

Welcome to the sixth news bulletin from the Coordination of Assessments for Environment in Humanitarian Action (the Joint Initiative). For more updates, presentations, our [annual report](#) and other resources, please visit us at <http://www.eecentre.org/assessments> and share with your networks.

In membership news, we are very pleased to welcome the Norwegian Refugee Council as formal [partners](#) in the Joint Initiative.

We have made important progress since our last update, following a highly successful Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HNPW) in Geneva February 5-9.

The gathering, which brought together humanitarians to solve common operational problems, provided a fitting platform to launch working groups linked to the Joint Initiative's core deliverables of building an Environment in Humanitarian Action (EHA) Framework and updating a project level environmental assessment tool for humanitarian action (NEAT+). A third working group dedicated to remote environmental analysis was also launched.

More than 70 actors from 30 organizations have signed up to participate in the working groups, reflecting growing momentum behind the Joint Initiative and its aim to bring together the environment and humanitarian communities to ensure environmental considerations are mainstreamed in humanitarian response. This collaborative approach is fundamental part of the Joint Initiative. To read more, please click [here](#).

Terms of Reference for the EHA Framework Working Group and how to join the group can be found [here](#).

Terms of Reference for the Project Level Assessment Tool Update Working Group and how to join can be found [here](#).

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.

WHAT NEXT FOR NEAT+: A PROJECT LEVEL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR HUMANITARIAN ACTION

The Joint Initiative is working to update the Norwegian Refugee Council's (NRC) Environmental Assessment Tool (NEAT). The updated tool, NEAT+, will allow organizations to conduct a rapid environmental screening before implementing a humanitarian project.

The focus is on providing a methodology that is fast and does not require environmental expertise, whilst still offering a technically sound and robust analysis that can influence project design.

The Joint Initiative has started asking the NEAT+ working group for their feedback of the first module of the updated tool, which aims to assess the sensitivity of the receiving environment by identifying key vulnerabilities and potential issues of concern. By evaluating a number of criteria, the risk to the environment will then be categorized as high, medium or low. For an overview of NEAT+, please click [here](#).

Anyone wishing to review the environmental sensitivity module or contribute to the shelter, WASH or food security and livelihoods technical modules, can contact Joint Initiative Team Leader [Mandy George](#).

There has been extensive interest amongst humanitarian organizations in piloting the NEAT+ with Chad, Nigeria and Uganda put forward as possible settings for a trial of the tool in June. Any humanitarian practitioners interested in piloting the NEAT or being involved in a trial of the tool in those countries are requested to get in touch with [Mandy George](#).

LATEST STEPS ON THE FRAMEWORK FOR ENVIRONMENT IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

The first working group meeting was held at the HNPW in February with 30 people from 19 organizations contributing to the mapping of the tool. We will be developing content over the next few months and inviting inputs from working group members.

A number of Working Group members interested in EcoDRR, or ecosystem-based approaches to disaster risk reduction, have formed a mini-working group to drill down ways of integrating this concept into the [Framework](#).

For more information on the Framework, please click [here](#) or contact [Mandy George](#).

REMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The Working Group on remote environmental analysis was asked to review the proposal for a process to strengthen humanitarian analysis by involving environmental actors, and ensuring environmental factors and data are included at an early stage. Such analysis will provide vital environmental information to the right people at the right time in a humanitarian response.

Ideas for integrating environmental considerations into wider remote analysis processes were further developed with pilots planned in the coming months and the group aims to pilot the approach in one sudden onset and one protracted emergency before the end of the year.

To take part in this Working Group, please contact [Tomas Declerq](#), Programme Officer of the UN Environment/OCHA Joint Unit (JEU).



OTHER INITIATIVES

In a sign of increasing support behind the Joint Initiative and its aims, the United Nations' Environmental Management Group (EMG) has commended the Initiative as a best practice example in promoting holistic and shared analysis between environmental and humanitarian actions.

The Joint Initiative's core deliverables feature prominently in the EMG's newly launched [Issues Management Group](#) that is specifically related to Environment in Humanitarian Action.

EVENTS

The Joint Initiative made a presentation at the UN Environment / Partners for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction seminar in Geneva on April 26 on the topic: "*Greening Post-Crisis Recovery for More Resilient Reconstruction*". The key objectives of the seminar included stocktaking on green recovery tools in post-crisis contexts and lessons learnt from post-crisis Integrated Strategic Environmental Assessments (ISEAs).

PARTNERS NEWS

In light of the [Rohingya refugee crisis](#), the **UN Environment / OCHA Joint Unit**, with support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), deployed an environmental expert to Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, in November 2017 to support a Rapid Environmental Assessment. As a result of a collaborative effort, supporting environmentally sustainable solutions was included as one of the four strategic objectives of the [2018 Joint Response Plan for Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis](#). This is the first time the environment has featured as one of the main strategic objectives of a Humanitarian Response Plan, showing strong progress is being made in mainstreaming environment into humanitarian action.

The **CDAC Network**, which promotes communication with disaster affected communities, included a session on community engagement and the environment in its [round-up of events](#) at this year's Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HPNW).

The **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** is celebrating its 70th anniversary this year. Follow and share the excitement with #IUCN70. For more information about the events calendar, please click [here](#).

UN Environment has worked with partners to help them maximize the impact of the data collected for Somalia's Drought Impact and Needs Assessment. Using UN Environment's geo-spatial [MapX platform](#), the partners have been able to consolidate all the data into a single page, which has facilitated decision makers to make evidence-based decisions.

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



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