



UNITED NATIONS

ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP



3rd meeting of the EMG Issue Management Group on Human Rights and the Environment

Date and time: 21 July 2021, 14.00-15.30 CEST

Participants:

in annex 1

Report of the meeting

Agenda

Subject	Objective
1. Next steps following the mid-term meeting of the technical segment of the EMG Senior Officials Meeting	for information
2. Presentation and discussion of activities under workplan: a. Focus Area 1 of workplan (including common narrative on Human Rights and the Environment in a Development Context) - UNDP b. Focus Area 2 of workplan (including Engagement strategy on human rights and environment in relation to the UNFCCC)- OHCHR c. Focus Area 3 of workplan (thematic deep dives)- UNEP	for information and discussion
3. AOB	for discussion

1. Next steps following the mid-term meeting of the technical segment of the EMG Senior Officials Meeting

Gita Parihar, the EMG consultant for Human Rights and the Environment, opens the meeting by introducing the co-leads of the IMG and sharing the timeline for upcoming events. Following the Mid-Term Technical Segment of the 27th Senior Officials Meeting, the IMG must prepare a report for the SOM27 in September/October 2021 for which a draft will be circulated by 30 July for comments.

2. Presentation and discussion of activities under workplan

a. Focus Area 1: A common narrative on Human Rights and the Environment in a Development Context - Ann Cathrin Pedersen, UNDP

- On exploring the creation of temporary desk support function for UN Country Teams (UNCTs) with DCO, focal points will provide an overview of all the work of this IMG and guide other focal points from agencies to existing resources in the organisation. The next step for this output involves creating and circulating the overview.

- On joint guidance for UNCTs and national level agencies on integrating human rights in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for climate change and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) for pollution prevention, UNDP technical focal points for NDCs and NBSAPs welcome support but a further definition of entry points and expected achievements is required along with guidance on what needs to be implemented. This can be achieved with a joint effort that builds on OHCHR's existing exploration of guidance and filling existing gaps.

OHCHR invites participants to engage with either of the two areas and highlights there is a need for synthesising human rights elements of existing guidance with current NDC/NBSAP work.

ILO highlights the need for a broader scope of pollution reporting that addresses air, land, water, freshwater, marine, and chemicals and waste. ILO then invites participants to join and submit inputs on this effort.

UNFF reminds participants that Stockholm+50, due to take place in 2022, has themes of climate change, biodiversity loss and action against pollution. The planned UNEP/EMG proposal on Stockholm+50 would therefore benefit from synergising with the HR and Environment IMG. UNDP and OHCHR agree with UNFF on the synergy. OHCHR adds that synergies between this IMG and the Consultative process on Biodiversity are being explored, but the IMG would also benefit from synergising with other workstreams.

The EMG Secretariat confirms that synergies are currently being analysed and planned before the end of Summer, also inviting colleagues to volunteer for participation in the Stockholm+50 task team which is currently in the early stages of planning.

- The support to pilot/use NDC and NBSAP guidance is planned for early 2022 and can be discussed further at a later date.
- On 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 UN Common Country Analysis, the draft narrative will soon be circulated with this IMG and the Call to Action Group for inputs. A consultation will follow with civil society, with a proposal for an advisory board of technical experts which will include the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Environment. These activities are planned for Q4 2021.

UN-HABITAT supports the checklist as an important element and highlights the importance of climate change in all aspects of human rights, welcoming coordination for this particular theme.

b. Focus Area 2 of workplan (including Engagement strategy on human rights and environment in relation to the UNFCCC)- Benjamin Schachter, OHCHR

- On the engagement strategy on human rights and environment in relation to UNFCCC, a draft strategy was circulated mid-July for comments which will be shared with the wider IMG once

comments are integrated. There are five strategic priorities in this strategy: ambition and NDCs; Article 6 mechanisms; participation; loss and damage and climate finance.

The strategy currently includes key resources and context for each strategic priority but colleagues are invited to input on non-OHCHR key resources for the process. Three key outputs have been identified, guidance for integrating rights in NDCs and other national planning tools, the development of talking points on the strategic priorities and cooperating within the context of COP in preparing side events on issues. On side events, there is a deadline of August 20 for entities to submit joint proposals on ideas for events on HR and climate change which will fit with the overall framework of SDGs and COP26 presidency priorities.

- The UNCCD COP is not occurring until 2022 so this strategy is still in the early discussion stage.
- A CBD strategy is being discussed but the process is subject to confirmation of the timing for the CBD COP.
- On synergies, more discussions will be planned around addressing human rights as a cross-cutting issue across the Rio Conventions.

UNFCCC requests more time for feedback on the draft due to the holiday period. OHCHR confirms they will be giving an extra two weeks for comments and feedback from the wider IMG.

CBD suggests due to the uncertainties around their COP, there may be opportunities to present synergies and joint areas of work between CBD and UNFCCC at the UNFCCC COP. OHCHR suggests this may be a challenge due to complex and shared planning process of side events but relating rights-themed topics to SDGs/presidential priorities can help bring out these and other issues. This IMG should ensure UNFCCC focal points should be contacted by participants to ensure proposals with strong human rights elements are put forward.

In the chat, UNESCO agrees that it makes sense to engage with the Rio Conventions to promote synergies and cross-cutting norms, but there can be tensions between conservation measures and human rights, as has been expressed by indigenous peoples. CBD agrees with this comment in the chat. UNESCO suggests that a way to have focused attention on norms, standards and compliance concerning protected areas and other site-based measures that may be needed in a HR approach would be more relevant.

OHCHR is planning to integrate the nexus of climate and biodiversity in terms of nature-based solutions and conservation areas with human-rights based approaches, but this requires further discussion to prevent solutions from having negative human rights impacts. Ideas could be shared with the group for feedback and the creation of an event on this issue, with a requirement for at least three UN organisations supporting this if it were to have a chance of advancing as a COP26 side event.

UNESCO confirms only one event proposal per agency can be put forward, but the SDG themed events typically involve broad consortia arrangements.

c. Focus Area 3 of workplan (thematic deep dives) - Soo-Young Hwang, UNEP

- The first meeting has taken place and it has been suggested that capacity building efforts continue in an online manner for ease. Virtual workshops will occur with three thematic areas (climate change, biodiversity and pollution). A survey was circulated in the IMG questioning capacity building, participants and who should be given priorities in workshops. The deadline for this survey is 16th August and participants are invited to complete this.
- Online capacity building sessions under Focus Area three, which will be largely based on the materials developed under Focus Areas one and two, will occur in the first quarter of 2022 while preparation for the sessions will take place in 2021.
- The IMG has met with DCO who are keen on a workshop specially designed for RC offices. Participants are invited to suggest ideas on how such a workshop could be the most beneficial.
- Next steps: The survey results will be consolidated by the end of July, with another call occurring in September.
- On Focus Area 3, UNESCO mentions that the inter-agency Support Group on indigenous peoples' issues is going to organise a series of online events for UNRCs on the human rights of indigenous peoples. UNESCO will offer one dealing with indigenous knowledge systems and engagement in environmental and climate processes. UNEP confirms they will be in contact regarding this matter on potential synergies.

3. AOB

The EMG Consultant introduces the next steps. A draft report will be circulated on 30 July for comments in preparation for the SOM27 in September/October, providing updates on the work of the IMG and future action areas. The next meeting will occur in three months around a similar time as the SOM, to be confirmed.

FAO will circulate details of an event associated with the food systems summit on July 26.

Annex 1: Participants of the meeting on 22/7/2021

Amanda Kron	OHCHR	Hitomi Rankine	ESCAP
Amy Choi	UNECE	Juan Carlos Garcia Cebolla	FAO
Angela Kariuki	UNEP	Lara Geadah	UNEP
Ann Cathrin Pedersen	UNDP	Marina Venâncio	UNEP
Anna Kaplina	EMG	Monica Castillo	ILO
Barbara Tavora-Jainchill	UNFF	Nigel Crawhall	UNESCO
Benjamin Schachter	OHCHR	Robert Lewis-Lettington	UNECE
Bernard Combes	UNESCO	Robin Zuercher	ITU
Elena Mendoza	UNU-FLORES	Samuel Sinclair	EMG
Ella Behlyarova	UNECE	Sheilagh Henry	OCHA
Enni Kallio	UNCCD	Soo-Young Hwang	UNEP
Fatin Tawfig	UNFCCC	Susannah Friedman	UNHCR
Fei Jiao	WIPO	Tanya McGregor	CBD
Gita Parihar	EMG		

Annex 2: Meeting Documents

[Draft Workplan of the IMG](#)

