

The Third Meeting of the EMG Consultative Process on Sustainable Infrastructure
20th January 2022
Meeting minutes

Moderator: Mr. Rowan Palmer (UNEP)

Welcome and closing remarks: Ms. Anna Kaplina (UN, EMG)

Presenters:

Mr. Rowan Palmer (UNEP)

Mr. Joseph Price (UNEP)

Other UNEP:

Ms. Ana Fernandez Vergara

Mr. Carl Giardina

Mr. David Morgan

Ms. Marie-Aimee Salopiata

Ms. Nina Arden

Mr. Sam Jeremy

Participants: list appended.

Meeting Agenda:

Time	Agenda Items
15h00 – 15h05	Opening remarks (Anna Kaplina, EMG)
15h05 – 15h10	Update on Consultative Process and opportunities/plans for UNEA-5.2 (Rowan Palmer, UNEP)
15h10 – 15h30	Discussion on UNEA-5.2 coordination (All)
15h30 – 15h40	Overview of proposed 2022 activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Implementation of Principles</i> • <i>Barrier analysis</i> • <i>Nexus Dialogue</i> (Joseph Price, UNEP and Nina Arden, EMG)
15h40 – 15h55	Feedback and discussion on 2022 activities (All)
15h55 – 16h00	Closing remarks (Anna Kaplina, EMG)

Discussion:

Ms. Anna Kaplina (UN, EMG):

- Provided welcome remarks and outlined the EMG Secretariat's ongoing commitment to the Consultative Process in 2022 and in the lead up to UNEA5.2.

Mr. Rowan Palmer (UNEP):

- Provided an update on the Consultative Process, including a recap of what has been achieved to date and plans for the second phase of the Consultative Process in 2022.
- Following the first meeting of the Consultative Process in March 2021 and the subsequent establishment of the Task Team, a revised text for the second edition of the *International*

Good Practice Principles for Sustainable Infrastructure (“the Principles”) has been agreed by the Senior Officials.

- The second version of the Principles has been approved by the UNEP publishing committee and the English version will be published at UNEA 5.2. Translations to other languages are currently being prepared.
- It was furthermore agreed to extend the Consultative Process on Sustainable Infrastructure, with a focus on the implementation of the Principles and investment for Sustainable Infrastructure.
- A barrier analysis on the implementation of the Principles was suggested by UNU-FLORES in the context of the Consultative Process.
- There has also been a new draft UNEA 5.2. resolution on sustainable and resilient infrastructure that has been submitted by the Government of Mongolia. It is being discussed by Member States alongside other draft resolutions that are being presented and discussed - these processes will continue in the weeks leading up to the Assembly itself.
- The proposed UNEA 5.2. side event on sustainable infrastructure was not selected but has been identified as a potential contributor for a side event on nature-based solutions and climate change adaptation at the regional level.

Mr. Benjamin Schachter (OHCHR):

- Noted there will be at least one representative of OHCHR at UNEA 5.2, as the team will be organizing an event on human rights, conservation and biodiversity. While this is generally related to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and rights-based approaches to conservation, there are potential synergies that could be explored.
- Additionally, all side events at UNEA5.2 will be held online.
 - **Mr. Palmer** and **Mr. Price** agreed that there are synergies to be explored and areas in which Mr. Schachter could potentially highlight these issues, as they relate particularly to Principle 6 on equity, inclusiveness and empowerment, Principle 9 concerning stakeholder consultation and Principle 4 concerning investing in nature and nature-based solutions.

Mr. Joseph Price (UNEP):

- Regarding the proposed activities for 2022 and the second phase of the consultative process: the first key activity envisaged for this year is the implementation of the second edition of the Principles and coordinating among UN entities to promote the 2nd edition of the Principles among government counterparts following their publication, as well as to integrate them in the UN system’s internal operations and facilities (to be coordinated with Sustainable UN (SUN)).
- Thirdly, drawing on suggestions from the last meeting in September, EMG Members will be requested to report back by September 2022 on how entities have been promoting and applying the Principles.
- Additionally, the barrier analysis proposed by UNU-FLORES will support the implementation of the Principles by identifying and overcoming barriers in a real-world context. Chile has been selected as the pilot of the barrier analysis due to its diverse infrastructure stock, its different climatic regions, as well as progress on the topic and Chile’s current political context. The study will also build on previous related work.
- A piloting analysis focusing on transportation, buildings and energy will be conducted.
- There has been a meeting with the Chilean Ministry of Public Works who agreed to support the analysis.

- The fourth key output is the Nexus Dialogue on the topic of investing in natural infrastructure, which will take place after UNEA 5.2 (some time between May and August 2022 to sustain momentum on this topic).

Ms. Nina Arden (UN, EMG):

- Ms. Arden provided an overview of how the Nexus Dialogues function and came to fruition, highlighting that the Dialogues discuss thematic and institutional interlinkages between environmental issues, frameworks and agendas in the context of the wider SDGs. Ultimately, the aim is to promote and increase system-wide collaboration, coordination and awareness.

Mr. Joseph Price (UNEP):

- Provided an overview of the Sustainable Infrastructure's Nexus Dialogue on investing in natural infrastructure that is being jointly developed with UNDP. There have been suggestions to link this Nexus Dialogue with the UN Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE), given that the theme of this current second phase of the Consultative Process is to look towards country level implementation and useful mechanisms for engaging governments and policymakers on the ground.
- This links closely with Principle 4 and is a key topic in the UNEA5.2 context, which is all about strengthening actions for nature to achieve the SDGs.
- The objective is therefore exploring specific financing and policy mechanisms for scaling up investments in natural infrastructure.
- For the panel, it is planned to include a government representative from a PAGE country and other actors that are key for investment, such as multilateral development banks but also civil society (a speaker to represent indigenous youth, especially given that nature-based solutions rely in part on indigenous knowledge).

Ms. Nina Arden (UN, EMG):

- The concept note for the dialogue has been circulated, the next step is to finalise the panelists' questions that will be drafted by the EMG. Suggestions and ideas are very welcome from colleagues to ensure that they are relevant to the outcomes of the dialogue and actionable. Therefore, if members have any topics that might be interesting, or suggestions on cross-cutting issues relevant to multiple agencies, that would be very valuable.

Ms. Elena Mendoza Barajas (UNU-FLORES):

- Regarding the barrier analysis concept, the main sectors to explore are buildings, transport and energy, and, initially, the plan is to focus on Chile and then use the findings of this case study to do a publication that can be shared with other countries in the region.
- Regarding the methodology, initially the plan is to conduct interviews with the main focal points in the different ministries and with relevant stakeholders, and then continue with the analysis of the barriers in the sectors that we have selected, before finally interpreting and analysing the results.
- More information about the methodology can be found in the e-mail that has been circulated prior to the meeting.
- The unique characteristics of the country will be taken into account when drafting the questionnaire and conducting the interviews.

Mr. Joseph Price (UNEP):

- Regarding opportunities for other EMG members to contribute to the barrier analysis, we have established the concept of the barrier analysis, but there will be various opportunities

to review the materials, scientific publications, workshops, or presentations to share knowledge.

- **Ms. Mendoza Barajas:** agreed and mentioned that as UNU is planning to conduct two workshops, it will be good to have the involvement of other EMG members for this.
- Regarding the timing of the workshops, mentioned that the dates of the workshops need to be confirmed following the first meeting with Chile. UNU and UNEP are planning to start the activity after 11 March 2022 (when there will be new focal points in the Ministries).
- Regarding the Nexus Dialogue, the next step would be to share the concept note with PAGE but it would be useful to hear EMG members' suggestions regarding panelists.

Mr. Benjamin Schachter (OHCHR):

- From the perspective of OHCHR, it is a very interesting subject and one of the critical areas is thinking about how to do projects involving natural infrastructure or nature-based solutions in a way that respects human rights, as there is a risk of exclusionary practices and conservation efforts that may result in displacement or adverse environmental effects. Therefore, the OHCHR would want to see some examination or critical thinking about the environmental and social safeguards in the context of evaluating projects, and of redress mechanisms to address potential impacts to ensure that the proposed natural infrastructure doesn't have negative human rights impacts
 - Mr. Price agreed and suggested that it would be useful to have a specific question on this issue for the panel, and to reflect the linkage between human rights and natural infrastructure more broadly at the event.
 - Ms. Kaplina asked Mr. Schachter for suggestions for a specific speaker on this topic.
 - Ms. Arden added that the team has reached out to the UNEP Youth Major group regarding an indigenous youth representative from Latin America, but that it would be great to hear suggestions from Mr. Schachter.
- If there is an indigenous youth representative on the panel, there is a good chance that this person can contribute on this point, but potential speakers will be proposed.

Mr. Maher Salman (FAO):

- It is also important to consider the potential of investment in natural infrastructure as a priority for COVID. Last year, the FAO proposed and [published](#) on a [smart WASH](#) approach where the FAO promoted the multiple uses of water using Africa as a case study where multifaceted investments in natural infrastructure can improve water access while responding to the need of irrigation for food production but also sanitation.
- More details on this approach can be presented or shared after the meeting
 - **Mr. Price** agreed on the relevance of this case study and highlighted to other members the value of also sharing case studies and tools that support the Principles more broadly throughout the year.

Ms. Kate Newman (WWF):

- Mentioned that it might be useful to make the connection with accelerating the transition to sustainable infrastructure through financing. [FAST Infrastructure](#) is a group of private and public sector investors coming together to figure out how to encourage and facilitate investment by the private sector in sustainable infrastructure in emerging and developing economies. The group has just finished developing their label this fall and are in the process of creating a Secretariat. They aim to explore different pipelines of sustainable projects and promote investment from the private sector to fill the finance gap. Natural infrastructure is a possible investment category for this label, but it was clear in discussions that those involved

are not so familiar with the idea or how to invest in it. It is run by HSBC, IFC, Macquarie, etc., so it is a group of big investors who could gain from this relationship and could contribute a private sector voice to these discussions.

- **Mr. Palmer:** Agreed that it would be great to find a place on the agenda for this partnership and suggested a follow up call afterwards with Ms. Newman.

Ms. Arden (UN, EMG):

- Highlighted if there are any further ideas or comments on the Nexus Dialogue concept, colleagues can inform UNEP/EMG before Monday COB. On Monday, brainstorming of any panelist questions will begin, in order to crystallize the trajectory of this Nexus Dialogue.

Mr. Price (UNEP):

- Mentioned also coordinating with SUN, and potentially meeting with them sometime early in 2022 to discuss exploring how to look into integrating the Principles into internal operations and facilities.
 - **Ms. Kaplina:** Agreed and noted a follow-up call with SUN can be scheduled after the meeting.

Ms. Kaplina (UN, EMG):

- Thanked members of the Consultative Process for their ongoing participation and noted that anybody with ideas for promoting the second edition of Principles in their organisations would be well received, as well as any ideas to add to the Nexus Dialogue concept note or participating in the workshops associated with the barrier analysis.

Appendix 1: list of participants

Number	Name	Institution
1.	Ms. Riina Jussila	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
2.	Mr. Richard Roehrl	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
3.	Mr. Maher Salman	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
4.	Mr. Christophe Xerri	International Atomic Energy Agency
5.	Ms. Florence Descroix-Comanducci	International Atomic Energy Agency
6.	Mr. Lorenzo Gavilli	International Civil Aviation Organization
7.	Mr. Frederik Haag	International Maritime Organization
8.	Ms. Robin Michelle Zuercher	International Telecommunication Union
9.	Mr. Benjamin Schachter	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
10.	Mr. Mateo Salomon	UN Development Programme
11.	Ms. Anna Kaplina	UN Environment Management Group
12.	Ms. Nina Arden	UN Environment Management Group
13.	Mr. Carl Giardina	UN Environment Management Group
14.	Mr. Sam Jeremy	UN Environment Management Group
15.	Mr. Joseph Price	UN Environment Programme
16.	Mr. Rowan Palmer	UN Environment Programme
17.	Ms. Marie-Aimee Salopiata	UN Environment Programme
18.	Ms. Ana Fernandez Vergara	UN Environment Programme

19.	Mr. David Morgan	UN Environment Programme
20.	Mr. Henrique Silva Pacini Costa	UN Conference on Trade and Development
21.	Ms. Apoorva Bajpai	UN Office for Project Services
22.	Ms. Elena Mendoza Barajas	UN University
23.	Ms. Edeltraud Günther	UN University
24.	Ms. Garo Batmanian	World Bank
25.	Ms. Agnès Lostis	World Intellectual Property Organization
26.	Ms. Gergana Kiskinova	World Trade Organization
27.	Ms. Kate Newman	World Wide Fund for Nature