



16th Senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group

21 September 2010

Preparatory technical segment: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Senior officials segment: 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Hosted by the United Nations Division on Social and Economic Affairs (UNDESA)

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Distribution: EMG members

Progress report on ongoing work and suggested directions for further work

Note by the Chair

Executive summary

The present note is developed with the aim of supporting the relevant provisional agenda items of the 16th senior officials meeting Environment Management Group (EMG). It provides a progress report on ongoing work, including by the Issue Management Groups (IMGs), and contains suggested directions for further work, including:

1. A continuation of the work of the IMG on biodiversity for another two years with a renewed mandate to implement the findings of the report “Advancing the biodiversity agenda, A UN system wide Contribution” and the statement by Executive Heads of EMG members, and respond to any requests made to it from relevant intergovernmental meetings.
2. A request to the IMG on land to circulate the final draft on dry-lands to the wider EMG for approval and to continue its efforts by preparing a joint agenda for actions on dry-lands, and possibly land in general, by building on the findings of the report.
3. Support to the decision by the IMG on green economy to submit a preliminary report to the second Preparatory Meeting of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development and to circulate the final draft of the IMG report to the full EMG membership for approval.
4. Continued contribution to the work of the consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives which are considering the broader reform of the international environmental governance system, including by preparing an EMG approved report ‘Environment in the UN system’.
5. A request to the chair to continue to facilitate the consultative process on options for the development of a possible United Nations system-wide approach to environmental and social safeguards, in close cooperation with the issue management group on sustainable management.
6. A request to the IMG on sustainable management to prepare a strategic plan for sustainable management in the UN system, in view of the need to anchor sustainable management in intergovernmental processes and the internal management and operational structures of the UN system.
7. The approval of the work plan for EMG for the period 2011 – 2012 as presented in document EMG/SOM.16/04, on the understanding that it will be implemented on the basis of in-kind contributions from members and is subject to availability of resources.
8. A request to the Chair to continue the practise of circulating his draft report on the work of EMG to the UNEP Governing Council to members of the Group for their comments, and to explore modalities by which the full report of the EMG can also be made available to the UNGA.
9. Agreeing to convene an extraordinary senior officials meeting prior to the 2011 spring session of the Chief Executive Board which will be held at the UN Headquarter in Nairobi for a strategic discussion on the preparatory process for UNCSD, biodiversity and sustainability management and safeguards.

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Introduction

1. The present note provides a progress report on ongoing work of the Environment Management Group (EMG), including by the Issue Management Groups (IMGs), as well as suggested actions for further work. The note is developed to support the provisional agenda items of the 16th senior officials meeting of the Group.

1. The IMG on biodiversity

2. The 15th meeting of senior officials of the EMG held in September 2009 “welcomed the progress made by the time-bound issue management group on the post-2010 biodiversity targets and the contributions of members of the EMG to the preparation of the report for the intergovernmental processes on the formulation of the post-2010 biodiversity targets”. The meeting also “authorized the issue management group (IMG) on the post-2010 biodiversity targets to conclude the report on the United Nations system contribution to the formulation of the post-2010 biodiversity targets to be submitted by the Chair of the EMG to the CBD process for the formulation of the 2010 targets”. Finally it “agreed that the final report should be presented to the United Nations General Assembly high level event on 2010 biodiversity targets and the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity”.

3. The IMG writing team composed of representatives of key agencies and multilateral environmental agreements with biodiversity expertise organized its first meeting on 10 November 2009 hosted by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). It worked on the compiled zero draft report and prepared a revised report plus a division of role and responsibilities amongst IMG members for report writing.

4. The second meeting of the IMG was held in Geneva on 14 April 2010 and prepared a draft preliminary report for information to the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 14) and the third meeting of the Ad-hoc Open Ended Working Group on Review of the Implementation of the Convention (WGRI 3) in May 2010. The draft report was informed of the draft revised outline and elements of the new CBD Strategic Plan.

5. The Chair of the EMG submitted the draft report to the CBD Secretariat through a Note which was then made available for consideration of the SBSTTA 14 and WGRI 3 as information document.

6. A brief presentation of the report was made by the Director of the EMG Secretariat to the opening plenary session of WGRI III pursuant to the request of the CBD COP Bureau and Chairman of the WGRI 3. A side event was held on 24 May by the EMG in the margins of the WGRI III to elaborate more on the vision and contents of the report to a wide range of participants. The current presidency of the COP (Germany), the host of the next COP (Japan), few other members of the CBD COP Bureau (Mexico and Sweden), member states, NGO's and a number of IMG colleagues participated to the event. A number of feedbacks and comments were received which were considered and reflected in the draft report.

7. The WGRI 3 in two of its recommendations¹ welcomed the work of the EMG and requested its further work on the follow up of the biodiversity targets and the strategic plan in the UN system. In paragraph 13 (c) of recommendation 3/5 “Updating and revision of the Strategic Plan for the post-2010 period” which is currently bracketed, it invites the EMG “in building on its report to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to identify measures for effective and efficient implementation the Strategic Plan across the United Nations system and provide a report on its work to the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh meeting through WGRI and SBSTTA”. In paragraph 3 of recommendation 3/12 “United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020” it invites the EMG “to facilitate cooperation and information exchange among its members in support of the Convention and its Strategic Plan for the period 2011-2020”.

8. The 3rd meeting of the IMG was held on 19 July in form of a teleconference to finalize the draft report with a statement by Executive Heads of members of the EMG. The IMG agreed on its road map for the General Assembly High Level event on biodiversity (22 September) and the 10th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Nagoya, Japan (19-27 October). This included the presentation of the EMG Heads of agencies statement to the GA event by the Chair, organization of side event during the high level segment of the CBD COP 10 to launch the report, and contribution to the Heads of agencies event at COP 10.

¹ UNEP/CBD/COP/10/4

9. The IMG also agreed to propose to the 16th senior officials to continue the work of the EMG on biodiversity in order to contribute to the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD-Rio plus 20) and follow up on the outcome of the GA high-level event and 10th COP of the CBD. The work could be continued by extending the work of the IMG for another two years, with a new mandate which enables the IMG to initiate actions by the UN system in response to the intergovernmental expectations. The IMG could meet after the COP 10 to discuss the outcome of the above events and agree on a new Terms of Reference and a time bound program of work.

10. The final draft of the report titled: Advancing the biodiversity agenda, A UN system wide Contribution” including the statement was subsequent to its approval by IMG sent on 1 September 2010 to the Heads of agencies, through a letter by the Chair, for their final approval.

11. The questions of why biodiversity matters to sectors and how the different policy sectors can help maintain biodiversity and ecosystem services have been considered in the report. New opportunities for mainstreaming are emerging. Cooperation within the biodiversity sector and across sectors is increasingly pursued. The “one UN” initiative is but one example in this respect. The fragmentation of the environmental institutional landscape is being addressed. Developments in the area of biological science, monitoring, modeling and forecasting are improving the ability of society at all levels to identify risks of biodiversity loss and opportunities provided by ecosystem services. Rapid advances in information and communication technologies can potentially ease the task of managing complex information and facilitate communication among a broad range of users.

12. Executive Heads of UN agencies acknowledge, in the statement, that biodiversity considerations need to be mainstreamed into sectoral policies and strategies, and that such efforts need to address amongst others the institutional silos of a sectoralised society, the failure of markets to internalise the value of ecosystem services, and the demanding trade-offs between different interests and concerns in society. The statement also represents a commitment from the executives to identify opportunities for cooperation in mainstreaming biodiversity into the policy sectors, within the respective mandates of their organizations. Examples of the various ways this could be achieved include:

(a) using advances in environmental and social sciences, monitoring, modelling and forecasting, supporting the ongoing process on the development of an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, and using new developments in information and communication technology and knowledge management to exchange information, particularly that needed to stem biodiversity loss;

(b) cooperating at all levels through the “one UN” initiative in support of efforts by governments to implement their biodiversity commitments, including those under biodiversity-related conventions, for example through capacity building and technology support;

(c) supporting nationally driven efforts to arrest biodiversity loss that are fully integrated into and advanced through national development policies, strategies and programmes;

(d) capitalizing on ongoing efforts, such as the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity initiative, to improve the understanding of the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services and support governments in making a shift toward more sustainable development, for example through a green economy, including investment in sustainable and equitable use and conservation of biodiversity, which may generate jobs and economic wealth;

(e) recognising and respecting the role of poor and vulnerable groups, including indigenous peoples as custodians of biodiversity

(f) promoting awareness and enhancing capacities among different relevant stakeholder groups from each sector and identifying win-win situations across sectors;

(g) reviewing progress in implementing the biodiversity agenda through structured, and streamlined reporting, self evaluations and use of internationally agreed indicators and targets.

13. In the statement, the executive heads of the EMG members also commit to continue cooperation under the auspices of the EMG in order to demonstrate what a multi-sectoral approach can bring to the development and implementation of the international biodiversity agenda. The statement, therefore, affirms that opportunities for improved mainstreaming exist, and that public institutions, such as the UN, can help set establish the framework for actions by the private sector, households and individuals to act. The foundation for a new and multi-sectoral paradigm of cooperation is sketched out in this report. The report is not the end of the process. Rather, it signifies a milestone in a unique effort by the UN system to join hands in supporting the implementation of the biodiversity agenda by ‘delivering as one’.

Suggested action 1: Continuation of the issue management group (IMG) on biodiversity with a renewed mandate

The senior officials meeting decides to continue the work of the IMG on biodiversity for another two years to implement the biodiversity component of the EMG work plan for 2011 – 2012 with a view to:

- a) implement the findings of the report “Advancing the biodiversity agenda, A UN system wide Contribution” and the statement by Executive Heads of EMG members; and
- b) respond to any requests made to it from the UNGA high-level event on biodiversity, the 10th COP of the CBD and the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

The meeting also requests the IMG to prepare a submission on the follow up to the UNGA high-level event on biodiversity, the 10th COP of the CBD and any biodiversity aspects of the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to the extraordinary meeting of the senior officials in March 2011.

2. The IMG on land

14. Following a series of informal and technical consultations on land in 2009, the 15th senior officials meeting established the issue management Group on land composed of 15 members from UN agencies and a selected number of experts on land for a period of two years. It was established to propose modalities for a United Nations system-wide contribution to the implementation of the 10-year strategic plan of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD). This included preparation of a United Nations system-wide rapid response report on drylands and options for a coherent United Nations system-wide contribution to land challenges, including the implementation of the UNCCD 10-year strategic plan. The IMG was requested to report on the progress of its work to the 16th meeting of the senior officials of the EMG in 2010.

15. A side event was held on 30 September in the margins of the COP 9 of the UNCCD in Buenos Aires to share with member states the decision of the EMG and to seek their guidance and support in the work of the IMG.

16. The first meeting of the Issue Management Group (IMG) was held in Bonn on 24 and 25 November 2009 hosted by the UNCCD. Based on a concept note, the meeting considered options for a coherent United Nations system-wide contribution to land challenges, including the implementation of the UNCCD 10-year strategic plan and modalities for preparation of a United Nations system-wide rapid response report on drylands. The prepare options for cooperation on drylands, the IMG agreed to prepare a rapid response and action report which highlights the importance of drylands as they relate to key emerging issues on the global agenda, including climate change and food security, and the investment opportunities that they offer. The annotated outline of the report was prepared and members agreed on division of roles and responsibilities in writing the report. Members provided their inputs to the zero draft of the report through a web based tool.

17. The IMG established a core writing team to prepare the first draft report. Members are responsible for the various chapters according to their areas of expertise and focus. The writing team has been engaged in continuous consultations and drafting process through electronic means. A draft report provisionally titled *Global Drylands: A UN response* is under final review by the writing team which will be considered for comments and approval by the second meeting of the Issue Management Group. The 2nd IMG is scheduled to meet after the senior officials meeting possibly in the margins of the 16th Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC in Cancun. While approving the report and agreeing on its follow up recommendations, the Group will prepare a road map and a joint agenda for action in its second year and will report on its final outcome to the 17th senior officials in 2011.

18. The report is not intended to be prescriptive, but would be built on the existing knowledge, science and experience of the member agencies (including actions already being taken), focused on the positive aspects (economic, social, institutional and environmental) of drylands. The report highlights the importance of global drylands to key emerging issues on the global agenda, including climate change, food security and human settlements together with options for follow-up action. The premise of

this report is that in modern times, dry-lands in poor countries have tended to be de facto ‘investment deserts’, that is, the environmental challenges (aridity, variability) had their socio-economic counterparts in chronic under-investment. Where this constraint has not applied in some dry-lands in rich countries, sustained higher levels of investment have supported enhanced productivity and higher incomes. Such ongoing economic development provides the surest foundation for managing risk (the economic consequence of environmental variability), taking advantage of new or emerging opportunities, and adapting to possible negative climate change. The technologies for such a transition are available, and so the question arises of identifying and overcoming the constraints or barriers to the *re-capitalization* of dry-lands in poor countries. *The UN system can be a catalyst in bringing this about.* This report sets out a common vision and agenda for UN-wide action on dry-lands managements and its role in addressing climate change and food security, through a *positive*, dry-lands development and investment approach.

Suggested action 2: Ongoing work of the issue management group (IMG) on land

The senior officials meeting welcomes the progress made by the time-bound issue management group on land, and requests that the final draft be circulated to the wider EMG for approval. The meeting also requests the IMG to continue its efforts by preparing a joint agenda for actions on dry-lands, and possibly land in general, by building on the findings of the report.

3. The IMG on green economy

19. The 15th senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group, decided to establish an issue management group (IMG) on a Green Economy to assess how the United Nations system could more coherently support countries in making the transition to a “green economy” and to work on joint and consistent messaging on measures needed to support the transition. The EMG senior officials meeting further requested the EMG secretariat to engage electronically with the members to develop terms of reference of the Issue Management Group. These terms of reference were prepared through several rounds of consultations and the final version is available on the EMG website².

20. The first meeting of the Issue Management Group on a Green Economy, which took place from 23-24 March 2010, in Washington DC, organized in partnership with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, provided the opportunity to share information on past and planned activities related to the green economy that are underway across the UN system organizations and Bretton Woods institutions, and to build complementarity with existing intergovernmental and interagency processes. It also provided a forum for discussion on conceptual issues related to a green economy and resulted in convergence on some key elements. The meeting also discussed the preparation of a report by the IMG.

21. With regard to this report, the terms of reference of the IMG on a Green Economy call for the preparation of “a focused and forward-looking inter-agency assessment report on the UN system and the green economy analyzing where and how the expertise of the different agencies, funds and programmes of the UN system can contribute to supporting countries in the transition to a green low-carbon economy”.

22. At the first IMG meeting, it was decided that an interim version would be submitted to the second Preparatory Meeting of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development. At this meeting, there was an initial exchange on views on the contributions by the IMG members to this report. On the basis of these discussions, a draft outline was circulated for comment, in which member institutions were invited to propose sub-sections and indicate which parts they would be interested in co-authoring.

23. Based on the comments received, a second draft of the outline was prepared as a basis for discussion at a teleconference of 21 June 2010, proposing section titles and lead author institutions for each, as well as other contributing organizations. The discussions at the teleconference led to a revised and near-final version, contained in Annex I to this document.

24. The 21 June teleconference confirmed that this report is intended primarily for the UN system and Bretton Woods institutions, but also for use by Governments and institutions. The IMG report will

² See <http://www.unemg.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=7uSM8j2REYg%3d&tabid=3563&language=en-US>

highlight key policy issues as identified by contributing UN system and Bretton Woods institutions, as well as the response by the organizations to assist countries. It will complement reports that are already available and under preparation, including, for example, the UNEP Green Economy Report and the undg Guidance Note on Green Economy.

25. The 21 June teleconference also confirmed that a final draft of the IMG report would be submitted to the full EMG membership prior to the 17th senior officials meeting in the fall of 2011.

26. Conceptual issues related to a green economy will be clarified in the report, which also will build a common vision and goals, provide an assessment of the EMG members experience to date in supporting this transition, identify key policy issues and opportunities and risks, bring a multi-sectoral perspective, and draw up areas for further work and partnership.

27. A next teleconference of the IMG on a Green Economy is scheduled for September 2010 to discuss 2-page outlines of each section that are to be prepared by the lead author institutions in cooperation with the supporting institutions.

Suggested action 3: Ongoing work of the issue management group (IMG) on green economy

The senior officials meeting welcomes the progress made by the time-bound issue management group on green economy, including its decision to submit a preliminary report to the second Preparatory Meeting of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development as well as the decision to circulate the final draft of the IMG report to the full EMG membership for approval.

4. Cooperation on international environmental governance

28. The eleventh special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum held in Bali, Indonesia, 24–26 February 2010 established a regionally representative, consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives to consider the broader reform of the international environmental governance system. The group was tasked to present a report to the Council at its twenty-sixth session in February 2011 in anticipation of the Council’s contribution to the open-ended preparatory committee of United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the General Assembly.

29. The Council decided that the consultative group “*will also comprise high-level representatives of relevant United Nations agencies, designated through the Environment Management Group*”. The chair sought the cooperation of EMG members in designating a high-level representative of your organization to the consultative group. Fourteen agencies have nominated high level representatives to the ministerial group.

30. The Council also requested the Executive Director of UNEP in his capacity as Chair of the EMG “*to invite the United Nations system to provide input to the*” consultative group,” *including by assessing gaps, needs and considerations related to how the system is currently achieving the identified objectives and functions for international environmental governance*”. Members were invited to provide their inputs as well as to comment on a preliminary working draft note entitled ‘Information note on Environment in the UN system’. This draft note was prepared in response to calls from several governments for an overview of environmental activities in the UN system on the understanding that it would later undergo a review by members of the EMG. Members were also invited to submit data on their financial contribution to IEG.

31. A consultative meeting on the matter was convened 19 May 2010 in the margins of the first meeting of the preparatory committee of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development held 17-21 May 2010 in New York. A high level of engagement from members resulted in a substantially revised version of the ‘Information note on Environment in the UN system’ which was presented to the first meeting of the consultative group held in Nairobi 7-9 July 2010 with eight EMG members present. Members also commented on a broad set of options for broader reform presented to the consultative group.

32. The consultative group narrowed down the set of options and requested that they be revised by the co-chairs based on the deliberations of the group. The group also initiated the process for analysing

five institutional reform options based on standardised format for comparative analysis. These options are: a new umbrella organization for sustainable development; a specialized agency such as a World Environment Organization; possible reforms to ECOSOC and the Commission on Sustainable Development; and enhanced institutional reforms and streamlining of present structures. EMG members have been invited to comment on draft documents for the next meeting of the consultative group which will take place in November 2010 in Helsinki, Finland.

33. Based on informal consultations among participating EMG members at the consultative meeting in Nairobi it proposed that the document 'Environment in the UN system' undergo further work and be presented as an EMG approved report. A revised version of the draft has been circulated to members for further inputs.

Suggested action 4: Contributions to intergovernmental consultations on broader reform of the international environmental governance (IEG) system

The senior officials meeting welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the work of the consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives which are considering the broader reform of the international environmental governance system. The meeting decides to prepare an EMG approved report 'Environment in the UN system' in time for twenty-sixth session of UNEP Governing Council and the UNCSD prep com II.

The meeting also requests the EMG secretariat to facilitate the follow up to any requests made to the EMG from the twenty-sixth session of UNEP Governing Council and the UNCSD prep com II.

5. Consultations on environmental and social safeguards in the United Nations system

34. The 15th senior officials meeting of the EMG requested the Chair to prepare, in consultation with members of the Group, the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM), for consideration by the EMG, a report on options for the development of a possible United Nations system-wide approach to environmental and social safeguards based on a review of existing policies and guidelines.

35. The EMG secretariat has invited members to take part in a consultation process on safeguards through the development of a terms of reference, interviews with EMG member agencies and a desk study on the application of environmental and social safeguards in the UN system. A workshop on safeguards was hosted by the World Bank, 24 June 2010 which considered the main opportunities and challenges related to environmental and social safeguards in the UN system. The workshop agreed on a process for preparing an approach to safeguards in the UN, including by establishing a drafting group.

36. A number of norms and standards have been developed to enhance environmental and social performance. Examples are the norms and standards of the UN Global Compact Principles, the Equator Principles, international human rights treaties, Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other international agreements such as the Millennium Development Declaration, the Rio Declaration and the Beijing Platform for action. In addition there are international agreements that promotes cooperation and alignment such as the 2005 World Summit outcomes, the Delivering as One Initiative and the Paris Declaration

37. In the context of emerging international and national legislation on strategic environmental and social impact assessments in both developed and developing countries, the UN is challenged to find a more transparent and systematic approach to its environmental and social management procedures. However, a recent Joint Inspection Unit report pointed out that there is no single, institutional strategy for making environmental and social norms and standards operational across UN agencies. Some main constraints have been identified as: 1) Too many competing guidelines and frameworks, 2) Insufficient incentives and internal compliance measures, and 3) A lack of leadership and institutional commitment.

38. The first EMG consultative workshop agreed that a common UN-wide framework for environmental and social safeguards would:

- (a) provide a coherent, focused set of principles and minimum expectations for UN-supported initiatives, with enough flexibility to fit respective operational challenges;
- (b) strengthen organizational incentives to develop skills and expertise for supporting safeguard implementation and thereby improving environmental and social performance;
- (c) provide a common reference point and language for UN staff and for country partners and thereby reduce the number and complexity of different agency procedures at country level;
- (d) strengthen monitoring and evaluation processes, and enable the system to share knowledge, learn together, and improve in a more systematic manner; and
- (e) demonstrate to donors and other stakeholders that the UN has a credible, transparent and coherent approach, built on international good practices, and improve the ability of the UN to deliver resources to countries.

39. The first EMG consultative workshop also identified a number of challenges that have to be assessed in the context of a common approach to environmental and social safeguards such as:

- (a) how to choose and structure the standards for common safeguards? The range of potential negative social and environmental impacts across the areas of the UN's work is huge. A common safeguard system will need to apply a risk management approach to delimit the range of potential negative impacts, as well as the critical opportunities, it screens for;
- (b) how do we talk the same language? There are some terminology differences. For example, assessment is an Equator principle, an IFC standard, and a World Bank policy;
- (c) how to ensure consistent application of safeguards? Anecdotal reports and evidence suggest that usage of safeguard measures is variable. Safeguards require a high and ongoing institutional commitment to support and monitor implementation and follow-up on corrective action. Compliance, reporting, training & learning measures are essential. But which should be common and which are best done at agency level?
- (d) how far can we use national systems? In the spirit of the Paris Declaration, a common approach would have to consider when and how to use national screening and assessment procedures and standards in lieu of agreed UN system safeguards. While tailoring procedures to country context is an established principle of UN cooperation, too much flexibility could contribute to problems in accountability, performance, and public opinion;
- (e) how strong is the political will and leadership? A coordinated effort to develop and apply safeguards will require the endorsement of the safeguards of all participating organisations, and engagement with their governing bodies.

40. The drafting group on environmental and safeguards have assessed possible conceptual frameworks that could provide a balanced approach to the challenge of cross-cutting environmental and social issues, flexibility and accountability. One possible conceptual framework builds on international good practice and links common value based principles and universal procedures with decision making and technical guidance at agency level. A flow chart of the conceptual framework is illustrated in Annex II.

41. The next steps will be to finalize the gap-analysis in order to validate and refine the conceptual safeguards framework. The objective is to identify common principles and procedures and technical guidance that potentially could be used to develop the framework.

Suggested action 5: Furthering the consultation on environmental and social safeguards in the UN system

The senior officials meeting welcomes the progress made by the chair in the consultations on options for the development of a possible United Nations system-wide approach to environmental and social safeguards. In recognising the complexity of the issue at hand, requests the chair to continue to facilitate the consultative process in close cooperation with the issue management group on sustainable management with view to:

- a) Finalize the mapping exercise and gap-analysis and refine the conceptual framework for environmental and social safeguards;

- b) Prepare options for a coherent UN system-wide approach to environmental and social safeguards for consideration by the extraordinary meeting of the senior officials in March 2011.

6. IMG on Sustainable Management in the United Nations system: moving toward climate neutrality; sustainable procurement; and a coherent approach to sustainable management in the United Nations system

42. At its meeting in September 2009, senior officials of the EMG stressed that efforts related to greening the UN, such as through sustainable procurement, must be anchored in intergovernmental processes as well as in the internal management and operational structures of the UN system. The group recalled the statement endorsed by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination on moving toward a climate-neutral United Nations at its October 2007 session and the UN Climate Neutral Strategy and welcomed the reports and progress made by agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations in implementing the commitments made in the statement,

43. The meeting also took stock of the work of the IMG on a Climate Neutral United Nations and decided to merge its work with the IMG on Sustainable Procurement under a single IMG on Sustainable Management in the United Nations System for a period of two more years to be coordinated and supported by the Sustainable United Nations (SUN) facility hosted by UNEP. This new IMG was tasked to further facilitate:

- (a) A common methodology for greenhouse gas inventories, with appropriate linkages to enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems;
- (b) Development of individual emission reduction strategies for each UN organization by the end of 2010, in addition to a common approach for emission reductions in the UN system;
- (c) Exploring common modalities for purchase of offsets;
- (d) Developing support services for integrating sustainable procurement practices in the United Nations, including by training of concerned staff, documentation of success stories, development of practical tools and guidelines, updating of the United Nations procurement practitioner's handbook on sustainable procurement, and promotion of awareness in the business community;
- (e) Exploring how sustainable management in the United Nations system can be developed, including identifying options for developing sustainable management systems as an integral part of enterprise-resource planning (ERP) systems; and
- (f) Preparing a short practical overview guide to sustainable management practices in the United Nations system that includes references to relevant technical documents.

44. The first **common greenhouse gas inventory** for the UN system was released at UNFCCC COP15 in Copenhagen in December 2009 in the report "*Moving Towards a Climate Neutral UN*". The report includes inventories from 49 UN organizations, as well as accounts for their emission reduction efforts undertaken so far. The total climate footprint of the UN system in 2008 was 1.7 million tons CO₂ eqv. The report is available on-line at <http://www.greeningtheblue.org/resources/climate-neutrality>. The second annual report, reflecting the greenhouse gas emissions in 2009, is now in an advanced stage of preparation and is planned to be released in conjunction with the extraordinary meeting of senior officials of the EMG in March 2011.

45. An improved system for **on-line reporting of greenhouse gas emission inventories** has been developed, with valuable support by UN DFS and ICAO, and is now being tested as part of the preparation of the 2009 greenhouse gas inventory to be reported in late 2010/early 2011. As part of this work, UNEP, ICAO and IPCC jointly organized an expert workshop in Montreal in May 2009 to develop recommendations on how to handle the non-CO₂ effects from air travel, including the employment of a Radiative Forcing Index. The recommendation is that the science is yet not sufficiently mature to account for the potential effects of non-CO₂ effects in UN's greenhouse gas inventories.

46. Work has been initiated in the *HLCM networks and other common UN networks* for Communications (UNCG), Facilities Management (INFM), Travel (IATN), Procurement, and

Information and Communication Technologies to develop recommendations on how to reduce the climate footprint within their respective focus areas.

47. All UN organizations represented in IMG have initiated work to develop *specific emission reduction strategies* with defined emission reduction targets and timelines for specific emission reduction activities. The target is to have these endorsed or adopted by the relevant governing bodies in each organization before the end of 2011.

48. *Guidelines* for sustainable travel, climate friendly building and offices, energy efficient buildings, distance work, sustainable procurement, as well as an overview Guide to Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions in UN organizations were prepared by SUN with input from IMG and relevant HLCM networks. To further support UN organizations to prepare their annual greenhouse gas inventories and emission reduction plans, SUN has set up a hands-on Help Desk. The Help Desk provides training through online seminar and responds to questions related to data collection and emission reduction plans.

49. Forty case studies have been compiled and posted on Greening the Blue (refer to item j below) showcasing different projects in various UN organizations, aiming at reducing UN's climate footprint and improving its sustainability. Within the UN buildings work, this includes a number of *demonstration projects with strong sustainability features*, such as the Capital Master Plan in New York, the construction of a Green One UN House in Hanoi, and of a New Office Facility at UNON in Nairobi, as well as the formation of a Green Lease association among UN tenants in buildings outside the UN compound in New York.

50. A major source of greenhouse gas emissions in UN is official travel of staff, meeting participants, experts and others, contributing to approximately 50% of the total climate footprint of the UN system. SUN, with support of IMG and ICAO, has now released a guide to sustainable travel in UN. However, some of the barriers to sustainable travel and emission reduction from travel are embedded in the common travel policies for UN, and require a clarification or revision of these policies to enable UN organizations to address emission reductions from travel.

51. Greenhouse emissions from buildings also constitute a large share of UN's climate footprint with UN's presence in more than 500 locations around the world. Most UN buildings have been operating for many years and are in need of renovation works to improve their energy efficiency and overall sustainability performance. The Sustainable Facilities Management Working Group, supported SUN, was established within INFM in March 2010 to address some of these issues. However, UN facility managers need additional resources to assess, understand and implement necessary building upgrade works to systematically improve the overall performance of UN buildings globally.

52. Communication is key to implementing the UN climate neutral strategy, which is why SUN, with support from EMG and the UN communications group, has established a *new common communication platform – Greening the Blue* - for internal and external communications on climate neutrality and sustainability management in UN. The platform, which was launched on World Environment Day 2010 at www.greeningtheblue.org is supported on Facebook and Twitter. To further disseminate the resources and lessons learnt from the UN Climate Neutral Strategy *and provide support to organizations outside UN*, SUN has also established an advisory service under the UNEP hosted Climate Neutral Network.

53. IMG has developed a Guide for the *Procurement of Offsets in UN Organizations*, which provides technical guidance on how offsets may be procured in UN. In addition, IMG is in the process of finalizing a policy recommendation to EMG, to be presented at its next meeting, on how to implement offsetting in each UN organization along the recommendations of the UN Climate Neutral Strategy. Five guidelines for sustainable procurement of specific products/services have been released at (www.greeningtheblue.org/resources/procurement) (IT, cleaning, stationary, furniture, toner cartridges). Another three will be developed in 2010 (vehicles, catering and generators). In addition some 120 staff members have been trained in sustainable procurement at six procurement training events.

54. The issue of *sustainable procurement* (SP) in the UN is under consideration by the 5th committee of the General Assembly. The Secretary General submitted to the 64th session of the General Assembly a Comprehensive Report on United Nations Procurement Activities (A/64/284/Add.2). An addendum to the report addressing the issue of sustainable procurement was also presented. The addendum was based on inputs provided by the IMG and the HLCM procurement network. The Committee considered the report and agreed that further consideration of the matter was needed at its 65th session in September 2010.

55. The UNEP governing Council in its decision SS.XI/3 encouraged the EMG to continue its cooperation, including by working with the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its subsidiary bodies in enhancing the promotion of sustainable management practices in the United Nations system, including by making further progress towards climate neutrality and sustainable procurement.

56. The IMG in cooperation with the HLCM network on procurement and the support from the SUN, are exploring best practices for sustainable procurement as mandated by UNEP's Governing Council. Further work should emphasize documentation of case studies and best practices, support to discussions in the General Assembly and other concerned bodies with facts and figures about sustainable procurement, assessment of the impact of sustainable procurement in different markets, raising awareness about the role and potential of sustainable procurement, and continued development and testing of sustainable procurement tools.

57. IMG has initiated work to develop a proposal and recommendation on how to approach *Sustainable Management Systems (SMS) in UN*, supported by the relevant Enterprise Resource Planning Systems when possible. A key partner in this effort is the UN's ERP project called Umoja³. The recommendation is expected to be ready for the next EMG meeting.

58. At its meeting in September 2009, senior officials of the EMG were informed that the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) released in mid-2009 a report *"Implementation by the Environmental Management Group (EMG) Secretariat of the Secretary-General's Commitment to Move the United Nations Towards Climate-Neutrality"* (IED-09-002), wherein specific recommendations were provided to UNEP, the Secretary General and to the UN secretariat to strengthen implementation of the UN Climate Neutral Strategy. The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) further released in early 2010 the report *"Environmental Profile of the United Nations System Organizations"* (JIU/REP/2010/1), wherein twelve recommendations were provided to the General Assembly, the UN Secretariat and to Executive Heads of United Nations System Organizations. Both reports compliment the current efforts by the UN system, but stresses that there is a critical need a more formal and systematic framework that establish an integrated in-house environmental management system. The IMG has provided comments on the JIU report to the secretariat of the CEB. The CEB Secretariat is in the process of concluding a note by the Secretary General to the General Assembly with his comments and those of the UN CEB on the report of the JIU.

59. While several of these recommendations are now being addressed by IMG, e.g. developing a proposal for a sustainable management system approach, there are other recommendations that, in the view of IMG, are highly relevant but cannot be addressed at the level of IMG. This refers in particular to the need for the several UN organizations, including the UN Secretariat itself, to assign sufficient resources, especially staff time, to implement the UN Climate Neutral Strategy in their organizations. At its meeting in February 2010 IMG highlighted that this is a critical issue for the continued implementation of the UN Climate Neutral Strategy. IMG, requested senior bodies (EMG and CEB) to reaffirm its commitment to the UN Climate Neutral Strategy by asking each UN organization to allocate sufficient staff time and resources to implement the Strategy.

Suggested action 6: Ongoing work of the issue management group (IMG) on sustainable management

The senior officials meeting welcomes the progress made by the time-bound issue management group on sustainable management and the recent attention given to this issue by the Joint Inspection Unit in its report *"Environmental Profile of the United Nations System Organizations"*.

Given the ongoing nature of the work of the IMG the meeting decides to extend its time-period until the end of 2012 according to the attached draft work plan for EMG.

In view of the need to anchor sustainable management in intergovernmental processes and in the internal management and operational structures of the UN system, the meeting requests the IMG to prepare a strategic plan for sustainable management in the UN system for the consideration of the extraordinary meeting of the senior officials in March 2011, which include:

(a) Modalities for a regular integrated process for greenhouse gas inventories, with appropriate linkages to enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems;

³ meaning "unity" in Kiswahili.

- (b) Cooperation on a common approach for emission reductions in the UN system, through emission reduction plans for UN system organizations and working with relevant interagency networks on how relevant management policies may be applied or adapted in support of sustainable management.
- (c) Modalities for implementing the GHG offsetting part of the UN climate neutral strategy.
- (d) Approaches for maintaining inventories, reporting, communication, joint training, resource development and investments in sustainable management.
- (e). Continued support for promoting sustainable procurement practices in the United Nations system, and documenting benefits of such approaches to member states.

7. EMG work plan for 2011–2012

60. The 15th senior officials meeting of EMG adopted the first annual EMG. The new work plan is presented in document EMG/SOM.16/04 in the form of a proposed work plan for EMG for the period 2011 – 2012.

61. It is proposed that the work plan be given a two year horizon, i.e. be a plan for 2011 to 2012, but that the EMG continues to approve the plan annually. The reason for this approach is to capture activities which have a longer time span than one year. The plan gives an overview of forthcoming activities and milestones for the next 24 months. The plan is organized according four main expected accomplishments as they pertain to programmatic, management and operational issues as well as overall cooperation.

62. The technical segment of the 15th senior officials meeting encouraged the EMG secretariat to prepare a budget estimate as part of the proposed work plan. The budget estimate should as far as possible include expected contributions from members.

63. The EMG secretariat has in considering the matter identified the following cost elements:

- (a) secretariat costs born by UNEP;
- (b) costs of organising meetings and tele-connections to meetings which are partly born by UNEP, but often born by a member the hosting the meeting;
- (c) costs related to participation in meetings which are born by all members;
- (d) costs in developing joint support material or services, such as through consultancies, which are born by UNEP, but increasingly also by members;
- (e) costs related to preparation of report in terms of staff-time for writing and review as well as for publication which are born by UNEP and members.

64. The secretariat has come to the conclusion that it is difficult to cost activities as long as these are entirely based on in-kind contributions from members and from UNEP as a secretariat. The secretariat would therefore recommend that the plan remains un-costed as long as there is no common budget for EMG activities. It is also recommended that the work plan is implemented through in-kind contribution subject to the availability of resources. The in kind contribution will be budgeted, programmed and reported on by each member and the UNEP secretariat within their own administrative processes.

Suggested action 7: Approval of the proposed work plan for EMG for the period 2011 – 2012

The senior officials meeting approves the work plan for EMG for the period 2011 – 2012 as presented in document EMG/SOM.16/04, based on the understanding that it will be implemented on the basis of in-kind contributions from members and is subject to availability of resources.

8. Process for reporting to the UNEP Governing Council

65. The 15th senior officials meeting of the EMG requested the Chair to circulate his draft report on the EMG to the eleventh special session of the United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum to members of the Group for their comments. A draft reported was circulated to members for comments and then presented as part of document UNEP/GCSS.XI/3⁴ to the eleventh special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum held in Bali, Indonesia, 24–26 February 2010.

66. The council in its decision SS.XI/3 took note of the report of the Executive Director on enhanced coordination across the United Nations system welcomed the progress by the EMG in facilitating cooperation across the United Nations system to assist Member States in implementing the environmental agenda. It encouraged the EMG to continue its cooperation, including by working with the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its subsidiary bodies in enhancing:

(a) The promotion of sustainable management practices in the United Nations system, including by making further progress towards climate neutrality and sustainable procurement;

(b) Cooperation in programming environmental activities in the United Nations system in the areas of biodiversity, land degradation and green economy, including by supporting the implementation of the strategic plans of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,⁵ and the Convention on Biological Diversity, including the post-2010 biodiversity targets, and by assessing how the United Nations system could more coherently assist countries in making the transition to a green economy;

(c) Coherence in mainstreaming environmental considerations in United Nations operational activities at the country level, in particular by identifying options for the development of a possible United Nations system-wide approach to environmental aspects.

67. The UNGA is informed of the work of the EMG through the submissions of the proceeding of the UNEP Governing Council. The UNGA requested to be informed about the work of the EMG in its resolution A/RES/58/209

Suggested action 8: Reporting to the Governing Council of UNEP

The senior officials meeting welcomes the opportunity to inform the UNEP Governing Council, and through the Council the UN General Assembly, of its work. The meeting appreciates the guidance received from the Council and request the Chair to continue the practise of circulating his draft report on the work of EMG to the Council to members of the Group for their comments, and to explore modalities by which the full report of the EMG can also be made available to the UNGA.

9. Date and venue of the next senior officials meeting

68. In his letter of notification for the 16th senior officials meeting the Chair sought the views of members on the idea of furthering such a strategic discussion in an extraordinary meeting of EMG senior officials just prior to the 2011 spring session of the UN Chief Executive Board which will be held at the UN Headquarter in Nairobi. Possible issues for its consideration would be contributions to the preparatory process for UNCSD, biodiversity, environmental management, social and environmental safeguards.

69. In preparing for the senior officials meeting the chair has continued the practise of seeking the views of members on the agenda and to informally consult on dates and venues. This practise will be continued for the 17th senior officials meeting scheduled to take place in September 2011.

⁴ UNEP/GCSS.XI/3 Enhanced coordination across the United Nations system, including the Environment Management Group: implementation of the revised memorandum of understanding between the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme, Report of the Executive Director

⁵ ICCD/COP(8)/16/Add.1.

Suggested action 9: Date and venue of the next senior officials meetings

The senior officials meeting decides to in an extraordinary meeting of EMG senior officials just prior to the 2011 spring session of the UN Chief Executive Board which will be held at the UN Headquarter in Nairobi in order to facilitate a strategic discussion on contributions to the preparatory process for UNCSD, biodiversity, environmental management, social and environmental safeguards. The meeting requests the EMG secretariat to circulate to the members of the EMG options for dates and venues for its extraordinary meeting and the 17th senior officials meeting and consult with members on its agenda.

Annex I

Outline of report of the Issue Management Group on a Green Economy “Supporting the transition to a Green Economy” (annotated outline as at 07 Sept 2010)

Section title	Lead institution	Supporting institutions
Executive Summary	EMG secretariat	Chapter lead authors
Introduction	EMG secretariat	EMG members
1. Conceptual issues: key elements and rationale for moving towards a green economy	UNEP	CBD, DESA, IDB, ILO, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNESCO, WMO, World Bank
2. UN system and Bretton Woods institutions and green economy	EMG secretariat / World Bank	DESA, UNECE, ESCWA, IMF, UNCTAD, UNDP, WTO
3. Green stimulus package	UNEP	ICAO, ILO, OECD, UNCTAD
4. Dynamic growth strategies	DESA	ILO, UNCTAD, World Bank
5. Making green economy work for the poor	UNDP	CBD, FAO, ILO, UNAIDS, UN-HABITAT, UNWTO, WFP
6. Full cost pricing, subsidies and tax reform	IMF	CBD, DESA, ICAO, ILO, ESCAP, OECD, UNEP, WTO
7. Regulatory approaches	UNEP	CBD, DESA, ICAO, IMO, UNECE, UNESCO, World Bank, WTO
8. Supporting innovation and technology	UNEP	FAO, IAEA, ICAO, IDB, ILO, IMO, WMO, OECD, UNFCCC, World Bank
9. Social dimensions: education, health and culture	UNESCO	IAEA, ILO, UNAIDS, WHO, WMO
10. Sustainable trade	UNCTAD	DESA, UNEP, WTO
11. Indicators of progress, measuring growth and prosperity	UNEP	CBD, DESA, FAO, OECD

12. Investments for the transition to a green economy	UNEP	IDB, IMF, UNCTAD, UNECE, UNFCCC, UNWTO, World Bank
13. Different levels of action at the UN	UNDP	DESA, UNEP, UNESCO, UN-HABITAT, UN Regional Economic Commissions
14. Conclusions	EMG secretariat	EMG members

Annex II

