

Happy New Year and a warm welcome to the fifth news bulletin from the Coordination of Assessments for Environment in Humanitarian Action (the Joint Initiative). For more updates, presentations and other resources, please visit us at <http://www.eecentre.org/assessments> and share with your networks.

Last year was extremely busy and fruitful for the Joint Initiative which consulted nearly 300 individual stakeholders, organised two stakeholder workshops in Geneva and Washington DC, and participated in seven high-level meetings to promote coordination among humanitarian and environmental actors through improved access to, and use of, environmental data, information and assessments.

Three core deliverables were identified:

- Building an Environment in Humanitarian Action (EHA) Framework
- Updating a project level environmental assessment tool for humanitarian action (NEAT)
- Updating the Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA)

As we enter into 2018, one of the next steps of the Joint Initiative is to set up working groups to focus on these deliverables.

FRAMEWORK FOR ENVIRONMENT IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Following the Geneva Stakeholder Consultation Workshop, it was established there was a need for a broader framework within which any updated environmental assessment tools could sit. The Framework was seen as a way to address many of the challenges related to the use of environmental assessments, that can often be systematic.

The Framework will map environmental assessment and data sharing tools and mechanisms at different levels with a focus on preparedness, sudden onset, protracted crises and operational programme/project level. It aims to set out entry points for environmental assessments, existing data sharing tools as well as gaps and opportunities.

The Framework, an online, searchable resource that users will be able to tailor to their needs, will also provide a home for environmental assessment tools to sit in. It is intended to be used by both environmental actors working with the humanitarian system and by humanitarian actors wishing to give greater emphasis to the environment.

The structure has already been designed and IT developers are being consulted as to what kind of platform to use.

Terms of Reference for the EHA Framework Working Group and how to join the group can be found [here](#). The objective of this Working Group is to oversee and provide feedback on the design and content of the EHA Framework to ensure it is a collaborative effort that is useful and adopted within the humanitarian system.

A PROJECT LEVEL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR HUMANITARIAN ACTION

This will be a tool that allows organizations to conduct a rapid environmental assessment before implementing a programme or project. It will be open source and can be used, adapted and branded by other organisations.

This responds to demand expressed by stakeholders for a tool/methodology that is rapid, does not require environmental expertise, is easily accessible and can be adapted to organizations' individual needs. In cooperation with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), this tool will build on NRC's Environmental Assessment Tool (NEAT).

The Joint Initiative will be focusing on updating the scope and content of this tool which will be made available online as part of the Framework for Environment in Humanitarian Action. We have already mapped out the update of the structure and outline of content with the aim to pilot the updated tool in a priority location later in the year.

Terms of Reference for the Project Level Assessment Tool Update Working Group and how to join can be found [here](#). Tasked with overseeing the update of this tool, the Working Group will be asked to review the mapping of content categories and modality/usability of the tool among other activities in the coming weeks and months.



REA UPDATE

The Joint Initiative has worked to determine what parts of the current REA tool are in need of update, barriers to using the REA and the best ways to update the tool, which was originally designed in 2004.

The update will maintain the current approach, simplify some sections, provide better links to the humanitarian programme cycle and other tools, and look to mainstream a range of issues including climate change, resilience and protection.

Please contact Joint Initiative Team Leader [Mandy George](#) for more information about the REA update or to be involved.

OTHER ONGOING INITIATIVES

REMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

In addition to the core deliverables of the project, the Joint Initiative is setting up a Working Group on remote environmental analysis that will be led by the UN Environment / OCHA Joint Unit (JEU). The group aims to strengthen the involvement of environmental actors in remote analysis, thereby improving the quality of humanitarian analysis by ensuring environmental factors and data are included at an early stage.

Tasks will include identifying entry points for feeding environmental data into humanitarian analysis processes and tools and defining the purpose of environmental data.

The Working Group will also be asked to establish a process whereby environmental actors can be involved in humanitarian analysis.

Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Remote Environmental Analysis and how to join can be found [here](#).

Please contact Joint Initiative Team Leader [Mandy George](#) for more information about the Working Groups.



THE 2018 HUMANITARIAN NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIP WEEK

The [2018 Humanitarian Networks and Partnership Week](#) (HNPW), a space for humanitarians to get together and find ways to solve common operational problems, will be held from February 5 to 9 in Geneva.

The Joint Initiative and the JEU will be organising various events during the week.

The Initiative will launch the [EHA Framework](#) and [Project Level Assessment Tool Update](#) Working Groups on [Tuesday February 6](#), as well as our Working Group on [Remote Environmental Analysis](#).

On Wednesday February 7, the JEU is organising group discussions around three topics that aim to foster better collaboration in humanitarian action, including the merits of a coordinated disaster waste management response.

On Thursday February 8, the Environment and Humanitarian Action (EHA) Network will meet to discuss the setting up of the Issue Management Group on the integration of environment into humanitarian action by the Environment Management Group.

On Friday February 9, the JEU will host a workshop on improving humanitarian outcomes by sharing environmental data and monitoring risks in conflict settings. Please note, anyone wishing to attend the HNPW will need to register [here](#).

For more information on these events, please [visit our website](#).

SCOPING OF THE RAPID ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (REA) TECHNICAL REVISION

The Joint Initiative has published a report which analyses and compares 12 rapid environmental assessment tools. The [report](#) also outlines a proposed way forward for improving how environmental assessments are used within humanitarian action.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The National Council for Science and the Environment (NCSE) holds its 18th National Conference and Global Forum on Science, Policy and the Environment from January 23 to 24. This year the theme is The Science, Business, and Education of Sustainable Infrastructure: Building Resilience in a Changing World.

USAID's Erika Clesceri and Anita van Breda of WWF will be presenting alongside Jennifer Kane from USAID, Ali Raza from IUCN and Anne Koontz from Relief International at "[Community Resilience: Disasters, Development and Building with Nature](#)", a symposium highlighting the role of nature in humanitarian and development programming in the face of disasters.

The discussion will include challenges and opportunities in employing nature-based assessment tools and ecosystem-based adaptation, featuring in-country examples and key findings from the [Coordination of Assessments for Environment in Humanitarian Action](#) and USAID's ecosystem-based adaptation evidence summaries and case studies.

OTHER NEWS

For all of the environment in humanitarian action related events at the HNPW, please see [these resources](#) produced by the JEU.

[Conservation International](#) has launched the [Environmental Peacebuilding Training Manual](#). More than a year in the making, the manual aims to increase knowledge and skills around environmental peacebuilding among conservation practitioners and organizations working in areas affected by conflict or where conservation efforts could potentially impact conflict.

As always, if you are interested in getting involved in the project, or if you have news or initiatives that you'd like to share with us, please get in touch.

Best wishes,

The Coordination of Assessments for Environment in Humanitarian Action team

