



NAIROBI CONVENTION CLEARINGHOUSE AND INFORMATION SHARING SYSTEM

E-NEWSLETTER

ENHANCING SHARING, EXCHANGE AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN REGION

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NATIONAL COASTAL AND MARINE CLEARINGHOUSES GO ONLINE

The Nairobi Convention clearinghouse and information sharing system has begun to realize its goal of improving the coordination and participation of the Western Indian Ocean countries in the management of their coastal and marine resources. The countries have progressed in the establishment of the national clearinghouses in Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles and Tanzania.

Through the United Nations

Environment Programme, the countries have high performance servers which are hosted at designated national institutions. Currently, three trial versions of the national clearinghouse are online and accessible at <http://www.kmfri.co.ke/portal>, <http://tanzaniagpt.ims.udsm.ac.tz/Portal> and <http://mauritiusgpt.dynds.org> for Kenya, Tanzania and Mauritius respectively.

The main services of the national clearinghouses are acquisition of data and making it available over the internet, along with mechanisms for search of data. Data in the national clearinghouses will satisfy the needs of local communities and build the growing Western Indian Ocean information society. Consequently,

the main customer of these products and the beneficiaries of the national clearinghouses are the contracting states to the Nairobi Convention, through their local and central governments (policy makers, policy implementers, coastal and marine resource managers), environmental practitioners, academia and researchers. Other major potential users include non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

Online clearinghouses

Kenya

www.kmfri.co.ke/portal

Tanzania

tanzaniagpt.ims.udsm.ac.tz/Portal/

Mauritius

Mauritiusgpt.dynds.org



Tanzania national clearinghouse portal

and community-based organizations, UNEP, UN agencies and the donor community.

The national clearinghouse portals offers data, metadata records, geospatial mapping, and data management functions. Data and information in the national clearinghouses continues to be populated with key marine and coastal issues including:

- Biodiversity of critical ecosystems and habitats
- Climate change and mitigation related issues
- Environmental disasters and hazards
- Resource use and production
- Policies, agreements, acts and legislation pertinent to the coastal environment
- Harmful substances and hazardous waste
- Socio-economic data
- Pollutant source categories
- Tools and best practices to support resource management and policies.

The clearinghouse architecture is based on international standards which assures its interoperability and orientation towards implementing standards complying web services. The web solution allows for multi-access of data at local level, with the capabilities of data visualization, integration, verification and modification. With additional customization, the national coastal clearinghouses will offer data analysis for use in assessment and environmental alerts, enable geospatial analysis including data conversion to and from various formats, and visualization at national and regional level.

The regional clearinghouse available at <http://gridnairobi.unep.org/CHMPortal> depicts both national and regional synthesis of data and information on coastal and marine environment of the Western Indian Ocean region. It's an information service providing accurate and relevant data and information that supports regional assessment and

provides several strategic options for improved management and protection of the coastal and marine environment in the Eastern Africa region.

The Nairobi Convention clearinghouse is implemented by UNEP through the Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA), the Nairobi Convention Secretariat, the UNEP/GEF WIO-LaB project on Addressing Land-based Activities in the Western Indian Ocean, and Government designated institutions in Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa and Tanzania.

The clearinghouse responds to Decision 4/8 (July 2004) of the Nairobi Convention fourth Conference of Parties. Under decision 4/8, governments requested for the establishment of an information system to meet the needs of the Governments in implementing the Eastern African Action Plan ◀

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS AWARD

The recently held 28th International Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) User Conference in San Diego (4-8 June 2008) awarded UNEP with a Special Achievement in GIS Award in recognition of its contribution to GIS development in Africa, more so in the Western Indian Ocean countries of Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles and Tanzania where coastal clearinghouses are being implemented.

In the Conference UNEP showcased the success story of the

Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse. UNEP and ESRI discussed the possibilities of future collaborations in the development of the Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse and collaboration in geographic information capacity development in Africa. UNEP was represented by Messrs Johannes

Akiwumi and James Osundwa of the Division of Early Warning and Assessment.

In another meeting facilitated by the Bill Gates Foundation, UN agencies present in the Conference discussed in detail on how to stimulate the national intake of geographic information in developing countries. ◀



Award of special achievement

PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NAIROBI CONVENTION NATIONAL COASTAL CLEARINGHOUSE MECHANISM (AS AT AUGUST 2008)

ACTIVITY	COUNTRY							
	Comoros	Kenya	Madagascar	Mauritius	Mozambique	Seychelles	Tanzania	S Africa
Nomination of lead agency	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	(x)*
Nomination of country coordinator	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Signing of Agreement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Acquisition of Server	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
National working group constituted	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Project planning meeting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
1st review meeting on data collection	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2nd review meeting on data quality	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
3rd review meeting on gap analysis	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Training & data uploading	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
CHM online version (URL)		✓		✓			✓	
Outreach and launches	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	

(X)* awaiting nomination. Previous nominated agency requested substitution based on expertise available

BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATES WITH THE NAIROBI CONVENTION

The Nairobi Convention for the protection, management and development of the marine and coastal environment of the Eastern African region has initiated a process of partnership with BirdLife International to populate the list of the bird's species listed in the Convention Protocol on protected areas and wild fauna and flora in the Eastern Africa.

In a startup meeting held early July 2008 the parties agreed to develop a database of bird species on the protocol. The database would be linked to the Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse, through the adaptive framework initiative developed by BirdLife International.

The collaboration will help develop policy briefs on protected wild fauna and flora with particular focus on bird species. This will enable the Convention support ecosystem based management of the coastal and marine environment, using birds as indicators of ecosystem health.

Birds are ideal for use as indicators of biological integrity since their presence or absence tends to represent conditions pertaining to the proper functioning of an ecosystem. Marine birds are sensitive indicators of the condition of marine ecosystems because they are affected by changes in the many levels of the marine food web.

BirdLife International is a global partnership of conservation

organizations that work together on shared priorities, policies and programmes of conservation with special focus on birds. The partnership is represented in more than 106 countries with 100 autonomous organizations.

In support of partnership activities, BirdLife has developed a world bird database on information management tools to manage, analyze and report on the scientific knowledge of bird species, important bird areas and their habitats.

BirdLife International also works to improve people's awareness about birds surrounding them through initiatives such as the World Bird Festival.

For more information visit the <http://www.birdlife.org> ◀

NAIROBI CONVENTION CLEARINGHOUSE TRAINING WORKSHOP HELD

The Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse convened a ten day workshop from 26 November to 5 December 2007, in Nairobi to build, customize and populate the national clearinghouses with data collated by the national working groups.

The workshop was graciously opened by Mr. Dixon Waruinge the Programme Officer responsible for the Nairobi Convention. He informed of the mandate and roles of the Nairobi Convention in the development, management and protection of the coastal and marine environment of the Eastern and Southern Africa. He reiterated that the Clearinghouse was developed within the framework of the identified needs of Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention.

Mr Waruinge was accompanied by UNEP staff — Mr. Johannes Akiwumi, Programme Officer of the Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA), Mr. Peter Scheren, Manager of the UNEP/GEF Project “Addressing Land- Based Activities in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO-LaB), Mr. Willy Simons the Managing Director of

Institute (ESRI)— East Africa, Professor Timothy Waema, Consultant in Information Management and a lecturer of the University of Nairobi and Mr. Mwangi Theuri, the coordinator of the clearinghouse mechanism, Division of Early Warning and Assessment.

While highlighting the activities undertaken by DEWA, Mr. Johannes challenged the participants to accord the Clearinghouse project total commitment to realize its objectives at the national level.

Western Indian Ocean through the Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse mechanism.

Prof. Waema highlighted that fundamental information principles focus on purpose, accessibility, users and uses, and governance. He said the Clearinghouse mechanism will be judged by the usefulness of the data and information contained therein.

Prof. Waema urged the participants to join hands in a sustainability strategy of the clearinghouse beyond 2009 by encouraging



Mr. Willy Simons awarding a certificate to Mr. Nelson Lalande from Seychelles

Mr. Peter Scheren briefed the delegates on the linkages between the WIO-LaB Project, the Nairobi Convention and the UNEP/Global Programme of Action (GPA) for the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities in the field of data and information management for the

commitment and ownership by the national governments and focal institutions in order to facilitate tangible and visible benefit of the information system.

Mr. Willy Simons informed the participants on the partnership and support offered by ESRI to the Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse

and in particular the provision of software for geospatial analysis.

The 10 day regional workshop on data portal development and population was conducted by Mr. Thomas Ndegwa of Oakar Services, Nairobi, and UNEP staff — Mr. James Osundwa and Ms. Nancy Soi. The training enabled participants to fully appreciate the technical and functional capabilities of the Clearinghouse portal.

The workshop was attended by national participants from Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius,

Mozambique, Seychelles, Tanzania and the Kenya National Spatial Data Infrastructure (KNSDI).

Well-structured training manuals on the development of the coastal and marine clearinghouse portal were used during the course of the training coupled by hand-on experience in the preparation and uploading of data into the national portals. Participants were provided with high performance data servers which were later shipped to their respective national institutions.

After the highly successful training,

participants were issued with certificates by Mr. Willy Simons, the Managing Director of Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) East Africa.

The training enabled the participants to fully appreciate the technical and functional capabilities of the clearinghouse portal. They were to use the training to conduct national level training to the clearinghouse working group and be able to articulate the same to the members of their working groups. ◀

CONDOLENCES

The Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse learnt with deep sorrow the demise of a dear colleague and friend, Mr. Rakoto Rahetindralambo, Chief of Unit, Office National pour l'Environnement (ONE), Madagascar.



Mr. Rakoto Rabetindralambo

Until his death, Mr. Rakoto served diligently the Madagascar National Clearinghouse as the chief technical advisor in data and information at the Office National pour l'Environnement (ONE). The Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse extends to his family, National Office for Environment, Madagascar national clearinghouse team and friends God's comfort. May his soul rest in peace.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 27– 28th October 2008: Regional consultation on draft LBSA Protocol. Venue: Cape town, South Africa
- 29– 30th October 2008: Regional TDA/SAP stakeholders workshop. Venue: Cape town, South Africa
- 27 October -2nd November 2008: Training workshop on Ecosystem Approaches to coastal and ocean management: Focus on Ecosystem-Based Management in Eastern Africa. Venue: Mombasa, Kenya.

The e-newsletter of the Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse and Information Sharing system aims at informing stakeholders, national working groups, partners and all interested persons on the status of the clearinghouse activities.. Readers are encouraged to give comments on the newsletter and its effectiveness as a vehicle for information exchange. All communication should be directed to e-mail: dim.head@unep.org or mwangit@unep.org

The contents of this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of UNEP.

The Project staff of the Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse and information system within UNEP would like to thank the directors of the national lead collaborating agencies, the national coordinators and their working groups, partners and all well wishers for the success of the Clearinghouse this far. Your pro-active nature, commitment and support will ensure that the Western Indian Ocean region will realize the objective of the national coastal clearinghouses and facilitate practical experience in the sustainable development of our region

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