Category: **Procedural Obligations - General**

Sub-Category: **Civil Society Monitoring Mechanisms**

Name of Good Practice: **Environmental Democracy Index**

Key Words: Access to Information, Access to Justice, Bali Guidelines, Compliance, Implementation, Monitoring, Participation, Principle 10, Technology

Implementing Actors: Civil Society Organisation: World Resources Institute and The Access Initiative

Location: Global

Description: The World Resources institute (WRI) is a global research organization that works at “the nexus of environment, economic opportunity and human well-being.” The Access Initiative is a global network of civil society organisations that promote access to information, participation and justice in environmental decision-making.

WRI and The Access Initiative (TAI) are developing the Environmental Democracy Index (EDI), an index designed to measure country-specific realization of the procedural rights of access to information, access to justice and public participation relating to environmental protection through an analysis of national laws and regulations. The UN Environment Programme’s Bali Guidelines for the Development of National Legislation on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters serve as the international standard against which national laws can be assessed. Based on the Bali Guidelines, the EDI will assess country compliance through 99 indicators, each of which includes a guiding note and a scoring guide. According to WRI, “for each participating country, one environmental lawyer completes the research and provides indicator scores on a four-point scale (0-3). Then another environmental lawyer reviews the scores, clarifying and providing feedback on the researcher’s scores. Finally the TAI Secretariat conducts two separate reviews for each country, to bring the total analyses for each country to four.”

The first EDI is scheduled to be completed in early 2015 and will be available online through an interactive web-based platform where users can view country scores, including on a global map for broad comparison. Additionally, the website will include a separate page for each country with a breakdown of country scores by pillar, guideline and individual indicator, including the comments by participating environmental lawyers. Scores will be updated on a bi-annual basis. According to WRI, the EDI will help “identify legal gaps in the three areas of environmental democracy” and can be a useful tool for governments, civil society organizations, academics, and international financial institutions.

**Further Information:** Information on the EDI is available on WRI’s website: <http://www.wri.org/our-work/project/access-initiative-tai/commissions>.