



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

联合国环境规划署



<p>22nd Senior Officials' Meeting of the Environment Management Group Technical Segment, 21 September 2016 (08.00a.m.-1.00p.m. NY time) at the UN HQ GA Building Conference room 8 (CR8) 1st basement</p> <p>Senior Segment, 22 September 2016, (9.00 a.m-12.30 p.m.) at the UN HQ GA Building Conference room 8 (CR8) 1st basement</p>	<p>EMG/SOM.22/INF/1</p> <p>05 September 2016</p> <p>Distribution: EMG members</p>
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Consolidating sustainability processes within the Environment Management Group

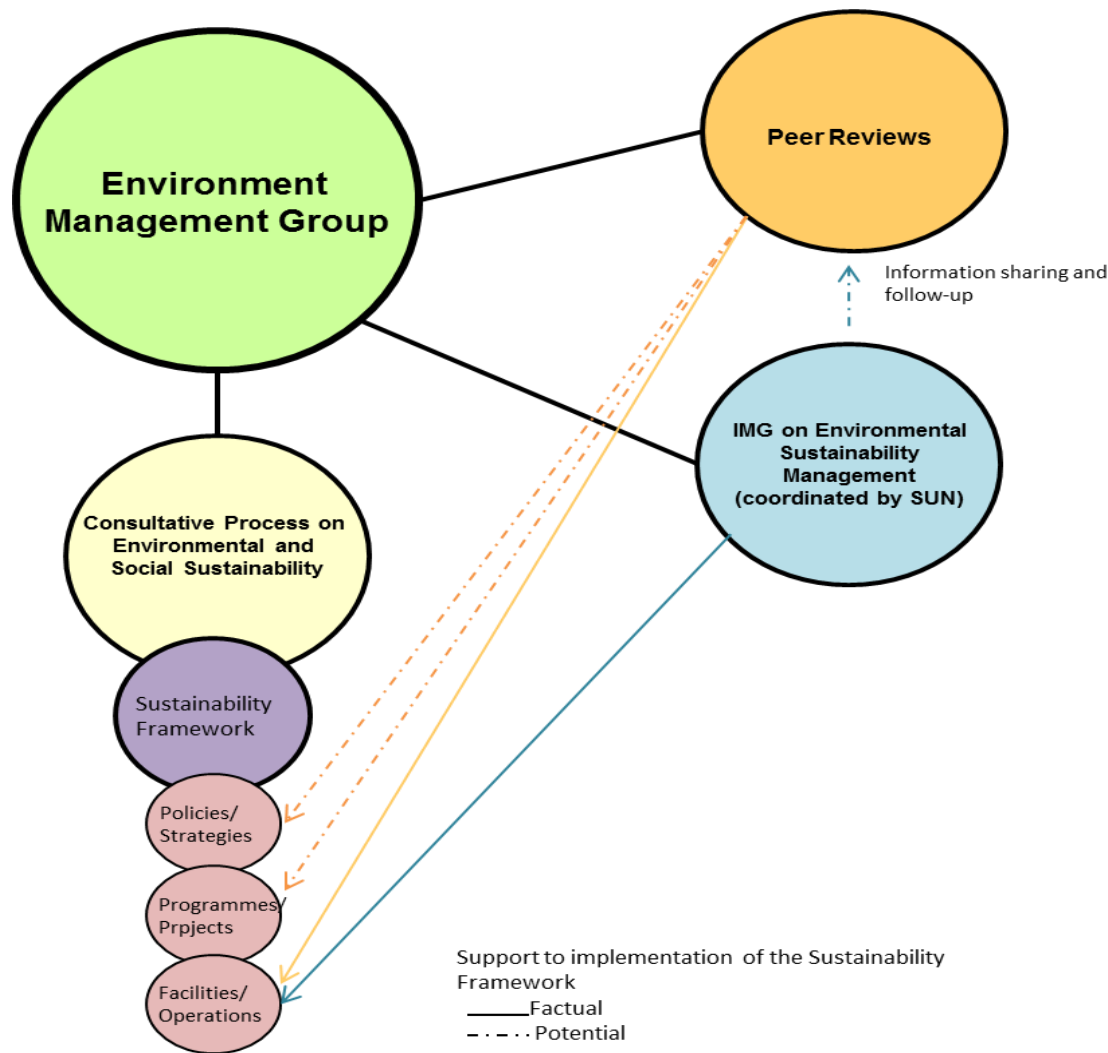
Note by the Secretariat

At their 21st meeting, the EMG Senior Officials invited the EMG Secretariat to prepare a note on the "linkages between the EMG led UN internal sustainability processes with a view to enhance coherence between these initiatives and consider consolidated reporting on their progress to the Senior Officials in the future".

This note has been prepared by the Secretariat to stimulate discussion among the EMG Members on possible ways in which further synergies and consolidation could be achieved between the three main processes that deal with internal sustainability management, namely the Consultative Process on Environmental and Social Sustainability (ESS), the Issue Management Group on Environmental Sustainability Management (ESM) and the Peer Review Process.

Laying the grounds for this discussion, an overview of the three processes, their mandates, scope and activities is provided to highlight the linkages between them. The note then proceeds to propose ways in which further synergies, including with regard to communication on the processes from the EMG Secretariat to EMG Members, could be promoted to facilitate effective participation in the work streams. The note reflects on potential impacts of consolidation measures from the perspective of the EMG Members and the Secretariat respectively.

1. Overview of the main sustainability processes coordinated by the Environment Management Group



Graph 1. Links between the three main sustainability processes within the EMG

The graph provides a simplified picture of the links between the three main sustainability processes within the EMG, namely the Consultative Process on Environmental and Social Sustainability, the IMG on ESM and the Peer Review process.

The scope and activities of each are further described and summarized in the table below.

Process	Established	Mandate	Main outputs	Differentiation	Links to other processes	Current focus
Consultative Process for Environmental and Social Sustainability (ESS) in the UN System	2009	<p>Develop a common and a more systematic management approach/architecture to ESS in the UN system in to order to lead by example, strengthen institutional effectiveness, maintain credibility as a partner in sustainable development and prevent and mitigate unintended environmental and social impacts of UN organizations' activities.</p> <p>Improve and strengthen the Sustainability Framework as the basis for a common approach for advancing environmental and social sustainability in the UN system.</p>	<p>-Progress Report on UN Environmental and Social Safeguards: Background, Findings, Options and Strategy (2011)</p> <p>-The Framework for Advancing Environmental and Social Sustainability in the UN system (Sustainability Framework) (2012) including Joint Statement</p> <p>-Interim Guide for Advancing the Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework in the UN System (2014)</p> <p>-Options Paper on system-wide Issues in the Follow up of the Framework for Advancing Environmental and Social Sustainability in the UN system (2014)</p>	<p>- Sustainability Framework developed specifically for UN organizations</p> <p>- Addresses not only environmental but also social sustainability in the UN system from a holistic perspective, providing an overall structure for sustainability measures at all levels of work (policy/strategy, programmes/projects and facilities/operations).</p>	<p>The IMG on ESM, the EMG pilot and the Peer Review process are linked to the implementation of the Sustainability Framework (mainly) at the facilities and operations level.</p> <p>The self-assessment process outlined in the Interim Guide could provide input to an</p>	<p>- Revise the Interim Guide,</p> <p>-Elaborate a common approach for environmental and social standards for UN programmes and projects, particularly at the country level.</p>

			-Synthesis Report of the pilot process, testing the implementation of the Sustainability Framework using the Interim Guide in seven volunteer agencies (2015).		Environmental Management System (EMS) baseline study.	
Issue Management Group (IMG) on Environmental Sustainability Management	2007/2009	Support the implementation of the UN CEB Climate Neutral Strategy and environmental management commitments (road map to a climate neutral UN by 2020) Provides a platform for exchange of experiences on emission reductions, best practices; assistance to implement Environment Management Systems. Engage with staff across the UN and to help them to reduce their individual footprints.	-Annual Moving Towards a Climate Neutral UN inventory. (GHG emissions, waste management and from 2017 onwards water and staff training indicators) -GreeningtheBlue.org -Mutual provision of technical support, capacity building and facilitating information exchanges; -Common rules, templates, approaches (UN common guidance for offsetting, sustainable procurement specification criteria in 9 product categories, -Sustainable procurement training and handbook; EMS Milestones framework, green events and green meeting guides)	-Focus on facilities and operations. -Administered by the UNEP Sustainable UN Facility. -Long-term rather than ad-hoc. - More than 60 IMG members generally representing facilities or corporate support services departments	-Considers the facilities/operations entry point of the Sustainability Framework, however, purely focusing on environmental sustainability. -Could be the place for the provision of tools, guidance and best practices for the implementation of the peer review	-Gradually track and report on waste management, water and staff environmental training)- Develop a UN-wide approach and support system for waste management

			<p>-Organizing mutual support and facilitating joint projects (Travel footprint calculator, new Environmental Management software, UNEP UNDP tutorial, UNEP UNOPS sustainable procurement guidance material; UNEP WFP cost benefit analysis for the implementation of EMS in the UN system, UNEP FAO and WFP waste management in the UN projects, etc.)</p> <p>-Day to day hands on support for UN agencies willing to purchase offsets (UNEP, UNFCCC, UNOPS)</p> <p>-Mainstream EMS in the UN system (pilots, assistance, EMS implementation etc.)</p>		<p>recommendations to the peer reviewed agencies.</p>	
Peer Reviews of environmental sustainability management of UN entities	2012	Peer review the environmental management profiles of volunteer EMG Members to contribute to enhanced individual and collective environmental	<p>-UNIDO on behalf of the UN entities based in the Vienna International Centre (Vienna, 2013)</p> <p>-WMO (Geneva, 2013)</p>	Offers a cost effective option/methodology for UN entities to get recommendations	Considers the facilities/operations entry point, but could potentially be	The feasibility of peer reviews of the environmental management of UN operations and

performance of participating entities.	<p>-UNEP (Nairobi, 2014)</p> <p>-IMF (Washington, 2016)</p>	for how the environmental performance of their facilities/operations can be further improved.	expanded to consider environmental and social sustainability more broadly.	facilities in the field is now being tested in volunteer field operations in Amman, Jordan.
		Currently covers a range of corporate environment management concerns including GHG emissions from building/ facilities and air travel, waste management; ICT, greening of meetings; water management and staff awareness, involvement and training.	Could contribute to the baseline study required for an EMS.	Guidelines and good practices will be documented to support agencies who wish to undertake peer reviews independently.
			Could also provide useful input to the self-assessment process outlined in the Interim Guide.	

2. Enhancing synergies between the EMG sustainability processes

While the Consultative Process on ESS, the IMG on ESM and the Peer Review process all foster collaboration among UN and related agencies to enhance the sustainability performance of the UN system and contribute to promoting UN leadership on sustainability, all three processes have distinctive features that complement and support each other with little or no overlap.

The Consultative Process on ESS has produced and now works to follow-up on the implementation of the Sustainability Framework that addresses not only environmental but also social sustainability in the UN system from a holistic perspective, providing an overall structure for sustainability measures at all levels of work. Of the three identified entry points in the Sustainability Framework, cooperation around environmental sustainability management at the facilities/operations level is coordinated through the IMG on ESM. The Peer Review process offers a cost effective option/methodology for UN entities to get recommendations for how the environmental performance of their facilities/operations can be further improved.

Examples of synergies/linkages:

- While the Interim Guide provides guidance about how to assess which of the minimum essential building blocks outlined in the Sustainability Framework an agency has in place and where there are gaps to be considered, the Environmental Management System (EMS) approach prompted by the IMG on ESM for the systematic reduction of facilities and operations environmental footprint, provides a cyclical step-by-step process for implementing environmental sustainability measures including leadership commitment, baseline review, goal setting, action plan, monitoring and follow-up that can apply also at policy and programmatic level.
- The ESS Framework has been developed specifically for UN organizations. An agency can choose to use an EMS as a structured approach to the implementation of the environmental aspects of the Sustainability Framework. While the IMG on ESM focuses its EMS mainstreaming work on the facilities/operations entry point, an EMS can cover all aspects of work of an organization. Standards similar to the ISO14001 (environmental sustainability) exist to address social sustainability of an organization (ISO2600:2010).

- The IMG on ESM may support the Peer Review process by providing tools, guidance and a platform for exchange of best practices for the implementation of the peer review recommendations to the peer reviewed agencies (all of which are already represented in the IMG on ESM).

Reversely a Peer Review could serve as or contribute to the baseline study required for an EMS for agencies that decide to take that route to systematically approach its environmental sustainability work. If expanded beyond the current facilities and operations focus the Peer Review process could also provide useful input to the self-assessment process outlined in the Interim Guide.

3. Enhancing synergies in the management of the EMG sustainability processes

In addition to looking at how the processes in terms of scope and activities are interlinked, coherence between the sustainability processes could be further enhanced by looking at the ways in which the three processes are managed.

While the Consultative Process on ESS and the Peer Review Process are coordinated by the EMG Secretariat, the IMG on ESM is administered by the Sustainable United Nations (SUN) under UNEP. The EMG and SUN Secretariats organize weekly meetings to ensure that the two teams are informed of each other's activities. Focal points are appointed to the three processes separately, and progress is reported separately to the Senior Officials.

The following measures are proposed to streamline and maximize the effectiveness of the above mentioned processes and facilitate agencies participation: :

- Forming an umbrella group on internal UN sustainability under which the Consultative Process on ESS, the Peer Review Process and the IMG on ESM are merged. EMG Members would nominate one focal point to the umbrella group, who would receive communications from the EMG Secretariat/SUN with regard to all three sub processes.
- A dedicated webpage is created where updated information on the different EMG sustainability work streams is consolidated, for example within the frames of the EMG website.

- Two conference calls are organized annually to which focal points of the EMG led sustainability processes are invited to receive complete updates on the activities and progress made in the different work streams, and where potential areas of further synergy can be identified.

In discussing the above measures, among others, it should be noted that the focal points appointed to the Consultative Process on ESS, the Peer Review Process and the IMG on ESM may differ in line with the expertise relevant to the work of each process. For example, the Consultative Process on ESS may be composed of focal points with expertise at the policy/programme level, while the focal points to the IMG and the Peer Reviews may be experts in facilities management. Consolidated communication to a single focal point would imply strong coordination within the agencies themselves in order to ensure that the information reaches the relevant audience. A comparison of focal points of the three EMG processes show that only a marginal number of agencies appoint the same focal point to the three processes, and many agencies are not following all three processes simultaneously. Should the option of one umbrella group on sustainability in the UN system be preferred, the issue of scope (environmental/social sustainability) should be discussed along with the responsible unit for coordination (EMG Secretariat/SUN).