environment, Czech Republic + Czech Ecolabelling Agency, Czech Environmental Information Agency (CENIA)
	Clean & Green Foundation, Inc. [Philippines]		Ministry of the Environment and Physical Planning, Greece
	Ecolabelling Denmark		The New Zealand Ecolabelling Trust -- NZET
	Ecolabelling Norway		SIS Ecolabelling AB [Sweden]
	Environment and Development Foundation -- EDF [ROC(Taiwan)]		Singapore Environment Council -- SEC
	European Commission, DG ENV G2 (BU-9 4/172)		Swedish Society for Nature Conservation – SSNC
	Federal Environmental Agency/Umweltbundesamt [Germany]		TCO Development [Sweden-based; international]
	Green Council [Hong Kong]		TerraChoice Environmental Services, Inc. -- TESI [Canada]
	Green Seal Inc. [USA]		UK Ecolabelling Competent Body, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs [United Kingdom]
	Hong Kong Federation of Environmental Protection (HKFEP)		
	Japan Environment Association -- JEA		

ASSOCIATE

	International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling (ISEAL) Alliance
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* For current contact information for any of the participating organizations, please reference the GEN Website at: www.gen.gr.jp, and use the member contact links

