

UNEP/IUCN

The Joint Environmental Law Information Service

The Joint Environmental Law Information Service is a project designed to provide Internet access to information on environmental law. The service is a joint project of the United Nations Environment Programme and IUCN, the World Conservation Union. The Government of the Netherlands is funding the first phase of the project.

Government officials, especially in developing countries, have a growing need for easy and no-cost access to environmental law information. Recognising the necessity for a single window to obtain this information, the UNEP Governing Council (Decision 18/9) called upon UNEP and IUCN to join forces in providing access to international and national environmental law information, primarily to assist developing countries. Thus, the Service is designed to use IUCN's Environmental Law Information System as its core archival system, and link these data to full text information available with UNEP and other future partners.

An Internet Prototype of the Service was demonstrated at the 20th Session of UNEP's Governing Council (Nairobi, 1-5 February 1999). The Service currently contains references on the status of more than 480 treaties



Anni Lukács, Documentation officer of IUCN-ELIS, demonstrates the joint Environmental Law Information Service of UNEP and IUCN at the 20th Session of the Governing Council in Nairobi (February 1999). Right to left: A. Lukács, Dirk van Gulik, Mark Collins, David Larkin, Françoise Burhenne-Guilmin.

from IUCN-ELIS with links to the full text from UNEP's Computerised Environmental Law Information Base.

The easy-to-use Service enables researchers to find information on references to environmental law and obtain full-text of documents. In addition to treaties, the Service will be expanded to cover national legislation, European Union instruments, international "soft law" and related documents, law and policy literature, and judicial decisions.

The service can be accessed on the Internet at:
<http://www.djl.co.uk/iucn/>

(Nattley Williams) □