

# Work Plan 1999-2001

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## 1 Introduction

At the 5th meeting in Lima on 4 and 5 November 1998, the INTOSAI Working Group on Environmental Auditing has accepted the Work Plan for the period 1999 - 2001. Two items were added to the draft Work Plan:

- a study on environment and employment;
- an inventory of international environmental accords, which could be audited by SAIs from all over the World. For some of these SAIs the Working Group will produce audit proposal-models.

In this Work Plan all intended activities are elaborated upon.

One of the key issues of this Work Plan is to work with the regions in the coming third period (1999-2001) of the Working Group. This idea is further developed in chapter 2. Chapters 3 to 5 elaborate on aspects of this cooperation on the basis of the Working Group's terms of reference, which were laid down at the XVth INCOSAI in Cairo. Chapter 6 looks at the Working Group's objectives at the XVIIth INCOSAI in 2001, and chapter 7 deals with the planning. In all these chapters, an effort has been made to indicate the relevance of the subjects to both the Working Group and the regions.

Appendix 1 presents an overview of the activities to be carried out in the period 1999-2001 and the SAIs responsible for them.

## 2 Strategy

### 2.1 General strategy for INTOSAI regions

Since the formation of the Working Group in 1992, its activities have focused on gathering information. For example, the SAIs of Norway and Canada have produced the guide 'How SAIs may cooperate on the audit of international environmental auditing' and the Netherlands Court of Audit has drawn up a proposal and background study on natural resource accounting. In addition, two surveys on environmental auditing have been conducted and a great deal of information has been collected on international environmental conventions and other matters of relevance to the environment.

The intention is that INTOSAI members will use the information gathered thusfar, when planning and implementing their audits. This information must therefore be made more accessible to the individual SAIs. An initial step has been taken through the creation of the Working Group's homepage <[www.rekenkamer.nl/ea](http://www.rekenkamer.nl/ea)>. In the period 1999-2001, the emphasis of the Working Group's activities will increasingly shift to the dissemination of information. Since the INTOSAI regions are closer to the individual SAIs than an INTOSAI Working Group, the Working Group has decided to involve the regions in its activities. Co-operation between SAIs in the region is particularly needed to cope with environmental problems effectively, because these are often transboundary problems. This transboundary character is reflected for instance, by regional or bilateral accords, as well as by environmental accords of a more global character.

A strategy for co-operation with the region will be developed in consultation with the boards of the regions. Regions might wish to play an active role in any, or all, of the Working Group area's of interest, which are reflected by the terms of reference of the Working Group:

1. *specific issues*: to assist SAIs in a better understanding of specific issues involved in environmental auditing relevant to the region;
2. *information exchange*: to facilitate the exchange of information and experience in this field;
3. *guidelines, methods and techniques*: to publish guidelines and other informative material for use by SAIs (including suggestions on the possible content of, and methods to be applied in, environmental auditing). The aim is to develop a tailor-made strategy for each region that has expressed interest in co-operation (action 2.1.1). The regions could create a kind of infrastructure for environmental auditing in their region. At the 5th meeting in Lima and the XVIIth INCOSAI in Uruguay arrangements have been made to initiate infrastructure in the region Start-up teams have been formed, consisting of members of the INTOSAI Working Group. This start-up team will take the lead to form a working group on environmental auditing in its region. Furthermore each region willing to co-operate, has a "co-ordinator" or "trekker".

The following scheme presents an overview of these arrangements:

Scheme 1. Overview of trekkers and start-up teams

INTOSAI region:	Trekker : SAI of	Start up team : SAIs of
AFROSAI	South Africa	Cameroon
ARABOSAI	Egypt	Egypt
ASOSAI	p.m.	Libya
EUROSAI	Poland (whole European area)	p.m.
	Malta (Mediterranean area)	Austria
	Norway (Nordic countries)	Czech Republic
	Netherlands (Western area)	Estonia
		European Union
		Georgia
		The Netherlands
		Russian federation
		United Kingdom
OLACEFS	Brazil	Colombia
		Nicaragua
		Peru

OLACEFS will also invite members of CAROSAI to take part in their regional Working Group on Environmental Auditing and will co-operate with the regional working Group on Environmental Auditing of OCEFS. The SAI of New Zealand will take care of the information-exchange between the INTOSAI Working Group and the members of SPASAI. The SAIs of the United States and Canada, which are not members of an INTOSAI region, will co-operate on the issue of environmental auditing as usual.

The planning of the activities is as follows:

The start-up teams, including the "trekker" will work on a strategy and workplan during the period December 1998 - May 1999 and will report on the state of the art per region at the Workshop for "trekkers", June 1999, The Hague, The Netherlands. The purpose of this Workconference is to exchange ideas and discuss the regional activities and problems which have risen so far. Then the start-up team can elaborate and may be implement their strategy and report on it at the 6th meeting of the Working Group, which will take place in May 2000, in Cape Town, South Africa. At the XVIIth INCOSAI in Seoul, Korea, in 2001, the Working Group and start-up teams, can report on the activities of the period 1999- 2001. Appendix 2 presents an overview of this planning.

To gain experience, a pilot project will be carried out by OLACEFS. OLACEFS has indicated that it is interested in cooperation and possibly in taking over Working Group tasks, and that it is willing to participate in a pilot project (action 2.1.3). The participation by the Working Group in the OLACEFS course, suggested in appendix 3, has taken place on November 3rd, 1998. in Lima, Peru. The reactions of participants of this pilot were positive.

"Fresh water" has been the theme of the Working Group since 1995. This means that in the aforementioned documents whenever possible the subject will be applied to fresh water, for instance when examples are described. Fresh water will also be the theme of the Working Group in the period 1998- 2001. This does not mean that the Working Group considers other issues to be unimportant. The choice of Fresh Water as a theme must be seen as an attempt to concentrate activities of environmental auditing on an issue which is relevant for all countries in all stages of development.

Chapters 3 to 5 indicate for each of the terms of reference which activities the Working Group will carry out itself in the coming period and what the cooperation between the Working Group and the regions can mean for both.

## 2.2 Strategy for the INTOSAI Working Group

At the fourth meeting in Tallinn, the Working Group agreed to review its continued existence in the coming period. At the XVIIth INCOSAI, the INTOSAI community will be asked to either abolish the Working Group or issue a new mandate. Only in the course of time will it become clear how the transfer of the Working Group's tasks to the regions

is progressing. It is therefore proposed that such a request to INTOSAI be drawn up during the period 1999-2001 (action 2.2.1). In this connection, the regions could present their ideas on how they want environmental auditing to be carried out in their region (e.g. via a regional Working Group) at the next INCOSAI (action 2.2.2). If the Working Group is continued, another SAI will have to be approached to take over the chairmanship in 2001 (action 2.3.1).

### 3 Specific subjects

#### 3.1 Introduction

In the period 1995-1998, the Working Group dealt with two specific subjects: coordinated audits and natural resource accounting. It also decided at its fourth and fifth meeting to carry out:

- a preliminary study on the measurement of sustainable development;
- a preliminary study on environment and employment.

With respect to specific subjects in general the regions could identify subjects relevant to the regions and elaborate upon these in a way most appropriate for the region (action 3.1.1) The following sections indicate a possible role of the regions as well as that of the Working Group.

#### 3.2 Coordinated audits

At the 15th INCOSAI, the SAIs were encouraged to carry out joint or coordinated audits: 'INTOSAI should encourage SAIs to cooperate where possible in the audit of compliance by their respective countries with international accords, recognising the factors noted earlier, and should encourage joint or concurrent audits between SAIs' (Cairo Statement, Recommendation 2, p. 7). In consequence, the guide 'How SAIs may cooperate on the audit of international environmental audits' was produced by the SAIs of Norway and Canada. This document is presented at the XVIIth INCOSAI in Uruguay as an official INTOSAI document.

Since SAIs generally have little experience of cooperation, especially in the field of environmental auditing, the subject also merits attention in the period 1999-2001. First, the individual SAIs could apply the guidelines contained in the book (action 3.2.1). In addition, it was agreed at the fourth meeting in Tallinn to review the possibility of organising a symposium on this subject for each region (action 3.2.2), at which the practical application of the guide could be examined. Also experiences from already concluded audits can be exchanged. The regions could play an important role in this regard. Besides, the regions could perhaps facilitate or promote the co-operation in environmental auditing between SAIs in general and in particular in the auditing of international environmental accords (3.2.3). The Brazilian SAI has suggested to pay more attention to methods, manuals, criteria etcetera.

#### 3.3 Natural resource accounting

At the meeting in Tallinn, the memorandum on natural resource accounting (proposal and paper) was accepted as a Working Group document. In the period 1999-2001, this memorandum can be used by all SAIs to determine whether they want to undertake activities in this field (action 3.3.1). The regions in particular could promote SAIs' familiarity with the paper and encourage debate on natural resource accounting (action 3.3.2).

#### 3.4 Sustainable development

The Working Group members in Tallinn also expressed a wish to examine the approaches used by SAIs in scrutinising measures and indicators of sustainable development (action 3.3.3). It is expected that many SAIs will be confronted with this subject in the future.

A plan for this study, presented by the SAI of the United Kingdom, was approved at the 5th meeting of the Working Group. A report will be ready in time for the XVIIth INCOSAI in 2001 in Lima, Peru. In the coming period, the regions could also contribute to this study, by gathering information on the development and scrutiny of sustainable development and environmental indicators (action 3.3.4).

#### 3.5 Environment and employment

At the 5th meeting in Peru, the SAI of the European Union proposed to prepare a preliminary study on environment and employment and this proposal was accepted by the Working Group. If the study shows the advantages of environmental activities on employment, it might be an impulse for SAIs to take up environmental auditing. The SAIs of Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, the Czech Republic, Egypt, the United Kingdom, and the United States will support the SAI of the European Union with this activity (action 3.4).

### 4 Information exchange

#### 4.1 Information gathering

At the fourth Working Group meeting in Tallinn, it was decided to conduct a third survey of environmental auditing in the period 1999-2001 in order to continue monitoring the national developments and developments at the SAIs (action 4.1.1). To ensure comparability with previous years, more or less the same questions will be included as in the first two questionnaires, which were conducted in 1993 and 1996 respectively. It was agreed at the 5th meeting in Peru, that the following subjects be included:

- contact information (including email and homepage);
- environmental policy;
- the authority of SAIs;
- reports on environmental auditing;
- international accords and cooperation between SAIs;
- sustainable development;

- natural resource accounting.

The Brazilian SAI has suggested to gather more information on the way of planning, methods, techniques and guidelines used by SAIs.

The first four subjects are repeated from the first two surveys and enable developments over time to be charted. They will also be used, inter alia, to update the country documents and the bibliography (action 4.1.2).

A report on the results of the survey will be prepared for the XVIIth INCOSAI. The activities mentioned in this section will be carried out by the country chairing the Working Group. The regions could play an important role, e.g. by improving the response to the survey and the realisation of the country documents in their region (action 4.1.3).

#### 4.2 Working Group communication

The Working Group agreed in Tallinn that the manner in which communication within its ranks took place in the 1996-1998 period will be continued in the next period (1999-2001). This means firstly that the homepage will be maintained and expanded (action 4.2.1). Secondly, the information bulletin 'Green Lines' will be continued (action 4.2.2), and thirdly the Working Group will continue to communicate by email as far as possible (action 4.2.3).

The country chairing the Working Group will carry out actions 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, while action 4.2.3 is the responsibility of all Working Group members with an internet connection.

In the field of information-exchange regions can play a very important role. The regions are closer to the individual SAIs and could stimulate the communication among these SAIs and the exchange of information between them. A regional Working Group might be the platform to do this, as well as courses, workshops or a homepage on internet for the permanent information-supply. Of course it is up to the regions to choose the most appropriate structures (Action 4.2.4)

#### 4.3 Information transfer

While SAIs around the world are increasingly desirous of doing environmental audits, there is more need for information on the fundamentals of this type of audits. Therefore the Working Group and Intosai regions could give priority to the dissemination of information (action 4.3.1).

### 5 Guidelines, methods and techniques

#### 5.1 Introduction

As regards guidelines, methods and techniques, a number of SAIs, coordinated by that of New Zealand, have produced the draft booklet 'Guidance on conducting audit activities with an environmental perspective' for the Working Group. At the 5th meeting the Working Group accepted the draft, apart from slight changes in the introduction and the summary. It was decided to present the booklet as an exposure draft at the 16th INCOSAI in Montevideo, and to initiate the procedure for official INTOSAI documents in the period 1999-2001 (see appendix 3) (action 5.1.1).

In the next period, the regions could bring the booklet to the attention of individual SAIs and encourage them to use and comment on it (action 5.1.2). More in general the regions could study those particular problems which appear to be relevant for its SAIs (5.1.3).

The SAI of the USA thinks it might not be very efficient to have standards and guidelines be developed on a regional basis, especially when performance based environmental audits are concerned. This SAI also suggested to focus the activities of the Working Group on training, development of models, case studies, etcetera, to supply fundamental information on conducting environmental audits. The INTOSAI regions could also take actions in this respect (action 5.1.4).

#### 5.2 Models

At the 5th meeting the Working Group decided to prepare several models (audit proposals), which can be used when auditing some international environmental accords (Action 5.2.1). The Netherlands Court of Audit will make an inventory of accords, which might be interesting in this respect (Action 5.2.2). At the 6th meeting in Cape Town, 2000, the Working Group can decide for which accords they will prepare an audit-proposal-model.

### 6 Objectives for the XVIIth INCOSAI

Based on the previous chapters, the following objectives have been formulated for the XVIIth INCOSAI (appendix 1 contains an overview of the SAIs responsible):

General strategy:

- regions which want to play a role in environmental auditing have developed ideas on how to do so, and -more or less- have put these into practice;
- report on developments in co-operation with and within the INTOSAI regions, including the OLACEFS pilot region.

Specific subjects:

- report on experiences with coordinated audits and the use of the booklet 'How SAIs may cooperate on the audit of international environmental accords';
- a preliminary study on sustainable development, leading to proposals for a possible role for SAIs in this area.
- a draft exposure on environment and economy

Information exchange:

- report on the third questionnaire;
- homepage to be updated, including country documents and bibliography.

Guidelines, methods and techniques:

- presentation of the booklet 'Guidance on conducting audit activities with an environmental perspective' as an official INTOSAI document.
- audit proposal-models for the audit of several international environmental accords
- Other matters:
- decision on the future of the INTOSAI Working Group on Environmental Auditing;
- optional: decision on the chairmanship of the Working Group.

## 7 Planning

Milestones in the planning of the Working Group are the 5th Working Group meeting, the XVIth INCOSAI, approval of the modified work plan by the Governing Board and the XVIIth INCOSAI in 2001. Furthermore the Working Group agreed at its 5th meeting to hold the next meeting of the Working Group (the 6th) the second quarter of the year 2000 at a location yet to be determined, at which the situation regarding the various actions carried out by the Working Group can be discussed. The timetable can be as follows:

Table 1. Timetable

5th meeting of Working Group	1 to 5 November 1998	Lima, Peru
XVIth INCOSAI	7 to 14 November 1998	Montevideo, Uruguay
46th meeting of Intosai governing board	26 and 27 May 1999	Vienna, Austria
Workshop "trekkers"	June 1999	The Hague
6th meeting of Working Group	Second quarter 2000	Cape Town, South Africa
7th meeting of Working Group	2001	to be decided
XVIIth INCOSAI	2001	Seoul, Korea

### Attachment 1 Overview of activities 1999 - 2001

#### General Strategy

Action number:	Action:	SAI responsible
2.1.1	Produce a tailor-made strategy for interested regions	Interested Regions and Working Group
2.1.2	Organize workshop regional "trekkers"	The Netherlands
2.1.3	OLACEFS Pilot project	OLACEFS together with Working Group (support)

#### Strategy for the INTOSAI Working Group

Action number:	Action:	Responsible SAI:
2.2.1	Draw up request to INTOSAI on the future of the Working Group	The Netherlands
2.2.2	Specify the working methods of the regions	Interested Regions
2.3.1	Look for new chairperson	All members Working Group (Optional)

#### Specific subjects

Action number:	Action:	SAI responsible
3.1.1	identify specific subjects relevant for SAIs in the regions	Interested regions
3.2.1	Application of booklet "How to co-operate..."	All SAIs (optional)
3.2.2	Organise regional conferences on co-operation between SAIs in auditing international environmental accords	Interested Regions
3.2.3	facilitate/promote co-operation between SAIs in environmental auditing in general and in the auditing of international environmental accords in particular	Interested Regions

#### Continuation Specific subjects

3.3.1	Use of options Natural resource accounting	All SAIs (optional)
3.3.2	Promotion of familiarity with and debate on the paper Natural Resource Accounting	Interested Regions
3.3.3	A preliminary study on the approaches used by SAIs in scrutinising measures and indicators of sustainable development	United Kingdom and ?
3.3.4	Gather information on the development and scrutiny of sustainable development and environmental indicators	Interested Regions
3.4	Preliminary study on environment and employment	SAI of the EU with assistance of the SAIs of Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Czech Republic, Egypt, UK, USA,

#### Information exchange

Action number:	Action:	SAI responsible
4.1.1	Third survey on environmental auditing	The Netherlands

4.1.2	Update State of the Art documents and bibliography	The Netherlands
4.1.3	Improve the response to the questionnaire and the country-documents	Interested Regions
4.2.1	Continuation and maintenance homepage	The Netherlands
4.2.2	Continuation Green Lines	The Netherlands
4.2.3	Use of e-mail	All SAIs
4.2.4	Create a tailor made infrastructure for information exchange and communication in the region	Interested Regions
4.3	Give priority to information transfer on methodological information concerning the conduct of environmental audits	Interested Regions Working Group
Guidelines, methods and techniques		
Action number:	Action:	SAI responsible:
5.1.1	INTOSAI procedure for the booklet "Standards and guidelines for environmental auditing"	Coordination: New Zealand. Contributions by the SAIs of: a. South Africa/ Estonia b. USA/ UK c. European Union/ New Zealand Support : The Netherlands (distribution , etcetera)
5.1.2	draw attention of SAIs to the booklet en encourage its use and feedback on it;	Interested Regions
5.1.3	study particular methodological problems relevant for the region	Interested regions
5.1.4	to focus the activities on training and development of models, case studies, etcetera	Interested regions Working Group

Planning for all regions, period 1999-2001

## Appendix 2 OLACEFS pilot project

### 1. Introduction

Following the fourth meeting of the INTOSAI Working Group on Environmental Auditing, OLACEFS stated that it was willing to carry out a pilot project in the field of environmental auditing. The project is designed to generate ideas on the possible role of regions in the field of environmental auditing and to learn how this role can be put into practice. It is proposed that ideas be exchanged with the regions on this matter. This exchange of ideas could be initiated on the basis of a meeting with the OLACEFS at two levels, namely for the members of the OLACEFS board and for participants of the environmental auditing course organised by the Colombian SAI. The meeting for the participants can be provided by the Netherlands Court of Audit. The meeting for the OLACEFS board could be provided by one of the Working Group members from this region.

It is proposed that an information package be handed out during the presentation. The following sections contain proposals for the presentation and the information package.

### 2. Meetings

#### 2.1 Purpose

The meeting could have the following aims:

- to encourage the directors of the SAIs forming part of OLACEFS to support the idea that OLACEFS itself should henceforth be responsible for and give shape to the implementation of INTOSAI's objectives on environmental auditing (presentation for the OLACEFS board);
  - to start a discussion on the best ways to give concrete form to the role of OLACEFS in environmental auditing with the officials of South American SAIs;
  - to take note of any objections and difficulties foreseen at both levels.
- It will then be considered whether this presentation can be given to other regions in this form or whether it should be modified on the basis of the experience with OLACEFS.

#### 2.2 Program

The program for the board and course participants could be as follows:

program item	minutes
Introduction:	10
- aims of this happening,	
- program of the afternoon	
Introduction on the working group: the origin, objectives , products, future strategy, etc.	20
presentation survey-report	20
presentation Natural Resource Accounting	10
Break	30
Workshop 1. Co-ordinated audit	90
This workshop aims at the implementation of the booklet "How SAIs may co-operate..." . It includes amongst other a presentation on the booklet and the elaboration of certain tasks	
Break	30

Workshop 2. Creating a working group 90

In this workshops the participants will try to find out a path to the creation of a regional working group. It includes the presentation of the video : "Green Auditing, a global challenge"

Total 300

### 3. The information package

The information package could contain:

- the programme of the presentation;
- an introduction, with the environmental auditing objectives from the terms of reference (1), an overview of the concrete results (2), and a suggestion that the regions build on the basic material available (3);
- the document 'How to cooperate in the audit of international environmental accords';
- the document on natural resource accounting;
- printouts (homepage, country documents from the board members of OLACEFS or from the countries of the students, interesting websites, international accords and an overview of countries interested in coordinated audits);
- after the presentation, the (Spanish) video will be handed out;
- report of the survey;
- plan for the Ramsar audit by the Netherlands Court of Audit, including an overview of the countries that have signed the Ramsar convention. The agreements in the convention apply to all signatories. It is proposed that the information package be distributed during the presentations.

### 4. Evaluation

The set-up, results etc. of this pilot with OLACEFs will be discussed at the following 5th meeting of the Working Group.

More in general the Working Group members from OLACEFS could report on the progress with the OLACEFS pilot project at the 6th meeting of the Working Group. The date (proposal spring 2000) and location of this meeting have yet to be decided.

### 5. Planning

The timetable for the pilot project is as follows:

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| - course on environmental auditing  | 3 November 1998 |
| - meeting of OLACEFS board  | to be decided   |
| - interim report on experience at 6th meeting of the Working Group. Maybe more regions have been visited by then; | 2000            |
| - presentation at XVIIth INCOSAI  | 2001            |