

Ethiopian Natural Resources and Environmental Meta-Database (ENRAEMED)

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SUMMARY

Information processed for some other purpose exists some where in some form. But most of the time the where about, the type, quality, content and form of information are not known by users and information seekers. As a result it became evident that information most of the time becomes unavailable for planners and decision makers or even if available not at the right time. Moreover, there is a duplication of effort in view of trying to avail desired information. Generally finding and retrieving appropriate and up-to-date information is a major problem hampering decision-making.

The then Ministry of Natural Resources Development and Environmental Protection (MNRD&EP) expressed an urgent need to make existing information on the nations natural resources and the environment more accessible to potential users.

The nation-wide scope of the meta-database was emphasized right from the start by establishing a partnership of seven major federal institutions concerned with the collection, storage and dissemination of natural resources and environmental information, and by involving Regional States on a pilot basis as well.

A number of key steps were taken to address the concerns and facilitate smooth business operations. These are: Identifying and listing of stakeholders, Selection of key stakeholders, Developing and agreeing on Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Forming the Organization Development Advisory Committee (ODAC), Forming the Technical Working Group (TWG), Forming the Internal Working Groups (IWG), Final agreement on data access and security policy.

In line with the above steps ENRAEMED is developed (in house developed software) based on review of internationally recognized metadata standards like the FGDC's, CSDGM and ANZELIC. The software has Metadata collector, administrator, explorer, and Meta-database website. Currently more than three thousand five hundred metadata on water, geology, GIS/RS digital files etc and related dataset have been described and hosted on website.

Presently the software ENRAEMED is adopted by UN-WATER Africa project/AWICH program. The ECA will promote the use of ENRAEMED in its member states. For the project and NEMC it is convenient to have the central server, located on the ECA premises in Addis Ababa, within reach. The project cooperated with the ECA technical staff to set up the website and get it up and running.