



SPECIAL INITIATIVE COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

Wise decision-making depends on use of an ever-growing pool of data, information and knowledge. Access is critical; nevertheless, decision-makers often find the resources to be inaccessible, absent or simply hidden.

Eye on Earth (EoE) converges initiatives that address the challenges of increasing access to environmental, societal, and economic information. More specifically, EoE is facilitating the global convergence of world class thinkers, actors and capacity builders with a focus on resolving data and information gaps, blockages and needs as required for more effective decision-making towards sustainable development.

In December 2011, under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), convened global leaders, innovators and decision-makers to the inaugural EoE Summit. Delegates committed to a suite of outcomes, including the EoE Summit Declaration and Eight (8) Special Initiatives (SIs). The SIs address major environmental issues and are categorized into five thematic and three foundational initiatives. Among the thematic initiatives is the Eye on Community Sustainability and Resiliency SIs.

In 2012, EAD, through the Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative (AGEDI), and UNEP established a Secretariat to support and facilitate the aims of EoE through the SIs. Each Initiative is comprised of stakeholders that form a global community of practice. Together, the SIs represent a major portion of the EoE community. Stakeholders are actively engaged in moving initiatives forward through exemplary projects that demonstrate the guiding principles of the EoE Summit Declaration.

THE EYE ON COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY SPECIAL INITIATIVE

The CSR SI has developed an international forum/community of practice linking practitioners and policy makers, who focus on urban and peri-urban development with projects and activities within the broad topic of sustainability and resiliency. The forum, creating a network of people and urban systems, facilitates the sharing of urban information, concepts, tools, challenges and solutions for greatest positive impact.

This initiative focuses on developing a framework for the collection and sharing of urban environmental and societal data, information and tools for medium-sized and large cities on various geographical scales – local, national and regional-so that consideration can be given early in the process of urban development or urban change to factors that affect vulnerability or that ensure resiliency. The framework provides a mechanism for sharing existing urban networks and databases as a way of reducing the effort and cost associated with data collection and as a stimulus for promoting information and tool sharing.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Within the next 5 years, the CSR SI will be striving to achieve the following outcomes:

- Building and providing access to a common knowledge platform for sharing the outputs of on-going urban sustainability and resiliency programs and for the benefit of urban managers and citizens.
- Connecting urban practitioners and researchers, both North-South (N-S) and South-South (S-S), in order to facilitate discussions on urban problems and solutions, as well as data and information sharing.
- Increasing the capacity of urban professionals and civil society to use available urban geospatial data, geospatial technology, and management tools through training workshops, materials and enhanced public outreach.
- Provide value propositions to policy makers who must support urban planning tools and staff investments.

EXPECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

To achieve the expected outcomes listed above, the Eye on CSR SI is working on the following outputs:

- Develop a framework for constructing the urban environmental baseline required to facilitate analysis and support planning on a variety of scales through the creation of datasets and maps.
- Complete the pilot project that focuses on the Lake Victoria Region in East Africa where baseline environmental data for fifteen urban areas are being collected. Share the lessons learned from this pilot with other regions in Africa, and beyond.

- Link the CSR framework to other urban networks and datasets in order to share best practices and information.
- Provide training and materials to local urban management professionals in the use of data and mapping techniques.
- Work with local universities to increase the number of urban planning professionals in targeted regions, and provide support to local governments who are short of staff.
- Sponsor focused workshops where regional urban professionals can meet to exchange ideas and best practices on ways to use the data that is available to them to make urban areas more sustainable.

SPECIAL INITIATIVE PROJECTS & LEAD STAKEHOLDERS

The following project has been selected for seed funding by AGEDI:

- Geoinformation for Sustainable Urban Management and Resilience (GeoSUMR) – Association of American Geographers
- Ecocitizen World Map - building EcoCities – EcoCity Builders.

In addition, several projects affiliated or proposed through the SI process will continue to be followed, supported and aligned:

- ARISE – Accelerating Resilient Investment in Sustainable Economies– John Hopkins University.
- Geospatial Sciences for Sustainable Development in Africa (GSSDA) – AAG.
- UN Habitat Sustainable Urban Development Network (SUD-Net) – UN HABITAT.
- Medeem.
- World Bank Urban Knowledge Platform – World Bank.

STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

Nearly forty stakeholders have engaged this Special Initiative. They include governmental organizations, NGOs, private firms, and other interested organizations. Stakeholders include: EAD, AGEDI, UNEP, World Bank, Economic and Social Research Institute (Esri), Manila Observatory, US Department of State, AAG, Ecocity Builders, UN Habitat, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), Ushahidi, Siemens, Masdar, US Green Building Council, Environmental Information Systems (EIS), Africa and Johns Hopkins University.

By participating in the SIs, your organisation can play a key role in helping us to achieve ‘best-impact’ from the SI programme. Through your support, you can play a leadership role in the provision of environmental and societal data and information to address the most critical issues of our time.

It is only with your help that we can collaborate to bridge the data and information gap between developing and developed countries, and build a more sustainable future founded on informed decision-making based on access to environmental and societal data and information by all of those who need it.

With the common vision of EoE you are offered a unique opportunity to support projects that have already been embraced by the international community, and highlight your distinction as an environmental leader in your chosen SI area of interest.

For further information, please contact the EoE SIs team at eoecommunity@ead.ae

WHAT IS A SPECIAL INITIATIVE?

A critical objective of the EoE Summit was to ensure that **compelling, specific, achievable outcomes** translate the principles of the Summit to **tangible commitments and actions**. The chosen eight initiatives are those considered by the EoE Community to fundamentally improve the landscape of environmental and societal information networking for the benefit of mankind, and from which compelling, tangible results can be achieved over the next 2-5 years.

BE PART OF THE EYE ON EARTH COMMUNITY

To find out more on which SI best aligns with your own environmental programme interests and how you can become an active participant, email us at eoecommunity@ead.ae or visit www.eoesummit.org

Join us and share your commitment to the SIs or keep up to date with our latest events and news through **Facebook/EyeonEarthSummit**.

OTHER 7 SPECIAL INITIATIVES:

- Eye on Access for All
- Eye on Biodiversity
- Eye on Disaster Management
- Eye on Environmental Education
- Eye on Global Network of Networks
- Eye on Oceans & Blue Carbon
- Eye on Water Security



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