



# UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement      Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente

Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде      برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

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<b>21<sup>st</sup> Senior Officials' Meeting of the Environment Management Group Technical Segment</b> 9 September 2015 (3-5pm GVA time) <b>by video-audio conference</b> 21 September 2015 (9am-12pm NY time ) <b>in-person meeting</b> in New York (venue to be confirmed)	<b>EMG/SOM.21/03</b> 1 September 2015 Distribution: EMG members
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## Progress Report on EMG's 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 item 3 of the technical segment of the 21<sup>st</sup> Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) of the Environment Management Group (EMG). It reports progress on ongoing work, including by the Issue Management Groups (IMGs) and the Consultative Processes, and proposes actions and directions for further work of the EMG in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

It proposes that the senior officials:

I. Continue the IMG on the sound management of chemicals and wastes to provide a coordinated system-wide input to the UN Statistical Division on possible composite indicators on sound management of chemicals for the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to consider how the EMG can best contribute to the implementation of the SDGs, inter alia, by promoting integration of sound management of chemicals into policy frameworks of selected sectors through system-wide cooperation.

II. Continue the Consultative Process on Environmental and Social Sustainability in the UN System to improve and strengthen the Sustainability Framework as a common approach for advancing environmental and social sustainability in the UN system, and, based on lessons learned in the pilot process, revise the Interim Guide to align with the new Sustainability Framework. It is further proposed to develop a package of key communications materials related to the Sustainability Framework and Interim Guide; to create an online platform on environmental and social sustainability in the UN system for information exchange and sharing of best practices and lessons learned; to facilitate continued implementation of the Framework by the volunteer pilot organizations; and to develop a mechanism by which other agencies may be supported to adopt the Framework and benefit from lessons learned to date.

III. Continue the IMG on Environmental Sustainability Management in the UN system to ensure full integration of environmental sustainability in UN management practices in close cooperation with the HLCM.

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IV. Continue the second phase of the Peer-Reviews, including the reviews of the IMF and UNFCCC, and consider developing guidelines and documenting good practices for additional peer reviews among the UN agencies.

V. Continue the Consultative Process on System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment (SWFS) to finalize the Framework for submission to the UNEA II.

VI. Extend the Task Team on maximizing the effectiveness of EMG for another year to follow-up on the recommendations of the report “*Maximizing the effectiveness of the EMG in the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda*” and to prepare an analytical report on the implementation of the environmental dimensions of the SDGs.

VII. Approve the work plan of EMG for the period 2016–2017, based on the understanding that the EMG secretariat will revise the plan to ensure that it fully reflects the actions agreed by the 21<sup>st</sup> Senior Officials meeting of the EMG.

VIII. The senior officials welcome the opportunity to inform the UN Environment Assembly of UNEP of its work.

IX. Request the EMG secretariat to circulate to the members of the EMG the date and venues for the 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the senior officials, and consult with members on its agenda.

## **Introduction**

The following sections provide progress reports of the IMGs and the Consultative Processes, as well as suggested areas for further work. All EMG documents referred to in these reports, including those in the footnotes can be found on the EMG website’s ([www.unemg.org](http://www.unemg.org)) special page for the 21<sup>st</sup> meeting of the EMG senior officials.

### **1. The IMG on Sound Management of Chemicals and Wastes**

At their 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, the senior officials decided to extend the IMGs on Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste to complete the remaining tasks as listed in the IMGs’ Terms of Reference (ToR), including mapping of the expertise, activities and initiatives of UN agencies, funds and programmes and how these contribute to the achievement of the WSSD 2020 goal, as well as identify possible synergies and areas for cooperation with the view to provide a contribution to the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM4).

The IMG has held a total of six meetings, focusing its three last meetings on completing the remaining tasks of its mandate by undertaking a mapping of activities in the UN system related to the implementation of the 2020 goal. Data was gathered through a survey that yielded responses from 25 agencies, and through making use of information already generated by the IOMC, SAICM and the BRS Conventions. An analysis of the collected data is presented in a synthesis report that signals the importance of sound chemicals management to the broader sustainable development agenda, showcases what has already been accomplished, and indicates how the UN system can achieve additional synergies and further assist member states in achieving sound chemicals management.

At its 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, the IMG discussed the scope of its mandate and the extent in which it can cover the issue of sound waste management. The IMG agreed that the mapping exercise covers hazardous waste in the specific context of sound chemicals management and SAICM. Should the EMG members wish to address waste management issues more broadly, a new IMG consisting of focal points with relevant expertise would need to be established.

The 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IMG was held in April 2015 in the margins of the 43<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the IOMC. The 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IMG, held in June 2015, decided to prepare an Information Document highlighting the achievements of the IMG and the recommendations of the Synthesis Report as a system-wide input to the ICCM4. Furthermore, it was decided to produce a brochure that would highlight work of the UN system more broadly on the sound management of chemicals.

The IMG also decided to prepare a Joint Statement by the heads of EMG member agencies involving a system-wide commitment to continuing to promote and raise the profile of sound chemicals management within the UN system. The Joint Statement is included in the Synthesis Report.

The mid-term meeting of the technical segment of the senior officials in May 2015 was briefed on the progress made in the IMG, including on the information document that was prepared, providing information to Governments on the IMG and its endeavours, for the second meeting of the SAICM Open-ended Working Group (OEWG2), held in Geneva in December 2014. The information document was presented to the OEWG2 orally in the form of an intervention by the EMG Secretariat. A similar intervention was made at the meetings of the Conferences of the Parties of the BRS Conventions in May 2015.

The OEWG-2 recognized the need to strengthen inter-organization engagement and invited the EMG and IMG to “look at how the United Nations system can deliver on the OOG [Overall Orientation and Guidance] up to 2020”. The Parties of the BRS Conventions also emphasized the importance of enhancing cooperation and coordination among international bodies “to facilitate the fulfilment of the objectives of the conventions, in particular within the chemicals and wastes cluster” and invited the EMG “to look at how the United Nations system can deliver in meeting the 2020 goal for the sound management of chemicals and waste”. The IMG agreed at its 6<sup>th</sup> meeting that the EMG would provide a note to the BRS COPs and SAICM stating that the IOMC is preparing a Plan of Work on delivering on the OOG, on which other members of the IMG are invited to collaborate.

The mid-term meeting further took note of the need to discuss whether there is a need to continue the IMG into 2016, to follow up on chemicals and waste management in the context of the post-2015 development agenda and raise the profile of the chemicals agenda across the broad range of actors in the UN system. The IMG agreed to a proposed continuation of its work for another year with a focus on providing inputs to the work of the Statistical Division on composite indicators for the SDG targets. Furthermore, the IMG discussed the feasibility of undertaking a task on mainstreaming sound chemicals management, and noted the possible for the IMG to continue its work on highlighting the importance of chemicals management and integrating it into the work of other sectors—this would require formulating a focused approach with a clear objective and scope.

The technical segment of the EMG senior officials suggests therefore the following actions for the IMG on Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste for consideration by the senior officials:

### ***Suggested Action I: The Issue Management Group (IMG) on Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste***

The senior officials:

1. Welcome the Synthesis Report *United Nations and Sound Chemicals Management: Coordinating delivery for member states and sustainable development* and the recommendations therein;
2. Welcome and approve the *Statement by the Members of the Environment Management Group* committing to stepping up joint and coordinated efforts to promote the sound management of chemicals as a critical component of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda;
3. Take note of the decision by the 43<sup>rd</sup> IOMC meeting to invite the UN bodies involved in the IMG exercise to a meeting in 2016 to gauge their interest in future engagement with IOMC on the sound management of chemicals and wastes;
4. Also take note of the invitation by the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to look at how the United Nations system can deliver on the 2020 goal for the sound management of chemicals and wastes;
5. Further take note of the invitation by the Strategic Approach's Open-ended Working Group to look at how the United Nations system can deliver on the Overall Orientation and Guidance (OOG) up to 2020;
6. Decide to extend the IMG for one more year to provide a coordinated system-wide input to the work underway led by the UN Statistical Division on possible composite indicators on sound management of chemicals for the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Also consider how the EMG can best contribute to a system wide implementation of the SDGs, inter alia, by promoting integration of sound management of chemicals into policy frameworks of selected sectors through system wide cooperation in the light of the integrated nature of the SDGs.

## **2. Consultations on Environmental and Social Sustainability in the United Nations system**

### ***2.1. Piloting the Framework on Environmental and Social Sustainability and the Interim Guide in individual volunteer agencies***

The 20<sup>th</sup> meeting of the senior officials of the Environment Management Group in its decision IV extended the Consultative Process on Advancing the Environmental and Social Sustainability in the UN system. This extended mandate was to pilot the integration of the Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework in volunteer agencies through an Interim Guide with a view to sharing lessons learned, improving understanding of the practical implications of implementing the Sustainability Framework, as well as improving the Framework and the Guide. In the context of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, the Process was extended to identify linkages between the Sustainability Framework and the various 'fit for purpose' discussions in the UN system, as well

as to enhance communication around this issue, to enable further consideration in the EMG after the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda has been adopted.

An approach for follow-up of the senior officials' decision was shared with the Consultative Process, suggesting piloting the ESS Framework and the Interim Guide in interested UN agencies and conducting a survey of UN agencies on progress in operationalizing the elements of the Sustainability Framework within the UN system. The Consultative Process agreed to implement the pilot, but decided to undertake the survey after the pilot phase as a similar exercise had been conducted in connection with the drafting of the Framework in 2012.

A Concept Note explaining the process of piloting the Interim Guide in volunteer agencies was approved by the Consultative Process in January 2015. Seven agencies with diverse mandates (IFAD, UNEP, UNIDO, UNOPS, UN Women, WFP and WHO) volunteered to participate as pilot agencies, assisted by an EMG consultant, to test the utility of the Guide and the extent to which its minimum building blocks are understood and are being considered in practice. UNDP was also part of the pilot support team in order to share experiences and lessons learned.

An inception meeting hosted by WHO in Geneva on March 30-31 launched the pilot process. With the support of a senior consultant, the volunteer pilot agencies initiated self-assessments based on the Interim Guide, so as to begin the process of designing approaches that would further enhance sustainability measures within the organizations.

As of early August, the ESS pilot project has completed its second phase, with all seven agencies having conducted internal consultations and a self-assessment process. The detailed agency-specific outcomes of these sessions, as well as a synthesis report on the outcome of the pilot phase, are being prepared.

Some of the initial findings of the pilot phase include:

- There is a recognition that enhanced commitment by UN agencies to environmental and social sustainability is needed, both in order to improve the lives of people in environmentally fragile and socially disadvantaged nations and also to respond to growing donor expectations. Related drivers are: support for the post-2015 SDGs; the Rio+20 call for accountability and transparency; enhancing delivery of results and the quality of interventions; risk management; and, providing an example for partner countries.
- The pilot agencies all have initiatives in place at the “facilities/operations” entry point. However, most are focussed on environmental sustainability or “greening”. For this aspect, agencies are benefitting significantly from the work of the IMG on Environmental Management, so there is a clear commonality in approach. The social sustainability of operations is an area that needs to be better understood.
- At the “programmes/projects” entry point, most of the pilot agencies have only recently introduced environmental and social standards and safeguards into programme and project cycles. These were in many instances prompted by the time-bound requirements of key donors (e.g. GEF, GCF, member states). Therefore, there is an opportunity to use the pilot process to identify a common basis to strengthen policy coherence. Without this, there may

be increased challenges at the country level and in Joint Programmes resulting from a multitude of requirements and approaches to environmental and social standards and safeguards.

- Pilot agencies found the self-assessments process using the Interim Guide and the five minimum building blocks to be a useful exercise. The self-assessment process helped agencies to consider what aspects or strategy they should consider to effectively build on environmental and social sustainability measures.
- There is a strong willingness to learn from the experiences across the UN system to strengthen policy coherence, harmonization and shared learning, while at the same time recognizing that agencies need to have tailored approaches for implementing the framework.

## ***2.2. Linkages between the Sustainability Framework and the various ‘fit for purpose’ discussions in the UN system in relation to the post-2015 development agenda***

It is envisaged that the outcome of the pilot and the implementation of the Framework will feed into communication materials on the progress that is being made in the UN system in integrating sustainable development across internal operations and programme management. The outcome of the pilot phase will also help the Consultative Process to examine if the UN system is ready to apply possible common approaches, including minimum requirements/principles in integrating and implementing environmental and social sustainability in their work to improve coherence and coordination.

## ***2.3. Enhancing resilience and business continuity in the face of shocks in the UN system***

As part of their decision IV, the senior officials proposed at their 20<sup>th</sup> meeting that the Consultative Process make recommendations to the next EMG SOM on steps to enhance resilience and business continuity in the face of shocks in the UN system. However, the subsequent mid-term technical meeting of the EMG felt considered that this multifaceted issue required expertise beyond the EMG and noted that any EMG contribution on the environmental dimension of this issue should be consistent with, and contribute to, the recently approved CEB system-wide policy on organizational resilience management system (ORMS).

In anticipation of a possible EMG contribution to the ORMS, the EMG Secretariat is preparing a factual note on the ongoing initiatives in the UN system in this area.

The technical segment of the EMG senior officials and the Consultative Process therefore suggest the following actions for the Consultative Process for consideration by the senior officials:

<b><i>Suggested Actions II: Consultations on Advancing the Framework for Environmental and Social Sustainability in the UN system.</i></b>
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The senior officials:
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1. Take note of the progress made by the Consultative Process on the implementation and the findings of piloting the Framework for Advancing Environmental and Social Sustainability in the UN System as well as the Interim Guide in seven UN agencies;
2. With the aim of generating system-wide commitment in advancing the Framework for Environmental and Social Sustainability, decide to extend the Consultative Process for one more year to:
  - a) Revise the Sustainability Framework: Improve and strengthen the Sustainability Framework as the basis for a common approach for advancing environmental and social sustainability in the UN system, based on the lessons learned from the pilot process, including elaborating where there is a common basis that can be built on (e.g. principles, minimum requirements, etc.), and clarifying linkages with the post-2015 sustainable development agenda;
  - b) Revise Interim Guide: Update the Interim Guide to align it with the new Sustainability Framework, building on feedback from the pilot phase, and to address commonly identified implementation challenges and best practices in responding to those challenges;
  - c) Communications Package: Develop a package of key communications materials related to the Sustainability Framework and Interim Guide, including a brochure, PowerPoint presentations, webinars etc., that can be used across the UN system;
  - d) Online Platform: Create an online platform on environmental and social sustainability in the UN system for information exchange and sharing of best practices and lessons learned;
  - e) Expand Uptake: Facilitate continued implementation of the Framework by the volunteer pilot organizations, requiring feedback on progress made by each agency during this time; and propose a mechanism by which other agencies may be supported to adopt the Framework and benefit from lessons learned to date.

### **3. IMG on Environmental Sustainability Management in the United Nations system**

The 20<sup>th</sup> Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of the Environment Management Group (EMG) welcomed the progress of the IMG on **Environmental Sustainability Management** and invited the IMG and SUN to continue with their work of mutual support, coordination and implementation of the UN Climate Neutral strategy. Furthermore, as a follow up to the call of the Secretary General urging the UN system to become climate-neutral, ideally by 2015 or by 2020 at the latest, EMG senior officials committed their organisations to intensify their actions in moving their agencies toward climate neutrality and asked the IMG to make recommendations to support the process.

The sixth common greenhouse gas inventory for the UN system - *Moving Towards a Climate Neutral UN –The UN system’s footprint and efforts to reduce it-* was published on the 26<sup>th</sup> of February, 2015. The report included the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventories from 64 UN entities for 2013, and described their emission reduction efforts in 2014. The data shows that the footprint of the UN system continues to be around 1.7 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> eq and 8 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> eq

per capita, with only a very slight decrease since 2012. Though the results help to show overall emission trends and obvious causes, comparison of GHG emission data across years is still a technically complex issue for the system and for individual organisations. In execution of the CEB request that UN system organisations report also on waste, water and staff awareness, in 2015 IMG members have started on a pilot basis to collect data on waste management practices.

IMG members updated the “Guide to carbon offsetting for UN organisations”; and initiated the seventh common greenhouse gas inventory for the UN system to be released in late November 2015, before the UNFCCC COP21.

By September 2015, 11 UN system organisations were climate neutral for their facilities and operations. In addition, UNDP and UN Women have offsets emissions from their headquarters, UNICEF for their Zimbabwe Office and Regional Office of Asia, while others have offset specific events (e.g., the UN Secretary general Climate Summit, or WIPO offset the 2015 IAMLADP<sup>1</sup> Annual event).

Finally, in response to the call from the UN Secretary-General for the UN system to improve the UN GHG emission inventory’s data quality and coverage, SUN and the IMG have carried out a ‘**Gap analysis**’, the results of which will be available in October 2015.

### ***3.1. Greening the blue***

The web-based ***Greening the Blue*** campaign continues engaging staff and provides organizations with an opportunity to showcase their efforts in emission reductions. In the past year, the visits to the website have increased tremendously: between June 2014 and May 2015 [www.greeningtheblue.org](http://www.greeningtheblue.org) hosted 177,885 sessions. A peak of 53,448 visitors was reached in June 2015. The **UN sustainability tutorial** is also part of the effort to make climate neutrality part of UN system corporate culture. 3000 certificates were released in the first year of the tutorial’s posting on line.

### ***3.2. Environmental sustainability management***

In support of the implementation of environment management systems by IMG members, SUN intensified its guidance on EMS. With support from UNFCCC, a training on ISO 14001 was held on the occasion of the face-to-face IMG meeting in October 2014. In addition, with support from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, a project was launched in October 2014 to mainstream EMSs in facilities and operations of UN system organisations. A stocktaking exercise on the status of EMS implementation in UN organizations has been completed and four UN offices have been selected as pilots for EMS implementation support between 2015-2017: UN Secretariat in New York, ESCAP in Bangkok, MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and WFP in Nairobi.

The IMG also researched UN waste management practices, with UNEP and FAO support, via a survey on best practices in UN offices located in over 30 countries. The survey revealed that,

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<sup>1</sup> The **IAMLADP** is an international forum and network of managers of international organizations employing conference and language services providers. IAMLADP meets once a year and is chaired by the UN Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (**DGACM**)



beyond some ad hoc examples of excellent practice, the UN system does not yet have a highly developed or coherent approach to waste management. The survey suggests that integration of sustainable waste management considerations into the procurement of waste management services would be a good means of addressing that.

### **3.3. Connection between EMG Climate neutral work, HLCM and CEB**

In September 2014, on the occasion of the UN Climate Summit, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon wrote to all CEB members and UN programmes and funds indicating that “It is my expectation that the United Nations system reaches full compliance with the United Nations Climate Neutral Strategy and becomes effectively climate neutral by 2020 at the latest”. He tasked UNEP and UNFCCC to support agencies in meeting these objectives.

EMG submitted for HLCM consideration a UN Roadmap towards Climate Neutrality by 2020, outlining a number of steps UN system organizations will need to take jointly and individually to reach such goals. At their 2015 Spring Session, HLCM members, in line with the 2007 UN Climate Neutrality Strategy and the Strategic Plan for Environmental Sustainability Management that was endorsed in 2013:

- a) committed to reach Climate Neutrality by 2020 through a combination of emission reduction initiatives and purchase of offsets; and
- b) adopted the UN Roadmap towards Climate Neutrality by 2020.

HLCM also recognized that “while carbon offsets are an important tool, focus should be placed on reducing the actual carbon footprint of the UN System.” This decision was subsequently endorsed by CEB in April 2015.

In view of the above progress report, the IMG submits for consideration of the EMG senior officials the following action points for its future work:

#### ***Suggested Action III: System-wide commitments on Environmental Sustainability Management***

The senior officials:

1. Take note the above report on activities of the IMG on environmental sustainability management and invite the EMG to continue its joint work, including with HLCM, to ensure full integration of environmental sustainability into UN management practices;
2. Welcome the April 2015 decision of the CEB and ask the IMG to report on progress to the next senior officials meeting and to HLCM as appropriate.

### **4. Peer-Review of Environmental Profiles of UN organizations**

In 2011, the EMG established a process for peer reviewing the environment portfolio of its members, and launched a pilot phase in early 2013. At their 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, the senior officials welcomed the conclusion of the pilot phase of the peer reviews, including the reviews of UNIDO, on behalf of the

UN entities based in the Vienna International Centre, WMO and UNEP. Considering the usefulness of the process and positive feedbacks, they decided to extend the peer review process into a second phase, taking note of the potential interest expressed by some organisations in being peer reviewed. They invited the EMG members participating in the peer review process to consider how the process can be sustained, including possible options for sustainable funding of the peer-review activities. Reviewed agencies were encouraged to consider sharing with other EMG members their peer review reports, as well as information on the progress made in their agencies in implementing the recommendations. The May 2015 mid-term meeting of the EMG also suggested that guidelines and best practices be developed and documented as an outcome of the peer reviews.

### ***Progress made***

The second phase was initiated and discussions were held with UPU, IMF, UN Women, WIPO, OECD, UNFCCC, WFP, UNHQ and UNOPS, on their participation in the peer reviews for 2014-2015. Proposals for cost sharing were shared with IMF, UN Women, OECD and UNFCCC.

IMF has confirmed being peer reviewed in 2015, and preparations are underway for forming the peer review team and a site visit of IMF Headquarters in late 2015. UNFCCC has also confirmed being reviewed in early 2016. Both IMF and UNFCCC have agreed to share the major part of the costs for their own reviews.

UNOPS, while showing interest in participation and reviewing their field offices, will take a decision later, while UPU, WIPO and OECD have deferred participation in the peer reviews. WFP, UNHQ and UN Women, along with IMF and UNFCCC, have shown interest in participating as reviewers during the second phase.

The technical segment of the EMG senior officials suggests the following actions for the Peer Review process for consideration by the senior officials:

#### ***Suggested Action IV: Peer-Review of Environmental Profiles of UN organizations***

The senior officials:

1. Take note of the progress made in initiating the second phase of the Peer-Reviews;
2. Welcome that IMF and UNFCCC have volunteered to be reviewed and share the costs, and the willingness of other UN entities to contribute to the reviews, including through participation in the peer review expert teams;
3. Invite the reviewed agencies to consider sharing with other EMG members information on the progress made in their agencies in implementing the recommendations of their Peer Review reports;
4. Consider developing guidelines and documenting good practices, as an output of the peer review process.

## **5. Contribution of the EMG to a UN System-Wide Strategy on the Environment**

In follow up to paragraph 88(c) of the Rio+20 outcome document, the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP (UNEA) requested the Executive Director of UNEP to “develop system-wide strategies on the environment mainly through the EMG and to invite the engagement of the Secretary-General and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination to facilitate broad ownership in the United Nations at all levels”.

The senior officials at their 20<sup>th</sup> meeting considered the above calls by Member States as an opportunity to explore possibilities to achieve greater coherence on the environment benefitting from the SDGs as a common guideline for creating convergence among existing or future agencies strategies on the environment.

As a first step they agreed to provide feedback on a draft outline for a System-Wide Strategy on the Environment and in response to the questions posed in the Strategic Directions note of the EMG SOM 20 (Working document: EMG/SOM.20/04). It was agreed that based on the feedback and views of EMG members, UNEP will provide a proposal for further development of the System-Wide Strategy(s) on the Environment.

Following that, the Senior Officials through a proposal by Chair of the EMG established a Consultative Process to contribute to the preparation of System Wide Strategies on the Environment.

The Consultative Process has met 2 times by teleconference. At its first meeting in January 2015, the Consultative Process provided comments on a compilation paper prepared by UNEP on environmental mandates in the UN system prepared to support the elaboration of the outline of the Strategy. They also considered and agreed on the Terms of Reference of the Process, reflecting the views of the EMG members on the focus and scope for the Strategy. They agreed to prepare a UN System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment (SWFS) whose purpose will be to:

- a) Set out a UN system-wide medium- and long-term vision in the field of the environment which should be derived from, be in line with and contribute to the implementation of the SDGs;
- b) Take into consideration common and/or complementary policies and approaches concerning emerging and important environmental issues of global concern;
- c) Propose means of strengthening existing processes to facilitate better coordination for the planning and execution of UN system activities that support the implementation of internationally agreed environmental objectives and goals; and
- d) Suggest a mechanism for assessing the effectiveness of the UN system-wide activities undertaken in the context of the [Framework Strategy(ies)] and propose new processes if appropriate.

At its second meeting in May 2015, the Consultative Process considered the “substantive elements”, including a shared high-level vision and medium-term objectives, as well as possible “process

elements” of the SWFS, including monitoring, review and reporting prepared by UNEP in a Concept Note. The Process provided comments and requested further elaboration of the Note :

- Explaining further the purpose of the Framework, what role it will play and why it is developed;
- Explaining the linkages of the long term vision and the medium term objectives;
- Highlighting how the long term goals and the medium term vision were established; and
- Stating how the framework responds to the EMG mandate.

The Consultative Process is envisaged to hold its third meeting in September to agree on the outcome of its work for consideration of and further guidance from the Senior Officials.

***Suggested Action V: Contribution of the EMG to a UN System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment***

The senior officials:

Decide to continue the Consultative Process on System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment (SWFS) to finalize the Framework for submission to the UNEA II.

**6. Maximizing the effectiveness of the EMG in coordinating the environmental work in the United Nations in the context of the post-2015 development agenda**

In light of opportunities created by the post-2015 sustainable development agenda to strengthen the coordination of the environmental sustainability dimension of sustainable development, Member States invited the Executive Director of UNEP to examine if the EMG, after having functioned for 14 years, is fit to respond to today’s coordination challenges in the field of environment. Resolution 11 of the First Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP, invited the Executive Director of UNEP as Chair of the EMG to identify possible measures to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of the Group, in consultation with the Secretary-General and the Chief Executives Board, and to submit a report with recommendations to the UNEA for consideration at its second session.

The 20<sup>th</sup> meeting of the senior officials considered this issue and by its decision VIII agreed to establish a Task Team to identify options for maximizing the effectiveness of the EMG, including its contribution to the post-2015 development agenda.

The Task Team was established in January 2015, composed of focal points nominated by EMG members. The Task team agreed at its first meeting on its Terms of Reference including a plan of work and has so far held three virtual meetings. It has made progress on the following tasks:

### ***6.1. Preparation of a report on options for maximizing the effectiveness of the EMG***

The Task Team engaged in a process of reviewing the effectiveness of the EMG, including its Terms of Reference, modalities of work and effectiveness and fitness for purpose more broadly, including its contribution to the post-2015 development agenda.

With the support of UNITAR, a series of semi-structured interviews with EMG member organizations were conducted during the months of April and May 2015. The interviews elicited views of EMG focal points on maximizing the effectiveness of the EMG in the context of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. The interviews were held under Chatham House rules and followed a set of questions that were shared with respondents in advance, but with the flexibility to discuss other issues of particular interest to respondents. As a result of these interviews, an Emerging Insights Report, containing the preliminary findings of the interviews, was prepared and discussed at the second meeting of the Task Team on 20 May 2015. The preliminary findings included views of the EMG members on:

- a) EMG's approach for identification of topics/issues (internal UN issues as well as global issues);
- b) EMG working modalities, their effectiveness and work load (consultative processes, IMGs, Task teams, reports etc.);
- c) Dissemination of EMG products within the UN system – how does this happen, what is the take up of our products and conclusions; what has been the most effective method?
- d) Whether EMG fits for purpose and institutionally-well equipped to guide and support the UN system on environmental dimensions of SDGs;
- e) The functioning of the Secretariat and linkages with the wider coordination system including the CEB.

The third meeting of the Task Team in July 2015 considered the first draft final report of the Task Team on Maximizing the Effectiveness of the EMG, including the context and background of the EMG and its Issue Management Groups and the results of the interviews, and provided written comments on a revised final draft report, including options and recommendations on specific procedural and substantive issues addressed in the report for consideration of the Senior Officials.

### ***6.2. Preparation of a contribution on the environmental sustainability dimensions of the SDGs***

Following the first and second meeting of the task team and the mid-term meeting of the EMG technical segment, it was agreed that given the advanced stage of the SDGs negotiations, the EMG should refocus from screening of the environmental sustainability of the SDGs to prepare, by consolidating the existing materials, an implementation-focused and forward-looking analysis aiming to:

- Explore linkages of the SDGs and their targets and emerging indicators with existing international environmental agreements and goal frameworks;
- Inform, as appropriate and through existing channels, the development of indicators from an environmental sustainability perspective;

- Provide analytical insights to support consideration of implementation issues and linkages at an early stage.

Such analysis would seek to link the environmental aspects of the SDGs with existing international goals and MEAs.

The third meeting of the Task Team agreed to proceed with a pilot analysis, testing an analytical framework proposed by UNITAR on three thematic pilot areas including sound chemicals management, biodiversity and Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), drawing on the work already carried out by the BRS and CBD Secretariats and DESA.

BRS, UNEP, and the CBD Secretariat and DESA agreed to provide inputs in completing the table as outlined in the note using available information and existing data, on sound chemicals and waste management, biodiversity and SCP, respectively.

The technical segment of the EMG senior officials suggests therefore the following actions for the Task Team for consideration by the senior officials:

***Suggested Action VI: Maximizing the effectiveness of the EMG in coordinating the environmental work in the United Nations in the context of the post-2015 development agenda***

The senior officials:

1. Welcome the report *Maximizing the effectiveness of the EMG in the context of the post-2015 development agenda*, including the recommendations and suggested action points included therein;
2. Agree to submit the report through the Chair to the second meeting of the UNEA in response to UNEA Resolution 1/11;
3. Agree to extend the Task Team for another year to
  - a) Follow-up on the recommendations of the report;
  - b) Prepare the analytical report on the implementation of the environmental dimensions of the SDGs.

## **7. EMG Work Plan for 2016–2017**

The 20<sup>th</sup> senior officials' meeting of EMG adopted the 2015-2016 EMG work plan. The plan has been updated to reflect the suggested actions put forward in the current note as presented in document EMG/SOM.21/05.

It is proposed that the work plan be given a two year horizon, i.e. cover the period 2016 to 2017, subject to annual approval by the senior officials. The plan is organized according to four main expected accomplishments as they pertain to programmatic, management and operational issues, as well as overall cooperation.

The work plan remains un-costed as long as there is no common budget for EMG activities. It is recommended that the work plan be implemented through in-kind contributions subject to the availability of resources. The in-kind contributions will be budgeted, programmed and reported on by each member and the UNEP secretariat within their own administrative processes.

***Suggested Action VII: Approval of the EMG Work Plan for 2016–2017***

The senior officials approve the work plan for EMG for the period 2016–2017 based on the understanding that the EMG secretariat will revise the plan presented in document EMG/SOM.21/05 to ensure that the plan fully reflects the actions agreed by the 21<sup>st</sup> senior officials meeting of the EMG. The work plan will be implemented on the basis of in-kind contributions from members and is subject to availability of resources.

**8. Reporting to the UN Environment Assembly of UNEP**

The second session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) of UNEP will take place in Nairobi, Kenya in May 2016. Upon request of the first UNEA held in 2014 (*Resolution 1/11*), the Executive Director of UNEP, as Chair of the Environment Management Group, in consultation with the Secretary-General and the Chief Executives Board, is expected:

- a) To prepare, in consultation with regions, as appropriate, and submit to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its second session, a report which includes proposals developed in conjunction with the Environment Management Group describing the integration of the outcome of the post-2015 development agenda into the environmental work of the United Nations;
- b) To identify possible measures to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of the Group and to submit a report with recommendations to the United Nations Environment Assembly for consideration at its second session;
- c) To provide a summary report at the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly on the Group's work, highlighting issues that may require the particular attention of the Assembly;
- d) In his capacity as Chair of the Environment Management Group, to transmit the summary report to the governing bodies of the members of the Group.

***Suggested Action VIII: Reporting to the UN Environment Assembly of UNEP***

The senior officials welcome the opportunity to inform the UN Environment Assembly of UNEP of its work.

**9. Date and venue of the next senior officials meeting**

Preparing for the senior officials' meeting, the Chair has continued the practice of seeking the views of members on the agenda and to informally consult on dates and venues. This practice will be continued for the 22<sup>nd</sup> senior officials meeting scheduled to take place in September 2016.

***Suggested Action IX: Date and venue of the next senior officials meeting***

The senior officials request the EMG secretariat to circulate to the members of the EMG the date and venues for the 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the senior officials, and consult with members on its agenda.



## Acronyms

**BRS Conventions** – Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions  
**CEB** – Chief Executives Board  
**COP** – Conference of the Parties  
**DESA** – Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
**ESCAP** – Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific  
**EMG** – Environment Management Group  
**EMS** – Environment Management System  
**ESS** – Environmental and Social Sustainability  
**FAO** – Food and Agriculture Organization  
**GCF** – Green Climate Fund  
**GEF** – Global Environment Facility  
**GHG** – greenhouse gas  
**HLCM** – High-Level Committee on Management  
**IAMLADP** – International Annual Meeting on Language, Arrangements, Documentation and Publications  
**ICCM4** – 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Chemicals Management  
**IFAD** – International Fund for Agricultural Development  
**IMF** – International Monetary Fund  
**IMG** – Issue Management Group  
**IOMC** – Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals  
**ISO** – International Organization for Standardization  
**MEAs** – Multilateral environmental Agreements  
**MONUSCO** – United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo  
**OECD** – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development  
**OEWG2** – SAICM Open-ended Working Group  
**OOG** – Overall Orientation and Guidance  
**ORMS** – Organizational Resilience Management System  
**SAICM** – Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management  
**SCP** – Sustainable Consumption and Production  
**SDGs** – Sustainable Development Goals  
**SOM** – Senior Officials Meeting  
**SUN** – Sustainable United Nations  
**SWFS** – System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment  
**ToR** – Terms of Reference  
**UN** – United Nations  
**UNDP** – United Nations Development Programme  
**UNEA** – United Nations Environment Assembly  
**UNEP** – United Nations Environment Programme  
**UNFCCC** – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change  
**UNHQ** – United Nations Headquarters  
**UNICEF** – United Nations Children’s Fund  
**UNIDO** – United Nations Industrial Development Organization  
**UNITAR** – United Nations Institute for Training and Research  
**UNOPS** – United Nations Office for Project Services  
**UPU** – Universal Postal Union  
**WFP** – World Food Programme  
**WHO** – World Health Organization  
**WIPO** – World Intellectual Property Organization  
**WSSD 2020 goal** – World Summit on Sustainable Development 2020 goal