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**United Nations Environment
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**146th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
to the United Nations Environment Programme**

Nairobi, 20 June 2019

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; 2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Conference Room 1

**Agenda Item 7b): Follow-up of the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly -
Implementation of decision UNEP/EA.4/1**

The annexed note, “Development of a Roadmap for Mainstreaming UNDS Reforms” has been developed in response to a request to the Executive Director in UNEA resolution 4/1 (L.28), entitled “Programme of work and budget for 2020–2021”, to undertake an assessment of internal policies, guidelines and regulations that need to be adjusted in order to implement the provisions in General Assembly resolutions 71/243 and 72/279 and to present a plan with timelines for their implementation to the Committee of Permanent Representatives at its 146th meeting.

It identifies internal policies, guidelines and regulations that need to be assessed for UNEP to implement the UNDS reform; some of which may also have budgetary and funding implications. It also sets out a plan with indicative timelines.

The note concludes that the ongoing UN Development System repositioning presents new opportunities and has direct implications for UNEP, the full extent of which is still partly unknown. UNEP perceives the changes as an enabling opportunity to deliver better on our environmental mandate within and as part of the UNDS. UNEP is unwavering in its commitment to working together to drive UNDS reforms forward, with the primary objective of delivering better collective sustainable development results for the people and planet we serve.

Development of a Roadmap for Mainstreaming UNDS Reforms

1. Introduction

This document responds to United Nations Environment Assembly's (UNEA) resolution 4/1 requesting "the Executive Director to undertake an assessment of internal policies, guidelines and regulations that need to be adjusted in order to implement the provisions in General Assembly resolutions [71/243](#) and [72/279](#) and to present a plan with timelines for their implementation to the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) at their 146th meeting".

The document builds on the [information note on the implications and opportunities of the UN development system \(UNDS\) reforms](#) for the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) provided to the CPR at its 145th meeting. It should be read in conjunction with the [Secretary-General's report, and related addenda, on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development](#), considered by the [Economic and Social Council \(ECOSOC\) at its Operational Activities Segment \(OAS\)](#).

The Secretary-General has emphasised that 2019 is a year of transition for the UNDS, with many components still being developed. The organisation continues to leverage the opportunities and spaces created by the reforms to better deliver its policy expertise and support to Member States for achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, in line with its mandate and capacities. The UNDS reforms present unique opportunities for entities such as UNEP, with limited country presence. With a new Executive Director, 2019 will be a year to review and best incorporate UNDS reforms in parallel with the continued efforts to strengthen the Organization.

The development system reforms have implications for how UNEP plans, delivers and reports on results at the global, regional and country levels. They also present us with significant opportunities to further deliver our mandate within the 2030 Agenda, as called for in the Outcome Document of the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development ¹. In line with our mandate, UNEP has an essential role within the repositioned UN development system, providing advice and policy guidance on how to integrate environmental and natural resource sustainability and resilience.

The development system reforms offer an opportunity to raise the environmental agenda and strengthen coordination of global environmental policies and strategies at regional and national levels, including by better linking the UN Environment Management Group (EMG) expertise and resources to the work of the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) and the new Resident Coordinator System.

This paper identifies internal policies, guidelines and regulations that need to be assessed for UNEP to implement the UNDS reform; some of which may also have budgetary and funding implications. It also sets out a plan with indicative timelines.

The collective implementation of UNDS reform is being undertaken jointly by the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG), under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General and with the support of the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO) and the Transition Team. UNEP remains very

¹ Para 88 of the Future We Want calls to "(c) Enhance the voice of UNEP and its ability to fulfil its coordination mandate within the United Nations system by strengthening UNEP engagement in key United Nations coordination bodies and empowering UNEP to lead efforts to formulate United Nations system-wide strategies on the environment".

closely engaged in these ongoing system-wide processes. UNEP, as part of the UN Secretariat, applies guidelines and administrative instructions issued by the Secretary-General and agreed through the UN UNSDG.

2. Reinvigorated Resident Coordinator System

The UNDS reform establishes an independent resident coordinator (RC) system. UNEP is fully supportive and is committed to its successful roll-out.

Strengthening Mutual Accountability in UN Country Teams and UNDS at regional & global levels

The new **Management Accountability Framework** (MAF) outlines roles and responsibilities for the management and oversight of the new Resident Coordinator system, and contributions and accountabilities of all UN Sustainable Development Group members at the global, regional and country levels.

In response UNEP aims to:

- Undertake a full review of all provisions of the new country-level Management Accountability Framework and initiate measures to ensure alignment with the new accountability and reporting provisions². The review of all relevant MAF provisions will take into account UNEP's Accountability Framework and revised Delegation of Authority Policy and Framework that is currently under implementation. The review will be initiated in Q3 2019 and be completed by Q4 2019.
- Review suggested common language on responsibilities as a UNCT member and the matrixed reporting arrangement and consider inclusion in relevant job descriptions and performance management documents. The review will tentatively take place in Q3 2020.
- Continue to engage actively in the development of the regional and global level MAF chapters.

Funding the Resident Coordinator System

The RC system is funded through several different strands. UNEP's approach is outlined for each of the elements listed below:

- **Funding Compact:** UNEP will review relevant commitments and associated indicators for UN entities under the Funding Compact, and initiate measures to ensure alignment and track and report on compliance. This involves assessing the UNEP monitoring policy and revising the accountability framework
- **1% Levy:** UNEP, in coordination with UN-Habitat and the UN Office in Nairobi (UNON) is in contact with the Development Coordination Office regarding the parameters and measures required to

² The MAF stipulates that UN Country Team (UNCT) member entities are "those that carry out operational activities for development in support of countries, irrespective of where the UN entity is physically located, including entities with a project presence". With clear criteria, UNEP will need to consider participation and levels of engagement in UNCTs and associated staff capacity and budgetary implications. UNEP staff that are UNCT members will have dual reporting lines and will be part of the Assessment of Results and Competencies (ARC) system of evaluation of UNCT/RCs. Under the MAF, UNEP will be expected to: report to Resident Coordinators/UNCTs on contributions to collective results; and provide RC Offices with information on country-level results and activities (planned and implemented), with baselines, targets, indicators and partners, including through the new online UN INFO global database.

collect and transfer the levy (which are not donor-administered) and communicating and following up with donors accordingly. With the implementation of the levy, UNEP will continue to closely monitor its administrative and transaction costs but does not envisage a direct impact on any policies.

- **UNDS cost-sharing:** For 2019, \$13.57 million was approved by the General Assembly for the UN Secretariat portion (under which UNEP falls). A/RES/72/279 calls upon governing bodies of all UNDS entities to double their contributions. At this stage no action is required by UNEP. UNEP will revisit the situation from the 2020 budget period onwards should the situation change.
- **15% of non-core resources to joint UN activities:** UNEP will assess the percentage of current resources dedicated to joint UN activities, to identify the level of allocation and ensure are meeting/exceeding this requirement. UNEP intends to undertake a review of the portfolio of projects within each subprogramme to leverage greater partnerships and UN activities. The review will tentatively take place in Q4 2019.

Supporting the pool of Resident Coordinators

A strengthened pool of RCs is critical to the success of the UNDS. To this end, UNEP will:

- Develop a talent and leadership strategy with focus on ensuring a talent pool of suitably qualified senior staff to engage with the RC system including by fielding qualified candidates for the pool.

3. New Generation of Cooperation Frameworks and UNCTs in support of the 2030 Agenda

Supporting the new generation of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and their underlying UN Common Country Analysis (CCA)

The reform calls for system-wide changes at country level to better support the SDGs and realize the promise of the 2030 Agenda. This includes a 'new generation' of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (Cooperation Frameworks – formerly UN Development Assistance Frameworks, or UNDAFs) and UN Country Teams.

In response, UNEP will:

- Review regional and country presence strategies, in line with the principles and provisions in the MAF, Regional and Multi-Country (MCO) reviews and new Cooperation Frameworks guidelines, and associated protocol for country engagement (under development) by Regional Economic Commissions and other Secretariat or non-resident agencies. This will take place between Q3 2019 and Q2 2020.
- Undertake scenario analysis to identify optimal regional presence structure, including:
 - deployment of advisors of technical missions;
 - establishment of project offices housed in UN common premises; and/or,
 - strengthening of partnerships.This will take place between Q4 2019 and Q3 2020.
- Develop a UNEP 'menu of services' offered to UNCT and RCs. This menu should be customizable for different countries' contexts. The aim is for RCs to have knowledge of normative environmental issues and instruments, and be strong advocates for the environment and related internationally agreed norms and Multilateral Environment Agreements. The 'menu of services' will familiarize UNCTs with

services that UNEP can deliver, directly or through our partners, and how they can draw on its expertise and assets. This will be done iteratively between Q4 2019 and Q3 2020.

- Strengthen UNEP engagement in the Cooperation Frameworks formulation (and annual review) processes, including scaling up initiatives to develop an integrated environmental analysis and data package tool as an analytical input to all CCAs. This has already started as a pilot and will continue to be developed until Q2 2020, taking into account lessons learned.
- Engage in the UNSDG development of Cooperation Frameworks companion guidance pieces, including on CCA.
- Review the UNEP programme manual to align programme and project planning to respect the Cooperation Frameworks as the most important instrument for planning and implementation of UNCT support. The programme manual will be updated once all transitional elements have been finalized, which is expected by Q3 2020.
- Revise the monitoring policy to provide inputs to the UN INFO portal, which is the UNDS planning, monitoring and reporting platform. A revised monitoring policy would also strengthen reporting mechanisms at national and regional levels to ensure inputs for national and regional One UN annual reports. This will be done iteratively between Q4 2019 and Q3 2020.
- Revise the approach to knowledge management as well as the monitoring policy to include all projects, outputs, activities and budget at country level, and link existing country-based knowledge management systems to UN INFO. This will also be done iteratively between Q4 2019 and Q3 2020.
- Review the UNEP resource mobilization strategy to raise funds at regional levels for provision of more policy and technical advisory services to UNCTs. This will take place between Q4 2019 and Q3 2020.

Strengthening staff capacities on SDGs/Cooperation Frameworks processes

There is broad recognition of the need for staff capacity development on how best to support Member States in achieving the SDGs, fostering a culture of collaboration and promoting the need for system-wide coherence and consistency.

In response, UNEP will develop a Human Resource Strategy between Q4 2019 and Q3 2020 to:

- Strengthen in-house capacity, literacy on, and engagement in UN system policy coherence and inter-agency coordination, Cooperation Frameworks preparation and implementation, including through training.
- Encourage, facilitate and strengthen in-house capacity on the use of more collaborative and joined-up interagency approaches at all levels; results-based management (RBM), theory of change, and integrated policy formulation.
- Promote use of the new 'SDG Primer' and provide inputs to its planned companion pieces.

Improving SDG data/data collection and monitoring

UNEP recognizes the vital role of statistics and data in monitoring the SDGs. To this end UNEP will:

- Consider implementing an open data policy that is aligned to ongoing work to fully comply international reporting and transparency standards through the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). The aim will be to enhance support to member States for the capacity of their national bodies in charge of statistics to generate environmental statistics and data for a regular production of strategic environmental reports as a key ingredient of CCAs.
- Contribute to strengthening of the regional data ecosystem through the envisioned change management process to consolidate existing capacities around data. Pilot work has already started with the World Environment Situation Room and UNEP's role as custodian agency for 26 SDG indicators. Given the evolving nature of data analysis, this will continue into Q4 2020.
- Support system-wide mechanisms for tracking results and resources through the 'data cube' (as agreed through UNSDG) and UN Info.

System-wide strategic document (SWSD)

The SWSD, which is still under consideration, is a UN Development System instrument that sets its strategic intent at the global, regional and country level to best support member states in achieving their nationally defined priorities, to achieve the 2030 Agenda. It guides UN global, regional, and country level development plans, programmes and operations.

- UNEP will embed the principles of the SWSD in the roadmap for the next Medium-term strategy, which will be approved at the fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly in February 2021.

Accountability: monitoring and reporting on results

As parts of the efforts to enhance accountability, UNEP will, by Q1 2020:

- Improve monitoring and reporting systems, including harmonized data collection and reporting system to track UN system-wide results, and tracking our engagement in the Cooperation Frameworks development and implementation.
- Review/update our Monitoring and Evaluation policies; evaluation tracking system, including status of evaluations and management responses.
- Continue engaging in the review of System-Wide Evaluation through the UN Evaluation Group.

4. Reviewing the profile and structure of country and regional assets

UNEP will undertake a review of its Policy an Operational Guidance note for strengthening strategic presence. This will be part of an overall review of country and regional presence between Q4 2019 and Q4 2020, with a view to:

- Engage proactively in implementing the Secretary-General's regional review recommendations, following feedback from the ECOSOC deliberations at its Operational Activities Segment.
- Engage in the new Regional Collaboration Platforms (RCP), which will be anchored by an SDG policy pillar and an operational pillar – to forge links to discussions in regional inter-governmental environment fora and contributing through thematic coalitions. UNEP will be advocating for and leading "issues-based coalitions" on environment.
- Ensure that the outcomes of all regional environmental ministerial fora are presented to the regional fora for sustainable development.

- Drawing on UNEP's regional and division assets, engage strongly in establishment of 'knowledge management hubs' for surge capacity quickly deployable and easily accessible; contribute to mapping of UNDS regional knowledge and expertise required to build the hubs

Multi-Country Office Review

- UNEP will engage proactively in implementing the Secretary-General's MCO review recommendations, following feedback from the ECOSOC deliberations at its Operational Activities Segment.
- UNEP will provide knowledge and expertise in Multi-Country Office settings: consider implications of MCO review recommendations for how UNEP supports Small Island Developing States, in line with the Samoa Pathway and considering our existing experience with MCOs. The recommendations call for UNCTs for each country covered by MCOs, each with specific country plans, which should bring together all relevant entities and staff, whether physically there or not. All UNDS entities are asked to consider how they organize their knowledge and expertise to make sure it is easily and quickly accessible, and available on demand, for SIDS.

5. Business Innovations and Efficiencies

As called for by Member States, UNEP is fully committed to UNDS efforts to enhance efficiencies in operations, including through common offices and improved business operations, so that the achieved efficiency gains can be redeployed for development activities. To this end, UNEP will:

- Ensure stronger focus on programmatic and operational efficiencies driving how to plan, implement and monitor our programmes.
- Harmonize and simplify business practices: review of the profile and structure of UNEP's business operations; including which services could be offered to - or purchased from - other UN entities.

Mutual recognition

UNEP supports the Mutual Recognition Statement that aims to facilitate active collaboration across agencies and reduce transaction costs for Governments and participating agencies, especially in the area of procurement. In this vein, UNEP will:

- Sign on to the UNDS mutual recognition statement by Q3 of 2019.

Moving towards common premises

UNEP will aim to provide a leadership role in the UNDS to:

- Integrate environmental sustainability considerations into UN operations and management of premises, building on the inter-agency efforts connected to the [Greening the Blue](#) initiative.
- Develop a comprehensive guidance document on how to integrate environmental sustainability considerations in the UN common premises flow chart. The document will be in support of the new UN Sustainability Strategy to be developed by Q4 2019.

6. Conclusion

The ongoing UN Development System repositioning presents new opportunities and has direct implications for UNEP, the full extent of which is still partly unknown. UNEP perceives the changes as an enabling opportunity to deliver better on our environmental mandate within and as part of the UNDS. UNEP is unwavering in its commitment to working together to drive UNDS reforms forward, with the primary objective of delivering better collective sustainable development results for the people and planet we serve.