



Eye on Earth Summit Bulletin



A Daily Report of the Eye on Earth Summit 2015

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EYE ON EARTH SUMMIT: 6-8 OCTOBER 2015

The second Eye on Earth Summit (Eye on Earth 2015), themed 'Informed Decision-making for Sustainable Development,' opens on Tuesday, 6 October 2015, in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and will continue through Thursday, 8 October 2015. Through dialogue, collaboration and network building, the Summit will strive to spark international action that will transform the collection, access, sharing and use of data and information in support of sustainable development.

Eye on Earth 2015 is organized across three themes: data demand (Tuesday); data supply (Wednesday); and enabling activities (Thursday). Under data demand, topics will include data acquisition and management, optimizing data use through effective communication and visualization, and current data requirements. Data supply discussions will consider: availability of and access to environmental, social and economic data; knowledge sharing and open access data; and information gathering through crowd sourcing and citizen science. The legal, financial and technological institutions and capacities that facilitate data availability, access and sharing will be examined under the enabling activities theme.

Each day participants will explore these issues and other data-related challenges and solutions through focused panel discussions and break-out groups.

High-level presentations will also be convened on: data revolution and institutional transformation; data revolution-data supply side; reaching audiences through innovations in visualization; creating the enabling environment; and cutting-edge applications.

A number of launch events will be held throughout the three-day event. Various international organizations will be introducing innovative concepts and new tools, such as online portals and

platforms, websites, indices and maps. Side events will also take place in parallel to the main Summit, creating additional space for in-depth discussion on the latest innovations in delivering data for informed sustainable development decision making.

The Summit's main outcome will be the identification of solutions for greater access to, and sharing of, data, providing policymakers with timely, actionable information for the critical decisions that will implement the post-2015 development agenda. Participants will consider opportunities for Eye on Earth to support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the role of data integration in effectively monitoring SDG implementation.

Hosted by H.E. Razan Al Mubarak, Secretary-General of the Environment Agency, Abu Dhabi (EAD), the Summit is being overseen by the Eye on Earth Alliance, a collaboration among five core organizations, namely EAD's Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative (AGEDI), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the World Resources Institute (WRI), and many partners.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF EYE ON EARTH AND RELATED PROCESSES

Barriers, such as limited monitoring and data collection initiatives, lack of coordination among data providers, cost of accessing data sets, and the cost of technology to process and use data, can result in inaccurate and ineffective decision making and policy implementation. Failure to overcome these barriers may result in the loss of valuable environmental assets and resources, particularly in emerging economies.

Concerned that many scientists, policymakers and private citizens must rely on limited and poorly presented environmental data and information as they set out to tackle challenges such as

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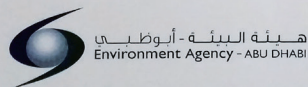


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Eye on Earth Summit 2015

6-8 October, 2015
Abu Dhabi, UAE



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<http://enb.iisd.mobi/>

water scarcity, food security and climate change, AGEDI, in partnership with UNEP, initiated the Eye on Earth process in 2011.

Eye on Earth aims to mitigate the paucity of environmental data and the lack of adequate technology to process and use data, which hinder sustainable development, particularly in developing countries. The initiative convenes thought and action leaders and organizations from around the world to “converge on key issues to reach consensus on solutions to greater data accessibility” and “collaborate to strengthen existing initiatives and where necessary, launch new ones.”

The inaugural Eye on Earth Summit (Eye on Earth 2011) convened in the lead up to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20) that was held in June 2012. UNCSD marked the 40th anniversary of the first major international political conference that specifically had the word “environment” in its title (UN Conference on the Human Environment), the 20th anniversary of the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED or Earth Summit), and the 10th anniversary of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

AGEDI: AGEDI was launched on 2 September 2002 at WSSD, in response to the lack of quantifiable environmental data and to address the UAE’s concern about the approach and criteria used for the results of the Environmental Sustainability Index (ESI), produced by the World Economic Forum in February 2002.

AGEDI works with partners, members and stakeholders throughout the world to achieve a more sustainable future through “best-impact” access to environmental and societal data. Focusing on support to developing countries and emerging economies, AGEDI’s current scope includes: monitoring and enabling effective data access and availability across worldwide environmental and societal information networking movements; identifying data needs; determining strategies for data access, acquisition and dissemination; implementing projects which address specific data, information and knowledge product needs; enabling and facilitating local, regional and global participation in, and support of, an active network of thought and action leaders; and ensuring capability and capacity building of developing countries and emerging economies to support “best-impact” access and application of data and information for decision making.

EYE ON EARTH 2011: The first Eye on Earth Summit convened in December 2011, and was facilitated by AGEDI to strengthen existing efforts and inspire a search for unified, global solutions to the issues that preclude access to data. The resulting Eye on Earth Summit Declaration, with its 14 guiding principles, was adopted and forwarded to

UNCSD for consideration. The Declaration, endorsed by 48 countries, agrees to advance Eye on Earth collaboration on, *inter alia*: a cooperation agenda involving a diverse range of stakeholders; effective mechanisms for collecting, managing and disseminating necessary environmental information; and public access to environmental information.

Five thematic and three foundation Special Initiatives (SIs) were launched at the Summit. The eight SIs, which form the work programme of Eye on Earth, are: Eye on Access for All; Eye on Environmental Education; Eye on Global Network of Networks; Eye on Biodiversity; Eye on Community Sustainability & Resiliency; Eye on Disaster Management; Eye on Oceans & Blue Carbon; and Eye on Water Security.

UNCSD: At Rio+20 in 2012, the international community gathered in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and agreed to launch a process to develop a set of SDGs, the cornerstone of the post-2015 development agenda. The UN General Assembly (UNGA) endorsed the outcome document, titled ‘The Future We Want,’ on 27 July 2012.

ELEVENTH PLENARY SESSION OF THE GROUP ON EARTH OBSERVATIONS (GEO-XI): This meeting convened from 13-14 November 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland. GEO is a voluntary partnership consisting of Members and Participating Organizations that are coordinating efforts to build the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS). GEOSS seeks to link existing and planned observing systems around the world, and support the development of new systems where gaps currently exist, with a view to providing key data to assist decision makers, planners and emergency managers in nine “Societal Benefit Areas” (SBAs), namely: disasters, health, energy, climate, water, weather, ecosystems, agriculture and biodiversity.

At GEO-XI, the GEO, *inter alia*: discussed the 2016-2025 Implementation Plan; extended the mandate of the Data Management Task Force by one year to develop the Implementation Guidelines for GEOSS Data Management Principles; and considered the ‘Report on Data Sharing Principles Post-2015 and Mechanisms to Ensure Legal Interoperability of Shared Data.’

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT: On 25 September 2015, the UNGA adopted the post-2015 development agenda, comprising several elements: a preamble; a declaration; 17 SDGs and 169 supporting targets; means of implementation (MOI) and the Global Partnership; and a framework for follow-up and review of implementation. This agenda, titled ‘Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,’ was developed by UN Member States during negotiations that stretched from March 2013 to August 2015.



Eye on Earth Summit 2015
6 - 8 October 2015
Abu Dhabi, UAE
INFORMED DECISION-MAKING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1 Global Challenge 3 Days 8 Special Initiatives 650 Delegates

Data Demand

- Data acquisition and management
- How data can be communicated and visualised
- Current data requirements
- Challenges and solutions

Data Supply

- Availability of and access to environmental, societal and economic data
- Innovations in knowledge sharing and open access data
- Importance of crowd sourcing and citizen science

Enabling Conditions

- The necessary legal, financial and technological frameworks required to facilitate better sharing and access to data.

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Keynote Speakers:

<p>Razan Al Mubarak Executive Director, Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD)</p> 	<p>Achim Steiner Executive Director, UNEP and Under-Secretary General of the UN</p> 	<p>Ingar Anderson Director General, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)</p> 	<p>Barbara J. Ryan Director, Global Earth Observations (GEO)</p> 	<p>Janet Ranganathan Vice President, Science and Research, World Resources Institute (WRI)</p> 
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