

**COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT
(CSTD)**

Twenty-fifth session

Geneva, 28 March to 1 April 2022

**Submissions from entities in the United Nations system, international
organizations and other stakeholders on their efforts in 2021 to
implement the outcomes of the WSIS**

Submission by

United Nations Environment Programme

This submission was prepared as an input to the report of the UN Secretary-General on "Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels" (to the 25th session of the CSTD), in response to the request by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2006/46, to the UN Secretary-General to inform the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS as part of his annual reporting to the Commission.

DISCLAIMER: The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme for the Secretary General's report on progress made in 2021 in the implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society

Specific area of Work:

C3 – Access to Information and Knowledge

C7 – ICT Applications. E-Environment

Executive Summary

Activities undertaken by all stakeholders, progress made, and any obstacle encountered

The Ministerial Declaration (EA.1/2019), Resolution 4/23, UNEA 4, 2019 as well as the Action plan for the implementation of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, request UNEP and the Executive Director to present progress reports (2021, 2023 and 2025) on the implementation of a Global Environmental Data Strategy (GEDS) and the World Environment Situation Room (WESR). The approved MTS, Medium Term Strategy of UNEP 2022 - 2025, approved in February 2021, aligns the requests on GEDS/WESR with an enabler Digital Transformation and Science Policy Sub-Programmes.

Developing a global environmental data strategy by 2025 in cooperation with other relevant United Nations bodies. Making regular updates (with progress reports in 2021 and 2023 and a final report in 2025) to the Committee of Permanent Representatives and United Nations Environmental Assembly (193 members states) on the progress of developing the global environmental data strategy and how it fits into the broader delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs.

Development of an innovative integrated data, information, and knowledge platform to promote the access, use and sharing of environmental data, as well as to ensure comparable environmental data. This was kickstarted by the approval of World Environment Situation Room – global data, information, and knowledge platform on the environment (Big Data on the Environment Initiative) as a project within the UNEP Programme of Work in May 2019.

Analytical Overview

A brief analytical overview of trends and experiences of activities undertaken

The development and implementation of the global environmental data strategy is aligned with the overall UN Data Strategy and the UN Secretary-General's Strategy on New Technologies. UNEP has produced at this stage a 'Concept Data Strategy' document, available online at (https://wesr.unep.org/media/docs/reporting/concept_data_strategy.pdf) which is a progress report and a conceptual framework on the development of a Global Environmental Data Strategy and provides a basis for discussion for consultations with Member States and complies with the first milestone of 2021.

UNEP has established in June 2021 a UNEP Data Governance Group (DGG), chaired by the Deputy Executive Director and Vice-Chaired by the Science Division Director, with membership of several UNEP Division Directors and representatives of the Regional Offices, to oversee the implementation of the UNEP Data Strategy and the World Environment Situation Room.

A new design and content management system of the WESR platform is already available, fully aligned with UNEP.org as well as with the main priorities and pillars of the Medium-Term-Strategy, including Digital Transformation and Science Policy interface, is being upgraded, extended and enhanced (available at <https://data.unep.org>). This new platform that integrates data, information and environmental knowledge includes a repository function for data and publications. It allows open access to up to date (and for some in near-real time) data, such as downloadable datasets, CSV's and API's in the areas of geospatial, SDGs

environmental statistics and indicators, Multilateral Environmental Agreements, Global Environmental Monitoring Systems, Assessments, Scientific Publications, Citizen Science and Private Data, and Strategic Foresight.

A network of partners was created: the *One Global Partnership*. This group includes partners ranging from the GRID-Centre's, the UNEP/WCMC, spatial agencies, private sector (such as ESRI, Google, IBM, DHI, Descartes Lab.), universities (Geneva, Yale), the Group on Earth Observation (GEO), Governmental research institutions, such as RADII (China), EU/JRC (Europe), regional institution (AGEDI, SPREP) and is now evolving toward the Global South (discussion with INPE (Brazil), ICIMOD (Nepal)). UNEP is leveraging the expertise from the various partners to improve the platform (World Environment Situation Room) that provides a repository function, to allow open access to up-to-date, quality-assured, credible and relevant data.

Leading towards a **global data strategy** to support international cooperation on data development and governance that promotes accessible and interoperable data and harmonized methodologies for environmental statistics and accounting to facilitate monitoring of environmental and social interaction and to inform evidence-based policies and new standards for sustainable growth and to predict and manage climate change impacts and environmental disasters (e.g. in international collaboration with other regional partners including the European Green Deal communication, European Strategy for Data and other UN system entities, as the UN Global Geospatial Information Management – UN GGIM and the UN Geospatial Network).

Regarding **International Environmental Governance** on Data, strategically engaging in the UN development system reform, with a view to embedding the environmental dimension in national planning and implementation processes for sustainable development; This has been implemented through the WESR Common Country Analysis: +38 Countries and establishing the Interoperability with UN Regional Economic Commissions – as Regional Data Hubs.

On Geospatial data, UNEP is chairing the UN Geospatial Network within the UN GGIM, Committee of experts on Global Geospatial information Management of the ECO-SOC. A network of 37 UN agencies, funds and Programmes. With the aim of coherence and coordination of Geospatial across the UN system. And standardizing and harmonizing data sharing. Consequently, UNEP is building the World Environment Situation Room, using latest standards for data exchange, such as OGC standards for geospatial data and API for statistics, Geospatial data, publications.

Part Three

Innovative Policies, programme and Projects and Future actions or initiatives to be takes

- Work towards global, regional, and national development of trusted, accessible, peer-reviewed and relevant data and statistics to support planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting on the environmental SDGs, and multilateral environmental agreements, e.g., through the Framework for the Development of Environmental Statistics, supported by the UNEP World Environment Situation Room.
- Strengthen synergies between existing science and data platforms and initiatives, amongst others the Green Digital Infrastructure, global and regional assessment reports, and global earth observations.
- Improve uptake and usage of Earth Observation from space and remote platforms and derived services such as the NASA and Copernicus Services by national and regional users. Engage with governments, academia, the private sector, and civil society to develop or adapt Copernicus services to user needs. Explore the integration of the NASA Globe and Copernicus Services into the World Environment Situation Room.