



THE ACCESS INITIATIVE MEMBERSHIP: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

FOR INDIVIDUALS

Community of Practice | Most importantly, you become part of a readymade group of friends and professional colleagues who share common concerns and speak a common vocabulary.

You become part of a vibrant community of practice on transparency, public participation and accountability on natural resource and environmental issues. This allows you to pose questions and get answers from fellow TAI'ers and provide mutually beneficial information to them. It allows you to be notified and kept up to date on key developments in laws, practices, events, opportunities and knowledge in this area. It allows you to present and test your ideas among a trusting group of peers. You would be surprised how many TAI members you may meet when you travel to conferences or events.

Access to the TAI Website Blog | You are entitled to post your own stories and achievements in transparency, participation and accountability to the TAI website blog.

The TAI website has a highly visible web-presence with thousands of hits a month. Your posts will be read widely and get solid exposure to government, civil society and donors. The website will undergo an upbeat revision by September 2014. Expanded opportunities to share your current campaigns and resources will be available.

Biennial TAI Global Gathering | As a TAI member you are entitled to attend and fully participate in the biennial TAI Global Gathering.

So far there have been five such Gatherings in Thailand, Ireland, Uganda, Brazil and Colombia. While there is no guarantee all TAI members will be funded to attend, as a TAI member you are entitled to apply and be considered for available travel funds. As a TAI member you will also have a say in the development of the agenda for such events.

Country and International Chapters | As a member you belong to a TAI country Chapter or the International Chapter. Each Chapter brings together organizations and individuals working on access issues in that country or internationally.

Collectively the TAI members in a Chapter have much greater visibility, influence and bargaining power when negotiating with decision-makers, whether on new laws, revised policies or project level decisions. Each Chapter has a lead organization and can have its own decision-making structure. It can also raise its own funds for its activities. As individuals in government, civil society or the private sector, you are among fellows in a common cause – to promote access. Chapters afford an opportunity to collaborate across institutional and interest lines.



Your Voice | As a TAI member you have a right to vote on network-wide decisions and at elections of Core Team for your region in keeping with the Core Team Membership rules in force. While most TAI network decisions are arrived at through consensus, your voice within the network counts.

TAI Expert Commissions | As a member you can also join the various Commissions that are established by the TAI network.

At present a Commission on Forest Governance has been established specializing on issues concerning the governance of forests. Similar Commissions are expected in water, extractives and sustainable cities. Expert Commissions give TAI members an opportunity to contribute to and benefit from the specialization of access issues within a sector. Sector approaches to access rights is sometimes more powerful than general approaches. These Commissions will be action-oriented. They can help frame your work within international and regional processes as well as allow you to take advantage of joint fundraising opportunities. TAI members can also be part of other working groups and regional groupings.

TAI Tools | TAI has developed (and continues to develop and refine) various tools that help partners promote access in their work.

Foremost among these tools are the TAI Assessment tool, the TAI Advocacy Tool and the Environmental Democracy Index. TAI members are free to use these tools in their work and also entitled to attend workshops, when held, on training for these tools. TAI partners may also adapt the established tools to suite their own needs, provided they don't brand them as TAI without the express permission of the TAI Core Team.

Safety & Security | TAI members have a considerable degree of security and personal safety that comes from being part of the network.

In the event of an arrest or other similar incident of a member, especially when they are engaging in access related work, family members can appeal to the network for support. The TAI Global Secretariat and the TAI network can take a number of steps including alerting Amnesty International, the UN Special Representative for Human Rights Defenders, local politicians and government officials and other

similar networks to the plight of that member. Within minutes, TAI members have responded in the past with emails, letters and petitions seeking the safety and security of TAI members. There is safety in numbers – including international numbers.

FOR ORGANIZATIONS

Display of TAI logo | In addition to all the above privileges of membership, organizations also have the right to display the TAI logo in their offices, stationary, websites and other media in keeping with the TAI branding rules.

Election as a Core Team Member | TAI member organizations may also be nominated and elected to the Core team to represent their respective regions and help lead the network.

TAI Country Chapter Lead | TAI organizations can also, when so constituted by the Core team member for their region or by election by individual and organizational members of that country Chapter, become leads for the country Chapter.

Fundraising | The TAI network is a great resource for learning about new funding opportunities and for expanding opportunities for collaboration. Many TAI partners work together and with the Global Secretariat to jointly fundraise for country specific, regional or international projects. TAI organizations may also use the TAI logo and goals and reputation when submitting proposals.



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ABOUT TAI

TAI is a global network that promotes access to information, participation, and justice in environmental decision-making. TAI is the world's largest network of civil society organizations dedicated to ensuring that local communities have the rights and abilities to gain access to information and to participate in decisions that affect their lives and their environment.