



Regional Meeting on Experiences & Best Practices in  
Environmental Information Development and Management  
in West Asia, 9 – 10 January 2005  
Abu Dhabi - UAE

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## Regional Study **Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative**

### **Terms of Reference**

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## **Terms of Reference**

### **Regional Study**

#### **Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative (AGEDI)**

These terms of reference are for the experts who are contributing to the regional study for Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative.

The objective of the study is to collect information and prepare national and regional reports on the experiences, best practices and status of environmental data and information systems in West Asia. The information produced will be integrated into a regional report, which will in turn be integrated with a global report to be used in guiding the development and implementation of AGEDI. It would also be used to develop a regional strategy for environmental information in West Asia.

It also aims at establishing a base for regional partnership and networking for environmental data and information, using the experts and the institutions involved in the study as a pool of resources to strengthen and build the capacity of the region in data and information management in support of decision making bearing on sustainable development.

The terms of reference have four tasks:

- 1- Answer a set of questions/inquires given in task 1. These are the general and collective information at country or regional level.
- 2- Provide the information requested in task 2. This information is requested for each national or regional initiative, programme, project, or network, in your institution, country or region as applicable to your case.
- 3- Prepare a report according to the outline in task 3.
- 4- Attend a regional meeting to be held in the last quarter of 2004, exact dates will be determined later. You will present your study, and contribute to the discussions on best practices, lesson learned and the regional strategy for environmental information to be undertaken by AGEDI and UNEP. UNEP will cover the expenses of your participation in this meeting.

**Note:**

- Expert nominated by their countries are to provide the information relevant to the country level.
- Expert nominated by key partner institutions are to provide information relevant to their institution experience both internally and as a part of national efforts.
- Regional organizations and institutions are to provide information on their institution experience internally and within the regional and global framework.

You may arrange for interviews with relevant experts or officials in key environmental institutions in your country (region) to collect the information needed, using the support of the organization, which nominated you.

## **TASK-1**

Please answer the following questions:

**What are the focus areas for environmental data and information in your institution/ country, or region (as applicable to your case)?**

**What is the environmental information needs common across stakeholder groups in your country (region)?**

**Is there a national (regional) environmental information system, initiative, programme, project, etc., that address those needs? When it started and when it will be completed?, who is overseeing it?**

**What are the strengths and weaknesses of current public information systems and services provided in your country (region)?**

**What are the preferred information acquisition methods? Internet, CDs, printed materials, etc.**

**What are the constraints and barriers to access environmental information in your country (region)?**

Is there a national (regional) programme or project on environmental indicators? Please provide titles, starting and ending dates, thematic areas covered, indicate whether it has been successful and why?

Are there any monitoring programmes (national or regional) aiming at collecting data and filling in data gaps, what are the thematic areas covered?

Does your country (region) produce state of environment (environment outlook) reports? Please give dates produced; what are the information sources being used in producing this report?

Please give recommendation to improve public access to environmental data at the local, national and regional levels (address the following aspects: policy, institutional, technical, financial, sustainability).

## TASK-2

Please identify and provide information on initiatives, programmes, projects, systems, or networks on environmental data and information. You need to give the experience of your own organization too.

For each one, please provide the following:

1. Name:
2. Lead agency:
3. Purpose, aims, objectives:
4. Users:
5. Methods - a description of the work done.
6. Appropriateness of the approach.
7. Institutional capacity.
8. Outcomes and benefits expected or achieved.
9. Results (impact).
10. Effectiveness and efficiency:
11. Discussion on the results in relation to the intensions.
12. Lessons learned and experiences

## TASK- 3

Please synthesize all the information you collected and prepare a 12-15 page report according to the following outline.

Please use font 12, Times New Roman, single-spaced, with one inch margins all around. All documents have to be provided in digital format, Microsoft Word.

### Outline:

- 1- Title.
- 2- Executive summary (no longer than one page, shorter is preferable)
- 3- Introduction and background
- 4- Methodological approach.
- 5- Status of environmental data and information.
  - a. Analysis of existing initiatives, programmes, projects, systems, and networks.
  - b. Data and information availability (collectively, sectoral and thematic)
  - c. Public Access.
  - d. Information policy and legislations.
  - e. Institutional capacity for managing environmental data and information.
  - f. Financing of environmental data and information.
- 6- Effectiveness and efficiency of current information systems (include strengths and weaknesses).
- 7- Constraints and barriers to manage and improve availability and accessibility of environmental data and information.
- 8- Assessment of general requirements:
  - a. Environmental priority issues.
  - b. Priority environmental information needs of various groups (stakeholders) to support decision-making.
  - c. Technological needs
  - d. Institutional needs (including training and finance)
- 9- Regional and international cooperation (including UNEP and other UN agencies).
- 10- Opportunities for the future.
- 11- Lessons learned and experiences.
- 12- Recommendations of priorities for action. Please consider the following:
  - a. Policy.
  - b. Institutional.
  - c. Technical.

- d. Financial.
  - e. Sustainability.
13. References

### **Appendix 1**

List of agencies and person interviewed (if any).

### **Appendix 2**

List of conventions used.