UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Independent Review of UNEP's Contributions to Poverty Reduction, on behalf of Sida

Synthesis Report

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

10YFP	10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production
ABS	Access and Benefit Sharing
AREED	African Rural Energy Enterprise Development
DDT	Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane
ESSF	Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GE	Green Economy
GEI	Green Economy Initiative
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
GHG	Green House Gas
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
IGE	Inclusive Green Economy
ILO	International Labour Organization
JPO	Junior Professional Officer
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LDC	Least Developed Country
LDCF	Least Developed Country Fund
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MIC	Middle Income Country
MTS	Medium Term Strategy
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
PAGE	Partnership for Action on Green Economy
PCA	Programme Cooperation Agreements
PEA	Poverty-Environment Action
PEI	Poverty-Environment Initiative
PoW	Programme of Work
P-E	Poverty-Environment
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RPSC	Regional Policy Support Component
SCAF	Seed Capital Assistance Facility
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEK	Swedish Krona
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
TEEB	The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity

TOC.....Theory of Change
TOR.....Terms of Reference
UN .....United Nations
UNCT .....United Nations Country Team
UNDAF.....United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP.....United Nations Development Programme
UNEA .....United Nations Environment Assembly
UNEG.....United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP .....United Nations Environment Programme
UNICEF .....United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO .....United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNITAR.....United Nations Institute for Training and Research
USD.....United States Dollar
WAVE .....Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services

Executive Summary

Introduction

1. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has been a long-term partner of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), providing support to the implementation of its sub-programmes. The Swedish government has been placing environment and climate change among the top priorities within its support to development cooperation with natural capital regarded as the basis of human existence. The overall objective of the Swedish development cooperation is: *'to create preconditions for better living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression'* (Sida, 2019). As part of the Programme Cooperation Agreements (PCA), Sida supported UNEP through softly earmarked funding during the period 2015-2017 and beyond, across selected UNEP sub-programmes, with a focus on sustainable development and poverty reduction[1] and with emphasis on improving conditions for people living in poverty in developing countries[2].

2. UNEP is primarily a normative agency with, typically, no in-country presence and a broad mandate in the field of the environment and support to the environmental pillar of sustainable development. UNEP's niche is seen in particular in terms of the science – policy relationship, grounded in scientifically-based evidence. UNEP's role is considered to focus at policy level, including support to international agreements and their implementation, norms and standard setting and development of guidelines for the enactment of policies and plans and piloting the operationalization of policies, standards and guidelines, supporting their application at national and local levels. The context in which UNEP operates is evolving and challenging with three main environmental crisis identified: climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

3. As part of the cooperation agreement of UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) 2018-2021, Sida supported UNEP to perform a review of poverty reduction related results[3] that were achieved through UNEP's work evaluated and reported during the period 2015-2017[4]. This was in order to assess the level to which, and the ways in which, poverty had been integrated in UNEP's projects and initiatives. The review was to provide a forward-looking analysis on how poverty reduction results could be further strengthened within, and catalysed by, UNEP's work in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

4. The present review covered the five sub-programmes to which Sida has provided support during the period of the MTS as well as the Resilience to Disaster and Conflict sub-programme, to which it has

[1] The present report makes use of the term poverty reduction in order to refer to inclusion of poverty related objectives in UNEP's initiatives, which aim at reducing poverty, contributing towards the broader goal of poverty eradication, as referred to in Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

[2] PCA, 2014: '*The Sida contribution shall be used in line with the following principles: The sub-programmes and two priority areas supported by Sida according to Article 2 shall be implemented in a result-focused manner through the Programme of Work based on their relevance for sustainable development and poverty reduction, as well as areas where UNEP has a comparative advantage; Emphasis on improving conditions for people living in poverty in developing countries; Emphasis on coordination and co-operation with other development partners, particularly within the UN family; Emphasis on ensuring that gender and human rights are fully taken into account and equality and equity are integrated in all policies, programmes and projects and Increased efficiency by improving coordination and synergies between the programmes.*

[3] *'… Sida will support UN Environment to perform a review of poverty reduction results achieved through UN Environment's work between 2015-2017. The review will be initiated in 2019 for delivery in 2020 and will draw upon completed independent evaluations, performance monitoring and programme planning information. Contributions and linkages to key poverty-related SDGs will also be highlighted. Specific recommendations on how SDG-linked poverty reduction results can be further strengthened within, and catalysed by, UN Environment's work will be developed'* (para 3, Sida PCA 2018-21).

[4] The review was expanded to the period 2014-2017 in order to align with the timeframe of the previous UNEP MTS. Two evaluations of the Poverty Environment Initiative were included in the review sample, one completed in 2016 and the other in 2019. Some project evaluations completed in 2018-19 were also included in the review sample in order to follow 'information-rich' projects and to represent UNEP's portfolio at a sub-programme level (see Annex 4, Details on the Methodology of the Review).

been providing funding for the period 2018-21, with Sida's poverty framework from 2019 including human security as one of its four dimensions. The review made use of human rights and gender as cross-cutting issues. The review focused on the assessment criteria of: relevance, project design, effectiveness, and sustainability and the conduct of a forward-looking analysis. As part of effectiveness, the availability of outputs, achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact was assessed. Evaluation questions included in the Terms of Reference (TOR) were arranged by the assessment criteria.

5. The review methodology[5] included primarily the desk review of project evaluations and design documentation and semi-structured interviews. The review has taken as its primary subject matter a sample of evaluations of projects carried out during the 2014-17 period, in line with the requirements from the PCA. Moreover, projects designed and approved in 2020 were reviewed in order to inform the forward-looking analysis. A meta-analysis was carried out using a purposive sample of 20 project evaluations and 5 project design documents. A total of 60 interviews were conducted, including Sida representative, UNEP senior management and programme staff, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) representatives, focusing in particular on the UNEP-UNDP joint Poverty Environment Initiative (PEI), later transformed to the Poverty Environment Action (PEA), and selected representatives of agencies benefitting from UNEP support.

6. The inclusion of multiple stakeholders and the use of a variety of analytical methods allowed for the triangulation of data across the various respondents as well as across methods used, in this way enhancing validation of findings. In order to strengthen the utility of the recommendations of the review, the analysis was informed by use of two frameworks: Sida's 2019 articulation of its 'Dimensions of Poverty'[6] and Agenda 2030, including the SDGs approved in 2015. Developed during or after the period of project implementation under review, these two frameworks have not explicitly informed the design or full implementation of the work under review but nevertheless served as important references for analysis. The reviewer made use of the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System and abided by the ethical code of conduct for UNEG evaluations.

Relevance of poverty to UNEP's Medium-Term Strategies and Programmes of Work

7. The focus in much of UNEP's strategies and Programmes of Work (POW) is towards human development and well-being, which goes back to the 1972 Stockholm Environment Conference, at which UNEP's mandate originated. This emphasis on human well-being in the MTS of 2014-2017 as well as the present MTS (2018-2021), shows the position of UNEP regarding the conservation of nature, considering it not as an aim in and of itself, but related to human use of natural resources for economic and social development, as the basis for human subsistence, contributing to people's livelihoods and their prosperity. In this respect the concept of sustainability is important as it provides limits to human use, with use meant to be commensurate with the carrying capacities of natural resources and leaving access and related opportunities for future generations. Poverty reduction has been subsumed as part of sustainable development at the level of the objectives of sub-programmes both in the previous and the present MTS and POWs.

8. Although largely left implicit, poverty reduction concerns an important element of enhancing human well-being and prosperity for UNEP. Linkages with poverty reduction can be found in all the sub-programmes, though they vary in terms of directness and contents concerned. Many UNEP staff interviewed do consider the relationship between UNEP initiatives and poverty reduction as important although they realize that this relationship is often not made explicit. Many believe that UNEP's

[5] See Annex 4 Details on the Methodology of the Review for further details.

[6] Sida's framework includes four poverty dimensions: in terms of access to resources for people living in poverty, in terms of lack of opportunities and choice and the ability to move out of poverty, in terms of a lack of power and voice, lacking to take part in decision-making that affects their lives and livelihoods, and poverty in terms of lack of human security, exposed to violence and limited ability to exercise their human rights and further aggravating the existing poverty conditions.

projects and programmes contribute towards poverty reduction in terms of their results. They consider that it would be beneficial if aspects of poverty and relations with environmental issues were made explicit and as much as possible monitored in order to show UNEPs contribution to poverty related results.

9. An early adopter of a poverty approach in UNEP has been the Poverty Environment Initiative (PEI), developed and implemented in partnership with UNDP. The PEI is one of UNEP's flagship initiatives. The key objective of the initiative has been to enhance the relationship between poverty and environment, i.e. to provide support to country-led efforts to mainstream poverty-environment (P-E) linkages into national and sub-national development planning, including policy-making, budgeting, and monitoring through the provision of financial and technical assistance. Poverty perspectives have, moreover, been integrated in UNEP's development of the Green Economy concept, with its transformation to an Inclusive Green Economy which combines economic growth with environmental health as well as social-well-being. The Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE), a joint UN initiative of UNEP together with International Labour Organization (ILO), UNDP, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), provided support to aspects of inclusive green economy at the country level. Moreover, other projects at regional and country level have included a poverty focus in more or less implicit ways in the period 2014-17.

Operationalisation of poverty in UNEP projects and initiatives

10. A focus on poverty in UNEP's programming has been achieved in part through the selection of Least Developed Countries (LDC) and of poor rural regions of other developing countries and other locations with high poverty incidence as the target areas for projects and initiatives. Much of the UNEP support has included a focus on the interests and needs of poor and vulnerable groups and at times these groups have participated in project design. Such inclusion has not always been informed by a formal assessment on the multi-dimensional aspects of poverty incidence in the project area concerned nor has inclusion necessarily been followed through in project implementation and in monitoring and evaluation. The lack of gathering of baseline data at the start of projects has limited the opportunities for impact analysis towards their end. Although all aspects of addressing and affecting poverty, as identified in the Sida poverty framework, can be found in UNEP sub-programmes, the extent to which this is the case and the poverty – environment linkages concerned differ substantially amongst them.

11. Gender has been recognized by UNEP as an important aspect of economic and social deprivation and included in project design and implementation. A gender marker analysis was conducted in 2016 and, since then, projects have been budgeting for gender action and staff capacities have been developed on gender mainstreaming. Gender has been included in the project design review process, although without a minimum quality assessment threshold on gender, projects without sufficient attention to gender can still be approved with a sufficient aggregate score across all the assessment criteria. Based on the review of project evaluation reports, attention to gender in selected initiatives was varying while the inclusion of gender in the evaluation reports themselves also varied substantially. In particular, longer term initiatives have been able to enhance the inclusion of gender responsive approaches over time.

12. The UNEP Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework (ESSF) sets out four guiding principles and a set of social and environmental standards for UNEP support. The framework extends beyond the application of a 'do no harm' principle and includes 'leaving no one behind' as one of the principles of the framework. The original framework dates from 2015 with an updated version approved in February 2020. Although reference is made within this framework to the call to end poverty as part of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, there is no further specification of what minimum requirements would be needed in terms of project design and implementation.

13. Social and other safeguards were not usually referred to explicitly in the evaluation reports that were reviewed, nor have the requirements of the earlier version of the framework been used as a specific assessment criterion for project evaluations until late 2019. Prior to this, evaluation reports more generally addressed any, unintended, negative effects of projects. Given its environmental focus, UNEP has a unique relationship with indigenous and other groups that are highly dependent on natural resources, often in remote and hard to reach areas, aspects which have been included in the ESSF. There is a need, in terms of poverty-oriented interventions, to take the specific needs and requirements of these groups into consideration in line with the ESSF standards.

14. For UNEP, as a non-resident UN agency and a relatively small organization within the UN system, partnerships are key to its programming, including for global flagship initiatives as well as for small or larger scale projects at the country level. UNEP has been able to expand its partnerships with member states beyond Environmental Ministries to work with Ministries of Planning and Finance, which are important partners in terms of enhancing national development planning and budgeting processes through integration of environmental and poverty related concerns, an approach that was started through PEI. It has, moreover, enhanced its relations with Ministries of Industry, Ministries of Agriculture and other Ministries in particular in terms of resource efficiency and climate change programming. This form of multiple ministerial partnerships has enabled UNEP to enhance its ability to address economic, social and poverty issues in relation to environmental challenges.

15. Partnerships with other UN agencies have been important, in particular given UNEPs mandate to enhance environmental perspectives and capacities in sister UN agencies. This has included resident UN agencies with social-oriented mandates that have built longer term country level experience and can provide complementary expertise and capacities for the implementation of country-based support. Even though there have been substantial transaction costs in terms of cooperation with multiple UN agencies at a global level in some of the flagship initiatives, achievements are considered to have outweighed the costs concerned. The UN reform process has provided additional incentives as well as opportunities for partnerships with sister UN agencies. Work with private sector actors has been important, in particular in terms of their investments in 'green' and inclusive economic activities. In addition to the formal sector, the importance of paying sufficient attention to the informal sector has been recognized, which is of critical importance in particular to poor people who more often depend on the informal part of the economy. Moreover, partnering with civil society organizations and academia has become more prevalent in project design.

Assessment and achievement of results

16. An assessment of poverty related results has been severely constrained by the lack of identification of such results and how they are meant to be achieved in the project results frameworks and the Theories of Change (TOCs) often reconstructed as part of the project evaluations conducted. An exception concerns the PEI, which includes six interrelated pathways of change in its TOC developed over the timeframe of project implementation. These pathways are to lead to improved livelihoods, enhanced poverty reduction and human development as well as improved environment and natural resource management and sustainable natural wealth.

17. The monitoring of poverty related results and intermediate level change has been limited. Use has mostly been made of a varied set of less than ten quantitative indicators, with a focus on process related issues. Human development and poverty related aspects have rarely been included in the monitoring frameworks and the results indicators, with limited attention to gender and other aspects of vulnerability. The assessment of poverty related results, if conducted at all, has depended primarily on qualitative and descriptive approaches. This has made it challenging for the monitoring data gathered to provide the evidence base required for demonstration of proof of concept on poverty related initiatives and to engage in the policy level discussions needed for scaling up and replication of the approach being demonstrated by a project. Moreover, the site selection of pilot projects has

often been primarily opportunistic, rather than driven by a rigorous methodology that could enhance the credibility of findings regarding the effectiveness of the intervention.

18. With poverty reduction usually not included as an explicit project objective, UNEP evaluations which assess project performance against their approved designs, did usually not unpack the relationships between environment and people-oriented social development aspects of the interventions. No specific attention was paid to poverty related results in most of the evaluation reports reviewed. Exceptions include the use of stories of change in some of the projects reviewed and the development of the Green Economy Progress Index, which provide qualitative and quantitative examples of ways to include people's well-being and poverty related issues in UNEP's assessment of results.

19. The effects that UNEP initiatives and projects have on poverty-related issues are usually caused indirectly rather than directly. In many initiatives and projects UNEP does not work directly with beneficiaries at the local level. This is particularly true for the flagship initiatives, which implement activities in multiple countries and work both at global and country levels. With UNEP's focus on the environment, poverty related results are usually achieved in relation to environmental results. With UNEP being one of several organizations that support the changes concerned, results need to be assessed in terms of UNEPs contribution to these changes. Given this indirect approach to addressing poverty, effects of UNEP projects on poverty are often either broad (i.e. in terms of targeting Least Developed Countries), implied (i.e. improving the environmental context and climate conditions) or indirect (e.g. healthier ecosystems can provide better support to families living at subsistence level or on the margins of ecological sustainability).

20. Nevertheless, some poverty related results could be identified. The results of PEI reflect the integration of the understanding of the poverty environment nexus into development planning and budgeting. GEI and PAGE initiatives reached important results in terms of the inclusive green economy, which has been recognized as one of the pathways to achieving sustainable development. Single country projects, which work more often at the sub-national level, at times obtained tangible results at the local level, including for poor and vulnerable groups. Based on their approach, such results are limited in reach even though some are meant to be pilots and scaled up or replicated elsewhere.

21. The lack of a UNEP presence in-country was seen by many of the interviewees as a constraint, in particular to country level context-based initiatives, although it was realized on the other hand, that partnerships, including those with resident UN agencies, could address this constraint. Some UNEP initiatives have been using a variety of human resource approaches in terms of country level support, including stationing of UNEP staff temporarily in partner UN agency offices. The PEI initiative developed a minimum human resource infrastructure for its support in Africa, with staff stationed at regional level and in participating countries.

22. UNEP's human resource base is regarded as being very technically oriented. Although economists have been recruited more recently, there is less staff with social or political science backgrounds, which would be useful in terms of relating environmental aspects to multi-dimensional aspects of poverty. The lack of a poverty analysis or use of context specific poverty details to inform project design was identified as a limitation in terms of poverty related programming in evaluation reports reviewed. Changes in government priorities based on shifts related to elections or otherwise, were seen at the most important external constraint to UNEP project implementation.

23. The most important enabling factor for enhancing poverty related results concerns UNEP implementation of longer-term flagship programmes, together with other UN agencies. The programmatic approach of in particular the PEI and PAGE longer term initiatives proved beneficial to a focus on poverty concerns as it allowed for a longer-term emphasis on key aspects of environmental, social and economic development connections, supporting systemic change at the policy and institutional levels.

Sustainability of results

24. Project level sustainability, assessed during UNEP project evaluations[7], has been constrained by the lack of the inclusion of realistic and practical exit strategies in the design stage of projects, in order to prepare for the phasing out of project support and to ensure the sustainability of results. In PEI, sustainability was enhanced, in particular, through the hiring of national level expertise, making use of a 'learning by doing' approach and building country level capacities in this way. Exit and sustainability strategies were developed for participating countries, setting out the exit process and requirements for sustainability post PEI interventions. Apart from sustainability obtained through PEI in planning processes, this proved less the case in terms of budgeting support, where less results were achieved, in particular in countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, with relatively high levels of donor dependencies.

25. For poverty to be addressed and results to be sustained, there is a need to include economic and social aspects of poor and vulnerable people and groups, in addition to a focus on the natural environment. While UNEP has been able to develop a clear understanding of the interrelationships between economic development processes and the environment, a similar understanding has not yet been put in place in terms of the social aspects of the sustainable development process, including social aspects of poverty and left behind groups and their relationship with environmental concerns. Such a social development perspective can inform UNEP's programming, clarifying the relationships between economic, social and environmental parameters within the broader process of sustainable development, making use of an environmental sensitive, people- and poverty-oriented approach.

Lessons Learned

26. A useful set of lessons learned was included in the evaluation reports reviewed, which focused on programmatic contents, means of programming and aspects of programme support. Inclusive green economy was considered an important means to address poverty in the African context. There was the recognition that there is a lack of knowledge and guidance to look at environmental projects from a poverty perspective. Rather than focusing primarily on new policies and legislation, the need to focus on the implementation of existing laws, policies and plans was identified. The need for a central knowledge management system to enhance learning within the organisation and across UNEP sub-programmes and divisions was included. Coordination between government, international organizations, civil society and the private sector, was seen as critical to bringing about the substantive changes in national policy and practices required to achieve an inclusive green economy and support achievement of the SDGs.

27. In terms of lessons from PEI, the practice of UNEP engagement beyond the Ministry of Environment, with Ministries of Planning and Finance, was seen as pivotal to include environmental and poverty related objectives in national development planning and budgeting. P-E mainstreaming was recognized to concern a long-term process of institutional change across Government which requires long-term funding to undertake technical studies, broaden ownership, develop co-ordination mechanisms, build capacity and develop and embed tools and approaches. It usually required engaging in multiple sectors and associated planning and budget processes and engagement in national as well as sub-national level planning and implementation with sufficient attention to monitoring of results across all levels concerned.

Analysis

28. Sida support has enabled UNEP to explore how its environmentally oriented projects and initiatives can contribute to poverty reduction. This was realized in a period when the relationship between poverty and environment was less clearly identified. UNEP has started to achieve results, in particular

[7] UNEP project evaluations consider three aspects of the sustainability of project level results: socio-political, institutional and financial sustainability.

through the inclusion of an environmental perspective to economic and social development planning and budgeting processes at the country level, including the valuation of ecosystem services on which poor people depend and the addition of the concept of inclusiveness to the Green Economy agenda. There is substantial potential to further enhance UNEP's programmatic approach to include poverty explicitly as part of its human well-being-oriented perspective.

29. Given the limited resources of UNEP, results at scale cannot be expected to be realized through UNEP resources alone, but usually need to be achieved through changes of government and private sector investment, which is what UNEP project support often tries to achieve. Partnerships with UN agencies with an explicit social mandate can help in this respect as these can enable UNEP to focus on environmental aspects from a people perspective as part of the sustainable development process, while other social and economic concerns can be dealt with by other UN agencies, using an environmental sustainable development perspective.

30. The effects of climate change, the enhanced levels of environmental pollution and the reduction of biodiversity have had substantial negative effects on the environment and have affected people living in poverty, increasing the incidence of poverty. The recent Covid-19 pandemic has directly affected poor and vulnerable people in terms of their health as well as indirectly in terms of their household economics. Part of the gains made on poverty in the last decade are being reversed by the Covid-19 crisis, which can be expected to have some negative effects on the environment as enhanced poverty is often related to enhanced pressure on the natural environment. The Covid-19 crisis has, moreover, drawn a spotlight to the effects of human encroachment on the natural environment of wildlife, resulting in increased human contact with wild animal species and the related risk of emergent zoonotic diseases.

31. Given these contextual changes in terms of human – environment relationships, there is an enhanced need for UNEP to increase its focus on people and poverty in relation to the natural environment, informed by a broader understanding of the interrelationships of environmental, economic and social development aspects of the sustainable development process. UNEP would need to access the relevant human resources to lead the development and support the implementation of such an approach throughout the organisation.

32. With its focus on the environmental pillar, UNEP is uniquely positioned to validate the role of the natural environment in the sustainable development process, not as an objective on its own, but in its relationship to economic and social development aspects, assisting as well as providing boundaries to the process, in order to support the well-being of both present and future generations.

Recommendations *(abridged, for complete version please see recommendations section in the main report)*

33. Recommendations are presented based on the findings and analysis of the review. They are in particular addressed to UNEP and the way in which it deals with poverty related issues at the strategic and programmatic level with one of the recommendations addressed to Sida. In the development of the recommendations, use has been made of the viewpoints of stakeholders interviewed as well as of learnings obtained in the joint UNEP-UNDP PEI and other UNEP flagships and projects that integrated social development and poverty concerns in environmental initiatives. The recommendations provide the strategic and programmatic pathways for mainstreaming of economic, social and poverty considerations and their relation to environmental issues into all aspects of UNEP's programming. For each of the recommendations the challenges/problems to be addressed are identified as well as actions required, priority levels, responsibilities and time frames concerned.

    1. Incorporate a people-oriented approach and a social development perspective as part of UNEP's global strategy, including support to poverty reduction and related social development issues in terms of their relation to environmental and economic aspects of sustainable development in the MTS and POW for the period 2022 and beyond. This needs to be informed by clear donor expectations with respect to poverty, made explicit in the Sida-UNEP PCA.

2. Develop multiple scenarios for the relevant level of inclusion of poverty reduction related issues into UNEP projects and initiatives as part of the social development perspective, ranging from minimal, intermediate and substantial levels of inclusion of poverty related issues and identify when and where to make use of such scenarios.

3. For Sida to include explicitly a people-oriented approach and social development perspective in the PCA with UNEP as well as in the PCA performance framework, combining an accountability perspective with a learning-oriented approach, enabling the use of experiences and lessons to inform the development of UNEP's programme on poverty reduction in terms of its relations to environmental and economic aspects of sustainable development, making use of a multi-dimensional poverty perspective.

4. Ensure that the Policy and Programme Division has the capacity to provide a global poverty reduction / social development advisor to spearhead the integration of the social development pillar of sustainable development into the work of UNEP, in its relationships to the environmental and economic pillars and with a particular focus on the objective of poverty reduction and provide support at regional and country levels through the capacity development of Regional Sub-Programme Coordinators.

5. Develop detailed guidelines, methods and tools for the programmatic implementation of a social development perspective in relation to UNEP's approach to sustainable development, including reduction of poverty in its multiple dimensions and its relation with social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development.

6. Enhance project design, monitoring and evaluation in response to the inclusion of a people-oriented approach, including explicit social development aspects and poverty reduction objectives and results in projects and initiatives in addition to environmental ones, in order to enable assessment of relevant poverty reduction results and enhance learning within the organization on poverty related results and ways to achieve these.

   Project designs should, in particular, strengthen the likelihood that environmental and poverty related results achieved at project level are sustained by including realistic and practical exit strategies at the project design stage. It should also enhance the probability of expansion of project results through adequate attention to opportunities for scaling-up and replication of the initiative concerned in its design as well as throughout project implementation.

7. In country level initiatives, partner with the UN Resident Coordinator's office and UN resident agencies, in particular those agencies that can provide complementary support to a people-oriented, social development and poverty reduction approach in the proposed initiative and the specific country context concerned, in line with the on-going UN reform process.

1. Introduction

1) Purpose and Scope of the Review

8. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has been providing long-term support to the implementation of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). This is within the overall objective of the Swedish development cooperation 'to create preconditions for better living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression' (Sida, 2019). As part of the Programme Cooperation Agreements (PCA) of UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy 2018-2021, Sida provided support to UNEP to perform a review of poverty reduction related results that were achieved through UNEP's work in the period 2015-2017. This review was agreed to be delivered in 2020 and needed to draw, among others, on completed independent evaluation reports.

9. In line with the requirements in the PCA and the Terms of Reference (TOR), this review is intended to inform Sida and UNEP and other relevant stakeholders on the extent to which, and the ways in which, the UNEP programme has contributed to address key poverty issues and made use of the nexus between poverty and environment. Informed by an assessment of the UNEP programmes and projects implemented, the review provides a forward-looking analysis on how poverty reduction results can be further strengthened within, and catalysed by, UNEP's work as part of support to the Sustainable Development Goals. The review puts forward a set of practical recommendations.

10. In order to align with the period of the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) 2014-2017, the review expanded on the period of 2015-2017 mentioned in the PCA in order to align with the period of the strategy. The review focused in particular on those projects with a strong emphasis on poverty, and included such projects that started before 2015. This concerned, in particular, the Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI), which received earmarked funds from Sida over an extended period and for which initiative two evaluations were conducted, covering the periods 2008-2013 and 2013-2018 respectively. Evaluation reports of both periods of the PEI were therefore included in the review.

2) Objectives of the Review

11. The assessment made use of the evaluation questions included in the TOR, which were rearranged making use of a limited number of overarching issues, with a focus on aspects of relevance, project design, effectiveness and forward-looking analysis. In line with UNEP's approach, three elements were considered as part of effectiveness: availability of outputs, achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact. The means used by projects to assess results were also included. Moreover, the issue of sustainability was added, in order to detail questions on the social and environmental aspects concerned and to inform the forward-looking analysis.

12. The appraisal of aspects of relevance of the initiatives focused in particular on their significance to poor and vulnerable people and groups, while assessments of effectiveness focused on results achieved and their contribution to addressing poverty and environmental results. The persistence of results in terms of gains on poverty and environmental aspects was assessed under Sustainability. In its forward-looking approach, the assessment moved beyond implemented projects and their achievements, to include what has been learned so far on the nexus between environment and poverty and the interconnectedness of economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development and to use these learnings to inform the identification of future opportunities to enhance poverty related aspects in the various parts of UNEP's programming. Both in terms of the assessment, as well as the forward-looking analysis, the review made use of human rights and gender as cross-cutting issues. For an overview of objectives see box 1 below.

Box 1: Review Objectives

- **Relevance**
- **Effectiveness**
- **Sustainability**
- **Project Design**
- **Forward-looking analysis**

13. The review drew upon selected project completed independent evaluation reports and project design documents as well as other relevant documentation. The review covered the five sub-programmes to which Sida provided support during the period of the MTS as well as the Resilience to Disaster and Conflict sub-programme to which it has been providing funding in the PCA for the period 2018-21. This inclusion, moreover, is in line with the Sida's multi-dimensional poverty framework, which distinguishes human security as one of its four dimensions.

3) Context of the UNEP Initiatives and Projects

14. The context within which UNEP operates is continuously evolving. Changes identified in UNEP's MTS include increasing average temperatures, increased frequency and severity of climatic events affecting natural assets and human security, sea level rise, substantial biodiversity loss and the continuing extinction of species. Challenges concerned are seen as further exacerbated by population growth, depletion of natural resources, increased waste production and increased global inequalities. Moreover, urbanization is identified as an important driving force behind environmental change, though it is recognized that with the resulting concentration of people, it might pose advantages in terms of ease of communication. Air pollution is considered among the world's largest environmental health risks. The need to understand the gender dimensions of the environmental challenges is considered as an important condition for addressing these, taking into consideration the ways in which women and men are managers of natural resources and affected by the changes concerned.[8]

[8] United Nations Environment Programme, Medium Term Strategy 2014-2017, January 2015; United Nations Environment Programme, Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021, May 2016.

2. Subject of the Review

1) UNEP Strategic Directions and Programmes of Work

15. Within the United Nations (UN) system, UNEP has the responsibility of leading and coordinating action on environmental matters. As part of its mandate, UNEP promotes environmental sustainability, while contributing to a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

16. UNEP's strategic planning approach is consolidated through a set of interrelated documents. This includes the four-year UNEP MTS, the two-year Strategic Framework and the biennial Programme of Work and Budget (PoW). These are all public documents. They are supplemented by the internal Programme Framework, outlining the programme interventions of the sub-programmes and Project Documents, detailing the projects that operationalize the PoW.

17. In the MTS of the period 2014-17 and the POWs of 2014-2015 and 2016-2017 poverty reduction appears included in the aim of enhancing human well-being and is considered as a part of the sustainable development process. How poverty is to be addressed in its relationship with environmental issues is not made explicit.

18. The latest UNEP medium-term strategy for the period 2018-2021 puts people at the centre of the development process, enhancing their ability to manage the environment and to safeguard the biodiversity and ecosystem services that it provides for countries' development, which are crucial to reduce poverty and promote human well-being[9]. Meeting the needs of present and future generations is to be achieved without degrading the environment or exceeding the planet's regenerative capacities. Inclusive green economy is seen as playing an important role in sustainable development and poverty reduction across all UNEP focus areas with the need for environmental considerations to be integrated into all economic and social agendas.

19. In the UNEP MTS of 2014-2017 as well as the MTS of 2018-2021, the UNEP programme consists of seven sub-programmes (terminology of the most recently published MTS used):

Present Sub-Programmes	**Sub-Programmes during period 2014-2017**
• Climate change;	• Climate change;
• Resilience to disasters and conflicts;	• Disasters and conflicts;
• Healthy and productive ecosystems;	• Ecosystem management;
• Environmental governance;	• Environmental governance;
• Chemicals, waste and air quality;	• Chemicals and waste;
• Resource efficiency;	• Resource efficiency;
• Environment under review.	• Environment under review.

20. Each of the sub-programmes is implemented by one or multiple of UNEP's five functional divisions:

Present Divisions	**Divisions during period 2014-2017**
• Communication Division;	• Division of Communication and Public Information;
• Economy Division;	• Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE);
• Ecosystems Division;	• Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI);
• Law Division;	• Division of Environmental Law and Conventions (DELC);
• Policy and Programmes Division	• Programme Support and Planning Team (Office for Operations)
• Science Division;	• Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA);

[9] The World Bank has defined poverty in terms of deprivation in well-being. This could be measured by an individual's possession of income, health, nutrition, education, assets, housing and certain rights as freedom to speech (Haughton, Jonathan and Shahidur R. Khandker, Handbook on Poverty + Inequality, World Bank, Washington DC, 2009).

21. Each of the divisions is headed by a Division Director and these divisional heads lead on specific sub programmes. In this respect, UNEP is operating as a matrix organization, combining functional and thematic aspects of UNEP's mandate within individual leadership roles.

22. With the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed in late 2015, UNEP's focus has increasingly been on support to environmental sustainability, while balancing the integration of the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development. The comparative advantage of UNEP is seen as the provision of an environmental lens through which to view, understand and advise on sustainable development.

23. While the MTS 2014-2017 provides objectives and Expected Accomplishments for each of the sub-programmes, the MTS of 2018-2021 enhanced the results-based management approach. The more recent MTS contains outcome maps for each of the sub-programmes, including the identification of results in the strategic period, results to be achieved in upcoming strategic periods and impact level changes expected to be realised by 2030, the target year for the realization of the SDGs with additional details in the POWs. For an overview of the objectives and Expected Accomplishments of each of the UNEP sub-programmes during the period 2014-2017 see annex 3.[10]

24. Each of the UNEP sub-programmes is further detailed in the PoWs, each of which covers a 2-year period, with each of the MTSs covered by two consecutive PoWs (i.e. a 4 years period). Each of the PoWs focuses on core UNEP objectives to catalyse a transition towards low-carbon, low-emission, resource-efficient and equitable development, based on the protection and sustainable use of ecosystem services, coherent and improved environmental governance and the reduction of environmental risks. This is with the ultimate goal of contributing to the well-being of current and future generations of humankind and the attainment of global environmental goals.[11]

25. Each of the three PoWs relevant to the present review includes Expected Accomplishments and indicators of achievement for each of the sub-programmes. While in the PoWs of 2014-2015 and 2016-2017 such indicators were not always very specific, in the PoW 2018-2019 units of measurement were included for each of the indicators, with meta-data specifying the details of the indicator concerned. The latter PoW also includes a Theory of Change (TOC) for each of the sub-programmes, linking Expected Accomplishments with key deliverables needed for their realization as well as with the Intermediate States and 2030 Impacts resulting from them. Details on drivers, important for the realization of results and within the control of UNEP, as well as assumptions that are outside of the programmes' control are specified within these TOCs.[12]

UNEP Flagship Initiatives that address the Poverty-Environment Nexus

26. UNEP, with the support of Sida and other development partners, has developed and implemented several larger and longer-term initiatives with a focus on the linkages between poverty and environment in the timeframe covered by the present review. These include the Joint UNEP/UNDP Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI), which is part of the environmental governance sub-programme (and closely related to the ecosystems sub-programme) and has, more recently, been developed into the Poverty Environment Action (PEA) for SDGs. Also included are the Green Economy Initiative (GEI), part of the Climate Change sub-programme, the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE), which is implemented by a group of five UN agencies,[13] and The Economics of Ecosystems and

[10] United Nations Environment Programme, Medium Term Strategy 2014-2017, January 2015; United Nations Environment Programme, Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021, May 2016.

[11] Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, Proposed biennial programme of work and budget for 2014-2015, November 2012; United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, Proposed biennial programme of work and budget for 2016-2017, April 2014; United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, Proposed programme of work and budget for the biennium 2018-2019, March 2016.

[12] Ibid.

[13] The five collaborating agencies are ILO, UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO and UNITAR.

Biodiversity (TEEB), both part of the resource efficiency sub-programme. Each of these initiatives has gone through multiple phases of implementation. Details are provided in box 2 below.

Box 2: Details on selected UNEP Flagship Initiatives with Poverty Focus

Poverty-Environment Initiative: A global initiative, jointly implemented by UNEP and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that supports country-led efforts to mainstream the nexus between poverty and environment into national and sub-national development planning, including policy-making, budgeting, and monitoring. The project provides financial and technical assistance to government partners to set up institutional and capacity-strengthening programmes and implement measures to address the poverty-environment nexus. PEI has now been developed into the Poverty Environment Action for SDGs project, jointly implemented by UNDP and UNEP between 2018 and 2022.

Green Economy Initiative: This initiative has been one of UNEP's contributions to the global environmental debate during the past decade and to the introduction and broad acceptance of the concept of Green Economy. The project provided support to countries in their endeavours to transition to greater resource efficiency, and the introduction of more sustainable consumption and production patterns. The project has included 16 sub-interventions. (Also known as strengthening ecosystems and development linkages through innovative economic approaches for green growth, 2013-2016)

Partnership for Action on Green Economy: A partnership between five UN agencies of UNEP together with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UNDP, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). It is a multi-year programme responding to the call made at Rio+20 to support countries in pursuing green economy policies. PAGE's mission is to support countries reframing economic policies around sustainability and putting in place enabling conditions, reforms, incentives, business models and partnerships, to catalyse greater action and investment in green technologies and natural, human and social capital.

The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity: This project sets out to promote a better understanding of the value of ecosystem services and to offer economic tools that take proper account of this value. It was designed around three interlinked activity areas: i) to advance natural capital accounting by undertaking country assessments and assessments in 'externalities heavy' industry sectors; ii) to deepen the analysis on specific 'biomes' and 'sectors'; and iii) to support in-depth examinations to identify ways to 'work with nature' to meet country-specific policy priorities, with an initial focus on five pilot countries. The project intended to work in a complementary manner with other projects with poverty dimensions, specifically the UNEP/UNDP PEI initiative and the World Bank 'Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services' (WAVE) project.

PoW Resource Projections

27. When looking at the total of resource projections across the UNEP sub-programmes in the period 2014-2017, it can be observed that the largest proportions of financial resources were absorbed by the sub-programmes on Ecosystem Management (24-26 percent) and Climate Change (22-25 percent). About 14 percent of resources were used by each of the sub-programmes on Harmful Substances and Resource Efficiency. Least resource intensive appears to have been the Environmental Governance and Disaster and Conflicts sub programmes at 10 and 8 percent of resource use respectively.[14] For details see table in annex 2.

[14] Ibid Note 4. Resources of PEI/PEA are accounted for under the Ecosystems Division though in terms of its results the initiative contributes to the Environmental Governance sub-programme.

2) Sida Support to Poverty and its Nexus with the Environment

28. Sida has been an important supporter of UNEP with substantial contributions to the Environment Fund as well as support to individual projects and programmes. The core funding from the Swedish government is channelled through its Ministry of Environment according to the agreed levels of funding while additional programme funding is provided through Sida on a 'soft ear-marking'[15] basis. The Swedish government has been placing environment and climate change among the top priorities within its support to development cooperation. This is because they regard natural capital, like natural resources, ecosystems and their services and climate as the basis for human existence. Sida relates this directly with poverty, as people living in poverty are more directly dependent on natural resources and biodiversity, including forests, land and water. Vulnerable people, moreover, are seen as suffering more than others from environmental degradation, exploitation, climate change and natural or man-made disasters and related risks.[16]

29. Sida maintains 5 thematic perspectives across its programmes: Poverty, Democracy and Human Rights, Environment and Climate Change, Gender Equality and Conflict Sensitivity. Poverty is at the core of Sida's development approach, guided by poor people's perspectives and embedded in a rights approach. Protection and sustainable use of ecosystem services is seen as essential to the realisation of basic human rights. The human rights-based approach is used to establish processes and to provide mechanisms to bring conflicting interests and rights into the open and resolve them. The use of this approach aims to highlight inequalities and to enable the use of an integrated approach, addressing structural causes behind environment-related problems, in the process building capacities among poor and marginalized groups. Sida's support abides by four human rights principles, including: non-discrimination, transparency, participation and accountability. Gender equality is an important part of its programming, both as a stand-alone goal and integrated in all aspects of its programmes.[17]

30. Sida support to Implementation of UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy 2014-2017, was to be used in line with the following principles:

- The sub-programmes and priority areas supported were to be implemented in a result-focused manner through the Programme of Work based on their relevance for sustainable development and poverty reduction, as well as areas where UNEP has a comparative advantage.
- Emphasis on improving conditions for people living in poverty in developing countries.
- Emphasis on coordination and co-operation with other development partners, particularly within the UN family.
- Emphasis on ensuring that gender and human rights are fully taken into account and equality and equity are integrated in all policies, programmes and projects.
- Increased efficiency by improving coordination and synergies between the programmes.

Financial Details of Sida Support to UNEP

31. Sida support to UNEP amounted to a total of approximately 14.5 million USD in the period 2014-2017. Support has been provided to five of the UNEP sub-programmes, with additional funding for Gender and results-based management. Resources have been distributed almost evenly between climate change and ecosystem management and, at a slightly lower level, between environmental governance and chemical and waste sub-programmes. Resource efficiency has received the lowest allocation amongst the sub-programmes. For details see table in annex 2.

[15] Swedish programme funding is allocated by Sida to individual UNEP Sub-Programmes and UNEP sub-allocates funds to individual projects within these sub-programmes.

[16] Sida, HRBA, Environment and Climate Change, February 2015; Sida, How Sida works with gender equality, May 2017.

[17] Ibid.

3. Poverty-Environment Nexus and Sida Framework

32. For the present review, it is important to understand the relationship between poverty and the environment and, in particular, how these are incorporated in the SDGs. The review was, moreover, informed by the framework that Sida has been using in their approach to poverty. This framework was used to provide a multi-dimensional perspective to poverty.

1) The Poverty - Environment Nexus

33. The interrelationship between poverty and related social change and the environment is complex, with specific details very much dependent on the context concerned. Though there is increasing substantive evidence of the linkages and direction of causality between environment, natural resources and poverty as well as the links between climate change and poverty, such linkages often have context specific aspects and are usually insufficiently reflected in national strategies, policies, plans and budgets as well as development support.[18] . Nevertheless, this nexus is at the heart of sustainable development. Poor and rural people depend more directly on environmental resources for their livelihoods, in particular when their main livelihoods depend on agricultural and fishery. The indoor environment of poor households is often less conducive to their health, as they frequently depend on cooking with solid fuels. Environmental issues all involve the human use of natural resources, resulting in a combination of environmental, economic and social aspects of development processes. While overexploitation in a local context can at times be ascribed to specific groups, when looked at it from a wider perspective it can often be related to inappropriate rules and institutions that create incentives that result in excessive use. The nature of environmental resources as common property can further aggravate these issues.[19]

2) Poverty and Environment as part of the SDGs

34. The SDGs, as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, include a variety of dimensions of poverty that need to be addressed, as well as sets of environmental issues that need to be focused on in an indivisible and all-encompassing set of goals and targets. The SDGs balance the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental - providing an integrated view on poverty and environment. This requires harnessing synergies and opportunities and averting unintended or conflicting outcomes and impacts. The combination of these three dimensions requires breaking down sectors and other types of 'silos' and enhancing horizontal and cross-sector coordination, in government as well as UN agencies. The 2030 Agenda makes an explicit commitment to 'leave no one behind' and includes the endeavour to reach the furthest behind first. Leaving no one behind concerns a commitment to combat inequalities and discrimination, ensuring that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality in a healthy environment.[20]

[18] The PEI/PEA initiative has provided lessons from Africa including case studies of African experiences of putting in place new and innovative ways of development that support socially inclusive, environmentally sustainable economic development. The evidence shows the intimate linkages among social, environmental and economic objectives in the context of the countries concerned. UN Environment, UNDP, Poverty-Environment Initiative, accelerating Sustainable Development in Africa: Country lessons from applying integrated approaches, 2017.

[19] Birnbaum, M. & P. Mickwitz (Eds.), Editor's Note. In: Environmental Program and Policy Evaluation: Addressing Methodological Challenges, New Directions for Evaluation, 122, 1-7; Uitto, Juha I., Evaluating environment and development: Lessons from international cooperation, in: Evaluation 2014, Vol 20 (1) 44-57; Comertler, Necmiye and Funda Condur, A Literature Survey on Environment – Poverty Nexus, In: International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanity Studies, Vol. 2, No. 2, 2010.

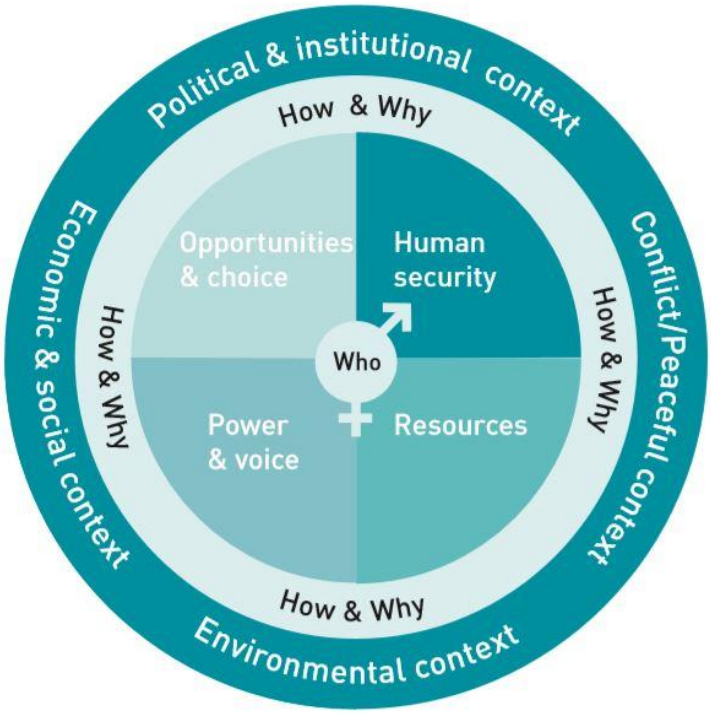
[20] United Nations General Assembly: Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York, October 2015; United Nations General Assembly, Economic

3) Sida Poverty Framework (2019)

35. The poverty framework of Sida[21] consists of four dimensions of poverty (see figure 1 below). According to Sida's definition, "a person living in poverty is resource poor, as well as poor in one or several other dimensions":

1) Poverty in terms of *resources* refers to not possessing or having access to, or power over, resources needed to meet a household's basic needs and improve members' lives, with such resources being material as well as skills and access to ecosystem services.
2) Poverty in *opportunities and choice* refers to a lack of the ability to move out of poverty, which relates to the consequences of poverty in the other three dimensions and to a disabling context, including lack of access to education, markets and information.
3) Poverty in terms of *lack of power and voice* relates to people's ability to articulate their concerns, needs and rights and take part in decision-making that affects their lives, including in the public as well as the private sphere. Aspects of power include socio-cultural hierarchies and relations including gender relations, which can be instrumental in various forms of discrimination.
4) Poverty in terms of *human security* relates to violence and insecurity that limits people's ability to exercise their human rights and find ways out of poverty. People experiencing any of these dimensions of poverty are often worst affected by conflict and insecurity, which can further aggravate their situation.

Figure 1: Sida's Poverty Framework



36. At the centre of the poverty framework are the poor - women and girls, men and boys - and their own perspectives on their situation, needs, preconditions and priorities, which is meant to be the starting point of the analysis conducted by using this framework. Gender is of key importance in this respect, in combination with other relevant vulnerability criteria. Putting poor people at the centre of the framework also reflects their potential, recognizing that people living in poverty can be agents of change.

37. Living in poverty enhances people's vulnerability to various types of risk, which pushes them further, or more permanently, into poverty. The framework identifies this linkage between poverty and

and Social Council: Mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development throughout the United Nations system. March 2016.

[21] Sida, Dimensions of Poverty, Sida's Conceptual Framework, Stockholm, Sweden. 2019

vulnerability as dynamic and complex, with poor people's capacities to manage risks related to the multi-dimensional nature of their poverty as well as to aspects of the wider societal context. This wider societal and development context is important in order to understand the causes of poverty as well as the reasons for its persistence. The framework distinguishes between the economic and social context, the political and institutional context, conflict/peaceful context and the environmental context. This outer circle provides an understanding of poverty-related aspects at the structural level. Dimensions of poverty in the inner circle are linked with the development aspects of the outer circle and need to be understood as interrelated. Gender permeates the various levels of the framework.

4. Review Approach and Methodology

1) Review Questions

38. The review was guided by a set of review questions, which are presented in box 3 below. This concerns a clustering, and at times slight tweaking, of the review questions from the TOR. In this respect, five main review questions were identified, enhancing the focus of the review. The issue of sustainability was added to the issues identified in the TOR, as it was deemed necessary to inform the forward-looking analysis

Box 3: Review Questions

What has been the significance of UNEP projects in terms of reduction of poverty?

What have been the UNEP project results in poverty and environmental terms and how were these achieved?

To what extent and in what ways have sustainability concerns been addressed in UNEP projects in poverty and environmental terms?

How well has poverty been incorporated in UNEP project's design, monitoring and evaluation?

What are effective ways for UNEP to enhance its focus on poverty reduction in the various parts of its programme?

2) Review Methodology

39. The review methodology was set out to cover a variety of methods and tools. The use of multiple methods allowed for the use of triangulation of data across these methods. The variety of methods allowed for foci on both in-depth as well as broader based data gathering as part of the review process.

40. The review made use of a participatory approach, including a range and variety of stakeholders in the data gathering stage. An important input to the review was a purposive selection of 20 evaluation reports from UNEP projects and initiatives implemented during the period 2014-17. These evaluation reports each were informed by a range of project level stakeholders, including stakeholders at the receiving end of UNEP support. Each of the 20 evaluation reports consulted, in a participatory manner, with a wide range of stakeholders, including partners, government officers and representatives from affected groups relevant to the project's scope of work.

41. In order to cover changes in terms of UNEP's approach to poverty related projects and initiatives in the period 2018 to 2020 a selection of project design documents was reviewed, guided by the questions of the review. This analysis of design document informed the forward-looking analysis. Also these design reports assessed as part of the review benefitted from the inputs and reflected the views of multiple UNEP partners and other stakeholders, including benefitting agencies of each of the projects concerned.

42. Participation of stakeholders was enhanced through interviews, which included a representative from Sida and UNEP staff, the latter across the various UNEP divisions and sub-programmes. Task and project managers of selected projects of which the evaluation report was reviewed were included in the interviews. Moreover, selected UNDP staff were interviewed in relation to the joint UNEP-UNDP PEI initiative and their view on the role of UNEP in terms of poverty reduction, including corporate and country level staff. In addition, selected representatives of agencies and other benefitting parties at the receiving end of UNEP support were included in the interviews.

43. The use of a participatory approach enabled the inclusion of a range of perspectives on the development and implementation of the UNEP projects and initiatives during the period under review. The inclusion of multiple stakeholders, moreover, allowed for triangulation of data across the various respondents and in this way enhanced validation of findings. Through the use of a participatory approach the level of ownership of the review process and its findings was enhanced, which in turn is expected to enhance the likeliness of the use of the review recommendations.

44. The review made use of appreciative inquiry in addition to a problem-oriented approach. Through the use of appreciative inquiry, the focus was turned away from finding solutions to problems towards a more positive approach, focusing on what works and how this can be reinforced within the organization. Through its focus on appreciative questioning, appreciative inquiry provided a powerful way to engage participants in evaluative discussions. Rather than addressing problems as negatives, the use of appreciative inquiry addressed what does not work by assessing what respondents would wish to be different in the organisation, and the way in which projects were implemented, in order to enhance results.

45. The review made use of the multi-dimensional framework of Sida in the assessment of the poverty focus of the UNEP strategies and programmes of work in the period under review as well as in the assessment of programmatic initiatives of each of the sub-programmes. In its assessment of results, the review made use of the results frameworks of selected projects and theories of change (TOCs) reconstructed as part of the evaluation process.

46. The review included attention to the use of a human rights-based approach to poverty related issues, through assessment of the use of this approach in project design and implementation. Focus was on the rights of poor and vulnerable groups and responsibilities of stakeholders concerned, including attention to the ways in which projects engaged with the concerns of rights holders and duty bearers. The review assessed the extent to which UNEP initiatives made use of a normative approach, based on a human rights perspective when addressing environment and poverty related aspects of UNEP initiatives. This was supplemented by a gendered approach, assessing the results in terms of gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as attention to the mainstreaming of gender in project design and implementation.

47. Throughout the data gathering process, aspects of vulnerability and marginalization were included, attempting as much as possible to obtain disaggregated data that enabled the identification of inequalities, the specifics of support from UNEP and partners provided to vulnerable and marginalized people and groups and the results concerned. Criteria for the disaggregation of data included gender, age and other relevant vulnerability criteria.

48. Primary data were gathered from key stakeholders to the design and implementation of UNEP projects and programmes. This included:

    - Selected Sida representative
    - UNDP representative at corporate and country level
    - Selected representatives from Ministries of Environment
    - UNEP Executive Director
    - Director, UNEP Evaluation Office
    - Head of UNEP's Major Groups and Donors Office
    - UNEP Division Directors
    - UNEP Global Sub-Programme Coordinators
    - UNEP Regional Directors
    - UNEP Selected Regional Sub-Programme Coordinators
    - UNEP Team members responsible for project design and review, performance monitoring and results reporting and Safeguards and Gender Unit
    - UNEP Project Managers/Designers of selected initiatives and projects

49. An important part of the desk review concerned the review of secondary resources. This included the medium-term strategies from 2014 to present, the Programmes of Work, the evaluation of the MTS 2014-2017, evaluations of sub-programmes and other relevant documentation.

50. Meta-evaluation of a set of 20 selected UNEP project evaluation reports provided details on UNEP programmatic approach and achievements in terms of poverty reduction and environmental results from the perspective of independent evaluators and evaluation teams for the period 2014-2017. The review of a selection of more recent project design documents added details on the period 2018 – 2020.

51. In order to ensure a gender responsive approach to the review, gender was an important cross-cutting aspect throughout the review process. This concerned gender aspects in the stakeholder analysis, gender considerations as part of the desk review, making use of existing gender assessments and ensuring the inclusion of male and female respondents in semi-structured interviews. Gender was, moreover, an important aspect of the meta-analysis of UNEP project evaluation reports and design documents.

52. A one week visit to UNEP head office in Nairobi was originally planned as part of the review in order to enable the conduct of face-to-face meetings with UNEP stakeholders in head office. Due to the New Corona virus (COVID-19) crisis, this visit was not possible and meetings were conducted online, using virtual communication means.

53. For each of the five review questions a set of assumptions and indicators for their assessment were identified in the review matrix as part of the inception phase, making use of the 14 original review questions included in the TOR. Moreover, for each of the indicators, sources of information and the method and tools used in data collection were identified. The review matrix guided data gathering and analysis.

3) Methods for Data Gathering

54. Methods for data collection included desk review, meta-analysis of evaluation reports and design documents and semi-structured interviews, supplemented with targeted e-mail communications as needed. Details on each of these methods are presented in annex 4.

4) Selection of Evaluation Reports and Project Designs for Meta-Analysis

55. The selection of evaluation reports of UNEP projects included in the present review was guided by a set of criteria as well as a selection process. The selection criteria focused on the attention to poverty in the projects concerned and in the evaluation reports. With the focus on the MTS period of 2014-2017, the selection of evaluation reports included those projects implemented in that time period. In addition, any projects with a substantial focus on poverty with implementation prior to this period were included, in line with the specification concerned in the TOR. This resulted in the inclusion of the PEI evaluation report of 2019 focused on the PEI project period 2013 – 2018 in addition to the PEI evaluation report of 2016, focused on the project period 2008 – 2013. These criteria were applied to the evaluation database of UNEP by the UNEP Evaluation Office and resulted in the initial identification of 30 evaluation reports. This number was scaled down by having sub-programmes represented in line with the funding envelopes concerned with each sub-programme represented by at least one evaluation report.

56. Design reports reviewed were selected from recent designs, with one report from most of the sub-programmes. In addition to projects, designs of hubs were included as these concern a setup under which a variety of initiatives is conducted with a range of partners (for details see annex 8).

5) Methods for Data Analysis

57. Evaluation questions were used to analyse the data and information gathered making use of the various methods concerned. Moreover, qualitative content analysis was used as well as analysis or results chains and TOCs and context analysis (for details see annex 4).

58. Internal interim reports were prepared on results of desk review and interviews, including the meta-analysis of a selection of UNEP Evaluation reports covering projects and initiatives implemented during the period 2014-17, analysis of more recent UNEP project design documents and analysis of the interviews conducted with UNEP and other stakeholders. The present synthesis report is informed by these earlier internal interim reports.

59. In order to strengthen the utility of the recommendations stemming from this review, the analysis has been informed by reference to two conceptual and guiding frameworks developed during or after the period 2014-2017: the Sustainable Development Goals approved in 2015 and Sida's 2019 articulation of its 'Dimensions of Poverty'. Given the timing of their development, it is noted that these two frameworks have not explicitly informed the design or full implementation of the work under review.

6) Ethical Considerations

60. The reviewer was bound by, and abided by, the ethical code of conduct for UNEG evaluations as well as the UNEG Standards and Norms for Evaluation in the UN System. This included the independence of the reviewer, the anonymity and confidentiality of individual participants to the evaluation, sensitivity to social and cultural context and acting with integrity and honesty in relations with all of the stakeholders.[22]

[22] UNEG, United Nations Evaluation Group, Norms and Standards for Evaluation, 2016, 2017; UNEG, Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, March 2008; UNEG, UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System, March 2008.

5. Significance of poverty in UNEP projects and initiatives

1) Linkages in Programming with Human Well-being and Poverty Reduction

61. The inclusion of human welfare and poverty in UNEP was assessed from a strategic as well as a programmatic perspective. Below, an overview is presented on ways in which these aspects are represented in UNEP MTSs and POWs as well as in UNEP's programmatic initiatives and projects.

UNEP Medium Term Strategic Plans

62. The UNEP MTS 2014-2017 was developed in line with recommendations of Rio +20 "the Future we want". It lays out the vision, strategic objectives and results for UNEP to achieve by 2017. The UNEP business model was based on partnerships to expand reach and leverage impact and on UNEP taking leadership in coordination of environmental matters within the UN system. Focus of the organization in the period concerned was on seven sub-programmes (see details in par. 42).

63. The MTS made reference to contributing to poverty reduction as a part of ensuring human well-being, with poverty reduction included as a part of sustainable development. It included assisting interested countries and partners in their understanding of the concept of the green economy and its role in sustainable development and poverty reduction across all UNEP focus areas, with the aim of integrating environmental considerations into all economic and social agendas.

64. The overall focus of UNEP on human welfare as the goal of many of its projects and programmes is related to the protection and sustainable use of the natural environment for the benefits of present and future human generations. Such a perspective is also reflected in some of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) like the Convention on Biodiversity.

65. The MTS 2018 – 2021, has been aligned with the Agenda 2030 which was approved in September 2015, and explicitly links to its paradigm of sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda stresses the interrelationships amongst the three pillars of sustainable development, including economic, social and environmental aspects. In the situation analysis to the strategy the implication for the UNEP strategy is identified:

> *"The complex and interconnected nature of the three dimensions of sustainable development requires a shift to addressing the social, economic and environmental dimensions in an integrated manner."* [23]

66. The MTS 2018-2021 propagates an integrated approach to sustainable development. Three factors are considered as key to this integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development:

> *First, sustainable natural resource use is increasingly critical to economic and social development.*
>
> *Second, the regular review by UNEP of the state of the environment shows a reduction over time of social and economic costs as a result of gradual improvements in environmental sustainability.*
>
> *Third, compared to the rest of the population, marginalized and vulnerable groups enjoy greater social and economic benefits from the integration of environmental considerations into development planning.*[24]

67. Moreover, the key role of gender dimensions in environmental sustainability is recognized, with women as key managers of land and resources and the need to empower women to participate as equals in decision-making. With all aspects of development recognized as interrelated, including health and education as well as the environment, support to sustainable development is no longer supposed to be conducted in silos but is meant to be 'intrinsically linked'. The work of UNEP is said to include "to support countries in their efforts to become more environmentally sustainable, while balancing the integration of the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development." UNEP's

[23] United Nations Environment Programme, Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021, May 2016.

[24] Ibid.

comparative advantage is seen as "to provide an environmental lens through which to view, understand and advise on sustainable development."[25]

68. The integration of environmental, economic and social objectives in sustainable development policies has been identified by scientists as the number one issue for the twenty-first century and a means to align environmental governance structures to the challenges of global sustainability. In the present MTS, UNEP expands the constituencies that the organization works with, especially in the economic and social arena, which is a change from previous medium-term strategy periods.[26] It is this connection of UNEP's environmental perspective with the economic and social aspects of sustainable development that enables the inclusion of an enhanced focus on the relationship between environment and poverty.

69. The focus in much of UNEP's strategies and programmes of work is towards human development and well-being, which goes back to the 1972 Stockholm Environment Conference, at which UNEP's mandate originated. This emphasis on human well-being shows the position of UNEP regarding the conservation of nature, considering it not as an aim in and of itself, but related to human use of natural resources for economic and social development, contributing to people's livelihoods and their prosperity. For UNEP, natural resources are the basis for human subsistence and means to sustain people's livelihoods. In this respect the concept of sustainability is important as it provides limits to human use, with use meant to be commensurate with the carrying capacities of natural resources and leaving access and related opportunities for future generations. The ethos of the organisation centres on environmental management for the benefit of people, for present as well as future generations.

70. UNEP's niche is seen in particular in terms of the science – policy relationship, including policy related support to inform environmental policy making, grounded in scientifically-based evidence. UNEP's role is considered to focus at policy level, including international agreements and their implementation. Support to MEAs includes thought leadership and policy work. The role of UNEP at the global level also concerns norms and standard setting and development of guidelines for the enactment of policies and plans. UNEP, moreover, works with partners in developing countries in order to pilot the operationalization of policies, standards and guidelines and support their application at national and local levels. In this respect, UNEP needs field-based evidence to be able to show what works on the ground, which details are fed back to adapt guidance and inform policy and decision-makers.

71. Overall, poverty reduction is considered as within the purview of UNEP as a UN organization, with the objective clearly included in many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for the period before 2015 as well as many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for the period beyond 2015.

72. Both present and previous MTS and POWs include a clear focus on human well-being with poverty reduction included as part of sustainable development. However, the relationship between environment and poverty is not made sufficiently clear, nor is it specified how poverty reduction is to be achieved. Also in the agreement between Sida and UNEP regarding support to the implementation of the MTS 2014-2017, the principles concerned (see par 52) do include poverty reduction as an objective, though provide less details on how this would need to be achieved, including the poverty-environment nexus. Although largely left implicit, it is clear that poverty reduction concerned an important element of enhancing human well-being and prosperity for both UNEP and Sida.

73. To encourage projects and initiatives to contribute to poverty reduction through addressing of environmental concerns, such a strategic perspective would need to be incorporated explicitly in the MTS, with further details on ways in which this needs to be achieved in the POWs.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

UNEP projects and initiatives

74. The focus on poverty in many of UNEP's projects and initiative was achieved in part through selection of Least Developed Countries (LDC), selection of poor rural regions and other locations with high poverty incidence of other developing countries. This goes for example for the projects of the LDC Fund, which projects focus on adaptation to the effects of climate change in LDCs. Also in PEI the focus was on LDCs with more than half of the 14 PEI programme countries in the PEI scale up phase of 2008-2013 consisting of LDCs, including several landlocked developing countries and one Small Island Developing State, i.e. the Dominican Republic. A similar focus on LDCs was prevalent in UNEP's flagship initiative of The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) and other projects and initiatives.[27] UNEP, moreover, has provided support to defenders of the environment, which often concern representors of the interests of poor and indigenous groups.

75. Country ownership of UNEP projects and initiatives that included a poverty orientation, proved relatively high, with project goals and objectives much in line with government strategies and national development plans. Projects' objectives, moreover, clearly aligned with the UNEP MTS and POWs and their focus on environmental and human welfare related results.

76. Many UNEP staff interviewed do consider the relationship between UNEP initiatives and poverty reduction as important though they realize that this relationship is often left implicit. Many consider that it would be beneficial if such interrelations were made explicit and as much as possible monitored in order to show UNEPs contribution to poverty related results. There is a realisation amongst UNEP staff that work on social aspects is important, including monitoring of results concerned. When, for example, supporting investment in renewable energy in a coal dependent area, it would be necessary to work on the societal aspects of coal workers and related social issues.

77. UNEP staff also consider UNEP's projects and programmes, in terms of their results, to contribute towards poverty reduction, although the extent to which this is the case is seen as differing across initiatives. While a poverty perspective is explicit in few of the projects and initiatives, in most it is in practice merely an assumption, rather than something which is embedded in the results framework or theory of change of the intervention. Overall, many of the staff see benefit in a more explicit inclusion of poverty related objectives in UNEP projects and programmes.

78. Donor interests in terms of the linkages between poverty and environment in UNEP projects and initiatives vary. Although no one denies the importance of addressing poverty, the views on the perceived role for UNEP varies. While Sida and Norway are keen for UNEP to make linkages to poverty reduction in their projects and programmes, some other donors are less determined in this respect. This is partly as other UN agencies are working more directly on poverty related issues to which some of the same donors provide support.

79. The importance of environment to the sustainable development agenda is clearly reflected in the SDGs, where environment is one of the three pillars to achieve these goals. Rather than to be promoted as a stand-alone issue, environment is understood and supported in terms of its relationship to the other two pillars of sustainable development, economic and social development, including aspects of poverty and the needs of vulnerable and marginalized people.

80. An early adopter of a poverty approach in UNEP has been the Poverty Environment Initiative (PEI), developed and implemented in partnership with UNDP. The PEI is one of UNEP's flagship initiatives and it has over time developed a strong poverty-oriented focus. This approach proved to be an

[27] The five countries in which TEEB was operational, in the period covered by the evaluation report reviewed, were selected based amongst others on their development status with many LDCs included. The LDCF projects in Afghanistan and Rwanda were implemented in Least Developed Countries, as the LDC fund focuses on climate change issues in these countries specifically. The Mixteca project in Mexico supported biodiversity conservation and enhancement of livelihoods in the Oaxaca region, an area selected for high biodiversity and it being one of the poorest regions of the country. The Caribbean Biological Corridor project covered three LDCs including Cuba, Dominican Republic and Haiti all with high levels of poverty.

important reason for its perceived continued relevance by participating countries. The key objective of the initiative was to enhance the relationship between poverty and environment, i.e. to provide support to country-led efforts to mainstream poverty-environment (P-E) linkages[28] into national and sub-national development planning, including policy-making, budgeting, and monitoring through the provision of financial and technical assistance. PEI was expected to be a vehicle for achieving better integration of poverty reduction and environmental management in UNEP and UNDP's activities, as well as for improving the understanding of the linkages between poverty and environment in both organizations.[29]

81. The relevance of PEI was confirmed by many interviewees of this review. Moreover, the Regional Case Study for Latin America and the Caribbean, conducted as part of the PEI evaluation, reached the conclusion that "PEI's objectives were incontrovertibly relevant to the sustainable development of the LAC region throughout the Scale-up period. Addressing the link between poverty and environment remains a key issue today, especially as poverty reduction gains achieved during the last decade are being eroded, inequality persists, and environmental degradation, and climate change continue to escalate."[30]

82. However, a focus on poverty in relation to environmental aspects did not materialize from the start and it proved a challenge for the PEI to find the right balance between environment and poverty reduction and the interconnections concerned. The final evaluation of the PEI for the period 2013-2018 observed a lack of focus on the poverty dimension. As part of the key challenges identified it observed: "Many felt PEI did not have a strong enough focus on poverty." It specifies that: "the links between natural resources and community development / poverty alleviation were not consistently or explicitly enough set out and tested, and there was not enough engagement with Ministries with a social profile such as Labour and Health." Poverty assessment and poverty targeting were seen as weak or largely absent with the expertise of UNDP regarded as underexploited. Nevertheless, the evaluation acknowledges that progress had been made in terms of identification and targeting of the poor through work on environment and natural resources related multi-dimensional poverty in particular in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.[31]

83. In 2018, PEI was transformed into Poverty – Environment Action (PEA), focusing on aligning finance and investment (including from the private sector) with poverty, environment and climate objectives to accelerate SDG implementation with emphasis on partnerships and South-South knowledge transfer and cooperation as a means of widening the application of P-E mainstreaming.[32]

84. A poverty perspective has also been integrated in UNEP support to the development of the concept of a Green Economy and its implementation, in terms of Inclusive green economic growth.[33] The Green Economy Initiative (GEI), aimed to contribute towards a development approach based on an

[28] P-E mainstreaming is defined as "The iterative process of integrating poverty-environment linkages into policymaking, budgeting and implementation processes at national, sector and subnational levels. It is a multi-year, multi-stakeholder effort that entails working with government actors (head of state's office, environment, finance and planning bodies, sector and subnational bodies, political parties and parliament, national statistics office and judicial system), non-governmental actors (civil society, academia, business and industry, general public and communities, and the media) and development actors. UNDP-UNEP Poverty-environment Initiative, Mainstreaming Poverty-Environment Linkages into Development Planning: A Handbook for Practitioners, March 2009.

[29] UNEP Evaluation Office, Independent Evaluation of the Scale-up Phase (2008-2013) of the UNDP-UNEP Poverty – Environment Initiative (PEI) June 2016.

[30] Ibid.

[31] UNEP Evaluation Office, Final Programme Evaluation of Joint UNDP-UN Environment Poverty Environment Initiative (PEI) – (2013-2018), March 2019.

[32] Poverty-Environment Action for Sustainable Development Goals has embarked on eight full-fledged country projects — in Bangladesh, Lao PDR, Malawi, Mauritania, Myanmar, Mozambique, Nepal and Rwanda — and two technical assistance efforts — in Indonesia and Tanzania (PEA website at https://pea4sdgs.org/about-poverty-environment-action).

[33] United Nations General Assembly, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 27 July 2012, The future we want, July 2012.

innovative economic perspective, away from a focus on GDP growth that in addition to economic growth contributed to environmental degradation, towards 'green' economic growth, i.e. economic growth in combination with environmental health and social well-being. The programme operated at the global level and supported the development of country-based initiatives. Informed by feedback from member states, the original Green Economy concept was adapted to include equitable development aspects, renamed Inclusive Green Economy. This provided more recognition of the importance of social development issues, including poverty reduction, as part of a shift towards a green economy.

85. The Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE), a joint UN initiative of UNEP together with ILO, UNDP, UNIDO and UNITAR, provided support to aspects of inclusive green economy at the country level. PAGE provided support to countries and regions to reframe economic policies and practices in ways that fostered inclusive economic growth, created jobs and provided income, reduced poverty and inequality, and strengthened the ecological foundations of their economies. PAGE, as well as PEI and GEI, aimed at leveraging change through support to policy and planning processes, at global and country levels.

86. One of the regional UNEP projects with a clear poverty focus concerned the African Rural Energy Enterprise Development (AREED) II project, which was explicitly focused to contribute to poverty reduction through enhanced access to clean energy technology and services for rural households, in this way enhancing income generation, alleviating poverty and contributing to reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, addressing rural poverty in this way proved difficult as in particular poor rural households appeared unable to furnish the relatively large upfront payments to be made for small scale clean energy devices. The setup of a micro credit scheme to address this issue proved an important means to overcome this constraint.

87. In the more recent design documents of UNEP initiatives and projects that were reviewed, the inclusion of poverty as an objective varied. It concerned a direct relationship with poverty reduction in a climate change adaptation project in Mauritania, aimed at enhancing the resilience of people's livelihoods. There appeared to be an intermediate level of relationship in the designs of the trade and city hubs, which have a focus at the policy level with inclusiveness as part of support to a changed economic paradigm, focused on a 'green economy'. Also at an intermediate, or indirect level to poverty reduction, concerned the design of the reducing global environmental risks project in Mexico, where reduction of primary mercury mining reduced the health risk of the population in the surrounding area, which concerned one of the poorer areas in the country. The project design with the least relationship to poverty aspects of the documents reviewed concerned the Electrifying Mobility in Cities in India project, which focused on reduction of GHG emissions with indirect benefits to all citizens.

88. Although poverty reduction does represent a major objective for UNEP projects and initiatives, the objectives concerned are often not made explicit but assumed in reference to human well-being or included in the wider objective of contribution to sustainable development. Notwithstanding some exceptions, this goes for the period 2014-2017 as well as for more recent project designs.

2) Operationalization of Human Well-being and Poverty reduction

89. The attention to poverty in UNEP initiatives and projects needed to be operationalized in project design and in the practice of project implementation in order to generate results on the ground. The ways in which a focus on, or attention to, poverty has been operationalized was assessed at various levels. This includes the PoWs, across the sub-programmes and within each of the sub-programmes.

UNEP PoW

90. Both for the POW of the period 2014-15 and 2016-17 the core objective concerns:

> *…to catalyse a transition towards low-carbon, low-emission, resource-efficient and equitable development based on the protection and sustainable use of ecosystem services, coherent and improved environmental governance and the reduction of environmental risks.*[34]

91. This with the ultimate goal being:

> *…to contribute to the well-being of current and future generations of humankind and the attainment of global environmental goals.*[35]

92. Both POWs made reference to integration of gender and environmental and social safeguards in UNEP's work and referred to social equity issues and the attention to vulnerable and disadvantaged communities as important means of achieving environmental sustainability. Green economy was regarded as an important way to achieve sustainable development of which poverty reduction was a part, including opportunities for decent green employment. Assessment of progress was meant to be broadened beyond a focus on gross domestic product to better inform policy decision-making.

93. Though in the POWs of 2014-15 and 2016-17 poverty reduction is at times included in the sections on strategies and on causal relationships of achieving results of several of the sub-programmes, it remains less clear how this is to be achieved. Though it is indicated that many of the activities are conducted 'in the context of sustainable development and poverty reduction', there is no clear linkage of how the activities, through a chain of results, link to poverty related changes.

94. The POW 2018-2019 was informed by the paradigm for sustainable development as outlined in the Agenda 2030. It is based on the MTS 2018-2021 and puts people at the centre of sustainable development, promoting human well-being and meeting the needs of present and future generations without degrading the environment or exceeding the planet's regenerative capacity. It makes reference to the role of UNEP in the UN system, including the promotion of the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development and to be an authoritative advocate for the environment. The comparative advantage of UNEP is regarded to be the provision of an environmental lens through which to view, understand and advise on sustainable development. [36]

95. The overall orientation of UNEP is identified in the POW 2018-19 as:

> *UNEP will, within its mandate, promote environmental sustainability while contributing to a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.*[37]

96. In line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in its most recent MTS (2018-2021) UNEP recognized a strategic shift in sustainable development towards a truly universal and transformational course. This includes the acknowledgement of the integrated nature of the challenges concerned, including gender inequality, unemployment, income inequality, social exclusion and lack of environmental safeguards. It underwrites the new paradigm for sustainable development in which the environment is an integrated component rather than a stand-alone silo. A rights-based approach underpins all of the programmes, in particular the right of all people, including present and future generations, to a healthy environment.[38]

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[34] Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, Proposed biennial programme of work and budget for 2014-2015, November 2012; United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, Proposed biennial programme of work and budget for 2016-2017, April 2014.

[35] Ibid.

[36] United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, Proposed programme of work and budget for the biennium 2018-2019, March 2016.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

97. What is less clear is UNEP's perspective on poverty and how the various dimensions of poverty can be addressed through an environmental perspective. Moreover, no details are provided on the principle of Leaving No One Behind of the Agenda 2030 and what it means in this context. This also goes for the outcome maps of each of the sub-programmes as included in the POW 2018-2019, where aspects of poverty and results for poor and vulnerable groups are in some cases included in terms of the impact expected to be achieved by 2030, but there is less explicit focus on how to achieve these changes through the present and upcoming MTS periods.[39]

98. UNEP's role is viewed accordingly:

> *… as the leading global environmental authority, promote the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serve as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.*[40]

99. Though reduction of poverty is part of the UNEP's development perspective, it is often left implicit in UNEP project design. The more general approach to poverty that is envisaged through support to human well-being is not necessarily the optimal way for reaching the most vulnerable and marginalized groups.

100. The 20 projects of which the evaluation reports were reviewed clearly aligned with the UNEP MTS and POWs and their focus on environmental and human welfare related objectives. Country ownership of these projects, including a poverty orientation, proved relatively high, with project goals and objectives much in line with government strategies and national development plans.[41]

Across UNEP Sub-programmes

101. The way in which a focus on poverty is operationalized in UNEP's programming varies. In some initiatives the relationship between environment and poverty is explicit and part of the objectives and impact level results to be achieved. A clear example of such an approach concerns the PEI initiative, which includes poverty related aspects in all results levels, including impact.

102. There are commonalities in how projects and initiatives across the sub-programmes relate to poverty in their design or implementation. Many of UNEP's initiatives are legislation, policy and regulatory oriented, supported by scientific evidence, implemented in partnerships with other UN agencies and governmental ministries as well as other in-country partners. Such initiatives often work at the global level in terms of development of approaches and tools and at the country level in terms of their use and implementation. With their focus on the wider national level policy and regulatory system,

[39] This goes for example for the sub-programme Resilience to Disaster and Conflicts, where one of the impact indicators reads "Resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations to disasters and conflicts", while there is no specific focus on poor and vulnerable groups in the ways of achieving these results. In some of the sub-programmes broad social results are included at impact level, like supply of eco-system services for human well-being in the Ecosystems sub-programme, people benefiting from vulnerability reduction interventions in the Climate Change sub-programme, inclusiveness as part of the impact statement in the Environmental Governance sub-programme and reference to human health in the Chemicals, Waste and Air Quality Sub-programme. However, the means of reaching these results are not made explicit in the lower levels of the outcome maps. Exception of the latter could be the Resource Efficiency sub-programme where the improvements in human well-being identified at the impact level are to be achieved amongst others through support to an inclusive and green economy (IGE), though the IGE concept remains broad in itself and is not further unpacked. United Nations Environment Programme, Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021, May 2016.

[40] Ibid.

[41] The issue of strategic relevance scored mostly 'highly satisfactory' in the twenty UNEP evaluation reports reviewed. The issue of country ownership, (combined with aspects of cooperation and partnership) scored mostly satisfactory. A useful example concerns the support provided through PEI in the period 2013-2018, which was typically closely linked to country priorities as expressed in Government plans, thus facilitating ownership and support. There was a considerable demand from countries to be included in the PEI initiative. There are, nevertheless, some exceptions in terms of government ownership of UNEP projects. In Mixteca, Mexico, the responsible federal government agency appeared less interested in the choice of the Mixteca region for the project and thus had little interest in its implementation, while in AREED II the project paid little attention to national policy aspects, notwithstanding the recommendation to do so from the evaluation of the AREED I project phase, resulting in less interest from the national level government.

linkages to poverty in such initiatives are usually indirect, realised through the subsequent implementation of laws, policies, regulations and plans.

103. Other projects, in particular those working at the level of a single country, work at the implementation level, where they can contribute to poverty reduction for targeted groups and geographical areas, at times aiming through a pilot approach to influence wider environment and poverty related policy and planning processes.

104. Many of the UNEP Initiatives and projects have included the interests and needs of poor and vulnerable groups and at times these groups participated in project design. This has been, for example, the case in several of the GEF supported projects, in which there is a project design period which includes consultations with stakeholders at the country and local levels. UNEP, moreover, has provided support to defenders of the environment, which often concern representors of the interests of poor and indigenous groups.

105. The inclusion of stakeholder needs in project design is, however, not necessarily followed through in project implementation and in monitoring and evaluation. Nor is the inclusion of the needs of poor and vulnerable groups always informed by a more formal assessment on the multi-dimensional aspects of poverty incidence in the project area concerned. The lack of such a formal needs assessment and the gathering of baseline data at the start of the project, limits the opportunities for impact analysis towards the project end.

Within UNEP's sub-programmes

106. According to Sida's multi-dimensional definition (see Fig 1, p 8), "a person living in poverty is resource poor, as well as poor in one or several other dimensions." Although all aspects of addressing and affecting poverty can be found in UNEP sub-programmes, the extent to which this is the case and the poverty – environment linkages concerned differ substantially amongst them. A summary of the primary linkages is provided in Table 1 below. For additional details for each of the sub-programmes and examples of projects concerned see annex 6.

Table 1: Contribution by Sub-programme to Dimensions of Poverty

Climate Change Sub-programme
There are strong interlinkages between environment and poverty in terms of climate change. Support to climate change adaptation is usually people oriented, focused on support to particularly vulnerable groups and communities in vulnerable areas affected by climate change, aimed at enhancing their livelihood and resilience to disaster making use of eco-system-based adaptation. For example, subsistence farmers influenced by changing rain patterns resulting in the need to adapt their farming practices. Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+), through its sustainable forest management approach, also has a close connection to poverty. Climate change mitigation focuses on renewable energy in terms of industrial processes, transportation and buildings. This part of the sub-programme is more indirectly related to poverty reduction with indirect benefits for poor households. The goal of limiting climate change through reduction of greenhouse gas emission is important in reducing climate change effects, in particular for poor and vulnerable groups who are most affected by the detrimental effects and are least in a position to address effects concerned. Their use of clean energy within the household for cooking and otherwise can, moreover, have significant health benefits, in particular for women and girls. Project level experience has shown the enhanced results when adaptation and mitigation aspects of addressing climate change are combined, as this provides results in both respects and delivers more economic solutions that produce less environmental damage. *Contributes primarily to reducing poverty of resources and human security*
Resilience to Disasters and Conflict Sub-programme
At global and regional levels, the programme works on norm setting, early warning and disaster risk reduction including ecological issues, supporting the least developed and poorest countries to build capacities for resilience

to disaster. The focus in this sub-programme includes support to ensure that environmental dimensions are taken into consideration in the humanitarian programming of other UN agencies, which in turn are focused on providing support to survivors of natural and man-made disasters, in particular poor and vulnerable groups, to save people's lives, support their livelihoods and contribute to their recovery. The sub-programme also includes UNEP projects in post-conflict settings, like in Sudan where the root causes of the conflict concern access to land and other natural resources. Projects in this sub-programme have usually a people- and poverty-oriented perspective from the start.

Contributes primarily to reducing poverty of human security, often in combination with some of the other dimensions of poverty.

Healthy and Productive Ecosystems Sub-programme

The relationship between poverty and natural resource use is seen as multi-faceted, if natural resources are not sustainably managed, this can easily lead to increased poverty levels while on the other hand extensive poverty can easily undermine the sustainable management of natural resources. The initiatives of the sub-programme provide support to ecosystems, enhancing the capacity of such systems to perform a variety of functions for the populations that depend on them for their livelihood. In particular, poor and vulnerable people in both rural and urban areas are usually more heavily dependent on such functions. The ecosystems sub-programme has also focused on the inclusion of biodiversity valuation in development planning and budgeting and enhancing sustainable use of biodiverse natural resources by poor local populations. Biosafety is another part of the sub-programme, with the prevention of zoonotic diseases an important objective.

Contributes primarily to reducing poverty of resources and at times to opportunities and choice through the development of alternative livelihood opportunities.

Environmental Governance Sub-programme

This sub-programme is first and foremost aimed at the enabling environment of policies and laws through which the environment is governed, contributing primarily to reducing poverty by supporting the integration of environmental sustainability into national and sub-national policies and development plans. It incorporates aspects of inclusiveness and participation in governance processes. It made headway in particular in terms of UNEP's relationships with Ministries of Finance and Planning, moving beyond only engaging with Ministries of Environment, in this way being able to support more directly planning and budgeting processes in relation to the environment poverty-nexus at country and sub-national levels. The sub-programme incorporates aspects of inclusiveness and participation in governance processes.

Contributes primarily to reducing poverty in terms of enhancing power and voice.

Chemical, Waste and Air Quality Sub-programme

The link with poverty is realized through attention to human health. Underpinning the sub-programme is the right to a non-toxic environment, in particular for poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups, who often reside in areas with more exposure to toxic waste or polluted air and who have less opportunity to move out of such areas and have less access to health services. Many of the UNEP projects of the sub-programme focus on bringing benefits for poor and vulnerable groups as well as for the general population, with the poor benefitting more since they are more heavily affected by the issues concerned.

Contributes primarily to reducing poverty of human security and in terms of enhancing power and voice.

Resource Efficiency Sub-programme

Linkages with poverty reduction in the resource efficiency sub-programme are to be achieved among others through UNEP support to the realization of an inclusive green economy, which supports economic growth while making sustainable use of natural resources, rather than depleting them, provides less pollution, creates 'green' jobs and is beneficial to the environment and to human welfare, in particular to poor and vulnerable groups. This includes decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, support to sustainable consumption and production, support to small and medium enterprises and attention on resource extraction industries. Factoring in both environmental and social issues in investment decision-making and related risk management, was

underpinned by a human rights-based approach to sustainable development, ensuring that all people benefit from the development process, including future generations.

Contributes primarily to reducing poverty of resources and in opportunities and choice.

Environment Under Review Sub-programme

Through this sub-programme UNEP assesses what kind of environmental conditions people are living under in various parts of the world. It provides scientific data and analysis to other sub-programmes. The composition of the advisory bodies to the various reports has a balance in terms of representation from the various regions, as well as in terms of gender, and include selected persons from disadvantaged groups. Poverty and equity specialist have been included and the composition of the advisory bodies are scrutinized by member states.

Contributes primarily to reducing poverty in terms of enhancing power and voice.

107. Across the sub-programmes, when attention to poverty reduction is made clear as part of the project objectives and reflected in its results framework, the focus is mostly on aspects of access to resources and enhancing the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable people and groups. In fewer cases, aspects of inclusion or enhancing of poor people's voice is included in the initiatives and part of the design and implementation process. In conflict contexts, attention is, moreover, paid to aspects of human safety and security. In some of the initiatives attention to poverty is focused on aspects of human health. This goes especially for the chemical, waste and air quality sub-programme. With most of the initiatives and projects, of which the evaluation reports were reviewed, developed before the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there has been no attention yet in these reports to the application of the principle of Leaving No One Behind.

3) Gender and Social Safeguards in UNEP Initiatives

Gender

108. Gender has been recognized as an important aspect of project design and implementation in UNEP and the means to support this have been put into place. A Gender and Safeguards Unit was established in 2014 as part of the Policy and Programme Division. Being located in this division provides the unit with the opportunity to enhance and support gender mainstreaming. In order to achieve this, a total of 70 gender focal points were appointed in the various divisions, sub-programmes and regional offices of the organization, who have responsibilities for gender as part of their job descriptions. The approach to gender mainstreaming has focused on including a gender equality perspective in the design of most of the UNEP projects and programmes and to support the use of a gendered approach. Gender was also included in the financial guidelines, ensuring the inclusion of gender in project budgets, in this way enabling gender related activities. A gender marker analysis was conducted in 2016 with, since then, projects budgeting for gender action. Staff capacities have been developed through training by the gender adviser and through UN Secretariat mandatory training courses on gender and human rights. There is, however, not always follow through on design details during project implementation and the monitoring of gender related results has been limited.

109. When initiatives in UNEP do include a gender perspective, it can be characterized as gender responsive, with interventions mostly targeting the different roles of men and women. The aim is to move towards a gender transformative approach, including making a real difference in the lives of women and men, girls and boys. The gender unit looks at the interface of gender and livelihoods and has developed guidelines on gender analysis to inform project design. The analysis provides information on how to address gender related issues by UNEP as well as by other stakeholders.

110. Over the years, gender has become less controversial within the organization, integrated in the project design review process and referred to in several of the results frameworks and theories of change of

UNEP interventions. Nevertheless, this is regarded as not yet sufficient and so far the project review process has not included a threshold on gender, meaning that a project can still be approved based on its average rating without paying sufficient attention to gender, even in a context where this is relevant. The challenge is, moreover, to include gender in project and programme implementation, in line with the details provided in the design. At times the inclusion of gender in terms of monitoring is constrained by the lack of gathering of disaggregated data by gender and other aspects of vulnerability. UN women has been a partner for UNEP in terms of gender, supporting the assessment of UNEP's performance in following the UN System Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP)[42] and facilitating joint work in projects at the country level.

111. Based on the review of project evaluation reports attention to gender in selected initiatives was varying while the inclusion of gender in the evaluation reports themselves also varied substantially. With gender often proving a relevant perspective based on the content of the projects, opportunities to enhance the inclusion of gender in some of the projects appear to have been missed.[43]

112. To enhance gender at the regional level, one of the UNEP regional offices hired a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) on gender, who supported the development of understanding on gender amongst the programme staff. Before the JPO arrived, the focus had been on ensuring gender was mentioned in the draft design documentation in order to pass through the quality assurance process of the Project Review Committee (PRC). With the support of the JPO, the understanding of what gender meant in an environmental programming context was enhanced and subsequent support provided to various countries in their projects and initiatives to include gender aspects as relevant. A dedicated position at the regional level with the relevant qualifications to support gender mainstreaming in projects was seen by some respondents as more beneficial compared to point persons that need to be trained and can devote only part of their time to the issues concerned.

113. Longer term initiatives proved to have the ability to include a gender perspective over time. Gender has become a core part of the UNEP – UNDP PEA flagship programme. The need to address gender is high in the ecosystems and climate change sub-programmes work on agriculture, where, in the context of Africa, about seventy percent of smallholders are women. Thus, there is a need to collect gender disaggregated data to provide evidence to show the socio-economic relevance of women farmers and have policy interventions on extension to include women rather than maintaining a focus on male farmers. PEA has been working with UN Women on this gap in the agricultural sector, providing the economic evidence that women farmers are important for agricultural production and the need to target women with extension and other services. It was the PAGE and TEEB projects that

[42] The UNSWAP, presently in its second generation, is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. While the first generation focused on gender mainstreaming and planning, the second generation focuses on results, including monitoring activities and outcome for gender-related Sustainable Development Goal results. The Action Plan includes a performance framework, which is organized around seven dimensions: planning; programming and monitoring and evaluation; partnerships; communications and advocacy, leadership, and organizational culture; gender architecture and capacities; resources; and results (https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/promoting-un-accountability).

[43] In the LDCF Rwanda project, the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion was a member of the Project Steering Committee. The project put in place measures to ensure gender equality in the implementation of project activities. Gender concerns were taken into consideration in the selection of participants for training.

In the climate change adaptation and livelihoods project in Mauritania a gender analysis informed the incorporation of gender in project design. The focus on gender is part of a wider approach to incorporate socio-economic considerations into development planning. The Electrifying Mobility in Cities in India project on the other hand did include a clear gender action plan, which focus appeared limited through its concentration on women only, rather than gender with the approach not part of a broader socio-economic perspective, including aspects of poverty.

In the terminal evaluations of the regional level project on climate change in the Nile River Basin and in the Mexican Mixteca project attention to gender was assessed as limited, this while there were sufficient reasons to focus on gender. In the case of the Nile River Basin project the remark that water has an important gender dimension is not followed up through attention to gender related issues. In the Mixteca project attention to gender would have been warranted given the considerable male migration, with women being the main participants of the project.

made use of a gender approach at the country level, with TEEB and ABS India project, moreover, paying some attention to indigenous groups. Although the Green Economy concept was usefully adapted to Inclusive Green Economy, this change did not include a clear gender approach.

114. In Sudan, where UNEP has had a longer term in-country presence, gender has been an important dimension of the programme, with a gender expert included in the programme team and with gender advisors in some of the UNEP projects. The involvement of women went beyond counting men and women participants and ensuring equal representation. The team worked with UNDP and UN Women on enhancing the role of women in natural resource management.[44]

Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework (ESSF)

115. The UNEP ESSF[45] sets out the social and environmental standards for UNEP support to sustainable development with the dual goal of promoting human well-being and protecting the environment. The ESSF is used by the Project Review Committee as one of the elements in their assessment of the quality of project design. ESSF is meant to provide the means to ensure that all projects have the minimum requirements in terms of environmental and social safeguard in place. The ESSF was revised at the instigation of GEF and GCF who needed this in terms of standards required from UNEP as implementing agency. The updated framework dates February 2020 and replaced the earlier version of the framework from 2014.

116. The ESSF includes four guiding principles: Human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment; leaving no one behind (principle included in the 2030 agenda); sustainability and resilience; and accountability. The principles are expected to inform all of UNEP's work and are to be applied by all projects and programmes. The standards of the framework[46] are dependent on the context in which initiatives are implemented and their application varies based on the characteristics of projects and initiatives concerned.

117. The principles and standards of UNEP's ESSF support initiatives to apply the 'do no harm' principle, in particular with respect to poor and vulnerable people in targeted areas by the intervention, in line with UNEP's overarching principles and approaches. The revised framework also goes beyond that and includes a focus on the principle of leaving no one behind with attention to the needs of marginalized, disadvantaged and indigenous groups though does not refer explicitly to poverty related issues. Nevertheless, the ESSF is in practice the only requirement regarding the inclusion of poverty related issues as part of the project design process.

118. As part of the accountability principle, local community engagement and participation is mentioned as a requirement. The involvement of beneficiaries is expected to start from the design phase of a project. Several UNEP policies have been included within the ESS framework, like the UNEP policy on indigenous people.

119. Efforts to develop UNEP staff capacity to implement the framework have been undertaken, though actual support to the use of the framework is limited to a single staff member, who assists all sub-programmes and divisions in this respect. Apart from the required use of the framework in project

[44] In the peace building related project in Sudan, special attention was provided to the inclusion of women in a context with much male out-migration. A gender perspective was included from the design stage of this project, with a budget for relevant activities. The focus included women's ability to diversify their livelihood options and to be engaged in natural resource management, in particular their access to water as well as their participation in conflict resolution committees on natural resource management and use. Notwithstanding considerable cultural constraints, the integration of women at all levels of the project was assessed as evident in the evaluation of the project, with active and effective participation, addressing their needs and interests.

[45] United Nations Environment Programme, Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework (ESSF), February 2020.

[46] The ESSF includes 8 Safeguard Standards: Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Sustainable Natural Resource Management; Climate Change and Disaster Risks; Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency; Community Health, Safety and Security; Cultural Heritage; Displacement and Involuntary Resettlement; Indigenous Peoples; Labour and Working Conditions. Ibid.

design, there appears no means of accountability on the use of the framework in terms of project implementation.

120. Social and other safeguards are not usually referred to explicitly in the evaluation reports that were reviewed, with the exception of TEEB and ABS India projects, nor have the requirements of the earlier version of the UNEP Environmental, Social and Economic Sustainability Framework from 2014 been used as a specific criterion[47] that needs to be assessed as part of project evaluations, considering whether safeguards had been sufficiently put in place and risks concerned identified and mitigated against. Nevertheless, evaluations do report on whether negative effects have occurred as a result of a project.

121. Given its environmental focus, UNEP has a unique relationship with indigenous and other groups that are highly dependent on natural resources, often in remote and hard to reach areas. Its technical expertise on natural resources provides UNEP with an important entry point to engage with these groups. There is a delicate balance between a rights-based as well as a sustainable development perspective in such interventions, supporting the living conditions and the environment on which these groups depend as well as the need to have natural resource use be sustainable and permitting future generations to benefit from the same resources. The application of social safeguard is of particular importance in projects that affect these groups. UNEP will need to develop an approach to address the specific needs and conditions of these groups as part of its approach to poverty reduction.

4) Partnerships

122. For UNEP, as a non-resident UN agency and a relatively small organization within the UN system, partnerships are key to its programming, including for global flagship initiatives as well as for small or larger scale projects at the country level. UNEP works first and foremost with national governments, typically with the Ministry of Environment as its key entry point. Partnerships with other UN agencies are important, in particular given UNEPs mandate to enhance environmental perspectives and capacities in sister UN agencies. UNEP has worked closely with UNDP for over a decade in the implementation of the PEI (now transformed into the PEA) and has institutional partnerships with other UN agencies, in particular FAO and UN Women. Partnering with other UN agencies that have a country presence and that have complementary capacities is particularly important in the flagship programmes, including PEI, GEI and PAGE, all of which work at the global as well as country levels.[48] UNEP has also been partnering with Regional Economic Commissions in this respect.

[47] A specific criterion has since, in late 2019, been included in the evaluation ratings table as a sub-heading under Factors Affecting Project Performance.

[48] In the PEI, UNEP partnered with UNDP, while in the PAGE UNEP partnered with UNDP, ILO, UNIDO, and UNITAR. PEI, developed and implemented in partnership with UNDP and operating from 2005 till present, has established multiple partnerships, in particular at the country level. PEI was seen as the leading example for collaboration and joint working at the forefront of the One UN reform process. Notwithstanding some implementation challenges, aspects of the initiative's organization could be regarded as good practice, including the joint financial system and the shared bank account for example. Participating countries appreciated having a single system for programming, financial management and reporting.

The GEI Initiative identified four groups of partners that supported the promotion of transition towards a green economy: UN agencies, research partners, regional initiatives and networks, and national governments and initiatives. Partners who co-implemented the project (delivering outputs with project budget) included UNDP, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA, co-implementers of a sub-project), German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ, co-responsible for the delivery of the BMU/GIZ funded project), and SEED.

In PAGE, partnerships were key to reaching results with a focus on supporting policy related aspects of the adoption of a green economy approach at the country level. Partnerships include government agencies as well as civil society stakeholders and private sector actors. In particular the inclusion of the private sector was of vital importance and the project worked with ILO and UNIDO in this respect, who are part of the five UN agencies implementing the project. In particular the private sector can be seen as a non-traditional partner for UNEP (though not necessarily for some of the other UN Agencies participating). Regarding the cooperation with five UN agencies though, transaction costs were substantial, the benefits were considered to have outweighed the investments. Advantages have included: carrying more weight with the government,

123. At the same time, UNEP has been able to expand its partnerships with member states beyond Environmental Ministries to work with Ministries of Planning and Finance, which are important partners in terms of enhancing national planning and budgeting processes, something which was started through PEI. It has, moreover, enhanced its relations with Ministries of Industry and Ministries of Agriculture in particular in terms of resource efficiency and climate change programming. This form of ministerial partnership has enabled UNEP to enhance its ability to address economic, social and poverty issues in relation to environmental challenges.[49]

124. Partnering with other UN agencies has depended much on programmatic requirements and project specific conditions. At the country level UNEP worked with other UN agencies depending on the requirements of the projects and contexts concerned. While in the LDCF in Rwanda, UNEP implemented the project together with UNDP, for the LDCF in Afghanistan and the ABS India project UNEP worked with government agencies and civil society organizations, without direct involvement of other UN agencies.

125. The UN reform process has provided additional incentives for partnerships with sister UN agencies. The setup of new funding opportunities provides incentives for agencies to work together, with the SDG fund and the recent Covid fund requiring UN agencies to apply in partnerships for such funding, so that they cooperate when accessing funds rather than compete amongst themselves. This is meant to support the One UN initiative. Some donors, including the International Climate Initiative, are moving away from small projects to larger scale initiatives for which UN agencies need to apply as a consortium. Through the Resident Coordinator system, UN agencies are meant to receive budget based on mandate, not on competition.

126. Engagement with UNCTs and the process of Common Country Analysis form important entry points for UNEP at the country level, with opportunities to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which in turn relates to the country specific poverty agenda. The UN reform provides prospects to enhance working together with other UN agencies at the country level and pull resources together, which can enable the uptake of learnings and tools like those from PEI/PEA by other UN agencies. UNEP Regional Offices play an important intermediate role in the linkages between UNEP divisions and sub-programmes and the country level UN RC office and UN country teams. As part of the UN reform a governance structure is being put in place to work remotely with UNCTs, something which will help UNEP to link with the resident UN in-country agencies. This push for enhanced cooperation amongst UN agencies can be an important enabling factor for UNEP in terms of country level implementation of initiatives.

convening a range of government ministries offering different entry points, multiple perspectives to the same issues from the various UN agencies and in-kind contributions from each of the agencies. The avoidance of five parallel structures in terms of project implementation proved a great gain.

[49] In terms of the design documents reviewed partnerships varied. The two hubs as well as the Electrifying Mobility in Cities in India project have a large range of partnerships to implement the initiatives concerned. The hubs function as platforms to further develop initiatives under the umbrella of the objectives of the hub. Partners of the hubs include UNEP divisions and branches, MEAs and UNEP Regional Offices that deliver services as part of the project and are involved in resource mobilization. Moreover, the hubs involve institutional partners, regional partners, primarily research institutions and technical experts at national or regional levels, and global partners, including other UN agencies and initiatives as well as think tanks. The project Electrifying Mobility in Cities in India is large scale as it covers multiple cities in India with a large number of partnerships with government agencies as well as with private sector actors. Project designs in Mauritania and Mexico concern smaller initiatives, with a variety of partnerships with government agencies and selected private sector actors. The project in Mexico moreover, has partnerships with universities and global stakeholders in mercury reduction. There appeared no partnering with other UN agencies at the country level in this project.

Other projects, in addition to PEI/PEA, have worked with several Ministries, in addition to the Ministry of Environment, examples include: Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change by Establishing Early Warning and Disaster Preparedness Systems and support for Integrated Watershed Management in Flood prone Areas (Rwanda LDCF), Building Adaptive Capacity and Resilience to Climate Change in Afghanistan (LDCF-1 project) and SWITCH to Sustainable Policies and Innovation for Resource Efficiency in Asia - Regional Policy Support Component.

127. Partnerships with private sector organizations have also proved important. UNEP has a policy to work with the private sector with an orientation towards influencing the practices of private sector actors, not for the mobilization of resources. UNEP's approach focuses on influencing partners to make use of UNEP's specialized knowledge and promoting environment friendly, sustainable and 'green' investments by the private sector. When working with the private sector, UNEP works through platforms and associations rather than making use of a one-on-one approach. From a poverty reduction perspective, it is important to include engagement with the informal as well as the formal sector as poor households are more often involved in informal private sector initiatives.

128. In addition, partnerships with civil society organizations have been important at local level and with universities and think tanks in terms of the development of knowledge products. Such partnerships are country specific and usually not the first line of contact for UNEP as it is more used to working with government agencies of member states. Working with 'non-traditional' partners is expected to become more important in order to support reaching the SDGs.

129. UNEP has reinforced its abilities to work at the country and regional levels and to provide support in a variety of ways. As part of a partnership approach at country level, UNEP has in some instances embedded UNEP staff at country level in the office of the UN Regional Coordinator or of other partner UN agencies, enhancing UNEP support at the country level on a temporary basis. Another approach focused on Regional Office support to country level initiatives through the use of a virtual support team, enabling country level support without a country presence.

130. In the European region, issue-based coalitions have been established. Led by one or several UN agencies, these broad, multi-partner coalitions coordinate the UN response to cross-cutting challenges in the region, help realize synergies among related areas of work of different UN entities, and serve as platforms to reach out to non-UN stakeholders. Through regular meetings, the coalitions coordinate their cross-sectoral activities and develop plans for joint action (e.g. interagency guidance notes, common position papers, side events at inter-governmental meetings). The work of the issue-based coalitions is guided by the Regional UN System Meetings, which decide the establishment of new coalitions and review the work of existing coalitions. Issue-based coalitions act as regional task forces to facilitate improved cooperation between different UN agencies and their partners.[50] They form important examples of forums that UNEP can use to promote its perspective and engagement on environment and poverty as part of its support to the process of sustainable development.

[50] The Regional UN System Meeting has set up six Issue-based Coalitions, clustered around cross-cutting policy issues: Health, Gender Equality, Youth and Adolescents, Social Protection, Large Movements of People, Displacement and Resilience and one on Environment and Climate Change.

6. Assessment and Achievement of Poverty related Results

131. Before discussing the results achieved through the various UNEP projects and initiatives of which the evaluation reports were reviewed, it is important to look at the results frameworks and theories of change which articulate the results chains of the initiatives, identifying the ways in which results are meant to be achieved and the expected pathways of change. Moreover, it is necessary to review the monitoring and evaluation that takes place to assess the achievement of results. This will allow for an informed assessment of the changes that were realized through UNEP support, including results in terms of poverty reduction. Finally, enabling and constraining factors for reaching poverty related results will be identified.

1) Results Frameworks and Theories of Change

132. All UNEP projects usually have a results framework included in the design of the project, with the newer projects also including a TOC in their design. In older projects and initiatives the TOC was not yet a requirement for the design and was usually reconstructed as part of the evaluation process. The results frameworks provide details on the output and outcome level changes and the objectives to which these contribute. Indicators provide a means of assessing the achievement of results at the output and outcome levels. The TOC is a means to identify how change in a project or initiative is expected to occur and usually identifies several pathways of change, which relate to the different outcome level changes of the results framework, the intermediate states and impact level results to which these contribute. Assumptions and drivers further specify the factors and processes needed for change to take place.

133. Most UNEP project result frameworks and TOCs pay little attention to poverty related aspects, with many including a reference to human welfare in the higher results levels, without details on how these changes are to be achieved. The PEI framework is an exception in this respect and is the only framework with equal attention to poverty and environmental objectives (see details in figure in annex 7). The framework details the pathways through which these objectives are to be achieved, including:

- improved understanding of the poverty-environment nexus,
- improving coordination mechanisms across government sectors,
- incorporation of poverty – environment objectives in national, sector and sub-national development plans,
- revision of national budgeting and financial management processes,
- adapted legal framework for investments,
- enhanced monitoring systems and accountability

134. Through the inclusion of poverty related issues in all of the levels of the TOC of the PEI this not only indicates that the programme contributes to "Equitable sustainable development and pro-poor growth" at the level of impact, but also shows how this is to be achieved, i.e. through "Improved capacity of country programme government and other stakeholders to integrate the environmental concerns of poor and vulnerable groups into policy, planning and implementation processes for poverty reduction, pro-poor growth and the achievements of the MDGs"; "increased national capacity for sustainable management of natural resources assets for equitable and pro-poor economic growth"; and "improved awareness and understanding of importance of poverty-environment mainstreaming in national policy and planning instruments among key policy-makers in planning and finance ministries".

135. The reconstructed and abridged Theory of Change shown in the evaluation report of the later phase of PEI sums up the change process from bottom to top: capacities strengthened of target agencies, improved institutions and coherence with integrated development policies, equitable growth supported through improved policies and practices and increased investment in poverty and

environment, resulting in enhanced poverty reduction efforts through improved livelihoods and environment and natural resource management, sustainable natural wealth and human development.

136. Another interesting example concerns the TOC of the UNEP Climate Change Adaptation and Livelihoods in Mauritania project design. The rationale in this case concerns investment in technical aspects of eco-system improvements, resulting in enhanced livelihood opportunities and related income (in kind or cash) and increased food security and health conditions, while reducing poverty and in turn reducing the pressure on, and exploitation of, ecosystems which in turn increases livelihood opportunities. Thus the circle is rounded. For details see TOC figure in annex 7.

137. Many of the other projects and initiatives reviewed pay less explicit, or specific, attention to poverty related issues. One example is the TOC of the UNEP city hub, in which poor and vulnerable and marginalized groups are included in the impact statement but no further details are provided on how they are included in the other steps of the change process. For details see TOC figure in annex 7.

138. A fourth example concerns the UNEP UNDAF project, in which UNEP provided inputs to UNDAF development processes of UNCTs. The impact level change relates only to environmental goals with the output and outcome level changes focusing on integration of environmental sustainability. There is no mention of the relationships between environmental issues and economic and social issues, i.e. the other two pillars of sustainable development. For details see figure in annex 7.

2) Monitoring and Evaluation of Results

139. All design documents reviewed included a costed M&E plan.[51] UNEP standard monitoring, reporting and evaluation processes are followed and/or similar processes are followed in line with partner requirements. M&E is informed by the project results framework and assesses the level of achievement of the output and outcome level indicators. Mid-term and terminal performance assessments (evaluations or reviews) are planned and budgeted for as part of the project design review and approval process. Information on achievements at output and outcome levels are regularly reported on in the UNEP Project Information Management System (PIMS) and presented in annual project reports using donor specified templates (e.g. Project Implementation Reports (PIR) for GEF-funded projects).

140. Monitoring is mostly process-oriented, making use of a limited set of quantitative indicators of the results framework at output and outcome levels. With this setup, project monitoring is often unable to provide a sufficient evidence base required to engage in the policy level discussions needed for scaling up and replicating the approach being demonstrated by the project. This is of particular importance if an intervention is meant to result in a 'proof of concept'. Project site selection, including for pilot projects, is often opportunistic. For pilot initiatives to generate credible evidence, the selection of sites would need to be underpinned by a methodological approach to enhance the validity of the findings produced. The city hub aims to move beyond process monitoring with the explicit objective of ensuring that the evidence is generated to show what works, and what does not, as part of the initiative.

141. Projects usually do have a results framework and, increasingly since 2011, a theory of change. In the results frameworks and TOCs aspects of poverty are usually limited to the inclusion of human well-being which is, at times, identified as the ultimate goal of the initiatives but without much detail or lower-level output and outcome level changes that contribute to this goal. There are usually no indicators on poverty related results, nor on the intermediate level changes that would be required to reach such results. If at all included, any focus in terms of monitoring of changes in poverty is limited to access to resources, with lack of attention given to assessments of participation of poor and vulnerable groups in decision-making processes, opportunities for poor people to move out of poverty

[51] In the project design document of Mexico the relevant annex was referred to though not included in the document provided.

and/or issues of security as identified in the multiple dimensions of the Sida poverty framework. Monitoring of poverty related results has overall been limited. This goes for the flagship initiatives like PEI,[52] GEI,[53] PAGE[54] and TEEB[55], as well as for country level projects.[56] Monitoring of poverty issues has usually not been included in project design and there is no clear guidance on the inclusion of poverty related issues in planning, design, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. Any poverty related results therefore usually remain 'invisible'.

142. Human development and poverty related aspects are rarely included in the monitoring framework and the results indicators of more recent project designs.[57] Moreover, attention to monitoring of gender, including disaggregation of indicators by gender and other aspects of vulnerability, has been limited. Even in the design of the UNEP Electrifying Mobility in Cities in India project, which pays attention to gender through inclusion of a gender plan, only one of the indicators on staff trained requires disaggregation of data by gender, with no further attention to assessing gender related results.

143. Monitoring is informed by donor requirements as well as by UNEP's needs as outlined in the programme manual. Monitoring is primarily conducted through the use of quantitative indicators. In the design documents reviewed the number of indicators of projects was limited, with usually less than 10 at the combined levels of outcomes and outputs.[58] This appears too few to allow for

[52] For PEI, the evaluation report that covered the period 2008-2013 provided a rating for monitoring, reporting and evaluation as moderately satisfactory, while in the report that covered the period 2013-2018 it was rated as satisfactory, with the observation that considerable effort was placed on improving the Results Framework as presented in the project document. Limitations remained in terms of the monitoring information based on quantitative indicators that provided little insight in the actual results of the programme, with the initiative focused at policy level change with different approaches in countries concerned based on the country context. PEI experimented with various approaches for global monitoring and reporting in response to the M&E weaknesses identified by the earlier evaluation. The inclusion of the series "Stories of Change" was an important addition and considered very informative and well written.

[53] The formal system of the GEI initiative was rated as unsatisfactory, with the evaluation report commenting that the project and its sub-projects had no operational monitoring and evaluation system, beyond standard technical and financial reporting with any additional monitoring conducted informally. Although this type of monitoring was still able to inform project management responses to changes in the context, the report indicated that the project in this way missed the opportunity to demonstrate its achievements, be held accountable for its actions and to improve internal learning.

[54] In the PAGE initiative, M&E was rated as moderately satisfactory with the monitoring framework capturing change at both the global as well as the national level. However, the framework missed out on targets linked to the uncertainty of funding and in practice data were regularly gathered on only part of the indicators. The evaluation identified the need to better align the PAGE indicators at all levels with the SDG goals and targets.

[55] TEEB included a monitoring plan with the monitoring framework updated during the project implementation, although some of the outcome level indicators were assessed by the evaluation as weak. There appeared to be no budget allocation for monitoring activities.

[56] The projects that worked at the country level, like the Mixteca Project, the peace building project in Sudan, the LDCF projects in Rwanda and Afghanistan and the ABS project in India did include results in terms of poverty in their results frameworks, in particular in terms of enhancing the livelihood opportunities of participating households through project support. Social development results were to be achieved in addition to, and in relationship with, ecosystem and biodiversity conservation related results, enhancing sustainable ecosystem services on which poor people depend for part of their livelihoods. In some of the projects this included support to functioning early warning systems for emergency situations and land use adaptation, issues required in the process of adaptation to aspects of climate change. Results in all cases were identified in general terms without concrete details on poverty related indicators. The LDCF project in Rwanda was an exception, with social and adaptation related quantitative index indicators included.

[57] In terms of the design documents reviewed, the project design document in Mauritania focused primarily on number of beneficiaries and access to water, rather than economic gains through the project. The focus of indicators in the two hubs are on policy and capacity related issues, while the indicators of the electrifying mobility in cities project in India focus on GHG emission reduction and uptake of low-emission transport. The design of the Reducing global environmental risks in Mexico project focuses on the number of people benefiting from the alternative economic activities and livelihoods. It does however, not assess how this compares to their previous income which, if sufficiently less, could provide a reason to return to the practice of artisanal mercury mining that the project aims to address.

[58] The UNEP Electrifying Mobility in Cities in India was an exception with a total of 15 indicators at objective and outcome levels.

meaningful results-based management in the complex contexts of environmental, social and economic change. In the city hub there is a total of 8 indicators, which would be insufficient to provide the proof of concept that the approach is delivering results as is foreseen in the design. Milestones are useful in terms of activity-based monitoring but add little in terms of the assessment of results. The focus on quantitative indicators is, moreover, not able to capture the qualitative aspects of change in terms of policy level engagement and poverty related aspects.

144. In one country an attempt was made by UNEP to include environment related poverty indicators as part of the UNDAF results framework. What UNEP staff proposed was for example when UNICEF proposed child mortality rate as an indicator, they included the same indicator specifically due to unhealthy environmental conditions; when UNDP had an indicator on small and medium enterprises developed, UNEP added an indicator on new small and medium businesses in green sectors. In this way they added tailored indicators to the draft UNCT results frameworks. The constraint was that data was not always available as the capacities of the national statistics office was limited, which resulted in the indicators ultimately not being included in the final version of the UNDAF results framework.

145. In Sudan, UNEP project monitoring was done through indicators as well as through the preparation of stories of change. Some were stories of successes through the eyes of beneficiaries, some were stories of people's experiences, some of which were video recorded and used in project events, showing how improved local governance of natural resources allowed for shared benefits and reduced conflict. Some of the stories got published in an International newspaper.

146. UNEP monitoring systems are heavily focused on process, assessment of activities and outputs and their contribution to outcome level changes, making use of a selected number of indicators. This is often not sufficient to provide a strong evidence base that the project approach applied did work in terms of achieving the results concerned. For UNEP, as a relatively small UN organization, working primarily on normative issues and informed by science, expansion of country-based practice through scaling up and replication needs to be conducted by others. For this to occur there is a need for a strong evidence base in terms of the results of initiatives on the ground, which can be used to inform policy and other decision-makers to make use of the lessons learned and to expand the initiative and implement it in other areas. Advocacy for scale up of project implementation needs to be informed by sufficiently rigorous M&E.

147. One monitoring method developed in the period under review concerns the Green Economy Progress Index, a global methodological approach to assess progress made on people's well-being in relation to economic opportunities, social inclusiveness and sustainable environmental management. It includes 13 indicators that capture critical issues faced in achieving an Inclusive Green Economy transition. It concerns quantification and modelling on aspects of income, job issues, health, gender and others for application in selected countries. The index is comparable across countries and includes an international database of 100 countries over a 10-year period. Data are international data, which puts a restriction to the number of indicators. The index concerns relative measurement which allows for a comparison over time, rather than absolute measurement. In future more countries are expected to be included. The index provides a means to support countries in their assessment on whether they are progressing on the IGE targets that they have set for themselves, including on social inclusion.

148. Evaluations of UNEP projects focused on findings and ratings for each of the applied evaluation criteria but were at times relatively weak in terms of analysis and conclusions. There was usually no unpacking of the interrelationships between environment and people-oriented social development aspects of the interventions. No specific attention was paid to poverty related results in most of the reports reviewed.

149. There has not been a strong focus on the application of the requirements of the ESSF in project implementation as part of UNEP project evaluations. Inclusion of such aspects in the design of a project were not verified in terms of the application during project implementation as part of the

evaluation process in the reports reviewed. Thus, there has been no rigorous review of the use of the safeguard framework in the period concerned.

150. Although projects are being evaluated consistently, there is less attention to the demonstration of impact in both environmental and human development terms and how the results of projects implemented add up to higher level results, including synergistic workings. This also goes for longer term initiatives, like the PEI.[59] This could be supported by moving away from a portfolio towards a programmatic approach in sub-programmes. Although the number of projects is large in several of the sub-programmes, they are not necessarily contributing to the same overarching objectives, missing out on opportunities for synergy, and mutually enhancing results. Moreover, pilot projects are often not expanded in their reach, with projects focusing on the implementation of the pilot without sufficient attention to aspects of evidence gathering and replication and scaling up as part of the project. Follow up often depends on sustained donor funding.

3) Results Achieved

151. Given the limitations of the monitoring frameworks of UNEP initiatives and projects and in particular their lack of inclusion of human welfare and poverty related indicators, evaluations have been able to pay limited attention to explicit poverty-related results. This is further exacerbated through the lack of social change related aspects in the results frameworks of projects and the TOCs reconstructed as part of the evaluation process, with a lack of baseline data in place. When evaluations did include poverty related aspects, and the ways in which issues concerned had been addressed, it did this in descriptive and narrative ways. The lack of inclusion of quantitative indicators has limited the ability of evaluations to quantify results concerned.

152. The effects that UNEP initiatives and projects have on poverty-related issues are usually caused indirectly rather than directly. In many initiatives and projects UNEP does not work directly with beneficiaries at the local level. This is particularly true for the flagship initiatives, which implement activities in multiple countries and work both at global and national level. With UNEP's focus on the environment, poverty related results are usually achieved in relation to environmental results. With UNEP being one of several organizations that support the changes concerned, results need to be assessed in terms of UNEPs contribution to these changes.

153. An exception in this respect are single country projects which work more often at the sub-national level and do at times aim at tangible results at the local level, including for poor and vulnerable groups. Based on their approach, such results are limited in reach even though some are meant to be pilots and scaled up afterwards or replicated elsewhere. Also in these cases, results were identified in general terms without concrete quantified data on poverty related results, except for the LCDF project in Rwanda.

154. Results from flagship initiatives as well as from single country projects are summarized in the boxes 4 to 7 below, based on evaluation reports reviewed.

[59] The evaluation report for the PEI period 2013-2018 observes that notwithstanding the longer-term implementation period of the programme, no impact level assessment has been conducted as part of the project looking at poverty reduction and environmental results. In particular with PEI having been implemented over a total of 13 years at the time of the evaluation, impact level changes could be expected. Impact was initially defined as enhanced poverty reduction and equitable growth, which was in 2015 adapted to (i) environmental sustainability secured to sustain economic and social benefits for men, women, and vulnerable groups; and, (ii) poverty levels of men and women reduced as measured by multi-dimensional indices. Impact assessment would require indicators at the impact level which had remained relevant over the entire project period, as well as baseline data from the start of the initiative. The use of a reasonable counterfactual could further enhance the rigour of such an assessment.

Box 4: Results achieved in UNEP - UNDP PEI Flagship Initiative

The PEI outcome level results focused on the integration of poverty-environment approaches in development policies and plans, with experiences documented and knowledge products developed in order to share learning and inform country, regional and global development programming by the UN and member states. For each of the PEI periods the achievement of output and outcome level results were rated, with a rating of satisfactory for the period 2008-2013 and highly satisfactory for the period 2013-2018.

Outcome level indicators included (assessed through multiple level based capacity self-assessments):

- Level of application of Poverty-Environment (P-E) approaches and tools for integrated development policies, plans and coordination mechanisms
- Increased public sector financial expenditure for P-E results
- Level of integration of pro-poor environmental mainstreaming approach and tools in UN and partner strategies and programmes at country, regional and global levels;

Output level indicators included:

- Number of national and subnational policies and development plans /key sectoral policies and plans that integrate P-E objectives and indicators in target countries;
- Number of national M&E frameworks that integrate P-E indicators;
- Number of national budgeting and expenditure processes that integrate P-E objectives in target countries;
- Number of countries introducing 'beyond GDP measurements';
- Number of UNDAFs and Country Programme Documents that mainstream P-E;
- Number of P-E knowledge products shared with regional and global networks.

In the PEI evaluation 2013-2018 the knowledge management part of the PEI was regarded as having more potential than was being realized with the interest from member countries and demands for support being high. Knowledge management was considered to need to become more strategic, coordinated and resourced.

The evaluation also pointed out that although PEI increased its focus on a rights-based and gender sensitive approach, with an increased identification and targeting of poor and vulnerable groups and working on multi-dimensional aspects of poverty, the focus on poverty could have been further enhanced. This was seen as to require addressing the prevalence of environmental experts in the PEI teams and enhance the use of UNDP expertise on poverty and social development and partnering with social ministries.

While PEI was meant to have impact through leveraging of its work, it was generally felt that the many avenues for leveraging PEI's work were under-exploited such as: (i) integrating PEI into other UNEP/ UNDP programs and projects; (ii) developing partnerships; (iii) knowledge management, including South South learning; and, (iv) resource mobilization.

Achievements of PEI included the normalization of working in particular with Ministries of Planning and Finance, as well as with other sector Ministries, including agriculture, in addition to Ministries of Environment, the traditional partner of UNEP at country level, in order to enhance the P-E linkages in national development strategies, policies and plans. PEI showed that appropriate investment in sustainable management of environment and natural resources could reduce poverty at multiple levels.

Box 5: Results achieved in UNEP GEI Flagship Initiative

Results of the GEI initiative focused on two outcome areas: on the one hand developing the case for a green economy informed by evidence and data and, on the other, piloting of regulations, economic incentives and other voluntary measures to promote the actual shift towards a green economy. No explicit poverty related objectives were specified.

The evaluation assessed that much progress was made in terms of promotion of the concept of a green economy, making a strong economic case based on data. Less progress was made in terms of the transition process in selected countries to actually implement the concept of green economy due to limitations in capacities to implement proposed incentives and regulations, lack of continuity of government support in particular in countries with a change of administration during project implementation and lack of commitment to deliver at national level. Given the multiple barriers that still proved to exist in the transition to a green economy at the country level, the likelihood of achieving the project impact of improved resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production was assessed as moderate.

Through its initiative of the GEI, UNEP was seen as having maintained genuine leadership in the promotion of the concept of green economy and having brought together important international organizations in a global partnership, with the GE concept accepted as a key issue in sustainable development. UNEP's initiative was considered to have contributed to the changes made in the global and national development discourse, informed by adequate data and information. The organization was seen to have contributed to the initiation of a transformation process in many countries towards a greener economy and the development of required capacities among governmental agencies.

Box 6: Results achieved in UNEP PAGE Flagship Initiative*

The PAGE project aimed at providing support to countries in their efforts to reframe economic policies and put in place the conditions, reforms and incentives as well as the partnership for an inclusive green economic approach.

The mid-term evaluation assessed the achievement of outcome level changes as moderately satisfactory, with only the results of the support to Ghana identified as not being on track. Outcome level achievements were seen as difficult to assess as indicators of half the outcomes had not been monitored by the project.

In terms of impact level changes, there were poverty related results identified in Mauritius in terms of a Marshal Plan against poverty in place, and in Burkina Faso with the adoption of a National programme for Economic and Social Development in process and mention of results in addressing poverty reduction, jobs and social equity in South Africa. In Senegal, UNIDO, in collaboration with the GEF and the World Bank, was promoting Green Industry through the establishment of an integrated industrial platform and the development of a sustainable model city. These outcomes and impact level changes were facilitated by output level results realized.

** PAGE concerns an initiative in partnership with ILO, UNDP, UNIDO and, UNITAR.*

155. The results of PEI reflect the integration of the understanding of the poverty environment nexus into development planning and budgeting. GEI and PAGE initiatives reached important results in terms of the inclusive green economy, which has been recognized as one of the pathways to achieving sustainable development.[60] However, in both GEI and PAGE evaluations, the concept of Green Economy was taken as a whole and was not further unpacked in its components, identifying economic,

[60] United Nations, RIO+20, United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, The future we want, June 2012.

social and environmental aspects and their interrelationship as well as their uptake in different ways in the different contexts of the countries concerned. Without such unpacking, Green Economy remains a black box and it does not become clear how results are being achieved in each of its aspects.

Box 7: Examples of Results achieved in UNEP Projects at Country Level

The projects that worked at the country level, like the Mixteca Project, the peace building project in Sudan, the LDCF projects in Rwanda and Afghanistan and the ABS project in India, did include results in terms of poverty, enhancing the livelihood opportunities of participating households through project support. In the project in Sudan, moreover, results included reduction of conflict over natural resources and enhanced security at the local level as well as improved levels of engagement of in particular women in decision-making processes.

These social development results were achieved in addition to, and in relationship with, ecosystem and biodiversity conservation related results, enhancing sustainable ecosystem services on which poor people depend for part of their livelihoods. This included, in Afghanistan and Rwanda, support to the establishment of functioning early warning systems for emergency situations and land use adaptation, aspects required in the process of adaptation to aspects of climate change.

The levels of results in all cases were relatively small, limited to selected geographic areas and population groups in the participating countries. In some cases, projects were meant to serve as pilots, with learning used to expand the programming to other areas in the country concerned. Results in all cases were identified in general terms without concrete details on poverty related indicators, with the exception of the project in Rwanda, which made use of an index to assess poverty related results.

4) Enabling Factors to Reach Results

156. UNEP, together with selected sister UN agencies, has been implementing a number of longer term flagship programmes, with a combined focus on environmental sustainability and economic and social development, including poverty reduction, which were sufficiently resourced and combined global level development approaches, methods and tools to address the issues concerned with country level support to implement project level initiatives, which in turn fed back information on results to inform the global level approach. This programmatic approach proved beneficial as it allowed for a longer-term emphasis on a set of key aspects of environment and social development connections. In the case of PEI, it benefitted from a human resource infrastructure set up in Africa at regional level and in PEI supported countries.

157. Hubs have been a more recent means to support sustainable development initiatives across UNEP sub-programmes, making use of an integrated approach, together with a range of partners. The hubs do work with a people-oriented approach, and social development and poverty reduction are mentioned in the design documents of two of these hubs, though not yet fully integrated in them.

158. Partnerships are an important enabler for UNEP to reach results, in particular at the country level. As a non-resident UN agency, the organization does not have country representation in most countries and depends on partnerships with resident UN agencies and other organizations at the country level for the implementation of in-country interventions.

159. Projects have made use of win-win scenarios, with positive results for people's livelihoods and biodiversity. This is exemplified by the Mixteca project, which focused on sustainable agricultural practices, diversification of livelihood options and biodiversity conservation in a rich biodiverse area of Mexico. Support to more sustainable agricultural practices for cultivation of corn, beans and cabbage was combined with new income generating activities, including growing of fruit trees, bee keeping and resin collection. These were important gains for the local population, for which experimentation had been too risky to engage in beforehand. Enhanced production enabled the local

population to develop more sustainable forest resource use, enhancing the biodiverse natural environment of the area.

160. There is considerable attention to application of a systemic approach in UNEP projects and initiatives, providing support to enhancing environment and poverty related systems that would persist beyond the timeframe of a project or initiative. This has been in particular the case in the longer-term flagship initiatives. There is, moreover, a clear understanding that for change towards sustainable development to happen, the relatively small resources of UNEP need to be used to affect the way in which national budgets and private sector investments are made, in a sustainable and socially responsible way.

161. The Seed Capital Assistance Facility (SCAF) is an example of enhancing financial investment in higher risk sectors through the provision of risk management strategies and safety nets, in order to enable the private sector to invest in clean energy in developing countries that are usually excluded from the mainstream investment system due to their high-risk profile. As part of UNEP's Finance Initiative, guidelines were developed on private sector investments on environment and its sustainable use.

162. Also in GEF supported projects there appears to be a move towards a more systemic and integrated approach through the implementation of 'Impact Programmes' which make use of an integrated approach with programmes on sustainable cities (12 cities in 12 countries), food systems (500 m USD) and Amazonia in GEF cycle 6 and Congo basin (90 m USD) and dry lands in cycle 7. These are multi-agency programme initiatives with GEF agencies concerned making use of a common framework implemented across countries and regions. The Congo Basin and the sustainable cities programmes are led by UNEP, while in the food systems programme, UNEP is one of the partner agencies.

163. UNEP's normative approach and its work with multiple countries in some of the flagship initiatives provides a useful basis to support South and Triangular Cooperation across countries with a sufficiently similar context but in different stages of the sustainable development process. The UNEP South South Cooperation policy supports technological and knowledge transfer amongst Southern countries, including LDCs and SIDS, in order to enhance their development. UNEP provides facilitative and other support in the process. However, such cooperation initiatives have proved to require substantial human resources to implement, in particular in terms of coordination in the design and preparation stages.

5) Constraining Factors to Reach Results

164. Several of the constraints identified relate to organizational aspects. UNEP is, in UN terms, a relatively small and normative organization, usually without a country presence, which makes it more challenging for the organization to support sustainable development at the country level, informed by the country specific context and to play a supporting role to protection and sustainable use of ecosystem services and poverty reduction. Such country-based initiatives are nevertheless indispensable in order to enhance the evidence base of what works, to provide feed-back to the scientific work and to inform policy-making. UNEP makes use of a wide array of partnerships to play a role at the country level.

165. In terms of funding, UNEP's core resources appear to be decreasing, while at the same time donors remain interested in funding of projects, which means that much time needs to be invested in 'chasing funding' for projects. While Sida has doubled its support to UNEP in comparison with the PCA 2014-2017, it has done this with more of the funds being softly earmarked, which affects UNEP's flexibility in terms of allocation of resources for programming.[61] Resources for PEA have reduced more recently.

[61] Sida as a Government Agency is not able to provide core support to a UN body, which is the prerogative of the Swedish Government.

Part of the projects implemented have co-funding resources in their design, which are however, not always realized, limiting opportunities for project implementation.

166. The human resources of the organization are much related to the technical aspects of each of the seven sub-programmes and thus most of the staff have a technical background. In addition, there are economists, in particular working on aspects of GEI, PAGE, TEEB and PEI Africa. With a limited number of staff with a social science background it is considered difficult to have environmental projects include social development and poverty related objectives, as this would require a thorough understanding of the social development context and discourse. This also goes for the linkage with policy makers, which is often done by technical specialists, based on their technical knowledge but less aware of the intricacies of political economy and the power dynamics concerned. Even when working with partners, UNEP itself needs sufficient capacity to relate with partners on the issues concerned.

167. Monitoring has remained focused on a select number of indicators without baseline data and lacking sufficient attention to the linkages between environmental and climatic aspects on the one hand and poverty issues and the wider development framework at country, sub-national and sector levels on the other hand. Capacities in this respect remain weak, in particular in terms of relating environmental aspects to multi-dimensional aspects of poverty. There is overall insufficient disaggregation of data, including data on the lowest income quintile and gender related data, which is required to assess changes for the poorest and most vulnerable parts of society.

168. UNEP projects and initiatives do not usually conduct a poverty analysis as part of the design process. This goes for projects in which multiple countries were involved in terms of project implementation, such as the project addressing issues of climate change adaptation in the Nile River Basin, in which basin wide contextual details were included but no country specific or basin wide poverty analysis was referred to in the evaluation report. This also goes for projects in single countries. The project on peace and natural resource management in Sudan is an exception. In this case a needs assessment was conducted which was facilitated by UNEP, enabled among others by the organization having a longer-term presence in-country. In some projects of which the evaluation report was reviewed, reference was made to the use of existing poverty related data, such as in the case of PAGE in Peru, where use was made of the human development indicators to assess country level needs.

169. In terms of in-country implementation, political uncertainties proved to be in particular a constraining factor for project implementation, with changes in governments and in a certain case a coup d'état changing government's course and the interest in UNEP projects and their objectives. In this respect one respondent remarked: "Nothing is permanent in politics". Moreover, policy decisions are seen as only as strong as the government agency responsible for the issues concerned. In one of the countries the change in government threatened the green economy agenda, though this was prevented by UNEP supporting both parties before the national election to include Green Economy into their political agenda so that whichever party would win, the agenda would be supported.

170. Some other constraints that are outside of UNEP's control have been identified in evaluations on a project by project basis, including lack of clarity of responsibilities between and within various Ministries, lack of platforms for cooperation across Ministries, sensitivity regarding selected data and sharing of such data and data gaps, different views on goals to be achieved between government agencies and UNEP, limited entry points to working with private sector entities, conflict contexts and aspects of insecurity limiting results, the geographical isolation of some of the areas in a country, which limited opportunities for collaboration with other areas in the same project, high variability of environmental conditions to which projects need to be adapted, risk averseness of poor farming households and the inability of rural poor to pay upfront for business investment opportunities. All these challenges needed to be addressed in the specific context in which they occurred.

7. Ways in which sustainability concerns have been addressed

171. Sustainability in UNEP evaluations focuses on three aspects considered to be important for the effects of interventions to be durable and longer-lasting. These include, socio-political (the commitment to continue results), financial (funding issues) and institutional aspects (capacities concerned). For sustainability to succeed, all three aspects need to be in place towards the end of a project or initiative. Poverty related results are connected to, and dependent on, conditions in each of the three pillars of sustainable development, i.e. economic, social and environmental aspects. For poverty to be addressed, there is a need for sustained results in intermediate level changes in each of these pillars of sustainable development.

172. The PEI (later PEA) is a good example in this respect as it has addressed all three aspects of sustainability in terms of its support to enhancing country capacities in planning and budgeting for sustaining the environment in a way that is beneficial in particular for poor and disadvantaged groups. With its focus on the P-E nexus in planning and budgeting and capacities concerned, it has combined political commitment, capacity development and on-going financial support through the national budget. A limitation identified concerned the use of PEI learnings by other UNEP sub-programmes and other UN agencies so far which has been less than optimal. For details on sustainability aspects of PEI see box 8 below.

173. The combination of policy level engagement, capacity development and financial viability is exemplified by the UNEP Electrifying Mobility in Cities in India Project. This project aims to contribute to sustainable development by addressing the three main barriers to electrified mobility that have been identified and that affect the transformation to a sustainable low-emission transport system in India: lack of a policy framework, limited institutional capacities and the need for financing and business models. The demonstration character of the project and awareness campaigns are to enhance buy-in and promote behaviour change, building private sector as well as public support capacities and demand for sustaining and scaling-up of results post-project.

174. Ownership is an important aspect of sustainability, which is the main focus of the way in which sustainability is supported in the UNEP climate change adaptation and livelihoods project in Mauritania. The project enhances sustainability by ensuring project ownership through a participatory approach, and raising awareness and developing capacity on the ecosystem-based approach applied by the project. The inclusion of strengthening policies and legal framework and support to cross sectoral planning at regional and local levels as well as a focus on gender is regarded critical to enhance sustained results. A cost-effective approach is meant to enhance financial sustainability. The project consensus-based approach is to be applied in an upscaling strategy to climate change adaptation in other arid areas of Mauritania. For details see box 9 below.

175. The engagement of a variety of stakeholders in the process of sustainable development, the formation of partnerships and the creation of coordination and cooperation mechanisms amongst them were seen as important factors that can enhance the sustainability of results. Partnership with UN resident agencies at the country level can provide relevant additional support during implementation as well as after project termination. As a non-resident agency, such cooperation with sister UN agencies is of particular importance to UNEP. Nevertheless, several of the reviewed UNEP projects implemented at the country level had not partnered with other UN agencies. Partnering in particular with local institutions has been recognized as a factor that enhances opportunities for sustainability at the local level. The support to partnerships and coordination mechanisms proved to be of particular importance in the longer-term flagship initiatives, where such means of cooperation could be used to provide on-going support over longer timeframes. This also goes for the more recently developed trade and cities hubs, in which sustainability is highly dependent on the building of long-term partnerships, with the uptake of learning during implementation relying heavily on the buy-in from the various stakeholder groups that UNEP partners with in the initiatives.

Box 8: Sustainability in the UNEP - UNDP Poverty Environment Initiative

The initiative has enhanced the inclusion of poverty – environment related issues in country level development planning and budgeting, with the sustainability of the budgeting aspects considered as having been less realized compared to the planning results. This is in particular the case for those countries with high donor dependencies in Sub-Saharan Africa and has been less the case in Asia with less donor dependencies. In institutional terms the likelihood of sustainability is regarded as very much proportionate to the length of time PEI has been providing support to a given country. Sustainability is highest where countries have applied the more ambitious approach of engaging with the entire national planning, policy and budgeting processes of the country with a view to achieving systemic change with possible substantial impacts for poverty reduction and inclusive sustainable development.

The PEI invested in capacity building of individuals and institutions, through tailor-made training programmes to government staff, with increasing inclusion of non-governmental actors. Training was often provided in partnership with local actors who could guarantee long-lasting assistance and, in this way, enhance the sustainability of PEI's work. For development of many of the country studies that were included as part of the project, local experts were hired from participating institutions as a strategy for developing their capacities through 'learning by doing' and to ensure that they would be in a position to adjust and update the tools as the situation in the country evolved. PEI has made use of international consultants to provide expert support to the national teams. Creating systemic capacities has been a key to PEI's approach to sustainability.

In 2015, exit and sustainability strategies were developed for all countries, setting out the exit process and requirements for sustainability post 2018. All countries felt that a 'hard PEI-Exit' without any continuing technical support would endanger the sustainability of results. The strategy clarified the roles and resources necessary for each agency to ensure the sustainability of project results.

Mainstreaming of the PEI learnings into the UN has always been a strong rationale for donor support. Despite targets of related outputs being reached in this respect, there is a view among many stakeholders that more could have been achieved. PEI has not been sufficiently mainstreamed within the UN with further scope to raise PEI's profile in UNDP and UNEP and the wider UN system.

At the global level, given PEI's integrated approach, its profile was raised in support of SDG implementation, including the importance of environment and natural resource management for poverty reduction. Opportunities for further mainstreaming in the UN include the use of the PEI handbook, training UN staff in charge of country programmes, supporting UN's global research agenda and support to equitable resource access in post-conflict countries. Fostering South-South Cooperation has been part of the PEI strategy and approach, as a means of facilitating learning and advocacy. However, there is considered to be additional scope to develop South-South learning at the regional and global levels.

Box 9: Sustainability in Design of UNEP Climate Change Adaptation & Livelihoods Project in Mauritania

The UNEP Climate change adaptation and livelihoods project in Mauritania enhances sustainability through ensuring project ownership through the application of a participatory approach, and through awareness raising and capacity development on the ecosystem-based approach applied by the project. Inclusion of strengthening policies and legal frameworks and support to cross sectoral planning at regional and local levels as well as a focus on gender is regarded critical to enhance sustained results. A cost-effective approach is meant to enhance financial sustainability. The project is meant to be used as a pilot to inform an upscaling strategy to apply the ecosystems-based approach to climate change adaptation in other arid areas of Mauritania. Awareness raising and outreach are important means to support the implementation of the upscaling strategy.

176. The institutionalization of some of the tools used by UNEP in its programming is another intermediate level change that supports the continuation of achieved results. For an example see box 9 below.

Box 10: Adoption of the Environmental-Economic Accounting Strategy developed through TEEB

Activities in the TEEB initiative have been conducted under the auspices of the established United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting and the UN Statistical Commission which adopted the Environmental-Economic Accounting strategy developed through the project at its 47th meeting in March 2016. Ongoing work is integrated into the UN Statistics work programme. The approach itself, and implicitly the engagement of UNEP, was endorsed in a 2016 UNEA Resolution.

177. A realistic and practical exit strategy is considered to be required from as early as the design stage of the project in order to prepare for the phasing out of project support and to ensure the sustainability of results. Sustainability has been too often seen as becoming an issue only towards the end of a project. Sustainability concerns in small projects often occur too late in the process and there is a need to include clear exit strategies in the design of such initiatives. However, as identified in the evaluation reports reviewed, in many of the initiatives, there is no specific attention to the follow-up by different government agencies and other stakeholders after project termination and responsibilities for ensuring that results achieved at national and sub-national levels have a lasting effect are not identified from the start, at project design. Although pilot projects are meant to be scaled up or replicated by government agencies or other stakeholders this is usually not paid attention to as part of the implementation of the project, often limiting actual scaling up or replication after project termination. In terms of financial sustainability, in many of the evaluations prolonged financial support was deemed required in order to ensure the durability of the results achieved by the projects concerned.

178. Public awareness raising and communication are used in the hubs as well as in other initiatives to support the sustaining of results and to promote and support replication of proven approaches. Attention to the dissemination of results for scale up and replication is often included in project design but not always sufficiently resourced and/or carried out to the full planned extent. South South cooperation has at times been used for dissemination of learning but could be further expanded.

179. The durability of project results ideally refers to all aspects of sustainable development that the project addressed, including economic, social and environmental aspects, with poverty closely intertwined with economic, social and environmental conditions. In practice, the assessment of the evaluation criterion of sustainability in the evaluation reports reviewed usually focused on the combined objectives of the various programmes, from a socio-political, financial and institutional perspective. There is normally no distinction made between the sustainability of environmental, economic and social aspects of the results of a project or initiative. Such distinction could inform lesson learning, in particular on the sustainability of poverty related results.

8. Analysis

180. UNEP's approach to social development has been primarily oriented towards human welfare. Although aspects of poverty have been assumed to be included in this perspective, in many cases no clear targeting approach has been used in terms of who benefits from projects. Assessments concerning poverty-related aspects in affected populations have often not been conducted. A more concerted approach to poverty reduction has been limited to a small proportion of initiatives. In the context of UNEP, this concerned projects in which poverty was more directly related to environmental concerns such as the sustainable use of natural resources, the services provided through eco-systems or the adaptation required to detrimental consequences of climate change. The PEI has been an important frontrunner in this respect and has shown ways in which environment and poverty are interconnected and paths through which poverty can be reduced through an economic development process that benefits the poor and that sustains the natural environment, safeguarding the ecosystem services that poor people depend on.

181. UNEP is overall regarded as a normative organization, grounded in its science-based approach and its engagement at the policy level. Its technical methods are underpinned by a rights-based focus, including the right to a safe and supporting natural environment for present and future generations. UNEP's added value includes its ability to develop innovative approaches to sustainable development, grounded in its normative work, with much of the support provided at the level of policy and planning processes, informed by the preparation of standards and guidelines concerned. The organization has played a convening role at global, regional and country levels. Moreover, relevant work has been conducted at sub-national levels. UNEP has developed a wide variety of partnerships, enabling it to support the implementation of a variety of flagship initiatives at global and country levels, including programming in humanitarian settings. It has provided ways to assess and understand the relationships between environmental, economic and social aspects of sustainability, including aspects of poverty reduction.

182. The social development aspects of UNEP's programming are reflected in the organization's MTS and POW in terms of human well-being, with different types and levels of linkages provided in the various sub-programmes and the theories of change incorporated in the POW. Although linkages with poverty reduction can be found in all the sub-programmes, they vary in terms of directness and contents concerned. Strong linkages can be observed in particular in the ecosystems sub-programme, the climate change adaptation and the REDD+ part of the climate change sub-programme, where the focus is on support to livelihood opportunities, development of resilience to the effects of climate change and establishment of early warning systems. The linkage in the chemicals, waste and pollution sub-programme is in particular through improving health conditions. Although pollution often affects all groups, poor people tend to be more impacted as they are usually more exposed to pollution and related health risks, and have less access to health services once ill. A more multi-dimensional connection with poverty is found in the resilience to disaster and conflict sub-programme, which includes a focus on human security often in combination with other dimensions of poverty. Resource efficiency, through its focus on an inclusive green economy and sustainable consumption and production, addresses social objectives and poverty reduction, often more in an indirect way. Thus, although linkages with poverty of the sub-programmes differ, a poverty perspective appears relevant to each of the sub-programmes.

183. UNEP has operationalized its attention to poverty in a variety of ways, including in terms of geographical targeting of the poorest countries and regions as well as through inclusion of the viewpoints of poor groups in some of the project design processes. The focus in terms of how to address poverty has been strongest on access to resources, with relatively less attention paid to other aspects of poverty reduction, including aspects of voice, opportunities and security, (notwithstanding examples of incidental focus on such issues in individual projects). There are also examples of

initiatives in which opportunities to address poverty were missed, as well as those in which poverty related results were assumed, but not sufficiently specified and monitored. With the exception of single country projects, the poverty related results of UNEP initiatives are often indirect, through support to policy development and implementation, planning and budgeting processes and the development of methods, approaches and standards related to environmental issues.

184. In order to ensure that poverty reduction effects are arrived at as relevant in programming and country contexts there is a need to: i) make the poverty issues and concerns explicit, ii) show how a project is meant to contribute to reducing poverty, iii) provide details on the poverty-environment nexus concerned and relations with economic and social development processes.

185. Although awareness of poverty related issues and recognition of their importance is high among staff within the organization, linkages of social development and environmental aspects often remain at a generic level and the incorporation of poverty related issues within projects and initiatives is variable. In many cases such issues remain implicit in objectives and are thus not explicitly addressed nor monitored. The review of more recent design documents confirms that poverty related aspects are included in some of these, while remaining limited or lacking explicit attention in others. An important exception concerns the PEI programme, in 2018 transformed into PEA, which has increasingly strengthened its poverty reduction approach. However, its perception as a special case project, jointly with UNDP, has limited the extent to which learnings from PEI have been sufficiently recognized as useful to inform other UNEP projects and initiatives in terms of their contribution to poverty reduction.

186. Experience in the PEI shows that even in an initiative that focuses on the relationship between environment and poverty, it was not easy for UNEP, in partnership with UNDP, to demonstrate a clear focus on poverty related issues. There was a need to make aspects of poverty and environment explicit, including poverty related results. A TOC was developed with multiple pathways showing how poverty could be reduced through environmental programming that includes social development objectives. Human resources put into place at regional level and in focus countries to support project implementation tailored to the country context proved an important enabling factor for reaching results.

187. Given their longer time span, the UNEP flagship initiatives, developed and implemented in partnership with other UN agencies, have been in a relatively advantageous position to develop their environment-oriented programming to increasingly include a focus on poverty related issues, relevant to the country contexts concerned. PEI, GEI and TEEB all developed their approach towards poor and vulnerable groups over time. Their longer timespan is also more in line with the longer-term approach required to address poverty related issues.

188. UNEP's experience with social development in programming was obtained initially through the incorporation of gender dimensions in its projects and initiatives. There has been a concerted effort for a sustained period of time to enhance the gender perspective in UNEP programming, in order to enhance results of projects and initiatives in particular for women and girls and other vulnerable and marginalized groups. The social safeguards framework has been one of the means to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in UNEP project design and that other social aspects, including those of indigenous people, are incorporated. This serves the purpose on the one hand of ensuring that UNEP interventions do no harm to vulnerable and marginalized groups and, on the other, that through the incorporation of their needs, projects have beneficial effects on vulnerable and 'left behind' groups in line with the principle of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. However, the gender and social safeguards perspective has not been part of a wider social development perspective, including aspects of poverty and other forms of disenfranchisement of people. Such a broader framework of social development would support the linking of poverty and gender related issues as well as incorporating the interests of indigenous people and other neglected or disadvantaged groups in a common approach to inclusive and sustainable development, from an environmental perspective.

189. Partnerships are essential for UNEP as a non-resident UN agency and this goes for the global, regional as well as the country level. UNEP's partnerships with sister UN agencies have enabled it to implement several longer-term flagship initiatives, making use of its own comparative advantage and relationships as well as those of sister agencies. Even though there have been substantial transaction costs, the results have appeared to justify these and achievements are considered to outweigh the costs concerned. Cooperation at the global level with selected UN agencies has provided UNEP entry points through these UN agencies at the country level. Partnerships with UN agencies with an explicit social mandate can enable UNEP to focus on environmental aspects from a people perspective as part of the sustainable development process, while other social and economic concerns can be dealt with by other UN agencies, making use of an environmental sustainable development perspective. The new round of UN reform is expected to further contribute to enhanced cooperation across UN agencies and to support such partnerships.

190. UNEP has successfully enhanced its partnering with government agencies and moved, in addition to working with Ministries of Environment as its natural partner, to working with Ministries of Finance and Ministries of Planning, as well as key sector Ministries like Agriculture, which has provided inroads to engaging more broadly with national development planning and budgeting and the positioning of environmental concerns in national development processes. This has considerably enhanced the role of UNEP at the country level and its ability to support an integrated approach, linking environmental, economic and social aspects of sustainable development in planning and budgeting processes.

191. UNEP's work with the private sector has been important in addition to working with government agencies, as private sector investments are important factors of economic processes in many parts of the world. In many countries these investments exceed government investment and are important resources that, if targeted in the right way, can contribute to economic and social development in an environmentally sustainable manner.

192. Results frameworks and theories of change have become commonplace in present-day UNEP project design and these frameworks guide monitoring and evaluation, which is included in all initiatives in a standard way. Although some of the frameworks of UNEP initiatives and projects do include poverty related objectives as well as some pathways to reach those, these are the exception, rather than the rule. More often, people-oriented objectives are limited to a statement regarding human well-being as the ultimate goal of the project, without much detail in the remainder of the framework on how to reach this. At times, poverty related aspects are included as either assumptions or as drivers of change and although these additions do enhance the strength of the frameworks, they usually do not compensate for the limitations of the frameworks in terms of monitoring and evaluation of poverty related results and contributing factors to achieve these.

193. Monitoring and evaluation is guided by the results framework (i.e. assessing the extent to which what was planned has been achieved) and is usually based on upto a maximum of ten quantitative indicators spread between output and outcome levels of the framework. A lack of poverty related indicators in the frameworks as well as a lack of the inclusion of the systemic changes required to reach poverty related results, has meant that monitoring and evaluation usually lacks a clear poverty orientation. This is also true for evaluation reports, in which the focus is usually on environmental changes at times linked to economic development issues but mostly without sufficient attention to social development aspects, including poverty related issues. Limitations of the monitoring and evaluation of results, including the lack of relevant social development and poverty related indicators, has meant that the assessment of poverty related results has depended on qualitative and descriptive approaches incidentally applied. Although gender aspects have been included in several of the evaluation reports, they have focused on a limited set of gender related indicators and some gender disaggregated data. Gender related results have usually not been presented within a broader social development framework.

194. In order to ensure that poverty reduction related results are monitored and evaluated and that UNEP can built on learnings concerned there is a need to: i) include quantitative and qualitative means for assessment of poverty related results with reference to baseline data, ii) apply more rigorous M&E of poverty related issues in key poverty initiatives and in pilot projects, providing a methodological basis for the selection of pilot sites and contents and iii) develop a knowledge management system on learnings in relation to poverty and the poverty-environment nexus.

195. UNEP's focus on poverty is not direct, but linked to its work on environment including the complexities of the poverty – environment nexus. Therefore, effects on poverty of UNEP projects are often either broad (i.e. in terms of targeting LDCs), implied (i.e. improving the environmental context and climate conditions) or indirect (e.g. healthier ecosystems can provide better support to families living at subsistence level or on the margins of ecological sustainability).

196. Most prominent in terms of results are the achievements of the longer running flagship programmes, which have enabled transformative change in terms of environmental planning and budgeting and in terms of re-orientation of economic development processes, away from their link with environmental degradation towards a circular economy with sustainable consumption and production patterns as captured in the concept of inclusive green economy. This approach has been recognized by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development as an important tool to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication.[62]

197. While UNEP has been able to develop a clear understanding on the interrelationships between economic development processes and the environment, a similar understanding has not yet been put in place in terms of the social aspects of the sustainable development process, including aspects of poverty and left behind groups and their relationship with environmental concerns. A poverty-oriented approach would be an important element of such a broader social development and people-oriented perspective on environmentally sustainable development. UNEP would need to access the relevant human resources to lead the development and support the implementation of such an approach throughout the organisation.

198. The sustainability of results of UNEP projects and initiatives has been assessed in evaluations conducted in terms of socio-political, financial and institutional aspects, with the understanding that such results relate to environmental issues. For results to be sustainable, all three are considered required. High levels of country ownership of UNEP initiatives and the use of a systemic approach to issues have enhanced the likeliness of sustainability of results. However, given the limited resources of UNEP, results at scale cannot be expected to be realized through UNEP resources alone. Usually, scale would need to be achieved through changes of government and private sector investment, making use of project experiences and learning. In this respect, many of the projects are meant to be pilot initiatives, which need to be scaled up to a larger geographic area or replicated in other areas of a country to have a significant or substantial effect. However, systems and methodologies for pilot site selection and for rigorous monitoring and evaluation of results, able to provide proof of concept, were usually not in place, which limited their ability to inform scaling up and replication. Sustainability of short-term projects was often found to be limited, with the lack of exit strategies in the design of such projects.

199. Sida support has enabled UNEP to explore how its environmentally oriented projects and initiatives can contribute to poverty reduction. This in a period when the relationship between poverty and environment was less clearly identified. UNEP has started to achieve results in particular through inclusion of an environmental perspective to economic and social development processes, aimed at contributing to sustainable development at the country and local levels. There is substantial potential

[62] *"… we consider green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication as one of the important tools available for achieving sustainable development…" United Nations, RIO+20, United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, The future we want, June 2012.*

to further enhance UNEP's programmatic approach to include poverty explicitly as part of its human well-being-oriented perspective.

200. The effects of climate change, the enhanced levels of environmental pollution and the reduction of biodiversity have had substantial negative effects on the environment and have affected people living in poverty, increasing the incidence of poverty. The recent Covid-19 pandemic has directly affected poor and vulnerable people in terms of their health as well as indirectly in terms of their household economics. Part of the gains made on poverty in the last decade are being reversed by the Covid-19 crisis, which can be expected to have some negative effects on the environment as enhanced poverty is often related to enhanced pressure on the natural environment. The Covid-19 crisis has, moreover, drawn a spotlight to the effects of human encroachment on the natural environment of wildlife, resulting in increased human contact with wild animal species and the related risk of emergent zoonotic diseases.

201. Given these contextual changes in terms of human – environment relationships, there is an enhanced need for UNEP to increase its focus on people and poverty in relation to the natural environment, informed by a broader understanding of the interrelationships of the three pillars of the sustainable development process. In order for UNEP projects and initiatives to include a clear people-oriented and poverty approach, the strategic guidance of MTS and POW will need to include those elements explicitly. It will be in particular UNEP's capacity to enhance linkages between environmental sustainability and economic and social aspects of development making use of a people-oriented perspective that enables UNEP to make a contribution to ending poverty while at the same time safeguarding a natural environment that can provide for present as well as future generations.

9. Lessons Learned

202. A useful set of lessons learned was included in the evaluation reports reviewed, which focused on programmatic contents, means of programming and aspects of programme support. In most cases lessons were expanded, which provided useful details to inform future programme development and implementation. The PEI lessons were the ones that focused mostly on poverty and environment related issues, given the focus of the initiative (see details in box 11 below).

203. Other lessons with reference to poverty related issues included:

i. Inclusive green economy was considered an important means to address poverty in the African context. The focus would need to include the informal sector in addition to the formal sector, as it is an important part of the African economy, with many poor and vulnerable groups depending on the informal economy for their livelihood. The informal economy is part of the fabric of the African economy and cannot be underestimated or neglected. The informal sector is of mayor importance in the agricultural value chain which in turn is a main part of the economy.

ii. With relation to poverty, there was the recognition that there is a lack of knowledge and guidance to look at environmental projects from a poverty perspective. The need to identify linkages with poverty in UNEP projects was recognized along with greater clarity of where poverty fits within the organization's strategic documents. Sida's poverty framework was considered a useful way to include multiple dimensions in the understanding of poverty and it would need to be seen how parts of the framework could be operationalized in the context of UNEP's initiatives and projects. However, it was also realized that donor agencies differ in their attention to poverty.

iii. Rather than focusing primarily on new policies and legislation, the need to focus on the implementation of existing laws, policies and plans was identified. Notwithstanding 500+ MEAs in place and 150 countries having included environmental rights in their constitution and with NGOs focussing on the field of environment, the state of the environment is in practice declining, with major crises in terms of biodiversity reduction, environmental pollution and climate change. Thus, there is a need for enhanced attention to the implementation of the existing laws and policies concerned. It would be important for the reviews of the state of the environment to pay attention to this issue.

iv. The identification of learnings by UNEP staff members also included some shortcomings, like the lack of a clear knowledge management system to enhance learning within the organisation and across UNEP sub-programmes and divisions. It was noted that different parts of the organization do not learn enough from one another and do not always make sufficient use of the science produced by the organization itself. There is no system in place to capture learning and experiences from the initiatives and projects implemented in the various parts of the organization for use throughout the UNEP sub-programmes. Flagship Initiatives like PEI are seen as separate projects with no clear knowledge management plan for their learnings to be used across the sub-programmes. This is seen as having limited the effects of the initiative on other sub-programmes as well as the mainstreaming of the PEI approach of inclusion of environmental aspects in national development planning and budgeting processes, throughout and beyond the organization.

v. Coordination between government, international organizations, civil society and the private sector, was seen as critical to bringing about the substantive changes in national policy and practices required to achieve an inclusive green economy and support achievement of the SDGs. Good coordination requires an understanding of the opportunities and synergies between various initiatives and actors that contribute to an inclusive green economy at the country level. Countries need to put in place a national structure (e.g. multi-stakeholder steering committee) to coordinate the transition to an inclusive green economy. A clear commitment to inter-ministerial coordination would need to be ensured to allow for an integrated approach.

Box 11: Lessons Learned from the UNEP - UNDP Poverty Environment Initiative

The practice of UNEP engagement beyond the Ministry of Environment, with Ministries of Planning and Finance, as well as with sector Ministries, like Agriculture, proved pivotal to include environmental and poverty related objectives in national planning and budgeting and sector-based planning.

P-E mainstreaming is complex, it involves understanding interactions and feedback loops between bio-physical, economic and social factors and to work across different sectors at national and sub-national levels.

P-E mainstreaming concerns a long-term process of institutional change across Government and requires long-term funding to undertake technical studies, broaden ownership, develop co-ordination mechanisms, build capacity and develop and embed tools and approaches. Supporting satisfactory implementation of P-E objectives is time and staff intensive. It usually requires engaging in a minimum of 4 sectors (e.g. agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and energy) and associated budget processes. P-E mainstreaming becomes more demanding as progress is made along its key stages:

(i) integrating P-E objectives into a national development plan;

(ii) integrating P-E objectives into a range of sector plans, policies and strategies, while concurrently engaging in influencing sector budgets and monitoring processes; and,

(iii) integrating P-E objectives and implementation at the sub-national levels.

Integrated approaches to P-E should target existing processes rather than creating parallel systems. The most effective way to promote integrated approaches will usually be by targeting existing planning, budgeting and institutional coordination mechanisms and tools and enabling them to better respond to the three dimensions of sustainable development. Creating mechanisms outside routine national systems or parallel processes can be counterproductive.

Working with the Ministry of Finance and tracking expenditures are key to increasing budget allocations to P-E. There is often a gap between the ambitions for sustainable management of the environment as articulated in national policies and plans and the resources allocated in budgeting and expenditure processes. PEI has demonstrated that increasing ownership of environment by finance ministries and the institutionalization of mechanisms to track spending, can close this gap. This challenge also needs to be addressed at the sub-national level, where the links between planning and budgets are weak and capacities on P-E mainstreaming limited.

Policy engagement is very much relationship based. Technical studies may be done by short term consultants, but they need to be propagated to Government by UNEP colleagues with an established relationship with policy makers. As expressed by one consultee 'diplomacy is more important than money' and a small contribution can have a big impact if good relations with the Government exist. Effective technical assistance requires patience, perseverance and presence. A long-term presence allows a Technical Advisor to be perceived almost as part of the Government team, rather than an outsider, and better able to understand the sensitivities around policy changes and how systems operate. P-E mainstreaming is a demanding process that requires proactive, tactful staff who are able to win the confidence of implementing partners. Building and maintaining a collegial and trusted working relationship with government is essential.

Pilots can be powerful tools for shifting policy. Buy in at National Government level is important and pilots can be used to test ideas and build a business case which can be used to influence policy. For example, in Tanzania, PEI pilots on fish farms led to their inclusion in the national Fisheries policy informed by the demonstrated environmental, social and economic benefits concerned.

Data gaps are a key challenge and efforts are needed to build up data needed for policy design and monitoring purposes, especially environmental data. Governmental action is more likely to be triggered by analysis if it is based on data from central government agencies. P-E related data are often lacking or inadequate. The inclusion of P-E related objectives or indicators in a monitoring framework does not automatically mean that data towards the indicator will be collected.

Private sector investments can be an important focus area for PEI as they can have a profound and increasing influence on livelihoods and environmental sustainability (PEI Lao PDR evaluation).

Even when Government ownership is in place it can be difficult at the programme level to ensure inter-departmental collaboration on cross-cutting issues at central level. Considering the cross-cutting nature of P-E issues, specific measures to address such concerns should be considered in programme design (PEI Lao PDR evaluation).

Further unpacking the multiple dimensions of poverty and vulnerability, and the differentiated impacts on different groups, could strengthen the "P" of PEI and the message of the socio-economic importance of environmental sustainability (PEI Lao PDR evaluation).

10. Recommendations

204. Below the recommendations are presented based on the findings and analysis of the review. They are in particular addressed to UNEP and the way in which it deals with poverty related issues at the strategic and programmatic level, with one of the recommendations addressed to Sida. In the development of the recommendations, use was made of the viewpoints of stakeholders interviewed as well as of learnings obtained in the joint UNEP-UNDP PEI and other UNEP flagships and projects that integrated social development and poverty concerns in environmental initiatives. The recommendations provide the strategic and programmatic pathways for mainstreaming of economic, social and poverty considerations and their relation to environmental issues into all aspects of UNEP's programming. For each of the recommendations the challenges/problems to be addressed are identified as well as actions required, priority levels, responsibilities and time frames concerned.

Recommendation #1:	Incorporate a people-oriented approach and a social development perspective as part of UNEP's global strategy, including support to poverty reduction and related social development issues in terms of their relation to environmental and economic aspects of sustainable development in the MTS and POW for the period 2022 and beyond. This needs to be informed by clear donor expectations with respect to poverty, made explicit in the Sida-UNEP PCA.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	The absence of a consistent approach in UNEP to poverty reduction and its relation to environmental change hampers the maximization of UNEP's contribution to sustainable development and its environmental, social and economic pillars. UNEP's programming currently contributes below its possible full potential to poverty reduction in sub-programme and country contexts.
Actions for Consideration:	a. Make use of the lessons learned from previous poverty related initiatives, including the UNEP-UNDP joint Poverty Environment Initiative, to inform strategic direction and approach. b. Include an explicit focus on poverty and the Agenda 2030 principle of leaving no one behind in MTS and POW, enhancing aspects of poverty where it is needed most, in LDCs in Africa and other regions, in fragile contexts and in specific underserved areas and groups and marginalized people in MICs. Apply a multi-dimensional approach to poverty and social development including objectives concerning people's livelihoods, health, security, and resilience. c. Develop an internal discourse on poverty and its relationships to the process of sustainable development, including a conceptual framework regarding the poverty – environment nexus and the interdependencies between the social and the environmental aspects of sustainable development, consistent with UNEP's approach to the relationship between economic and environmental aspects as embodied in the concept of inclusive green economy. Embedding UNEP's approach to poverty in a human rights-based and gender sensitive approach, using gender responsive and gender transformative perspectives[63]. Fully articulate the contribution to poverty reduction made by each of the sub-programmes within their TOC narratives, making explicit ways in which each of

[63] These approaches to gender relate to tangible results for women and men, girls and boys through addressing their rights and needs and contributing to changes in norms, values and power structures that underpin gender inequalities and discrimination. These approaches stand apart from gender negative, gender blind and gender targeted approaches. Source: Gender Results Effectiveness Scale in: UNEG, Guidance on Evaluating Institutional Gender Mainstreaming, 2018.

	the sub-programmes engage with social development aspects and the reduction of poverty. d. Continue to provide support through longer term flagship initiatives, enhancing their contribution to poverty related issues over time. e. For a subset of projects[64], in order to enable a focus on poverty as part of an integrated approach to the three pillars of sustainable development, consider the use of a 'landscape based' approach, focusing on the development of territorial based plans, including attention to environmental, economic and social aspects, bringing all sectors together in an integrated approach to area-based development.
Priority Level:[65]	Critical Recommendation
Type of Recommendation:[66]	UNEP wide
Responsibility:	Senior Management Team
Proposed implementation timeframe:	During the process of development of the new MTS for the period 2022 -2025 and in the development of the POW for 2022

Recommendation #2:	Develop multiple scenarios for the relevant level of inclusion of poverty reduction related issues into UNEP projects and initiatives as part of the social development perspective, ranging from minimal, intermediate and substantial levels of inclusion of poverty related issues and identify when and where to make use of such scenarios.

[64] This needs to be applied in specific projects where the pathways to 'on the ground' poverty effects are likely to be realised through fairly direct pathways.

[65] Three categories of Priority level concern the following:

***Critical recommendation**: address significant and/or pervasive deficiencies in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided regarding the achievement of programme objectives.*

***Important recommendation**: address reportable deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance might be at risk regarding the achievement of programme objectives.*

***Opportunity for improvement**: comprise suggestions to improve performance that do not meet the criteria of either critical or important recommendations.*

[66] Type of recommendation concern the following categories:

***Project:** where the actions of those UNEP staff managing the evaluand <u>can</u> address the recommendation or the underlying problem independently.*

***UNEP-wide**: (i) where the actions of those UNEP staff managing the evaluand <u>cannot</u> address the recommendation or the underlying problem independently or (ii) where the actions to be taken to resolve the problem, which could have been caused by systemic issues or gaps in UNEP's operational requirements, require approval/leadership from UNEP senior management and/or coordination among several different parts of UNEP. In such a case, the Evaluation Office would need to pass on the UNEP-wide recommendation to the responsible entity(ies). Note, however, that as the UNEP-wide recommendation has to be associated with a project evaluation, the UNEP staff managing the evaluand is required to confirm acceptance.*

***Project and UNEP-wide**: where the UNEP staff managing the evaluand <u>can</u> address the recommendation or the underlying problem insofar as it affects their work <u>and</u> where staff in other parts of UNEP are required to act to either avoid future occurrences of the same underlying issues or to support those managing the evaluand to respond to the recommendation. In such a case, the problem to be addressed will be presented twice, once with the project level recommendation and again with the UNEP-wide recommendation. The Evaluation Office would need to pass on the UNEP-wide recommendation to the responsible entity(ies).*

Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Guidance is lacking within the organization on the level of attention that needs to be paid to poverty reduction and related social development objectives in the design of distinctive UNEP initiatives in relation to the environmental and social context and the inherent characteristics of the sub-programmes concerned. The means to analyze the contextual aspects in order to inform the decision-making concerned is needed.
Actions for Consideration:	a. Develop three scenarios for addressing poverty related issues with the **minimum** approach based on the 'do no harm' principle, with UNEP projects and interventions avoiding any negative effects that they could have on poor and vulnerable groups (the ESSF has a strong role to play at this level); the **medium level** approach would seek to enhance 'co-benefits' and avoid 'trade-offs' of projects and initiatives in terms of results for poor and vulnerable groups, including poverty related results as effects of initiatives; the **substantial** approach would seek for a project or initiative to combine poverty and environmental results, placing these at the same level, enhancing environmentally sustainable development with benefits for present poor groups as well as future generations. b. Conduct analysis of economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development in targeted countries and sub-national areas in order to inform the selection of the scenario concerned and further develop scenarios, based on the specific project context. Document existing and develop new examples of the different levels of inclusion of poverty-related issues in UNEP projects, in order to inform future project design. c. Informed by a contextual analysis, include poverty as appropriate in project design in line with the relationship between environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainable development in the context of the initiative or project concerned, paying attention to the relevant dimensions of poverty and making use of the perspective of the poor themselves on their situation. Include the appropriate attention to poverty and its relation to environmental concerns in the review of the quality of the design as conducted through the PRC process. d. Mainstream work on aspects of planning and budgeting in relation to the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development in each of the scenarios through work with Ministries and Departments of Planning and Finance at relevant national and sub-national levels, making use of existing systems rather than creating parallel ones. e. Where relevant, ensure that the poverty and environmental goals of UNEP projects and initiatives are at the same level of relevance and importance, avoiding the subjugation of the rights and needs of poor and vulnerable groups to environmental objectives, in line with the notion that environmental conservation is not an aim in itself but relates to the human use of natural resources for present and future generations.
Priority Level:	Critical Recommendation
Type of Recommendation:	UNEP-wide
Responsibility:	UNEP Policy and Programme Division in close cooperation with Directors of other Divisions and Global Sub-Programme Coordinators, with inputs from (Sub-)Regional Directors and Regional Sub-Programme Coordinators and selected Project Managers

Proposed implementation time-frame:	In the initial two years of the implementation of the new MTS 2022-2025.

Recommendation #3:	For Sida to include explicitly a people-oriented approach and social development perspective in the PCA with UNEP as well as in the PCA performance framework, combining an accountability perspective with a learning-oriented approach, enabling the use of experiences and lessons to inform the development of UNEP's programme on poverty reduction in terms of its relations to environmental and economic aspects of sustainable development, making use of a multi-dimensional poverty perspective.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	For Sida to make explicit its expectations in terms of a poverty orientation in UNEP's initiatives and the way in which Sida assesses UNEP's performance in this respect.
Actions Required:	a. Include clear expectations that Sida has in terms of social development and poverty reduction related results in the PCA with UNEP. b. Include social development and poverty related results in the performance framework of the PCA, enabling the use of performance data and information to inform results-based management of the projects and initiatives concerned, while at the same time making use of performance data for accountability purposes. c. Make use of a targeted evaluation approach to intermittently assess results, enhancing in this way the analysis of data and information gathered through monitoring and guiding the implementation of the programme through a management response to evaluation results.
Priority Level:	Critical Recommendation
Type of Recommendation:	UNEP-wide
Responsibility:	Sida
Proposed implementation time-frame:	During the entire period of implementation of the new MTS 2022-2025.

Recommendation #4:	Ensure that the Policy and Programme Division has the capacity to provide a global poverty reduction / social development advisor to spearhead the integration of the social development pillar of sustainable development into the work of UNEP, in its relationships to the environmental and economic pillars and with a particular focus on the objective of poverty reduction and provide support at regional and country levels through the capacity development of Regional Sub-Programme Coordinators.

Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Leadership and human resource requirements at global and regional levels to guide the process of an enhanced and systematic attention to poverty reduction and social development, as relevant to issues and contexts concerned in UNEP's initiatives, is lacking.
Actions for Consideration:	a. Assign the poverty reduction / social development advisor role to support UNEP in the enhancement of its approach to poverty and its relationship to environment. Such an advisor would need a combined background in social, economic and environmental science. b. Include as part of the role of the advisor to lead the development of multiple scenarios for the various levels of inclusion of poverty related issues into UNEP projects and initiatives (as included under recommendation 2) and the development of the 'nuts and bolts' of the programmatic implementation of a social development perspective (as included under recommendation 5) in close collaboration with the senior management team, division heads and sub-programme coordinators. Ensure that the advisor plays an important role in providing inputs to the design of new projects and the project design review process through the PRC. c. Within this advisory role, develop a knowledge management and sharing mechanism to enable learning on poverty related results and their relationship with environmental sustainability across the UNEP sub-programmes, including a learning strategy in relation to the TOCs of the various sub-programmes. d. Provide internal training to UNEP staff on the poverty – environment – sustainable development discourse and application of the social development perspective, including global and regional sub-programme coordinators who will have an important role to play in enhancing the process and in supporting the development of capacities of staff in projects and initiatives. e. Make explicit the responsibilities of UNEP managers in terms of the inclusion of social development and poverty related aspects in project implementation and monitoring and evaluation of results and provide support mechanisms through global and regional sub-programme coordinators.
Priority Level:	Critical Recommendation
Type of Recommendation:	UNEP-wide
Responsibility:	Senior Management Team
Proposed implementation time-frame:	In 2021 during the period of preparation for the implementation of the new MTS for the period 2022-2025 and in the first few years of the new MTS.

Recommendation #5:	Develop detailed guidelines, methods and tools for the programmatic implementation of a social development perspective in relation to UNEP's approach to sustainable development, including reduction of poverty in its multiple dimensions and its relation with social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development.

Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Programme staff lack access to guidelines, methods and tools that enhance their knowledge on poverty issues and relationships with environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainable development and enable them to incorporate poverty reduction and related social development objectives in environmental and climate change related initiatives.
Actions for Consideration:	a. Develop and make available a set of guidelines and tools to support the incorporation of poverty reduction related objectives and approaches in UNEP's programming, including those that have been developed as part of the PEI, TEEB, GEI, PAGE and other relevant UNEP initiatives. b. Ensure that all relevant aspects of poverty reduction and focus on poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups are fully addressed in the UNEP Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework.
Priority Level:	Important Recommendation
Type of Recommendation:	UNEP-wide
Responsibility:	Poverty reduction / Social Development Advisor together with UNEP Division Directors, Global Sub-Programme Coordinators, (Sub-)Regional Directors, Regional Sub-Programme Coordinators
Proposed implementation time-frame:	In the initial two years of the implementation of the new MTS 2022-2025.

Recommendation #6:	Enhance project design, monitoring and evaluation in response to the inclusion of a people-oriented approach, including explicit social development aspects and poverty reduction objectives and results in projects and initiatives in addition to environmental ones, in order to enable assessment of relevant poverty reduction results and enhance learning within the organization on poverty related results and ways to achieve these. Project designs should, in particular, strengthen the likelihood that environmental and poverty related results achieved at project level are sustained by including realistic and practical exit strategies at the project design stage. It should also enhance the probability of expansion of project results through adequate attention to opportunities for scaling-up and replication of the initiative concerned in its design as well as throughout project implementation.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	The need for incorporation of monitoring and evaluation in all stages of the project cycle in UNEP initiatives that include a focus on poverty reduction and other related social development objectives and to provide programme staff with the means to achieve this as part of enhancing a results-based management approach. Specifically, there is a need to pay attention from the start to the likelihood of sustainability of results of UNEP initiatives that include poverty and related social development objectives. Similarly, the ways in which results can be expanded

	through future replication and scaling up initiatives needs to be explicit and adequately funded in intervention designs.
Actions for Consideration:	a. Incorporate social development and poverty objectives in results frameworks and theories of change of projects and initiatives, making use of UNEPs approach to social development and poverty reduction in its multiple dimensions, drawing on the results frameworks of some of the flagship initiatives, as well as the work of other agencies. b. Make use of the monitoring approaches developed as part of UNEP flagship initiatives, including the joint UNEP-UNDP PEI in which Environment and Natural Resources aspects were included in a multi-dimensional poverty index and the Green Economy Progress Index developed as part of the GEI to assess progress made on people's well-being in relation to economic opportunities, social inclusiveness and protection and sustainable use of ecosystem services. c. In terms of the programme cycle, this would include the following: i. make the poverty issues and concerns explicit as part of the intervention, ii. show how a project is meant to contribute to the reduction of poverty as part of the TOC of the project, iii. provide details on the poverty-environment nexus concerned and relations with economic and social development processes, iv. ensure the inclusion of realistic and practical exit strategies in the design phase of projects, with sufficient detail concerning environmental, social and poverty related aspects, making use of the key criteria of socio-political, institutional and financial sustainability and include presence of an adequate exit strategy as part of the PAC design review process, v. enhance the methodological rigor of pilot projects, in terms of the methodological selection of project area(s) and other key parameters influencing success in terms of project objectives, vi. develop and agree on a set of poverty reduction indicators that can be applied within UNEP projects (i.e. indicators that reflect the key elements of the poverty – environment nexus). In addition to quantitative indicators, make use of qualitative indicators, methods and tools for results assessment, including in projects with a focus on policy engagement, and use methods that capture voices and perspectives of beneficiaries, vii. include quantitative and qualitative means for monitoring and assessment of poverty related results with reference to baseline data, viii. apply more rigorous monitoring of poverty relevant dimensions in UNEP initiatives and especially in pilot projects, ix. develop a knowledge management system on learnings in relation to poverty reduction and the poverty-environment nexus. c. Ensure that the project monitoring systems of pilot projects are able to provide the robust evidence base required to advocate for the scaling up or replication of the results of the project to national level government and/or other stakeholders, together with appropriate evaluative evidence. d. Enhance the evaluation of projects and initiatives, including people and poverty reduction related results and the pathways through which these have been realized, ensuring inclusion of social development and poverty aspects in the assessment and in the findings, conclusions and recommendations as well as in the management response and follow up. (It is noted that there will be a time lag

	before this becomes possible as projects will first have to plan for, and deliver against, poverty related results for these to become evaluable). e. In evaluation, in particular of those projects with a substantial poverty dimension, ensure that the assessment of sustainability pays explicit attention to poverty as related to, but distinct from, environmental aspects. This in terms of the socio-political, institutional and financial aspects of sustainability as identified by UNEP. The explicit focus on the sustainability of poverty related aspects of projects can inform the organizational learning on aspects concerned. f. Include responding to the requirements of the ESSF as part of the evaluation, comparing actual implementation with the details provided in the design stage of the project. g. Build-in the data collection requirements in future phases of long-running flagship initiatives to support impact evaluations on poverty related results and ensure the availability of funding required.
Priority Level:	Important Recommendation
Type of Recommendation:	UNEP-wide
Responsibility:	UNEP Division Directors, Global Sub-Programme Coordinators, (Sub-)Regional Directors, Regional Sub-Programme Coordinators, Project Managers, PRC, Evaluation Office, Poverty Reduction / Social Development Advisor
Proposed implementation time-frame:	Development of guidelines, methods and tools during the first two years of the implementation of the MTS 2022-2025 with implementation of these during the entire period of the new MTS.

Recommendation #7:	In country level initiatives, partner with the UN Resident Coordinator's office and UN resident agencies, in particular those agencies that can provide complementary support to a people-oriented, social development and poverty reduction approach in the proposed initiative and the specific country context concerned, in line with the on-going UN reform process.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	As a non-resident agency in most countries, UNEP needs to partner with other UN agencies in order to advocate for environmental aspects and concerns that need to be included in the country level Partnership Frameworks in relation to social development and poverty aspects and to garner support from other UN agencies for specific UNEP environment and poverty related initiatives at the country level, making use of the complementary comparative advantage of sister agencies.
Actions for Consideration:	a. Take into consideration the set-up of the Poverty-Environment Action for SDGs initiative (the successor of PEI) in which UNDP presence in pilot countries is a key feature of the UNEP – UNDP partnership, with the partnership framework based on complementarity. b. Enhance UNEPs role at the country level through support to the Common Country Assessment, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and Voluntary National Report processes, informing these processes with details on the interrelationships between environment and social and economic development and aspects of vulnerability and marginalization, informing the UN support to the process of sustainable development.

	c. Relate with the UNCT in LDC, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to support the environmental aspects of poverty reduction objectives in the UN partnership frameworks and national development plans. d. Make use of social development and poverty related data and assessments of the UN partner agencies and inform project design and in particular targeting of poor and vulnerable groups and people with the results of the assessments and the evidence concerned.
Priority Level:	Important Recommendation
Type of Recommendation:	UNEP-wide
Responsibility:	UNEP Division Directors, Global Sub-Programme Coordinators, (Sub-)Regional Directors, Regional Sub-Programme Coordinators, Project Managers with support from the Poverty reduction / Social Development Advisor
Proposed implementation time-frame:	During the entire period of implementation of the new MTS 2022-2025.

ANNEX 1:

Terms of Reference of the Review

Independent Review of UNEP's Contributions to Poverty Reduction, on behalf of Sida

Jan 2020

1. Background and Objective:

1.1 The overall objective of Swedish development cooperation is 'to create preconditions for better living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression'. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has updated its definition of poverty with a multidimensional perspective in line with political guidance and Agenda 2030. According to Sida, a person living in multidimensional poverty is resource poor and poor in one or several other dimensions. To benefit people living in poverty requires understanding of who is living in poverty, how poverty is experienced and what are the underlying causes that keep people in poverty. These Terms of Reference describe the first phase of a two-phase piece of work to contribute to learning on this central topic.

1.2 The Swedish International Cooperation Agency (Sida) has provided long-term support to the Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Relevant to these Terms of Reference (TOR) are the Programme Cooperation Agreements (PCA) to support the UNEP Medium-Term Strategies of 2014-17 and 2018-21.

1.3 The PCA for support to the **UNEP MTS 2018-21** states:

'In addition, Sida will support UN Environment to perform a review of poverty reduction results achieved through UN Environment's work between 2015-2017. The review will be initiated in 2019 for delivery in 2020 and will draw upon completed independent evaluations, performance monitoring and programme planning information. Contributions and linkages to key poverty-related SDGs will also be highlighted. Specific recommendations on how SDG-linked poverty reduction results can be further strengthened within, and catalysed by, UN Environment's work will be developed' (para 3, Sida PCA 2018-21).

1.4 This review will be undertaken in two phases, the second of which will be covered in separate Terms of Reference. For the first phase, these TOR present the scope of work necessary to meet the requirement **to review the poverty reduction results and contributions to poverty-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in completed independent evaluations relevant to Sida's funding during 2014-17 with the aim of developing specific recommendations on how SDG-linked poverty reduction results can be further strengthened within, and catalyzed by, UN Environment's work**.

1.5 A second piece of work will be commissioned, under separate Terms of Reference, to provide results-focused insights that can be derived from UNEP's experiences of **performance monitoring and programme planning** during the same time period.

1.6 The UNEP work under review is, therefore, represented by major projects within sub-progammes receiving funds from Sida and evaluated primarily during the **MTS 2014-17** (see para 2.3 below). The number of project evaluations to be reviewed will not exceed 20.

2. Evaluand:

2.1 Through the two partnership agreements since 2014 the two parties have agreed to utilize the Swedish funding contribution to support specific UNEP's sub-programmes (SP) during each of the full MTS periods. Specifically, for the **MTS 2014-17** these are:

SP1 - Climate Change
SP3 - Ecosystems Management
SP4 - Environmental Governance
SP5 - Chemicals and Waste
SP6 – Resource Efficiency

2.2 In the PCA for the **MTS 2018-21** a sixth SP has been added to the areas supported in the MTS 2014-17, namely SP2 – Resilience to Disasters and Conflict.

2.3 Four refinements to the boundaries of the evaluand are proposed. These are in keeping with the spirit of the review request, which is seeking a retrospective review of the contribution to poverty reduction and poverty-related SDGs within UNEP's planned work.

i) As the PCA is framed by the dates of successive MTS, the period under review will be adjusted from 2015-17 to 2014-17 to coincide with the principal MTS period.

ii) Where projects have a strong poverty focus and their evaluative material pre-dates the specified time period, earlier evaluation reports may be included in the sample of project evaluations for review. For example, the Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) received earmarked funds from Sida during 2014 -17. Two independent evaluations have been carried out: in 2016 (Tavera, Alderman & Nordin), covering project implementation during 2008-13 and in 2019, (Bann), covering implementation during 2013 – 2018. Both evaluation reports would therefore be reviewed.

iii) It is noted that as the SDGs were adopted in January 2016 the designs of projects evaluated in the 2014-17 period may not include explicit reference to these goals. It is likely to be necessary to draw on inferred or retrospectively-identified links between project results and the SDGs.

iv) As Sida has, in the 2018-21 PCA, extended its funding support to a sixth sub-programme (Resilience to Disasters and Conflict) and as Human Security is one of the four dimensions of poverty recognised by Sida, UNEP reserves the right to select independent evaluations of projects implemented in conflicted and insecure contexts where these evaluations make a contribution to learning on how to strengthen poverty reduction results.

3. Funding Envelope and Allocation of Sida Funds:

3.1 Of central relevance to the requested review period of 2015-17, is the allocated Sida funding to five SPs as during 2014-17 shown below (Table 1).

Table 1: Sida Funding Allocations by Sub-Programme (MTS 2014-17) **– Planned Allocations in Swedish Krona (SEK)**

Sub-Programme	2014	2015	2016	2017	Agreement Total	% Distribution
SP 1: Climate Change	8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000	32,000,000	22.86
SP 3: Ecosystem Management	7,750,000	7,750,000	7,750,000	7,750,000	31,000,000	22.14
SP 4: Environmental Governance	6,600,000	6,600,000	6,600,000	6,600,000	26,400,000	18.86
SP 5: Chemicals and Waste	6,500,000	6,500,000	6,500,000	6,500,000	26,000,000	18.57
SP 6: Resource Efficiency	5,500,000	5,500,000	5,500,000	5,500,000	14,000,000	10
PEI[67]	-	-	-	-		
Gender	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	8,000,000	5.17
RBM	650,000	650,000	650,000	650,000	2,600,000	1.86
GRAND TOTAL (SEK)	**35,000,000**	**35,000,000**	**35,000,000**	**35,000,000**	**140,000,000**	**99.46**
GRAND TOTAL (USD) [68]	**3,610,586**	**3,610,586**	**3,610,586**	**3,610,586**	**14,442,345**	

4. Poverty-Related Results:

4.1 The Expected Accomplishments (i.e. high-level results, hereinafter EA) to which these sub-programmes contributed during the MTS period 2014-17, are listed in Annex 1.

4.2 Sida recognises four dimensions of poverty, as outlined in its documents: 'Dimensions of Poverty: Sida's Conceptual Framework' (2017) and 'Dimensions of Poverty: Poverty Toolbox' (2019). This multi-dimensional understanding of poverty will inform the nature of the analysis in this review and form the basis for the structure of its report:

[67] The actual allocation of funds includes funds specifically for this project.
[68] All USD conversions at Oct 2019 rates

Table 2: Sida Dimensions of Poverty (Sida, 2019)

FOUR DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY
Being poor in terms of **resources** means not having access to or power over, resources that can be used to sustain a decent living standard, meet basic needs and improve one's life. Resources can be both material and nonmaterial: a decent income or physical and human, such as being educated or having professional skills, being healthy, having agricultural tools or a cart to transport goods.
Being poor in terms of **opportunities and choice** refers to one's possibilities to develop and/or use the resources to move out of poverty. Access to productive employment, education, health clinics, infrastructure, energy, markets and information accet the choices available and opportunities to escape from poverty.
Being poor in **power and voice** relates people's ability to articulate their concerns, needs and rights in an informed way, and to take part in decision-making affecting these concerns inside the household, in local communities and at the national level. Power is a relational concept that allows us to better understand socio-cultural hierarchies and relations of which gender is one. Others include age, caste, class, religion, ethnicity and sexual identity. Reinforcing forms of discrimination based on socio-cultural relations may increase an individual's poverty in this sense.
Being poor in terms of **human security** means that physical, sexual, and/or psychological violence and insecurity are constraints to different groups' and individuals' possibilities to exercise their human rights and to find paths out of poverty.

4.3 Even though Sida uses a broad definition of poverty, it does not mean that everything in the four dimensions amounts to poverty. According to Sida's definition, "a person living in poverty is resource poor, as well as poor in one or several other dimensions." Whether it is relevant to work in a specific area or dimension depends on how it relates to the target group, i.e., people living in (resource) poverty.

4.4 All the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, 2030) can be understood and interpreted from a poverty-reduction perspective. UNEP Sub-Programmes have identified SDG targets where they expect to make substantive contributions (Climate Change SDG 7 and 13; Ecosystems SDG 14 and 15 and Resource Efficiency SDG 12). During the inception period of this review ways in which the Sida multi-dimensional conceptualisation of poverty and the SDG framework can be combined will be explored.

Table 3: Sustainable Development Goals 2030

SDG No	Label	Short text
1	No Poverty	*End poverty in all its forms everywhere*
2	Zero Hunger	*End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture*
3	Good Health and Well-being	*Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages*
4	Quality Education	*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*
5	Gender Equality	*Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*

6	Clean Water and Sanitation	*Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all*
7	Affordable and Clean Energy	*Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all*
8	Decent Work and Economic Growth	*Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all*
9	Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure	*Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation*
10	Reducing Inequality	*Reduce income inequality within and among countries*
11	Sustainable Cities and Communities	*Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable*
12	Responsible Consumption and Production	*Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns*
13	Climate Action	*Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts by regulating emissions and promoting developments in renewable energy*
14	Life Below Water	*Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development*
15	Life On Land	*Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss*
16	Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions	*Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels*
17	Partnerships for the Goals	*Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development*

5. Method and Primary Review Questions:

5.1 The Review will take the form of a desk-based review of findings reflected in the following list and primary data collection during a one-week visit to UNEP's Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. Additional online communication and interviews will follow the visit to Nairobi as necessary:

- purposive sample of independent project-level evaluations (max 20 reports)
- all Sub-Programme evaluations that have been carried out since 2014[69] (4 reports)
- UNEP's Programmes of Work (2014-15 and 2016-17)
- Formative Evaluation of the MTS 2014-2017 (2015)

[69] Sub-Programmes were evaluated as follows: Climate Change, April 2014; Ecosystem Management, May 2015; Chemicals and Waste, Oct 2015 and Resource Efficiency, Nov 2018.

5.2 This review of secondary data will be supplemented by interviews with:

- Director, UNEP Evaluation Office (1)
- Sida
- Head of UNEP's Major Groups and Donors Office (1)
- Division Directors (6, as Sub-Programme leads) and Sub-Programme Coordinators (up to 6) of the SPs receiving funding in the PCA supporting the MTS 2014-17
- Director of UNEP Policy and Programme Division and team members responsible for project design and review, and performance monitoring and results reporting (4)
- all Regional Directors (6)
- Project Managers/Designers of selected projects

5.3 The key Review questions are as follows:

- To what extent have the project priorities (of projects selected) been informed by an analysis of the needs and priorities of the people living in poverty? To what extent are the project priorities and strategic decisions motivated by their effect on people living in poverty? Are the links (direct or indirect, short-term or long-term) to poverty reduction and target group well-defined?
- Who has benefitted from the projects included in the evaluation? Are the final beneficiaries well-defined in the project documentation? Are the primary beneficiaries of the projects living in multidimensional poverty, as defined by Sida? Is it clear how poverty manifests itself to these groups, and what issues are the projects addressing?
- Do the projects included in the evaluation describe and address specific risks that people living in poverty are typically exposed to?
- Has evidence on 'what works' been used to inform the strategic choices? If so, what evidence?
- To what extent, and in what ways, are poverty-reduction results reflected in UNEP's Programme of Work? Based on the evaluation reports selected for the Review, what is the nature and extent of discernible poverty-reduction results in UNEP's portfolio?
- In what ways, and to what extent, has the Sida funding made a positive contribution to UNEP's poverty related results?
- How could the impact on poverty (as reflected in Sida's multi-dimensional approach), of UNEP's work be strengthened?
- How could the poverty-related effects, and the contribution to SDGs, be better articulated or captured in the future?

6. Deliverables and Work Plan:

6.1 A single consultant will be hired to carry out this desk-based Review. They will prepare:

- **Inception Report:** including the analytical framework for the Review and a narrative and diagrammatic confirmation of the Theory of Change by which UNEP intends to reduce poverty; coherent articulation and display of the combined evaluative dimensions (i.e. Sida's four dimensions of poverty, UNEP's Expected Accomplishments and the SDGs); list of possible and selected project evaluations to be reviewed, together with the sampling strategy/rationale and description of how 'credible association' will be established.

- **Preliminary Findings Note:** typically in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, the sharing of preliminary findings is intended to support UNEP participation, act as a means to ensure all information sources have been accessed and provide an opportunity to verify emerging findings.

- **Draft and Final Evaluation Report:** containing an executive summary that can act as a stand-alone document; detailed analysis of the evaluation findings organised by evaluative dimensions and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations

- **Evaluation Bulletin:** text for a 2-page summary of key evaluation findings for wider dissemination.

6.2 The work will be scheduled as follows:

Table 6: Proposed Schedule (to be completed during the review inception phase)

STAGE	TENTATIVE DEADLINE
Inception Phase (secondary data collection and review)	February 2020
Submit Inception Report	
Disseminate Inception Findings	
Primary Data Collection	
Submit Draft Review Report	
Disseminate Draft Review Findings	
Submit Final Review Report	June 2020
Management Response	

7. Contractual Arrangements:

7.1 The UNEP Evaluation Office will contract the first phase and, based on the review findings, the nature and management of the second phase will be proposed by UNEP for Sida's consideration.

7.2 The Evaluation Consultant will be hired for 5 months spread over the period February 2020 to June 2020 and should have: an advanced university degree in social sciences, international development or other relevant poverty-related area; a minimum of 8 years of technical / evaluation experience, preferably including using a Theory of Change approach. English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For this consultancy, fluency in oral and written English is a requirement, along with excellent writing skills in English. Working knowledge of the UN system and specifically the work of UNEP is an added advantage. The work will be home-based.

7.3 Evaluation consultants will be selected and recruited by the Evaluation Office of UNEP under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) on a "fees only" basis (see below). By signing the service contract with UNEP/UNON, the consultant certifies that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of the contract) with the project's executing or implementing units. All consultants are required to sign the Code of Conduct Agreement Form.

7.4 Fees will be paid on an instalment basis, paid on acceptance by the Evaluation Manager of expected key deliverables. The schedule of payment for the first phase is as follows:

Table 7: Schedule of Payment for the Principal Evaluator for the first phase, as described in these TOR:

Deliverable	Percentage Payment
Approved Inception Report (as per annex document 7)	30%
Approved Draft Main Evaluation Report (as per annex document 13)	30%
Approved Final Main Evaluation Report	40%

7.5 Fees only contracts: In the event that international travel is required, air tickets will be purchased by UNEP and 75% of the Daily Subsistence Allowance for each authorised travel mission will be paid up front. Local in-country travel, if deemed appropriate, will only be reimbursed where agreed in advance with the Evaluation Manager and on the production of acceptable receipts. Terminal expenses and residual DSA entitlements (25%) will be paid after mission completion.

7.6 The consultants may be provided with access to UNEP's Programme Information Management System (PIMS) and if such access is granted, the consultants agree not to disclose information from that system to third parties beyond information required for, and included in, the evaluation report.

7.7 In case the consultants are not able to provide the deliverables in accordance with these guidelines, and in line with the expected quality standards by the UNEP Evaluation Office, payment may be withheld at the discretion of the Director of the Evaluation Office until the consultants have improved the deliverables to meet UNEP's quality standards.

7.8 If the consultant(s) fail to submit a satisfactory final product to UNEP in a timely manner, i.e. before the end date of their contract, the Evaluation Office reserves the right to employ additional human resources to finalize the report, and to reduce the consultants' fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the Evaluation Office to bring the report up to standard.

ANNEX 2:

Financial Details of UNEP 2014-2017

Table: PoW Resource Projections by Sub-Programmes in million USD (percentages in parenthesis)

PoW Period	Climate change	Disasters /Conflicts	Ecosystem Management	Environmental Governance	Harmful Substances	Resource Efficiency	Environment Review	Total
2014-2015	123 (22%)	43 (8%)	144 (26%)	57 (10%)	76 (14%)	77 (14%)	38 (7%)	558 (100%)
2016-2017	131 (22%)	47 (8%)	152 (25%)	62 (10%)	83 (14%)	86 (14%)	42 (7%)	604 (100%)
2018-2019	181 (25%)	51 (7%)	169 (24%)	78 (11%)	100 (14%)	86 (12%)	51 (7%)	716 (100%)

Table: Sida Funding Allocations by Sub-Programme 2014-2017 in Swedish Krona (SEK) and USD

UNEP Sub-Programme	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total budget	Percentage
SP 1: Climate Change	8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000	32,000,000	23
SP 3: Ecosystem Management	7,750,000	7,750,000	7,750,000	7,750,000	31,000,000	22
SP 4: Environmental Governance	6,600,000	6,600,000	6,600,000	6,600,000	26,400,000	19
SP 5: Chemicals and Waste	6,500,000	6,500,000	6,500,000	6,500,000	26,000,000	19
SP 6: Resource Efficiency	5,500,000	5,500,000	5,500,000	5,500,000	14,000,000	10
Gender	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	8,000,000	5
RBM	650,000	650,000	650,000	650,000	2,600,000	2
Total SEK	**35,000,000**	**35,000,000**	**35,000,000**	**35,000,000**	**140,000,000**	**100**
Total USD	**3,610,586**	**3,610,586**	**3,610,586**	**3,610,586**	**14,442,345**	**100**

Source: Terms of Reference, Independent Review of UNEP's Contributions to Poverty Reduction, on behalf of Sida Jan 2020.

Annex 3:

Objectives and Expected Accomplishments of UNEP Sub-Programmes, 2014-17

Sub-Programme 1	Climate Change
Objective:	To strengthen the ability of countries to move towards climate-resilient and low emission pathways for sustainable development and human well-being.
EA1: Climate Resilience	Ecosystem-based and supporting adaptation approaches are implemented and integrated into key sectoral and national development strategies to reduce vulnerability and strengthen resilience to climate change impacts.
EA2: Low Emission Growth	Energy efficiency is improved and the use of renewable energy is increased in partner countries to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants as part of their low emission development pathways.
EA3: REDD+	Transformative REDD+ strategies and finance approaches are developed and implemented by developing counties that aim at reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and bringing multiple benefits for biodiversity and livelihoods.

Sub-Programme 2	Disasters and Conflict
Objective:	To promote a transition within countries to the sustainable use of natural resources and efforts to reduce environmental degradation, to protect human wellbeing from the environmental causes and consequences of disasters and conflicts
***EA1:* Risk reduction**	The capacity of countries to use natural resource and environmental management to prevent and reduce the risk of disasters and conflicts is improved.
***EA2:* Response and recovery**	The capacity of countries to use natural resource and environmental management to support sustainable recovery from disasters and conflicts is improved.

Sub-Programme 3	Ecosystem Management
Objective:	To promote a transition to integrating the management of land, water and living resources to maintain biodiversity and provide ecosystem services sustainably and equitably among countries.
EA1: Production	Use of the ecosystem approach in countries to maintain ecosystem services and sustainable productivity of terrestrial and aquatic systems will be increased.
EA2: Marine Issues	Use of the ecosystem approach to sustain ecosystem services from coastal and marine systems will be increased.
EA3: Enabling Environment	Services and benefits derived from ecosystems are integrated with development planning and accounting, particularly in relation to wider landscapes and seascapes and the implementation of biodiversity related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

Sub-Programme 4	Environmental Governance
Objective:	To strengthen synergies and coherence in environmental governance to facilitate the transition towards environmental sustainability in the context of sustainable development.
EA1: Coherence and Synergies	The UN system and multilateral environmental agreement bodies, respecting the mandate of each entity, demonstrate increasing coherence and synergy of actions on environmental issues.
EA2: Law	The capacity of countries to develop and enforce laws and strengthen institutions to achieve internationally agreed environmental objectives and goals and comply with related obligations will be enhanced.
EA3: Mainstreaming Environmental Sustainability	Countries increasingly mainstream environmental sustainability in national and regional development policies and plans.

Sub-Programme 5	Chemicals and Waste
Objective:	To promote a transition among countries to the sound management of chemicals and waste to minimize impacts on the environment and human health.
EA1: Enabling Environment	Countries increasingly have the necessary institutional capacity and policy instruments to manage chemicals and waste soundly including the implementation of related provisions in the MEAs.
EA2: Chemicals	Countries, including major groups and stakeholders, increasingly use the scientific and technical knowledge and tools needed to implement sound chemicals management and the related MEAs.
EA3: Waste	Countries, including Major Groups and stakeholders, increasingly use the scientific and technical knowledge and tools needed to implement sound waste management and the related MEAs.

Sub-Programme 6	Resource Efficiency
Objective:	To promote a transition in which goods and series are increasingly produced, processed and consumed in a sustainable way that decouples economic growth from resource use and environmental impact, while improving human well-being.
EA1: Enabling Environment	Cross-sectoral scientific assessments, research and tools for sustainable consumption and production and green economy developed, shared and applied by policy-makers, including in urban practices in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.
EA2: Sectors and Supply	Uptake of sustainable consumption and production and green economy instruments and management practices in sectoral policies and in business and financial operations across global supply chains is increased, in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.
EA3: Lifestyles	Enabling conditions for promoting more sustainable consumption choices and lifestyles are enhanced.

ANNEX 4:

Details on Methodology of the Review

1) Review Main- and Sub-Questions

What has been the significance of UNEP projects in terms of reduction of poverty?

- To what extent have project priorities and strategic decisions been motivated by their effect on people living in poverty?
- To what extent have the project priorities (of projects selected) been informed by an analysis of the needs and priorities of the people living in poverty?
- To what extent, and in what ways, have poverty-reduction results been reflected in UNEP's Programme of Work?

What have been the UNEP project results in poverty and environmental terms and how were these achieved?

- Who has benefitted from the projects included in the review? Have the final beneficiaries been well-defined in the project documentation? Have the primary beneficiaries of the projects been living in multi-dimensional poverty, as defined by Sida? Has it been clear how poverty has manifested itself to these groups, and what dimensions of poverty have UNEP projects been addressing?
- To what extent and in what ways has the Sida funding made a positive contribution to UNEP's poverty related results?
- What has been the nature and extent of discernible poverty-reduction results of UNEP's projects in the various sub-programmes?
- *What have been enabling and constraining factors for reaching poverty related results?*

To what extent and in what ways have sustainability concerns been addressed in UNEP projects in poverty and environmental terms?

- *What have been the poverty related sustainability concerns that have been addressed in the projects in order to ensure sustained results for poor people and vulnerable groups?*
- *What have been the environmental concerns that have been addressed in the projects in order to ensure environmental sustainability?*

How well has poverty been incorporated in UNEP project's design, monitoring and evaluation?

- Has evidence on 'what works' been used to inform the strategic choices in the design on initiatives? If so, what evidence?
- Do the projects included in the review describe specific risks that people living in poverty are typically exposed to and have ways been included to address these risks identified in the design?
- Are the links (direct or indirect, short-term or long-term) to poverty reduction and target group well-defined in project design?
- *How have poverty related results been monitored and evaluated, and to what extent has there been attention to intermediate level changes to achieve such results.*

What are effective ways for UNEP to enhance its focus on poverty reduction in the various parts of its programme?

- How could the poverty-related results and their contribution to achieving SDGs be better articulated or captured in UNEP projects in the future?
- How could the impact on poverty (as reflected in Sida's multi-dimensional approach) of UNEP's work be strengthened?
- *What lessons have been learned that can inform UNEP's approach to the poverty-environment nexus?*

2) Methods for Data Gathering

Methods for data collection included desk review, meta-analysis of evaluation reports and design documents and the conduct of semi-structured interviews, supplemented with target e-mail communications as needed. Details on each of these methods are presented in the table below.

Methodologies for Data gathering and Key Characteristics

Method	Description	Objective	Comments
Desk review of secondary materials	Study and review of selected background documents relevant to the present review including UNEP MTS and PoW, and Sida key documentation as well as other relevant documentation	To gather and assess relevant information on the background and context as well as documented details of the UNEP programme and Sida support through secondary resources	Main learnings from the desk review as part of the inception phase of the review were used to develop the inception report, which informs the remainder of the review process
Meta-analysis of UNEP project evaluation reports and design documents	Analysis of a selection of 20 evaluation reports of UNEP projects and 5 design documents	To analyze the relationship between poverty and environment in UNEP design documents and project evaluations, assessing related results from the perspective of the independent evaluators and the range of stakeholder consulted in the evaluation process	Selection of reports focused on those projects that aimed to contribute to reduction of poverty
Semi-structured interviews	Online discussions with selected respondents conducted through online means	To gather qualitative and quantitative data on the initiatives and projects, including their design and implementation at global, regional and national levels and the inter-connectedness of poverty and environmental aspects and results	Topics for discussion informed by the desk review as part of the inception phase and guided by the review matrix
E-mail communication	Focused e-mail messages	To address specific gaps in data and information to be obtained from specific persons and stakeholders	As needed

3) Selection of Evaluation Reports for Meta-Analysis

The selection of evaluation reports of UNEP projects included in the present review was guided by a set of criteria as well as a selection process. The selection criteria focused on the attention to poverty in the projects concerned and in the evaluation reports. With the focus on the MTS period of 2014-2017, the selection of evaluation reports included those projects implemented in that time period. In addition, any projects with a substantial focus on poverty with implementation prior to this period were included, in line with the specification concerned in the TOR. This resulted in the inclusion of the PEI evaluation report of 2019 focusing on the PEI project period 2013 – 2018 in addition to the PEI

evaluation report of 2016, focusing on the project period 2008 – 2013. These criteria were applied to the evaluation database of UNEP by the UNEP Evaluation Office and resulted in the initial identification of 30 evaluation reports.

This number was scaled down to the number of 20 specified in the TOR by using some additional criteria. With Sida funding spread across five of the UNEP sub-programmes, the selection of reports needed to include at a minimum one report for each of these sub-programmes with ideally a spread of evaluation reports in line with the relative funding levels of Sida. Amongst the 30 identified evaluation reports not all sub-programmes had similar numbers of reports. In particular the sub-programme of Ecosystems had a higher number of evaluation reports. In order to select the reports for this sub-programme, an assessment of each of the reports was made in terms of their attention to poverty related results and the linkages between poverty and environment, by the independent reviewer. Moreover, since three of the reports from flagship programmes concerned the sub-programme of ecosystems management at a global level, the remainder three reports for this sub-programme were selected at country level, to enable sufficient country level analysis. Reports for climate change were selected with equal representation of projects focusing on aspects of adaptation as well as mitigation, with no report on REDD+ in the selection of 30 reports. With the Sida poverty framework including the dimension of Human Security and with Sida providing support the UNEP sub-programme of disasters and conflict in the present MTS, this sub-programme was included even though in the period under review Sida did not provide support to this part of the UNEP programme. An overview of the selected evaluation reports and the corresponding sub-programmes is provided in table below. Recent project design documents reviewed were selected from recent designs covering most of the sub-programmes and supported by interviews with UNEP staff involved in designing new projects. For an overview see the table below.

Selected UNEP Project Evaluation Reports for Meta-Analysis (Flagship projects in bold)

#	Report Title	Sub-Programme	Date
1	**Final Programme Evaluation of Joint UNDP – UN Environment Poverty Environment Initiative (PEI) – 2013-2018**	Ecosystem Management	March 2019
2	**Terminal Evaluation of The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) National Implementation: Reflecting the Value of Ecosystems and Biodiversity in Policymaking**	Ecosystem Management	January 2018
3	**Terminal Evaluation of The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) Phase III & ENRTP-funded sub-component: National Implementation: Reflecting the Value of Ecosystems and Biodiversity in Policymaking**	Ecosystem Management	January 2018
4	**Lao PDR Country Study Report for the Independent Evaluation of the Scale-up Phase (2008-2013) of the UNDP-UNEP Poverty – Environment Initiative and Mid-term Evaluation of the Second Phase (2012 – 2014) of the Lao PDR PEI Country Programme**	Ecosystem Management	2015
5	Mid-Term Evaluation Report of the project Strengthening the Implementation of the Biological Diversity Act and Rules with Focus on its Access and Benefit Sharing Provisions (India ABS Project)	Ecosystem Management	November 2015
6	Integrating trade-offs between supply of ecosystem services and land use options into poverty alleviation efforts and development planning in Mixteca, terminal Evaluation Report	Ecosystem Management	November 2015
7	**Independent Evaluation of the Scale-up Phase (2008-2013) of the UNDP-UNEP Poverty – Environment Initiative (PEI)**	Environmental Governance	June 2016
8	Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP Project Caribbean Biological Corridor	Environmental Governance	June 2015

#	Report Title	Sub-Programme	Date
9	Integrating Environmental Sustainability in the UN Development Assistance Frameworks and UN Common Country Programming Processes	Environmental Governance	January 2016
10	Terminal Evaluation of the Project "Development of National Biosafety Frameworks"	Environmental Governance	May 2016
11	**Mid-term Evaluation (MTE) of the UN Environment-ILO-UNDP-UNIDO-UNITAR project 'Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE)**	Resource Efficiency	April 2017
12	Terminal Evaluation of UNEP Project: "SWITCH to Sustainable Policies and Innovation for Resource Efficiency in Asia - Regional Policy Support Component"	Resource Efficiency	January 2017
13	**Policy, macro-economic assessments and instruments to empower governments and business to advance resource efficiency and move towards a Green Economy (GEI)**	Resource Efficiency	January 2017
14	Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP Project Adapting to Climate Change Induced Water Stress in the Nile River Basin	Climate Change	September 2014
15	Terminal Evaluation of the Project: "Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change by Establishing Early warning and disaster preparedness systems and support for integrated watershed management in flood prone areas (Rwanda LDCF)"	Climate Change	September 2015
16	Terminal Evaluation of the Project "African Rural Energy Enterprise Development II" (AREED II)	Climate Change	2014
17	Mid-Term Evaluation of the UN Environment Project "Seed Capital Assistance Facility, Phase II"	Climate Change	August 2018
18	Terminal Evaluation of the Global Environment Facility-UN Environment Project "Demonstrating and Scaling Up Sustainable Alternatives to DDT for the control of vector borne diseases in Southern Caucasus and Central Asia"	Chemical and Waste	August 2018
19	Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project "Promoting Peace over Natural Resources in Darfur and Kordofan"	*Human security*	*2019*
20	Mid-Term Evaluation of the project "Building Adaptive Capacity and Resilience to Climate Change in Afghanistan (LDCF-1 project)"	*Climate Change in Conflict setting*	*2017*

Selected UNEP Project Design Documents

#	Report Title	Sub-Programme	Date
1	UNEP, The UNEP Environment and Trade Hub, Project Document.	Multiple sub-programmes	Sept 2014
2	UNEP, UN Environment Cities Hub, Project Document.	Multiple sub-programmes	July 2019
3	UNEP (GEF 7), Electrifying Mobility in Cities: Investing in the Transformation to Electric Mobility in India, Project Document.	Climate Change (mitigation)	June 2020
4	UNEP (GEF), Climate change adaptation and livelihoods in three arid regions of Mauritania	Climate Change (adaptation)	July 2020
5	UNEP (GEF), Reducing global environmental risks through the monitoring and development of alternative livelihood for the primary mercury mining sector in Mexico	Chemicals and Waste	Not dated

4) Methods for Data Analysis

Data analysis focused on the review main and sub-questions as presented above. For analysis of data from desk review, meta-analysis and primary data gathering, use was made of the frameworks presented in section 3 above. Moreover, the following means of analysis were applied:

Qualitative content analysis: reducing large amounts of unstructured textual content into manageable data relevant to the review questions in order to interpret and analyse meaning from the content of the data making use of coding of data guided by the review objectives and main and sub-questions of the review

SWOT Analysis: Looking at strengths and weaknesses in terms of internal capabilities of organizations concerned, and looking at opportunities and threats to highlight external factors. Strengths and opportunities will be used to assess aspects to be further developed and reinforced, while weaknesses and threats will be used to identify those internal as well as external issues that need to be addressed and mitigated against.

Analysis of Results Chains Theories of Change: This included the results chains and Theories of Change of selected initiatives and projects as part of the meta-analysis of the relevant sub-programme, assessing the logical sequence between activities, their direct outputs, and intermediate and impact level changes.

Contribution Analysis: Providing an assessment of whether the project was based on a plausible theory of change, whether it was implemented as intended, whether the anticipated chain of results occurred, the extent to which the UNEP project contributed to outcome level changes through the realization of output level results and the extent to which other factors influenced the project's achievements. The analysis was aimed at plausible association, based on a preponderance of evidence.

Context analysis: an assessment of the current situation of UNEP, its programmes and projects with respect to the wider social, economic, political and natural background in which they function, used in order to assess the enablers and constraining factors in terms of UNEP's strategy and the implementation of its initiatives and projects.

5) Methodological Limitations and Risks and their Mitigation

Methodological choices had their inherent limitations and their application in a specific context at times could pose certain risks in terms of data gathering and the ability of the evaluation process to reach its purpose. These and any other limitations and risks pertaining to the present review were identified and detailed in table 6 below, including measures to mitigate limitations and risks identified.

Key Limitations/Risks and Mitigation Measures

#	Limitation / Risk	Mitigation Measures
1	Given resource constraints, the number of UNEP project evaluation reports to be included in the meta-analysis part of the review was limited to a maximum of twenty reports, which could compromise representation.	Selection of evaluation reports reflected all the sub-programmes, in this way ensuring that all relevant parts of the UNEP programme were represented in the review. In addition, interviews with UNEP staff included members from all sub-programmes and divisions.
2	As the SDGs were adopted in January 2016, the evaluation reports included in the review could not provide explicit	The review made use of inferred or retrospectively-identified links between project results and SDG details. Use was made of any MDG references provided as well as any other results

#	Limitation / Risk	Mitigation Measures
	references to these goals and their targets and indicators.	related references to assess where these fit within the SDG monitoring framework.
3	Due to the present COVID-19 crisis it was not possible to visit Nairobi and to have face-to-face meetings and interviews with relevant stakeholders at UNEP Headquarters.	This was mitigated through the conduct of online virtual interviews. The fact that with the crisis most Nairobi-based UNEP staff was working from home, in a virtual setup, facilitated the conduct of online interviews. With few exceptions, all planned interview could take place.

6) Process Overview

The review process consisted of five phases: (i) preparatory phase, (ii) inception phase, (iii) data gathering phase, (iv) data analysis and reporting phase, and (v) management response, dissemination and follow-up phase. The development of the inception report was part of the inception phase. Below details on the inception, data gathering and reporting phases of the review are provided. An overview of all phases is presented in the Workplan of table below.

Work plan for the UNEP Sida Poverty Review

Phases / Specific Activities / Deliverables	Dates (2020)
1. Preparatory Phase	
Develop and finalize evaluation terms of reference, establish ERG, prepare documentation for desk review, select independent consultants	Feb
2. Inception Phase	
Desk review of documentation	March
Preparation of the inception report	March
Submit the draft inception report to UNEP	27 March
Review the draft inception report by UNEP	30 March - 3 April
Consolidated comments shared by UNEP	3 April
Finalization of the inception report	30 April
3. Primary Data Gathering Phase	
Meta-analysis of 20 UNEP evaluation reports	April / May
Main primary data collection from key stakeholders	20 April – 8 May
On-going desk review	April / May
Online debriefing / Validation meeting – Preliminary findings note	22 May
Second round of primary data collection from key stakeholders	June
4. Data Analysis and Reporting Phase	
Data analysis and preparation of first drafts of analysis of interviews and evaluation report	May/June
Submission of draft analysis of interviews	22 May
Submission of draft analysis of 20 evaluation reports	5 June
Submission draft analysis of review of design documentation	26 June

Phases / Specific Activities / Deliverables	Dates (2020)
Submission of draft synthesis report and validation meeting	Second part of July
Submission of final review report and 2-page evaluation bulletin	End of August
5. Dissemination and follow-up Phase	
Dissemination of the results of the review by UNEP and Sida and development of a management response	September

7) Phases of the Review Process

Inception Phase

The inception phase of the review included the desk review of the secondary information of UNEP and Sida and other relevant documentation. A virtual meeting with the review management team was conducted on March 19th, in which the details of the TOR of the assignment were discussed. Informed by the desk review, the inception report was prepared.

Data Gathering Phase

The data gathering phase included online interviews with key stakeholders to the UNEP programme and its implementation. Moreover, the possibility to include representatives of agencies at the receiving end of UNEP support was examined but was not deemed feasible. All interviews were conducted online, this change was made with respect to the requirements of the on-going Covid-19 crisis, which precluded face-to-face interviews. This phase of the review process included the meta-analysis of 20 UNEP project evaluation reports as well as the on-going desk review of relevant secondary materials and the review of selected design documents.

Analysis and Reporting Phase

After the data gathering phase the reviewer analysed the data gathered and prepared the draft synthesis report. The report was organized by the review objectives and questions as much as possible, supported by evidence presented in the report and contains separate sections on lessons learned and recommendations. The report includes an executive summary that can be read as a stand-alone document.

The draft synthesis report will inform a validation meeting in which input from key stakeholders is obtained to inform the formulation of the final report. Moreover, an evaluation bulletin will be prepared, a 2 - page summary of key evaluation results for wider dissemination.

Review Deliverables

The deliverables of the review consisted of a total of six items, to be provided as part of the data analysis and reporting phase of the review. Each of the deliverables were discussed with the review manager, i.e. the UNEP evaluation office. The deliverables consisted of the following:

1. Review Inception Report
2. Findings of the interviews conducted
3. Findings of the meta-analysis of the selected UNEP Project Evaluation Reports
4. Findings of review of design documentation and second round of interviews
5. Draft Synthesis Report and possibly meeting with presentation of review results
6. Final Review Report and contribution to Evaluation Bulletin, i.e. a 2 pager for wider dissemination of review results

8) Review Team

The review was conducted by Mr. Frank Noij, specialist in complex and meta-evaluation and review and capacity development for results-based management. With a background in social and cultural anthropology, Frank has worked for 30 years in the evaluation of international development programming, primarily in the Asia and Pacific region as well as in East and West Africa. His experience includes the conduct of complex evaluations and reviews, development and implementation of evaluation quality assurance systems and capacity development on evaluation and its use in results-based management. Poverty and environmental aspects have been an important part of his work, including evaluation of poverty reduction programmes and development initiatives on forestry and access to forest resources by indigenous people, rural development, natural resource management, energy related policy development and the management of a biodiversity conservation project.

9) Logistic Support Requirements

The reviewer befitted from support from the UNEP Evaluation Office in terms of the primary data gathering process. This concerned in particular introduction to key stakeholders for interviews and setting up of appointments for such interviews.

ANNEX 5:

Persons Interviewed

#	Name	Position	Sub-programme/division
1	Elisabeth Folkunger	Sida	-
2	Alice Kaudia	Executive Director Eco-entrepreneurs, Former Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Kenya	-
3	Usman Iftikhar	UNDP Policy Specialist Environmental Economics	-
4	James Mbata	UNDP PEA coordinator Malawi	-
5	Inger Andersen	Executive Director	UNEP Secretariat
6	Joyce Msuya	Deputy Executive Director	UNEP Secretariat
7	Sonja Leighton Kone	Head of donor relations	Corporate Services Division
8	Maria Elena Zuniga Barrientos	Programme coherence and assurance unit	Policy & Program Division
9	Francoise D'Estais	Finance Unit	Economy Division
10	Kati Autere	Resource Mobilization Unit	Corporate Services Division
11	Joanne Maina		
12	Steven Stone	Resources and Markets Branch	Economy Division
13	Fulai Sheng	Economic and Trade Policy Unit, Resources and Markets Branch	Economy Division
14	Robert Erath	Task Manager, Biodiversity and Land Branch, GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit, Mixteca project evaluation	Ecosystem Division
15	David Smith	Chief Economist and Regional Co-ordinator - Africa UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Action for the SDGs (PEA)	Africa Office
16	Oli Brown	Former Sub-programme Coordinator	Disaster and Conflict sub-programme
17	Ebrahim Gora	Strategic Planning Unit, Policy and Programme Performance	Policy and Programme Division
18	Yassin Ahmed	Global Sub-Programme Coordinator, Environmental Governance Programme	Law Division
19	Ersin Essen	Biodiversity and Land Branch, GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit	Ecosystems Division
20	Tessa Goverse	Sub-programme Coordinator, Chemicals, Waste and Air Quality Sub-programme	Economy Division
21	Rosemary Mukasa	Policy and Programme Performance, Programme Performance Support Unit	Policy and Programme Division
22	Marieta Sakalian	Global Sub-programme Coordinator, Ecosystems Sub-programme	Ecosystems Division

#	Name	Position	Sub-programme/division
23	Rula Qalyoubi	Global Sub-programme Coordinator, Environment Under Review Sub-programme	Science Division
24	Maarten Kappelle	Big science branch, Thematic Assessment Unit, former global sub-programme coordinator SP5	Science Division
25	Maria Cristina Zucca	Chemicals and Health Branch, Pollution and Health Unit	Economy Division
26	Djaheezah Subratty	Global Sub-programme Coordinator, Resource Efficiency Sub-programme	Resource Efficiency
27	Alex Owusu-Biney	Task manager, biodiversity and Land Branch, GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit, Bio-safety project evaluation	Ecosystems Division
28	Niklas Hagelberg	Global Sub-programme Coordinator Climate Change Sub-programme Climate Change	Ecosystems Division
29	Juliette Biao	Regional Director Africa	Africa Office
30	Daniel Cooney	Director (a.i.) Communications Division	Communications Division
31	Salman Hussain	Task Manager, Biodiversity and Land Branch, Ecosystem Services Economics Unit, ENTRP TEEB project evaluation	Ecosystems Division
32	Atila Uras	Task manager Sudan project	Africa Office
33	Robbert Paul Bekker	Senior programme Adviser, Sudan project	Africa Office
34	Dechen Tsering	Regional Director, Asia and Pacific	Asia and the Pacific Regional Office
35	Janet Macharia	Policy and Programme Performance, Gender and Safeguards Unit	Policy & Program Division
36	Leo Heileman	Regional Director, Latin America and the Caribbean	Latin America and the Caribbean Office
37	Elois Touni	Chemicals and Health Branch, GEF Chemicals & Waste Unit	Economy Division
38	Mahir Aliyev	Project manager, UNDAF Evaluation Report	Law Division
39	Yunae Yi	Safeguards (Former project design in Q&A unit)	Policy & Program Division
40	Barbara Hendrie	Regional Director, North America	North America Office
41	Arnold Kreihuber	Division Director (ad interim)	Law Division
42	Charles Arden-Clarke	Resource and Markets Branch, 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns	Economy Division
43	Lars Christiansen	Project manager, LDCF Rwanda project evaluation	Ecosystems Division
44	Richard Munang	Regional Sub-programme Coordinator Africa Climate Change Sub-programme	Africa Office

#	Name	Position	Sub-programme/division
45	Nicolas Bertrand	Assistant to Executive Director	UNEP Secretariat
46	Brennan Van Dyke	Capacity Development and Innovation Branch	Science Division
47	Pushpam Kumar	Chief Economist	
48	Bruno Maggy Pozzi	Regional Director Europe	Europe Office
49	Makiko Yashiro	Regional Sub-programme Coordinator Healthy and Productive Ecosystems Sub-programme	Asia and the Pacific Office
50	Robert Wabunoha	Regional Sub-programme Coordinator, Environmental Governance Sub-programme	Africa Office
51	Kelly West	Global Environment Facility Coordination Unit	Corporate Services Division
52	Jessica Troni	Nature for Climate Branch, Climate Change adaptation Unit	Ecosystems Division
53	Kakuko Nagatani-Yoshida	Regional Sub-programme Coordinator Chemicals, Waste and Air Quality Sub-programme	Asia and the Pacific Office
54	Ligia Noronha	Division Director	Economy Division
55	Martina Otto	Energy and Climate Branch, Local Climate Actions Unit, Cities Hub Design	Economy Division
56	Tim Kasten	Division Director	Policy & Programme Division
57	Michael Spilsbury	Director Evaluation Office	Evaluation Office
58	Susan Gardner	Division Director	Ecosystems Division
59	D. Osborn	Division Deputy Director	Ecosystems Division
60	Daniel Stothart	Regional Sub-programme Coordinator, Resilience to Disaster & Conflicts Sub-programme	Latin America and the Caribbean Office

ANNEX 6:

Contribution to Dimensions of Poverty by UNEP Sub-Programmes

Climate Change Sub-programme

1. There are strong interlinkages between environment and poverty in terms of climate change. The linkages differ amongst the three programme components of the sub-programme. Part of the initiatives focus on adaptation, i.e. taking measures to adapt to a warming world, with, for example, subsistence farmers influenced by changing rain patterns resulting in the need to adapt their farming practices. Then there are those initiatives oriented towards mitigation, i.e. efforts to reduce or prevent emission of greenhouse gases in order to reduce rising global temperatures. Finally, part of the sub-programme focuses on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+).[70] Climate change adaptation and REDD+ are considered to have clear linkages with poverty reduction while the situation is different for support to climate change mitigation, with more indirect linkages to poverty reduction. The goal of limiting climate change through reduction of greenhouse gas emission is important in reducing climate change effects, which is of particular importance for poor and vulnerable groups who are least in a position to adapt to effects concerned. Project level experience has shown the need to combine adaptation and mitigation aspects of addressing climate change, as this provides results in both respects and results in more economic solutions that produce less environmental damage.

2. The adaptation-oriented support to climate change is usually people-oriented, focused on support to particularly vulnerable groups and communities in areas affected by climate change, aimed at enhancing their livelihood and resilience to disaster. Support is aimed at enhancing people's adaptive capacities to climate induced change, including livelihood diversification and establishment of early warning systems. In particular a focus on households most vulnerable to climate change tends to provide a focus on the poorest and most marginalized households. UNEP initiatives focus in particular on LDCs, SIDS and rural communities in other developing countries. At the level of the community, vulnerable to climate change and poor often refers to the same group of people. The poor are usually unable to make investments to address climate change risks and to adapt their practices. Initiatives to enhance climate change adaptation focus on ecosystem-based adaptation in order to broaden people's livelihoods, including enhancing food and water security in a changing climate context. The climate change LDC Fund, managed by GEF, is dedicated to climate change adaptation issues in LDCs, i.e. the poorest countries.

3. REDD+, through its sustainable forest management approach, also has a close connection to poverty, working in rural areas and supporting rural and poor people's livelihoods, enabling the use of biodiverse natural resources in a sustainable and carbon neutral way.

4. The climate change adaptation-oriented projects that were reviewed worked at regional and country levels and focused on adaptation of water management related policies in the Nile river basin, on land use adaptation and early warning systems in Rwanda and Afghanistan and adapting livelihoods in arid areas of Mauritania. A country level focus on early warning systems and land use adaptation, as well as livelihood strengthening, directly benefitted poor and vulnerable households and groups.

5. The situation is different for climate change mitigation, which focuses on renewable energy in terms of industrial processes, transportation and buildings. The sub-programme provides support to developing countries and poorer segments of these countries, with results obtained in terms of enhancement of local level livelihoods through, for example, enhanced energy efficiency. For large middle-income countries (MIC) like India and China, with fast growing economies, support to climate change mitigation is important in order to assure that growth in energy use does not add to

[70] REDD+ is a United Nations-backed framework that aims to curb climate change by stopping the destruction of forests. The "+" signifies the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Issues of development relate to making the right choices in terms of renewable energy in this respect and reduce GHG emissions for the benefit of all people. For the poor it is important to get access to renewable energy as their source of energy in order not to contribute to climate change and to leapfrog the disadvantages from traditional energy sources.

6. Reviewed projects that focused on mitigation operated at global and regional levels. These included a project providing support to funding mechanisms for renewable low carbon energy projects and stimulation of financial markets to engage in such investments. Though African countries are low emitters of GHG, one of the UNEP projects reviewed aimed to provide access to clean energy to poor rural households in order to enhance business opportunities and related income generation while limiting GHG emissions. With the financial capacities of households concerned limited, a credit component was established as part of the project and the beneficiaries were expanded beyond poor households. Results were limited in terms of scale. The project showed that household livelihoods could potentially be improved through enhanced access to clean energy for productive purposes. However, policy related objectives of the project could not sufficiently be realized, there appeared a lack of entrepreneurial culture and inadequate access to funding by banks which limited results.

7. For mitigation-oriented projects, the focus on reduction of GHG emission is not necessarily easily directly related to poverty reduction although there are indirect benefits to poor households from limitations in climate change and its detrimental effects. Moreover, the use of clean energy can also have additional benefits like health benefits for household members concerned through using solar energy compared to the use of firewood or a diesel generator. Solar powered equipment to dry harvested grains can reduce loss of produce after the harvest and improve storage. An important aspect of these examples is the dual benefits of clean energy and livelihood gains.

Examples from UNEP Climate Change Projects

The Nile River Basin project focused on ecosystems and the resilience of communities to climate change, including aspects of water stress. Poverty was explicit in one of the assumptions identified: "*… other human pressures and vulnerabilities (e.g. poverty) addressed*". The project aimed to include adaptation measures in water management related policies, planning and investments, guided by enhanced knowledge and information gathered and developed with project support.

The LDCF Rwanda project combined the development of an early warning system for climate change related disaster with livelihood and land use adaptation in response to climate change, in this way reducing the adverse effects of floods and droughts in the project area and enhancing sustainable use of natural resources and preserving biodiversity of the ecosystem.

The LDCF Afghanistan project had a similar setup to the Rwanda project, with enhanced focus on the development of models for four selected types of landscapes in terms of climate change adaptation. These models were to be disseminated to other parts of the country in order to replicate results. In this respect, a project component on information dissemination was included. The focus was on knowledge sharing within the country and less attention was paid to knowledge generation and on sharing in an international context, though that had been part of the design of the project.

The AREED II project aimed to address poverty through increasing access of rural poor households to clean energy for productive purposes, in this way increasing their opportunities for the generation of income. The access to energy was to be delivered through social enterprises that supported small scale energy technology and services. Though in the design of the project the focus was on rural poor households, this was expanded in implementation, through inclusion of peri-urban residents while, in addition to productive use, consumptive use also became included. This can be understood from an economic perspective of the social entrepreneurs, with the peri-urban residents being able to afford to pay some necessary costs upfront, something which the rural poor were not able to do and for which an end-user financing component needed to be included in the project. On the other hand, this diluted the poverty related emphasis on the rural poor, which had been a response to the lessons from AREED I, in which phase the

Resilience to Disasters and Conflict Sub-programme

8. In the Resilience to Disasters and Conflict sub-programme the focus is on support to ensure that environmental dimensions are taken into consideration in the humanitarian programming of other UN agencies, which in turn are focused on providing support to survivors of natural and man-made disasters, in particular poor and vulnerable groups, to save people's lives, support their livelihoods and contribute to their recovery. At global and regional levels, the programme works on norm setting, early warning and disaster risk reduction including ecological issues, supporting the least developed and poorest countries to build capacities for resilience to disaster.

9. The sub-programme also includes work in post-conflict settings. In disaster- and conflict-related programming poor and vulnerable people are often at the receiving end of the detrimental effects and projects concerned are from the start usually poverty-oriented. In Sudan, where the root causes of the conflict concern access to land and other natural resources, one of the UNEP projects focused on conflict resolution and agreements on land use and natural resource management, making use of the lessons learned to inform the development of national development plans and strategies. The improved infrastructure, enhanced governance mechanisms for natural resource management and conflict resolution contributed towards enhanced access to resources, diversified livelihood opportunities and reduced conflict.

10. In the earlier part of the period under review, Sida had excluded the Resilience to Disasters and Conflict sub-programme from its support. Last year (2019) was the first year in which Sida provided funding again to the sub-programme, with support to Venezuela in the Latin America and Caribbean region. Also in this initiative, multiple poverty dimensions were addressed, including resource access, human security as well as health related issues. UNEP support at the local level was organized through the posting of a staff member in the office of another UN agency.

11. Some of the projects from the resilience to disaster and conflict sub-programme appear to address all four dimensions of the Sida poverty framework, including human security, participation and voice with inclusion of women and youth, access to resources and enhancing opportunities and choice.

Examples from UNEP Resilience to Disaster and Conflict Projects

The project in Sudan was implemented in a context of environmental degradation, political instability and enhanced competition over natural resources, in particular between farmers and pastoralists. The project was based on enhancing the governance mechanisms and infrastructure for natural resource management. This was achieved through investments in particular in water related infrastructure in the project area, establishment of a variety of local committees by project stakeholders on natural resource management and conflict resolution and training on environmental, social and conflict related topics. The participation of local stakeholders in training and decision-making enhanced the internal social relationships across groups of farming households and pastoralists. It also improved relationships of local people with government agencies, with the latter involved in provision of the training and whose capacities were enhanced through the project. Separate committees worked on aspects of conflict resolution, bringing various interest groups together, including farmers and pastoralists, to find solutions in particular on natural resource management related issues. A revolving fund was set up for women and youth, which provided them with alternative livelihood options. Infrastructure investments in water facilities reduced the time required for women and girls to fetch water, enabling them to participate in income generating and conflict resolution activities and enhancing their voice in the various committees.

Healthy and Productive Ecosystems Sub-programme

12. The relation with poverty is prevalent in the Healthy and Productive Ecosystems Sub-programme. The aim of most of the objectives of the sub-programme is for humans to thrive within a healthy environment with sustainable resource use and poverty reduction as important goals. The relationship

between poverty and natural resource use is seen as multi-faceted: if natural resources are not sustainably managed, this can easily lead to increased poverty levels while on the other hand extensive poverty can easily undermine the sustainable management of natural resources.

13. The initiatives of the sub-programme provide support to ecosystems, enhancing the capacity of such systems to perform a variety of functions for the populations that depend on them for their livelihood. In particular, poor and vulnerable people in both rural and urban areas are usually more heavily dependent on such functions. The degradation of open access natural resources in developing countries affects poor and vulnerable people most directly, as they often depend on these resources for their daily subsistence. Several GEF supported initiatives have focused on conserving biodiversity combined with sustainable use, based on benefit sharing, in order to enhance human health and nutrition. However, results on poverty are usually implied and not monitored through the use of poverty related indicators.

14. The ecosystems sub-programme has also focused on the inclusion of biodiversity valuation in development planning and budgeting through TEEB and enhancing sustainable use of biodiverse natural resources by poor local populations. Biosafety is another part of the sub-programme, with the prevention of zoonotic diseases an important objective. In case of an outbreak, these diseases have detrimental effects in particular for poor and vulnerable people who are less able to avoid getting infected and have less access to health services once they become ill. The conservation of ecosystems and the reduction of human and wildlife interaction, moreover, can prevent the spread of new zoonotic diseases. With the present Corona virus pandemic, this part of the sub-programme has been given renewed relevance and urgency. The sub-programme has also been paying attention to 'blue economy', which relates to the sustainable exploitation and preservation of the marine environment. Through TEEB the sub-programme is addressing the valuation of marine ecosystems to inform related planning and sustainable use.

Examples from UNEP Healthy and Productive Ecosystems Projects

In the Mixteca project, poverty related aspects were included in terms of attention to improved livelihoods and productive activities, with the project objective focused on "Mainstream biodiversity conservation into natural resource use and development planning in the Mixteca Region of Oaxaca integrating ecosystem services tools and sustainable livelihood options". The goal of the project was conservation oriented: "To conserve globally important ecosystems and species within the Mixteca region of Oaxaca."

TEEB supports the inclusion of ecosystem services into development planning through their valuation in economic terms. This with the aim to contribute to direct livelihood support, security and resilience through food security, mitigation of disasters and climate change adaptation and mitigation, to health through access to clean air and water, disease control and traditional medicine and to social relations through support to cultural, aesthetic and spiritual values of natural capital. TEEB website at http://www.teebweb.org/.

Environmental Governance Sub-programme

15. This sub-programme is first and foremost aimed at the enabling environment of the use and management of natural resources. The sub-programme focuses on international coherence of environmental issues and support to national government capacities. In the past there was a third part of the POW on mainstreaming environmental SDGs but this has been transferred to each of the international and national components of the sub-programme. The sub-programme incorporates aspects of inclusiveness and participation in governance processes. Several of the initiatives reviewed did have concrete linkages with poverty reduction, though at times connections between project interventions and poverty were complex and/or ambiguous.

Examples from UNEP Environmental Governance Projects

The PEI initiative was directly linked with poverty through its focus on the connection between poverty and environment. PEI focused on poverty-environment mainstreaming supporting country-level results. It included a focus on enhancing the understanding of poverty and environment linkages across the various sectors and government institutions, incorporating related objectives in national development planning and budgeting, adapting legal frameworks and enhancing monitoring systems regarding P-E related issues.

The project linked with the Ministries of Planning and Finance, in addition to the Ministry of Environment, in order to achieve its objectives. This provided an important change in terms of UNEP's approach at the country level, seeking engagement beyond its traditional 'natural' partner, the Ministry of Environment. This opened up new opportunities and this experience was used to inform other UNEP projects and initiatives. With the integrated approach used by PEI, the initiative appeared well placed to support the international Agenda 2030 for sustainable development. PEI was considered to embody a model for supporting countries in their implementation of the SDGs with use of the PEI 'road tested' integrated approaches suitable to support the wider delivery on the SDGs. However, one of the limitations of PEI has been that the learning concerned on the environment - poverty linkages has not been widely shared and used across the various sub-programmes within UNEP and beyond.

The project Integrating Environmental Sustainability in the UNDAF and UN Common Country Programming Processes aimed to integrate environmental priorities into UN country analysis and the development of the UNDAF and its results framework and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan. This was aimed at enabling decisions of UN Country Team members and national partners regarding policies and programmes to give full consideration to environmental priorities and issues. In the end this was aimed to enhance the achievement of environmental goals. UNEP was seen as bringing in the environmental aspects, with other UN agencies contributing poverty and other relevant development aspects. However, the inclusion of poverty in the project was limited. The TOC made poverty explicit only at the impact level and did not include any relationship with poverty related issues nor with vulnerable and marginalized groups at the level of the

Chemical, Waste and Air Quality Sub-programme

16. In the chemical, waste and air quality sub-programme the link with poverty is realized through attention to human health, in particular of poor and vulnerable groups. Cancer, diabetes, heart disease and other non-communicable diseases are on the rise and many of them are associated with air and water pollution leading to rapidly rising health care expenditures per capita. Air pollution is considered as one among the world's largest environmental health risks.[71] Underpinning the sub-programme is the right to a non-toxic environment, in particular for poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups, who often reside in areas with more exposure to toxic waste or polluted air and who have less opportunity to move out of such areas and have less access to health services when falling ill as a result of such exposure.

17. Many of the UNEP projects of the sub-programme focus on bringing benefits for poor and vulnerable groups as well as for the general population, with the poor benefitting more since they are more heavily affected by the issues concerned. The programme supports the mainstreaming of sound longer term management of chemicals and waste in developing countries which requires engagement with the private sector and looking at aspects of sustainability of the results.

[71] United Nations Environment Programme, Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021, May 2016.

Examples from UNEP Chemical, Waste and Air Quality Projects

The Alternatives to DDT project worked on four interrelated areas. In terms of human health, it developed alternatives to disease vector control interventions apart from the use of DDT. Moreover, the capacities of government agencies were supported at national level on these alternatives to integrated vector management. This was to lead to the implementation of an integrated vector management system in project countries, which in turn was aimed to result in application at scale within countries in the Central Asia region. Benefits included health related results for affected poor as well as the general population. UNEP led the process for a follow-up project on demonstration of non-thermal treatment of DDT wastes in Central Asia.

UNEP's Reducing Global Environmental Risks project in Mexico was working on the reduction of artisanal mercury mining in the Sierra Gorda region in Mexico. The project worked through the identification of primary mercury mining, reinforcement of control mechanisms to mercury mining and the introduction of alternative livelihoods for primary mercury miners in the project area. Results included enhanced environmental conditions in the project area, improvement of the health conditions of the local population in the surrounding rural area with high poverty incidence as well as contribution to the reduction of mercury pollution worldwide.

Resource Efficiency Sub-programme

18. Linkages with poverty reduction in the resource efficiency sub-programme are to be achieved through UNEP support to the realization of an inclusive green economy, including the creation of 'green jobs' and support to sustainable consumption and production, including support to small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Moreover, attention focuses on resource extraction industries.

19. UNEP support to the development of the green economy concept and later the inclusive green economy concept and its implementation cuts across several of the sub-programmes. The concept combines economic and ecological aspects of development and aims to change the basic premise of economic development towards a 'green economy', which supports economic growth while making sustainable use of natural resources, rather than depleting them, provides less pollution, creates 'green' jobs and is beneficial to the environment and to human welfare, in particular to poor and vulnerable groups.

20. The initiatives that were part of the resource efficiency sub-programme aimed to address the unsustainable pathway to economic growth, decoupling such growth from environmental degradation. They aimed for a development approach that meets human needs while respecting the ecological carrying capacity of the local, national and global level environment. With poor and vulnerable people more heavily dependent on natural resources, they benefit indirectly from limitations in environmental degradation.

21. A cross divisional working group has been established on blue economy including aspects of eco system valuation, pollution and other related issues, with the inclusion of a people-oriented focus in terms of the involvement of, and benefits for, rural coastal communities.

22. The linkage between sustainable consumption and production (SCP) and poverty is indirect. Through SCP one can produce more goods and services making use of less resources and resulting in less pollution, which increases the economic assets (size of 'the cake'), which can be beneficial to all if there is a distribution-related policy of the benefits concerned, a domestic policy for ways in which the 'cake' is being shared, with poor and vulnerable groups being able to get a larger share compared to the present setup.

23. Attention to resource extraction industries include oil and gas, mining and other industries, with a focus on safety and security issues for workers and people residing in the surrounding areas of locations concerned. Improper and environmentally unsound mining negatively affects the sustainability of natural resources, with detrimental effects on the surrounding population, in

particular poor and vulnerable groups that depend more heavily on access to these resources to sustain their livelihoods. There has been an attempt to work with the mining sector to develop guidance including improved environmental management around mining.

Examples from UNEP Resource Efficiency Projects

The GEI and PAGE flagship initiatives both focused on the promotion and facilitation of a green economy, improving human well-being while reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. They aimed for a low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive economy. In terms of its conservation of natural resources as well as in its focus on inclusive growth, the initiatives related to poverty reduction, with poor and vulnerable households depending more heavily on natural resources and benefitting from inclusive growth.

The transformation of the initial Green Economy concept into Inclusive Green Economy enhanced the focus on the distribution of the benefits of green economic growth, in addition to aspects of investment, production and consumption. Part of this focused on the creation of green jobs, providing income opportunities while respecting environmental sustainability. Moreover, it also addressed other aspects of a multi-dimensional poverty approach, including opportunity and choice and human security. Factoring in both environmental and social issues in investment decision-making and related risk management, was underpinned by a human rights-based approach to sustainable development, ensuring that all people benefit from the development process, including future generations.

UNEP has supported the Seed Capital Assistance Facility (SCAF) which focuses on enabling private sector Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) investment in clean energy in LDCs. The selection of LDCs provides a generic poverty perspective in terms of stimulating overall economic development while contributing at the same time to the reduction of GHG emissions.

The regional sustainable consumption and production (SCP) project, SWITCH RSPC, focused on supporting the adaptation of production and consumption patterns in order to minimize natural resource use and to limit pollution and GHG emissions over the lifecycle of goods and services concerned, an approach captured by the phrase "doing more and better with less". The focus of SWITCH RSPC was on national and regional policy frameworks to promote the shift towards SCP and enhancing resource efficiency, contributing to green growth and indirectly to a reduction of poverty.

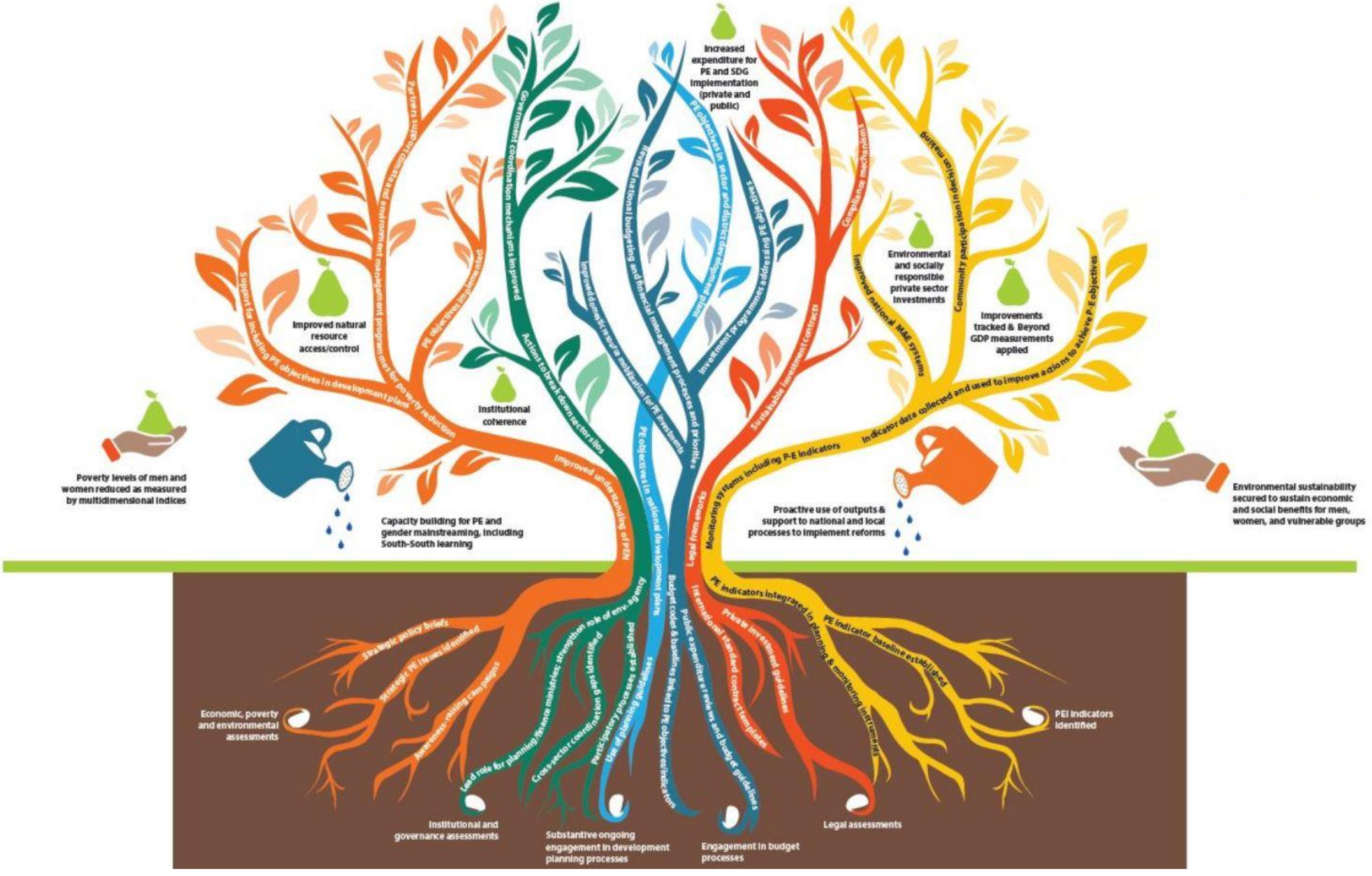
Environment Under Review Sub-programme

24. Through the Environment under Review sub-programme, UNEP assesses under what kind of environmental conditions people are living. This is a relatively young sub-programme which is designed for environmental data and information relating to the world environmental situation. It is gathering a global inventory on the state of the environment, including environmental indicators.

25. The sub-programme provides scientific data and analysis to other sub-programmes. This includes for example the Emission Gap Report produced in 2013 and 2015, Frontiers which presents emerging issue of environmental concern and the Global Environmental Outlook (GEO). The composition of the advisory bodies to the various reports have a balance in terms of representation from the various regions, in terms of gender, and includes selected persons from disadvantaged groups. Poverty and equity specialist have been included and the composition of the advisory bodies are scrutinized by member states. GEO-6 was guided by a people-oriented approach, with its focus on a 'healthy planet, healthy people'.

26. In 2016 the sub-programme published a document on zoonotic diseases and released an updated version recently. The publication of 2016 alerted for the danger of zoonotic diseases while the recent report looked for the causes concerned with attention to both human health concerns and environmental concerns and their interlinkages. There has been a gender and environment outlook as part of the sub programme while there has not been an assessment related to poverty conducted so far as part of the environment under review sub-programme.

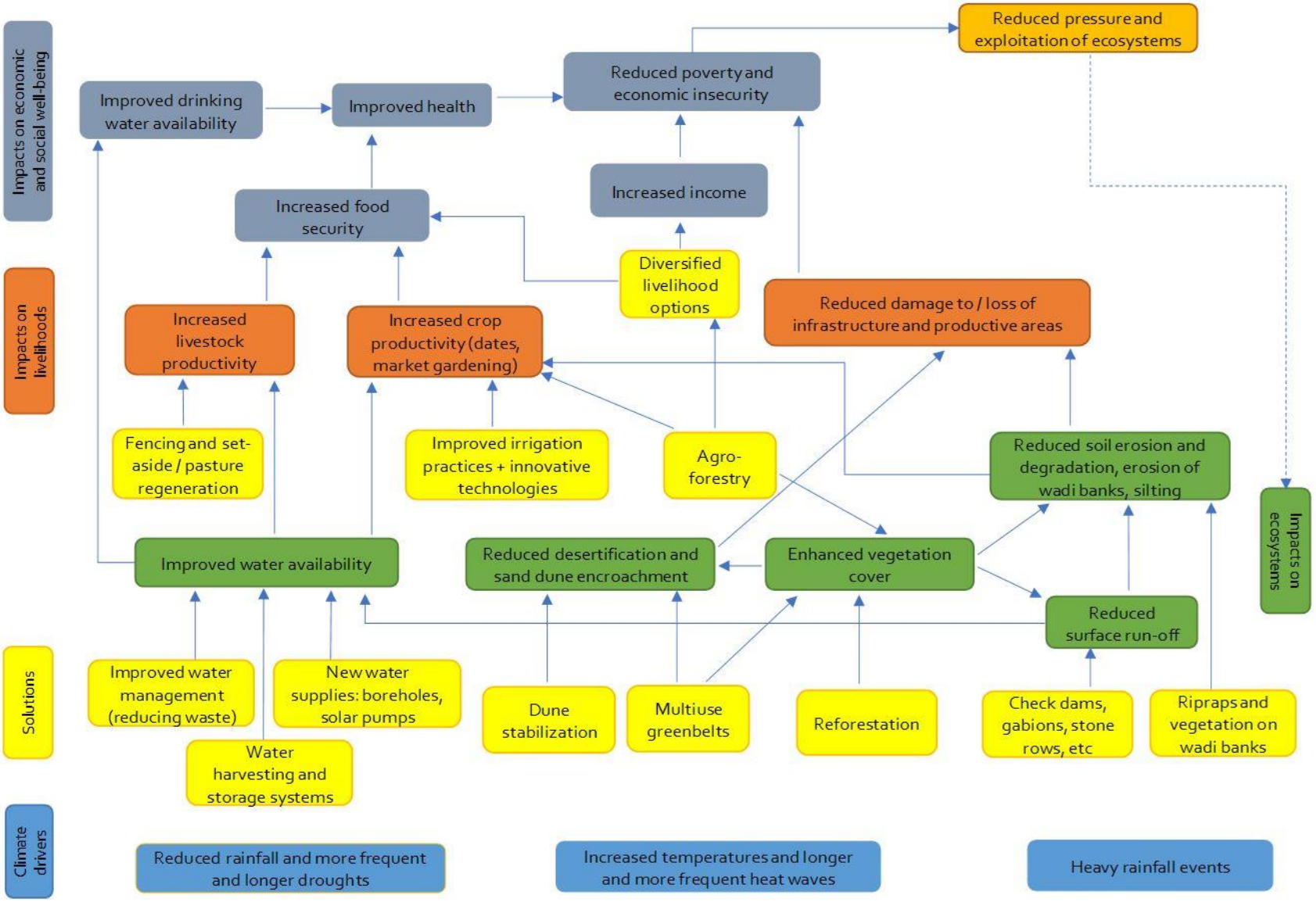
ANNEX 7: Theories of Change - *Theory of Change of the UNEP UNDP Poverty - Environment Initiative*



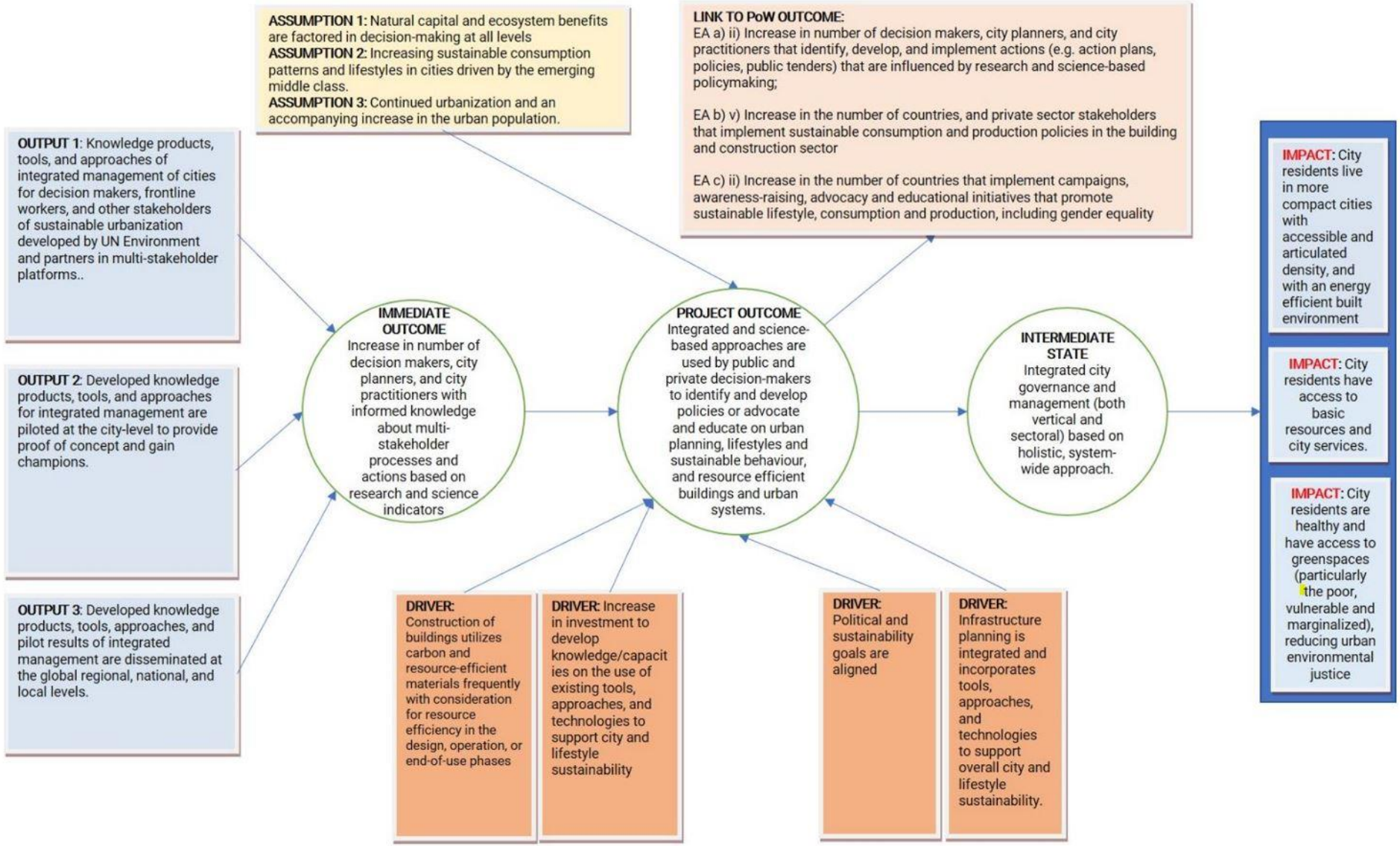
PEI Theory of Change

Activities	Outputs	Drivers of change	Intermediate level changes			Impact level change
• Economic, poverty and environmental assessments	• Strategic policy briefs • Strategic PE issues identified • Awareness raising campaigns	• Capacity building for PE and gender mainstreaming, including South-South learning • Proactive use of outputs and support to national and local processes to implement reforms	• Improved understanding of PEN	• Support for including PE objectives in development plans • Partners support climate and environment management programmes for poverty reduction • PE objectives implemented	• Improved natural resource access/control • Environmental and socially responsible private sector investments • Increased expenditure for PE & SDG implementation (private and public) • Improved national M&E systems • Improvements tracked and beyond GDP measurements applied	• Poverty levels of men and women reduced as measured by multi-dimensional indices • Environmental sustainability secured to sustain economic and social benefits for men, women and vulnerable groups
• Institutional and governance assessments	• Lead role for planning/finance ministries • Strengthen role of environmental agency • Cross sector coordination gaps identified		• Actions to break down sector silos	• Government coordination mechanisms improved		
• Substantive ongoing engagement in development planning processes	• Participatory processes established • Use of planning guidelines		• PE objectives in national development plans	• PE objectives in sector and district development plans • Investment programmes addressing PE objectives • Revised national budgeting and financial management processes and priorities • Improved domestic resource mobilization for PE investments		
• Engagement in budget processes	• Budget codes and baselines linked to PE objectives / indicators • Public expenditure reviews and budget guidelines					
• Legal assessments	• International standard contract templates • Private investment guidelines		• Legal frameworks	• Sustainable investment contracts • Compliance mechanisms		
• PEI indicators identified	• PEI indicators integrated in planning and monitoring instruments • PE indicator baseline established		• Monitoring systems including PE indicators	• Indicator data collected and used to improve actions to achieve PE objectives • Community participation in decision making		

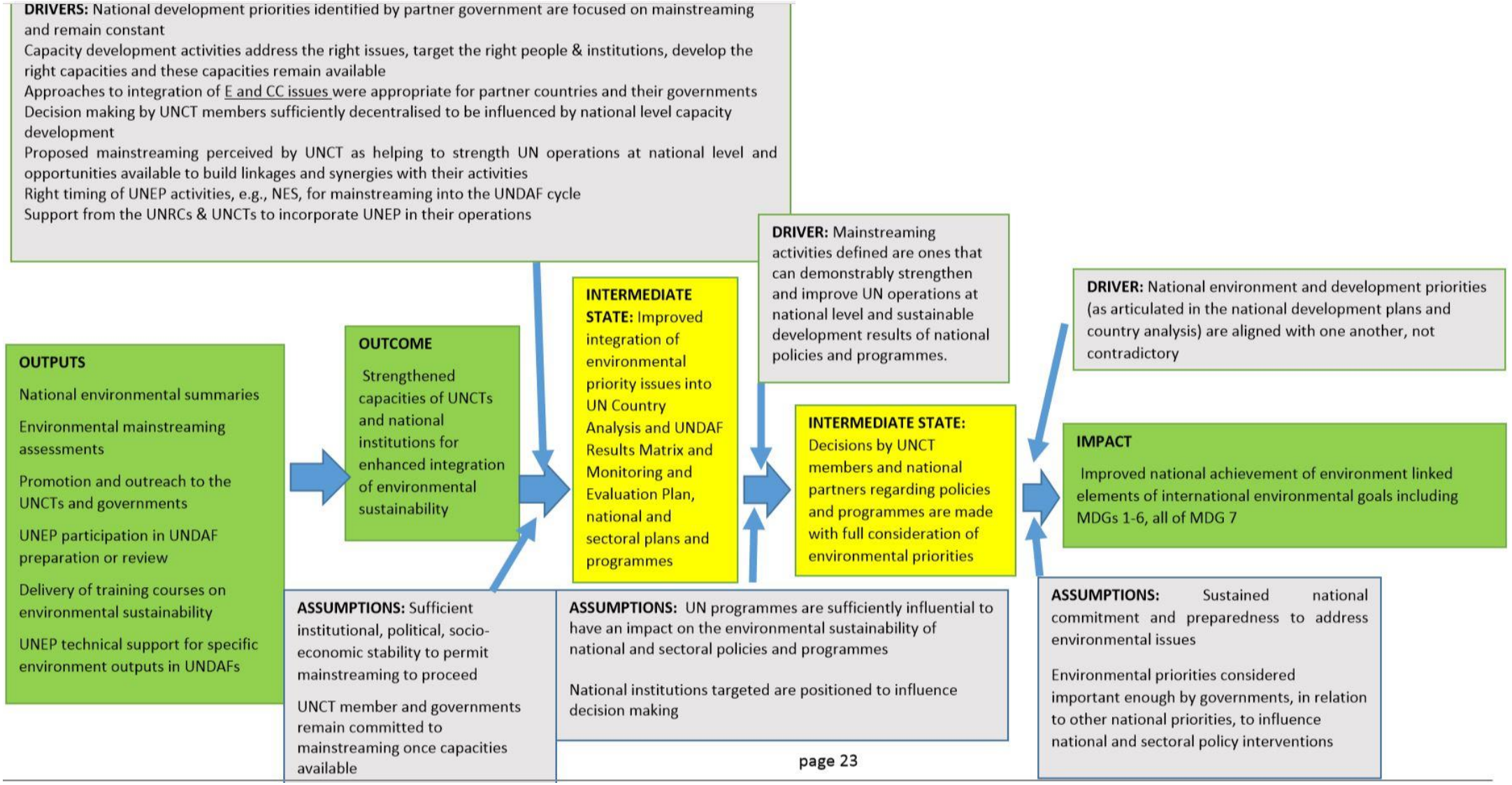
Theory of Change of the UNEP Climate change adaptation and livelihoods in Mauritania design



Theory of Change of the UNEP Cities Hub design



Reconstructed Theory of Change of the UNEP UNDAF project



ANNEX 8:

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