



**NAIROBI CONVENTION CLEARINGHOUSE AND
INFORMATION SHARING SYSTEM
E-NEWSLETTER**

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

January 2010 Vol.4 Issue

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MADAGASCAR ENVIRONMENT CLEARINGHOUSE LAUNCHED

The Madagascar Environment Clearinghouse Mechanism was officially launched on 25 September 2009 at Toamasina, Antananarivo, Madagascar. The National launch was held after a series of national training workshops on the development, use, and benefits of the clearinghouse which targeted the government officials, research institutions, NGOs, and other environmental partners. The environmental data and informational clearinghouse portal is available at <http://www.madagascarportal.org>

The launch was attended by a number of Government dignitaries that included the Director General of Meteorology Mr. Raelinera Nimbol, the Director General of the Ministry of Water Mr.

Randriamaherisoa Alain, and Ralison Paul Oliver, Directeur de l'Intégration des Dimensions Environnementales. Others included the Director General of Office National pour l'Environnement (ONE) Mr Rakotoary Jean Chrysostome, , Rasoavahiny Laurette, the national focal point for the Convention on Biological Diversity and Rabemananjara Dorothee

Chairman, Directeur Qualité et Communication, Office National pour l'Environnement (DQC/ONE).

Prior to the launch, a vigorous public awareness campaign was carried out through press releases, newspapers, Radio and TV from 23 September and continued in other towns up to 6 October 2009.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was represented in the launch by Dr. Peter Scheren, the Project Manager of UNEP/GEF WIO-LaB Project (Addressing Land-based Sources of Pollution in the Western Indian Ocean region). Describing the Madagascar environment Clearinghouse mechanism as a “one stop shop” in data

ONLINE PORTALS

- Kenya**
<http://www.kmfri.co.ke/portal>
- Tanzania**
<http://tanzaniagpt.ims.udsm.ac.tz/Portal/>
- Mauritius**
<http://Mauritiugpt.dyndns.org>
- Seychelles**
<http://seychellesgpt.sc/Portal/>
- Comoros**
<http://41.194.33.19/Portal/>
- Madagascar**
<http://madagascarportal.org>
- Mozambique**
<http://geoport.inahina.gov.mz>

Regional
<http://Gridnairobi.unep.org/CHMPortal/>



Delegates at the Madagascar Environment Clearinghouse at the National launch held at Toamasina, Antananarivo, Madagascar

and information Dr. Scheren urged the working group members to widen their network and train other partners to ensure ownership, maintenance and sustainability of the data and information in the clearinghouse. He urged the National Coordinator of the clearinghouse, Mr. Jean Roger Rakotoarijaona, to continue with the

public awareness campaigns for a wider coverage. Due to the tight schedule of activities while in Madagascar, Dr. Scheren's speech was read on his behalf by the National Coordinator of the Clearinghouse.

The National Coordinator informed the delegates that the

data and information contained in the Madagascar Environment Clearinghouse remains under the ownership and responsibility of the people of Madagascar. He stressed that the sustainability of the Clearinghouse will involve collaborative partnership with other national and regional initiatives.

NAIROBI CONVENTION CLEARINGHOUSE NATIONAL TRAINING — PROGRESS

KENYA

The Kenya coastal and marine environment clearinghouse mechanism (CHM) working group held their national training on 30 -31 July 2009 at the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Institute (KMFRI), Mombasa. The training was facilitated by the National clearinghouse coordinator, Mr. Harrison Ong'anda. The training focused on creation and updating of institutional profiles, metadata standards, creation of new channels, and use of channel editor to update information on the portal available at <http://www.kmfri.co.ke/portal/>.

The training was attended by representatives from more than 10 institutions. Participants requested for a mechanism to be established to reward the excellence observed among the working group members, and to provide technical assistance on software maintenance to cushion against technical turnover of the project team. The clearinghouse national coordinator promised to offer workable suggestions for future activities. The regional coordinator of the Clearinghouse project Mr. Mwangi Theuri (UNEP) attended the training.

SEYCHELLES

The Seychelles environment clearinghouse mechanism (CHM) working group held their second training workshop from 7-9 September 2009 at the Pollution Control and Environmental Impacts, Department of Environment, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Mahe, Seychelles. The training was

facilitated by the national CHM coordinator, Mr. Justin Prosper. UNEP's technical staff members James Osundwa and Esther Maina provided guidance during the training. 15 members from 7 different organizations were trained. Participants showed a keen interest in the development of their portal. The Seychelles clearinghouse portal is available at <http://seychellesgpt.sc/Portal/>.



Mozambique working group members at a training session at the Instituto Nacional de Hidrografia e Navegação (INAHINA), Mozambique

MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambique national CHM working group held their second training workshop on 24-27 November 2009 at the Instituto Nacional de Hidrografia e Navegação (INAHINA). The training was facilitated by the national CHM coordinator Ms. Ana Maria Alfredo. UNEP staff James Osundwa and Esther Maina conducted the training. Six participants were trained on the use of the channel editor, harvesting tool, creation of map services, metadata and data uploading. Participants also learnt how to add new web pages, portal customization and how to change the

look and feel of the portal.

The Mozambique environment clearinghouse portal is available at <http://geoportal.inahina.gov.mz>. Participants created a page counter, down time and uptime notification and a link to other national clearinghouse portals in the Western Indian Ocean.

MAURITIUS

The Mauritius CHM working group held their national data development and uploading workshop from 28 Sep - 2 October 2009 at the Mauritius Meteorological Services (MMS). The

training was facilitated by the national CHM coordinator Mr. Mohamadally Beebeejaun. UNEP staff James Osundwa and Esther Maina conducted the training. Participants showcased the enormous data held by their respective institutions.

The working group was trained on the technical architecture of the Clearinghouse, configuration of the Clearinghouse server enhancement of interoperability features, creating web Map Services, configuration of website monitoring and site statistics counter and setting up of a Backup

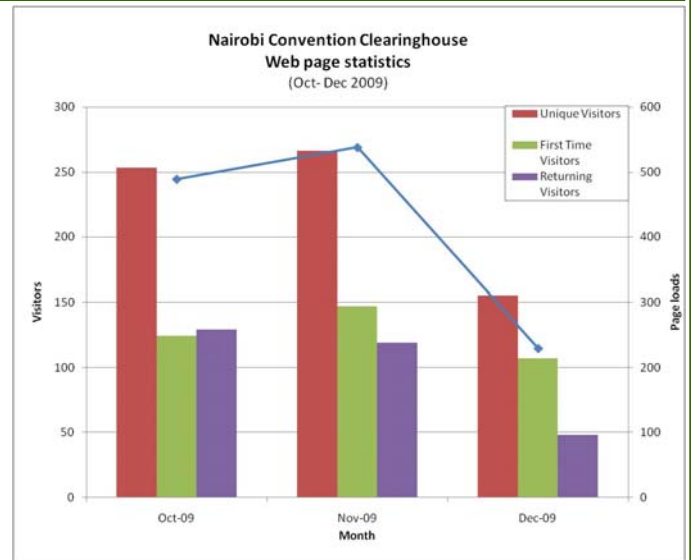
and Recovery system.

The national working group expressed the need for a government data exchange policy before they could make their organization's data available online at <http://mauritiusgpt.dyndns.org/Portal/index.jsp>. The Mauritius CHM Coordinator tasked the working group to follow-up with their institutions to agree to a data sharing policy that would enable them share more data on the Mauritius Environment portal.

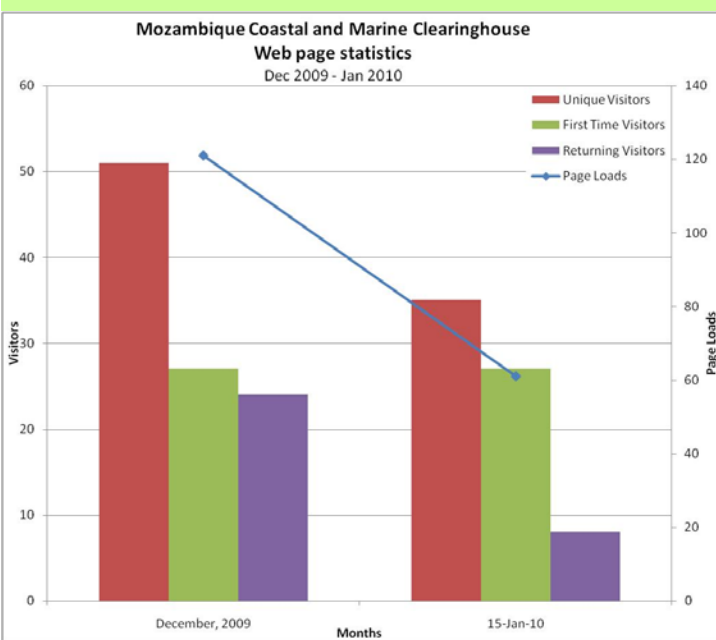
WEB PAGE STATISTICAL COUNTER

The Nairobi Convention clearinghouse and information sharing system has incorporated a statistical web counter to provide web usage the multiple national clearinghouse portals in the Western Indian Ocean region. The statistical web counter enables the server administrator and portal managers to monitor traffic into and out of the clearinghouse to that they can make better decisions about their portal.

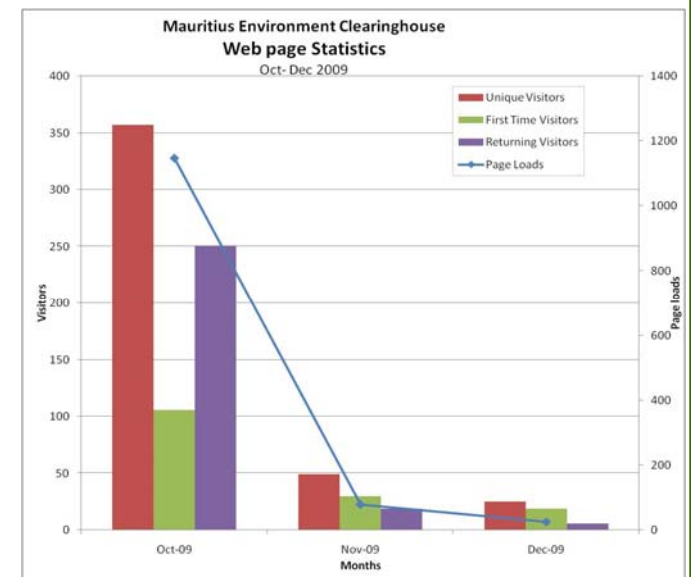
The statistical counter tracks the log-size and gives summary statistics of all page loads, unique, returning and first-time visitors in the portal, their geographical distribution, the pages they navigated, and the time they spent in the portal. The counter also ranks according to popularity the web browser and operating system the users used to navigate the portal.



Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse web Page Statistics (October to December 2009)



Mozambique Coastal and Marine Clearinghouse Web Page Statistics for December 2009 to January 2010



Mauritius Environment Clearinghouse Web Page Statistics for (October to December 2009)

CATALOGUE CAPABILITIES

The Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse and Information Sharing System has further strengthened its capabilities of being a “one stop shop” in coastal and marine data and information in the Western Indian Ocean through catalogue capabilities. The catalogue of web map services enables the user to easily view all web map services from different clearinghouse portals and display them in the online map viewer available on the portal. The user can either choose to view the map as a jpeg image or download as an extensible markup language (xml) file.

XML is a markup language for documents containing structured information such as words, pictures, etc. Structured information contains both content (words, pictures, etc.) and some indication of what role that content plays.

The screenshot displays the Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse and Information System interface. It features a navigation menu on the left with categories like 'Metadata Portal', 'Mapping Services', 'About This Site', 'Partners', 'Information and Publications', 'National Clearinghouse', 'Discussion Forum', and 'Contact Us!'. The main content area shows a list of mapping services for the GRID Nairobi Map Services, including 'MGMadagascar_Diana', 'MGMadagascar Administration Map', and 'MGMadagascar'. Each service entry includes a thumbnail map, a 'Download' button, and a 'View Map' button. The top navigation bar includes links for 'Nairobi Convention', 'DEWA', 'GEF Programme', 'GPA', 'Regional Seas', 'WIO LAB', and 'UNEP'.

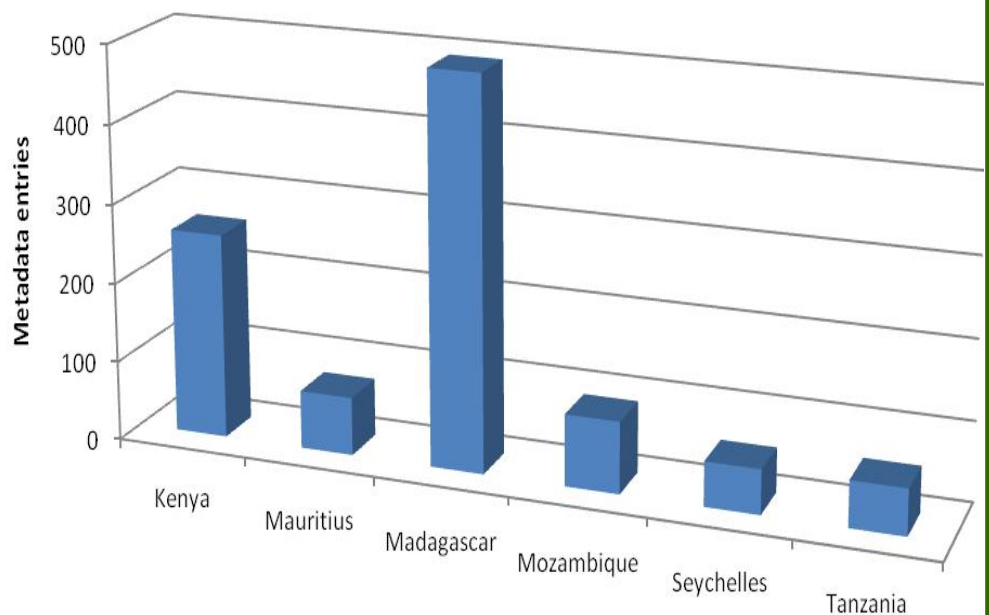
Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse catalogue web mapping capabilities

METADATA RECORDS

As a step towards being the main access point to geospatial and non spatial data in their country, the National Clearinghouse portals have steadily increased the data and metadata count in their portals. In a metadata statistical count carried out by the Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse, Madagascar Environment Clearinghouse had the highest metadata of 493 records, followed by Kenya Clearinghouse portal with 259 records. Mozambique, Mauritius, Tanzania and Seychelles National Clearinghouse portals had 90,73,58, and 56 records respectively. The Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse has 1790 records.

The Comoros National Portal was not included as the server was switched off due to frequent power cuts in Comoros.

Data and metadata records available in each National Clearinghouse



Metadata records available in each National Clearinghouse Portals

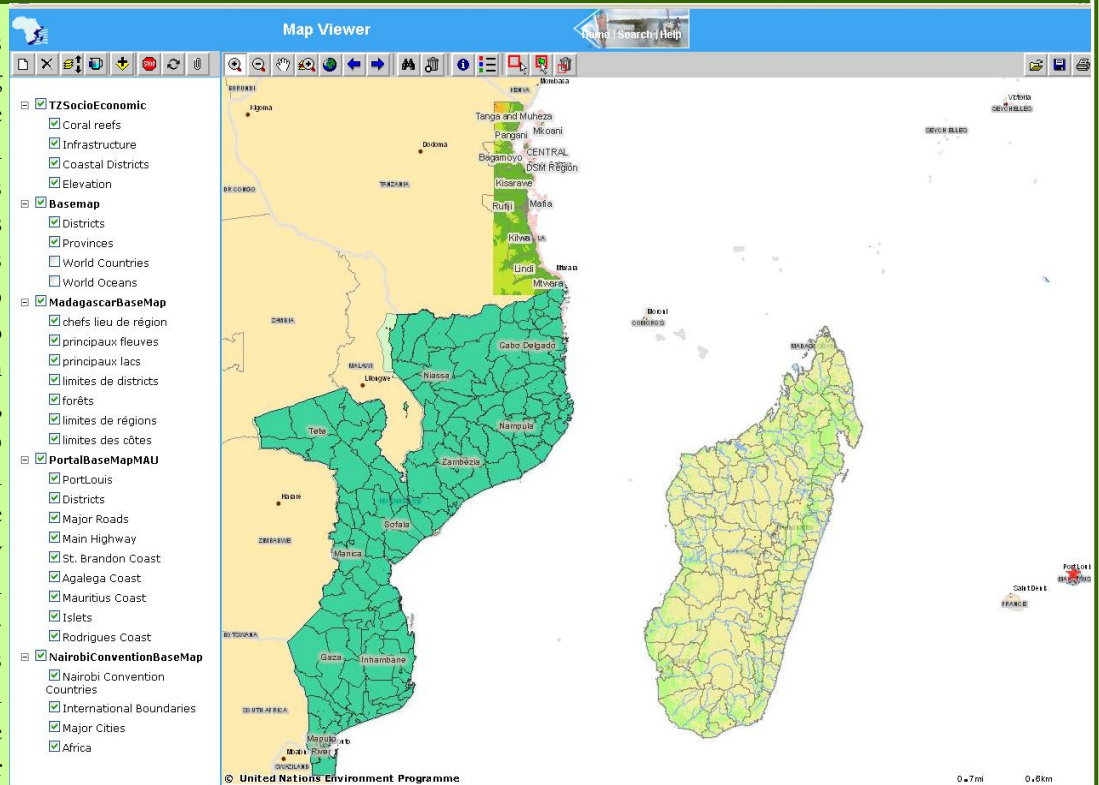
IMPROVEMENTS ON THE NAIROBI CONVENTION CLEARINGHOUSE MAP VIEWER

As a step towards achieving interoperability, the Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse map viewer has the capability of viewing all its national spatial data services under one basemap. The map viewer enables users to combine mapped data from different live map sources, conform it to a single map projection and extent, and overlay it on a single basemap. This can be done by combining map services from a drop-down list of Web-accessible map services available through the Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse Map Viewer interface and /or by selecting live maps that have been discovered during metadata search. This capability does not in any way download data resident in a national clearinghouse node, but only accesses and displays the services available.

Map layers included in a live map that is added to a MapViewer are listed in the MapViewer legend, and the user can select which layers to include or omit in the map display.

Once a map is completed, the Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse functionality provides a 'Save Map' function that enables users to save the image map they have created for use in subsequent Map Viewer sessions. The Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse functionality also enables users to save the image map to their own computers or network as an Open Geospatial Consortium Web Map Context file.

This web capability provides capacity for the national or regional teams to



Map services displayed on one map viewer

carry out credible assessment and analysis of spatial data using parameters with the same geographic

projections. Such visual assessments are useful when carrying out environmental outlook studies.

WAY FORWARD

The Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse is gearing up for the second phase. This is a critical stage that will involve data transformation through periodic assessments, monitoring of environmental parameters, and identifying emerging environmental issues and threats, and bringing them to the attention of policy makers.

The purpose of the second phase will be to increase the use of data and information available in the regional and national clearinghouse portals. Assessments and analytical capabilities will inform on emerging environmental issues and threats, contribute to the scientific understanding of a wide range of environmental changes. The assessment will raise awareness and

provide options about the likely consequences of environmental changes.

It is expected that the information generated through assessments will feed into the national policies and action plans and assist in the identification of programmatic priority areas. The information will also be useful to the Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention in their endeavour to protect, manage and develop the marine and coastal environment of the Western Indian Ocean.

Other major potential users of the information include the research and academic institutions, NGOs, CBOs, the private sector, media, regional partners, the UN agencies and the donor community.

PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NAIROBI CONVENTION NATIONAL COASTAL CLEARINGHOUSE MECHANISM (AS AT DECEMBER 2009)

ACTIVITY	COUNTRY							
	Comoros	Kenya	Madagascar	Mauritius	Mozambique	Seychelles	Tanzania	S Africa
Nomination of lead agency	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nomination of country coordinator	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Signing of Agreement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Acquisition of Server	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	to be implemented out in 2010
National working group constituted	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Project planning meeting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
1st review meeting on data collection	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2nd review meeting on data quality	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	
CHM online version (URL)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Training - portal customization	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	
Training - advanced portal development	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	
3rd review meeting on gap analysis	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	
Outreach and launches	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	

UP COMING EVENTS

Date: 4 February 2010

Event: Launch of the Kenya Coastal and Marine Clearinghouse

Venue: Mombasa

Date: 29 March – 1 April 2010

Event: 6th Conference of Parties to the Nairobi Convention

Venue: Nairobi

National CHM Coordinators

Comoros: Mr. Farid Anasse, Ministère de l'Agriculture, de la Pêche, et de l'Environnement (MAPE)

Kenya: Mr. Harrison Ong'anda, Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI)

Madagascar: Mr. Jean Roger Rakotoarijaona, Office National pour l'Environnement (ONE)

Mauritius: Mr. Mohamadally Beebeejaun, Mauritius Meteorological Services (MMS)

Mozambique: Ms. Ana Maria Alfredo, Instituto Nacional de Hidrografia e Navegação (INAHINA)

Seychelles: Mr. Justin Prosper, Policy Planning and Services Division, Ministry of Environment

South Africa: Mr. Gavin Fleming, SAEON Egagasini

Tanzania: Dr. Desiderius Masalu, Institute of Marine Sciences

Advisory & Management Team at UNEP/ Nairobi Convention Secretariat

Mr. Dixon Waruinge

Mr. Peter Scheren

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Technical Team at UNEP/DEWA

Technical Advisor: Mr. Johannes Akiwumi

Coordinator: Mr. Mwangi Theuri

GIS Server Administrator: Mr. James Osundwa

GIS Specialist: Ms. Nancy Soi

ICT Specialist: Ms. Esther Maina

The entire staff of the Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse and information sharing system at 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 continued success of the Clearinghouse. Your proactive nature, commitment and support ensures that the Western Indian Ocean region will realize the objectives of the clearinghouses and facilitate practical experience in data sharing and exchange for the sustainable development of our region.

The Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse and Information Sharing system e-newsletter 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.

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

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