



# Chief Executives Board for Coordination

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## **Summary of deliberations**

### **Addendum**

***Strategy for sustainability management in the United Nations system, 2020-2030***  
***Phase II: Towards leadership in environmental and social sustainability***

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## I. Rationale

1. The normative authority and impact of the United Nations<sup>1</sup> are unique. Through its unparalleled convening power, the United Nations works with Member States to promote peace, human rights, and sustainable development for all. But the United Nations must also live up to the principles it promotes by applying and defending them *within the organization itself*. The United Nations should and must be a leading example in environmental and social sustainability management.

2. The United Nations has many exemplary achievements to show in specific areas of environmental and social sustainability management. In the spirit of the ongoing United Nations reform, it is important that the system has a comprehensive vision for its sustainability management, and that entities can aspire to this vision and follow a common strategy. The values, principles, and standards enshrined in the *United Nations Charter*, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and international human rights instruments, and the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*<sup>2</sup> must serve as a compass for this common vision and strategy.

3. The mandate for the development of a comprehensive vision and strategy for the sustainability of the United Nations system was given by the Senior Officials of the Environment Management Group (EMG) in 2018<sup>3</sup> and was reinforced by a call from the Secretary-General for the United Nations to intensify its internal efforts to combat climate change.<sup>4</sup> In 2019, the EMG and the Sustainable United Nations facility (SUN) presented a

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this strategy, “United Nations” is defined as the [United Nations system](#), which, in addition to UN Secretariat entities, comprises specialized agencies, programmes, and funds, each with their own mandate, governance, and budget.

<sup>2</sup> [Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), General Assembly resolution A/70/L.1.

<sup>3</sup> As decided at the 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Senior Officials of the UN Environment Management Group, EMG/SOM.24.

<sup>4</sup> As decided by the Secretary-General’s Executive Committee in January 2019, ExCom 2019/05.

*Strategy for sustainability management in the United Nations system, 2020–2030 – Phase I: Environmental sustainability in the area of management* (hereafter abbreviated as: “*Sustainability Strategy I*”) to the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).<sup>5</sup> It describes a comprehensive vision for sustainability management in the United Nations and a strategy that focuses on environmental sustainability in the area of management. Upon endorsement of this strategy, the CEB requested that it be “incorporated into a comprehensive sustainability strategy for the United Nations system, encompassing a broader and fuller picture of environmental and social sustainability in United Nations system policies, programming and support functions”. The present *Strategy for sustainability management in the United Nations system, 2020-2030 – Phase II: Towards leadership in environmental and social sustainability* (hereafter abbreviated as “*Sustainability Strategy II*”) responds to this request. *Sustainability Strategy II* does not replace *Sustainability Strategy I*, which remains in effect.

4. The development of a comprehensive strategy for environmental and social sustainability across all functions of the United Nations has the full support of Member States, who expressed in *The future we want*<sup>6</sup> the need for the United Nations to advance the integration of sustainable development into its own work; who emphasised in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and in the *Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations*<sup>7</sup> the central role of the United Nations in supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; and who requested in the *2020 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review*<sup>8</sup> that the entities of the United Nations development system continue mainstreaming human rights, the leave no one behind principle, gender equality, youth, disability inclusion, disaster risk reduction, and climate- and environment-responsive approaches, amongst other issues, into their work and reporting.

5. The present *Sustainability Strategy II* shares the same comprehensive vision for environmental and social sustainability as *Sustainability Strategy I* but translates this vision by means of a theory of change into a framework for environmental and social sustainability for all functions of the United Nations. Moreover, *Sustainability Strategy II* acknowledges that multiple frameworks, strategies, and action plans are already in place in the United Nations for specific dimensions of sustainability, such as environmental sustainability or gender equality – they are listed in Annex 1. ***Sustainability Strategy II* proposes a set of principles and a theory of change to: (i) build a unifying framework around existing system-level frameworks, strategies, and action plans; and (ii) stimulate existing sustainability initiatives at entity level to address all dimensions of environmental and social sustainability in all functional areas.**<sup>9</sup> The theory of change uses concepts provided by the *2012 Framework for Advancing Environmental and Social Sustainability in the United Nations System* and the *2014 Interim Guide for Advancing the Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework in the UN System*.<sup>10</sup>

6. The theory of change proposed in the present *Sustainability Strategy II* describes one possible pathway to realize the vision of the strategy. The entity-level outputs suggested in the theory of change are intended to inform entities’ sustainability management within their specific operational context and should in no way interfere with the mandate and guidance given by the governing bodies of the entities. Moreover, not all suggested outputs of the proposed theory of change may apply to all entities in the United Nations system. Entity-level reporting on the implementation of *Sustainability Strategy II* will be voluntary.

<sup>5</sup> [Strategy for sustainability management in the United Nations system, 2020–2030. Phase I: Environmental sustainability in the area of management](#), CEB/2019/1/Add.1.

<sup>6</sup> [The future we want](#), General Assembly resolution A/RES/66/288.

<sup>7</sup> [Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations](#), General Assembly resolution A/75/L.1.

<sup>8</sup> [Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system](#), General Assembly resolution A/RES/75/233.

<sup>9</sup> The *Sustainability Strategy II* does not supersede but complements the existing sustainability frameworks, strategies, and action plans that are listed in Annex 1. The commitments of, and reporting on these existing frameworks, strategies, and action plans – including *Sustainability Strategy I* – remain unaltered.

<sup>10</sup> The [2012 Framework](#) and the [2014 Interim Guide](#) are outcomes of the [Consultative Process on Advancing Environmental and Social Sustainability in the United Nations System](#) and were presented to the Senior Officials of the UN Environment Management Group at EMG/SOM.18 and EMG/SOM.20.

## II. Vision

7. The United Nations system made a commitment to be fit to lead the delivery of the *Sustainable Development Goals* by being innovative, inclusive and results-oriented, and by effectively linking together normative frameworks, policy support capabilities and operational activities. This *Sustainability Strategy* outlines actions needed to complete the transition of the United Nations system to the sustainable and resilient path envisaged in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

8. **The 2030 vision for sustainability management is that the United Nations system is a leader in integrating environmental and social sustainability considerations across its work in a systematic and coherent way, practising the principles that it promotes and leaving a positive legacy.**

9. Fundamental to this vision are the objectives to embody the *Sustainable Development Goals* at all levels of the United Nations System; lead by example; ensure the harmonization of internal sustainability initiatives; manage risks; strengthen business resilience; enhance credibility and accountability; and achieve financial savings through optimal resource efficiency.

## III. Scope

10. Given In functional terms, the *Sustainability Strategy II* applies to *all internal functions* of the United Nations, namely:

- a. **entity-level governance functions**, including: policy development; strategic planning; organisational setup; leadership; enterprise risk management; performance management; reporting; audit;
- b. **entity-level programme functions**, including: the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects/programmes;
- c. **entity-level management functions**, including: facilities management; human resources management; financial management; procurement and supply chain; travel; events management; ICT;
- d. **system-wide coordination functions**, including: tracking of and reporting on environmental and social sustainability of the United Nations system; facilitation of knowledge sharing.

11. In thematic terms, the *Sustainability Strategy II* focuses on the *environmental and social* dimensions of sustainability management and explicitly provides principles related to environmental and social sustainability. The correlated economic dimension of sustainability is implicitly encompassed.

## IV. Environmental and social sustainability principles

12. The *Sustainability Strategy II* promotes the mainstreaming of the following ten environmental and social sustainability principles across all functions of the United Nations. They reflect the values, principles, and standards of the *United Nations Charter*, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and other international human rights instruments, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, the *Common Agenda*,<sup>11</sup> and the *Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards in UN Programming*.<sup>12</sup> The description of each principle recalls the specific frameworks, strategies, or action plans that are already in place in the United Nations for the mainstreaming of the respective principle in the work of the United Nations.

### *Related to People*

- a. **Apply a human rights-based approach in all our work.** The United Nations system has a standing legal mandate and a central duty to promote and encourage respect

<sup>11</sup> [Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations](#), General Assembly resolution A/RES/75/1.

<sup>12</sup> [Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards in UN Programming](#), presented to the Senior Officials of the EMG in 2019, EMG/SOM.24.

for human rights, as laid down in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*,<sup>13</sup> the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*,<sup>14</sup> the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*,<sup>15</sup> and other international human rights instruments. The commitment of the United Nations to apply a human rights-based approach in all its work has been affirmed by the Secretary-General in *The Highest Aspiration: A Call to Action for Human Rights*.<sup>16</sup> The *Call to Action* demands that within the United Nations, human rights are fully considered in all decision-making, operations, and institutional commitments. Entities must make full use of existing human rights tools and entry points to further the realization of the human rights of current and future generations, and must support governments and other relevant actors to adhere to their respective human rights obligations and responsibilities. The related *United Nations Guidance Note: Protection and Promotion of Civic Space*<sup>17</sup> emphasizes the importance of meaningful, inclusive and safe participation to allow for people's voices to be heard and taken into account. In crisis settings, the humanitarian actions of the United Nations are guided by the *Humanitarian Principles* of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence.<sup>18</sup>

- b. **Leave no one behind.** The pledge of Member States to “leave no one behind”, formulated in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, represents their commitment to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities, as they recognize that this is necessary to shift the world on to a sustainable path. The role of the United Nations in realizing this principle is described in *Leaving No One Behind: A Shared United Nations System Framework for Action*.<sup>19</sup> The framework provides guidance to United Nations entities, their staff and other interested stakeholders on the promotion of respect for human rights and the elimination of all forms of discrimination:<sup>20</sup> they must enshrine the commitment to equality in all strategic planning; must prioritize interventions that address the situation of those most marginalized and disadvantaged; and must proactively seek to give visibility and voice to marginalized and disadvantaged groups in all decision-making. The United Nations also agreed on specific strategies to mainstream attention for certain marginalized or disadvantaged groups in its functions: a *System-wide action plan*<sup>21</sup> and a *Call to Action*<sup>22</sup> on indigenous peoples; a *United Nations Youth Strategy*<sup>23</sup> on children and young people; a *Disability Inclusion Strategy*<sup>24</sup> on persons with disabilities; and the *United Nations Network on Migration Workplan*<sup>25</sup> for coordination on migrants.
- c. **Pursue gender equality and empower women.** Sustainable development cannot occur without the equal and active participation of women and girls at all levels. The basis for all work on gender equality is provided by the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*,<sup>26</sup> which requires countries to eliminate discrimination against women and girls in all areas and

<sup>13</sup> [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), General Assembly resolution 217.A.

<sup>14</sup> [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#), General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI).

<sup>15</sup> [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#), General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI).

<sup>16</sup> [The Highest Aspiration: A Call to Action for Human Rights](#), presented by the Secretary-General on the occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations.

<sup>17</sup> [United Nations Guidance Note: Protection and Promotion of Civic Space](#).

<sup>18</sup> The *Humanitarian Principles* were endorsed by General Assembly resolutions [46/182](#) and [58/114](#).

<sup>19</sup> [Leaving No One Behind: A Shared United Nations System Framework for Action](#), CEB/2016/1.

<sup>20</sup> The [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) prohibits discrimination on the basis of “race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. Other international human rights mechanisms have since specified that “other status” includes discrimination on the basis of age, nationality, marital and family status, sexual orientation and gender identity, health status, place of residence, economic and social situation, and civil, political or other status.

<sup>21</sup> [System-wide action plan for ensuring a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), CEB/2015/2.

<sup>22</sup> [Building an Inclusive, Sustainable and Resilient Future with Indigenous Peoples: A Call to Action](#), CEB/2020/2.

<sup>23</sup> [United Nations Youth Strategy](#), developed by the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development.

<sup>24</sup> [Disability Inclusion Strategy](#), CEB/2019/1/Add.6.

<sup>25</sup> The United Nations Network on Migration, through its annual [workplans](#), seeks to provide system-wide support to Member States and partners in the implementation of the [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#).

<sup>26</sup> [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#), General Assembly resolution 34/180.

promotes women's and girls' equal rights. The mainstreaming of gender equality and women's empowerment into the work areas of the United Nations system is outlined in the *United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (SWAP)*,<sup>27</sup> which sets out performance indicators for corporate processes and institutional arrangements at the individual entity level. A specific *System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity*<sup>28</sup> was launched by the Secretary-General in 2017 to reach gender parity across the United Nations system by 2028.

- d. **Protect the health, safety, and security of all.** The United Nations must protect the health, safety, and security of the communities it serves by upholding the right to the highest attainable standard of health, as recognized by the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*,<sup>29</sup> and by protecting communities from sexual exploitation and abuse, as described in the 2017 report of the Secretary-General on *Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: a new approach*.<sup>30</sup> The United Nations must also ensure a working environment for its own personnel<sup>31</sup> that is healthy, safe, respectful, and free from sexual harassment, as outlined in the *Core Principles for a healthier, safer and more respectful UN workplace*,<sup>32</sup> the *UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment*,<sup>33</sup> and the *UN system Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy*.<sup>34</sup>
- e. **Uphold labour rights.** The pursuit of sustainable development requires the protection of workers' rights, their fair treatment, and the provision of safe and healthy working conditions, as set out in international conventions and instruments, in particular, but not limited to, the ILO core labour conventions enshrined in the *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work*.<sup>35</sup> The United Nations needs to be a leader in realizing the labour standards of the ILO for its own personnel; this happens through the application of the common *Staff Regulations and Rules*.<sup>36</sup> In addition, the United Nations equally has the responsibility to advance the application of labour rights through the delivery of projects/programmes. Benchmarks for this are described in the *Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards for UN Programming*. They should not only apply to workers directly employed for the delivery of projects/programmes, but also to populations participating in labour-based programmes, third parties performing work on behalf of the United Nations, and primary suppliers.<sup>37</sup>

#### *Related to the planet*

- f. **Protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems.** The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* cannot be realized without determined action to prevent the loss of, protect, and restore biodiversity and ecosystems. The United Nations has pledged in the *Sustainability Strategy I* that it will identify and avoid adverse impacts from United Nations facilities, operations, and activities on biodiversity and habitats in consultation with relevant affected stakeholders. Related to the programme functions, the United Nations system has agreed on a *UN system-wide framework of strategies on the environment*<sup>38</sup> to enhance the coherence of the entities'

<sup>27</sup> [United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women \(SWAP 2.0\)](#). This is an updated version of the SWAP that was endorsed by the CEB in 2012, CEB/2012/1.

<sup>28</sup> [System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity](#).

<sup>29</sup> [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#), General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI).

<sup>30</sup> [Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: a new approach](#), General Assembly report 71/818

<sup>31</sup> In this strategy, the term "personnel" is used in a broad sense and includes staff personnel (internationally or locally recruited) and other non-staff personnel with a direct contractual relationship with a United Nations entity (consultants, individual contractors, interns, UN Volunteers, etc.).

<sup>32</sup> [Core Principles for a healthier, safer and more respectful UN workplace](#), CEB/2019/HLCM/27/Add.1.

<sup>33</sup> [UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment](#), CEB/2018/2.

<sup>34</sup> [UN system Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy](#).

<sup>35</sup> ILO Conventions [29](#), [87](#), [98](#), [100](#), [105](#), [111](#), [138](#), [182](#).

<sup>36</sup> [UN Staff Regulations and Rules](#).

<sup>37</sup> In this strategy, the term "primary suppliers" refers to those suppliers who, on an ongoing basis, provide goods or services to the UN entity, its programmes, or projects, that are essential for the core functions of the entity, programme, or project. In most cases they are "first-tier suppliers", a term indicating that there is a direct contractual relationship with the UN entity.

<sup>38</sup> [UN system-wide framework of strategies on the environment \(SWFS\)](#), endorsed by the Senior Officials of the EMG and launched at the

projects/programmes in the environmental sphere, and on a *Common approach to integrating biodiversity and nature-based solutions for sustainable development into the UN's policy and programme planning and delivery*<sup>39</sup> to mainstream attention to biodiversity in all planning and delivery of United Nations policies and programmes.

- g. ***Prevent pollution and maximize resource efficiency.*** Commitments regarding air, soil, water and marine pollution have been made in various international agreements.<sup>40</sup> The United Nations has the duty to prevent pollution following the same international agreements and to maximize resource efficiency in its own operations. The *Sustainability Strategy I* includes commitments on pollution prevention and resource efficiency for the area of management. The *Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards for UN Programming* includes benchmarks for pollution prevention and resource efficiency in the delivery of projects/programmes.
- h. ***Take action on climate change.*** It is imperative to immediately curb greenhouse gas emissions in line with the obligations of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the commitments of the *Paris Agreement* in order to combat “dangerous human interference with the climate system”. In the *Sustainability Strategy I* the United Nations has set a greenhouse gas emission reduction objective for itself: by 2030 it will have reduced its absolute greenhouse gas emissions in line with the recommendations of the 2018 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to limit the increase in global temperature to 1.5°C. Based on this, several United Nations entities have developed their own climate action plans or environmental management plans.<sup>41</sup> The system-wide strategy and the entity-specific action plans build on the long-standing commitment and work of the United Nations system to track and reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from management functions and to become climate neutral.<sup>42</sup> The United Nations system has also agreed on a *United Nations System Strategic Approach on Climate Change Action*<sup>43</sup> to improve and coordinate the delivery of support on climate change action to Member States, by building on human rights-based and gender-responsive approaches, and working through partnerships such as with the private sector and civil society.

#### *Related to Peace*

- i. ***Prevent conflict, reduce disaster risk, and foster resilience.*** A conflict-sensitive and risk-informed approach to humanitarian and development work and peace building, that empowers and gives voice to local actors, can significantly limit human, environmental, and economic losses in the event of a crisis or disaster. In the long run, it also reduces vulnerabilities and builds resilience. The *UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience*<sup>44</sup> is the United Nations’ commitment to strengthen system-wide coherence in support of the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*;<sup>45</sup> to build the system’s capacity to deliver coordinated, high-quality support to countries on disaster risk reduction; and to maintain disaster risk reduction as a strategic priority. The *UN Common Guidance on Helping Build Resilient Societies*<sup>46</sup> provides a system-wide reference and guidance on building resilience for delivering the *2030 Agenda* that is embedded in

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second session of UN Environment Assembly on May 25th, 2016.

<sup>39</sup> [A common approach to integrating biodiversity and nature-based solutions for sustainable development into the UN's policy and programme planning and delivery](#), CEB/2021/HLCP41/CRP.2.

<sup>40</sup> [Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer; Minamata Convention on Mercury; Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal; Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade; Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants; Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management.](#)

<sup>41</sup> Including the United Nations Secretariat, FAO, UNEP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and UNDP.

<sup>42</sup> [Strategy for a climate-neutral UN](#), EMG/AM.07/11, Annex 2.

<sup>43</sup> [United Nations System Strategic Approach on Climate Change Action](#), CEB/2017/4/Add.1.

<sup>44</sup> [UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience](#), CEB/2016/4, annex V.

<sup>45</sup> Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, General Assembly resolution 69/283, annex II.

<sup>46</sup> [UN Common Guidance on Helping Build Resilient Societies](#), UN Sustainable Development Group.

the United Nations reform and the Secretary-General's *Prevention Agenda*.<sup>47</sup> The Common Guidance builds on the *Analytical Framework on Risk and Resilience*.<sup>48</sup>

#### *Related to Partnership*

- j. ***Be transparent, inclusive, and accountable.*** The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* includes a strong commitment of all stakeholders for greater accountability towards each other and towards citizens. Transparency, inclusiveness, and accountability are human rights principles that go hand in hand: accountability requires transparent information sharing, inclusive decision-making, and the creation of independent mechanisms that allow partners to hold each other to account. The *Rio Declaration Principle 10*,<sup>49</sup> the *United Nations Guidelines on Public Participation*,<sup>50</sup> the *Aarhus Convention*,<sup>51</sup> and the *Escazú Agreement*<sup>52</sup> lay out principles and standards for Member States on information sharing, public participation, and justice in environmental matters. The principles and standards of these conventions and guidelines can be interpreted for application within the United Nations, as described in the *Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards in UN Programming*, the *Common Minimum Standards for Multi-stakeholder engagement in the UN Development Assistance Framework*,<sup>53</sup> and the *United Nations Guidance Note: Protection and Promotion of Civic Space*. In practice, for the United Nations system, the commitment to transparency, inclusiveness, and accountability requires: the active and meaningful involvement of all stakeholders in decision-making processes; the protection and promotion of the civic space in which these processes take place; the timely disclosure of all information that is relevant to the stakeholders; transparent and public reporting; and the creation of mechanisms for internal accountability (to personnel and governing bodies) and external accountability (to donors, partners, communities served by the United Nations, affected populations, and the general public). The latter may take the form of independent accountability and grievance redress mechanisms.

13. These ten principles are inextricably linked, in the same manner as the sustainable development goals are inextricably linked. For instance, the *Leave no one behind* principle needs to be gender-responsive and the implementation of the *Be transparent and accountable principle* needs to be consistent with the human rights-based approach. In addition, every principle assumes both a precautionary and a restorative approach to sustainability. The former is enshrined in the *Rio Principle 15*<sup>54</sup> and means that a lack of data or evidence should not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent serious or irreversible damage. The latter means that a pro-active approach should be taken to repair existing damage and to lift current practices to a higher standard of sustainability.

## V. Strategy

### A. Envisaged impact

14. ***The United Nations positively affects people and the planet.*** Fostering peace, security, prosperity, and a healthy planet is central to the United Nations' mandate. The United Nations seeks to realize this mandate primarily by setting standards and by convening and supporting Member States. But the United Nations, as an institution with hundreds of thousands of employees and thousands of offices around the world, must also seek, through the

<sup>47</sup> United Nations Secretary-General's priorities: [Prevention](#).

<sup>48</sup> [Adopting an analytical framework on risk and resilience: a proposal for more proactive, coordinated and effective United Nations action](#), CEB/2017/6, Annex III.

<sup>49</sup> [Rio Declaration on Environment and Development](#), A/CONF.151/26 (Vol.I), Annex I, Principle 10.

<sup>50</sup> [United Nations Guidelines for States on the effective implementation of the right to participate in public affairs](#), adopted by the Human Rights Council through resolution 39/11 of 28 September 2018.

<sup>51</sup> [Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters](#), adopted in 1998 at the Fourth Ministerial Conference in the 'Environment for Europe' process.

<sup>52</sup> [Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean](#), adopted on 4 March 2018.

<sup>53</sup> [Common Minimum Standards for Multi-stakeholder engagement in the UN Development Assistance Framework](#), UN Sustainable Development Group.

<sup>54</sup> [Rio Declaration on Environment and Development](#), A/CONF.151/26 (Vol.I), Annex I, Principle 15.

management of its own presence and operations, to positively affect people and the planet, minimize inadvertent harm, and leave a long-term positive legacy. This is the impact envisaged by this strategy. Since the adoption of the *2030 Agenda*, the world has clear goals and indicators to guide and measure positive impacts on people and the planet. The same goals can and should also guide the sustainability management of the United Nations.

### **B. Expected outcome**

15. ***The United Nations is a leader in integrating environmental and social sustainability principles across its work.*** By mainstreaming the environmental and social sustainability principles described in this *Sustainability Strategy II*, the United Nations demonstrates practical pathways for sustainability management that are consistent with the normative frameworks it promotes, in particular human rights and the *2030 Agenda*. The United Nations, as an organization, shows exemplary leadership in sustainability management and inspires governments, organizations, and citizens around the globe.

### **C. Suggested outputs at system level**

16. ***System-level output 1: The United Nations system has a mechanism in place to track and report in a comprehensive manner on the environmental and social sustainability performance of the United Nations.*** The United Nations system identifies an entity, or coalition of entities, that takes ownership of the *Sustainability Strategy II*, steers the implementation of the strategy, and facilitates public reporting on the sustainability of the United Nations system. The reporting will be comprehensive, meaning that it will cover the whole United Nations system and that it will consider priority areas of focus across all functions (governance functions, programme functions, management functions) and all sustainability principles (listed in Section IV). The reporting, to be developed, will be both qualitative (e.g. based on a scorecard as proposed in Annex 3) and quantitative (e.g. based on a list of outcome indicators<sup>55</sup>). The reporting on the sustainability of the United Nations will need to build on, and align with the existing, topic-specific reporting processes in place for the strategies, frameworks, and action plans listed in Annex 1 (such as the *Sustainability Strategy I*, the *Greening the Blue Report*, the *SWAP on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women*, or the *Disability Inclusion Strategy*) to avoid duplication and to foster coherence. This may require the development of shared vocabularies and methodologies. The reporting will be streamlined to ensure it provides a clear picture without a heavy reporting burden for entities. Entity-level reporting on the implementation of *Sustainability Strategy II* will be voluntary and the scorecard will include a rating of ‘not applicable’ in the grading system. The comprehensive reporting on the sustainability of the United Nations can also feed into reports to Member States, such as the regular reporting requested in the *2020 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review*.<sup>56</sup>

17. ***System-level output 2: The United Nations system has a mechanism in place to facilitate knowledge sharing on the integration of environmental and social sustainability principles across its work.*** Enhancing sustainability is an iterative and incremental process of change that needs to be based on practical experience. A distinctive feature of this *Sustainability Strategy II* is the vision that greater coherence across different areas of sustainability, different functional areas, and different entities will lead to greater positive impacts on people and the planet. The knowledge exchange will therefore need to build on, and strengthen connections between the inter-agency initiatives already in place on specific aspects of sustainability, as listed in Annex 1. Successful experiences of combining and mainstreaming environmental and social sustainability in entities, or of building sustainability synergies between entities, will be shared between entities and with relevant external partners, to foster greater transparency, cohesion, comparability, and continuous improvement.

<sup>55</sup> It is expected that this list of outcome indicators will be able to give an overview of the environmental and social sustainability of the United Nations, as per the ten sustainability principles. This list of indicators may consist of indicators that are in use already in the United Nations system but may have to be complemented with new indicators, in order to cover all sustainability principles and all functional areas.

<sup>56</sup> [Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system](#), General Assembly resolution A/RES/75/233.

#### D. Suggested outputs at entity level

18. **Entity-level output 1: The entity is committed to mainstreaming environmental and social sustainability across all functions.** The entity develops a comprehensive vision of what environmental and social sustainability means for its own work, within its specific mandate. The vision is described in one or more governance documents, such as entity-level policies, that are communicated internally and externally, and made publicly available. The entity is committed to implementing this vision: it is championed by the senior management of the entity and it is backed by an implementation plan and a budget. The vision and commitment can build on, or integrate existing commitments on specific aspects of sustainable management, such as environmental sustainability, gender equality, human rights, disability inclusion, and others.

19. **Entity-level output 2: The entity has defined environmental and social sustainability standards for its own work.** The entity clearly defines quality standards, indicators, and targets for the environmental and social sustainability of its work, within its own operational context. While these standards, indicators, and targets build on the existing work of the entity in sustainability management, the complete set of environmental and social sustainability standards of the entity covers all principles described in section IV. The standards, indicators, and targets are developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders and made publicly available. The indicators and targets may be differentiated per functional area. The *Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards in UN Programming* can serve as a reference, particularly for the programme functions.

20. **Entity-level output 3: The entity has a mechanism in place for the comprehensive tracking of, and public reporting on its environmental and social performance.** United Nations entities are already tracking and reporting on certain aspects of environmental and social sustainability, such as environmental sustainability in the area of management, gender equality, or disability inclusion. It is proposed that the entity reports comprehensively on its performance in priority dimensions of environment and social sustainability, preferably on an annual basis, and by building on established reporting mechanisms. This comprehensive reporting would be shaped by considerations of all functions (governance functions, programme functions, management functions) and all areas of environmental and social sustainability (outlined in section IV). The sustainability reporting should be transparent and provide meaningful opportunities for relevant stakeholders to review and share their views. Once the United Nations system agrees on a scorecard and outcome indicators for environmental and social sustainability (see paragraphs 16 and 27), these can inform entity-level tracking and reporting. Entity-level reporting on the implementation of *Sustainability Strategy II* will be voluntary and the scorecard will include a rating of ‘not applicable’ in the grading system.

21. **Entity-level output 4: The entity has procedures in place to ensure the mainstreaming of environmental and social sustainability across its programming.** The entity builds procedures into each stage of the programme cycle (design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation) to ensure that its projects/programmes comply, at all times, with the entity’s environmental and social standards (see entity-level output 2). As a bare minimum, the environmental and social risks and impacts of projects/programmes are identified and managed through appropriate due diligence processes. Ideally projects/programmes also proactively seek environmental and social co-benefits in line with the sustainability principles. The *Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards in UN Programming* serves as a benchmark reference to facilitate alignment across entities.

22. **Entity-level output 5: The entity has procedures in place to ensure that its implementing partners adhere to the environmental and social standards of the entity when delivering UN programming.** In case the entity works with implementing partners,<sup>57</sup> the entity puts an approach, framework, or procedures in place to ensure that the partners are guided by the environmental and social standards of the entity, use due diligence to prevent or mitigate environmental or social harm, and have environmental and social management

<sup>57</sup> In this strategy, “implementing partners” are defined as third parties that deliver projects/programmes on behalf of the entity or with funds received from the entity.

systems in place. The entity equally puts mechanisms in place that can be activated in case the implementing partner fails to adhere to the environmental and social standards of the entity. Ideally, all agreements with implementing partners and fund recipients outline the roles of all parties in complying with the entity's environmental and social standards.

**23. Entity-level output 6: The entity has procedures in place to ensure that primary suppliers apply the environmental and social standards of the United Nations.** The procurement of goods and services constitutes an important part of the United Nations' impact on the planet and on people. Therefore, the United Nations aspires, by means of *Sustainability Strategy I*, to integrating sustainability considerations in its procurement practices and has committed to publicly report on them. The High-Level Committee on Management - Procurement Network has a definition for sustainable procurement that covers the three dimensions of sustainable development,<sup>58</sup> as well as a set of sustainable procurement indicators.<sup>59</sup> For suppliers and service providers, the United Nations has a *Supplier Code of Conduct*<sup>60</sup> in place to make companies doing business with the United Nations aware of the environmental, social, and economic principles of the United Nations. The entity will strengthen its use of these instruments to further integrate sustainability considerations in its procurement policies and processes.

**24. Entity-level output 7: The entity has procedures in place to evaluate and continually improve its environmental and social sustainability.** The pathway towards leadership in environmental and social sustainability management is complex and calls for constant evaluation and adaptive learning. The entity-level tracking of, and reporting on sustainability (entity-level output 3) needs to be used to evaluate the progress of the entity towards its sustainability standards and targets (entity-level output 2) and to make adjustments to the processes it has put in place. This iterative cycle of constant evaluation and adaptive learning is central to good management and can be applied to all aspects of sustainability (although it may have to be tailored to the different functional areas). The *Sustainability Strategy I* already includes the commitment that all entities will put (an) environmental management system(s) in place to gradually improve the environmental performance of their management functions.

**25. Entity-level output 8: The entity has appropriate human and financial resources in place to ensure the mainstreaming of environmental and social sustainability across all functions.** Commensurate to the size of its activities and organizational structure, each United Nations entity puts in place human resources, with clear accountabilities and adequate financial resources, to promote environmental and social sustainability across all functional areas of the entity and to ensure coordination. This may include: putting in place a dedicated sustainability capacity such as a sustainability coordinator or sustainability coordination unit with adequate financial resources; mainstreaming sustainability management into relevant existing roles; building capacities of personnel for delivering on sustainability commitments; and ensuring internal accountability of personnel on the delivery of sustainability commitments.

**26. Entity-level output 9: The entity has mechanisms in place for accountability and remedy on issues of environmental and social sustainability.** The entity needs mechanisms that allow different stakeholder groups to hold each other accountable regarding the delivery of the environmental and social sustainability commitments. This includes mechanisms for internal accountability between the governing body, management, and employees of the entity, and mechanisms for external accountability of the entity towards the governments and people it serves. The mechanisms for accountability need to be commensurate to the severity and likelihood of environmental and social risks the entity incurs. The entity will also ensure affected parties have access to effective remedy through legitimate, transparent, and accessible grievance redress processes and mechanisms.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> [Sustainable Procurement Statement](#), High-Level Committee on Management - Procurement Network.

<sup>59</sup> [Sustainable Procurement Indicators](#), High-Level Committee on Management - Procurement Network.

<sup>60</sup> [UN Supplier Code of Conduct](#), High-Level Committee on Management - Procurement Network.

<sup>61</sup> The effectiveness criteria described in the [United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#), Principle 31, can serve as guidance, while bearing in mind the elements contained in paragraph 6 with regards to specific mandates and governance in different International Organizations.

## VI. Proposed implementation plan

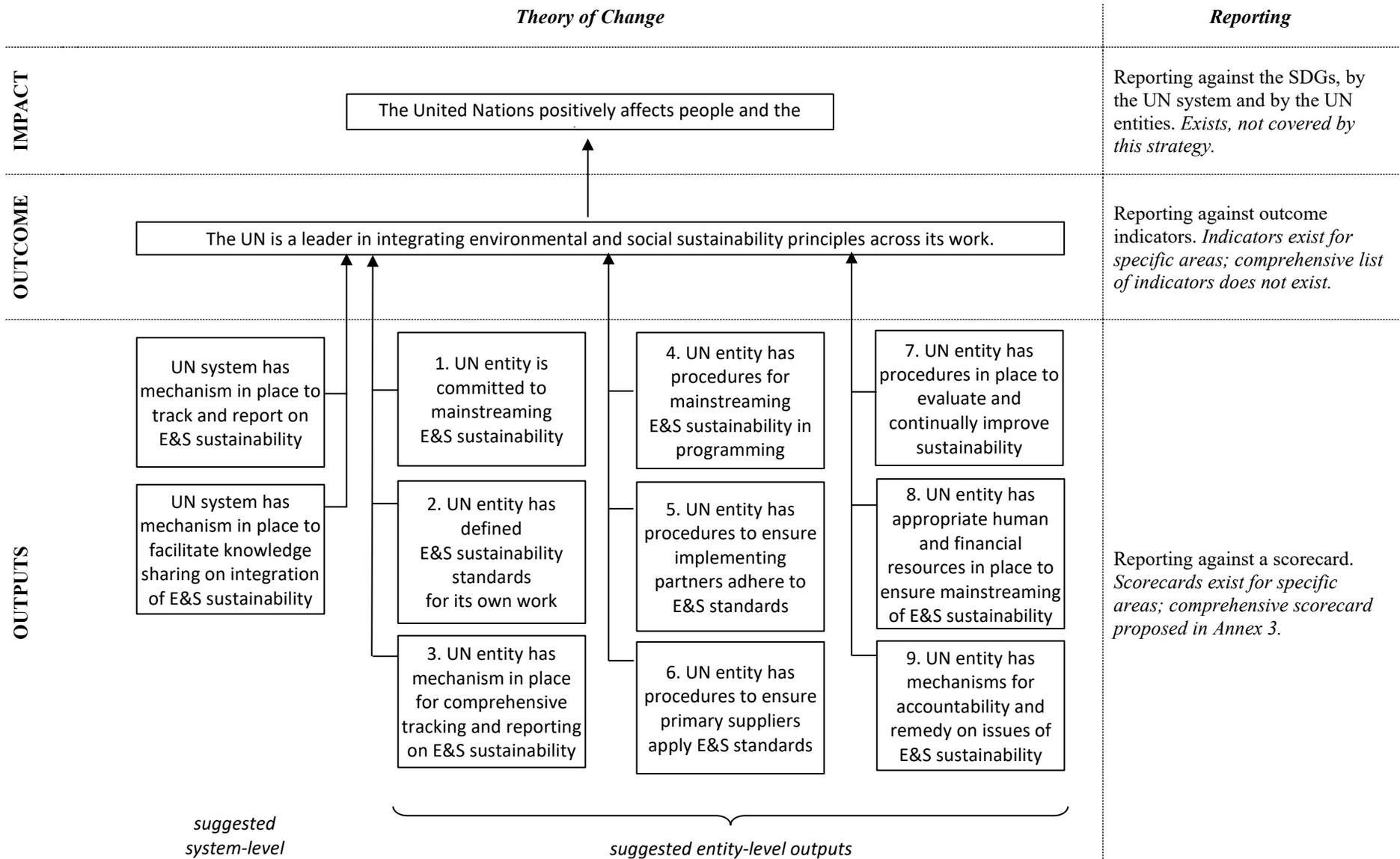
27. It is suggested that the implementation of the strategy takes a staged approach, as follows:

- a. **Establish the foundations (2022):**
  - a coalition of entities willing to steer the implementation of the strategy creates a steering committee; the composition reflects the diversity of entities' mandate, size, and structure;
  - the steering committee establishes a mechanism for coordination, knowledge exchange, and capacity building across entities and levels of the United Nations;
  - the steering committee seeks synergies with other system-wide initiatives at system level (listed in Annex 1), country level (Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, Business Operations Strategies), and regional level (Issue-based Coalitions);
  - entities start exchanging experiences and best practices on the suggested outputs of the strategy (and continue the exchange throughout the implementation of the strategy);
  - entities identify possible gaps in the suggested outputs;
  - entities agree on a first version of the scorecard, list of outcome indicators, and the reporting medium;
- b. **Pilot the strategy and scorecard (2023):**
  - a select number of entities report on the scorecard and the outcome indicators on a pilot basis; these entities also reflect on the possibilities to harmonize internal data collection to fulfil the requirements of different system-wide reporting initiatives;
  - entities agree on an updated scorecard, list of outcome indicators, and reporting medium;
  - detailed guidance is developed;
- c. **Roll out the strategy and scorecard (2024):**
  - at least 50% of entities report on the scorecard and list of outcome indicators;
  - a first system-wide sustainability report is produced on the basis of the scorecard and list of outcome indicators;
- d. **Review the implementation and reporting mechanism (2025):**
  - the coordination mechanism, scorecard, list of outcome indicators, and reporting medium are reviewed;
- e. **Reach leadership in integrating sustainability principles (2026-2030):**
  - entities aim to meet all the requirements on the scorecard by 2030 or earlier;
  - a system-wide sustainability report, based on the scorecard and list of outcome indicators, is produced annually.

28. Given the need for urgent sustainability action and leadership from the United Nations, every effort will be made to further accelerate the proposed implementation timeline.

## VII. Assumptions and opportunities

29. The success of the strategy hinges on the following **assumptions**:
  - a. There is willingness and capacity in the United Nations system and its entities to harmonize initiatives that relate to different aspects of environmental and/or social sustainability.
  - b. Resources are mobilized for the implementation of this strategy, both at system level and entity level. The entities have sufficient internal capacity to absorb the strategy and report on it.
30. The strategy can seize the following **opportunities**:
  - a. There is a growing attention of Member States to the environmental and social sustainability of the United Nations, as expressed in recent General Assembly resolutions (see paragraph 4).
  - b. There is a political will from Member States and the United Nations management to increase the coherence and efficiency of the United Nations system.



## Annex 1: Existing UN-wide frameworks, strategies, and action plans on one or more aspects of sustainability management

<i>Sustainability principle</i>	<i>Title of the framework/strategy/action plan</i>	<i>Proponent</i>	<i>CEB reference</i>	<i>Acronym</i>
Apply a human rights-based approach	<a href="#">The Human Rights–Based Approach to Development Co-operation—Towards a Common Understanding among UN Agencies</a>	-	-	HRBA
Apply a human rights-based approach	<a href="#">The Highest Aspiration: a Call to Action for Human Rights</a>	SG	-	HRca
Apply a human rights-based approach	<a href="#">United Nations Guidance Note: Protection and Promotion of Civic Space</a>	OHCHR	-	CIVIC
Apply a human rights-based approach	<a href="#">Humanitarian Principles</a>	UNGA	-	HUM
Leave no one behind	<a href="#">Leaving No One Behind: Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Sustainable Development</a>	CEB	CEB/2016/1	LNOBf
Leave no one behind	<a href="#">Leaving no one behind: a UNSDG operational guide for UN country teams - Interim Draft</a>	UNSDG	-	LNOBg
Leave no one behind (disability)	<a href="#">Disability Inclusion Strategy</a>	HLCM	CEB/2019/1/Add.6	DIS
Leave no one behind (youth)	<a href="#">United Nations Youth Strategy</a>	IANYD	-	YTH
Leave no one behind (indigenous peoples)	<a href="#">System-wide action plan on the rights of indigenous peoples</a>	USG-ESA	CEB/2015/2	IPap
Leave no one behind (indigenous peoples)	<a href="#">Building an Inclusive, Sustainable and Resilient Future with Indigenous Peoples: A Call to Action</a>	CEB	CEB/2020/2	IPca
Leave no one behind (migrants)	<a href="#">United Nations Network on Migration Workplan</a>	UN Network on Migration	-	MIGR
Pursue gender equality and women's empowerment	<a href="#">United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (SWAP 2.0)</a>	UNWOMEN	CEB/2012/1	GENap
Pursue gender equality and women's empowerment	<a href="#">System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity</a>	SG	-	GENpar
Protect the health, safety, and security of all	<a href="#">Core Principles for a healthier, safer and more respectful UN workplace</a>	HLCM	CEB/2019/HLCM/27/Add.1	HSR
Protect the health, safety, and security of all	<a href="#">UN system Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy</a>	HLCM	-	MENT
Protect the health, safety, and security of all	<a href="#">Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: a new approach</a>	SG	-	PSEA
Protect the health, safety, and security of all	<a href="#">UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment</a>	HLCM	CEB/2018/2	HARASS
Uphold labour rights	<a href="#">UN Staff Regulations and Rules</a>	UNGA		STAFF

Protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems Prevent pollution and maximize resource efficiency Take action on climate change	<a href="#">Strategy for Sustainability Management in the UN System 2020-2030 - Phase I: Environmental Sustainability in the Area of Management</a>	UNEMG & UNEP-SUN	<a href="#">CEB/2019/3/Add.2</a>	SSM1
Protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems	<a href="#">A common approach to integrating biodiversity and nature-based solutions for sustainable development into the UN's policy and programme planning and delivery</a>	CEB	CEB/2021/HLCP41/CRP.2	BIO
Protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems Prevent pollution and maximize resource efficiency Take action on climate change	<a href="#">System-wide framework of strategies on the environment for the UN system</a>	UNEMG	CEB/2016/1	SWSF
Take action on climate change	<a href="#">Strategy for a climate-neutral UN</a>	CEB	EMG/AM.07/11/Annex.1	NEUTR
Take action on climate change	<a href="#">United Nations System Strategic Approach on Climate Change Action</a>	HLCP	CEB/2017/4/Add.1	CCA
Prevent conflict, reduce disaster risk, and foster resilience	<a href="#">Adopting an analytical framework on risk and resilience: a proposal for more proactive, coordinated and effective United Nations action</a>	CEB	CEB/2017/6	afRIRE
Prevent conflict, reduce disaster risk, and foster resilience	<a href="#">SG Prevention Agenda</a>	SG	-	PREV
Prevent conflict, reduce disaster risk, and foster resilience	<a href="#">UN Common Guidance on Helping Build Resilient Societies</a>	UNSDG	-	RESIL
Prevent conflict, reduce disaster risk, and foster resilience	<a href="#">UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience</a>	UNDRR	CEB/2016/4/annex.V	DRR
Be transparent and accountable	<a href="#">Common Minimum Standards for Multi-stakeholder Engagement in the UN Development Assistance Framework</a>	UNSDG	-	MSENG
Be transparent and accountable	<a href="#">United Nations system leadership framework</a>	HLCM	CEB/2017/1	LEAD
Be transparent and accountable	<a href="#">Management and Accountability Framework of the UN Development and Resident Coordinator System</a>	UNSDG		MAF
Multiple (mainly programme functions)	<a href="#">United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework – Internal Guidance</a>	UNSDC	-	SDCF
Multiple (mainly programme functions)	<a href="#">Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards for UN Programming</a>	UNEMG	-	maESS
Multiple (in procurement only)	<a href="#">UN Supplier Code of Conduct</a>	HLCM		SCC
Multiple (in procurement only)	<a href="#">Sustainable Procurement Indicators</a>	HLCM	CEB/2019/3/Add.2	SPRI

*Note 1: The table includes frameworks, strategies, and action plans that apply across the United Nations system. Not all have been endorsed by the CEB.*

*Note 2: Single entities may have their own frameworks, strategies, or action plans, but these are not included in the table.*

*Note 3: The acronyms are not official acronyms but have been coined solely for use in Annex 2.*

## Annex 2: Mapping of existing UN system-wide frameworks, strategies, and action plans against the sustainability principles and functional areas described in Sustainability Strategy II

	Governance functions							Programme functions				Management functions						
	Policy & Strategy	Org setup	Leadership	Enterprise risk management	Performance management	Reporting	Audit	Planning	Implementation	Monitoring	Evaluation	Facilities	Human Resources	Financial Resources	Procurement	Travel	Events	ICT
<i>Apply a human rights-based approach</i>	HRca CIVIC HUM	HUM	LEAD HUM			HRca HRBA SDCF maESS		HRca HRBA CIVIC SDCF maESS HUM	HRca HRBA CIVIC SDCF maESS HUM	HRca HRBA CIVIC SDCF maESS	HRca HRBA SDCF maESS		STAFF HUM	HUM	SCC SPRI			CIVIC
<i>Leave no one behind</i>	LNOBf DIS IPap HUM	DIS YTH HUM	DIS YTH LEAD HUM		DIS YTH	LNOBf LNOBf g DIS IPap IPca YTH MIGR SDCF maESS		LNOBf LNOBf g DIS IPap IPca YTH MIGR SDCF maESS HUM	LNOBf LNOBf g DIS IPap IPca YTH MIGR SDCF maESS HUM	LNOBf LNOBf g DIS IPap IPca YTH MIGR SDCF maESS	LNOBf LNOBf g DIS IPap IPca YTH MIGR SDCF maESS	DIS	DIS YTH HUM	YTH HUM	SCC SPRI DIS		DIS IPap IPca	LNOBf YTH
<i>Pursue gender equality and empower women</i>	GENa p	GENa p	GENa p GENp ar LEAD		GENa p GENp ar	GENa p SDCF maESS	GENf	GENa p SDCF maESS	GENa p SDCF maESS	GENa p SDCF maESS	GENa p SDCF maESS		GENa p GENp ar	GENa p	SPRI			
<i>Protect health, safety, and security of all</i>	HSR PSEA		MENT HSR LEAD PSEA HARA SS			maESS PSEA		maESS	maESS PSEA	maESS	maESS	HSR	MENT HSR PSEA HARA SS	MENT	SCC SPRI			
<i>Uphold labour rights</i>		STAFF	STAFF LEAD			maESS		maESS	maESS	maESS	maESS		STAFF		SCC SPRI			

<i>Protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems</i>	SWSF		LEAD	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b> BIO SDCF maESS SWSF		BIO SDCF maESS SWSF	BIO SDCF maESS SWSF	BIO SDCF maESS SWSF	BIO SDCF maESS SWSF	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b> SPRI	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>
<i>Prevent pollution and maximize resource efficiency</i>	SWSF		LEAD	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b> maESS SWSF		maESS SWSF	maESS SWSF	maESS SWSF	maESS SWSF	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSC</b> <b>SSM1</b> SPRI	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>
<i>Take action on climate change</i>	CCA		LEAD	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b> maESS CCA		maESS CCA	maESS CCA	maESS CCA	maESS CCA	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b> SPRI	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>SSM1</b>
<i>Prevent conflict, reduce disaster risk, and foster resilience</i>	<b>DRR</b> <b>PREV</b>					<b>DRR</b>		<b>DRR</b> afRIRE <b>PREV</b> RESIL	<b>DRR</b> afRIRE RESIL	<b>DRR</b> afRIRE RESIL	<b>DRR</b> afRIRE RESIL	<b>SSM1</b>	<b>DRR</b> afRIRE SSM1	<b>DRR</b> SSM1	SSM1	SSM1	SSM1	<b>PREV</b>
<i>Be accountable and transparent</i>			LEAD			<b>MSEN</b> <b>G</b> SDCF maESS MAF		<b>MSEN</b> <b>G</b> SDCF maESS MAF	<b>MSEN</b> <b>G</b> SDCF maESS MAF	<b>MSEN</b> <b>G</b> SDCF maESS MAF	<b>MSEN</b> <b>G</b> SDCF maESS MAF	<b>SSM1</b>	SSM1	SSM1	<b>SSM1</b> SPRI	SSM1	SSM1	SSM1

Note 1: Acronyms as defined in Annex 1.

Note 2: Frameworks/strategies/action plans in **bold** include explicit commitments regarding the area in question. Frameworks/strategies/action plans not in bold only include guidance regarding the area in question and no explicit commitments.

### Annex 3: Draft proposal for a scorecard to measure progress towards the suggested entity-level outputs

The scorecard in this Annex is indicative and will be further developed and agreed during the implementation of this strategy, as per the implementation plan described in Section VI. As a result, the scorecard in this Annex is not meant for adoption as part of the current *Sustainability Strategy II*.

Like other United Nations reporting systems, the proposed scorecard would allow entities to report their performance on the suggested entity-level outputs using a graded five-point rating system:

- *Exceeds requirements*
- *Meets requirements*
- *Approaches requirements*
- *Missing*
- *Not applicable*

The tables below suggest milestones that could characterize the levels “*Approaches requirements*”, “*Meets requirements*”, and “*Exceeds requirements*” of each of the suggested entity-level outputs.

<b>1. The entity is committed to mainstreaming environmental and social sustainability across all functions.</b>		
<p><i>Approaches requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has a number of governance documents (such as policies, guidelines, frameworks) in place on environmental and social sustainability. These governance documents may be disconnected from each other and may not cover all sustainability principles.</p>	<p><i>Meets requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has outlined a coherent vision for the entity’s environmental and social sustainability in one or more governance documents (such as policies, guidelines, frameworks), covering all sustainability principles and all functional areas.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>This is accompanied by (an) implementation plan(s) and dedicated funding that cover all sustainability principles and all functional areas.</p>	<p><i>Exceeds requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has outlined a coherent vision for the entity’s environmental and social sustainability in one or more governance documents (such as policies, guidelines, frameworks), covering all sustainability principles and all functional areas.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>This is accompanied by (an) implementation plan(s) and dedicated funding that cover all sustainability principles and all functional areas.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>The entity provides an update at least every two years to its governing body or equivalent.</p>
<b>2. The entity has defined environmental and social sustainability standards for its own work.</b>		
<p><i>Approaches requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has sustainability standards. The standards may not cover all sustainability principles and may not be applicable to all functional areas of the entity.</p>	<p><i>Meets requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has environmental and social standards, covering all sustainability principles. The standards may be differentiated per functional area.<sup>62</sup></p> <p>AND</p>	<p><i>Exceeds requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has environmental and social standards, covering all sustainability principles. The standards may be differentiated per functional area.</p> <p>AND</p>

<sup>62</sup> The [Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards in UN Programming](#) can serve as a reference, particularly for standards in projects/programmes.

	The standards come with key performance indicators and targets for each of the areas of sustainability.	The standards come with key performance indicators and targets for each of the areas of sustainability. AND The standards, indicators, and targets are periodically reviewed and updated as necessary.
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<b>3. The entity has a mechanism in place for the comprehensive tracking of, and public reporting on its environmental and social performance.</b>		
<i>Approaches requirements</i> The entity reports periodically and transparently on its performance in some areas of environmental and social sustainability. This reporting may not cover all areas of environmental and social sustainability, nor all functional areas.	<i>Meets requirements</i> The entity reports annually and transparently on its performance in all areas of environmental and social sustainability and all functional areas, in a comprehensive manner, in both qualitative and quantitative terms.	<i>Exceeds requirements</i> The entity reports annually and transparently on its performance in all areas of environmental and social sustainability and all functional areas, in a comprehensive manner, in both qualitative and quantitative terms. AND The qualitative and quantitative data is used in an annual meta-analysis to assess the performance of the organization over time.

<b>4. The entity has procedures in place to ensure the mainstreaming of environmental and social sustainability across its programming.</b>		
<i>Approaches requirements</i> The entity has procedures in place to check that the design and implementation of projects/programmes does not cause environmental or social harm.	<i>Meets requirements</i> The entity has built procedures into each stage of the programme cycle (design, management, monitoring, evaluation) to ensure that its projects/programmes comply, at all times, with the entity's environmental and social standards. These procedures have been checked for alignment with the <i>Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards in UN Programming</i> .	<i>Exceeds requirements</i> The entity has built procedures into each stage of the programme cycle (design, management, monitoring, evaluation) to ensure that its projects/programmes comply, at all times, with the entity's environmental and social standards. These procedures have been checked for alignment with the <i>Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards in UN Programming</i> . AND The procedures are periodically reviewed and updated as necessary.

<b>5. The entity has procedures in place to ensure that its implementing partners adhere to the environmental and social standards of the entity when delivering UN programming.</b>		
<i>Approaches requirements</i> The entity has built some requirements on environmental and social sustainability into its	<i>Meets requirements</i> The entity has an approach, framework, or procedures in place that lay out how implementing partners are expected to adhere to the environmental and social	<i>Exceeds requirements</i> The entity has an approach, framework, or procedures in place that lay out how implementing partners are expected to adhere to the environmental and social

agreements with implementing partners.	standards of the entity. AND Agreements with implementing partners clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of all parties in complying with the entity's environmental and social standards.	standards of the entity. AND Agreements with implementing partners clearly outline the roles of all parties in complying with the entity's environmental and social standards. AND The entity pro-actively seeks to build the capacities of the implementing partners to comply with the entity's environmental and social standards.
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**6. The entity has procedures in place to ensure that primary suppliers apply the environmental and social standards of the United Nations.<sup>63</sup>**

<p><i>Approaches requirements</i></p> <p>The entity is compliant with the commitments of <i>Sustainability Strategy I</i> on procurement, including the commitments to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- develop policies and guidance to integrate sustainability considerations (e.g. circular procurement, innovation, phase-outs, gender and diversity, disability and inclusion, human rights) in its procurement cycle;</li> <li>- monitor, and publicly report on the inclusion of sustainability considerations in the entity's tenders, based on the sustainable procurement indicators.<sup>64</sup></li> </ul>	<p><i>Meets requirements</i></p> <p>The entity is compliant with the commitments of <i>Sustainability Strategy I</i> on procurement.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>The entity has an approach, framework, or procedures in place that lay out how primary suppliers are expected to adhere to the environmental and social standards of the entity and/or the <i>UN Supplier Code of Conduct</i>.</p>	<p><i>Exceeds requirements</i></p> <p>The entity is compliant with the commitments of <i>Sustainability Strategy I</i> on procurement.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>The entity has an approach, framework, or procedures in place that lay out how primary suppliers are expected to adhere to the environmental and social standards of the entity and/or the <i>UN Supplier Code of Conduct</i>.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>The entity has an approach or procedures in place to monitor the compliance of primary suppliers with the entity's standards and/or <i>UN Supplier Code of Conduct</i>.</p>
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**7. The entity has procedures in place to evaluate and continually improve its environmental and social sustainability.**

<p><i>Approaches requirements</i></p> <p>The entity is compliant with the commitment of <i>Sustainability Strategy I</i> that an environmental management system is approved by top management.</p>	<p><i>Meets requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has one or more procedures in place for the evaluation of its sustainability performance and for adaptive learning, covering all areas of sustainability across all functions. The procedure(s) may be differentiated per functional area.</p>	<p><i>Exceeds requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has a unified system in place for the evaluation of sustainability performance and for adaptive learning, covering all areas of sustainability.</p>
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<sup>63</sup> The entity-level output 6 and related milestones will be further discussed and agreed in the relevant networks and working groups of the High-Level Committee on Management.

<sup>64</sup> [Sustainable Procurement Indicators](#), High-Level Committee on Management - Procurement Network.

<b>8. The entity has appropriate human and financial resources in place to ensure the mainstreaming of environmental and social sustainability across all functions.</b>		
<p><i>Approaches requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has human resources in place with clear responsibilities to ensure sustainability coordination in the entity. This could be a sustainability coordinator or sustainability coordination unit.</p>	<p><i>Meets requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has human resources in place with clear responsibilities to ensure sustainability coordination in the entity. This could be a sustainability coordinator or sustainability coordination unit.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Sustainability management is integrated into the capacity building of all personnel.</p>	<p><i>Exceeds requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has human resources in place with clear responsibilities to ensure sustainability coordination in the entity. This could be a sustainability coordinator or sustainability coordination unit.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Sustainability management is integrated into the capacity building of all personnel.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Sustainability management is mainstreamed to the extent possible in the Terms of Reference of relevant existing roles and in senior managers' compacts.</p>
<b>9. The entity has mechanisms in place for accountability and remedy on issues of environmental and social sustainability.</b>		
<p><i>Approaches requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has grievance redress mechanisms in place. The mechanisms may not be fully equipped, in terms of mandate or capacities, to handle grievances of potential or actual environmental or social nature harm.</p>	<p><i>Meets requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has grievance redress mechanisms in place that are fully equipped, in terms of mandate and capacities, to handle grievances of potential or actual environmental or social harm. The mechanisms respect the effectiveness criteria outlined in <i>Principle 31</i> of the <i>Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights</i>.<sup>65</sup></p>	<p><i>Exceeds requirements</i></p> <p>The entity has grievance redress mechanisms in place that are fully equipped, in terms of mandate and capacities, to handle grievances of potential or actual environmental or social harm. The mechanisms respect the effectiveness criteria outlined in <i>Principle 31</i> of the <i>Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights</i>.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>The grievance redress mechanisms have a demonstrated record of effectively receiving and responding to grievances.</p>

<sup>65</sup> Principle 31: Effectiveness Criteria For Non-Judicial Grievance Mechanisms, in: [United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#), A/HRC/17/31/Annex, endorsed by the Human Rights Council by resolution 17/4 of 16 June 2011.