

UNITED NATIONS EMG

UN environment programme

United Nations Climate Change

Summary Report

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) assessment reports and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) emissions gap reports find that the international community is falling far short of the Paris Agreement goals, with no credible pathway to 1.5°C in place. The first Global Stocktake under the Paris Agreement (2023) revealed the overall effect of Parties' nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and overall progress made by Parties towards the implementation of their NDCs. Achieving net-zero emissions and the transformation towards adaptive and resilient development are urgently needed. Only an urgent system-wide transformation can avoid climate disaster requiring collective and rapid action.

The United Nations (UN) has called for urgent, collective action and higher ambition to combat climate change, including through nature-based solutions that can play an important part in limiting global warming and in meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement. Strengthening action on biodiversity and climate change under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process is a key component in achieving the vision of "living in harmony with nature by 2050".

Against this background, the UN Environment Management Group (EMG) organized **a High-Level Dialogue on Strengthening UN system Climate Action** for heads of agencies and senior officials on the margins of the 28th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP28) on the 2nd of December 2023 in Dubai to solicit ideas on areas of work that require system-wide collaboration and challenges experienced to determine of the EMG can support. The Dialogue shared common

messages by the UN system on its efforts and opportunities for improved inter-agency collaboration for climate action.

The key messages of the round table are presented in this report to inform the UN entities and the Senior Officials of the EMG on ways to enhance system wide collaboration on climate action and strengthening synergies of climate, nature and pollution agenda in interagency settings to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and the wider sustainable development agenda. The discussion points may inform and inspire shared interagency action to expedite and enhance coherent UN support to Member States in local, regional and global mobilization for action.

Main takeaways from the dialogue:

- *Strengthening the UN system-wide inter-agency collaboration:* In view of duplication of efforts and a lack of coordination in the thematic area of climate action, the UN system would benefit from the integration and mainstreaming of support to Member States in interagency settings, regional collaboration, and national implementation. It was noted that the EMG should address it, for example, by creating a platform to enable exchange and communication, and to provide an overview of strengths of all UN entities, in order to bring all agencies together on climate action. The EMG could do the advocacy for strengthening the UN system-wide knowledge base, which currently is scattered.

- *Strengthening the collaboration at the national level:* there was a clarion call to strengthen the cooperation with UN Country Teams for enhancing the UN system-wide collaboration at the national level and with governments, and as such leverage them to pool resources such as partnerships,[1] finances, expertise, collect and share standardized data,[2] and collaborate on tailored work programmes to optimize the benefits of actions at the most local level. The UN system must be able to adopt different approaches to support countries based on their national circumstances and national priority areas in order to address specificities of the regions for integrating and mainstreaming climate action. This includes working closer with Member States and include their expertise.

- *Collaboration and Partnerships:* Strategic collaboration with ministries of governments is crucial to provide early technical support to foster equity, leverage investment, and develop regulations and policies. It was highlighted that all levels of climate action go through the private sector, which requires ambition from governments, better use of regulation, and leveraging the investment. Multi-stakeholder collaboration and partnerships are a prerequisite for climate action, which could benefit from the UN system-wide cooperation. Enhancing the inter-agency collaboration is hindered by fragmentation, competition, lack of resources and the specificities of the agencies' mandates, which results in a silo-approach for the partnerships where UN agencies are unwilling to share information on partnerships of their own organizations. Strengthening the collaboration between UN agencies on systemic issues and partnerships would help to use the existing funds more efficiently and avoid overlap in agencies' work.

- *Ensuring that solutions by UN system are holistic and integrative*: It was highlighted that the UN system is a major driver of a change for climate action and hence understanding

[1] UNU secured shared funding from German Academy Exchange Service for 64 doctorate students in partnership with UNDCO and summoned requests for partnerships from Country Teams to fund students for 3.5 years

[2] The Sustainability Nexus Analytics Informatics and Data Program contains 181 tools which can be accessed at sustainabilityaid.net

WIPO's database contains 124 000 available technologies and the needs of 140 countries

A platform of adaptation solutions that address the needs of the most vulnerable was requested

of solutions needs to be deepened for which coordination by EMG is required to understand the problems globally with foresight and horizon-scaling to the regional, local, and very local levels, such as cities. Working more innovative in an integrative manner is required that should embrace different aspects, including the social dimension and a just transition, where EMG can help with the UN system messaging and a coordinating role for scaling up agencies' efforts and working together.

- *Sharing and collecting data:* better coordination in data collection and sharing would avoid duplication of work and save resources. Data is required for all aspects of the climate action, including mitigation, adaptation, just transition, loss and damage, the delivery of the means of implementation (i.e., finance, technology transfer and capacity building); monitoring and forecasting; development of technical standards. The UN system-wide collaboration is thus important for improving collection, management, exchange, access to and use of data and other relevant information for climate action.

- *Participation of stakeholders:* the participation of cities, local communities, SMEs, women, and indigenous peoples are needs to be strengthened. The UN system must work more on the inclusion of populations affected by climate change in the means of digitalization. There was also a call for capacity-building of law enforcement officers to integrate the rule of law into climate action and to protect environmental resources from exploitation.

- *Business sector:* there is a need for the UN agencies to expand their partnerships to private sector. A business model for just socio-ecological transition to renewables to reduce emissions in the corporate value chain was requested. Electricity, transport, textile, building and construction, agriculture and finance were industries identified to elevate ambition in NDCs to achieve targets required to assuage the climate crisis. Technical standards on energy efficiency and E-waste and digital solutions to include the most affected populations.

- *Overall expectations from the EMG*: EMG was called to have a coordinating role for bringing all UN entities together to enhance UN system-wide support to Member States and working more innovatively in an integrative manner. A number of areas were mentioned including facilitation of a stronger knowledge base and the mainstreaming of climate action in sectors and areas of impacts, such as economy, finance, food systems, and social dimensions. Strengthening UN system-wide efforts via EMG would allow it to scale solutions nationally and help in the coordination of environmental measures taken at the national levels. During the discussion, the important role of the EMG in reducing fragmentation in the UN-wide system climate work was highlighted and there was a call to expand EMG's role to enhance system wide collaboration for bridging the gaps and scaling up coherent support to climate action, and strengthening synergies of climate, nature and pollution agenda in interagency settings to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and the wider sustainable development agenda. EMG was called to convene agencies that facilitate a social-ecological transition that involves labour, trade unions and enterprises.



1Participants of the UN Environment Management Group (EMG) High-level Dialogue at COP28, 2nd December 2023, Dubai. Photo credit: International Institute for Sustainable Development

List of Participants

The dialogue was moderated by Ms Gabrielle Walker, Co-founder of CUR8 and Rethinking Removals

Opening statements were presented by Ms Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and Chair of the EMG, and Mr Daniele Violetti, Senior Director of Programmes Coordination, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Panelists:

- Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Secretary General, International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- Ms Sanda Ojiambo, Assistant Secretary-General, United Nations Global Compact (UNGC)
- Ms Rola Dashti, Executive Secretary, UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA)
- Mr Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (BRS)
- Ms Zoritsa Urosevic, Executive Director, The World Tourism Organization of the United Nations (UNWTO)
- Ms Ghada Waly, Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- Ms Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General, The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- Ms Valerie Hickey, Global Director for Environment, Natural Resources and the Blue Economy, The World Bank
- Ms Dena Assaf, United Nations Resident Coordinator for United Arab Emirates

- Mr Jorge Moreira da Silva, Executive Director, United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
- Mr Gernot Laganda, Director of Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction Service, World Food Programme (WFP)
- Mr Vladimir Ryabinin, Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO and Assistant Director-General of UNESCO
- Ms Najat Mokhtar, Deputy Director General, Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- Ms Aarti Holla-Maini, Director, United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA)
- Mr Andrew Harper, Special Advisor on Climate Action to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- Ms Liliana Annovazzi-Jakab, Chief of the joint ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, Forests, Land and Housing Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
- Ms Li Ailan, Assistant Director-General of the Universal Health Coverage, Healthier Populations Division, World Health Organization (WHO)
- Ms Edeltraud Guenther, Director, United Nations University (UNU) Flores
  Ms Chizuru Aoki, Lead Environmental Specialist, Global Environment Facility (GEF)
- Mr Gautam Narasimhan, UNICEF Global Lead for Climate, Energy and Environment, & Ms Paloma Escudero, UNICEF Global Special Adviser to Advocate for Children and Climate Action, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
- Mr Moustapha Kamal Gueye, Director of Priority Action Programme, The International Labour Organization (ILO)
- Ms Dalila Hamou, Director, External Relations Division, Global Challenges and Partnerships Sector, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
- Mr Benjamin Schachter, Senior Representative, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- Ms Xenya Scanlon, Chief of Communications, External Relations and Partnerships, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- Ms Sarah E. Hendriks, Deputy Executive Director for Policy, Programme, Civil Society, and Intergovernmental Support, UN Women