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EMG UPDATE

2023



UNITED NATIONS

ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP

EMG



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INTRODUCTION TO THE EMG



Background

The Environment Management Group (EMG) is a UN system-wide coordination body on environment and human settlements. EMG membership of 52 UN entities and 3 observing bodies.

The EMG was established in 2001 as a response to the General Assembly **resolution 53/242** in July 1999. The resolution supported the proposal, to establish an environmental management group, made by the Secretary-General in his report on the Environment and Human Settlements (A/53/463),

The EMG identifies issues on the international environmental agenda that warrant UN system-wide collaboration, and finds ways to engage its collective capacity to create holistic responses to those issues. The EMG operates through leading a variety of technical meetings, Issue Management Groups and task forces. Additionally, the EMG assists UN entities in addressing environmental issues by creating topic guides in the form of Common Approaches.

EMG Members

 BRS	 CBD	 CITES	 CMS	 DOS	 ECA	 UNECE	 ECLAC	 ESCAP	 ESCWA	 FAO
 gef	 IAEA	 ICAO	 IFAD	 ILO	 IMF	 IMO	 IOM	 ITC	 ITU	 Minamata
 OCHA	 OHCHR	 Ramsar	 UNCCD	 UNCTAD	 UNDESA	 UNDP	 UNDRR	 UNEP	 UNESCO	 UNFCCC
 UNFPA	 UN-Habitat	 UNHCR	 UNICEF	 UNIDO	 UNITAR	 UNODC	 UNOOSA	 UNOPS	 UNU	 UN Women
 UNWTO	 UPU	 WFP	 WHO	 WIPO	 WMO	 WB	 WTO	 IUCN	 WWF	 ENVOY ON YOUTH
Observers										

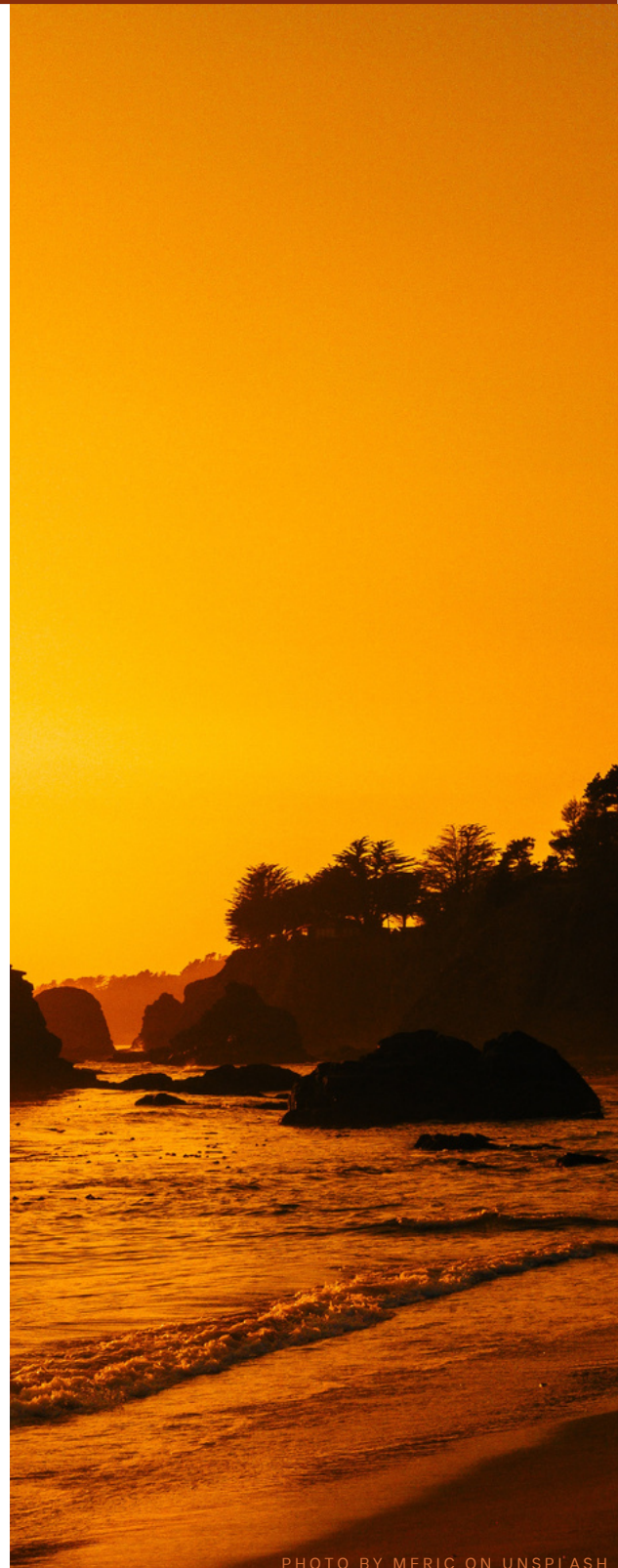
COMMON APPROACH TO BIODIVERSITY

In May 2021, the UN system expressed a shared recognition of the urgency to collectively act on the biodiversity crisis and, committed to mainstream biodiversity and nature-based solutions across the UN system. The CEB endorsed the "**Common Approach to Integrating Biodiversity and Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable Development into the United Nations Policy and Programme Planning and Delivery**".

The Common Approach to Biodiversity supports the implementation of the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework** by acting as a tool to leverage the convening power and expertise from across the UN system.

Outputs include:

- Establishment an Issue Management Group (IMG) on Biodiversity to prepare the ground for UN-system collaboration on the GBF through the UN Common Approach to Biodiversity.
- Currently, the IMG is developing an Inventory of UN Knowledge Products on Biodiversity to ensure entities have access to tools, knowledge, expertise and guidance on biodiversity, and to fostering information exchange among entities.
- Production of global, regional and national webinar series to; raise awareness of biodiversity; support the implementation in management plans; disseminate best practices, policy instruments, tools and knowledge systems; raise awareness of the CA.
- Actions are being taken to finalize the Monitoring and Reporting Framework on the implementation of the Common Approach. Indicators have been established, and baseline values will be compiled in anticipation of the mid-term report in 2024 and the final report in 2030.



COMMON APPROACH TO POLLUTION FREE PLANET



The UN Common Approach on Pollution was prepared by the EMG in October 2023 in response to UNEA4 endorsed implementation plan “Towards a Pollution-Free Planet ” and the request of the UN Secretary General Senior Management Group. Through the Common Approach to Pollution, the UN system is building on the existing efforts to:

- Demonstrate a shared recognition of the urgency of action and a commitment to mainstreaming pollution prevention and reduction into their programmes and operations.
- Promote collaboration and advances coordination to mobilize, accelerate, and scale up the sustainable, inclusive and just transition towards a pollution-free planet;
- Provide a framework to leverage and advance existing interagency arrangements that address pollution-related issues.

Following the endorsement of the Common Approach, the EMG Senior Officials decided at their 29th meeting in October 2023 to create an **Issue Management Group (IMG)** to prepare an implementation plan to facilitate a coordinated approach to the implementation of the Common Approach and report on progress achieved. This plan would guide UN entities in integrating the Common Approach to Pollution within their respective programmes and inform the design and delivery of their assistance strategies to Member States. The implementation plan will be informed of the outcomes of the 2023 SDG Summit, the recently adopted Global Framework on Chemicals, the Science-Policy Panel (whose negotiations are to be concluded in 2024), and other instruments.

IMPLEMENTING THE HUMAN RIGHT TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

In response to the Secretary Generals **Call to Action on Human Rights** in 2020. Led by OHCHR, UNDP and UNEP, the IMG aims to integrate the human right to a healthy environment into the work of the UN to ensure a coherent and rights-based approach to environmental action throughout the UN system.

The creation of the IMG was further justified in 2021, when the Human Rights Council adopted **resolution 48/13** recognizing that a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is a human right. This was followed by the adoption of the GA **resolution 76/300: “the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment”** in 2022.

Since inception, the IMG on Human Rights and the Environment has:

- Provided guidance on advancing a human rights-based approach within climate negotiations.
- Supported and guided the development of the Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Organised UN entity knowledge exchanges on the topics of ‘Advocacy and Guidance’, and ‘Training and Capacity Building’.
- Produced guidance on integrating human rights in National Biodiversity strategy and action plans, which have been adapted in line with the Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Organized side events on the right to a healthy environment at the Basel - Rotterdam - Stockholm (BRS) COPs, at UNFCCC COP 27, and at CBD COP15.



IMPLEMENTING THE ENVIRONMENTAL SDGs



PHOTO BY MODRANNOGAURUS ON UNSPIDER

The EMG supports the environmental SDGs through various workstreams.

In 2014, at UNEA, member states supported the proposal for the EMG to develop a **UN System Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment (SWFS)**, as a way to promote greater collaboration amongst UN entities. Each framework's goal is to enhance synergy, collaboration, and coherence in the UN system's environmental work, to better support Member States in the delivery of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

Since launching in 2016, two SWFS synthesis reports have been published on the following topics:

- Strategic alignment of UN entities to the SDGs
- Systemwide contributions to the Biodiversity Agenda

The third edition of the SWFS is being prepared highlighting the latest progress on the environmental SDGs in the UN system sharing key joint initiatives, tools and resources prepared by the UN agencies.

The **EMG Nexus Dialogues** bring together experts from diverse institutions and disciplines to explore emerging, persistent, and systemic cross-cutting issues. These forums allow participants to discuss the thematic and institutional interlinkages between environmental issues, frameworks, and agendas, in the context of the wider Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Four nexus dialogues have been held in 2023, on the topics of:

- Sustainable Nitrogen Management *In response to **UNEA Resolution 5/2**.*
- Sustainable Consumption and Production Series. *In response to **UNGA A/RES/76/202**.*
 - Digitalisation for Circular Economy and Green Jobs for Youth.
 - Sustainable Living and Aspirational Consumption.
- Environmental Aspects of Minerals and Metals Management. *In response to **UNEP/EA.5/Res.12**.*

STRENGTHENING THE UN COUNTRY TEAMS

The purpose of this exercise is to support UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) and Development Coordination Office (DCO) efforts in strengthening UN system-wide support to UN Country Teams and Resident Coordinators to tackle the triple planetary crisis building on efforts by the EMG, The UN Common Approaches on Biodiversity and Pollution, and the Secretary-General's Calls to Action, and other UN environmental initiatives. Synergies within and across existing EMG workstreams will be enhanced, and horizontal coherence strengthened as a result.

Activities include mapping of UN initiatives and knowledge products relevant to the triple planetary response and strengthening awareness, knowledge, and capacity of Regional Coordination Office (RCOs) and UN Country Teams (UNCTs) on key entry points for integrated programming that addresses the triple planetary crisis. Existing UN system resources including those developed by the EMG workstreams will be curated into user friendly formats and e-platforms for use by RCOs/UNCT. Furthermore, a series of EMG Dialogues targeting RCOs/UNCTs will be organized.

The EMG, DCO, and UNSDG secretariats have regularly met to develop shared workplans and report on progress. Areas for collaboration have been identified, which has led to improved tool accessibility and the preparation of joint webinars. Ultimately, this collaboration takes a pragmatic approach to support UNCTs and RCOs in responding to the triple planetary crisis.



WALKING THE TALK: UN SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

In follow up of the CEB adopted UN Sustainability Strategy (2020-2030) , EMG facilitated UN system efforts in enhancing environmental sustainability in UN system management, policies, programming, and support functions with the ambition to make the UN a lead agency on sustainability by 2030. The Sustainability Strategy is composed of two parts:

Phase I: Environmental sustainability in the area of management is in charge of sustainability in the area of UN facilities management. **Phase II: Towards leadership in environmental and social sustainability** is about creating environmental and social sustainability within internal UN functions.

The Greening of the Blue efforts led by UNEP has continued to engage and support the UN system in the transition towards greater environmental sustainability in the management of its facilities and operations including introduction and implementation of Environmental Management Systems.

Efforts on environmental sustainability in UN Programming has continued through knowledge exchange, data collection and preparation of technical tools for accentually and reporting of the sustainability Strategy. A draft monitoring and reporting framework for the UN Sustainability Strategy has been developed and piloted in seven UN entities, informing the finalization of the framework and the future production of a UN corporate sustainability report.

