



EEA side event at the Rio Conference – 19 June 2012

'Sharing environmental information in action'

Background

The 1992 Rio Declaration, endorsed by world leaders, stated under Principle 10 that: "Environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level." Since then, countries and organisations have been looking into the best solutions for implementing this objective. In Europe, the 1998 Aarhus Convention, followed shortly at the EU level by the Directive on Access to information, were trying from a regulatory perspective to respond to this demand. At global level, the Bali guidelines adopted in 2010 under UNEP auspices also supported the development of national legislation in the field of access to information. In practical terms, efforts are being made by countries and organisations to increase the accessibility to and the multiple use of available environmental information.

Objectives

The present event aims to take stock of major developments in translating into action Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, and the concrete future steps envisaged by different stakeholders for improving the sharing of and access to environmental information.

Expected outcomes

- Promote the need of opening the access to and sharing of environmental information and knowledge as an instrument for change, for the transition towards a greening economy and achieving sustainable development.
- Provide solid evidence and concrete arguments in support of the draft Rio Declaration which refers to the development of a sharing platform for environmental information and knowledge.

Venue: European Pavilion of the EU delegation, Parque dos Atletas located near the main conference venue (Rio Centro): <http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/logistics.html>

Duration: 17:00 – 19:00

Agenda

Panel discussions highlighting concrete actions supporting the implementation of Principle 10

Introduction

- **Overview of initiatives supported by the European Environment Agency to improve the sharing of environmental information.**

Ms. Jacqueline McGlade – Executive Director, European Environment Agency

A number of questions looking ahead into the expected outcomes of various initiatives related to the sharing of and access to information will be addressed by a panel of distinguished speakers.

- **Effective access to reliable environmental information – how can UN/ECE contribute?**

Mr. Sven Alkalaj – Executive Secretary, UNECE



- **What it is foreseen in Europe's Horizon2020 Framework Research Programme for building further on the GEO/GEOSS investments for global environmental information sharing?**
Ms. Manuela Soares – Director, European Commission, DG Research and Innovation, European Commission
- **What concrete activities support the implementation of the Astana Ministerial declaration in terms of sharing environmental information for regular assessment?**
Mr. Talaipek Makeev – Director, Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia
- **What will be the role of IT industry to ensure increased access to information for all?**
*Mr. Frank McCosker – Managing Director, Global Strategic Accounts, Microsoft/
Ms. Carmelle Terborgh -Federal/Global Affairs Team Lead and Account Manager, ESRI*
- **What will be the contribution of the special initiatives adopted in Abu Dhabi in 2011 in increasing the access and sharing of environmental information around the globe?**
Mr. Peter Gilruth – Director, Division of Early Warning and Assessment, United Nations Environment Programme

Discussion with participants

Announcement of the launch of the Eye on Earth “mashup” competition.

Refreshments will be served.