

November 6, 2007

PRESS RELEASE:

OARE hits the 100 Country Mark

Developing Nations Now Accessing Environmental Science Research Worth \$1.5 million.

Nairobi, Kenya, and New Haven, Conn.— An international partnership to provide developing countries access to one of the world's largest data bases of environmental science research has expanded to a new level, it was announced today.

Members of "Online Access to Research in the Environment" (OARE) say the initiative is now opening its doors to more than 37 new countries—increasing the number of developing nations, areas or territories involved to 107.

The initiative, involving the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Yale University, the International Association of Scientific Technical and Medical Publishers, and over 340 international publishers, scientific societies and associations, launched its first phase last year offering free access to 70 of the world least developed countries—countries whose per capita income is below \$1,250.

This second phase, adding 37 more countries, areas and territories, involves offering the service to countries where the per capita income is between \$1,250 and \$3,500. These include Albania, Algeria, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cape Verde, Columbia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Guatemala, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Serbia and Montenegro, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Morocco, Namibia, Paraguay, Peru, Romania, Tunisia, Western Samoa, Republic of Serbia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Vanuatu, and West Bank and Gaza.

Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), said: "Providing practitioners, researchers, and scientists with online access to scientific research on the environment has been a long held dream and desire by institutions around the world. OARE is contributing greatly to the reduction in the North-South scientific gap and digital divide.....and to the intellectual foundation of environmental institutions in many developing nations".

James Gustave Speth, Dean of Yale University, School of Forestry & Environmental Studies said that "In an age characterized by rapid globalization and exponential expansion of scientific knowledge, it is not surprising that the scientific gap between the developed and developing countries has assumed great importance in the international development community. Thanks to advances in information and communication technologies and the generosity of many publishers, there is now an unprecedented opportunity to provide less-developed countries intellectual resources that we in the developed world take for granted."

After a free 3-month trial period, institutions in the 37 participating countries are asked to pay an annual enrollment fee of \$1000. Representing less than one tenth of one percent of the annual retail

Continued from Pg. 1,

subscription value of the resources in OARE, all of these fees will be reinvested in training activities in developing countries.

The OARE initiative's new technology partner is Microsoft, and enrolling institutions also benefit from new Ex Libris Software, which allows developing countries to open full text articles directly within scientific search databases, dramatically reducing the time required to search for and access research documents and papers.

"Ex Libris is proud to support this important global initiative and to provide its SFX linking solution to enable scientists in developing countries to access the critical information needed for their research," said Robert Mercer, Ex Libris President of North America.

OARE aims to contribute to the development of expert professional and academic communities and an informed public, encourage scientific creativity and productivity, and build the capacity of environmental professionals to manage fragile ecosystems, protect human health, and manage natural renewable resources more sustainably. Support for the coordination of the project is provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

Notes to Editors

Institutions can enroll in OARE by completing the online registration form available on the OARE website at www.oaresciences.org or writing to oare@oaresciences.org.

Since launching in late 2006, 500 public institutions and local non governmental organizations have enrolled, each receiving access to scientific literature that, with a US annual retail subscription value in excess of \$1.5 million, represents approximately 75 percent of the world's most prestigious and highly cited scientific research in the environmental sciences.

As the OARE initiative's new technology partner, Microsoft has provided the consortium a new system for access and authentication that, by providing enhanced features under Microsoft's Intelligent Application Gateway (IAG) 2007, will help the program meet expanded demand and perform at the standards of today's most heavily trafficked websites. Institutions enrolling in OARE will also benefit from the introduction of Ex Libris SFX software to the program, a remarkable new tool that allows developing countries to open full text articles directly from within international research databases, dramatically reducing the time required to search for and access international research.