



# United Nations Environment Programme

## Mid-Term Evaluation of UNEP's Medium-term Strategy 2010 - 2013

Anna Guerraggio, Aru Inamdar-Willetts, Alison King  
Robert Malpas, and Segbedzi Norgbey

Evaluation Office

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United Nations Environment Programme

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The following working papers providing more in-depth information and discussion on the findings of this evaluation are available from the UNEP Evaluation Office on request:

- Relevance
- Effectiveness & Impact
- Business Processes, Systems & Structures
- Human Resources & Finance

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

The Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) 2010-2013 (the Evaluation) was conducted between June 2012 and January 2013 by a five-person team comprising three external evaluators and two members of the UNEP Evaluation Office. The detailed findings and recommendations of the report are provided in this Evaluation Report as well as in a set of detailed working papers, which are available on request from the UNEP Evaluation Office. The purpose of the Evaluation was to assess the extent to which the new MTS has been successful in reorienting UNEP's programme to address key global environmental challenges, and in guiding the associated institutional reform process designed to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation in programme delivery. In this regard, the Evaluation is essentially "two in one" - on the one hand looking at the MTS' impact on the actual programmes that UNEP is delivering (the "what"), and on the other at the MTS' influence on the mechanisms used to deliver the programme (the "how"). The Evaluation identifies key successes and challenges in MTS implementation, and provides lessons and recommendations aimed at improving future programme implementation. To achieve this, the Evaluation focussed on four key aspects of MTS implementation:

- The **strategic relevance of the MTS** within the context of UNEP's vision and mandate (including Governing Council decisions), comparative advantage, and current and emerging global environmental issues;
- The **progress made by UNEP in achieving the anticipated MTS outcomes and impacts** as identified in each of the six MTS sub-programmes during the first two years of implementation of the MTS, and the success factors and challenges that have influenced programme performance;
- The **business processes, systems and structures** that have been put in place to support MTS implementation, including aspects such as: programme planning, management, monitoring and reporting; accountability arrangements for programme delivery; the role of UNEP's project portfolio in MTS implementation; and the progress made in developing UNEP's strategic presence including the role of UNEP's Regional Offices;
- The **human resources and financial mechanisms associated** with the delivery of the MTS, including the progress that UNEP has made in establishing and appropriately allocating human resources for enabling the efficient and effective implementation of the MTS, and the effectiveness of the systems and processes used for human and financial resources allocation and management in supporting MTS delivery.

The process of implementing the new MTS has inevitably involved a significant amount of organisational change, both in the nature of the work that UNEP is implementing as well as in the mechanisms used to deliver the programme. These change processes are highly complex, dynamic, and of a long-term nature, especially in an organisation such as UNEP that is constrained by its governance structures within the international community, and by the organisational systems and processes that it must adhere to within the UN family. Over the first biennium of this MTS period, UNEP has already made significant progress in reorienting its activities, systems, processes and structures in line with the new directions set out in the MTS. Nevertheless, it is inevitable that the organisation is still in a state of flux, with new organisational processes and systems continuously being introduced and/or adapted according to lessons learnt from MTS implementation.

One important outcome of this situation observed by the Evaluation is that there are clearly “tensions” within the organisation as the new organisational systems and approaches are introduced, and old practices done away with. This Evaluation regards such tensions as a natural, necessary and largely positive aspect of the MTS implementation process. Change, and the associated tensions involved, is an important force to enable the organisation to strengthen its focus on the emerging priority environmental issues, to set aside old activities and management practices that are no longer relevant in today’s environment, and to encourage innovation and cost effectiveness in achieving results.

Another consequence of the change process is that UNEP staff members do not yet have the necessary knowledge or experience of the new systems and processes to implement them effectively and efficiently. In this regard, UNEP has been making concerted efforts to provide the necessary training and awareness raising activities to accompany the new systems and processes, but much more needs to be done in this regard in the remainder of the MTS cycle.

## Findings & Recommendations

### Strategic Relevance of the MTS

**Finding #1: UNEP’s mandate.** The Evaluation found that there is a strong alignment across all six sub-programmes between the MTS Expected Accomplishments and Programme of Work (PoW) Outputs and each of these key areas of UNEP’s mandate. Given that the UNEP mandate is derived from major Governing Council decisions, the MTS therefore also complies with major Governing Council decisions. The MTS is consistent with UNEP’s technological support/capacity building mandate as set out in detail in the Bali Strategic Plan (BSP), especially at the PoW Output level. However, there are challenges in the implementation of this mandate, because the BSP (which sets the mandate) does not provide the necessary guidance to achieve the requirements contained therein.

**Recommendation #1:** A review of the BSP should be undertaken to assess its relevance and effectiveness ten years after its launch.

**Finding #2: UNEP’s Comparative Advantage.** Stakeholders identified UNEP’s most important comparative advantages as: its convening power which also enables the Organization to mobilize political will; its scientific assessments which help identify emerging issues and provide a sound science-policy interface; and its considerable track record in environmental issues. UNEP’s convening power was considered the organisation’s greatest asset, as evidenced by its pull on stakeholders for Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA) negotiations and the formation of scientific panels such as the IPCC and IRP. The leveraging of UNEP’s comparative advantages is best illustrated in the Climate Change, Disasters and Conflicts, and Harmful Substances and Hazardous Wastes Sub-Programmes. The Evaluation also recognised that it will be important that UNEP more clearly identifies and develops its specific niches in the area of natural disasters, so as to avoid duplication with other organisations, and to ensure that UNEP capitalises on specific aspects of UNEP’s comparative advantage.

**Finding #3: Global Environmental Priorities.** The Evaluation found that the six thematic priority areas of the MTS are well aligned with the existing global environmental challenges identified in the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) 4, the GEF focal areas and MDG7. With regard GEO4, the thematic areas of the MTS are consistent with the key current and emerging environmental priorities identified such as water, climate change, biodiversity, international environmental governance, harmful substances, etc. The MTS is closely aligned with GEF priorities as determined by its six focal areas, including biodiversity and ecosystem management initiatives carried out through the Ecosystems Management Sub-Programme (EMSP), climate change (mitigation and adaptation) and sustainable forest management and REDD+ initiatives through the Climate Change Sub-Programme (CCSP), and Persistent Organic Pollutants,

ozone layer and chemical related initiatives implemented through the HSHWSP. With regard to the Millennium Development Goals, the MTS addresses MDG7 Target (A) on sustainable development and reversing loss in environmental resources through the CCSP EA(b) (renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and energy conservation) and EA(c) (Clean Development Mechanism), while all the Expected Accomplishments under Resource Efficiency and Sustainable Consumption and production (RESCPSP) address resource efficiency. MDG7 Target (B) on reducing biodiversity loss is primarily addressed through the EMSP and CCSP EA(d) REDD.

However the link between environment and development in the MTS is weak and cross-cutting issues, specifically poverty and gender, are poorly reflected. Responding to these deficiencies and, in order to conform to strategic documents such as the Future We Want, the Draft MTS 2014-2017 has attempted to integrate these issues into each of its sub-programmes.

**Recommendation #2:** The MTS 2014-2017 should establish programmatic indicators linking these cross-cutting issues to UNEP's work on environment and development. This will also enable measurement of achievement against key MDGs.

**Finding #4: UNEP and Poverty Alleviation.** Stakeholders interviewed during the Evaluation regarded the lack of inclusion of poverty in the MTS as an important omission. Thus, while the links between MDG1 on Poverty and Hunger and the MTS Sub-Programmes may be implied, they are not emphatic. UNEP's outcome paper on the Rio+20 Conference (The Future We Want) acknowledges that poverty must be addressed to attain sustainable development, and the Resource Efficiency Sub-programme of the draft MTS 2014-2017 aims to "use opportunities for cleaner investments and green jobs to address poverty and enhance human well-being". The evaluation notes that the MTS 2014-2017 has a stronger focus on human well-being and poverty than does the current MTS.

**Finding #5: Regional and National Priorities.** The MTS' focus with regard to regional and national priorities revolves around support to policy and national development planning and capacity building. However, while UNEP has played an important role in strengthening environmental governance at the global, regional and national levels, the MTS still needs to do more to strengthen support to governments, in line with the Paris Declaration, to enable them to formulate and implement their national, sub-regional and regional policies, laws and institutions.

**Finding #6: UNEP's Normative versus Operational Role.** Some stakeholders interviewed during the Evaluation felt that, given UNEP's small size and capacity and financial constraints, its activities through the MTS should focus on normative work at the global level. It could then focus on pushing the environmental agenda forward, for example by convening member countries to galvanise political interest in key current and emerging issues. However, this Evaluation is of the opinion that UNEP's impact has to be felt at national level if it is to deliver key components of its Sub-Programmes, namely: to promote capacity building which is predominantly targeted towards country level stakeholders, whereas global forums are largely inadequate to reach the majority of these stakeholders; to implement pilot projects in order to ground-truth and demonstrate the concepts and tools it is promoting; and to provide long-term, intensive country-level support to influence policies and institutions. Besides, UNEP's access to Governments in global and regional forums is mostly channelled through Ministries of Environment or other environmental agencies which in many developing countries have relatively little political influence and are often under-resourced. Influence on other key sector ministries (agriculture, industry, transport etc.) can only be obtained through direct country-level support or by working through international partners with stronger country presence, the latter being a key pillar of UNEP's business model in the MTS 2014-2017.

**Finding #7: UNEP's Partnerships.** The MTS indeed emphasises the importance of working with UNEP's partners for its successful implementation. In this regard, the MTS SPs, through their outputs,



promote the establishment of national and regional networks, public and private partnerships, partnerships with other UN organizations, and partnerships for international cooperation and regional coordination. At the national and regional level, these partnerships can play an important role in catalysing action. There is a need for UNEP to build on existing partnerships, particularly civil society, through communication and knowledge sharing to ensure greater impact of MTS activities, and to promote UNEP's role as a global leader in environment. UNEP possesses expertise and technical capacity that other UN agencies do not have (e.g. in climate change, marine and terrestrial ecosystems, etc.). It should, through the MTS, use these assets to strengthen partnerships particularly among UN agencies and bilaterals, so that these agencies can solicit UNEP expertise and advice and, in return, provide UNEP with a wider reach and add weight to UNEP's messages at the country level. Building on strategic partnerships is a key part of the MTS 2014-2017.

**Recommendation #3:** UNEP should periodically assess how successful and relevant its partnerships are, particularly with other UN agencies and bilateral agencies, and what impact these partnerships are having in assisting UNEP achieve its MTS objectives. Further, UNEP should review how well the organisation works through sub-programme level partnerships and with more operational, project level partnerships.

**Finding #8: UNEP and the Multilateral Environment Agreements.** MEAs have succeeded in promoting environmental governance at global, regional and national level. UNEP through various MTS programme activities is providing relevant services to MEAs, notably through exercising its convening power for MEA preparations and negotiations, supporting scientific networks (e.g., IPCC, IRC) and forging strategic partnerships. However, linkages between the MTS and the CMS and CITES MEAs that are anchored within UNEP need to be given more prominence in the MTS Sub-Programmes. The DCSP, EMSP and RESCPS in particular need to emphasise UNEP's role in providing support to member countries in the implementation of MEAs and also in communicating MEA requirements to stakeholders. Building on UNEP's convening power, the MTS should also focus more on system-wide approaches to convergence and cooperation on MEAs. The recommendation proposed in the UNEP EO's Evaluation of the EGSP of the need for a focused strategy on Environmental Governance would help to address, among other things, the problem of MEA fragmentation and duplication and guide the implementation of MEAs at global, national and regional level.

### **Effectiveness and Impact**

**Finding #9: Overall Assessment of UNEP's Effectiveness.** Despite challenges related to funding and institutional reforms, UNEP achieved positive results during the 2010/2011 biennium in all six sub-programme areas. There are positive indications that interventions have already contributed to the development/adoption of improved policies and practices. UNEP's efforts to generate scientific knowledge, provide policy advice, and convene stakeholders to catalyse international action seem to have been particularly effective.

**Finding #10: Gender Mainstreaming.** The fact that UNEP has not included gender equality and women's empowerment targets in its MTS 2010-2013, its PoW 2010/2011, nor in its programme progress reporting, thus making it difficult to assess the extent to which UNEP has effectively mainstreamed gender, is unfortunate. It is therefore encouraging to note management measures taken to enhance results-based management for gender equality and women's empowerment in the design and implementation of the MTS 2014-2017 and PoW 2014/2015.

**Finding #11: The Climate Change Sub-Programme.** Under the PoW 2010/2011, UNEP has built and strengthened capacities to conduct adaptation planning and measures. It has done so in numerous countries, through regional interventions and in collaboration with partners, including from the UN development system. Capacity-building activities targeted a range of stakeholders, from public officials, private sector

representatives participating in regional climate change networks in Africa and Asia, to indigenous communities. There are some examples where increased capacities have contributed to adaptation planning and preventive actions being incorporated into national development planning and policy processes.

In the area of climate change mitigation, UNEP has considerable experience in particular in the field of clean technology. Evidence suggests that UNEP-supported global initiatives, partnerships and networks have played an important role in enhancing capacities to take sound decisions regarding low carbon and clean energy sources and technology alternatives. Throughout the 2010/2011 biennium, UNEP provided governments and other stakeholders with evidence and advice on mainstreaming and advancing renewable energy; it helped to mobilize over USD 200 million for clean energy projects. Increased capacities and funding have contributed to countries making sound policy, technology and investment choices and deploying improved/phasing out inefficient technologies. At the policy level, the UNEP/UNDP Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI)<sup>1</sup> has contributed, amongst other things, to the inclusion of climate issues in Bangladesh's Sixth Five-Year Plan 2011-15; to the establishment of the Rwanda National Climate and Environment Fund and the integration of climate change in Rwanda's 2nd Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Building on the convening role and technical expertise of UNEP, UNDP and FAO, the UN-REDD Programme has been an important vehicle in enhancing countries' information and knowledge-base for reducing emissions from deforestation, by convening stakeholders at the global level and supporting nationally-led, participatory country strategies, plans and programmes to catalyse the transformation of forest systems.

**Finding #12: The Disasters and Conflicts (D&C) Sub-Programme.** The D&C Sub-programme has been very successful in enhancing availability and access to environmental information in the aftermath of disasters and conflicts, by delivering quality post-crisis environmental impact assessments in numerous crisis-affected countries. Increasingly, professional communication strategies and plans have helped ensure that newly generated information was accessed and internalized by the right target audiences. In-depth assessments in post-conflict countries conducted by UNEP are highly regarded for their reliability and usefulness, and have laid the foundation for UNEP's continued post-conflict recovery support to countries such as Sudan, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone.

UNEP has provided technical assistance and training to natural disaster and conflict-affected countries for improving environmental and emergency preparedness strategies and planning. Better awareness and understanding through assessments, field-research and training courses have contributed to enhanced technical and managerial skills, in particular in countries where UNEP could maintain longer-term support. UNEP's direct engagement in environmental restoration and management projects in post-disaster situations has been limited and mainly focussed on the same countries where assessments and policy/planning support has been provided. In those cases, UNEP provided very specific technical advice to government and communities engaged in restoration and reconstruction efforts, contributing to their implementation skills. In the area of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and environmental emergency preparedness, implementation skills were built in many demonstration sites.

**Finding #13: The Ecosystem Management Sub-Programme.** UNEP's work to make the case for incorporating an ecosystem approach into national planning processes has chiefly revolved around the development and testing of specific ecosystem management and assessment tools and methodologies for freshwater, terrestrial and marine ecosystems. A number of the EMSP's projects have assisted governments to implement ecosystem assessment and management tools, including Integrated Ecosystem Assessments and Sub-Global Ecosystem Assessments. UNEP has also assisted numerous countries in

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1 [www.unpei.org](http://www.unpei.org)

developing biodiversity assessment indicators within the framework CBD global biodiversity indicators, and has developed and tested tools and methodologies for integrated marine and coastal management in several pilot areas. Under the auspices of the Marine Ecosystems Unit, the Regional Seas Programme and the GPA, UNEP has also supported the establishment of marine protected areas and the implementation of a wide range of marine and coastal initiatives.

UNEP's work to mainstream ecosystem management approaches into development and economic planning involves several landmark project initiatives, including: the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) project, designed to promote the conservation of biodiversity, ecosystems and ecosystem services by demonstrating their real economic values; support for the establishment and operation of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), which aims to provide policymakers with credible and independent scientific information concerning the status and valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services; UNEP's work stream on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services under the UNEP Finance Initiative, which is working with 23 leading global financial institutions to address the challenges arising from the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services; and the development of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Manual, which aims to make the MA assessment tools and methodologies widely accessible to policymakers.

Despite the good progress that the EMSP has made at the output and immediate outcome levels, the programme has faced challenges in achieving the Expected Accomplishments defined in the MTS, in particular in gaining buy-in, adoption and mainstreaming of ecosystem management approaches at the national level. One factor is that tools and methodologies that UNEP has developed at the ecosystem level may not be easily mainstreamed at the national level. Another is that the mainstreaming of ecosystem management approaches at the national level is largely beyond UNEP's mandate and resources. In addition, the integration of ecosystem management approaches at the national level is necessarily a long-term process that cannot easily be achieved in the two years of the current MTS under review. To overcome these obstacles, UNEP needs to put stronger emphasis in future EMSP project design on building partnerships with national governments as well as with other development agencies such as UNDP, in mainstreaming ecosystem valuation into national development and economic planning and in rolling out the tools and methodologies that the EMSP has already developed.

**Finding #14: The Environmental Governance Sub-Programme.** UNEP's most important contribution to environmental governance has been its early warning support in bringing emergent legal and policy issues to the attention of states and inter-governmental organizations, leading to initiatives addressing human rights and the environment, country negotiation capacities for MEAs, training of the judicial sector, and national compliance/enforcement of environmental legislation and international environmental agreements. In addition, evidence suggests that 22 governments have drafted policy and legislative proposals with UNEP support, and that ten countries have taken measures to develop new legislation, strengthen existing laws or incorporate environmental aspects to sector laws. Another important contribution is the integration of environmental legislation to facilitate MEA implementation at country level.

UNEP has also been instrumental in the design and set-up of Multilateral Environmental Agreements. Substantive support includes updating assessments and indicators, providing technical advice and capacity building for MEA implementation, and assisting secretariats to prepare meeting agendas. This has helped to ensure that key issues identified by UNEP are reflected in MEA work programmes and to raise UNEP's profile at COP meetings. However, overall, there is little evidence of progress towards synergies in MEA policy and practice and facilitation of MEAs implementation. Promoting synergies among MEAs is a complex process influenced by factors outside UNEP's control. Moreover, funds appear to have been mainly used to service meetings and to support MEA focal points.

Advances on the International Environmental Governance (IEG) and International Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD) agendas are a good example of UNEP contribution towards improving

UN system coherence. In particular, UNEP has played a crucial role in advancing options within the Nairobi-Helsinki process, subsequently transmitted to UNEP Governing Council and UN General Assembly. UNEP has been able to mature different options for global EG and succeeded in putting IEG at the centre of the IFSD debate. Regional forums facilitated dialogue among countries, which had the chance to express their opinions on IEG and the future of UNEP.

UNEP has contributed to the work of UN Country Teams (UNCTs) and has bolstered the environmental components of Delivering as One (DaO) programmes and UNDAFs. It has distributed environmental data and information to inform Country Capacity Assessments, supported the formulation of planning documents, coordinated WG meetings, and provided training to UNCTs. UNEP's performance has improved in terms of scope of its activities and effectiveness. The increased participation in country-level programming processes has allowed UNEP to advocate for ES and CC adaptation and to offer its expertise to the wider UN community and others at local level. UNEP presence at country level has made a big difference.

**Finding #15: The Harmful Substances and Hazardous Waste Sub-Programme.** UNEP is undertaking a variety of activities designed to enhance the capacity of states to manage chemicals and hazardous wastes, including producing training materials, tools and methodologies, guidance documents, reports and resource kits. To disseminate intelligence and promote the use of these products, it provided country-level training and gave presentations to national officials, private sector representatives and other technical experts. UNEP also established seven Chemical Information and Exchange Networks (CIENs). It entered into partnerships with key industry associations in Brazil, China, Egypt and Vietnam to support chemical-related priorities.

Besides developing capacities, evidence suggests that UNEP has helped facilitate access to funding for country-level chemicals management through the voluntary Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). The Evaluation revealed instances where UNEP interventions and products have contributed to the introduction and strengthening of country-level policies, strategies and infrastructure for managing harmful chemicals and hazardous waste. Documentation and interviews portray Mainstreaming Sound Chemicals Management<sup>2</sup>, in partnership with UNDP, as particularly promising. A further indication of effective use of capacities acquired thanks to UNEP is the completion of Situation Analysis and Needs Assessments (SANAs) by 14 African countries under the Health and Environment Linkages Initiative<sup>3</sup>, a global effort by UNEP and the World Health Organization (WHO).

To improve stakeholders' knowledge and inter-connectedness as regards harmful substances and hazardous waste, UNEP produced and disseminated case studies, scientific reviews, assessment and reports. It also convened regional and international meetings/conferences and facilitated/supported the creation and work of voluntary multi-stakeholder partnerships and legally-binding regimes. Through initiatives such as these, the evidence suggests that UNEP has made an important contribution to the evolution and implementation of policy and control systems for harmful substances of global concern. Moreover, services delivered by UNEP for numerous years in connection with three inter-governmental and multi-stakeholder processes had or are likely to have an important influence: UNEP's technical, networking and financial support for improved capacity and technology to eliminate leaded vehicle fuels nears completion, with more countries having ceased to use them.

UNEP's efforts have also provided an important contribution to strengthening the chemicals and waste MEAs. UNEP has been instrumental in improving monitoring of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). Specifically, POPs results from 32 countries in three regions participating

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2 In operation since 2006.

3 Initiated prior to the 2010/2011 biennium.

in the GEF-supported Global Monitoring Plan of the Stockholm Convention are expected to be of considerable help in assessing and focusing the implementation needs of the Convention and its parties. Overall, a growing engagement of countries is reported: The conventions now have more than 140 parties each. Equally, UNEP has played a key role in facilitating an inter-governmental agreement on a legally binding instrument on mercury expected to be adopted by 2013. Under its Global Mercury Programme, UNEP has played an important role since 2003 by way of improving access to and knowledge of relevant scientific and other information for decision-making and leveraging interest and commitment to join hands to control and phase out mercury releases, and facilitating the inter-governmental negotiation process.

**Finding #16: The Resource Efficiency & Sustainable Consumption and Production (RE-SCP) Sub-Programme.** UNEP has strengthened the international community's scientific knowledge base in the area of RE-SCP. UNEP's International Resource Panel (IRP) - set up in 2007 - has started to fill an important gap in terms of providing decision makers and other interested parties with scientific assessments on the sustainable use of resources and their environmental impacts over their full life cycles. During the 2010/2011 biennium, the IRP produced four assessments, on metal stocks, recycling rates of metals, priority products and materials, and decoupling. The Evaluation infers from decisions taken by governments at the global, regional and country levels to adopt policies and economic instruments for resource-efficient and sustainable products that UNEP has likely influenced policy formulation and decision-taking. Furthermore, UNEP's work stream on the Green Economy, initiated during the 2008/2009 biennium, has played an important role in advancing the international - and European Union (EU) - as well as national political agendas on resource efficiency. At the country level, already benefiting from UNEP green economy advisory services, China, Senegal and South Africa included green economy in their respective development plans and initiated regulations, market-based instruments and incentives.

In practice, the private sector seems to have been the main target group of UNEP's efforts to increase awareness of the catalytic effect of resource-efficient investments. UNEP assistance to the private sector is normally channelled through global, regional and national networks, centres and institutions, whose capacity it is building. During the 2010/2011 biennium, besides involving private sector representatives in RE-SCP-related global events and initiatives, UNEP co-initiated and/or supported the work of a number of sectoral multi-stakeholder partnerships. They include the UNEP Sustainable Building and Climate Initiative (SBCI), the UNEP Finance Initiative (FI) and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism. Agri-food is a relatively new area of work for UNEP. Here, the UNEP/FAO Agri-food Task Force on SCP and the UNEP-led Sustainable Rice Platform are worth mentioning.

## **Business Processes, Systems, and Structures**

**Finding #17: Programme planning.** To guide the envisaged strengthening of Results-based Management in the organisation, UNEP utilised a hierarchy of planning frameworks, with the MTS itself providing the overall strategic focus and direction of the programme, and the Strategic Frameworks and PoWs providing increasing levels of detail on delivery. The MTS, Strategic Frameworks and the PoWs focus on higher level results - the Expected Accomplishments and PoW Outputs. To bridge the gap between these higher level results and the projects being implemented by the divisions and regional offices, UNEP introduced an additional level of planning, the Programme Frameworks. However, in practice the Programme Frameworks have not lived up to their expected role in strengthening RBM in the implementation of the MTS, for several reasons. A crucial weakness was that the Programme Frameworks did not put in place a comprehensive and coherent causal logic between the Expected Accomplishments and PoW Outputs to be achieved and the projects that will achieve them. In addition, because of their tight integration with the statutory planning process, the Programme Frameworks were unable to exhibit the adaptability that is ideally required for effective results-based planning based on lessons learnt and evolving circumstances, and soon became outdated.

**Recommendation #4:** The role of the Programme Frameworks in UNEP’s planning cycle should be strengthened, including:

- Strengthening the underlying logic of the Programme Frameworks, by articulating a clear overall Theory of Change for the concerned sub-programme
- Putting in place explicit mechanisms to facilitate learning from sub-programme implementation, and subsequent regular adaptation of the Programme Frameworks. At the corporate level, this could include introducing a programme review component to the functioning of SMT meetings, perhaps through an annual or bi-annual programme review session. At the sub-programme level, this could be achieved by sub-programme level implementation review meetings, including exercises to respond to the in-depth sub-programme evaluations carried out by the Evaluation Office
- Strengthening the criteria used in the Programme Frameworks for prioritising the selection of project activities for inclusion in the Frameworks
- Broadening the scope of the Programme Frameworks to provide space for aspects of the sub-programme that are unsuitable for packaging into projects. This aspect will greatly increase the relevance of the Programme Frameworks to a significant proportion of the work carried out under some sub-programmes

**Finding #18: Accountability and Authority.** The introduction of a matrix management approach was a cornerstone of the reform process instigated by the new MTS, and was designed to provide a new framework for allocating accountability and authority for MTS delivery that cut across the traditional divisional silos. The Evaluation found, however, that UNEP’s current matrix management model is not providing the clear lines of authority and accountability for programme delivery that are needed. In response, UNEP has already made a number of adjustments to simplify and clarify the accountability arrangements according to lessons learnt, but in the view of the Evaluation, still further modifications are needed in order for the matrix management approach to be fit for purpose.

**Recommendation #5:** UNEP should undertake a review of the current matrix management approach and accountability/authority arrangements in an effort to address the following key weaknesses:

- The lack of clear distinction in the present accountability arrangements between the two major functional axes of the matrix; the “programmatic” axis (i.e., the responsibility for overseeing the achievement of the sub-programme objectives -the WHAT), and the “implementation” axis (i.e., the responsibility for the day-to-day, technical delivery of the programme -the HOW).
- The apparent conflict in accountability for implementation aspects of each sub-programme between the Lead Division Director, who has overall sub-programme implementation accountability and responsibility, and the Managing Division Director, who is responsible and accountable for delivering specific components of a sub-programme, but who reports directly to the DED, and has no reporting arrangement with the Lead Division Director.
- The lack of adequate accountability and authority vested in the position of the SPC.
- Clarification of the reporting relationship between the SPC and the Lead Division Director versus the Deputy Executive Director.

**Recommendation #6:** UNEP should revise the Accountability Framework and Delegations of Authority by the ED as necessary, to take account of the outcomes of the above review.

**Recommendation #7:** UNEP should take steps to significantly enhance the role of the Sub-Programme Coordinators in overseeing the programmatic dimension of the matrix management model. This should include an enhanced role in the decision making process concerning programme implementation, such

as participation in appropriate senior-management forums, and an enhanced role in the decision making process with regard resource allocation to their respective sub-programmes.

**Finding #19: UNEP's project portfolio and the MTS.** Projects represent the principal mechanism for delivering on the Expected Accomplishments defined in the MTS, and as such they are a crucial dimension of the achievement of results-based management. The Programme Frameworks with their associated approved Project Concepts developed in the early months of the MTS provided an important mechanism for ensuring that UNEP's project portfolio, including both existing and new projects, was increasingly aligned with the higher-level MTS and PoW results framework. However, it is clear that the Programme Frameworks did not provide a sufficiently robust framework to facilitate the necessary transition, at least for some sub-programmes. This situation seems to be improving with the PoW 2012-2013 and the associated Programme Framework Extensions, but there is still progress to be made in putting into place robust mechanisms for ensuring the alignment of the project portfolio with the higher-level MTS results framework.

**Recommendation #8:** UNEP should further strengthen the process for aligning the project portfolio with the MTS results framework. In particular, it is recommended that specific "flagship areas" are defined to articulate the concerned sub-programme's project delivery response to the MTS results framework, incorporating for each flagship area an explicit causal logic related to particular aspects of achieving the Expected Accomplishment concerned.

**Finding #20: Programme monitoring and reporting.** The Formative Evaluation of the MTS concluded that "at two key levels in the PoW RBM framework, Expected Accomplishments and PoW Outputs, UNEP does not have reliable performance indicator." The FE recommended that in developing future MTS's, the Expected Accomplishment indicators identified should be better aligned with the principles of results-based. This Evaluation agrees with this recommendation. In this regard, a good foundation has now been established for enhancing both outcome and output level indicators in the revised UNEP Programme Manual. When combined with more realistic Expected Accomplishments established at the immediate outcome level, it should be possible to develop more realistic EA indicators, applying the principles outlined in the Programme Manual.

The Formative Evaluation also recommends that a better approach for monitoring performance in PoW implementation is to capture progress towards the delivery of PoW Outputs and Expected Accomplishments through the achievement of verifiable milestones. In this regard, UNEP has already made significant progress in introducing and monitoring **project output milestones**, and these milestones now form a crucial element of UNEP's performance monitoring systems. Both the FE and the revised UNEP Programme Manual also introduce the concept of **outcome milestones**, but neither document goes into any detail of how these should in practice be formulated.

**Recommendation #9:** The identification of generic outcome milestones should be part of the process of developing the revised Programme Frameworks. Both the generic EA causal pathways and milestones can then form the basis for developing the specific causal logic and milestones for individual projects being implemented under the concerned Programme Framework. The achievement of outcome milestones should also be monitored in PIMS, and this information should be consolidated to the Expected Accomplishment and Sub-Programme level.

**Finding #21: Project Information Management System.** The introduction of the Project Information Management System (PIMS) has enabled UNEP to fill, at least in part, the gap created by the weaknesses of the present UN-wide PoW performance monitoring system, IMDIS. However, a number of considerations influence the decision as to whether PIMS is the appropriate management information system to meet UNEP's long-term needs for performance monitoring and results-based management, including the following:

- The quality of PIMS performance outputs is only as good as the performance information being entered into its database. This depends on how rigorously the sub-programme concerned implements the system. For example, the in-depth evaluation of the Environmental Governance Sub-Programme noted that once PIMS was introduced, performance measurements appeared to be significantly more realistic, with red and yellow traffic lights appearing across the sub-programme. However, by the end of the biennium, all traffic lights were green again, which either meant that significant progress had been made, or that the sub-programme had taken a more generous approach towards measuring its progress. Similar situations were reported to exist with the other sub-programmes.
- Currently, PIMS is only recording performance information against defined project output milestones, and it is not yet clear how suitable the system will be for managing other non-projectised performance data. Specifically, under the sections on “Programme Management” and “Role of the Regional Offices” below, it is recommended that UNEP move towards a system whereby both divisional and regional office annual workplans are used to plan operational activities and to measure performance at the divisional and regional office level. Depending on the division or regional office concerned, much of this work will not be projectised. Will it be appropriate and/or practical to adapt PIMS to cater for such monitoring information?
- Commencing in mid-2013, the UN system is in the process of introducing a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system called Umoja, which may well cater for UNEP’s performance monitoring and results-based management needs. It may prove worthwhile awaiting the introduction of the new system before determining whether to further adapt and strengthen PIMS.

**Finding #22: Programme Performance Reports.** Although under constant improvement, the evaluation team felt that the PPRs still have two significant weaknesses: firstly, the reporting of achievements at the outcome level relies on weak Expected Accomplishment indicators, which in turn are linked to overly ambitious EAs. This aspect is best addressed by strengthening the Expected Accomplishments so that they are at the immediate outcome level, strengthening indicators, and putting into place and monitoring higher-level outcome milestones as described above. Secondly, the way in which the PPRs use the PIMS “traffic light” system to aggregate project output milestone information to the Expected Accomplishment level is in the view of the Evaluation inappropriate. On the one hand, aggregation to the outcome (EA) level has the potential of creating a false impression of actual achievements at this level, as opposed to the project output-level delivery performance which PIMS actually currently records. On the other hand, there is a danger that, by “dumbing down” much more complex performance information, the traffic light mode of presenting project output performance data has the potential of being counter-productive in understanding and responding to UNEP’s actual performance, especially if the data is not robust.

**Recommendation #10.** UNEP should undertake a review of the future role of PIMS in its results-based management performance monitoring, in particular with regard the suitability of the system to meet future needs for monitoring UNEP’s non-projectised activities, its role vis-à-vis the new UN Umoja ERP system, and its actual performance as a monitoring tool as demonstrated by the in-depth sub-programme and project-level evaluation. As part of the review of the future role of PIMS in performance monitoring (see R#10 above), the role of PIMS data and the traffic light system in the Programme Performance Reports should also be re-examined. This should include a review of the desirability of aggregating project output-level performance information to the divisional level as opposed to EA (sub-programme outcome) level as at present, and a consideration of the value-added of the PIMS traffic light project output performance presentation, as opposed to the presentation of more qualitative information on progress towards PoW outputs.



**Finding #23: The UNEP Programme Manual.** Alongside working on strengthening the RBM monitoring and reporting systems, UNEP has also been making efforts to strengthen its programme management systems, in particular through the development of a revised and expanded Programme Manual, which provides a comprehensive framework for strengthening UNEP's RBM and project delivery mechanisms. Much of this work has been led by the Quality Assurance Section (QAS). Work on revising the UNEP Programme Manual began in 2009, but it was not until May 2012 that the Manual was eventually released in draft form. The delay has meant that there has not been a robust framework in place for programme management in the meantime, but on the other hand, it has also meant that the eventual manual incorporates many of the lessons learnt in implementing the revised programme processes and systems that have been developed in the intervening period.

**Finding #24: Divisional Workplans.** Divisional workplans represent a potentially important underutilised mechanism for defining, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the MTS and the PoWs, including those aspects that are not presently captured by the project delivery mechanism. Up until now this role has been partially, and inadequately, fulfilled by the Programme Frameworks, and to an extent by the PoWs themselves. With the proposed shift to making the Programme Frameworks more strategic and adaptive documents that elaborate the causal logic underlying the sub-programmes, the need to fill the implementation gap by the divisional workplans becomes all the more important.

**Recommendation #11.** The process of developing divisional workplans should be fully instituted as an integral and instrumental component of UNEP's programme management and accountability processes. Like UNEP's projects, these workplans should establish milestones for other aspects of the division's work that are not included in the project delivery mechanism. PIMS should then incorporate delivery milestones for broader divisional workplans as well as projects. The implementation of this recommendation is likely to also entail the review and revision by Office of Operations (OfO) of the existing workplan format.

**Finding #25: Role of Regional Offices.** UNEP's network of Regional Offices has a vital role to play in the delivery of the MTS and PoWs, especially with regard the regional and country level priorities that are identified in the Bali Strategic Plan (BSP). UNEP has established a strong strategic and policy foundation to strengthen UNEP's strategic presence and the role of UNEP's Regional Offices in programme implementation, including the Bali Strategic Plan, the Dalberg Report on UNEP's Strategic Presence, and UNEP's policy document, Moving Forward with UNEP's Strategic Presence. UNEP has already made good progress in increasing the technical capacity of the Regional Offices through the assignment of technical staff from the different divisions to the different regions. Enabling the Regional Offices to play a more substantive role in programme implementation will ensure that UNEP's activities are regionally relevant and appropriate, that synergies between projects and sub-programmes at the regional level are capitalised upon, and that duplications of effort and lack of coordination at the country and regional level are reduced. Achieving this strengthened programme implementation role will require continuing efforts to enhance capacity at the regional level, supported by appropriate management systems.

**Recommendation #12:** UNEP should further strengthen its Regional Offices by a continuation of the process of outpostting divisional staff to the ROs. UNEP should also further develop the RO's management systems, processes and accountability arrangements for programme delivery under the next MTS. One aspect of this would be to strengthen the role of regional office workplans, so that they can serve a similar planning, resource allocation and accountability responsibility as this Evaluation has earlier recommended for the divisional workplans. Another aspect could be the development of specific projects at the regional level, designed to respond to regional dimensions of one or more of the sub-programmes, and to establish regional synergies in the delivery of the respective sub-programme(s), in line with the relevant Programme Framework.

**Recommendation #13:** UNEP should undertake a review of the optimal institutional arrangements

between the Regional Offices and the Divisions, in line with the aims of UNEP's Strategic Presence model as well as the achievement of effective and efficient programme implementation. Such a review should include an examination of the strengths and weaknesses of an approach where the Regional Offices enjoy substantial autonomy in the delivery of the UNEP programme, i.e. they represent a separate dimension of the matrix structure, and one in which they are essentially the field-level arm of the Divisions, i.e., the same dimension of the matrix as the Divisions. The review should also look at the optimal role of the Division of Regional Cooperation in supporting the Regional Offices, in particular potential alternative models that strengthen DRC's role in providing a communication and facilitation bridge and service between the Divisions and the Regional Offices.

## **Human & Financial Resources**

**Finding #26: UNEP Staff Capacity.** In the PoW 2010-2011, UNEP estimated an overall 8% increase in its staff capacity (55 posts) compared to the previous biennium. Staff estimates for the biennium 2012-2013 were less rosy, with a reduction of 57 posts mainly paid for by the Environment Fund, following a Governing Council Decision (24/9) to "take a cautious approach to the creation of additional posts under the EF". Although PoW staff figures are only estimates and are not representative of UNEP's entire workforce (for example they do not include extra-budgetary funded project posts), they provide evidence of UNEP's intention to enhance its staff capacity at the beginning of the MTS period and, two years later, the need to pull back to the original figures, given the difficult worldwide financial situation and the Governing Council decision to shift the resource balance more towards activities.

However, the sought-after re-profiling of the Organization to enable it to be better equipped for the implementation of the MTS has not entirely occurred. With few exceptions, UNEP has delivered its PoW with the human resources already available. Percentage-wise, UNEP has not significantly modified its staff composition by Division. DTIE, DRC and Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI) represent each about 20% of UNEP staff, followed by Division of Early Warning and Assessment [DEWA] (9%), Division of Environmental Law and Conventions [DELC] (7%), and Division of communication and public Information [DCPI] (4%). UNEP strengthened its Office of Operations in 2009, increasing the number of staff from 37 to 63, mainly due to the transfer of finance and administration functions from UNON to UNEP Corporate Services Section. Since then, however, the OfO's staff base has decreased to 56 members, the decline being more significant for the Quality Assurance Section and Corporate Services Section. With regard to strengthening UNEP's presence in the regions, the Evaluation noted that this happened only thanks to the set-up of various Liaison Offices. In the biennium 2010-11, all Regional Offices but Regional Office for Latin America and Caribbean saw a slight decrease in their staff base (in the measure of 2 to 5 staff decrease). At the same time, UNEP established Liaison Offices in Beijing, Moscow, Brussels, Brasilia and Mexico City, and reinforced the one in New York.

**Recommendation #14.** UNEP should develop its human resource strategy in order to support the transition towards results-based management, including the strengthening of staff expertise in both thematic areas and project management, and outlining the technical and managerial competences needed for the MTS implementation. This should include a mapping exercise for the OfO to allow it to better perform its strategic role on planning, corporate management, and reporting on the MTS results.

**Recommendation #15.** The contribution of staff to different Sub-Programmes should be acknowledged in both individual and Divisional work-plans, and staff performance should be assessed accordingly against the achievement of the objectives as in the plans.

**Finding #26: UNEP's Gender Balance.** UNEP has made good progress in the gender balance of its staff. Women now represent 59% of UNEP entire workforce, and 55% of Professional staff at P1-P3 level. The Evaluation noticed a significant increase (+6%) of women at Director levels since 2010 –

women are now 30% of the ASGs and Directors of UNEP, while some more challenges remain at middle- and senior- professional levels. The share of women at P4 and P5 levels has not changed much since 2008, from 35% to 37% of staff.

**Finding #28: Human Resource Management.** Over the MTS period, there has not been any significant shift in the way staff resources are managed. Staff continue to be recruited in functional Divisions, and reporting lines and the locus of authority firmly reside with the Division Director. However, staff are able to work on Sub-Programmes which cut across several Divisions in a matrix system. The results of the survey conducted by the Evaluation confirmed that UNEP staff members generally divide their time between two Sub-Programmes or more, DTIE and DELC staff excepted as they generally work for the implementation of one Sub-Programme only. The Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) which UNEP uses for human resource management does not, however, allow for such allocation of staff time along functional and thematic lines. UNEP was thus compelled to assign *de facto* the cost of staff to the Sub-Programme to which they devote the major part of their working hours. This proved particularly challenging for those staff positions – such as Division Directors, Regional Directors, but also drivers and other support staff - who cannot be said to be working towards the achievement of specific Sub-programme objectives. In the event, the allocation of staff among Sub-Programmes was only partially based on the contribution they provide to Sub-Programme objectives.

The allocation of human resources across Sub-Programmes has been sometimes artificial, often following only budgetary criteria (e.g. in the allocation of Environment Fund-funded posts) and partly suffered from the tendency of Divisions to include their staff within the Sub-Programme they lead.

**Finding #29: Capacity Building.** The need to “attract, build, and maintain a highly competent, multi-skilled and versatile international workforce capable of fulfilling the mandates of UNEP and UNEP-administered MEAs” and “to boost career development within UNEP” has long been acknowledged. In 2007/08, the Strategic Implementation Team (SIT) was tasked with drafting a Training and Learning Programme for UNEP and its administered-MEAs, to be implemented by QAS in collaboration with the UNON Staff Development and Training Unit (SDTU). Some worthwhile training initiatives which contributed to the MTS implementation were undertaken. However, the Evaluation is under the impression that, despite strong support by the Executive Office, capacity development became less of a priority in the overall MTS development and implementation process. Once the SIT was dismantled at the beginning of 2010, no dedicated staff was appointed to carry the task forward. The Training Strategy remained in draft form, and some elements (e.g. the induction courses) were never, or fully (e.g. the rotation programme) implemented. Training workshops on RBM have since been organised by Quality Assurance Section, and have proved effective in developing the capacities of staff. However, they have been one-off events with inadequate coaching /advisory services performed by QAS, also because of the latter are limited resources.

**Recommendation #16:** UNEP should integrate its talent management approach into its strategy, and remodel it around the development of skills for MTS implementation. This should include: programme and project design, results-based management for senior level staff and programme developers, and financial management for Fund Management Officers. The Evaluation further recommends implementing an induction programme for new staff, in order to ensure that all UNEP staff gain a better understanding of UNEP’s mandate, its organizational set-up and key delivery mechanisms to achieve the results in the MTS.

**Finding #30: UNEP’s Corporate Culture.** In its Audit of Governance (2010), Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) found that UNEP lacked a corporate culture supportive of UNEP’s goals, and that Divisional cultures still persisted. The OIOS recommendation was rejected by UNEP management, with the view that the implementation of the MTS in itself would promote a corporate culture in UNEP. Two years later, this Evaluation still notes the absence of a “One UNEP” culture oriented towards the fulfilment of corporate goals. While acknowledging that the current MTS matrix structure has increased

cooperation and coordination among Divisions, respondents to the survey blamed the matrix system to be still too much tied up with Division leadership. It has been reported that “Lead Divisions make decisions biased towards Divisional interest, often going against the recommendations of the Sub-Programme Coordinators”, and that “the current matrix structure works only for those Sub-Programmes that are resident in a particular Division”. Cooperation seems to have been mostly “ad-hoc”, based on specific issues. 64% of the respondents to the UNEP survey indicated that, within the current MTS framework, cooperation and coordination depend both on personalities and institutionalized practices, but that personalities count more. The rivalry among Divisions, the perceived poor management capacities of some high-level ranked staff, and the low level of trust in the relationship between OfO and Divisions, are seriously affecting the morale of UNEP staff.

The high level of competition among Senior Managers “over resources and fame” has worked against the sense of a shared vision with common goals to be achieved by different Divisions, each one for its own area of competence.

**Recommendation #17:** The following steps should be taken to enhance collegiality in decision-making and the adoption of common standards in project planning and management:

- Sub-Programme Coordinators should be invited to Senior Management Team meetings, whenever Sub-Programme resource management issues are dealt with;
- OfO should make further efforts to reach out to Divisions, improve its corporate communication, and make the MTS process (including on resource allocation) more transparent, through the soon-to-be-launched intranet, monthly newsletters, and regular updates of the Programme Manual.

**Finding #31: Resource Mobilization.** In 2009, in parallel with the drafting of the MTS and the Strategic Presence study, UNEP moved to a federated Resource Mobilization (RM) framework. The Evaluation considers the federated RM process a good basis for UNEP to assure both coherence and flexibility in its fundraising efforts, provided that all the players are empowered to play their role. Overall, UNEP staff exhibited a good degree of flexibility in adapting to the new model, by looking for co-financiers and partners, but also in some cases stretching their capacities to the limit. UNEP should continue to pursue the increase of its Environment Fund base, as well as of Partnership Contribution Agreements signed with donors. The instability of UNEP resource base requires Sub-Programme Coordinators and project managers to be more cautious when planning for the next biennium, and at the same time proactive in the search for funds, not relying only on the established channels and partnerships.

**Recommendation #18:** The following steps should be taken to strengthen UNEP’s resource mobilization systems:

- UNEP enhance its resource mobilization efforts and outreach to emerging economies and countries outside the Euro Zone, as well as engaging more with the private sector and research foundations in the implementation of projects;
- Sub-Programme Coordinators should lead the resource mobilization planning efforts for the entire SP, and formulate clear Resource Mobilization Strategies, where prospective sources of funds for areas of focus are identified. Regional Offices are to be fully involved in both the development and implementation of RM strategies;
- Project concepts need to be better formulated, and include a clear plan for the mobilization of resources. Liaison Offices should be invited to attend the meetings where these are discussed, to help the prompt identification of concepts of interest of donors (e.g. the EU);
- Resource Mobilization Section should continue its communication efforts to Sub-Programme Coordinators about Resource Mobilization opportunities UNEP could tap into, and strengthen

the UNEP Resource Mobilization knowledge base, by finalising Standard Operating Procedures and regularly updating donor profiles on the intranet.

**Finding #32: Resource Allocation.** The analysis of resources by Division in the last four biennia (2006-13) shows that Divisions such as Division of Technology Industry and Economics (DTIE), Division of Regional Cooperation (DRC), and DEPI have benefited more, and in the case of DTIE significantly more, from the move to the new framework in terms of resources allocated. DEWA, DELC and DCPI have instead lost ground. The Evaluation relates this to the lead role that DTIE and DEPI play for 5 (out of 6) Sub-Programmes, and to the decision to enhance UNEP presence in the regions. The Evaluation considers that, despite the undeniable leadership role played by these Divisions on key areas of work for the MTS, the observed concentration of resources “in few hands” may work only if resources assigned to Lead Divisions are then sub-allotted to participating ones in a transparent and consultative way. Divisions such as DEWA and DCPI, who are supposed to work more across SPs, reported to have instead experienced significant challenges in receiving funds through sub-allotments, and to have been denied the access to funds for projects already agreed by Sub-Programme Coordinators. The power to decide on the allocation of resources also within Sub-Programmes ultimately rests with the Lead Division Director.

**Recommendation #19:** UNEP should now move towards establishing a full results-based budgeting (RBB) system. As no Division can claim the sole ownership of a sub-programme, to ensure transparency and accountability, the allocation of resources within a Sub-Programme should be based on formally-approved Divisional workplans, which would show how each Division contributes to the achievement of the Sub-Programme results. EF should be foremost allocated to core functions of the Organization, in line with UNEP’s mandate.

**Finding #33: Resource Management.** The Evaluation noticed a major slippage between programme and financial management in UNEP. Financial approval was granted for activities within projects (not yet) approved by the Project Review Committee. Financial management needs to be better integrated into project planning and delivery. Fund Management Officers should not limit themselves to the administration (including the certification over the use) of project resources.

**Recommendation #20** Fund Management Officers should be systematically involved in project planning and financial and project revisions should be done concomitantly. To enhance corporate oversight over financial resources, Fund Management Officers should not report exclusively to Division staff, but also to the Office of Operations.

## Summary Table of Key Actionable Evaluation Findings & Recommendations

Finding	Recommendation	Current Status	Reference in Main Report
<b>Strategic Relevance of the MTS</b>			
<b>F#1. UNEP's Mandate.</b> Strong alignment across the six sub-programmes, but the BSP does not provide sufficient guidance	<b>R#1.</b> A review of the Bali Strategic Plan should be undertaken	Not yet underway	¶ 85
<b>F#3. Global Environmental Priorities.</b> The six thematic priority areas of the MTS are well aligned with the existing global environmental challenges identified in the GEO4, the GEF focal areas and MDG7. However the link between environment and development in the MTS is weak, and cross-cutting issues, specifically poverty and gender, are poorly reflected.	<b>R#2.</b> The MTS 2014-2017 should establish programmatic indicators linking these cross-cutting issues to UNEP's work on environment and development. This will also enable measurement of achievement against key MDGs.	The Draft MTS 2014-2017 has attempted to integrate these issues into each of its sub-programmes.	¶ 88
<b>F#7. UNEP's Partnerships.</b> UNEP needs to build on existing partnerships, particularly civil society, through communication and knowledge sharing to ensure greater impact of MTS activities	<b>R#3.</b> UNEP should periodically assess how successful and relevant its partnerships are, particularly with other UN agencies and bilateral agencies	UNEP Partnership Policy & Procedures developed in October 2011	¶ 89
<b>Business Processes, Systems &amp; Structures</b>			
<b>F#17. Programme Planning.</b> The Programme Frameworks have not lived up to their expected role in strengthening RBM in the implementation of the MTS	<b>R#4.</b> The role of the Programme Frameworks in UNEP's planning cycle should be strengthened	Already partially underway in draft MTS 2014-2017	¶ 224
<b>F#18. Accountability &amp; Authority.</b> UNEP's current matrix management model is not providing the clear lines of authority and accountability for programme delivery that are needed	<b>R#5.</b> UNEP should undertake a review of the current matrix management approach and accountability/authority arrangements	Not yet formally underway – ongoing informal process	¶ 226
	<b>R#6.</b> UNEP should revise the Accountability Framework and Delegations of Authority by the ED as necessary	Ongoing informal process	¶ 228
	<b>R#7.</b> UNEP should take steps to significantly enhance the role of the Sub-Programme Coordinators in overseeing the programmatic dimension of the matrix management model	Ongoing process, but more steps are needed	¶ 229
<b>F#19. UNEP's project portfolio.</b> Programme Frameworks did not provide a sufficiently robust framework to facilitate the alignment of the project portfolio with the MTS/PoW	<b>R#8.</b> UNEP should further strengthen the process for aligning the project portfolio with the MTS results framework	Already partially underway in Programme Framework extensions and in design of new MTS	¶ 232
<b>Finding #20: Programme monitoring and reporting.</b> UNEP has made significant progress in introducing and monitoring project output milestones, and these milestones now form a crucial element of UNEPS performance monitoring systems	<b>R#9.</b> The identification of generic outcome milestones should be part of the process of developing the revised Programme Frameworks	Foundation established in Programme Manual, but related systems and capacity still needs to be built	¶ 236

Finding	Recommendation	Current Status	Reference in Main Report
<p><b>F#21. PIMS.</b> The introduction of PIMS has enabled UNEP to fill, at least in part, the gap created by the weaknesses of the present UN-wide PoW performance monitoring system, IMDIS. However, a number of considerations influence the decision as to whether PIMS is the appropriate management information system to meet UNEP's long-term needs for performance monitoring and results-based management</p>	<p><b>R#10.</b> UNEP should undertake a review of the future role of PIMS in its results-based management performance monitoring requirements, in particular with regard the suitability of the system to meet future needs for monitoring UNEP's non-projectised activities, its role vis-à-vis the new UN Umoja ERP system, and its actual performance as a monitoring tool as demonstrated by the in-depth sub-programme and project-level evaluations. The role of PIMS data and the traffic light system in the PPRs should be re-examined. This should include a review of the desirability of aggregating project output-level performance information to the divisional level, and a consideration of the value-added of the PIMS traffic light project output performance presentation</p>	Not yet underway	¶ 239
<p><b>F#22. PPRs.</b> Although under constant improvement, the PPRs still have two significant weaknesses: firstly, the reporting of achievements at the outcome level relies on weak Expected Accomplishment indicators. Secondly, the inappropriate way in which the PPRs use the PIMS "traffic light" system to aggregate project output milestone information to the EA level</p>		Not yet underway	¶ 241
<p><b>F#24. Divisional Workplans.</b> Divisional workplans are currently underutilised in defining, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the MTS and the PoWs</p>	<p><b>R#11.</b> The process of developing divisional workplans should be fully instituted as an integral and instrumental component of UNEP's programme management and accountability processes. This is also likely to also entail the review and revision by OfO of the existing workplan format.</p>	ED and SMT have emphasised importance of workplans	¶ 243
<p><b>F#25. Role of Regional Offices.</b> Despite significant efforts to strengthen the role of Regional Offices, they are yet to fulfil their potential</p>	<p><b>R#12.</b> UNEP should further strengthen its Regional Offices by a continuation of the process of outposting divisional staff, developing the RO's management systems, processes and accountability arrangements, and strengthening the role of regional office workplans</p>	Ongoing process	¶ 245
	<p><b>R#13.</b> UNEP should undertake a review of the optimal institutional arrangements between the Regional Offices and the Divisions, including the optimal role of DRC in supporting the Regional Offices</p>	Not yet formally underway	¶ 247
<b>Human &amp; Financial Resources</b>			
<p><b>F#26. UNEP Staff Capacity.</b> The re-profiling of UNEP to enable it to be better equipped for the implementation of the MTS has not entirely occurred. Despite strong support by the Executive Office, capacity development became less of a priority in the overall MTS development and implementation process</p>	<p><b>R#14.</b> UNEP should develop its human resource strategy in order to support the transition towards results-based management</p>		¶ 290
	<p><b>R#15.</b> UNEP should integrate its talent management approach into its strategy, and remodel it around the development of skills for MTS implementation.</p>		¶ 290

<b>Finding</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Reference in Main Report</b>
<b>F#28. Human Resource Management.</b> There has not been any significant shift in the way staff resources are managed over the first biennium of the MTS. Staff continue to be recruited in functional Divisions, and reporting lines and the locus of authority firmly reside with the Division Director	<b>R#16.</b> The contribution of staff to different Sub-Programmes should be acknowledged in both individual and Divisional work-plans, and staff performance should be assessed accordingly against the achievement of the objectives	Not yet underway	¶ 291
<b>F#30. UNEP's Corporate Culture.</b> There is still an absence of a "One UNEP" culture oriented towards the fulfilment of corporate goals.	<b>R#17.</b> UNEP should take steps to enhance collegiality in decision-making and the adoption of common standards in project planning and management.		¶ 292
<b>F#31: Resource Mobilization.</b> The federated RM process is a good basis for UNEP to assure both coherence and flexibility in its fundraising efforts	<b>R#18.</b> Steps should be taken to strengthen UNEP's resource mobilization systems		¶ 293
<b>F#32. Resource Allocation.</b> The concentration of UNEP's resources "in few hands" will only work if resources assigned to Lead Division Directors are then sub-allotted to participating ones in a transparent and consultative way	<b>R#19.</b> UNEP should now move towards establishing a full Resource Based Budgeting system. As no Division can claim the sole ownership of a sub-programme, the allocation of resources within a Sub-Programme should be based on formally-approved Divisional workplans		¶ 294
<b>F#33. Resource Management.</b> There has been a major slippage between programme and financial management. Financial approval was granted for activities within projects not yet approved by the Project Review Committee	<b>R#20.</b> Fund Management Officers should be systematically involved in project planning. Financial and project revisions should be done concomitantly. FMOs should not report exclusively to Division staff, but also to the OfO		¶ 295



# Acronyms

ACAD	Africa Carbon Asset Development
ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific
APELL	Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level
BSP	Bali Strategic Plan
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CC	Climate change
CCDARE	Climate Change Adaptation & Development Initiative
CCSP	Climate Change Sub-Programme
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CEB	Chief Executives Board for Coordination
CITES	Convention on International Trade on Endangered Species
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
CPC	UN General Assembly's Committee for Programme Coordination
CPR	(UNEP) Committee of Permanent Representatives
CSS	(UNEP) Corporate Services Section
D&C	Disasters & Conflict (Sub-Programme)
DAC	(OECD) Development Assistance Committee
DCPI	(UNEP) Division of Communication and Public Information
DCSP	Disasters and Conflict Sub-Programme
DED	(UNEP) Deputy Executive Director
DELIC	(UNEP) Division of Environmental Law and Conventions
DEPI	(UNEP) Division of Environmental Policy Implementation
DEWA	(UNEP) Division of Early Warning and Assessment
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)
DPaC	(UNEP) Donor Partnerships and Contribution
DRC	(UNEP) Division of Regional Coordination
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DTIE	(UNEP) Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
EA	Expected Accomplishment
EBA	Ecosystem-based adaptation
ED	(UNEP) Executive Director
EF	(UNEP) Environment Fund
EGSP	Environmental Governance Sub-Programme
EMG	United Nations Environment Management Group
ENRTP	(EU) Thematic Programme for Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy
EU	European Union
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation
FE	Formative Evaluation of the MTS
FMO	(UNEP) Fund Management Officer

FMT	Financial Monitoring Tool
GA (UNGA)	(UN) General Assembly
GC	(UNEP) Governing Council
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
GEPA	Gender Plan of Action
GFEI	Global Fuel Economy Initiative
HFC	Hydrofluorocarbons
HLCP	High Level Committee on Programmes
HSHWSP	Harmful Substances and Hazardous Wastes Sub-Programme
HMRS	(UNON) Human Resources Management Services
IEA	International Energy Agency
IEG	International environmental governance
IFSD	International Framework for Sustainable Development
IMDIS	(UN) Integrated Monitoring and Documentation Information System
IMIS	Integrated Management Information System
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IPBES	Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IRP	(UNEP) International Resource Panel
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
ITPGR	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources
MA	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
MTS	(UNEP) Medium-term Strategy
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NCPC	National Cleaner Production Centres
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OfO	(UNEP) Office of Operations
OIOS	(UN) Office of Internal Oversight Services
PAG	(UNEP) Programme Approval Group
PIMS	(UNEP) Programme Information Management System
PCA	Project Cooperation Agreement
PCFV	Partnership for Clean Fuels Vehicles
POP	Persistent Organic Pollutants
PoW	Programme of Work
PPR	Programme Performance Report
PRC	(UNEP) Project Review Committee
PSC	Programme Support Costs

QAS	(UNEP) Quality Assurance Section
RB	(UN) Regular Budget
RBM	Results Based Management
RBB	Results Based Budgeting
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RESCPSP	Resource Efficiency and Sustainable Consumption and Production Sub-Programme
RM	Resource mobilization
RMS	(UNEP) Resource Mobilization Section
ROLAC	(UNEP) Regional Office for Latin America and Caribbean
SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
SANA	Situation Analysis and Needs Assessments
SDTU	(UNON) Staff Development and Training Unit
SF	Strategic Framework
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SIT	(UNEP) Strategic Implementation Team
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Attributable, Relevant, and Time-bound
SME	Small and medium enterprises
SMT	(UNEP) Senior Management Team
SP	(UNEP) Sub-Programme
SPC	Sub-Programme Coordinator
SSC	South-South Cooperation
TEEB	The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity
TF	Trust Fund
TOC	Theory of Change
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCSD	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNON	United Nations Office in Nairobi
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WHC	Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage
WHO	World Health Organisation
WMO	World Meteorological Organisation
XB	Extra-budgetary

# 1. Introduction

1. This Main Report of the Mid-term Evaluation of the UNEP Medium-term Strategy 2010-2013 provides a condensed version of the findings, lessons learnt and recommendations of the evaluation. It is written in a concise form to enhance the accessibility of the findings, and to ensure that the evaluation's key audiences are able to gain a rapid insight into the main issues addressed by the evaluation. As such, most of the findings presented in the report are not covered in depth, and may sometimes appear to lack sufficient evaluative evidence or in-depth explanation. For the reader that requires more in-depth findings, the main report is accompanied by additional working papers that are available on request from the UNEP Evaluation Office.
2. The main report consists of five sections: this section, which provides background information on the origins of the MTS as well as on the evaluation's objectives and scope, methodology, and limitations. The following four sections address in turn each of the four main themes of the Evaluation: Strategic relevance of the MTS; Effectiveness and impact of MTS delivery; UNEP's business processes, systems and structures supporting MTS delivery; and human and financial resources. Each of these thematic sections provides an introduction to the key issues that need to be addressed by the evaluation, the major findings of the evaluation (with in-depth findings in the associated working paper), conclusions and recommendations. Also to ensure that this main report is concise and easily assimilated, there are no annexes appended to the report - all such information is to be found in the working papers available on request from the Evaluation Office.
3. The evaluation was conducted between June and November 2012 by a five-person team comprising three external evaluators and two members of the UNEP Evaluation Office. As such, this evaluation can best be regarded largely as an independent external evaluation but with significant guidance and inputs provided by the Evaluation Office.

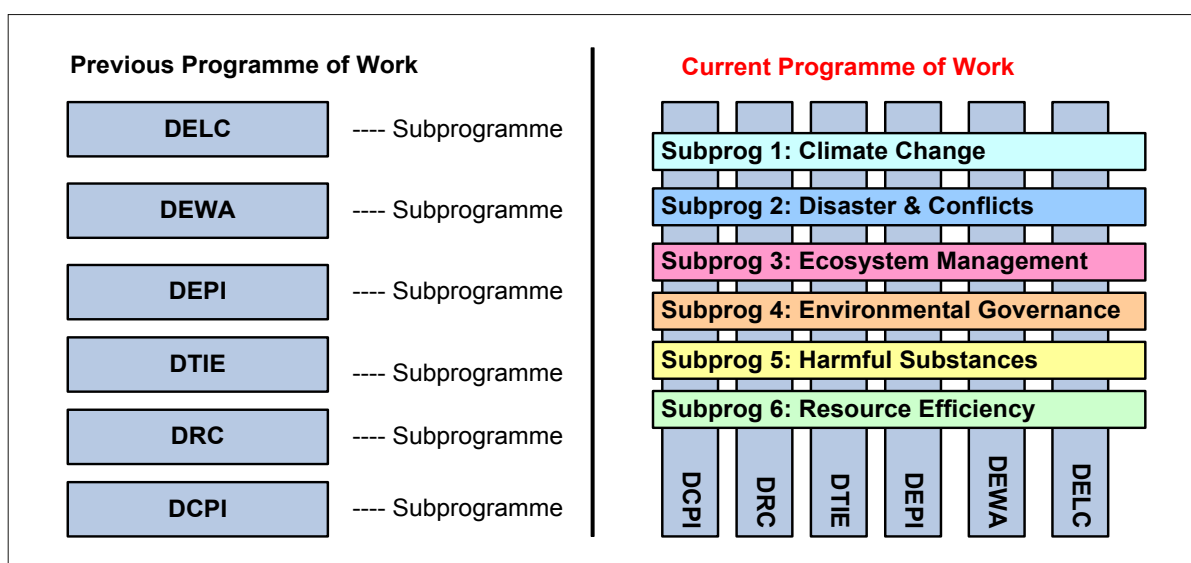
## 1.1 Background to the UNEP MTS 2010-2013

4. At the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNEP Governing Council, the UNEP Executive Director (ED) was requested to prepare "a Medium-term Strategy for 2010–2013, with a clearly defined vision, objectives, priorities, impact measures and a robust mechanism for review by Governments"<sup>4</sup>. Subsequently, the ED worked with the UNEP Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) to develop a "road map" for the development of the Medium-term Strategy (MTS), modalities for the CPR to work alongside the UNEP secretariat in developing the MTS (through the establishment of a CPR MTS Working Group), and a timetable for the development of the MTS. In addition to four meetings of the MTS Working Group, the UNEP secretariat also conducted extensive consultations with the UNEP-administered MEA secretariats, as well as with civil society and the private sector, to obtain additional inputs in the development of the MTS. The new MTS was also developed in consultation with UNEP staff, including meetings of the UNEP Senior Management Team (SMT) and UNEP Divisional retreats. Following this consultation process, the MTS was approved by the UNEP Governing Council at the 10<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum held in Monaco from 20<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2008.

4 UNEP Governing Council Decision 24/9/13

5 UNEP/GCSS.X/10. SS.X/3. Medium-term Strategy for the period 2010–2013

**Figure 1: UNEP's Revised Programme Structure as introduced by the MTS 2010-2013 and the PoW, 2010-2011**



5. The new MTS introduced an innovative, results-oriented approach to the design and implementation of the UNEP Programme, based on **six new thematic priority areas**, each to be delivered by a sub-programme. To fully appreciate the extent of the paradigm shift in programme delivery that the new MTS represented, it is important to understand the programmatic and organisational *status quo* in UNEP prior to the launch of the new MTS in 2010. Before the new MTS was put into place, UNEP's sub-programmes were aligned with the organisation's divisional structure, i.e.: Environmental Assessment and Early Warning; Environmental Law and Conventions; Environmental Policy Implementation; Technology, Industry and Economics; Regional Cooperation and Representation, and Communications and Public Information. This programme delivery arrangement is illustrated in the left-hand side of Figure 1.
6. Each sub-programme therefore reflected the mandate, functions, and skills and experience sets of the respective divisions, which in turn had gradually evolved since UNEP's establishment in 1972 to respond to key "service areas" that the organisation was being called upon by its stakeholders to deliver, and that also in principle reflected the key areas of UNEP's comparative advantage (see the Relevance component of this evaluation report for a further discussion of these aspects). For example, the Division on Environmental Law and Conventions (DELC) was and still is the focus for UNEP's services in support of the development and facilitation of international environmental law, governance and policy, the Division on Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA) provides services in carrying out environmental analyses, data and information for decision-making and action planning for sustainable development, and the Division of Communications & Public Information (DCPI) provides services in raising public awareness of environmental issues and communicating UNEP's core environmental messages.
7. For the 2008-2009 biennium therefore, much of UNEP's work was delivered in the form of environmental support services that capitalised on UNEP's mandate, comparative advantages and competencies. This situation is reflected in the Expected Accomplishments (EAs) established in the PoW 2008-2009, which are largely service oriented. For example, under the DEWA Sub-Programme, EA(A) states "Participatory, policy-relevant and scientifically credible environmental assessments", whereas under the DELC Sub-Programme, EA(C) states "Enhanced environmental legal frameworks aimed at sustainable development". Similarly, under the DRC Sub-Programme, EA(A) states: "Process of policy deliberations and consensus-building globally and in the regions facilitated and supported".

8. This predominantly service orientation, while built on UNEP's comparative strengths, was of concern to both external and internal stakeholders for a variety of reasons. In particular, there was a concern that, by focussing UNEP's programme and planning on service provision, the ability of the organisation to work towards the achievement of specific and tangible environmental and sustainable development results was diminished. Another concern of stakeholders with the programme structure in place prior to the MTS was the "monolithic" nature of the divisions, and the lack of sufficient cross-divisional collaboration in programme delivery. This so-called "silo mentality" was of particular concern because of the growing complexity and inter-connectedness of the environmental challenges, such as climate change and ecosystem management, that UNEP was being called upon to address, and the increasing need to bring together a variety of UNEP's service functions, such as policy and legal support, environmental assessment, and environmental communications, in an effective, efficient and integrated way to address them. It was perceived that this requirement could not easily be addressed within the existing divisional, service-oriented, sub-programme structure, but required an entirely new approach which brought together the service skills-sets and capabilities of multiple divisions in addressing the priority environmental themes that were identified in the new MTS. This new collaborative and cross-divisional approach is illustrated in the right-hand side of Figure 1 above.
9. The new MTS sub-programmes cut across UNEP's traditional divisional structure, with multiple divisions potentially being responsible for contributing to the delivery of each individual sub-programme. In line with the perceived weaknesses of the previous programme structure discussed above, the new programme structure had two fundamental aims: 1) to enhance UNEP's results orientation to address major environmental challenges, rather than simply to provide a range of potentially disparate environmental services; and 2) to enable the effective and efficient delivery of UNEP services in a complementary and synergistic manner to address these challenges, through greater cross-divisional collaboration and communication. These key aspects of the MTS, and how successfully they have been delivered over the past two years of MTS delivery, will form an important focus of this evaluation.
10. No explicit prioritisation or gaps analysis exercise was carried out as part of the process of developing the new MTS – rather, the identification of MTS priorities largely hinged on the consultations that were carried out with governments as well as with UNEP's other public and private sector partners. However, the reorganisation of the UNEP Programme carried out through the MTS has inevitably led subsequently to the identification of gaps - such as through the consolidation of UNEP's climate change initiatives, and the reorientation of the Disasters and Conflicts Sub-Programme, including a stronger focus on disaster risk reductions. In addition, the prioritisation articulated in the MTS was later rationalised through the Foresight Process<sup>6</sup>. The increasing adoption of Theory of Change principles and approaches by UNEP in both the evaluation and design of the sub-programmes is also enabling gaps in the sub-programmes to be identified.
11. The process of implementing the new MTS has inevitably involved a significant amount of organisational change, both in the nature of the work that UNEP is implementing (the "what") as well as in the mechanisms used to deliver the programme (the "how"). These change processes are inevitably highly complex, dynamic, and of a long-term nature, especially in an organisation such as UNEP that is constrained by its governance structures within the international community, and by the organisational systems and processes that it must adhere to within the UN family. Over the first biennium of this MTS period, UNEP has already made significant progress in reorienting its activities, systems, processes and structures in line with the new directions set out in the MTS. Nevertheless, it is inevitable that the organisation is still in a state of flux, with new organisational

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6 21 Issues for the 21st Century – Results of the UNEP Foresight Process on Emerging Issues, 2012.

processes and systems continuously being introduced and/or adapted according to lessons learnt from MTS implementation.

12. One important outcome of this situation observed by the Evaluation is that there are clearly “tensions” within the organisation as the new organisational systems and approaches are introduced, and old ones done away with. This Evaluation regards such tensions as a natural, necessary and largely positive aspect of the MTS implementation process. Change, and the associated tensions involved, is an important force to enable the organisation to strengthen its focus on the emerging priority environmental issues, to set aside old activities and management practices that are no longer relevant in today’s environment, and to encourage innovation and cost effectiveness in achieving results.
13. Another consequence of the change process is that UNEP staff members do not yet have the necessary knowledge or experience of the new systems and processes to implement them effectively and efficiently. In this regard, UNEP has been making concerted efforts to provide the necessary training and awareness raising activities to accompany the new systems and processes, but much more needs to be done in this regard in the remainder of the MTS cycle.
14. Reflecting these two major dimensions of the MTS, this evaluation report also has two main thrusts, with the first two chapters on evaluation findings - Strategic Relevance and Effectiveness and Impact - looking at the actual programmes and projects implemented under the auspices of the MTS, while the next two chapters - Business Processes, Systems & Structures, and Human & Financial Resources - address the role of the MTS as a policy and planning framework within UNEP. Both perspectives are important in understanding the contribution that the MTS has made to the delivery of UNEP’s Programme.

## 1.2 Evaluation objectives

15. The purpose of this Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNEP Medium Term Strategy 2010-2013 is to assess the extent to which the MTS has been successful in guiding and reorienting UNEP’s programme to address key global environmental challenges. The Evaluation identifies key successes and challenges in MTS implementation, and provides lessons and recommendations aimed at improving future programme implementation. To achieve this, the Evaluation has the following key objectives designed to assess:
  - The **strategic relevance of the MTS** within the context of UNEP’s vision and mandate (including Governing Council decisions), comparative advantage, and current and emerging global environmental issues;
  - The **progress made by UNEP in achieving the anticipated MTS outcomes and impacts** as identified in each of the six MTS sub-programmes during the first two years of implementation of the MTS, and the success factors and challenges that have influenced programme performance<sup>7</sup>;
  - The **business processes, systems and structures** that have been put in place to support MTS implementation, which are broadly referred to as the reform process, and which include aspects such as: programme planning, management, monitoring and reporting, accountability arrangements for programme delivery, the role of UNEP’s project portfolio in MTS implementation, and the progress made in developing UNEP’s strategic presence including the role of UNEP’s Regional Offices;

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<sup>7</sup> The evaluation of effectiveness and impact does not look at the contribution of UNEP’s Global Environmental Facility (GEF) portfolio to MTS objectives.

- The **human resources and financial mechanisms associated** with the delivery of the MTS, including the progress that UNEP has made in establishing and appropriately allocating human resources for enabling the efficient and effective implementation of the MTS, and the effectiveness of the systems and processes used for human and financial resources allocation and management in supporting MTS delivery.

### 1.3 Evaluation methodology

16. The evaluation used a combination of information collection techniques, including desk review, semi-structured interviews, and a survey of UNEP staff. A comprehensive desk review of relevant documentation was carried out as part of the Inception Phase, and the outcomes of the exercise are available in the detailed working papers obtainable on request from the UNEP Evaluation Office. Further documentation was reviewed as necessary during the implementation phase of the evaluation. While donor evaluations were consulted wherever these existed (e.g. the MOPAN<sup>8</sup> evaluation), internal UNEP evaluations as well as policy documents and other reports relating to MTS implementation were also reviewed extensively and form an important foundation for the Evaluation's findings and recommendations. In particular, the Formative Evaluation and the in-depth evaluations of the Environmental Governance Sub-Programmes and Disasters & Conflict Sub-Programme provided a rich source of additional information concerning implementation of the MTS. In particular, these sub-programme level evaluations formed an important basis for the findings presented in the Effectiveness & Impact chapter, but for those sub-programmes which have not yet been evaluated, selected project-level evaluations were used instead.
17. A comprehensive checklist of key documentation consulted during the evaluation is included in the detailed working papers available from the Evaluation Office. To complement and expand on the review of documentation, the evaluation relied extensively on direct information collection, through semi-structured interviews with key MTS stakeholders both inside and, to the extent possible, outside UNEP. The full list of stakeholders interviewed is also included in the working papers.
18. The UNEP Evaluation Office has adopted a "Theory of Change" approach to understanding and assessing the causal logic of the UNEP's projects and sub-programmes, as illustrated in the Formative Evaluation of the PoW 2010-2011, as well as the draft in-depth evaluation reports of the Environmental Governance and Disasters & Conflicts Sub-Programmes. This evaluation has also adopted a Theory of Change approach to understanding the progress made in achieving outcomes and impact under the six sub-programmes. This involved the establishment of a simplified causal logic for each sub-programme based on the Expected Accomplishments and Outputs identified in the MTS and the PoWs, and the identification of Impact Drivers and Assumptions that are regarded as crucial in the realisation of impacts.
19. The adoption of Theory of Change approaches is an important step for UNEP, but at the moment this has mostly occurred at the evaluation, rather than project design and implementation level (although as reported in the evaluation, significant work is on-going to incorporate the TOC approaches at these levels as well). Identifying the major drivers and underlying assumptions of UNEP's impact is a potentially important step, but realistically it is beyond the scope of this evaluation. These aspects are best addressed by in-depth project and sub-programme evaluations.
20. The Evaluation also conducted an online survey of UNEP staff with a focus on the evaluation component dealing with Human & Financial Resources. In addition, the evaluation was also provided

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8 Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network



access to the detailed results of a parallel online survey of UNEP staff and Governing Council members carried out as part of the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) Evaluation of UNEP. In this regard, many aspects of the OIOS evaluation complement this present Evaluation.

## 1.4 Evaluation limitations

21. The timing of this Mid-term Evaluation was constrained by, on the one hand, the need for a sufficient span of time in implementing the MTS and PoW to have passed to allow the generation of lessons learnt, and on the other, the need to as far as possible feed these lessons learnt into future planning processes. With regard the former, implementation of the MTS commenced in 2010, and therefore only two years have elapsed in which the changes introduced by the MTS can be evaluated. This is clearly too short a time span to realistically measure significant progress in terms of behavioural/institutional change, and certainly insufficient time to carry out any meaningful direct assessment of the impacts that UNEP is working towards achieving. In addition, since the MTS is inevitably being implemented within the context of an on-going UNEP work programme, many of the activities currently being implemented by UNEP actually preceded the establishment of the present MTS. As a result, there are significant challenges in attributing evaluation findings to the specific contributions that have been made or changes that have been brought about by the MTS.
22. With regard the Evaluation's contributions to future planning processes, UNEP is necessarily working to timetables and deadlines dictated by the broader UN planning and reporting institutional requirements. In practice, the PoW for the period 2012-2013 was approved at the UNEP Governing Council's meeting held in February 2011 and similarly, the new MTS for the period 2014-2017 and the PoW 2014-2015 were at the time of the Evaluation already at an advanced stage of development.
23. Taking these time factors into consideration, this Evaluation has been designed to fulfil a largely strategic function, mainly geared towards identifying potential "course corrections" in the implementation of the MTS, rather than attempting to propose major new directions for UNEP, which is appropriately more the function of the final evaluation of the MTS, when more time will have elapsed in its implementation. It is hoped that the Evaluation will nevertheless make a significant contribution to the ongoing adaptive management processes underway in UNEP, which have involved the Executive Office, the Office of Operations, the Evaluation Office, as well as all six divisions, and which are gradually adapting UNEP's implementation and business processes according to lessons learnt. In practice, many of these adaptations are already being incorporated into the new MTS now under development.
24. The Effectiveness and Impact component of the Evaluation necessarily looked at all six sub-programmes. However, because of time and budget constraints, it was not possible to explore each sub-programme in depth, nor was it feasible to talk to the beneficiaries of UNEP's activities, or to directly observe sub-programme results on the ground. Furthermore, the evaluation of effectiveness and impact was limited by very weak evaluative evidence across all sub-programmes. While few projects concluded during the 2010/2011 biennium have been subject to independent project evaluations<sup>9</sup>, projects approved during the biennium in question have not yet been evaluated. Rather, the evaluation of Effectiveness & Impact largely relied on consultations with UNEP staff involved in sub-programme implementation, and indirect evidence gathered from the review of sub-programme and project documentation<sup>10</sup>. This Evaluation therefore attempts to give a broad overview of the achievements that have been made and challenges that have been experienced in implementing the sub-

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<sup>9</sup> Available project evaluation reports used for the present evaluation are quoted in footnotes.

<sup>10</sup> It is worth noting, however, that for those sub-programmes that have not yet been subjected to a full sub-programme evaluation, there is a significantly deficiency of readily accessible evaluative evidence to work with.

programmes to date, leaving more in-depth studies to the sub-programme, country-level and project-level evaluations. Nevertheless, in response to stakeholder interest, an effort has been made wherever possible to identify the emerging outcomes of MTS and PoW delivery, and to provide firm evidence of these outcomes where this is readily available. The final evaluation of the MTS will once again provide a better opportunity to examine UNEP's actual achievement of higher-level results.

25. Also as a result of time and budget constraints, the Evaluation was unable to examine aspects of efficiency and cost effectiveness in MTS implementation. These aspects are best dealt with in the context of more in-depth evaluations such as sub-programme and project-level evaluations.

## 2. Strategic Relevance of the MTS

### 2.1 Introduction

26. In response to a growing recognition in the international community of the need for sustainable development at the global level, there have been a number of directional shifts within the UN system, particularly over the past decade, calling for renewed focus on the future of international environmental governance, greater coherence within the UN system, increased focus on the role of the private sector, responsiveness to country level priorities and needs, and results-based management.
27. This section of the MTS Evaluation assesses the overall relevance of the strategic intent of the MTS, its objectives and expected accomplishments, and their consistency with UNEP's vision and mandate and UNEP's comparative advantage. It also examines the relevance of the MTS in the broader global political, institutional and environmental context; the MTS's responsiveness to the particular needs of UNEP, the UN system, member countries and other stakeholders; and the MTS's contribution to the broader vision of setting the "global environmental agenda".

### 2.2 Context

#### UNEP's Mandate

- 28 The mandate for UNEP derives from General Assembly Resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 that established UNEP. In recent years, several key resolutions and decisions have influenced the evolution of the role and mandate of UNEP. The **Malmo Declaration**<sup>11</sup> noted discrepancies between commitment and action, and highlighted the risk of climate change. In September 2000, the General Assembly adopted the **United Nations Millennium Declaration**<sup>12</sup> which focused on the reduction of extreme poverty and set out a series of time-bound targets known as the **Millennium Development Goals** (MDG)<sup>13</sup>. The **Cartagena Package**<sup>14</sup> emphasised the need for strengthening UNEP in regard to, *inter alia*, its science base, improving coordination and coherence between multilateral environmental agreements and across the UN system. The **Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building**<sup>15</sup> (BSP) requires a "more coherent, coordinated and effective delivery of environmental capacity-building and technical support... in response to country priorities and needs". The BSP further emphasises the need for UNEP programmes to build on existing capacities, to promote national ownership, and to tailor capacity-building programmes to individual countries based on a bottom-up needs assessment, and proposes several strategic considerations that emphasise the need to focus on regional and national needs and priorities<sup>16</sup>. Other declarations include the **Rome Declaration on Harmonisation** which focuses on national development processes, and the **Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness** and its **Accra Agenda for Action**<sup>17</sup> which call for national ownership, harmonisation and alignment of aid with partner countries' priorities, managing results and mutual accountability.

11 General Assembly resolution 53/242 of 28 July 1999

12 General Assembly resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000

13 A/56/326.Road Map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration: Report of the Secretary-General, Annex

14 Decision SS.VII/1 of 15 February 2002 on international environmental governance and its appendix, known together as the "Cartagena package"

15 UNEP Governing Council decision 23/1 of February 2005

16 UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1

17 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) (<http://www.oecd.org/dac/aideffectiveness>)

## UNEP's Mandate

- ❖ Keeping the world environmental situation under review;
- ❖ Catalysing and promoting international cooperation and action;
- ❖ Providing policy advice and early warning information, based upon sound science and assessments;
- ❖ Facilitating the development, implementation and evolution of norms and standards and developing coherent inter-linkages among international environmental conventions;
- ❖ Strengthening technology support and capacity in line with country needs and priorities.

29. UNEP's Vision for the medium-term future remains as stated in the 1997 Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of UNEP<sup>18</sup>, that is *"to be the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, that promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and that serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment"*. UNEP subsequently modified its Mandate to capture the requirements of the above-mentioned resolutions and declarations in order to enable it to effectively address current and emerging global environmental challenges. UNEP's current Mandate is presented in the box below.
30. UNEP also has a coordination role within the UN system which is derived from GA Resolution 2997 (XXVII) that mandates its Governing Council to "promote international cooperation in the field of the environment and to recommend, as appropriate, policies to this end, and to provide general policy guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programmes within the UN system". The Executive Director of UNEP was given the responsibility to coordinate environmental programmes within the UN system.<sup>19</sup> The coordination mandate was then refined to *"promote the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system"*. The Cartagena Package and the Bali Strategic Plan both reiterate the need for coordination and cooperation between multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) secretariats and across the United Nations system.
31. The second Expected Accomplishment under the Executive Direction and Management Component of the 2012-2013 biennium stipulates: Improved leadership of UNEP in the United Nations system effort to achieve coherent and complementary actions by United Nations agencies on the environmental dimension of sustainable development. In this respect, also in part addressing UNEP's vision, UNEP's New York Office plays a key role in facilitating UNEP's coordination of environment-oriented activities within UN system through its participation in major inter-agency meetings, particularly those of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and two of its sub-committees, the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) and the UN Development Group (UNDG).
32. In addition, the Environment Management Group (EMG) is the UN system-wide coordination body for environment and human settlement, whose members include specialized agencies, programmes and organs of the United Nations including the secretariats of the MEAs. UNEP's Executive Director is the chair of the EMG, and the EMG is supported by a secretariat provided by UNEP. In response to UNEP Governing Council Decision at its twenty-sixth session in February 2011<sup>20</sup>, the EMG is currently spearheading an inter-agency initiative to develop a framework for environmental and social sustainability in the UN system<sup>21</sup> which will draw up a uniform system-wide approach to integrate simultaneous economic, environmental and social impact assessments in major UN policy and decision-

18 UNEP Governing Council decision 19/1 of 7 February 1997

19 <http://www.unep.org/newyork/UNEPsCoordinationMandate/tabid/56200/Default.aspx>

20 Decision UNEP/GC.26/11 Add.1

21 EMG, 2012.A Framework for Advancing Environmental and Social Sustainability in the United Nations System

making processes. The EMG Issues Management Groups deal with Land, Biodiversity, Green Economy, Sustainability Management, and International and Environmental Governance.<sup>22</sup>

### UNEP's Comparative Advantages

33. UNEP now has some 40 years of experience in the field of environment and its interface with development. As a result UNEP believes that it has developed a number of comparative advantages, and in order to be the “*leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda*”, UNEP realises that it must capitalise on these comparative advantages or niches, particularly those advantages relevant to the six thematic areas of its Sub-Programmes. UNEP's comparative advantages are listed in the MTS 2010-2013 as follows:
- UNEP provides a high-level environment policy forum within the United Nations system and participates in numerous inter-agency boards, partnerships and other mechanisms;
  - It promotes inter-disciplinary approaches to address environmental issues, including the inter-linkages between environmental change, development and human well-being;
  - It has extensive experience in working with scientific and technical communities and at the science-policy interface, including providing integrated environmental assessments to facilitate priority setting and decision-making;
  - It also has longstanding linkages and networks to Governments and their environment ministries, United Nations entities, regional environmental bodies, key international environmental institutions, the broad scientific community, civil society and private sector through hosting several multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) secretariats, and as an implementing agency for the GEF; and
  - Its linkages, networks and partnerships give it a unique convening power for addressing the full range of environmental issues.

### International Environmental Governance

34. UNEP's Evaluation Office Evaluation of the EGSP defines environmental governance as “the conduit that links scientific assessment to policy development and implementation, bearing directly on the enforcement/compliance of national environmental legislation and internationally agreed environmental goals.” According to the UNEP's Draft Environmental Governance Strategy<sup>23</sup>, international environmental governance (IEG) is essentially a process to guide Governments, major groups and civil society to strengthen environmental governance at country, regional and global level in order to manage environmental threats and to address agreed environmental priorities. In this respect, UNEP provides: a) access to sound science for decision-making b) facilitation of international cooperation, c) support to international policy setting and provision of technical assistance, and d) support to national development planning.
35. There are more than 40 UN agencies involved with IEG-related issues, and numerous organisations outside the UN who deal with IEG, for example development partners (World Bank, DfID), think tanks (such as the World Resources Institute, the International Institute for Sustainable Development), as well as various academic institutions (Centre for Governance and Sustainability at the University of Massachusetts, Yale Centre for Environmental Law and Policy).
36. The Nairobi-Helsinki Outcome<sup>24</sup> reaffirms that with regard to IEG, UNEP through the MTS is aiming to do “the right thing”. It proposes a set of options to address challenges in the delivery of key elements

22 <http://www.unemg.org>

23 UNEP (June2008). Draft Strategy Document for Environmental Governance

24 Second meeting of the Consultative Group of Ministers or High-level Representatives on International Environmental Governance Espoo, Finland, 21–23 November 2010: The Nairobi-Helsinki Outcome

of the MTS which focus on strengthening IEG, and more broadly on sustainable development, including strengthening the science-policy interface, encouraging synergies between compatible multilateral environmental agreements, creating a stronger link between global environmental policy making and financing, developing a system-wide capacity-building framework in line with the BSP, and strengthening strategic engagement at the regional level by further increasing the capacity of UNEP regional offices to be more responsive to country environmental needs.

## Multilateral Environmental Agreements

37. Multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) provide the international legal basis for global efforts to address specific environmental issues. They are therefore an important mechanism for advancing international environmental governance. The box below lists the key global MEAs.
38. UNEP hosts the secretariats for the CBD, CMS, CITES, the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, and the Vienna Convention. The Ramsar Convention is hosted by the IUCN, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are both hosted by the UN Secretariat, the World Heritage Convention by UNESCO, and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGR) by FAO. In addition, UNEP hosts secretariats for numerous regional conventions, such as those on regional cooperation in the protection and sustainable development of the marine and coastal environments and on the conservation and combating pollution of regional seas<sup>25</sup>. Apart from administering the MEAs mentioned here, UNEP provides support to MEAs through legal advisory services in the context of processes for the development of global and regional legal environmental instruments, assistance to countries in negotiating MEAs, and assistance through capacity building and developing tools to facilitate the implementation of MEAs at national level.

### Key Global Multilateral Environmental Agreements

#### Biological Diversity

- ❖ Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
  - ◆ Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
  - ◆ Nagoya Protocol on Genetic Access and Benefit Sharing
- Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)
- ❖ Convention on International Trade on Endangered Species (CITES)
- ❖ Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat
- ❖ International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources (ITPGR)
- ❖ Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (WHC)

#### Chemicals and Waste Management

- ❖ Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal
- ❖ Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade
- ❖ Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants

#### Climate, Atmosphere and Deserts

- ❖ United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- ❖ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
  - ◆ Kyoto Protocol (Climate Change)
- ❖ Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer
  - ◆ Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

Source: [www.informea.org](http://www.informea.org)

25 [www.informea.org](http://www.informea.org)

## **Global Environmental Concerns**

39. In order to achieve its vision of being “the leading global authority”, UNEP must necessarily keep abreast with current and emerging global challenges and priorities. Indeed, the six thematic priority areas of the MTS were identified against a background of UNEP’s vision and mandate, existing global environmental challenges, Global Environment Facility (GEF) focal areas and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), sound science and member state priorities.

## **GEF Focal Areas**

40. The Global Environment Facility is the financial mechanism for four MEAs: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs); and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). Its role is to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to meet the agreed incremental costs of measures designed to achieve global environmental benefits in its focal areas, namely: biodiversity, climate change (mitigation and adaptation), chemicals, international waters, land degradation, sustainable forest management / REDD+, and ozone layer depletion. UNEP is the only one of 10 GEF Implementing Agencies whose core business is environment, and therefore stands to play a key role in supporting the GEF.

## **Millennium Development Goals**

41. UNEP’s work is reflected primarily under Millennium Development Goal 7 (MDG7) which focuses on environmental sustainability. The MDG7 targets that are directly relevant to UNEP’s work are: Target 7A - Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources [calling for action on deforestation and climate change]; and Target 7B - Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss [the need for the protection of key habitats for endangered species and for sustainable global fisheries].

## **UNEP Scientific Assessments and Reports**

42. UNEP regularly publishes updates on new science and developments with the intention of bringing to light emerging environmental issues so that governments and other stakeholders can take these into consideration in policy and planning decisions, thereby contributing to strengthening the science-policy interface. The Global Environment Outlook 4 Report<sup>26</sup> identified four key issues:
- Atmosphere: climate change causing threats to coastal areas, food security and livelihoods, and health effects of indoor and outdoor pollution
  - Land: land degradation, including soil erosion, nutrient depletion, water scarcity, salinity, chemical contamination and disruption of biological cycles, which cumulatively threaten food security, biodiversity, and carbon fixation and storage.
  - Water: depletion of freshwater sources, ocean acidification, long term changes in the water cycle, contamination and deterioration of inland and coastal water quality, impacts on freshwater and marine ecosystems and therefore biodiversity
  - Biodiversity: Biodiversity decline and loss of ecosystem services, impacting on livelihoods
43. The GEO4 Report notes that the underlying drivers responsible for these issues are population increase, economic growth, both leading to resource consumption, globalization and changes in social values.

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26 UNEP, 2007. Global Environment Outlook (GEO) 4: Environment for Development

44. More recent reports that will influence the development of the next MTS (MTS 2014-2017) are: the GEO5 Report<sup>27</sup> (which also identifies Atmosphere, Land, Water (Freshwater and Oceans), Biodiversity, Chemicals and Waste as key issues); the Foresight Report<sup>28</sup> which identifies 21 critical environmental issues under five general headings namely Cross-Cutting Issues, Food, Biodiversity and Land Issues, Freshwater and Marine Issues, Climate Change Issues, and Energy, Technology and Waste Issues; and UNEP's outcome paper on the Rio+20 Conference entitled *The Future We Want*<sup>29</sup>. The Draft MTS 2014-2017<sup>30</sup> has retained the six priority thematic areas in the MTS 2010-2013 (albeit with some Sub-Programme titles altered), and has added a new thematic area: "Environment under Review".

## 2.3 Analysis of the Relevance of the MTS

### UNEP's Mandate

45. UNEP's five key mandates are described in Paragraph 1. There are obvious links between these mandates themselves. For example assessments that are carried out which keep the world environment under review serve to provide the science and basis for policy advice and early warning information. These assessments also contribute to developing norms and standards, and influence national development planning. Catalysing and promoting international cooperation and action provide avenues for UNEP's work to reach global, regional and national levels. Strengthening technology support and capacity building in line with country need and priorities (as stipulated in the BSP) help to facilitate the development, implementation and evolution of norms and standards, as well as to promote multi-stakeholder and regional and international cooperation. Examples of how the MTS Sub-Programme Expected Accomplishments and outputs address each of UNEP's key mandates are described below.
46. **Keeping the world environmental situation under review:** At Expected Accomplishment level, the Climate Change Sub-Programme (CCSP) EA(a), and Disasters & Conflict Sub-Programme (DCSP) EA(b) and EA(c) make reference to assessments that keep the world environmental situation under review. The GEO Reports and Foresight Report are published as an output under the Environmental Governance Sub-Programme (EGSP), and these are key sources of information on the state of the environment, and on current and emerging global environmental issues. It is surprising therefore that none of the Expected Accomplishments of the EGSP reflect this important aspect of the SP. Rather than being a gap, this is more of an issue of language in the formulation of the EAs. At output level, the MTS Sub-Programmes keep the world situation under review primarily through various types of assessments of: e.g. vulnerability, black carbon, tropospheric ozone and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) assessments (CCSP), crisis/post-crisis risk assessments (DCSP), environmental assessments (EGSP - for example through the GEO and Foresight processes), assessments of policies/trends (Hazardous Substances and Hazardous Waste Sub-Programme - HSHWSP), and scarcity assessments (Resource Efficiency and Sustainable Consumption and Production Sub-Programme - RESCPSP).
47. **Catalysing and promoting international cooperation and action:** Catalysing and promoting international cooperation and action is reflected in the EGSP objective and in its EA(a) and EA(c), and in the RESCPSP in EA(b). This mandate is captured well at output level by all SPs. Outputs cover,

27 UNEP, 2012. Global Environment Outlook (GEO) 5: Environment for the Future we Want

28 21 Issues for the 21st Century – Results of the UNEP Foresight Process on Emerging Issues, 2012. In support of the road to Rio+20 and UNEP's work towards an inclusive Green Economy, a major consultative process involving over 400 scientists from across the globe was initiated to identify and rank the most important emerging issues related to the global environment, alongside options for action. This came to be the Foresight Process, which culminated in a publication commonly referred to as the Foresight Report.

29 A/CONF.216/L.1 The Future We Want. Outcome of the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, June 2012

30 UNEP, 10 April 2012; 2014-2017 Medium Term Strategy (Draft)



for example, public private partnerships on energy efficiency and clean energy, catalysing practical action among vulnerable countries to reduce risk from natural hazards and human-caused disasters, inter-governmental coordination and facilitate policy dialogue for emerging issues at regional and environmental forums, facilitating the mainstreaming of environmental sustainability into the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAFs) and national sectoral development processes, promoting dialogue on sustainable management of national and transboundary resources, collaboration with financial institutions on ecosystem valuation, development of national and regional networks (e.g. through the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)), and the implementation of resource efficient policies at regional and national levels on a pilot basis under the Marrakech Process .

48. **Providing policy advice and early warning information, based upon sound science and assessments: Expected Accomplishments** directly reflecting this mandate are: CCSP EA(b) and EA(e); DCSP EA(b) and EA(c); EGSP EA(d); and HSHWSP EA(b) and EA(c). At output level, all the Sub-Programmes address this mandate. In addition to the assessments mentioned above, outputs contributing to this mandate include, for example, dissemination of climate change information to regions to assist them in CC negotiations; pilot projects in ecosystem restoration, sustainable food production and benefit sharing; review of regional policies on ecosystem management and initiating transboundary coordination mechanisms; and development of tools for ecosystem assessment, cost benefit analysis, and ecosystem valuation.
49. Facilitating the development, implementation and evolution of norms and standards and developing coherent inter-linkages among international environmental conventions: At the Expected Accomplishment level, EGSP EA(a) and EA(b), and HSHWSP EA(c) respond to the inter-linkages among international environmental conventions. The HSHWSP EA(b) and EA(c) also relate directly to the development of norms and standards. If national development planning can be considered implicit to this mandate, then CCSP EA(a); DCSP Expected Accomplishment (a); and EGSP EA(a) and EA(c) would also address it. Outputs contributing to this mandate include support to developing protocols and tools for carbon management, forestry and land use regulations, integrating REDD<sup>31</sup> into national development planning; promoting MEAs through cooperation, to mainstream them into the UN system, and to develop capacity in MEA-related negotiations; promoting national programmes and inventories for HSHW management and tighter control on HSHW releases to the marine environment, and the mainstreaming of resource efficiency and cleaner production into national development planning (through UNDAFs).
50. **Strengthening technology support and capacity in line with country needs and priorities:** Expected Accomplishments that address strengthening technology support and capacity building are CCSP EA(b), EA(c) and EA(d); DCSP EA(a); EMSP EA(a), EA(b) and EA(c); EGSP EA(b); and HSHWSP EA(a) and EA(b). Technical support and capacity building at output level is provided through, for example, the development of various tools and methodologies for sustainable development; policy support to post crisis countries in reducing risks arising from disasters and conflicts through promoting best practices in environmental management and integrating environmental considerations into relief/recovery policies and risk reduction through preparedness (including industrial risk through the APELL process)<sup>32</sup>; strengthening environmental law institutions and judicial systems (particularly in the context of MEAs); building capacity in biodiversity assessment and integrated marine management mechanisms; support to the development of financial instruments to assist policy development; promoting capacity building focus on best practices, developing tools, and training (for example in eco-labelling, life cycle analysis, certification and awareness).

31 The UN-REDD Programme is the United Nations collaborative initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation

32 Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level (APELL) process helps people prevent, prepare and respond appropriately to accidents and emergencies (<http://www.unep.fr/scp/sp/process/>)

51. At Expected Accomplishment level, the EMSP deals only with capacity, and the RESCPSP only with promoting action; other Sub-Programme Expected Accomplishments are fairly well balanced across the mandates. However, it is not necessary that each of the Sub-Programme Expected Accomplishments should respond directly to each mandate, but clearly the MTS Sub-Programmes as a whole do.
52. Sub-programme evaluations conducted to date have also found that the Sub-Programmes are well aligned with UNEP's vision and mandate. For example the DCSP Sub-programme Evaluation (Revised Draft September 2012)<sup>33</sup> finds that the DCSP's stated objectives and Expected Accomplishments are fully aligned with UNEP's mandate as expressed in several Governing Council decisions and UN General Assembly Resolutions and Reports issued between 1989 and 2011. The DCSP is appropriate and relevant in promoting environmental management for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and peace-building, supporting environmental emergency preparedness, conducting post-crisis environmental assessments and providing environmental recovery support in post-crisis and vulnerable countries. Similarly, the Evaluation Office's Draft Evaluation of the EGSP grants that the sub-programme is relevant to UNEP's corporate mandate and member states' priorities<sup>34</sup>.
53. The Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building (BSP) was designed to address the need for environment-related technology support and capacity-building in developing countries as well as in countries with economies in transition. Capacity building, the provision of technical and institutional support, and catalysing and promoting international cooperation at national and regional level are strong themes running through all the MTS SPs, as noted above. In this respect the relevance of the MTS at national and regional level is compelling. While the MTS is aligned with the requirements of the Bali Strategic Plan, this may not be necessarily by design, because the BSP does not provide a strategic approach, but rather provides a set of principles that need to be integrated in UNEP's strategic framework and PoW. The BSP proposes courses of action for technology support and capacity building to countries, but is it not clear about UNEP's role in providing technical assistance to build capacity, and neither the BSP nor the MTS show countries how to implement these actions. This was corroborated by stakeholders interviewed during this evaluation, as well as by UNEP's QAS survey (February 2012) which concluded that the BSP and its implementation need to be analysed further in order to raise its profile (particularly among UN agencies) and strengthen its effectiveness.
54. South-South Cooperation (SSC) is a cross-cutting mechanism designed to enhance UNEP's ability to deliver environmental capacity building and technology-support activities in developing countries and regions of the South. The MTS refers to the SSC in Section IVC as a process to implement the BSP. But the SSC is not clearly captured in the MTS Sub-Programme Expected Accomplishments or in the PoW Outputs. While the SSC Unit undertakes a number of activities such as developing and implementing policy guidance for the integration of SSC approaches into UNEP POWs, SSC exchange mechanisms, communication and outreach activities, and liaising with other UN agencies to establish strategic partnerships, these appear to be carried out outside the realm of the MTS.

### **Gender**

55. The BSP requested UNEP to formulate and integrate specific gender mainstreaming strategies, including education and training for women in relevant policies, and to promote the participation of women in environmental decision-making. Subsequently, the UNEP Governing Council in its decision 23/11 "Gender equality in the field of the environment" requested UNEP to promote

<sup>33</sup> UNEP Evaluation Office (September 2012). Evaluation of the UNEP Sub-Programme on Disasters and Conflicts, Main Report -Revised Draft.

<sup>34</sup> UNEP Evaluation Office (May 2012). Evaluation of the UNEP Environmental Governance Sub-programme (Internal Report)

equal participation of men and women in environmental decision-making, to mainstream gender in environmental policies and programmes, and to collaborate with scientific institutions to assess the effects of environmental policies on women. The Gender Plan of Action (GEPa) 2006-2010 was developed to operationalize Governing Council Decision 23/11.

56. The Evaluation Office's Formative Evaluation<sup>35</sup> recommended that a study be commissioned to assess the progress made in ensuring gender equality at the operational level, and the extent to which gender had been mainstreamed into UNEP programme activities. The Review of Gender Mainstreaming was completed in June 2012<sup>36</sup>. The Review noted that the promotion of gender equality in all areas of UNEP's work is very relevant for increasing the effectiveness of its mandate. However, the Review revealed that the MTS makes no clear statement in support of gender equality, nor does it define how UNEP translates gender equality in its work. While the MTS reiterates UNEP's commitment to continue to ensuring gender responsive programming, strengthening staff capacity for gender mainstreaming and ensuring gender sensitive human resource practices, its approach to mainstreaming gender is essentially an institutional mechanism for the achievement of its objectives. Gender is therefore not integrated into the six sub-programmes *per se*. The Gender Plan of Action is process-oriented, which diminishes the relevance of gender equality in UNEP programme activities, and moreover does not support the gender equality objectives in the Governing Council decision 23/11. These findings were supported by stakeholders during this Evaluation of the MTS, where it was felt that gender integration in UNEP activities should be programmatic, rather than a human resources issue. In response to the Gender Mainstreaming Review, an internal Task Force was set up by the Executive Director, which has proposed ways to implement the recommendations of the Review.
57. To address these short-comings, the Review recommends that i) a corporate Gender Policy and Strategy is drawn up by end 2012, ii) a corporate Gender Action Plan is developed to operationalize the Gender Policy and Strategy and to complement UNEP's strategic planning documents, and iii) the UNEP Gender Policy and Strategy and gender mainstreaming initiatives are communicated proactively and sustainably, by using different channels in-house and through partners.

### UNEP Comparative Advantages

58. Stakeholders interviewed during this Evaluation (and interviews undertaken during the EO's evaluation of the EGSP<sup>37</sup>) regarded UNEP's scientific assessments, its science-policy interface, the interdisciplinary approach it promotes, and its convening power as the organisation's major comparative advantages. UNEP's convening power can be considered its greatest asset, as evidenced by its pull on stakeholders for MEA negotiations and the formation of scientific panels such as the IPCC and IRP. In the sub-programme Expected Accomplishments and outputs, UNEP's convening power is not emphasised as a distinct advantage, but implicitly rests mainly on outputs addressing linkages, partnerships and networks. With regard to the high level policy forum that UNEP is supposed to facilitate, the MTS only responds to this in EA(a) of the EGSP. As convening power can be regarded as a means to achieving, for example, interagency and inter-governmental coordination, it should appear more explicitly at the strategic level in the MTS.
59. UNEP's comparative advantages are best illustrated in the Climate Change, Disasters and Conflicts, and Harmful Substances and Hazardous Wastes Sub-Programmes. However, UNEP must identify, and then nurture, the niches that it has established. An example is in the DCSP, where UNEP provides high quality research, planning support, institutional capacity building and strategic environmental coordination at country level<sup>38</sup>. But, while UNEP has a clear niche in promoting environmental

35 UNEP Evaluation Office (July 2011). Formative Evaluation of UNEP's Programme of Work 2010-2011

36 UNEP Evaluation Office (June 2012). Review of Gender Mainstreaming in UNEP

37 UNEP Evaluation Office (May 2012). Evaluation of the UNEP Environmental Governance Sub-programme (Internal Draft)

38 UNEP Evaluation Office (August 2012). Evaluation of the UNEP Sub-Programme on Disasters and Conflicts, Zero Draft Main Report (restricted)

management for peace-building and post-conflict recovery, the DCSP Evaluation recommends that UNEP must “*specify its niche in environmental management for DRR and post-disaster recovery work to avoid duplicating efforts of other UN agencies and INGOs with perhaps larger implementing resources and firmer long-term commitment at the country level*”, giving the example of IUCN and WWF who have also been giving increasing importance to ecosystem management for DRR and have acquired significantly more field experience in the area over the same period than UNEP. This implies that the efforts and activities of other organisations may eclipse DCSP activities, eventually rendering UNEP’s work in this area irrelevant, whereas APELL is unique to UNEP, so this is one area which UNEP could build upon through the MTS.

60. UNEP’s interdisciplinary approach could be better recognised. The various Sub-Programmes bring together different disciplines and skills, and the MTS could exploit this further. For example, the linkages between climate change adaptation and ecosystem management are obvious in some of the CCSP activities (e.g., its Flagship on Ecosystem Based Adaptation), but it is not clear how the MTS is building on this link to ensure that opportunities for cooperation are not missed.
61. UNEP’s scientific assessments contribute to the science-policy interface, and comprise one of several aspects of the environmental governance platform. Based on these assessments, together with data obtained from various partners, UNEP produces a number of publications (e.g. the GEO series, the Foresight Report and country atlases) which bring emerging environmental issues to the attention of governments and other stakeholders for their consideration. In this way UNEP is building on this comparative advantage. But while many regard these assessments and publications as “invaluable” and containing important information on the state of the environment, it is not clear how much influence these publications have on member states’ national policy and decision making processes, and how this can be measured. The problem lies in how to translate science into policy, and in this case the MTS does not identify technical assistance to support countries to do this.
62. Some of UNEP’s comparative advantages as stated in the MTS 2010-2013 are in reality aspirations that UNEP hopes to achieve - namely it being “an authoritative voice for the global environment” and a “global environmental leader”. Others are advantages but not really “comparative”, particularly those referring to partnerships and UNEP’s access to, and ability to generate, expertise and knowledge which are not unique to UNEP (as there are several other UN and non-UN organisations that can claim the same, (e.g. UNDP, IUCN, WWF, IISD) but rather provide bases upon which UNEP can strengthen its comparative advantage.
63. Key themes emanating from the Sub-Programme Expected Accomplishments which could be interpreted as niche areas for MTS focus are capacity building and support to national development planning processes (both requirements of the Bali Strategic Plan). The former derives from UNEP’s experience, expertise and access to science and knowledge and the latter is based on its policy-influencing role and MEA obligations. The MTS does in fact build on these two aspects: all the sub-programmes include a capacity building component through various types of training (e.g. in adaptation planning for the CCSP, in disaster risk and biodiversity assessments for the DCSP and EMSP respectively, or in the use of specific tools), policy guidance and institutional support. Similarly all Sub-Programmes have activities aimed at strengthening institutional and regulatory frameworks and support to policy development, which are consequently distilled into national development planning processes in targeted countries.
64. Section IVB of the MTS 2010-2013 outlines implementation objectives and priorities on awareness raising, outreach and communications. However, these aspects – in particular communications - are not well emphasised in the MTS Sub-Programme Expected Accomplishments and outputs. This is a niche that would build on UNEP’s partnerships and networks. In addition, Agenda 10 of the Rio+20

Outcome<sup>39</sup> promotes universal membership of UNEP, which would help to propel UNEP into a more global landscape, but its achievement will depend to a large extent on UNEP's ability to promote the activities it carries out through the MTS, which is essentially a matter of "branding". This was highlighted previously in a paper prepared in 2009 by the Stakeholder Forum for Sustainable Development<sup>40</sup> which stated that "*the GEO report has been consistently identified by UNEP and Major Groups representatives as an extremely valuable UNEP partnership. However, its impact is reduced for the same reasons as other UNEP projects – there exists no durable communications strategy to ensure that it is used by decision-makers*". The same document also notes that "*a lot of the extremely valuable work that UNEP does is not communicated or used widely enough to have a significant impact*". This sentiment was echoed by stakeholders interviewed during this evaluation, and during interviews conducted for the EO's Evaluation of the EGSP and UNEP's QAS in February 2012 during the GCSS-X11 GMEF (20-22 Feb. 2012) and the 13th Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF-13) (18-19 Feb. 2012). UNEP has developed an External Communications Strategy<sup>41</sup> which is intended to communicate UNEP's activities through the MTS Sub-Programmes and the Green Economy Initiative to various levels of stakeholders. The strategy provides the rationale, guiding principles and channels for communication, but lacks depth in how it should be implemented.

65. While the MTS 2010-2013 was designed to meet the diverse needs of UNEP's multiple institutional stakeholders, it does not provide the tight focus needed to leverage UNEP's comparative advantages and niches. One shortcoming is that there is no mechanism in the MTS by which UNEP's comparative advantages can be measured to gauge whether they are actually being delivered through the programme activities, because they are not explicit in the Expected Accomplishments and PoW outputs.

### Global Environmental Challenges and Priorities

66. GEF priorities as determined by its six focal areas and UNEP's six thematic areas as defined in its MTS are closely aligned. Biodiversity, being a key element for sustainable ecosystems<sup>42</sup>, is addressed by all the EMSP projects as these are oriented towards the management of terrestrial, marine, coastal and freshwater ecosystems. The CCSP projects and outputs fully comply with the GEF climate change (mitigation and adaptation) and sustainable forest management and REDD+ goals. The GEF's chemical focus is mainly on POPs and fulfilling the obligations of the Stockholm Convention, and several projects and outputs of the HSHWSP have been developed on the basis of the "chemical cluster" MEAs (i.e. the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions). The CCSP and HSHWSP have outputs dealing with the assessment of tropospheric ozone and protection of the ozone layer, respectively. Capacity building and environmental governance are other MTS activities that support GEF goals. The GEF Annual Monitoring Review (2011)<sup>43</sup> agrees that the MTS satisfies GEF focus area goals, and further states that UNEP's mandated role in keeping the environment under review, as well as its scientific normative work and innovations on emerging issues is of use to helping the GEF Partnership mainstream environment into all sectors. The Division for GEF Coordination was subsumed into the rest of the organization in the course of 2010 and its staff was integrated in various Divisions of UNEP. The GEF project portfolio will be fully integrated in the Programme of Work starting from 2014-2015.
67. With regard to the MDGs, the MTS addresses MDG7 Target (A) on sustainable development and reversing loss in environmental resources through the CCSP EA(b)(renewable energy sources, energy

39 A/CONF.216/L.1 Agenda 10 – The Future We Want. Outcome of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, June 2012

40 Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future, 2009. Enhancing the role of Major Groups and Stakeholders in the implementation of UNEP's Programme of Work 2010-11

41 UNEP External Communications Strategy (X-Com) 2010–2013

42 Biodiversity is defined as "the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems." Source: <http://www.thegef.org/gef/biodiversity>

43 UNEP (2011). Annual Monitoring Review of GEF Supported Projects Implemented by UNEP

efficiency and energy conservation) and EA(c) (CDM), while all the Expected Accomplishments under RESCPSP address resource efficiency. MDG7 Target (B) on reducing biodiversity loss is primarily addressed through the EMSP and REDD under CCSP EA(d) through its ecosystem-based adaptation (EBA) approach. UNEP is not involved in monitoring progress on the MDG7 with the exception of consumption of ozone-depleting substances which is monitored by the Ozone Secretariat hosted by UNEP. That said, the sub-title of this MTS is “Environment for Development”, and development in the global context is synonymous with poverty eradication, the latter also being a key MDG (MDG1). Although the links between MDG1 on Poverty and Hunger and MDG3 Gender Equality and the MTS Sub-Programmes may be implied, they are not emphatic: neither poverty nor gender is reflected in any Expected Accomplishments. This was also noted by several stakeholders interviewed during this evaluation as being a significant omission in the current MTS. The Review of Gender Mainstreaming (2012) has made recommendations to address the gender gap (see Paragraph \_ above). UNEP’s outcome paper on the Rio+20 Conference (The Future We Want) acknowledges that poverty must be addressed to attain sustainable development, and the draft MTS 2014-2017 has in all its sub-programmes a stronger focus on human well-being, poverty and gender.

68. In the context of current and emerging environmental priorities, the thematic areas of the MTS are consistent with the key issues identified in the GEO4 Report, i.e. water, climate change, biodiversity, international environmental governance, harmful substances, etc. The scientific assessments and reviews carried out through various MTS sub-programmes contribute to UNEP’s mandate of keeping the global environmental situation under review and providing policy advice and early warning information based on sound science. This has been discussed in the context of UNEP’s comparative advantages (see Paragraph \_ above).
69. The MTS could do more to adequately respond to its vision to be “the leading global authority that sets the environmental agenda... and that serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment”. This is an advocacy issue, which in the MTS is relegated to a much lower level (output level), and does not leverage UNEP’s position as a global environmental authority.

### **Regional and National Priorities**

70. The MTS CCSP, DCSP, EGSP, EMSP and HSHWSP have one or more Expected Accomplishments and/or outputs that aim at national-level interventions. Key projects under these Sub-Programmes also have regional and/or national focus<sup>44</sup>. The MTS’s focus with regard to regional and national priorities revolves around support to policy and national development planning, and capacity building. Direct involvement at country level is also subject to the type of intervention. For example the DCSP is more country-oriented due to the nature of the sub-programme, and has country programmes in Sudan, Afghanistan, Haiti and the DR Congo. The notable exception is the RESCPSP which does not clearly reflect regional or national level focus at Expected Accomplishment level, or at output level.
71. Some stakeholders interviewed during this evaluation felt that given UNEP’s small size and capacity and financial constraints, its activities through the MTS should focus on normative work at the global level. It could then focus on pushing the environmental agenda forward, for example by convening member countries to galvanise political interest in key current and emerging issues. This Evaluation finds that UNEP’s impact has to be felt at national level if it is to deliver key components of its SPs, namely: to promote capacity building which is predominantly targeted towards country level stakeholders whereas global forums are largely inadequate to reach the majority of these stakeholders; to implement pilot projects in order to ground-truth and demonstrate the concepts and tools it is promoting; and to provide long-term, intensive country-level support to influence policies and institutions. Besides, UNEP’s access to Governments in global and regional forums is

44 Sub-Programme Factsheets

mostly channelled through Ministries of Environment or other environmental agencies which in many developing countries have relatively little political influence and are often under-resourced. Influence on other key sector ministries (agriculture, industry, transport etc.) can only be obtained through direct country-level support or by working through international partners with stronger country presence, the latter being a key pillar of UNEP's business model in the MTS 2014-2017.

72. The preparation of the MTS 2010-2013 was largely top down. Countries are targeted for support either directly by the donor/funding agency, when a country (or where applicable, through its Permanent Representative) or regional office approaches a division for support, or at the discretion of a Divisional Director. Thus in some cases there is a conflict between global and national priorities, as country support is influenced by the funding available to the divisions, rather than as a process of coordination or communication with the countries. As a result, national level priorities are sometimes overlooked in favour of global ones, although, overall, countries do find UNEP's work relevant to their development objectives. This was confirmed in interviews conducted during this evaluation, and also by UNEP's QAS in February 2012.
73. The BSP and the Accra Agenda emphasise the principle of national ownership and the need for effective partnerships. According to DfID assessment of UNEP<sup>45</sup>, MTS Sub-programme country level activities have relatively little national ownership, particularly among developing member states. However, national ownership and relevance at the national level is highly dependent on the nature of Sub-Programme activities. For example, DCSP responds directly to specific country requests as noted above, and agri-food initiatives supported through the RESCPSP are implemented at national level.
74. The MTS emphasizes the importance of working with UNEP's partners for its successful implementation. The MTS SPs, through their outputs, promote the establishment of national and regional networks, public and private partnerships, partnerships with other UN organizations, and partnerships for international cooperation and regional coordination. At the national and regional level, these partnerships can play an important role in catalysing action. For example, under the EMSP, UNEP, the EU and the Kenya Government have embarked on a new restoration project for Kenya's Mau Forest complex, a critical but degraded forest ecosystem and water catchment.
75. UNEP has developed a partnership and procedures policy<sup>46</sup> which focuses on the modalities of setting up partnerships. But the policy provides no strategy for dissemination of information (including UNEP publications) and knowledge to partners or sharing experiences amongst partners, nor any means to measure how successful partnerships are or have been. As implied above and also noted in the Stakeholder Forum report (2009), UNEP needs to enhance its knowledge management and improve communication, both internally and externally, in order to render its partnerships "successful, relevant and impactful". Furthermore, partnerships appear to be formed in Paris or Geneva with the emphasis being on the "environment" bit of the MTS 2010-2013 sub title "Environment for Development"; the "development" aspect is somewhat neglected. UNEP also has a policy on 'Strategic Presence', although it is not clear how it targets countries for the provision of services; moreover, UNEP's direct impact on development at the country level is difficult to measure.
76. UNEP's convening power renders it a key player in international environmental governance. Although UNEP has been commended for playing an important role in strengthening environmental governance at the global, regional and national levels<sup>47</sup>, the MTS still needs to do more at the strategic level to strengthen support to governments, in line with the Paris Declaration, to enable them to formulate and implement their national, sub-regional and regional policies, laws and institutions. Again, the problem

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45 DfID (February 2011). Multilateral Aid Review: Assessment for United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

46 UNEP (October 2011). UNEP Partnership Policy and Procedures Policy Outline No.1/2011

47 Australian AID (March 2012). Australian Multilateral Assessment - UNEP

here is in the implementation of policies, laws and standards, and their applicability to the situation on the ground, due to for example, differing environmental priorities at regional and even national levels.

77. Responding to a recommendation in the Formative Evaluation of UNEP's Programme of Work 2010-2011, the MTS 2014-2017 has tried to align regional and national priorities with global priorities. Its preparation process mapped country needs and priorities using the results from various regional and national documents and ministerial as well as expert forums. However, within UNEP's existing divisional structure, there lies a challenge to incorporate a bottom-up approach which will accommodate national level priorities, and so to capture regional and national priorities more effectively it will necessitate rethinking UNEP's divisional organisational processes and structures.

## **Multilateral Environment Agreements**

78. The MTS acknowledges the "need to engage even deeper with multilateral environmental agreement secretariats in coherently addressing substantive environmental issues, as appropriate". The MTS also proposes that UNEP identifies "inter-linkages among multilateral environmental agreements to provide an opportunity for more effective implementation at all levels and to achieve the objectives for each cross-cutting thematic priority." These intentions are reflected in EGSP EA(a) and (b), and in outputs under these Expected Accomplishments which put strong emphasis on collaboration with MEA secretariats, assisting member countries in MEA negotiations, and providing support to implement MEAs.
79. The UNEP's Programme Performance Report<sup>48</sup> shows that the CCSP objective and Expected Accomplishments respond directly to the UNFCCC's decisions (e.g. through supporting development of Technology Needs Assessments, CDM and REDD). UNEP undoubtedly contributed to the success of the Vienna Convention and its Montreal Protocol, and is regarded as the torch bearer for the UNFCCC. Similarly, the HSHWSP has been instrumental in the successful implementation of the "chemical cluster" MEAs, and UNEP is currently negotiating the development of a global legally-binding treaty on mercury. The HSHWSP EA(a) and (b) (and their respective outputs) both satisfy the MTS intentions of addressing key environmental issues through support to the MEA secretariats as well as providing support at national and regional levels for chemical management, while EA(c) directly relates to controlling use of harmful substances of global concern in line with MEAs. The DCSP objective and EA(a) links with the UNCCD in connection with risk reduction from natural disasters.
80. While the links between MTS SPs, Expected Accomplishments and activities and the key MEAs are clear in the Sub-Programmes described above, they need to be strengthened in the EMSP and RESCSP. For example, the CCSP makes reference to ecosystem-based adaptation, but there are hardly any clear linkages between EMSP activities and the UNFCCC, or between EMSP and the CMS or CITES. The RESCSP also lacks any concrete linkages with specific MEAs, although its EA(b) could reflect a link with the UNFCCC's CDM.
81. As mentioned above, the secretariats for the CBD, CMS, CITES, the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, and the Vienna Convention are administered by UNEP. Their location within UNEP can be considered a comparative advantage, as it is relevant in the context of UNEP's ability to influence the global environmental agenda in regard to these specific convention topics. In addition, the success of the MEAs, in particular the Chemical Cluster MEAs, demonstrates that UNEP makes use of, and builds on, its convening power.
82. The DCSP, EMSP and RESCSP need to emphasise UNEP's role in providing support to member countries in the implementation of MEAs and also in communicating MEA requirements to stakeholders.

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48 UNEP Programme Performance Report, January 2010 – December 2011



83. MEAs have succeeded in promoting environmental governance at global, regional and national level. UNEP through various MTS programme activities is providing relevant services to MEAs, notably through exercising its convening power for MEA preparations and negotiations, supporting scientific networks (eg IPCC, IRC) and forging strategic partnerships. However, there are currently more than 500 MEAs, 45 of global geographical scope and at least 44 UN organizations actively engaged in environmental activities<sup>49</sup>. Consequently there is much fragmentation and duplication, as well confusion in regard to obligations and responsibilities among countries to satisfy MEA requirements. This has led to weak implementation or “domestication” of MEAs, which indicates that more needs to be done in regard to streamlining and harmonising MEAs, and providing support to Governments to strengthen legal and institutional arrangements to facilitate the implementation of MEAs. Agenda 10 of the Rio+20 Outcome, The Future We Want, endorses the need “*to promote policy coherence at all relevant levels, improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary overlap and duplication, and enhance coordination and cooperation among the multilateral environmental agreements ... well as with the United Nations system in the field*”. In this regard, the Evaluation notes that MTS 2014-2017 recognises the need for UNEP to use its convening power to bring about synergies, convergence and cooperation on MEAs, and further proposes means for implementing the MTS in consultation with MEA Secretariats.
84. In terms of the UN system, the EGSP addresses inter-agency coordination processes at all levels, including at the CEB, EMG, UNDG and UNCTs under One UN, as well as global and regional intergovernmental processes for policy debate, negotiations and decision-making within and outside the UN system, including those of MEAs. Under the EGSP EA(a), there are a number of outputs such as providing policy guidance on inter-governmental coordination and to UN entities, mainstreaming MEAs into the UN system and promoting MEAs through cooperation, which build on UNEP’s convening power. However, the UNEP Evaluation Office’s Evaluation of the EGSP found that UNEP should collaborate more with other UN entities, engaging with them to mainstream environment into UN system-wide activities, improving outreach communication and awareness, and asserting its relevance to policy makers within its own existing institutional structures as well as those of its partners. In addition the Evaluation of the EGSP notes that there is a need for better support to the UNEP Liaison Office in translating the technical outputs developed in Nairobi into relevant forms for integration into UN policy processes.

## 2.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

### UNEP Mandate

85. Each of the MTS Sub-programmes (through EAs, outputs and/or activities) clearly contributes towards achieving one or more of the five key areas of UNEP’s mandate. All Sub-Programmes are aligned with major Governing Council decisions, in part because the mandate is so broad that it can accommodate the diverse nature of the MTS Sub-programme objectives, Expected Accomplishments and outputs. Given that the UNEP mandate is derived from the major Governing Council decisions, and the MTS is aligned with the UNEP mandate, the MTS therefore also complies with major Governing Council decisions.
86. While the MTS’s consistency with UNEP’s technological support/capacity building mandate is evident, the challenge lies in the implementation of this mandate, because the BSP (which sets the mandate) does not provide the necessary guidance to achieve the requirements contained therein. This puts its relevance into question. **The Evaluation therefore recommends** that a review of the BSP be undertaken to assess its relevance and effectiveness 10 years after its launch, and to propose

<sup>49</sup> UNEP Evaluation Office (May 2012). Evaluation of the UNEP Environmental Governance Sub-Programme (Internal Report)

practical actions for the focused implementation of the Plan in line with The Future We Want (Agenda 10, Outcome of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development).

### **UNEP Comparative Advantages**

87. UNEP's most important comparative advantages are its convening power which also enables it to mobilize the Organisation's political will, its scientific assessments which help identify emerging issues and provide a sound science-policy interface and its considerable track record in environmental issues. To give clear focus to Sub-Programme activities, it is important that the MTS more clearly identifies and develops UNEP's niche areas, so as to avoid duplication with other organisations working in similar areas, and to ensure that it capitalises on specific aspects of UNEP's comparative advantages.

### **Global, Regional and National Priorities**

88. The six thematic priority areas of the MTS are well aligned with the existing global environmental challenges identified in the GEO4, the GEF focal areas and MDG7. However the link between environment and development is weak and cross-cutting issues, specifically poverty and gender, are poorly reflected in the MTS. Taking cognisance of this, and in order to conform to strategic documents such as the Future We Want, the Draft MTS 2014-2017 has attempted to integrated these issues into each of its sub-programmes. **The Evaluation therefore recommends** that the MTS 2014-2017 has programmatic indicators linking these cross-cutting issues to UNEP's work on environment and development. This will also enable measurement of achievement against key MDGs.
89. The MTS indeed emphasizes the importance of working with UNEP's partners for its successful implementation. Nevertheless, there is a need for the MTS to build on existing partnerships, particularly civil society, through communication and knowledge sharing to ensure greater impact of MTS activities, and to promote UNEP's role as a global leader in environment. UNEP possesses expertise and technical capacity that other UN agencies do not have (e.g. in climate change, marine and terrestrial ecosystems, etc.). It should, through the MTS, use these assets to strengthen partnerships particularly among UN agencies and bilaterals, so that these agencies can solicit UNEP expertise and advice, and in return provide UNEP with a wider reach and add weight to UNEP's messages at country level. Building on strategic partnerships is a key part of the MTS 2014-2017. In this regard, **the Evaluation recommends** that UNEP periodically assesses how successful and relevant its partnerships are, particularly with other UN agencies and bilateral agencies, and what impact these partnerships are having in assisting UNEP achieve its MTS objectives. Further, UNEP should assess how well the organisation works through sub-programme level partnerships and with more operational, project level partnerships.

### **Multilateral Environment Agreements**

90. Linkages between the MTS and the CMS and CITES MEAs that are anchored within UNEP need to be given more prominence in the MTS SPs. Building on UNEP's convening power, the MTS should also focus more on system wide approaches to convergence and cooperation on MEAs. The recommendation proposed in the UNEP EO's Evaluation of the EGSP of the need for a focused strategy on Environmental Governance (as proposed in the MTS 2014-2017) would help to address, among other things, the problem of MEA fragmentation and duplication and guide the implementation of MEAs at global, national and regional level.

## 3. Effectiveness & Impact

### 3.1 Introduction

91. The assessment of effectiveness discusses the achievement of immediate outcomes, the level of results that can be realistically expected after an implementation period of two years, and progress towards intermediate states.<sup>50</sup> The impact assessment discusses the likelihood of UNEP interventions bringing about a fundamental and durable change in the condition of people and their environment. To this intent, the evaluation has identified assumptions and impact drivers required for converting immediate outcomes into eventual impact - via intermediate states.<sup>51</sup> The assessment builds on two draft in-depth evaluations of the UNEP Environmental Governance and Disasters & Conflict Sub-programmes<sup>52</sup> as well as a review of the remaining four UNEP sub-programmes on Climate Change, Harmful Substances and Hazardous Waste, Resource Efficiency - Sustainable Consumption and Production, and Ecosystem Management. Given limitations to the review of the four sub-programmes, findings are preliminary in nature for further investigation and verification by forthcoming in-depth sub-programme evaluations.<sup>53</sup>

### 3.2 Assessment of Effectiveness

92. The following sections assess the achievement of immediate outcomes and to what extent progress has already been made towards intermediate states as identified in sub-programme Theories of Change (TOCs), used as the basis for assessment.
93. The evaluation was requested to include a review of UNEP contributions to gender equality and women's empowerment. However, the team is required to point out the overall finding on effectiveness of the 2012 Review of Gender Mainstreaming in UNEP: "UNEP is having difficulty in successfully demonstrating its contribution to this endeavour. UNEP projects are unable to demonstrate their contribution to promoting gender equality mainly due to lack of substantive gender considerations in project design and implementation, lack of sex-disaggregated and gender-specific information in monitoring and reporting, and lack of attention to gender dimensions in UNEP evaluations." Programme Performance Report (PPR) #4 features gender in a specific section entitled "Integrating Gender Perspective into Programme Implementation", but only to highlight the number of projects that have integrated gender actions into their project activities (72) or incorporated gender-specific activities (2), without indicating their affiliation to a particular sub-programme or discussing concrete outcomes. It is therefore not possible to pronounce any views on UNEP's effectiveness in terms of gender equality and women's empowerment.

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50 Immediate outcomes are defined as short to medium-term behavioural or systemic effects that projects contribute towards, and that are designed to help achieve the project's impacts. Intermediate states are defined as the transitional conditions between the project's outcomes and impacts that must be achieved in order to deliver the intended impacts (The ROTI Handbook, piii).

51 Drivers and assumptions are those external factors or conditions that need to be present for change to happen along the causal pathways of the Theory of Change from outputs over outcomes to impacts. Drivers are factors over which UNEP can exercise a certain level of control and which can therefore be influenced. Assumptions are factors which the Organization cannot influence.

52 Draft reports.

53 For further information on the applied methodology, please see above.

## Climate Change

94. As set out in the MTS and the PoW 2010/2011, the CC Sub-programme is structured around four themes: i) adaptation, ii) mitigation, iii) reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation, and iv) science and outreach. Its results framework builds on five EAs, four of which are situated at the intermediate state level, with EA(e) pitched at the immediate outcome level. Based on the results statements and intervention strategy, the evaluation has constructed a simple Theory of Change against which to assess progress.<sup>54</sup>
95. This section assesses the extent to which UNEP interventions are making a difference according to three inter-connected immediate outcome areas:  
National capacities to conduct adaptation planning and measures are built and strengthened;
- Capacities to take sound decisions regarding low carbon and clean energy sources and technology alternatives are strengthened and access to finance for renewable technologies is facilitated; and
  - Countries' information and knowledge-base for reducing emissions from deforestation, while ensuring that forests provide multiple benefits for livelihoods and biodiversity, is enhanced.

### ***National capacities to conduct adaptation planning and measures are built and strengthened***

96. Climate change adaptation, with a specific focus on ecosystem-based adaptation (EBA), is a relatively new idea and area of work for UNEP. Under the PoW 2010/2011, UNEP has built and strengthened capacities to conduct adaptation planning and measures. It has done so in numerous countries, through regional interventions and in collaboration with partners, including from the UN development system. Capacity-building activities targeted a range of stakeholders, from public officials, private sector representatives participating in regional climate change networks in Africa and Asia<sup>55</sup>, to indigenous communities in the Nicaragua Bosawa Biosphere Reserve<sup>56</sup>. A particular focus, although still in its start-up phase, has been on mountain ecosystems.<sup>57</sup>
97. *Going beyond immediate outcomes*, there are some examples where increased capacities have contributed to adaptation planning and preventive actions being incorporated into national development planning and policy processes (intermediate state & EA(a)). CC DARE<sup>58</sup>, in collaboration with UNDP, seems to have been particularly effective in this regard. For instance, a CC DARE project in the Seychelles has reportedly resulted in the Ministry of Education adopting legislation on the integration of rainwater harvesting into building codes as well as on rainwater harvesting in schools. CC DARE also inspired the establishment of the Climate Change Adaptation Unit within the Environmental Protection Agency in Ghana and contributed to the finalization of a Climate Change Adaptation

54 The ToC forms the basis for the performance assessment. It was constructed on the basis of a review of strategic documents. The TOC shows the causal linkages between changes at different results levels. It identifies the expected immediate outcomes of UNEP's work and the intermediate states between these outcomes and desired environmental impact.

55 At the regional level, UNEP supported the establishment and work of climate change networks to help understand vulnerability patterns, exchange adaptation knowledge and good practices and provide capacity building in view of influencing national development planning and policy processes. UNEP supported the Asia Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN) ([www.apan-gan.net](http://www.apan-gan.net)) and the Adaptation Knowledge Platform for Asia ([www.climateadapt.asia](http://www.climateadapt.asia)). This support resulted in, among other things, training needs assessments and training modules for the agriculture sectors in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Mongolia and Nepal. REGATTA, the Regional Gateway for Technology Transfer and Climate Change Action in Latin America and the Caribbean, launched in October 2010, held a first regional roundtable in April 2011 followed by a number of other events to exchange knowledge.

56 Activities with indigenous communities in the Nicaragua Bosawa Biosphere Reserve have raised awareness of climate change and facilitated the sharing of traditional knowledge in order to strengthen their understanding of the possible impacts of climate change on livelihoods and wellbeing and enhance local actions to adapt to climate change impacts.

57 In December 2010, UNEP, UNDP and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) launched the four-year Joint Ecosystem-Based Adaptation in Mountain Ecosystems Programme ([www.ebaflagship.org](http://www.ebaflagship.org)), focusing services on Nepal, Peru and Uganda to help countries build resilience through ecosystems-based adaptation measures.

58 [www.ccdare.org](http://www.ccdare.org)

Strategy. Furthermore, in Senegal, the Ministry of Finance is integrating climate change adaptation into national planning and budgeting using tools developed under CC DARE activities.

***Capacities to take sound decisions regarding low carbon and clean energy sources and technology alternatives are strengthened and access to finance for renewable technologies is facilitated***

98. In the area of climate change mitigation, UNEP has considerable experience in particular in the field of clean technology. Most recent highlights at the beginning of 2012 are the launch of the UN SG's global initiative Sustainable Energy for All<sup>59</sup>, which UNEP helped to shape, and the decision for UNEP to host the UNFCCC Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), an indication of confidence in the Organization's capabilities.
99. Evidence suggests that UNEP-supported global initiatives, partnerships and networks have played an important role in enhancing capacities to take sound decisions regarding low carbon and clean energy sources and technology alternatives. Throughout the 2010/2011 biennium, UNEP provided governments and other stakeholders with evidence and advice on mainstreaming renewable energy into sector plans and strategies and advancing energy efficiency and renewable energy. Highlighted examples are the en.lighten initiative<sup>60</sup>, the Partnership for Clean Fuels Vehicles (PCFV)<sup>61</sup> and the Global Fuel Economy Initiative (GFEI)<sup>62</sup>. A MTE<sup>63</sup> of the UNEP-facilitated South-East Asian Climate Change Focal Point Network concludes that the project has been somewhat effective in that - after two years of implementation - an increasingly known network has been built, although confined to a relatively small circle of practitioners, and responsible government officials and other stakeholders have attended meetings and capacity-building activities on especially energy-related mitigation tools.
100. As concerns access to finance for renewable technologies, the second element of this immediate outcome area, current estimates indicate that UNEP helped to mobilize over USD200 million during the 2010/2011 biennium for clean energy projects: The Organization's involvement in the Seed Capital Assistance Facility (SCAF), established towards the end of 2010, is estimated to have stimulated over USD150 million in investments. In addition, USD63 million is the total leveraged from the public and private sectors under the Global Solar Water Heating Market Transformation and Strengthening Initiative (GSWH<sup>64</sup>) and the Mediterranean Investment Facility (MIF).<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the public-private partnership Africa Carbon Asset Development (ACAD) Facility<sup>66</sup>, spearheaded by UNEP, was scaled up in late 2010 to include provision of grant funding for five additional projects. Out of some 74 project applications received from 20 countries, 15 projects in nine countries<sup>67</sup> were selected to receive targeted ACAD grant support covering a wide range of technologies and sectors.
101. *Going beyond immediate outcomes*, the evaluation finds that increased capacities and funding have contributed to countries making sound policy, technology and investment choices and deploying improved/phasing out inefficient technologies (intermediate state & EA(b) and EA(c)). At the policy level, the UNEP/UNDP Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI)<sup>68</sup> has contributed, amongst

59 The initiative brings key actors to the table to make sustainable energy for all a reality by 2030. It was launched globally in January 2012; [www.sustainableenergyforall.org](http://www.sustainableenergyforall.org).

60 GEF-funded and therefore not further elaborated.

61 Elaborated under the HSHW Sub-programme assessment below.

62 UNEP involvement since 2009. [www.globalfueleconomy.org](http://www.globalfueleconomy.org).

63 Mid-term Evaluation of the Southeast Asian Climate Change Focal Point Network Project, June 2011.

64 GEF-funded.

65 Financial data source: PPR4.

66 Established late 2009. [www.acadfacility.org](http://www.acadfacility.org).

67 Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda.

68 [www.unpei.org](http://www.unpei.org).

other things<sup>69</sup>, to the inclusion of climate issues in Bangladesh's Sixth Five-Year Plan 2011-15; to the establishment of the Rwanda National Climate and Environment Fund and the integration of climate change in Rwanda's 2nd Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy; as well as to the institutionalization of the Environment-Climate-Poverty Mainstreaming Reference Group and the integration of environment-climate-poverty concerns into national and sectoral key results areas of the 11th Plan in Bhutan. Particular achievements in terms of improved technologies are the deployment of solar water heating in Tunisia<sup>70</sup>, the effective phasing out of lead in gasoline as a result of PCFV<sup>71</sup>, and the adoption of vehicle efficiency standards in Vietnam and the Philippines as part of GFEL.

***Countries' information and knowledge-base for reducing emissions from deforestation, while ensuring that forests provide multiple benefits for livelihoods and biodiversity, is enhanced***

102. UN-REDD, the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries<sup>72</sup>, is the vehicle for achieving this particular outcome. UN-REDD builds on the convening role and technical expertise of UNEP, UNDP and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). It convenes stakeholders at the global level and supports nationally-led, participatory country strategies, plans and programmes to catalyse the transformation of forest systems.
103. By the end of 2012, the number of partner countries benefiting from the UN-REDD Programme in terms of enhanced information and knowledge for reducing emissions from deforestation, while ensuring that their forests provide multiple benefits for livelihoods and biodiversity, had increased to 42. They are reportedly home to 56% of the world's tropical forests. In addition, UN-REDD had expanded beyond the initial nine pilot countries to provide support, including funding allocations, for 16 countries.
104. *Going beyond these immediate outcomes*, funds are being used to implement national programmes, i.e. to support countries in their REDD+ readiness efforts to develop and implement national REDD+ strategies to transform their forest systems (intermediate state & EA(d)). Partner countries are reportedly in various stages of implementation. Indonesia, Vietnam and the DRC are amongst those considered most advanced. Only one country programme has been subject to evaluation so far. A MTE of the Tanzania UN-REDD programme<sup>73</sup> found that while the objectives of the programme remain highly relevant, it was hampered by limited national ownership and limited national capacity on technical aspects. Furthermore, numerous management issues had caused delays in programme implementation and the number of multilateral and bilateral engagements had created coordination challenges. Overall, the evaluation assessed the programme as "unsatisfactory, with positive elements".<sup>74</sup>

**Disasters and Conflicts**

105. To ultimately have an impact on the sustainability of environmental benefits and livelihoods, the D&C Sub-programme, in the medium term, is expected to contribute to improved and equitable environmental management and governance for disaster risk reduction, improved environmental emergency response, conflict prevention and peace building, and environmental recovery in supported countries. UNEP's efforts focus on building different dimensions of capacity in countries vulnerable

69 See UNEP Environmental Governance Sub-programme Evaluation Report.

70 133,340 households have reportedly installed solar water heaters as a result of the PROSOL project funded through MIF.

71 See findings for the HSHW Sub-programme.

72 Launched in 2008. [www.un-redd.org](http://www.un-redd.org); also see UN-REDD Programme 2011 Year in Review.

73 Mid-term evaluation of the UN-REDD Programme – Tanzania Quick Start Initiative, adopted by the Programme Coordination and Management Group (PCMG) of the UN-REDD Tanzania Country Programme on 23 May 2012.

74 According to comments on the draft evaluation report by CC Sub-programme staff, "since the evaluation, corrective action has been taken and all of UNEP's funds have been disbursed and activities have been completed".

to disasters and conflicts, so that environmental management and governance can be improved. On the basis of a reconstructed TOC, the evaluation identified six immediate outcomes corresponding to different dimensions of country capacity for environmental management and emergency preparedness.

106. This section assesses the extent to which UNEP interventions are making a difference according to six inter-connected immediate outcome areas:
- Raised awareness and better information on environment-disaster and environment-conflict linkages;
  - Improved environmental and emergency preparedness strategies and planning;
  - Improved policies for environmental management;
  - More adequate environmental regulatory framework;
  - Enhanced environmental management skills; and
  - Stronger environmental institutions.

### ***Raised awareness and better information on environment-disaster and environment-conflict linkages***

107. The D&C Sub-programme has been very successful in enhancing availability and access to environmental information in the aftermath of disasters and conflicts by delivering quality post-crisis environmental impact assessments in numerous crisis-affected countries. Increasingly, professional communication strategies and plans have helped ensure that newly generated information was accessed and internalized by the right target audiences. Assessment results were usually well accepted, sometimes even by opposing parties, because UNEP was widely believed to provide neutral and independent, science-based information.
108. Within the period covered by the evaluation, most in-depth assessments by UNEP were conducted in post-conflict countries and their reliability and usefulness was overall considered very high. Assessments have also laid the foundation for UNEP's continued post-conflict recovery support to some countries such as Sudan, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone. In-depth post-crisis assessment reports are usually well written and illustrated. Some country-level stakeholders were directly involved in assessments and field research and should have acquired new skills through that involvement. The sub-programme has missed opportunities to capitalize on more than twelve years of post-crisis assessment experience. An exception to this has been in the "preventive" Programme Framework 1 where significant attention was given to the development of assessment tools, their demonstration in a limited number of pilot countries and their dissemination through publications and training.

### ***Improved environmental and emergency preparedness strategies and planning***

109. UNEP has provided technical assistance and training to several governments of natural disaster and conflict-affected countries for improving environmental and emergency preparedness strategies and planning. The evaluation is quite confident that UNEP post-crisis assessments, sometimes followed by more specific field research on environment-conflict or -disaster linkages, have also influenced strategies and planning by raising awareness and understanding among decision makers. During the period under review, UNEP supported several disaster-affected countries in integrating environmental needs and priorities into recovery plans and, in a few cases, UNEP's support went further and led to the preparation of stand-alone environmental recovery strategies. Also in post-conflict programme countries, UNEP has in some instances supported government agencies directly with the development or up-dating of general and sector-specific environmental strategies and plans. The D&C Sub-programme has also directly promoted the use of assessment information for disaster

risk reduction (DRR) planning in a limited number of countries, supported emergency preparedness planning as part of local Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies on a Local Level Programme (APELL) demonstrations, both in industrial parks and coastal tourism sites, and advised on the design of local, coastal protection projects. Planning for DRR has been indirectly supported as well, through a training initiative on Eco-DRR in partnership with the Partnership on Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction (PEDRR).

### ***Improved policies for environmental management***

110. UNEP post-crisis assessments and occasional field research on more specific themes are likely to have influenced policy making towards more sustainable environmental management. In a few post-conflict countries, UNEP has also provided direct policy advice, in particular on how to integrate assessment and field research recommendations in environmental policy. Understandably, direct policy support was concentrated in those countries where UNEP has a longer-term country presence because policy work usually requires long-term engagement and close collaboration and trust relationships with the relevant decision makers.

### ***More adequate environmental regulatory framework***

111. The D&C Sub-programme has contributed to enhancing environmental regulatory frameworks in a handful of post-crisis countries aiming at reducing the environmental impact of disasters, conflicts and reconstruction efforts, as well as promoting more sustainable post-crisis reconstruction. UNEP assisted governments with improving a quite varied and dispersed set of laws, regulations, technical standards and guidelines. In post-conflict country programmes, UNEP also managed to influence regulatory frameworks through its assessments, research, advocacy and, sometimes, direct technical assistance. In some cases, UNEP played an advisory role in key regulatory processes led by other development partners.

### ***Enhanced environmental management skills***

112. Better awareness and understanding through assessments, field-research and training courses have contributed to enhanced technical and managerial skills, in particular in countries where UNEP could maintain longer-term support. This immediate outcome was achieved to a certain extent where UNEP provided technical advice to efforts led by national and local stakeholders, such as in demonstration sites, where pilot project stakeholders received technical coaching during the practical implementation of UNEP-promoted environmental management and industrial emergency preparedness approaches. Generally speaking, skills development has usually not been comprehensive in terms of whose skills were built or of what kind of skills were built. Most attention was given to policy and planning skills, while assessment, management, monitoring and enforcement skills have received less attention. Across the post-conflict country programmes, skills were built for staff of a rather limited number of government agencies and other national partners in varied fields such as field research, community-based environmental planning, conduct of awareness campaigns, development of laws and regulations, and verification of compulsory environmental impact assessments by extractive industries. UNEP's direct engagement in environmental restoration and management projects in post-disaster situations has been rather limited and mainly focussed on the same countries where assessments and policy/planning support has been provided. In those cases, UNEP provided very specific technical advice to government and communities engaged in restoration and reconstruction efforts, contributing to their implementation skills. In the area of DRR and environmental emergency preparedness, implementation skills were built in many demonstration sites.

### ***Stronger environmental institutions***

113. UNEP has contributed to strengthening of environmental institutions in those crisis-affected countries where UNEP has a longer-term country presence. Understandably, no institutional support



was provided in the area of DRR because of the typically shorter, more localized and less intensive country engagement strategy in the countries supported by the DRR teams.

## Ecosystems Management

114. The Ecosystems Management Sub-programme (EMSP) differs from most other MTS sub-programmes in that it is built around a set of approaches - grouped together under the broad concept of ecosystem management - rather than addressing a specific set of environmental challenges, such as climate change, harmful substances, disasters and conflicts, etc. This has two important implications: firstly, ecosystem management approaches are also important to several other sub-programmes, with the result that there is a significant amount of overlap and complementarity between the EMSP and other SPs such as Climate Change or Disasters & Conflicts, and secondly, the EMSP inevitably aggregates a wide range of different thematic areas or issues to which ecosystem management principles can be applied - such as biodiversity, marine and coastal areas, freshwater areas, etc.
115. In this regard, the Ecosystem Management Sub-programme can best be regarded as a matrix, with different components of the ecosystem management approach on one axis, and different thematic areas to which the approach can potentially be applied on the other. This matrix is illustrated in Figure 2. In practice during the current MTS cycle, the MTS results framework for the EMSP has been aligned with the vertical “approach” axis, with three Expected Accomplishments relating to different dimensions of the EM approach, namely: a) building awareness and capacity of countries and regions to adopt the ecosystem approach - referred to by the EMSP as “Making the Case”; b) Developing and applying ecosystem management tools for assessing, restoring and managing ecosystems; and c) mainstreaming ecosystem management approaches into development and economic planning and investment decisions.
116. The matrix underlying the Ecosystem Management Sub-programme, comprising of major ecosystem management approaches and key EMSP thematic areas

**Figure 2: Major EMSP Thematic Areas**

Major EM Approaches (EAs)	Marine & Coastal Ecosystems	Terrestrial Ecosystems	Freshwater Ecosystems	Biodiversity
Making the Case				
Developing and applying ecosystem management tools and methodologies				
Mainstreaming in national economic and development processes				

117. Cutting across these three approach-oriented EAs, UNEP has in practice been implementing a wide range of broad thematic initiatives that inevitably contribute to multiple PoW Outputs and multiple EAs. For example, UNEP has a comprehensive, well-established and highly regarded programme of activities on marine and coastal ecosystems led by DEPI’s Freshwater and Marine Ecosystems Branch, covering a variety of initiatives such as the Marine Ecosystems Unit, the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land based Activities (GPA), and the Regional Seas Programme. These initiatives align with the thematic (horizontal) dimension of the matrix in Figure 2, but the activities and outputs that they deliver inevitably cut across all three of the ecosystem management approaches (or MTS EAs) in the vertical arm of the matrix. However, because of the way in which UNEP’s results framework and resource allocation mechanisms are currently structured (see Business Processes, Systems & Structures, and Human Resources and Finance sections), in practice the projects implemented under each thematic area

must for administrative, financial and reporting purposes be attributed to a single EA or even a single PoW Output. For example, in the case of the marine and coastal thematic area, the majority of the projects implemented under this theme are attributed to PoW Output #323: "Integrated marine management mechanisms are developed and networks of Marine Protected Areas are promoted", because that is the only EMSP PoW Output that explicitly addresses marine issues.

118. In hindsight, the alignment of the EMSP results framework with the ecosystem management approaches dimension of the matrix has in practice undermined UNEP's ability to deliver effectively and efficiently on the sub-programme. Rather, it would have been more appropriate for the sub-programme results framework to have been aligned with the major thematic areas as illustrated in Figure 2 above, and to have adopted the ecosystem management approaches as major cross-cutting principles underpinning programme delivery, to be reflected in the causal logic and design of all projects delivered through the sub-programme. This lesson learnt has already been taken on board in the design of the new MTS 2014-17 and the PoW 2014-2015, in which the EMSP results framework is now primarily aligned with priority thematic areas, as opposed to ecosystem management approaches. This evaluation fully supports the planned realignment of the EMSP results framework.
119. The EMSP Theory of Change developed as part of this Evaluation established three immediate outcomes for the EMSP during the current period, each of which is aligned with the three EMSP EAs (see paragraph \_ above). The achievements against each of the identified immediate outcomes are discussed below.

### ***Building awareness and capacity***

120. This immediate outcome focuses on making the case for incorporating an ecosystem approach into national planning processes to enhance human wellbeing. UNEP's work in this regard has chiefly revolved around the development and testing of specific ecosystem management and assessment tools and methodologies for freshwater, terrestrial and marine ecosystems. This has included support for the development of integrated water resource management plans for seven African countries, and the development of pilot terrestrial ecosystem management projects in both Kenya and Haiti. In Kenya, UNEP has supported the implementation of practical ecosystem management and community-based forest management approaches spearheaded through the development and implementation of the Mau Forest management plan and related follow-on initiatives. In Haiti, UNEP is working to support the recovery and development of rural Haiti through two pilot initiatives: the Haiti Regeneration Development and Support Programme and the Haiti Southwest Sustainable Development Project. At the regional level, UNEP has provided support for the development of regional cooperation to manage trans-boundary ecosystems. In the Himalayas, UNEP is supporting the development of a transboundary framework for conservation and sustainable development of the Mount Kailash Sacred Landscape region of Nepal, India and China. In the Congo River Basin, UNEP is working with Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) to conserve 29 protected areas, and promote sustainable forestry and community-based conservation in 11 priority landscapes. In the Zambezi River Basin, UNEP has worked with SADC and the Zambezi Basin Commission to develop a decision support system aimed at attenuating floods and droughts on the Zambezi River for the benefit of the 10 countries sharing the river basin. At the international level, UNEP has developed a global outreach strategy designed to raise awareness and understanding of decision-makers and the public of the concepts of ecosystem management.

### ***Developing and applying ecosystem management tools***

121. This immediate outcome has focused on assisting governments to implement a range of ecosystem assessment and management tools, including Integrated Ecosystem Assessments and Sub-Global Ecosystem Assessments. UNEP has assisted numerous countries in developing biodiversity

assessment indicators within the framework CBD global biodiversity indicators, and has developed and tested tools and methodologies for integrated marine and coastal management in several pilot areas. This outcome also incorporates UNEP's work to support the establishment of marine protected areas and a wide range of marine and coastal initiatives that are being implemented under the auspices of the Marine Ecosystems Unit, the Regional Seas Programme and the GPA. Work towards achieving this outcome also includes transboundary collaboration initiatives reported under the previous outcome, such the Mount Kailash transboundary initiative, as well as support for Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia in establishing transboundary corridors between the Tai and Sapou National Parks.

### **Mainstreaming ecosystem management approaches**

122. This immediate outcome has been and is being addressed through several important projects, including The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) project, designed to promote the conservation of biodiversity, ecosystems and ecosystem services by demonstrating their real economic values, and implemented in a number of countries. According to a terminal evaluation<sup>75</sup>, TEEB has equipped stakeholders to integrate economics more effectively into biodiversity conservation and to mainstream biodiversity and ecosystems into economics. The evaluation found that TEEB's arguments had been incorporated in policies and projects, thus creating enabling conditions, mainly related to the environment sector and among audiences predisposed to be supportive, but with evident linkages to desired broader and deeper impacts.
123. Other important initiatives include: UNEP's support for the establishment and operation of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) which aims to provide policymakers with credible and independent scientific information concerning the status and valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services; UNEP's work stream on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services under the UNEP Finance Initiative, which is working with 23 leading global financial institutions to address the challenges arising from the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services; and the development of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Manual, which aims to make the MA assessment tools and methodologies widely accessible to policymakers. The MA Manual is currently being rolled out in six countries.
124. Despite the strong progress that the EMSP has been making at the output and immediate outcome level, the programme has faced challenges in achieving the EAs defined in the MTS, in particular in gaining buy-in, adoption and mainstreaming of ecosystem management approaches at the national level. One factor is that tools and methodologies that UNEP has developed at the ecosystem level may not be easily mainstreamed at the national level. Another is that the mainstreaming of ecosystem management approaches at the national level is largely beyond UNEP's mandate and resources. In addition, the integration of ecosystem management approaches at the national level is necessarily a long-term process that cannot easily be achieved in the two years of the current MTS under review. To overcome these obstacles, UNEP needs to put stronger emphasis in future EMSP project design on building partnerships with national governments as well as with other development agencies such as UNDP, in mainstreaming ecosystem valuation into national development and economic planning and in rolling out the tools and methodologies that the EMSP has already developed.

### **Environmental Governance**

125. The Environmental Governance (EG) Sub-programme is articulated around four pillars and associated four EAs, i.e.: i) international cooperation; ii) strengthened national laws and institutions; iii) international policy setting and technical assistance; and iv) access to sound science for decision-making. This section assesses the extent to which UNEP interventions are making a difference according to the four EAs.

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<sup>75</sup> The Terminal Evaluation of the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity, December 2011.

***The UN system progressively achieves synergies and demonstrates increasing coherence in international decision-making related to the environment, including those under multilateral environmental agreements***

126. Advances on the International Environmental Governance (IEG) and International Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD) agendas are a good example of UNEP contribution towards improving UN system coherence. In particular, UNEP has played a crucial role in advancing options within the Nairobi-Helsinki process, subsequently transmitted to UNEP GC and UNGA. UNEP has been able to mature different options for global EG and succeeded in putting IEG at the centre of the IFSD debate. Regional forums facilitated dialogue among countries, which had the chance to express their opinions on IEG and the future of UNEP.
127. As for engagement in UN inter-agency coordination mechanisms, while there is effort, UNEP is considered to have insufficiently linked up to development issues and to have worked alone too much. In terms of concrete outputs, UNEP, as co-chair of the EMG, contributed to a stocktaking of collaborative initiatives and actions within the UN system in the field of environment<sup>76</sup>, which subsequently fed into the Nairobi-Helsinki process mentioned above. It facilitated the inventory of emissions for 49 UN entities in view of the move towards a climate-neutral UN. UNEP's participation in the EMG also led to the development of joint initiatives for assisting country transitions towards green economies as well as to the design of a post-2010 biodiversity agenda.
128. In addition, UNEP has been instrumental in the design and set-up of MEAs. Yet, there is little evidence of progress towards synergies in MEA policy and practice and facilitation of MEAs implementation. Promoting synergies among MEAs is a complex process influenced by factors outside UNEP's control. Moreover, funds appear to have been mainly used to service meetings and to support MEA focal points. Substantive support includes updating assessments and indicators, providing technical advice and capacity building for MEA implementation, and assisting secretariats to prepare meeting agendas. This has helped to ensure that key issues identified by UNEP are reflected in MEA work programmes and to raise UNEP's profile at COP meetings. A significant UNEP-led success was the consolidation of MEAs on chemicals and hazardous waste under one Executive Secretary. Another step towards greater synergies was the simultaneous extraordinary Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel Conventions in February 2010 that adopted a decision on joint services, joint activities, synchronisation of budget cycles, joint managerial functions and review arrangements. Another important development was the launch of InfoMEA, an information portal on treaty decisions created to facilitate collaboration within MEAs, namely the biodiversity, chemicals and waste and climate change clusters. MEA secretariat representatives and NGOs consider InfoMEA a good step forward with better chance of success than previous information consolidation and sharing efforts.

***The capacity of states to implement their environmental obligations and achieve their environmental priority goals, targets and objectives through strengthened laws and institutions is enhanced***

129. UNEP's most important contribution to environmental governance has been its early warning support in bringing emergent legal and policy issues to the attention of states and inter-governmental organizations, leading to initiatives addressing human rights and the environment, country negotiation capacities for MEAs, training of the judicial sector, and national compliance/enforcement of environmental legislation and international environmental agreements.
130. Furthermore, evidence suggests that 22 governments have drafted policy and legislative proposals with UNEP support, and that ten countries have taken measures to develop new legislation, strengthen existing laws or incorporate environmental aspects to sector laws. Another important contribution

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<sup>76</sup> UNEP 2011 Environment in the UN Report GC26/INF/23.

is the integration of environmental legislation to facilitate MEA implementation at country level. With the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), UNEP has promoted integrated MEA reporting by countries to rationalize institutional efforts, encourage better communication and improve knowledge management.

131. The Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo IV) has led to a new international treaty on mercury, legal work on freshwater resources that has guided regional inter-governmental organizations in managing trans-boundary water basins, and improved negotiation capacities for parties to the UNFCCC. Moreover Montevideo IV played an important role in the UNEP GC's recent adoption of Guidelines for Compensation Liability and Public Participation and Access to Justice. Studies<sup>77</sup> conducted through Montevideo IV also led to the adoption of UNEP guidelines for drafting national environmental legislation. The programme has recommended a number of actions to governments and MEA Secretariats. The extent to which they have been implemented or have had an impact is not documented.
132. A mid-term review of the ACP/MEA project found that UNEP has contributed to increased ratifications of MEAs and related regional agreements such as the Maputo Convention, and built momentum towards convening the first COP to the Bamako Convention, adopting a Protocol on Land-based Sources of Pollution to the Abidjan Convention, and developing enabling legislation and regulatory frameworks for POPs.

***National development processes and UN common country programming processes increasingly mainstream environmental sustainability in the implementation of their programmes of work***

133. UNEP has contributed to the work of United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) and has bolstered the environmental components of Delivering as One (DaO) programmes and UNDAFs. UNEP has distributed environmental data and information to inform CCAs, supported the formulation of planning documents (and related matrices of results), coordinated WG meetings, and provided training to UNCTs. UNEP's performance has improved in terms of scope of its activities and effectiveness. The number of countries supported in each biennium has moved from 19 in 2006/07 to 30 in 2008/09 and 2010/11. The increased participation in country-level programming processes has allowed UNEP to advocate for ES and CC adaptation and to offer its expertise to the wider UN community and others at local level. UNEP presence at country level has made a big difference. It allowed participation in all key meetings and to co-chair the ETGs whenever formed. It influenced the articulation of objectives and generated valuable impact.
134. The evaluation analysed the content of 94 UNDAFs. Almost all UNDAFs aim to mainstream environmental considerations into national development policies. The number of UNDAFs incorporating environment increased from 36 in 2009 to 59 in 2010. On average, 80% of UNDAFs include an environment-related Country Programme Outcome. UNEP involvement clearly helped significantly in this respect, but it has not been the only – and in some cases not the most active – promoter of mainstreaming environmental concerns. UNEP is on average mentioned in 65% of the cases, with a steady increase from 53% in the biennium 2007/08 to 75% in 2011/12. UNEP signed the UNDAFs in one fifth of the cases, with a steady increase from four in 2007 to 19 in 2011. UNEP environmental assessments are increasingly referred to. This represents a significant improvement compared to the situation in the past biennia. UNEP's support to UNDAF implementation varied across the regions. UNEP's contribution to UNDAFs appears to have been most prominent in

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<sup>77</sup> The documents are Guidelines for the Development of National Legislation on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (2009); and Guidelines for the Development of Domestic Legislation on Liability, Response Action and Compensation for Damage caused by Activities Dangerous to the Environment (2009). Both were adopted by UNEP's Governing Council at its 11th Special Session and distributed to member States.

Africa, East Asia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia and spans across ES, CC and DRR. Water and energy figure as the most prominent technical areas. Links with food security, green economic development and ecosystem management are acknowledged.

### ***Access by national and international stakeholders to sound science and policy advice for decision-making is improved***

135. UNEP finalized a number of important publications<sup>78</sup> and supported the preparation of state of the environment reports and atlases. The Organization also provided access to more than 3,400 scientific peer-reviewed journals through the Online Access to Research on the Environment (OARE) system, for which over 2,000 institutions from 109 countries registered. Moreover, the Knowledge from Science to Societies (KNOSSOS) initiative was launched in November 2011 to make scientific research more actionable for policy-makers and civil society. UNEP-live was created as a repository of reports, data and indicators on the state of the environment.
136. The Global Environmental Outlook (GEO) is the main output for this EA.<sup>79</sup> The 2009 review of the impact of the GEO4<sup>80</sup> concluded that GEO needed to reposition itself to ensure appropriate and timely consideration by governments and other stakeholders. The in-depth sub-programme evaluation noted a significant improvement in the process for GEO5 by engaging experts and governments, thus increasing the likelihood that policy recommendations are taken on board and of higher policy impact. A draft of the Summary for Policymakers was adopted by the UNEP GC27, following negotiation and endorsement at an intergovernmental meeting held in January 2012. The report was published on-line in mid-May 2012, and then officially presented in June in Brazil for the World Environment Day, two weeks before the UNCSD Rio+20. The high number of monthly downloads recorded is considered indicative of the GEO's value to the environmental community.

### **Harmful Substances and Hazardous Waste**

137. As set out in the MTS and the PoW 2010/2011, the HSHW Sub-programme rests on three pillars: i) sound chemicals management at national level; ii) scientific assessments to inform the debate on issues of international concern; and iii) developing and implementing internationally agreed chemical management regimes. Its results framework builds on three EAs, formulated at different levels: EA(a) at the immediate outcome level, EA(b) at the activity level; and EA(c) at the intermediate state level. Based on the results statements and intervention strategy, the evaluation has constructed a simple TOC against which to assess progress.
138. This section assesses the extent to which UNEP interventions are making a difference according to two inter-connected immediate outcome areas:
- Capacities and financing of states and other stakeholders to assess, manage and reduce risks to human health and the environment posed by chemicals and hazardous waste are increased; and
  - Stakeholders are better informed about issues of international concern regarding harmful substances and hazardous waste and better connected.

78 The Africa Water Atlas, GEOLAC 3, a Report on Green Growth, Resources and Resilience in Asia and the Pacific, the Haiti Environment Outlook and a Vulnerability Assessment of Freshwater in West Asia, Keeping Track of Our Changing Environment, GEO Outlook on Latin America and the Caribbean (GEOLAC 3), UNEP Science Strategy.

79 Four reports have been published to date: GEO-1 in 1997; GEO-2, in 1999; GEO-3 in 2002; and GEO-4 in 2007.

80 Review of the initial impact of the GEO4 report 2009.

**Capacities and financing of states and other stakeholders to assess, manage and reduce risks to human health and the environment posed by chemicals and hazardous waste are increased**

139. To this intent, UNEP produced and updated numerous studies, training materials, tools and methodologies, guidance documents, reports and resource kits.<sup>81</sup> To disseminate intelligence and promote the use of these products, the Organization provided country-level training and gave presentations to national officials, private sector representatives and other technical experts. For example, UNEP trained UNEP/United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) National Cleaner Production Centres (NCPCs) and other local institutions/experts to use its resource kit for promoting responsible production in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Further research is required to objectively establish whether NCPCs are now reaching out to SMEs and the extent to which SMEs are improving the management of harmful substances and hazardous waste across the value chain.
140. During the biennium, UNEP also established seven Chemical Information and Exchange Networks (CIENs). It entered into partnerships with key industry associations in Brazil, China, Egypt and Vietnam<sup>82</sup> to support chemical-related priorities. The effectiveness of these networks and partnerships remains to be seen.
141. Besides developing capacities, evidence suggests that UNEP has helped facilitate access to funding for country-level chemicals management through the voluntary Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)<sup>83</sup>, for which UNEP provides secretariat services, and its Quick Start Programme (QSP). Documentation indicates that funding approved so far totals USD30.18 million for governmental and non-governmental projects in 103 countries. Projects totalling a value of USD12.9 million were approved during the 2010/2011 biennium.<sup>84</sup>
142. *Going beyond immediate outcomes*, the present review has revealed instances where UNEP interventions and products have contributed to the introduction and strengthening of country-level policies, strategies and infrastructure for managing harmful chemicals and hazardous waste in an environmentally-sound manner (intermediate state). Documentation and interviews portray Mainstreaming Sound Chemicals Management<sup>85</sup>, in partnership with UNDP, as particularly promising. Inter alia based on new guidance on how to work together on chemicals legislation and the Costs of Inaction report, UNEP is collaborating with governments and the private sector to promote better and more predictable chemicals legislation and mainstreaming of sound chemicals management. Benefiting from these efforts, the Cambodian Ministry of Environment has drafted framework legislation on sound chemicals management. Other countries, including Belize, Uganda, Zambia and Macedonia, have mainstreamed sound chemicals management into their national development policies/strategies.
143. Moreover, the “Guidance Document for Governments: A Flexible Framework for Chemical Accident Prevention and Preparedness”<sup>86</sup> is reportedly being applied in six countries<sup>87</sup> to prepare,

81 For instance, a study on the impact of chemicals on children’s health, training materials on sound management of pesticides, tools and methodologies for undertaking health and environment-related Situation Analysis and Needs Assessments (SANAs), guidance documents on the development of legal and institutional infrastructures for sound chemicals management and on chemical accident prevention and preparedness, a report on the Costs of Inaction, and resource kits such as for promoting responsible production in small and medium-sized enterprises.

82 Brazil (involving the Brazilian Chemical Industry Association and the Federation of Industries of the State of Sao Paulo); China (involving the China National Cleaner Production Centre and Tsinghua University of Beijing); Egypt (involving the Egypt Cleaner Production Centre and the German Technical Cooperation-GTZ (now GIZ)); and Vietnam (involving the Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, the German Technical Cooperation-GTZ and the PREMAnet network).

83 Adopted by the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) in 2006; [www.saicm.org](http://www.saicm.org)

84 Source of financial information: PPR4.

85 In operation since 2006.

86 Published under the auspices of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC).

87 Cambodia, the Philippines, Mali, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Tanzania.

revise or improve chemical accident prevention and preparedness programmes. To implement their respective programmes, Cambodia and the Philippines have developed “road maps” and established autonomous Task Forces.

144. A further indication of effective use of capacities acquired thanks to UNEP is the completion of Situation Analysis and Needs Assessments (SANAs) by 14 African countries under the Health and Environment Linkages Initiative<sup>88</sup>, a global effort by UNEP and the World Health Organization (WHO). SANAs link health and environment considerations and help define evidence-based and technically-sound interventions. A further 51 countries have committed to doing so.
145. As far as relevant infrastructure is concerned, the number of SAICM National Focal Points for sound chemicals management - who also play an important role in taking forward and sustaining the aforementioned Mainstreaming Initiative - increased to 172 by the end of 2011, an additional 74 since the 2nd ICCM in mid-2009.

***Stakeholders are better informed about issues of international concern regarding harmful substances and hazardous waste and better connected***

146. To improve stakeholders’ knowledge and inter-connectedness as regards harmful substances and hazardous waste of international concern, UNEP produced and disseminated case studies, scientific reviews, assessment and reports<sup>89</sup>. It also convened regional and international meetings/conferences and facilitated/supported the creation and work of voluntary multi-stakeholder partnerships and legally-binding regimes.
147. In May 2010, UNEP and WHO organized an inaugural meeting of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paints (GAELP)<sup>90</sup>, the objective of which is to address the emerging policy issue of lead compounds from paints that give rise to highest exposure risks in developing countries. The meeting was attended by 23 participants. UNEP also supported the creation of the Global Partnership on Waste Management (GPWM) and its launch in November 2010. UNEP provides substantive and administrative secretariat services to both partnerships. It is too early to conclude how effective these networks are in terms of knowledge-sharing and relationship-building.
148. In parallel, UNEP continued to work as the secretariat of the Global Mercury Partnership, established in 2007, the membership of which trebled throughout the biennium, with currently 97 members. Specifically, recent UNEP assessments and technical work facilitated the addition of cement as a new partnership area and helped raise awareness of the specific issue of mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining.
149. Moreover, as part of its support for Regional Seas Agreements, UNEP, in collaboration with UNDP and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, convened the 5th International Marine Debris Conference with 440 participants representing some 38 countries. The resulting Honolulu Commitment marks the first step in the development of a comprehensive global framework for the prevention, reduction and management of marine debris, to be known as the Honolulu Strategy.
150. *Going beyond the level of immediate outcomes*, evidence suggests that UNEP has made an important contribution to the evolution and implementation of policy and control systems for harmful

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88 Initiated prior to the 2010/2011 biennium.

89 E.g. case study on Information Systems on Chemicals in Products, reviews of scientific information on lead and cadmium, an assessment of health implications of DDT in mothers’ milk and reports such as with WHO on restorative materials for dental caries. The evaluation was unable to determine the concrete consequences of the production of these and other papers.

90 In 2009, the International Conference on Chemicals Management established GAELP to promote the phase-out of the use of lead in paint. A 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting was held in July 2012.



substances of global concern (intermediate outcome & EA(c)). Although started with some delay at the beginning of 2011 due to lack of funds, the PATROL project with the UNODC has contributed to Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand mainstreaming environmental crime into the work of their respective border liaison offices in order to better enforce laws and reduce illegal tracking of harmful substances and hazardous waste in fulfilment of international commitments. A national sub-decree combating transnational crime is being drafted in Cambodia.

151. Moreover, services delivered by UNEP for numerous years in connection with three inter-governmental and multi-stakeholder processes had or are likely to have an important influence: UNEP's technical, networking and financial support for improved capacity and technology to eliminate leaded vehicle fuels nears completion, with more countries having ceased to use them. An evaluation<sup>91</sup> of the UNEP-supported Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV) activities in Sub-Saharan Africa showed that PCFV has contributed to substantial health benefits, which in turn have promoted social and economic gains through reduced sickness and improved physical and mental development, particularly of children in urban areas. The evaluation also found that UNEP had made a substantial contribution to this process, operating at three levels: as a high level advocate to governments; as a channel to resources within the partnership; and as a facilitator and supporter of activities at the country level. Meanwhile, during the 2010/2011 biennium, thanks to PCFV, half of the twelve countries still using leaded gasoline phased it out.<sup>92</sup>
152. UNEP's efforts have also provided an important contribution to strengthening the chemicals and waste MEAs. UNEP has been instrumental in improving monitoring of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). Specifically, POPs results from 32 countries in three regions participating in the GEF-supported Global Monitoring Plan of the Stockholm Convention are expected to be of considerable help in assessing and focusing the implementation needs of the Convention and its parties.<sup>93</sup> In addition, control measures for nine new POPs targeted for action in the Stockholm Convention entered into force, and a tenth chemical was added, bringing the number of POPs controlled under the Convention to 22. Overall, a growing engagement of countries is reported: The conventions now have more than 140 parties each.
153. Equally, UNEP has played a key role in facilitating an inter-governmental agreement on a legally binding instrument on mercury expected to be adopted by 2013. Under its Global Mercury Programme, UNEP has played an important role since 2003 by way of improving access to and knowledge of relevant scientific and other information for decision-making and leveraging interest and commitment to join hands to control and phase out mercury releases, and facilitating the inter-governmental negotiation process.

## **Resource Efficiency & Sustainable Consumption and Production**

154. As set out in the MTS and the PoW 2010/2011, the RE-SCP Sub-programme is structured around four themes: i) assessments to strengthen the scientific knowledge base; ii) building capacity for policy actions; iii) seizing investment opportunities for new markets and technologies; and iv) stimulating demand for resource-efficient goods and services. Its results framework builds on three Expected Accomplishments (EAs), two of which are formulated at the intermediate state level, and EA(a) at the impact level. Based on the results statements and intervention strategy, the evaluation has constructed a simple TOC against which to assess progress.

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91 "Outcome and Influence Evaluation of the UNEP Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV)", October 2010.

92 Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Egypt.

93 As part of this process, UNEP established/strengthened the scientific capacities of developing country laboratories to reliably analyse and report on POPs.

155. This section assesses the extent to which UNEP interventions are making a difference according to three inter-connected immediate outcome areas:
- Knowledge and capacities to design policies, economic instruments and management practices that promote resource-efficient and sustainable goods and services are strengthened;
  - Government and business awareness of the catalytic effect of resource-efficient investments is increased;
  - Consumer attitudes to sustainable lifestyles are changed favourably.

***Knowledge and capacities of states and businesses to design policies, economic instruments and actions that promote resource-efficient and sustainable are enhanced***

156. UNEP has strengthened the international community's scientific knowledge base in the area of RE-SCP. UNEP's International Resource Panel (IRP) - set up in 2007 - has started to fill an important gap in terms of providing decision makers and other interested parties with scientific assessments on the sustainable use of resources and their environmental impacts over their full life cycles. During the 2010/2011 biennium, the IRP produced four assessments, i.e. on metal stocks, recycling rates of metals, priority products and materials, and decoupling. Assessment findings<sup>94</sup> were used by the media and as inputs during important events.<sup>95</sup> They have reportedly helped shape the European Commission's roadmap for a resource-efficient Europe and national policies on resource efficiency in China, South Africa, Germany, Switzerland and Japan.
157. UNEP's Green Economy Report, released in November 2011 to provide research findings and advice on greening national economies, was widely disseminated on-line and used in important global and regional multi-stakeholder forums.<sup>96</sup> Most recently, its analysis provided inputs into the Rio+20 conference where green economy was selected as one of two focus themes.
158. *Going beyond the immediate outcome level*, the evaluation infers from decisions taken by governments at the global, regional and country levels to adopt policies and economic instruments for resource-efficient and sustainable products (immediate state) that UNEP has likely influenced policy formulation and decision-taking. For instance, technical assistance and advice provided to stakeholders in the context of the year-long Marrakech Process have facilitated the adoption of regional SCP strategies, the development of national SCP Action Plans and the mainstreaming of RE-SCP in national development plans in eight countries<sup>97</sup>. Moreover, as a result of the, governments finally adopted the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP) at Rio+20 in 2012.<sup>98</sup>
159. Furthermore, UNEP's work stream on the Green Economy, initiated during the 2008/2009 biennium, has played an important role in advancing the international - and European Union (EU)<sup>99</sup>- as well as national political agendas on resource efficiency. Most recently, inter alia building on UNEP inputs

94 See Responsible Resource Management for a Sustainable World: Findings from the International Resource Panel.

95 The report on decoupling was launched at CSD 19; it also featured strongly in key note speeches and sessions as the global reference on resources during the European Commission's Green Week. The two most recent reports, decoupling and recycling rates of metals, made significant media impact, with over 320 articles in over 30 countries published. Furthermore, findings of the assessments were discussed at the World Resources Forum in September 2011, during which a special session was dedicated to the IRP and its key findings.

96 Including the G-20 Meeting (November 2010), World Economic Forum (January 2011), UNEP GC (February 2011), UNEP/ICC Business and Industry Global Dialogue (April 2011), OECD Ministerial Council Meeting (May 2011), the EC's Green Week (May 2011), 4<sup>th</sup> Conference for LDCs (June 2011) and 7th Ministerial Conference on Environment for Europe (September 2011).

97 Brazil, Burkina Faso, Mali, Saint Lucia, Ivory Coast, Azerbaijan, Croatia and Kazakhstan.

98 For more details, see „Paving the way for sustainable consumption and production: The Marrakech Process progress report” (full report and Executive Summary). UNEP has been requested to serve as secretariat for the 10YFP and to establish a trust fund.

99 Green Economy Strategy.

such as the Green Economy Report, the Rio+20 conference outcome document exemplified benefits and encouraged countries to consider implementing green economy policies.<sup>100</sup> At the country level, already benefiting from UNEP green economy advisory services, China, Senegal and South Africa included green economy in their respective development plans and initiated regulations, market-based instruments and incentives. Moreover, South Korea produced a National Green Growth Strategy and, in March 2012, work in Barbados culminated in the launch of a Green Economy Scoping Study as road map for developing a National Green Economy Strategy.

160. Evidence regarding industries is limited to UNEP's work with National Cleaner Production Centres (NCPCs), and further research is required to assess its effectiveness: During the 2010/2011 biennium, two new NCPCs were set up in Albania and Rwanda. In addition, by pooling resources with UNIDO, capacity-building activities reportedly resulted in twelve NCPCs<sup>101</sup> incorporating resource efficiency and cleaner production in their portfolios, immediately benefiting forty SMEs.

***Government and business awareness of the catalytic effect of resource-efficient investments is increased***

161. In practice, the private sector seems to have been the main target group of UNEP's efforts to increase awareness of the catalytic effect of resource-efficient investments. UNEP assistance to the private sector is normally channelled through global, regional and national networks, centres and institutions, whose capacity it is building. During the 2010/2011 biennium, besides involving private sector representatives in RE-SCP-related global events and initiatives, UNEP co-initiated and/or supported the work of a number of sectoral multi-stakeholder partnerships. They include the UNEP Sustainable Building and Climate Initiative (SBCI), the UNEP Finance Initiative (FI)<sup>102</sup> and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism<sup>103</sup>. Agri-food is a relatively new area of work for UNEP. Here, the UNEP/FAO Agri-food Task Force on SCP<sup>104</sup> and the UNEP-led Sustainable Rice Platform<sup>105</sup> are worth mentioning.
162. It was not possible for the evaluation to investigate the extent to which all partnerships and initiatives have effectively built stakeholder awareness. It did, however, note that both the older SBCI and the FI continue to attract increased interest and willingness to engage.<sup>106</sup> The fact that 27 leading insurance companies representing over ten per cent of world premium volume committed themselves at the Rio+20 conference to promoting the new UNEP FI-Principles for Sustainable Insurance (PSI) indicates increased awareness and commitment. The same goes for the SBCI-developed Common Carbon Metric (CCM), which was subsequently adopted by the International Standards Organization as a basis for developing an international standard for measuring the environmental performance of existing buildings.
163. *Going beyond immediate outcomes*, evidence is insufficient to ascertain the extent to which business, thanks to UNEP, has invested in efficient, clean and safe industrial production methods (intermediate state & EA(b)), and has thus improved its environmental performance. The evaluation is not in a position to pronounce a finding in this regard.

100 Work in 2011 to secure further sharing of knowledge and forward-looking research on green economy-related policy tools, also led to the launch of the Green Growth Knowledge Platform (GGKP), in January 2012, jointly with OECD, World Bank and the Global Green Growth Institute. GGKP was referenced at Rio+20, by the SG's Implementation Matrix of Rio+20 Outcomes and by the Mexican G-20 Declaration.

101 Ethiopia, Vietnam, Kenya, Tanzania, Lebanon, Uganda, Sri Lanka, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ghana and Rwanda.

102 Inception in 1992 on the side lines of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit; also see UNEP FI 2010 Overview.

103 Launched in January 2011.

104 Formed in November 2010 and, in February 2012, converted into the formal Sustainable Food Systems Programme for inclusion in the 10YFP.

105 Launched in December 2011.

106 The SBCI expanded its geographical and sectoral reach by adding twenty new partners in 2010/2011 and eleven in 2011/2012. The FI attracted 25 new member institutions and now engages with over 200 members from over 40 countries from the banking, insurance and investment sectors.

### ***Consumer attitudes to sustainable lifestyles are changed favourably***

164. Intending to change attitudes and stimulate more demand for sustainable lifestyles, UNEP presented public awards and implemented/supported numerous campaigns during the 2010/2011 biennium.<sup>107</sup> However, interview partners and documentation recognize that changing consumption patterns is difficult to tackle because of perceptions that consumer choice and lifestyles are “developed world” issues that UNEP should not prioritise. There are apparently very few examples to inspire change at scale.
165. Eco-labelling has been part of UNEP’s efforts to advance information tools and certifications schemes. A 62-month project in emerging economies<sup>108</sup> progressed towards a successful end in March 2012 in terms of increasing the environmental efficiency of key export products and related industrial processes. A terminal evaluation<sup>109</sup> found a high level and quality of outputs for progressing towards project outcomes and longer-term impact. In particular, the specific objective to increase the number of eco-labelled products in the EU as well as in national and global markets was met with at least one product from each target country eco-labelled or in process. Furthermore, the project was considered to have had great success in positioning eco-labelling as a market opportunity that can also bring resource efficiency and reduced environmental impact benefits, rather than a green barrier to emerging economies.
166. Moreover, UNEP has supported sustainable public procurement. During the 2010/2011 biennium, building on a global consensus and after having fostered information exchange and provided practical tools for capacity building, UNEP provided advisory services to seven pilot countries.<sup>110</sup> While all countries have completed first steps for introducing sustainable public procurement, including legal reviews and market readiness analyses, five have also started to pilot the insertion of sustainability criteria into procurement processes.
167. *Going beyond the level of immediate outcomes*, no evidence is available of consumer choice favouring more resource-efficient and environmentally-friendly products as a result of UNEP interventions (intermediate state & EA(c)). The evaluation is not in a position to pronounce a finding in this regard.

### **3.3 Assessment of Impact Prospects**

168. Looking ahead, the following sections examine external conditions and factors that have the potential to influence the transformation of immediate outcomes to intermediate states, and consequently also long-term environmental impact prospects. They differentiate between external conditions and factors that UNEP can attempt to influence (impact drivers) and those out of reach of the Organization (assumptions). The evaluation identified three assumptions and seven drivers that are required for enhanced country capacity to effectively lead to change. To a great extent, they are relevant to all UNEP sub-programmes; others are more specific.

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107 For example, the Green Passport campaign to raise awareness among tourists, which was adapted by six countries, including South Africa on the occasion of the 2010 FIFA World Cup; and the Scaling up, UNEP-UNESCO YouthXchange Programme intended to engage young people on sustainable lifestyles and empower them to take action on the issues important to them. The UNEP-led Global Survey on Sustainable Lifestyles in over 20 countries in all regions was the first research project on sustainable lifestyles to be conducted on a large scale. It gathered insights from young adults in urban areas on their current lifestyles, aspirations for the future and reactions to visions of sustainable lifestyles. The results are included in the report entitled “Visions for Change: Recommendations for Effective Policies on Sustainable Lifestyles”.

108 India, South Africa, Mexico, Kenya/Ethiopia, Brazil and China.

109 Terminal Evaluation of UNEP Project: Enabling developing countries to seize eco-label opportunities - Capacity building and technical assistance for industries and governments in developing economies - April 2012.

110 Chile, Colombia, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Mauritius, Lebanon and Tunisia.

## Assumptions

### ***The political and security situation remains relatively stable***

169. There is a basic assumption, particularly in those countries where the D&C Sub-programme operates, that the political and security situation will not deteriorate to a level that makes UNEP's work too difficult or dangerous, hampers the uptake of UNEP's products and services by stakeholders, or adds serious non-environmental threats to the environment or livelihoods that overshadow any positive impacts that could have been achieved through UNEP's work. However, the risk that the security situation deteriorates where D&C staff members are working is real in many post-crisis countries. Even though D&C teams have learned, to a certain extent, to cope with insecurity, there is a limit to where UNEP teams and their local partners can continue to operate without putting persons in danger. Security risks often seriously hamper the movement, and therefore the effectiveness, of field staff and their local partners. Political instability, another real risk in many D&C countries, can result in the removal of people with whom UNEP has developed a trust relationship from key decision-making positions, temporary closure of key national partner institutions, interruptions in counterpart funding flows, and restrictions of access to information and project sites.

### ***Government agencies and international organizations have adequate human resources***

170. The UNEP D&C Sub-programme evaluation identified human resources as a key assumption. The same can be assumed for UNEP's other sub-programmes. As stated in the D&C evaluation, there are two aspects: numbers and stability. "Staff numbers in supported countries are usually insufficient at all levels and this often seriously constrains the capacity of national partners to absorb all the technical support that UNEP can offer. Turn-over of senior staff in government agencies has remained relatively low so far, even though UNEP's focus on a limited number of people within a very limited number of institutions does constitute a risk for continuity. More junior, well trained technical staff tend to be more volatile in that they are often attracted by better paid positions with international organisations operating in the country. Turn-over of staff in international organisations is also a serious problem, because induction of new staff in complex post-crisis country situations requires much time and effort, and cooperation with key international partners at the country level can really be affected by personal interests and relationship issues. The success of UNEP's D&C country programmes is based in part on the good personal relationships and very good understanding of the country context acquired with time by a relatively small number of UNEP staff. If these staff were to leave the country team, there could be serious consequences for the continuity of the country programme."

### ***Renewable energy is economically competitive***

171. This assumption is particularly important for UNEP's CC and RE-SCP sub-programmes. External factors related to the global economic situation, and which UNEP cannot influence, such as a decline in price of fossil fuels, alters the economic case for investments in cleaner energy goods and services to reduce pollution and mitigate climate change. Currently, oil prices are considered high enough for competition to exist.

## Impact Drivers

### ***Countries dispose of sustainable financing to translate enhanced capacities into effective change***

172. Countries require long-term funding to address environmental issues. However, mobilization of domestic financial resources is often weak, particularly in countries affected by disasters or conflict, due to the environment not being a priority concern and/or due to missing domestic income sources. In addition, accessing external funds for the environment may pose an increasing challenge to national

partners because of an evolution in many donors' development funding strategies and poor national capacities to develop programmes and projects to international standards. The latter weakness is particularly disadvantageous in view of new important financial mechanisms, such as for climate change programmes, e.g. GEF, the Adaptation Fund and the newly established Green Climate Fund under the UNFCCC, which, as described by one interviewee, is an "unprecedented opportunity" to trigger transformation. Private sector funding will probably become increasingly important, such as in the areas of clean technologies, sound chemicals management and for environmental clean-up and rehabilitation of contaminated sites.

173. UNEP is aware of this challenge and is working to leverage country funding, including from the private sector. As shown in the effectiveness chapter, the Organization has been able to show some good results by informing countries' priority-setting and policy making, by engaging the private sector to achieve additional investments and financial flows, by facilitating the introduction of new funding mechanisms and by building countries' capacities to successfully identify and access these sources.

### ***Partnerships and networks leverage UNEP's work***

174. Partnerships and multi-stakeholder networks can be an effective way to leverage UNEP's work by driving institutional and behavioural change and impact. Partnerships and networks facilitate a common understanding of environmental issues and bridge science and policy formulation. They help to integrate and mainstream environmental issues beyond the environment sector. They serve to scale up and replicate UNEP's capacity-building efforts. They bring stakeholders together to strengthen participatory and informed policy making and implementation. Last, but not least, they motivate actors to improve their own environmental performance.
175. UNEP has recognized the importance of convening and engaging with other UN entities, international institutions, government ministries beyond the environmental sector, academia, civil society and the private sector. During the 2010/2011 biennium, the Organization initiated/facilitated the establishment of at least five global multi-stakeholder networks. It provides secretariat services for numerous multi-stakeholder networks, key MEAs and inter-governmental processes. Moreover, UNEP is the focal point for environment within the UN Development Group (UNDG) and UN country teams. It is also the focal point for environment in the humanitarian coordination system, and as such, through the Environment Network, has raised awareness, developed assessment tools, trained responders, provided technical assistance on environmental considerations and advocated for the inclusion of environmental components in Flash Appeals and Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP). Joint programmes with other UN entities, including UNDP, FAO, UNIDO, WHO, UNESCO, UNDESA and UNODC, are further examples of efforts to leverage UNEP's work.
176. The level to which partnerships and networks are successful in driving impact varies. The UNEP Disasters & Conflicts Sub-programme evaluation notes, for example, that success in terms of integrating environment in UN recovery operations has been highly dependent on the supportiveness of the leading agencies in the UNCT and sometimes seriously hampered by a lack of funding and staff resources, and also limited interest and support from humanitarian agencies' headquarters. Interviewees confirmed that establishing and nurturing global partnerships requires sufficient UNEP staff and funding to engage and advise on basis of consensus in industry and governments, in order to go beyond a mere administrative role.

### ***The broader public is aware of environmental issues***

177. An inclusive approach that engages all stakeholders and identifies/creates a critical mass of champions drives change and impact. Successful outreach to the public, besides increasing confidence in UNEP

and changing individual attitudes and behaviour, will help to maintain a minimum level of pressure on government agendas and the private sector. Communication and popular outreach is part and parcel of UNEP's sub-programmes, in the CC and RC-SCP sub-programmes more explicitly than in others. UNEP's outreach has not been subject to an evaluation, and as such it is not possible to conclude how effective UNEP has been.

### ***Governments agree on a legally binding response to climate change***

178. The outcome of the UNFCCC climate change negotiations will have key implications on the national uptake of UNEP's current and future achievements in climate change mitigation. The momentum towards Copenhagen, both in industrial and developing countries, is cyclical, and thus the outcome is difficult to predict.
179. UNEP is closely following and actively participating in the climate change negotiations. Through its different service lines, the Organization can inform the process and help countries implement decisions arising from it. During the 2010/2011 biennium, UNEP enhanced access to climate change science, policy analysis, tools and methodologies by way of the new UNEP-hosted scientific platform called PROVIA<sup>111</sup>, scientific assessments and publications, (revamped) dedicated websites and virtual networks, science policy dialogues, exhibitions, staff secondment and targeted trainings/workshops.<sup>112</sup> Specifically, UNEP's Tropospheric, Ozone and Black Carbon Assessment and the Emissions Gap Reports were cited in various inter-governmental and governmental documents. The former is considered to have been instrumental in launching the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (CCAC)<sup>113</sup>; the latter has been helping to inform discussions around ambition levels. The twin annual reports REN21 Renewables Global Status Report and Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment are also considered cutting edge and authoritative sources of information. Furthermore, approximately 600 climate change negotiators from 140 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Least Developed Countries and the Alliance of Small Developing States participated in six regional preparatory workshops organized by the UNEP Climate Negotiators Support Project, leading to the groups' adoption of common policy positions, increased visibility and, reportedly<sup>114</sup>, also influence with respect to issues central to the climate change negotiations, e.g. REDD and technology transfer.

### ***Governments adopt the 10YFP on SCP***

180. An important condition for medium-term effectiveness and long-term impact in the area of RE-SCP is in place, i.e. the 10YFP on SCP. UNEP can take credit in this having been accomplished. Through its support for the Marrakech Process on SCP, together with UNDESA, UNEP enhanced regional and country-level capacities and helped bring negotiations to a successful conclusion. In June 2012, at the Rio+20 conference, governments finally adopted the 10YFP, after a lack of consensus on political issues unrelated to SCP prevented them from doing so during the Commission on Sustainable Development. Although voluntary in nature, the 10YFP is the only inter-governmental framework for RE. It provides - as one interviewee mentioned - a "political anchor" for scaling up RE-SCP work and - as future secretariat - strengthens UNEP's convening role.

### ***Governments embrace the Green Economy concept***

181. UNEP's RE-SCP Sub-programme was also instrumental in evolving and mainstreaming the Green Economy concept in international and national policy making. While important concerns remain in

111 Programme of Research on Climate Change Vulnerability, Impacts and Adaptation.

112 It was not possible for the evaluation to assess the use of all products mentioned.

113 Launched in February 2012. 18 state and nine non-state actors have since joined.

114 The evaluation was not able to investigate any further.

parts, an increasing number of governments and stakeholders at highest levels are demonstrating interest in the Green Economy concept and how to put it into practice. Most importantly, the Rio+20 conference outcome document acknowledges that Green Economy can enhance countries' abilities to manage natural resources sustainably with lower negative environmental impacts, increase resource efficiency and reduce waste. It also encourages countries to consider the implementation of green economy policies, thus providing UNEP and other actors with a licence to operate and a basis to expand advisory services where invited to do so.

### 3.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

182. Drawing firm conclusions about UNEP's effectiveness during the 2010/2011 biennium is difficult given a weak results framework against which to assess performance, patchy evidence on outcome achievement due to missing evaluative data, and the inability of the evaluation team to gather sufficient information on the quality and use of outputs leading to outcomes. Drawing conclusions on how UNEP's efforts have influenced or have the potential to influence policies and practices, which is one step beyond immediate capacity enhancement outcomes, is even more difficult. Nevertheless, the evaluation would like to offer some cautious views on effectiveness and impact of UNEP's work.
183. Despite challenges related to funding and institutional reforms, UNEP achieved positive results during the 2010/2011 biennium in all six sub-programme areas. There are positive indications that interventions have already contributed to the development/adoption of improved policies and practices. UNEP's efforts to generate scientific knowledge, provide policy advice and convene stakeholders to catalyse international action seem to have been particularly effective.
184. The fact that UNEP has neither included gender equality and women's empowerment targets in its MTS 2010-2013, its PoW 2010/2011 nor in its programme progress reporting, thus making it quasi impossible to assess the extent to which UNEP has effectively mainstreamed gender, is unfortunate. It is therefore encouraging to note management measures taken to enhance results-based management for gender equality and women's empowerment in the design and implementation of the MTS 2014-2017 and PoW 2014/2015.
185. The review has identified assumptions, outside UNEP's control, that affect the achievement of institutional and behavioural change. For instance, the price of renewable energy will remain volatile influencing the uptake of green technologies. Also, there is a medium to high risk of political instability occurring in post-crisis countries where UNEP's D&C sub-programme operates, thus reducing the likelihood of achieving lasting change if adequate risk management measures are not taken. Furthermore, the assumption that adequate human resources are available for countries to translate enhanced capacities into significant effective change quite often does not hold true.
186. UNEP has contributed to a number of key impact drivers required for immediate outcomes to lead to higher-level results. For instance, in the area of RE-SCP, it played an important role in ensuring the adoption by governments of the 10YFP on SCP, which provides a political anchor for scaling up work. UNEP has also been instrumental in evolving and mainstreaming the Green Economy concept. Furthermore, through the CC, DC and HSHW sub-programmes, UNEP has successfully facilitated access to sustainable financing for the environment and sustainable development.
187. UNEP should continue to influence impact drivers and needs to allocate necessary resources for doing so. For instance, the outcome of the on-going UNFCCC climate change negotiations have key implications on the national uptake of UNEP's current and future achievements in climate change. Thus, as a matter of priority and as envisaged by the MTS 2014-2017, UNEP needs to continue to



support scientific assessments and provide policy and legislative advice that support and inform the UNFCCC climate change negotiations led by parties.

188. As discussed earlier under Strategic Relevance, partnerships and networks have played a critical role in taking UNEP's work forward. UNEP often works through collaborative arrangements with sister UN agencies and other international organizations. To further extend its reach, it should continue to promote and facilitate multi-stakeholder and multilateral networks and processes subject to their continued relevance and effectiveness. The evaluation therefore agrees with the business model of the MTS 2014-2017, which includes working through partnerships and collaborative arrangements to achieve planned results. While ensuring that all appropriate due diligence requirements are in place, engaging dynamic civil society organisations and resourceful private sector partners, raising their awareness and building their capacity, seems all the more important given the oftentimes sluggishness of inter-governmental consensus-building processes, the risk of political upheavals, and limited public funding at a time of global recession.
189. The role of the general public in responding to environmental challenges is also important in terms of mobilizing awareness and political action as well as influencing consumer choices. In this field, UNEP is only one amongst many organizations and interest groups, both globally and in its programme countries. To avoid diluting its impact by spreading itself too thin, UNEP needs to focus on and ensure full use of its comparative advantage as member of the UN family to be visible and trustworthy in its messages and actions.

## 4. Business Processes, Systems, and Structures

### 4.1 Introduction

190. The MTS 2010-2013 articulated two crucial overarching organisational objectives: 1) enhancing UNEP's results orientation to address major environmental challenges; and 2) enabling the different skill sets housed in the six divisions to be leveraged and pooled to address these challenges in an effective and efficient way. Subsequently, the realisation of these two objectives has given rise to a process of organisational change within UNEP (often called the "reform process") that has involved the development of a range of new or revised business processes, systems and structures. This section of the evaluation examines the overall organisational change process designed to implement the MTS, highlights areas where the reforms have been successful and others less so, and makes recommendations for how the change process can be further strengthened in future.
191. The following key aspects of the organisational change process were examined:
- Programme planning and the MTS
  - Accountability and authority for programme delivery
  - UNEP's project portfolio and the MTS
  - Programme monitoring, reporting and evaluation
  - Programme management
  - UNEP's strategic presence and the role of the Regional Offices

The evaluation's findings according to each of these aspects are discussed in the following sections.

### 4.2 Programme planning and the MTS

192. One of the key principles on which the MTS and the subsequent PoWs were founded was the need to realign UNEP's programme from the traditional emphasis on delivery of products and services to a stronger focus on the achievement of higher level results and, ultimately, environmental impacts. To guide this reorientation towards Results-based Management (RBM), UNEP utilised a hierarchy of planning frameworks, with the MTS itself providing the overall strategic focus and direction of the programme, and the Strategic Frameworks and PoWs providing increasing levels of detail on delivery. The overarching design intent for these planning frameworks was to provide a clear focus on results that were aligned with the organisation's mandate, priorities and comparative advantage. The aim was to develop a workplan for targeted, effective and efficient delivery of results and clear and transparent monitoring and evaluation of performance<sup>115</sup>.
193. In the event, the practical process that was employed to define the results framework put some constraints on the achievement of these ambitious aims. With regard to the process used to design the MTS itself, significant emphasis was placed on the need to engage and gain buy-in from UNEP's external stakeholders, in particular the UNEP Governing Council working through the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) MTS Working Group, as well as the UNEP-administered MEA secretariats, civil society and the private sector. This extensive external engagement meant that in its effort to be "all things to all people" the design of the eventual MTS results framework represented a compromise

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115 UNEP PoW 2010-2011: Designing the activities to deliver the results. UNEP SMT, Mar 2009

that attempted to encompass the differing priorities of the different stakeholders. What this meant in practice was that the MTS Expected Accomplishments were formulated at an outcome level that was not realistically possible for UNEP alone to achieve, particularly over the four-year MTS timeframe. The inappropriate and ambitious formulation of the MTS' Expected Accomplishments is addressed in depth in the Formative Evaluation of the PoW<sup>116</sup>, the more recent evaluations of the Disasters & Conflicts and Environmental Governance Sub-Programme evaluations, as well as in the Effectiveness and Impact section of this present evaluation report. Notably, UNEP appears to have been already taken this lesson on board, and the draft MTS for 2014-2017 has responded by pitching the level of ambition of the Expected Accomplishments at a level that is more in line with what UNEP can realistically deliver<sup>117</sup>.

194. As far as the PoWs were concerned (2010-2011 and 2012-2013), these were chiefly developed by the respective lead divisions for each of the six sub-programmes, and benefitted from a greater degree of internal participation. Nevertheless, the PoW Outputs were unable to provide a robust causal logic for how the very ambitious Expected Accomplishments could in practice be achieved. The FE concludes that *“in developing future Medium Term Strategies, the Expected Accomplishment and indicators should be formulated to better align with basic principles of Results Based Management... UNEP needs to strengthen its results basis by showing the causal relationship between projects, PoW outputs and EAs”*<sup>118</sup>.
195. The MTS, Strategic Frameworks and the PoWs focus on higher level results - the Expected Accomplishments and PoW Outputs. To bridge the gap between these higher level results and the projects being implemented by the divisions and regional offices, UNEP introduced an additional level of planning - the **Programme Frameworks**, the purpose and structure of which is defined in the document **“UNEP PoW 2010-2011: Designing the activities to deliver the results”**. The Programme Frameworks were subsequently developed by the respective Sub-Programme Coordinators, working with other UNEP staff contributing to the sub-programme concerned.
196. While the purpose of the Programme Frameworks is clearly defined, in reality they have not fully lived up to their expected role in strengthening RBM in the implementation of the MTS, for several reasons. A crucial weakness was that the Programme Frameworks did not put in place a comprehensive and coherent causal logic between the Expected Accomplishments and PoW Outputs to be achieved and the projects that will achieve them. In addition, because of their tight integration with the statutory planning process, the Programme Frameworks were unable to exhibit the adaptability that is ideally required for effective results-based planning based on lessons learnt and evolving circumstances, and soon became outdated. The FE concluded that the Programme Frameworks in their current form do not represent a useful results construct, and that they play no meaningful role in programme implementation, monitoring and reporting.
197. The Final Report of the UNEP Task Team on Programme Management<sup>119</sup> endorsed the need to reform the RBM planning process, concluding that: *“UNEP must continue to strengthen its strategic*

116 The FE points out that many MTS EAs define higher level outcomes that are beyond the exclusive control of UNEP, rather than the direct outcomes to be produced as a result of the implementation of the MTS. The evaluation notes that this weakens the underlying RBM principles that were a cornerstone of the MTS design.

117 The draft MTS 2014-2017 states that *“This entails that Expected Accomplishments are realistic in terms of UNEP’s level of ambition, and that the indicators to measure achievement against Expected Accomplishments allow for attribution to UNEP”*. The OfO has provided a good example of the sort of ‘reality check’ that the EAs have now been subjected to: The EA *“Reduction in deforestation and land degradation with countries moving towards sustainable forest management, conservation and full terrestrial carbon accounting based on tackling all drivers of deforestation, and taking fully into account co-benefits and safeguards”* in the current MTS has been changed in the new MTS to focus on UNEP’s main contribution during 2014-2017: *“Transformative REDD+ strategies and finance approaches are developed and implemented by developing countries that aim at reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and bringing multiple benefits for biodiversity and livelihoods”*.

118 UNEP has already responded to this FE finding. In the new PoW under development, a new section has been added to each sub-programme describing the causal relationship between the Sub-Programme Outputs and their associated Expected Accomplishments.

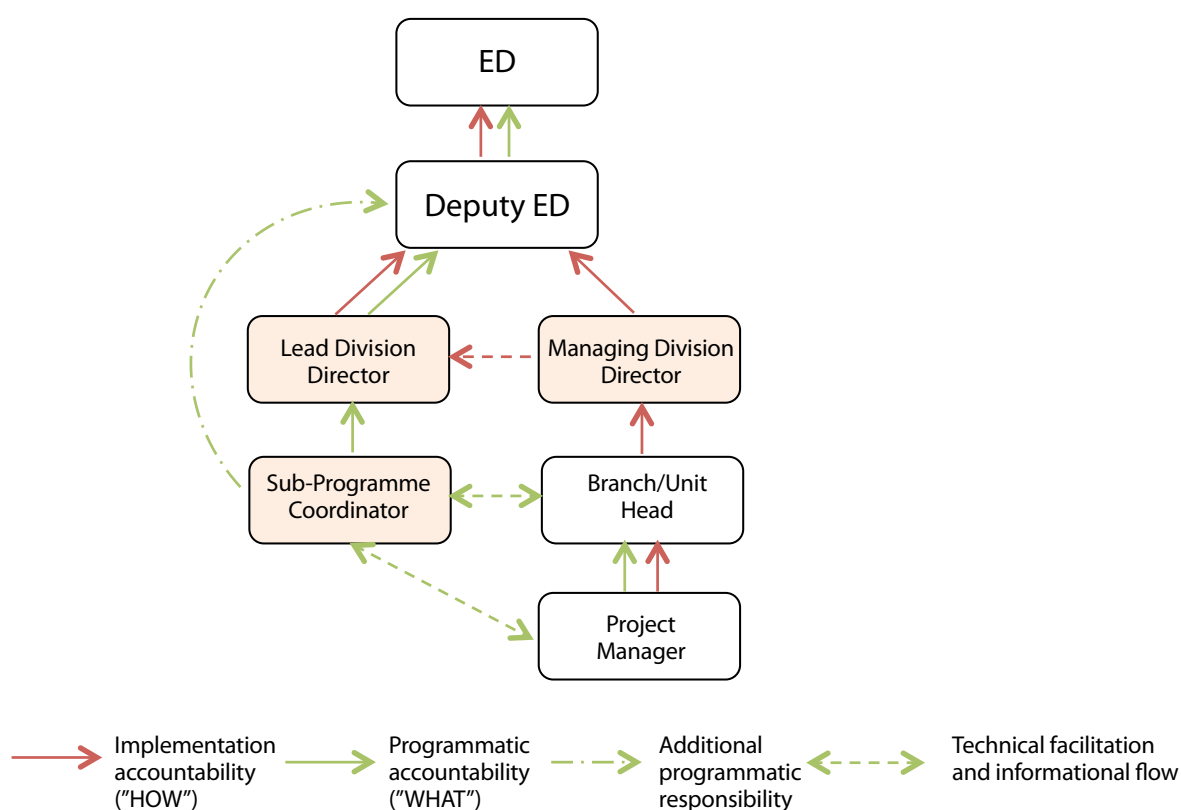
119 UNEP Task Team on Programme Management and Implementation, Final Report, Sep 2011

planning... The Expected Accomplishments in the next MTS are to be derived based on an analysis of the logical relationship between projects, PoW outputs and EAs.”

### 4.3 Accountability and authority for Programme delivery

198. The **UNEP Programme Accountability Framework**, approved in April 2010, established new arrangements for accountability, responsibility and authority for delivering the six new sub-programmes defined in the MTS. Based on lessons learnt in implementing the framework, there has been much subsequent discussion about the need to further simplify and clarifying the accountability and authority arrangements. In this regard, the Final Report of the Task Team on Programme Management<sup>120</sup> concluded that “UNEP must continue to strengthen its efforts to increase clarity in accountability for the delivery of the MTS right from the initial planning stages. The next MTS will be a key opportunity.”
199. Figure 3 below illustrates in diagrammatic form the key accountability and authority arrangements for MTS delivery that were initially defined in the Accountability Framework but which have subsequently been modified and simplified according to lessons learnt from practical implementation<sup>121</sup>.

**Figure 3. Diagram of UNEP's current accountability arrangements for MTS delivery**



120 UNEP Task Team on Programme Management and Implementation, Final Report, Sep 2011

121 To some extent, the diagram may be an oversimplification of the present day reality, but it is designed to illustrate the key accountability arrangements for sub-programme delivery as they are being implemented in practice at the time of the evaluation.

200. The figure shows the three key accountable officers (highlighted in yellow)<sup>122</sup>: the **Lead Division Director**, who has overall programmatic (technical) as well as implementation responsibility and accountability for the delivery of the sub-programme; the **Managing Division Director**, who has day-to-day implementation responsibility and accountability for the delivery of those PoW Outputs and projects that are being implemented through their division, but limited programmatic accountability; and the **Sub-Programme Coordinator (SPC)**, who has programmatic responsibility for the coordination and facilitation of the relevant sub-programme, and is accountable to the Lead Division Director. In addition, the SPC now has an additional programmatic reporting line (Additional Supervisor) to the Deputy Executive Director, although it is also not clear whether this aspect has as yet been implemented in practice<sup>123</sup>.
201. The introduction of a matrix management approach was a cornerstone of the reform process instigated by the new MTS. Matrix management is by definition a system of management whereby staff within an organisation have two reporting lines, the first to the head of their particular department, and the second to the head of a particular project or product area to which they are assigned. In the case of the UNEP's matrix model, this implies that for a successful matrix management approach, the concerned UNEP staff members should also appropriately have two unequivocal reporting lines - the first to their divisional head (or branch/unit head) for day-to-day implementation aspects, and the second, for programmatic aspects, to the Sub-Programme Coordinator concerned. However, in practice, the dual reporting lines required by UNEP's matrix management model have not been established. This is illustrated in Figure 3 by the dotted lines between the Sub-Programme Coordinator and the branch and unit heads and project managers involved in implementing the sub-programme concerned.
202. In practice, there are no formal reporting lines between staff implementing the sub-programmes and their respective Sub-Programme Coordinator (SPC), leaving the SPC concerned with significant accountability for the delivery of the sub-programme, but no actual authority to enable them to fulfil their programmatic responsibility for the coordination and facilitation of the relevant sub-programme. This is ultimately an unworkable situation which has caused considerable frustration to the SPCs as well as other UNEP staff participating in the sub-programmes. It has also placed a significant extra work burden on all the staff concerned. Another aspect that has compounded the problem is that all but one of the current SPCs are essentially part-time and have to carry out their SPC duties alongside an implementation role within their parent division.

#### 4.4 UNEP's project portfolio and the MTS

203. Projects represent the principal mechanism for delivering on the Expected Accomplishments defined in the MTS, and as such they are a crucial dimension of the achievement of results-based management. This section looks at the process that was used to align UNEP's project portfolio with the higher-level results framework set out in the MTS and associated PoWs, and the degree to which this has enabled UNEP to implement its reform process. In this regard, it is important to recognise that the MTS and PoWs were not developed in a vacuum, where projects could be designed from scratch to address specific Expected Accomplishments and PoW Outputs. In reality, the MTS and the PoWs were developed in the context of an already well-established and substantial UNEP project portfolio that predated the MTS, in some instances by many years.

122 Note that the other division director responsibility that is identified in the Accountability Framework – the Coordinating Division Director – is in practice not being implemented. In addition, many UNEP documents, including the Programme Frameworks, refer to an Accountable Division Director. This report uses the terminology used in the Accountability Framework where the Accountable Division Director is referred to as the Managing Division Director. The Lead Division Director has overall responsibility for the entire Sub-Programme and its component EAs.

123 The UNEP ED's Management Note of 30th January 2012 states that “*Sub-Programme Coordinators will have a reporting line to the Lead Division Director and a second reporting line to the Deputy Executive Director.*”

204. The chief mechanism for aligning the existing UNEP project portfolio with the Expected Accomplishments and PoW Outputs, and for identifying new project initiatives, was the Programme Frameworks, which altogether defined a total of 83 “Project Concepts” which were intended to provide an explicit framework for decision making concerning the relevance of existing projects to the MTS results framework, and the requirement for developing new projects. In practice, each sub-programme approached this task in somewhat different ways. For example, some PF Concepts were essentially formulated as “Umbrella Projects”, or “Project Areas”, into which a number of smaller projects could potentially be fitted, while other Concepts were more akin to individual projects in their own right.
205. Following the approval of the PFs, it was then necessary to reconcile the 300+ projects already making up the UNEP project portfolio with the 83 approved Project Concepts, including winding up of any projects that were not in line with the PF. Depending on how the concerned sub-programme had initially designed their PF, this process met with varying degrees of success. For some sub-programmes, ongoing projects did not ideally align with the approved PF Concepts. In these instances, they were either loosely slotted into one of the PF Concepts or else continued outside of the results framework and of the results-based monitoring system.
206. The **Programme Framework Extensions** developed in early 2012 initiated a renewed effort to look at the alignment of the sub-programme project portfolios with the MTS results framework, and to identify new projects that needed to be developed to address aspects of the results framework. Most comprehensive is the section on the Climate Change Sub-Programme, which made a concerted effort to examine the respective roles of existing projects, umbrella projects, and Climate Change flagship areas, including provision for winding up existing projects and their incorporation as appropriate in the flagship areas and umbrella projects. The work of the Climate Change Sub-Programme in this regard could provide a good foundation for a UNEP-wide revised process for the alignment of the project portfolio with the MTS results framework, established in good time for the next MTS round commencing in 2014.

## 4.5 Programme monitoring, reporting and evaluation

207. Monitoring of the MTS and the PoWs is essentially carried out at two main levels: monitoring of progress made in achieving the MTS’ Expected Accomplishments, i.e. programme effectiveness, and monitoring of actual delivery of the PoW and Project Outputs compared to inputs and schedules, i.e. programme efficiency. The third level of programme performance monitoring is impact, which is addressed as part of ex-post evaluations coordinated by the UNEP Evaluation Office.
208. Concerning monitoring indicators, the Formative Evaluation concluded that “*at two key levels in the PoW RBM framework, Expected Accomplishments and PoW Outputs, UNEP does not have reliable performance indicator.*” The FE recommended that in developing future MTS’s, the Expected Accomplishment indicators identified should be better aligned with the principles of results-based management, and specifically should be SMART<sup>124</sup>. In this regard, a good foundation has now been established for enhancing both outcome and output level indicators in the revised UNEP Programme Manual (see section 1.6 below). When combined with more realistic Expected Accomplishments established at the immediate outcome level, it should be possible to develop more realistic Expected Accomplishment indicators, applying the principles outlined in the Programme Manual<sup>125</sup>. The FE also recommends that a better approach for monitoring performance in PoW implementation is to capture progress towards

124 SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Attributable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

125 In this connection, it should be noted that EA indicators identified in the draft MTS 2014-2017 are formulated at the immediate outcome, rather than impact, level.

the delivery of PoW Outputs and Expected Accomplishments through the achievement of verifiable milestones<sup>126</sup>.

209. As with the establishment of indicators, UNEP's monitoring systems are also divided into two: monitoring of higher-level outcomes (EA), and monitoring of the delivery of PoW Outputs. To complicate matters, there are also two parallel monitoring systems in operation, the UN-wide monitoring system, the **Integrated Monitoring and Documentation Information System** (IMDIS), and UNEP's own performance monitoring system, the **Programme Information Monitoring System** (PIMS). The critical aspect of the IMDIS structure is that it monitors performance at the output level against a predefined set of IMDIS monitoring or "deliverables" categories, to which individual **PoW Outputs** are assigned as part of the process of preparing the PoWs and Programme Frameworks. Furthermore, the IMDIS categories are largely established at what in the UNEP results framework are more akin to activities rather than outputs. For example, PoW Output #1 under EA(a) of the Climate Change Sub-Programme: "*Vulnerabilities to Climate Change and adaptation of critical ecosystems are assessed and findings are integrated into national decision-making...*" is assigned to IMDIS category "Non-recurrent publications", with a target of 4 publications, which is clearly not a useful indicator of delivery of the overall output. At the Expected Accomplishment level, IMDIS uses a qualitative description of progress towards the achievement of the Expected Accomplishment similar to that used in the UNEP Performance Progress Reports (see below). As with the PPRs, this qualitative information may often be more helpful in understanding achievement of EAs, but a constraint of IMDIS is that there is a tight limit on the amount that can be written about any particular EA, which can undermine the usefulness of this information.
210. In sum, whereas IMDIS may have been an appropriate results-based management tool for measuring performance against outputs under previous UNEP programme cycles that largely focussed on deliverables, it is increasingly anachronistic as a results-based management tool as far as UNEP's present results framework as defined in the MTS and PoWs is concerned. This issue may be addressed in the longer term by the introduction of the UN's new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system **Umoja**, which will begin to be introduced to the system in mid-2013 and is due to be completed by 2016.
211. In the absence of an appropriate UN-wide results-based management system, UNEP has been developing the role of PIMS in supporting UNEP's entire programme and project management cycle - from project design stage, through to approval, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. PIMS now plays a central role within UNEP in monitoring and reporting of progress in project implementation, by recording and analysing information concerning progress towards PoW Output targets and the achievement of project milestones. Most UNEP staff familiar with PIMS that were interviewed seemed to be relatively comfortable with the system, although some still struggled with its practical use.
212. With regard programme reporting, up until the time of this evaluation, UNEP has prepared a total of four **Programme Performance Reports** (PPRs), with the first being produced in October 2010 covering the January-June 2010 period of the PoW 2010-2011 biennium, and the latest in December 2011. Over this period, there has been a significant evolution in the design of the PPRs, but all of the reports are divided into an Overall Programme Performance Review followed by a more in-depth performance reporting by sub-programme.
213. With regard EA-level reporting, the two annual PPRs (Jan 2010-Dec 2010 and Jan 2010-Dec 2011) provide an assessment of actual achievement of the Expected Accomplishments based on the assessments made against the indicators, targets and baselines provided in the Strategic Framework for

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126 The Programme Manual defines a milestone as "a scheduled event signifying the progression or completion of work towards a project output and ultimately the project outcome. Milestones are key events that provide a measure of progress and a target for the project team to aim at."

the biennium. For example, the Jan 2010-Dec 2011 PPR states that “*Performance indicators conclude that of the 21 EAs, 15 have been fully achieved, with five partially achieved, and one insufficiently achieved, indicative of a good overall performance.*” Considering the very ambitious nature of the Expected Accomplishments in the first place and the weakness of the associated Expected Accomplishment indicators, statements such of this are not credible and potentially detract from the value of the PPRs in reporting on UNEP’s true progress towards the desired outcomes.

214. With regard output level reporting, the Jan 2010-June 2011 PPR introduced a new approach to monitoring performance based on the new PIMS system, aggregating and analysing performance data for individual projects (through measurement against project milestones) towards the delivery of PoW Outputs. However, a weakness of the analysis is the practice of consolidating project output level information up to the level of the Expected Accomplishments, which gives an inaccurate and misleading impression of UNEP’s true achievements in delivering outcomes. In this regard, while it is clearly important to aggregate project level output performance information to provide an overall indication of UNEP’s implementation performance, it would be more appropriate and useful to present the information according to the **relevant accountable divisions**, so that they can indeed be held accountable for the delivery of the projects for which they are responsible, rather than by EAs.
215. A recent independent peer review of UNEP’s evaluation function<sup>127</sup> concluded that evaluation in UNEP is independent, well-established and has been growing in importance through the reform process, with increasing focus on managing for results. The review noted that, while the bulk of evaluations undertaken are terminal project evaluations, there has been a move to higher-level strategic evaluations through the Formative Evaluation of the PoW, and the on-going comprehensive sub-programme evaluations. The review recommended that increased focus should be placed on strategic evaluations in line with UNEP’s strategic and programmatic priorities and in order to feed into higher-level decision making.
216. Besides the Formative Evaluation, the other two key strategic Evaluation Office evaluations that have provided an important foundation for this evaluation are the ongoing in-depth evaluations of Disasters & Conflicts and Environmental Governance Sub-Programmes. Like the FE, these two sub-programme evaluations build on the Theory of Change approaches that have been widely adopted by the Evaluation Office. With the exception of GEF project evaluations, no evaluations have yet been undertaken of UNEP projects that are contributing to the current MTS. While it is still early days to be assessing these projects, it will clearly be important to launch a limited number of pivotal project evaluations for each of the sub-programmes in the near future.

## 4.6 Programme management

217. Alongside working on strengthening the RBM monitoring and reporting systems, UNEP has also been making efforts to strengthen its programme management systems, in particular through the development of a revised and expanded **Programme Manual**<sup>128</sup> which provides a comprehensive framework for strengthening UNEP’s RBM and project delivery mechanisms. Much of this work has been led by the Quality Assurance Section (QAS). Work on revising the UNEP Programme Manual began in 2009, but it was not until May 2012 that the Manual was eventually released in draft form. The delay has meant that there has not been a robust framework in place for programme management in the meantime, but on the other hand, it has also meant that the eventual manual incorporates many of the lessons learnt in implementing the revised programme processes and systems that have been developed in the intervening period.

127 Professional Peer Review of the UNEP Evaluation Function, Mar 2012

128 UNEP Programme Manual. Draft, May 2012



218. At the divisional level, **divisional workplans** represent a potentially crucial element of UNEP's programme management systems in support of the MTS, since they provide a potentially important operational planning framework for the division concerned to define individual projects contributing towards the results framework, as well as other non-project activities that are crucial to the achievement of results but which are not necessarily captured in the project delivery mechanism. The important role of divisional workplans was also confirmed by the ED's Management Note (January 2012) which stated that "*Divisional workplans constitute the baseline data against which OfO can assess the extent of alignment with the PoW and the steps needed to bring about alignment*".
219. Most respondents to the online survey of UNEP professional staff carried out as part of this evaluation were aware of their own division's workplan, with only DELC staff members (two thirds of them) responding that they were unaware of the existence of a formal division workplan. However, while divisional workplans appear to be being prepared, it is less clear whether they are fulfilling their potential role in programme management, and specifically in defining, monitoring and reporting on the specific contributions that are being made by the individual divisions to the delivery of the six sub-programmes. Currently, the functions of defining, monitoring and reporting on the contributions of the divisions seems to have been almost entirely aligned to the project delivery mechanism. For example, the Programme Frameworks set out which projects are to deliver on the concerned sub-programme, and which division is accountable for delivering each project. Similarly, the PIMS system and PPRs are currently oriented around monitoring the project delivery mechanism. Some additional non-project related monitoring and reporting may be occurring in IMDIS, but as discussed previously, IMDIS is less than ideal for reporting on UNEP's output-level performance information, and also does not incorporate a financial and resource allocation component. As a result, according to the information provided to the evaluation by UNEP staff, a significant proportion of UNEP's work, is, because it is not currently "projectised", not being subjected to an appropriate process of management oversight and approval, and thereafter to monitoring and reporting in PIMS and in the PPRs. This is especially the case for those divisions that have a significant number of general corporate functions (such as DRC), as well as the regional offices.

#### 4.7 UNEP's strategic presence and the role of the Regional Offices

220. UNEP's network of Regional Offices has a vital role to play in the delivery of the MTS and PoWs, especially with regard the regional and country level priorities that are identified in the **Bali Strategic Plan** (BSP - see the Relevance section of this report). Responding to the needs and priorities identified in the BSP, the **Dalberg Report on UNEP's Strategic Presence**<sup>129</sup> highlighted the key issues that needed to be addressed in strengthening UNEP's strategic presence. These issues were subsequently taken up in the UNEP policy document **Moving Forward with UNEP's Strategic Presence 2010 – 2013**<sup>130</sup>, which laid the foundation for UNEP's approach towards developing the organisations' strategic presence. The progress that has been made in implementing the strategic presence policy and in strengthening the capacity of the ROs to deliver the PoW was reviewed in early 2012 in the UNEP ED's report entitled **Results of the Review of the Needs and Potential of Regional Offices**<sup>131</sup>. The report found that while UNEP had made significant strides in building the "One UNEP" approach and in coordinating and supporting coherent implementation of the six sub-programmes at the regional and national levels, there was still room for improvement in communication and collaboration between divisions and regional offices, and in enabling the regional offices to be more directly involved in the MTS planning process. Following up on this recommendation, the UNEP ED's Management Note (January 2012) stated that

129 Moving UNEP towards a strategic presence model, Dalberg, Feb 2008

130 Moving Forward with UNEP's Strategic Presence 2010 – 2013. Final Approved SMT Policy Paper, Jan 2009

131 UNEP PoW 2012–2013: Addendum - Results of the review of the needs and potential of regional offices. Report of the Executive Director, Feb 2012

*“the next PoW 2014–2015 and budget should include an enhanced mechanism for UNEP delivery in response to regional and country priorities in the MTS and PoWs for 2014–2017.”*

221. Interviews with Regional Office and DRC staff carried out during the present evaluation also suggest that good progress is being made in strengthening the role of the Regional Offices in the design and implementation of the MTS and PoWs, in particular through the process of holding regional forums to identify priorities for inclusion in the new MTS, the subsequent development of regional strategic analyses, and also the decision that the ROs should be involved in relevant PRC meetings to review projects impacting on their regions. However, while these steps have resulted in improvements in the ROs role in programme planning, there are still significant challenges with respect to developing and implementing an appropriate role for the ROs in programme implementation. In this regard, the current role of the Regional Offices in programme delivery is largely one of providing support services to the divisions, such as liaison activities and assisting in establishing national and regional contacts and selecting partners, rather than of project development and implementation *per se*. The recent in-depth evaluation of the Disasters & Conflicts Sub-Programme reports on efforts made under the sub-programme to transfer responsibility for programme implementation in Haiti and Sierra Leone to the respective regional offices (ROALAC and ROA respectively) on an experimental basis. Both arrangements were only partially successful, chiefly because of the limited operational capacity, funding and delegated authority at the RO level to run the projects effectively<sup>132</sup>.
222. A potential way to begin addressing this issue of limited implementation capacity in the regions is proposed in the document **“Implementation of the PoW 2010-11 in the regions: Achievements and challenges faced in 2010”**, the key aspects of which were reinforced by the submission from the Director, DRC to the Task Team on Programme Management in April 2011. Besides emphasising the on-going efforts to increase the involvement of the ROs in the development of the MTS and the PoWs through regional consultation and the development of regional strategic analyses to identify needs, as well as technical capacity building, these documents also put emphasis on the development of “Regional Implementation Frameworks” (RIFs), which it is proposed should be the chief mechanism for the implementation of the PoW at the regional level and the framework for resource allocation.
223. In determining the optimal future role of the Regional Offices in programme implementation, two alternative institutional models need to be considered. The first model is where the Regional Offices are essentially on the same institutional level as the Divisions, and have a parallel and to an extent autonomous role in implementing UNEP’s PoW. In the matrix management approach, this would essentially represent a third dimension to the matrix, with the other two dimensions being the Divisions and the Sub-Programmes. The second model is one in which the Regional Offices remain closely integrated with the Divisions, albeit with enhanced programme implementation capacity and accountability, and essentially represent the field-based arm of the Divisional implementation dimension of the matrix. That is, a two dimensional matrix, not a three-dimensional one.
224. This Evaluation favours the second of these models. We take the viewpoint that the Regional Offices should primarily be an extension of UNEP’s divisional structure at the regional level, as opposed to an alternative implementation mechanism in their own right. The evaluation reached this conclusion based on the major aims of UNEP’s Strategic Presence model, which is chiefly to establish a conduit for enabling access to UNEP’s global technical expertise at the regional and country level, and to generate field-based learning, rather than to establish a regional and country presence for its own sake. Furthermore, it makes sense from the effectiveness and efficiency perspective to have a single

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<sup>132</sup> According to the DRC, while the formal general delegations of authority to Regional Directors are already established, the problem is that the Regional Offices have no accountability in the PoW for the delivery of specific outputs.

implementation dimension, rather than two implementation dimensions. A separate Regional Office implementation mechanism is in our view likely to add significantly to the costs, duplications and inefficiencies of UNEP's operations.

## 4.8 Conclusions and recommendations

### Programme planning

225. UNEP's present programme planning process has several key weaknesses which undermined the organisation's ability to achieve the RBM improvements that were a key objective of the MTS. To overcome these deficiencies, **this Evaluation recommends** that the planning process is revised to strengthen the future role of the Programme Frameworks in enabling a stronger element of iterative and participatory planning and adaptive management.
226. There are a variety of potential ways in which this strengthening of the role of Programme Frameworks could be achieved:
- Strengthening the underlying logic of the Programme Frameworks, by articulating a clear overall Theory of Change for the concerned sub-programme<sup>133</sup>.
  - Putting in place explicit mechanisms to facilitate learning from sub-programme implementation, and subsequent regular adaptation of the Programme Frameworks. At the corporate level, this could include introducing a programme review component to the functioning of SMT meetings, perhaps through an annual or bi-annual programme review session. At the sub-programme level, this could be achieved by sub-programme level implementation review meetings, including exercises to respond to the in-depth sub-programme evaluations carried out by the Evaluation Office. A key aspect will be the scheduling of Sub-Programme review events to ensure appropriate contributions to the design of subsequent MTS' and PoWs, as well as to enable the Programme Frameworks to respond appropriately to recently approved MTS' and PoWs (i.e., a two-way interchange of planning information between the statutory planning documents and the in-house Programme Frameworks. It is suggested that the Programme Frameworks should not only be an articulation of the programme-related decisions set out in the MTS and PoWs, as articulated by the Expected Accomplishments and PoW Outputs, but also a mechanism for inputting into the decision making process).
  - Strengthening the criteria used in the Programme Frameworks for prioritising the selection of project activities for inclusion in the Frameworks (see "UNEP's Project Portfolio and the MTS below").
  - Broadening the scope of the Programme Frameworks to provide space for aspects of the sub-programme that are unsuitable for packaging into projects. This aspect will greatly increase the relevance of the Programme Frameworks to a significant proportion of the work carried out under some sub-programmes, such as Environmental Governance. It will be necessary to provide sufficient guidance in the Programme Frameworks to ensure that these non-project components are transparent and accountable, and provide a basis for their elaboration in Divisional and Regional Office workplans (see "Project Management" below).

### Accountability and Authority

227. The current interpretation of matrix management in UNEP is not providing the clear lines of authority and accountability for programme delivery that are needed. With hindsight, the

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133 UNEP has taken steps to strengthen future Programme Frameworks in this regard. In the Lessons Learnt section of the draft MTS 2014-2017 states that "Programme Frameworks should continue to be used to help determine which projects will be required to deliver the PoW, and ensure that there is both causal logic between the projects and the results in the MTS/PoW".

Accountability Framework put in place early on in the MTS cycle established too many different forms of accountability for programme delivery than it was in practice realistic or desirable to achieve. In response, UNEP has already made a number of adjustments to simplify and clarify the accountability arrangements according to lessons learnt, but in the view of the Evaluation, still further modifications are needed in order for the matrix management approach to be fit for purpose.

228. **The Evaluation recommends** a further strengthening and clarification of the matrix management model to provide clear accountability, authority and reporting lines for the delivery of the sub-programmes. In particular, it is recommended that the following key weaknesses with the current matrix management approach be addressed (refer to Figure 3 earlier in this section):

- The lack of clear distinction in the present accountability arrangements between the two major functional axes of the matrix; the “programmatically” axis (i.e., the responsibility for overseeing the achievement of the sub-programme objectives -the WHAT), and the “implementation” axis (i.e., the responsibility for the day-to-day, technical delivery of the programme -the HOW)<sup>134</sup>. In this regard, a key weakness in the present accountability arrangements is the dual and potentially conflicting programmatic and implementation roles of the Lead Division Director. The evaluation team believes that a clearer distinction between the programmatic and implementation axes of the matrix will provide a more even playing field between the participating divisions, and ultimately enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of sub-programme implementation.
- Linked to this, the apparent conflict in accountability for implementation aspects of each sub-programme between the Lead Division Director, who has overall sub-programme implementation accountability and responsibility, and the Managing Division Director, who is responsible and accountable for delivering specific components of a sub-programme, but who reports directly to the DED, and has no reporting arrangement with the Lead Division Director<sup>135</sup>. Ideally, each Divisional Director should be solely accountable for the components of the sub-programme that they are implementing, reporting directly to the DED<sup>136</sup>.
- The lack of adequate accountability and authority vested in the position of the SPC. In this regard, key weaknesses are: the lack of a clear programmatic reporting relationship between the divisional branch and unit heads and the Sub-Programme Coordinator; the fact that most SPCs are currently part-time positions; and that some SPCs are at too junior a level in the organisation compared with the level of accountability and responsibility for programme coordination that they should ideally fulfil.
- There is also a need to clarify the reporting relationship between the SPC and the Lead Division Director versus the Deputy Executive Director. As reported earlier, UNEP has now established a reporting relationship between the SPCs and the DED, although it is unclear whether this has been put into practice. More importantly, however, it is not clear on which

134 This parallels with the differentiation of programme delivery and progress towards results performance monitoring discussed in the previous section.

135 Responding to an earlier draft of this evaluation report, the OfO has stated that the Lead Division Director is responsible for “*providing the leadership on each sub-programme, not delivery of the whole sub-programme*”. However, the evaluation team would argue that the term “providing leadership” has no meaning as such in organisational terms, unless it is defined in terms of authority, accountability and responsibility. In reality, the Lead Division Director is currently programmatically responsible for the relevant sub-programme, as demonstrated by the fact that the Sub-Programme Coordinator reports directly to them. In addition, they have significant control over the allocation of financial resources to the sub-programme, and, according to the Accountability Framework, they are: “*responsible for ensuring coherence and coordination and **programme performance and reporting** at Sub-Programme level*” (our emphasis). In effect, these aspects mean that the Lead Division Director also has a significant element of implementation responsibility and accountability for the concerned sub-programme, and this is certainly borne out by the team’s discussions with UNEP staff.

136 Addressing this weakness of the current matrix management approach is closely linked to the issues of divisional work planning addressed in paragraph \_ below, in particular the potential role of divisional workplans in fulfilling the respective division’s accountability and reporting responsibilities for sub-programme implementation.

responsibilities the SPCs will report to the DED, and which to the Lead Division Director. In the view of the evaluation team, the optimal approach would be to establish a direct and clearly-defined programmatic reporting relationship between the SPCs and the DED<sup>137</sup>.

229. **The Evaluation recommends** that the accountability and authority arrangements should be adjusted to address the weaknesses identified above through the revision of the existing UNEP Accountability Framework, and put into effect through the provision of appropriate revised Delegations of Authority by the ED.
230. **The Evaluation also recommends** that UNEP instigates steps to significantly enhance the role of the Sub-Programme Coordinators in overseeing the programmatic dimension of the matrix management model. This should include an enhanced role in the decision making process concerning programme implementation, such as participation in appropriate senior-management forums, and an enhanced role in the decision making process with regard resource allocation to their respective sub-programmes.
231. Nevertheless, in the view of the evaluation team, the main function of the SPC's remains, as their title suggests, in programme coordination and technical oversight, not programme management and implementation, which remains the function of the Divisions and Regional Offices. This is the essence of the proposed refinement of the UNEP matrix management model that is proposed in the report, with a clearer distinction between programme supervision on the one hand and implementation on the other.
232. The strengthening of the matrix structure and associated accountability arrangements can only succeed if there are parallel and complementary adjustments made to UNEP's human and financial resource allocation systems, which at present are not fully supportive of a matrix management approach. The aspects are discussed further in the Human & Financial Resources section later in this document.

### **UNEP's project portfolio and the MTS**

233. The transition to the new MTS with its six new sub-programmes inevitably represented a major departure from the UNEP project portfolio *status quo* as it existed prior to the MTS, and it is to be expected that the transition to appropriate alignment with the new results framework, including determining which projects should be continued and which ones should be closed, would be a complex one that needed to be spread over an extended period. In this regard, the Programme Frameworks with their associated approved Project Concepts developed in the early months of the MTS provided an important mechanism for ensuring that UNEP's project portfolio, including both existing and new projects, was increasingly aligned with the higher-level MTS and PoW results framework.
234. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Programme Frameworks in practice did not provide a sufficiently robust framework to facilitate the necessary transition, at least for some sub-programmes. This situation seems to be now changing with the PoW 2012-2013 and the associated Programme Framework Extensions, but there is still progress to be made in putting into place robust mechanisms for ensuring the alignment of the project portfolio with the higher-level MTS results framework.
235. **This Evaluation recommends** that the process for aligning the project portfolio with the MTS results framework be strengthened in advance of the next MTS, 2014-2017. In particular, as part

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<sup>137</sup> Because of the amount of potential work involved in programme coordination and supervision, an option would be to establish a new DED post responsible for programmes, or alternatively a post of Programme Director.

of the strengthening of the role of the Programme Frameworks in UNEP's programme planning process, it is recommended that specific "flagship areas" are defined to articulate the concerned sub-programme's project delivery response to the MTS results framework, incorporating for each flagship area an explicit causal logic related to particular aspects of achieving the Expected Accomplishment concerned, building on comparative advantages and priorities of the organisation, and providing appropriate guidance for the identification of specific projects<sup>138</sup>. The work of the Climate Change Sub-Programme to put in place such flagship areas could serve as a good foundation for developing this aspect of the PFs.

236. One important factor contributing to the inability of the Programme Frameworks to fulfil their anticipated role in strengthening UNEP's results framework was the unrealistic level at which the MTS established the Expected Accomplishments. This meant that it was not possible to target project outcomes at specific EAs. UNEP's ongoing efforts to reformulate Expected Accomplishments at the immediate outcome level, as reported in the Programme Planning findings earlier in this section, will help ensure that future projects are better aligned with the results framework set out in the MTS and PoW.

### Programme monitoring and reporting

237. The Formative Evaluation and the revised UNEP Programme Manual introduces the concept of **outcome milestones**, but neither document goes into any detail of how these should in practice be formulated. **This Evaluation recommends** that the identification of generic outcome milestones should be part of the process of developing the revised Programme Frameworks. Both the generic Expected Accomplishment causal pathways and milestones can then form the basis for developing the specific causal logic and milestones for individual projects being implemented under the concerned Programme Framework. The achievement of outcome milestones should also, if feasible, be monitored in PIMS, and this information should be consolidated to the Expected Accomplishment and Sub-Programme level.
238. **The Evaluation also recommends** that outcome milestones should be based on key components of the causal logic, in particular relating to the achievement of key outcome and impact drivers. For example, if the outcome of a project is for a participating government to incorporate ecosystem management approaches into its development planning processes, a key milestone may be that the government carries out key legislative and policy reforms to enable this to happen. In some circumstances, the milestone concerned may be the same as one of the project's own output indicators, but some milestones identified from the causal logic may not be an integral part of the project itself. For example, a significant milestone towards achieving the outcome may be that the country's Parliament adopts the necessary policy and legislation changes, which while crucial to the eventual achievement of the outcome, is unlikely to be within the scope of the project to deliver.
239. UNEP has already made significant progress in introducing and monitoring **project output milestones**, and these milestones form a crucial element of UNEPS performance monitoring systems discussed in the next section.
240. The introduction of PIMS has enabled UNEP to fill, at least in part, the gap created by the weaknesses of the present UN-wide PoW performance monitoring system, IMDIS. However, a number of considerations influence the decision as to whether PIMS is the appropriate management information system to meet UNEP's long-term needs for performance monitoring and results-based management, including the following:

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138 A related aspect here will be a requirement to prioritise such flagship areas for resource allocation.

- The quality of PIMS performance outputs is only as good as the performance information being entered into its database. This depends on how rigorously the sub-programme concerned implements the system. For example, the in-depth evaluation of the Environmental Governance Sub-Programme noted that once PIMS was introduced, performance measurements appeared to be significantly more realistic, with red and yellow traffic lights appearing across the sub-programme. However, by the end of the biennium, all traffic lights were green again, which either meant that significant progress had been made, or that the sub-programme had taken a more generous approach towards measuring its progress. Similar situations were reported to exist with the other sub-programmes.
- Currently, PIMS is only recording performance information against defined project output milestones, and it is not yet clear how suitable the system will be for managing other non-projectised performance data. Specifically, under the sections on “Programme Management” and “Role of the Regional Offices” below, it is recommended that UNEP move towards a system whereby both divisional and regional office annual workplans are used to plan operational activities and to measure performance at the divisional and regional office level. Depending on the division or regional office concerned, much of this work will not be projectised. Will it be appropriate and/or practical to adapt PIMS to cater for such monitoring information?
- As discussed previously, commencing in mid-2013, the UN system is in the process of introducing a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system called Umoja, which may well cater for UNEP’s performance monitoring and results-based management needs. It may prove worthwhile awaiting the introduction of the new system before determining whether to further adapt and strengthen PIMS.

241. In this regard, **this Evaluation recommends** that UNEP undertake a review of the future role of PIMS in its results-based management performance monitoring requirements, in particular with regard the suitability of the system to meet future needs for monitoring UNEP’s non-projectised activities, its role vis-à-vis the new UN Umoja ERP system, and its actual performance as a monitoring tool as demonstrated by the in-depth sub-programme and project-level evaluations.

242. Although under constant improvement, the evaluation team felt that the PPRs still have two significant weaknesses: firstly, the reporting of achievements at the outcome level relies on weak Expected Accomplishment indicators, which in turn are linked to overly ambitious EAs. This aspect is best addressed by strengthening the Expected Accomplishments so that they are at the immediate outcome level, strengthening indicators, and putting into place and monitoring higher-level outcome milestones as described above. Secondly, the way in which the PPRs use the PIMS “traffic light” system to aggregate project output milestone information to the Expected Accomplishment level is in the view of the Evaluation inappropriate. On the one hand, aggregation to the outcome (EA) level has the potential of creating a false impression of actual achievements at this level, as opposed to the project output-level delivery performance which PIMS actually currently records<sup>139</sup>. On the other hand, there is a danger that, by “dumbing down” much more complex performance information, the traffic light mode of presenting project output performance data has the potential of being counter-productive in understanding and responding to UNEP’s actual performance, especially if the data is not robust (see above). It can focus managers as well as external audiences on relatively crude performance measures, rather than on understanding the underlying factors influencing performance. In this regard, the Evaluation found the qualitative components of the PPRs infinitely more useful in understanding UNEP’s performance under the different sub-programmes than the quantitative information generated by PIMS.

139 This is illustrated in the June 2011 PPR, which defines EA and PoW Output ratings as: “PoW output ratings are based on the aggregated rating of milestone attainment for project outputs under each PoW output. The expected accomplishment rating is an aggregated rating of all the project output milestone ratings for that EA”.

243. **The Evaluation recommends** that, as part of the review of the future role of PIMS in performance monitoring as per the previous recommendation, the role of PIMS data and the traffic light system in the Programme Performance Reports should also be re-examined. This should include a review of the desirability of aggregating project output-level performance information to the divisional level as opposed to EA (sub-programme outcome) level as at present, and a consideration of the value-added of the PIMS traffic light project output performance presentation, as opposed to the presentation of more qualitative information on progress towards PoW outputs.

### Programme management

244. **Divisional workplans** represent a potentially important underutilised mechanism for defining, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the MTS and the PoWs, including those aspects that are not presently captured by the project delivery mechanism. Up until now this role has been partially, and inadequately, fulfilled by the Programme Frameworks, and to an extent by the PoWs themselves. With the proposed shift to making the Programme Frameworks more strategic and adaptive documents that elaborate the causal logic underlying the sub-programmes, the need to fill the implementation gap by the divisional workplans becomes all the more important.
245. **This evaluation recommends** that the process of developing divisional workplans should be fully instituted as an integral and instrumental component of UNEP's programme management and accountability processes. Like UNEP's projects, these workplans should establish milestones for other aspects of the division's work that are not included in the project delivery mechanism. PIMS should then incorporate delivery milestones for broader divisional workplans as well as projects, and this information should in future be consolidated up to the divisional level, rather than the Expected Accomplishment level as at present. The implementation of this recommendation is likely to also entail the review and revision by OfO of the existing workplan format, in consultation with divisions and regional offices (see below).

### UNEP's strategic presence and the role of the Regional Offices

246. UNEP has established a strong strategic and policy foundation strengthening UNEP's strategic presence and the role of UNEP's Regional Offices in programme implementation, including the Bali Strategic Plan, the Dalberg Report on UNEP's Strategic Presence, and UNEP's policy document, *Moving Forward with UNEP's Strategic Presence*. Notwithstanding this foundation, it seems clear today that UNEP's Regional Offices are yet to fulfil their full potential in delivering on the MTS, PoWs and the goals set out in the BSP. UNEP has already made good progress in increasing the technical capacity of the Regional Offices through the assignment of technical staff from the different divisions to the different regions. Enabling the Regional Offices to play a more substantive role in programme implementation will ensure that UNEP's activities are regionally relevant and appropriate, that synergies between projects and sub-programmes at the regional level are capitalised upon, and that duplications of effort and lack of coordination at the country and regional level are reduced. Achieving this strengthened programme implementation role will require continuing efforts to enhance capacity at the regional level, supported by appropriate management systems.
247. **The Evaluation recommends** that UNEP further strengthens its Regional Offices by a continuation of the process of outposting divisional staff to the ROs. UNEP should further develop the RO's management systems, processes and accountability arrangements for programme delivery under the next MTS. One aspect of this would be to strengthen the role of regional office workplans, so that they can serve a similar planning, resource allocation and accountability responsibility as this Evaluation has earlier recommended for the divisional workplans<sup>140</sup> (see Paragraph \_ above). Another

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140 As with the divisional workplans, the regional office workplans should articulate how the respective Programme Frameworks will



aspect could be the development of specific projects at the regional level, designed to respond to regional dimensions of one or more of the sub-programmes, and to establish regional synergies in the delivery of the respective sub-programme(s), in line with the relevant Programme Framework.

248. **The Evaluation also recommends** that UNEP undertakes a review of the optimal institutional arrangements between the Regional Offices and the Divisions, in line with the aims of UNEP's Strategic Presence model as well as the achievement of effective and efficient programme implementation. Such a review should include an examination of the strengths and weaknesses of an approach where the Regional Offices enjoy substantial autonomy in the delivery of the UNEP programme, i.e. they represent a separate dimension of the matrix structure, and one in which they are essentially the field-level arm of the Divisions, i.e., the same dimension of the matrix as the Divisions. The review should also look at the optimal role of the Division of Regional Cooperation in supporting the Regional Offices, in particular potential alternative models that strengthen DRC's role in providing a communication and facilitation bridge and service between the Divisions and the Regional Offices. Depending on which model is eventually adopted, it will also be important in due course to further clarify the delegated accountability and authority of ROs with regard programme implementation.

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be implemented at the regional office level. They should therefore be produced in response to the PFs, not as an alternative to them.

## 5. Human & Financial Resources supporting MTS Implementation

### 5.1 Introduction

249. The MTS identified “human resource management” and “resource mobilization” as two of the (four) institutional mechanisms to be put in place to achieve its objectives. UNEP aims to “build a high-quality, multi-skilled and mobile workforce that is efficient, competent, and possesses the highest degree of integrity”, paying due regard to geographical representation and gender balance. UNEP intends to do so through targeted and more efficient recruitment efforts, combined with the development of management and leadership capacities of existing staff and the implementation of a staff rotation programme. As regards financial resources, the MTS wants to be “a credible platform for mobilizing resources” around its objectives and strategic/programmatic frameworks. UNEP aims to enhance voluntary contributions to the Environment Fund (EF), strengthen its direct engagement with development partners, and raise contributions from the private sector, foundations, and non-environmental funding windows, including humanitarian, crisis and peace-building instruments.
250. UNEP operates under the broad framework of the UN Secretariat. As such, the rules and regulations defined by the UN Secretariat for human resources management, performance measurement, reporting and financial audits are binding on UNEP. The move to the new programmatic framework has been yet accompanied by any important organizational restructuring for financial management and administration. Effective January 2008, the Corporate Services Section (CSS) and the Administrative Service Centre (ASC) in Geneva have assumed responsibilities for specific functions previously undertaken by the United Nations Office in Nairobi (UNON). Together with the Quality Assurance Section (QAS) and the Resource Mobilization Section (RMS), CSS has represented the backbone of UNEP management and administration for the implementation of the MTS. Following the recommendations included in the “Review of UNEP’s Programme Implementation Mechanisms and Administrative Structures” by Dalberg Global Development Advisors (2006) and the following audit by the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS, 2009), QAS, CSS and RMS were later organized as the Office of Operations (OfO), to allow for strategy development, resource mobilization, budgetary and financial reporting, human resource planning, and performance monitoring to be more interlinked, and to avoid duplication and overlap of activities. The OfO has been responsible for the strategic management of UNEP budgetary, financial, human, information technology and physical resources. However, UNEP still relies on UNON as service provider in the areas of accounting, payroll and payments, recruitment and staff services, staff development, procurement and inventory maintenance.

### 5.2 Human resource management

251. In preparation for the MTS, and in response to recommendations made by the Dalberg Review (2006), UNEP Senior Management Team (SMT) approved the document “Approaches to realignment of staff skills against programmatic priorities”<sup>141</sup>. The document stated the need to: a) institutionalize recruitment practices (including the assessment of capacity and the development of recruitment

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141 Despite formal approval by SMT and distribution through intranet, the Approaches document does not seem to have been a reference for human resources management in UNEP, and systematically acted upon.

plans in Divisions and across Divisions); b) promote targeted recruitments (internal and external); c) implement the Optional Voluntary Separation Programme, and; d) implement the rotation and training programme. Building on the four focus areas, this Evaluation has come out with four criteria against which performance of UNEP towards achieving human resources management-related objectives can be assessed: i) Strengthened human resources base and allocation of human resources according to the priority objectives of the MTS; ii) Enhanced capacities of UNEP staff to implement the MTS, iii) Increased efficiency of recruitment processes and human resources management, and; iv) “One UNEP” corporate culture promoted and staff motivation enhanced.<sup>142</sup>

### **Strengthened human resources base and allocation of human resources according to priority objectives in the MTS**

252. In the PoW document for 2010-11, UNEP estimated an overall 8% increase in its staff capacity (55 posts) compared to the previous biennium. Staff estimates for the biennium 2012-13 were less rosy, with a reduction of 57 posts mainly paid for by the EF, following a Governing Council Decision (24/9) to “take a cautious approach to the creation of additional posts under the EF”. Although PoW staff figures are only estimates and are not representative of UNEP’s entire work-force, as for example they do not include extra-budgetary funded project posts, they provide evidence of UNEP’s intention to enhance its staff capacity at the beginning of the MTS period and, two years later, the need to back off to the original figures, given the difficult world-wide financial situation and the Governing Council decision to shift the resource balance more towards activities.
253. The increase in staff numbers at the beginning of the MTS period was intended to mainly strengthen UNEP’s operational capacity in line-management functions within the OfO, and to enhance UNEP’s presence in the regions. Effective January 2008, 18 posts (7 Professionals and 11 Local Level) were transferred from UNON to UNEP, and 6 Professionals have been added to the various corporate services function. Overall, the OfO had 80 posts assigned in the PoW 2010-11, and 78 planned for the biennium 2012-13, which the Evaluation would consider adequate to the size of the Organization (14%). Regarding UNEP’s presence in the regions, a significant increase (61%) of (core and project) posts within Regional Offices (excluding DRC) was planned. This increase was intended to particularly benefit the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (+81%) and the Regional Office for Africa (+76%), to balance the amount of UNEP resources available in the regions.<sup>143</sup> In addition, the increase in staff resources would have mostly benefitted DEWA (+14%) and DCPI (+12%). DELC, DTIE and DEPI resources were reduced, inasmuch as -7%, -4%, and -3% respectively.
254. Comparing staff figures in the PoW with the actual numbers of staff working for UNEP across the world (project staff excluded), the Evaluation got a very different picture. After 2009, when UNEP workforce increased by more than 100 staff despite the negative signals about the forthcoming financial crisis, UNEP has steadily cut its human resources base, in as much as 6.4% since 2009. In the last three years (up to the end of September 2012), only DEPI and DELC have seen their staff base increase by 5.5% and 10.5% respectively. Percentage-wise, UNEP has not significantly modified its staff composition by Division. DTIE, DRC and DEPI represent each about 20% of UNEP staff, followed by DEWA (9%), DELC (7%), and DCPI (4%). DEPI emerges as the only Division whose share of staff has increased since 2008 from 16% to 20%, also because of the integration of previous GEF staff.

142 Criterion iv) is not officially mentioned in the Approaches document. Yet, the Evaluation reckons the importance of organizational motivation for enhanced performance. As indicated in the framework developed by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and Universal Management Group, organizational performance ultimately depends on three main factors: the external environment, organizational capacity (strategic leadership, human resources, financial management, organizational processes, programme management, infrastructure), and organizational motivation. Organizational motivation is both related to the history and mission of the Organization, but also to its culture and the system of incentives in place.

143 The increase responded to the need “to provide client countries with timely and quality assistance”, as stated in three of the six Sub-Programme Strategies for 2010-11 (DC, HSHW, and RE), and, again, in the UNEP Budget Committee document of July 2011.

**Table 1: UNEP staff figures 2008-2012**

Division	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
DEWA	74	77	78	76	77
DELC	58	53	57	60	63
DEPI	132	163	164	157	173
DTIE	183	202	193	181	187
DRC	182	207	211	210	197
DCPI	41	41	45	43	38
OED	81	103	99	100	92
GEF	66	76	60	52	36
UNSCAR	3	4	3	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>926</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>883</b>	<b>867</b>

(Source: UNON Human Resources Management Section)

255. As regards strengthening UNEP's presence in the regions, the Evaluation denotes that this happened only thanks to the set-up of various Liaison Offices. In the biennium 2010-11, all Regional Offices but ROLAC saw a slight decrease in their staff base (in the measure of 2 to 5 staff decrease). At the same time, UNEP established Liaison Offices in Beijing, Moscow, Brussels, Brasilia and Mexico City, and reinforced the one in New York.
256. In conformity with the planning, UNEP strengthened its OfO in 2009, increasing the number of staff from 37 to 63. As indicated above (paragraph \_), this was mainly due to the transfer of finance and administration functions from UNON to UNEP CSS. Since then, however, the OfO's staff base has decreased down to 56 members, the decline being more significant for QAS (-5 staff only in 2012) and CSS (-4 in 2011-12). The position of Director of QAS at D1 level has remained vacant for some time - with the Senior Planning Officer performing the function of Director ad interim – and then filled in by the Director of OfO, while waiting for the classification of his post at D2 level to happen (documents sent to the UN Secretariat only in October 2012).

### **Allocation of human resources by Sub-programme**

257. Over the MTS period, there has not been any significant shift in the way staff resources are managed. Staff continue to be recruited in functional Divisions, and reporting lines and the locus of authority firmly reside with the Division Director. However, staff are able to work on Sub-Programmes which cut across several Divisions in a matrix system. The results of the survey conducted by the Evaluation (the UNEP Survey, hereafter) confirmed that UNEP staff generally divides its time between two Sub-Programmes or more, except for DTIE and DELC staff who generally work for the implementation of one Sub-Programme only.
258. The Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) which UNEP uses for human resource management does not however allow for such allocation of staff time along functional and thematic lines. UNEP was thus compelled to assign *de facto* the cost of staff to the Sub-Programme to which they devote the major part of their working hours. This proved particularly challenging for those staff positions – such as Division Directors, Regional Directors, but also drivers and other support staff- who cannot be said to be working towards the achievement of specific Sub-programme objectives. In the event, the allocation of staff among Sub-Programmes was only partially based on the contribution they provide to Sub-Programme objectives. The inclination of Division Directors to

include all the staff they manage within the Sub-Programme they lead, combined with some logical fallacy in the design of the MTS, had to be ultimately rectified by the OfO for a better balanced (and sometimes admittedly artificial) distribution of resources<sup>144</sup>. For the PoW 2012-13, UNEP proposed to allocate the costs of specific professional figures (including Senior Managers and Fund Management Officers) in a specific Sub-Programme under Programme Management. While the proposal was accepted by UNEP GC, it was subsequently rejected by the UN Committee for Programme Coordination. These costs were thus later spread over the six SPs. The Evaluation notes that the operations strategy for the 2014-2017 MTS includes plans to manage human resources in line with needs related to results-based management.

259. Taking account of the limitations that any analysis of human resources based on PoW figures has, the Evaluation observes that the distribution of human resources in the PoW – excluding staff hired within projects – favours the Ecosystems Management (EM) and Environmental Governance (EG) Sub programmes (SP), which account together for almost half of UNEP budget (23% each), followed by Climate Change (19%), Resource Efficiency (17%), Hazardous Substances and Hazardous Waste (11%), and Disasters and Conflict (7%). The analysis of the distribution of PoW posts among SPs confirms this trend. Compared to others, the EG and EM SPs also appear to use a bigger part of their EF resources to fund posts: the ratio of post/non post resources for the two SPs is respectively 0.46 and 0.37, compared to an average 0.31 in UNEP. The distribution of staff resources by level appears almost equal across SPs, with few exceptions which can be, for the most part, explained by the challenges that OfO faced in the distribution of resources among SPs. Only the professional level within the Office for Operations/Programme Support function (at P4 level) does not seem entirely adequate to support MTS implementation.

### ***Gender and geographic balance***

260. UNEP seems to have achieved good progress in the gender balance of its staff. Women now represent 59% of UNEP entire workforce, and 55% of Professional staff at P1-P3 level. The Evaluation notes a significant increase (+6%) of women at Director levels since 2010 – women are now 30% of the ASGs and Directors of UNEP, while some more challenges remain at middle- and senior-professional levels. The share of women at P4 and P5 levels has not changed much since 2008, from 35% to 37% of staff.
261. As of October 2012, UNEP staff base is comprised of 117 countries. Among Professionals, the United States of America, Kenya, and the United Kingdom are the most represented, with 37, 36, and 30 staff members each. The OfO declares its commitment to reach a better geographic balance, although hiring staff members from under-represented countries has been admittedly difficult. National examinations have helped in this respect.

### ***The rotation programme***

262. The rotation programme was first introduced in UNEP in 2009, as a component of the Training and Learning Programme developed by the Strategic Implementation Team (SIT). The Evaluation reported anecdotal evidence of high interest by staff, which however did not turn into actual moves of staff within the Organization, partly due to the fact that vacant posts within Divisions were not made available. The programme was proposed again in 2010, still with very limited success. In August 2012, the ED acknowledged it, and decided to postpone any further decision to the time the UN Secretary General acts on it as a general policy for the UN Secretariat.<sup>145</sup> Mobility, in any case,

144 This was particularly true for the EG SP, whose blurred boundaries allowed for the initial allocation within it of the majority of DELC, DRC, and DEWA staff.

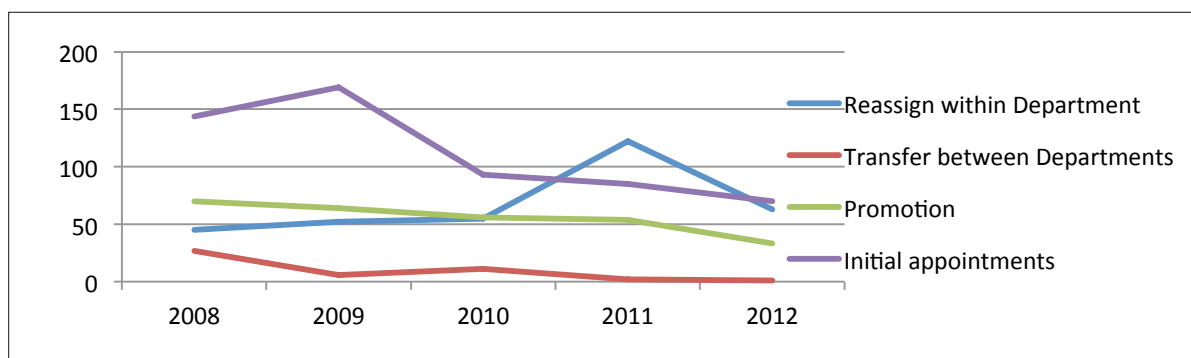
145 At the forthcoming session of the General Assembly, the UN Secretary General will present a proposed framework on mobility and career development, based on a proposal prepared by the Staff-Management Committee.

remains a quite significant component of UNEP recruitment: in the first nine months of 2012, about 60% of the human resources actions have involved internal candidates (40% lateral moves and 20% promotions). Reassignment of staff within UNEP (at large, including the Secretariats' Conventions) peaked in 2011 (+121% compared to 2010), in parallel with the beginning of the MTS period. The Evaluation however could not distinguish between transfers within and between Divisions. Opportunities for career progression appear more limited. In the period 2008-12, the number of staff promoted has steadily fallen, each year, from 70 to 33.

### Enhanced capacities of UNEP staff to implement the MTS

263. The need to “attract, build, and maintain a highly competent, multi-skilled and versatile international workforce capable of fulfilling the mandates of UNEP and UNEP-administered MEAs” and “to boost career development within UNEP” has been long acknowledged. In 2007/08, the Strategic Implementation Team (SIT) was tasked with drafting a Training and Learning Programme for UNEP and its administered-MEAs, to be implemented by QAS in collaboration with the UNON Staff Development and Training Unit (SDTU). The Programme included – among others – UNEP-customized opportunities for management training, seminars and brown-bag lunches, and an induction course. The Evaluation is under the impression that, despite strong support by the Executive Office, capacity development became less of a priority in the overall MTS development and implementation process. Once the SIT was dismantled at the beginning of 2010, no dedicated staff<sup>146</sup> was appointed to carry the task forward. The Training Strategy remained in draft form, and some elements (e.g. the induction courses) were never, or fully (e.g. the rotation programme), implemented.

**Figure 4. UNEP staff movements (2008-12)<sup>147</sup>**



264. While there was loss of momentum on the development of a coherent training and human resource management strategy to implement the MTS, a few worthwhile initiatives which contributed to the MTS implementation were undertaken. In 2009, QAS organized a first “fast track capacity building for PoW” programme. The initiative was part of the SMT-approved “Programme of Work 2010-11: Designing the activities to deliver the results”, a blended communication and training strategy on UNEP’s new PoW structure, and aimed to guide UNEP staff on the formulation of Programme Frameworks derived from the PoW, while at the same time provide guidance on the matrix implementation. The training successfully targeted a high number (270) of staff, including in regional and decentralized offices. Despite strong support by the ED, the training content (and materials) could have benefitted from more guidance and clarity from QAS on processes, roles, and responsibilities, including of Regional Offices. The lack of inclusion of FMOs in the training,

146 A UNEP Human Resources Officer was hired in 2010. Yet, his Terms of Reference ranged from human resources management to finance and procurement.

147 Including staff of the Conventions’ Secretariats

although requested, represented a missed opportunity for Results Based Budgeting (RBB) and for better integration of fund management in programme management. This was more so, as the planned workshops coordinated by the then CSS (when procedures on budgeting would have been clarified) never happened. At the same time, QAS planned a “logic framework clinic”, to support UNEP staff with the formulation of project logical frameworks. The initiative was interrupted after only a couple of sessions. Although commendable, it should have been planned differently, as a one-to-one help desk service rather than a brown bag lunch open to all staff. A second training on RBM project management, funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), was organized by QAS in 2011-12, “to target capacity needs in programme and project implementation, and improve UNEP’s orientation towards measurable results”. The roll-out of the training comprised eleven sessions (including in regional and out-posted offices), and saw the participation of 184 staff. According to the final report of the training, participants found the training particularly relevant and useful to develop their capacities on project design, and the use of Theory of Change in project formulation. Still, as occurred with the previous training, they lamented the lack of stronger support by, and participation in the initiative of, OfO and QAS staff.<sup>148</sup>

265. In addition, in the biennium 2010-11, UNEP staff attended several instructor-led training courses organized by UNON SDTU<sup>149</sup>, including the Leadership Development Programme (for D1 and D2 staff), the Management Development Programme (for P5 and P4 staff), the General Service Development Programme, and the course on Women Preparing for Leadership. Fifty-one UNEP staff also attended the course on Performance Management for Managers and Supervisors, focused on the development of work-plans and the definition of objectives for inclusion in the E-PAS plan. Overall, the Evaluation estimates that UNEP staff is taking good advantage of the training opportunities offered by UNON SDTU (including on career development), representing 36% and 41% of the trainees in 2010 and 2011 respectively.
266. In parallel, QAS has developed a Programme Manual to provide guidance on UNEP processes for planning, managing, and reporting on activities and results, to ultimately improve the standards of UNEP’s projects and their focus on the results framework set out in the MTS and PoW. Work on the Programme Manual started as early as in 2009, but it has taken almost three years to complete. The Evaluation collected anecdotal evidence of the difficulty the managers of this initiative had in getting the buy-in of staff other than QAS and few other committed colleagues in-house. The Evaluation appreciated the current version of the manual, which provides a comprehensive framework for RBM, building on recommendations provided by the Formative Evaluation of UNEP PoW on the use of Theory of Change in project design. In this regard, the uptake and implementation of the Manual is likely to significantly strengthen the basis for RBM within UNEP.
267. In October 2011, a dedicated Training Officer joined the OfO from the Staff Development and Learning Unit of the UN Secretariat in New York. The (still draft) Training Approach developed for the biennium 2012-13 does not appear to be based on a real prioritization of needs, and relies very much on opportunities offered by UNON SDTU, given the limited resources available. As of November 2012, only two of the nine training opportunities identified for implementation have been realized (the Professional Development Coaching Programme and the above-mentioned RBM Project/Programme Management training funded by SIDA). Importantly, even though the need

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148 Other relevant training events for the implementation of the MTS, organized in the biennium 2010-11 to enhance staff capacity, included: training on the Programme Information Management System (PIMS), Prince II Foundation, IMDIS, and One UN briefing. 20 UNEP staff attended a ToT, organized by the UN System Staff College, on mainstreaming environmental sustainability and climate change in the UN Development Assistance Frameworks.

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for training for FMOs was stressed during the Administration Management Meeting in 2010 and resources by SIDA were allocated to the purpose the same year, the Fund/Programme Management training is still “under development”.<sup>150</sup> The evaluation notes, however, that the proposed 2014–2015 PoW anticipates RBM training for staff both in programme/project development and financial management.

### **Increased efficiency in recruitment processes and human resources management**

268. Human resources management in UNEP is based on the Administrative Instruction ST/AI/2010/3, which applies to the UN Secretariat as a whole. The Human Resources Section of the OfO and UNON Human Resources Management Services (HRMS) collaborate in the recruitment and management of UNEP human resources, according to a list of well-defined tasks. 60% of the newly recruited or newly promoted staff who responded to the UNEP survey rated the recruitment process, in terms of transparency and efficiency, “somewhat inefficient” or worse. Negative assessments appear to be derived from the bad reputation that the UN human resources gateway Inspira has got since its early days. The lack of prompt action by managers, who generally wait up to 60 days to start the assessment of applications, has added up to the perceived complexity of the system in creating a sense of frustration about recruitment processes. In the event, selection of new staff (from the job opening to the decision taken) has on average taken up to 100 days more than expected. The relationship with the UNON HRMS appears smooth, with no bottlenecks except in the classification phase (where UNON staff capacity is limited) hampering the process.
269. The Evaluation collected anecdotal evidence that the planned discussions on capacity gap assessments and targeted recruitment plans to deliver on the MTS objectives (see the Approaches document of 2009) had not systematically occurred at Sub-Programme or Division level. 80% of the respondents to the UNEP survey indicated they had not participated in any of those. Moreover, about half of the staff who participated in such discussions considered them to be of no utility, as they have never witnessed any decisions coming out from this analysis. An additional 25% reported that, whenever a recruitment plan was drafted, it could not be implemented, given the lack of resources and the length of the appointment process.

### **“One UNEP” corporate culture promoted and staff motivation enhanced**

270. In its Audit of Governance (2010), OIOS found that UNEP lacked a corporate culture supportive of UNEP’s goals, and that Divisional cultures still persisted.<sup>151</sup> The OIOS recommendation was rejected by UNEP management, with the view that the implementation of the MTS in itself would promote a corporate culture in UNEP. Two years later, this Evaluation still notes the absence of a “One UNEP” culture oriented towards the fulfilment of corporate goals. While acknowledging that the current MTS matrix structure has increased cooperation and coordination among Divisions, respondents to the survey blamed the matrix system to be still too much tied up with Division leadership. It has been reported that “Lead Divisions make decisions biased towards Divisional interest, often going against the recommendations of the SPCs”, and that “the current matrix structure works only for those Sub-Programmes that are resident in a particular Division”.
271. Cooperation seems to have been mostly “ad-hoc”, based on specific issues. 64% of the respondents to the UNEP survey indicated that, within the current MTS framework, cooperation and coordination

150 SIDA provided USD 270,000 for capacity development, including training on: the Programme Information Management Systems (PIMS), Financial and Administrative Training, to be led by OfO Finance, and Project Management training. PIMS and the Project Management training were held in 2011 and 2012, respectively.

151 To compensate for this, OIOS recommended strengthening the mechanism for assessing organization culture on a periodic basis, for: “a common vision and coordination among Divisions as they implement Sub-programmes”, “management to be committed to competence and readiness to take corrective action when needed”, and “staff members to support changes entailed by the adoption of the MTS”.



depend both on personalities and institutionalized practices, but that personalities count more. A number of UNEP staff lamented the lack of incentives for collaboration, beyond “a greater sense of UNEP-wide programme implementation”. It appears that synergies are easy to achieve at technical level, but it becomes more complicated at senior management level. It is indeed in the competition among Divisions within Sub-Programmes - especially over the allocation of resources and at senior level - and in the perceived gap between authority and responsibility, where the bottleneck towards a “One UNEP” culture exists. The rivalry among Divisions, the perceived poor management capacities of some high-level ranked staff, and the low level of trust in the relationship between OfO and Divisions, are seriously affecting the morale of UNEP staff.

### 5.3 Resource Mobilization

272. In 2009, in parallel with the drafting of the MTS and the Strategic Presence study, UNEP moved to a federated Resource Mobilization (RM) framework. The (one-page) Policy Guidelines on RM, approved by the SMT, highlight the need to stabilize and broaden the resource base for the MTS implementation, adopting a programme-based approach in line with the thematic priorities of the MTS. The description of the different roles that the ED/DED, Resource Mobilization Section, Divisions/SPCs, and Regional Offices would play in a federated Resource Mobilization system is cross-referenced to the “Guidelines on Federated Resource Mobilization – Roles and Responsibilities”. The document also makes clear that all RM initiatives, whether starting from managers at HQ or in Regional Offices, need to get through the RMS, to ensure coherence and complementarity with UNEP priorities as in the MTS and PoW. The Guidelines do not however describe the RM process’ phases and timing - for which Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are only now under development - nor do they address the issue of how to reach out to the private sector and foundations (which is one of the objective of the MTS).
273. In line with the UNEP Framework for RM, the UNEP RMS has been strengthened by recruiting two staff, at D1 and P5 level, in the last year and establishing an operational link with the Contributions Section of the OfO. Outreach to UNEP managers through an enhanced knowledge base is not yet to standards, but planned to be reinforced in the near future through the new intranet (soon to be launched).
274. UNEP staff acknowledges the utmost importance of coordination of efforts in RM, to raise funds for the implementation of the MTS, moving away from the pair tied contributions- donor driven programmes. UNEP staff are also mindful of their own (primary) responsibility in RM as project managers, given the reliance of UNEP on extra-budgetary (XB) funding other than the EF<sup>152</sup>. A significant part of the resources raised for the last biennium have actually been mobilized thanks to contacts that project managers established with various donor representatives in the course of the projects, by involving them in the project implementation. Yet the Evaluation observes that RM has been added to the tasks that project managers have, without adequately considering the implications that this responsibility would imply, in terms of required skills for RM. This has brought about a general sense of frustration in staff, who lamented their lack of expertise in the sector and the considerable amount of time spent on raising funds rather than managing projects.
275. The MTS wants to be “a credible platform for mobilizing resources” around its objectives and strategic/programmatic frameworks. This holds valid not only for the allocation of the EF, but also for all extra-budgetary (XB) contributions. The Programme Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) signed with Norway and Sweden soft-earmark funds at Sub-programme level, which are then allocated at

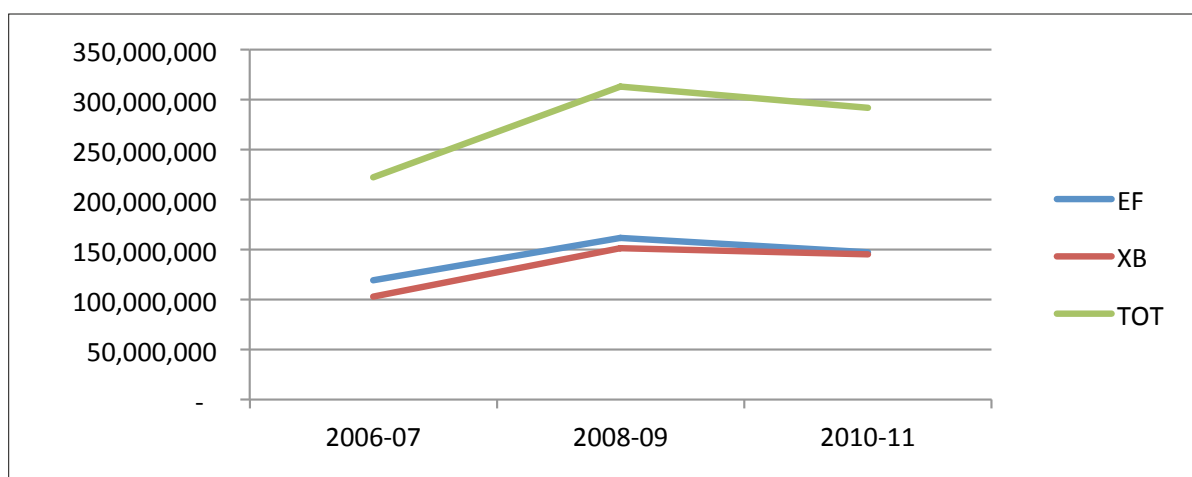
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152 In this document, XB contributions refer to all funds but the Regular Budget and the Environment Fund

project level through internal consultations and keeping into due account donors' priority target areas.<sup>153</sup> The Strategic Cooperation Agreements with the European Commission - within the Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources Framework (ENRTP) window - and the Framework Agreement signed with Spain<sup>154</sup> rather provides for a Joint Committee to allocate the funds, within the SPs, to specific projects. The ENRTPs (one signed with the DG Environment and one with the DGDev) have their own expected results, but relate to the UNEP Programme of Work. Earmarked funding to specific projects still persists, not only because of specific donor interests, but also due to the more pro-active behaviour of some project managers towards various donors. The Evaluation does not consider that earmarked funds to projects diminish the value of federated RM in UNEP, provided that no PCA with that donor has already been assigned and that each agreement is approved by RMS, once the conformity with UNEP PoW is checked.

276. Data from the top 15 donors show that, within an overall positive trend, in 2010-11 UNEP suffered a financial resources' reduction of USD 21 million. The 75% decrease of contributions by Italy and Spain compared to the previous biennium, which amounted to a cut of about USD 38 million, could only be partly compensated by the increase in contributions (within a range of 20-36%) by Germany, USA, Sweden, and Finland. Despite the intention to “increase the voluntary contributions to the Environment Fund for UNEP to deliver critical normative responsibilities, environmental analysis, policy advice and project design and implementation”, the EF resource base decreased of USD 14.4 million (-9%). 9 of the top 15 donors have augmented their contributions to the EF, but only in three cases (Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland) the increase was more than USD 1 million.

**Figure 5: Contributions by top 15 donors (2006-11)**



277. A sample analysis of resources disbursed to projects against the plan shows that, on average, UNEP has received/raised about three quarters of the project funds estimated at the beginning of the biennium. A very fragmented picture emerges when the results are broken down by SP. While the Climate Change (CC) Sub-Programme has been able to raise more than what it estimated (125%, calculated on the basis of a sample of 77% of the projects' total budgets), Hazardous Substances and Hazardous Waste (HSHW), Disasters and Conflict, and – above all – Environmental Governance Sub-Programmes have suffered of a significant resource gap (45% for the first two and 60% for

153 In the MTS period (2010-13), the EG Sub-Programme – including the Poverty and Environment Initiative - received the most significant share of funds raised through cooperation agreements (40% of SIDA funds, 24% of Norway funds), followed by the EM Sub-Programme (24% and 18.5%). The Evaluation denotes an increased interest by Norway in 2012-13 to fund initiatives within the Resource Efficiency and Sustainable Consumption Sub-Programme (and to a lesser extent the EM and EG SPs) to the detriment of the Climate Change Sub-Programme and other emerging policy issues.

154 UNEP is close to sign a similar agreement with China and Brazil (under negotiation).

the third). Several factors may have added up to the resource discrepancy, including too ambitious project design, poor or ineffective fundraising efforts, or again delays in the receipt of funds. Within SPs, the Evaluation recorded anecdotal evidence of a severe resource gap between well-funded/high-visibility projects and under-funded ones for which delivery of results will inevitably take much longer. Examples of high-visibility projects benefiting of earmarked funds include the UNEP Finance Initiative, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the Global Mercury Partnership. The last two initiatives received approximately 80% of the total funds for the HSHW Sub-Programme.

278. The constrained budgetary situation is likely to have affected UNEP's effectiveness, to an extent which is hardly quantifiable in the absence of any financial gap analysis by EA.<sup>155</sup> 60% of the respondents to the UNEP survey acknowledged that the projects they managed to have suffered significant budget reductions against the plan, and 15% of them consider the gap to have been "very significant". Driven by the positive resource trend of the previous biennia, UNEP managers got the impression, at the planning stage, that they needed to "think big and go out for more money". The result was the design of speculative and too ambitious projects (whose total budget exceeded in some cases the one assigned to the SP), which could not then be fully implemented because of the financial crisis and the difficulty to raise funds. Budget reductions against the plan appear to have primarily affected the implementation of activities at country level, including capacity development, and did not allow for a proper follow-through and outreach to stakeholders.<sup>156</sup>
279. UNEP's reliance on extra-budgetary resources, including GEF funds<sup>157</sup>, is well acknowledged. However, this is not equally an issue of concern for all. Interviewed staff members working for the HSHW and the CC SP, for example, consider the Extra-Budgetary funds received in the biennium 2010-11 sufficient, and appear confident that more resources will come (for example, through the Green Climate Fund for CC). Managers working on environmental assessments or other normative work instead reported to have experienced problems reaching out to donors who feel reluctant to finance what is perceived as UNEP core work. Some Sub-Programmes and Divisions proved to be more proactive in the search for funds. The DC Sub-Programme was, for example, the only one to develop a RM Strategy, which has been regularly updated with the evolving context of humanitarian and development aid financing. CC Sub-Programme has asked a consultancy company advice on how to better shape the Sub-Programme offer by identifying flagship concepts for resource mobilization. As it has historically been, DCPI and DTIE continue to engage more with the private sector, the latter in a variety of ways including technical advisory platforms (such as the Finance Initiative and the Sustainable Buildings and Climate Initiative) and policy/standard-setting dialogues.
280. The inadequacy and unpredictability of resources – due to the financial crisis, the difficulty to attract long-term funding for institutional development and for what is perceived as "academic work"- is often mentioned in UNEP documents as one of the major risks (generally with medium probability and high impact) for implementation. Mitigation strategies vary in details across Sub-Programmes, and include: the development of multi-stakeholder fundraising strategies, close cooperation with in-country partners, early sensitization of donors, and enhanced awareness of the importance of normative work. To lessen the risk of unsecured funding, UNEP has introduced RM benchmarks at

155 Only about half of the respondents to the UNEP survey indicated to have discussed how the budget reduction would have affected the attainment of higher-level results.

156 GEO5 – UNEP's flagship publication – was delivered with a budget of USD 5.6 million (compared to an estimate of USD 9.5 million): the budget reduction affected the team's capacity to implement capacity development activities in the region, and other outreach initiatives. The translation budget was reduced to the backbone, and – as of today – the report has not been translated in French, Russian, and Arabic. Funds for the Spanish version were raised with the support of donors from Latin America and the Caribbean.

157 About 70% of UNEP activities on CC adaptation are funded by the GEF. The GEF also supports 30-40% of the projects managed by UNEP Energy Branch.

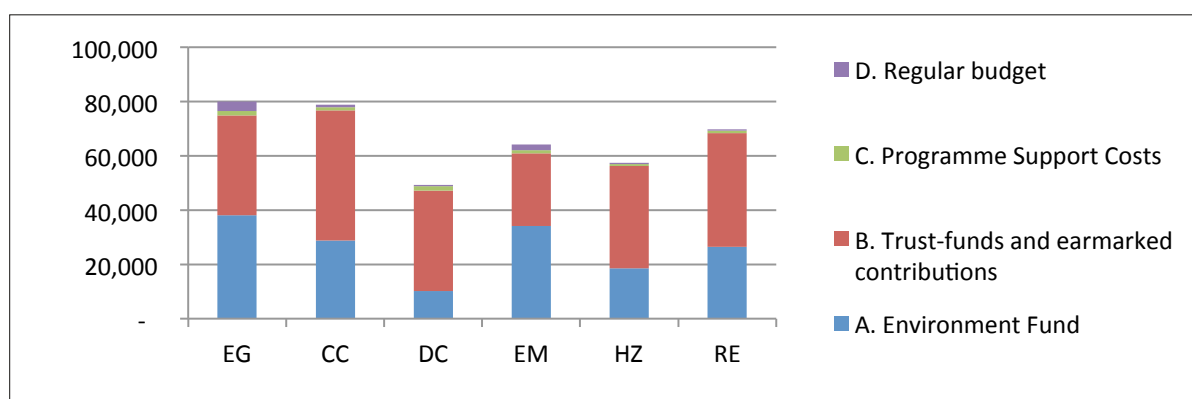
key moment in time during the programme and project planning processes, against which measuring the ability of the organization to attract donor resources. However, without adequate estimates of resources needed for project implementation in programmatic documents, the SMT could hardly assess the project's prospective "ability to attract donor funding". Only half of the Programme Frameworks for the biennium 2010-11 included such an estimate, and only those for the Resource Efficiency Sub-Programme broke it down to project concept level. In those few cases where the SMT was given enough elements to judge the "ability to attract donor funding", it commented on the need for a stronger focus ("not to have projects looking like a shopping list") and for a better description of the potential on-the-ground impact derived from the use of UNEP normative products.

281. The evaluation recorded also complaints about the poor timing in the receipt of mobilized resources, which affected the efficiency of project implementation and compelled staff to deliver in a reduced lapse of time. Starting from PoW 2012-13, "the timely mobilization of funding required for the delivery of the PoW" has been included among the Expected Accomplishments of the Office of the Executive Director (OED), with the aim to increase the share of resources mobilized within the first six months of the year. UNEP's improved capacity to attract resources earlier in the year is however limited by the Governments' own budget cycles. To enhance the predictability and timeliness of resources, the RMS will continue encouraging Governments to contribute as early as possible during a given year, and work on increasing the number of long-term cooperation agreements with top donors.

## 5.4 Resource allocation

282. The allocation of all UNEP resources<sup>158</sup> first goes by Sub-Programme, and then by Division participating in a Sub-Programme. The allocation of Environment Fund non-post resources by Sub-Programme follows the distribution of EF-posts, which thus becomes strategically important and is in turn influenced by the limitations of the current system. Trust Funds and Earmarked Resources are instead allotted on the basis of the corporate agreements signed with donors, and of other strategic considerations such as the ability of some Sub-Programmes to attract more extra-budgetary resources than others. The administrative costs which each Division incurs by virtue of being a management structure, and which can seldom be unequivocally linked to a particular deliverable, are allocated among Sub-Programmes following the Environment Fund allocation too.

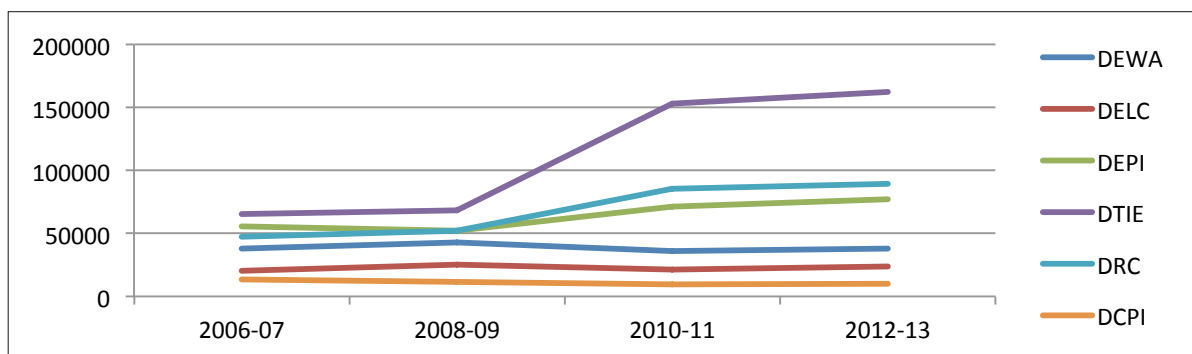
**Figure 6: Allocation of resources by Sub-Programme (PoW 2010-11)**



<sup>158</sup> UNEP budget only reflects amounts that channel through the UNEP accounting system. GEF funding and projects delivered through wider partnerships, such as the Great Apes Survival Partnership and the Poverty and Environment Initiative, are not included. The UN financing system is in fact unable to capture spending on UNEPs' behalf by other agencies or partners. Moreover, funds pertaining to MEAs administered by UNEP are excluded, with the exception of related programme support costs retained by UNEP.

283. PoW budget estimates for the biennia 2010-11 and 2012-13 do not present huge differences in the resources allocated among Sub-Programmes (SP). In each biennium, the Climate Change (CC) and Environmental Governance (EG) Sub-Programmes are projected to receive 18% of the total funds each, followed by RE (16%), EM (14%), HSHW (13%), and DC (11%). The OfO would receive 5% of the total resources, while the Executive Direction function would get 2%. The analysis of PoW resources broken down by source of funds shows that, in the period 2010-13, “small” Sub-Programmes (like Disasters & Conflict and Hazardous Substances & Hazardous Waste) are planned to receive less EF than others (6% and 10% respectively). This was motivated by the better capacity that these Sub-Programmes have to attract Extra-Budgetary contributions. This holding true, the Evaluation registered from the same Sub-Programme staff that this produced a counter-effect, with donors reluctant to support activities to which UNEP is not allocating its own resources. Trust Funds and earmarked contributions are divided almost equally by Sub-Programmes (an average 16% by SP): the CC and RE Sub-Programmes are expected to attract more of these resources than others (20% and 18% respectively), while the Ecosystem Management Sub-Programme less (11%).
284. UNEP budget does not provide any break down at the level of Expected Accomplishment or Output. Subsequent consultations between SPCs and Division Directors are expected to identify, for each SP, what analytical, policy, legal, outreach and operational work may be needed to achieve each EA, and what the budgetary implications are. However, contrary to expectations, the new funding logic was not able by itself to overcome contrasts by Divisions, and resources were finally allocated among them to manage “independently of the Sub-Programme structure”. This held true across all SPs. In the event, Divisions still lead the allocation process, and Sub-Programmes are not the ultimate driving factors in the distribution of resources.
285. The analysis of resources by Division in the last four biennia (2006-13, see Figure 8 below)<sup>159</sup> shows that Divisions such as DTIE, DRC, and DEPI have benefited more, and in the case of DTIE significantly more, from the move to the new framework in terms of resources allocated. DEWA, DELC and DCPI have instead lost ground.<sup>160</sup> The Evaluation relates this to the Lead role that DTIE and DEPI play for 5 (out of 6) SPs, and to the decision to enhance UNEP presence in the region. The Evaluation considers that, despite the undeniable leadership role played by these Divisions on key areas of work for the MTS, the observed concentration of resources “in few hands” may work only if resources assigned to Lead Divisions are then sub-allotted to participating ones in a transparent and consultative way. Divisions such as DEWA and DCPI, who are supposed to work more across SPs, reported to have instead experienced significant challenges in receiving funds through sub-allotments, and to have been denied the access to funds for projects already agreed by Sub-Programme Coordinators (SPCs). The power to decide on the allocation of resources also within Sub-Programmes ultimately rests with the Lead Division Director.

**Figure 7: Resource allocations by Division (PoWs 2006-13)**



<sup>159</sup> Source: Division work-plans and Programmes of Work

<sup>160</sup> DEWA, for example, lamented a significant decrease in EF resources for both posts and activities: in the last biennium, DEWA EF-financed posts decreased from 68 to 62; DEWA presence in the regions was similarly affected as all the posts funded by extra-budgetary sources were closed off.

286. Once resources are distributed among Divisions, Lead Divisions and SPCs have no means to monitor the use of funds by Divisions other than their own. The Evaluation collected anecdotal evidence across Sub-Programmes of Divisions having diverted resources for political representation and purposes other than Sub-Programme implementation, reducing the actual amount available for the latter. Overall, the Evaluation notes a paramount lack of information about the allocation of resources within a Sub-Programme, which made the Team unable to determine how efficient the strategic management process has been in optimizing the allocation of resources for the achievement of the intended objectives. In 2011, the ED acknowledged the need for UNEP to have “a more structured process for allocating the Environment Fund, the Extra-Budgetary resources secured at corporate level and other discretionary funding”. The OfO is working on it, but explicit criteria to drive the allocation process are not yet apparent.

## 5.5 Resource management

287. UNEP resource management is still very much centred on Divisions, to which Fund Management Officers (FMOs) are accountable. SPCs work across the Divisional structures but do not hold any authority over human or financial resources. Although it was always part of the design intent not create a ‘power base’ in the Sub-Programmes that would be at odds with the authority currently vested in Divisions Directors, the Evaluation found that the lack of SPCs’ authority on resource management constrained their influence on allocation decisions to pursue alignment with Sub-Programme priorities, and even impeded them from getting access to progress information from other Divisions.
288. The Evaluation noticed a major slippage between programme and financial management in UNEP. Financial approval was granted for activities within projects (not yet) approved by the PRC. This holds true for three large projects managed by DELC within the EG Sub-Programme for 2010-11, as well as for projects continuing throughout 2012-13 for which a project’ revision has not yet finalised. Following a recommendation by the ED (2012), the OfO is currently reviewing its administrative operations associated with the delivery of the PoW, to also address the coordination vacuum between programme and financial management.
289. Several reviews by donors have pushed for UNEP to enhance its “value-for-money mind-set / cost and value consciousness”, as they found little evidence on UNEP controlling administrative costs and achieving economy on purchased inputs. Monitoring of expenditures in UNEP, including by partner organizations, adheres to UN Financial Rules and Regulations. UNEP’s financial statements are all audited by the UN Board of Auditors every two years, to ensure compliance with Article VII of the Rules. In addition, OIOS conducts audits at regional and project level. A sample of OIOS audit reports examined by the MOPAN review provided evidence that audit recommendations regarding irregularities are followed up by UNEP’s management. Any assessment of cost-effectiveness is outside of the scope of this Evaluation. However, the Evaluation observes that tasking the PRC to assess cost-effectiveness at project level is unrealistic. The desk review of the 54 proposals submitted to the PRC in 2010 showed that, in the great majority of cases, reasoning over cost-effectiveness was hampered by too aggregated budget figures and in the event equated to budget allocation planning issues.<sup>161</sup> Whenever cost-effectiveness concerns were raised, they referred mostly to the opportunity cost of having staff/focal points in the country. The Evaluation is of the opinion that assessing the cost-efficiency of measures taken is of utmost importance and needs to be regularly done, yet better within a project and whenever procurement of inputs is planned.

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<sup>161</sup> Including: over-inflated budgets; too high staff costs; disproportionate travel budget (either too high or too low), and; lack of budget provisions for Regional Offices and DCPI.

## 5.6 Conclusions and recommendations

290. UNEP Sub-Programmes are conceived and used, admittedly to a certain extent only, as frameworks for the mobilization and the planning of resources for the achievement of the MTS objectives. Authority and accountability in resource management are still very much vested into Divisions. UNEP corporate management processes do not yet comply with RBB principles, although the movement towards it is apparent. An effective OfO, working together with Divisions to facilitate and ensure coherence and transparency in the implementation of the MTS, will be key in this respect.

### Human resources

291. The sought-after re-profiling of the Organization to enable it to be better equipped for the implementation of the MTS has not entirely occurred. With few exceptions, UNEP has delivered its PoW with the human resources already available. Training workshops on RBM in UNEP have been organised to enhance staff capacities, but they have been one-off events with inadequate coaching/advisory services performed by QAS, also because of the latter's limited resources. The transition of UNEP towards RBM implies that UNEP needs to include staff with expertise in both thematic areas and project management. **The Evaluation recommends** that:
292. UNEP develops its human resource strategy, outlining the technical and managerial competences needed for the MTS implementation. This would include a mapping exercise for the OfO to allow it to better perform its strategic role on planning, corporate management, and reporting on the MTS results.
293. UNEP integrates its talent management approach into its strategy, and re-model it around the development of skills for the MTS implementation. This will include: programme and project design; RBM for senior level staff and programme developers, and; Financial Management for FMOs. The Evaluation further recommends implementing an induction programme for new staff, in order to ensure that all UNEP staff gain a better understanding of UNEP's mandate, its organizational set-up and key delivery mechanisms to achieve the results in the MTS.
294. The allocation of human resources across Sub-Programmes has been sometimes artificial, often following only budgetary criteria (e.g. in the allocation of EF-funded posts) and partly suffered from the tendency of Divisions to include their staff within the Sub-Programme they lead. For proper resource management and accountability reasons, **the Evaluation recommends** that the contribution of staff to different Sub-Programmes is acknowledged in both individual and Divisional work-plans, and that staff performance is assessed accordingly against the achievement of the objectives as in the plans.
295. The high level of competition among Senior Managers "over resources and fame" has worked against the sense of a shared vision with common goals to be achieved by different Divisions, each one for its own area of competence. To enhance collegiality in decision-making and the adoption of common standards in project planning and management, **the Evaluation recommends** that:
- Sub-Programme Coordinators are invited to Senior Management Team meetings, whenever Sub-Programme resource management issues are dealt with;
  - OfO makes further efforts to reach out to Divisions, improve its corporate communication, and make the MTS process (including on resource allocation) more transparent, through the soon-to-be-launched intranet, monthly newsletters, and regular updates of the Programme Manual.

## Resource mobilization

296. The Evaluation consider the federated RM process a good basis for UNEP to assure both coherence and flexibility in its fundraising efforts, provided that all the players are empowered to play their role. Overall, UNEP staff proved a good degree of flexibility in adapting to the new model, by looking for co-financiers and partners, but also stretching in some cases their capacities to the limit. UNEP should continue to pursue the increase of its EF base, as well as of Programme Cooperation Agreements signed with donors. The instability of UNEP resource base requires SPCs and project managers to be more cautious when planning for the next biennium, and at the same time proactive in the search for funds not relying only on the established channels and partnerships. To this end, **the Evaluation recommends** that:
  297. UNEP enhance its RM efforts and outreach to emerging economies and countries outside the Eurozone, as well as engaging more the private sector and research foundations in the implementation of projects;
  298. The DED through the SPCs leads the resource mobilization planning efforts for the entire PoW in collaboration with the Office of Operations, and formulate clear RM Strategies for each SP, where prospective sources of funds for areas of focus are identified. Regional Offices are to be fully involved in both the development and implementation of Sub-programme RM strategies;
  299. Project concepts are to be better formulated, and include a clear plan for the mobilization of resources. Liaison Offices should be invited to attend the meetings where these are discussed, to help the prompt identification of concepts of interest of donors (e.g. the EU);
  300. RMS should continue its communication efforts to SPCs about RM opportunities UNEP could tap into, and strengthen UNEP RM knowledge base, by finalising Standard Operating Procedures and regularly updating donor profiles on the intranet.

## Resource allocation and management

301. The Evaluation urges UNEP to move towards a full Results-Based Budgeting system. As no Division can claim the sole ownership of a Sub-Programme, to ensure transparency and accountability, **the Evaluation recommends** that the allocation of resources within a Sub-Programme is based on formally-approved Divisional workplans (see Business Processes, Systems & Structures above), which would show how each Division contributes to the achievement of the Sub-Programme results. The Environment Fund should be foremost allocated to core functions of the Organization, in line with UNEP's mandate.
302. Financial management needs to be better integrated into project planning and delivery. Fund Management Officers (FMOS) should not limit themselves to the administration (including the certification over the use) of project resources. **The Evaluation recommends** that FMOS are systematically involved in project planning, and that financial and project revisions are done concomitantly. In addition, to enhance corporate oversight over financial resources in UNEP, **the Evaluation recommends** that FMOS do not report exclusively to Division staff, but also to the OfO.



**Evaluation Office**

United Nations Environment Programme

P.O. Box 30552-00100

Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +(254-20)-7623387

Fax: +(254-20)-7623158

Email: Segbedzi.Norgbey@unep.org

Email: eou@unep.org

URL: <http://www.unep.org/eou>

**[www.unep.org](http://www.unep.org)**

United Nations Environment Programme

P.O. Box 30552 Nairobi, 00100 Kenya

Tel: (254 20) 7621234

Fax: (254 20) 7623927

E-mail: [unep@unep.org](mailto:unep@unep.org)

web: [www.unep.org](http://www.unep.org)

