

## **Sixth Meeting of the Issue Management Group on Environmental Sustainability Management in the UN System.**

### **Meeting Report**

The 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Issue Management Group on Environmental Sustainability Management in the UN System (IMG 6) took place online the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011. Participation in the meeting was good with 22 IMG members on the first day and 29 IMG members on the second day. The agenda and background papers are posted on the Focal Point area of the Greening the Blue website.

<b>Agenda item 1: Introduction and Adoption of Agenda</b>
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#### **A. General information**

The Chair of the meeting (Isabella Marras) introduced the 2-day agenda and summarized the recent changes in the SUN team, areas of responsibility. She noted that the team is now based principally in Geneva, with other members in the UK, New York and potentially Nairobi. She clarified that the purpose of the meeting was mainly to provide an overview of the Senior Officials Meeting of the Environment Management Group (EMG), which took place on 19 September 2011 and to define together what the IMG and SUN will need to present at the next SOM meeting. The meeting would also review how SUN could best serve the IMG and would update IMG members about SUN's current work.

#### **B. Comments/Suggestions**

IMG members provided the following comments/suggestions:

- To have SUN responsibilities posted on Greening the Blue so IMG focal points are up to date with who is responsible for what area.

#### **C. Outcome/Results/Action points**

- The agenda was adopted.
- SUN team agreed to send to the IMG members and upload in the secure area of the GtB website its new composition, contact details and share of responsibilities.

<b>Agenda item 2: Results of the EMG Senior Officials Meeting (SOM 17)</b>
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#### **A. General information**

Julie MacKenzie outlined the results of SOM 17 as they related to the IMG. Three key issues were highlighted:

- Change of name to IMG on Environmental Sustainability Management
- Approval of recommendations for voluntary offsetting in the report "Carbon Credits – Recommendations for selection and procurement"
- Approval of the Strategic Plan for Sustainability Management in the UN System

#### **B. Comments/Suggestions**

IMG members provided the following comments/suggestions:

- Thanks to Julie for doing a good job at SOM 17
- Thanks to Isabella for keeping focal points informed of SUN and SOM activities
- The origin of the decision to pursue sustainability management systems was questioned, eg, whether it sprang from JIU recommendations or something else. It was clarified that the decision had been taken at SOM 16 in 2010 on grounds that GHG emissions were only one aspect of environmental sustainability and that it was important to establish a system to capture other indicators, such as water and waste.,

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- There was some concern over how the Strategic Plan for Sustainability Management and the related EMG agreement that UN agencies implement their own sustainability management systems was intended to fit with IMG members' current work on Emissions Reduction Strategies, in particular the transition from one to the other. It was clarified that IMG focal points should focus on completing their ERS, while keeping in mind the next goal of an SMS. In the meantime, and in the lead up to SOM 18 in September 2012, those agencies which already had an SMS in place or were near to adopting one would be able to contribute their experience in a working group that would develop a framework for sustainability management systems suitable for adoption by UN organizations and provide feedback on key learnings (e.g. this worked; this did not work)

The Chair asked the following questions of IMG focal points:

*Had the SOM decision to support SMS arrived at agency level?*

- Answers indicated that the SOM decision had hit some agencies (UNRWA) but not the majority (UNDP; WHO; UNOPS; OHCHR)
- Focal points requested a letter from the Chair of the EMG (A.Steiner) to their organizational heads explaining the link between an ERS and an SMS, in order to help managers prioritize their efforts in this area.
- Focal points were encouraged by the Chair to draw on the SOM decisions in their dealings with managers to help keep their managers up to date on implications for their work.

*Is a new working group on SMS needed?*

- It was decided that the existing group should continue

The Chair opened a discussion on how SUN could improve its service to UN organizations. The first phase of SUN work, developing tools and raising awareness among UN organizations has come to an end; in addition, the SUN team is reduced in staff. A different way of working is therefore needed for the IMG and the SUN team in which a stronger collaboration among IMG members and more targeted assistance from SUN may be possible.

Some possible avenues for a more practical support to IMG members were mentioned:

Learning more about energy audits

- The Canton of Geneva has offered to help Geneva-based UN organisations improve their environmental profile with a number of programs including free energy audits – could some information sharing about energy audits be of interest to the larger IMG membership?
- Focal points said that guidance on energy audits (what they would consist of, what were the potential benefits), particularly for field offices, would be appreciated

Information sharing on lessons learned and other issues of common interest

- WFP floated the concept of establishing a platform for sharing practical knowledge/information that could help IMG members make quicker progress on their various environmental efforts (e.g. what is best option for chiller replacement? how to include environmental considerations in bidding? etc)

Extraction of salient action points from the many SUN publications

- SUN has produced many publications, many of which are too lengthy for UN staff and offices looking for quick guidance for quick steps to green their facilities and activities. UNDP has developed a first list of quick actions for out-posted offices. Based on this concept, SUN proposed a full package of quick actions related to all SUN publications. This will be associated with the “executive summaries” of SUN publications that SUN had already committed to at the IMG5 in Rome.

**C. Outcome/Results/Action points**

- IMG members will circulate SOM decisions to managers to increase their awareness of the decisions that were taken.
- Letter from A.Steiner on SMS and ERS to help IMG focal points engage their managers
- SUN to will send a survey (e.g. doodle survey; zoomerang) to gather suggestions from IMG members on where they have the greatest need for SUN's assistance
- SUN to provide information to IMG members on energy audits (Jacob Kurian)
- SUN to create a shared information-exchange site in collaboration with IMG members. This site will provide a section on lessons learnt for ERS, SMS and other issues.
- SUN to publish the quick actions package and 2 pages summaries for each of its publications

<b>Agenda item 3:            Key Issues for 2012</b>
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**A. General information**

Sustainability Management Systems

The Chair provided an overview of the SMS and explained that SUN intends to fundraise in order to pilot SMS in a few UN agencies.

Dominique Brief provided an overview of the differences between an ERS and an SMS, and outlined how an ERS can evolve over time into an SMS. It was explained that the development of a model for SMSs appropriate for UN organizations would be the work of 2012. The model (or template) would emphasize environmental issues, while creating space to incorporate optional social and economic indicators.. Moving from an ERS to an SMS would follow a phased process similar to that adopted for creating the ERS template. SUN would first draft an SMS template, this template would be put to the SMS working group as a basis for discussion and further elaboration, then the outcome of the working group's deliberations would be put to the full IMG for modification/comments and finally adoption. A guidance note would follow.

The Common Facility

An overview of the issues surrounding the Common Facility was provided. It was explained that the Common Facility would take the place of SUN, but unlike SUN, would be a permanent structure of the UN. Its overall goal would be to institutionalize the integration of environmental considerations into operational management.

*Questions asked of IMG:* Should the SMS and Common Facility have the same working group? It was decided that there should be two groups that would work in parallel, with group leaders ensuring each was informed about the other.

The Tutorial Project

Imogen Martineau provided an overview of the status and upcoming steps. The tutorial was intended to be a basic training course on sustainability for all staff. The training working group was looking for funding to develop the modules. Currently UNEP and UNDP agreed to co-funding (UNDP by way of in-kind provision of the services of its Learning center), but more funds would be required.

**B. Comments/Suggestions**

IMG members provided the following comments:

- Guidance on SMS and on the shift from ERS to SMS is certainly needed
- How do we manage the completion of Emission Reduction Strategies (ERS) and evaluate whether our organization can move forward with the Sustainability Management Strategy (SMS)?

### **C. Outcome/Results/Action points**

#### Sustainability Management Systems

- Agencies will finish their ERSs and move onto an SMS when they are ready to progress.
- The SMS working group will stay intact and continue working with SUN
- SUN will develop a SMS template and guidance document in collaboration with the IMG working group on SMS while ERSs are being completed and propose an SMS template to IMG for comments and adoption
- SMS and Common Facility will have separate working groups but will keep close communications with each other. The Common Facility working group will be more politically-focused than its SMS equivalent. The SMS working group will focus on more technical issues and ideally should be made up of focal points with hands-on experience of operations

#### Common facility:

- SUN will carry out a quick study on where sustainability offices are most often situated inside organizations and lessons learned from their “location”.
- SUN will draft a survey(s) for sending to IMG focal points to identify the main characteristics of the Common Facility
- SUN will share the survey with the Common Facility working group & finalise it
- The proposed calendar for producing a report for the EMG SOM 18 on options for the Common Facility will be: March 2012 (draft), May (comments from IMG), August 2012 (final).
- It was also suggested that once reached the final draft, the proposal for a common facility could be presented to selected senior officials (e.g. Achim Steiner, Angela Kane / Warren Sach, Helen Clark, WFP, ICAO, UNFCCC, Janos Pasztor) for feedback and ideas.

SUN will send out a survey to IMG focal points calling for volunteers in participating in the different working groups

<b>Agenda item 4: Update on Other Work Streams</b>
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### **A. General information**

#### Travel

Julie Mackenzie provided an overview of the Inter Agency Travel Network and SUN’s outreach to their members (at the IATN annual meeting in October) for input into a draft paper on developing a sustainable travel policy for UN system organizations. She also spoke about changes being made to the UN Secretariat’s travel policy, driven by cost savings, into which it had been possible to insert a number of environmental considerations. As far as ongoing links with the IATN were concerned, there was interest on the part of IATN members in having SUN provide: FAQs/quick tips, information on how to buy offsets, and how to express CO2 emissions in more readily understood terms.

#### Sustainable Procurement

- The “Buying for a better world Guide on Sustainable procurement for the UN system” is finally public. It will be sent by Achim Steiner to all heads of agencies and to focal points on demand.
- In early 2012, SUN will also issue also an on-line training on sustainable procurement
- Jacob Kurian will take over the work on sustainable procurement from Isabella Marras
- The series of trainings on SP will continue on demand. Focal points interested can contact SUN

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Sustainable Events and Rio+20

- Dominique Brief will take over this project from Isabella Marras
- Julie MacKenzie explained about the participation of SUN in two New York initiatives related to logistics for Rio+20: the PaperSmart Rio+20 coordination committee (for digital rather than paper workflow) and greening of the Rio+20 event more widely in collaboration with UN DESA.
- UNCCD: briefed the meeting on its recent success in running a paper-smart meeting in Korea (6,000 delegates), supported by Samsung which had loaned computer tablets for the occasion. It had been decided to use the same system for all future UNCCD conferences. A lessons learnt paper was being prepared and would be forwarded to SUN.

Interviews report

- The external consultant had submitted a first draft of 'A Vision of a Sustainable UN' to SUN.
- Ban-Ki Moon will be also interviewed and the final report launched in the first half of 2012.

Budgeting

- The 2010 report on "budgeting and sustainability" is available since 2010 on the GtB website, under IMG 3 meeting background documentation. While agreeing that budgeting is a major issue, IMG 3 had decided to postpone consideration because of the then work load of the group.
- SUN now proposes to pursue the issue of budgeting during 2012.
- IMG members are requested to review the 2010 report and share ideas on how to address this issue.

**B. Comments/Suggestions**

Suggestions from the IMG included:

- The need for a forum where members could exchange experiences in dealing with issues such as how they have done offsetting, or how to piggyback on other UN agencies' purchases.
- Several IMG focal points expressed interested in SUN guidance on how to incorporate environmental standards and labels into tenders, so they could liaise with their procurers to this end.

**C. Outcome/Results/Action points**

- A side meeting will be arranged to respond to IMG needs on Sustainable Procurement. A call for expressions of interest will be circulated. Those who have already expressed interest include. So far expressions of interest include: AB; FAO; UNHQ; DFS.
- The case study of the UNCCD conference of UN IMG FPs/nominees, the carrying out of audits of the inventories of a small number of agencies by the trained UN staff (a few each year), and the verification of these audit reports by the partner agency in Korea will be published on Greening the Blue and also on the forthcoming Sustainable Events Guide.

<b>Agenda item 5: Inventories and Towards Climate Neutral Report</b>
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**A. General information**

Inventories

- Around half the agencies have uploaded the inventories.
- The UN-wide IMP will be completed within first quarter of 2012.
- Luke Redmond, DFS, who was coordinating the software development related to the inventory reporting system, was recently shifted from this responsibility. SUN expressed thanks to Luke and welcomed, Syed Ahmed, DFS, who would take over the responsibility.
- ICAO had released a new version of the air travel emissions calculator, which was available at the GtB website.
- Responding to a request from the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to carry out verification of the UN GHG Inventory, SUN had considered several options and prepared a draft proposal. A long-term partnership with an external verification body was recommended as the best

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means, to gradually improve the quality assurance and control procedures for the UN Inventory. The draft proposal included the development of protocols and standards for verification, brief online training of UN IMG FPs/nominees, the carrying out of audits of the inventories of a small number of agencies by the trained UN staff (a few each year), and the verification of these audit reports by the partner agency.

Towards Climate Neutral Report

- Imogen Martineau asked IMG members what they want to see in next report. Some prefer a 40-page report because of the greater detail and the ability for each agency to benchmark themselves against others. Some preferred a 4-pager. Others did their own internal report.
- The UN-wide report is due out in April 2012.

**B. Comments/Suggestions**

- SUN could explore if training on GHG Inventory verification can be sourced and delivered to the IMG. Several IMG members expressed interest in this.

**C. Outcome/Results/Action points**

- Agencies are encouraged to upload their inventory data and verify/approve them by 1 December 2011. The next meeting of the Technical Group will take place in December (tentative date 9<sup>th</sup> December).
- SUN will send a zoomerang survey to find out what IMG members would like to see covered by report, and in what format.

<b>Agenda item 6:           IMG membership and Senior Officials Identification</b>
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**A. General information**

Dominique Brief explained that the SUN database of IMG membership needs to be updated. Further, that based on our projects such as the Common Facility, SUN also needs contact information of senior management staff. An excel sheet of the categories of contacts was shown demonstrating how to update the contact information including: telephone, email, location, etc.

**B. Comments/Suggestions**

Some minor questions for clarification were provided.

**C. Outcome/Results/Action points**

- Excel database will be sent to IMG membership for updating.

<b>Agenda item 7:           IMG 7 location and dates</b>
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**A. General information**

- ICAO used its meeting venue calculator to define which location would be the least GHG emissions intensive for the next meeting of the IMG. The result of the calculation was Geneva, Switzerland.
- The date proposed by SUN is in June 2012.
- SUN needs to find a hosting organization in Geneva.

**B. Comments/Suggestions**

- Some IMG members asked to see the ICAO meeting venue calculation.

**C. Outcome/Results/Action points**

- The meeting date will be put to IMG vote, through a doodle survey. SUN will need to keep RIO+20 dates in mind. The date will be put to IMG vote, through a doodle survey. Sun will need to keep RIO+20 dates in mind.

<b>Agenda item 8: Conclusion and Wrap-up</b>
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- The Chair summarized the conclusions from the meetings' discussions, as reported above.
- IMG membership was thanked for their participation.
- A meeting report would be sent to IMG members for comment in a week 's time.

The meeting closed at 17:45 on 15 November 2011.