



**World Environment Situation  
Room and WESR CCA**  
**Executive Briefing**  
November 2021

**UN**   
**environment  
programme**



# I. Global World Environment Situation Room

## A. Technical Implementation of WESR

The World Environment Situation Room (WESR) is the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on-line data and knowledge platform. It enables users to visualize, query, access, link and share data, information and knowledge products regarding the world environment situation in near real-time (<https://data.unep.org/>/<https://wesr.unep.org/>)

This platform is already a primary tool for UNEP’s geospatial data, data-driven assessments, foresights, monitoring, communications, and support to UN country teams and related Common Country Analysis (CCA).

The platform is still under development in a ramping up mode, meaning that its content is growing over time. It is already well-integrated into the main [WWW.UNEP.org](http://WWW.UNEP.org) website.

Among key progress made in the technical development of WESR includes;

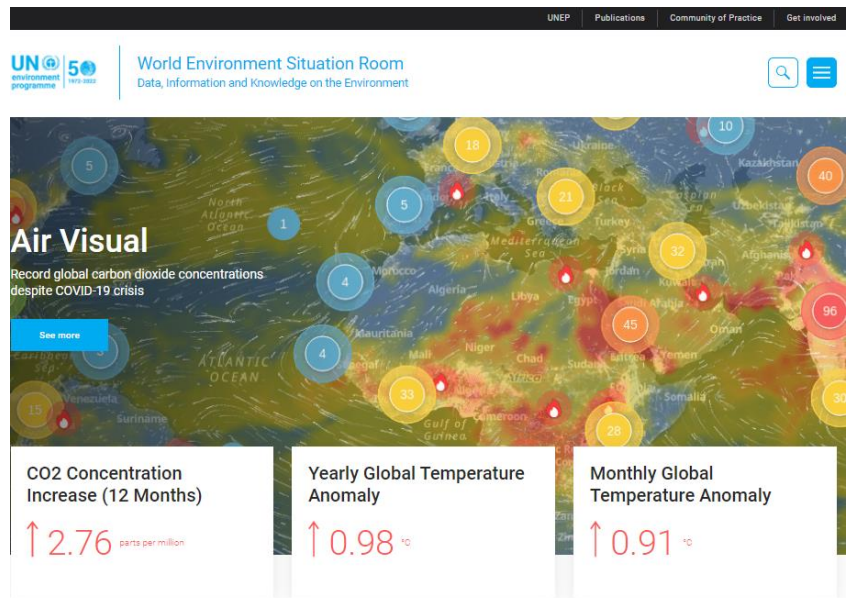
### i. New WESR Design

Incredible improvements have been made in [www.wesr.unep.org](http://www.wesr.unep.org) landing page. The page features a theme topic in any given period, currently featuring Air visual (<https://www.iqair.com/unep>).

The highlighted theme has features statistics that are updated in real time. Currently, under Air visual, statistics on CO2 concentration increase in the last 12 months, yearly global temperature anomaly and monthly global temperature anomaly are being featured.

The landing page also features communities of practice (<https://communities.unep.org/>) and citizen science (<https://wesr.unep.org/citizen>).

Further, the new design allows for browsing by topic, browse by SDGs, by regions and countries, and finally by story maps. Through integration with UNEP.org, WESR featured story provides a doorway to the story published in UNEP.org. This interlinkage provides a seamless movement between the two platforms.



### Browse by Topic



[pollution](#)



[biodiversity](#)



[climate-change](#)

Three flagship thematic areas namely, pollution, biodiversity and climate change are prominently featured under browse by topics.

### Browse by Regions and Countries



[Africa](#)



[Asia & Pacific](#)



[Europe](#)

The five regional pages present SDG related data, publications, progress reports and partnership platforms from the regions. These includes; [Africa](#), [Asia & Pacific](#), [Europe](#), [Latin America & Caribbean](#), [West Asia](#) and [North America](#).

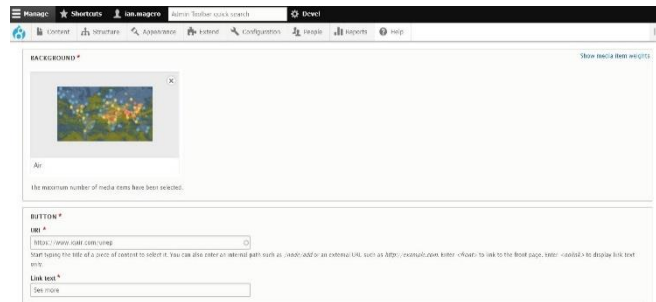
The WESR landing page, further, allows browsing by SDGs with data on environmental related SDGs already uploaded and growing over time. More than 20 story

maps on crucial environmental related topics are already featured in the platform.

### ii. Content management system powered by Drupal

To ensure close mirroring of the UNEP.org, WESR have also adopted the Drupal technology for the development of the contents management system(CMS). The first splint of developments has been finalized with key outputs including;

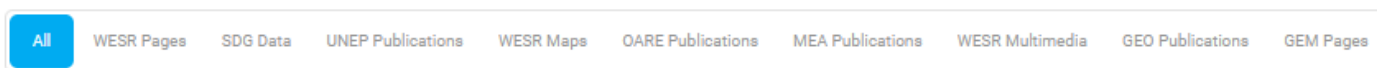
- (i) the development of a layout and structure for the dynamic website capturing the latest trends for website presentations which is compatible and easily accessible to most common devices and browsers. (Laptops, mobiles and other handheld and
- (ii) the Integration with a Content Management System (CMS) - Drupal- based on the best user-friendly tools.



A custom edit page for the Drupal CMS

The new CMS allows for content owners and the thematic area focal point a more direct involvement in the development and updates of their specific thematic pages. Training on the Drupal CMS is already ongoing.

### iii. Development of WESR search tool with ontology



The development of the WESR Search tool have included a new search tool with ontology (based on GEMET), which provides results organized by types. Results are grouped in categories that range from the WESR pages, SDG Data, UNEP publications, WESR maps, OARE publications, MEAs, GEO publications and GEM pages.

English and French are the official language of the UN secretariat. Four other languages are official languages in the UN (Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Arabic). It is costly to translate content in all these languages, as a result most of the content is in English. However, the team is working so that this search can be done in all the 6 UN official languages.

## B. 25 Demonstration Projects – Use cases and Thematic Implementation of WESR

WESR already integrates seven streams of Data, Information and Knowledge such as: Geospatial Technology and Knowledge platforms; Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), SDGs and environmental Statistics; Scientific information on the Environment; Global environmental Monitoring Systems ; Global Environmental Outlook, Scientific Assessments other Thematic Assessments and all UNEP publications; Citizen Science and Private Environmental Data; Strategic Foresight Green and Emerging Challenges.

Key projects identified for showcasing impact attained and for demonstration during the UNEA 5.2 and UNEP@50 includes;

Project	Key Leadership
WESR CCA	Across UNEP, all Regional Offices and Policy Division, GRIDs, Yale University
InforMEA	MEAs and Law and Governance Division
SCP-HAT	Economy Division, TRP and 10YFP Network
Biodiversity	Ecosystems, WCMC, GRD, IUCN, CBD, JRC
Ozone	MEA Secretariat Ozone
Climate Change	Ecosystems Division, GRID-Geneva
3 Cities in Africa	Regional Office for Africa, GRID-Geneva, Yale University
Hotspots Atlas	GRID=Sioux Falls, GRID-Geneva
Illegal Killing Elephants	CITES and MIKE Team and EAD AGEDI Abu Dhabi
Oceans	GRID-Arendal, Science Division, UNESCO
Water	GEMs and World Water Quality Alliance, Ecosystems Division
Pollution	Economy Division
33 Countries Fiches	GRID Geneva
SDGs and Statistics	Science Division
Knowledge Repository	Science Division
Air Quality Monitoring	Science Division
Foresight	Science Division, IPCC, IRP, IPBES, and UN CEB–HLCP Foresight Network
UNEP and Copernicus	GRID-Geneva, EC, ESA, Copernicus
Blueprint Geospatial Hub	UN Geospatial Network UN-GCIM



## II. Impact on the Ground in Country support to UN Reforms (WESR CCA and EC country Fiches)

### A. WESR CCA - Impact

Through support from Denmark, WESR CCA has endeavored to support the implementation of the World Environment Situation Room for supporting the Common Country Analyses, UN Reform in an initial target group of 15 countries (Phase I) and an additional 20 countries (Phase II).

WESR CCA has made available an initial core set of basic data and analytics on environmental SDG indicators, where already available, for all the UN System and for all UN Member States.

It has also led to the engagement with UN Country Teams and UN Resident Coordinators in over **38 pilot countries** enhancing the WESR platform and tailoring it to the needs and priorities of UN RCs in support the UN CCA and UNSDCF. Countries that have received interventions from CCA includes;

<b>Africa:</b> Kenya, Tanzania, South-Africa, Ethiopia, Egypt, Somalia, Cote D'Ivoire, Uganda, Senegal, Togo, Ghana, Gambia, Gabon, Botswana, Madagascar, Guinea, Botswana, Eritrea, Malawi, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone
<b>Asia Pacific:</b> Northeast Asia (2): China, Mongolia, South Asia (8): Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan Southeast Asia (9): Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Thailand and Viet Nam; The Pacific (1): Papua New Guinea
<b>West Asia:</b> Jordan, Lebanon, Kuwait, Thailand, Myanmar, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Vietnam, Mongolia, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, Saudi Arabia
<b>Europe:</b> Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Tajikistan
<b>Latin America &amp; the Caribbean Countries:</b> Argentina, English speaking countries (sub-regional CCA-5 RCOs), Uruguay, Peru, Honduras

### B. Development of WESR CCA Country Pages

The development of WESR CCA country pages supports the member countries in bringing the assessments and data collected in the process of WESR CCA and EC Fiches on one page and thus support their specific policy work. The page features the specific country overview, common information, and country specific information among other things.

The WESR CCA country pages provides country based analysis which integrates environmental information and through an open platform enables stakeholders to use and share data and knowledge, and to engage in the production and use of scientifically sound information for assessment processes and for the transition to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The country overview introduces the specific country description and the structure of the economy, population and territory. The pages provide the key information regarding the **country's environmental performance**, in the context of the most relevant policy questions.

Comparable and existing data/indicators is based on 8 pillars. i.e. Climate change, Water, Pollution, Biodiversity, Forests, Land, green economy, sustainable finance. The country pages feature the SDG scorecards for the respective countries. The Country pages allows for essential indicator customization and links with external platforms through

APIs and harbors links to external data platforms. Interoperability with World Environment Situation Room has been finalized and accessible via <https://wesr-cca.unepgrid.ch/>

WESR CCA country pages provides for: use of data on the ground (country data); support to country teams needs and priorities; data analytics and analysis; support to interoperability; data visualization.

### C. Interactive Country Fiches. Funded by the European Union. Led by Regional Office Europe

The Interactive Country Fiches provide a system of interactive and updatable environmental profiles for the analysis of environmental situations and performances of countries around the world. Covering eight environmental pillars, this online tool aims to provide information on key national policies and actions and offers a single-entry point to over a hundred of up-to-date datasets. <https://dicf.unepgrid.ch/>

The EC interactive Country Fiches project is geared towards strengthening of the science policy interface by countries based on the use of data, information and policy analysis. It is aimed at;

- Assisting the EC in their strategic vision to support countries towards sustainable development.
- Fast and accurate environment data of the countries
- Easy and quick access to visualize data and trends via graphs, tables and maps
- Organized around 8 pillars of environment themes and each of them around the DPSIR framework
- Reverse footprint analysis to show impacts triggered by imports from other countries and sector
- Concise policy analysis on national context

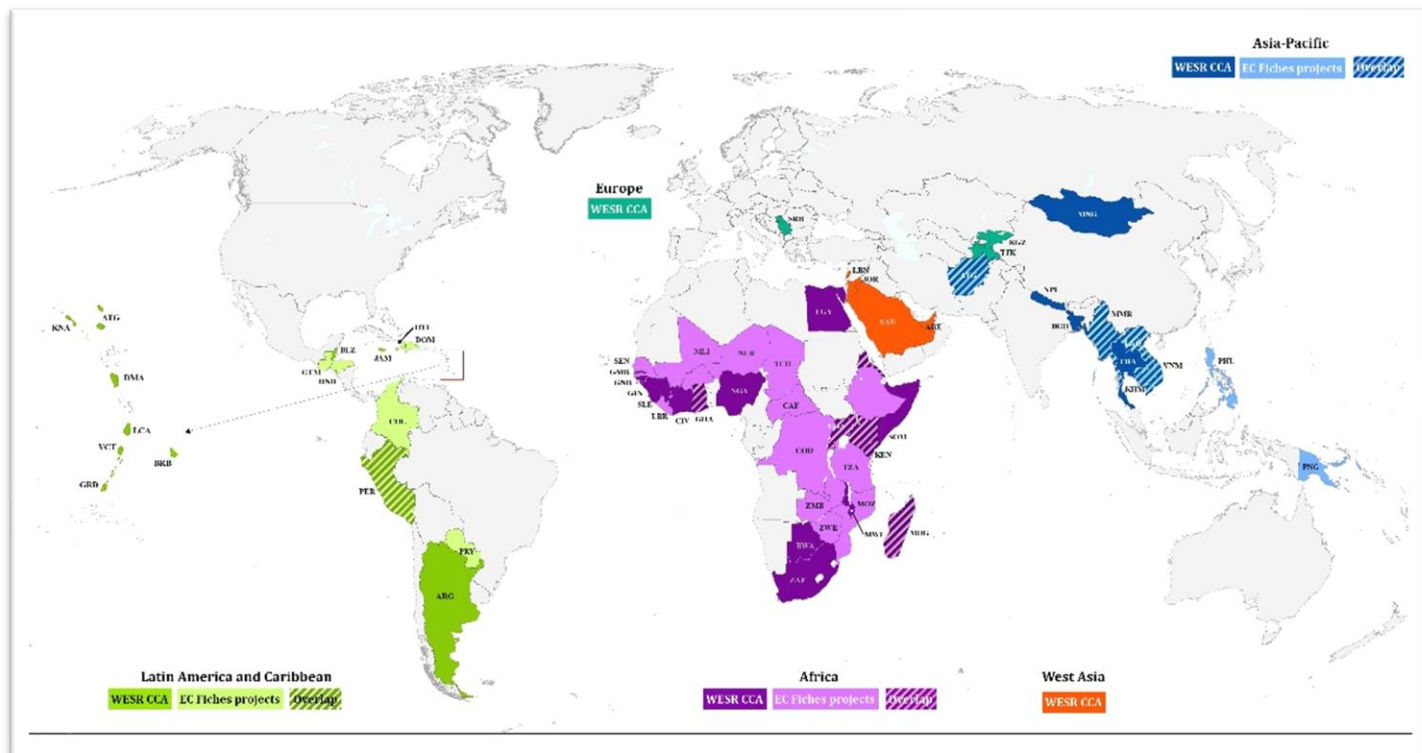
The **33 countries** selected for the project, include;

Latin America and the Caribbean: Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Paraguay, Peru

Africa: Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Rep. Dem. Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia Zimbabwe

Asia and the Pacific: Afghanistan, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Vietnam

### D. Global implementation of both WESR CCA and EC Country Fiches



From the graphical representation of the global efforts by both WESR CCA and EC Fiches, more than 60 countries have so far benefitted with about 8 of them being fortunate enough to pilot both projects.

### E. Lessons Learnt from the implementation of WESR CCA and EC Country Fiches

The Data Analytics Dashboards are a useful platform supporting the CCA implementation; There is a need for Data Analysts and Policy Analysts working with the Data platform and providing alignment with Country specific priorities

and needs; There is a need for "Common Information" made available to all countries; but also "Country Specific Information", aligned with Countries Priorities; The Data Dashboards should also include other Data sets (social and economic data) in addition to environmental data; The interoperability of the WESR CCA Dashboard with the UN Knowledge Hubs in the Regions in particular the UN Regional Economic Commissions is a critical element for success.

Optimizing on UNEP's nimbleness in the regions, CCA support in the region has seen a continued application of lessons learned from previous CCA processes to new CCA processes. These include drawing from key aspects of CCA development such as formulation of the terms of references and coordination of various contributing entities to the actual analysis and key highlights emanating from the 2019 [UNEP-led UN Resident Coordinator's dialogue](#) hosted in Nairobi.

This is in addition to various aspects that reflect the centrality of environmental sustainability, multilateralism and science-policy interfaces in the country programming processes. As well, and in line with the [COVID-19 realities](#) and other shocks, CCA support has sought to incorporate critical aspects of [sustainability](#), including prominent issues drawn from key reports with UNEP's hand such as those on '[United in Science](#)' and '[Preventing the next pandemic](#)'.

### **III. The Interoperability with UN Regional Economic Commissions (UN Reform Knowledge Hubs) and UNDCO**

In the context of the UN Reform, and based on the outcome of several Regional Meetings, the UN Regional Economic Commissions are serving as the secretariat of the Regional Collaboration Platforms (RCP) and leading the development of Regional Knowledge and Data Hubs.

In this role the 5 UN Regional Economic Commissions fosters collaboration on sustainable development across the United Nations development system; enhance policy coherence between global and regional United Nations processes; promote consensus on the United Nations system support and response to regional development priorities and needs; ensure the implementation and follow-up of regionally agreed frameworks, norms and standards at the national level; and deliver integrated policy advice.

#### **A. The Interoperability with UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) Knowledge and Data Hubs**

A targeted approach to build on existing regional networks and platforms is critical to catalyzing the reach and impact of CCA findings. In Africa, UNEP has engaged the [UN Economic Commission for Africa \(ECA\)](#) on options to harness existing platforms for environmental statistics and data. This strategic move seeks to, among others, harness digital technologies and platforms to increase the reach and impact of the environmental data, statistics, and the accompanying policy analysis. Accordingly, the partnership will resonate well with UNEP and ECA common objectives on SDG data and statistics and the Africa region's [O/IBC-1](#) - "*Strengthened integrated data and statistical systems for sustainable development*", which the ECA is one of its co-conveners

#### **B. The Interoperability with MANARA**

In West Asia and Europe, WESR APIs were provided to MANARA team. The APIs are being implemented. The technical teams are working on tackling the technical challenges registered in the implementation process. Two meetings have been organized between technical teams to discuss making the interoperability between the two platforms more seamless.

#### **C. The Interoperability with ESCAP platforms**

In Asia-Pacific, two meetings were organized between the ESCAP team and WESR team. It was noted that there is willingness and need to collaborate and improve the interoperability between the two platforms. The importance of participation of the SDG Unit team was also underlined. The teams noted numerous commonalities in back-end architecture of the data WESR and ESCAP platforms, however, more detailed protocols of data and product sharing should be established. The need of enhancing the data access through the WESR web page was pointed out by the ESCAP team.

#### **D. The Interoperability with CEPALStat regional platform.**

The LAC Unit established a robust communication channel and fruitful collaboration with the team within ECLAC responsible for the development of the regional SDG hub (SDG Gateway) as well as in charge for the management and updating of the CEPALStat regional platform. Several technical meetings were organized to ensure interoperability between the WESR (including WESR-CCA platforms) and ECLAC's data platforms. In addition, the LAC Regional Office facilitated a meeting between GRID-Geneva, WESR Unit in Nairobi and ECLAC to identify synergies and technical



arrangements (e.g., APIs) to publish products and services produced by UNEP and/or ECLAC through their own platforms.

### E. The Interoperability with UNDCO and UNSDG data portal

Liaison through our New York Office (Focal Point: Mara Murillo) have successfully been attained and agreement with DCO to make the WESR CCA available in DCO platforms (DCO Portal and UN Info) as at June 2020.

Agreement to organize regional Webinars through DCO platforms in the 4 regions to share the WESR and to enhance, validate and tailor the platform to further meet UN System country-level needs in each region and country. (Webinars' dates to be agreed)

A WESR page on the UNSDG data portal is to be built to connect UNEP data and analysis by API. The page features standard analysis of key climate and environmental indicators, but country pages of the data portal could have more customizable analysis.

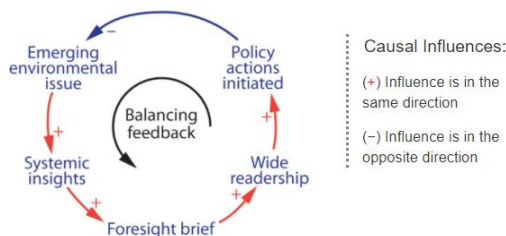
A brainstorming meeting between UNDCO, WESR team and Regional teams was organized on a vision to support better use of UNEP data and analysis in CCAs as well as an incremental plan to support that vision, including potential capacity building targeted to RCOs and DCO regional offices on basic quality criteria for climate and environmental analysis in the CCA.

## IV. Foresight Briefs. WESR supporting UNEP Strategic Foresight (Data for Future)



### Foresight Briefs

Foresight Briefs highlight a hotspot of environmental change, feature an emerging science topic, or discuss a contemporary environmental issue. They provide a systematic way of examining possible future outcome of emerging environmental issues that can also inform decision making today. UNEP's Foresight Briefs aim to present emerging issues, systemic insights and possible policy solutions on a wide range of topics related to our environment in a short readable document.



015 Growing popularity of alternate food systems for environment and health



016 Seagrasses, the forgotten ecosystems



017 Challenges for the growth of the electric vehicle market



018 Unveiling plastic pollution in oceans



019 Blockchain technology and environmental sustainability



020 The need to eliminate lead paint globally



021 Food loss and waste in the Sustainable Development Goals' nexus



022 Desert locusts' upsurges: A harbinger of emerging climate change induced crises?



023 Nature-Based Solutions for Urban Challenges

The 27th edition of UNEP's Foresight Brief explores the environmental impact of internet use and the increasing digitalization of the economy. It outlines some of the mitigating factors that can be implemented to green our digital future. The issue can be accessed through:- [Increasing digitization of the economy](#)

## V. Integration of Knowledge repository into WESR

### A. Integration of Knowledge Repository into WESR



[Knowledge Repository](#)



[Online access to research in the environment \(OARE\)](#)

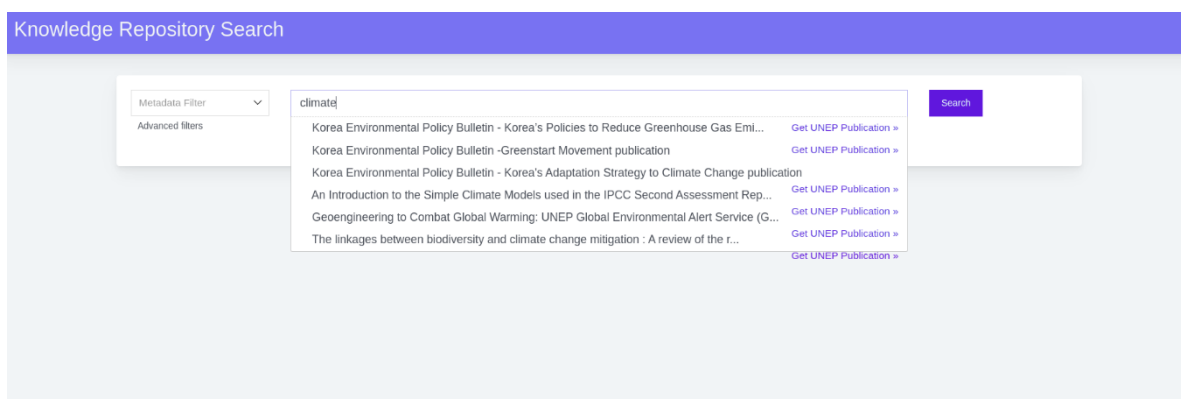
The knowledge repository and access to use of scientific publications and knowledge management are 1 of the 7 Fundamental Pillars of the WESR.

Towards attainment of its effective delivery, the following 5 key areas have been prioritized and delivered. These include;

- 1) Knowledge Repository left/right/and center in the FrontPage of WESR (menus, specific section, etc.)
- 2) A landing page (for Knowledge repository) using new design and CMS
- 3) Search in WESR should show results for Publications and Knowledge Repository in an easy, effective fashion
- 4) The WESR CCA Dashboard showing / demonstrating access to documents and publications of the WESR/Knowledge Repository
- 5) The APIs of Interoperability with UN Regional Economic Commissions showing interoperability of Knowledge Repository through WESR.

### B. New Knowledge repository user interface. Data for Good, supporting Development

The development of a new Knowledge repository external user, user interface with a cleaner user experience and search experience has been undertaken. The first phase of this initiative is the development of the search functionality. In the new UI, there is extra functionality that autosuggests results as the user is typing the query, there are filtering options across the different metadata fields associated with the publications and the results are displayed in a more consistent manner. The second phase will be to incorporate the browsing functionality that will be reading data via API from we-docs.



*Auto suggestion at Query time*

<https://data.unep.org>  
**World Environment Situation Room (WESR)**  
Environmental Data, Information and Knowledge

*Acting and Delivering as One*