



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



Reference: EMG/SOM-21/EO/2015/HF/yo

22 May 2015

Dear Colleagues,

In conjunction with the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly and the Summit on the Sustainable Development Goals in September 2015, I would like to benefit from your presence in New York to convene the 21st Senior Officials Meeting of the Environment Management Group (SOM-21) on 24 September, 2015.

This meeting of the Senior Officials will take place at an important juncture as Member States are about to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals within the context of the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda. This meeting will provide a timely opportunity to strategise and provide a common message on how the UN system intends to support Member States in efforts to achieve the environmental sustainability dimension of the SDGs.

I would like to propose that the following issues which have recently been considered by the mid-term technical meeting of the EMG be discussed by the senior officials:

- a) UN System Wide Strategy (ies) on the Environment as a means for the UN system to contribute to the environmental sustainability dimension of the SDGs in a coherent and efficient manner and to ensure the consistency of the UN's environmental activities with the sustainable development agenda ;
- b) Maximise the effectiveness of the EMG to be fit for purpose in the context of the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda (how should the EMG be organized and managed to serve the coordination needs of the UN system on the environment in the Post-2015 Agenda) and;
- c) The role the EMG should play in coordinating UN system-wide support for implementing the SDGs including in monitoring and reviewing progress of the environmental dimension.

To: EMG Members

Executive Office

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In order to ensure a well-structured meeting with adequate time for discussions at the senior level on the above listed strategic issues, I would like to propose the following new modalities for the organization of SOM-21:

1. The meeting will consist of two segments: a technical preparatory segment and a senior officials segment. UNDP has kindly agreed to host and provide a venue for the meeting.
2. The technical segment of SOM including EMG focal points will meet twice in advance of the senior officials meeting; once on 9 September (by audio conference for two hours) and again on 21 September (in person) in New York to consider the progress report of the EMG Issue Management Groups and Processes and approve (ad referendum) the decisions for the future work of the EMG on behalf of their senior officials. This approach is similar to the way the CEB meetings are prepared by its sub-committees. The senior officials will meet on 24 September from 08:30 to 11:00 am, beginning with a working breakfast; they will approve without discussion the report of the technical segment, including any decisions contained therein, unless there is a specific request for discussion by a participant. The bulk of the meeting will be devoted to a strategic dialogue conducted through three panel discussions moderated by designated senior officials.

The provisional agenda and background documents will be transmitted two weeks in advance of the meeting at the latest. Additional organizational details of the meeting will be communicated to you through your designated EMG focal points.

I would be grateful if you can confirm your participation to the EMG Secretariat by e-mail, EMG@unep.org or of your designated senior official who is authorized to make decisions on your behalf. I would also be interested in hearing your views on the topics suggested for discussion as well as on the proposed modalities for the meeting.

I am grateful for your continued commitment and contributions to the work of the EMG and look forward to fruitful discussions at the next Senior Officials Meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Achim Steiner

Executive Director and Chairman of the EMG

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