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ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP



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Proposal

Strengthening UN System-wide Support to RCOs/UNCTs for Triple Planetary Crisis Responses

Objective

Leverage the full potential of the UN system to strengthen UN system-wide support to governments and national stakeholders to tackle the triple planetary crisis by strengthening the capacities of and providing guidance, integrated advisory services, and analysis to RCs and UNCTs.

Background

The interlinked nature of the SDGs demands concerted national efforts on ‘SDG Integration’ – i.e., taking into account synergies and trade-offs between SDGs, as different goals might have reinforcing, but also undermining, effects on each other. The need for SDG integration is particularly evident when viewed through the lens of the triple planetary crisis - climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. Driven by unsustainable production and consumption patterns, this crisis requires integration at two levels.

First, the components of the triple planetary crisis themselves need to be addressed in an integrated manner for policy and programmes to be productive. For instance, climate mitigation efforts such as renewable energy rollout should not compromise biodiversity. Second, efforts on the triple planetary crisis must be integrated across the SDGs, such that action on “planet” becomes an engine for “people”, “prosperity” “peace”, and “partnership”. For example, efforts to decarbonize economic sectors must be purposely designed increased economic growth, employment and equality, rather than stifle them.

For the first time in the history of UNGA resolutions on operational activities for development, the 2020 QCPR contains strong environmental mandates for the UN system. This is an area where more systematic and robust support to UNCTs is needed to promote integrated solutions within and across climate, biodiversity, and sustainable use that support countries’ just transition to green economies.

For UNCTs developing and implementing Cooperation Frameworks (CFs) together with national governments, such integration depends on systemic analysis and policy-making processes. Yet, national analytical and policy-making architecture is often fragmented and siloed. National governments undertake environmental efforts under a plethora of multilateral environmental agreements or

conventions, often siloed within the ministry of environment, with little coordination with ministries pertinent to economic growth or social inclusion, or with the UNCT in the design and implementation of the CF. As strategic convenors and custodians of Agenda 2030, UNRCs are uniquely positioned to support UNCTs to “bridge the conventions” by engaging the breadth of the national policy frameworks and transforming fragmentation into integration via next-generation CFs.

The UNSDG Core Group requested DCO, UNEP and UNDP, in July 2021, to co-lead a workstream on strengthening the UN system-wide support to UNCTs and RCs to tackle the triple planetary crisis. The UNSDG Core Group reviewed, in November 2021, the first stages of that work and provided further guidance. In 2022, the UNSDG will support UNCTs and the regional level platforms with capacity building, guidance, integrated advisory services, and analysis, to support a strengthened response climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and promote an inclusive green recovery. The UNSDG is expected to coordinate with and build on efforts led by the UN EMG, the SG’s Calls to Action, and similar UN environmental initiatives. Key activities and results for this UNSDG Core Group workplan in 2022 include:

- A system-wide response tailored to the needs of RCOs and UNCTs by establishing a direct feedback loop – through a focus group to advise on approaches, activities and outputs developed.
- Opportunities to strengthen how the triple planetary crisis is addressed in Common Country Analyses and Cooperation Frameworks identified through their in-depth review.
- Strengthened awareness, knowledge and capacity on key entry points for integrated programming that addresses the triple planetary crisis – through webinars, information sessions and dialogues.
- Approaches on the triple planetary crises are tested and operationalized in select UNCTs, through a more in-depth and tailored support.
- Strengthened global interagency collaboration and coherence in addressing the triple planetary crisis is strengthened through the EMG.

Activities and scope

In line with the broader UNSDG Core Group workplan outlined above, this proposed EMG activity will include a focus on the following deliverables in collaboration with UNDCO.

Activity 1: Map UN initiatives and knowledge products relevant to the triple planetary response

- Consolidate and update mappings undertaken by existing EMG workstreams and by relevant IBCs to provide an overview of UN interagency arrangements, partnerships, frameworks and guidance initiatives of agencies, funds and programmes that can contribute to the triple planetary response.
- Identify opportunities for strengthening this knowledge base from the perspective of RC/UNCT needs.

Activity 2: Strengthen awareness, knowledge and capacity of RCOs/UNCTs on key entry points for integrated programming that addresses the triple planetary crisis.

- Curate existing UN system knowledge, guidance and resources including those developed by the EMG workstreams, into user friendly formats and e-platforms for use by RCOs/UNCT – through or in collaboration with IBCs on environment and climate in each region.

- Integrate this knowledge into a series of EMG Nexus Dialogues targeting RCOs/UNCTs, including by addressing gaps identified in the review of the QCPR environmental indicators. These dialogues will be complementary to the overall information sessions undertaken under the UNSDG workplan.

Activity 3: Test and operationalize support to select RCOs/UNCTs on the triple planetary crises

- Facilitate coordinated UN inputs for more in-depth support to a sub-set of RCOs with the aim to operationalize the approaches on the triple planetary crises.
- Capture lessons from this process to strengthen the UN system knowledge base and guidance.

Value added: These efforts will strengthen the value-added of synergies within and across existing EMG workstreams relevant to the triple planetary crisis response including on green recovery, human rights, the common approach on biodiversity, and pollution, as well as the EMG nexus dialogue series.