Press Release

Cutting-Edge UN Knowledge Platform on the Environment Introduces New Real-time Tools to Track Implementation of Global Goals

Nairobi, 16 February 2017 – Environment Live, the cutting-edge, dynamic UN platform on the environment, designed to collect, process and share the world's best environmental science and research, has introduced new tools to support the follow up and review of progress towards the implementation of the environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Built and maintained by UN Environment, the platform provides real-time open data access to both the public and policy makers using distributed networks, cloud computing, big data and improved search functions.

New features introduced include:

- Integrated support for assessments and policy decision-making at the global, regional and country levels.

- Access to scientific world data, maps and graphs desegregated at the regional, national and local levels and a World Data portal that combines official statistical data obtained from countries and remote sensing satellite imagery. The portal gives access to geospatial information and Big supported by a powerful search facility.

- Real time tools for public interaction through communities of practice and access to the latest citizen science and citizen-driven monitoring networks.

From mapping natural capital to forecasting hydropower to intelligent energy and the sustainable use of materials, strong data presently exist in a wide variety of environmental arenas.

The objective is to translate this knowledge into good political and socio-economic decisions that will contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Indeed, policy making "in the dark" - under high levels of uncertainty and without concrete data - carries high risks and transactional costs which need to be minimized. End users must be able to access data in a meaningful way.

To that end, Environment Live fills gaps between data providers and consumers.

Among the goals is to provide full and open access to information to people around the world.

Public access to data is a fundamental element in the transformation to a vibrant green economy.

Better access allows citizens to better understand - and even participate in the collection of - data on environmental changes.

Indeed, the role of the public in "citizen science", or the crowd-sourcing of data, is one of the most cutting-edge and exciting tools emerging in the global research arena.

Environment Live provides people a greater voice in policy development and monitoring, which is crucial to an inclusive green economy.

Through the platform's applications, multimedia content and digital publishing tools, users will have access to data from multiple verified sources an data providers.

Moreover, through these tools and resources, the platform will support the streamlining of national monitoring, reporting and verification of data for global and regional environmental goals, including the post-2015 agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.
UN Environment continues to work with a number of global partners (UN-DESA - on implementing frameworks for environmental data and statistics; UN Stats Division - in coordinating support to countries to improve access to information; FAO and WHO on integrated indicators for the sustainable development goals; as well as UN regional offices) to advise on which environmental data sets should be prioritized for collection and sharing with the public.