



UNITED NATIONS

ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP



**Mid-Term Technical Segment of the 25<sup>th</sup> Senior Officials Meeting**

**EMG SOM25/mid-term/03**

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By video-audio conference

from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Geneva time.

## Mid-Term Progress Report

### *Note by the Secretariat*

This note has been prepared to support the discussions of the midterm technical segment of the 25<sup>th</sup> Senior Officials' Meeting by providing a short progress report on the work of the EMG Issue Management Groups and Consultative Processes, as well as the next steps of their work in line with the decisions taken by the 24<sup>th</sup> Senior Officials' Meeting in September 2018. The referred documents and reports in this note can be found at the EMG website [www.unemg.org](http://www.unemg.org).

## I. Collaboration on Global Environmental Issues

### a) The Issue Management Group (IMG) on Tackling E-waste

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
<p>Welcome the initiative by the Letter of Intent signatories and the subsequent concept note, developed by these signatories and other stakeholders, detailing plans for the development of an e-waste coalition.</p> <p>Further welcome continued engagement with other UN entities and stakeholders outside the UN system</p>	<p><b>Ongoing:</b> The World Health Organization, International Trade Centre and UN Human Settlements Programme signed the Letter of Intent as new signatories during the World Summit on the Information Society Forum in April.</p>	

<p>Extend the work of the IMG on Tackling E-waste for one more year, in order to build a stable arrangement for the E-waste Coalition and any continued future collaboration.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing:</b> Members of the emerging Coalition are in the process of preparing Terms of Reference for the Coalition, considering topics such as governance, key functions and engagement with partners through a series of meetings and workshops.</p> <p>The report <i>“A New Circular Vision for Electronics: Time for a Global Reboot”</i> was launched in Davos in January as a collaboration with the World Economic Forum and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development.</p> <p>Input to the ongoing design and development of a new circular vision for electrics and electronics, an envisaged area of work of the emerging E-waste Coalition, have been obtained through the organizing of a side event at UNEA in March, the BRS COPs in May, the Global Dialogue Forum on Decent Work in the Management of E-waste organized by ILO and the World Summit on the Information Society Forum, organized by ITU.</p>	<p>Development of Terms of Reference for the Coalition including options for its governance.</p>
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## b) UN Coalition on Combatting Sand and Dust Storms

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
<p>Establishment of a Task Team to develop Terms of Reference and a plan of work for the Coalition.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing:</b></p> <p>Following the Senior Officials Meeting, the Chair of the EMG circulated a request for nomination of focal points to the task team responsible for providing inputs to the Terms of Reference of the Coalition.</p> <p>The first meeting of the focal points of the Coalition was organized on 14 February, 2019 to consider a concept note outlining the objectives, main areas of work, the structure and approach of the Coalition.</p>	<p>Agreement and finalization of Terms of Reference and workplan.</p> <p>Preparation for the SDS day in the margins of the UNCCD COP in September and other relevant events.</p>

## II. Enhancing UN environmental and social sustainability

In occasion of the retreat of the UN Executive Committee on Climate and Security in December 2018, the UN Secretary-General asked the UN to raise the level of its internal sustainability ambitions and to intensify its efforts to combat climate change from within. Specifically, the Secretary-General wishes to highlight at the September 2019 UN Climate Summit that the UN is “walking the talk” on environmental sustainability and climate change. Internal sustainability has therefore been integrated in the UN Roadmap for Climate and security that ensued from the retreat as follows:

The Secretary-General’s request raised the profile the existing mandate from Senior Officials of the UN Environment Management Group (EMG), in September 2018, to develop a UN internal sustainability vision and strategy beyond 2020 to confirm the UN’s leadership aspirations in the area of internal environmental and social sustainability and to show that the UN aligns its own performance with the principles it has pioneered internationally.

As a result of the above, the CEB secretariat asked the Environment Management Group and UN Environment to develop a comprehensive system-wide strategy for sustainability management in the UN system 2020-2030, through a two-phased approach, delivering for the HLCM/CEB events in Spring 2019:

1. A compelling presentation of results achieved on internal sustainability in the UN system through a cooperative arrangement between HLCM, EMG, SUN in context of the UN Climate Neutral strategy and the related Greening the Blue initiative since 2007;
2. A strategy limited environmental sustainability in the area of management (Phase 1), which will be comprised of a set of strategic goals and qualitative measures for the UN system to achieve by 2030

Phase 2, for endorsement by the CEB in 2020, will address the full picture of environmental and social sustainability in UN system policies, programming and facilities and operations. A Task Team of sustainability focal points officially designated by their entities, the EMG Secretariat and UN Environment have drafted the two documents above which were approved by the HLCM in April and the CEB in May.

### a. Consultations on Environmental and Social Sustainability (ESS) in the United Nations system

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
Conduct a public consultation process to receive inputs from stakeholders and experts on the document “Moving Towards a Common Approach on Environmental and Social Standards in UN Programming” (the Model Approach).	<b>Completed:</b> A public commenting on the draft Model Approach was arranged between 1 November 2018 – 15 January 2019. Thirty-three sets of comments were received: fourteen from UN entities, eight from NGOs, six from individuals/academics, two each from international federations and consulting firms, and one comment from a national bilateral agency.	Post the comments matrix summarizing all comments received on the EMG website.

Finalise the Model Approach and initiate a phase of application by volunteer agencies.	<b>Ongoing:</b> A revised draft considering the feedback received during the public comment period has been shared with the drafting group for comments, along with a first draft of the associated self-assessment tool.	Integrate comments by the drafting group and address outstanding issues to finalize the Model Approach.
Facilitate shared learning to support implementation of the Model Approach.	<b>Ongoing:</b> Thematic calls on the implementation of safeguards will be organized with the objective to focus on operational challenges and lessons learned in agencies. The first call to be organized in May/June will focus on the implementation of labour standards.	Organize 5-7 thematic calls.
Identify possible entry points to link the Model Approach to the work of other relevant UN platforms and processes such as the UN Sustainable Development Group, the Sustainable UN etc., and articulate ways in which the Model Approach can contribute to other processes, i.e. the UN development system reform.	<b>Ongoing:</b> The Model Approach has been shared with SUN and UNSDG for their input.	
Based on the findings of the desk study, prepare recommendations for enhanced collaboration in the UN system in the area of organizational sustainability reporting in close collaboration with the Sustainable UN Facility	<b>Ongoing:</b> In collaboration with the University of Geneva, master students are preparing a review of sustainability reporting in the UN system on the basis of available documentation, studies and information.	Report by students to be submitted to the EMG Secretariat for consideration in June.
Support UN entities to strengthen their own environmental and social sustainability by facilitating access to relevant guidance and tools.	<b>Ongoing:</b> Based on the thematic calls on the implementation of safeguards, the needs for shared guidance in this regard will be identified.  Discussions ongoing on the development of an online knowledge sharing space for UN entities summarizing good practice and existing tools for i.a. safeguards implementation.	Organize 5-7 thematic calls.  Prepare an overview of available online platforms / applications that may be used for the development of the knowledge sharing space.
Establish a task team composed of interested members of the Consultative Process on Environmental and Social Sustainability in the UN system and the IMG on Environmental	Please see overall update above on the UN Sustainability strategy 2020-2030.  <b>Ongoing:</b> The Strategy for Sustainability Management in the	The Consultative Process to take the lead in developing Phase II of the Strategy which will cover the full scope of internal environmental and social sustainability in UN system

Sustainability Management to propose a draft UN corporate sustainability vision and strategy beyond 2020, for consideration of the EMG Senior Officials at their next meeting.	UN System 2020-2030, Phase I: Environmental Sustainability in the Area of Management” was approved by the HLCM in April and the CEB in May.	policies, programming and facilities and operations.
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## b. The IMG on Environmental Sustainability Management in the United Nations system

Tasks	Progress	Next Steps
Invite the EMG to continue its joint work, to ensure progressive implementation of the UN Roadmap for Climate Neutrality by 2020 including the new streams of work related to waste management, water management and staff awareness.	Given the course of events in preparation of the UN Climate Summit and a UN 2020-2030 Sustainability Strategy the work of the IMG on ESM has focussed on accelerating the UN environmental inventory.	Finalise UN environmental inventory and climate neutrality status report (Greening the blue report) by September 2019.
Welcome the new tools at the disposal of the UN system to reduce the environmental footprint of facilities and operations, in particular the “Say Yes to Less” waste management guidance and campaign materials; the online Environmental Management Systems tool kit and the Environmental Management software.	<b>The</b> Environmental Management Systems tool kit is being tested in the UNHCR office in Amman, Jordan and is now publicly available for use by all Un focal points.  The Environmental Management software is also complete and being used for the 2018 UN environmental inventory.	Further advertise the toolkits and their use.  Explore potential for use of these tools by other intergovernmental organisations.
Commit to expand existing efforts to bring environmental sustainability management to UN offices in the field, including Common Premises and UN country offices.	Initial guidance for the greening of Un common premises, developed with the IMG and approved by the task team on common premises. The guidance is now shared with all new common premises.  UN task team on common premises sustainability focal points created to “shadow” the TTCP and provide coordinated sustainability assistance.  Provided greening advice to the UN House in Senegal (UNEP, WFP, UNICEF).	Maintain activities of the task team (bimonthly meetings) and explore funding options for the development of UN common premises’ further guidance.
Renew their commitment to Climate Neutrality by 2020, requesting the EMG boost its efforts to assist the UN system in	Work to assist UN entities to become climate neutral is underway in particular in support	

reaching this vision within the agreed timeframe.	of the climate neutrality of the UN Secretariat.	
Establish a task team composed of interested members of the IMG and the Consultative Process on Environmental and Social Sustainability in the UN system to propose a draft UN corporate sustainability vision and strategy beyond 2020 for consideration of the EMG Senior Officials at their next meeting (see Suggested Action III b. vii). For facilities and operations, the strategy should build on the Climate Neutral Strategy, taking into consideration the progress achieved over the past 10 years, the existing Chief Executive Board Decisions of 2007, 2013 and 2015, the call of Member States made to the UN system in the 2012 Rio+20 Outcome document to integrate sustainable development considerations in facilities and operations with the goal to achieve resource efficiencies, and the renewed ambitions for UN walking the talk on the Sustainable Development Goals that the UN reform has brought about.	<b>Ongoing:</b> A draft UN corporate sustainability vision and strategy has been approved by the HLCM and by the CEB.  Please see overall update above on the UN Sustainability strategy 2020-2030.	Develop with the IMG on ESM and the ESS Consultative process, a Task Team on the UN Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030 targets and roadmaps for key aspects of the strategy.  Special to this IMG: Take part and provide “corporate” angle into the Phase II of the Strategy development.

### c. Peer Review of environmental management of United Nations organisations

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
Take note of the concluded Peer Review reports of UNICEF, UN Compound, WHO and UN Women in Beijing, and the Kakuma refugee camp of UNHCR in Kenya.	<b>Ongoing:</b> Draft executive summaries of the Amman and Beijing UN Compound, WHO, and UN Women Peer Reviews have been prepared.  Comments by reviewers on the Peer Review Report of the Kakuma Refugee Camp have been received and considered by UNHCR.	Finalisation of the executive summaries and publish the summaries on the EMG website.  Finalisation of the Peer Review of the Kakuma Refugee Camp.

<p>Welcome the continuation of the Peer Review Process, including the peer review of the UN in Ethiopia and Colombia in 2019-2020, and the UN Department of Field Support in 2020, as part of the next phases of the Peer Review Process.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing:</b> The Peer Review fact finding visit of ECA took place on the 14th-18th January 2019. A report on themes and scope of the review was prepared.</p>	<p>Date and modalities of the Peer Review site visit of ECA to be agreed with ECA.</p> <p>Consultations with UN Political mission, UNESCWA on their possible Peer Reviews.</p> <p>Invite other agencies to Peer Reviews.</p>
<p>Invite reviewed agencies to consider the Peer Review reports as a guidance and baseline for improving environmental sustainability measures and developing environmental management systems.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p>	
<p>Encourage other agencies to reference the reports in development of their own environmental sustainability measures and program development.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p>	

#### d. The IMG on Environment and Humanitarian Action

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
<p>Invite the Group to proceed with the implementation of the tasks as outlined in the ToR.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing:</b> The IMG has contributed a humanitarian perspective to the development of the Model Approach on Environmental and Social Standards.</p> <p>A draft joint statement highlighting the nexus of humanitarian, environment, peace and development action in addressing the challenges of climate change has been prepared for release at a suitable opportunity.</p>	<p>Consider input/activity in connection with the Secretary-General's Climate Summit in September.</p>

### III. Supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals

## a. Consultative Process on a UN System-Wide Framework of Strategies (SWFS) on the Environment

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
Encourage UN agencies to provide input to the second edition of the SWFS Report, with a thematic focus on biodiversity, including case studies of illustrative interagency collaboration on the topic.	<b>Completed:</b> Information was gathered from the UN Member Agencies, both through the Knowledge Exchange platform and from their respective websites.	Complete the thematic SWFS Report on biodiversity.
Welcome the proposal to convene an expert group meeting of EMG Members prior to the High Level Political Forum to consider progress made by the agencies in the implementation of the environmental dimensions of the SDGs, nexus areas and interlinkages and to showcase, best practices and interagency collaboration efforts on the environment. The Senior Officials further request the EMG Secretariat, in close collaboration with UNDESA, to prepare a proposal outlining the organisation of such meeting for the consideration of EMG members.	<b>Ongoing:</b> A concept note has been prepared. Consultation is ongoing on the possibility and the best occasion for organising this meeting.	
Extend the Consultative Process to support the continued implementation of the Framework, including the preparation of the third edition of the SWFS Synthesis Report, and the facilitation of information sharing via the SWFS Knowledge Exchange Network.	<b>Ongoing</b>	

## b. EMG Nexus Dialogues

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
Welcome the Nexus Dialogues as opportunities for identifying collaboration amongst agencies on SDGs interlinkages and for a continued exchange on lessons learned and good practices.	<b>Ongoing:</b> Four nexus dialogues have been organized: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greening with Jobs: A Just Transition to Sustainability (Oct 2018)</li> <li>- Law for Environmental Sustainability (Nov 2018)</li> <li>- Environment, Peace and Security (January 2019)</li> </ul>	Two nexus dialogues to be organized in 2019 including on the issue of chemicals management and the textile industry, and environment and finance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainable Infrastructure for the SDGs (February 2019)</li> </ul> <p>The outcome of these dialogues have been shared with respective fora such as UNEA and the UNFCCC COP in Poland.</p>	
Invite UN agencies to sponsor and identify themes for future Nexus Dialogues and to share their ideas for how the dialogues can be further improved.	<b>Ongoing</b>	Agencies are welcome to suggest issues for future dialogues and partner as hosts or co-conveners of the dialogues.
Encourage UN agencies to participate and contribute to future Dialogues by sharing their experience and exchanging ideas on innovative solutions to environmental challenges with other stakeholders.	<b>Ongoing</b>	

#### IV. Other achievements

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
EMG contribution to UNEA 4	<p>A nexus dialogue on Sustainable Food Systems and innovation in the context of the Sustainable Consumption and Production was organized on 12 March.</p> <p>A high-level dialogue was organized on 13 March on the need for a new vision for Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE), according to the principles of circular economy.</p> <p>The outcome of these two events are available on the EMG website.</p>	Follow up on the outcome of the two dialogues for further consideration of these two issues by the EMG.