

AFRICA ENVIRONMENT INFORMATION NETWORK

1. Background

- **UNEP has prepared a framework proposal for the establishment of an Africa Environmental Information Network (AEIN) in response to a request by the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN).**
- **AEIN is designed as a capacity building programme that aims to harness and enhance access to information and knowledge.**

Information on environmental assets

- **A key objective of the initiative is to build capacity for establishing the essential data foundation needed to support country-level sustainable development initiatives, focusing on the environmental aspects.**
- **The initiative is a direct outcome of the Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) preparation process which was mandated by AMCEN. At the launch of the first AEO during the 9th Session of AMCEN (Kampala, 1-5 July, 2002) Ministers endorsed the AEIN concept as a means for harmonising and promoting access to data in the Africa region, and acting as “a basis for tracking environmental changes using quantitative indicators focusing on national needs.**

- **AEIN is designed, to build capacity for integrated environmental assessments and reporting at the national level.**
- **AMCEN serves as the platform for the implementation of the Environmental Component of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Therefore, the AEO, endorsed during the 9th Session of AMCEN as “a monitoring and reporting tool for sustainable environmental management, as well as [providing] a framework for national and sub-regional integrated environmental assessment and reporting”.**

2. Highlights of the AEIN Framework

project activity areas:

- **An integrated environmental assessment and reporting platform.**
- **A data development and exchange platform.**
- **An information and communications technology (ICT) platform.**

3. Objectives for Phase 1

The first phase of implementation (2003 – 2004)

In this regard the thrust of implementation within UNEP will be on integrated environmental assessment and reporting, leading to the production of AEO-2.

Key issues to be addressed include:

- What are the issues relating to core data sets that need to be addressed?**
- What organisational and institutional framework would be appropriate to deal with the coordination and implementations processes?**
- What capacity would be required, and how would capacity needs be met?**

The immediate goals for Phase 1 implementation are:

- a) To build capacity for the development and management of core datasets for integrated environmental assessments and reporting at the national level;**
- b) To support and catalyse institutional networking and capacities related to the management of data and information at the sub-national, national, sub-regional, and regional levels.**

Specific objectives will be:

Activities are aimed at building a stronger foundation for the production of AEO-2 in 2006.

- **To assess the status of environmental information networking activities in respective African countries;**
- **To strengthen networking (data/information exchanges, knowledge/expertise sharing, etc.) at the national and sub-regional levels;**
- **To develop information management tools, collate data, and develop compendia and other data products from existing data sources;**
- **To develop quantitative indicators of environmental change for use in characterising emerging issues, and for assessing impacts of such changes on human vulnerability at national and sub-regional levels;**
- **To build capacity for using information management tools and methodologies for producing or (re-)packaging information for various target groups.**

4. Expected Outputs

The principal outputs expected from Phase 1 will be:

- **Structures for managing the AEIN programme, including implementation guidelines and procedures, and an International Steering Committee.**
- **National EIS status reports and AEIN implementation strategies for 12 pilot countries.**

■ **Environment information management tools comprising:**

- **Directory/profiles of national institutions involved in the management of the environment.**
- **Catalogue of information needs and reporting requirements for the Conventions**
- **Catalogue of data and information resources**
- **Directory of experts and facilities**
- **Documentation (bibliographic) system**

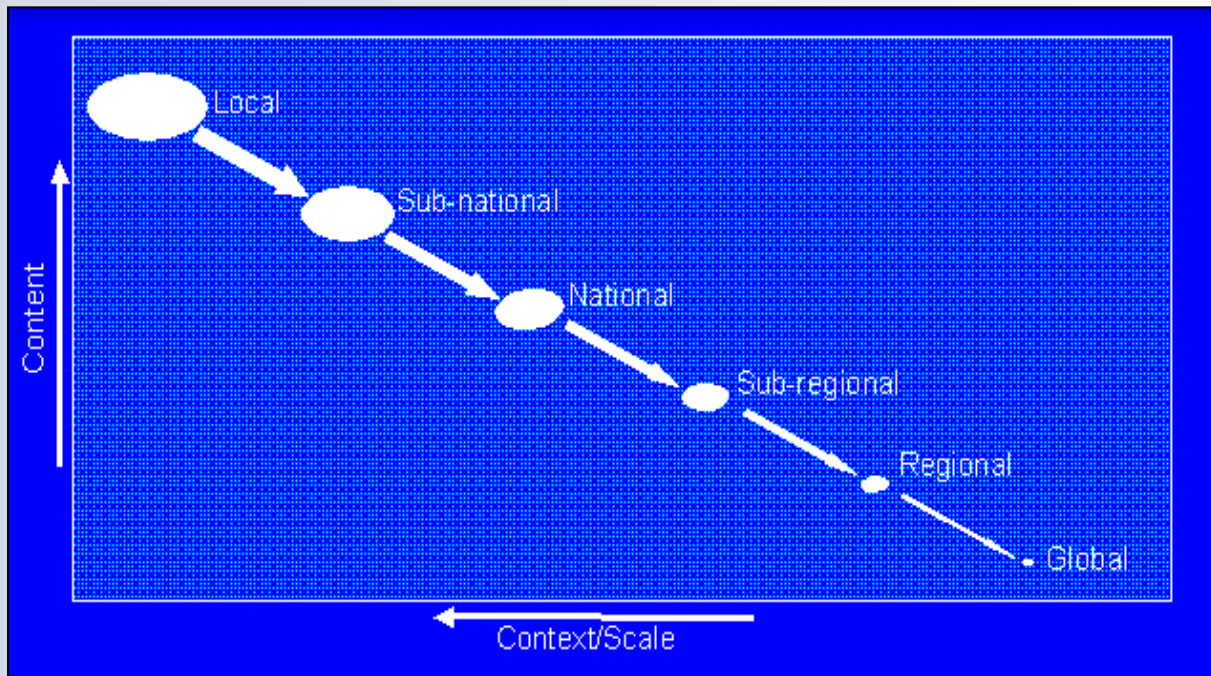
- **Guidelines/sourcebook for environment policy analysis.**
- **Guidelines for harmonised State of Environment Reporting.**
- **A set of environmental indicators**
- **Intermediate products and packaged technical information including:**
 - **Data products (thematic briefs, thematic vital graphics, etc.).**
 - **Policy briefs**
 - **Fact sheets**
 - **Thematic video scripts**
 - **Africa River basins information system prototype**

- **National State of Environment Reports for 12 pilot countries.**
- **Scope and structure of AEO-2.**
- **AEIN communication strategy.**
- **Increased awareness among the high-level decision-makers.**
- **National Action plans.**

5. Activity Areas

5.1 Enhancing Environmental Information Networking

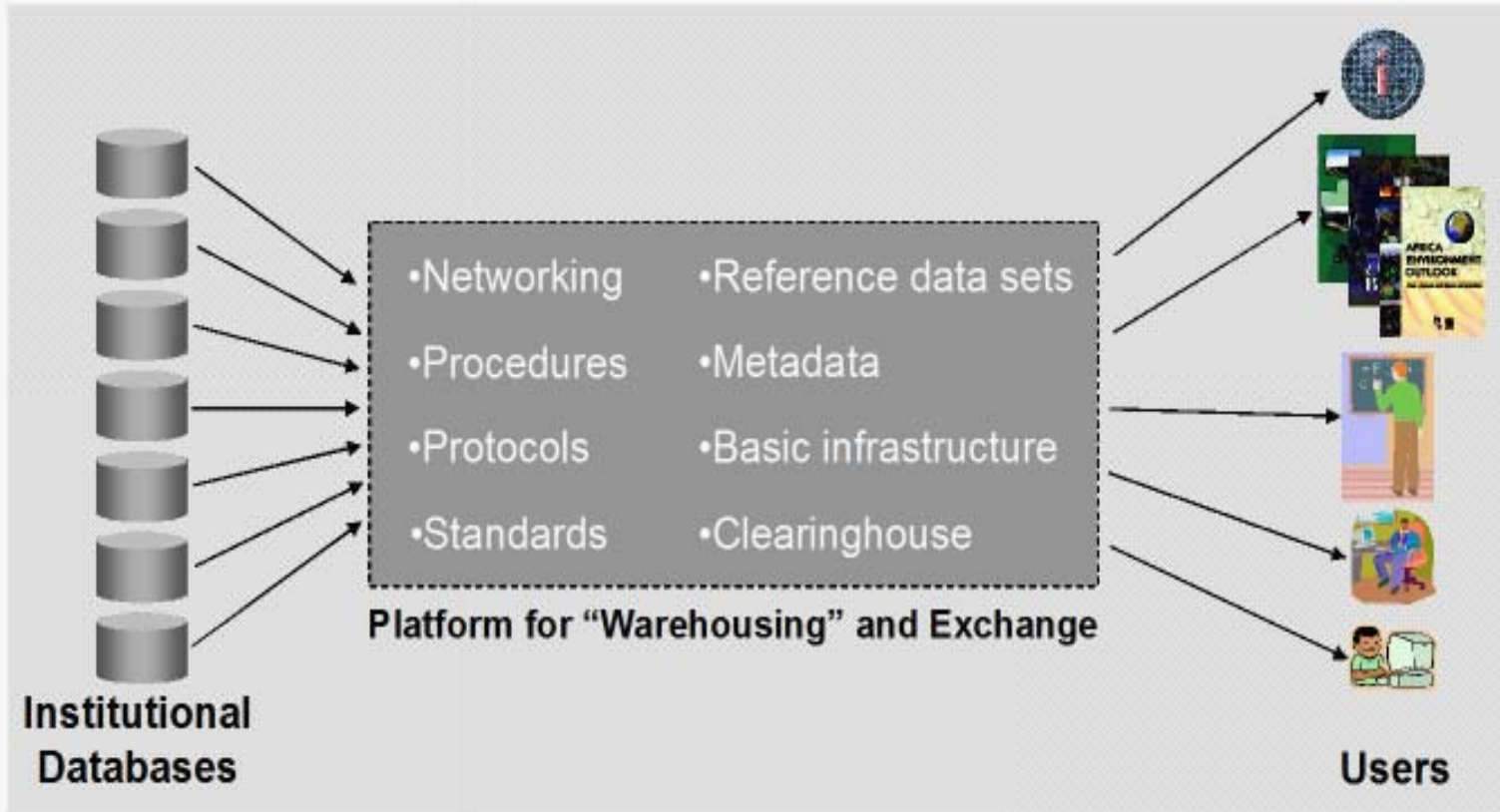
Functionalities for the AEO Data and Indicator Toolkit



Tool must be multi-purpose and should be able to handle minimum data sets for countries, as well as core data sets for AEO and GEO

5.2 Enhancing Analytical Capacity

skills and methodologies for policy analysis, multi-scale/temporal data analysis, and the production of indicator-based national and sub-regional assessments and SoE reports, and providing inputs into the AEO process.



Data should be collected, harmonised and quality-assured once, and then made available for use by many users, and in multiple information products.

Figure 1: Data Exchange Platform — Vision

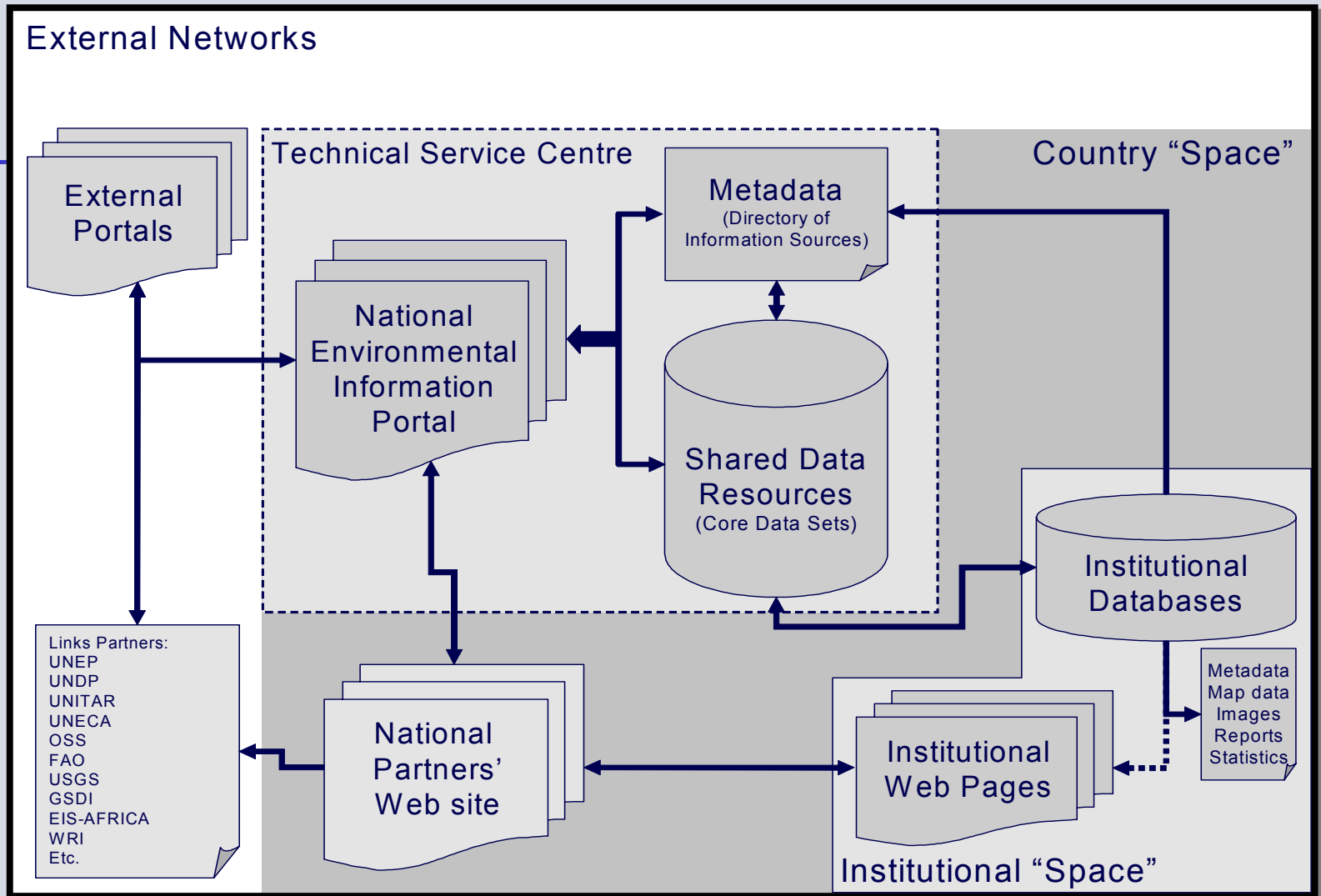


Figure 2: Shared "spaces" and information repositories

5.3 Information Packaging and Dissemination

AEIN recognises three broad levels of decision-making at which information need to be targeted:

**the strategic (policy-makers),
mid-level (managerial), and
operational (first-line “actors”) levels.**

Decision-Making Level	Useful Information Types	AEIN Products/Services
<p>Policy-makers : Strategic (Vision and the long-term policy objectives for sustainable development)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Forward-looking projections ■ Scenarios and policy options ■ What-if analyses ■ Status of implementation of policy objectives ■ Strategic environmental overviews/assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Policy Briefs ■ Vital (summary) graphics ■ Specific decision-support applications ■ Thematic extract ■ Executive seminars
<p>Planning and implementing agencies: Tactical/Managerial (Implementation of policy objectives, ensuring that available resources are used efficiently and effectively to achieve the set objectives.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Scenarios and policy options ■ What-if analyses ■ Policy analysis/implications ■ Indicator-based trends ■ Comparative assessments ■ Medium-term forecasts ■ Special reports ■ Situation analyses ■ Status reports or updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Indicator-based environment and development reports at all levels ■ Issue-specific, indicator-based thematic reports ■ Thematic extracts ■ Vital (summary) graphics ■ Case studies ■ <i>InfoKiosks</i>
<p>First-line “actors”: Operational Control (Use available facilities and resources to ensure that specific activities are carried out towards the attainment of policy objectives.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Primary data ■ Thematic aggregations ■ situation reports ■ Operational information and procedures ■ Basic facts ■ Other “transactional-level” information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Indicator-based assessment reports (SoE, AEO, etc.) ■ Environmental Data Compendia ■ Metadata bulletin and information catalogues ■ Datasets and databases ■ <i>InfoKiosks</i>

6. Pilot Countries

selection of countries for the first phase should include the following:

- i) There should be a balance in the capacity levels**
- ii) There should be geographic balance in the selection;**
- iii) There should be a high probability for showing concrete results by the end of Phase 1.**

The following countries have been

selected for Phase 1:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| i) Cameroon | vii) Mauritius |
| ii) Egypt | viii) Senegal |
| iii) Ethiopia | ix) Seychelles |
| iv) Gabon | x) Tunisia |
| v) Ghana | xi) Uganda |
| vi) Lesotho | xii) Zambia |

7. Institutional Framework for Coordination and Management

The proposed institutional framework for and coordination management, i.e.,

- i) An International Steering Committee to oversee overall implementation**
- ii) Regional coordination and management by UNEP**
- iii) Sub-regional “clustering” for the purpose of coordination, using the existing network of AEO/GEO Collaborating Centres**
- vi) National implementation framework comprising**

- iv) National implementation framework comprising**
 - National AEIN node**
 - National Steering Committee**
 - Forum of Stakeholders**
 - Technical Committee**
 - Working Groups**
 - A network of Data Centres**
 - Provision of technical services by entities with capacity to do so**

- v) A network of partners to support or implement different aspects of the AEIN framework**

7.1 Networking Framework

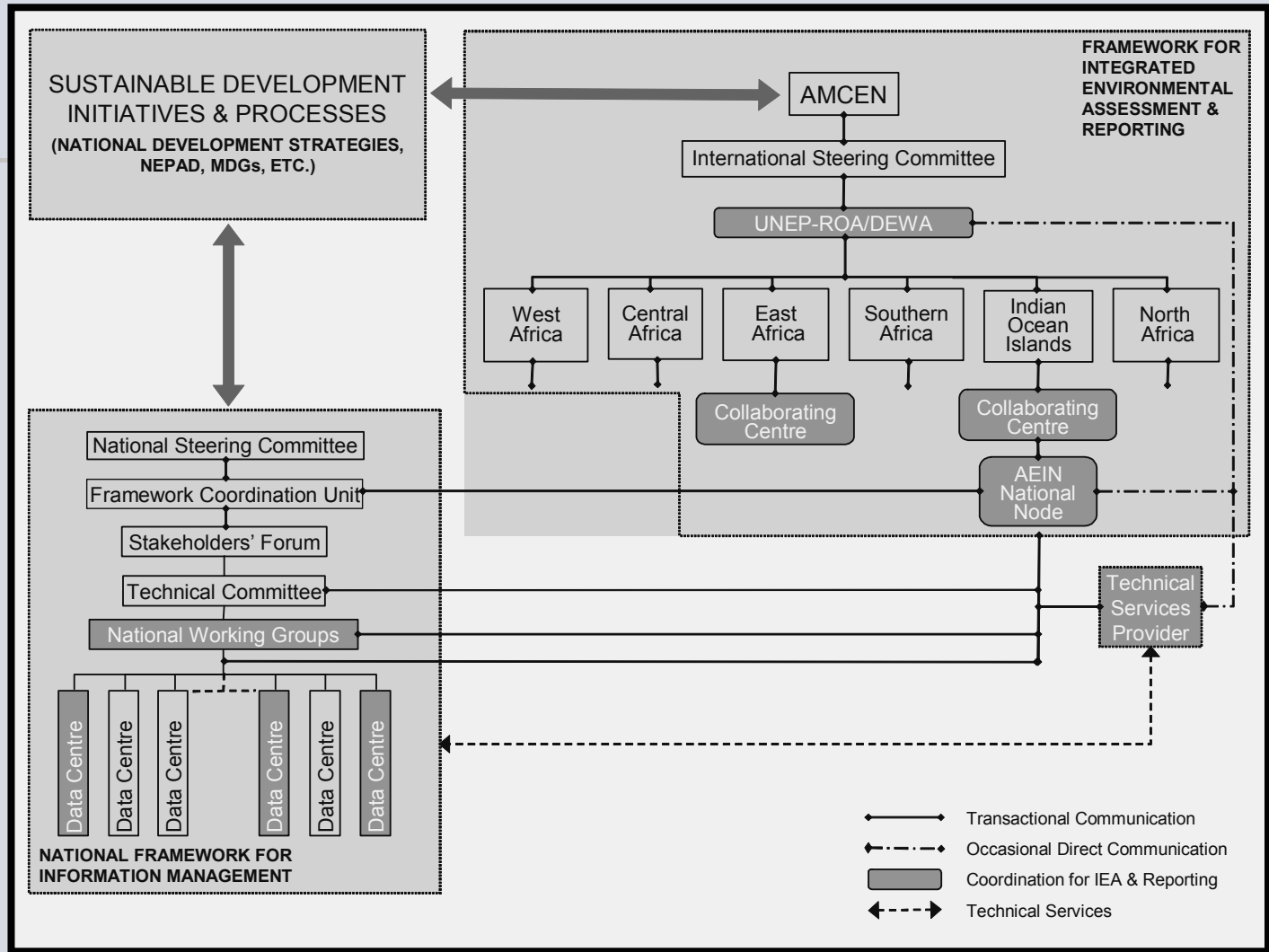


Figure 3: AEIN network structure and linkages to on-going initiatives

8. Monitoring and Impact Assessment

Documentation for such review will include:

- Quarterly progress reports**
- Any implementation problem diagnostic reports**
- Any on-going evaluation reports required by donors/funding agencies**
- Working groups thematic reports**
- National Steering Committees meetings reports**
- Training reports**

8.1 Suggested process indicators

- **AEIN proposal finalised and published in English and French**
- **AEIN implementation plan and guidelines published in English and French**
- **Number countries who have signed up at Ministerial level to participate in AEIN**
- **Implementation structures established and functional and national, sub-regional and regional levels**
- **Number of participating national institutions in compliance with AEIN guidelines and procedures**
- **Number of institutions adopting AEIN procedures and technical tools**
- **Number of participating international partners**
- **Number of signed and functional data and information exchange agreements, MoUs and protocols**

- **Amount of data (types, country coverage, volume) identified within international organisations for which exchange agreements are successfully negotiated**
- **Amount of data (types, country coverage, volume) identified within international organisations successfully transferred (repatriated) to countries of origin**
- **Number of agreements with secretariats (number) of MEAs on the harmonisation of information management and reporting for respective conventions/treaties**
- **Number of national web sites and data portals with harmonised interfaces**

- **On-going maintenance of national web-sites and data portals**
- **Number of data/information exchange transactions (e.g., requests, releases, downloads from portals, etc.) recorded by participating institutions**
- **Number and quality of applications based on new methodologies and tools**
- **Number of and quality of different types of information products**

8.2 Impact indicators

- **Increased/improved access to information**
- **Increase in the number of institutions (national and international) participating in AEIN**
- **Number of decision and actions attributable to the use of AEIN tools, procedures, data and information products**
- **Adoption of common frameworks for reporting on MEAs**

Thank You