

## **Projects 2004: New and Continuing Work for the Pacific Institute**

As a follow up to last month's 2003 Rewind, we present our Projects 2004 memo, which looks at our planned and ongoing projects for 2004, and how they relate to the larger trends shaping issues of development, environment, and security.

+ **Sustainable Water Management in Practice:** How can an entire region live within its means? When it comes to water, the Pacific Institute aims to find out with a major, new initiative to put sustainable approaches into place at the regional level. The benefits? A stronger economy, a healthier environment, and significant cost savings. The project, Sustainable Water Management in Practice (SWMP), will focus, at first, on the Silicon Valley region with plans to expand to at least two other regions. SWMP will analyze current water use and then work with communities, businesses, and government agencies to find cost-effective, practical solutions. Ultimately, we hope to create a template that cities, towns, and regions around the globe can use to make sustainable water management a reality.

The SWMP concept paper is online at <http://www.pacinst.org/swmp>

+ **Soft Path for Water:** On the heels of the successful release of "Waste Not, Want Not" the Pacific Institute is continuing to advocate for the benefits of a "soft path" approach to providing water. According to the soft path, building new infrastructure – aqueducts, reservoirs, dams, and the like – is appropriate, but only after cost-effective efficiency solutions have been tried. And, as our research shows, too often water agencies and water users underestimate how much water can be saved through efficiency. "Waste Not, Want Not" finds, for example, that California can save 1/3 of its current urban water use through the more widespread use of currently available approaches. And if a relatively efficient state like California can do that much better, than many other states (and nations) can make easy progress.

"Waste Not, Want Not" is available online for download and purchase at:  
[http://www.pacinst.org/reports/urban\\_usage/index.htm](http://www.pacinst.org/reports/urban_usage/index.htm)

+ **National Water Commission:** We hope to bring this message of efficiency to the attention of elected officials across the United States with our proposal for a National Water Commission. Water policy in the United States is uncoordinated and usually focused on increasing supply no matter what the cost. But with climate change, growing populations, and over-pumping all threatening our supply of clean water, business as usual won't work. Our leadership on international water issues is likewise lacking. A National Water Commission will cost little and yield many benefits both here and abroad.

Our proposal to create a National Water Commission is online at:  
[http://www.pacinst.org/national\\_water\\_commission/index.html](http://www.pacinst.org/national_water_commission/index.html)

+ **Clearing the Air:** Environmentalists, health advocates, and community leaders all agree that diesel pollution is a serious threat to human health and well-being. New

research shows that diesel pollution is far more toxic than car exhaust and confirms that diesel soot causes cancer, and triggers or worsens asthma. A recent report by the Pacific Institute, "Clearing the Air," finds that residents of West Oakland are being exposed to far more than their share of toxic air pollution. Residents of neighborhoods with heavy truck traffic across the nation face a similar threat. Community groups and environmental advocates are now being joined by health organizations like the American Lung Association and government agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency in their fight against diesel pollution. With all this in mind, the Pacific Institute is stepping up its work to help West Oakland, and other communities, reduce toxic air pollution.

Information on our work on diesel pollution is available online at:

<http://www.pacinst.org/diesel/>

+ **International NGO Network on ISO:** International standards are growing in importance, but major standards-setting bodies like the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) are dominated by large corporations. Much like the controversy over the World Trade Organization, environmental and social groups risk being unable to influence the development of these critical global standards unless they find a seat at the table and participate.

The Pacific Institute has long been involved in ensuring that ISO, and other standards-setting bodies, protect the public interest and the environment. This year we are stepping up our efforts through the International NGO Network on ISO (INNI). Begun in 2002, INNI provides timely information on the activities of ISO to participating organizations so that they can activate their members, provide guidance to decision-makers, and shape public opinion. While its primary audience remains NGOs, the INNI is now going public with its website and email list.

To join or learn more, contact [inni@pacinst.org](mailto:inni@pacinst.org). Information on the International NGO Network on ISO is available online: <http://www.pacinst.org/inni>

+ **Environment and Security:** In conjunction with Oregon State University and The Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Pacific Institute will hold a series of meetings in 2004 to reduce the risk of conflict over water resources. In June, the group will cosponsor meetings on the San Juan and Lempa River basins in Central America. That same month, we will bring funders and researchers together to improve the effectiveness of efforts to defuse resource-related conflict. In October, as part of the 2nd Israeli-Palestinian Conference on Water, the Institute will cosponsor "The Spirit and Science of Water: Sharing Across Boundaries," to explore how to move from conflict to cooperation in water negotiations.

Carnegie, Oregon State, and the Pacific Institute will also work on an expanded and reorganized Water Conflict Chronology, and a Water and Conflict Bibliography, which will both be available as searchable databases. Our current Water Conflict Chronology is available online: <http://worldwater.org/conflictIntro.htm>

+ **Sustainable Agriculture:** Building on the successful release of “Healthy, Fair, and Profitable,” which mapped a path to reduce the use of dangerous pesticides in agriculture, the Pacific Institute is working on a follow-up report that looks at how we can accelerate the transition to low-pesticide farming practices. Sustainable agriculture benefits the environment, workers, consumers, and the farm economy.

“Healthy, Fair, and Profitable” is available online without charge:

<http://www.pacinst.org/reports/pesticide.htm>

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