



GRID

GLOBAL RESOURCE INFORMATION DATABASE

**GRID
INFORMATION SERIES
NO. 17, Rev. 1**

**NAIROBI
JULY 1991**

GRID DATA DISTRIBUTION POLICY



GEMS

**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT MONITORING SYSTEM
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**



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1. BACKGROUND

GRID, the Global Resource Information Database, is an environmental data management service within the United Nations system, established in 1985 by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in the framework of the Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS). It is an international co-operative effort involving UN Specialized Agencies, intergovernmental organizations and national governments.

GRID has four main data management functions: to bring together key global and regional environmental data sets produced as a result of inventory and monitoring activities both within and outside GEMS, to integrate such data sets through geographical referencing and defined functional linkages, to establish an analytical basis for assessment statements on selected key environmental issues, and, in general, to convert environmental data into integrated information usable by both national and international decision-makers and scientists anywhere in the world. GRID also aims to provide access to a unique international GIS service.

During its initial years, GRID has tested the application of geographical information system (GIS) technology in the international context at scales ranging from global to sub-national. An archive of data sets has also been established. This GRID Data Release Policy statement describes the types of data which have been collected, the archive and the guidelines for release of the data. (For further information on the GRID system, please see the GRID Brochure and other reports in the GRID Information Series).

2. THE GRID ARCHIVE

2.1 Types of Data

The GRID archive contains a variety of data sets relevant to the health of the planet. The data sets come from a number of sources and at a number of scales. The majority of the data sets, however, concern global or regional themes, although a number of national data sets are also included. All of the data sets have the common characteristic of being geographically referenced.

The GRID datasets can be classified into the following general categories:

- A. Global and regional data sets from UN or intergovernmental Sources: These are "public domain" data sets which have been released by a UN organization or an intergovernmental organization such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), the International Livestock Centre for Africa (ILCA), etc., either as maps, atlases, books or in other published form, or which are available as digital data. Examples are the FAO Soils Map of the world and the Conservation Monitoring Centre Databases of Threatened Plant and Animal Species. This category also includes data sets derived by UNEP-GRID centres.**

- B. **Global and regional data sets from national organizations:** These data sets have been developed within national agencies, typically for analysis of global processes or as an aid to international communication. Examples are the US Navy Global Spot Elevation Data set and the NOAA Weekly Global Vegetation Index. This category could include data sets derived by cooperating GRID-compatible national centres. For most practical purposes they are "public domain".
- C. **National data sets from international development activities:** Obtained from the same sources as type A data, these data are limited in scope to one country or a part thereof. They have been generated through the activities of an internationally financed development project, and are generally considered by the country in question to be suitable for circulation to users outside that country.
- D. **National data sets from national organizations:** national or sub-national data sets arising out of a national organization project activity, often generated from GRID supported case studies. Such data sets are usually privileged by the terms of the case study agreement. Most national and sub-national data sets in this category may only be released with the expressed permission of the relevant authority. Spatially resampled (generalized) versions of the data may be used to update other GRID data sets.
- E. **Data sets from private organizations:** Such data sets have been produced by profit-making organizations, either for internal use or for public sale. These reside in the GRID archive by arrangement and are only for in-house use. Many are processed satellite data sets sold by private vendors.
- F. **GRID does not distribute raw (unprocessed) satellite data.**

2.2 Archive Maintenance

The GRID Archive is operated in a distributed fashion with each regional GRID node responsible for certain data sets. Global data sets are maintained at GRID-Geneva. In general, the division is along geographical lines, with the Africa data sets, for instance, maintained in Nairobi. Cooperative centres are being established, for example in Bangkok (South East Asia), Noumea (the Pacific), Mexico City (Latin America and the Caribbean). The first centre in the Nordic region has been opened in Arendal, Norway and a North American centre in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, USA. Some GRID nodes also have specific sectoral responsibilities.

As more up-to-date information is received, the relevant data sets are modified and the changes incorporated into the archive at the responsible node. All nodes report any such updates to the GRID Coordinator on a regular basis.

2.3 The GRID Data Set Bulletins

On the basis of the information received from the various GRID nodes, a detailed listing of the current GRID data sets is issued on a regular basis

from Nairobi in printed form and on diskettes. The following information about each data set is available:

- A. **DATA SET IDENTITY CODE.**
- B. **GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE:** Global, continental, regional, national, sub-national or specific area.
- C. **SOURCE:** including originators, and originating unit or organization, and a literature reference, as appropriate.
- D. **DATE:** indicating the date of publication, generation, and/or date range covered by the data set.
- E. **FORMAT:** Indicating the data structure. Data sets are normally archived in either vector or raster format.
- F. **MAP PROJECTION and COORDINATE SYSTEM.**
- G. **SCALE OR SPATIAL RESOLUTION,** as appropriate.
- H. **AVAILABILITY:** Following the guidelines outlined in section 2.1, all data sets have been assigned one of the following categories: free access, source approval, or in-house GRID use only.
- I. **DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH:** Each data set is accompanied by a descriptive legend and narrative statement supplying more details about its contents, history purpose and limitations in terms of accuracy and quality where these have been determined by the relevant science group. The first line of the description includes the NAME of the data set.

2.4 Master Directory

In the course of 1991, a general on-line data directory containing the GRID meta-database, as well as a major part of the US National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA) Master Directory, will be accessible at GRID-Geneva. The parameters listed in section 2.3 are basically a printed subset of the GRID meta-database directory, which has 30 or more parameters per data set. Most of GRID's global data sets have already been entered in this meta-database; however, the others are being entered as time allows. Access details will be circulated in due course.

3. DATA REQUESTS

3.1 Release guidelines

The GRID database is maintained for the purpose of assisting individual nations and the international community in making sound decisions related to resource management and environmental planning, and where applicable to provide data for scientific studies. In general, requests for data from the archive will be filled according to data availability, GRID work load and the

nature of the data set being requested. Requests will be queued with priority given to requests related to joint activities with UNEP programme areas.

UN Organizations, intergovernmental Organizations, private research Organizations, scientific and academic Organizations, non-governmental Organizations and national government Organizations are all eligible to request data from the GRID archive. Requests from such eligible Organizations for data with an unrestricted access rating will normally be filled without further clearance. Requests for data with a source approval rating will be referred to the relevant authority for clearance, and in some cases, the requestor will be advised to seek the data from source. Data sets with an in-house rating will not be distributed; however, information about such data sets, including the distributor's name, will be sent to eligible Organizations on request.

Data requests from private commercial firms and private individuals will not normally be filled. Exceptional cases in which the intended use of the data would be of direct benefit to the United Nations or member states will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the GRID Coordinator, in consultation with the UNEP Assistant Executive Director - Programme.

There is no charge for data sets obtained from GRID. However, recipients are asked to supply an appropriate number of replacement media.

It is understood that due acknowledgement will be made to GRID, GEMS and UNEP, as well as the original data source, on all output products. Suitable wording would be: "Data provided by the Global Resource Information Database (GRID) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). GRID is an element of the Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS). The data originated at..." A short acknowledgement on, say, a graphic output product could consist of the acronyms: "UNEP/GRID"

A copy of any significant outputs should also be provided to the GRID node supplying the data or the GRID Coordination Unit, UNEP, Nairobi.

3.2 Release media and format

GRID data sets can be supplied on magnetic tape, IBM or DEC cartridges, diskette (3.5" or 5.25" floppy), optical disk (IBM 3363 200 MByte), or CD-ROM.

Data sets are normally distributed in the data format in which they are archived. Requests for data in other formats will only be filled in exceptional cases.

A copy of any available documentation will be sent with data sets.

3.3 Procedure for requesting data

Requests for GRID data should be sent to the nearest GRID office, at present as follows:

GRID-Nairobi
GEMS/UNEP
Box 30552
Nairobi, KENYA
Telex: 22068 UNEP-KE
Telefax: 254-2-520281
hcroze@nasamail.nasa.gov
[HCROZE/NASA/]NASAMAIL/USA
DIALCOM 41:UNE008

GRID-Geneva
6, rue de la Gabelle
Carouge, CH-1227
Geneva, SWITZERLAND
Telex: 422227 GRID-CH
Telefax: 41-22-438862
hebin@cgegrd11.bitnet
DIALCOM 41:UNE060

GRID-Arendal
TK-Senteret, Longum Park
PO Box 1602, Myrene
N-4800 Arendal
NORWAY
Telefax: 47-41-35050
DIALCOM 41:UNE061

GRID-Sioux Falls
EROS Data Center
US Geological Survey
Sioux Falls, SD 57198
USA
Telefax: (605) 594 6589
DIALCOM 41:UNE062

GRID-Bangkok
Outreach Building
Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)
P.O. Box 2754
Bangkok 10501
Thailand
Telefax: (66.2) 516 2125
grid@ait.th
DIALCOM 41:UNE096

These offices will forward requests to the responsible GRID node for processing. Data sets will be sent by UN pouch or international mail as appropriate. In the case of urgent requests, data sets can be sent by commercial courier service at cost to the recipient.

All requests should clearly identify the following:

- A. The requestor's name, title and organizational affiliation(s).

- B. The nature of the project for which the data are being requested, including title, objectives, timetable, source(s) of finance, institutional framework, outputs, and use of outputs.**
- C. The software and hardware on which the data will be processed.**
- D. The identifier number(s) and name(s) of the data set(s) requested.**
- E. The desired output medium: magnetic tape, diskette or optical disk. Parameters such as density and blocksize should be specified. PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL DATA REQUESTS SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADEQUATE NUMBER OF DISKS OR TAPES. IN CASES WHERE INADEQUATE MEDIA ARE PROVIDED, THE REQUEST MAY BE FILLED AT THE DISCRETION OF UNEP, STRICTLY ON CONDITION THAT THE DEFICIT BE MET BY RETURN MAIL.**

Every effort will be made to fill data requests promptly. However, delays may occur, particularly for data sets requiring source approval prior to distribution. With regard to all matters concerning data requests, the decision of the UNEP Office of the Environment Programme is final.

GRID INFORMATION SERIES

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1. Criteria, hardware and software for a global land and soil monitoring system | November 1981 |
| 2. Report of an ad hoc expert group meeting for review of hardware and software criteria for a global resource information database
Monitoring and Assessment Research Centre
London, 31 May - 3 June 1983 | June 1983 |
| 3. Status Report: March 1985 - April 1986 | May 1986 |
| 4. Data sources, standards and quality control for a GEMS-GRID Kenyan case study
Woljiciech Bulski | July 1986 |
| 5. Interim data release policy | September 1986 |
| 6. Status Report: April - September 1986 | October 1986 |
| 7. GIS Applications within GRID: An atlas of African watersheds and slope categories | May 1987 |
| 8. Uganda Case Study: A sampler atlas of environmental resource datasets within GRID | June 1987 |
| 9. GRID Pilot Project: An interim status report | June 1987 |
| 10. UNEP/UNITAR Training Programme in Geographical Information System in the Field of Environment | July 1987 |
| 11. An Assessment of GEMS Global Monitoring Networks: Data management and linkages to GRID
Mitchell E. Loeb | September 1987 |
| 12. Report of an Ad Hoc Expert Workshop on GRID Systems and Software
Weber, J.D. ed. | November 1987 |
| 13. Guidelines for the Development of GRID-Compatible National Geographic Information Systems (GIS) | December 1987 |
| 14. GRID Pilot Phase 1985-87: Final Report | January 1988 |
| 15. Report, Meeting of the GRID Scientific and Technical Management Advisory Committee
UNEP, Nairobi, 18-21 January 1988 | January 1988 |
| 16. Report of an Ad Hoc Expert Workshop on GRID Systems Architecture
Universities Space Research Association Columbia, Maryland, USA
16-17 November 1988 | November 1988 |
| 17. GRID Data Report Policy, REV. 1 | June 1991 |