



**15<sup>th</sup> Senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group**

23 September 2009

Preparatory technical segment: 8.30 am - 2 pm

Senior officials segment: 3–5 pm

Hosted by the United Nations Development Programme

DC1 Building, 1 United Nations Plaza (corner 44th Street and 1st Avenue) 21st floor

New York

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14 September 2009

Distribution: EMG members

## Provisional agenda, suggested action and background information

### Note by the Chair

#### Executive summary

1. The present note provides background information and suggests actions relevant to the provisional agendas of the 15<sup>th</sup> senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group. The agenda and documentation have been prepared based on input from members of the Environment Management Group and relevant processes in the United Nations, including the work of the Group.

2. It is suggested that the participants in the senior officials segment of the meeting focus their attention primarily on a strategic cluster of interrelated issues captured under the heading “addressing unprecedented environmental change by moving to a green economy and the role of international environmental governance”. In doing so the participants may wish to address the following key questions:

(a) How can the United Nations system best support the integration of environmental change considerations into sectoral development plans and policies?

(b) What United Nations system-wide measures are needed to enable agencies to assist Member States in making the transition to the green economy?

(c) Does the United Nations system need a more strategic and results-oriented approach to responding to the nested set of challenges faced by Member States in dealing with environmental change and making the transition to the green economy? If so how can the members of the Environment Management Group inform the consideration of such an approach?

3. It is recommended that the Environment Management Group establish an issue management group that, within one year, will prepare a United Nations system-wide environment management outlook. The outlook would consider how the United Nations system better can assist Member States in meeting challenges and taking advantage of opportunities relating to addressing unprecedented environmental change and making the transition to a green economy.

4. The environment management outlook would be informed by ongoing processes and would be prepared by experts from within the United Nations system. The process would inform a possible move by the United Nations system to addressing environmental issues at a more strategic level and responding to emerging expectations on the work of the Environment Management Group.

5. The senior officials meeting participants may also want to adopt the action points emanating from the technical segment on guidance related to continuing activities of the Environment Management Group. It is recommended that the Environment Management Group:
- (a) Consolidate the work of the issue management group on a climate neutral United Nations and the issue management group on sustainable procurement under a single issue management group on sustainable management in the United Nations system for a period of two years;
  - (b) Give direction to the issue management group on its work on climate neutrality and sustainable procurement, along with sustainable management practices in the United Nations system more broadly;
  - (c) Authorize the issue management group on the post-2010 biodiversity targets to conclude its report on the contribution of the United Nations system to the formulation of the post-2010 biodiversity targets;
  - (d) Establish an issue management group on land for a period of two years 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;
  - (e) Initiate a consultation with members, the United Nations Development Group and the High-level Committee on Management on options for the scope of and modalities for the development of a possible United Nations system-wide approach to environmental and social safeguards;
  - (f) Adopt the work plan of the Environment Management Group for October 2009–October 2010;<sup>1</sup>
  - (g) Request the Chair of the Environment Management Group to circulate his draft report for the eleventh special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum<sup>2</sup> to members of the Environment Management Group for their comments;
  - (h) Recommend that the 16<sup>th</sup> senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group be held in the margins of the opening of the 65th session of the General Assembly in New York in 2010 to address current work and issues of joint concern to members of the Group.
6. Finally, members of the Environment Management Group are invited to comment on the merits of the Group's current working modalities at both the senior officials level and at the technical level.

## Introduction

1. The present note provides background information and suggests actions relevant to the items on the provisional agenda of the 15<sup>th</sup> senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group. The agenda and documentation have been prepared based on comments received from members of the Environment Management Group in response to the invitation letter of 22 June from Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP and Chair of the Environment Management Group, to heads of agencies. It also responds to recommendations emanating from technical meetings and issue management groups of the Environment Management Group, directions received from United Nations General Assembly, the UNEP Governing Council and the Chief Executives Board for Coordination as well as findings of the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Joint Inspection Unit.

2. It is suggested that the senior officials meeting participants focus their attention primarily on a strategic cluster of interrelated issues captured under the heading “addressing unprecedented environmental change by moving to a green economy and the role of international environmental governance”. The senior officials meeting participants may want to respond to these issues based on the considerations, questions and suggested action contained in chapter III below. They may also want to adopt the action points emanating from the preparatory technical segment of the meeting that precedes their meeting on guidance related to current activities of the Environment Management Group. Issues to consider and suggested actions for the preparatory technical segment of the meeting are discussed in chapter IV below.

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1 See annex II.

2 The session which is to be held at the Bali International Conference centre, Bali, Indonesia, 24–26 February 2010 will in turn report to the United Nations General Assembly.

## **I. Provisional agenda and proposed organization of work**

### **A. Provisional agenda for the senior officials segment of the 15<sup>th</sup> senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group**

3. The provisional agenda for the 15<sup>th</sup> Senior officials meeting is as follows:
  1. Opening remarks by the Co-Chairs: Ms Helen Clark Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and host of the meeting and Mr Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and Chair of the Environment Management Group.
  2. Adoption of the agenda.
  3. Addressing unprecedented environmental change by transiting to a green economy and the role of international environmental governance.
  4. Adoption of the recommendations from the technical meeting on actions related to continuing work of the Environment Management Group.
  5. Any other business.

### **B. Provisional agenda for the preparatory technical segment of the 15<sup>th</sup> senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group**

4. The provisional agenda for the preparatory technical segment of the 15<sup>th</sup> senior officials meeting is as follows:
  1. Opening remarks by the Co-Chairs.
  2. Adoption of the agenda.
  3. Recommendations to the 15<sup>th</sup> senior officials meeting on action related to the work of the Environment Management Group:
    - (a) Management issues: moving toward climate neutrality, sustainable procurement and a coherent approach to sustainable management in the United Nations system;
    - (b) Programmatic issues: supporting post-2010 biodiversity target setting and joint work on land;
    - (c) Operational issues: consultations on environmental and social safeguards in the United Nations system;
    - (d) Environment Management Group work plan for October 2009–October 2010 and process for reporting to the UNEP Governing Council.
  4. Consideration of possible actions by the Environment Management Group to address unprecedented environmental change by moving to a green economy and the role of international environmental governance.
  5. Date and venue of the next senior officials meeting.
  6. Other business.

## C. Proposed organization of work

*Wednesday 23 September 2009*

### *Preparatory technical segment of the meeting*

8.30–8.45 a.m.	Opening remarks by the Co-Chairs
8.45–8.50 a.m.	Provisional agenda item 2: adoption of the agenda
8.50–10.30 a.m.	Provisional Agenda item 3: recommendations on action related to the work of the Environment Management Group to the 15 <sup>th</sup> senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Management issues: moving toward climate neutrality, sustainable procurement and a coherent approach to sustainable management in the United Nations system</li><li>(b) Programmatic issues: supporting post-2010 biodiversity target setting and joint work on land</li></ul>
10.30–10.45 a.m.	Coffee and tea break
10.45–11.45 a.m.	Continuation of provisional agenda item 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(c) Operational issues: Consultations on environmental and social safeguards in the United Nations system</li><li>(d) Environment Management Group work plan for October 2009– October 2010 and process for reporting to the UNEP Governing Council</li></ul>
11.45 a.m.–12.30 p.m.	Provisional Agenda item 4: consideration of possible actions by the Environment Management Group to address unprecedented environmental change by moving to a green economy and the role of international environmental governance
12.30–1.00 p.m.	Working lunch
1.00–1.30 p.m.	Continuation of provisional agenda item 4
1.30–1.45 p.m.	Provisional agenda item 5: date and venue of the next senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group
1.45–2 p.m.	Provisional agenda item 6: other business
2 p.m.	Closure of the technical meeting

### *Senior officials segment of the meeting*

3–3.15 p.m.	Opening remarks by the Co-chairs, Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme, and host of the meeting, and Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme, and Chair of the Environment Management Group
3.15–3.20 p.m.	Adoption of the agenda
3.20–4.30 p.m.	Provisional agenda item 3: addressing unprecedented environmental change by moving to a green economy and the role of international environmental governance
4.30–4.45 p.m.	Provisional agenda item 4: adoption of the recommendations from the technical meeting on actions related to the work of the Environment Management Group
4.45–5 p.m.	Provisional agenda item 5: other business
5 p.m.	Closure of the senior officials meeting

## II. Suggested actions

5. The senior officials meeting participants may wish to consider the following suggested actions. It is proposed that the senior technical meeting participants consider the actions first and that any proposed amendments be brought to the attention of the senior officials meeting.

*The senior officials of the Environment Management Group,*

### I

#### **Initiating the preparation of a United Nations System-wide environment management outlook**

*Mindful* of the need to enhance inter-agency cooperation in support of efforts by Member States to address unprecedented environmental changes at all levels with potentially negative implications for economic and social development, especially for the poor and vulnerable groups in society,

*Recalling* the inter-agency statement of 25 June 2009 entitled “Green Economy: A Transformation to Address Multiple Crises”, which stated that a shift toward a green economy could create dynamic new industries, quality jobs and income growth while mitigating and adapting to climate change and arresting biodiversity decline,

*Bearing in mind* recent considerations from the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies on international environmental governance and the emerging expectations regarding the work of the Environment Management Group on interagency cooperation in the field of environment,

1. *Decides* to establish an issue management group that will prepare a United Nations system-wide environment management outlook on how the United Nations system can better assist Member States to meet challenges and capitalize on opportunities arising from dealing with unprecedented environmental change and making the transition to a green economy;
2. *Requests* the issue management group in preparing the United Nations system-wide environment management outlook:
  - (a) To take into account and reflect in the outlook the current strategies, targets, cooperation efforts and assessments by its individual members and to build on the continuing United Nations system-wide cooperation efforts of, among others, the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence, the United Nations Development Group and the High-level Committee on Management;
  - (b) To identify elements and options for a system-wide strategic and result-oriented approach to addressing United Nations system-wide environmental challenges and opportunities;
  - (c) To ensure that the outlook is prepared by staff and experts nominated by members of the Environment Management Group, that modelling and scenarios are used as appropriate and that the outlook undergoes at least one round of peer review among members and the secretariat of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its subsidiary bodies;
  - (d) To conclude the outlook in time for the 16th senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group, tentatively scheduled for October 2010;
3. *Invites* members of the Environment Management Group to provide financial and staff resources in support of the preparation of the environment management outlook.

### II

#### **Continuing work of the Environment Management Group**

##### A

#### **Management issues: moving toward climate neutrality, sustainable procurement and a coherent approach to sustainable management in the United Nations system**

*Recalling* 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 welcoming the reports and progress made by agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations in implementing the commitments made in the statement,

*Taking note* with appreciation of the evaluation report by the Office of Internal Oversight Services entitled “Implementation by the Environmental Management Group (EMG) Secretariat of the

Secretary-General's Commitment to Move the United Nations Towards Climate-Neutrality”, and the recommendations contained therein,

*Welcoming* the work undertaken by the issue management group on a climate neutral United Nations and the work of the issue management group on sustainable procurement in cooperation with the procurement network of the High-Level Committee on Management with the support of the UNEP Sustainable UN facility,

*Mindful* of the report on sustainable procurement by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its 64<sup>th</sup> session,<sup>3</sup>

1. *Requests* the Chair of the Environment Management Group to report to the Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its relevant subsidiary bodies on progress by the United Nations system in moving toward climate neutrality;

2. *Requests* the Chair of the Environment Management Group, in consultation with members of the Group, to prepare and make available a final report on the activities of the United Nations system to move toward climate neutrality at the upcoming climate change meeting in Copenhagen;

3. *Decides* to consolidate the work of the issue management group on a climate neutral United Nations and the issue management group on sustainable procurement under a single issue management group on sustainable management in the United Nations system for a period of two years;

4. *Requests* that the issue management group on sustainable management in the United Nations system build on and enhance the cooperation that is under way with the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group and that it build on the work of the High-level Committee on Management on facility management, procurement, information and communications technology, travel, finance and budget by:

(a) Facilitating continued cooperation among Environment Management Group members on implementing the Chief Executives Board for Coordination statement on moving toward a climate neutral United Nations, in particular by:

- i. Facilitating a common methodology for greenhouse gas inventories and tracking performance through an online reporting and monitoring system with appropriate linkages to enterprise-resource-based planning systems;
- ii. Facilitating the development of individual emissions reduction strategies for each organization by the end of 2010, including for travel, as well as a common approach on emission reductions across the United Nations system;
- iii. Exploring modalities for the common purchase of offsets;

(b) Developing, in cooperation with the procurement network of the High-Level Committee on Management, support services for integrating sustainable procurement practices in the United Nations system, including by:

- i. Promoting training for requisitioners and procurers and finalizing an online training module;
- ii. Documenting success stories and good practices related to sustainable procurement from within the United Nations system;
- iii. Continuing the development of sustainable procurement practical tools such as product guidelines;
- iv. Updating the section of the United Nations procurement practitioner’s handbook on sustainable procurement;
- v. Promoting awareness on sustainability for the business community through business seminars in collaboration with the Global Compact;

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3 Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations, Comprehensive Report on the United Nations Procurement activities, Report of the Secretary-General, Addendum II: Sustainable Procurement (\*A/64/150) (currently being translated).

(c) Exploring how sustainable management in the United Nations system can be developed, including by identifying options for developing sustainable management systems as an integral part of enterprise-resource-based planning systems;

(d) Reporting on progress and proposed further actions to the senior officials of the Environment Management Group at their next meeting;

5. *Welcomes* the support of the United Nations Environment Programme's Sustainable UN facility for the work of the issue management group on sustainable management in the United Nations;

## **B**

### **Programmatic issues: supporting post-2010 biodiversity target setting and joint work on land**

*Welcoming* the progress made by the time-bound issue management group on the post-2010 biodiversity targets and the contributions of members of the Environment Management Group to the preparation of the report for the intergovernmental processes on the formulation of the post-2010 biodiversity targets,

*Welcoming* also the results of the informal consultations on land, including the strategic views and recommendations contained in the reports of the consultation meetings in Nairobi and New York,<sup>4</sup>

1. *Authorizes* the issue management group 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 Environment Management Group for the 2010 special session of the United Nations General Assembly, the 16<sup>th</sup> senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group for any further action and for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity;

2. *Decides* to establish an issue management group on land for a period of two years 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;<sup>5</sup>

3. *Requests* the issue management group on land to prepare a United Nations system-wide rapid response report on drylands highlighting the importance of drylands to key emerging issues on the global agenda, including climate change and food security, together with options for follow-up action, for consideration by the senior officials of the Environment Management Group at their sixteenth meeting;

## **C**

### **Operational issues: consultations on environmental and social safeguards in the United Nations**

*Welcoming* the recommendation emanating from the technical meeting of the Environment Management Group on fiduciary standards in the United Nations system and the potential benefits associated with considering a common approach to environmental and social safeguards for policies and operations in the United Nations system,

*Requests* the Chair of the Environment Management Group to prepare, in consultation with members of the Group, the United Nations Development Group and the High-level Committee on Management, for consideration by the Environment Management Group, 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;

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4 See report of the technical meeting of the Environment Management Group, Nairobi, February 2009, and the report of the Environment Management Group informal consultation on land, New York, May 2009 (<http://www.unemg.org/MeetingsDocuments/EMGSeniorOfficialsMeetings/2009/tabid/1330/language/en-US/Default.aspx>)

5 <http://www.unccd.int/cop/officialdocs/cop8/pdf/16add1eng.pdf#page=8>.

## D

### **Approval of the Environment Management Group workplan for October 2009–October 2010 and process for reporting to the UNEP Governing Council**

1. *Adopts* the work plan of the Environment Management Group for the period October 2009–October 2010 set out in annex II to the present decision;
2. *Requests* the Chair of the Environment Management Group to circulate his draft report for the eleventh special session of the United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum<sup>6</sup> to members of the Group for their comments;

## E

### **Date and venue of the next senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group**

*Recommends* that the 16th senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group be held in the margins of the opening of the 65th session of the General Assembly in New York in 2010 to address continuing work and issues of concern to members of the group.

## **III. Addressing unprecedented environmental change by moving to a green economy and the role of improved international governance**

6. In their responses to his letter of 22 June 2009 members of the Environment Management Group supported the proposal by the Chair of the Group that there be a discussion on challenges and opportunities related to making the transition to a green economy and its role in facilitating sustainable development. The need to relate such a discussion to common United Nations efforts to address environmental change, in particular climate change, and the functioning of the international environmental governance system was stressed. Reference was made in that context to other continuing processes, at both the intergovernmental and interagency levels, including those of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its subsidiary bodies, in particular the United Nations Development Group, the High-Level Committee on Programmes and the High-Level Committee on Management.

### **A. Addressing unprecedented environmental change**

7. The United Nations General Assembly in resolution 63/220 of 9 March 2009 expressed deep concern over the evidence of unprecedented environmental changes at all levels including their potentially negative implications for economic and social development, especially for the poor and vulnerable groups in society that was presented in the fourth volume in the Global Environment Outlook series, *Global Environment Outlook: Environment for Development (GEO-4)*.<sup>7</sup> Mitigating and adapting to environmental change requires action by and cooperation between sectors and groups at all levels in society, many of whom are mirrored in the membership of the Environment Management Group. The Group is therefore well placed to address the concerns of the General Assembly and support the integration of environmental change considerations into sectoral development plans and policies.

8. In their response to the 22 June 2009 letter from the Chair of the Environment Management Group members of the Group suggested that greater policy integration with regard to various aspects of environmental degradation might merit consideration. Such integrative efforts could include air pollution abatement in climate change mitigation, disaster risk reduction in climate change adaptation and ecosystem-based approaches to addressing climate change. It was also felt that the role of the Environment Management Group and its members in the lead-up to the climate negotiations in Copenhagen would merit discussion. In consideration of the latter, members may wish to keep in mind the relationship between the Environment Management Group and the current work of the High-level Committee on Programmes on climate change.

#### **Possible question for consideration:**

*How can the United Nations system best support the integration of environmental change considerations into sectoral development plans and policies?*

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6 The session which is to be held at the Bali International Conference centre, Bali, Indonesia, 24–26 February 2010 will in turn report to the United Nations General Assembly.

7 <http://www.unep.org/geo/geo4/media/>.

## B. Making the transition toward a green economy

9. Investments at the global, regional, national and local levels to achieve sustainable development and to take timely action to prevent, mitigate and adapt to unprecedented environmental change offer opportunities for addressing the nature and scale of the emerging multiple global crises related to food, energy, freshwater and finance and for transitioning to a green economy.<sup>8</sup> In its recent resolution 63/303 the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the outcome document adopted at the Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development, which concluded that the response to the global financial crisis presented an opportunity to promote green economy initiatives. Similarly, a recent interagency statement stated that a shift toward a green economy could create dynamic new industries, quality jobs and income growth while mitigating and adapting to climate change and arresting biodiversity decline. It called for greater investment of stimulus funds in such sectors as energy efficient technologies, renewable energy, public transport, sustainable agriculture, environmentally friendly tourism and the sustainable management of natural resources, including ecosystems and biodiversity, and stressed that many developing countries would require financial support. It also called for fiscal reforms, a review of trade and investment in education, training and capacity-building.<sup>9</sup>

10. In preparing for the current meeting members of the Environment Management Group reviewed the UNEP policy brief entitled “Global Green New Deal”.<sup>10</sup> The importance of considering mainstreaming green economy principles into the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, such as through the work of the United Nations Development Group, was stressed by some, as was the need to consider the green economy in the context of sustainable development (see policy brief no. 12 from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs<sup>11</sup>). It was suggested that consideration could be given to an environmental financial architecture that would promote the involvement of the rural poor and to the use of valuations, integrated assessments, economic instruments, impact assessments and scaling up of local solutions. It was said that the green economy approach should include the development of skills and capacities at all levels of education, science, research and technology and should highlight the fact that climate change adaptation and mitigation, ecosystems and social systems and their diversity and would stimulate and diversify economies, create jobs, promote sustainable trade and reduce poverty. It was also said that attention should be given to the evolution of a global green new deal beyond the next few years of economic stimulus packages and that it should be integrated into the management of deficits and debt resulting from the crisis and, even more, demographic and other national challenges.

11. There is now a need to substantiate and broaden the economic case for short- and long-term investment in the environment. UNEP is therefore currently working with partners, including partners within the United Nations system, on a report that will make the economic case for a green economy while providing policymakers and other stakeholders with information on the important role of the government in the march towards such an economy. UNEP will also prepare another key report on the economics of biodiversity and ecosystems.<sup>12</sup> Such reports will along with others support current efforts by individual agencies and joint efforts such as those by the High level Committee on Programmes on the global financial crisis and its impact on the work of the United Nations system.

### **Possible question for consideration:**

*What United Nations system-wide measures are needed to enable agencies to assist Member States in making the transition to the green economy?*

## C. The role of improved international environmental governance

12. In their responses to the 22 June 2009 letter from the Chair of the Environment Management Group members of the Group suggested that United Nations system-wide support for the transition toward a green economy and efforts to address environmental changes, such as climate change, should

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8 See the discussion paper: “Globalization and the environment – global crises: national chaos?” (UNEP/GC.25/16) and Governing Council decision SS.X/5, paragraph 5.

9 Interagency statement of 25 June 2009 entitled “Green Economy: A Transformation to Address Multiple Crises”, [http://www.unep.org/pdf/pressreleases/Green\\_Economy\\_Joint\\_Statement.pdf](http://www.unep.org/pdf/pressreleases/Green_Economy_Joint_Statement.pdf).

10 [http://www.unep.org/pdf/A\\_Global\\_Green\\_New\\_Deal\\_Policy\\_Brief.pdf](http://www.unep.org/pdf/A_Global_Green_New_Deal_Policy_Brief.pdf).

11 <http://www.un.org/esa/policy/policybriefs/policybrief12.pdf>.

12 See the interim report at [http://www.unep.org/greeneconomy/docs/TEEB\\_English.pdf](http://www.unep.org/greeneconomy/docs/TEEB_English.pdf).

be discussed in the context of international cooperation and international environmental governance. It was also proposed that the Environment Management Group should discuss what the United Nations could do to address the fragmentation of the normative work on the environment and to link it better with realities on the ground. The recent work of the United Nations Development Group on a guidance note on environmental sustainability<sup>13</sup> was seen as a contribution to the latter.<sup>14</sup> Support was expressed by members of the Group for the suggestion by the Chair that consideration be given to the call from the Joint Inspection Unit, the Office of Internal Oversight Services,<sup>15</sup> the UNEP Governing Council and others for the Group to work at a more strategic level.<sup>16</sup>

13. A specific request was made that UNEP inform the Environment Management Group about the current status of the initiative by the UNEP Governing Council to establish a consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives on international environmental governance. The mandate of the consultative group as set out in Governing Council decision 24/5 is to present a set of options for improving international environmental governance to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eleventh special session, with a view to providing inputs to the United Nations General Assembly for, among other things, the General Assembly's follow-up to the measures set out in paragraph 169 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome.<sup>17</sup> The consultative group recently met for the first time in Belgrade<sup>18</sup> and is scheduled to meet again in Rome on 28 and 29 October 2009. The Executive Director of UNEP is working with members of the group to prepare a paper for the Rome meeting on developing a set of options for improving international environmental governance. Other key milestones in the further evolution of international environmental governance include the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which will be held in Copenhagen, the fifth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility and a possible decision by the General Assembly on a Rio+20 summit.

14. It was also said that the recent report by the Joint Inspection Unit on its management review of environmental governance within the United Nations system<sup>19</sup> and the United Nations response coordinated by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination and presented in a note by the Secretary General<sup>20</sup> might merit consideration by the Environment Management Group. The note refers to the potential role of the Environment Management Group in conjunction with recommendations related to system-wide divisions of labour and the development of United Nations-wide policy orientations, strategies and planning frameworks in the area of environment as well as support for implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and financial tracking for environmental purposes along the lines of the tracking system that has been established in the humanitarian field. The note is under consideration by the General Assembly.

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13 Draft "Guidance note for United Nations country teams and implementing partners on mainstreaming environmental sustainability in country analysis and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)" prepared by the "Task Team on Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change" jointly chaired by UNEP and UNDP within the Working Group on Programming Issues in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), which is to be considered for endorsement by the United Nations Development Group (see <http://www.unemg.org/MeetingsDocuments/EMGSeniorOfficialsMeetings/2009/ReferenceDocuments/tabid/1331/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

14 See chapter II, section C of the present document, on environmental and social safeguards in the United Nations system.

15 Evaluation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services of implementation by the Environment Management Group secretariat of the Secretary-General's commitment to move the United Nations toward climate neutrality (see <http://www.unemg.org/MeetingsDocuments/EMGSeniorOfficialsMeetings/2009/ReferenceDocuments/tabid/1331/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

16 The UNEP Governing Council in its decision 25/1 welcomed the attention of the Environment Management Group to key environmental processes under the three Rio conventions and requested the Executive Director to promote cooperation across the United Nations system to assist Member States to implement the international environmental agenda, including through consideration of joint approaches to addressing environmental challenges of United Nations system-wide significance.

17 General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 25 October 2005. See also UNEP Governing Council decision 24/5, fifth preambular paragraph.

18 A summary of that meeting prepared by the consultative group's co-chairs is available online at <http://www.unep.org/environmentalgovernance/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=7RzudGTFKRI%3d&tabid=341&language=en-US>.

19 [http://www.unjiu.org/data/reports/2008/en2008\\_3.pdf](http://www.unjiu.org/data/reports/2008/en2008_3.pdf).

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<http://www.unemg.org/MeetingsDocuments/EMGSeniorOfficialsMeetings/2009/ReferenceDocuments/tabid/1331/language/en-US/Default.aspx>.

15. The Environment Management Group may wish to consider whether a strategic and results-oriented United Nations system-wide approach in the field of environment might help address the nested set of challenges referred to by members in the area of environmental change and the transition to a green economy. While such an approach would need considerations and endorsement at the appropriate intergovernmental and interagency level, it would benefit from being informed by the Environment Management Group. The members of the Group, who also includes the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements, collectively constitute a unique compilation of institutional capacity in the field of environment. This is evident from, among other things, the stocktaking exercise undertaken by the Environment Management Group and the ongoing work on biodiversity, land and climate neutrality.

**Possible questions for consideration:**

*Does the United Nations system need a more strategic and results-oriented approach to responding to the nested set of challenges faced by Member States in dealing with environmental change and making the transition to the green economy? If so how can the members of the Environment Management Group inform the consideration of such an approach?*

#### **D. Possible actions by the Environment Management Group**

16. The Environment Management Group may wish to initiate a process for preparing a forward looking rapid assessment, an outlook, of the how the United Nations system can better assist Member States in meeting challenges and capitalizing on opportunities relating to dealing with environmental change and making the transition to a green economy. Such an assessment could be informed by and reflect the current strategies, targets, cooperation efforts and assessments (such as the Green Economy report) of its individual members. In this respect it could build on the ongoing Environment Management Group processes (see part II below) along with those of the High-level Committee on Programmes, the United Nations Development Group, the High-level Committee on Management and others.

17. The assessment could identify elements and options for a system-wide strategic and results-oriented approach to tackling the identified challenges and opportunities. Such a process would also increase the preparedness of the Environment Management Group to respond to the specific expectations of the Group that are emerging in processes relevant to international environmental governance such as the follow-up to the Joint Inspection Unit report and the consultative group on international environmental governance under the auspices of the UNEP Governing Council. The environment management outlook might also facilitate a response from the Environment Management Group on the recommendation from the Office of Inspection and Oversight that the members of the Environment Management Group clarify the purpose, the terms of reference and membership of the Group.<sup>21</sup> Consequently the Environment Management Group might wish to consider the suggested actions set out in chapter II of the present note.

#### **IV. Ongoing work of the Environment Management Group**

18. The 14<sup>th</sup> senior officials meeting in Poznan and the technical meeting in Nairobi resulted in the initiation of several activities that set out a practical and forward looking approach to cooperation in assisting Member States to deal with environmental change. Members of the Environment Management Group in their comments supported a proposal by the Chair to review progress, give strategic guidance on further work and consider providing advice to the Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its subsidiary bodies on issues currently under consideration by the Environment Management Group. Summaries of progress reports on these activities are presented below and presented in more detailed reports annexed to the present note. Some further actions have been developed in consultation with focal points and issue management groups. The actions have been summarized in an annual work plan for 2009 and 2010, which is presented below and annexed to the present note.

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21 See footnote 15, supra.

**A. Management issues: moving toward climate neutrality, sustainable procurement and a coherent approach to sustainable management in the United Nations**

19. In response to the letter of 22 June from the Chair of the Environment Management Group, members of the Group underscored the linkages between the Environment Management Group topics and themes being discussed in the High-level Committee on Management. The need for adequate reporting on progress in the process of moving toward climate neutrality (possibly through enterprise-resource-based planning systems) and the need to ensure accountability in the process were stressed. So was the importance of building capacity in countries to supply environmentally sustainable goods, and the need to include modules on climate neutrality and sustainable procurement in training for senior United Nations system officials, for example through the United Nations Staff College.

**1. Moving toward climate neutrality**

20. In October 2007, the Chief Executives Board for Coordination endorsed a statement on moving toward a climate-neutral United Nations, in which the Heads of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes agreed that by 2009 they would estimate greenhouse gas emissions, undertake efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to the extent possible, and analyse the cost implications and explore budgetary modalities - including consulting with governing bodies as needed - of purchasing carbon offsets with the aim of eventually reaching climate neutrality.

21. The Environment Management Group secretariat and the UNEP Sustainable UN facility have been providing support to the United Nations system with these efforts. In particular, the following activities have been carried out:

(a) A network of climate-neutral focal points has been established across the United Nations system and has met four times to implement the move toward climate neutrality in a coordinated manner;

(b) A common methodology for calculating greenhouse gas emissions has been developed, with a minimum agreed boundary for the United Nations footprint;

(c) Common tools have been made available for calculating greenhouse gas emissions (the United Nations greenhouse gas calculator and the United Nations Interface to the International Civil Aviation Organization Carbon Emissions Calculator);

(d) Two online trainings sessions and two workshops have been organized for the United Nations system on how to use these tools and on how to manage the organization's greenhouse gas footprint, respectively, and a helpdesk has been set up;

(e) Guidelines have been developed on how to achieve emissions reductions (green meetings, energy efficiency in buildings, a quick guide on emissions reductions and more);

(f) A common approach has been developed for the procurement of carbon offsets;

(g) Information on the above-mentioned activities has been made available on a knowledge-sharing website, which also serves as a platform for exchanging experiences.<sup>22</sup>

22. A comprehensive report on the United Nations system's activities to move towards climate-neutrality is being prepared and will be made available at the forthcoming climate change talks in Copenhagen in December 2009. This report will be based on inventories and other information on implementing the climate neutral commitment which is to be submitted by members of the Environment Management Group by 1 September 2009. Annex I to the present note contains a proposed outline of this report, the final version of which will be reviewed by the Environment Management Group members through the issue management group on a climate neutral United Nations.

23. At their 14<sup>th</sup> meeting the senior officials of the Environment Management Group noted that the climate change effects of emissions of gases from aviation other than carbon dioxide were uncertain. It accordingly decided to take into account only the effects of carbon dioxide for the time being. The International Civil Aviation Authority and UNEP have been invited to convene a meeting of experts to be identified based on, among other things, recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which will aim to provide further guidance on the question of an appropriate metric to account for all greenhouse gas effects from aviation. There have been preliminary discussions between partner institutions on the modalities of such a meeting, during which differing views have been expressed about the uncertainties and current research, and no date has yet been set for the meeting.

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22 <http://www.unemg.org/climateneutralun/>.

24. An evaluation was carried out by the Office of Internal Oversight Services on implementation by the Environment Management Group secretariat of the Secretary-General's commitment to move the United Nations toward climate neutrality. A report on the evaluation has been distributed to the Secretary-General and to heads of agencies, funds and programmes. The report makes nine recommendations (variously directed to UNEP, the United Nations Secretariat and the Secretary-General) aimed at improving support for the climate-neutral commitment and its implementation within the Secretariat.<sup>23</sup> It stresses, among other things, the need to resolve pending methodological issues related to greenhouse gas inventories, to focus on reducing emissions, including from travel - the largest source of United Nations emissions, and the need for engagement by management to formulate a clear strategy and assign responsibility for achieving results.

25. While the United Nations system has achieved significant progress and outstanding contributions have been made to common efforts from individual members of the Environment Management Group, the move toward climate neutrality will require continuing work by the UN system, a finding that has been expressed both by the issue management group and the Office of Internal Oversight Services. This reflects the systemic scale of the challenge and the experience of the few members of the Environment Management Group, such as the World Bank, that have been working on climate neutrality for some years.

26. Further efforts are needed to build on current accomplishments and improve on current practices. For example, 2008 greenhouse gas reporting was carried out using two separate Excel greenhouse gas calculators. This system of separate Excel files has been inefficient and does not allow automatic recalculation of base year data and performance tracking. The United Nations greenhouse gas reporting exercise should therefore be made more efficient by investment in a more sophisticated online reporting and monitoring system that goes beyond basic data collection. Such an online system would also facilitate:

- (a) Quality assurance, including quality checks to avoid missing data and duplication, and the use of agreed methodologies and a robust emission factor database;
- (b) Performance tracking, including the possibility to re-calculate base year data, run historical updates and change estimation methods and emission factors;
- (c) Analysis and greenhouse gas management, including by threshold analysis, trend analysis and benchmarking;
- (d) Reporting, including through automatically generated reports for greenhouse gas management at both the entity and United Nations system levels.

27. Consequently, further efforts to facilitate a common methodology for greenhouse gas inventories require that the specific requirements of the United Nations be defined. It will also be necessary to decide whether to buy an already existing reporting system or to develop a new system internally with appropriate linkages to enterprise-resource-based planning systems. Further efforts are also needed in developing a common United Nations emissions reductions strategy, including for travel, and exploring modalities for the common purchase of offsets. Such efforts will require a sustained and coherent approach involving systematic cooperation between the Environment Management Group, and the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group. Suggested actions in this area are presented in chapter II of the present note.

## **2. Sustainable procurement**

28. At its annual meeting in October 2007, the Environment Management Group approved a two-year programme of work for the issue management group on sustainable procurement, requesting that it be undertaken in full cooperation with the procurement network of the High-level Committee on Management. It requested that issues that required system-wide decisions of a managerial or administrative character be prepared for action by the High-level Committee on Management.

29. In response, close collaboration has been established with the procurement network of the High-level Committee on Management, which has served as the issue management group on sustainable procurement, with the following outcomes:

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23 See <http://www.unemg.org/MeetingsDocuments/EMGSeniorOfficialsMeetings/2009/ReferenceDocuments/tabid/1331/language/en-US/Default.aspx>.

(a) Sustainable procurement has been adopted as one of the continuing areas of work in the procurement network's strategy of "harmonization of UN rules". The work of the network has been undertaken with the support of the UNEP Sustainable UN facility;

(b) The initial 2007 Environment Management Group work plan on sustainable procurement has been consolidated and expanded by the procurement network;

(c) The procurement network has agreed on a definition, criteria and approach to promotion of sustainable procurement by individual agencies;<sup>24</sup>

(d) A modular training course on sustainable procurement has been developed, with online training material available in English and French. Three awareness-raising training sessions have been held, as well as five in-depth training sessions, in Bangkok, Berne, Brindisi, Nairobi, New York, Panama and Rome;

(e) The following resources have been developed and are available at the web<sup>25</sup>:

- i. A United Nations guide for procurers and facility managers on sustainable lighting;
- ii. Five product guidelines for United Nations procurers (on information and communications technology, furniture, cleaning products and services, paper and stationary products and vehicles), with five more planned for development by the end of 2009;
- iii. A green meetings guide (in collaboration with the International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications);
- iv. A United Nations procurement resource book for ecolabels (in collaboration with the United Nations Office of Project Services);<sup>26</sup>
- v. Seven case studies on existing sustainable procurement work in United Nations agencies;
- vi. A United Nations sustainable procurement guide, to be finalized in October 2009;

(f) Web pages on sustainable procurement featuring these resources have been made available for use by United Nations procurers and requisitioners on the United Nations Global Marketplace procurers and suppliers portal;<sup>27</sup>

(g) Ad hoc assistance has been provided to United Nations agencies on sustainable procurement related matters (such as advice for tenders and sustainable procurement policy development);

(h) The procurement network of the High-level Committee on Management at its biannual meeting, scheduled for 2–4 September 2009 in Paris, is expected to discuss sustainable procurement in joint session with the Environment Management Group's issue management group on sustainable procurement and report on its discussions to the High-level Committee on Management and the Environment Management Group.

30. Furthermore, in response to a specific request from the General Assembly, a report on sustainable procurement was prepared for the Procurement Division of the United Nations Secretariat.<sup>28</sup> The report provides information on the concept of sustainable procurement, related criteria and on the impact of sustainable procurement in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The report is scheduled to be discussed by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly in October 2009.

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<http://www.unemg.org/climateneutralun/BecomingClimateNeutral/EmissionsReduction/SustainableProcurement/SustainableProcurementPoliciesHandbook/tabid/601/Default.aspx>.

25 [www.unep.fr/sun](http://www.unep.fr/sun).

26 Available at <http://www.unops.org/english/whatwedo/procurement/Pages/Procurementpolicies.aspx>.

27 See [www.ungm.org/sustainableprocurement](http://www.ungm.org/sustainableprocurement).

28 Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations, Comprehensive Report on the United Nations Procurement activities, Report of the Secretary-General, Addendum II: Sustainable Procurement (\*A/64/150) (currently in translation)

31. Given the current focus on addressing sustainable procurement it is advisable for the Environment Management Group to continue its cooperation with the procurement network of the High-Level Committee on Management. In particular further efforts are needed to promote further training sessions and develop an online training module, to document success stories in the United Nations system and facilitate the sharing of experiences. Suggested actions in this area are presented in chapter II of the present note.

### **3. A coherent approach to sustainable management in the United Nations**

32. At its most recent meeting, the issue management group on a climate-neutral United Nations expressed support for considering climate neutrality as part of a broader effort to “green” the Organization’s operations. In other words, climate neutrality should be part of a comprehensive sustainability management system in which the Environment Management Group’s work on sustainable procurement is streamlined and integrated with other efforts and the Environment Management Group and the UNEP Sustainable UN facility continue to support the United Nations system on these issues beyond December 2009. Similar sentiments were expressed by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in its evaluation of the Environment Management Group. In its report on environmental governance the Joint Inspection Unit suggested that the Environment Management Group had failed to convince member agencies backed by the High-level Committee on Management to adopt sustainable procurement practices.<sup>29</sup> A sustained and coherent approach involving systematic cooperation between the Environment Management Group, the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group is needed based on, for instance, the experience gained from the cooperation between the Environment Management Group and the High-level Committee on Management procurement network.

33. In line with the above considerations it is proposed that the Environment Management Group consolidate the work of the issue management group on a climate neutral United Nations and the issue management group on sustainable procurement under a single issue management group on sustainable management in the United Nations system. This new issue management group should build on and enhance the cooperation that has been established with the High-level Committee on Management on its work on facility management, procurement, information and communications technology, travel finance and budget, as well as with the United Nations Development Group. The consolidated issue management group would continue to facilitate efforts by the United Nations system on climate neutrality and sustainable procurement and would in addition identify holistic and comprehensive approaches to environmental and sustainable management practices in the United Nations system, including by exploring options for developing sustainable management systems as an integral part of enterprise-resource-based planning. In line with the recommendation from the Office of Internal Oversight Services support for this endeavour would be provided by the UNEP Sustainable UN facility. Suggested actions in this area are presented in chapter II of the present note.

## **B. Programmatic issues: - Supporting post-2010 biodiversity target setting and joint work on land**

### **1. Supporting the post-2010 biodiversity targets**

34. At their 14<sup>th</sup> meeting the senior officials of the Environment Management Group considered a proposal by the then Presidency of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity that the Environment Management Group make a contribution to the celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity, the deliberations of the United Nations General Assembly special session in 2010 and the process under the Convention for formulating post-2010 biodiversity strategy and targets.<sup>30</sup>

35. The Chair of the Environment Management Group convened technical consultations in Nairobi in February 2009 to discuss what and how it would contribute to the post-2010 biodiversity targets process.<sup>31</sup> In line with what was agreed during those consultations the Chair wrote to members of the

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29 Joint Inspection Unit, Management Review of Environmental Governance in the United Nations System, [http://www.unjiu.org/data/reports/2008/en2008\\_3.pdf](http://www.unjiu.org/data/reports/2008/en2008_3.pdf), page 19.

30 See report of the 14th senior officials meeting (<http://www.unemg.org/MeetingsDocuments/EMGSeniorOfficialsMeetings/2009/tabid/1330/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

31 See the report of the Environment Management Group technical meeting, Nairobi, February 2009 (<http://www.unemg.org/MeetingsDocuments/EMGSeniorOfficialsMeetings/2009/tabid/1330/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

Group<sup>32</sup> suggesting the establishment of the issue management group on post-2010 biodiversity targets. The issue management group is composed of nominated focal points from agencies along with observers from the bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and selected biodiversity experts.

36. At its first meeting, which was hosted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in Paris on 8 April 2009, the issue management group agreed to submit its contribution in the form of a report on the United Nations system contribution to the formulation of the post-2010 biodiversity targets. It also agreed on the scope, structure and modalities of the work to be done, including a work plan, an outline of the report, a template for information gathering, guidance for submissions and the structure of a web-based workspace for the group.<sup>33</sup> The Group also agreed that the report on the United Nations system contribution to the formulation of the post-2010 biodiversity targets would include, among other things:

- (a) Presentation of the biodiversity aspects of strategies, programmes, plans and initiatives of individual members;
- (b) A United Nations system-wide perspective on the post-2010 biodiversity target process;
- (c) Selected areas in which collaborative programmes and initiatives were under way and identification of areas that might warrant further cooperation.

37. Issue management group focal points provided inputs to the web-based post-2010 biodiversity targets survey template on their accomplishments in contributing to the implementation of the post-2010 biodiversity targets and proposals for sectoral objectives, targets and indicators (i.e., their inputs related to their respective mandates).

38. A core writing team of the issue management group composed of representatives of key biodiversity agencies and multilateral environmental agreements has been established to start compiling and writing the report on the basis of information gathered and analysed by members of the group. Two meetings of the writing team are scheduled for October and December 2009. The UNEP World Conservation and Monitoring Centre has been contracted by the Environment Management Group secretariat to provide technical support for the work of the issue management group in the preparation of the report.

39. A summary report will be prepared by the issue management group in late January 2010 for submission to the secretariat of the Convention for consideration at the fourteenth meeting of the Convention's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the third meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, which will take place in May 2010.

40. The second meeting of the issue management group is scheduled to take place in February 2010, possibly in the margins of the eleventh special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in Bali, Indonesia, to review and agree on modalities for finalization of the report on the contribution of the United Nations system to the formulation of the post-2010 biodiversity targets. The issue management group may hold its final meeting in the margins of the fourteenth meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, at which time it might agree on the final report. The Environment Management Group is requested to delegate authority to approve the final report to the issue management group to enable it to be submitted by the Chair of the Environment Management Group in time for the 2010 special session of the United Nations General Assembly, the 16<sup>th</sup> senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group for any further action and the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Suggested actions in this area are presented in chapter II of the present note.

## **2. Environment Management Group and the issue of land**

41. At their 14<sup>th</sup> meeting the senior officials of the Environment Management Group considered a proposal by the secretariat of the Convention on Desertification to identify a coherent United Nations

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32 Letter by the Chair of the Environment Management Group (<http://www.unemg.org/MeetingsDocuments/EMGSeniorOfficialsMeetings/2009/tabid/1330/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

33 See the report of the first meeting of the issue management group (<http://www.unemg.org/MeetingsDocuments/EMGSeniorOfficialsMeetings/2009/tabid/1330/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

system-wide response to the implementation of the Convention's 10-year strategic plan.<sup>34</sup> The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, at its seventeenth session, the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, at its twenty-fifth session, and the General Assembly have also adopted decisions and resolutions calling on the United Nations system to devise a coherent approach to desertification and land degradation issues.

42. The Environment Management Group accordingly agreed to hold a series of technical consultations, notably technical meeting in Nairobi in February 2009 and an informal consultation meeting on land in April in New York, to define modalities and deliverables for a UN system-wide network and process on sustainable land use in the framework of the Environment Management Group. During these consultations the agencies' individual and joint activities and frameworks, programmatic links with the Desertification Convention's strategic plan and the scientific and political rationale for a collective process on land under the Environment Management Group were reviewed. A set of key pressing land issues that could both benefit from issue-based and focused cooperation and support accelerated implementation of the 10-year strategy was identified. Strategic views, follow-up recommendations and a suggested plan of work for the Environment Management Group on land were suggested and are set out in the report of the last consultation meeting, which was held in New York.<sup>35</sup>

43. Suggestions emanating from the consultations included the establishment of an issue management group by the Environment Management Group for a period of two years. Building on the recommendations from the technical consultations, the proposed tasks for the issue management group, as listed in the report of the New York consultation, include preparation of a United Nations system-wide rapid response report on drylands. It was recommended that the report highlight 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 report would not 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 supported by a strong communication plan (possibly benefiting from marketing advice). Member agencies would be engaged and responsible for the various chapters according to their areas of expertise and focus.

44. The suggested work plan of the issue management group is set out in annex II to the present note. It includes consultation with the Desertification Convention's Committee on Science and Technology to promote the integration of the rapid response report as part of the scientific preparation for the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Desertification Convention, which will take place in Buenos Aires in September 2009. A side event will be held in the margins of that session for agencies, partners from the private sector and other scientific and political personalities to solicit further support. The report will be scheduled to be ready for consideration by the senior officials of the Environment Management Group and by the Conference of the Parties to the Desertification Convention at their next meetings. Suggested actions in this area are presented in chapter II of the present note.

### **C. Operational issues: consultations on environmental and social safeguards in the United Nations system**

45. Participants in the Environment Management Group technical meeting that took place in Nairobi in February 2009 suggested to the Chair of the Group that the Group consider whether there was a need for fiduciary standards within the United Nations for those charged with the implementation of multilateral funds. Members felt that, while individual agencies had developed or were working on environmental and social safeguards for their policies and operations, the United Nations system would benefit from a common approach drawing on, among other sources, existing standards and guidelines such as those of the World Bank. UNEP and the World Bank have expressed readiness to contribute to an in-depth discussion on this topic at future meetings of the Environment Management Group.

46. In their responses to the 22 June letter from the Chair of the Environment Management Group members of the Group welcomed the agenda item on the approach to environmental and social safeguards. It was felt that the issue would require discussion, including on its links to the United Nations Development Group and a decision on follow-up at the technical level. Further discussion of the matter, including the question of soliciting support for its implementation from United Nations

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34 <http://www.unccd.int/cop/officialdocs/cop8/pdf/16add1eng.pdf#page=8>.

35 Report of the Environment Management Group informal consultation on land, New York, May 2009 (<http://www.unemg.org/MeetingsDocuments/EMGSeniorOfficialsMeetings/2009/tabid/1330/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

system agencies, may be found in a guidance note on environmental sustainability which is being prepared by the United Nations Development Group.<sup>36</sup>

47. The World Bank has extensive experience in the use of environmental and social safeguards.<sup>37</sup> The Quality Assurance and Compliance Unit of the Bank has agreed to brief the Environment Management Group on its experiences and possible implications for a United Nations system-wide approach. A key question that needs to be considered is the scope of any such guidelines both in terms of coverage (dimensions of environmental and social issues) and application (policies, programmes, projects and partners). The Environment Management Group may want to request its Chair to develop, in consultation with members of the Group, the United Nations Development Group and the High-level Committee on Management and based on a review of existing policies such as the United Nations Development Group guidance note on environmental sustainability, options for the scope of and modalities for the development of a possible United Nations system-wide approach to environmental and social safeguards for consideration by the Environment Management Group. The scoping exercise may for instance suggest options for supporting the implementation of the United Nations Development Group's guidance note. Suggested actions in this area are presented in chapter II of the present note.

#### **D. Environment Management Group work plan for October 2009–October 2010 and process for reporting to the UNEP Governing Council**

48. In its recent evaluation of the Environment Management Group<sup>38</sup> the Office of Internal Oversight Services recommends that the Group's secretariat develop and facilitate agreement on a strategic plan for the work of the Group. The Environment Management Group work plan gives an overview of forthcoming activities and milestones for the next 12 months. The plan is organized according to three categories of environmental issues: sustainable management issues, programmatic issues and operational issues. The plan also indicates key partners. These are partners that have a role to play in leading scoping exercises or issue management groups and following up on agreed activities and milestones. The plan is developed in accordance with the suggested actions presented to the Environment Management Group and the group is invited to approve the plan accordingly.

49. The Executive Director of UNEP in his capacity as Chair of the Environment Management Group reports to the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum on the accomplishments of the Group. His last report was presented as part of a wider report on international environmental governance.<sup>39</sup> Any action taken by the Governing Council is reported to the General Assembly for its consideration. It is proposed that the Chair's reports be prepared with greater involvement by the members of the Environment Management Group. Consequently an action item in the form of a request to the Chair of the Group to circulate his report to the members of the Group for comments is suggested in chapter II of the present note.

#### **E. Date and venue of the next senior officials meeting of the Environment Management Group**

50. In its recent evaluation of the Environment Management Group<sup>40</sup> the Office of Internal Oversight Services recommends that the secretariat of the Group encourage greater senior participation in the Group's meetings. The current approach of inviting submissions from the executive heads of the

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36 Draft "Guidance note for United Nations country teams and implementing partners on mainstreaming environmental sustainability in country analysis and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)", prepared by the "Task Team on Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change" jointly chaired by UNEP and UNDP within the Working Group on Programming Issues in the United Nations Development Group, which is to be considered for endorsement by the United Nations Development Group (see <http://www.unemg.org/MeetingsDocuments/EMGSeniorOfficialsMeetings/2009/ReferenceDocuments/tabid/1331/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

37 [www.worldbank.org/safeguards](http://www.worldbank.org/safeguards).

38 Evaluation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services of implementation by the Environment Management Group secretariat of the Secretary-General's commitment to move the United Nations toward climate neutrality, page 33 (<http://www.unemg.org/MeetingsDocuments/EMGSeniorOfficialsMeetings/2009/ReferenceDocuments/tabid/1331/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

39 <http://unep.org/gc/gc25/working-docs.asp>.

40 See note 38, supra.

Group's member organizations on possible topics for discussion at the senior officials meetings and setting an early date and venue in conjunction with the opening of the United Nations General Assembly are efforts to encourage greater senior participation and agency ownership in meetings of the Group. For cooperation at technical level the Group has experimented with the use of online meetings and training workshops to reduce the burden on members of meeting attendance. Members of the Environment Management Group are invited to comment on the merits of such an approach and on the suggested action in chapter II of the present note, which recommends that the 16<sup>th</sup> senior officials meeting be held in the margins of the opening of the 65th session of the General Assembly in New York in 2010 to address continuing work and issues of concern to members.

## Annex I

### **Report on the implementation of the commitment by the Chief Executives Board to promote coordination on moving toward a climate-neutral United Nations**

#### **Outline**

Executive summary

Foreword

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Annex: Individual agency fact sheets and summary fact sheet for the United Nations system

## Annex II

### Environment Management Group work plan for October 2009–October 2010

Expected accomplishment	Activities and milestones	Key partners
<b>A. Management issues</b>		
Enhanced sustainability of management practices in the United Nations system	<p><b>1. Sustainable management</b> Explore how sustainable management can be developed in the United Nations system.</p> <p>Identify options for developing sustainable management systems as an integral part of enterprise-resource-based planning systems.</p>	Members of the issue management group (IMG) on sustainable management, the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) and its networks and the United Nations Development Group (UNDG)
	<p><b>2. Climate neutral United Nations</b> Facilitate cooperation among members of the Environment Management Group (EMG) on implementation of the statement by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) on moving toward a climate neutral United Nations.</p> <p>(a) Prepare a final report on the United Nations system’s activities to move toward climate neutrality and make it available at the forthcoming climate change meeting in Copenhagen.</p> <p>(b) Facilitate a common methodology for greenhouse gas inventories and tracking performance through an online reporting and monitoring system with appropriate linkages to enterprise-resource-based planning systems.</p> <p>(c) Facilitate the development of individual emissions reduction strategies for each organization by the end of 2010, including for travel, as well as a common approach on emission reductions across the United Nations system</p> <p>(d) Explore modalities for common purchase of offsets.</p>	Members of the IMG on sustainable management, HLCM and its networks, UNDG
	<p><b>3. Sustainable procurement</b> Develop, in cooperation with the HLCM procurement network, support services for integrating sustainable procurement practices into the United Nations system.</p> <p>(a) Promote training for requisitioners and procurers and finalizing an online training module.</p> <p>(b) Document success stories and good practices related to sustainable procurement from within the United Nations system.</p>	Members of the IMG on sustainable management, HLCM procurement network

Expected accomplishment	Activities and milestones	Key partners
	<p>(c) Continuing the development of sustainable procurement practical tools such as product guidelines.</p> <p>(d) Update the section of the United Nations procurement practitioner's handbook on sustainable procurement</p> <p>(e) Promote awareness on sustainability for the business community through business seminars in collaboration with the Global Compact</p>	
<b>B. Programmatic issues</b>		
<p>Enhanced coherence in programming of environmental activities in the United Nations system, including for mainstreaming environmental concerns into sectoral programmes</p>	<p><b>1. Post-2010 biodiversity targets</b> Facilitate the contributions of EMG members to the preparation of the report for the intergovernmental processes on the formulation of the post-2010 biodiversity targets.</p> <p>Prepare a report on the United Nations system contribution to the formulation of the post-2010 biodiversity targets to be submitted by the EMG Chair to the United Nations General Assembly at its tenth special session the senior officials of EMG at their 16<sup>th</sup> meeting for any further action and to the CBD Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting.</p>	<p>Members of the IMG on the post-2010 biodiversity targets with support from members of the bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), CBD secretariat, the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), IUCN and WWF</p>
	<p><b>2. Land</b> Propose modalities for a United Nations system-wide contribution to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD) 10-year strategic plan<sup>41</sup></p> <p>Prepare a United Nations system-wide rapid response report on drylands that highlights the importance of drylands as they relate to key emerging issues on the global agenda, including climate change and food security, together with options for follow-up actions, for consideration by the EMG senior officials at their 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.</p>	<p>Members of the IMG on land with support from the UNCCD secretariat and WCMC</p>
	<p><b>3. A United Nations system-wide Environment Management Outlook</b> Prepare a United Nations system-wide environment management outlook (EMO) on the how the United Nations system can better assist Member States to meet challenges and capitalize on opportunities relating to addressing unprecedented environmental change and making the transition to a green economy.</p> <p>(a) Identify the current strategies, targets, cooperation efforts and assessments by individual EMG members and build on, among other things, the continuing United Nations system-wide</p>	<p>Members of the IMG on the environment management outlook</p>

41 <http://www.unccd.int/cop/officialdocs/cop8/pdf/16add1eng.pdf#page=8>.

Expected accomplishment	Activities and milestones	Key partners
	<p>cooperation efforts by the High Level Panel, undg and HLCM.</p> <p>(b) Identify elements and options for a system-wide strategic and result-oriented approach to addressing United Nations system-wide environmental challenges and opportunities.</p> <p>(c) Mobilize staff and experts nominated by EMG members, use modelling and scenarios as appropriate and undertake at least one round of peer review among members and the secretariat of the CEB.</p> <p><b>4. Report to UNEP Governing Council on EMG accomplishments</b>  Preparation of A report by the EMG Chair to UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eleventh special session.<sup>42</sup>  Circulate draft report to the EMG members for their comments.</p>	EMG members
<b>C. Operational issues</b>		
Enhance coherence in mainstreaming environmental considerations in operational activities at the country level by the United Nations system	<p><b>Consultations on environmental and social safeguards</b>  Prepare options for scope of and modalities for the development of a possible United Nations system-wide approach to environmental and social safeguards for consideration by the EMG based on a review of existing policies such as the ongoing work by undg on a guidance note on environmental sustainability.<sup>43</sup></p> <p>(a) Take stock of existing social and environmental safeguards, analyse the possibility of a common approach and identify deliverables under the EMG.</p> <p>(b) Prepare a report for consideration by the EMG senior officials at their meeting in 2010 with recommendations on follow up actions.</p>	undg and EMG members

42 The session which is to be held at the Bali International Conference centre, Bali, Indonesia, 24–26 February 2010 will in turn report to the United Nations General Assembly.

43 Draft “Guidance note for United Nations country teams and implementing partners on mainstreaming environmental sustainability in country analysis and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)” prepared by the “Task Team on Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change” jointly chaired by UNEP and UNDP within the Working Group on Programming Issues in the United Nations Development Group, which is to be considered for endorsement by the United Nations Development Group (see <http://www.unemg.org/MeetingsDocuments/EMGSeniorOfficialsMeetings/2009/ReferenceDocuments/tabid/1331/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).