

Eleventh Meeting of the Issue Management Group on Environmental Sustainability Management in the UN System.

Online, 10 April 2013

15:00 CET

Meeting Report

The eleventh meeting of the Issue Management Group (IMG) on Environmental Sustainability Management (EMS) in the UN System (IMG 11) took place online on 10 April 2013. The meeting was attended by 23 Focal Points (FPs). The meeting agenda and the list of participants are attached.

Agenda Item 1: Opening

A) General Information

The chair (Isabella Marras, SUN) opened the meeting, introduced and welcomed the participants. The agenda was approved. It was confirmed that the Sustainable United Nations (SUN) team's composition had not changed since the last IMG, but it was noted that the team now has an intern assisting Florian Krauzer with the GHG inventory helpdesk.

B) Outcome/Results/Action Points

The agenda was adopted

Agenda Item 2: UN Environment Management System

A) General Information

The results of the High Level Committee on Management (HLCM) meeting, regarding the implementation of Environment Management Systems (EMS) in the UN, were presented by Isabella Marras (SUN). A long and short version of the *Cost Benefit Analysis Report on EMS* in the UN was shared with the HLCM that met on 8th of March in Rome. The model estimated cost savings worth hundreds of millions of US\$ across the entire UN system. It proposed a phased approach with minimum indicators and targets, including a common model for reporting and an underlying need to keep the IMG together to ensure shared learning and cost efficiencies.

The paper also stressed that environment management systems can help in managing resource use. All organizations are encouraged to implement an EMS, ensuring it's integrated into their existing administrative systems. Overall the main interest was on EMS to focusing on low investment-high return activities.

It was noted that those who invest in EMS's aren't always the ones who receive the cost savings – so there's a need to work on budgets to ensure this is addressed through a clear relationship between investment and returns.

The official decision was ratified by the Chief Executives Board (CEB) on 5 April, 2013 and sustainability was included in the *HLCM Strategic Plan* for the next three years. The details are included in section B3 of the *HLCM Result Framework*.

B) Discussions/Suggestions

Amare Egziabher (UNHCR) asked how EMS mainstreaming in programming will be progressed. Isabella Marras (SUN) responded saying that work on programming is part of the EMG consultative group on the Framework for Social and Environmental Sustainability in the UN system. Jacob Kurian (SUN) is working with the EMG to create a manual on how to integrate social and environmental management. In addition mainstreaming EMS in programmes and planning will also be discussed in early 2014 by HLCM and HLCP on the occasion of a back to back meeting on matters of joint interest.

Mitch Hall (FAO) asked if and when there might be a formal document outlining the decisions from the HLCM and CEB. If it could be announced publically it would help to make agencies more accountable. Isabella Marras (SUN) will check with Hossein Fadaei (EMG) and share any documentation with the group as it becomes available. Similarly SUN will investigate the possibility to share the cost benefit study beyond the EMG and CEB circle.

Isabella Marras (SUN) gave an overview of the options for work to be undertaken in the next couple of years. This included a census on cost saving measures, template development for agency policies, trainings, updated reporting and more thorough Emissions Reduction Strategies (ERS).

Shoa Ehsani (SUN) explained that SUN had received ERSs from 6 – 10 agencies but that more information is needed from FPs on timelines, training required and what other support they need. Feedback from FPs would help SUN to structure its assistance.

On the issue of how the work on EMS will be carried out, Isabella Marras (SUN) indicated that SUN is fundraising with the Swedish EPA for a three-five year post that will focus on assisting the UN system in implementing EMS's, with some agencies acting as pilots. SUN will reconvene the Sustainable Management Systems (SMS) working group to produce further tools and training, in addition to the FAQs and case studies that have already been completed.

The IMG were reminded that Unite Connections provides a real-time interactive collaboration platform. FPs will receive a password and invitation to join and a tutorial on how to use the new system will be given in May.

C) Outcome/Results/Action Points

- Seek clarity on the language used in HLCM decision and results framework so as to align it better with SUN's work.
- Enquire if other agencies, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), already have policies and action plans that can be useful in preparing the EMS template and then prepare a report for the HLCM.

- SUN will reconvene the SMS working group to look at next steps for EMS.

Agenda Item 3: European Commission (EC) experience with Environment Management Systems

A) General Information

Ms Sofia Gregou gave an overview of the work undertaken by the European Commission to internalize the European Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) in the last 10 years. EC embarked on an EMS because it wanted a clear demonstration of their commitment to reducing their impact on the environment whilst better managing their resources.

The slides that accompanied the presentation gave an overview of the scale of the work that was being undertaken and the number of staff involved.

Challenges faced in implementation of EMAS included changing the organizational culture, skepticism by employees, obtaining support and commitment of management. These challenges were overcome by securing a decision at the very top level. A long-term investment in communication and training is necessary to ensure skepticism is overcome.

B) Discussions/Suggestions

Anne Fernqvist (UNDP) asked for the ten principles to be shared. These will be circulated.

Amare Egziabher (UNHCR) enquired about the challenges and time required to get buy-in from the Commission. Sofia Gregou explained that to be successful skepticism must constantly be addressed, regular events, campaigns and competition were held to bring everyone round to the idea. Staff surveys were carried out every two years to gauge attitudes. Many of the challenges remain, but they have changed with time.

C) Outcome/Results/Action Points

- The link to the European Commissions 10-minute online course will be circulated to all Focal Points.
- Julie Mackenzie (UNS) is currently working on the drafting of a joint statement of intent to be signed by the EC and UN on sustainable public office services.
- In April 2013 SUN and the EC will meet on line to share experience of EMS.

Agenda item 4a: Preview of GHG Inventory results and launch of 2013 Moving Towards Climate Neutral UN report

A) General Information

Jacob Kurian (SUN) provided an overview of the 2011 emissions data. Whilst the overall total emissions were similar to last year with around 50% resulting from air travel, it was noted that air travel within some agencies had decreased from previous years.

Approximately 56 agencies have submitted data for their 2011 emissions. This is an increase on 2010 data, when 54 agencies submitted. Around 8 of the 56 agencies who have submitted data for 2012 have not submitted fresh figures, (DPKO is using data from 2008 and a few others are using data from 2010).

In order to enable SUN to publish results more promptly next year, the greenhouse gas flat files will be released in May 2013. The new deadline for uploading data will be 31 October 2013. This should mean that the reviewed data can be finalized by mid December, ready to publish early in 2014.

Louise Boom (SUN) gave an update on plans to launch the next edition of *Moving Towards a Climate Neutral UN*. This year the publication will take the form of an A5 brochure that opens out to an engaging A2 poster that people will want to display in their work place. As result, space is restricted and overall less information will be provided. The focus will be on key messages and best case studies. The aim is to launch publish the results in early May.

B) Discussions/Suggestions

None

C) Outcome/Results/Action Points

- The 2012 emissions data will be published in the Focal Point area of *Greening the Blue* once finalized.
- Focal Points need to return their completed web questionnaires asap and let louise@martineauandco.com know how many copies of the report they would like to order.
- Louise Boom (SUN) will send Focal Points the Moving Towards Comms pack as soon as a launch date has been agreed.
- A printed copy of the Visions report will be sent to each Focal Point and the Head of each Agency.

Agenda item 4b: Green IT: Compiling lessons learned

A) General Information

It was brought to the meeting's attention that it is vital to consider the energy efficiency of equipment when purchasing it. While IT is a source of GHG emissions due to electricity use, it can be leveraged to reduce GHG emissions through the use of e-Communication technologies that rest on an IT system's backbone. The types and benefits of various e-communication technologies were presented. Compatibility with other agencies' equipment such as video conferencing equipment may also be a deciding factor when it comes to deciding which equipment to purchase.

A good example of the benefits of Green IT is the reduction in CO2 emissions and costs that UNEP have achieved in air travel as the result of using use of new communication technologies. These cost savings have then been able to be reinvested in IT equipment.

B) Discussions/Suggestions

Anne Frenqvist (UNDP) asked about the sort of “spec” temperatures for server operation. Shoa Ehsani (UNEP) mentioned that while this varied by equipment type, 25 degrees centigrade was about the upper-limit. Servers can operate at higher temperatures, but this would shorten their life.

C) Outcome/Results/Action Points

- Need to work towards changing the culture around travel and encourage uptake of new technologies.
- Green IT information to be shared on GtB.
- Advice on procuring web servers is to be included in the Sustainable Procurement guide.

Agenda item 4c: Survey on transport to and from UN offices

A) General information

The impetus behind the survey was UNEP Nairobi’s request for information on transport systems and services offered to their staff by the UN in Geneva. This would provide ideas for provision of services in Nairobi.

Shuttles between offices, train station and offices, and home to office services are available to staff in Geneva, Rome, and Washington D.C. For a small fee, cycle to work initiatives with cycle hire, repairs and showers are also available in various duty stations.

The provision of shuttles is also a security requirement in some duty stations. The results of the survey on these schemes will be uploaded to *Greening the Blue*.

B) Discussions/Suggestions

Nives Costa (UNOPS): In Copenhagen, using bicycles is very common, everyone uses them and there are bike lanes available. The new building that UNOPS has just moved to has many bike racks for parking and a cycling initiative is being launched.

Mitch Hall (FAO): Suggested a Wiki should be created for exchanging experiences on staff transport to the office

Karina Holms (OHCHR): Working on a carpooling initiative, surveys have been sent out, and software to coordinate carpooling will be developed.

C) Outcome/Results/Action Points

- SUN will develop a case study on transport for GreeningtheBlue.org.
- SUN will gather more information on car-pooling and subsidies for public transport.

Agenda item: 4d: Help desk services on sustainable procurement and facilities

A) General Information

There are currently three helpdesk services provided by SUN: GHG inventory, Sustainable Procurement and Energy Management for the Inter-agency Facilities Managers (INFM) group. The services are progressing well.

B) Discussions/Suggestions

Isabella Marras (SUN) asked the Sustainable Procurement helpdesk to put together some advice on green IT server procurement.

<h3>Meeting Conclusions, next steps</h3>

The chair thanked participants for their contributions to the meeting. She recapped the main action points and confirmed that notes from the meeting would be written up, circulated and posted in the Focal Point area of *Greening the Blue*.

Each Focal Point will receive a feedback form at the end of the meeting, please fill these in and return them to the SUN team.

The chair confirmed that the next IMG meeting had been scheduled to take place on 13 – 14 June in Paris, hosted by the World Bank. Focal Points are requested to contact the SUN team if they have suggestions for specific topics to be covered at the next IMG meeting.

The meeting was closed.

Annex I

PARTICIPANTS

	IMG member	Organization
1.	Isabella Marras	SUN
2.	Julie MacKenzie	SUN
3.	Jacob Kuriane	SUN
4.	Shoa Eshani	SUN
5.	Imogen Martineau	SUN
6.	Louise Boom	SUN
7.	Adam Rubinfield	World Bank Group
8.	Amare Geber Egziabher	UNHCR
9.	Heidi Nabel-Meyer	UNV
10.	Marina Maiero	WHO
11.	Michele Rogat	UNOV
12.	Mitchell Hall	FAO
13.	Anne Fernqvist	UNDP
14.	Kare Pugerup	IFAD
15.	Anne Jona	UNFCCC
16.	Karina Holm	OHCHR
17.	Nives Costa	UNOPS
18.	Oliver Buehler	UNFPA
19.	Suzie Bolvenkel-Prior	UNAIDS
20.	Linnea XXX	WTO
21.	Monika Kumar	World Bank Group
22.	Andy Cole	WFP
23.	Marina XXXX	UNON

ANNEX II

AGENDA

Time (CET)	Item	Topic	Background
14.30 – 15.00		On-line meeting room opens for participants to	
15:00		Meeting starts	
15:00 – 15:10	1	Opening: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome and update from the SUN Team• Purpose of the call• Review and adoption of agenda	IMG/ESM.11/01 Isabella Marras
15:10 – 16:00	2	UN environment management systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High Level Committee on Management (HLCM) & Chief Executives Board (CEB)• Implications for IMG work & Work plan• Discussion	IMG/ESM.11/02 Isabella Marras
16:00 – 16:45	3	European commission experience with Environment Management Systems	IMG/ESM.11/03 Sofia Gregou, EC
16:45 – 17:55	4	Updates on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Preview of GHG inventory results and launch of 2013 Moving Towards Climate Neutral UN reportb) Green IT: compiling lessons learnedc) Survey on transport to and from UN officesd) Help desk services on SP, and facilities	IMG/ESM.11/04 Jacob Kurian, Louise Boom Shoa Ehsani Tsitsi Mupoperi Jacob Kurian
17:55 – 18:00	5	Conclusions and next IMG meeting	Isabella Marras