

Thursday December 15, 2011

Eye on Earth Abu Dhabi 2011 Summit

**Closing Address by H.E. Razan Khalifa Al Mubarak, Secretary
General, Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi**

In the past 4 days, thousands of people have converged in Abu Dhabi for the Eye on Earth Summit and Exhibition. We came from all walks of life and regions of the world: 56 people traveled from Kenya, 19 from Nepal, 25 from Switzerland, the list goes on and on. Nations large and small, rich and poor, far and wide.

Not only does this exemplify the diversity and breadth of the Summit attendees, but more importantly it represents the diversity, breadth, and global importance of the environmental and societal data movement.

Although we have convened for a brief moment in time, we have met inspiring people. They are people who give us a Reason to

Hope. From these people, we see not only possibilities, but actions on behalf of our planet.

We have gathered together as individuals with a shared interest to act and solve many environmental challenges. These challenges are wide-ranging and complex. All require numerous data. However, we know now that this information does not belong to specialized scientists or experts; Society is a generator and user of these this information. We need to embrace this new dimension and this summit has demonstrated our collective interest.

This common interest is exemplified by the Eye on Earth Community Declaration and the Special Initiatives. This week, ministers of environment and their delegates, leaders of civil

society, and United Nations representatives have negotiated and agreed to a Declaration.

This Declaration helps us transition from our moment in Abu Dhabi into a movement. We are united by our common interest and, now, the Eye on Earth Community is emerging.

However, community membership requires commitment and responsibility, accountability and action. For us in Abu Dhabi the path is clear.

Abu Dhabi is committed to fostering and facilitating this movement, developing its sense of community, and playing a lead role in the development of the Eye on Earth Community.

- AGEDI commits to continue and further its mission as a catalyst for the development of the Community.

- We commit to working with our executive advisory board and other partners especially the European Environment Agency and UNEP regarding access and sharing of environmental information across the region and shared areas of interest.
- AGEDI will serve as a coordinator of the Special Initiatives at a regional level for the Eye on Water, Eye on Biodiversity, Eye on Oceans and the Network of Networks.

But we cannot act alone. For this movement to thrive, we must all act in concert. I encourage you to reflect on your time here and reach out to your colleagues and commit to action. Commit to the Special Initiatives and the principles of the Declaration.

To paraphrase Bill Clinton in his remarks earlier this week “TALK IS CHEAP.” We all know that our commitments require accountability. Therefore, we are committed to sharing our achievements with you in 2 years’ time, and we would like you to

report on your achievements. We invite you to reconvene for the Eye on Earth Abu Dhabi 2014.

Your Highnesses and Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, Thank you for gathering in Abu Dhabi.