GEF
Global Environment Facility

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PROJECT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MECHANISMS TO DISSEMINATE LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES IN INTEGRATED TRANSBOUNDARY WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

DELTAmerica Project

Systems Manuals

User's Manual

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1. Introduction

The websites of the Regional Nodes of the Inter-American Water Resources Network (IWRN), the Southern Cone, Central America, the South Pacific and Amazon (in Spanish), Brazil (in Portuguese) and the Caribbean (in English), contain an dynamic information system that is useful for:

- Promoting the open exchange of information and education
- Promoting the exchange of technical expertises
- Strengthening the communication, cooperation, collaboration and financial commitment of interested parties for integral management of the Water Resources. Specifically, to establish an articulation with the provinces, states, municipalities and communities involved in the regional framework.

Each Regional Node, an integral part of the Basin Information System, has the following structure:

- A decentralized WEB of internet sites.
- A variety of actors responsible for the operation of the regional Websites

The Regional Nodes are:

- Southern Cone Node – With its headquarters in Argentina, this Node will gather information on the water resources of all the spanish-speaking countries in the Southern Cone: Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Paraguay and Bolivia.
- Brazil Node – With its headquarters in Brazil, this node is not only responsible for gathering information about water resources in Brazil, but also for the translation of the main topics of other Nodes into portuguese. This Node is the only one that functions and operates in portuguese.
- Amazon – South Pacific Node - With its headquarters in Peru, this Node will gather information on all the countries that are in the Hydrographic Basin of the Amazon River and in the South Pacific Basins, including, Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, and Surinam.
- Caribbean Node – Based In Saint Lucia, this Node will gather information mainly related to the water resources in the Caribbean Islands.
- Central American Node – This node will gather information on the water resources of all the countries in Central America.

Each regional node website contains references on:

- Organizations and Personal Contacts
- Activities
- Technical Documents and Publications
- Virtual Library
- Discussion Forums
- Sector News

This information is structured on a Relational Database with the following tables and service functions:

- Main Tables (Data Tables): ORGANIZATIONS, PEOPLE, ACTIVITIES, and DOCUMENTS
- Reference Tables (Lookup tables): Geographical, Categorization, Identifiers, etc.
- Auxiliary Tables: News, Administrative Functions
- Links Tables
- Discussion Forums

This permits access to essential information in decision making processes, such as:

- Links to Participating Institutions
- Information on Experts
- Information on Activities and Institutional Arrangements
- Information for the Basins

The structure of Relational Databases have been adopted for the Websites, including the following features:

- Avoidance of data REDUNDANCY and increase of STORAGE CAPACITY
- The possibility to NORMALIZE the Reference Look Up Tables
- Avoidance of Data Entry ERRORS and INCONSISTENCIES
- PERFORMANCE Optimization of the Database

The normalization function accessed through the Link Tables adds FLEXIBILITY to the data entry process, increasing The STORAGE CAPACITY and presenting the only answer to fields of indefinite multiple entrances.

This permits the consultation of the information on the Website:

- By TOPICS: Action lines of the Projects
- By COMPONENT: Main Tables
- By SPECIFIC: News, Calendar Events and Upcoming Events, as well as Links to sites of Participating Institutions

In the following sections, the utilities of the web-sites will be briefly explained, describing each section of the web-site portals and results that are obtained by clicking on a specified link. This bried description aims to generate a general idea of the main functions of the sites

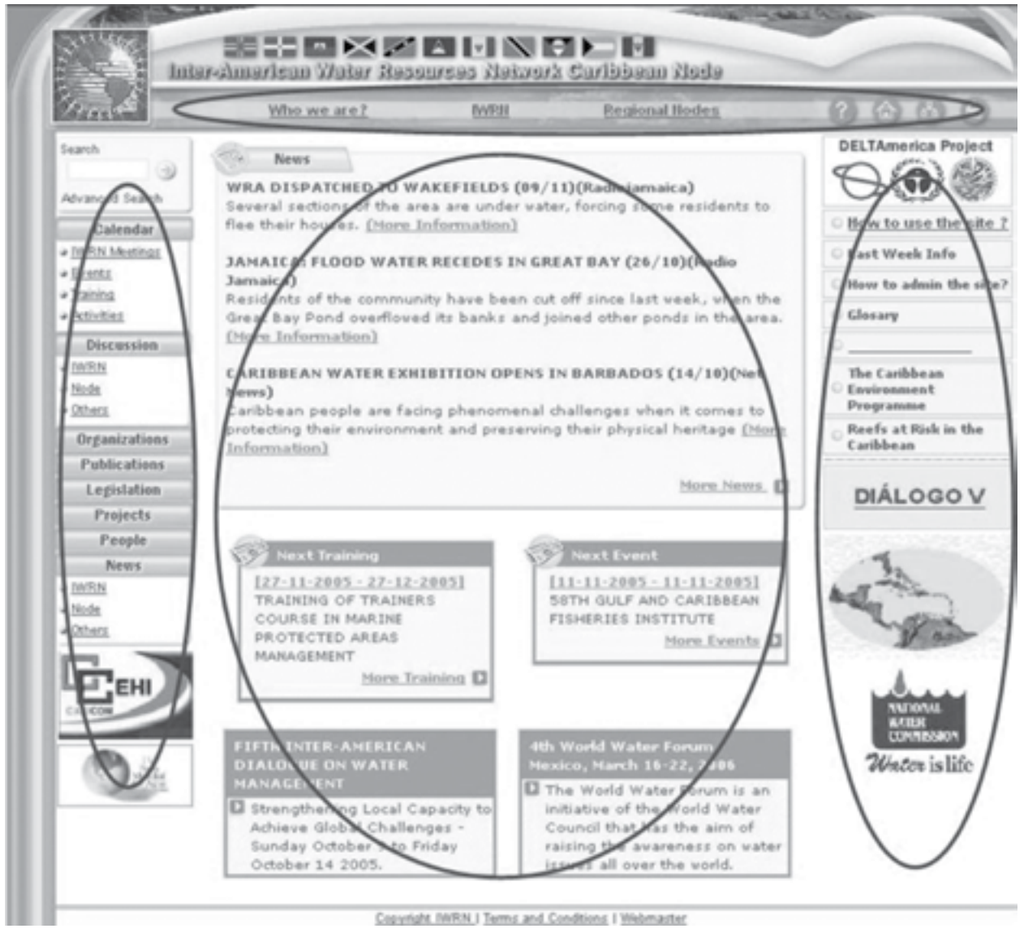
Additionaly, the necessary steps to introduce information into the database will be explained. Users can collaborate and interact with the Network by entering his/her own information or any other information they believe should be presented on the site. Users will also be able to enter information on Courses or Events that don't appear in the search results of the databases.

2. General Description on the website's utilities

The Home Page for each site of the Regional Nodes is:

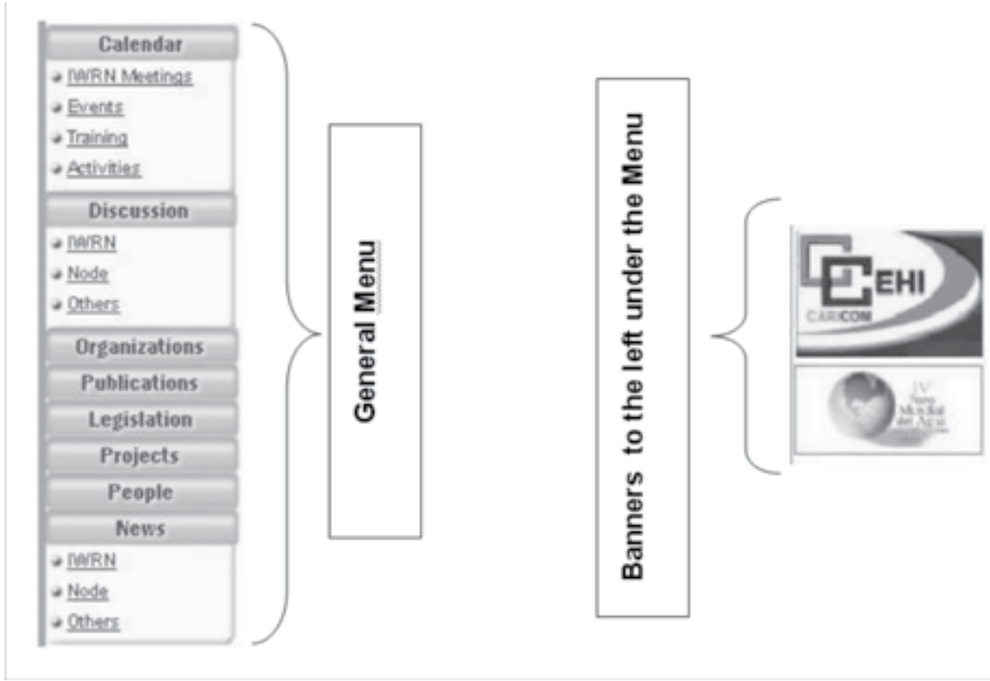
- Southern Cone: **http://conosur.rirh.net**
- Central America: **http://centroamerica.rirh.net**
- Brazil: **http://brasil.rirh.net**
- Caribbean: **http//caribbean.iwrn.net**
- South Pacific: **http//pacificio.rirh.net**

This Nodes were developed to be viewable by different browsers (Iexplore, Mozilla, Firefox). The Portal Page general structure can be divided into 4 information sections: Left, Central, Right and Upper.



2.1.- Left Section

The left Section contains the General Menu and a Banners sector.



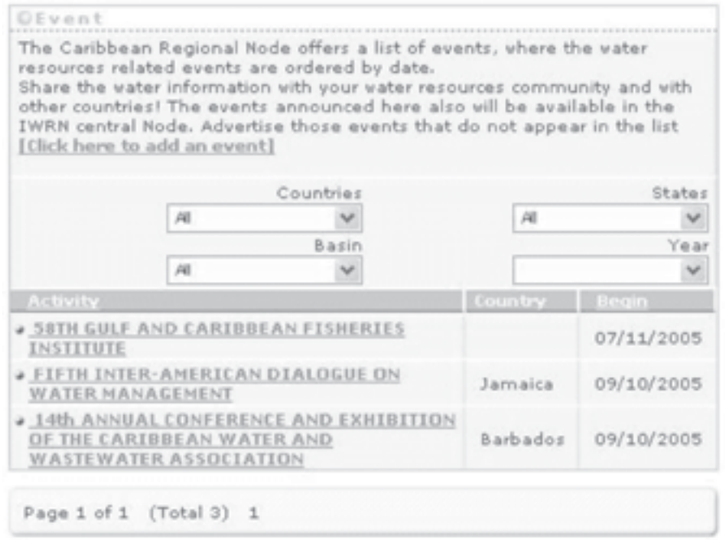
2.1.1.- General Menu (Static Section)

The buttons on the General Menu are predetermined and they show, in the central part, a list of all the registries that were categorized within each button's features. For the Events button, captured images of the screens that the describe the actions of the button will be displayed. The rest of the buttons function in the same way with differences respective of each information category.

On the Calendar Subsection:

IWRN Meetings
This is a link to the Central Node's page in spanish, where the Network's meeting calendar is located.

Events
This button spreads a list of all the registries clasiffied as events on the Database. The Southern Cone Node offers a list of events, where the events related to water resources can be found organized by date. The events announced here will also be available on the IWRN central site. It is important for users to announce those events that do not appear on the list.



When you click on any of the titles of the result list, the related registries are displayed.

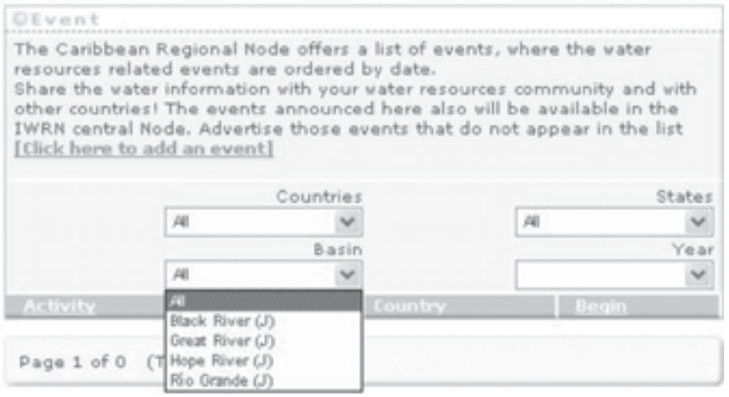
Many levels of information related to the registeries can exist:

documents

organizations

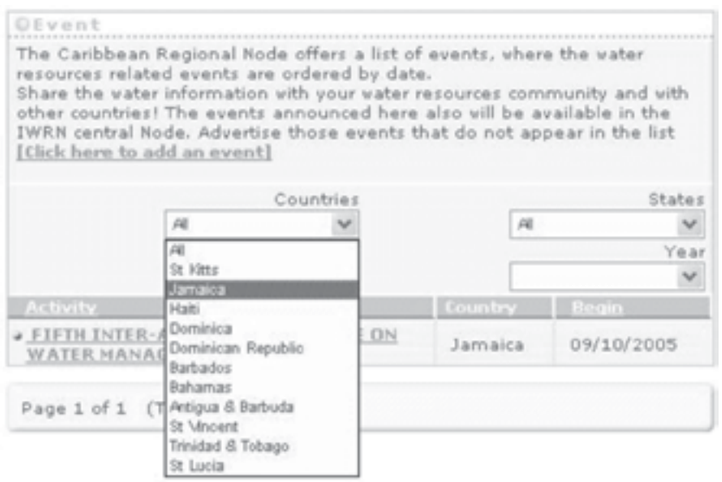
links

by country/state



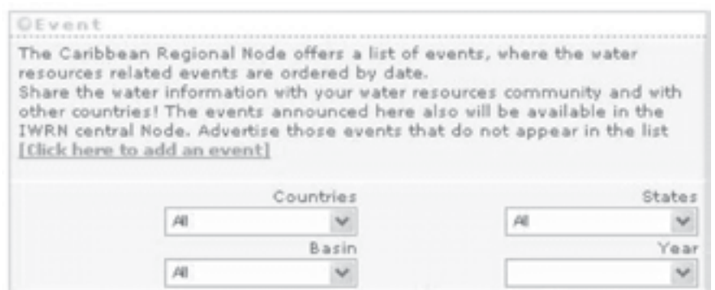
by basin

The results obtained can be annotated:

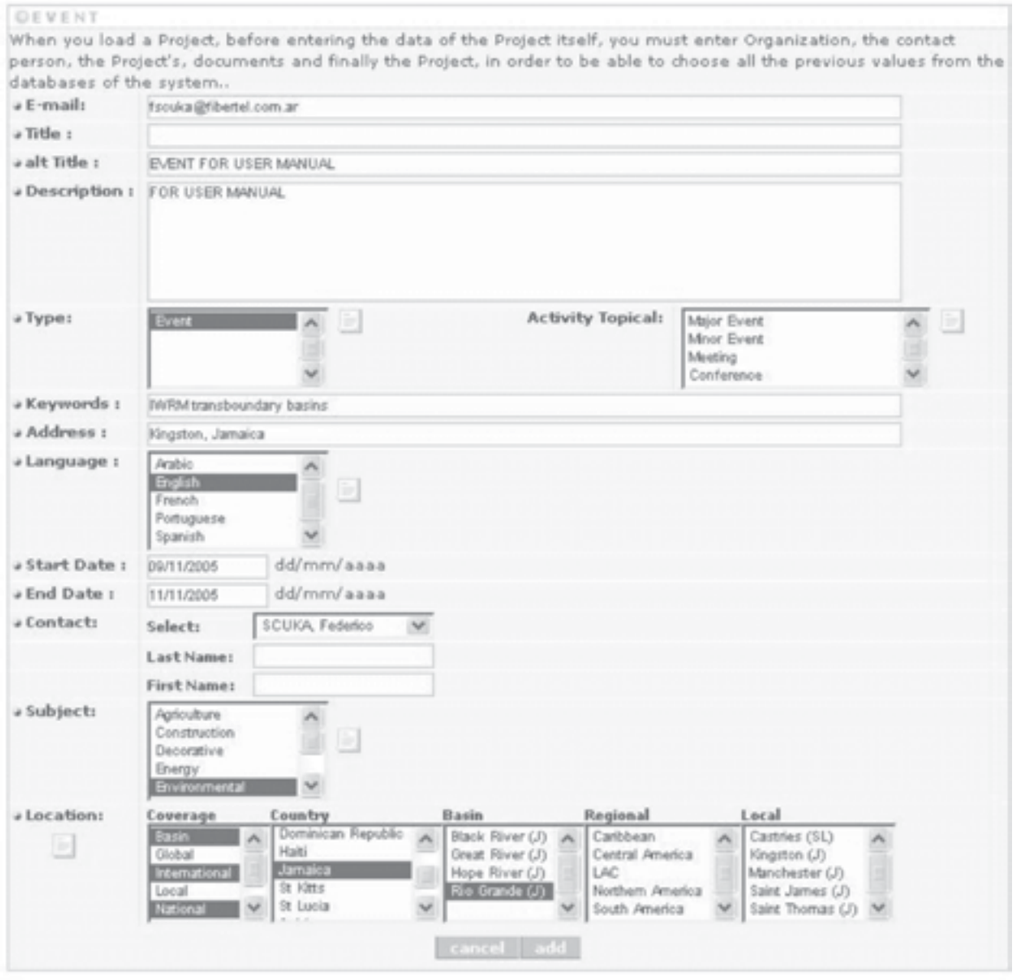


by coutry

Information can be entered in the site's Database by first adding information to the ad-hoc forms that spread out when you click on the corresponding link and then by clicking the button/link [Click here to add an event].

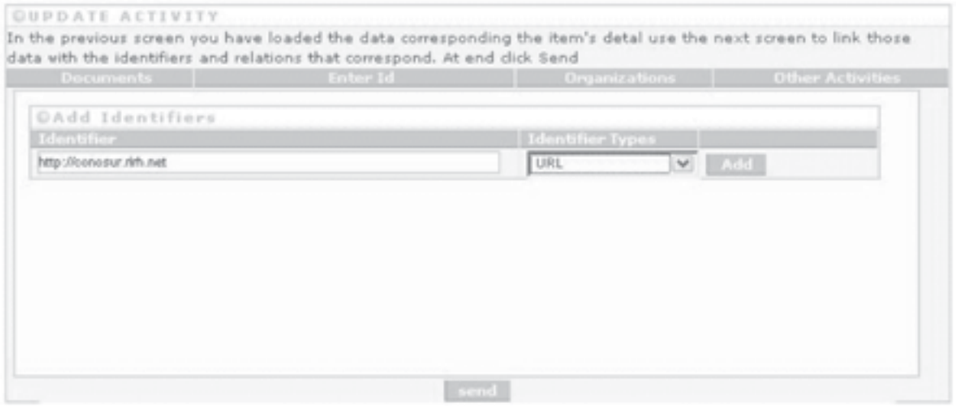


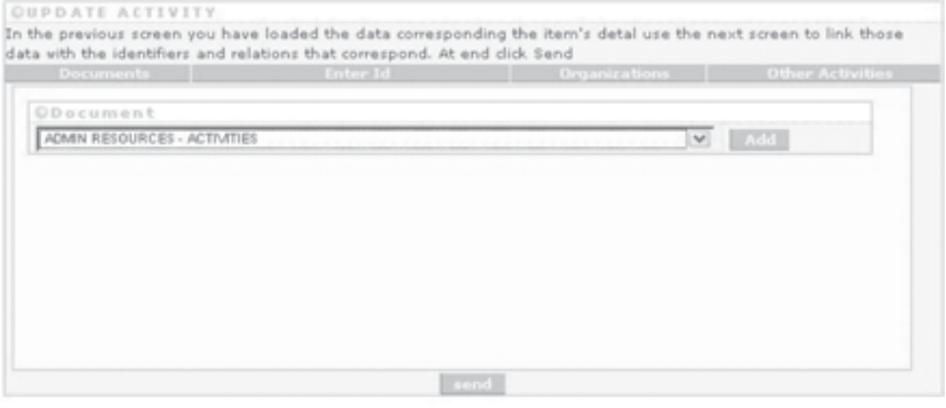
After those initial steps are completed, a series of screens that show how the information is uploaded to the node spreads out. When the forms are completed and sent, the new information is uploaded to the database.

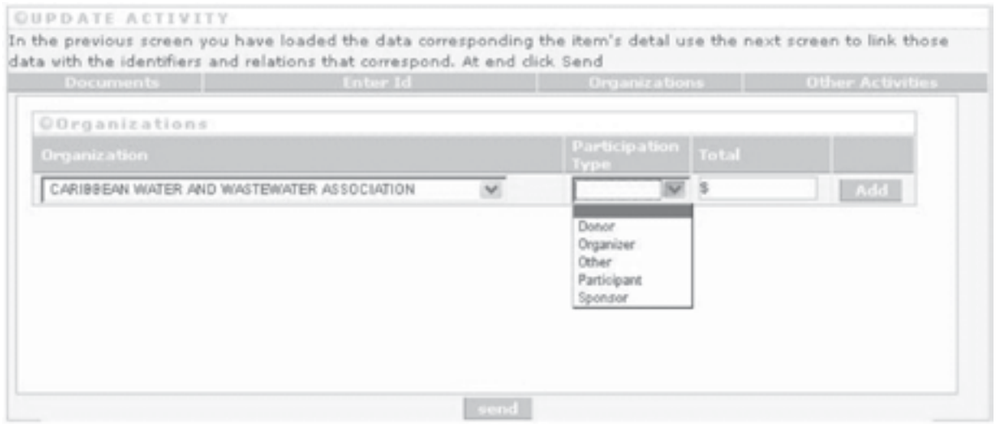


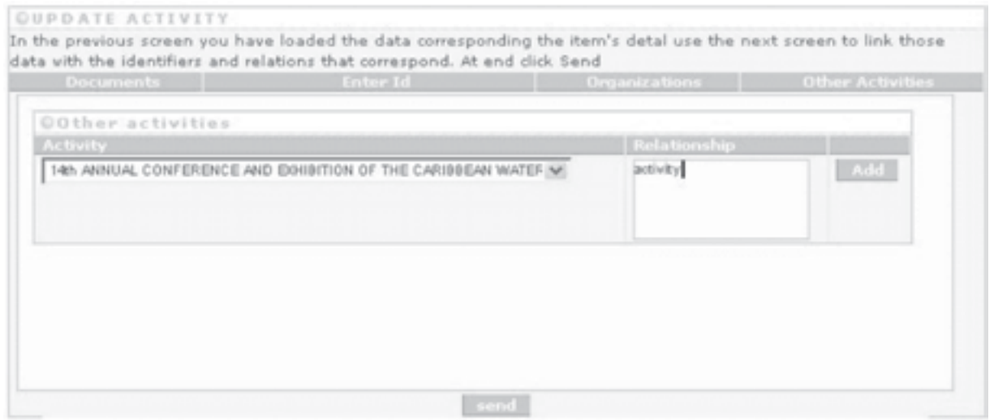
The fields with the corresponding values have to be filled and then uploaded by clicking on the Add button. The second section permits users to enter the information links and their attached values. It is important to clarify that this information is saved directly to the site's tables, and they are available for all the users when the Node's administrator approves them.

Next, the screens to add incidental information will be presented:









By clicking on the Send button a message that confirms the information upload appears.

Likewise, the Site sends an automatic thank you message to the upload address that was originally entered.

Hello! Your message has been successfully sent to the Caribbean Node's webmaster for his approval. All the people participating in the International Water Resources Network (IWRN) thanks your participation, Caribbean Node Team.

Courses

This link spreads out a list of all the organized course registries on the Database. The Southern Cone Node in the IWRN offers a list of training opportunities, where different types of courses and workshops can be found. They are related to water resources and are organized by date. Users are invited to announce relevants courses that are not on this list.

Activities

An organized list of all the other events on the Database spreads out. The IWRN's Southern Cone Node offers users the chance of knowing, listed by date, the activities carried out on various projects or hydrographical basins, not including events or courses, such as: meetings, technical visits, field work and others. It is important for users to announce those activities that are being promoted in your hydrographical basin, or in your project, that do not appear on this list.

On the Discussion Subsection:

In the IWRN

A link to the Central Node's page in spanish where the Forums are located appears.

In this Node

A screen is displayed in the central part indicating the entry to the discussion environment for the water community of the region.

Currently, this node is developing:

Deltamerica Forum: To identify efficient solutions to the problems of water systems, so as to generate, share and store knowledge to facilitate the management of water projects in the Southern Cone subregion.

[Click here for learn more and register]

The system of forums in the Southern Cone Node facilitates the dynamic exchange of opinions on different subjects on the resources and provides a flexible platform that will users will enjoy.

To access the Forum as a User, you must register a Username. To do it, click on the small link Sign Up at the top of each page.

You will access the "Accept the Sign Up Terms" dialogue, which you must accept in order to be able to sign up. Subsequently, you will be taken to the Sign up Information screen. Fill in each of the obligatory fields and the optional ones you as you deem necessary.

Others

A screen is displayed in the central part of the portal listing all of the external links to forums and electronic references loaded in that category of the Database. It is important for users to announce those discussion forums that do not appear on that list.

Organizations

In this link a list of all the loaded registries spreads out with data on Organizations involved in the Database. The Southern Cone Node offers a list of organizations, that can be filtered according to the characteristics of the Country, Province, Basin, and Water Use and Type. The data of the Organizations listed in this Node will also be available on the IWRN's central site. It is important for users to announce any Organization of which the references do not appear on the list.

Publications

Excluding the legal documents that are related to another menu channel, a list of all the registries loaded on the Database as Published Documents spreads out. The Southern Cone Node offers a list of links to Documents that can be filtered according to the characteristics of Country, Province, Basin, and Water Use and Type. . The data of the Publications that appear in this Node will also be available on the IWRN's central site. It is important for users to announce any Publications of which the references do not appear on the list.

Legislation

A list of all the registries loaded as Legal Documents (Laws, Decrees, etc.) on the Database spreads out (excluding all the publications of the previous button). The Southern Cone Node offers a list of links to Legal Documents, that can be filtered according to the characteristics of Country, Province, Basin, and Water Use and Water. The data of the Publications that appear in this Node will also be available on the IWRN's central site. It is important for users to announce any legal documents of which the references do not appear on the list.

Projects

A list including all the registeries labeled as Projects on the Database spreads out. The Southern Cone Node offers a list of Projects that can be filtered according to the characteristics of Country, Province, Basin, and Water Use and Water. The data of the Projects presented on this site will also be available on the IWRN's central site. It is important for users to send their own Project's data in case it doesn't appear on the list.

People

A list containing the information of the people stored in the Database, sorted by Language, Organization and Expertise, spreads out when this link is clicked. The information regarding the People stored in this database will be published after the interested party agrees as well as being available on the IWRN's central site. Users should send their data in case it doesn't appear on the list.

On the News Subsection

About the IWRN
This is a link to the Node's central page in spanish where news on the resource can be found.

About this Node
By clicking here, users can access the news loaded to the Node related to Water Resources and the Environment, as well as those that were published in the subregions. The news contained in the database can be organized by calendar years, specific dates, Countries, Provinces, Departments and Basins.

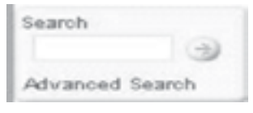
Others
A list of the news related to the resource in the subregion spreads out, with the ability for users to filter the results by Countries and Provinces, or Departments.

NOTES:
All of the previous buttons spread the same lists and forms that are displayed in the figures of the Events button. This includes features on how to see the results and obtain more information, using the different association levels the information presents. Also, the methods for sending information through the Web are similar.

At this point, it is important to point out that the sites were developed so as to provide referential information only. This means that it will only contain final documents for common activities to the different nodes or to the network, and in some cases, an exception will be granted to users to upload curriculums or their individual jobs if they dont have a chance to do so elsewhere on the internet.

Search and Advanced Search

Using the text box and the search button, users can access a powerful search tool in the website: search by words. The simple search tool presents a list of elements according to the features they present. In the following "search", we look for all the elements containing the word aquiferous:
The obtained result is a list of 27 elements, listed within



the main divisions of the information in the database (People, Documents, Events, Courses, Projects, Organizations and News).

Clicking on the titles of these groupings, the recovered elements are displayed as shown on the following figures.

The Advanced Search refines the search, permiting users to look for exact words, phrases or groups of words, as well as providing annotations of elements, categories and specifications on a determined resource.

The following screen shows the general values that are permitted in the advanced search:

It should be pointed out that each search is based not only on the elements description, but on many other fields, resulting in a specific search for the whole amount of elements that the word or words present in any of the main fields.

2.1.2. Left Banners (Dynamic Section)

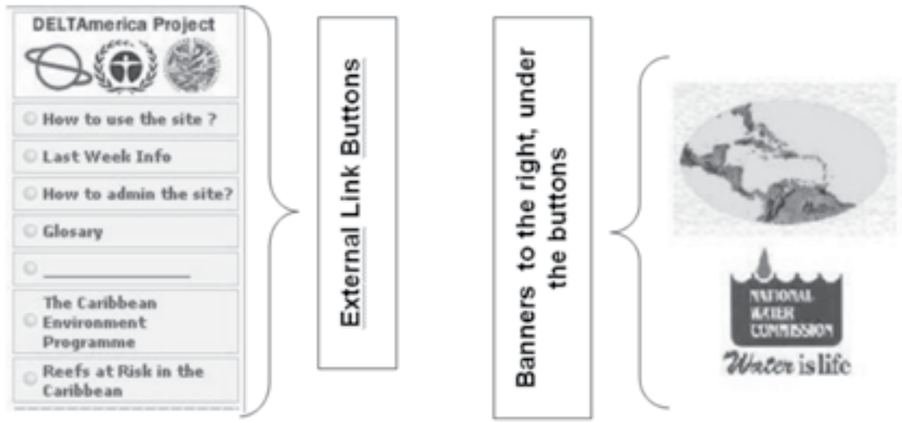
The left seector varies substaintially, and can be modified to add and change the banners. At the same time, they can be linked to different elements in the Site, pointing to a registry of the database where the information linked to the Banner will be displayed.

The banners can also be used to emphasize a special event or ephemeris, as well as a site's determined section that is not taken into consideration in the general menu or that might not be specifically pointed out.

This left sector is managed by the site's webmaster and its dynamics influence the way in which the frontpage of the site is displayed.

2.2. Right Section (Dynamic Section)

On the right section we have a sector with Links buttons and a Banner sector



In the same way as the Banner sector to the left, these two sectors are also modifiable. They can be modified and they can change their locations with each other or between both sides. The External Links sector presents definitions of the same site with changeable utilities such as Scholarships, Working Oportunities, etc. It is important to point out that even if the external links format is fixed, by modifying their text they can be used in several ways to represent different links.

The same happens with the Banners, that can be exchanged, added, modified and redirected to different addresses according to what is desired.

The banners can also be used to emphasize a special event or ephemeris, as well as a site's determined section that is not taken into consideration in the general menu or that might not be specifically pointed out.

This right sector is managed by the site's webmaster and its dynamics influence the way in which the frontpage of the site is displayed.

2.3. Upper Menu (Static Section)

In the upper section icons and links to special addresses can be found.

Icon to communicate with the Site's Administrator

Icon that shows the site's map

Icon that refreshes the browser with the Site's Home

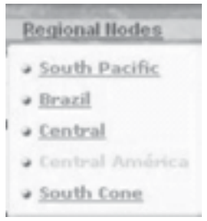
Icon for frequently asked questions (FAQ's)

Who we are

This is a link to an explanatory text on the Regional Nodes of the IWRN

IWRN

This is a link to an explanatory text on the Interamerican Water Resources Network that resides in the Central Node.

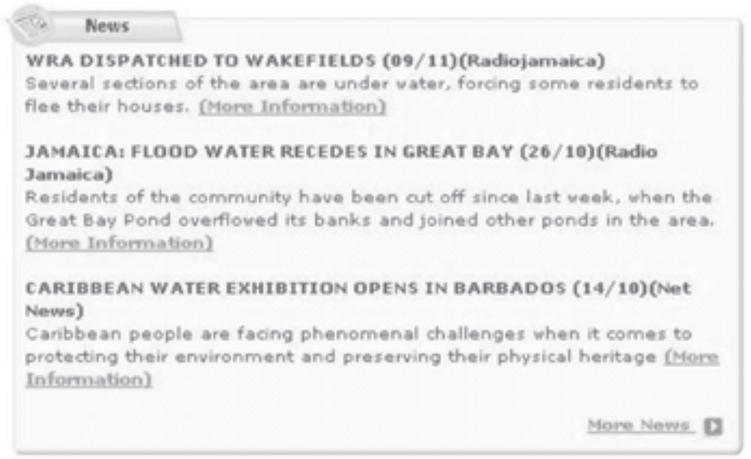


Regional Nodes

This is a list that contains the names of all the Network's regional nodes, with the corresponding link to their websites.

2.4 Central Section (Dynamic Section)

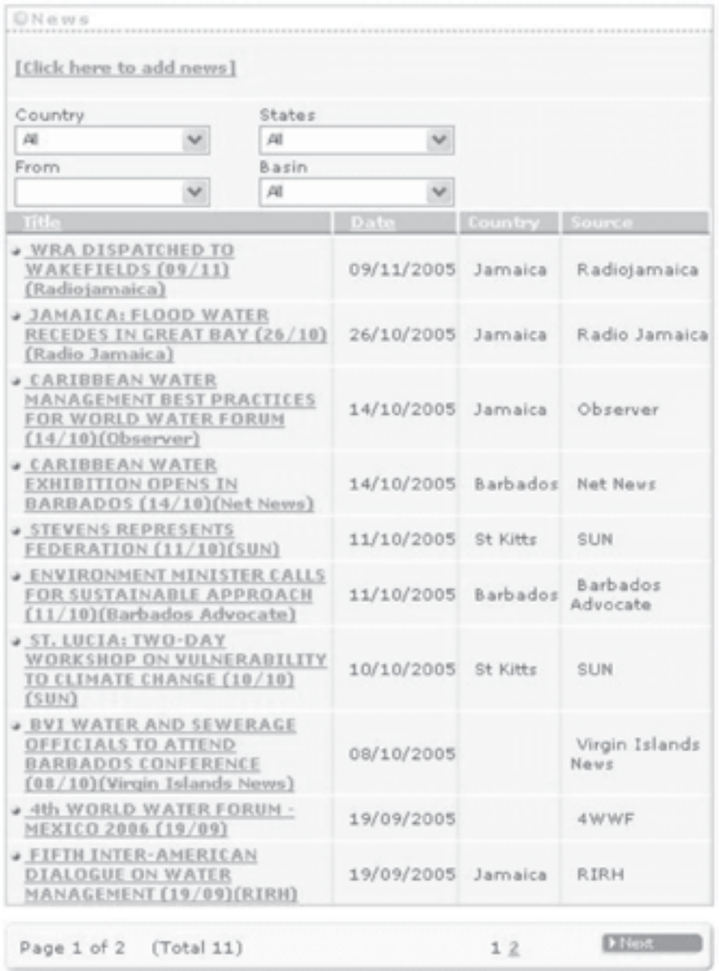
In the central section different types of information can be used to show an initial image (changeable periodically during the day) as well as to show the results of the actions of the different buttons and banners. In other words, this section has three functions that change as you surf the website: i) it integrates the site's Homepage, ii) when it is used to present the results of using the menu buttons or search functions and iii) when the forums/discussion page in the site is accessed.



i) In the Home of the site the principal news are displayed as well as four boxes with important information for the user including Upcoming Events, Courses (with links to the complete information) and to boxes that the administrator uses to highlight important information or documents

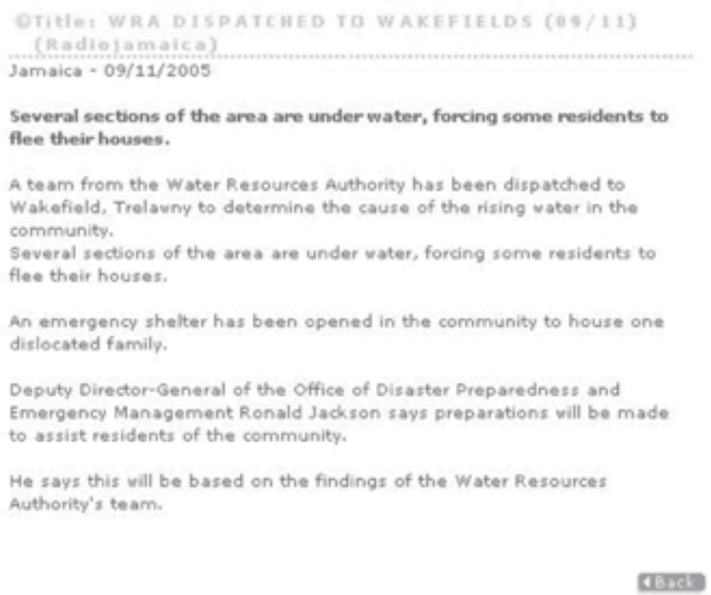
The Next Course and Event boxes are automatic and managed by the site. The highlighted boxes are modified according to the administrators needs.

ii) When utilized to show the result of a determined action of a menu button or of a specific search.

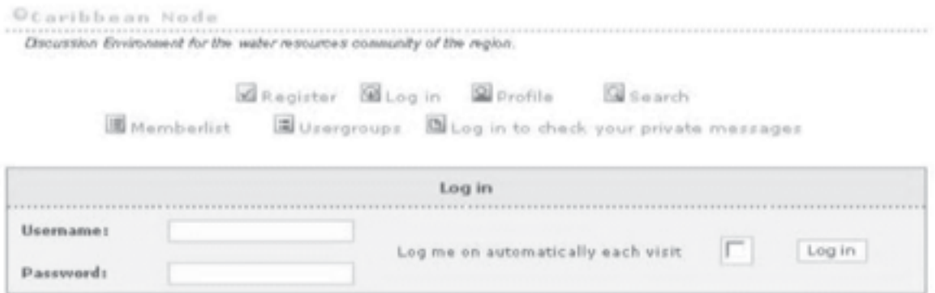


The previous screen shows the result of clicking on the News button in the Southern Cone Node. The news stored is listed as the figure shows.

Clicking on the title of any particular news headline will spread out the information on the central zone.



iii) When it is used to access the forums it directly takes you to the forums portal and access page.



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