

Annex I

Terms of reference of the Environmental Management Group

Background

The General Assembly in its resolution 53/242, paragraph 5, supports the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish an environmental management group for the purpose of enhancing United Nations system-wide inter-agency coordination related to specific issues in the field of environment and human settlements.

Mandate

Taking into account the views expressed by Member States on the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements (A/53/463), and also taking into account the mandates of the relevant United Nations system organizations and bodies, as well as the views expressed by ACC (see ACC/1999/4) and IACSD at its thirteenth and fourteenth meetings, the Environmental Management Group is entrusted with the following responsibilities:

- To provide an effective, coordinated and flexible United Nations system response to and to facilitate joint action aimed at finding solutions to important and newly emerging specific issues of environmental and human settlements concern, through an issue management approach as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform" (A/51/950);
- To promote inter-linkages, encourage timely and relevant exchange of data and information on specific issues and compatibility of different approaches to finding solutions to those common problems, contribute to the synergy and complementarity among and between activities of its members in the fields of environment and human settlements, and hence act in a complementary manner and add value to the existing United Nations system-wide inter-agency cooperation.

Objectives

In fulfilling its mandate, the Group shall aim at attaining the following objectives:

To identify, address and resolve collectively specific problems, issues and tasks on the environmental and human settlements agenda requiring enhanced inter-agency cooperation in a given time-frame through securing effective and collaborative involvement of the relevant United Nations system agencies, programmes and organs and of other potential partners, as appropriate;

To provide a forum for an early discussion and sharing of information on emerging problems and issues in the field of environment and human settlements geared at finding collectively the most effective coordinated approach to the solution of the new tasks;

* UNEP/GCSS.VIII/1.

¹ UNEP/GCSS.III/5/Add.2.

To assist UNEP and Habitat in carrying out their functions related to the promotion of coordinated approaches to environmental and human settlements issues in the United Nations system and to enhance their environmental and human settlement perspectives, in particular their normative and analytic aspects, in the work of other United Nations system organizations;

To facilitate, in this vein, the work of UNEP and Habitat in carrying out their responsibilities as IACSD task managers for a number of environment and human settlements-related chapters of Agenda 21 with a view to enhancing their contributions to the work of IACSD, its subcommittees and the task managers system and other related inter-agency mechanisms, as well as the Commission on Sustainable Development, as appropriate.

Membership

In line with the mandate and objectives of the Group set out above, making it an instrument to enhance further inter-agency cooperation and coordination across the United Nations system on specific issues in the field of environment and human settlements, members of the Group shall be the specialized agencies, programmes and organs of the United Nations system, including the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements.

Modus operandi

The Group will function in a results-driven, flexible and cost-effective manner, using modern telecommunication technologies whenever possible and appropriate. It will take into account work in progress under the aegis of the Ecosystem Conservation Group and utilize that Group, to the extent possible, to facilitate its own work on ecosystem management and conservation.

UNEP will be providing the secretariat for the Environmental Management Group.

The Group will have a two-tiered structure:

- A senior-level decision-making body, entitled the Environmental Management Group, chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP and consisting of senior-level officials from member organizations of the Group;
- Time-bound ad hoc issues-management groups set up by the Group. They will cease to exist after completion of their tasks.

The members of the Group will meet at least once a year on the invitation of its Chairman, after appropriate consultations. They will, in particular:

- Identify the specific issues to be addressed by the Group;
- Establish, as appropriate, an ad hoc issue management group for each specific issue identified;
- Decide on the mandate and time-frame of each ad hoc issue management group;
- Adopt the reports of the ad hoc issue management groups.

In cases where an issue is of an urgent nature and demands prompt action, the Chairman of the Group will immediately inform the members of the necessity to form an ad hoc issue management group and invite members to participate in the task. While all Group members have the right to accept or decline participation in any given ad hoc issue management group, any such group should benefit as much as possible

from the participation of those organizations of the United Nations system which are most concerned with the issue at hand.

Each ad hoc issue management group is responsible to fulfil its mandate within the given time-frame. In case a group is not able to meet the deadline, it will submit a proposal on how and when to accomplish the task to the secretariat of the Group at least six weeks before expiration of the deadline. The Group will decide on the proposal.

UNEP will normally be the lead agency and chair the ad hoc issue management groups, the work of which will be organized and supported by the secretariat of the Group. However, an ad hoc issue management group may nominate by consensus a lead agency other than UNEP if this is found appropriate in light of the specific task. The lead agency will then prepare the documents, organize and chair the meetings, and prepare the report on the results of the group's deliberations.

Participation of non-members

Representatives of relevant sectors of the civil society and of international non-governmental organizations with a potential and specific expertise related to issues being deliberated by the Group may participate upon the request of Group members in meetings of the Group by invitation of the Chairman of the Group, taking due account of respective United Nations rules and procedures. They may also participate in the work of an ad hoc issue management group if required by the specific issue under discussion and so decided by the group. Accordingly, the lead agency of the ad hoc issue management group will invite the respective additional participants.

Reporting

The lead agency of each ad hoc issue management group will submit the report on the results of the group's work to the Chairman of the Group through its secretariat.

The secretariat in turn will submit copies of the report for comments and adoption to the representatives of those organizations-members of the Group who have participated in the respective work. In order to enhance efficiency the deadline for comments should not exceed four weeks. Immediately after the report has been adopted, the secretariat will distribute copies of the report for information to Group members.

When appropriate and in the case of an ad hoc issue management group having been chaired by an organization other than UNEP, after having consulted this lead agency, the Chairman of the Group may bring the report to the attention of the Secretary-General.

In the event that the results of the meetings of the Group and/or its ad hoc group's work have a bearing on United Nations system work in sustainable development, the Chairman of the Group will inform ACC and the secretariat of the Group will communicate the relevant report to the secretariat of IACSD.

Annex II

Contribution of EMG to the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements

Addressing environmental aspects of the water agenda: Activities of the United Nations system (UNEP/GCSS.VIII/INF/5)

1. The present information paper was submitted as a contribution by the Environmental Management Group (EMG) to the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eighth special session and the to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its twelfth session. It surveys major programmes and activities across the United Nations system relating to environmental aspects of water, giving details of the partners involved, their objectives and their outputs. The activities were analysed and grouped into three policy areas, namely: first, the application of ecosystem approaches in integrated water resource management; second, environmental dimensions of sanitation; and, third, water, health and poverty. While the survey shows the extent of inter-agency cooperation already taking place, the paper concludes by calling for more concerted programming of activities within the United Nations system, which also needs to be underpinned by more concerted action on the part of donors, and by identifying some emerging topics on the water agenda to which the United Nations system might respond with further joint action.

2. The main recommendations for further action are as set out below:

(a) Recommendation 1: Strengthening ecosystem approaches in integrated water resource management

Ecosystem approaches in integrated water resource management may be strengthened by:

- Enabling the allocation of water to environmental flow requirements, especially in so-called “closed” river basins where existing allocations have already exhausted or exceeded available supplies of freshwater;
- Using ecosystem approaches in urban storm water and urban catchment management, in order to increase urban biological diversity;
- Applying ecosystem approaches in irrigated agricultural systems, by linking aquaculture with agriculture and making use of the principles of integrated pest management; and in rainfed agricultural systems, by designing rainwater harvesting systems to increase biological diversity, and promoting the sensitive management and cultivation of seasonal wetlands;
- Promoting awareness of the virtual water trade: water-scarce countries can make substantial water savings by decreasing their exports of virtual water, while importing virtual water, via water-intensive crops and products;
- Producing better statistics and more accurate estimates of the true values of freshwater resources, their productivity, the level of livelihoods dependency, and the extent of use.

(b) Recommendation 2: Strengthening the environmental dimensions of sanitation within the United Nations system

The environmental dimensions of sanitation within the United Nations system may be strengthened by:

- Intensifying efforts to ensure wastewater reuse in a range of urban and industrial uses, in addition to its use in agricultural irrigation and aquaculture;
- Giving more urgent attention to the implementation of ecological sanitation and the future of waterborne sewerage systems, in rapidly urbanizing developing countries;
- Examining the viability of establishing zero-effluent discharge targets both for human settlements and for industries;

- Tackling the issue of endocrine-disrupting chemicals, which are not removed by conventional wastewater treatment.

(c) *Recommendation 3: Strengthening water, health and poverty approaches within the United Nations system*

Water, health and poverty approaches within the United Nations system may be strengthened by:

- Targeting more resources towards hazard identification and flood risk management, as a proportion of those dedicated to emergency assistance;
- Addressing risk management for low-level disasters in poor communities;
- Integrating work on water supply and sanitation in a participatory approach to the upgrading of informal settlements, rather than as isolated projects implemented from without;
- Mainstreaming water, poverty and environment indicators into processes already under way, such as poverty reduction strategy papers, in order to underpin effective water governance and management, to harmonize sectoral programming and to measure progress.

Annex III

Issue management group on the harmonization of information management and reporting for biological diversity-related conventions

1. At its first meeting in January 2001, EMG discussed the issue of the harmonization of national reporting and agreed to establish an issue management group dealing with this issue. UNEP was invited to serve as task manager, focusing on biological diversity-related conventions while considering the relevance of biological diversity-related aspects of other multilateral environmental agreements. The issue management group was asked to look at this issue comprehensively, taking into account issues such as the best use of lessons learned, the composition of the group and the number of the countries to be used in a pilot phase.
2. Over the ensuing years, a number of actions were taken to implement the mandate given to the issue management group, and EMG discussed several progress reports. Among those activities were bilateral meetings on harmonization issues between UNEP as the task manager and the secretariats of all the global biological diversity-related conventions, several regional agreements, and some international programmes. Four national harmonization pilot projects coordinated by UNEP have continued in Ghana, Indonesia, Panama and the Seychelles, and have now all delivered results. It is expected that a draft report on those pilot projects will be available in February 2004 for initial review by those participating in them. It is hoped that a workshop will be convened later in the year to review the experiences gained and proposed follow-up.
3. Over this same period, there have been significant changes in the international agenda as it relates to biological diversity and reporting, and the issue of reporting has been considered further in advisory and governance meetings held by the multilateral environmental agreements.
4. At the EMG meeting in February 2004, UNEP as the task manager of the issue management group submitted the following broad recommendations, based on the activities and developments described above:
 - (a) **Secretariat liaison meetings:** Regular liaison meetings between those responsible for reporting and information management matters within the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements should be reestablished to help, among other things, in promoting harmonization in reporting; in the analysis, synthesis and use of reports; in associated information management and use; and in the sharing of information among secretariats;
 - (b) **Collaborative task forces and workshops:** Appropriate use of task forces and workshops on reporting and information management issues of relevance to a range of international conventions and programmes will help ensure that key issues are tackled in a synergistic manner. Issues to be tackled in this manner might include, for example, nomination and reporting formats and processes for site-based treaties, or harmonized taxonomies for international conventions and programmes with species annexes and appendices;
 - (c) **National level approaches:** Testing harmonization approaches at the national level and sharing the results in the form of lessons learned, assessments of the value of different approaches and guidelines to help others in developing more integrated approaches will help to build national mechanisms that can respond more effectively to the need for information to be used in a more effective manner to support implementation and reporting on a range of international agreements and programmes;
 - (d) **Direct support to nations in reporting:** It has been suggested in various forums that some streamlining of the reporting agenda and improved access to information that will support reporting (including reporting formats, previous reports and any relevant handbooks and guidelines) will help countries in responding to reporting requirements. This might include advice on information management to support implementation and reporting processes;
 - (e) **Information dissemination:** Mechanisms should be developed and promoted to ensure the more efficient sharing of information and experience in harmonization. This could be in the

form of improvements in the existing web site and its wider promotion and use, wide dissemination of the synoptic report, and the holding of workshops and seminars at relevant international forums;

- (f) ***Future approaches:*** While there is currently a reluctance to consider use of this approach, various international forums and national pilot projects have shown an interest in the potential of what might be termed “virtual reporting”, and this should be investigated further. This would mean that a country would place information on a national web site that would then constitute its report (or part of its report) to an international agreement on a particular issue. Such a study would be purely exploratory at this stage.

5. EMG decided to recommend to all its members that they contribute to the implementation of these recommendations and to report to EMG on their activities undertaken in this area in 2005.
