

G E N

Global Ecolabelling Network Annual Report 2002



Message from the GEN Chair

Dear GEN Members and Interested Colleagues,

The growth of ecolabelling continues strongly on all fronts. More and more, it is being recognized as a positive force for environmental improvement. Using market forces for environmental benefit has significant potential to help deal with the myriad of environmental issues we face today. By way of example, virtually any product or service that has been identified as an environmental leader will produce climate change benefits. This is true whether the benefit comes from reduced energy use, reduced chemical use, recycling or resource use reduction.

In regard to the issue of ecolabelling having the potential to be an unnecessary barrier to trade, these concerns have not disappeared. However, there is a growing recognition that ecolabelling is an effective environmental market-based policy tool, and that, in most cases, programs are being operated in a professional and effective manner. Education and openness always illuminate and inform issues, and the ecolabelling-trade debate is no different. The GEN continues to work with intergovernmental agencies and the ISO to represent our interests and to explain how ecolabelling actually works and the codes of conduct that we follow. As well, GEN members are working together to explore and test different approaches related to criteria harmonization and mutual recognition. In the last few years, members have developed common core criteria for a number of products, developed a unique four step approach to mutual recognition, signed bilateral mutual recognition agreements, developed harmonized criteria among four members, and are exploring a higher level of integration among members.

The highlight for all GEN members is getting together as a group once a year for a conference/workshop and Annual General Meeting. Not only is this a chance to catch up with old friends and make new ones, but to also share experiences and learn from each other. In October, our colleagues with the Taiwan Green Mark Program hosted the 2002 meetings. The conference was held in Taipei and then the participants were treated to a trip to Taiwan's

Taroko National Park where the Annual General Meeting was held. Some trips to beautiful, scenic sites punctuated an excellent meeting. The annual meetings are being attended by more than just GEN members. Representatives from different types of environmental labelling schemes, intergovernmental agencies, private business and environmental groups are increasingly in attendance.

On a personal note, at the time of writing this message, I am in my third year as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Global Ecolabelling Network, and I will not be seeking re-election. I owe a debt of gratitude to all of the members, but particularly to the directors and the Secretariat and General Affairs Office staff who have served with me over this three-year period. Their dedication and efforts make the job of Chairperson more than just manageable, it has also been a pleasure and an honour. The GEN is on a solid footing and I have every confidence that it will continue to grow and prosper in the years ahead.

*Yours truly,
John C. Polak*





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Ecolabelling

"Ecolabelling" is a voluntary method of environmental performance certification and labelling that is practised around the world¹. An "ecolabel" is a label which identifies overall environmental preference for a product or service within a specific product/service category based on life cycle considerations². In contrast to "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 or services that are independently determined to meet environmental leadership criteria.

the global ecolabelling network (GEN)

1.1 Mission

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

The mission of the GEN is to:

- serve its members, associates, other ecolabelling programs, 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.

In support of this mission, GEN participants:

- set criteria for and certify products and services with lower environmental burdens and impacts than comparable products/services with the same function;
- provide information, advice and technical assistance to organizations contemplating or developing programs;

- disseminate information to the public; and
- represent the interests of ecolabelling in various international meetings and events.

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

1.2 Participants

As of the end of 2002, the GEN included 26 member organizations that operate ecolabelling programs around the world, and the China Ecolabelling Center (CEC) as an additional formal participant³. Also, two non-ecolabelling program delivery organizations - the Consumer's Choice Council (CCC) and the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling (ISEAL) Alliance - had become formal associates⁴.

Table 1.2-1 provides summary information on the GEN member organizations. It is noteworthy that several are responsible for the delivery of more than one ecolabelling program.

Appendix A provides contact information for all the GEN participating organizations and their representatives.

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 A list of countries and multinational regions that have ecolabelling programs is provided in Appendix B to this Annual Report.

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

³ While the China Ecolabelling Center (CEC) can satisfy the GEN membership requirements and conditions, CEC officials have requested "participant status" at this time. This arrangement has been considered and approved by the GEN Board of Directors on an exceptional basis.

⁴ Based on a decision taken in 2000, formal participation in GEN initiatives and activities has been expanded to potentially include "associates". These associates are not-for-profit organizations that formally support ecolabelling principles and goals, though they are not ecolabelling practitioners.



Table 1.2-1 Member Organizations: Summary Information

Organization	Program(s) Delivered	Voluntary Standards/ Criteria Sets	Licences Issued to Companies	Certified Products/ Services
Asociacion Espanola de Normalizacion y Certificacion - AENOR [Spain]	AENOR Medio Ambiente	13	62	20 products 54 services
	EU Eco-label / The Flower	*	*	*
Associaçao Brasileira de Normas Técnicas - ABNT [Brazil]	Certificado do Rótulo Ecológico ABNT - Qualidade Ambiental	1	10 participants	0
Australian Environmental Labelling Association (AELA), Inc.	Australian Ecolabel Program	9	10	63
Central Pollution Control Board - CPCB [India]	Ecomark Scheme of India	16	2	3
DG Environment - DG3, European Commission	EU Eco-label / The Flower	20	134*	17,888* (i.e. "SKU's"****)
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs - DEFRA [United Kingdom]	EU Eco-label / The Flower	20	*	*
Ecolabelling Denmark	Nordic Swan	54	365	2000
	EU Eco-label / The Flower	20	*	*
Ecolabelling Norway	Nordic Swan	54	66 companies with 91 licenses	>350
	EU Eco-label / The Flower	20	0	*
Environment and Development Foundation - EDF [Taiwan]	Green Mark	77	381	1557
Green Council [Hong Kong]	Hong Kong Green Label	37	3	7
Green Seal Inc. [USA]	Green Seal	40	52	301
Hungarian Eco-Labelling Organization - HELO	Hungarian Eco-labelling Program	**	**	**
Japan Environment Association - JEA	Eco Mark Program	64	1,867	5,391
Korea Environmental Labelling Association - KELA	Environmental Labelling Program	84	221	441
Ministere de l'Environnement, Luxembourg	EU Eco-label / The Flower	20	*	*
Ministry of Environment, Israel	Green Label Program	11	28	82
Ministry of Environmental Protection and Physical Planning, Republic of Croatia	Environmental Label of the Republic of Croatia	**	**	**
Ministry of the Environment, Czech Republic	National Program of Labelling Environmentally Products	31	58	>280
Ministry of the Environment and Physical Planning, Greece	EU Eco-label / The Flower	20	*	*
New Zealand Ecolabelling Trust	Environmental Choice New Zealand	19	11	115
SIS Ecolabelling AB [Sweden]	Nordic Swan	54	391 companies/ 522 licenses	Unknown but in the 1,000's
	EU Eco-label	20	10	100's (?)
Swedish Society for Nature Conservation - SSNC	Good Environmental Choice	12	242 companies/ 387 licenses	462
TCO Development [Sweden-based; international]	Quality and Ecolabelling Program	11	80	740 [in 2002] 5,100 [since start]
TerraChoice Environmental Services, Inc. [Canada]	Environmental Choice ^M Program (ECP)	140	240	7,000 (i.e. "SKU's"****)
Thailand Environment Institute - TEI	Thai Green Label Program	33	34	200
Umweltbundesamt [Germany]	Ecolabel Blue Angel	88	703	3,788
	EU Eco-label / The Flower	20	*	*

* Total numbers have been provided for the EU Eco-label Program, but are generally not segregated on a national basis.

** Information not provided.

*** The EU and Canadian programs count the number of "stock keeping units -- SKU's" rather than attempting to define and count products in various different product categories. SKU's are industry determined and assigned identifiers of products that allow differentiation between products within a product category.

1.3 GEN Management & Administration

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

2002 GEN Board of Directors

	Term on Board since:
Mr John Polak, Chair TerraChoice Environmental Services Inc., Canada	November 2000
Mr Seiji Taguchi, Treasurer Japan Environment Association (JEA)	October 1998
Ms Melissa Arseneault New Zealand Ecolabelling Trust	November 2000
Mr Wolfgang Lohrer Umweltbundesamt (UBA), Germany	November 2000
Mrs Lisbeth Engel Hansen Ecolabelling Denmark, Denmark	October 2001
Dr Ning Yu Environment and Development Foundation (EDF), Taiwan, ROC	October 2001

Since 1995, the GAO has been established and operated in the offices of the Japan Environment Association. Since August 1999, Secretariat services have been provided by

TerraChoice Environmental Services Inc. (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.)

GEN General Affairs Office

Japan Environment Association
Attention: Ms Hiroko Mizuno
Toranomom Takagi Building
1-7-2 Nishi-Shimbashi, Minato-ku
Tokyo 105-0003, JAPAN
Telephone: +81 3 3508 2662 Telefax: +81 3 3508 2656
E-mail: dc3h-mzn@asahi-net.or.jp

GEN Secretariat

TerraChoice Environmental Services, Inc.
Attention: Mr. Evan Bozowsky, Manager
Suite 801 - 1280 Old Innes Road
Ottawa, Ontario
K1B 5M7 CANADA
Telephone: +1 613 247 1900 Telefax: +1 613 247 2228
E-mail: gensecretariat@terrachoice.ca

2002 GEN Board of Directors

Front row (left to right)
Mr Seiji Taguchi,
Mrs Lisbeth Engel Hansen,
Ms Hiroko Mizuno
(GEN General Affairs Office),
Dr Ning Yu,
Ms Melissa Arseneault

Back row (left to right)
Mr Evan Bozowsky
(GEN Secretariat),
Mr Wolfgang Lohrer,
Mr John Polak



2

2002 Operations and Activities

This section highlights GEN operations and activities, and provides an annual financial statement.

2.1 Board of Director Activities

In accordance with the GEN Bylaws, the Board of Directors manages GEN efforts and initiatives in various business and work plan areas. The Board met formally three times in 2002 (i.e. March 18-19 in Auckland/New Zealand, October 28 in Taipei/Taiwan and November 2 in Hualien/Taiwan) to formulate and review strategies, work plans, initiatives and budgets. Electronic means were also used during the year to conduct GEN business.

Based on decisions taken at the Board Meetings and at the 2001 and 2002 Annual General Meetings (AGMs), major Board responsibilities and activities in 2002 included:

- providing provisional acceptance of an application from Australian Environmental Labelling Association (AELA), Inc. for membership in advance of the November 2002 AGM;
- providing provisional acceptance of applications for "associate" status from the Consumer's Choice Council - CCC (based in the United States of America) and the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling (ISEAL) Alliance in advance of the 2002 AGM;
- convening the 2002 AGM and assisting in the planning, organizing and staging of a corresponding conference and exposition, including some sponsorship to enable members and others to participate;
- making recommendations and directing revisions to the 2002 and draft 2003 work plans and budgets;
- undertaking a performance review of Secretariat services and subsequently renewing the contract with TerraChoice Environmental Services Inc. for an additional three-year contract period (based upon: acceptance of the continuation of services proposal submitted; determination of satisfactory performance to date; and no other contract work proposals received);
- recommending and securing approval from the membership for the maintenance of the annual membership fee level at the level originally set in 1997, while establishing the same fee level for "GEN associate" status;
- directing the preparation of the 2001 annual financial report, and subsequently reviewing and recommending its approval by the membership at the 2002 AGM;
- encouraging and directing the completion of an internal ISO 14024 Compliance Self-Assessment exercise for the benefit of the individual members, and preparation of an internal "summary of findings" report [elaborated upon in Section 2.3.7];
- authorizing and overseeing the efforts of a small working group to formulate themes and issues, and prepare a discussion paper on "The Future of GEN" that was tabled and considered at the 2002 AGM [elaborated upon in Section 2.3.9];
- directing design work to be undertaken on a GEN participation logo/art work for consideration and adoption by the membership at the 2002 AGM;
- directing revisions to the Technical Assistance Program (TAP)⁵ and its corresponding documentation in order to expand the Program and modify certain aspects based upon experience gained;
- considering proposals and approving two "enhanced cooperation/mutual recognition exploration" projects involving various GEN member organizations [elaborated upon in Sections 2.3.3 and 2.3.4];
- directing the preparation, by the Chair and Secretariat manager, of a draft outline and proposal for the

⁵ This Program provides expertise sharing, project funding support, and other types of assistance for members, potential members, and other organizations contemplating the design, development or enhancement of ecolabelling systems. The core purpose of the TAP is to increase the importance and scope of ecolabelling around the world. Assistance is targeted and provided to organizations with small resources.



advancement of an "integrated ecolabelling system", for presentation, review and revision at the Spring 2003 Board of Directors Meeting;

- directing the preparation of a listing of ecolabelled products available around the world (within a limited number of selected product categories) for provision to various international development banks and other organizations (e.g. the United Nations) and posting on the GEN web site in Spring 2003; and
- managing and supervising other GEN activities within the frameworks of the annual work plans and budgets approved at the 2001 AGM and 2002 AGM, including the allocation of Ford Foundation Grant funds⁶ to specific projects and initiatives in 2002.

2.2 Administrative Activities

The General Affairs Office (GAO) and Secretariat perform the following tasks on an on-going basis:

- handle and respond to internal and external information requests and communicate with and forward information of interest to members and others (refer to Table 2.2-1);
- lead and/or collaborate in the planning, preparation for and staging of the AGM;
- provide secretariat services to the Chair (and other directors serving on the GEN Board);
- maintain and enhance a GEN filing system;
- invoice and collect annual membership and associate fees;
- maintain and update the GEN web site and various information documents;
- establish, maintain and update contact lists;

- co-ordinate selected GEN projects/programs (e.g. the Technical Assistance Program);
- provide support to GEN representatives in international meetings;
- conduct research projects/surveys and prepare information reports; and
- perform other related activities as directed/requested.

Significant operational and administrative activities undertaken in 2002 included:

- collaborating with the Chair in administering, analyzing responses to, and reporting on a membership opinions survey conducted in late 2002 (refer to Table 2.2-2 for a summary of results and comparison to results of a previous membership survey);
- drafting the text for the 2001 Annual Report and co-ordinating the external editing;
- preparing and forwarding Global Ecolabelling Network "Year Two" / Final Report To The Ford Foundation as required under the terms of the grant from the Ford Foundation;
- collaborating with Environment and Development Foundation (EDF) officials in the planning, organizing, staging, and reporting upon the 2002 AGM, international conference and exposition staged in Taiwan/ROC in late October and early November 2002 (refer to Section 2.4 for more information);
- implementing a process to accommodate applications for GEN "associate" status and sending invitations to ten specific organizations which had previously conveyed interest in GEN initiatives and activities;
- enhancing a "Members Only" section on the GEN web site that includes a bulletin board feature to facilitate simple and efficient information transfer and exchange of views and ideas between members;

⁶ In late 2000, a two-year Ford Foundation Grant was secured and applied in order to: (i) build capacity within appropriate agencies and organisations in order to achieve effective design and delivery of national and regional (i.e. multinational) ecolabelling initiatives; (ii) promote and facilitate co-operation (e.g. mutual recognition) among ecolabelling interests at bilateral and multilateral levels; (iii) promote the interests of ecolabelling to international organisations such as the UNEP, WTO, and OECD; and (iv) help offset increasing GEN operating costs.



- installing web site links to product category criteria lists and documents posted on the members' web sites;
- initiating a study of "international market penetration by ecolabelling products and criteria"⁷;
- meeting with various officials and delegations interested in the GEN and international ecolabelling developments, including: Chinese public and private sector officials in Beijing; ISEAL Alliance member representatives during a series of ISEAL Alliance Meetings staged in New York; and a New South Wales [Australia] government procurement official during her visit to Ottawa;
- initiating the compilation and maintenance of a list of potential international media contacts;
- providing co-ordination and direct input to the GEN technical assistance project involving Colombian government, Ecolabelling Norway, and Ecolabelling Denmark officials (refer to Section 2.3.2);
- providing technical guidance and assistance to New Zealand and Australian officials in the advancement of national programs and a potential region program (refer to Section 2.3.4);
- taking a lead role in formalizing relations with the ISEAL Alliance (refer to Section 2.3.8); and
- monitoring and notifying GEN members of international developments and events relevant to the advancement of ecolabelling.

Table 2.2-1 Information and Documentation Dissemination in 2002

Requests from Members	92
Requests from: - Potential Members	25
- Potential Associates	12
Requests from Academic Sources	12
Requests from Industry Sources* (associations & individual companies)	14
Requests from Media Sources	5
Requests from Government Sources**	16
Requests from Other Sources (non-governmental organizations, individuals, unidentified)	21
Requests to Reproduce the GEN Logo in External Publications	0
GEN Guide to Ecolabelling: - Forwarded Copies	9
- Inquiries Handled	3
Announcements by Other Organizations Received and Forwarded to GEN Members (and Others)	32

* Industry officials who requested, and were provided with, information included representatives of: an Australian business corporation; the Brazilian textile industry; a Hong Kong business association; the International Organization for Standardization (ISO); a Japanese manufacturing and retail business; the Romanian textile sector; Steelcase Europe; a United Kingdom business/industry association; the United States electronics industry sector; a United States company producing office products made from recycled materials; and a United States company producing products made from recycled industrial tires.

** Public sector officials who communicated with GEN administration officials, included government officials of: Australia, Canada, Colombia, Estonia, Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Peoples' Republic of China, Romania, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

⁷ Low participation levels led to an incomplete and limited study, and a decision not to proceed on this initiative.



Table 2.2-2 Members' Feedback on GEN Strategies, Operations and Evolution:
Presentation and Comparison of 2002 and 2000/1 Results

	2002 GEN Members' Survey: Average Ratings on 1 to 5 Scale* [1 is "very low"; 5 is "very high"]	2000/2001 GEN Members' Survey: Average Ratings on 1 to 5 Scale** [1 is "very low"; 5 is "very high"]
Importance of Strategic Directions and Priorities		
Capacity building - assistance for participants	4.18	3.73
Capacity building - assistance for external organizations	3.00	
Co-operation - among participants	4.57	4.27
Co-operation - with external parties	3.50	
Internal communications - information exchange	4.54	3.93
External promotion / awareness raising	3.79	3.67
Satisfaction Levels with Operations and Evolution		
GEN overall	4.13	3.67
GEN's evolution	4.46	3.67
GEN assistance activities	3.62	3.00
Frequency of email communications	3.82	3.46
GEN web site - overall	3.40	
Web site - "members' only" section	3.46	
GENews	3.33	
Information routinely forwarded	3.53	3.23
Annual General Meetings (AGMs)	4.30	4.09
Conferences / workshops staged (in association with the AGMs)	3.93	3.71

* Based upon fifteen responses.

** Based upon fifteen responses.



2.3 Major Initiatives Undertaken

The success of the GEN depends to a large extent on the efforts and support of its Chair, directors and the members and associates. In 2002, major initiatives undertaken on behalf of the GEN included:

2.3.1 Technical Assistance for Sri Lankan Officials Establishing a Program

In accordance with a Technical Assistance Program (TAP) application forwarded in early 2001, Environmental Protection, Manpower & Skills, Adults & Parenthood Development Assistance, Childcare & Women and Education & Culture (EMACE) Foundation of Sri Lanka officials have received assistance and advice in the establishment of a national ecolabelling program over a number of years.

EMACE Foundation officials participated in the November 2000 GEN AGM and workshop at which they acquired some awareness and basic knowledge about ecolabelling strategies and practices. In August 2001, four Sri Lankan officials participated in a two-day Southeast Asian regional ecolabelling workshop staged in Taiwan. This participation enabled them to meet with ecolabelling experts from GEN member programs to further discuss ecolabelling strategies and issues.

In 2002, a series of steering committee meetings and a multi-stakeholder forum were staged in Sri Lanka. The approach taken in this project (and the Colombian project described below) was for GEN officials to offer input to program design and development processes being led by the proponent. Rather than prescribing and imposing a specific framework and set of strategies and operational processes, GEN officials provided input to the EMACE

Foundation's program design, development and promotional plan. Specifically, an official of the Environment and Development Foundation (EDF) of Taiwan/ROC, as the requested and selected GEN "technical expert", undertook the following:

- continued (from 2001) comprehensive training of Steering Committee members and EMACE Foundation officials to enable them to begin serving and acting as the in-country "experts" for the national program under development; and
- conducted an ecolabelling workshop/forum in Sri Lanka, that was attended by thirty-eight public and private sector officials, to educate them on the technical aspects and merits of ecolabelling schemes, provide insightful responses to their questions, and address concerns.

With indirect guidance from GEN officials (i.e. notably the manager of the GEN Secretariat), EMACE Foundation and program steering committee officials also initiated:

- a process to design and select a national ecolabelling emblem;
- general public awareness raising and promotion, through print and television media opportunities, of the virtues and benefits of identifying and selecting environmentally-preferable products;
- consideration of appropriate product categories for which to develop ecolabelling criteria; and
- consultations with potential government funding agencies, and consideration of external funding agencies, in order to secure program launch and sustain funding.

GEN officials will continue to provide technical assistance and advice when and as requested. It is hoped that the EMACE Foundation may be able to join GEN in the near future as a member operating a national ecolabelling program.



2.3.2 Technical Assistance for Colombian Officials Establishing a Program

In 2000, Colombian officials submitted a TAP application requesting both general GEN support and direct assistance and advice from Nordic Ecolabelling/ Ecolabelling Norway officials. Funding was approved and committed by the GEN Board of Directors in September 2001.

In late 2001, two Colombian officials traveled to Denmark and Norway and participated in various information gathering and consultative sessions with ecolabelling experts and practitioners who were in attendance at the 2001 GEN AGM and conference.

In 2002, officials of the Economic and Financial Group of the Colombian Ministry of the Environment continued to direct and take steps to develop and implement a Colombian ecolabelling program. The ecolabelling program is intended to complement the Ministry of the Environment's Mercados Verdes ("Green Markets") Program, which is aimed at helping producers of "green" products to gain and increase market share.

In follow-up to the 2001 activities, the following activities were undertaken in 2002:

- criteria development was initiated for three product categories - hotels and hostels, all purpose detergents and paper;
- an ecolabel design contest was staged (in a manner consistent with suggestions provided by the GEN Secretariat) to raise the general awareness of this initiative and with a winning graphic design publicly selected and promoted through the media and a relevant designs exhibition; and
- a series of strategic, promotional and information-sharing meetings were staged in late July/early August with officials of various government agencies and other potential allies, stakeholders and interested parties.

On behalf of, and with funding from, GEN a technical expert from the Nordic Ecolabelling Scheme traveled to Colombia and participated in the series of meetings and presentations. During a one-week period, he provided:

- awareness raising and technical presentations for interested public and private sector officials;
- expert input and comments during various meetings, and presentations that addressed topics such as: criteria development and licensing processes, trade aspects of ecolabelling, possibilities for ecolabelling of agricultural products, barriers and potential for a Colombian ecolabelling program, the role of life cycle assessment in criteria development, coordination strategies regarding other existing Colombian environmental performance labelling schemes, etc.;
- feedback and recommendations on the early drafts of the product criteria sets being developed;
- comments and advice on the merits and feasibility of a South American regional program based on his experience and knowledge regarding the multinational Nordic Swan program; and
- guidance and advice on program design and operational strategies and processes that will facilitate greater potential for international cooperation and mutual recognition with other ecolabelling programs (i.e. the Nordic Swan and others).

Work remains to finalize the program structure, devise and implement operational processes, procedures and documentation, and secure adequate stakeholder support and program funding. Nevertheless, Colombian officials have expressed confidence in continuing the process to the point of establishing and operating a credible and successful Colombian program that can and will become a GEN member. GEN officials (notably Nordic Ecolabelling and Secretariat officials) will continue to provide technical assistance and advice to Colombian officials to the extent necessary and possible.



2.3.3 Multilateral Enhanced Co-operation and Common Criteria Development Initiative

Prior to 2002, GEN member organizations had bilaterally, and without GEN direct involvement or support, explored and entered into broad mutual recognition and cooperation agreements/arrangements. These agreements were intended to provide general frameworks to enable cooperation between the particular members with respect to various program delivery aspects (e.g. sharing of verification results, authorization of each party as a "technical agent" of the other, potential cooperation on criteria development for product categories of mutual interest, etc). The agreement documents were shared freely with other GEN members, and were announced and presented in general terms at Annual General Meetings.

At the 2001 AGM, GEN officials discussed and determined that the GEN should strive to promote and facilitate enhanced cooperation and collaboration between individual GEN members. However, it was also decided that GEN officials shouldn't get directly involved in the establishment and implementation of cooperation arrangements between groups of members unless it could be ascertained that the initiative would have value for the GEN and all members collectively.

In late 2001, four Asian member organizations consulted and decided to submit a request for TAP funding assistance to enable a multilateral mutual recognition and cooperation project to proceed. The project design called for collaboration, negotiation and establishment of a mutual recognition framework and cooperative process through which sets of common ecolabelling criteria (i.e. a single harmonized criteria set) would be formulated for two specific product categories - toner cartridges and paints⁸. An ultimate project goal would

be the adoption of the common criteria and encouragement of other members to also adopt and/or reference the common criteria in their own ecolabelling criteria documents.

While the project proponents were willing and able to devote their own resources to the project, there was a need to secure supplemental funding to offset certain initial research costs and travel costs associated with one or two planned "round table meetings/work sessions". GEN officials considered the request and deemed it appropriate for GEN funding support. The deciding factor was that the proposed multiple party mutual recognition and cooperation framework was seen as a valuable model that could subsequently be used as a guidance tool by other GEN members, and perhaps even by the entire GEN organization. Consequently, in early 2002, GEN officials committed funding to partially reimburse the project participants for certain expenditures.

Considerable work was undertaken in 2002, the framework was developed and applied, and several versions of the criteria sets were drafted, reviewed, negotiated and revised. As well, three other regional GEN member organizations sought and secured "observer status" to be able to directly participate in the process.

At the 2002 AGM and conference, the project manager (from the Thailand Environment Institute - TEI) provided informative presentations on the process undertaken and project status. The project participants also conducted a meeting to advance the project while they were all in Taiwan for the AGM and conference.

The project should be completed by mid-2003 with the product criteria sets finalized for adoption and promotion and the effective co-operation framework model available for future guidance.

⁸ "Toner Cartridges" was selected because it is a product category that is produced in all four countries and significantly marketed throughout the region and around the world. While there is minimal exporting of "paints" between member countries and elsewhere, "paints" is a product category for which most GEN members have or are contemplating criteria, so it was proposed that there would be value in determining consistent criteria for adoption by multiple programs.



2.3.4 Bilateral Program Development/ Revision Exercise

In 2001, a group of motivated individuals began serious efforts to design and implement an ecolabelling scheme in Australia, aware that two previous efforts had failed. This group consulted extensively with GEN organizational and member officials, and initiated informal consultations with officials of the New Zealand Ecolabelling Trust on program design and strategy issues, and on potential future collaboration. At the same time, the New Zealand officials were undertaking an organizational review with the intent of making significant changes to improve the management, operations and effectiveness of their ecolabelling scheme.

During discussions between the two groups, it was determined and agreed that the advancement of ecolabelling in the region could be greatly and positively influenced and directed through consultation and collaboration. It was recognized and appreciated that a formal consultation process could:

- accelerate and provide expert regional guidance to the Australian program design and development process;
- mutually benefit both parties through sharing of regional market intelligence (since many products marketed in New Zealand are exported from Australia);
- lead to the establishment and operation of relatively consistent and complementary (rather than competing) ecolabelling schemes;
- enable in-depth consideration and determination of program delivery areas and activities for collaboration (e.g. common criteria development and review, designation and function as "technical agents" for each other in order to conduct compliance assessment and verification activities for each other and/or share compliance verification results, etc.); and
- involve an assessment of the viability and merits of a jointly managed and operated regional ecolabelling system or single program.

With the New Zealand organization becoming a not-for-profit trust in an effort to secure some needed funding, and the Australian group having not initiated any substantial fund-raising, funding was seen as the major obstacle to implementation of this initiative. Consequently, they chose to jointly submit a proposal for GEN TAP funding assistance. GEN officials considered the proposal and approved partial funding support for a series of consultative meetings and related activities. Reasons for this GEN decision included:

- the ongoing and intensive technical guidance and advice that New Zealand officials could provide their Australian colleagues was seen as an interesting and useful alternative "technical assistance model" to the traditional sponsorship of either a one-time workshop or attendance at a single meeting or event;
- confidence that, with the strong guidance and assistance of the New Zealand officials, the Australian program could achieve regional and international credibility and be fully operational much quicker; and
- interest in the process and potential results of collaboration intended to make an existing and a new program as consistent and compatible as possible, even to the point of potential full harmonization [in contrast, both the Nordic and EU Ecolabelling Schemes were created to involve uniformity among their multinational delivery agencies].

In 2002, along with considerable electronic and telephone correspondence, officials of the two formalized organizations - Australian Environmental Labelling Association (AELA) Inc. and Environmental Choice New Zealand Trust (ECNZT) - scheduled and conducted two series of substantial meetings.

The first set of meetings were held in Canberra in mid-February and focused upon identification of the issues for a collaborative effort by both programs/organizations and a dialogue on the principles and barriers to effective collaboration.



A second set of co-operative strategic planning meetings occurred in association with the 2002 GEN event in Taiwan. An extraordinary achievement at the 2002 AGM was the approval of AELA Inc. as a new GEN member, given that the organization and its program had evolved in a period of less than two years.

While consultation and collaboration efforts will definitely continue in the future, with a regional ecolabelling strategy/scheme remaining a possibility, the work undertaken and completed in 2002 has established a strong base. The TAP project has also produced a process model for similar regional cooperation initiatives that could occur in the future.

2.3.5 Work on Common Information Lists and Shared Databases

A decision was made at the 2001 AGM to establish a working group to consider and recommend the types of common lists and databases that could be established and made available to members and external audiences. It also was suggested that the lists and databases could focus upon performance requirements, exclusion lists, and property-based chemical lists. The working group was activated in late 2001, with an Ecolabelling Norway official as Chair, and officials of the Japan Environment Association (JEA), DG Environment/European Union and the New Zealand Ecolabelling Trust, as members.

Through electronic correspondence, the Working Group began giving consideration to various issues, including:

- should the lists/databases be product-specific (e.g. should the GEN have a "detergents ingredients data base"), multiple product categories, or generic in focus and application;
- should data be taken from product producers, other existing lists and databases, and chemical producers, and if so, then how should GEN officials determine the

credibility of the data sources and the validity of the data itself (e.g. would the GEN investigate for, and require evidence of, credible test methods and results behind data values offered);

- what could be feasible and practical at the global level; and
- should GEN efforts be linked to other initiatives underway, including a joint effort by EU and Nordic officials to synthesize existing parallel chemical databases and go forward with a single shared database system.

Based on these considerations, the Working Group Chair proposed that GEN members should first collectively provide input to and benefit from work to be undertaken by EU and Nordic officials rather than considering "going it alone". She identified that key factors which led her to this recommendation, included:

- the joint initiative had already received approval and was going to proceed with public sector support (political and financial);
- the GEN could provide input and benefit from the results without cost;
- experience gained through participation in this specific project could provide useful guidance to GEN officials in planning and implementing future comparable initiatives; and
- she would probably be performing a lead role in the EU/Nordic project.

At the same time, JEA officials had initiated work upon a "chemical substances database" with some "seed funding" from the Japanese government, for the use and benefit of the GEN and its members.

This database was being developed to co-ordinate with international ecolabelling criteria on handling of different chemical substances. Potentially, the data base system could be designed so GEN members could both access and input data directly. The central purpose for the database was intended to be the provision of the following for a large variety of chemical substances:



- specific criteria requirements contained in ecolabelling programs' relevant product category criteria;
- summary information on physical properties;
- summary information on toxicity; and
- summary information on classification and labelling.

Based on discussions at the 2002 AGM, it was agreed that GEN members and officials would encourage both initiatives to proceed and would provide input to both initiatives as and when requested.

2.3.6 Involvement in the Advisory Group to the World Bank (and other Multilateral Development Banks) on Environmentally Responsible Procurement Strategies, Instruments and Practices

Over the past several years, the World Bank has annually hosted a one-day meeting on Environmentally Responsible Procurement (ERP) and commissioned several relevant discussion papers and studies. 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. The GEN has co-sponsored several of these meetings. These meetings have generally had the following objectives:

- share organizations' experiences to date on ERP and receive feedback on strategies under development;
- continue to identify new ERP partners in developing and developed countries;
- encourage ownership of ERP by institutions' procurement departments; and
- develop and implement plans of action for follow up to the meetings and as input to next meetings.

The GEN Chair participated in the 2001 and 2002 Meetings, providing awareness raising and promotional presentations on the GEN and the role that it and its members could serve in assisting international institutions to implement ERP.

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. This development was recognized as an opportunity for the GEN and its members to have direct input into the process. Consequently, GEN officials committed to compile, prepare and submit a list of ecolabelled products available around the world that fit under several selected product categories.

In early 2003, data will be sought and compiled from all GEN members, as well as from other established ecolabelling/ environmental performance certification/ labelling programs (e.g. the Forest Stewardship Council).

2.3.7 Consideration of ISO 14024 and Participation in the ISO Technical Committee 207

A "self-assessments of compliance with ISO 14024" exercise was initiated in late 2001 with the preparation and provision of simple compliance checklists for the voluntary use of individual member organizations. A decision was taken at the 2001 AGM that the Secretariat should collect and compile voluntary findings reports from GEN members, but only prepare a summary of cumulative findings for presentation at the 2002 AGM (and for any other purposes). If individual members wanted to announce their specific findings and conclusions, this was left up to those members to pursue.

At the 2002 AGM, the Chair highlighted that, of fourteen responses (on behalf of eighteen GEN member



organizations), three respondents identified full compliance while most others identified strong degrees of compliance. Through rough calculations, it was determined that the respondents had identified approximately 89 percent overall compliance with the principles and 78 percent compliance with the procedural requirements. It was noted that certain terminology and concepts used in the Standard could be perceived as open to various interpretations and, consequently, made self-assessment of compliance somewhat uncertain and imprecise. It was also noted that while the GEN exercise had sought absolute responses (i.e. "full compliance" or "no"), respondents identified through their written comments that degrees of compliance with specific clauses might be quite high/nearly full.

A general view was that it had been useful for the members to undertake the self-assessments for their own internal purposes. Subsequently, discussion focused on the value of the exercise for the GEN and potential next steps in the process. Two major initiatives were proposed and endorsed by the membership. These were:

- a formal findings report will be produced for the benefit of members and for potential circulation to appropriate stakeholders and interested parties; and
- an official GEN position relating to ISO 14024 and its potential revision will be formulated and articulated.

In respect to the relationship between GEN membership requirements and the ISO 14024 Standard, as at the 2001 AGM, contrary views on the appropriate degree of organizational acceptance, endorsement, and adoption of the Standard by the GEN were expressed at the 2002 AGM. However, a general consensus was that the Standard, in its current version, does serve as an appropriate guidance document for the design, development, and review of ecolabelling systems.

With regards to the possibility of future revisions to the Standard, given GEN members' relative comfort with the Standard in its current version (as a guidance tool), a general position was proposed and adopted that the GEN:

- deems the current version as adequate;
- opposes revision of the Standard; and
- encourages ISO voting member organizations to also oppose revision.

Finally, it has been strategically important for the GEN to be involved in the development and review of the ISO standards and other documents relating to environmental labelling and certification systems. Consequently, GEN officials have secured and retained formal 'Category "A" Liaison Organization' status within this ISO Sub-committee for several years. In 2002, no ISO environmental labelling and claims standards development and review meetings were held. Nevertheless, Dr. Yu of EDF, as the GEN representative, did attend the ISO Technical Committee 207 Meetings and participated in several information exchange workshops.

2.3.8 Formalization of Relations with the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling (ISEAL) Alliance

For several years, GEN officials have communicated with ISEAL Alliance officials. The 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.

In 2000 and 2001, representatives of each organization participated in formal meetings and events staged by the other organization. This enabled bilateral information exchange and awareness raising and discussion of possible steps to formalize and enhance relations.



In 2002, based primarily upon a decision taken at the 2001 GEN AGM, efforts were undertaken to implement more formal relations and to institutionalize co-operation and collaboration on items of mutual interest. A working group was set up, composed of representatives from both organizations, to initiate such work. The GEN representatives in this working group were Ms Eiderstrom of the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), Dr. Yu of the EDF of Taiwan/ROC, and Mr. Bozowsky of the GEN Secretariat.

Initial dialogue and exchange of organizational policy and procedural documentation between the Secretariat offices led to a decision that formal participation in each other's organizations should definitely be considered and pursued. In February, Ms Eiderstrom, as a GEN representative, participated in an IFOAM Conference staged in Germany and met with ISEAL Alliance and IFOAM officials during the conference period. Besides exchanging information on each other's organizations, key points raised during these meetings included:

- the need for relations to be built between the ISEAL Alliance and the GEN since IFOAM is a member of the ISEAL Alliance;
- greater awareness and understanding of the ISEAL Alliance and its individual members would encourage GEN members to reference ISEAL Alliance members' programs and criteria in their ecolabelling criteria documents;
- besides organizational level relations - information exchange, awareness raising, and co-operation between national certifiers of ISEAL Alliance members and individual GEN members would be possible and desirable;
- ISEAL Alliance members could potentially provide expert advice and guidance to some GEN members interested in devising and participating in standard-setting peer review exercises similar to ones already implemented by those ISEAL Alliance members;
- GEN endorsement of the ISEAL Alliance and its members could potentially open doors with

governments since most ecolabelling systems are directly or indirectly associated with national governments;

- communications between Secretariats could be increased and made routine, with each notifying of, and potentially inviting the other to participate in, respective upcoming meetings and events; and
- GEN officials could consider associate membership status in the ISEAL Alliance while ISEAL Alliance officials could seek associate status in the GEN.

In May 2002, at the invitation of ISEAL Alliance officials, the GEN Secretariat manager participated in the ISEAL Alliance's AGM and a corresponding technical meeting. He also took advantage of the opportunity to meet one-on-one with the director of the ISEAL Alliance Secretariat prior to the formal meetings in order to formulate and implement more routine consultation processes, and to identify areas and issues of mutual interest and challenges shared. A significant development at the AGM was that GEN's participation status was revised from an "observer" to the first approved "associate member".

At the 2002 GEN Event in Taiwan, an ISEAL Alliance representative participated as a conference and AGM presenter. At the AGM, the GEN membership approved the ISEAL Alliance as one of the GEN's first "associates" (along with the Consumer's Choice Council). Some informal discussions were also arranged between officials of the two organizations to advance cooperative strategies and efforts.

2.3.9 Consideration of GEN Evolution and an Integrated International Ecolabelling System

A major topic of discussion at the 2002 AGM was the series of efforts over the past two years to introduce options for the future evolution of the GEN. The Chair reviewed the major



themes and points raised in his 2001 “A Future Role for the Global Ecolabelling Network” paper. He also re-introduced the proposition of an international ecolabelling system, which could be delivered at national levels; effectively address trade impact issues; facilitate start-ups and advancements of individual programs; increase the attractiveness and ease of ecolabelling for transnational businesses; and increase the international significance and influence of the GEN.

In a complementary manner, Mrs. Engel Hansen, on behalf of Dr. Graver of the Nordic Ecolabelling Scheme, presented the 2002 “The Future of GEN” paper prepared by a small working group of GEN officials directed and overseen by Dr. Graver. Mrs Hansen highlighted the recommendations and suggestions contained in the paper regarding strategies and activities to greater pursue GEN objectives.

The AGM participants expressed some support for the general concepts and issues proposed for further consideration. However, the membership was neither able nor willing to make decisions on new strategic directions and/or significant changes to GEN. A prevailing view emerged that it would be appropriate and worthwhile for GEN officials to investigate and further consider the many challenges and opportunities involved in pursuing a structured and formalized international ecolabelling system. Specifically, it was decided that the Board should proceed with a more detailed issue analysis and formulate recommendations and a proposal for presentation to the membership at the 2003 AGM.

2.3.10 Participation in the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)

Dr. Yu, as an invited and authorized GEN observer, attended the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). She informed the GEN participants at the 2002 AGM that the WSSD Event had included a review of the implementation status of Agenda 21, and the advancement of a plan of implementation with several sections and provisions quite relevant and supportive of ecolabelling initiatives on national and international bases. She encouraged others to visit the WSSD web site for a more thorough review of the event and its outcomes.

2.4 Annual General Meeting, Conference and Exposition

The GEN Annual General Meeting (AGM) and its related events and activities are recognized by members (and potential members) as some of the best forums for the exchange of views and advice on addressing common 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 programs have undertaken specific activities, has proven useful and informative over the years.

Dr. Ning Yu, President, Environment and Development Foundation (EDF) and Ms Linda Ho, Chief Executive Officer Green Council of Hong Kong at 2002 GEN Annual Conference, Taiwan.



2.4.1 2002 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Dates:

November 1-2, 2002

Location:

Grand Formosa Taroko, Hualien, Taiwan, ROC

Host Organizations:

Environment and Development Foundation (EDF) of Taiwan, ROC and the GEN

Participants:

38: eighteen representatives of thirteen member organizations (including the Chair); two representatives of two associate organizations; Secretariat and GAO representatives; eight EDF staff members; and eight observers from: the Clean and Green Foundation Inc. of the Philippines (2), Vietnam Certification Services (QUACRT), Environmental Protection Agency of Taiwan/ROC (2), and media (3).



Participants - 2002 GEN Annual General Meeting. Hosted by the Environment and Development Foundation (EDF) of Taiwan, ROC and the GEN.

Besides the conducting of routine business, there were significant meeting announcements, decisions and outcomes, including:

- approval of the Australian Environmental Labelling Association (AELA) Inc. as the newest GEN member, and the ISEAL Alliance and Consumer's Choice Council

as the GEN's first two associates;

- a review of the five-year GEN Strategic Plan to be performed by the Board with the intent of presenting an updated and revised Plan for membership approval at the 2003 AGM;
- a detailed work proposal to develop the concept of an "integrated international ecolabelling program/system" to be prepared by the Board and tabled at the 2003 AGM (refer to Section 2.3.9 for elaboration);
- a general findings report on the GEN's "Self Assessments of Compliance with ISO 14024" exercise to be produced for the benefit of members and for potential circulation to appropriate stakeholders and interested parties (e.g. ISO, WTO);
- a general GEN position paper on the ISO 14024 Standard and its potential revision to be prepared (refer to Section 2.3.7 for elaboration);
- effective April 20th of 2002, an agreement on common criteria for copiers was executed and implemented between the Japan Environment Association (JEA) and the Nordic Ecolabelling Board;
- EDF officials negotiated and signed two [partial] mutual recognition agreements with Thailand Environment Institute (TEI) officials in December 2001 and Korean Environmental Labelling Association (KELA) officials in September 2002;
- collaborative work by EDF, JEA, KELA and TEI officials on common criteria for paint and toner cartridge products expected to result in final criteria being completed and adopted in mid-2003 (refer to Section 2.3.3 for elaboration);
- GEN officials are supportive of, and will provide input to, two initiatives already underway relating to the establishment of common and shared product and chemical database systems of considerable interest and value to the GEN member organizations collectively (refer to Section 2.3.5 for elaboration);
- while a proposed internal study of international market impacts and other influences of ecolabelling has been deferred, GEN officials are to monitor and report on relevant work being performed by others;



- a "GEN logo" has been designed for use by GEN members, associates and other participants to identify their participation in the GEN organization (see below);
- a list of ecolabelled products in selected categories will be compiled and produced in early 2003 for distribution to development banks and United Nations agencies (refer to Section 2.3.6 for elaboration);
- a paper on GEN initiatives that address international trade concern issues to be prepared and distributed in early 2003 to appropriate national and international organizations (including the WTO) for information and awareness raising purposes;
- a GEN promotional plan to be prepared for consideration at the 2003 AGM;
- GEN efforts to continue to identify appropriate organizations for GEN membership or associate status;
- the JEA to continue to operate the GAO, and TerraChoice Environmental Services Inc. to continue to serve as the Secretariat for a three-year period commencing in 2003;
- the Board of Directors will remain the same in 2003 as the 2002 Board; and
- the 2003 Annual General Meeting and related events will be staged in Prague, Czech Republic.

2.4.2 2002 International Conference and Exposition

Dates:

October 29-30, 2002

Location:

Civil Service Development Institute, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC

Host Organizations:

Environment and Development Foundation (EDF) of Taiwan, ROC and the GEN

Participants:

Greater than 120, including representatives from: fifteen GEN member and associate organizations; Clean and Green Foundation Inc. of the Philippines (2); International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI); Sustainable

Forestry and Certification Watch; Japanese Green Purchasing Network (GPN); Global Environmental Declaration Network (GEDNet) (an international network of ISO Type III programs that is comparable to the GEN for Type I programs); Vietnam Certification Services (QUACRT); Business Council on Sustainable Development (BCSD)/ROC; Korean Ministry of the Environment; two multinational corporations interested in ecolabelling initiatives occurring around the world [Hewlett-Packard Co. (2) and Seiko Epson Corporation (2)]; Green Mark (the Taiwanese ecolabelling program) industrial sector participants (with several exhibiting their products in the exposition area), EDF, Government of Taiwan/ROC; several Taiwanese NGOs; several Taiwanese academic institutes; and Taiwanese media.

The Conference topics were:

- Public Green Procurement Initiatives (around the world);
- Implications of ISO Moving into Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Standards;
- Type III Environmental Declaration Programs and Strategies;
- Use of Life Cycle Assessment in Ecolabelling Criteria Development;
- Trade Implications of Type I Ecolabelling;
- Introductions of GEN Member Ecolabelling Programs and Associate Organizations;
- Industry's Perspective on Green Product Development; and
- Common Criteria and Mutual Recognition in Ecolabelling and Other Environmental Labelling.

The sixteen Conference presenters comprised both GEN member and associate officials as well as officials from external organizations selected for their pertinent knowledge and strong expertise. All the attendees expressed high levels of satisfaction and gratitude for the opportunity to participate. GEN member organizations that were not represented were subsequently forwarded copies of the proceedings and other meeting documentation in the form of a Conference compact disc (CD) produced by EDF officials.



The corresponding Products Exposition featured a variety of environmentally responsible products that had been awarded ecolabels in Taiwan and/or around the world. Most of the products were produced in Taiwan or the Asian region. A number of marketing and sales officials were in attendance and presented their specific products to the GEN event participants who walked through the Exposition area.

Valuable awareness was raised of initiatives of strong interest to GEN members. For non-GEN participants, considerable information transfer and increased understanding of ecolabelling strategies and initiatives was accomplished. Further, the strong relevance of the conference topics led to various co-operative initiatives being discussed and proposed among GEN members and associates and other initiatives being suggested that could involve both members and non-GEN organizations.

2.5 2002 Financial Statement

Table 2.5-1 provides a preliminary and unaudited financial statement for the GEN as of the end of 2002. A more comprehensive and formal 2002 audited financial statement will be prepared, reviewed by an external auditing firm, and considered for acceptance by the GEN membership at the 2003 GEN AGM in Prague, Czech Republic.



Mr. Wolfgang Lohrer, Umweltbundesamt (UBA) Germany and Mr. Seiji Taguchi, Japan Environment Association (JEA) at the 2002 GEN Conference & AGM in Taiwan, ROC

Table 2.5-1 GEN 2002 Budget and Actual Status
(as of December 31st, 2002; all figures in US\$)

Income	Budget	Annual
Membership Fees	70,000	74,417
EAJ and JEA Contribution	24,000	24,000
Ford Foundation Grant	50,000	*35,977
Carryover from 2001	20,000	49,233
Other (sale of "GEN Guide to Ecolabelling", bank interest, etc)	4,000	538
TOTAL	168,000	84,165
Expenses		
Personnel: Chair	10,980	10,980
Personnel: Secretariat	40,000	**45,000
Personnel: GAO	18,000	18,000
Honoraria & Consultants	28,090	6,495
Travel	43,430	28,469
Annual GEN Conference/Workshop	10,000	10,000
GENews (Web) and Annual Report	8,000	7,351
Supplies	1,000	167
Audit and Legal Fees	6,500	6,056
Miscellaneous - postage and bank charges, etc.	2,000	1,098
TOTAL	168,000	133,616
Carry-over to 2003		50,549

* For original budgeting purposes, the two-year, \$100,000 grant was divided into two equal \$50,000 allocations for 2001 and 2002. However, actual applicable expenditures in 2001 totaled \$64,023, leaving available funding for 2002 of \$35,977.

** A \$5,000 expense was incurred in 2001 and paid in early 2002.

*Strategic Directions, Initiatives
and Accomplishments*

The adoption of a 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 in 2001 and again in 2002.

This section of the Annual Report presents:

- major strategic objectives which are focused upon in the Strategic Plan;
- strategic action areas, efforts and achievements in 2002; and
- priority action areas and initiatives planned for 2003.

3.1 The Strategic Plan

In 2000, the GEN membership approved and adopted a five-year strategic plan. The goal of the Plan is to "...establish a framework of direction and action within which GEN can evolve during the five year period from 2001 to 2005." The Plan also responds to needs and priorities that GEN members have identified, including:

- compilation and provision of information from around the world;
- extensive and timely information exchange among members and associates and with other interested parties;
- co-operative initiatives among members, including pursuit of mutual recognition arrangements;
- technical assistance among members, in order to advance ecolabelling efforts and achievements; and
- international recognition and acceptance of ecolabelling.

Table 3.1-1 (page 27) summarizes the three major strategic objectives and related priority action areas of the GEN Strategic Plan.

3.2 2002 Strategic Action Areas, Efforts and Achievements

As proposed in the Strategic Plan, the Plan's strategic action areas were directly incorporated into the 2002 GEN Work Plan. This section reports progress and accomplishments against the three strategic objectives. Various activities and initiatives, which are listed in this section, are described in Section 2 of this report.

3.2.1 Capacity Building

Efforts and achievements in this strategic objective area included:

- the Technical Assistance Program (TAP) was revised and expanded to improve application, approval and delivery processes;
- five TAP application packages were distributed, with two applications returned and approved;
- a successful and valuable international conference and exposition was staged;
- a "self-assessments of compliance with ISO 14024" exercise was facilitated and undertaken;
- technical assistance and guidance continued to be provided to Sri Lankan and Colombian officials designing and developing national ecolabelling programs;
- Environmental Choice New Zealand Trust and GEN officials provided guidance and assistance to Australia Environmental Labelling Association Inc. officials in the development and implementation of a national ecolabelling program in Australia;
- GEN officials provided capacity building through participation in a number of events staged by others;
- considerable internal and external information requests were handled by GAO and Secretariat officials; and
- work progressed on updating and improving the GEN's "Ecolabelling Guide".



TABLE 3.1-1 Summary of GEN Strategic Plan

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 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 web site with information on GEN initiatives, member programs and product criteria</p> <p>Produce, record and distribute GENews 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 forums accordingly</p> <p>Promote ecolabelling as a policy and/or environmental management tool to public and private sector audiences, including industry</p>



3.2.2 Internal Co-operation

Efforts and achievements in this strategic objective area included:

- the GEN web site was enhanced, and routinely updated and maintained, with links to GEN members' product category lists and/or criteria sets installed;
 - two TAP projects were approved and undertaken that involved the exploration and implementation of enhanced co-operation and mutual recognition between multiple member organizations;
 - through one of the approved TAP projects, a process for multilateral development of common criteria sets was formulated and implemented, with common criteria for two product categories drafted and expected to be finalized and adopted by mid-2003;
 - a membership survey was conducted to obtain feedback and suggestions on GEN strategies, operations and evolution for planning purposes;
 - work progressed on the development of a strategy/work plan regarding the establishment of common product and chemical lists and databases of value to the GEN membership collectively;
 - a couple of meeting reports were posted in the Members Only section of the web site for consideration and reference by GEN participants; and
 - the Chair, and GAO and Secretariat officials, routinely received and forwarded announcements and information of interest and value to the GEN participants through electronic means.
- the 2001 Annual Report was produced and distributed, along with the 2000 Annual Report, to external stakeholders and interested parties by GEN administrative and member organization officials;
 - a list of international media contacts was initiated;
 - liaison and information sharing continued with non-GEN ecolabelling organizations and potential GEN associate organizations;
 - the ISEAL Alliance and the Consumers' Choice Council (CCC) became the first two GEN associates, while the GEN remained a member of the CCC and became the first ISEAL Alliance associate member;
 - involvement continued in a "greening of the World Bank and other International Institutions" exercise with a commitment to prepare and distribute a list of ecolabelled products available around the world;
 - "liaison organization" status in the ISO was maintained and exercised; and
 - a GEN representative acted as an observer at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

3.2.3 External Promotion and Relations

Efforts and achievements in this strategic objective area included:

- the GEN web site was enhanced, and routinely updated and maintained;
- GENews issues were produced and posted on web site;

3.3 2003 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 2002, the 2003 GEN Work Plan proposes the following major action areas and initiatives for 2003:

3.3.1 Capacity Building

Technical Assistance Program Revision and Potential Expansion:

- Prepare a report on results and feedback from completed projects;
- Implement program revisions including a potential



trainee /fellowship program option;

- Continue to encourage GEN and non-GEN organizations to apply; and
- Seek additional funding from international funding agencies to expand program (if specific project proposals necessitate the seeking of third-party funding).

International Conference/Workshop for Members, Associates and Others:

- Plan and stage a conference and/or workshop to coincide with the Annual General Meeting; and
- Invite GEN members, associates and other interested parties to participate in this event.

Offer and Provide Technical Assistance:

- Receive and assess Technical Assistance Program (TAP) applications;
- Approve and allocate GEN resources to worthy projects; and
- Provide sponsorship funding to enable participation in GEN events.

Update and Improve the "Ecolabelling Guide":

- Produce a revised document and post on web site for reference and downloading.

3.3.2 Internal Co-operation

Strategic Plan Review and Revision:

- Undertake review of the five-year plan;
- Prepare a "Future of GEN: Recommendations, Issues and Strategies" paper for presentation and consideration of the membership at the 2003 AGM;
- Approve new GEN strategic initiatives and activities at 2003 AGM; and
- Based on 2003 AGM decisions, draft a revised strategic plan document and circulate for comment/feedback.

Enhanced Web Page Contents and Features:

- Maintain and further enhance web site (with a potential change in host/service provider);
- Post 2001 and 2002 Annual Reports; and
- Maintain "Product Category List of Ecolabelling Programs Worldwide" and links to GEN members' product category lists.

Mutual Recognition Agreements Among GEN Members:

- Continue to encourage and assist in facilitating agreements.

Co-operative Development of Common Core Criteria:

- Prepare and circulate a final report on the process implemented by Asian members to develop common criteria for two product categories; and
- Encourage members to implement similar initiatives.

Common/Shared Lists and Databases:

- Compile data and produce international list of selected ecolabelled products;
- Provide list to interested organizations, including UNEP and international banks, and post on GEN web site;
- Encourage and contribute to Nordic Ecolabelling-led project to produce common chemical properties, materials, and toxics reference lists / databases;
- Encourage and contribute to Japan Environment Association-led project to establish a GEN chemical substances data base; and
- Post work documents for consideration and reference on GEN web site.

GEN Participation Logos for Members, Associates and Other Participants:

- Prepare art work and "user instructions sheet" for posting on the GEN web site in the Members Only section.



3.3.3 External Promotion and Relations

GENews:

- Prepare GENews issues and post on web site.

GEN Annual Report:

- Continue to distribute 2001 Report to members and others; and
- Design, produce and distribute 2002 document.

Promotion and Global Media Relations:

- Prepare and implement a promotion plan;
- Maintain list of media contacts;
- Prepare and circulate standard media document formats (e.g. news releases, etc); and
- Prepare and issue news releases and other media information pieces.

Potential New GEN Members and Associates:

- Encourage ecolabelling programs around the world to become GEN members;

- Liaise with non-GEN ecolabelling/environmental labelling programs;
- Invite non-GEN ecolabelling organizations to participate in select events and activities; and
- Identify and invite appropriate non-ecolabelling organizations to participate in GEN as associates or invited observers.

Contacts with Important Institutions:

- Continue dialogue with established contacts in order to encourage them to consider ecolabels and/or ecolabelling criteria in their policies;
- Circulate GEN list of select ecolabelled products to interested parties; and
- Initiate dialogue with other appropriate institutions.

Participation in Multinational Forums:

- Maintain "Liaison Organization" status and participate in ISO;
- Prepare paper on GEN members' compliance with ISO 14024 principles (and practises) based upon results of the GEN's "self-assessment of compliance" exercise;
- Produce and circulate a GEN position paper opposing revision of the ISO 14024 Standard;
- Retain membership in the Consumers' Choice Council;
- Retain associate member status in ISEAL Alliance and participate when and as appropriate;
- Continue to participate in the "Greening of the World Bank and other International Institutions" initiative;
- Participate in other multinational forums in response to appropriate invitations;
- Develop a GEN paper on "Ecolabelling and Trade" for distribution to WTO officials and others;
- Inform governments on merits and aspects of ecolabelling from a trade-impacts perspective;
- Get invited to and participate in international events focused on labelling and trade issues; and
- Investigate and monitor work of other organizations in assessing the merits of ecolabelling and report on initiatives and outputs at the 2003 AGM.



The New Zealand Minister for the Environment, the Hon Marian Hobbs with Mr. John Polak (GEN Chair) and Mr. Evan Bozowsky (GEN Secretariat) at a function hosted by Environmental Choice New Zealand Trust following the GEN Board of Directors meeting, March 2002.





appendix

Appendix A:

2002 GEN Participants



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Appendix B:

Ecolabelling Programs in Existence

Germany	1978
Canada	1988
Japan	1989
Nordic Council	1989
- Sweden (White Swan), Norway, Iceland, Finland, & Denmark (as of 2000)	
USA	1989
New Zealand	1990
Sweden - Good Environmental Choice	1990
Austria	1991
India	1991
European Commission	1992
France	1992
Korea	1992
Singapore	1992
Spain	1992
Sweden - TCO Development	1992
Taiwan / ROC	1992
The Netherlands	1992
Brazil	1993
Croatia	1993
Israel	1993
Thailand	1993
China (PRC)	1994
Czech Republic	1994
Hungary	1994
Indonesia	1995
Malaysia	1996
Hong Kong	2000
Australia	2001
The Philippines	2003



Mrs Marianne B. Eskeland, Head of EU/International matters, Ecolabelling Norway, visiting the Secret Valley, Hualien, Taiwan.



Environment and Development Foundation (EDF) staff at 2002 GEN Conference/AGM, Taiwan, ROC.

NOTE: Other programs may exist / be under development at this time.

