



UNITED NATIONS

ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP



Mid-Term Technical Segment of the 27th Senior Officials Meeting

30th June 2021

GoToMeeting

from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Geneva time.

EMG SOM27th /mid-term/03

Distribution: EMG members

Mid-Term Progress Report

Note by the Secretariat

This note has been prepared to support the discussions of the midterm technical segment of the 27th 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 26th Senior Officials' Meeting in October 2021 . The referred documents and reports in this note can be found at the EMG website www.unemg.org.

I. Collaboration on Global Environmental Issues

a) Consultative Process on Biodiversity

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
Agree to establish an interagency Consultative Process with the purpose to prepare a system-wide contribution to the development and implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.	Completed: The Consultative Process was established in November 2019 and the fourth and last meeting was held on 22 June 2021 to discuss implementation of both the EMG and UN Common Approach on Biodiversity through the establishment of an EMG Issue Management Group	Approve ToR for establishment of an EMG Issue Management Group on Biodiversity along with its 2021/22 workplan. See <u>https://unemg.org/our-work/emerging-issues/biodiversity/</u> .

	on Biodiversity. More information on the process can be found here .	
Provide coordinated input from the UN system to the Open-ended Working Group and other meetings with relevance to the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and CBD CoP 15.	Ongoing: EMG has provided input to both OEWG and is preparing input for 3 rd OEWG.	EMG input for 3 rd CBD OEWG meeting scheduled for 23 Aug – 3 Sept 2021 and CoP15 in Oct 2021.
The Consultative Process will produce an Outcome Report on the role and contributions of the UN system to the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework, including an analysis of how these efforts fit within the frames of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;	Completed: EMG Biodiversity Report entitled "Supporting the Global Biodiversity Agenda: A United Nations System Commitment for Action to assist Member States delivering on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework" was launched jointly with UN Common Approach on Biodiversity at High-Level Virtual Dialogue on 25 May 2021. See https://unemg.org/launch-of-emg-biodiversity-report-2021/	Implementation of the findings of both reports through an EMG Issue Management Group on Biodiversity.

b) Task Team on Marine Litter and Microplastics

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
Development of a comprehensive overview of UN system activities and initiatives addressing marine litter and microplastics by the Task Team on Marine Litter and Microplastics.	Ongoing: The Task Team, composed of 24 member entities, held its second meeting in July 2020 to discuss the progress made on the mapping exercise and the initiation results of the analysis. The third meeting of the Task Team is planned for June/July 2021 with the objectives: 1) Building on the EMG Report on Marine Litter and Microplastics, present what has been undertaken and discuss the	Finalizing the report (the final review). Organizing a High-Level Launch of the EMG Report on Marine Litter and Microplastics, to be held in the second half of September 2021. It will be a high-level virtual dialogue on the UN system's contribution to tackling marine litter and microplastics to discuss raising the profile of the marine litter issue in Member States' efforts and

	<p>suggestions for the way forward and the high-level report launch; 2) Ensure continued dialogue and discuss what is the vision of the Task Team for the next steps.</p> <p>The Task Team has contributed to the preparation of the EMG Report on Marine Litter and Microplastics: "Assessment of UN Activities and Initiatives related to Marine Litter and Microplastics: UN system-wide contribution to support Member States in addressing marine litter and microplastics". The Task Team provided an overview of their activities, mandates, initiatives, projects and partnerships and actively participated in the exchange of information on marine litter and microplastics with the EMG Secretariat. All information was summarized and analysed in the report, that was shared with the Task Team in January 2021. The Task Team members reviewed the draft report and provided their feedback in spring 2021. The final draft report on marine litter and microplastics was shared with the Task Team for the final review in June 2021, after which (over summer period) it will be finalized, proofread, and professionally designed and laid out for publication the latest in September.</p> <p>A progress report on the Task Team's work was delivered to the meeting of</p>	<p>strengthening national plans for advancing solutions on marine litter.</p> <p>Initiate targeted webinars for information exchange on marine litter and microplastics among Task Team members to continue awareness raising activities among members of the UN EMG and beyond about the importance of reducing plastics and microplastics pollution in UN facilities, operations and programming; and on specific topics of mutual interest among UN EMG members.</p> <p>Establishing at the EMG Secretariat a digital inventory of UN EMG members marine litter and microplastics activities and initiatives as provided in the Report.</p> <p>Task Team to serve as resource experts to support mainstreaming of plastics and microplastics reduction activities in relevant ongoing processes facilitated by UN EMG.</p>
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	the Ad Hoc Open-ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics in October/November 2020.	
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c) Consultations on Environmental and Social Sustainability (ESS) in the United Nations system

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
Collectively develop tools and guidance notes to harmonize the operationalization of the Model Approach.	<p>Ongoing: A mapping of existing resources including references, guidance and tools related to the Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards for UN Programming was previously conducted.</p> <p>A Terms of Reference was developed and recruitment process conducted for a Knowledge Management Specialist to facilitate knowledge sharing, including sharing of tools and guidance.</p>	Recruitment of a Knowledge Management Specialist to facilitate sharing of guidance/tools in a shared space and building of a community of practice.
Raise awareness and facilitate shared learning to support implementation of the Model Approach through joint webinars and capacity building exercises.	<p>Ongoing: A series of deep-dive calls serves as opportunities for UN entities and beyond to exchange good practice and share learning when it comes to addressing common challenges in standards implementation. In addition, a draft concept note to take forward capacity building at the country level related to the Model Approach was consulted and developed in partnership with DCO and Swedish EPA.</p>	The deep-dive call series continues. The Knowledge Management Specialist, once on board, will also help to capture learning coming from the discussions. In addition, the concept note for country level capacities and application of the Model Approach will be finalized and taken forward.
Create an online knowledge sharing space where existing guidance documents, tools and	<p>Completed: A knowledge sharing platform for advancing the Model Approach to</p>	A key function of the Knowledge Management Specialist will be to help facilitate and moderate the

knowledge materials on environmental and social standards are compiled and made available for UN entities.	Environmental and Social Standards for UN Programming was created on Yammer and launched in April 2020.	online sharing space to help it become an active space for engagement and shared learning. Efforts are also needed to raise awareness, invite more agencies to join and encourage agencies to use the platform.
Prepare Phase II of the Strategy for Sustainability Management in the UN System 2020-2030 in close collaboration with the Issue Management Group on Environmental Sustainability Management.	Ongoing: The Task Team for the development of a <i>UN Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030</i> was reactivated in 2021. The Task Team met in March to discuss the scope and vision of Phase II of the Strategy, in April to discuss a revised outline, in May to discuss a theory of change, and in June to discuss a first full draft of the strategy.	A final draft will be presented to the Senior Officials of the EMG in September 2021 and the HLCP & HLCM in October. Following their endorsement, the document may be presented to the CEB in November 2021.

d) Consultative Process on Sustainable Infrastructure

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
Agree to establish an EMG Consultative Process on Sustainable Infrastructure to strengthen the coordination of UN-system support to the Member States in this area of work.	Completed: In November 2020, EMG Senior Officials agreed to establish a Consultative Process. The first meeting of the Consultative Process was held in March 2021, with 28 participants across UN entities. More information on the process and first meeting can be found here .	A second meeting of the Consultative Process will be scheduled, following receipt of feedback on the International Good Practice Principles for Sustainable Infrastructure.
EMG Members' review of the International Good Practice Principles for Sustainable Infrastructure and provision of written comments, with a view to endorsement as a UN-wide	Ongoing: A questionnaire has been dispatched to focal points, for providing feedback on the International Good Practice Principles for Sustainable Infrastructure and for sharing complementary normative guidance from different entities.	After 30 June, the results of the questionnaire will be discussed with a task team, and the EMG Secretariat will organise a second meeting with focal points to address the comments received, as part of an inclusive revision process.

<p>framework, either in its current form, or as a revised document with increased scope and ambition.</p>	<p>The deadline for feedback is 30 June 2021.</p>	
<p>Compilation of sustainable infrastructure tools from UN bodies in support of Member States' implementation of the International Good Practice Principles for Sustainable Infrastructure - to be integrated into existing Sustainable Infrastructure Tool Navigator Platform, as applicable.</p>	<p>Ongoing: An invitation to submit tools has been dispatched to focal points, with a deadline of 30 June 2021 for submissions.</p>	<p>Applicable tools will be collated and integrated into the Sustainable Infrastructure Tool Navigator.</p>
<p>Preparation and maintenance of a consolidated calendar of UN events and international policy processes in the lead-up to UNEA-5.2 in February 2022 that are related or relevant to sustainable infrastructure and identification of opportunities for engagement with those processes.</p>	<p>Ongoing: A 'live' calendar of events is being established and populated with three tiers: 1) High priority/UN global events and processes, 2) Specific thematic events, 3) Deadlines for a submission.</p>	<p>The calendar will be made public on the EMG sustainable infrastructure web page. Focal points and a task team will have editorial access to contribute to, and maintain, the calendar.</p>
<p>Ongoing provision of coordinated inputs into relevant events and policy processes, where opportunities exist, as well as sharing of case studies, and sharing of resources to support Member States in financing sustainable infrastructure.</p>	<p>Ongoing: An invitation to submit case studies on an ongoing has been dispatched to focal points.</p> <p>Ongoing: Potential barrier analyses are being explored with UNU, which may form a future follow-up exercise, after publication of the 2nd edition of the International</p>	<p>The idea of a future barrier analysis will be discussed further with UNU and with a task team, while identifying priority sectors.</p>

	Good Practice Principles for Sustainable Infrastructure.	
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e) The IMG on Human Rights and the Environment

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
The 26 th Senior Officials meeting of the EMG in October 2020 agreed to establish the IMG.	The IMG met for the first time on 17 February 2021 to adopt its TOR and discuss next steps.	
Develop a workplan	Completed: The second meeting of the IMG took place on 20 April 2021. At this meeting, it was agreed to focus on 3 areas with lead agencies as follows: 1) integrating a Right to A Healthy Environment in UN system work at country level (UNDP lead), 2) integrating human rights in MEAs (OHCHR lead), and 3) capacity-building (UNEP).	The next meeting of the full IMG will take place in July 2021, with further meetings expected to take place on a quarterly basis.
Implement the workplan	Ongoing: The workplan will remain a flexible document to respond to changing circumstances but the initial draft is expected to be finalised shortly. First meetings of the task teams under each focus area of the work plan took place in April and May to further develop the workplan. A shared workspace for the IMG has been set up on Teams to facilitate	Specific tasks expected to be completed under the workplan by the [27 th] EMG Senior Officials Meeting in October 2021 include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Developing a Common narrative on Human Rights and Environment in a Development Context and a Checklist on integrating human rights into climate action on national policy level, for the Common Country Analyses/UNCDFs b. Developing Engagement Strategies on human rights and the environment in

	information-sharing. A consultant is in place to support the work of the IMG and her role and deliverables are in the process of being finalised.	relation to the UNFCCC and CBD c. Identifying topics and developing concepts for thematic deep-dive webinars related to the subject matter of the IMG
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f) Consultative process on COVID-19 and the environment

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
Define a common narrative for a green recovery in line with the SDGs.	<p>Completed:</p> <p>The first meeting was held in March and the Terms of Reference for the consultative process was finalised and approved.</p> <p>Two surveys have been completed to collect information from the UN agencies on: why green recovery is needed, how green recovery must be defined/implemented, how the UN system is helping, and how the efforts by the UN agencies can be better coordinated and integrated.</p> <p>The draft green recovery narrative has been completed.</p>	Feedback will be collected from the UN agencies' representatives on the draft green recovery narrative, improvements will be made based on the feedback, and the common narrative will be finalized.
Facilitate a dialogue, information and science and policy exchange on the COVID-19-environment nexus issues.	<p>Ongoing:</p> <p>Data is being collected through surveys and interviews, involving the UN agencies, and web searches and reviewing reports produced by the UN agencies to identify the programs, initiatives, guidance documents and other tools on COVID-19 response and recovery.</p>	The UN agency programs, initiatives, guidance documents and other tools on COVID-19 response and recovery will be mapped and their main areas of contribution/focus and their relationships with the SDGs will be highlighted.
Identify gaps and opportunities for collaboration in	<p>Ongoing:</p> <p>The gaps and opportunities for collaboration in green recovery are being identified based on the</p>	A draft report containing the finalized green recovery narrative, mapping of the COVID-19-environment nexus activities by the UN

science, policy and implementation.	feedback from different stakeholder groups and reviewing the current state of interactions between them.	agencies, and the analysis of the gaps and opportunities for collaboration in green recovery will be shared for comments with the Consultative Process members in early July and it will be finalized by the end of July.
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II. Enhancing UN environmental and social sustainability

g) The IMG on Environmental Sustainability Management in the United Nations system

Tasks	Progress	Next Steps
i. Finalize the UN environmental inventory and climate neutrality status report (the 2020 Greening the blue report) by November 2020 along with the revamped Greening the Blue website;	<p>Completed: The Greening the Blue report 2020 was released in December 2020 with the 2019 UN System data.</p> <p>Highlights: report more aligned with the sustainability strategy Phase I; 97% of the UN System reported emissions were offset; 22% emissions were reduced since 2010; + 5 entities engaged in environmental governance.</p> <p>A letter from Inger Andersen with the results of the report was sent to all EMG members and contributing entities.</p> <p>The new Greening the Blue website was also launched in December.</p> <p>Completed: In January 2020, the UN HLM Sustainable procurement indicators framework was "open" on the UN Global Market place.</p>	<p>The IMG will meet October 2021 hopefully face-to-face (To be confirmed due to the pandemic).</p> <p>The HLCM working group on sustainable procurement will focus on awareness raising and capacity building.</p> <p>SUN will partner with UNFCCC to assist the UN System organizations to achieve 100% climate neutrality status as per UN commitments.</p> <p>The Greening the Blue report 2021 will be released in November 2021 in occasion of the UNFCCC COP.</p> <p>NOTE: in November 2021 the Greening the Blue report</p>

	<p>Completed: From October 2019 to this date, SUN responded to close to 100 queries from UN system organizations on various environmental matters on waste management, facilities, environmental management systems or sustainable procurement.</p> <p>On-going: The IMG has started the work on the 2020 environmental inventory: data collection on GHG emissions, waste management, water consumption, environmental management progress, and later on climate neutrality. The IMG has revamped and reconsidered data collection on EMS to more aligned with ISO14001.</p>	will also bring to the public domain efforts made by organisations to raise staff awareness on their environmental efforts and on sustainable procurement.
<i>ii. Continue liaising with the Task Team on Common Premises on the finalization and adoption of the new guidance "Important and Desirable Actions (IDEAs)";</i>	Completed: the Important and Desirable Actions (IDEAs) for the selection of UN premises was officially approved in May 2021 by the Task Team on common premises.	Sustainable UN is collaborating now with DCO on a training module based on IDEAS that will be rolled out by DCO and UNSSC to common premises facility managers.
iii. Work with UN experts (e.g. UNEP-WCMC, CBD) towards the implementation of the biodiversity aspect of the UN 2020-2030 environmental sustainability strategy;	<p>Completed: the IMG has had occasion in 2020 to learn more about the UN Common Approach on biodiversity.</p> <p>The IDEAs document includes guidance on the integration of biodiversity considerations in premises selection.</p>	More guidance on the integration of biodiversity in procurement, events and staff awareness will be the object of a collaboration between the SUN team the IMG on ESM and the IMG on biodiversity in the course of 2021.
iv. Continue to support the development of Phase II of the Sustainability Strategy in close collaboration with the Consultative Process on	On-going: SUN is collaborating with the EMG on the development of the	

Environmental and Social Sustainability.	UN System Sustainability Strategy Phase II.	
Additional important items of work.	May 2021 Release of Science based targets for UN organisations <i>Technical Guidance</i> .	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNDP UNEP update on the Greening the Blue tutorial 1 hour animation. Launch foreseen by fall 2021. 2. UNEP IMO WFP UNHCR UNFPA collaboration on understanding and improving UN fleet related GHG emissions.
	Business Operations Strategy reference to the UN 2020-2030 Sustainability strategy Phase I.	The IMG needs to consider together how to address the requests received from UN country teams on the implementation of the Sustainability strategy Phase I in country offices.
JIU Review of mainstreaming environmental sustainability across organizations of the United Nations system.	The IMG discussed and adopted a common approach in 2020 vis a vis the JIU review which presents several excellent recommendations on how to mainstream environmental sustainability in the UN system.	Integrate the reviews recommendations in the work of SUN and the IMG collectively and individually.

III. Supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals

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

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
Encourage UN agencies to contribute to the second edition of the SWFS Report with focus on biodiversity, with the aim to launch the report at the UN	Ongoing: The report on UN system biodiversity efforts in the context of the Post-2020	

Biodiversity Summit in September 2020, followed by a system-wide event during the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention Biological Diversity in October 2020 in China.	Global Biodiversity Framework was prepared	
Extend the Consultative Process to support the continued implementation of the Framework by compiling information on progress made by UN entities in the implementation of the environmental dimensions of the SDGs and showcasing good practices and examples of interagency collaboration efforts in the third edition of the SWFS Synthesis Report.	A concept note for the Third edition of the SWFS report is under preparation for consideration of the EMG with focus on the review of the UN system on the environment in the context of the Stockholm+50 Conference in June 2022.	Consideration of the Concept Note and preparation of the third edition of the SWFS

i) EMG Nexus Dialogues

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
Encourage UN agencies to propose themes for and contribute to future Dialogues by sharing their experience and exchanging ideas on innovative solutions to environmental challenges with other stakeholders.	<p>Completed:</p> <p>Six virtual Nexus Dialogues have been completed via Zoom, with unprecedented broad stakeholder engagement and attendance:</p> <p>Gender & Biodiversity: 2-Part Series</p> <p>1. Unpacking Linkages with Gender & BD in UN System Efforts (29 Mar 2021)</p> <p>2. Towards Gender Responsive Biodiversity Action and Outcomes (30 Mar 2021)</p> <p>Addressing COVID-19 for the Environment: 3-Part Series</p> <p>3. Defining Green Recovery (27 Apr 2021)</p> <p>4. Financing Green Recovery (4 May 2021)</p>	Seeking the support from UN agencies to identify dates, partners, and objectives for the two ongoing virtual Nexus Dialogues: Enhancing Synergies... and Stockholm+50, in light of interrupted and/or postponed intergovernmental processes.

	<p>5. Regional Nexus Approaches to Building Back Better (15 Jun 2021)</p> <p>6. Food System Resilience through Integrated Natural Resource Management, a Food Systems Summit Independent Dialogue (7 June 2021)</p> <p>Upcoming:</p> <p>1. Sustainable Recovery through Sustainable Fashion: A Focus on the Environmental Dimensions (7 September 2021)</p> <p>Ongoing:</p> <p>1. Enhancing Synergies between the Post-2020 Biodiversity and Chemicals & Waste Frameworks (TBD)</p> <p>2. Stockholm+50 (TBD)</p>	
Invite UN agencies to share their ideas for how the value-added of the dialogues can be further increased.	Ongoing.	Agencies are invited to express ideas continuously and share their feedback following implementation of the 2022 dialogues.

IV. Communications and Outreach

Tasks	Progress	Next steps
Establish a formal communications strategy for EMG.	Completed: A four-page document has been written and reviewed by EMG staff and consultants.	Review and approval by EMG Secretary. Update as needed at end of year for 2022.
Issue periodic EMG Updates (newsletter) via email to EMG Focal Points and other lists.	Completed: The May 2021 EMG Update was distributed.	Prepare next issue, probably for September 2021, followed by December 2021.

<p>Support EMG events with regular social media texts (Twitter, LinkedIn, FaceBook) and web stories.</p>	<p>Ongoing: Each event has been promoted with one or more social media messages. A web story was published to support the launch of the EMG and HCLP biodiversity documents.</p>	<p>Continue with regular messaging.</p>
<p>Revise and improve EMG website.</p>	<p>Ongoing: The website has been reviewed in detail and proposed revisions that can probably be handled inhouse have been identified.</p>	<p>Implementation pending. Staff resources are limited. A consultant will eventually be needed to make some of the more significant revisions.</p>
<p>Produce a short animated promotional video.</p>	<p>Ongoing: Script has been written and video production consultant has been identified.</p>	<p>Awaiting completion of administrative process in order to proceed with producing the video.</p>
<p>Develop updated EMG PowerPoint.</p>	<p>Ongoing: PowerPoint has been updated.</p>	<p>Review further and consider additional updates.</p>