



# UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement      Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente  
Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде      برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

联合国环境规划署



<b>19<sup>th</sup> Senior Officials' Meeting of the Environment Management Group</b> 19 September 2013 <sup>1</sup> Hosted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) LRC Room on the 11 <sup>th</sup> floor of the UNDP FF-Building, 304 E 45 <sup>th</sup> Street, New York. Preparatory technical segment: 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Senior officials' segment: 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.	<b>EMG/SOM.19/02/Rev.1</b> 12 September 2013 Distribution: EMG members
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## Strategic Directions for EMG including Consideration of New Issues for its future work

### Note by the Chair

#### Introduction

1. The senior officials, under agenda item 4, are invited to provide their strategic directions for future work of the EMG in its contribution to the international environmental agenda and implementation of the outcome document of the Rio+20: "The Future We Want".
2. The outcome document in several places addresses the importance of cooperation and coherence of actions within the UN system including on environment in pursuit of sustainable development. The Secretary General has underlined the importance of a systematic response by the UN system to the guidance and objectives set out in the outcome document including supporting the environmental sustainability agenda.
3. It is proposed that the senior officials structure their discussion around the following issues:

***A) Overall role of the EMG in enhancing coordination on environment and its support to programing environment in the work of the UN system.***

4. The senior officials may wish to provide their views on the overall approach of the EMG in facilitating coordination on environment in the UN system and supporting mainstreaming of the environment including the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in programs of the UN system. A discussion by the senior officials is suggested on how the work of the EMG can be more effectively and systemically linked to the agenda of the UN Chief Executives Board (CEB) and its subsidiary bodies. This would ensure that environmental dimensions and responses of the UN system's work are systematically taken into account in all planning processes of the CEB structure thus ensuring mainstreaming of the environment for sustainable development across sectors. The recent decision of the High

<sup>1</sup> Information on the meeting logistics, including the video-audio conference connections, is provided in the logistical note of the meeting (EMG/SOM.19/05)

Level Committee on Management of the CEB<sup>2</sup> on working with EMG in development and implementation of the Environmental Management Systems in the UN system is a good example that can be replicated in other areas including in enhanced coherence in programming of environmental activities in the UN through close cooperation with the High Level Committee on Program and enhanced cooperation on environment at national level through cooperation with the UN Development Group.

***B) A strategic approach in enhancing sustainability measures within the UN system.***

The senior officials may want to provide their views on the system-wide follow up of the ***Framework on Environmental and Social Sustainability in the UN System***. An “Options Paper” has been prepared by the EMG Consultative Process on Environmental and Social Sustainability in the UN System. The Paper proposes options related to the potential roles of various inter-agency mechanisms including for future anchoring of the Framework in the UN system and to address the need for system-wide commitment, reporting to member states, knowledge sharing, monitoring and evaluation, and support for system-wide accountability. The senior officials are invited to provide their guidance on how and through which of the suggested options and inter-agency mechanisms they would wish to move forward with the system-wide follow up of the Framework.

5. A draft “Interim Sustainability Guide” for supporting implementation of the Framework in each UN agency has been prepared to support the discussion of the senior officials on how they can advance sustainability measures in their respective agencies and what are the challenges which they can overcome by working together. The follow up of the Framework and the strategic views of the senior officials are significant in view of preparation of the future reports by the Secretary General on mainstreaming the three dimensions of sustainable development in the UN system in response to paragraphs 93-96 of the Rio+20 outcome document.

***C) Addressing New Issues***

6. Senior officials are also invited to consider the following two new issues for future work of the EMG :

***1) A contribution by the EMG to a UN system-wide approach to the sound management of chemicals***

7. The senior officials may want to express their views on a possible contribution of the EMG to the chemicals agenda. An “Issue Paper”<sup>3</sup> has been prepared to support a discussion by the senior officials on preparation of a possible UN system-wide approach by the EMG on sound management of chemicals to enhance cooperation and coordination at the global level and by extension at the national level. The issue paper provides a background, rationale and objectives, and proposes a way forward with activities for consideration by the EMG.

8. The suggested system-wide approach is in response to the Rio+20 outcome document (para. 89), decisions of various intergovernmental processes, including the first

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<sup>2</sup> HLCM spring session 7-8 March 2013. More information is available in document: EMG/SOM SOM.19/03.

<sup>3</sup> Information document: “*A UN System-wide Strategy for Sound Management of Chemicals: Coordinating delivery for member states*”.

universal session of the UNEP Governing Council, the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, and the International Conference on Chemicals Management, which have called for a more systematic approach for cooperation and coordination in the implementation of Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) and other instruments related to the sound management of chemicals and waste (e.g., the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), and supported by the findings of the UNEP Global Chemicals Outlook 2012.

9. The purpose of the suggested approach is to facilitate the integration of sound management of chemicals into the international organizations charged with social and economic development, identifying opportunities for concrete collaborative actions at the national level and supporting mainstreaming of sound chemicals management into national development plans and processes.
10. A UN system-wide approach would bring in the expertise and potentials of the EMG members to contribute to developing programmatic cooperation in the field that would support implementation of the three chemical conventions (Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm) in areas of common concern such as sustainable development, trade, customs (for example through the Green Customs Initiative), transport, public health, labour, environment, agriculture and industry for a better delivery and implementation at national level .
11. It is proposed that the senior officials create an Issue Management Group (IMG) to define a UN system-wide strategy for a coordinated approach to the efficient delivery of sound chemicals management.

## ***2) Stocktaking of funding for international cooperation on environmental matters***

12. The senior officials may also want to consider a discussion on whether a contribution by the EMG to the issue of enhancing coherent and effective funding of the environmental agenda within the broader context of financing for sustainable development, as outlined in the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference, would be useful.
13. Elements for consideration would include: how environmental financing has evolved and how it can best be captured; what constitutes environmental funding and how environment-related financial flows should be categorized; whether the current data provides an adequate overview for policy makers; and whether a stocktaking by the EMG of existing financial flows for environment would add value.
14. The senior officials may also wish to consider whether a contribution on this issue by the EMG would be of value to the work of the UN Task Team Working Group on “Financing for sustainable development” which supports the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development.
15. An Issue Paper <sup>4</sup> is provided to the senior officials to support their discussion on this issue.

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<sup>4</sup> Information document: “ *Taking Stock of Funding for International Cooperation on Environmental Matters* ”.