



Habitat II on the Internet

A comprehensive set of documents for Habitat II - from the 1976 Vancouver Declaration and Plan of Action to the latest, draft unedited, version of the Habitat Agenda are available on the Internet. These documents are available not only to those who have direct access to the World Wide Web or the Internet gopher, but also to people, organizations and governments that have more limited forms of electronic mail service.

In its commitment to make available its documents on-line, the Habitat II Secretariat is building on the experience and practice of the series of major conferences that began with the Earth Summit in Rio. The rapid advances in computer technology, communications software and of the Internet in the five and a half years since the Earth Summit launched its Internet initiative on Earth Day 1990 have made the on-line documents progressively easier to obtain.

The increased accessibility of electronic communications has meant that in addition to the on-line compilation of official Habitat II documents, a growing number of non-governmental organizations - now joined by one Member State - are also disseminating Habitat II related information on-line. The capacity inherent in the World Wide Web and the Internet gopher to create links to other on-line resources makes it increasingly possible for these on-line resources to be integrated, and for a comprehensive clearinghouse for Habitat II to be developed as a cooperative venture of all the partners in the Habitat II process.

To date the on-line dissemination of Habitat II documents has been managed through cooperative partnerships with Information Habitat: Where Information Lives, a Consultative Status, Category II, non-governmental organization, and the Central European Data Request facility (C.E.D.A.R.) in Vienna.

In addition to sites maintained by Information Habitat and C.E.D.A.R., other Habitat II World Wide Web and Internet gopher sites include: the Linkages and Earth Negotiations Bulletin project of the International Institute for Sustainable Development; the Habitat II Clearinghouse of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; the People's Voices and Visions campaign of the International NGO Facilitation Group; a Habitat II Aotearoa site developed by students in the planning department at Auckland University in New Zealand; the Instituto de Pesquisas e Projetos Sociais e Tecnológicos in São Paulo, Brazil; the Vancouver-based Friends of Habitat '96 group that is bringing together participants who were at the 1976 Habitat conference; and Eco-Hab International. In addition, the New York Host Committee for Habitat II and the U.S. Network for Habitat II have each established an initial "home page" on the World Wide Web, and are preparing for more extensive on-line dissemination.

World Wide Web

All of the above site can be reached through the "Conferences" section of the United Nations World Wide Web and/or gopher sites. If you have access to the World Wide Web - the most powerful and user-friendly of the Internet services - you can reach the Habitat II documents - and direct links to all the other on-line resources - by pointing your Web browser to the following URL (Uniform Resource Locator):

<http://www.un.org/Conferences>

Gopher

If you just have access to the Internet gopher, you can reach the gopher sites for Habitat II, via the United Nations gopher, by typing "o" when using the gopher and selecting

Host: <gopher.un.org>
Path/directory: </Conferences>

Gopher-mail server

Through the use of a "gopher-mail server", those who do not have access to the gopher can obtain listings of the documents available on the Habitat II gopher, identify those documents they wish to receive, and have them sent as electronic mail messages. For information on using the gopher-mail server, send an e-mail message to <rpollard@igc.apc.org>.

Listserv

In addition to the World Wide Web and gopher sites, there are also two "Listservs" for Habitat II. (A listserv is an electronic mailing list that allows everyone who participated in the list to send messages to everyone else, and to receive the messages sent by the other participants.)

Whenever significant new documents are posted onto the World Wide Web and Internet gopher sites, an announcement is made on the general Habitat II listserv of its availability. The announcement is made in the form of a message that can be used to select and obtain the documents via UNDP's Gopher-mail server by those who do not have World Wide Web or gopher access

To participate in the general Habitat II list, you just need to send an e-mail message to <listproc@cedar.univie.ac.at> Do not give a subject for the message, and in the body of the message, include only the text: subscribe Habitat2 your_name - filling in your own name instead of your_name.

There is also a listserv for the People's Voices and Visions campaign of the International NGO Facilitating Group - a campaign to enable the voices and visions of people and people's organizations to be heard in Istanbul. To participate in this list, send an e-mail message to <majordomo@igc.apc.org> Again, leave the subject blank, and in the body of the message, include only the text: subscribe peoples-voices

Association for Progressive Communications Electronic Conferences

There are two Habitat II related electronic conferences - <un.habitat.gen> and a Spanish language conference, <amlat.habitat> - that are carried on the more than twenty members networks around the world of the Association for Progressive Communications (APC). APC is a Consultative Status, Category I, non-governmental organization that has played a major role in promoting and enabling the use of electronic communications by non-governmental organization and in providing Internet access at major United Nations conferences. One has to subscribe to one of the APC member networks in order to have access to these electronic conferences. For information on subscribing, send an e-mail message to <support@igc.apc.org> or phone the Institute for Global Communications, the APC's U.S. affiliate, at 415 442-0220.

Documents on Disk

Most of the Habitat II documents that are on-line have been compiled - in compressed form - by Information Habitat: Where Information Lives on a set of two diskettes. These diskettes can be obtained through the Habitat II New York Liaison office.

Getting On-Line

Government Missions and accredited non-governmental organizations that do not have an e-mail account can obtain one - without graphic interface to the World Wide Web - through the United Nations Development Programme, by phoning Malcolm Chapman at 212 906-6585 or Serban Pencescu at 212 906-6351. E-mail access can also be obtained through the APC networks (see above) or through many commercial Internet service providers.

For additional information or questions about Habitat II information on-line, please contact Robert Pollard, Special Adviser on Information Technology for Habitat II, DC2-980, 2 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017. Tel: 212 963-8718; Fax: 212 963-8721; E-mail: rpollard@igc.apc.org.