



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
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UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE

**AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE SWISS FEDERAL COUNCIL
THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
AND
THE UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA (UniGe)**

FOR THE GRID-GENEVA PARTNERSHIP

Purpose and Value-added of the Partnership

1. This Agreement supports GRID-Geneva in carrying out its core activities by providing a framework of cooperation, collaboration and understanding to facilitate operationalisation of the Partnership between the Parties. The purpose of the Partnership is to further the Parties' shared goals and objectives in regard to environmental assessment, indicators and foresight activities on emerging environmental issues, geospatial analysis and on-line portals; related environmental data, information and networks; and using these to strengthen the linkages between science and policy-making. The value-added of this Partnership, therefore, is the provision of environmental information to decision-makers at multiple levels (from local, national, regional and global levels).
2. Through this Agreement, CH-FOEN, UNEP and UniGe reaffirm their Partnership, having as its major goal not only to improve access to environmental data and information for decision-making, but also to strengthen the scientific base of UNEP's assessment, monitoring and emerging environmental activities and outputs. The Parties complement and reinforce each other in mutually supportive and useful ways. CH-FOEN, in addition to its financial contribution, brings to the Partnership its political support and its experience in environmental policy formulation to help guide the technical studies and other work. UNEP provides overall strategic guidance, a global outreach and convening capacity, the integration of GRID Geneva into relevant activities in its Programme of Work and financial contributions (see Annex 1 and Annex 3). The UniGe provides both a firm science base for these same activities and dynamic, as well as highly-trained staff to assist in the work, allocation of staff for heads of unit, IT resources for computation power. Finally, GRID-Geneva, is also providing financial contribution through projects and services, gives the analytic skills and tools needed to execute the relevant activities and projects. The synergies created by and applied within this Partnership are unique, given the status of the three entities involved, and lead to a situation where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

Areas of Cooperation

1. GRID-Geneva organises its work according to four streams (generation of data platforms; environmental modelling & monitoring; emerging environmental issues & assessments; teaching & capacity building). GRID-Geneva shall continue to focus on the delivery both within and outside of the Parties, of environmental data and information-related activities, projects and services, with the following main, preliminary overarching areas of work under this Agreement:
 - a. facilitating access to and collection of a wide range of environmental data and information, and providing information for decision-makers;
 - b. broadening and strengthening networks for environmental assessment and early warning-related activities globally and regionally;
 - c. providing support, assistance and know-how for the use of information technologies and tools (GIS, remote sensing, Internet/web, spatial data infrastructure etc.); and
 - d. supporting and delivering the UNEP's Programme of Work, through implementing an

annual plan of activities approved by UNEP; and contributing to a strengthened scientific and/or policy role of the Parties for improving environmental governance;

2. Areas of cooperation, as well as policies and priorities of the Partnership will be agreed jointly through the cooperation mechanism described in Article 5 of this Agreement to allow the Parties to respond to newly emerging issues in the fields of environment and sustainable development.
3. The principal end users of the activities, project and service outputs and products are the Parties (CH-FOEN, UNEP and UniGe), followed by other intergovernmental organisations, regional bodies, academic institutions, civil society entities and private citizens. However, GRID-Geneva will implement projects funded by external entities within agreed areas of cooperation with the aim of becoming as much as possible financially self-sustainable.

Core Activities and Services

The specificities of GRID-Geneva lies in the processing and analysis of geospatial data, data dissemination and capacity building. As part of its mandate to support UNEP's environmental assessments and reporting, including early warnings of emerging environmental problems and threats, as well as to facilitate access to environmental data and information and build related capacities for improved data/information management and environmental decision-making, GRID-Geneva on behalf of the parties will continue or initiate the following types of activities during the period of the next Partnership Agreement (2019-23):

Database: maintain, update and improve database related to environmental issues, including metadata. For supporting the creation of **data and indicators**, monitoring trends and supporting UNEP and other parties need in their assessment and reporting processes.

Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI): continue to keep up with latest technologies and standards such as those from the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) for data dissemination via webservice and contributing to the improvement of data dissemination, **linked data and data dissemination** for provision of near real-time data and automatic updates.

Interactive Mapping Platform: GRID-Geneva has acquired great skills in developing interactive Mapping Platforms for displaying, interrogating, analysing and disseminating geospatial data. GRID-Geneva can be funded for providing such support during the course of this Partnership (e.g. for the generation and maintenance of the World Environment Situation Map continuously updated through UNEP Live in a very user friendly mode, accessible to Citizens, Business, Policy makers, and the Scientific community). GRID-Geneva acts as a single worldwide entry point to high quality projects, on the ground, with real life geospatial data and impact on people and countries.

Geographic Information System (GIS) and Spatial modelling/geoprocessing: monitoring the environment and reporting on its status requires the processing and analysis of many different types of data such as geophysical data (climate, soil), topographic data, hydrological data, biodiversity data, socio-economic data and many other. Many of these data sets are more and more considered as "Big data" and demand appropriate infrastructures and skills to be manipulated. Managing these data and transforming them into information product, crossing various products to generate knowledge is the core of GRID-Geneva's activity. For better reporting the capacity to upscale and downscale data is also essential.

Remote sensing: GRID-Geneva is using the latest technologies for processing satellite imagery (e.g. data cube, image object analysis) as well as usual remote sensing techniques. It will continue to maintain such skills and will contribute to support the three Parties and other partners with remote sensing analysis. This can be used for monitoring trends on environment status. Automation of remote sensing analysis, conversion of raster data to graphs and capacity building on these technics are part of key know how from GRID-Geneva.

Live Graphs and Maps: with the introduction of UNEP Live, it is essential for UNEP to be able to feature

near-real time data and having them automatically updated. GRID-Geneva in collaboration with data providers can automate the data update in order to maintain data with the latest information available.

Capacity Building: with the rapid change in technologies, GRID-Geneva has an important role in helping governments and insuring that nobody is left behind. GRID-Geneva has developed several training packages on GIS, remote sensing and SDI and will keep providing support to various partners and governments to improve their skills in these domains. GRID-Geneva staff persons are also teaching at the UniGe on these geospatial technologies. Capacity building is not only provided on technologies but also on themes. On-line training can also be developed e.g. through Massive Online Open Course (MOOC).

Network: over more than three decades of existence, GRID-Geneva has constituted a large network of partners from other GRID centres (Arendal, Sioux-Falls, Warsaw), UN Agencies, Development Banks, academic institutions, research organizations. GRID-Geneva should maintain and improve this network, especially with Geneva-based organizations (Group on Earth Observations, World Meteorological Organization, Global Climate Observing System, World-Wildlife Fund, Ramsar Convention, International Union for Conservation of Nature, ...), as well as European-based research organizations (e.g. ESA, EU Commission, EU/JRC). GRID-Geneva will facilitate contact between Parties and its network.

Thematic skills: GRID-Geneva has developed strong technical skills, but also, throughout projects, high skills in various thematics such as monitoring extractives, Disaster Risk Reduction (including Ecosystem Based Adaptation), climate change (including Climate Change Adaptation), renewable energy, water quality, population modelling, ecosystem services, planetary boundaries and foresight on emerging environmental issues.

Assessment & Reporting (AR): Provide ongoing support for/inputs to the environment assessments and state-of-environment reporting activities of the partners.

Foresight Early Warning (EW): Contribute to the UNEP foresight brief, early warning-related activities of UNEP and the partners, including relevant strategies and methodologies for the study and mitigation of emerging environmental threats and human vulnerability to environmental change, including disaster risk reduction as related to climate change and ecosystems degradation/loss. Continue to prepare appropriate global, regional and topical reports and in-depth studies, related to emerging environmental issues that highlight environmental changes and degradation, and their impact on human society.

Capacity Development (CD): carry out appropriate technical support and capacity development and outreach activities in selected sub-regions and countries of the Eastern European, Caucasus and Central Asian (EECCA), South Eastern Europe (SEE) and Mediterranean regions, in line with the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building adopted by the 23rd Session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in February 2005 (Decision 23/1).

These may include, *inter alia*, regional to local assessment and reporting processes (including those led for Europe by the EEA and UNECE), "One UN" and UNDAF exercises at the country level, and other activities/projects such as those led by the multi-agency Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative, and for the Green Economy (RE/SCP) et al.

Miscellaneous/Other (e.g., Environmental Information Networking EIN): GRID-Geneva will contribute to and participate in global and regional environmental information networking activities, including the Eye on Earth movement and related special initiatives, in particular the "Global Network of Networks (GNoN)", with key partners such as the Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative (AGEDI), the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the Global Earth Observing System of Systems (GEOSS), in order to further develop capabilities for data sharing and use, best practices and application of agreed international standards for the same.

Other core activities and services may be performed via separate legal instruments with third parties where they are requested and respond to the Parties' Programmes of Work.