Environment Agency – ABU DHABI

UNEP

AGEDI
Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative

SPECIAL INITIATIVE
GLOBAL NETWORK OF NETWORKS

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. With the shared knowldge and understanding of the EoE Community, 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 foundational initiatives is the Eye on Global Network of Networks (GNON) SI.

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 GLOBAL NETWORK OF NETWORKS SPECIAL INITIATIVE

By joining existing and emerging information networks and encouraging innovative approaches to data, information and knowledge sharing, GNON provides fundamental value and support to the EoE process and provides foundational and cross-cutting support for the other initiatives. The plan is to implement GNON in 3-5 years, with well-defined short, medium and long-term objectives and outcomes.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

• In the short-term: UNEP-Live and in particular its National Reporting Toolkit (NRT) component. Reporting under the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) (support to InforMEA)

• In the medium-term: GNON must demonstrate how it can support all the SIs and identify desirable actions and projects to address the gaps and needs identified in the network overview. For demonstration purposes, activities could be focused on a few specific areas, e.g., the Access for All (A4A) SI, Disaster Management SI and Water Security SI.

• In the long term: GNON should deliver actual support and value added to all the thematic SIs, regional Environmental Information Networks (EIN) and link to communities of practices in related geosciences, earth observation and assessment areas.

EXPECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Support UNEP-Live and in particular its NRT component by
• Demonstrating (under the aegis of the EAD and UNEP) an early version of the country-level NRT, using the A4A SI leverage in the triad: governance, access and data.
• Demonstrating early versions of the NRT for thematic realms (e.g. water quality and biodiversity assessment to support Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)).
2. Support reporting under MEAs (InforMEA) by:
• Demonstrating that InforMEA can deliver enhanced and enriched information services through GNON-mediated access to relevant third-party information, shared tools and networking experience.
• Thereafter continuously revising and re-publishing the overview.
3. Support the development of the Eye on Earth Geospatial Platform by:
• Recruiting key networks and partners to make direct contributions to diversify existing content both geographically and thematically.

4. Support the A4A SI by:
- Demonstrating that GNON principles and practices can lead to improvements in local, national, regional and global sustainable development governance.
5. Support the Eye on Water Security SI by:
- Demonstrating and documenting in one region that GNON principles and practices have increased accessibility to and application of data and information content from trans-boundary sources as a step towards enhancing collective water security.

Long-term Aspirations for GNON are to:
- Promote the development of core common content to improve relevancy for key stakeholders.
- Bind the thematic SIs together (important e.g. for Integrated Assessment), while at the same time recognizing and respecting their diversity and need for flexibility.
- Demonstrate a series of regional environmental information networks delivering content able to be integrated and synthesized into global products.

SPECIAL INITIATIVE PROJECTS

The projects listed below are already on-going projects (previously funded or newly funded through the SI process), in need of additional funding, or proposed projects requesting funding:
- GeoSUR Regional Network – CAF Latin American Development Bank.
- The Africa Environment Information Network (AEIN) - UNEP.
- UNEP Live - UNEP.
- Eye on Earth Geospatial Platform – European Environment Agency.
- NRT – EAD/AGEDI/UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Center (WCMC).
- Multilingual Environmental Database on Emergency Aid (MEDEA) – International Center for Environmental Research.
- Foundations for Integrating Environmental Information - Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Information International Associates (IIA), UNEP.
- Scalable Knowledge Networks - International Council for Science (ICSU).

STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

Nearly seventy stakeholders have engaged in this Special Initiative. They include governmental organizations, NGOs, private firms, and other interested organizations. Stakeholders include: AGEDI, UNEP, European Environment Agency (EEA), CSIRO, Latin American Development Bank, IEEE, United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Economic and Social Research Institute (Esri), South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON).

By participating in the Special Initiatives process and sharing the common vision of Eye on Earth:

You can play a key role in a global collaboration that addresses the need for data, information, and knowledge that underlies the most critical societal and environmental issues of our time.

You can help build the organizational arrangements, common data and technical infrastructure across developed and developing nations.

You are offered a unique opportunity to support and participate in projects that are endorsed by the international community, highlighting your distinction as an environmental leader in your chosen Special Initiatives.

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

OTHER 7 SPECIAL INITATIVES:

- Eye on Access for All
- Eye on Biodiversity
- Eye on Community Sustainability & Resiliency
- Eye on Disaster Management
- Eye on Global Network of Networks
- Eye on Oceans & Blue Carbon
- Eye on Water Security

www.eoesummit.org