

# **Options for a common approach to Environmental and Social Safeguards in the UN**

Progress Report on the  
Consultative Process



Environment Management Group

# Background

The 15th Senior Officials meeting of the EMG requested the Chair of the Group to prepare:

- 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



# Why Safeguards

- Better decision-making through shared principles, precautionary planning and participatory approaches
  - Reduce and manage risk of adverse impacts on the environment and people
  - Increase results on the ground both short and long term
  - Demonstrate credibility through actions and increased transparency



# Safeguards are

- Systematic procedures to integrate environmental and social issues into decision making processes
- Instruments to
  - prevent single minded implementation
  - balance environmental and social trade-offs
  - support sustainable development



# Consultative process

<b><i>Phase I – Design consultative process</i></b>	
- Conduct a desk study and initial consultations	Completed
- Hold a 1 <sup>st</sup> workshop to consider the rationale for a common approach to safeguards	Completed
- Agree on a terms of reference and establish a drafting group	Completed
<b><i>Phase II – Identify options</i></b>	
- Prepare a background report that identifies options for safeguards in the UN	In progress
- Hold an open ended drafting group meeting in October 2010 to finalize methodology	In progress
- Hold an online information session for the consultative group in October 2010	In progress
- Hold a 2 <sup>nd</sup> consultative workshop in January 2011 to consider options for a common approach to environmental and social safeguards in the UN	To be confirmed
- Propose options for the extraordinary senior officials meeting of the EMG in spring 2011	To be confirmed

# Challenges

## Principles

- How to choose and structure environmental and social priorities?
- How to talk the same language?

## Processes

- How to integrate environmental and social priorities into decision-making and operations?
- How to guide decisions on environmental and social trade-offs?
- How to assess risk in a consistent way?
- How to combine with national systems?

## Compliance and accountability

- How to balance flexibility and accountability?
- How best to establish a common safeguard system across agencies with different mandates and modes of operation?



# Gap-Analysis

- Will build on existing UN practices and tools
- Will identify agency needs for support and possible EMG contributions
- Will identify possible options
  - Scope
  - Accountability and compliance
  - Capacity building
  - Roll-out plan



# Baseline Framework

