



# SPECIAL INITIATIVE WATER SECURITY

Wise decision-making depends on the 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) facilitates the convergence of world class thinkers, actors and capacity builders from every part of the globe. They focus on resolving data and information gaps and blockages and on meeting the needs of decision-makers, scientists, and the public for environmental, economic, and societal information.

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 knowledge 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. Eye on Water Security is among the thematic initiatives.

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 WATER SECURITY SPECIAL INITIATIVE

This initiative addresses challenging issues. The domain of water security encounters political reluctance to share data and information, which might be considered to document vulnerabilities. There is a lack of collaborative organizational arrangements, common data, and interoperable technology to support water data and information collection and use. In addition, capacity to collect water information is undermined by a lack of resources and the lack of expertise to collect, analyze and interpret water data. This leads to a gap in capacity for generating reliable, adequate data and information to support scientific study, policy analysis, decision-making, or public information.

Eye on Water Security proposes to demonstrate practical means for addressing these and other challenges. Eye on Water Security SI stakeholders strive to meet the challenges by strengthening technical and organizational foundations through inter-linkages with other SIs such as Eye on Global Network of Networks (GNON), Eye on Access for All, and Eye on Biodiversity.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Engendering a culture of sharing information on water.
- Improved capacity for data collection and analysis resulting in improved decision making on water security, with a specific focus on regions with developing economies and/or developing information management systems.
- Improved contribution of data to existing networks such as Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS)/Water.
- Informed science and policy dialogue based on sound information on water security.

## EXPECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

- A partnership between national and international institutions addressing data on water management and their related ecosystems for sharing information on water involving different water users from various regions.
- A network of decision makers and practitioners in water management that promotes the development of collaborative activities e.g. preparing global water quality assessment reports in addition to sharing data on water quality, quantity and related ecosystems.
- A science-policy platform addressing information collection, analysis and sharing for water security e.g. protocols for data collection.
- A programme to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to collect, analyze and use the information in decision making.

## SPECIAL INITIATIVE PROJECTS & LEAD STAKEHOLDERS

The following projects are affiliated or proposed through the SI process:

- Water components of UNEP Live - UNEP, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), Information International Associates (IIA) (Joint project with GNON).
- National Reporting Toolkit (NRT) - UNEP, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), IEEE, IIA (Joint project with GNON).
- Water Data and Information Challenges and Future Needs for Sustainable Development - collaborative project.

## STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

Nearly forty stakeholders have engaged this SI. They include governmental organizations, NGOs, private firms, and other interested organizations. Stakeholders include: AGEDI, UNEP, CSIRO, Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), IEEE, United States Environment Protection Agency (USEPA), Economic and Social Research Institute (Esri), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC)/ India Musokotwane Environment Resource Centre for Southern Africa (IMERCSA), IIA, Arabian Gulf University (AGU).

By participating in the SI process and sharing the common vision of EoE:

You can play a role in a global collaboration that addresses the need for data, information, and knowledge that underlie 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 SI.

For further information, please contact the EoE SIs team at [eoecommunity@ead.ae](mailto: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](mailto:eoecommunity@ead.ae)

or visit [www.eoesummit.org](http://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 Community Sustainability & Resiliency
- Eye on Disaster Management
- Eye on Environmental Education
- Eye on Global Network of Networks
- Eye on Oceans & Blue Carbon



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