MAIN REPORT

Formative Evaluation of the UNEP Delivery Model and associated Programmatic Approach
(Delivery Model Policy, 2022)
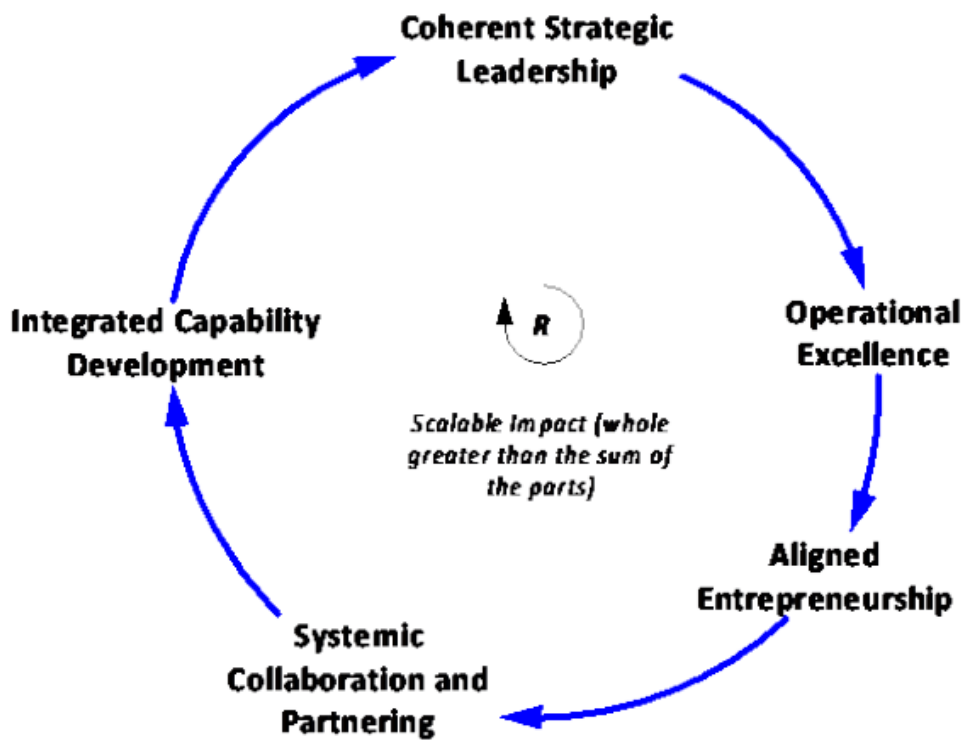

Figure 1: UNEP's Desired Management and Leadership Style, end of 2025

Evaluation Office of the United Nations Environment Programme

December 2024

Table of Contents

Terminology

These terms are used and/or interpreted within this report as follows:

Co-creation – a collaborative process through which geo-political priorities are considered in conjunction with, and of equal value to, UNEP's technical expertise.

Cross-cutting – action that is expected to take effect beyond the boundaries of the office carrying out the action, or having an effect across many boundaries (e.g. increasing gender equality is a topic that cuts across the work of the whole house – institutional/programmatic; design/implementation; project/subprogramme etc). It is sometimes necessary to specify where the cross-cutting effect is expected to be experienced. For example, work in one Subprogramme might be expected to cut across the projects in all other Subprogrammes while some types of work in the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes may be expected to cut across the work of Divisions.

Line of sight – refers to there being one, easily apparent, UNEP staff member accountable for any individual UNEP project. Implicit in this term is the existence of an effective line management chain from a project to the accountable staff member, such that the accountable person can be reasonably expected to have knowledge of the work.

Missing middle – this term is used, in an evaluation context, to refer to significant gaps in either a level of results or a causal narrative. It is most commonly observed at an outcome level or beyond. In UNEP the term is also used in a management context. In both cases, the term refers to a discontinuation effect when there is too big a gap between either results or management levels, which interupts either a causal narrative or undermines a supervision/oversight mechanism.

Programme – UNEP's Results Definitions (Dec, 2023): a programme is a group of synergistic projects contributing to a common outcome(s) and managed in a coordinated way to obtain benefits not available from managing the projects individually.

Shift the needle – this is understood to mean UNEP is making a discernible impact on one of its high level goals or objectives and that a credible association can be made between UNEP's work and this impact.

Institutional traits (Figure 1, Front Cover: source Delivery Model Policy, 2022, pg 5):

Coherent strategic leadership - A coherent, focused and disciplined senior leadership whose focus extends through the organization for shared leadership at all levels. This ensures ownership and accountability while being globally coherent and locally responsive.

Aligned entrepreneurship - Creating shared focus and joint activities in service of a larger set of ambitions. This encourages innovation and risk taking so long as it is in line with the strategy.

Systemic collaboration and partnership – Fostering conditions and structures that support the building of trust, mutual support and mutual learning.

Integrated capability development - Investing in longer-term systemic capability to enable UNEP to shift how it functions and multiply its impact.

Operational excellence - Migrating opaque, inconsistent and incomplete processes to clear, transparent, continuously improving performance monitoring and data-rich, disciplined routines.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CAG	Concept Approval Group[1]	
CCA	Common Country Analyses	
DM	Delivery Model	
EA	Expected Accomplishment	
EOU	Evaluation Office of UNEP	
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities	
IPMR	Integrated Planning, Monitoring and Reporting Tool	
MTS	Medium Term Strategy (4 years' duration)	
PA	Programmatic Approach	
PCP	Programme Coordinating Project	
CA 1	*Adaptation & Resilience (SMA 148560)*	
CA 2	*Decarbonization (SMA 148607)*	
CA 3	*Science and Transparency (SMA 147863)*	
NA 1	*Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (SMA 157481)*	
NA 2	*Governance Accountability for Biodiversity (SMA 167368)*	
NA 3	*Mainstreaming Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (SMA 164823)*	
CPA 1	*Circularity in Sectors (SMA 137795)*	
CPA 2	*Pollution and Health (SMA 146723)*	
CPA 3	*Towards Zero Waste (SMA 137838)*	
ScP 1	*Science for Policy and Action (SMA 182935)*	
Env Gov 1	*Environmental Governance (SMA 165708)*	
F&E 1	*Finance and Economic Transformations (SMA 151386)*	
DT 1	*Digital Transformations (SMA not yet assigned)*	
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services	
POW	Programme of Work (2 years' duration)	
PPR	Programme Performance Report	
PRC	Project Review Committee (internal UNEP committee that approves new projects)	
ProDoc	Project Document (must be reviewed by PRC before any project can be undertaken, with the approval of the managing division director)	
QBR	Quarterly Business Review	
RO	Regional Office	
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals	
SMT	UNEP's Senior Management Team	
SP	Subprogramme	
TD	Technical Division	
TOC	Theory of Change	
TOR	Terms of Reference	
UNCT	UN Country Team	
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme	
UNSDCF	UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework	

---

[1] Delivery Model Policy, November 2022, lists two names with the abbreviation CAG: Concept Advisory Group and Concept Approval Group. The TOR for the Group, refers to Concept Approval Group and this term is used within this evaluation report.

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Background

1.   The Medium-Term Strategy (MTS, 2022-25) sets out UNEP's strategic vision and is operationalised through successive programmes of work (POW, 2022-23, extended to 2025). The 2022-25 MTS introduced a strong focus on the triple planetary crises[2]; a revised subprogramme structure[3] including three thematic, two foundational and two enabling subprogrammes and a commitment to establishing a strong 'line of sight'[4] between leadership and the delivery of results.

2.   The strengthened ambitions of UNEP to address the triple planetary crises require UNEP to operate in the most efficient and effective way possible and to *'fully capitalise on our regional presence and political engagement and matching this capability to our technical expertise to ensure delivery as "One-UNEP" at the country level'* (Delivery Model, 2002, p5). To achieve that, a new 'Delivery Model' (DM) Policy was developed and formally approved by the Senior Management Team (SMT) in Sept 2022.

3.   The DM was developed in response to a prior 'transformation process' and aimed to address challenges being faced in the management context, namely: siloed entrepreneuralism; constrained collaboration; stagnant system capability; lack of shared leadership and impaired accountability.[5]

4.   The primary features of the DM are: a re-alignment of roles and responsibilities between Divisional and Regional Offices (below); the subsequent movement of regionally managed projects to the appropriate technical division; an emphasis on the 'co-creation' of new work and the introduction of a 'typology of interventions' (Annex V) for UNEP projects.

> *In a nutshell, Regional Offices will represent UNEP in the regions and thus lead dialogue with Member States and, within UNEP, provide strategic and programmatic direction, thought leadership, technical input and coordination for UNEP's work as it relates to regional and national priorities, guiding the project design and implementation process. The Divisions will provide thematic sectoral and technical depth and thematic coherence for UNEP's work and be directly accountable for project implementation, progress monitoring, and reporting.* (DM, 2002, p4)

5.   Although not mentioned in the Policy, the introduction of the DM was accompanied by an initiative referred to as the 'Programmatic Approach' (PA). The PA is described in UNEP's Results Definitions (Dec, 2023) as:

> *The Programmatic Approach is a mechanism to improve programmatic integration and alignment with the MTS/POW in delivering UNEP's three strategic priorities of nature, climate, and pollution. It involves grouping UNEP's projects into a series of thematically coherent 'programmes', each guided/managed by a Programme Coordination Project (PCP).*

6.   The PA was envisaged as an evolution from the earlier 'Programme Framework' construct, reflected in the Subprogrammes. In the past, the focus was more on 'quality on entry', placing emphasis on both the design and results alignment of each cluster of work, but there were few management arrangements to promote coordination and synergy across projects within each Programme Framework. The new PA aims to build on this by also including 'quality during implementation' where management and coordination actions need to be taken during implementation to realize interdependent benefits. Implicit in the enhanced approach is a strong emphasis on learning and adaptive management, which goes beyond monitoring and evaluation of performance and encompasses co-creation.

---

[2] In response to the triple crises of: climate change; biodiversity and nature loss and pollution and waste, UNEP's objectives are to: achieve climate stability, live in harmony with nature and move towards a pollution-free planet.
[3] Thematic: Climate Action, Nature Action and Chemicals and Pollution Action; Foundational: Science Policy and Environmental Governance; Enabling: Finance and Economic Transformations and Digital Transformations.
[4] This 'line of sight' requires a clear articulation of where accountability lies and has implications for a wide range of roles and responsibilities.
[5] As part of the commenting process at draft report stage, some respondents challenged this link to the principles. However, the DM Policy (p.5) clearly states that the Policy is 'informed by' and 'mainstreams' the five guiding principles. This premise is repeated in the presentation to the SMT (29th, Nov, year unknown) and that of the last CSD/PPD workshop, January 2024.

7.   This Formative Evaluation draws on internally-circulated documents dated August and December 2022[6], to further understand the intended nature and benefits of the PA. The PA is presented in these documents as bringing the focus, coordination and integration needed to deliver the current MTS and POW and as a progression from the subprogramme project portfolios in the 2018-21 MTS. It places emphasis on strengthening the 'quality during implementation' of projects in addition to their 'quality on entry'. Its aims include to:

- improve the strategic alignment of UNEP's work;
- improve the management of interdependencies between related but separate projects;
- provide a more strategic approach to advocacy and communications;
- manage risks more efficiently;
- facilitate a more strategic approach to resource mobilization;
- implement a more results-focused approach to resource allocation; and
- address OIOS and Evaluation Office recommendations[7].

8.   The PA features thirteen Programme Coordination Projects (PCPs)[8], which were developed and approved during 2023 and each one is led by a Directly Responsible Individual (DRI). This role is assigned to Division Directors and typically delegated through the Head of Branch to a Head of Unit (See internal diagram, Annex XI).

9.   The DM Policy included a request that the Evaluation Office undertake a formative evaluation of the Model a year after implementation. This report presents the findings of the Formative Evaluaton, providing insights into early experiences of implementing the DM and offering recommendations for the way forward in two time periods: to the end of the current MTS and in the following MTS (2026-29).

10.   This evaluation team comprises two external consultants, Frank Noij and David Simmons, and two senior members of the Evaluation Office. The process began in January 2024 with an inception phase, which focused on reviewing relevant documents (Annex II), interviewing a small group of eight people and analysing key elements of the DM and PA. This culminated in an Inception Report (summary findings Annex IV). The main evaluation phase explored the early experiences of implementation through 58 interviews (Annex I) involving a total of 81 people, representing staff from the corporate functions, divisional and regional offices, as well as consultants who were engaged in the design of the DM and PA and those advising the change management process.

1.2   Summary Discussion

11.   This formative evaluation was identified by respondents as a much-needed means of gathering feedback on the implementation of the DM and attracted high levels of participation and wide-ranging discussion. Seen from the perspective of the main features of the DM/PA and the new practises it aims to introduce, the following categorisation shows features that can be built upon now (where there is traction already); those that need further discussion and guidance and those that need to be renewed attention and effort (areas that have not gained ground).

Areas where traction is evident:
- consensus on the value of the focus in the MTS on the triple planetary crisis;
- widespread support for the principle of responding to regional/country priorities and needs;
- widespread support for the principle of increased co-creation; and
- considerable efforts on the part of individuals and teams to respond to the expectations of the DM and PA although these are largely unorchestrated (beyond the Office or Division/Branch they belong to) and reliant on pre-existing relationships and work patterns.

Areas where more discussion, operational guidance and leadership is needed:

---

[6] 'FAQ on Programmatic Approach v3' (PPD, August 2022); 'Programmatic Approach Background Note v5' (PPD, August 2022) and 'Guidance for UNEP-wide Engagement_5' (PPD, December 2022)
[7] E.g., the 2019 OIOS Evaluation Recommendations: (i) UNEP Lacks a coherent strategic approach: "[UNEP] projects did not always reflect a coherent strategy on how best to achieve UNEP objectives, which impacted sustainability and funding." (ii) The fragmented funding model that leads both donors and staff to suboptimal solutions: "[UNEP] is using earmarked funding and meeting donor requirements to demonstrate tangible results but not necessarily catalyzing change and/or responding to mandated needs and priorities related to UNEP science and policy expertise."
[8] See Abbreviations Table above for a list of the 13 PCPs

- guidance on the change management process, key milestones and success indicators;
- how to operationalise co-creation;
- clarification of new roles and responsibilities and their operationalisation;
- transfer of project management from Regional Offices to Divisions and its financial repercussions, especially on Regional Offices;
- assessment and adaptation of human resource capacities of Divisions and Regional Offices;
- support for communicating UNEP's normative and operational 'offer';
- strengthening causal thinking and articulation;
- ways in which to enhance synergy across projects within a programme;
- correct use of RBM and its terminology
- the effect of the DM/PA on working in partnership; and
- strengthening the quality of project implementation rather than focusing on project approval.

Areas that have not yet gained ground:
- use of Typology of Interventions;
- mechanisms for phasing out less strategic or lower-priority work;
- programmatic adaptations to partnerships; and
- shared knowledge management strategy and platforms.

1.3 Overarching Learning

12.   During this evaluation process some cross-cutting insights were generated, which do not lend themselves to a recommendation but which UNEP is urged to consider (see Conclusions section for full details). These learnings suggest the need for: a more structured and well-documented approach to the design and development of internal policies; documentation of the rationale behind, and expected benefits of, substantive institutional changes; appropriate and accurate use of results-based management terminology across the house and clarification of terms that are coined to communicate UNEP's vision so that they are consistently understood and interpreted.

1.4 Key Findings Statements

There is divergence in views on many topics and the evaluation aims to consolidate the perspectives through the lenses of improved strategic relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and stronger monitoring, reporting and evaluation. These findings have informed the Recommendations (Section 1.5 below) which focus heavily on immediate next steps.

Strategic Relevance

Finding 1A: Despite a clear vision of relevant and transformative change being set out in the MTS, UNEP's ability to present its unique offer to external parties such as UNCTs, countries, other UN agencies, funding partners etc., does not appear to have been substantially strengthened by the introduction of the DM. This is in a context where country, regional and UN agency expectations are likely to be raised through UNEP's renewed commitment to responsiveness at these levels. The DM contains elements that have the potential to clarify or communicate UNEP's offer, but this potential has not yet been realised. For example, differentiating between thematic, foundational and enabling subprogrammes and adding 13 new programmes is not reported as having made it easier to describe UNEP's portfolio strategically and the typology of interventions is also not being used in this respect. In particular, it is challenging to articulate UNEP's strategic balance between normative and operational initiatives.

Finding 1B: The potential for the CAG to strengthen the strategic merit and alignment of UNEP's future work is not yet being realised, although this is part of the CAG Terms of Reference (TOR). The initial focus of the CAG, which reviews all project concepts apart from those already included in the PCPs, has been on whether co-creation has taken place. The high staff costs of a CAG meeting suggest that the primary focus should be strategic rather than monitoring compliance and that not all project concepts need to be approved by this Group (e.g. Enabling Activities, task-focused work, low value projects etc. could be approved in an alternative way, for example by the accountable Division Director).

Finding 1C: There is no evidence of UNEP having an organizational mechanism that has shown itself to be able to support phasing out or rejecting less strategic or lower-priority work, including long-standing work that may have become less strategically relevant over time[9]. The POW (2022-23) and DM/PA documentation suggests that the typology of interventions might assist in this, but interviews did not support any adoption of this typology beyond entries in the PCPs and concept templates. Without such a mechanism, it is highly unlikely that UNEP can steer the strategic path envisioned in the MTS.

Finding 1D: The potential for addressing gender, equity and other social issues within UNEP's work as part of the focus on people and planet has not been strengthened with the introduction of the DM and PA. UNEP's enhanced engagement with UNSDCF processes at the country level could provide opportunities in this respect, working through relevant partnerships on social aspects of environmental issues. However, it is also possible that the greater emphasis on co-creation, new roles and responsibilities and new programmatic structures could draw time and effort away from these cross-cutting concerns and ambitions.

Effectiveness

Finding 2A: The introduction of the DM and the PA has required a new mindset among staff and a 'cultural shift'. While staff are taking up new roles in line with the DM, the shift is most clearly recognized in the transfer of project management to the Divisions and the adoption of the co-creation of projects between divisional and regional staff. Significant gaps in shared understanding are evident, especially on: a) when, if and how elements of project work can be managed by Regional Offices (e.g. implementing GEF projects; sub-allotments for components or activities; what to do with residual funds after sub-allotment etc), and b) how 'co-creation' can be operationalised, what co-created pieces of work can look like and how the benefits of co-creation can be identified and tracked.

Finding 2B: The lack of causal relations linking project-level outcomes, through programme-level results in the PCPs, to the MTS strategic objectives, and the absence of distinct intermediate programme-level results, limits both the potential for the objectives to be met and the capacity for UNEP to effectively report on its performance from a results perspective. Given the global and systemic nature of many of UNEP's intended results, clearly articulated intentions and strong causal narratives are necessary to associate UNEP's work with observed changes.

Finding 2C: The two 'foundational' subprogrammes are aptly named as they form a central basis for UNEP to deliver on its mandate and fulfil its mission: all of UNEP's work should be founded in scientific knowledge and based on current global environmental data; UNEP aims to embed change within normative and governance structures and systems. They represent enduring areas of UNEP's work, while one can expect the focus of the thematic subprogrammes to evolve depending on the global environmental priorities being experienced. However, the foundational subprogrammes are not fully articulated and lack TOCs that show a) their stand-alone progression and b) their cross-cutting effects. Similarly, the two 'enabling' subprogrammes, hold the greatest potential for transformative change and the intended causal mechanisms should be represented in TOCs at the subprogramme level.

Finding 2D: The terms 'project', 'portfolio' and 'programme' have specific and commonly agreed meanings in Results Based Management (RBM). However, UNEP is using the term 'programme' for work that is constructed as a 'portfolio', limiting the use of RBM. It is also deviating from the published UNEP definition of 'project' by nesting funded work within different constructs (e.g. grants within projects, within portfolios etc) without being transparent about the relationships between agreed results frameworks and the contributions being made between them:

- the PCPs are supposed to represent 'programmes' but currently most[10] of them do not contribute to shared results across the projects concerned. The enhancement of synergy through the PCPs is

---

[9] 'Phasing out' projects does not refer to cutting projects short or renegading on commitments and agreements. It refers to critical reflections taking place to decide on whether long-standing work streams are still strategically relevant and the highest priorities for UNEP to follow, or whether they have been superseded by other work and/or events.
[10] The PCPs under Nature Action and the Finance and Economic Transformations PCP do have programme level outcomes.

questioned and the development of the PCPs was done in a short timeframe and with limited consultation. They contain duplications, and some overlap with each other. The PCPs are, in their current form, not seen as having the potential to enhance the achievement of results. Cumbersome administrative processes have added to a lack of communication and coordination across projects of a PCP.

- within the programmes, large/high-value projects are being formed that are themselves also portfolios and do not appear to have programmatic features that will amplify the intended effects. Additionally, many projects are composed of multiple grants and lack conformity with the definition of a 'project' (specifically, the results frameworks in grants are often not contributing to the results of the PRC-approved project to which they are expected to contribute). Where grants or projects are 'nested' within larger projects the causal links between the project and the POW Direct Outcomes are too convoluted for a credible association between the project work and evidence supporting results at that higher level. This increasingly nested approach will make monitoring, reporting on and evaluating organisational performance on aggregated results extremely complex.
- the introducton of the PA does not seem to have benefited the work of the foundational and enabling subprogrammes in terms of their potential for receiving funding, increasing effective coordination or reporting on results. In each of these subprogrammes, the scope of the single PCP is the same as that of the respective Subprogramme itself. Yet these Subprogrammes contain work that supports or delivers projects under the Thematic Subprogrammes as well as work that cuts across all subprogrammes and, in some cases, work supporting institutional capacity and development. While there is a potential benefit in having a 'coordinating project' that can receive funds for programmatic development, coordination and knowledge sharing, more discussion is needed on what should constitute the 'programme' in these cases.
- there is also a fundamental challenge between formulating a consistent approach at country level and fitting responsive work within PCPs' individual scopes and meeting their respective requirement for alignment and clearance. (i.e. there is no mechanism to translate country/regional priorities and needs into programming).

Finding 2E: The biggest single challenge faced by the PCPs is that the rationale for, and focus of, the PCPs and the projects they contain cannot be easily explained. In addition, they do not have programme-level results with performance indicators and, therefore, the additional costs of managing and coordinating work through PCPs cannot be offset against additional expected environmental gains. During the document review of the evaluation inception phase, it was noted that the number and breadth of PCPs are at a similar level to that of UNEP's Branches and Units structure. The question arises of why the set of PCPs are not more closely aligned to, or better reflect and represent, the set of Branches and Units, in keeping with the general wisdom that 'form' should follow 'function'.

Finding 2F: Co-creation is the central mechanism by which regional and country priorities and needs are expected to be fed into decision-making processes and the design of UNEP's work. People are supportive of co-creation and make individualised efforts to introduce co-creative practices. However, the effort is focused largely at a project level and at the point of project design rather than in a holistic way across the project cycle and within the context of annual, institutional (i.e. divisions, regions, PCPs etc) planning. There is a lack of guidance to support the common understanding of how 'co-creation' approaches are expected to be operationalised.

Finding 2G: UNEP's business model is founded on partnerships and this is how a relatively small agency is expected to generate global results (i.e. UNEP invests technical expertise and effort heavily into the early stages of new initiatives, working in partnership with other parties such that they can take on the future leadership of the work, Annex IX). However, the DM has a strong internal UNEP focus and does not yet address the integration of partnership thinking into the new approach, including: messaging the institutional changes externally; acknowledging whether/how partnership modalities may change; confirming roles with partners; guiding any partnership modalities that are likely to need adjustment etc). In addition, UNEP's approach to partnerships that support country level interventions should be differentiated from approaches at global/regional level to ensure that centralized processes reflect sub-global relevance.

<u>Finding 2H:</u> At present the programmatic mechanisms introduced to support the DM are heavily focused on development (of PCPs) and design (of projects). This has led to an increased concentration on 'quality at approval' and work has not been seen to strengthen the 'quality of implementation', which, along with monitoring and adaptive management, is essential for a strong results focus.

Efficiency

<u>Finding 3A:</u> Overall, there has been an absence of an implemented change management plan to guide policy implementation and support the efficient and effective uptake of new processes. While newly introduced processes in the DM have the potential to improve efficiency, so far there is no evidence that efficiency gains have been realized and the suggestions are that efficiency has reduced. Enhanced transaction costs in terms of co-creation of concepts and project designs and enhanced bureaucracy in approval processes have reduced organisational efficiency. Constraints regarding centralization of administrative processes have limited the optimization of programmatic implementation. In addition, several new roles and responsibilities have been introduced (e.g. PCP DRIs, UNCT FPs) and others have been amended (e.g. GSPC[11], RSPC, Head of Branch/Unit). Issues of possible duplication have not yet been fully addressed. Human resource constraints at the regional level undermine the adoption of new roles such as intelligence gathering and resource mobilization.

<u>Finding 3B:</u> There is significant variability in how some elements of the DM Policy itself are being interpreted. The responses are personalised and influenced by many factors such as the nature of the work in a Division and/or Regional Office, past experiences and relationships, staffing patterns and capacity etc. While the high level of initiative and commitment is to be applauded, UNEP should aim for more systematic and consistent uptake. There is no apparent fora for staff to discuss their experiences and/or share how they have responded, or for strong leadership to be shown. This has the appearance of 'siloed entrepreneurship' rather than the aligned initiatives to which UNEP aspires. Examples of common questions where staff asked for guidance are: which, if any, elements of externally-funded project work[12] can be managed by the Regional Offices; is there scope for administrative and finance roles to be devolved to outside Nairobi; are the new accountability roles consistent with the Delegation of Authority and how are the roles of the GSPC and PCP DRIs differentiated, especially where there is a single PCP in an SP. Most collaboration, and change, is taking place where divisions and regions have worked together in the past (e.g. Industry and Economy Division and West Asia Office) or have ongoing common interests in oingoing projects (e.g. GEF projects). It is noted that Deputies play a key role in operationalising policies and there may be scope for a regular meeting of Deputies with the DED to help clarify issues and support a two-way flow of informed dialogue.

<u>Finding 3C:</u> The role of the GSPC set out in the DM Policy comprises: portfolio coordination, thought leadership, strategic planning, reporting and analyzing results, resource allocation and mobilization and innovative approaches. This is not significantly different from the expectations of the role in 2016 (see TOC in Annex VI) and the evaluation team has drawn on the 2017 Subprogramme Coordination Function Review to highlight some of the insights gained then:

- the institutional location of the GSPC role should support its purpose and the results to which it contributes (i.e. greater strategic relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of UNEP's work at the POW level). This is expected to be achieved through a team effort of thought leadership, communication and decision-making to generate greater programmatic coordination, integration and synergy.
- although each GSPC serves a specific SP, the frame of reference for the combined efforts of the team of GSPCs is the performance of the Programme of Work. The role involves communicating with the Member States on the performance of, and reporting on, the POW.

---

[11] While the role of the GSPC has not significantly changed since its establishment, the DM/PA changes the context within which it is expected to fulfil its role, which requires some clarification, especially vis-à-vis the PCP DRI role, to avoid potential duplication of effort. Given the recent move of the GSPC posts into the Technical Divisions further clarification of the role vis-à-vis divisional staff roles (e.g. areas of decision making) would be beneficial.

[12] This is typically project work that falls under category B 'technical support, capacity building and advisory services' to which the Delivery Model applies.

- given the cross-cutting nature of the role one of its appreciated, but less visible, attributes is that of being a 'neutral broker' when there are competing interests and priorities.
- some of the issues that need to be addressed as the GSPC role reverts to a divisional home are: a) the accountability of the 'lead' Division Director may be for work that is not under their management authority; b) conflicts of interest in terms of the use of GSPC time and in decision-making may arise and will need a resolution mechanism that puts the POW results first; c) the identity of a 'team' of GSPCs should be protected and strengthened for the optimisation of results; d) there is not always a direct match between an SP and a Division (e.g. now Digital Transformation[13], previously Disasters and Conflict) and e) (based on the findings of this Formative Evaluation) the presence of programme (i.e. PCP) roles within the Division combined with a GSPC role has the potential to cause duplication of effort and challenges in terms of authority and responsibility, especially where there is a single PCP within an SP, which is also mapped onto a single Division (i.e. in the case of both Foundational SPs)

Finding 3D: The full mobilisation of the Thematic Funds faces challenges that are not unique to UNEP and expectations of how 'un-earmarked' these funds can be may be overly optimistic. There are also issues over how the results derived from these funds are identified and reported on. In addition, there are challenges around how the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes will raise sufficient funds to play their intended roles in realising UNEP's strategic objectives. A percentage of the amounts assigned to PCPs under the Thematic Subprogrammes are being specified for the Foundational/Enabling Subprogrammes (internal memo, 20.08.24) although the mechanism for the onward allocation of this percentage is not described.

Finding 3E: Given the substantive changes brought to UNEP's institutional and programmatic structure by the MTS, POW and DM, allocating funds based on past spending is no longer realistic. The new 'zero-based' approach being developed is welcome and has the potential to support strategic future plans, rather than the continuation of older work streams.

Finding 3F: The timely disbursement of core funds has not been easy to achieve in the past, despite guidance being given in good time and time-based plans having been made. It is clear that the predictability and timeliness of these funding releases are key to efficient and effective operations.

Monitoring and Reporting

Finding 4A: The expected benefits of the DM are numerous and not clearly or consistently expressed (Annex VIII) and the indications of success have not been made clear. Nor is it clear how adaptive management in operationalising the DM is envisaged. At present there is a lot of individualised, uncoordinated effort and there is need for a systematic monitoring and feedback system for the introduction and operationalisation of a policy with such far-reaching implications.

Finding 4B: The aims of the MTS, to be operationalised through the POWs, are currently not supported by a set of MTS outcome statements that fully reflect the vision of the triple planetary crisis, nor UNEP's global environmental mandate. The POW Direct Outcomes are: a) not consistently at an outcome level; b) do not all lend themselves to measurement or assessment; and c) the associated indicators are neither all SMART, nor grounded in baseline measurements. This limits the opportunities for the use of RBM to inform implementation processes and/or assess UNEP's performance.

Finding 4C: Reporting on the implementation of UNEP's work takes place largely within the IPMR system and is of a granular nature. It is difficult to aggregate UNEP's results from the project level upwards partly because the programme structure is not reflected in IPMR, but also because UNEP's results chains are not

---

[13] While the Thematic Subprogrammes may appear more closely matched to a Division (e.g. Nature Action appear to closely match the work of the Ecosystem Division) this may be misleading. For example, work in Nature and Climate Action are heavily dependent on projects managed by the Industry and Economy Division.

adequately supported by causal narratives that explain how UNEP's work will drive change and a lack of results statements at the programme and subprogramme levels.

<u>Finding 4D:</u> The plans for mid-term reviews and independent evaluations of each PCP may not reflect the most efficient approach to assessing their performance. The evaluation of PCPs would be more appropriately considered and integrated with the plans for Subprogramme level evaluations, which are already an institutional requirement and funded through the Evaluation Office annual budget.

<u>Finding 4E:</u> Knowledge management efforts are fragmented and there is a proliferation of online platforms that do not support the consolidation of knowledge and the sharing of learning. There is a lack of centralized knowledge-sharing platforms, inconsistent knowledge management practices and reliance on project/division-specific systems rather than a unified organizational approach. Resource constraints and non-functional existing systems further challenge the effective implementation of knowledge management. It is acknowledged that centralisation, in and of itself, is not the goal of a unified organizational approach. The goal is to avoid the duplication of effort – either duplication of generating knowledge or of repeating less effective work – and to make access to useful knowledge easier in order that this knowledge is used more often and more widely.

1.5   Recommendations and Key Findings to which they Respond

13.   This set of recommendations, and the findings from which they are derived, focuses on features or effects of the introduction of the DM/PA. They do not represent an exhaustive response to all the insights gathered during the evaluation, but aim to highlight those substantive areas where UNEP could consider taking action.

14.   The frame of reference for a findings statement is typically an individual evaluation criterion or a strategic question from the TOR. A finding aims to go beyond description and uses analysis to provide insights that aid learning specific to the evaluand. A recommendation makes proposals for specific action to be taken by identified people/position-holders to resolve concrete problems affecting the evaluand or the sustainability of its results.

15.   The evaluation team recognises the ongoing management response to the Sida Poverty Review (Noij, 2021[14]), which includes action on strengthening UNEP's work to the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) initiative and the recently completed evaluation of the Climate Change Subprogramme (Woerlen et al., 2024[15]), which contains some recommendations that are consistent with the findings of the Formative Evaluation.

A) 'Institutional Process' Recommendations

No. & Finding(s)	Recommendation
1 *Finding 4A* *Finding 3C* *Finding 4D*	*Review the DM Policy to add missing roles, incorporate the PA, introduce a set of performance metrics for the DM itself and revise the evaluation approach.* The DM Policy should be reviewed to formally recognise the programmatic approach. The review would include the following: a) include a set of success metrics for the DM that focus on tangible benefits/results as well as process milestones; b) update any changed roles (e.g. reflecting the incorporation of GEF and GCF into PPD and the recent move of GSPCs into Divisions); c) add any key roles that have been overlooked (e.g. UNCT FPs, Regional Development Coordinators); d) mainstream the country engagement plan, which is a key factor in having a coordinated approach at the country level, into the PA and e) revise, in conjunction with the Evaluation Office, the plans for evaluating the PCPs.

---

[14] Noij, F (2021), Independent Review of UNEP's Contributions to Poverty Reduction, on behalf of Sida.
[15] Woerlen, C; George, C; Hennig A; Moenter, A; Richter, S and Schlagenwerth, N, Evaluation of the UNEP Subprogramme on Climate Action, 2014-2023.

2 *Finding 2G*	*Review the DM/PA from a partnership perspective.* Review the DM Policy from a partnership perspective[16] and clearly communicate, both internally and externally, any expected adjustments to partnership relationships and modalities. Consider the need for an appendix to the upcoming new Partnership Policy to reflect how partnerships are affected by, or expected to contribute to, the DM/PA. This should include reflections on how the development of partnerships, especially those agreed at a global level, are expected to reflect differentiated needs at decentralised and country levels.

3
 	
Finding 3A
Finding 3B
	Develop and implement a consultative change management process to guide DM/PA implementation beyond the initial workshops and to provide leadership.
	
	This Formative Evaluation takes the DM/PA as givens, having emerged from a process endorsed by Senior Management. However, it is recognised that, at a more fundamental level, the premise that the DM/PA can simultaneously deliver country/regional level relevance, an increased entrepreneurial approach and substantive results and impacts within a sound financial model, could still be questioned.
	
	A detailed change management plan, beyond the initial workshops, should be developed and implemented to drive progress towards a more strategic, effective and efficient operationalisation of the policy. The plan should include a regular opportunity for discussion, feedback and problem-solving between those taking on new roles, responsibilities or procedures and those leading the implementation of the DM/PA. It should also include a common set of targets or milestones (e.g. each PCP to hold one PSC meeting by a certain time etc.) so that the change process moves forward with some consistency. This would also be a mechanism to provide stronger leadership.
	
	Some of the pressing issues to be discussed to a point where there is a consistent understanding are:
	    a) possible exceptions to the transfer of management of projects from Regional Offices to Divisions (e.g. whole projects or components);
	    b) the effects of a reduction in overhead allocations to the financial viability and functioning of Regional Offices;
	    c) guidance on suballotments under the DM;
	    d) how to fund the country-level functions of coordination and alignment of UNEP support to UNSDCF;
	    e) clarity around roles and responsibilities and issues of accountability/delegation of authority;
	    f) how to make 'country engagement plans' recognized and articulated within the broader PA; and
	    g) determination of the studies (if any) that need to be undertaken to support the change process (e.g. staff headcount, allocation of the OTA, whether Regional Offices are fit for their new purpose etc.) Such studies may cover both the extent of human resources needed as well as the capacity development needed to support changed roles and needed skill sets (see para 120).

4 *Finding 2A*	*Strengthen co-creation processes, providing guidelines across the planning and project cycle.* UNEP should develop guidance on operationalising co-creation holistically rather than solely at the individual project level. This guidance should address, for example, everything from annual planning between each Division and each Regional Office to collaborative roles in

---

[16] A comment was received on the draft report suggesting an advantage in having institutional MOUs with all major UNEP partners (see Comments Table). The evaluation did not gather sufficient material to assess the merit of this suggestion.

Finding 2F	monitoring and adaptive management. The guidance should detail what constitutes co-created work and how its benefits can be tracked and assessed. The issue of how co-creation is to be operationalised in situations where country endorsement is already a funding pre-requisite (e.g. GEF grants) should be addressed.
5 *Finding 1C*	*Develop a set of criteria as part of a mechanism for phasing out work if/when it is not the most strategically relevant work or is not, or no longer, a priority.* Develop a set of criteria that reflect the strategic direction and prioritisation of the MTS for: phasing out long-standing work that is no longer as strategically relevant as other options or low-priority initiatives; curtailing projects after multiple phases; rejecting new project proposals and, potentially, declining funding offers. Establish a process, with a timeline, to apply these criteria to review existing work and project concepts in all 13 PCPs. The softer approach of checking for 'alignment with the MTS/POW at approval' is not sufficient to realise the scale and focus that UNEP aims to achieve. Without such a mechansim it will be difficult for UNEP to maintain the strategic relevance of its work.
6 *Finding 3E* *Finding 3F*	*Prioritise the transparent allocation, and timely and predictable disbursement, of core resources.* Reinforce and closely monitor the timetable for disbursement of core resources through the SMT meeting agendas to improve the predictability and timeliness of core fund disbursements to enhance operational effectiveness and efficiency. Given the substantive changes introduced in the MTS/POW and DM/PA this evaluation endorses plans for a 'zero-based' allocation process.
7 *Finding 3D*	*Ensure allocation of Thematic Funds is transparent and associated results can be reported to support sustainable replenishment.* Decision-making around the allocation of Thematic Funds to programmatic work should be transparent, especially in terms of funding allocations to the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes. The link between intended results and the allocation of resources within the Thematic Funds needs to be clearly documented to support accountability and reporting to funding partners.
8 *Finding 4E*	*Develop an institutional knowledge management strategy.* UNEP should commit resources to engage external specialists to develop a comprehensive Knowledge Management Strategy that integrates programme-specific and organisational knowledge needs, promoting systematic knowledge sharing and application to enhance programme results. The strategy needs to ensure coherence across systems and processes, search functions and underlying taxonomy. A Knowledge Management Strategy would encompass programme-specific and organisational knowledge needs, ensuring systematic knowledge sharing and application to enhance results across programmes.
9 *Finding 2H* *Finding 2E*	*Enhance quality of project and programme implementation.* Strengthen mechanisms to support the quality of implementation by emphasizing supervision, monitoring, adaptive management, and continuous improvement in project execution[17]. Within this, consider the appropriate relationship between the structure of supervising offices (i.e. Divisions, Branches and Units) and the composition and efficient management of PCPs (i.e. 'form should follow function').

---

[17] Improved project execution should include aspects of creating synergies and adding value across the global, regional and country-specific projects that constitute a PCP. The recommendation goes beyond the provision of training materials.

B) 'Programmatic Design' Recommendations

10 *Finding 4B*	*Revise MTS outcomes and MTS and POW indicators.* The DM and PA aim to deliver the results set out in the MTS and the POW and these need to act as appropriate and effective goals for UNEP's programmatic work: a)　　Reformulate the MTS Outcomes as environmental benefits relevant to the triple planetary crises, with new indicators (e.g. derived from the Paris Agreement, UNCCC, Global Biodiversity Framework, GEF Global Environmental Benefits etc). This evaluation endorses the finding from the Climate Change Subprogramme on this topic (i.e. that the indicactors refer to reach rather than environmental progress). b)　　Revise the indicators for the POW Direct Outcomes so that they: a) follow a normal direction from outcome to indicator (and not the reverse); b) are SMART and c) have baseline measurements.	
11 *Finding 1A*	*Support the consistent and compelling communication of UNEP's strategic orientation.* In the next MTS document, UNEP should provide a single visualization of its strategic offer that encapsulates both its normative and operational work, for example in the style of the Science-Policy Interface diagram from the Resource Efficiency Subprogramme evaluation (2018, see Annex X). This should provide an overarching diagram that clarifies understandings of UNEP's programme, and complements the 'cube' diagram in the MTS. This should reflect, as pragmatically as possible, what UNEP aims to achieve and the roles it aims to play. The evaluation found no evidence that concepts such as 'direct, enabling and influencing', or any alternative abstract terminology, would be effective.	
12 *Finding 2B* *Finding 2C* *Finding 4C*	*Provide subprogramme TOCs (foundational/enabling) and develop concise causal narratives (all SPs).* Causal thinking underpins effective change processes and is currently lacking at the SP level: a)　　Develop concise causal narratives to illuminate the change processes in the TOCs for Thematic Subprogrammes. These should describe how the composition of SP projects relates to UNEP's mandate and mission and reflects its comparative advantage or technical expertise and focus. Create TOCs for the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes. b)　　Develop TOCs and concise causal narratives for each of the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes showing: a) the causal pathway(s) of the change process driven by the SP itself and b) the role(s) the SP plays in the Thematic Subprogrammes.	
13 *Finding 2D*	*Review and revise the PCPs.* The current PCPs have the features of portfolios of projects rather than programmes. Review the design and composition of the set of PCPs, ensuring they reflect the features of programmes, with synergistic PCP results (i.e. cumulative or additional PCP outcomes and associated indicators) clearly contributing to their respective SP results (i.e. POW Direct Outcomes). The following points should be considered: 　a)　　maintain a maximum of 3 PCPs per Thematic Subprogramme (i.e. 9 in total); 　b)　　taken together, the set of PCPs in each Thematic Subprogramme should represent the full scope of work of that SP in a way that can be easily communicated and reflects causal thinking; 　c)　　further discussion is needed on what should constitute the 'programme' in the single PCPs of each of the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes. One option is for these PCPs to reflect a programmatic approach only for the cross-cutting and institutional capacity development work carried out in each of these Subprogrammes (other country/regional level work would appear in the PCPs of the Thematic Subprogrammes);	

	d)	review the 'existing projects' in all PCPs that are going to be continued and assess the projects' strategic relevance and potential contribution to the POW/MTS against the set of criteria established in response to Recommendation 2.
14 *Finding 2D*	*Clearly state the results' link from all funded work to Project Review Committee (PRC) approved projects that are visible in the POW.* Project-level funding agreements (grants) must clearly identify a commitment to delivering / attaining at least one result statement (output or outcome) that forms part of the PRC-approved project to which it contributes (See memo DED to SMT 24.03.2021 Para 2). All project concepts, proposals and PRC-approved projects should articulate a plausible causal pathway to their PCP results, and at least one POW Direct Outcome within the context of an SP. The significance of this[18] is that there should be no break in the connection between results and *any level* of the causal pathway. No credible association can be made from funded work (i.e. a grant) to the POW Direct Outcomes unless the results can be traced from the grant to the PRC-approved project, to aggregated PCP results, through a Subprogramme causal path and to the POW Direct Outcomes.	
15 *Finding 1B*	*Enhance the strategic purpose of the CAG.* The CAG should prioritise strategic alignment and minimise its focus on more administrative compliance. In that regard, UNEP should revisit the TOR of the CAG and: a) ensure its modality is allowing for strategic relevance and contribution to be properly assessed; b) differentiate groups of projects that don't require 'concept approval' such as enabling activities/readiness projects and those below a budget/financial threshold.	
16 *Finding 1D*	*Strengthen the social development aspects of the PCPs.* Enhance attention to social development issues with UNEP's approach to planet and people. First steps would be to: a) review the management response to the Sida Poverty Review from the perspective of the DM and PA and b) adjust the PCP template to prompt for a description of the main social (i.e. human rights and equality) issues facing that programme in the 4 years of the relevant MTS and how the programme will respond. The description in the PCP should include how negative effects will be avoided as well as opportunities for promoting positive social change in accordance with environmental results.	

---

[18] This emphasis is added in response to comments.

2 EVALUATION APPROACH

2.1 Evaluation Criteria and Questions

16.   Formative evaluations intend to improve the ongoing process of the evaluand, in this case the DM and the associated PA, and to enhance the results that it can be expected to generate.[19] In the absence of any success metrics, intended results or key performance indicator for the DM, the evaluation team selected four standard evaluation criteria, generated reasonable evaluation questions and identified logical assumptions underpinning the change process to guide its data gathering and analysis.

17.   The four evaluation criteria were drawn from the OECD-DAC standard criteria: strategic relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and monitoring, reporting and evaluation. The DM was considered too recent for an assessment of impact and/or sustainability to have great utility at this time. Details of the guiding evaluation questions are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria and Related Questions

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions
1. **Strategic Relevance**	To what extent will the introduction of the Delivery Model and the Programmatic Approach provide UNEP with a **more strategically oriented programme towards the realization of the MTS and POW results**?
2. **Effectiveness**	To what extent, and in what ways, will the i) Delivery Model and ii) Programmatic Approach improve UNEP's ability to **demonstrate improved programmatic performance and results at the POW level**?
3. **Efficiency**	To what extent and in what ways will the i) Delivery Model and ii) Programmatic Approach improve UNEP's ability to **achieve greater results with the same level of resources**?
4. **Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation**	To what extent will the i) Delivery Model and ii) Programmatic Approach facilitate UNEP's **systematic monitoring, preparing to report on and evaluating the results** from the Delivery Model and the Programmatic Approach?

2.2 Evaluation Approach

18.   The evaluation made use of a theory-based approach, through which a set of assumptions that would realise improvements across the evaluation criteria were developed and data gathered to assess signs that the necessary assumptions were holding, or emerging. Further analysis was based on these foundational data.The evaluation made use of a participatory approach and involved 58 interviews during May 2024 with a wide array of UNEP stakeholders (see Annex I: 52 women; 29 men) in order to consider perspectives from a variety of organizational positions and to validate evidence across different informants, enhancing the validity of the findings.

19.   During the inception phase, an exploratory approach was used to get an initial impression of the transformation process from a variety of informed perspectives, and key pathways of questioning were identified. The main data gathering phase made use of a more formalized and systematic data gathering approach, guided by the evaluation criteria, questions and evaluation framework (see Annex VII). Data were analysed from different perspectives including the evaluation criteria, the key features of the DM and the five institutional traits UNEP aspires towards.

2.3 Stakeholder Mapping

20.   A stakeholder mapping was conducted to inform the selection of stakeholders for primary data gathering, presented in Table 2 below. During the data collection, Change Champions (Group 6 in the table below), were not clearly identified although the evaluation team was advised that these were intended to be

---

[19] This contrasts with *summative evaluation*, which is conducted after completion of a programme or after the stabilization of an ongoing transformation process and not meant to inform the details of the programme itself but rather its continuation, expansion or replication. Scriven, Michael, Evaluation Thesaurus, Fourth Edition, 1991.

the Deputy Divisional Directors, all of whom were invited to be interviewed (a total of 6 Deputy Divisional and Regional Directors participated in interviews).

Table 2: Key Stakeholders and their Roles in the Transformation Process

Key Stakeholders	Role in Transformation Process
1. Executive Director	Holder of the institutional vision and leadership
2. Members of the SMT/Division and Regional Directors	Institutional, political and technical leadership and accountability for results
3. PPD/CSD Delivery Model Project Team	Policy development and technical assistance/change champions
4. DRIs of PCPs	Monitoring of results at PCP level; coordination of implementation and development of synergies within the PCP
5. Global Sub-programme Coordinators	Reporting results at Subprogramme level; coordination of implementation and development of synergies across the Subprogramme
6. Change Champions	Facilitate the implementation of UNEP's Delivery Model across UNEP, helping colleagues to understand, appreciate and enact this new way of working
7. Regional Sub-programme Coordinators	Gathering national and regional, prioritized information at Subprogramme level; co-creating concepts for the PCPs
8. Heads of Branches and Units	Providing PCP DRI staff; co-creating concepts for the PCPs and implementing projects within the PCPs and resource mobilisation
9. Project Managers	Co-creating concepts for the PCPs and implementing projects within the PCPs
10. CSD Budget Unit and FMOs	Facilitate new resource allocation strategies.

2.4 Evaluation Methods

21.   The evaluation used a <u>mixed methods approach as part of a systematic inquiry</u>, including gathering and analysing qualitative and quantitative data from multiple sources. Important methods included desk review of draft and final documents from centralised and individual office sources; online semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with a variety of relevant stakeholders at UNEP headquarters, regional and other offices. There was an intention to capture and present specific examples of good practise as part of this evaluation process. However, at this early stage after the introduction of the new policy, what was recounted were individual experiences and efforts solve immediate challenge or address current priorites. The potential for shared learning from these is currently low and they do not feature in this report. The wide range of perspectives across the organisation allowed for the triangulation of findings and enhanced the validity of the findings. For the sake of keeping this report on the shorter side, further details on methods can be found in the Inception Report.

22.   Online interviews included members of the UNEP Senior Management Team, Division Directors, Regional Directors, Deputy Directors, Heads, Acting Heads and Staff of the Policy and Programme Division, Global and Regional Subprogramme Coordinators and Direct Responsible Individuals of PCPs as well as Heads of Coordination Units, including the GEF, GCF and Budget Units. Further, a selection of Heads of Branch and Units, Project Managers, Regional Development Coordinators and Fund Management Officers were interviewed.

23.   Selection criteria for interview and focus group participants included a substantive engagement with the new DM/PA and/or responsibility for substantive elements of PCPs. Moreover, some participants were selected based on extensive institutional knowledge. In the selection of participants, representation of the POW scope and UNEP's geographic footprint was considered.

24.   For an overview of evaluation methodologies used and their characteristics, see Table 3 below.

Table 3: Methodologies for Data Gathering and their Characteristics

Method	Description	Objective	Comments
Desk Review	Study and review of selected documents relevant to the design and implementation of the new DM/PA approach	To gain a strong foundation of knowledge on the background and context as well as documented details of the new approach, the implementation process and results achieved so far through secondary sources	Desk review was started in the inception phase and continued throughout the data gathering phase of the evaluation
Semi-Structured Interviews	Virtual individual interviews with selected stakeholders guided by a list of topics for discussion, tailored to type of stakeholder concerned	To gather qualitative and, where appropriate, quantitative data on DM/PA design and implementation from selected stakeholders throughout the organization	Topics for discussion were informed by the desk review and guided by the evaluation matrix
Focus Group Discussions	Virtual interviews with selected peer groups of UNEP stakeholders to the DM/PA transformation process	To gather perspectives from peers to the DM/PA transformation process	Conduct of focus group discussions enabled a larger group of UNEP staff to participate in the evaluation
Small-Scale Case Studies	An in-depth exploration of good practice examples in terms of their design, implementation and initial / expected results	In-depth exploration of what appears to be working well in order to be able to inform the next steps in the implementation of the DM/PA	Focus on good practices identified during the inception phase as well as during the main data gathering process
E-mail Communi-cation	Focused e-mail messages	To address specific gaps in data and information to be obtained from specific persons and stakeholders	As needed

2.5 Evaluation Limitations and Mitigation Measures

25. Some limitations of the present evaluation were identified, including:

- UNEP is in the early days of implementing the new DM Policy which means the landscape is still developing and intiatives and best practices are still emerging. This means that while the evaluation can highlight clear trends and points of breakthrough or tension etc, some details may become rapidly outdated;

- Given the magnitude of the changes UNEP expects to drive through the DM, and the need for formative findings to be generated within a reasonable time period, this is not an exhaustive study. To mitigate against this, priorities are reflected in the four evaluation criteria and related questions included in the evaluation framework presented in Annex VII;

- Features of the DM can be viewed from the perspectives of more than one evaluation criteria and, in some cases, features may be discussed in more than one place. However, to mitigate against repetition and to increase the utility of this report, an effort has been made to unify discussions of these features where possible.

- This evaluation discusses complex institutional changes and, for the sake of brevity and utility of the report, it is assumed that readers have some familiarity with the features of the DM and PA.

3   FINDINGS: STRATEGIC RELEVANCE

3.1   Guiding Questions

26.   To what extent is it likely that the introduction of the Delivery Model and the Programmatic Approach will provide UNEP with a more strategically oriented programme towards the realization of the MTS and POW results?

> Q A.1 In what ways has the potential for UNEP's Strategic Relevance been enhanced through use of the new Delivery Model?
>
> Q A.2 In what ways has the potential for UNEP's Strategic Relevance been enhanced through use of the Programmatic Approach?
>
> Q A.3 Which features of the DM and PA support the establishment of a clear 'line of sight' from local to regional and global interventions and in terms of addressing the three global environmental crises?

3.2   Evaluation Assumptions

27.   The strategic direction of UNEP's work is reflected in the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs and UNEP's MTS (2022-25). It was expected that, given the nature and emphasis of the DM, greater strategic relevance would also mean greater responsiveness to regional and country level priorities and needs and the UNSDCFs, as relevant to UNEP's mandate.

28.   The programmes and their PCPs are commonly referred to as the 'programmatic approach' (PA). However, no formal document was developed and approved to solidify this and the work has an unusual 'semi-formal' status[20]. Draft documents, August 2022, suggest the intention behind the programmatic approach was to: *'deliver the focus, coordination and integration that is required to deliver the MTS and PoW'*. The PA is presented as an extension of the earlier 'Programme Framework' approach of the subprogrammes that was intended to create synergies within UNEP's work and it also highlights a focus on *'quality of implementation'* through greater management and coordination. The programmes are expected to strengthen synergies and complementarities among subprogrammes and form the *'missing middle'*, between UNEP's projects and the POW.

29.   The thirteen PCPs, formed in order to operationalise their respective programmes within UNEP's monitoring and reporting system, IPMR, are expected to provide a means to enhance the focus and coherence of the projects within the programmes, with initiatives more strategically aligned within a PCP and to have enhanced interactions across the divisions and technical units.

30.   Prior to primary data collection, the team theorised that evidence of greater strategic relevance in UNEP's work would need to be reflected in a strategic shift and decision-making processes that: prioritise the three planetary crises; are responsive to regional and country priorities; reflect the UN Reform agenda, including UN Country Team engagement, and which uphold the principle of gender equality and Leave No One Behind. It was assumed that strengthening strategic relevance would need: a clear understanding of UNEP's 'offer' (i.e. both normative and operational work); tools and mechanisms to phase out and/or reduce new, less strategically relevant work; a system of reviewing new proposals for their strategic merit and processes to promote issues of inclusion and equality. It was also assumed that greater strategic relevance would require synergistic approaches to programme design and delivery as: a) environmental issues require a multi-sectoral response and b) coordinated efforts across many groups are needed to realise large scale (i.e. global) effects . To justify the complex programmatic arrangement (7

---

[20] The DM Policy does not contain a specific reference to a 'programmatic approach', nor is it described in any approved document. However, the PCPs have been developed to coordinate 13 new 'programmes; 'programmatic approach' has been included in UNEP's Results Definitions and the programmatic approach is included in the Project Management Manual.

subprogrammes and 13 PCPs) there would need to be an increase in the strategic focus and scale of institutional results.

31.   The evaluation team did not, before the interviews began, have a clear understanding of the term 'line of sight' as used by UNEP, recognising that this could be interpreted as either: a) ensuring that the contribution of local or project level results to higher level goals can be clearly articulated and tracked or, b) that there are clear lines of accountability for country level work, such that it is obvious who is responsible for every UNEP project. The accountability line of thought emerged as the more dominant one. Similarly, the term 'missing middle' has more than one interpretation and is understood to refer to a discontinuation effect when there is too big a gap between either results or management levels, which interupts either a causal narrative or undermines a supervision/oversight mechanism.

3.3   Discussion

Strategic Shift

32.   The MTS introduces a transformative shift to focus on the triple planetary crisis and three associated strategic objectives:

a)   "Climate stability",[21] where net zero greenhouse gas emissions and resilience in the face of climate change are achieved;
b)   "Living in harmony with nature" (SCBD, 2010), where humanity prospers in harmony with nature;
c)   "Towards a pollution-free planet",[22] where pollution is prevented and controlled and good environmental quality and improved health and well-being are ensured for all.

33.   This tighter focus is overwhelmingly supported by staff across the House - the strength of the MTS was summarised by one respondent as being *easily understood and communicable, and a lot of it was inspiring. It has generated a lot of momentum and goodwill'*. Other institutional changes that align with the triple planetary crises are the focus on three thematic subprogrammes (Climate, Nature and Chemicals and Pollution Action), the creation of a Climate Change Division and the establishment of the Thematic Funds resource mobilisation mechanism.

34.   The DM is intended to support the new MTS and is still early in its implementation process. The majority of staff want to see UNEP commit to the MTS vision and the DM and fear that the organisation will not 'stay the course' for long enough for it to become effective. More concerted effort, however, is seen to be needed to ensure that the actual work that UNEP undertakes, operationalised primarily through projects but also the MEA conventions, aligns with the strategic vision and delivers on quality and at scale to have a discernible effect.

35.   Some of the limitations mentioned most often are introduced below – they reappear in different contexts throughout this report:

a)   while the initial set of workshops was appreciated, there has been no apparent 'change management' plan to keep the vision in sight, nor sufficient opportunities to clarify expectations or discuss issues and solutions and insufficient guidance on the operationalization of the DM;

b)   the emphasis in the DM on responding to country and regional priorities and needs implies greater dialogue around what support UNEP can offer or what work it is well-suited to engage in. However, staff are struggling to present UNEP's 'offer' or comparative advantage succicntly and/or in a consistent way. This emerges most frequently as a question of how UNEP conceptualises the relationship between its normative and operational work, which has wide-reaching implications for the subprogrammes, PCPs, resource allocation, contributions to the UNSDCFs and UNCTs etc.

---

[9] Fully supporting a balanced implementation of the mitigation and adaptation commitments under the Paris Agreement.
[22] In 2017, Member States adopted a ministerial declaration, "Towards a pollution-free planet"

c) the common interpretation of, and consistent commitment to, the DM by SMT members is not yet evident across the House. As one respondent explained: *'it depends who you ask'*. It is recognised, however, that Directors already carry a wide range of responsibilities and the DM/PA has further extended these. This suggests that the 'coherent strategic leadership' is not yet being witnessed nor experienced. While there are many encouraging examples of people making good initiatives and trying to follow the principles of the DM, so far this is mostly dependent on individual circumstances, existing work relationships and past experience etc.

d) any strategic benefits added to UNEP's work by the programmatic approach (and the PCPs) are in doubt with PCPs often consisting of new groupings of existing projects. The added complexity of having 13 programmes, in addition to the 7 subprogrammes, is not yet clearly offset by stronger strategic effects. While the rationale of the DM was made explicit in the policy document concerned, this has not been the case for the programmatic approach and the use of PCPs.

UN Reform (RCOs, UNSDCFs and UNCTs)

36. The MTS commits to leverage the UN development system reform and to engage the wider UN system in stronger, more coordinated and mutually supportive environmental action (i.e. more strategic collaboration between UN agencies). This UN collaboration is supported, under the DM, by UNEP's increased engagement with the UNCTs and RCOs through regional offices.

37. There are reports of greater integration, albeit at varying levels, of UNEP's work at country level in the common UN agenda reflected in the UNSDCFs, which include country priorities and are intended to improve coordination and joint programming with other UN agencies. UNEP has strengthened its capacity to engage with the UN country presence by identifying over 50 UNCT FPs, who met[23] for the first time in November 2023. UNEP is also piloting Country Engagement Plans with approx. 5 countries per region and has created a Country Analysis dashboard[24], derived from IPMR and to support knowledge management. UNEP intends to place 30 *(number to be confirmed)* Environmental Specialists in RCOs.

38. There are reports that enhanced cooperation and engagement with the UN system, particularly concerning issues such as pollution and biodiversity, and more frequent collaboration with UNCTs, is beginning to contribute to UNEP's increased visibility and profile at the country level and a better alignment and integration of UNEP's environmental strategic priorities within the UNCSDFs. Regional offices are crucial in integrating localised insights into broader strategies, acting as *'intelligence agents on the ground'*, and there are signs that having Divisional staff present in Regional Offices can contribute to better country-level engagement. Some Global Subprogramme Coordinators (GSPC) have been facilitating engagement with the UNSDCF processes. A strong note was made that UNEP's engagement with the UNCTs should not preclude direct engagement with country level stakeholders and that bilateral national engagement remains important and a necessity.

39. Although the potential for greater strategic impact is recognized, progress is uneven and the full potential can neither be assumed to be automatic, nor is it fully realized yet. Practical implementation hurdles being faced include:

- the coverage of UNCT Focal Points to countries is neither even nor of a common nature, and the role of the UNCT FP is not formally described in the DM;
- the UNCT FP role is typically assigned in addition to at least one other, pre-existing role and so is not a full-time commitment;
- gaps exist in RSPC roles, which are not currently being replaced due to the Regular Budget recruitment freeze;
- it is difficult to engage with government officers to discuss priorities outside of any other technical activities or formal participation in key regional networks;

---

[23] A workshop report is available, which provides detail on the Focal Point TORs, early experiences are recommendations for going forwards with this role.
[24] The initiative to create Country Analysis dashboards pre-dates the DM approval.

- UNSDCFs often reflect mainstream interests, and these may not be the emerging or priority issues as seen by UNEP unless UNEP was able to participate in, and influence, the design process;
- UNEP is not fully equipped to make programmatic decisions at the country level and is only more recently beginning to support the UN system at this level; and
- the move of all project management into the Technical Divisions has created challenges for the Regional Office funding model as well as reducing their staffing complement (i.e. number and type of staff based in a Regional Office with time to commit to regional office work), which limits their reach and technical representation).

40.   An overarching issue is that high expectations from UNCTs regarding UNEP's role are not matched by corresponding support and resources, making it challenging for UNEP to fulfil its commitments effectively. Some suggestions received from respondents include the view that more specific targets at the Division level on how they will support UNCTs are needed to ensure systematic engagement; that Regional Offices need more technical staff to be based in the region and that UNEP needs to create better incentives for investment in the regions to facilitate co-design with UNSDCF processes.

41.   The deployment of UNEP Environmental Specialists to the UNRC Offices is a signal of greater strategic intent and commitment. This is a welcome effort, but the implications are, as yet, unknown. No details of how the Environmental Specialist role would be integrated into the DM roles were provided to the evaluation team and the way in which the countries/RCOs were selected was not entirely clear. At present the selection of countries for new funding proposals often depends on relationships with UNRC offices leading to some inconsistency in engagement and the concerned Environmental Specialists may help strengthen strategic considerations.

42.   While a stronger contribution to the UN Reform agenda requires greater *collaboration* with UN agencies at a country level, the term *co-creation* is understood to refer to the internal (i.e. within UNEP) translation of country level priorities and needs, which are hopefully well-reflected in the UNSDCFs, into UNEP project designs. There were reports of an uptake in co-creation acts between some Regional Offices and Technical Divisions. However, beyond the use of the term co-creation, a commitment to work together more closely and evidence of co-creation being a pre-requisite for the approval of new concepts, there is no clear and systematic mechanism for country and regional level priorities to feed into programming nor have guidelines on co-creation, which one would expect to be addressed throughout the project cycle, been developed.

43.   It was noted that there is an inconsistent flow of information between regional offices and divisions. This makes it challenging to incorporate regional priorities effectively into project designs. ROs, it was noted, are expected to map country or regional priorities, but there is a lack of tools and clear guidance to do so effectively. This gap hampers the practical implementation of the intended mechanisms. In addition, any current processes appear, at present, to be operating at the individual project level.

44.   Involvement of both regional office and division staff in large PCP steering committees could provide an opportunity for divisional/regional dialogue and exchanges, although few of these have yet taken place. There are instances of good collaboration, feedback being respected and project plans being changed in response, but these are not yet the norm and are based on individual personalities and past histories of working relationships. Any additional strategic benefits added by the programmatic approach are not easy to identify or articulate.

UNEP's Comparative Advantage

45.   With greater focus on regional and country dialogues it is natural that UNEP's partners may have questions about the internal changes, and that country expectations of what UNEP can deliver may change and/or increase. Those involved in relationships at the regional and country levels (both in the Regional Offices and Divisions) have to be able to represent UNEP's work in its entirety. One of the challenges being faced by many staff across the House, is how to explain UNEP's work or *'offer'* to partners and audiences outside the organization. This is particularly the case when representing UNEP at country and regional levels and in UN fora. Having a common and coherent understanding of UNEP's comparative advantage is also a critical part of being able to co-create based on a common understanding.

46. Some confusion was expressed at all levels over the combination of, and interplay between, UNEP's normative and operational work and what the DM means for that. Some see normative guidance as addressing broad systemic issues and the translation of these into actionable steps at the country and regional levels as operational. However, the dichotomy between normative (policy) and operational (implementation) may not be as clear cut as is sometimes assumed because the change processes UNEP aims to drive require both action at an operational level and interventions in the normative sphere. In addition, as UNCT FPs tended to note, UNEP's authority is founded on its technical expertise and global mandate, not solely on its project management capability. In some cases, UNEP not having a country presence, and an accompanying *'country programme'*, is seen by some at a country level as an advantage as it means UNEP can be directly responsive to a country's priorities. It also provides countries with an opportunity to claim ownership of the initiative, further enhancing the value of collaboration.

47. The new presentation of subprogrammes as three Thematic (climate, nature and chemicals and pollution), two Foundational (environmental governance and science-policy) and two Enabling Suprogrammes (finance and economic transformations and digital transformations) provides a new categorisation of UNEP's work, but has not provided additional clarity on how UNEP expects to achieve its objectives. There is a danger that the two Foundational Subprogrammes are seen by some to host UNEP's normative work, which is seen as perpetual and traditionally difficult to mobilise funds for, and the Thematic Subprogrammes host the operational work, focused on the three environmental crises, which is favoured by more bilateral and vertical funding sources. The point was made that the Foundational Subprogrammes represent UNEP's enduring offer and long-lasting identity, while one would expect the technical focus of the Thematic Subprogrammes to change over time depending on the environmental priorities of the period.

48. At present UNEP staff find the triple planetary crises make it easier to engage with others on UNEP's work and the 7 Subprogrammes represent the greatest level of detail that is digestible to partners. The 13 programmes (reflected in the PCPs) are experienced as being, for example, *'too narrow for someone interested in Climate Change and too broad for someone interested in talking about Textiles'*. Others mentioned that the PCPs have not yet developed sufficiently to form a *'bridge'* between UNEP's work and an identifiable community of practise or target audience.

Typology of Interventions

49. One of the tools expected to help communicate UNEP's range of work is understood to be the development of a typology of interventions with four categories and three levels of support: Direct, Enabling and Influencing. The evaluation team was advised that, in its earliest form, the typology was to provide a framework to identify what work would be clearly within the mandate of the organization and was a tool that could also be used for the review of concepts by the Concept Approval Group (CAG). In a few cases, respondents noted that the typology helps clarify how UNEP's activities align with its mandate. Its usefulness was also noted for helping to distinguish between interventions that deliver short-term outputs, perhaps through direct support, and those that use an enabling or influencing approach to reach longer-term policy change outcomes, especially in order to justify finance allocations to change processes that are less direct and slower to materialise. The typology of interventions was also noted as having the potential to provide a structured way to describe the organization's efforts.

50. In practice, however, the typology has been used primarily as an internal tool to classify legacy projects and to support their inclusion in the PCPs. The UNEP project document (ProDoc) template has been adjusted to incorporate the typology, indicating an effort to embed the typology into formal processes. However, it was noted that projects often include work across the categories and levels, which would require a 'dominance' approach and it was also reported that there is inconsistency in how different divisions apply the typology, leading to varying levels of understanding and implementation across the organization. Others mentioned that donor requirements typically overshadow any intended strategic use of the typology.

51. The added value of the typology of interventions is overall seen as limited and most respondents did not readily call the typology or its terminology to mind. Most interviewees believed the typology has not

significantly changed operations, resource allocation, or project design. It is seen more as an internal categorization tool than an operational change driver.

Phasing Out Work

52.   Any strategic endeavour depends on effective selection mechanisms that can both screen in, and screen out, work. Interviews confirmed that, across the House, there is no systematic or consistent mechanism to either phase out work (other than by default if funding dries up) or to reject project proposals. One interviewee described it as: *'we are very, very bad at taking a strategic lens to our work and being quite hard-nosed.'* Project work that cannot be easily aligned within a programmatic or operational structure is most likely to be: moved to another unit (e.g. moved to another PCP or part of the House); divided up and /or 'bolted on' or moved into other projects or 'tweaked' to address a concern that has been raised. PCP DRIs reported re-directing colleagues to other PCPs to find a 'home' for their projects and there is a lack of confidence that anyone other than the Executive Director can effectively reject a project proposal.

53.   One area of work was repeatedly cited as an example of a project being 'phased out', but this was reformulated and given an alternative operational home. This work may be extremely valuable and be destined for future re-design and growth etc., but it stands as an example that such issues are dealt with on an ad hoc basis or streams of work are most likely to be phased out only when staff who champion the work leave the organisation etc.

54.   Staff are more confident that they can decide when a country request does not fit UNEP's mandate or plans and that those can be gracefully declined. Over time it is hoped that by more clearly specifying UNEPs strategic direction in a proactive way country requests are more likely to be consistent with UNEP's offer. There was also scepticism that, without exceptional circumstances, funding for work on an environmental topic, would ever be rejected. Respondents noted that under UNEP's funding model, which is heavily dependent on extra-budgetary (XB) sources, projects generate income and staff positions. As one respondent put it frankly: *'if your funding is coming from XB and you are project-based, you want to continue undertaking that project because that's where your income is coming from.'*

55.   The DM brought three mechanisms that could be used to strengthen the strategic focus of UNEP's work: the PCPs, the CAG and the typology of interventions. However, none of these appear to being used to phase out project work:

- there were no accounts of a mechanism for reviewing the 'legacy' projects in the PCPs;
- the CAG does either conditionally approve or reject concepts, but most often these are returned to the proponent for there to be more co-creation; and
- the three categories of interventions, beyond being recorded in the ProDoc template, are not being used for any kind of analysis or causal thinking to support planning, selection and reporting.

Concept Reviews

56.   The work of the CAG is also discussed under Efficiency. It is included here under Strategic Relevance and strengthening strategic direction as this seen as something the CAG is particularly well-placed to do. 'Strategic' is defined as: *relating to the identification of long-term or overall aims and interests and the means of achieving them.* The MTS sets out organizational strategic objectives and priorities; similarly the DM commits to being more responsive to country and regional needs and priorities. Both of these positions pre-suppose that some work is more strategically relevant or prioritized than others. In order to achieve these objectives in the expected timeframes (i.e. SDGs. Agenda 2030 etc) choices have to be made between what work should be carried out first or to scale or where and how limited resources should be directed etc. Operating in a strategic manner presupposes that some possibilities are not acted upon and some existing work may no longer be the priority.

57.   In early 2021 the 'Delivering Quality Results' report[25], recommended strengthening the concept approval stage of the project cycle management process. Specific features were proposed as: a Concept Review Committee (CRC) to be chaired by the project-originating divisional or regional director; review to provide a 'go/no-go' decision on whether a proposal should be developed. Concept reviews were to be *'anchored in corporate processes, including the project's alignment with the MTS; appropriateness of the results statements, robustness of the performance indicators, the theory of change, and appropriate outcome-level ambition for each project.'* This recommendation indicates both the sensitivity of the timing of the concept review stage as well as the importance of reviewing the strategic relevance of the proposed work and the quality of intended results.

58.   With the introduction of the DM, concepts are now considered in the Concept Approval Group, which has replaced the CRC[26]. According to the CAG Terms of Reference (TOR, November, 2022) the review is also supposed to provide a 'go/no-go' decision stage before proposal preparation begins and covers all but corporate projects or initiatives supported entirely by Environment Fund resources. This means that all projects funded from extra budgetary resources (e.g. GEF[27], GCF, EC, IKI etc) and projects of all implementation modalities are reviewed by the CAG. It was designed as a light touch assessment of strategic merit and alignment: *'the CAG is designed to improve strategic value, intent and alignment of project concepts to the MTS/POW'* (TOR, 2022). To date the monthly CAG has been convened 12 times and the CAG Secretariat has recently carried out a survey of its membership. The CAG is chaired by the Deputy Executive Director and its membership is Divisional and Regional Directors, with a minimum of 3 of each to form a quorum. Some interviewees recalled that the CAG was intended to act as a gatekeeper to phase out irrelevant projects, but, as one described, they have not experienced this: *'while the CAG was established to approve projects aligned with the MTS, the idea of phasing out projects has not fully materialized.'* It was reported that conditionally approved and rejected concepts are often sent back to be re-worked. which may improve their own designs, but does not address the question of whether UNEP's new proposals taken together reflect the expected strategic focus or appropriate balance of effort.

59.   Feedback on the CAG process was varied, representing the positions of those who submit concepts, those who review and approve them and those who manage the process. It is not surprising that the CAG is a topic that many people have views on as it is the one arena where multiple players come together to collaborate on UNEP's way forward.

60.   The strengths of the CAG that were identified include:

- the leadership by the DED is acknowledged as bringing gravitas and seriousness to the Group;
- project staff appreciate the fact that Divisional and Regional Directors know more about their work in its early stages;
- some staff perceive the meetings to have progressed and improved over time;
- the voice of the Regional Offices is seen to be strengthened by the importance given to the Regional Directors' endorsement or rejection of concepts;
- there have been reports of useful discussion when substantive conversations have taken place; and
- it is evident that the CAG forms a very tangible check of whether a recognisable form and level of co-creation has taken place for those projects that involve technical support, advisory services and/or capacity building at the regional or county level. The CAG exercises a minimum threshold according to which no concepts will be reviewed if there's no evidence of co-creation.

61.   The challenges being faced, however, are numerous and include:

- the process is seen not to be asking relevant strategic questions, but rather, as being used to validate co-creation and rubber-stamp proposals with some interviewees noting that the CAG

---

[25] Ordu, Aloysius Uche: Delivering UNEP's Results Through Enhanced Focus on Quality (Project Cycle Management Review), December 2020
[26] Work funded by GEF and GCF are also reviewed in a Quality Enhancement Review process, which is based on a checklist.
[27] 40% of concepts are for GEF funded projects (Concept Pipeline Analysis, October 2023)

meetings often lack substantive dialogue and strategic discussions. *"CAG is very polite, rubber-stamping and validating co-creation."* While the CAG is supposed to be a facilitatory process, for many it is seen more as an obstacle. The constraints identified in terms of the CAG review process are seen as demoralizing staff involved and is seen as reflecting a lack of trust between different parts of the organization.

- the CAG implementation process developed over time and is regarded as having started off in practice with a focus on defending of 'turf' between divisional and regional directors who would be seeking alliances to pass a concept through the process. Similarly, the decision-making process has the potential to become a trading opportunity with one part of the House supporting another with an expectation of future support for their own proposals. Concept proponents reported experiencing the process as primarily one of 'defending' their proposals rather than receiving constructive and relevant feedback on the quality of the ideas and strategic positioning of the work;

- the process has been criticised for becoming bureaucratic and risk-averse, which might stifle innovation and strategic flexibility: *'the focus on bureaucratic processes and risk aversion can be a problem'* and *'the process makes us very risk-averse.'* A strong risk aversion may be particularly problematic for projects within the Disasters and Conflicts Branch;

- in essence, the CAG has meant a move in terms of authority from the Division and Regional Directors to the CAG, in which both functions participate. Along with this, the consent needed by the Technical Division Directors from the Regional Offices through the co-creation process is regarded by some as challenging the accountability assigned to the Technical Division Directors under the DM;

- the process is considered excessive for some implementation modalities such as initiatives that have an output level focus (e.g. some 'start up' activities and projects of an 'enabling activity' or 'readiness' nature);

- cross cutting issues, such as gender mainstreaming and social inclusion, are not a reference point in the review process and there is no role of the PPD gender team in the CAG; and

- the meeting has a very high senior staff time and cost, when Directors are already overloaded. There are concerns that: time is wasted if staff who know the concepts well are not allowed to speak; that the CAG Secretariat may be having more influence over decision-making than its administrative function would warrant; and, where the 3 to 4 pages concept page limit is not observed,[28] it is not clear how Directors can truly read them all;

62.   While the CAG has played a needed and significant role as a disruptor of previous, less overtly collaborative (i.e. more siloed work), project design processes, and has positioned co-creation firmly at the centre of concept proposal processes, high levels of frustration and scepticism on whether the CAG is fulfilling its initial purpose, were expressed by staff.

Leave No One Behind

63.   The need for social inclusion and equality issues in development work is recognized within Agenda 2030 and is reflected in UNEP's commitment to the planet and people, rather than planet only. In addition, the current MTS makes it clear (pg 8) that climate change is not experienced equally, with women and children being disproportionately affected. Some donors are keen that UNEP's approach to social issues and inclusion be made more explicit, including within the MTS. While UNEP may not have all its needed expertise in house to address social issues, as the organization is founded on a partnership model, staff should be able to make use of partner expertise in this respect.

64.   While there is assessment of the mainstreaming of gender in the project design approval process (i.e. through inclusion in the ProDoc template), gender issues have not been included in the PCP template and approval process and the PPD gender team does not play a role in the concept approval process. The

---

[28] Some respondents referred to concepts of 30 to 50 pages although that could not be confirmed.

revised UNEP Gender Policy, under development, reportedly aims to move from gender mainstreaming to gender responsiveness. However, it is not clear that the DM and PA have introduced processes that will support this progression.

65. With the more central role of divisions in project design and implementation, some at regional level fear that the inclusion of social issues will get less attention as the focus is likely to shift to global goals and contributions to global indicators. At the regional and country levels, the needs for inclusion of issues of poverty and equality in programming are more obvious, with Regional Office staff believing they are, based on their closer proximity to the implementation context, more aware and attuned to country social development specifics. There are differences across the various Divisions in terms of ways in which social aspects of development are addressed.

66. From the PPD perspective, the integration of LNOB, gender equality and vulnerability into the PA has been challenging as it has depended primarily on existing projects and portfolios, where such aspects are often included only at design stage in the form of social safeguards in relation to vulnerable groups, making use of a rights-based approach and meeting the requirements of the gender marker. Focus on social safeguards only gets you as far as 'doing no harm' in social development terms. However, with UNEP's focus on 'people and planet', it needs to go beyond a safeguards approach to include social development in addition to environmental results in design and implementation. This is related to the issue that environmental results are not beneficial, in and of themselves, but always relate to the interests of (groups of) people. Projects and programmes need to make that explicit. The regular evaluation of project performance shows that there is much less evidence of differentiated strategies that promote inclusion and equality having been followed during project implementation or of the intentions spelled out in project design documents having been actioned.

67. Another way of looking at the importance of this issue concerns UNEPs intended focus on LDCs, fragile countries and countries in conflict, the poorest groups of people, and aspects of environmental management and sustainable development in these countries. The analysis of the concept pipeline (Oct 2023) suggests this focus is limited in practice, with much of UNEP's work focused on MICs[29]. In addition, the country dashboards (active projects in IPMR) indicate that only 9% of UNEP consumable budget is directed towards conflict countries and only 13% to LDCs[30].

68. The evaluation notes that UNEP's work on Disasters and Conflict, which addresses the needs of those in the most crisis-prone situations, is currently housed in the Ecosystems Division and has no single base within either its own subprogramme or a PCP. It is understood that UNEP is providing its support to the environmental effects of disasters and conflict on a cross-cutting basis and that it has remained committed to maintaining the visibility of this work in the POW, given the strong interest of Member States. It is difficult to see, however, how these potentially increasing and diversifying needs can be met without UNEP's Disasters and Conflict work having a stronger and more strategic location within UNEP's operational and programmatic structure.

3.4 Findings Statements on Strategic Relevance

Finding 1A: Despite a clear vision of relevant and transformative change being set out in the MTS, UNEP's ability to present its unique offer to external parties such as UNCTs, countries, other UN agencies, funding partners etc. does not appear to have been substantially strengthened by the introduction of the DM. This is in a context where country, regional and UN agency expectations are likely to be raised through UNEP's renewed commitment to responsiveness at these levels. The DM contains elements that have the potential to clarify or communicate UNEP's offer, but this potential has not yet been realised. For example, differentiating between thematic, foundational and enabling subprogrammes and adding 13 new programmes is not reported as having made it easier to describe UNEP's portfolio strategically and the

---

[29] Insight Report, MTS Pipeline (2024-03-18)
[30] This information was provided from PPD during the process of commenting on the draft report.

typology of interventions is also not being used in this respect. In particular, it is challenging to articulate UNEP's strategic balance between normative and operational initiatives.

Finding 1B: The potential for the CAG to strengthen the strategic merit and alignment of UNEP's future work is not yet being realised, although this is part of the CAG TORs. The initial focus of the CAG, which reviews all project concepts apart from those already included in the PCPs, has been on whether co-creation has taken place. The high staff costs of a CAG meeting suggest that the primary focus should be strategic rather than monitoring compliance and that not all project concepts need to be approved by this Group (e.g. Enabling Activities, task-focused work, low value projects etc. could be approved in an alternative way, for example by the accountable Division Director).

Finding 1C: There is no evidence of UNEP having an organizational mechanism that has shown itself to be able to support phasing out or rejecting less strategic or lower-priority work, including long-standing work that may have become less strategically relevant over time[31]. The POW (2022-23) and DM/PA documentation suggests that the typology of interventions might assist in this, but interviews did not support any adoption of this typology beyond entries in the PCPs and concept tamplates. Without such a mechanism, it is highly unlikely that UNEP can steer the strategic path envisioned in the MTS.

Finding 1D: The potential for addressing gender, equity and other social issues within UNEP's work as part of the focus on people and planet has not been strengthened with the introduction of the DM and PA. UNEP's enhanced engagement with UNSDCF processes at the country level could provide opportunities in this respect, working through relevant partnerships on social aspects of environmental issues. However, it is also possible that the greater emphasis on co-creation, new roles and responsibilities and new programmatic structures could draw time and effort away from these cross-cutting concerns and ambitions.

---

[31] 'Phasing out' projects does not refer to cutting projects short or renegading on commitments and agreements. It refers to critical reflections taking place to decide on whether long-standing work streams are still strategically relevant and the highest priorities for UNEP to follow, or whether they have been superseded by other work and/or events.

4 FINDINGS: EFFECTIVENESS

4.1 Guiding Questions

69.   To what extent, and in what ways, is it likely that the i) Delivery Model and ii) Programmatic Approach will improve UNEP's ability to demonstrate improved programmatic performance and results at the POW level?

> Q B.1 What evidence is emerging that systems are being put in place to enable implementation of the Programmatic Approach across the organisation?
>
> Q B.2 To what extent are PCPs, in both their design and early implementation, showing to be an effective means to generate synergy across initiatives included within a programme and across programmes?
>
> Q B.3 What evidence is emerging that enhanced coordination across the projects within a programme and across programmes is feasible and practiced?
>
> Q B.4 What evidence is emerging that UNEP's programmatic engagement with countries and UNCTs has been/is likely to be enhanced?
>
> Q B.5 What evidence is emerging that UNEP is adapting its partnership approach to the new DM/PA in terms of its engagement with partners at global, regional and country levels?

4.2 Evaluation Assumptions

70.   Greater effectiveness of UNEP's work is understood to be reflected in improved programmatic performance at the MTS/POW level (i.e. POW Direct Outcomes and MTS Outcomes). It is also understood to be associated with the term 'shift the needle', which is taken to mean that UNEP's work should make a substantive and significant impact on the triple planetary crises and that UNEP's contribution should be both *discernible* and *attributable* to its programmatic work. As it is too early to assess the results achieved through the DM/PA, emphasis is placed on whether necessary and appropriate systems have been put in place and how well they are seen to be working to date.

71.   It was expected that greater effectiveness would require: a) developments in operational systems that support the implementation of the programme; b) developments in the design and organisation of the programme itself (e.g. PCPs); c) effective engagement with the UN Reform process (e.g. through support of the UNSDCF) and d) constructive dialogue with, and support from, partners.

72.   As the DM is intended to support the delivery of an ambitious MTS it also needs to support a strong results-focus and delivery mechanism. One would expect: a) clear dimensions of synergy across the POW as solutions to environmental issues require multi-sectoral and collaborative approaches; b) compelling causal thinking to help mobilise resources and report on UNEP's results and c) robust programmatic approaches that amplify the effects derived from multiple projects.

73.   It was assumed that greater effectiveness would require modalities and mechanisms that promote and facilitate working together in a consultative and collaborative manner (i.e. co-creatively) so that a number of key regional and country specific, as well as technical factors, can be considered at design and during implementation. These factors would include addressing UNEP's objectives and priorities, regional/country needs and potential impact as well as risk concerns and resource allocation limitations etc. The Theories of Change (TOC) embedded in the POW and the newly created PCPs were expected to be of good quality and to provide a strong framework for greater effectiveness through clearly synergistic, coordinated and results-focused designs and emerging delivery. Greater effectiveness was also assumed to be consistent with a shift in emphasis towards the 'quality of implementation' in addition to 'quality of design at approval'.

74.   The evaluation team did not, before or after the interviews, establish a clear or complete understanding of the origin of the 'programmatic approach', and with no specific policy document available, no confirmation of its consistent understanding and its full acceptance across all levels of management.

4.3   Discussion

Common and Coherent Understanding

75.   The DM introduces substantial and wide-spread institutional changes such that staff refer to having to adopt a 'new mindset' or that there needs to be a 'cultural shift'. Fundamental to such a scaled change is a common and coherent understanding of the vision and the intentions of the DM. Theoretically, this cultural shift is intended to be guided by the five institutional traits (guiding principles) shown on the front page of this report, but there is no clear description of what these ideal states would look like or any success metrics to determine whether they've been reached. They do act as inspirational labels representing the reverse of what was described as the current status during the inception of the transformation process.

76.   The need for a common understanding is recognized, but several interviewees indicated that the DM was not uniformly understood across the organization. Comments such as there being *'many UNEPs all over the place'* and *'different uptake of the process'* suggest variability in understanding and implementation. Some interviewees mentioned confusion and a slow acceptance process, with statements like *'the DM was rushed through, with not enough consultation'* although now *'early issues associated with Divisions becoming accountable have been clarified.'* To-date staff most frequently identify the following features of the DM: new point of accountabilty for project management; new divisional, regional and programmatic roles and responsibilities; change in subprogramme composition and emphasis on co-creation. Some staff think of the development of PCPs as part of the DM, others see it as part of a new 'programmatic approach' and others question the use of the term programmatic approach at all.

77.   The following suggests that a common and coherent understanding of the intended changes is being developed: staff acknowledged the benefits of taking part in the DM workshops (i.e. the main element of the 'change management process' that was implemented) as a step in developing a shared understanding; respondents have accepted the value and benefits of 'co-creation' and are moving on, increasingly, to question 'how' they best collaborate in an efficient and effective way and are looking for further guidance and shared experiences; and a large proportion of UNEP's project work has been transferred, as per the DM policy, to the management of the divisions. Although not an explicit feature of the DM, it is noted here that PCPs are being used to identify internal 'communities of practise'.

78.   While there are signs of a growing understanding of the DM, significant gaps in coherence, clarity and acceptance across the organization undermine the sense that enduring changes have yet occurred (see also para 76 on programmatic approach). Statements like *'I don't think most people really understand the vision'* and experiencing *'significant problems in putting my teams to work'* underscore these challenges. Multiple interviewees highlight that achieving cultural change within UNEP is challenging; staff are noted to be resistant to change, and they are described as comfortable with the previous status quo. The DM's intentions are recognized, but its practical implementation and communication need substantial improvement to achieve common understanding and support. Interviewees noted the continuing need for dedicated individuals and sufficient resources to lead and embed the transformation. Some interviewees highlighted UNEP's reliance on external consultants in developing the DM and the PA and felt this contributed to challenges in understanding and implementing the model/approach across different divisions and regions.

Collaboration and Co-Creation

79.   The principle of 'co-creation' is central to the DM and the term is being used to describe the most collaborative level of a joint engagement process (see fig. 3). Co-creation also appears to be the main mechanism through which responsiveness to regional and country level priorities and needs is expected to be realised.

Levels of Engagement between the regions and divisions
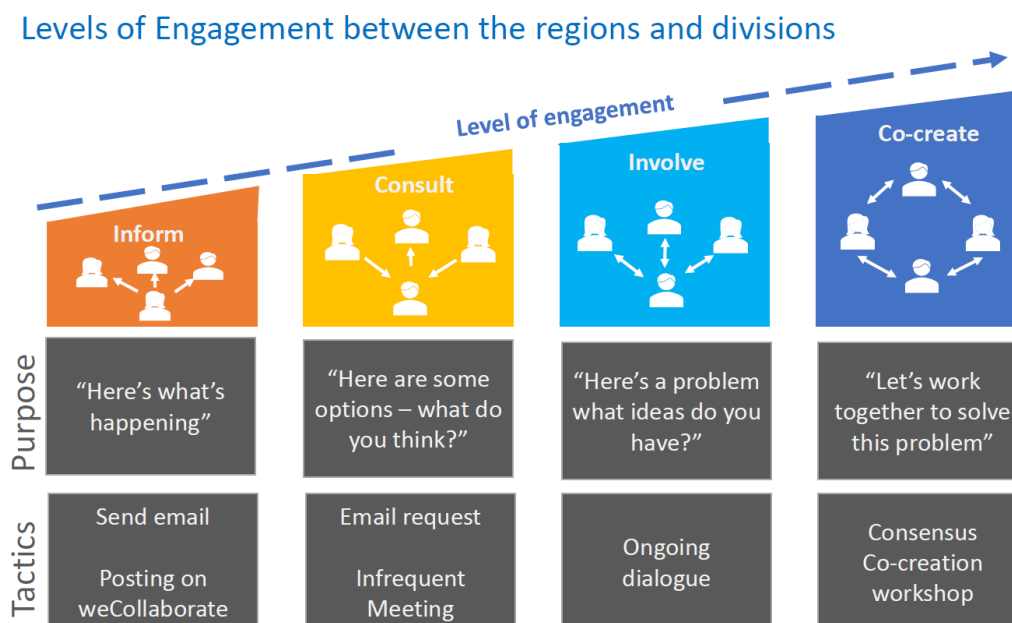
80.   While there is widespread support for the principle of co-creation and responsiveness, there is also a lack of common interpretation and widespread confusion on how co-creative ways of working can be effectively and efficiently operationalised and/or what true 'co-creation' entails. Most of the references to co-creation are at the level of individual projects rather than to the creation of a more holistic and systematic approach to working in co-creative ways. Co-creation at present is a matter of personal interpretation and is dependent on personal relationships and past shared work experiences where mutual trust has already been established. There are also instances reported where exchanges and processes are being 'rubber-stamped' as co-created, leading to tension and frustration in working relationships.

81.   At a senior level some staff suggested that co-creation may be bringing in very elaborate and complex administrative processes when much simpler strategies, such as talking and planning together, would serve as well.

82.   Positive experiences were reported:

-    co-creation is seen as a principle supported by senior leadership: *'the ED and DED made a strong push to say the ROs have to endorse the proposals in the CAG for co-creation to be there...more colleagues are contacting ROs as they develop GEF projects'*;

-    the DM has introduced this new vocabulary and carries a very clear message that co-creation and joint delivery are important in project design and implementation: *'the DM emphasises co-creation and collaboration'*;

-    key features of the DM like moving the management of Regional Office projects to Divisions have fostered more dialogue: *'transferring projects from regions to technical divisions has led to more frequent interactions between division staff and regional offices, fostering collaboration'*;

-    the CAG has facilitated greater collaboration between divisions and regions: *'collaboration has increased since the CAG was introduced. Divisions are working much more closely with the regions'*;

-    where divisions and regions have existing relationships and a track record of working together, they have adopted co-creation more easily: *'some divisions are planning on an annual basis with the region'* and *'co-creation potential depends on the region's capacity'*;

- the emphasis on co-creation does have the potential to dilute siloed work: *'co-creation is pushing people out of their silos for cross-house thinking and collaboration';*
- An example of promising efforts is a 'project incubator' model in one of the Regional Offices and successful joint project design efforts.

83.   However, the wish for co-creation is inextricably tied to other challenges:

- uptake has not yet achieved the 100% level: *'the delivery model encourages greater collaboration, but there is still some resistance. More capacity building and streamlining at the senior level are needed to ensure full buy-in';*
- the transfer of project management to technical divisions has changed the distribution of the workload, leaving less space for cross-functional collaboration: *'the shift of project implementation responsibility to divisions has raised concerns about the capacity and efficiency of divisions to handle the workload';*
- co-creation is an added demand in a highly bureaucratic and process-heavy environment: *'the complexity and weight of the processes discourage genuine co-creation and collaboration, limiting the reduction of duplicated efforts';*
- how different roles are expected to be distributed and played out in co-creative processes is unclear: *'the confusion between the DRIs for the PCPs, the subprogramme coordinator and the managers of the PCPs is huge';*
- the capacity to participate in co-creation may not be distributed in the expected or planned areas. For example some work may be core to a foundational or enabling subprogramme but also feature in a PCP and this raises challenges regarding which expertise leads and how best to coordinate work in these areas;
- access to, and control over, resources is seen as a source of power, which is not regarded as equally distributed, while effective co-creation requires a balance of power: *'the regional officers are expected to provide thought leadership and technical information, but they have no money';*
- the actual operationalisation of co-creation is not even across the House – it is hindered by tight timelines, lack of clear guidelines, institutional resistance, and dependency on personal relationships: *'co-creation processes are delayed and lack capacity, while coordination is low'; 'timing is often so tight that there's no time for co-creation'; 'there's sometimes a lack of understanding of what co-creation means'; 'we really need clearer guidelines on co-creation and its processes'.* In addition, people noted that there is a lack of clarity over what constitutes 'evidence' of co-creation and what would be efficient ways of providing that: *'we needed the operational guide... but it never came'; and*
- the alignment between UNEP's co-creation processes and external funding mechanisms, like those of the GEF, affects the ability to co-create effectively.

Enagagement with Countries and UNCTs

84.   UNEP's engagement with countries and UNCTs is reported to be improving, with reference to enhanced alignment with national priorities, greater involvement in joint programming, and increased visibility through country focal points. However, the full potential of these efforts is yet to be realised due to resource constraints, capacity limitations and ongoing challenges in fully integrating UNEP's environmental priorities into broader UN and country-level frameworks. The delivery model is still evolving, with the need for more robust implementation strategies to maximise its impact.

Partnerships

85.   UNEP's business model is centred around working in partnership with a wide range of parties, such as: government and other country and regional level stakeholders and regional or technical networks; implementing and funding partners; direct and indirect beneficiaries and/or gatekeepers and agents of change. The DM Policy suggests that work on partnerships is linked to UNEP's work being more strategic,

at larger scale and maximising results. Respondents also noted that UNEP is looking to increase 'partner-based execution,' which emphasizes more country and partner ownership. This would align with the DM's goal of ensuring that partnerships are effective 'for the delivery of results on the ground'. The evaluation team is not aware of any specific guidance on adapting UNEP's engagement with partners to the DM or guidance on how project level partnerships will be adapted to a more programmatic perspective.

86.   Delivery through UN Reform requires greater engagement in the UNCTs and contributions to the design and implementation of the UNSCDFs, which implies more cooperation with other UN agencies. However, there is confusion about how joint projects with other UN agencies fit into the DM, and, more broadly, how joint resource mobilisation should be approached at the regional level. A stronger presence in the UNCTs opens up a possibility for more varied roles for UNEP and staff report that UNEP is often seen as a preferred agency to lead environment related working groups, yet the time and costs for these roles have not yet been assessed or covered. With the shift of responsibilities for programme implementation to the divisions, who often work with global partners, staff caution that partnerships with relevant regional and country level stakeholders, which have taken years to develop, may receive less attention. There are complexities in maintaining country, regional and global partners effectively, which hampers seamless alignment and issues were noted in integrating local and regional partners into the broader UNEP strategy.

87.   In the broader UNEP context, the Partnership Policy of 2011 is currently being revised and is at an advanced consultation stage. It addresses various approaches to due diligence, comparative assessments and enhancing transparency in selecting partners. The new strategy includes a risk-based focus, with possible risks identified at an early stage and a competitive partner selection process, including calls for proposals/expressions of interest, with some exemptions identified for when such a competitive process would not be required. An important role is expected to be played by the Partnership Committee and the new partnership policy will require substantial input from programme staff. The high level of consultations and lengthy process involved in developing the partnership policy was seen by several respondents as being in stark contrast to their experience with the development and roll out of the DM Policy.

88.   Respondents described partnerships as being often project-based and dependent on existing relationships and contextual factors rather than on a coherent strategic plan. There are many examples of success, such as the Science Policy Business Forum, which engages major industries in discussions about fundamental changes in practices. The PCPs were regarded as an opportunity for UNEP to enhance the coherence and strategic underpinnings of partnerships, rather than just continuing existing ones. In practice, this is not seen as having been realized and partnerships are likely to still be designed and developed in relation to an individual project. Interviewees frequently mentioned that the PCP documents need added detail and coherence on their partnership approach. From a DM perspective, one might expect co-creation efforts and clear intentionality at a high programmatic level to lead to the identification of strategic partnerships that can be adopted at project levels.

89.   Some respondents noted that the development of partnerships usually depends on one's own past experiences and may contribute to inefficiencies and to inconsistent practices. There is no clear institutional mechanism within UNEP for partnerships and no common approach to their development. For example, there is no 'partnership office' that one can go to for options for partnership and development of a more effective approach, (beyond issues of due diligence and avoidance of risks).

90.   Some indications of a more strategic approach to partnership were noted, although this does not seem related to the introduction of the DM, namely a focus on extending funding partnerships beyond traditional sources (e.g. approaching additional EC Directorates) and a partnership to help explore working with the philanthropic sector.

Results Based Management

(The following section includes insights drawn from the review of documents carried out in the Inception Phase and summarised in Annex IV, which have been triangulated with interview responses.)

Theories of Change:

91.   The goals of the organisation are, given the environmental state of the planet, necessarily ambitious. Ideally the results of the organization would cascade from the MTS and POW to the PCPs and the projects and workplans of people. TOCs are used to guide the achievement of results through the identification of pathways of change and results chains. However, there are several concerns in terms of the TOCs and their use (with further detail provided in Annex IV) which affect the use of results-based management approaches. Some concerns that emerged during this evaluation are:

- the three **Thematic Subprogramme TOCs** show no causal pathways between the POW Direct Outcomes and the MTS Outcomes. The Thematic Subprogrammes are, therefore, better understood as portfolios;

- the **Thematic Subprogramme TOCs** do not show how the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes contribute to the Thematic Subprogrammes;

- the **Thematic Subprogramme TOCs** should articulate how the three PCPs relating to each Thematic Subprogramme are interdependent or have a cumulative effect at the Thematic Subprogramme level;

- the **TOCs of the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes** only exist at the level of the PCP and do not show results beyond the 2025 MTS level, yet they represent core areas of UNEP's work that are essential for the MTS strategic objectives to be achieved;

- the **TOCs in the PCPs** are almost all[32] without Outcome level results, referring instead to their 'components' and the POW Direct Outcomes and MTS Outcomes. The projects within the PCPs cannot, therefore, be said to have either a synergistic effect or be contributing to common programme outcomes. The PCPs effectively refer to portfolios of projects, with no cumulative or additional results' identification or articulation.

Subprogrammes, PCPs and Projects:

92.   A challenging limitation of the DM/PA is the lack of clear inclusion of the key features of a programmatic approach (and the distinction of a programme from a portfolio or project). It makes use of the term 'programme' for mechanisms that do not have programmatic features. All the necessary definitions are available in UNEP's own Results Definitions, but have not been applied in the DM: '*a programme is a group of synergistic projects contributing to a common outcome(s) and managed in a coordinated way to obtain benefits not available from managing the projects individually*'.

93.   The way in which programmes bring about upscaled effects or have an additional value is through a strong coherence in their effort, synergistic management and intergrated design and/or delivery. However, staff repeatedly questioned whether the new combination of SPs and programmes, reflected in the PCPs, has the potential to achieve the intended effects:

- the 7 SPs and 13 PCPs are seen as complex and convoluted, creating management challenges. This complexity is cited as a barrier to achieving clear synergy and coherence, with some interviewees describing the process as reinforcing silos rather than breaking them down;

- some interviewees stated that there is a perceived disconnect between the thematic pillars (climate change, pollution, and biodiversity) and the foundational subprogrammes (governance and science policy). This separation hinders the creation of a cohesive strategy that integrates all aspects of UNEP's work;

- some respondents feel that while the Subprogrammes are mapping gaps and advising on resources, the results achieved are not at the scale needed to meet the MTS' high ambitions. The lack of scaling up and replication of results diminishes the overall impact;

---

[32] The three Nature Action PCPs and the Finance and Economic Transformation PCP include an outcome level. During commenting the evaluation team was advised that, during a revision, the Adaptation and Resilience PCP incorporated outcome statements.

- the DM is seen as reinforcing thematic silos due to the vertical integration of implementation authority within Divisions. This siloed approach impedes the synergistic translation of local, national, and regional efforts into global results; and

- the processes involving the Foundational Subprogrammes and their PCPs are described as complicated and peripheral to the core work in these areas. This complexity does not facilitate the creation of the clear line of sight needed for synergy and coherence.

- the IPMR does not allow for this chain of results to be interrogated and their aggregation or consolidation at PCP or SP level, which means that higher level reporting is a manual and time intensive task.

94.   Given a) the weaknesses in the set of TOCs to represent a robust causal picture and b) the absence of programme outcomes in the PCPs, the only operational level at which UNEP can present an unbroken causal narrative (i.e. how outputs, given certain contributing conditions[33], are combined to achieve outcomes and these contribute to intermediate states and lead to impact) is that of a single project. However, UNEP has long-since struggled to maintain coherence at a *project*[34] level such that the PRC-approved project outcomes can be realised. With the apparent emphasis in the DM/PA on 'larger' projects and overall 're-grouping' of project work into 'flagship' or other 'umbrella' projects in the PCPs, this evaluation raises a concern that the results-chains between work that is funded through grants and funding agreements; projects that are approved; the programmes within which they operate; the subprogrammes to which they contribute and the POW Direct Outcomes they are expected to achieve, are not transparent nor continuous enough to support claims of *contributions*[35] by the projects that are visible in the POW to the intended POW and MTS results.

95.   The continuation of legacy projects and the lack of a robust mechanism for phasing out or retiring projects suggests that true Results Based Management (RBM) is not fully operational. A limiting factor concerns the existing legacy projects, which are included in the PCPs and which largely outnumber the new concepts therefore reflecting the existing thematic portfolio, rather than a new strategic approach. Thus, the focus on the triple planetary crisis in the new MTS has not substantially changed the project portfolio of the organization.

Programme Coordination Projects

96.   The development of the PCPs was a formal initiative led through the PPD and many staff have contributed a lot of work under considerable time pressure to develop and launch them. Their legitimacy is reflected in the fact that PCPs are incorporated in the Programme Manual and a description of the PA is included in UNEP's Results Definitions (2023). In-depth presentations of some of them have also been made to the CPR. However, the evaluation heard senior managers questioning the rationale, complexity and benefits of the PCPs.

Expected Benefits:
97.   Based on the responses from across the House, the creation of a set of programmes below the subprogramme level was intended to: enhance synergies and coherence; ensure strategic alignment towards the POW/MTS; help communicate UNEP's work; support resource allocation as well as knowledge management; support the use of RBM and generate more impact:

- ensure projects are strategically aligned to UNEP's POW and MTS;

- break down the siloes within UNEP and bring work together that belongs together;

---

[33] Contributing conditions are referred to in UNEP as 'assumptions' and 'drivers'.
[34] *A project is a time-bound intervention with a specific funding envelope that addresses a defined set of results within an identified implementation context or geographic area. The main components of the project must be interlinked/interdependent to achieve the project outcome(s).* (With the footnote: *A project must have had a corporate quality assurance review and clearance. Projects may be implemented through legal instruments such as SSFA and PCAs.)* UNEP Results Definitions, 2021.
[35] See Terminology, pg 3 of this report.

- strengthen interactions across UNEP's divisions and technical units and enhance organizational cohesion;

- enhance the synergies within and across the subprogrammes/units;

- align projects with the overall programmatic objectives of the PCPs, providing the means to enhance programmatic focus and coherence across the projects of a PCP;

- enable thinking beyond individual projects and consider overarching theories of change and programmatic goals, which could lead to more strategic and impactful programming;

- create more transparency in UNEP's work;

- act as a mechanism to support resource allocation;

- act as a communication tool to help present UNEP's work;

- support knowledge management; and

- lead to greater coherence and impact across initiatives.

98. In several interviews, asking about the expected benefits of the programmes did raise the question of how they differ from the Subprogrammes, which were also designed to bring synergy, coherence, strategic alignment and greater impact etc. and no compelling answers were received. There were also repeated suggestions that there are too many programmes and that the number should be reduced, although no 'ideal' number could be given. The evaluation team notes that if the number of 13 programmes are reduced very far, they would come closer, one would imagine, to the size and scope of the existing Subprogrammes.

Current Experiences:
99. The PCPs have helped staff to identify *'communities of practise'* within the House and to mobilise them around the programmatic themes. Efforts to coordinate around the PCPs are also being made. However, the administrative and coordination burdens have been high. The PCPs have generated the need for new roles, especially the delegated PCP DRI role, and confusion is still being experienced in operationalising those roles. In some cases, the added burden on an existing staff member is high, in addition to their pre-existing full-time position. The biannual Steering Committees involve a large number of people and this coordination cost appears high to the organisation. To date, four PCP Steering Committee meetings were reported as having been held. Coordination has included attempts to set up common reporting systems and the mapping of all indicators or projects within a PCP, in order to see how these work together.

100. Interviewees highlighted how developing the PCPs fostered better interactions across UNEP Divisions and technical units, promoting a more cohesive organizational approach. However, the engagement of Regional Offices in the development of the PCPs is reported to have been more superficial and is only now evolving to become more integrated. Effective co-creation with Regional Offices remains crucial for the success of any programmatic approach.

101. The timeframe for developing the PCPs, which are the only documents that represent the programmes, was extremely tight with some PCPs being designed in just one month. There were also many accounts of discussions regarding the allocation of existing projects to PCPs, thereby perpetuating the status quo more than applying a future-oriented strategic approach. While the new concepts can be expected to drive the future vision, the fact that the number of ongoing/legacy projects still outweigh the number of concepts belies this. Paras 46 to 49 discuss the apparent lack of a mechanism to review and potentially phase out or scale up legacy projects and any concepts that were recorded in the PCPs have a 'free pass' through the CAG. While this leans into an efficiency perspective, it also undermines the potential for PCPs to increase strategic relevance and impact.

102. There was a strong expectation that the PCPs would act as a resource mobilisation and allocation mechanism, and the experience of this has been very varied. Some initial allocations were made, but other

PCPs were then advised there would be no resources. In other cases, GSPCs have been able to use the PCP theme/focus to mobilise funds for project design processes.

103.   During their development there was considerable discussion over where projects would be housed (i.e. to which PCP a project would belong) and there are still reports of duplication and overlap. Noted cases were where there was an Environmental Governance PCP and a Governance Accountability in Biodiversity PCP. There are also mentions of the differences in focus among the PCPs – for example, Circularity in Sectors addresses circularity specifically while it is also a key aspect of Towards Zero Waste. There is also an apparent gap in the PCPs as UNEP's Disasters and Conflict work has no programmatic 'home'. The quality of PCPs is reported to have improved over time and collaboration in their design has been enhanced through co-creation, though usually on a variable and individualised basis. There is appetite, however, among staff responsible for operationalising the PCPs, to review and revise them and a strong belief that they can be made more effective.

Challenges Faced:
104.   The biggest single challenge faced by the PCPs is that the rationale for, and focus of, the PCPs and the projects they contain cannot be easily explained. In addition, they do not have programme-level results with performance indicators and, therefore, the additional costs of managing and coordinating work through PCPs cannot be offset against additional expected environmental gains.

105.   Significantly, all individual projects are mapped to the POW Direct Outcomes and MTS Outcomes and not to any intervening, programmatic level of result, which undermines any expectation of coalescing synergies or additional impacts and therefore undermines claims that 'programmes' have been created (see definition of programme on page 3 of this report). In addition, the majority of PCPs[36] are organised around components and do not have formulated outcome statements.

106.   Other challenges that were mentioned are:

-    the current PCPs were not developed from a strategic perspective but more as a reflection of the composition of ongoing work. In addition, there has been no attention to the added value that UNEP brings to the PCP topic area concerned, which are, at times, within crowded subject spaces. Moreover, there needs to be an evidence base on what works, which is mapped against the issues UNEP is investing in and what the organization is seeking to achieve. Such an evidence base could have a lot of power to inform the PCPs, which need to be improved in terms of how they foster synergy and deliver the impactful scaling up of initiatives;

-    differences between the PCPs of the three thematic areas and those of foundational and enabling programmes were highlighted, with the usefulness of the latter two more questioned: the PCPs for Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes should serve a different purpose from those that work together in delivering a Thematic Subprogramme and the justification and need for a single PCP for a single Subprogramme was challenged;

-    there are strong indications that the PCPs themselves are acting as the 'umbrellas' that UNEP has tried to move away from and that they may, in an effort to show more scale (interpreted as larger budgets) contain global projects that are also 'umbrellas' in their own rights.; *'We are developing very large global flagships across UNEP, such as plastics...A global programme can be tailored to each region, bringing economies of scale. Supposedly, there will be reduced duplication in the future.';*

-    the size of the PCPs varies greatly, as does the number of projects within them, (ranging from 14 to 144); they often appear too broad and lack clear strategic direction and coordination. However, the overall quality is thought to have improved over time, with the latter PCPs being of better quality compared to the ones developed earlier;

---

[36] The exceptions are the PCPs under Nature Action and that of Finance and Economic Transformations, which do have programme outcome statements.

- while PCPs' conceptual framework aligns with UNEP's strategic goals, practical coordination, clarity and implementation challenges limit their effectiveness. There was a sentiment that Subprogrammes might be sufficient for some audiences, suggesting that the necessity and quality of PCPs might vary depending on the specific programmatic context. As a regional colleague noted: *'subprogrammes are enough for [my] audiences.'*;

- one of the reasons staff all got on board with the PCP's is that they understood that it would be associated with the new funding process and that this would be one of the mechanisms through which the organization would allocate funding, but this has not, so far, proved to be the case in practice. The lack of funding allocated, so far, for the implementation of the PCPs through the environment fund and thematic funds has led to some staff worrying that this is a reflection of the SMT not yet sufficiently trusting in the PCP teams;

- the PCP structure is not reflected in UNEP's monitoring system and, from an evaluation perspective, are most appropriately assessed under the Subprogrammes;

- PCPs lack strong cross-cutting elements such as gender mainstreaming, engagement with ROs, and alignment with the UNSDCF. These missing elements are crucial for the quality and effectiveness of PCPs in addressing comprehensive programme goals.

107.   The PCPs have not really changed UNEP's focus on the design phase of programming yet. Implementing PCPs has been limited by inadequate systems, metrics and inconsistent coordination. Due to these systemic challenges, the intended synergistic effect still needs to be fully realized. Although the PCPs are conceptually aligned with UNEP's goals, their practical impact on day-to-day operations and strategic relevance varies across divisions and offices. PCPs are seen as in an infant stage, needing more development over time. *'Give people an opportunity to redesign them—don't make it a top-down process.'* Several respondents would like the opportunity to reframe the PCPs, given their early experience in working with, and managing, them and believe that a more collaborative process is possible and could improve their quality. More support is also deemed necessary for the PCP implementation phase, which is overall viewed as more risk prone.

Quality of Implementation

108.   Stronger effectiveness relies as much on implementation, which has the scope for continuous adaptive management, as it does on quality of concept or project design, which is the main focus at the approval stages of the Project Management Cycle. Several factors can still intervene and 'rescue' a poor design (assuming it is strategically relevant) from poor performance. However, few of the respondents were optimistic that UNEP can be seen to be moving towards enhanced support to the implementation process of projects, despite the clarification of responsibility for project delivery being at the divisional level.

109.   Respondents overwhelmingly identified the primary focus of the DM to be on approval processes, especially the recent approval of PCPs and the current focus on the concept approval process. Several interviewees noted that once a project is approved, there is minimal monitoring and/or compliance checks, beyond tracking whether regular reports are uploaded in IPMR. However, the approval process is lengthy and cumbersome, with multiple layers of delegation and oversight that create bottlenecks and logjams. UNEP is described as being devoted to strategizing and design, which leaves less time for focus on implementation. Others described UNEP as being skilled at articulating high-level ideas but less effective in implementing its plans.

110.   In discussions of the new roles and responsibilities associated with the DM, the role of PPD was raised. The DM Policy describes the overall role of PPD as being: *the process owner for many activities related to programmatic coordination, including strategic planning, programmatic coordination, and monitoring and reporting. The PPD Director, accordingly, plays a role in ensuring that these functions maximize the effectiveness of both thematic and geographical coordination.* PPD has been identified as the entity within UNEP that needs to provide more support to the implementation of the PCPs, in addition to their support in the design phase. Respondents noted that the role of PPD has evolved during the development and roll out of the DM with a strong emphasis on monitoring compliance with co-creation

rather than on service delivery and strategic programming. The rationale behind PPD's apparently strong role in resource allocation was questioned. It is noted that the composition of PPD is also changing with the GEF and GCF Units now being moved there and the GSPCs having been moved out of PPD to the Technical Divisions. The role of PPD, as outlined in the DM Policy, may benefit from review.

4.4 Findings Statements on Effectiveness

<u>Finding 2A:</u> The introduction of the DM and the PA has required a new mindset among staff and a 'cultural shift'. While staff are taking up new roles in line with the DM, the shift is most clearly recognized in the transfer of project management to the Divisions and the adoption of the co-creation of projects between divisional and regional staff. Significant gaps in shared understanding are evident, especially on: a) when, if and how elements of project work can be managed by Regional Offices (e.g. implementing GEF projects; sub-allotments for components or activities; what to do with residual funds after sub-allotment etc) and b) how 'co-creation' can be operationalised, what co-created pieces of work can look like and how the benefits of co-creation can be identified and tracked.

<u>Finding 2B:</u> The lack of causal relations linking project-level outcomes, through programme-level results in the PCPs, to the MTS strategic objectives, and the absence of distinct intermediate programme-level results, limits both the potential for the objectives to be met and the capacity for UNEP to effectively report on its performance from a results perspective. Given the global and systemic nature of many of UNEP's intended results clearly articulated intentions and strong causal narratives are necessary to associate UNEP's work with observed changes.

<u>Finding 2C:</u> The two 'foundational' subprogrammes are aptly named as they form a central basis for UNEP to deliver on its mandate and fulfil its mission: all of UNEP's work should be founded in scientific knowledge and based on current global environmental data; UNEP aims to embed change within normative and governance structures and systems. They represent enduring areas of UNEP's work, while one can expect the focus of the thematic subprogrammes to evolve depending on the global environmental priorities being experienced. However, the foundational subprogrammes are not fully articulated and lack TOCs that show a) their stand-alone progression and b) their cross-cutting effects. Similarly, the two 'enabling' subprogrammes, hold the greatest potential for transformative change and the intended causal mechanisms should be represented in TOCs at the subprogramme level.

<u>Finding 2D:</u> The terms 'project', 'portfolio' and 'programme' have specific and commonly agreed meanings. in RB). However, UNEP is using the term 'programme' for work that is constructed as a 'portfolio', limiting the use of RBM. It is also pushing the boundaries on the meaning of 'project' by nesting funded work within different constructs without being transparent about the relationships between agreed results frameworks and the contributions being made between them:

- the PCPs are supposed to represent 'programmes' but currently most[37] of them do not contribute to shared results across the projects concerned. The enhancement of synergy through the PCPs is questioned and the development of the PCPs was done in a short timeframe and with limited consultation. They contain duplications and some overlap with each other. The PCPs are, in their current form, not seen as having the potential to enhance the achievement of results. Cumbersome administrative processes have added to a lack of communication and coordination across projects of a PCP.
- within the programmes, large/high-value projects are being formed that are themselves also portfolios and do not appear to have the programmatic features that will amplify the intended effects. Additionally, many projects are composed of multiple grants and challenge the definition of a 'project' (specifically, the results frameworks in grants are often not contributing to the results of the PRC-approved project to which they are expected to contribute). Where grants or projects are 'nested' within larger projects the causal links between the project and the POW Direct Outcomes

---

[37] The PCPs under Nature Action and that of Finance and Economic Transformations, do have programme outcome statements.

are too convoluted for a credible association between the project work and evidence supporting results at that higher level. This increasingly nested approach will make monitoring, reporting and evaluating organisational performance on aggregated results extremely complex.

- the introducton of the PA does not seem to have benefited the work of the foundational and enabling subprogrammes in terms of their potential for receiving funding, increasing effective coordination or reporting on results. In each of these subprogrammes, the scope of the single PCP is the same as that of the respective Subprogramme itself. Yet these Subprogrammes contain work that supports or delivers projects under the Thematic Subprogrammes as well as work that cuts across all subprogrammes and, in some cases, work supporting institutional capacity and development. While there is a potential benefit in having a 'coordinating project' that can receive funds for programmatic development, coordination and knowledge sharing, more discussion is needed on what should constitute the 'programme' in these cases.
- there is also a fundamental challenge between formulating a consistent approach at country level and fitting responsive work within PCPs' individual scopes and meeting their respective requirement for alignment and clearance. (i.e. there is no mechanism to translate country/regional priorities and needs into programming).

Finding 2E: The biggest single challenge faced by the PCPs is that the rationale for, and focus of, the PCPs and the projects they contain cannot be easily explained. In addition, they do not have programme-level results with performance indicators and, therefore, the additional costs of managing and coordinating work through PCPs cannot be offset against additional expected environmental gains. During the document review of the evaluation inception phase, it was noted that the number and breadth of PCPs are at a similar level to that of UNEP's Branches and Units structure. The question arises of why the set of PCPs are not more closely aligned to, or better reflect and represent, the set of Branches and Units, in keeping with the general wisdom that 'form' should follow 'function'.

Finding 2F: Co-creation is the central mechanism by which regional and country priorities and needs are expected to be fed into decision-making processes and the design of UNEP's work. People are supportive of co-creation and make individualised efforts to introduce co-creative practices. However, the effort is focused largely at a project level and at the point of project design rather than in a holistic way across the project cycle and within the context of annual, institutional (i.e. divisions, regions, PCPs etc) planning. There is a lack of guidance to support the common understanding of how 'co-creation' approaches are expected to be operationalised.

Finding 2G: UNEP's business model is founded on partnerships and this is how a relatively small agency is expected to generate global results (i.e. UNEP invests technical expertise and effort heavily into the early stages of new initiatives, working in partnership with other parties such that they can take on the future leadership of the work, Annex IX). However, the DM has a strong internal UNEP focus and does not yet address the integration of partnership thinking into the new approach, including: messaging the institutional changes externally; acknowledging whether/how partnership modalities may change; confirming roles with partners; guiding any partnership modalities that are likely to need adjustment etc). In addition, UNEP's approach to partnerships that support country level interventions should be differentiated from approaches at global/regional level to ensure that centralized processes reflect sub-global relevance.

Finding 2H: At present the programmatic mechanisms introduced to support the DM are heavily focused on development (of PCPs) and design (of projects). This has led to an increased concentration on 'quality at approval' and work has not been seen to strengthen the 'quality of implementation', which, along with monitoring and adaptive management, is essential for a strong results focus.

5   FINDINGS: EFFICIENCY

5.1   Guiding Questions

111.   To what extent and in what ways is it likely that the i) Delivery Model and ii) Programmatic Approach will improve UNEP's ability to achieve greater results with the same level of resources?

> Q C.1 What evidence is emerging that UNEP's programmatic efficiency has been enhanced through adoption of the new DM/PA?
>
> Q C.2 What evidence is emerging that human resources have been structured and capacitated in line with the new DM/PA?
>
> Q C.3 What evidence is emerging that resource mobilization and fund allocation has been adapted to the new DM/PA?
>
> Q C.4 What evidence is emerging that other enabling systems have been implemented for the operationalization of the new DM/PA?

5.2   Evaluation Assumptions

112.   As a backdrop to increased efficiency, it was expected that there would be shared recognition that clearer accountability, clarification of roles and greater collaboration would make a valued contribution to greater efficiency.

113.   It was assumed that greater collaboration between divisional and regional offices, with the clear assignment of accountability at the Division Director level, as well as greater collaboration within and across Divisions and Subprogrammes, would support greater efficiency by clarifying boundaries and expectations and reducing the duplication of effort or substantive work. It was also assumed that internal processes would, as part of the DM, be optimized and streamlined, reducing bottlenecks and facilitating faster project design, approval and implementation timelines. Changes in roles and responsibilities were assumed to be accompanied by a plan to address any capacity gaps or needs due to the changes. It was assumed that the DM would, through greater collaboration, lead to more shared resource mobilization efforts and influence the allocation and utilization of resources across projects and programmes towards greater efficiency, including tracking savings realized (e.g. Thematic Funds).

5.3   Discussion

Accountability

114.   One of the central features of the DM is the creation of a clear 'line of sight' between leadership and the delivery of results on the ground. One would expect this to improve accountability to external parties and efficiency in internal communications and processes. Achieving this shift involved: a) clearly identifying where accountability lies and b) aligning management structures to be consistent with that accountability structure because it is not realistic to be held accountable for the use of resources that are not under the management of the accountable person.

115.   Under the DM, Technical Division Directors are directly accountable *'for the delivery of project results that fall within their division's expertise and mandate'* (DM Policy) and Regional Directors are accountable for '*representing the whole of UNEP in the regions and are the principal interlocutor with regional platforms and national governments and lead all regional and country dialogue'* (DM Policy). Some respondents believe that the clear assignment of accountability has helped streamline processes by making responsibilities more explicit and reducing ambiguity. *'Clear accountability of Division Director has made things more efficient. Yes, I think it has helped improve, improve accountability. Because it's just clear now where it sits versus what we had before, you know it sits with the Division Directors.'*

116. However, other respondents noted that: having project implementation managed by Divisions rather than Regional Offices has created challenges in communication and support, reducing overall efficiency; assigning implementation to Technical Divisions is seen as having created an imbalance between divisional and regional roles and that the complexity of new roles and responsibilities has made them less well suited to the needs of project funding, design, implementation and reporting.

117. There is also considerable resistance, both among divisional and regional staff, to the idea that the lines of accountability can be extrapolated to say that Technical Division staff have the technical expertise and Regional Office staff have the most extensive political and/or geographic knowledge. Among staff who were already holding posts before the DM was introduced, many in regional roles relied on their extensive technical expertise and many divisional staff had extensive experience and knowledge of specific countries, including relevant language skills.

118. Key to operationalising the new designations of accountability has been the transfer of the management of ongoing projects from the Regional Offices to the Technical Divisions. The messaging around how this would be operationalised is reported to have been inconsistent and has contributed to a great deal of confusion and varied outcomes. The initial guidance was that the management of all regionally-managed projects should be moved to the appropriate Technical Division by January 2024; insufficient clarification was received during the DM workshops and, since then, various practices have been adopted depending on the individual project circumstances. While the option of sub-allocation of project components by Divisions for implementation by Regional Offices has addressed some of the issue, staff are seeking more detailed guidance on the official standpoint.

Roles and Responsibilities

119. Along with a shared vision, there needs to be a common understanding of new roles and responsibilities and they need to play out effectively and efficiently. The signs that new roles and responsibilities are being adopted are: a) some altered and/or new roles have been spelt out within the DM and these have been adopted across the House and b) staff are raising questions about their new roles, which indicates they have started playing them.

120. However, it is evident from this evaluation that the extent to which UNEP requires both more human resources and different responsibilities and skill sets to implement the DM/PA, have not yet been fully assessed. In that regard, any studies should a) explore what staff are needed in both ROs and Divisions to handle the increased responsibilities, particularly in project implementation, political coordination, and support roles and b) consider a functional review to redefine and clarify roles across the organization, reducing overlap and ensuring that each staff member understands their duties. Following such studies a plan for a targeted training programs to build the necessary skills for co-creation, systemic thinking, and strategic planning under the DM/PA may be developed. This would include plans for strengthening change management processes to help staff adapt to their new roles and responsibilities.

121. Emerging challenges are that:

- some roles have not been described in the DM policy, namely that of the UNCT FP and the Regional Development Coordinator. A finding from this evaluation is that the Regional Development Coordinator role is played by experienced staff. Importantly, they consolidate country knowledge into a regional perspective and act as advisers to others playing UNCT Focal Point roles. In some cases they also hold institutional knowledge gained over time, which is valuable in times of substantive institutional change.

- the implications of re-locating project management back to divisions and the impact that has on the complement of skills in the ROs have not been fully addressed;

- duplications in effort are emerging as people try to work in the new roles (e.g. GSPC and PCP DRIs; those responsible for PCPs and those managing PCPs);

- the recent movement of GSPCs positions from PPD into Divisions has implications that are as yet unclear but may relate to, among other things: a) the way in which daily working practices support the development of synergies within and between SPs and b) conflict in resource allocation processes if or when Division and SP interests are in competition with each other;

- the movement of GSPCs into Divisions raises questions about the management mechanism by which PPD will engage with programme coordination and what role PPD can be expected to play in that respect (DM Policy, PPD Director Roles and Responsibilities, pg 10).

- more broadly, interviewees expressed concern over conflicts between project design roles, responsibilities and processes and project approval roles, responsibilities and processes. The misalignment causes processes to be too long to be effective (e.g. lengthy work has to be repeated; funding opportunities are lost etc.) and is particularly problematic for GEF funded work (i.e. GEF work is country driven and often of an enabling nature but must go through all the same approval processes).

- it was pointed out that when authority is being delegated along a chain, the delegation actually has to happen, otherwise an ineffective devolved model can lead to too many senior staff members being engaged in the same process or efforts being duplicated;

- while some roles may appear clear on paper they may be poorly understood or implemented in practice due to insufficient resources, capacity and guidelines.

122.   Some staff see the DM as an administrative burden rather than an added value to their work. There is mention of efforts to redefine roles and responsibilities, but scepticism remains about the DM promoting greater collaboration. Comments like *'DM doesn't seem to promote the best approach to achieve greater collaboration'* reflect this sentiment.

123.   Overall, the lack of a comprehensive/accompanying HR strategy to guide the transition process has led to inconsistencies and inefficiencies. Overlapping roles and a lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities were common concerns: *'having Divisions lead in project implementation can enhance efficiency but requires a cultural shift in how regional staff view their roles.'*

Regional/Divisional Office Staff:
124.   Positive aspects of this change include: provision for Environmental Specialists being placed in some Resident Coordinators' Offices; work on the creation of job families[38] and freeing up time for regional office staff to engage more at the country level and in liaison-oriented activities.

125.   The fact that divisional staff can be located in regional offices or elsewhere has been clearly heard and adopted. However, there are some tensions around the fact that a divisional staff member located in a Regional Office is likely to be seen more as a member of the divisional team than the Regional Office, but may also be asked to speak on behalf of the Regional Office, which they are not necessarily equipped nor mandated to do. At the same time, some regional staff also appreciate being more integrated into the Technical Divisions, through dialogue during the transfer and subsequent co-creation efforts, and see a benefit in being able to draw more easily on technically specialised knowledge of a team of colleagues. Concerns were expressed relating to Regional Office staff' technical capacity to engage with UN country teams and Resident Coordinators and the need for more systematic training for UNEP project managers in this respect.

126.   The operationalisation of the DM, and specifically the transfer of project management responsibilities from regional to division staff, has been a disruptive process. While staff are making efforts to adjust (and in some instances see positive advantages), significant challenges and gaps remain, particularly regarding: clear role definitions; guidance on specific project implementation scenarios and the possibilities for training and career progression. Some staff note that career progression has always faced

---

[38] Currently the majority of posts are described as being in the 'programme management' category and this does not allow for sufficient find-tuning of the types of skill sets that UNEP seeks to recruit.

limitations within Regional Offices. In contrast, others see the introduction of the DM as putting a significant block in their career path with UNEP. Some regions have experienced staff reductions, and the transition has sometimes led to the loss of experienced regional staff without adequate replacements, especially for posts funded through the Regular Budget, which are, at the time of writing this report, frozen.

127.   Another way in which the stability of Regional Offices has been affected by the DM is in the changes in staffing patterns. There is a backdrop whereby some Regional Subprogramme Coordinator positions remain unfilled because of the freeze on Regular Budget recruitments and yet these staff are expected to take up some of the new liaison and intelligence gathering roles, such as being UNCT Focal Points. In other cases, having consultants previously working on projects from Regional Offices extended the range of technical skills available at a regional level, simultaneously expanding the scope of a Regional Offices' response and advisory capacity. With the introduction of the DM, Regional Office staff reported having to ask Technical Divisions more often for technical inputs to regionally held meetings or country requests.

128.   Another area of concern that arose is the recruitment, management and location of consultants to carry out work at a country or regional level. These processes are now managed by divisional staff who might have different understandings of the local employment context and expectations (e.g. rates of pay) and of the significance of consultants not being placed physically in a regional office (i.e. there are benefits to having consultants located physically in a Regional Office rather than working remotely, specifically them being in the same timezone, likely to be recruited with relevant language skills and contributing to the technical capacity of the Regional Office they are based in).

129.   Initiatives such as placing UNEP colleagues within the UNRC teams to facilitate the type of work required for the DM/PA are seen as potentially very beneficial and a significant learning experience for UNEP, indicating steps towards cultural transformation.

GSPC, PCP DRIs and Heads of Branch/Unit:
130.   Up until the end of the 2018-21 MTS, UNEP operated with a matrix approach with 'vertical' Technical Divisions delivering project work and 'horizontal' Subprogrammes providing thematic perspectives that run across Divisions (i.e. a matrix of 4 Technical Divisions and 6 Subprogrammes). With the introduction of the DM, additional complexities have been introduced as: a) each Division needs a differentiated plan to work with each of five operational Regional Offices and b) the Subprogrammes have been split into two groups (thematic and cross-cutting). Thus, the matrix is comprising 4 Technical Divisions co-creating their offer with 4 regions and differentiating between 3 thematic subprogrammes and 4 cross-cutting foundational and enabling areas of work. Further, 13 programmes have been created under the PA, reflected in the PCPs. This level of complexity faces several major dangers, including: a) the danger of duplicated or contradictory effort as the matrix can be too diverse and dynamic to oversee; b) that the focus of effort becomes trapped in issues of alignment (i.e. ticking checklists) rather than results, as the causal pathways are either unclear/not identified or too complex to properly articulate; and c) administrative inefficiency as coordinating and recording what is happening is, in itself, time consuming.

131.   Reflecting this new structure, the DM presents a new operational context for the existing roles of GSPCs and RSPCs, as well as new roles (PCP DRIs) and the potential for substantial confusion between the roles has been identified, some of which has already started to emerge. The biggest risk is that of duplication of effort where the boundaries between roles is not clear, especially that of the GSPC, the PCP DRIs (Division Directors delegated to Heads of Branch) and the managers of the PCPs (Heads of Unit). At the moment interpretations of the new roles are dominated by interpersonal arrangements rather than the systematic application of guidance.

132.   At the beginning of this evaluation, the evaluation team was advised that a decision had been taken to move the position of the GSPCs from PPD back into the Technical Divisions. At the end of this evaluation process it appears that the decision is still under consideration. The role for the GSPC set out in the DM Policy (pg 9/10) comprises: portfolio coordination, thought leadership, strategic planning, reporting and analyzing results, resource allocation and mobilization and innovative approaches. This is not significantly different from the expectations of the role in 2016 (see TOC in Annex IV) and the evaluation team has

drawn on the 2017 Subprogramme Coordination Function Review to highlight some of the insights gained then:

- the institutional location of the GSPC role should support the purpose of the role and the results the role contributes to (i.e. greater strategic relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of UNEP's work at the POW level). This is expected to be achieved through a team effort of thought leadership, communication and decision-making to generate greater programmatic coordination, integration and synergy;
- although each GSPC serves a specific subprogramme, the frame of reference for the combined efforts of the team of GSPCs is the performance of the Programme of Work. The GSPC role carries the responsibility for communication with the Member States on the performance of, and reporting on, the POW;
- given the cross-cutting nature of the role one of its appreciated, but less visible, attributes is that of being a 'neutral broker' when there are competing interests and priorities;
- some of the issues that need to be addressed if the GSPC role reverts to a divisional home are: a) the accountability of the 'lead' Division Director will be for work that is not under their management authority; b) conflicts of interest in terms of the use of GSPC time and in decision-making may arise and will need a resolution mechanism that puts the POW results first; c) the identity of a 'team' of GSPCs should be protected and strengthened for the optimisation of results; d) there is not always a direct match between a Subprogramme and a single Technical Division (e.g. Digital Transformation[39]) and e) the presence of programme (i.e. PCP) roles within the Division combined with a GSPC role has the potential to cause duplication of effort and challenges in terms of authority and responsibility, especially where there is a single PCP within an SP, which is also mapped onto a single Division (i.e. both Foundational Subprogrammes)

133. During the data collection for this evaluation, confirmation was received that the role of the GSPC is recognised as having value in bringing different parts of design, resource mobilisation and allocation and reporting processes together (across SPs, PCPs and projects), which is seen to bring efficiency gains in terms of streamlining and coordinating processes. *'The GSPC coordinated the exercise to combine all the different parts of the process into a common narrative to do the reporting. It's another evidence that this is being done and that helps to streamline the process.'*

134. The role of PCP DRI is assigned based on the delegation of authority from the Division Director and may include both Heads of Branch and Heads of Unit. Some concern was expressed that, if the authority to make, and act on, decisions about work under the PCP is not fully devolved, there can be unnecessary duplication of effort between comparatively senior staff members (i.e. circular decision-making processes). For example, in the thematic pillars where there are 3 PCPs for each pillar, the Division Director is the PCP DRI and may delegate this authority to the Head of Branch, but it is likely that the Head of Unit will play a substantive management role in implementing the PCP.

135. To date four PCP Steering Committee meetings are reported to have been held and it is noted that these involve a large number of staff, who are difficult to assemble, and that the meetings have different formats and content depending on the interpretation of the GSPC leading the meeting. While some meetings have embraced their function as fostering collaboration and synergistic thinking, others have adopted more of a 'project management' tone, which is seen as less appropriate by the participants.

Administration and Finance:
136. One development which may or may not have been intended or identified during the development of the DM is the increased centralisation of finance and project administration work in UNEP Headquarters. This is a consequence of project management moving into the Technical Divisions and becoming part of the workload of divisional finance and administration teams. Respondents reflected a great deal of

---

[39] While the Thematic Subprogrammes may appear more closely matched to a Division (e.g. Nature Action appear to closely match the work of the Ecosystem Division) this may be misleading. For example, work in Nature and Climate Action are heavily dependent on projects managed by the Industry and Economy Division.

frustration over the slow speed of processes and see them as a major obstacle in the way of both resource mobilisation and project implementation: *'we are getting increasingly bureaucratic, which is just grinding the whole system to a halt'* and *'there is no proper administrative framework providing the guidance that says for every project, you have to do a, b and c.'* While the backdrop was already one of some challenges, interviewees who had experienced a move in their administrative and finance work to a more centralised approach, expressed concerns over increased inefficiency as a direct result of the DM. Several interviewees raised concerns about the impact on increasingly bureaucratic processes and how it reflects on UNEP's performance compared to other agencies: *'efficiency is hindered by additional layers of processes introduced by the new delivery model, making UNEP slower than other agencies.'* Several interviewees raised concerns about the impact on increasingly bureaucratic processes and how it reflects on UNEP's performance compared to other agencies.

137.   Apart from general views on the capacity of the HQ service centres to fulfil these roles as efficiently as service providers in some regional offices, there are more substantive concerns about concentrating service providers in one time zone to serve all geographic areas, as well as concerns on the ability of UNEP to operate in all languages. An absence of clear administrative guidelines was noted and said to lead to ad hoc processes, which undermines the assumption of optimization and streamlining brought about by the DM.

138.   The staffing of new structures and resolving HR issues has been slow, and in some cases, the changes have led to a decrease in efficiency, particularly in administrative and finance roles. Also, the creation of new positions has not always matched the specific needs of the regions, and there is a noted lack of coordination mechanisms to support the DM/PA effectively.

Streamlining Processes

139.   The DM introduces some specific new processes such as co-creation and PCP/concept approvals, and has a more generalised effect on processes through the creation of new roles and responsibilities. While there are indications of the potential for improved division of labour and structured processes for specific projects through the new divisional and regional roles, these are currently overshadowed by substantial evidence of increased bureaucracy, inefficiencies, and practical challenges in project design and implementation.

140.   On a positive note, there are instances where the DM has played a pivotal role in enhancing UNEP's responsiveness to country priorities, bringing both efficiency and strategic relevance gains. By establishing a clear division of labour between Regional Offices and Divisions, it has created more clarity and reduced overlaps in some responsibilities. This has the potential, which has not yet been fully realised, to facilitate more efficient project design and approval timelines.

141.   It was also noted that the new processes are now more structured, with some Divisions consulting with some regions to gather intelligence and set priorities. It is noted, however, that this consultation and collaboration is highly individualised, influenced by working relationships having been built over time and past experience of collaborative work.

Project Design and Approval:
142.   There are many examples that relate to the processes involved in project design and approval. While the principle of co-creation is widely supported, it is recognised that greater consultation comes with a time cost: *'we are spending a huge amount of time on the consultation and the coordination, particularly with the regional offices...transaction cost is too much for that.'*

143.   At the moment there is a great deal of uncertainty around how to operationalise co-creation of project concepts and initiatives (see above) and this is contributing to delayed processes. Developing the PCPs and developing projects under the new programmes was also noted to have taken considerable amounts of time: *'efficiency went down drastically after introducing this program approach'* as *'the process of approving the developing project under the programme is taking a long time.'* In addition, considerable

time was spent trying to find an appropriate 'home' for some proposals among the PCPs or making substantial revisions for them to 'fit'.

Concept Approval Process:
144.   A great deal of feedback was received on aspects of efficiency regarding the concept approval process:

- the CAG process could be made more efficient if the discussion were more focused and strategic rather than comprehensive (e.g. discussion to focus on the issues where there is disagreement amongst the CAG members rather than going to each and every item of the concepts concerned). Some interviewees mentioned that the Secretariat's role has become more about procedural compliance than supporting strategic outcomes, leading to frustration among staff and project managers. The focus of the CAG has implications for who is in its membership; it is more appropriate for senior management to be central to the CAG membership if strategic issues are the primary focus, but less so if it is about compliance;

- the process is experienced as slowing down approval processes without adding a substantive benefit, such as providing strategic or synergistic perspectives. In addition, the process is perceived to have become a major hurdle in the project design process, adding time that disadvantages UNEP over other agencies in their resource mobilization;

- from the perspective of concept proponents, the concept approval processes have become very heavy (set timelines, documentation, checklist approach, going back again over detail etc.), which is a constraint, especially for externally funded projects which now have to go through additional hoops, including a process of co-creation and which take time and resources;

- staff noted that the process of the CAG review of concepts can still occur after resources have already been mobilized from donors, in particular for GEF projects, which makes it extremely difficult to critically review the concept or proposal. That means that once a concept is considered by the CAG it is seen as too late to adjust anything as this could jeopardize the funding that is in place already. As a concept approval process was introduced because the Project Review Committee was experiencing the same problem, and the CAG was seen as the solution, it is a concern that funding discussions and UNEP's internal review/approval systems are not yet synchronised;

- another constraint identified concerns the fact that the CAG does not differentiate between different projects (e.g. by funding source; funding level or results ambition) and requires the same processes in terms of co-creation and CAG approval for all new concepts, which poses issues for GEF and GCF projects which driven by country preferences, requests and approvals. The CAG requires the project to be driven by the organizational and regional strategic direction, while this may not be in line with country level perspectives and requirements.

- the CAG review as it stands is seen as detrimental with good concepts being lost and staff getting frustrated. They see a need for the CAG to change, making use of learnings obtained so far.

145.   It is noted that both existing projects that have been included under a PCP, and concepts that have been included in the PCP document as part of the pipeline, are not subject to review and approval by the CAG. This is an efficiency gain, although it may have a negative implications for strategic relevance and effectiveness.

Resource Mobilisation, Allocation and Disbursement

146.   Discussions on resources concentrate around either: a) UNEP's core resources (i.e. Regular Budget, Environmental Fund, Softly-Earmarked Funds and the new Thematic Funds), where the concerns are largely around resource allocation and disbursement or b) extra-budgetary resources (i.e. bilateral donors, regional funding partners etc), where the concerns are more often focused on resource mobilisation.

Resource Mobilization:

147.   It was widely noted that UNEP has a high dependence on extra-budgetary resources and that the potential to mobilise resources is both crucial and varied across areas of work (its easier to secure funds for operational than normative work) and regions (some regions have more potential funding sources than others). Previously, extra-budgetary resources have been raised from regional funding partners to fund projects to be implemented through Regional Offices and funds raised by divisional staff would support projects managed by those Divisions. Increasing co-creation at the divisional and regional levels suggests a change in roles played in extra-budgetary resource mobilization and a greater sharing of those responsibilities. However, there is no evidence of any guidance given on how the resource mobilization roles are expected to be operationalised within a co-creation context and a lack of clarity remains. While staff express commitments to work together in resource mobilization, the modalities to do so remain unclear. This is linked to the wider issue that guidance on the implementation of the DM and PA has been lacking, beyond the initial workshops.

148.   For example, regional officers may be the main, existing UNEP representative in a funding relationship and there may be a reluctance, both on the part of the UNEP staff member and staff within the funding partner, to move the relationship to other, unknown parties. There is also a concern that the main 'face' of UNEP in a funding relationship may be held accountable, by the funding partner, for work that is no longer under their management, thereby opening staff up to professional reputational risks. Alternatively, established funding relationships may operate in a context (e.g. time frames or sequenced processes) that do not fit easily with the demands involved in greater collaboration and/or may not be responsive to regional and country priorities. For example, the GEF funding modality is fundamentally country-driven and UNEP has little sway over the allocation of funds to particular areas of work, although it can encourage countries to use the resources allocated to them for projects that are aligned to both UNEP and country priorities.

149.   The transition has proved difficult for many, with ongoing challenges in aligning financial resources with the new model. Several interviewees also noted that Divisions are beginning to learn from the experiences of Regional Offices in resource mobilization, suggesting an evolving process towards mutual understanding and better collaboration.

150.   On a positive note, one Regional Office has taken the initiative to generate a systematic analysis and dashboard on allocation to identify gaps, suggesting support towards more strategic and efficient resource allocation. Resource mobilization, however, was reported to remain largely centralized, with Divisions taking primary control and Regional Offices often left out of decision-making and resource allocation processes. This indicates that resource mobilization issues are not yet fully adapted to a co-creation modality.

Resource Allocation:

151.   As mentioned above, the potential to secure extra-budgetary resources varies according to types of work and programmatic areas as well as regional locations. There is also a challenge associated with reconciling donor priorities with UNEP's programmatic approaches. While there are reports of divisions consulting more with regions to align projects with country priorities, these difficulties in raising funds for specific areas of UNEP's programme and/or geographic regions, necessarily affect decisions around the allocation of other resources, i.e. those over which UNEP has some discretionary influence.

152.   The main challenge posed by the introduction of the DM has been to the stability of the funding model of Regional Offices. In regions where the guidance to move projects to divisional management was observed wholesale, some finance officers are now facing questions on whether all their overheads can be covered. Some of this is due to the fact that Project Support Costs accrue to the operational centres where they are expended and, as the value of disbursed funds decreases in the regions, this contribution to

overheads also reduces. In response, Regional Management Projects to support two main outcomes[40] have been developed as corporate projects and some surge funding[41] has been issued.

153.   Project funds not only provide financial resources to Regional Offices but also create the means to engage with key groups. As one regional officer described, it is difficult for them to provide the specific regional intelligence to a Division on a sector when they have no reason to be engaging in the networks and fora where sectoral players meet. The issues facing Sub-Regional Offices should also not be overlooked. These satellite offices have small numbers of staff who are covering a wide range of technical areas and, without project activities, have less scope to finance travel and engagement.

154.   There are also differences in the way that core funds are allocated at the divisional levels. The Divisions that house the two Foundational Subprogrammes traditionally find it more difficult to attract funding and the Enabling Subprogramme on Digital Transformations is still very new, and yet to build a track record of funding or a portfolio of projects.

155.   Interview responses echoed the finding of the Climate Change Subprogramme evaluation[42] that resource allocation processes lack transparency and the uncertainty around funding levels undermines strategic planning. For example, to-date some PCPs have received resources from Thematic Funds, while others had received mixed messages on whether their PCPs would receive funds from this source. As this is a new funding source it is anticipated that the decision-making will become clearer over time.

Resource Disbursement:
156.   The most frequently received feedback on the issue of resource disbursements was that of core funds being received 'late' (i.e. too far into the year in which the funds need to be spent). The internal schedule for resource allocations indicates that overall planning is expected to support disbursement in December each year. For the 2024 resource allocations, the first discussions began in October 2023, an initial disbursement of 40% was issued in December 2023 and the final allocation details were provided in August 2024. It was suggested that some of the factors contributing to the delay were the need to make revisions to reflect a stronger focus on results and preparing for UNEA 6, which took place earlier in the year than before. The changes in divisional and regional roles and new programming structures (PCPs) formed a new context for resource allocations, which likely increased the work around budgetary planning etc. However, there was no mention of any specific feature of the DM that would contribute to delays in disbursement in the future.

157.   Some initiatives that have been prompted by the DM include: an overview of the changed resource needs of Regional Offices, given changes in their roles; a possible study on the Overhead Transaction Allocation (OTA) to review overheads and the possibility of replacing the current incremental approach (i.e. future allocations heavily influenced by past allocations) with a zero-based approach that would be reviewed every five years. These initiatives were mentioned by interviewees but no official documentation confirmed their status.

---

[40] The outcomes are: *Outcome 1:* Governments, development partners and the UN system at national level take action to mainstream and deliver on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda and *Outcome 2:* Regional and subregional intergovernmental and thematic forums, the UN system and development partners operating at regional level take action to mainstream and deliver on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda. The *Project Objective* is: For the Regional Office of (insert name of the RO) to deliver efficient and effective implementation of the MTS 2022-2025 and related Programmes of Work by leading relevant engagement with Member States, UN Country Teams, regional stakeholders and within UNEP, providing strategic and programmatic direction and coordination on regional and national priorities and the implementation of the UNDS Reform.

[42] *Recommendation 3:* Internally, UNEP should improve transparency and communication on resource allocation and should enhance clarity on where long-term resources are needed to ensure continuity versus where project-based initiatives are better suited. The evaluation underscores the critical need for improved communication regarding resource allocation within UNEP, impacting both internal and external stakeholders. Internally, a lack of transparency in resource allocation processes leads to budgetary unpredictability for the Subprogramme as well as a lack of clarity regarding the availability of staff resources. This not only hinders the development of strategic long-term plans but is also resulting in staff dissatisfaction. Externally, donor countries have also expressed discontent with the current system, citing difficulties in tracing the flow of their contributions. This lack of transparency hinders their ability to demonstrate the impact of their investments that may to lead to a decrease in contributions to the Environment Fund and a shift towards earmarked funding. While the introduction of thematic funds represents a potential step forward, further strategic development is necessary to ensure their effectiveness. Decisions cannot be based on valid assumptions about the functioning and needed resources without a remapping of the existing staff positions to the subprogrammes. (Climate Change Subprogramme evaluation, 2024).

Thematic Funds and Funding the PCPs:

158.	The Thematic Funds, initiated through discussions in 2021, were established to support UNEP's triple planetary crises objectives on climate, nature and chemicals and pollution action. There are three allocation criteria: PCP and project pipeline; critical gaps and emerging areas and support to corporate projects and priorities.

159.	It is still a young initiative and ongoing transition is a natural feature at present. In 2024 the Funds reached a value of *c.*USD 24m and disbursements have been made in November 2022 and May, July and October 2023. Within each allocation UNEP may allocate up to 30% to staff costs and some of this was used as surge funding to Regional Offices during the early introduction of the DM. Since May 2023 the Funds have been managed through the Budget Committee (previously this was done through the Funds' own Steering Committee) and an allocation formula was agreed for each allocation round, which allows for 70% of the funds (after deductions) to be allocated to the PCPs.

160.	While flexibility in funding is crucial for UNEP to adapt to changing environmental priorities and needs, many funding partners are cautious in providing softly earmarked or unrestricted funding. In addition, regional funding partners tend to show interest in regional rather than global initiatives and are less likely to contribute to a centralized funding mechanism. A critical aspect of supporting the sustainability of this source of funding will be UNEP's capacity to report environmental results relevant to the thematic pillar to which a funding partner has contributed, such that the partner feels confident in repeating their financial support.

## 5.4	Findings Statements on Efficiency

Finding 3A: Overall, there has been an absence of an implemented change management plan to guide implementation of the policy and to support the efficient and effective uptake of new processes. While newly introduced processes in the DM have the potential to improve efficiency, so far these have not been realized. There is no evidence that efficiency gains have been realized and the suggestions are that efficiency has reduced. Enhanced transaction costs in terms of co-creation of concepts and project designs and enhanced bureaucracy in approval processes have reduced organisational efficiency. Constraints regarding centralization of administrative processes have limited the optimization of programmatic implementation. In addition, several new roles and responsibilities have been introduced (e.g. PCP DRIs, UNCT FPs) and others have been amended (e.g. GSPC[43], RSPC, Head of Branch/Unit). Issues of possible duplication have not yet been fully addressed. Human resource constraints at the regional level undermine the adoption of new roles such as intelligence gathering and resource mobilization.

Finding 3B: There is significant variability in how some elements of the DM Policy itself are being interpreted. The responses are personalised and influenced by many factors such as the nature of the work in a division and/or Regional Office, past experiences and relationships, staffing patterns and capacity etc. While the high level of initiative and commitment is to be applauded, UNEP should aim for more systematic and consistent uptake. There is no apparent fora for staff to discuss their experiences and/or share how they have responded. This has the appearance of 'siloed entrepreneurship' rather than the aligned initiatives to which UNEP aspires. Examples of common questions where staff asked for guidance are: which, if any, elements of externally-funded project work[44] can be managed by the Regional Offices; is there scope for administrative and finance roles to be devolved to outside Nairobi; are the new accountability roles consistent with the Delegation of Authority and how are the roles of the GSPC and PCP DRIs differentiated, especially where there is a single PCP in an SP. Most collaboration, and change, is taking place where divisions and regions have worked together in the past (e.g. Industry and Economy Division

---

[43] While the role of the GSPC has not significantly changed since its establishment, the DM/PA changes the context within which it is expected to fulfil its role, which requires some clarification, especially vis-à-vis the PCP DRI role, to avoid potential duplication of effort. Given the recent move of the GSPC posts into the Technical Divisions further clarification of the role vis-à-vis divisional staff roles (e.g. areas of decision making) would be beneficial.

[44] This is typically project work that falls under category B 'technical support, capacity building and advisory services' to which the Delivery Model applies.

and West Asia Office) or have ongoing common interests in oingoing projects (e.g GEF projects). It is noted that Deputies play a key role in operationalising policies and there may be scope for a regular meeting of Deputies with the DED to help clarify issues and support a two-way flow of informed dialogue.

Finding 3C: The role of the GSPC set out in the DM Policy (pg 9/10) comprises: portfolio coordination, thought leadership, strategic planning, reporting and analyzing results, resource allocation and mobilization and innovative approaches. This is not significantly different from the expectations of the role in 2016 (see TOC in Annex IV) and the evaluation team has drawn on the 2017 Subprogramme Coordination Function Review to highlight some of the insights gained then:

- the institutional location of the GSPC role should support its purpose and the results the role to which it contributes (i.e. greater strategic relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of UNEP's work at the POW level). This is expected to be achieved through a team effort of thought leadership, communication and decision-making to generate greater programmatic coordination, integration and synergy.
- although each GSPC serves a specific subprogramme, the frame of reference for the combined efforts of the team of GSPCs is the performance of the Programme of Work. The role involves communication with the Member States on the performance of, and reporting on, the POW.
- given the cross-cutting nature of the role one of its appreciated, but less visible, attributes is that of being a 'neutral broker' when there are competing interests and priorities.
- some of the issues that need to be addressed if the GSPC role reverts to a divisional home are: a) the accountability of the 'lead' Division Director will be for work that is not under their management authority; b) conflicts of interest in terms of the use of GSPC time and in decision-making may arise and will need a resolution mechanism that puts the POW results first; c) the identity of a 'team' of GSPCs should be protected and strengthened for the optimisation of results; d) there is not always a direct match between an SP and a Division (e.g. now Digital Transformation[45], previously Disasters and Conflict) and e) *(based on the findings of this Formative Evaluation)* the presence of programme (i.e. PCP) roles within the Division combined with a GSPC role has the potential to cause duplication of effort and challenges in terms of authority and responsibility, especially where there is a single PCP within an SP, which is also mapped onto a single Division (i.e. in the case of both Foundational SPs)

Finding 3D: The full mobilisation of the Thematic Funds faces challenges that are not unique to UNEP and expectations of how 'un-earmarked' these funds may be overly optimistic. There are also issues over how the results derived from these funds are identified and reported on. In addition, there are challenges around how the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes will raise sufficient funds to play their intended roles in realising UNEP's strategic objectives. A percentage of the amounts assigned to PCPs under the Thematic Subprogrammes are being specified for the Foundational/Enabling Subprogrammes (internal memo, 20.08.24) although the mechanism for the onward allocation of this percentage is not described.

Finding 3E: Given the substantive changes brought to UNEP's institutional and programmatic structure by the MTS, POW and DM, allocating funds based on past spending is no longer realistic. The new 'zero-based' approach being developed is welcome and has the potential to support strategic future plans, rather than the continuation of older work streams.

Finding 3F: The timely disbursement of core funds has not been easy to achieve in the past, despite guidance being given in good time and time-based plans having been made. It is clear that the predictability and timeliness of these funding releases are key to efficient and effective operations.

---

[45] While the Thematic Subprogrammes may appear more closely matched to a Division (e.g. Nature Action appear to closely match the work of the Ecosystem Division) this may be misleading. For example, work in Nature and Climate Action are heavily dependent on projects managed by the Industry and Economy Division.

6 FINDINGS: MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

6.1 Guiding Questions

161.   To what extent is it likely that the i) Delivery Model and ii) Programmatic Approach will facilitate UNEP's systematic monitoring, preparing to report on and evaluating the results from both: i) Delivery Model and the new ii) Programmatic Approach?

> Q D.1 In what ways has MR&E been integrated into the design and transformation process of the DM/PA, enabling assessment of the process and results at aggregate levels of PCPs and subprogrammes?
>
> Q D.2 What evidence is emerging that results-based management is used as part of the Programmatic Approach, informing adaptive management?
>
> Q D.3 What evidence is emerging that knowledge management is enhanced to inform organizational development?

6.2 Evaluation Assumptions

162.   For this evaluation, monitoring was understood to relate to both the adoption and implementation of the DM/PA, as well as tracking the aggregated results being generated through UNEP's POW.

163.   In order to effectively monitor, report on and evaluate the uptake of the DM and the results generated through it, it was assumed that success metrics would have been identified (e.g. a set of Key Performance Indicators, KPIs) and systematic mechanisms would need to be established (or adapted) to identify challenges, ensure accountability for results and inform decision-making within the organisation. Adaptive management and learning was expected to be part of the DM transition process, including the involvement of the SMT as thought leaders. Along with modern technologies and digital tools, it was assumed that a set of SMART indicators would be in place to support robust monitoring, reporting and, over time, evaluation. It was envisaged that the PCPs would be guided by sound knowledge management strategies and that knowledge platforms would be put in place to share good practices and to inform the transition process both in terms of management arrangements as well as ways in which to enhance reaching of results through synergies within programmes.

6.3 Discussion

Monitoring Implementation of the DM/PA

164.   Annex VII shows a summary of the expected benefits of the DM, derived from a powerpoint presentation to the SMT in November 2022. However, no success metrics (e.g. KPIs) for the implementation of the DM were found, although they were mentioned in some of the change management documentation. The most frequently cited intention of the DM was to move UNEP towards the five desired institutional traits identified during the transformation process (see Figure 1, front cover). However, in their current form, these traits do not act as success measures that are commonly understood and against which progress can be measured. They can be said to represent an institutional vision and could be used to guide a discussion of trends, but not to assess change and attribute it to the introduction of the DM.

165.   Some respondents referred to the set of KPIs that underpin the Quarterly Business Review (QBR), but these relate to the Divisions not to the SPs and/or PCPs and have not been adjusted to include key features of the DM. There is a perception that the QBRs are more comprehensive and accurate than previously, although their focus is on 'operational excellence' rather than quality of performance or impact.

166.   This formative evaluation was identified by respondents as a much needed means to gather feedback on the implementation of the DM and attracted high levels of participation and wide-ranging

discussion. However, insights from single formative or summative exercises are not a substitute for a systematic monitoring and feedback system for the introduction and operationalisation of a policy with such far reaching implications.

Feedback Loops and Adaptive Management

167.   The weekly SMT meetings provide a good opportunity for Directors to be informed of, and deliberate on, matters of importance to the House. In these early stages of implementing the DM, no regular agenda item appears to have been introduced to reflect on its uptake and effects. Over time, this would be an ideal forum to combine divisional and regional perspectives and consider progress in operationalising the policy (e.g. KPIs relevant to the DM in the QBR; annual reflection on the past year and/or at the presentation of the Programme Performance Report etc.)

168.   The main feedback loop tool appears to be the QBR which reflects performance at the divisional level based on project reporting fed into the IPMR. This is more a form of oversight, with red marks indicating issues of concern, rather than a tool for constructive feedback and adaptive management. Other channels for receiving feedback were mentioned, such as joint (division and region) meetings that have started to take place, albeit currently driven more by past collaboration and existing relationships rather as part of a systematic plan. Presentations on the project concept pipeline have also been made on a regular basis and these reflect the distribution of concepts across SPs, funding sources, geographic areas and value as well as recording the allocation of Thematic Funds. The CAG Secretariat has also recently carried out a survey of its members, which represents an effort to gather feedback from those engaged in the concept approval meetings.

169.   Significant feedback gaps remain, particularly in the meaningful integration and response to feedback from regional perspectives or programming units (e.g. Thematic Pillars, SPs or PCPs) and the alignment of reporting mechanisms. Certain divisions have reported structures or systems for adaptive management, indicating some results-based processes in place. The overall system lacks comprehensive and integrated feedback mechanisms to support the DM/PA transition process fully.

170.   Adaptive management represents a process by which UNEP could expect to move towards its desired institutional traits and is dependent on feedback loops as well as knowledge management (see below). Importantly, two of the factors that were mentioned frequently and that limit the potential for constructive adaptive management are: a) power dynamics and b) resource allocations. In change processes these two topics are always highly charged and staff are reluctant to raise concerns openly, outside the confidential context of an evaluation. Yet, concerns over power and resources have the potential to permanently undermine positive changes and are best addressed through open and safe dialogue. A lack of spaces to discuss all aspects of the DM and to provide feedback to inform the transition process was highlighted by several respondents.

171.   Two suggestions that were put forward that appear to have merit were first, the creation or reinstatement of a regular meeting (monthly or quarterly etc) of all Deputies across the house. It is also noted that a select group of Deputies were called together to meet several times during the design and development of the DM, while other Deputies were not aware of this consultation mechanism. Regular meetings of Deputies could provide a context for feedback, learning and adaptation. Secondly, a regular meeting with PPD and staff closely involved in implementing the DM/PA was proposed. While the workshops led by PPD and CSD were very welcome, they were not found to have gone far enough in allowing discussions of how to operationalise the DM.

Programmatic Outcomes and SMART Indicators

172.   The achievement of the 9 MTS Outcomes and 38 POW Direct Outcomes are expected, in the current POW, to be measured against a single set of 31[46] shared indicators. This compromises the logic that MTS

---

[46] The previous MTS (2018-21) and associated POWs, contained a set of 46 indicators at the Expected Accomplishment level and distributed fairly evenly across the 7 Subprogrammes (a range of 5 to 9 indicators across the different Subprogrammes)

Outcomes are higher level or longer lasting results than those derived from each POW, as one would expect a stronger cumulative effect at the MTS level. In addition, one would expect the 2025 MTS Outcomes to more substantially close the gap between the POW Direct Outcomes and the 2030 Outcomes and to reflect environmental results relevant to the triple planetary crises.

173.   This evaluation endorses the finding from the Climate Change Subprogramme evaluation[47] that UNEP performance indicators should better reflect UNEP's contributions to addressing the planetary crises, focusing on environmental change rather than institutional reach.

174.   A detailed review of the indicators against the standard dimensions of the SMART acronym is available in the Inception Report and gave rise to the following observations:

Specific: In the 2022-25 MTS, logical cause and effect thinking is compromised. In previous MTS' the successful achievement of each Expected Accomplishment was measured through a set of several (1 to 6) EA indicators. However, in the current MTS the reverse is described: each indicator is taken as a measure of the successful achievement of multiple (1 to 6) MTS Outcomes as well as multiple (2 to 14) POW Direct Outcomes. The indicators cannot be specific if they are applied to such a wide range of results.

Measurable: Some indicators look measurable (e.g. number of policies and strategies adopted) but have an underlying conceptual weakness, for example, can all policies and strategies be called equal (e.g. municipal vs national; multi-part policy vs all-encompassing; tangential environmental element vs core)? Can evidence for indicators of cross-cutting work (e.g. Digital Transformations) be isolated and identified? Some terms, such as 'adopted', need clarification and consistent interpretation to be comparable and therefore be suitable for addition together. All indicators, including qualitative ones, need a relevant baseline for change to be measured repeatedly. In all cases, attributing change to UNEP's work requires a strong causal justification for any measurement to be useful.

Achievable: Some quantitative targets associated with the indicators appear ambitious to achieve in the timeframe although it is impossible to assess this without an appropriate baseline figure. The absence of baseline measures is of concern as it suggests the measurement of the indicator may not have been fully developed or tested. Qualitative indicators relating to shifting public opinion appear to be too far outside UNEP's sphere of operations or influence to be meaningful.

Relevant: The indicators can all be said to be relevant to UNEP's work and/or mandate. However, it is less clear whether the indicators represent dimensions of change that have the potential to 'shift the needle' or that are central to solving the triple planetary crises (i.e. dimensions of centrality to the issues, potential for substantive effects etc. also need to be considered).

Time-bound: All the targets associated with the indicators have timeframes. However, the meaning of these is challenged by differences in the duration of the mechanisms intended to deliver the results. For

---

[47] **Recommendation 4: UNEP should fully implement its strategic paradigm and strive to utilize indicators that are tied to the *Paris Agreement*, suited for management and reporting and able to demonstrate UNEP's contribution to filling the gap**. The Paris Agreement of 2015 gives a clear direction where climate action should go, in its Article 2.1 – a) holding temperature rise to well below 2 degrees, b) increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change, and c) making financial flows consistent with this pathway. The Subprogramme demonstrates a strong alignment of its objectives and activities with the Paris Agreement, e.g., with the objectives outlined in the Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025. But UNEP could go even further. The EGR and AGR tell us exactly where to focus our attention on climate action. UNEP has formulated the strategic objective of "Climate stability" in its MTS 2022-2025, which is "where net zero greenhouse gas emissions and resilience in the face of climate change are achieved." (UNEP, 2021, p. 20) The expected 2030 outcome of the SP is that "government and non-government development actions are compatible with the long-term mitigation and resilience goals of the Paris Agreement." (UNEP, 2021b, p. 22) But where the outcome indicators need become more operational – coming down from this global target – they do not become sufficiently specific to guide action. The operational indicators from the POWs and MTS below that level are merely focused on accountability and mostly express reach. They count – for example - the number of policies, but do not take into account relevance, ambition levels or effectiveness of policies. "Investment leveraged" can be seen as measuring UNEPs contribution to climate action but the levels that can be leveraged by UNEP will always pale in comparison to the gaps reported in UNEP's own reports, and thus cannot be meaningfully related to the gaps, either. Generally, UNEP's indicators do not measure the contribution of the organization towards "closing the gap". This means that the PCPs and thematic Divisions cannot use these indicators for their internal strategic coordination or demonstrate that they cover the gaps in climate action as demonstrated by EGR and AGR. The PCPs still base their Theories of Change on the SP-CA building blocks, lacking a coherent or complete programme logic behind it – and thus, also no (or very few) SMART indicators. But as the current MTS already follows the PA logic, closing the gaps on the lower-level indicators is possible with the next POW.

example, the MTS spans 4 years from 2022-25 yet the PCPs vary from 3 years (2023, '24 and '25) to five, which would outlast the MTS. Beyond this, project timelines vary. An analysis of those projects that are expected to make the most noticeable contribution to the indicator would be needed to assess the feasibility of the timelines.

175. The unusual assignment of single indicators to multiple, high-level outcomes, is of concern as assertions that results have been achieved may not be defensible. Essentially changes in a single indicator lead to claims that achievements have been made in several different results areas (see example below). Without: a) greater specificity of the indicator and b) a strong causal relationship between the indicator and the result, UNEP is on weak ground to claim that the intended changes have taken place.

Example (POW, pg 16):

Nature Action indicator *iii.) # countries and national, regional and subnational authorities and entities that incorporate, with UNEP support, biodiversity and ecosystem-based approaches into development and sectoral plans, policies and processes for the sustainable management and/or restoration of terrestrial, freshwater and marine areas.*

Taken to demonstrate the achievement of all of the following:

POW Direct Outcomes:
2.1 Collective action by United Nations system entities addresses biodiversity loss and promotes conservation and restoration.
2.3 Productive land and seascapes and fresh water are sustainably managed.
2.4 Oceans are governed sustainably and holistically at the regional and global levels.
2.5 Nature is integrated into national and international public health decision making.
2.9 Institutional capacity to adopt and act on national and international commitments is enhanced and accountability frameworks are strengthened.
2.11 Illegal and unsustainable use of biodiversity decreases.
2.12 Food systems support biodiversity and environmental sustainability.
2.13 Commitments and actions to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems are enhanced.
2.14 Fair and equitable access and benefit-sharing frameworks are advanced.
2.15 Consumer awareness and behaviours have shifted towards products and services with lower environmental and nature footprints through digital nudging, green filtering, product labelling, certification schemes and value-chain indices.
2.16 Improved science and indigenous and local traditional knowledge contribute to sustainable management of nature.

MTS Outcomes
1A: Decision-makers at all levels adopt decarbonization, dematerialization and resilience pathways.
2B: Sustainable management of nature is adopted and implemented in development frameworks.
2C: Nature conservation and restoration are enhanced.

Monitoring and Reporting on Programmatic Results

176. A revised Monitoring Policy and Monitoring Framework (both in draft, 2023) is consistent with the current MTS and is taken to also serve the needs of the DM. Reporting in the DM is founded on the existing reporting systems for the MTS and POW and uses the existing systems of IPMR/Umoja and the QBR and Programme Performance Report (PPR). Pre-existing weaknesses in these systems (e.g. lack of adequate baselines; lack of distinction between activity and results-level reporting; lack of differentiation between just the presence of reporting content and not its quality etc.) continue.

177. Overall, the focus of UNEP's reporting remains at the project activity and output level rather than at an aggregated results level or with a quality focus and several respondents suggest that the system, or aspects of it, need either rethinking or some substantive improvements. Comprehensive systems for

monitoring and reporting that fit UNEP's need to report at a results level on the POW to the Member States, and especially reflecting the 13 new programmes construct, are lacking. To support results-focused reporting, the outcomes and indicators in the MTS/POW would need to be driving that focus (see above on SMART indicators).

178.   Responsibility for aggregating progress at the SP level and compiling these in the annual PPR continues to lie with the GSPCs. However, the 13 new programmes are not visible within IPMR as entities or aggregating units as they appear only as projects (PCPs) and so aggregate data at the PCP level is not readily available to inform the higher-level reporting. At present the PCPs are described as 'empty vessels' due to the lack of metrics to assess their success at any programmatic level. However, the PCP is being used for progress reporting to the CPR with positive feedback, while the integration of monitoring and reporting into the DM process is still evolving. On an encouraging note, staff from the Finance and Economic Transformations PCP have worked with ICTs to extract data[48] at the PCP level and are currently working on identifying indicators at the PCP level that would reflect the cross-cutting contributions of this Enabling PCP. Both of these efforts (PCP dashboard and PCP results/indicators) have the potential for wider application.

179.   The effort to use IPMR, which is the main project reporting system, is seen as a positive step that could potentially address some data gathering and reporting issues. The most immediate use of IPMR has been to generate dashboards and certainly the Country Dashboards are extremely useful in providing access to UNEP's project work at a country and regional levels. Tools and dashboards are reported to being developed to track activities, but practical support for this is lacking, particularly at the regional level.

180.   However, different reporting levels are still not integrated, divisional and regional offices are reported to be creating their own tracking systems and aligning reporting schedules and formats between various projects and UNEP's overall monitoring and reporting requirements remains challenging. There was also no reference in interviews of monitoring and reporting to have informed decision-making at the PPD/corporate level or to being used to reflect on accountability.

181.   Isolated references were made to initiatives to develop systems to support results-based budgeting, but as this is a long-standing issue within UNEP and not directly affected by the introduction of the DM, the references were not followed up by the evaluation team.

Knowledge Management Strategy

182.   Based on interview responses, there is considered to be no systematic approach (i.e. based on conscious structural or programmatic concerns) to knowledge management (KM) and no knowledge management strategy[49] to guide such an approach. It was noted that while the need for such a strategy has been recognized previously as important and necessary at a senior level, progress has not been possible in the context of existing resources and workloads. However, it was also noted that attempts to hire an external consultancy has also not been successful in the past. KM in UNEP has been primarily about ensuring that knowledge is gathered at the single project or portfolio level and applied to follow-on work or across a range of scientific products to have a more normative impact globally. This would create a hub of expertise within specific thematic areas, leveraging knowledge from numerous projects globally (e.g. knowledge generated from the execution of 30 to 40 projects around the world on the same topic in different countries). While this indicates a strategic approach to KM at the project level, it lacks a formal overarching strategy. Knowledge generated in parts of the organization does not typically reach the wider organization and projects can be started from scratch without checking for existing similar initiatives, resulting in duplication of effort.

---

[48] IPMR can 'read' a list of projects identified as belonging in the PCP and extra data to a bespoke dashboard that then allows data to be interrogated at the PCP level.
[49] A previous KM strategy (or policy) was mentioned but it does not seem to be in current use of known of widely.

183.   The programmatic approach, in its current form, is not seen to promote effective KM, missing out on opportunities for learning and collaboration. Specifically, the sections on knowledge management in the PCPs are very limited and do not touch on the key issues. Funds for KM have been allocated in only one of the PCP budgets, with the focus in other PCPs on communication and internal reporting rather than a strategic KM approach. There is a stated intention to improve on KM in the draft new Monitoring Policy and Framework, including increasing cooperation with other agencies and the use of digital tools.

Knowledge Management Platforms

184.   Many digital tools are available, yet a centralized platform (or limited number of platforms) for teams to share knowledge about UNEP's work is lacking. Several staff reported, unprompted, their frustration with the proliferation of platforms, to the extent that they have counted them (largest number noted was 45). Yet one project manager mentioned struggling to find information on current projects and their locations, while knowing that in past roles they had spent a lot of time reporting on project activities and providing seemingly repeated project information.

185.   Some of the many KM platforms that exist include those on Climate and Health, the World Environment Situation Room (WESR), which holds information on air and water quality etc., and the Global Plastics Initiative, which is tracking recycling at a global level. This reflects a reliance on knowledge systems at the project or division level (e.g., WESR, Foresight) and supports the view that changes in programming and projects are often in response to individual initiatives rather than through structured, organizational processes.

186.   UNEP's library has about 18,000 publications, which have been moved to the Communications Division while the WESR has been moved to the Digital Subprogramme office. This suggests that some restructuring of KM is going on without being guided by an institutional strategy. KM in UNEP is reliant on IPMR, which is a UN wide system and not necessarily well suited to UNEP's work. Some positive elements were mentioned, such as the Project Management Handbook, which was described as an extremely good knowledge source tailored to UNEP's processes. There was also mention of post-project discussions about lessons learned, although these are not significantly different or improved due to the DM.

187.   Combined with the reported concerns about creating multiple repositories, there was a recognition that the development, operation and management of KM systems is expensive. This suggests that UNEP would benefit from deciding how far it should go into developing its own KM system and to consider how it can best cooperate with, and make use of, existing systems. One suggestion was to link up with existing, external knowledge management platforms like the GEF Science Technical Advisory Panel, or platforms focusing on high-impact sectors etc., which contain an enormous amount of data, information and knowledge, which would be of use to the organization. The need to provide links more widely to the multiple platforms that UNEP already has access to was also reported.

Use of Digital Tools

188.   There is widespread recognition that modern technology and digital tools have the capacity to help improve project reporting and performance monitoring. However, the full potential of modern technology and digital tools is yet to be realized in the implementation of the DM due to challenges in implementation and lack of adequate support, including at the regional and PCP levels. The organization has numerous online platforms, but there seems to be a lack of a central platform and awareness of teams to share knowledge about existing projects. There is also a concern regarding the applications and systems that will be allowed given UN Security protocols. The current system is not experienced as integrated, leading to inefficiencies in reporting, monitoring and evaluation. Digital tools are also being used in terms of knowledge management, often at a project or Branch level, though not yet to the extent that they allow for enhanced collaboration.

6.4 Evaluation

189.   The DM Policy document only specifies one evaluation, after one year of implementation, and this commitment is addressed through this formative evaluation process. The PCP documents specify that mid-term reviews or evaluations will take place in the 2nd year of each programme including a set of recommendations with a management response. Independent terminal evaluations are expected at the end of each programme and to be managed by the Independent Evaluation Office. The Evaluation Office was not consulted on the inclusion of these evaluation commitments within the PCPs and is unlikely to be able to incorporate an additional 13 programmatic evaluations into its workplan. The Evaluation Office is more likely to recommend incorporating the evaluation of PCPs as an integral feature of Subprogramme evaluations.

190.   Financial provisions have been made to cover the cost of both a mid-term and terminal performance assessment in the PCP budgets, although it is noted that these budgets differ across the PCPs and do not necessarily refer to secured funds. If these funds are to cover work carried out by the Evaluation Office, these funds would need to be transferred to that Office sufficiently in advance for planning and commitments for work to be made.

191.   The full implications of the PA for UNEP's evaluation approach are not yet evident. While the Evaluation Office expects to continue managing evaluations at the level of PRC-approved projects, these may: a) have more complex histories and make contributions to more than one results' construct during their lifecycle; b) contain more streams of work (i.e. grants) and c) will have to contain secured funding for the evaluation of the full scope of their workstreams. If PRC-approved projects do expand to include more grants, then it is possible that the average life of a PRC-approved project will increase and be less predictable (i.e. dependent on the completion of more areas of work). It is anticipated that many PRC-approved 'projects' will not conform to the formal definition and will have become 'portfolios of grants' and that the PCPs will have the features of larger portfolios, containing these PRC-approved 'portfolio-type projects'. This is likely to lead to a higher proportion of UNEP's evaluations to be of 'complex evaluands' than in the past, and increase th challenge of assessing the perfomance of UNEP work in a consistent and comparable manner.

6.5 Findings Statements

Finding 4A: The expected benefits of the DM are numerous and not clearly or consistently expressed (Annex VII) and the indications of success have not been made clear. Nor is it clear how adaptive management in operationalising the DM is envisaged. At present there is a lot of individualised, uncoordinated effort and there is a need for a systematic monitoring and feedback system for the introduction and operationalisation of a policy with such far reaching implications.

Finding 4B: The aims of the MTS, to be operationalised through the POWs, are currently not supported by a set of MTS outcome statements that fully reflect the vision of the triple planetary crisis, nor UNEP's global environmental mandate. The POW Direct Outcomes are: a) not consistently at an outcome level; b) do not all lend themselves to measurement or assessment and c) the associated indicators are neither all SMART, nor grounded in baseline measurements. This limits the opportunities for the use of RBM to inform implementation processes and/or assess UNEP's performance.

Finding 4C: Reporting on the implementation of UNEP's work takes place largely within the IPMR system and is of a granular nature. It is difficult to aggregate UNEP's results from the project level upwards partly because the programme structure is not reflected in IPMR, but also because UNEP's results chains are not adequately supported by causal narratives that explain how UNEP's work will drive change and a lack of results statements at the programme and subprogramme levels.

Finding 4D: The plans for mid-term reviews and independent evaluations of each PCP may not reflect the most efficient approach to assessing their performance. The evaluation of PCPs would be more appropriately considered and integrated with the plans for Subprogramme level evaluations, which are already an institutional requirement and funded through the Evaluation Office annual budget.

<u>Finding 4E:</u> Knowledge management efforts are fragmented and there is a proliferation of online platforms that do not support the consolidation of knowledge and the sharing of learning. There is a lack of centralized knowledge-sharing platforms, inconsistent knowledge management practices and reliance on project/division-specific systems rather than a unified organizational approach. Resource constraints and non-functional existing systems further challenge the effective implementation of knowledge management. It is acknowledged that centralisation, in and of itself, is not the goal of a unified organizational approach. The goal is to avoid the duplication of effort – either duplication of generating knowledge or of repeating less effective work – and to make access to useful knowledge easier in order that this knowledge is used more often and more widely.

7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION TIMELINE

7.1   Conclusion

192.   The Executive Summary, above, presents the findings of this formative evaluation through the lenses of four standard performance assessment criteria and provides summary information on the emerging experiences in operationalising the DM/PA.

193.   Here, as concluding thoughts, the findings are applied to the five guiding principles that provide a framework for UNEP's transformation, ensuring that its approach to global environmental challenges is both cohesive and responsive: coherent strategic leadership, aligned entrepreneurship, systemic collaboration, integrated capability development, and operational excellence. These conclusions are guided by the brief descriptions of each principle, included in the DM Policy (p5):

Five guiding principles leading to **scalable impact** (whole greater than the sum of the parts)[50]:

A **coherent strategic leadership** is central to UNEP's ability to guide its work across a range of global and local contexts. The DM seeks to create a leadership structure that is both globally consistent and locally adaptable. This shared leadership structure should enhance ownership and accountability at all levels, although this formative evaluation highlights the need for further clarity on leadership roles, especially in translating strategy into actionable plans across divisions and regions. The leadership is currently relying on existing working relationships and shared histories to explore new ways of work which, in the short term, is a sound strategy. However, the next step is to build on these early experiences and convert them into more systematic and generalisable approaches. Senior management also has a critical role to play in guiding decision-making in several areas that still need clarification and collaborative decision-making.

Aligned entrepreneurship emphasizes innovation within a structured framework. The DM encourages creativity and some strategic risk-taking as long as initiatives align with overarching goals. The challenge lies in ensuring that this entrepreneurial spirit is not siloed but integrated across the organisation. The evaluation finds that many promising initiatives remain fragmented, reliant on personal initiative rather than a coordinated strategy. To unlock the full potential of aligned entrepreneurship, UNEP must provide clearer guidelines on co-creation and promote a culture that supports all types of collaboration (i.e. cross-divisional; regional-divisions; intra-divisional etc) in pursuit of large scale results.

Systemic collaboration and partnership are crucial for UNEP to achieve its goals. The organisation's relatively small size means it must rely heavily on partnerships to expand its reach. The DM aims to build trust, foster mutual learning and enable joint action across UNEP and its partners. However, the formative evaluation indicates that while collaboration is recognised as essential, the new DM has not yet fully articulated how these partnerships will evolve under the current framework.

Integrated capability development ensures UNEP can sustain and grow its global results by investing in long-term systemic change. This principle underscores the need to enhance skills, processes and institutional capacity across the organisation. The evaluation highlights that while UNEP has made strides in realigning resources and roles, more effort is needed to ensure that capabilities at the regional and divisional levels are adequate to meet the demands of the new model. A clear, organisation-wide strategy for capacity development is necessary for enabling UNEP to deliver on its mission with greater effectiveness and resilience.

Finally, **operational excellence** is about transforming UNEP's internal processes to ensure they are efficient, transparent, data-driven and consistently improving. The evaluation finds that while progress has been made in certain areas, inefficiencies remain, particularly around the administrative processes tied to project

---

[50] These principles were proposed by the 2020 Mirror Report and adopted by the SMT as part of the new Delivery Model on 6 December 2021.

approval and monitoring and reporting. By addressing the tensions that exist between a results-focus and securing funding, and accepting the discipline inherent in RBM, UNEP can strengthen its ability to allocate resources efficiently, track performance and achieve better outcomes across its initiatives. UNEP needs to be operating at a consistently higher standard to remain adaptive and effective in a rapidly changing global landscape.

7.2   Overarching Lessons

Lesson Learned #1:	UNEP policy development needs to: a) be clearly requested for development by the Executive Director through the SMT; b) be supported by TOR that clearly set out the challenge to be addressed; the relevant history of the policy area; the office charged with developing the policy; the office charged with overseeing the operationalisation of the policy; the performance metrics by which the success of the policy development and adoption will be determined; the potential costs associated with the adoption of the policy and a timeframe for its performance assessment; c) carried out in a consultative manner both during development and design and during early operationalisation; d) (where relevant), carried out by consultants who have been made known to the SMT; and e) contain provision, from secured resources, for an assessment of the operationalisation and performance of the Policy.
Context/comment:	There appears to be no standardised way of developing and introducing new policies within UNEP. During this evaluation, the primary topic was the DM and there was reference to the policy work on partnerships and procurement. The origin and intentions of the policies, i.e. the problems they were intended to address and how their performance would be measured, is difficult to reconstruct retrospectively. It is also difficult to guide the implementation of policies when their origin and intentions are not recorded. Given that policies affect the whole organisation, it is important that the SMT is fully aware of the initiation of the work and the plan for its development, implementation and performance assessment.

Lesson Learned #2:	Any substantial institutional change should be grounded in: a clear identification and documentation of the challenge that is being addressed by the change (i.e. what is the rationale behind the change) and how the success of the change will be identified and assessed.
Context/comment:	During the course of the evaluation a decision to re-locate the GSPC role into the technical divisions was confirmed. The same discussion was being held in 2016/17. In both cases the reasons why the move was under consideration or what the challenges being addressed or benefits expected to be gained were etc. are not documented. It is not clear whether the current discussions have drawn on the Subprogramme Coordination Function Review undertaken in 2017.

Lesson Learned #3:	Commonly used results-based management terminology should be appropriately and accurately used throughout UNEP's work. In particular the terms 'programme', 'portfolio' and 'project' should be applied accurately to constructs that reflect the features of those terms.
Context/comment:	The terms 'project', 'portfolio' and 'programme' have specific and commonly agreed meanings. The practise of Results Based Management is founded on such common understandings. However, UNEP is using the term 'programme' for work

	that is constructed as a 'portfolio'. It is also deviating from the published UNEP definition of 'project' by nesting funded work within different constructs (e.g. grants within projects, within portfolios etc) without being transparent about the relationships between agreed results frameworks and the contributions being made between them.
Lesson Learned #4:	Similar to the accurate use of results terminology, terms that are used in communication products should be clearly articulated within the organisation, used consistently and, depending on their intended use, included in the Results Definitions.
Context/comment:	The terms 'line of sight', 'shift the needle' and 'missing middle' are terms that are well-suited to broad communications but, when used internally in a more operational or performance context, are open to multiple interpretations and are often used to justify action, change or an approach etc. The intended meaning needs to be documented in order to support clear communication and collaborative action.

7.3   Recommendations

A) 'Institutional Process' Recommendations

#	RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	TIMEFRAME
1	Review the DM Policy to add missing roles, incorporate the PA, introduce a set of performance metrics for the DM itself and revise the evaluation approach.		End of current MTS (2025)
2	Review the DM/PA from a partnership perspective.		By end of next MTS (2026-29)
3	Develop and implement a consultative change management process to guide DM/PA implementation beyond the initial workshops and to provide leadership.		End of current MTS (2025)
4	Strengthen co-creation processes, providing guidelines across the planning and project cycle.		End of current MTS (2025 and beyond)
5	Establish a mechanism for phasing out legacy work.		End of current MTS (2025)
6	Prioritise the transparent allocation, and timely and predictable disbursement, of core resources.		End of current MTS (2025)
7	Ensure allocation of Thematic Funds is transparent and associated results can be reported to support sustainable replenishment.		End of current MTS (2025 and beyond)
8	Develop an insitutional knowledge management strategy.		By end of next MTS (2026-29)

#	RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	TIMEFRAME
9	Enhance quality of project and programme implementation.		By end of next MTS (2026-29)

B) 'Programmatic Design' Recommendations

#	RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	TIMEFRAME
10	Revise MTS outcomes and MTS and POW indicators.		End of current MTS (2025)
11	Support the consistent and compelling communication of UNEP's strategic orientation.		End of current MTS (2025)
12	Provide subprogramme TOCs (foundational/enabling) and develop concise causal narratives (all SPs).		End of current MTS (2025)
13	Review and revise the PCPs.		End of current MTS (2025)
14	Clearly state the results' link from all funded work to Project Review Committee (PRC) approved projects that are visible in the POW.		By end of next MTS (2026-29)
15	Enhance the strategic purpose of the CAG		End of current MTS (2025)
16	Strengthen the social development aspects of the PCPs.		By end of next MTS (2026-29)

ANNEX I: LIST OF RESPONDENTS

Type of Roles	Number
Executive Office	4
Corporate Services Division	6
Fund Management Officer	6
Division Directors and Deputies	7
Regional Directors and Deputies	6
Policy and Programme Division	8
Global Subprogramme Coordinators	6
Regional Development Coordinators	2
Regional Subprogramme Coordinators	3
UNCT Focal Points	6
Head of Branch	6
Head of Unit	4
Directly Responsible Individuals	9
Project Managers	4
Consultants	4
TOTAL	81 (52 w/29 m)

ANNEX II: KEY DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Category	Document
Terms of Reference	Terms of Reference for the Formative Evaluation of the UNEP Programmatic Approach
Medium-Term Strategy	For people and planet: the UNEP strategy for 2022–2025
	Medium Term Strategy 2018-21
Programme of Work	For People and Planet Annex I: UNEP Programme of Work and Budget for 2022-23
	UNEP POW 2020-21
	UNEP POW 2018-19
Delivery Model Policy	Delivery Model Policy, 2022
Programme Coordination Projects (PCP)	*Adaptation and Resilience Programme Coordination Project*
	Circularity In Sectors Programme Coordination Project
	Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity Programme Coordination Project
	Decarbonization Programme Coordination Project
	Digital Transformations Programme Coordination Project
	Environmental Governance Programme Coordination Project
	Finance and Economic Transformations Programme Coordination Project
	Governance and Accountability for Biodiversity Programme Coordination Project
	Mainstreaming Biodiversity Programme Coordination Project
	Pollution and Health Programme Coordination Project
	Science and Transparency Programme Coordination Project
	Science for Policy and Action Programme Coordination Project
	Towards Zero Waste Programme Coordination Project
	Diagram of Programmatic Approach
	CAG Terms of Reference
	CAG Meeting No 1_CAG Secretariat
	CAG No 1 Agenda
	CAG No 1 Meeting Minutes
	Secretariat Summary Report_CAG Meeting
	CAG No 2 Meeting minutes
	CAG No 2 Agenda
	CAG Secretariat Summary Report
	CAG No 3 Agenda
	CAG No 3 Meeting minutes (adopted)
	CAG Secretariat Summary Report
	CAG3 Conservation Restoration PCP screening
	CAG3 FET PCP screening
	CAG No 4 Agenda
	CAG No 4 Meeting minutes (for adoption)
	Summary Report CAG Meeting No 4
	CAG No 5 Agenda
	CAG 5 Secretariat Summary Meeting Report
	CAG No 6 Agenda
	CAG No 6 Meeting minutes

	CAG 6 Secretariat Summary Meeting Report
	CAG No 7 Pipeline Analysis Report
	CAG No 7 Agenda
	CAG 7 Secretariat Summary Meeting Report
	Subprogram Theories of Change
	MTS and POW - Elements Contributing to Theories of Change
PCP and Delivery Model (DM)	UNEP Annual Report 2023
	Programme Performance Report 2022
	Quarterly Report to 162nd Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
	Quarterly Report to 163rd Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
	Quarterly Report to 164th Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
	Quarterly Business Review (QBR) Overview
	2023 Q4 UNEP QBR Report
	UNEP Quarterly Business Review Presentation
	2023 Q4 UNEP QBR Corporate Report
	Review of the Sub-Programme Coordination Function of UN Environment - FINAL REPORT. December 2016
	Programmatic Approach to Deliver the PoW – an overview
	FAQs UNEP Programmatic Approach
	Onboarding the Programmatic Approach through 'One-UNEP' engagement between Regional and Divisional Offices
	FORMATIVE – DELIVERY MODEL & PROG APPROACH Meeting 1: 'Getting on the Same Page'
	FORMATIVE – DELIVERY MODEL & PROG APPROACH Meeting 2: 'Getting Started'
	FORMATIVE – DELIVERY MODEL & PROG APPROACH Meeting 3: 'Roles for Inception'
	FORMATIVE – DELIVERY MODEL & PROG APPROACH Meeting 4: 'Confirming Roles for Inception'
	FORMATIVE – DELIVERY MODEL & PROG APPROACH Meeting 5: 'Interviews and Tasks'
	FORMATIVE – DELIVERY MODEL & PROG APPROACH Meeting 5: 'Interviews and Tasks'
	10th ASCM - Ag. It. 3A - PPT A - Climate Stability
	10th ASCM - Ag. It. 3A - PPT B - Living in Harmony with Nature
	10th ACSM – Ag. It. 3A – PPT C – Towards a Pollution-Free Planet
	10th ASCM - Ag. It. 3A - PPT D - Science Policy
	10th ASCM - Ag. It. 3A - PPT E - Environmental Governance
	10th ASCM - Ag. It. 3A - PPT F (FET) & G (Digital Transformation)
	Historical Institutional Perspective
DM and Workshops	Frequently asked questions: UNEP's Delivery Model Policy for One UNEP Delivery for Better Collaboration and Country SubDivisional Workshop. March 2023
	Implementing UNEP's Delivery Model- Africa Regional Office Workshop, Windsor Golf Hotel & Country Club, 18th – 19th September 2023
	Implementing UNEP's Delivery Model- Industry and Economy Division, Paris 7th - 8th June, 2023
	Delivery Model workshop - Regional Subprogramme Coordinators: Delivering as One UNEP! Subprogramme Coordination Unit, Policy

	and Programme Division. 9th – 10th November 2023, Windsor Golf Hotel & Country Club (Oak Room)
	UNEP Delivery Model Workshops - 2024
	UNCT Focal Point Workshop 2023
	Delivery Model Change Plan – Sequencing. 2023
	Delivery Model CSD Components Only
	UNEP DM for 2022-25 MTS Final Draft for SMT Discussion
	DM - TOR for Change champions in regional offices
	UNEP Delivery Model Project Design and Delivery at Regional and National Levels Draft Proposed Process 30/11/21
	UNEP Delivery Model: Agreeing the Scope and scale of the Change Management intervention
	Delivering UNEP's Results Through Enhanced Focus on Quality December 18 2020
	Elements of UNEP Delivery Model for MTS 2022-25
	UNEP Summary Outcome Report of Senior Management Team (SMT) Retreat February 3-5, 2020 Nairobi
	Key priorities for 2021 to ensure 'MTS-readiness' by 1 January 2022
	Draft Version for Approval at 24 January SMT Meeting
	SMT readiness guidelines 210215. A short guide on the 2021 work plan adopted by Senior Management to gear towards Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025 and how to engage in its delivery.
	UNEP SMT Retreat February 2-5, 2020. Nairobi, Kenya
	SMT Meeting Notes December 6 2021

ANNEX III: SUMMARY OF SUBSTANTIVE STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

FINAL	9	15	10	11	2	13	14	16	12	5	1	6	7	8	3	4
DRAFT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

Place in text	Comment	Response
	RECOMMENDATIONS	
Recommendation 1 *(was Rec 9 at draft)* (General)	I agree that one of the issues with the DM is the lack of alignment of human resources with results. As you note this carries the attendant risk that the more roles overlap with an impact on the duplication of effort. This is something we noted at the outset of the DM, and it partly stemmed from an (understandable) unwillingness to imperil authorized positions for RB positions for the RSPCs and GSCPs through the ACABQ .	This thought can be considered as part of actioning Recommendation 1.
Recommendation 1 *(was Rec 9 at draft)*	Integrating success metrics focused on results and process milestones would be a positive step, as it will provide clearer indicators of progress and allow for performance tracking. However, balancing quantitative metrics with qualitative benefits may present a challenge.	The strongest approach to developing success metrics is to use quantitative metrics for what they are good at measuring and qualitative methods for what they are good at establishing. True 'mixed methods' (i.e. quant + quali) integrate the two such that the true nature and magnitude of results is evidenced. (See Q^2 literature).
Recommendation 1 *(was Rec 9 at draft)* (General)	A linked challenge in the development of the DM was that, at the time of developing it at least, there was little willingness to adjust the 'form' of UNEP to better meet the adjusted 'functions' that the DM was proposing. This institutional restructuring (including the creation of the new Climate Division) has happened since the introduction of the DM.	Emphasis added to Finding 2E. The question arises of why the PCPs are not more closely aligned to the scopes of work managed under Branches and Units, *in keeping with the general wisdom that 'form' should follow 'function'.*
Recommendation 1 *(was Rec 9 at draft)*	Updating roles to reflect organizational changes and adding key overlooked roles (e.g., UNCT Focal Points) can improve alignment and clarify responsibilities, but it may also require additional training and adjustments across divisions. Revising the evaluation approach for PCPs is beneficial to ensure relevance but could entail a significant resource investment.	Noted. 'Additional training and adjustments across divisions' are likely to be needed as the DM Policy has far-reaching implications that were unlikely to be achieved in the short term without additional support and resources. Given that the all 13 PCPs state that they will have their own mid-terms and terminal evaluations carried out by the Independent Evaluation Office, there is no revised approach that could be more costly.

		Finding 4D describes a reduced level of resources as the evaluation of Subprogrammes is already a regular part of the Evaluation Office plans, and funded on a continuous basis. Finding 4D has been extended to reflect this: *'The evaluation of PCPs would be more appropriately considered and integrated with the plans for Subprogramme level evaluations, which are already an institutional requirement and funded through the Evaluation Office annual budget.'*
Recommendation 1 *(was Rec 9 at draft)*	Results-based management: if the rationale of the DM is better collaboration and "better country support" – where and how are we measuring the country support and what are the results-based management options to be considered from that perspective?	This comment can be picked up in the management response to Recommendation 1, specifically in the design of a set of success metrics for the DM.
Recommendation 1 *(was Rec 9 at draft)*	Para is referring to the planned move of GSPCs to divisions- Please note that GSPCs were already moved to Technical Divisions. ED's memo is attached for reference.	'Planned move' replaced with 'recent move'
Recommendations 1, 3 and 2 *(were Recs 9, 10 and 15 at draft)* Finding 2D Finding 2G Finding 4D	This **finding (2D)** is very relevant, but also offers an opportunity to underscore the need to harmonize the renewed UNEP commitment to enhance support to UNCT and better deliver as one-UNEP at country level with the programmatic approach including fund raising and project cycle. The delivery model needs to answer questions like "how do we fund the country-level functions of coordination and alignment of UNEP support to UNSDCF?", and "how to make "country engagement plans" recognized and articulated with the broader the programmatic approach (or how to make it meaningful without integration in the project cycle)? In **finding 2D**, the list of challenges faced in the process of creating projects, portfolios and programmes and making PCP meaningful could also encompass the "collision in nature" between formulating a consistent approach at country level (which will inevitably lead to cross-dimension/cross-sector) and fitting within PCPs individual scopes and meeting their respective review for alignment and clearance. **Rec #1 to finding 4D** should also flag the importance of mainstreaming the country engagement plan (as a key factor of credibility and effective coordinated approach to country level) into the PA.	Two items added to the list of pressing issues under Recommendation 5: *d) how to fund the country-level functions of coordination and alignment of UNEP support to UNSDCF;* *f) how to make 'country engagement plans' recognized and articulated within the broader PA;* Final bullet added to Finding 2D. *there is also a fundamental challenge between formulating a consistent approach at country level (which will inevitably lead to cross-dimension/cross-sector) and fitting within PCPs individual scopes and meeting their respective review for alignment and clearance.* Item added to Recommendation 1: *d) mainstream the country engagement plan, which is a key factor in having a coordinated approach at the country level, into the PA* Added text to Finding 2G:

	Similarly (cf. **finding 2G**) the approach to partnerships for meaningful support at country level should be significantly differentiated from approaches at global or even regional level, so to mitigate a systemic tension between centralized processes and sub-global relevance. I suggest to introduce this idea of carefully assessing/reflecting the needs for differentiation/decentralization of the (obviously strategically aligned and consistent) partnership development approach into **recommendation #3**	*In addition, UNEP's approach to partnerships that support country level interventions should be differentiated from approaches at global/regional level to ensure that centralized processes reflect sub-global relevance.* Added text to Recommendation 3: *This should include reflections on how the development of partnerships, especially those agreed at a global level, are expected to reflect differentiated needs at decentralised and country levels.*
Recommendation 2 *(was Rec 15 at draft)*	With the new Partnership Policy recently approved, it is prudent to include a review by the Partnership Policy Team to update guidance at the end of the transition period (six months).	Noted.
Recommendation 2 *(was Rec 15 at draft)*	Suggest that we should have current institutional MOUs with all major partners to UNEP. Partnership committee to approve larger value total amount of funding agreements with the partners and ensure that due diligence is up to date for the MTS period, so at the point of negotiating individual funding agreements these are not stuck at the Partnership committee.	The evaluation didn't systematically cover the Partnership Policy, rather the question of the effect of the DM/PA on partners, and its reflection in the new Policy, was looked at. A footnote has been added to the recommendation so that the thought is not lost: *A comment was received on the draft report suggesting an advantage in having institutional MOUs with all major UNEP partners (see Comments Table). The evaluation did not gather sufficient material to assess the merit of this suggestion.*
Recommendation 3 *(was Rec 10 at draft)*	Sound recommendation, but the consultative approach could face challenges, such as balancing the time required for regular engagement with ongoing work demands. Additionally, reaching consensus on complex topics like delegation of authority and sub allotments may delay implementation. Conducting necessary studies, while beneficial for informed decision-making, could require significant time and resources.	The time and resources to operationalize the DM/PA are commensurate with the scope and ambition of the changes the Policy set out.
Recommendation 3 *(was Rec 10 at draft)*	The original change management plan anticipated ongoing discussions regarding the transition to the new DM and its maturity. Each Region and Division was to appoint a 'focal point' to facilitate communication and problem-solving. It is essential to clarify who will own this process—PPD, CSD, or the DED on behalf of the ED and SMT—especially considering the financial and administrative issues that need resolution. Additionally, I question the willingness of Divisions and Regions to accept a highly centralized change management approach.	'Leadership' should not be confused with 'centralisation'. The evaluation team agrees that the leadership of the change management process should be clearly owned and that ownership should be clear to the whole house. The plans for change management stopped short at the completion of the workshops and respondents consistently expressed the need to ask their questions and receive guidance on how they were expected to move forwards as a group and individually.
Recommendation 3 *(was Rec 10 at draft)*	This finding is a euphemism. The model produces additional burdens for experts and project developers and managers, in terms of both (i) heavier bureaucracy, standards,	This evaluation was requested as a formative assessment of the early implementation of the DM Policy and took the Policy

Finding 2H	controls, procedures etc. and (ii) expected quality improvement notably through co-creation, cross-sector approaches, strategic alignments, coordination at country and regional level etc. But the implication of the cost, and the discussion on how we fund the change to enhance or even maintain the substantive delivery and achievements of the organization is missing. As an illustration: the value of PCP is challenged (findings 2D, 2E…), but possibly they are not fit to address the underlying challenge: how do you operationalize collaborative design and implementation of substantive activities at UNEP? This experience may suggests that solutions are not with additional institutional arrangements and processes, and other ways could be explored: freeing more time for experts to focus more on qualitative work as part of project design and implementation, establish an organization culture that promotes collaborative approach and rewards the development of partnerships, truly foster entrepreneurship and explore opportunities that can increase financial resources and technical capabilities of the organization etc. These questions interlinking (i) substantive results and impacts, (ii) entrepreneurial approach (iii) country-level relevance and (iv) financial model could be inserted, for instance, in the list of considerations under **recommendation #10**… They could indirectly contribute to solve related limitations of other recommendations (for example **recommendation #11** is (again) missing the need to connect these organizational engineering with these 4 key factors of success). Similarly, **recommendation 12** misses to recognize that key factors to enhance quality also (primarily?) directly relates "how much time can an expert dedicate to substantive work vs. bureaucratic burden", "how to improve it", "how much space is allowed for creativity and adaptability to develop tailored initiatives (solutions, partnerships etc.) to meet specific (loca, country, subregional, regional) circumstances (or not)"?	as UNEP's formally approved approach. The evaluation was not given the mandate to go back to the drawing board to design a new approach for the institution. The recommendations therefore focus on what can be done to improve the benefits derived from the DM/PA. Text added to Recommendation 10: *This Formative Evaluation takes the DM/PA as givens, having emerged from a process endorsed by Senior Management. However, it is recognised that, at a more fundamental level, the premise that the DM/PA can simultaneously deliver country/regional level relevance, an increased entrepreneurial approach and substantive results and impacts within a sound financial model, could still be questioned.*
Recommendation 3 *(was Rec 10 at draft)*	Recommendations presumably would also include something along the lines of clarifying UNEP's approach to country engagement, including footprint, presence, delegations of authority.	This can certainly be addressed, but did not emerge from the 58 interviews. Recommendation 10 refers to a consultative change management plan which would provide an opportunity for emerging issues to be discussed and actions to be agreed upon/disseminated etc.

Recommendations 3, 13 and 15 (were Recs 3, 7 and 10 at draft)	The aspect of the PCPs and Programmes more generally is they should be the overarching vision and targets and are priority programmes. Hence projects and their precursor concepts would address these. This means the CAG could be more strategic ie that a concept really does meet an overall stated objective rather than being another project that someone has cooked up because they could.	The comment seems to endorse the importance of Recommendation 3 (i.e. that the strategic purpose of the CAG should be enhanced).
	The need for change management champions becomes more critical if this would be – if accepted – a big shift in the way we think and do business. Investment in someone to help with change management as it relates to the DM, strategic intent and prioritisation as well as changes in systems and processes could be useful.	Following the transformation process and commitment to the five principles that support scalable impact (Fig. 1 on the front page), one might expect the 'Coherent Strategic Leadership' to act as champions of change. The challenge with hiring someone to help with change management is that it might act as an alternative to internal 'ownership' of the change.
Recommendation 4 (was Rec 11 at draft)	This would be an easy win, as the evaluation suggests that cocreation has gained some traction already. However, there is still a hunger for more information about how it works in practice. It could also be an opportunity to focus on the DM again and push for progress in other areas to embed the model.	No response needed.
Recommendation 4 (was Rec 11 at draft)	It is agreed that providing clear guidance on co-creation will help standardize practices, enhance collaboration between Divisions and Regional Offices, and ensure that co-created work delivers added value. Addressing the operationalization of co-creation in contexts like GEF grants, where country endorsement is already required, will also help clarify expectations and avoid duplicative efforts.	'Guidance' should not be confused with 'prescription' or even 'documentation'. There are many mechanisms to provide guidance that are not overly rigid etc.
	However, developing detailed guidance may risk making the process overly rigid, potentially stifling the flexibility needed in different contexts. Ensuring that co-creation benefits are effectively tracked could also require significant resources for monitoring and evaluation. Additionally, aligning co-creation practices across UNEP may face resistance if not adequately supported with training and incentives.	It is unrealistic to introduce a new and far-reaching Policy without the provision (i.e. plans and resources) for monitoring its implementation and assessing its effects. Similarly one cannot plan to introduce significant changes in the roles and responsibilities of a large number of staff without planning and resourcing their training needs.
Recommendation 5 (was Rec 2 at draft)	I already provided a comment on para 52 about the assumption or characterisation that legacy projects are all bad or worthless. It also depends by what is meant by legacy projects, since country projects often have timelines of 5-7 years. Was this issue a widespread issue among all PCPs or was it observed in a narrow set? So Recommendation 2 could be reconsidered in that light.	Note that the evaluation did not find evidence that older projects were all bad or worthless. It found repeated evidence (Finding 1C) that there is no effective mechanism to support phasing out existing (especially long-standing) work if it has become less strategically relevant than new work that is being considered. There is material (documents/interviews) to show new work being added to UNEP's overall portfolio but no evidence of any conscious (i.e. strategic/priority) curtailing of work that

		may have become less strategic/priority in favour of new work.
Recommendation 5 *(was Rec 2 at draft)* Finding 1C	There is a problem with the approach to low-priority initiative. Reasons why the injunction for closing them has been ineffective are not always bad and perverse, including responding to the request of a trusted partner, standing by our commitments, building capacities and networks with longer-term opportunities for change etc. In addition, stopping a project and turning down an opportunity to act is like a death sentence, it can be arbitrary, it does not integrate the "human factor" risk and can lead to missed opportunities for impact.

I fully recognize the need to be meaningful and select interventions, but I would suggest an approach that rather (i) focuses on the project design and approval stage (preventing) rather than trying to stop initiatives already ongoing (after all, if no "bad" projects are approved any longer, the question will be closed within a few years), and (ii) accompanies experts and developers into their journey to relevance (when flashing red lights, take a supportive stance to assist the developer to strengthen its narrative or its substantial approach to enhance the relevance of the initiative, and possibly reject a project if it really cannot convince, but certainly avoid establishing arbitrary rules than be totally counterproductive (the recent example that suggests that UNEP should strictly and systematically avoid to execute GEF projects for other implementing partner is a perfect illustration of how top-down universal criteria can have dramatic impact on UNEP notoriety and ability to deliver on its mandate and objectives). | Explanatory footnote added to clarify:

'Phasing out' projects does not refer to cutting projects short or renegading on commitments and agreements. It refers to critical reflections taking place to decide on whether long-standing work streams are still strategically relevant and the highest priorities for UNEP to follow, or whether they have been superceded by other work and/or events.

The fact that existing projects were incorporated in the PCPs without review or renewed approval, reinforces the view that UNEP is averse to assessing long-standing work from a critical standpoint and, potentially, phasing it out. |
| **Recommendations 5 and 13** *(were Recs 2 and 7 at draft)* | Phasing out Legacy work. This is outlined in recommendation 2 but in my view is also tied to the review of the PCPs (recommendation 7). If we don't review the PCPs which are a collection of legacy projects we will not achieve this intent. So I wondered if we should link these and to more strongly suggest a reframing of PCPs in terms of strategic direction. This would then enable identification of what we could call legacy?? | Text added as bullet d) to Recommendation 7:

d) review the 'existing projects' in all PCPs that are going to be continued and assess the projects' strategic relevance and potential contribution to the POW/MTS against the set of criteria established in response to Recommendation 2. |
| **Recommendations 5 and 15** *(were Recs 2 and 3 at draft)* | I very much agree that the DM has not managed to tackle the issue of multiple legacy projects. The original idea was that the CAG was supposed to provide a 'glide path' towards phasing those projects out – nipping new 'aliens' in the bud (which tend to have a smaller internal constituency) rather than sacrificing existing 'sacred cow' projects. The review evidences a high percentage of legacy projects in the project coordination portfolios to suggest that this hasn't happened.

While I do think this is an issue, it also occurs to me that there is an alternative explanation – that (at least a percentage of) the older projects were sufficiently aligned with the core mission of UNEP to not require phase out at all. Accordingly, the existence of older projects themselves alone isn't sufficient to explain the lack of | Noted. This can be actioned in response to Recommendation 3. |

	strategically difficult choices. I would endorse a recommendation that sets out some kind of stricter alignment criteria for ranking and possible retirement of less compelling activities.	Note that the evaluation did not find evidence that older projects were not necessarily aligned with the core mission of UNEP. It found repeated evidence (Finding 1C) that there is no effective mechanism to support phasing out existing (especially long-standing) work if it has become less strategically relevant than new work that is being considered. Emphasis added to Recommendation 2: *The softer approach of checking for 'alignment with the MTS/POW at approval' is not sufficient to realise the scale and focus that UNEP aims to achieve. Without such a mechanism it will be difficult for UNEP to maintain the strategic relevance of its work.*
Recommendation 8 *(was Rec 16 at draft)*	While this is a critical point, it is important to note that while the DM adds weight to the need for such a strategy, it is not a fundamental driver for its implementation.	The evaluation team finds that the following features of the DM have <u>increased</u> the need for UNEP to have a knowledge management strategy and made it more of a <u>priority</u>: a) the additional complexity in roles and responsibilities, both in HQ and at decentralized levels, b) the new roles of information gathering at regional/country levels and c) the emphasis on co-creation (i.e. close collaboration and joint decision making etc)
Recommendation 8 *(was Rec 16 at draft)*	There is an ongoing process led by the Communications Division on Knowledge Management: with the current process underway, care must be taken to avoid duplication of efforts. The strategy should build on existing initiatives to ensure alignment and coherence. There is also a need to ensure that any new recommendations are practical and do not overburden staff with additional requirements.	As part of the commenting process the evaluation team was advised that UNEP has received a report on the needs for a knowledge repository and the corporate website. However, there is no guiding strategy and no funds have been identified to continue this work. The Recommendation can act as a catalyst for this work to continue to be developed. The management response should set out what the next steps will be in a course they have already set out on.
Recommendation 8 *(was Rec 16 at draft)*	Recommendation – I think this is now happening – so may not need to include.	Some action has been taken but we will keep the recommendation and the management response can indicate what the next steps are.
Recommendation 8 *(was Rec 16 at draft)*	Very happy with recommendation 16 on an Institutional Knowledge management Strategy. We could perhaps add the need to develop coherence across systems and processes, search functions and underlying taxonomy.	Text added to Recommendation 16: *The strategy needs to ensure coherence across systems and processes, search functions and underlying taxonomy.*
Recommendation 8 *(was Rec 16 at draft)*	Is "centralization" a condition for effectiveness, efficiency and impact? Is it desirable? A major concern with the whole DM is the way risk management and strategic alignment quite systematically translates into increased centralization (and a reason	Text added to Finding 4E:

Finding 4E	why much of UNEP commitment to enhance support at UNCT levels is challenging to unfold). One could rather suggest to try to improve the managerial approach to risk management and alignment itself, and make it more decentralized and entrepreneurial (it would sound counter-intuitive to many in the organization, but it is worth exploring!). As an illustration, the **recommendation 16** is relevant, but again it does not predetermine the angle or principles for strengthening the KM strategy in UNEP… which could 'naturally' lead to more centralization and over-complexifying the very knowledge production in UNEP (and eventually leading to reduced knowledge and low cost-efficiency). Promoting an approach to KM strengthening that frees capacities to produce meaningful and valuable knowledge adapted to what is needed to make change and impact at all levels of UNEP intervention should be considered and formulated.	*It is acknowledged that centralisation, in and of itself, is not the goal of a unified organizational approach. The goal is to avoid the duplication of effort – either duplication of generating knowledge or of repeating less effective work – and to make access to useful knowledge easier in order that this knowledge is used more often and more widely.*
Recommendation 9 *(was Rec 12 at draft)*	The PPD/PDSU is addressing this issue separately through the development of a new combined project manual and a corresponding certification course for all PMOs rather than through the new DM.	While the existing Project Management Training Course was cited several times as an excellent piece of work, it is unlikely that a manual and certification course will, in isolation from other supervision and support initiatives, improve the quality of project and programme implementation.
Recommendation 9 *(was Rec 12 at draft)*	The suggestion that "form should follow function" in structuring supervising offices and managing PCPs is sound, as aligning organizational structures with operational needs can enhance efficiency. Nevertheless, revising supervision structures may face resistance due to established practices, and restructuring could disrupt current workflows during the transition period. Additionally, expanding monitoring and adaptive management may demand increased resources and capacity-building efforts across Divisions, Branches, and Units. The challenge will be to implement changes without overwhelming staff or causing delays in ongoing projects.	The time and resources needed to operationalize the DM/PA, as well as the challenges that need to be faced, should be commensurate with the scope and ambition of the changes the Policy set out.
Recommendation 11 *(was Rec 1 at draft)*	of new MTS or the existing? To specify	Incorporating a diagram in the new MTS is the most realistic, although it would be possible to start designing one based on the existing MTS in preparation for the new MTS.
Recommendation 11 *(was Rec 1 at draft)* P81, diagram	Just to add my support to the idea of a stronger narrative that ties in the importance of the thematic subprogrammes with the enabling and foundational ones. And I like the Science Policy Interface Diagram. I'd suggest developing one for the whole organization that gives voice to the core vision of UNEP to inform, inspire and enable.	The evaluation notes that such a diagram should focus on what UNEP aims to achieve (i.e. not on high-level concepts such as inspire, inform and enable, nor on a diagram in which everyone can expect to 'see' their project-level work). Clarifying text added to Recommendation 1: *This should reflect, as pragmatically as possible, what UNEP aims to achieve and the roles it aims to play. The evaluation found no evidence that concepts such as 'direct, enabling and*

		influencing,' or any alternative abstract terminology, would be effective.
Recommendation 11 *(was Rec 1 at draft)*	It's crucial to keep the visualization of the strategic offer as streamlined and unified as possible, especially as it represents the strategy graphically. Introducing multiple diagrams—particularly 2-3 separate ones for normative and operational work—could dilute the core message and create unnecessary complexity. A single, cohesive visual representation will be more effective in conveying a clear and focused strategic message.	The word *'single'* has been included in Recommendation 1.
Recommendation 11 *(was Rec 1 at draft)*	While this is undoubtedly important, I don't think it is caused by or is a consequence of the new DM, which is more about the 'how' of delivery rather than the 'what'. The strategic engagement to create the new MTS 2026-29, including an extensive 'dialogue' session with key external and internal stakeholders, will address the ' 'what' going forward.	The DM is designed to strengthen 'Delivering as one-UNEP' (p.5) and the fundamental roles of regional staff (Directors and Subprogramme Coordinators) is focused on country dialogue and country/regional representation etc. Having a common understanding of what UNEP offers to countries and partners is fundamental to: a) common messaging across the house so that commitments/agreements and can be upheld and b) manage expectations during dialogues in which countries are being asked to express their priorities and needs.
Recommendation 11 *(was Rec 1 at draft)*	The focus on UNEP's strategic offer – with focus on outcomes and outputs – should complement the MTS cube diagram by following the same structure but expanding in detail of work as per the Annex X in reference. (SPU)	A 'cube' may or may not be the most appropriate visual structure. It is important that such a diagram speaks to people playing many different roles and supports their ability to present and discuss UNEP's offer.
Recommendation 12 *(was Rec 6 at draft)*	*Develop TOCs and concise causal narratives for each of the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes showing: a) the causal pathway(s) of the SP's own change process and b) the cross-cutting role(s) the SP playsi n the Thematic Subprogrammes.* TOCs of the three outcomes - ie climate, nature and pollution, should be developed properly to identify 'causal pathways' to use to design all SPs (and associated PCPs).	The meaning of the comment is not clear – it reads more like a 'note to self' or point of emphasis so no action taken.
Recommendation13 *(was Rec 7 at draft)*	What was not clear to me was what is proposed in Recommendation 7 for the sub programmes and what the reframing meant? So if they are sub programming coordination projects – is that similar to a PCP because there would be overarching approaches I would think. But to have projects diminishes these – so I think I need to better understand this intent.	Bullet in recommendation reformulated after follow up discussions with commentator: *c) further discussion is needed on what should constitute the 'programme' in the single PCPs of each of the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes. One option is for these PCPs to reflect a programmatic approach only for the cross-cutting and institutional capacity development work carried out in each of these Subprogrammes (other country/regional level*

		work would appear in the PCPs of the Thematic Subprogrammes);
Recommendation13 *(was Rec 7 at draft)*	The following points should be considered: maintain a maximum of 3 PCPs per Thematic Subprogramme (i.e. 9 in total); taken together, the set of PCPs in each Thematic Subprogramme should represent the full scope of work of that SP in a way that can be easily communicated and reflects causal thinking; reframe the PCPs for the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes to be Subprogramme Coordinating Projects that facilitate the functioning of the SP in its entirety. These are what PCPs are already. If some of them are not, then, it is a problem of the execusion and design, and not about the scope, structure or objective.	The first item says 'maintain' which means the way they are now should be continued into the next MTS (i.e. not increased nor decreased for the Thematic Subprogrammes) It is not clear that the 3 PCPs in each Thematic Subprogramme actually represents the full scope of that SP in a way that reflects causal thinking and can be easily communicated. The PCPs look as if existing work has been retrospectively grouped simply to include the work under a PCP. The PCPs of the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes represent a 'programme' and not the Subprogramme. This is causing confusion and duplication of effort.
Recommendation13 *(was Rec 7 at draft)*	*The PCPs effectively refer to portfolios of projects with no cumulative or additional results' identification or articulation.* Would be helpful if you could provide a recommendation that would address this observation.	Expanded Recommendation 7: The current PCPs have the features of portfolios of projects rather than programmes. Review the design and composition of the set of PCPs, ensuring they reflect the features of programmes, with synergistic PCP results (i.e. *cumulative or additional* PCP outcomes and *associated* indicators) clearly contributing to their respective SP results (i.e. POW Direct Outcomes).
Recommendation13 *(was Rec 7 at draft)*	Consider whether Divisions really need 3 PCPs. I find that it is carving issues up into really small pieces which would make the ToC between PCPs in that thematic area duplicative.	The creation of PCPs was done quickly and, as per this recommendation, would benefit from revision. However, the evaluation has seen evidence that project-level work has already been 'moved' to reflect the PCP structures, staff are trying to adopt new roles and are initiating processes to coordinate PCPs. The evaluation finds that to drop these constructs now, without any attempt to revise, would lead to far greater confusion and negative effects. The evaluation has therefore recommended a reflection and revision exercise, as the most appropriate immediate step.

		The text in the first bullet of Recommendation 7 says: *maintain a <u>maximum</u> of 3 PCPs per Thematic Subprogramme (i.e. 9 in total).* The actual number is left to the Thematic Subprogrammes with a ceiling of 3.
Recommendation 14 *(was Rec 8 at draft)*	This is an important point; however, it may not be a direct result of the new DM. For instance, the note from the DED to the SMT predates the new DM and PCP guidance.	The Finding (2D) sets out the ways in which the introduction of the Programmatic Approach, which is an associated part of the introduction of the DM, has further obscured a) the use of results' terminology and b) the results pathways that are expected to drive change. The fact that the note from the DED to the SMT predates the new DM and PCP guidance and these new introductions have embedded these issues further in UNEP's programmatic work underlines the importance of Recommendation 7.
Recommendation 16 *(was Rec 4 at draft)*	I question whether this is a persistent challenge that exists independently of the PCP process design. It may not stem from weaknesses in the current policy or guidance, so it is worth considering if this accurately reflects the underlying issue.	The DM is intended, (p5) to support UNEP operating at maximum efficiency and effectiveness to achieve the ambitions of the MTS. The MTS is entitled 'For People and Planet' and inclusion and equality is a core tenet of the work of UNEP specifically and the UN as a whole. Any UNEP Policy should, at the very least, not increase inequality and, one would hope, should have a positive effect on equality and inclusion.
Recommendation 16 *(was Rec 4 at draft)*	SPU will need to work closer with SPCs and other relevant units/divisions on the strategic integration of poverty reduction in the MTS, which will include revising the PCP templates.	Noted. The evaluation report recognizes that there is an ongoing management response to the Sida Poverty Review, which may include actions that can be used to take up this Recommendation.
Recommendation 16 *(was Rec 4 at draft)*	Finding 1D: Do not see how changing PCP template will enhance the social dev uptake of UNEP's work when many findings are alluding to lack of PCPs in the overall DM.	UNEP is free to propose an alternative action that addresses the finding that: *'The potential for addressing gender, equity and other social issues within UNEP's work as part of the focus on people and planet has not been strengthened with the introduction of the DM and PA.'* A review of the report did not find any references (explicit or implied) that there is a lack of PCPs in the overall DM?
Recommendations as a whole:	There are 16 of them and I fear that without prioritisation or an indication of the starting point and cascading way of managing these recommendations, they will not get implemented. For example, I would recommend that the change process is advanced along these lines:	Thanks, suggestion noted. In the Final Report the recommendations have been put into two groups – they are left in the original order for this version so that responses to comments can be more easily found.

	1. Impact and effectiveness of our programming	
	• Strengthen ToCs in each PCP (and consider reduction of PCPs) and between PCPs – **R6, R7, R8, R2, R4**	
	• Improve funding predictability which would help us develop larger, more effective partnerships to advancing the ToC – **R13, R14**	
	• Monitor and communicate – **R1, R16**	
	2. Institutional effectiveness Strengthen MTS ToC , drawing from PCP ToCs – **R5** Strengthen DM policy indicators – **R9** Strengthen corporate KM and communication to MS – **R1, R16, R15**	

	GENERAL	
Cover Page	Figure 1: The model presented during the Transformation aimed to identify and define the linkages between issues affecting UNEP's culture. However, it is important to clarify that the delivery model (DM) was not designed to address these cultural issues directly. Instead, addressing the culture is essential for the DM to function effectively. Therefore, I believe it should not be positioned as a primary driver of the changes within the DM.	Explanatory footnote added: *the DM Policy (p.5) clearly states that the Policy is 'informed by' and 'mainstreams' the five guiding principles. This premise is repeated in the presentation to the SMT (29th, Nov, year unknown) and that of the last CSD/PPD workshop, January 2024.*
General (CAG)	This draft evaluation has been informed by seven CAG meetings. However, to date, a total of 14 CAG meetings have been held. The CAG has matured significantly since CAG No. 7 (CAG No. 7 is the most recent material referenced), as recognised by CAG members recently. <Note Further: CAG should be included in the list of acronyms - its absent; and the correct name is NOT Concept Advisory Group (see page 68), it is Concept Approval Group.	CAG added to abbreviations and term edited through the report to read Concept Approval Group. However, the evaluation notes that both names are in the Acronyms list of the DM Policy document, signed Nov 2022, and the first use of the term in the Policy is Concept Advisory Group.
General	The evaluation speaks of a few 'Areas where traction is evident' on page 6, Section 1.2, but when it comes to 'Key findings' Section 1.4, there are no items corresponding to them. Therefore, one can not see what worked and why.	As a formative evaluation the focus is on the emerging patterns and actions, not a summative assessment of what worked and why.
General	I also felt the link is missing between some of the key findings and recommendations and UNEP's Desired Management and Leadership Style (Figure 1, shown on the cover page). How did or did not UNEP management progress on their style of management and leadership in order to help with the DM implementation?	This is in the Conclusions section which, as mentioned, was completed after the commenting process.

General	An overall reflection seems to be missing from the report: in relation to the DM's intent to enable UNEP to be more responsive to countries' needs.	While these are relevant and useful insights, they did not emerge from the document review (see list in Annex II) nor from interviews (list in Annex I).
	The policy ultimately is called: "Policy on One UNEP Delivery for Better Collaboration and Country Support". While there is a focus on internal collaboration in the report, the 2nd part on country support is largely absent.	These topics can be taken up as important questions to be discussed in a regular forum on operationalizing the DM.
	There are 3 significant considerations beyond those on UNCT engagement:	
	- UNEP's footprint at country level: 50% of UNEP's budget for active projects are implemented at country level (either single country or multi-country), only 5% of the budget is from regional projects and 27%Global. Where does the DM support / facilitate a results-based approached at the country level (and beyond the global normative *adage)*	
	- There are several countries in which UNEP has an overall consumable budget of more than 20 Million USD (cumulative of all projects in the country). Are the processes outlined in the DM fit for purpose in our support to countries?	
	- Many of the countries have different units and Divisions implementing projects. Take Uganda for example, with 18 Million USD of consumable budget, 14 different projects implemented by 4 different divisions (without even going into the breakdown of units). Does the DM facilitate/enhance the coherence of the support UNEP provides to countries?	
	These can be integrated in all of the key areas – strategic relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and monitoring and reporting.	
General	The report has gone beyond its formative scope; it has touched on business processes, some operational issues, strategic issues, some in more detail than others. The report has even gone as far as pointing out how UNEP should be formulating policy. For example: "Lesson Learned No 1 (pg 60) is that UNEP policy development needs..." take forward five points, from a-e. Are there more issues to consider when developing policies, or are these general best practices. The UN/UNEP recognises that policy development is not straightforward and not linear. So, is this Lessons Learnt really relevant in a formative Evaluation of the Delivery Model ? Clarify if there has been scope creep, which is why findings, lessons earned, and recommendations are not talking to each other. Cut out, trim and confine.	The comment is referring to a Lesson, not a Recommendation, and is relevant to a formative evaluation of the introduction of a new Policy. UNEP is free to add to the lesson as it sees fit and this does not become part of any compliance mechanism.
		Lessons learned reflect the new knowledge or understanding gained by the experience of implementing a project [in this case a Policy] that is applicable to, and useful in, other similar contexts. (UNEP Results Definitions, Dec 2023)
		The DM and PA has wide-ranging implications for the House and respondents shared their experiences in response to the evaluation questions set out in the Inception Report.

Throughout report	Most of the SPs do not directly match with Divisions not only Digital transformation SP, e.g delivery of Nature Action, Climate action depends heavily on Industry and Economy division.	An explanatory footnote added, in several places in the report, to Finding 3C.
Throughout report	Para is referring to the planned move of GSPCs to divisions- Please note that GSPCs were already moved to Technical Divisions. ED's memo is attached for reference.	Edits made to Finding 3A, in several places in the report, to reflect past tense.
	GSPC for climate change was already transferred to the CC Division. So paragraphs 124 that says "if GSPC returns to a Divisional home' and related finding 3C, could reflect that it has already happened in the case of one GSPC. We haven't noticed a duplication of roles because i) we are still missing a Division Director and ii) GSPC's role seems to be well carved out on a) liaison work with PPD and CSD and b) lead of UNFCCC organisation. There is no issue with the PCP DRI management flow.	Finding 3C now reflects past tense. The evaluation notes positive experience with the PCP DRI management flow in the case of Climate Change, but did not find that this experience is universal or the most frequent.

	LESSONS	
Lesson 2	The text mentions a discussion about locating GSPCs in the Technical Divisions that is happening now and was happening in 2016/7- in fact the prior discussion was in the other direction – ie the GSPCs were co-located with Divisions and the discussion was whether to move them to PPD (a decision which was eventually taken).	The comment emphasizes the importance of Lesson 2 (i.e. that substantial institutional changes should be grounded in a sound problem analysis and indication of what a successful solution is expected to look like. This would go someway in avoiding what appear to be 'pendulum' type changes.
Lesson 2	It is advisable to include a recommendation related to Lesson Learned #2 listed on page 61	Lessons and Recommendations will be presented to the SMT. If a recommendation is considered beneficial on this point, it can be drafted.

	FINDINGS	
Findings	*Key Findings* I would like to see Findings listed under this Section to b the key ones only and not listing exactly the same ones listed under Chapter 3 ad 6.	No changes made: This is a formative evaluation of a Policy that is newly introduced and has wide-ranging implications. The value that the evaluation offers is a structured description and analysis of the current situation within the house. We expect the report to also have a wide readership, but that many people may only read the Executive Summary. For this reason the complete list of findings, which are already a summary of the full scope of material gathered during the evaluation process, are presented here.
Finding 1C	*…rejecting less strategic or lower-priority work* Less effective/impactful, and/or weak alignment to the latest strategy.	No changes made:

		Being strategic means making choices based on reaching a defined objective – it is about focusing effort on more strategic and higher priority work to achieve set goals. A piece of work can be highly effective but not strategic. Equally, work can be well aligned to the MTS but not a priority.
Finding 1D	*The potential for addressing gender, equity and other social issues within UNEP's work as part of the focus on people and planet has not been strengthened with the introduction of the DM and PA* I see this as a whole new strategic issue of UNEP to deal with possibly beyond the current scope of the DM.	The aim of the DM is to strengthen the MTS, which is clearly for People and Planet so this is within the scope of the DM.
Finding 2D	Since they are foundational SPs to support the thematic TOC, it should not have a stand-alone TOC.	The Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes are still <u>Subprogrammes</u>, which contain work that delivers directly on the POW and MTS Outcomes as well as through work that cuts across the other Subprogrammes. They should have their own TOCs that link their work to the POW and MTS Outcomes. The TOCs for the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes should reflect two main pathways – the direct effect of the SP work and the effect of work that is cross cutting and contributes to other SPs. At the moment the TOCs for the PCPs of these Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes actually represent the scope of work under the Subprogramme itself so should be <u>consistent</u> with the TOCs of the other Subprogrammes.
Finding 2E	*…The Questions arises of why the PCPs are not more closely aligned to the scopes of work managed under Branches and Unit.* This is only or 'some' PCPS… Generalization is not helpful.	The point being made is not that some PCPs are more closely aligned to the scope of work of a Branch or Unit but that the whole set of PCPs could reflect UNEP's Branch/Unit structure. Text expanded: *The question arises of why the set of PCPs are not more closely aligned to, or better reflect and represent, the set of Branches and Units, in keeping with the general wisdom that 'form' should follow 'function'.*
Finding 2F	Co-creation is not a 'mechanism' as stated early on this report. Co-creation is mentioned 85 times in this report. As used in this report, it seems to be focused on the RO-DO dynamic, not on DO-DO inter-divisional co-creation… It does not even consider the idea of co-implementation. This suggests a narrow appreciation of how contained co-	The findings of the report on the early experiences in implementing the DM/PA reflect an analysis of reviewed documents (see list in Annex II) and responses from interviewees (Annex I).

	creation actually is. There is in fact basic guidance on co-creation in CAG templates, and in the trainings to CAG/SMT members, with notable maturity in understanding of what co-creation means in practice. Co-creation is a small part of a massive cultural shift. Coming up with templates and guidance on creation etc to advance a cultural shift is didactic and narrow, to the point that it will strip away self-discovery and learning, as we see in many real-world cases. Sometimes excessive hand-holding through the use of increased and even more guidance and templates to advance a cultural shift can introduce unintended consequences.	The focus on the RO-DO dynamic reflects the concerns of respondents and the request for more support on understanding how 'co-creation' approaches are expected to be operationalized was one of the most frequently expressed requests across interviews.
Finding 3A	Reference is made to revision of GSPC/RSPCs roles in DM policy. Please note that the role of GSPCs has not changed since its establishment.	Explanatory footnote added: While the role of the GSPC has not significantly changed since its establishment, the DM/PA changes the context within which it is expected to fulfil its role, which requires some clarification, especially vis-à-vis the PCP DRI role, to avoid potential duplication of effort. Given the recent move of the GSPC posts into the Technical Divisions further clarification of the role vis-à-vis divisional staff roles (e.g. areas of decision making) would be beneficial.
Finding 3C last bullet point c)	Most of the SPs do not directly match with Divisions not only Digital transformation SP, e.g delivery of Nature Action, Climate action depends heavily on Industry and Economy division.	Explanatory footnote added: While the Thematic Subprogrammes may appear more closely matched to a Division (e.g. Nature Action appear to closely match the work of the Ecosystem Division) this may be misleading. For example, work in Nature and Climate Action are heavily dependent on projects managed by the Industry and Economy Division.
Finding 4C	*The monitoring of UNEP's work takes place largely within IPMR system and is of a granular nature. It is difficult to aggregate UNEP's results from the project level upwards because UNEP's results chains are not adequately supported by causal narratives that explains how UNEP's work will drive change.* This is incorrect understanding. POW monitoring takes place through PPR and RB reporting mainly using IPMR as one of information sources.	Finding 4C has been clarified: *Finding 4C: Reporting on the implementation of UNEP's work takes place largely within the IPMR system and is of a granular nature. It is difficult to aggregate UNEP's results from the project level upwards partly because the programme structure is not reflected in IPMR, but also because UNEP's results chains are not adequately supported by causal narratives that explain how UNEP's work will drive change and there is a lack of results statements at the programme and subprogramme levels.*

	MAIN BODY	
Terminology	I suggest enhancing this definition of co-creation by emphasising that for it to be successful, all stakeholders, including team members, must actively engage in discussions and problem-solving. This collaborative approach fosters a sense of ownership and engagement and ensures that diverse perspectives are integrated into project development, ultimately leading to more effective and relevant outcomes.	Thanks for the suggestion. The evaluation team did not find a definition of co-creation in any of the documentation and this entry is used to disclose how the evaluation team understood the term during the course of its work. It would not be appropriate to re-define this retrospectively.
Para 3	Regarding comments on the Desired Management and Leadership Style (see above), para 3 should be removed. The key rationale for the DM is included in para 2, and the changes introduced are listed in para 5	Explanatory footnote added: *the DM Policy (p.5) clearly states that the Policy is 'informed by' and 'mainstreams' the five guiding principles. This premise is repeated in the presentation to the SMT (29th, Nov, year unknown) and that of the last CSD/PPD workshop, January 2024.*
Para 4	Please add the Diagram and the following from Pages 9 and 10 of the Inception Report. I thought they were clear.	Figure 4 on Page 9 of the Inception Report is well known to the audience of this formative evaluation report and is not deemed central to its purpose.
Para 4	9. The information from pages 9 and 10 of the Inception Report is clear and should be included. Specifically, the enhanced 'programmatic approach' represents an evolution from the previous 'Programme Framework' construct. This new approach emphasises 'quality on entry' and 'quality during implementation,' which is crucial for realising interdependent benefits. Additionally, focusing on learning and adaptive management during the transition to the new DM is vital, as it encourages divisions and regions to co-create and challenge conventional thinking.	The requested highlights have been added as para 6: *The PA was envisaged as an evolution from the earlier 'Programme Framework' construct, reflected in the Subprogrammes. In the past, the focus was more on 'quality on entry', placing emphasis on both the design and results alignment of each cluster of work, but there were few management arrangements to promote coordination and synergy across projects within each Programme Framework. The new PA aims to build on this by also including 'quality during implementation' where management and coordination actions need to be taken during implementation to realize interdependent benefits. Implicit in the enhanced approach is a strong emphasis on learning and adaptive management, which goes beyond monitoring and evaluation of performance and encompasses co-creation.*

Para 10	The Inception Report lists the High-Level benefits of the new DM Policy as: - Focus on the triple planetary crises of climate, nature loss and pollution and the most game-changing solutions. -Teamwork to deliver as one UNEP so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. - Accountability to ensure a clear line of sight from results to delivery. The Formative Evaluation identifies areas where traction is evident: - Consensus on the value of the focus in the MTS on the triple planetary crises; - Widespread support for responding to regional/country priorities and needs. - Widespread support for the principle of increased co-creation and considerable efforts by individuals and teams to respond to the expectations of the DM and PA, although these are largely unorchestrated (beyond the Office or Division/Branch they belong to) and reliant on pre-existing relationships and work patterns. Given that the evaluation took place early after the new DM was introduced, this strikes me as a successful policy introduction, and it should be acknowledged. This leads nicely into the "Areas where more discussion and operational guidance is needed," which are excellent pointers to what UNEP should do to increase the model's maturity.	This is a *formative* exercise undertaken, as set out in the DM Policy, after a year of implementation. Like any interim assessment, it focuses on the degree to which plans are progressing as expected and identifies areas that may require improvement. To establish 'success' more time would need to have elapsed and there would need to be pre-determined and more clearly defined success measures.
Para 10	The evaluation speaks of a few 'Areas where traction is evident' on page 6, Section 1.2, but when it comes to 'Key findings' Section 1.4, there are no items corresponding to them. Therefore, one cannot see what worked and why.	This is a *formative* exercise undertaken, as set out in the DM Policy, after a year of implementation. Like any interim assessment, it focuses on the degree to which plans are progressing as expected and identifies areas that may require improvement.
Para 26	On strategic relevance – taking a step further on the point on UNEP's ability to communicate its offer, it is also UNEP's ability to work with entities and partners that are not environmental organisations.	Noted
Para 26	Strategic relevance should give an indication of whether the delivery model is enhancing the support UNEP provides to countries. This is the key question. While our ability to communicate our offer is important, it is no match for our ability to deliver support.	Strategic relevance refers to whether UNEP is putting its time and resources into the 'right' things – 'right' things, in the context of the MTS are the three environmental planetary crises and, in the context of the DM, identified country/regional priorities and needs. Whether UNEP is doing this 'right' (i.e. enhancing its support to countries) would come under Effectiveness.
Para 29	UN reform is perhaps an outdated term (as the reform was launched in 2018) – suggest renaming it to UN country team engagement. It may also be interesting to refer to the opportunity of a strengthened engagement with UNCTs: complementary operational capacity to deliver at country level, cross-sectoral work which avoids maintaining	Noted Para 30 extended to read: *reflect the UN Reform agenda, including UN Country Team engagement,*

	environment siloed, coordinated entry point with ministries of planning and finance (beyond ministeries of environment)	
Para 29	I suspect it might be worth mentioning more is the wider UN Reform process as a 'horizon' factor in the creation of the DM. One aspect of that was proximity to country needs, and hence the idea of setting up the Country Focal Points. I think the importance of this as a key shift in UN policy more generally slightly overtook the development of the DM, so, to my mind at least, it has been bolted on a bit as an afterthought to the DM.	Noted
Para 55	*"It was reported that conditionally approved and rejected concepts are often sent back to be re-worked ...but does not address the question of whether UNEP's new proposals reflect the expected strategic focus or appropriate balance of effort".* This presumes that some concepts are irrelevant but it could be that all concepts are relevant within their sphere of work, considering that we need to serve all member states and that, specifically on climate action, the member states that have contributed least to the problem are the most vulnerable. I think there is a wider point about being selective in where we programme in order to prove the TOC however, we cannot ignore the imperative to help our Member States access financing that addresses aspects of the triple planetary crisis and that we would be criticized as an organization for concentrating focus on a handful of countries. . Let's not forget that each project is a universe on its own and they do achieve and impact at the country level. What UNEP needs to better at is linking this to our advocacy and comms and our normative messaging.	Added explanatory text to para 55. *The MTS sets out organizational strategic objectives and priorities; similarly the DM commits to being more responsive to country and regional needs and priorities. Both of these positions pre-suppose that some work is more strategically relevant or prioritized than others. In order to achieve these objectives in the expected timeframes (i.e. SDGs. Agenda 2030 etc) choices have to be made between what work should be carried out first or to scale or where and how limited resources should be directed etc. Operating in a strategic manner presupposes that some possibilities are not acted upon and some existing work may no longer be the priority.* As there is no evidence that 'saying no' to work or phasing out long-standing work etc is normalized within UNEP (i.e. there is no mechanism to do it, no support for it, no examples of it having happened through a conscious decision-making process) then we cannot say that UNEP is equipped in the best way to achieve its strategic objectives, which is something the CAG was set up to strengthen.
Para 65	*The integration of LNOB, gender equality and vulnerability into the PA has been challenging...where such aspects are not usually included beyond the issue of s****ocial safeguards, making use of a rights'-based approach and meeting the requirements of the gender marker****.* If projects can achieve the approach highlighted in bold, we would be making very good progress. What else is missing in the approach?	Text in para 65 edited to clarify difference between design and implementation. From the PPD perspective, the integration of LNOB, gender equality and vulnerability into the PA has been challenging as it has depended primarily on existing projects and portfolios, where such aspects are often not included beyond the *inclusion at design* of social safeguards in relation to vulnerable groups, making use of a rights-based approach and meeting the requirements of the gender marker. *During project implementation there is much less evidence of*

		differentiated strategies that promote inclusion and equality having been followed or the intentions spelled out in project design documents having been actioned.
Para 66	The country dashboards (active projects in IPMR) indicate that only 9% of UNEP consumable budget is directed towards conflict countries and only 13% to LDCs;	Thanks. Added to paragraph 66
Para 69 onwards	Whereas there might not be evidence yet, it would be useful to bring this perspective into the sections on partnership, RBM, collaboration. Is the DM helping coherence and collaboration at country level – especially when you have 20 different projects, managed by 20 different project managers in 5 different divisions?	This may well be a question for the future. Based on the findings of this formative evaluation, the current priorities related to this point are achieving coherence in UNEP's programming and collaboration between Regional and Divisional Offices, as well as establishing a mechanism whereby country/regional needs and priorities are translated into projects and programming.
Para 78	Co-creation and collaboration should and needs to be considered beyond the Division – Regional Office dynamic. It is also between Division, branches and units.	Agreed, but at the moment the focus among all the respondents who addressed this topic, was on Regional – Divisional dynamic.
Para 83	The reflection on this question is completely missing: Q B.4 What evidence is emerging that UNEP's programmatic engagement with countries and UNCTs has been/is likely to be enhanced?	Acknowledged. Text added before para 83. *UNEP's engagement with countries and UNCTs is reported to be improving, with reference to enhanced alignment with national priorities, greater involvement in joint programming, and increased visibility through country focal points. However, the full potential of these efforts is yet to be realised due to resource constraints, capacity limitations and ongoing challenges in fully integrating UNEP's environmental priorities into broader UN and country-level frameworks. The delivery model is still evolving, with the need for more robust implementation strategies to maximise its impact.*
Para 84	*The three thematic Subprogramme OC show no causal pathways between the POW direct outcomes and the MTS outcomes.* The PCP Adaptation & Resilience updated its ToC on recommendation of the CAG secretariat, which was approved in mid-June 2024. The updated PCP is available for your review.	Revised version of Adaptation and Resilience PCP received. TOC shows a level of 'Outputs' before the MTS Outcomes. The components remain the same. It is not yet clear where the programmatic outcomes are reflected, although effort to revise is noted.
Para 93	*The continuation of legacy projects and the lack of a robust mechanism for phasing out or retiring projects suggest that true RBM is not fully operational.*	The emphasis here is on the fact that there is no robust mechanism for phasing out or retiring projects based on an

	This presumes that on-going projects have no value which I don't thing can be the case as a broad generalisation. Please refer to my first comment.	assessment of their strategic merit, not that all ongoing or long-standing projects don't have value. To have a strategic focus UNEP should have a mechanism to assess the merits of existing work against the potential of new work, as well as a basis for considering the merits of new work – it can't be that UNEP does everything that is on offer or possible, or operates on a first come, first served basis. The evidence indicates that even at concept stage nothing is actually rejected and we know that the existing projects in the PCPs were not reviewed when the PCPs were approved.
Para 110	Roles and responsibilities – a more comprehensive understanding of existing roles in regional offices (in terms of skillset and responsibilities) vs those required for political representation outlined in the DM would be key in the reflection on efficiency. Do we need more human resources or different responsibilities and skillsets? Whether to be included in the evaluation or as a recommendation.	Bullet g under Recommendation 10 has been extended with: *Such studies may cover both the extent of human resources needed as well as the capacity development needed to support changed roles and needed skill sets (see para 120).* Para 120 added: *However, it is evident from this evaluation that the extent to which UNEP requires both more human resources and different responsibilities and skill sets to implement the DM/PA, have not yet been fully assessed. In that regard, any studies should a) explore what staff are needed in both ROs and Divisions to handle the increased responsibilities, particularly in project implementation, political coordination, and support roles and b) consider a functional review to redefine and clarify roles across the organization, reducing overlap and ensuring that each staff member understands their duties. Following such studies a plan for a targeted training programmes to build the necessary skills for co-creation, systemic thinking, and strategic planning under the DM/PA may be developed. This would include plans for strengthening change management processes to help staff adapt to their new roles and responsibilities.*
Para 118	The evaluation argues that the role of the Regional Development Coordinator was never spelled out in the Delivery Model. This is accurate. Indeed, the idea of country engagement was little discussed in the development of the Delivery Model at the time.	Text added to para 118:

	Having been involved with the elaboration of the strategy for the Europe Office I see how this role has both provided some direct accountability to countries, but – as with some of the other duplication of roles, it seems to have added another layer of coordination to UNEP's processes.	*A finding from this evaluation is that the Regional Development Coordinator role is played by experienced staff. Importantly, they consolidate country knowledge into a regional perspective and act as advisers to others playing UNCT Focal Point roles. In some cases they also hold institutional knowledge gained over time, which is valuable in times of substantive institutional change.*
Para 153	*For the 2024 resource allocation, the first discussions began in October 2023, and initial disbursement of 40% was issued in December 2023 and the final disbursement was made during April/May 2024.* For the 2024 resources allocation, we got the memo with the final allocation details in August 2024.	Paragraph edited to read *August*.
After para 189. Section 7.3	A number of the recommendations need to be done by mid 2025 when the next MTS preparation is completed.	No response needed.
After para 189. Section 7.3	This need to be done by July 2025 as part of the new MTS.	No response needed.
ANNEX I	*Summary of Substantive Stakeholders comments* Missing?	The Summary of Stakeholder comments can only be inserted once the commenting process is complete.
ANNEX IV:	I think we are not using this terminology in the DM. Please use only those appearing in DM.	This term was used in the Inception Report, not the Main Report.

ANNEX IV: KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE INCEPTION REPORT

1.   Based on the review of documents and a small number of explanatory interviews during the evaluation inception phase (Jan – March 2024), the evaluation team confirmed the following state of play, prior to the primary data collection phase (see below). The areas of focus were derived from a reading of the DM Policy and other documents that described the changes that were being introduced, with an emphasis on the new and key features that were being introduced. These were either confirmed, amended or expanded upon based on the additional inputs gathered during interviews:

Regional and Divisional Roles and Responsibilities

2.   In the Inception Phase of this evaluation, it was evident that there were differences in both interpretation and take up of new roles, suggesting more clarity and alignment was needed. This was most pronounced around the change in roles and responsibilities of Divisional and Regional Offices. The boundaries between overlapping roles were noted as being blurred, potentially limiting both effectiveness and efficiency of all aspects of the programme cycle. The expectation that staff in full-time positions would be able to take on additional and substantive roles was also a concern. One central workshop had, in November 2023, been held with UNCT Focal Points.

Co-creation of Projects

3.   As can be expected in the early stages of any major organizational change, there were indications of some confusion around the actual operationalisation of synergistic approaches and co-creation and these were associated with issues of ownership and accountability as well as power and access to resources. There were accounts of Regional Offices (Ros) only being involved in reviewing project documents at their later stages of development, but also examples of good inclusion and planning discussions, between some Substantive Divisions (SDs) and ROs.

Resource Allocations

4.   At inception, the Thematic Funds (operationalised in October 2022) was noted as having secured approx. USD 15m and having a dedicated Secretariat hosted by Corporate Services Division. The most recent Pipeline Analysis noted that resource mobilisation was heavily dominated by vertical funding (e.g. the GEF, GCF and bilateral partners etc). Significant delays in the allocation and disbursement of core resources was noted as having the potential to negatively affect the delivery of the Programme of Work.

Leadership/Management Style

5.   Concerns were identified around the need for continued communication and transparency from the leadership; how the changes in the flow of information would be operationalised as part of the co-creation commitment and new accountability structure and how staff in existing roles would be enabled to take up new or amended/expanded roles.

Concept Approval Group

6.   The Concept Approval Group (CAG) had been established with a set of TOR, had approved 13 PCPs and had held several monthly meetings, chaired by the Deputy Executive Director. Two presentations (Sept 2023 and Feb 2024) were provided, each addressing the question: 'what is the nature of the group of concepts being approved'. In the February analysis the MTS/POW pipeline was seen to be: strongly geared towards Climate and Nature Action; project concepts tended to be country specific; 80% were directed towards lower and upper middle-income countries and the pipeline was dominated by vertical funds (46.6% of funds in the form of GEF grants);

Risk-Based Project Review Committee

7.   The role of ensuring that political, financial and implementation risks are managed is assigned to the SD Directors and the role of helping to identify risks is assigned to the PCP DRIs. Risks are expected to be addressed through CAG and Project Review Committee (PRC) meeting and approval processes. Specifically, the PRC meetings for projects identified as facing high risks should be chaired by the Deputy Executive Director, those facing medium level risks chaired by the Director of Policy and Programme Division (PPD) and those considered to be operating in a low-risk context, chaired by PPD or the PRC Secretariat Focal Point.

POW Results and Indicators

8.   Potential challenges to the effective development of results and indicators at the POW level were identified as: data availability and quality issues, insufficient capacity for monitoring and evaluation, and the complexity of measuring environmental outcomes. Limited resources and competing priorities may also challenge effective monitoring and evaluation efforts, requiring strategic prioritization and resource allocation.

Results

There are 9 Outcomes at the MTS (2025) level and a further 38 Outcomes at the POW (2023) levels. The MTS level Outcomes do not either reflect UNEP's intended achievements in terms of addressing the triple planetary crisis nor represent environmental benefits. The agents where change should become evident (i.e. stakeholders representing a unit of analysis) are either not stated in the POW Direct Outcomes or are highly mixed (e.g. CA 1.2 government, non-government, private sector and financial community)

➢   Of the 9 MTS Outcomes, 3 are governed by common outcome level verbs *(adopted, implemented and reduced);* 4 are governed by verbs that require further definition to be evidenced *(enhanced, optimised and improved);* 1 only implies the need for action to be demonstrated *(increased capacity)* and 1 is at an output level *(established)*.

➢   In the 38 POW Direct Outcomes a range of verbs are used including those common at an outcome level *(integrated into, informed by, aligned with, apply, sustainably managed/governed, decreases, reduced, adopted and upscaled);* those that require further definition to be evidenced *(strengthened, enhanced, catalysed, shifted towards/away, addresses, contribute to, internalised in, maximised, advanced, improved and mainstreamed);* those that imply the need for action to be demonstrated *(enhanced/strengthened capacity)* and those that are at an output level *(generated and shared, are supported).*

➢   Some POW Direct Outcomes (1.4, 2.5, 2.12, 3.2, 3.8 and 3.9) are not reflected in any of the four Foundational and Enabling PCP TOCs (i.e. these POW Direct Outcomes are expected to be achieved without foundational or enabling contributions).

➢   In all but four instances, the three PCPs associated with each of the Thematic Subprogrammes only refer to POW Direct Outcomes also associated with that same Thematic Subprogramme (i.e. little indication of contributions across the Thematic Subprogrammes).

Indicators

Achievements against both sets of outcomes are measured through a common set of 31 indicators. An assessment of the POW/MTS indicators against the standard SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) highlighted the following observations:

Specific: In the 2022-25 MTS, logical cause and effect thinking is compromised. In previous MTS' the successful achievement of each Expected Accomplishment (EA) was measured through a set of several (1 to 6) EA indicators. However, in the current MTS the reverse is described: each indicator is taken as a measure of the successful achievement of multiple (1 to 6) MTS Outcomes as well as multiple (2 to 14) POW Direct Outcomes. The indicators cannot be specific if they are applied to such a wide range of results.

Measurable: Some indicators look measurable (e.g. number of policies and strategies adopted) but have an underlying conceptual weakness, for example, can all policies and strategies be called equal (e.g. municipal vs national; multi-part policy vs all-encompassing; tangential environmental element vs core)? Can evidence for indicators of cross-cutting work (e.g. Digital Transformations) be isolated and identified? Some terms, such as adopted, need clarification and consistent interpretation to be comparable and therefore be suitable for addition together. All indicators, including qualitative ones, need a relevant baseline for change to be measured repeatedly. In all cases, attributing change to UNEP's work requires a strong causal justification for any measurement to be useful.

Achievable: Some quantitative targets associated with the indicators appear ambitious to achieve in the timeframe although it is impossible to assess this without an appropriate baseline figure. The absence of baseline measures is of concern as it suggests the measurement of the indicator may not have been

fully developed or tested. Qualitative indicators relating to shifting public opinion appear to be too far outside UNEP's sphere of operations or influence to be meaningful.

<u>Relevant:</u> The indicators can all be said to be relevant to UNEP's work and/or mandate. However, it is less clear whether the indicators represent dimensions of change that have the potential to 'shift the needle' or that are central to solving the triple planetary crises (i.e. dimensions of centrality to the issues, potential for substantive effects etc. also need to be considered).

<u>Time-bound:</u> All the targets associated with the indicators have timeframes. However, the meaning of these is challenged by differences in the duration of the mechanisms intended to deliver the results. For example, the MTS spans 4 years from 2022-25 yet the PCPs vary from 3 years (2023, '24 and '25) to five, which would outlast the MTS. Beyond this, project timelines vary. An analysis of those projects that are expected to make the most noticeable contribution to the indicator would be needed to assess the feasibility of the timelines.

Theories of Change

9.   There are a total of 16 TOCs relevant to the POW: 3 TOCs for the Thematic Subprogrammes; 9 PCP TOCs that are assigned to the Thematic Subprogrammes and 4 PCP TOCs that are assigned to the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes. There are also project level TOCs from projects approved in 2023/24.

10.   In the Thematic Subprogramme TOC there are no causal pathways between POW/MTS Outcomes; the PCP TOCs more closely correspond with the definition of a portfolio than a programme. This is because there are no links, from a results perspective, between the project and programme level outcomes. The programmes are organised into Components, and only sometimes refer to Programme Outcomes. There is no consistent indication of causal pathways between Programme Components/Outcomes and the POW Direct Outcomes.

11.   The inter-relationships between the PCP TOCs and the TOCs of the three Thematic Subprogrammes themselves do not reflect the expected conscious synergy; the inter-relationships between the TOCs of the three Thematic Subprogrammes and the single PCPs of the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes do not reflect the expected conscious synergy.

12.   There is no indication of causal pathways between Project Outcomes and Programme Components/Outcomes. The timeframes of the PCP TOCs are not clear: the PCP budgets indicate a mid-point of 3 years and an end after 5 years but more clarity is needed around how these timeframes relate to: a) project durations, b) the POW duration and c) the MTS duration. The status and inter-relationship between the Results Alignment Table and the TOC in the PCP documents is unclear as they are not always consistent.

Programme Coordinating Projects

13.   The 13 PCPs represent a diverse set of Programmes, including 3 each from the Thematic and one each for the Foundational and Enabling Subprogrammes. It is recognised that the task of designing PCPs was undertaken within a tight timeframe and that those involved have indicated that even after a relatively short implementation period they have gained learning and insights that would help them to improve the designs and documents.

14.   It is understood that presentations on each of the 13 PCPs were made to the Committee of Permanent Representative (CPR) by global SPCs at the 10th Annual Sub Committee Meeting and that, beginning in April 2024, more in-depth presentations of PCPs were made on a gradual basis.

15.   The PCPs differ considerably in terms of their size, both in terms of initiatives covered as well as financial resources. The quality of the PCPs varies both across the PCPs and within each PCP in terms of the quality of the items covered. This means that no one PCP stands out as a good practice model. In terms of the projects that are part of a PCP, it is not made clear to which component these (mainly) contribute, leaving gaps in the understanding of how the PCP is meant to produce results. The number of existing (legacy) projects usually far outnumbers project concepts, which leaves gaps in understanding

how the initiatives, as part of the PCP, are meant to contribute to MTS results. Targeting of the project concepts appears uneven with often no clear justification of a focus at global, regional and country level and the combination of these levels within the Programme.

16.   Typically, each PCP will have a large Project Steering Committee which will meet biannually, with frequent mention of a physical meeting once a year. It is noted that the roles described are all additional to the roles already held by existing position holders; there is potential for considerable overlaps either between roles (e.g. Heads of Branch, GSPCs, Unit Heads as PCP DRIs and GEF Portfolio Managers) or between 'core' and 'PCP' roles (e.g. Heads of Branch overseeing work in the Branch and work that extends beyond that Branch). There are also organisational differences, with the Digital Transformations Subprogramme and PCP, for example, not housed in a single Division, unlike the other Subprogrammes and PCPs.

17.   PCPs in terms of their results framework make use of the MTS 2022-25 outcome areas and the POW Direct Outcomes and indicators, making a selection that fits the specific Programme. This, however, has not necessarily led to strong causal result chains given that the combined set of indicators are related to POW Direct Outcomes and MTS Outcomes without identifying the causal relations between individual indicators, Direct Outcomes and MTS outcomes. The way in which the linkages between the Thematic Subprogrammes are made explicit in the setup of their PCPs is very limited. While linkages between Subprogrammes are identified in several of the PCPs, this is usually not reflected in the results framework, nor are the management arrangements acknowledged.

18.   A variety of ways to enhance synergy has been identified in the various PCPs, including collaborative approaches, support to global and regional Multi-national Environmental Agreements (MEA), interdisciplinary cooperation, strategic partnerships, knowledge sharing, alignment with strategic objectives, and shared robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. There has been substantial integration of MEAs and GEF initiatives in the PCPs.

19.   No details are provided on the comparative advantages of partners and the roles that they are expected to play in the projects concerned, which makes it difficult to assess the strategic relevance of the partnerships. There are no clear resource mobilization strategies, detailed M&E plans, knowledge management strategies and communication and outreach strategies annexed to any of the PCPs. Gender and other social issues and concerns are only included in a piecemeal manner in the PCPs.

Typology of Interventions

20.   The new typology of interventions is described as being intended to empower UNEP to: 'focus its efforts on interventions that deliver results, leverage its comparative advantage, offer value for money, and adhere to UNEP's mandate'. The typology is also expected to support dialogue with Member States on what work UNEP is implementing and to provide a framework for qualitative and quantitative reporting of results.

21.   At the inception phase it was not clear what the three levels of interventions represent within each of the four types of interventions. In addition, the differentiation between enabling and influencing levels requires further explanation. The co-creation between Substantive Divisions and Regional Offices is only a requirement for projects falling under type B (Technical support, capacity building and advisory services). It is assumed that the other types of projects will be delivered through corporate projects to be developed by Regional Offices and funded through an allocation from the Environment Fund. The project concept templates ask for an indication of the type of project that is being proposed. It is not clear a) how a decision is made when a project has components that fit under all three types of intervention; b) how this will be used to 'frame' results reporting and c) how these levels will have a bearing, if any, on the design, approval and implementation of projects.

Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

22.   A new Monitoring and Reporting Policy was being finalised, along with a Monitoring and Reporting Framework, which is expected to provide more operational guidance, for example, on what a monitoring and reporting plan should look like etc.

23.   The Monitoring and Reporting Unit is responsible for the preparation and submission of regular corporate performance reports to the Member States, including the Programme Performance Report (PPR) and the Quarterly Business Report (QBR), among others. Since 2021 the QBR has presented trends in performance (operational excellence) against 15 KPIs. The data are collected and presented for 7 Divisions, 7 Regional Offices and 3 Offices with 'non programmatic' functions.

24.   The global SPCs are responsible for the synthesis and reporting of regular corporate results related to their subprogramme. The data will be collected, primarily, from UNEP's information system, IPMR. The Monitoring and Reporting Unit validates the results reported by the global SPCs against the 31 programmatic indicators using an excel-based validation template. For each indicator the template includes the units of measure and data sources (i.e. named projects, relevant databases, reports and surveys etc) and asks for evidence extracted from that data source. The template also prompts for a summary of how UNEP has contributed to the reported result. At inception phase, this validation exercise had been undertaken once since the new DM and PA were introduced.

25.   The evaluation team, at the inception phase, did not see any consistent articulation of the core benefits of the DM and PA, although the team did compile a table of possible benefits from across a number of sources. There are no known KPIs specific to the new DM.

26.   PCPs refer, in their budgets, to both a Mid Term Review (after 3 years) and a Terminal Evaluation (after 5 years). Most PCPs state that the Mid Term Review will be carried out by the relevant Technical Division and that UNEP's Evaluation Office will undertake the Terminal Evaluation, often within 6 months of programme implementation.

ANNEX V: TYPOLOGY OF INTERVENTIONS

Table 4: Typology of UNEP Interventions

Types of Interventions	Details
A) Generation and dissemination of science-policy knowledge	Including through scientific networks, coalitions and platforms, substantive advocacy, technical materials, and databases and digital materials
B) Technical support, capacity building and advisory services	Including through policy and regulatory development, demonstration and pilot testing innovative solutions and technologies, scaling up activities with partners, and training events
C) Advocacy and Outreach	Including outreach programmes and special events, and information materials
D) Intergovernmental and interagency processes	Including conference and secretariat services, the provision of Secretariats of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), and support for 'One UN' processes

Source: UN Environment Programme, UNEP Delivery Model, Policy for One UNEP Delivery for Better Collaboration and Country Support, September 2022.

Table 5: Levels of UNEP Interventions

Levels of Interventions	Details
Direct	UNEP plays a direct role, setting the scene for transformational change through science driven global advocacy, capacity development and stakeholder mobilization, to upscale innovative solutions through partnerships and networks
Enabling	UNEP enables others to initiate systemic change by supporting policymaking, changes in behaviours and attitudes, development of norms and standards, and institutional strengthening
Influencing	UNEP influences others to achieve social, economic and political transformational change through strengthened global norms and standards

Source: UN Environment Programme, UNEP Delivery Model, Policy for One UNEP Delivery for Better Collaboration and Country Support, September 2022.
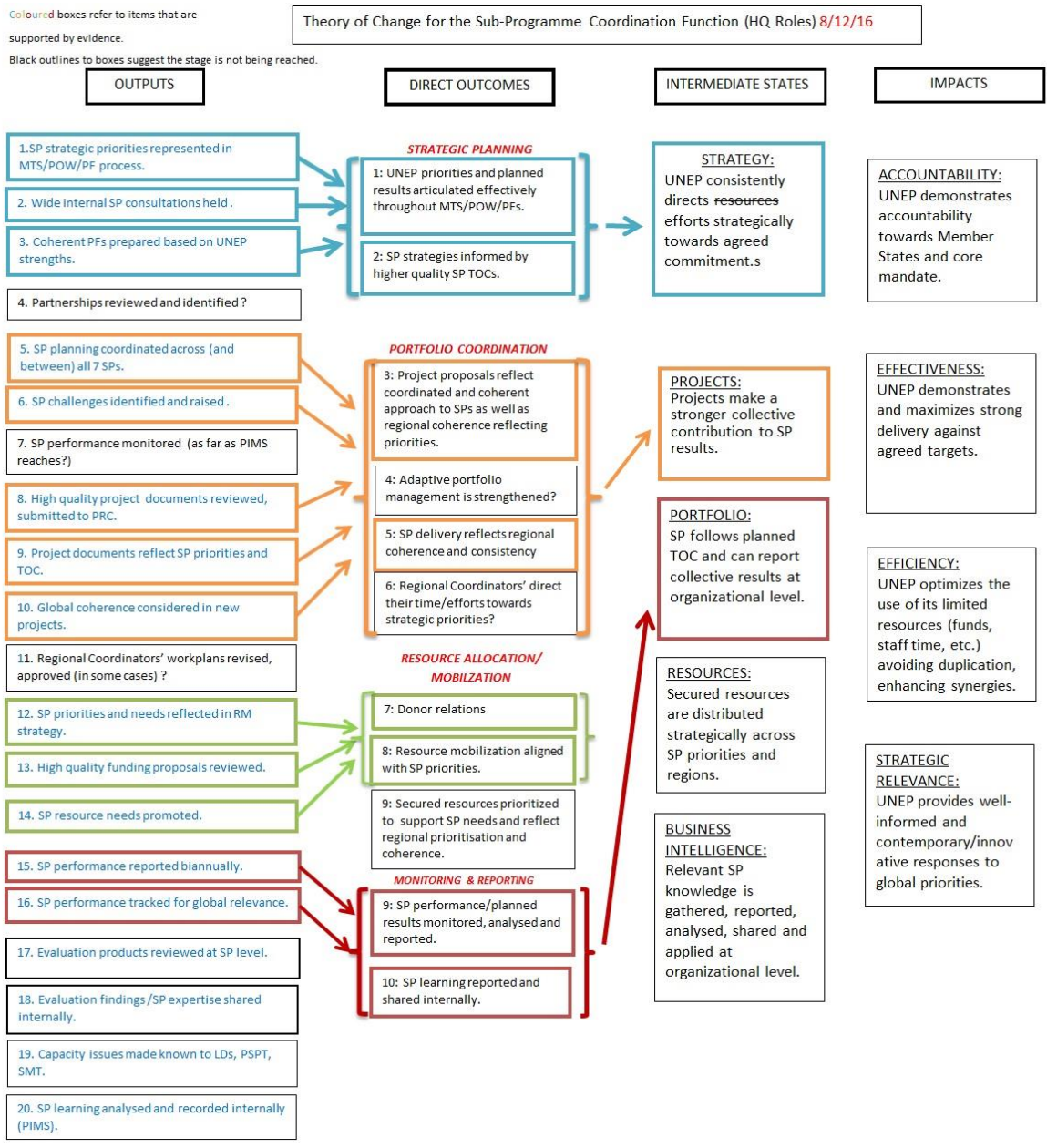
ANNEX VI: THEORY OF CHANGE FOR GSPC ROLE, 2017

Figure 3: Theory of Change of Subprogramme Coordinator Role, (Subprogramme Coordination Function Review, pg 34, 2017)

ANNEX VII: EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Sub Question	Sources of information	Methods of data collection
Strategic Relevance: *Broadly considers*….To what extent will the introduction of the Delivery Model and the Programmatic Approach provide UNEP with a more strategically oriented programme towards the realization of the MTS and POW results (i.e. providing a clear 'line of sight' in terms of addressing the three global environmental crises)?		
Q A.1 In what ways has the potential for UNEP's Strategic Relevance been enhanced through use of the new Delivery Model (DM)	Dpt. Exec Dir Division Directors Regional Directors PPD Director Dpt. PPD Director Chief of Staff	Desk review Semi-structured interviews E-mail communications
Q A.2 In what ways has the potential for UNEP's Strategic Relevance been enhanced through use of the Programmatic Approach (PA)	Dpt. Exec Dir PPD-Gender Division Directors Dpt. Div Directors Regional Directors PPD Director Dpt. PPD Director Chief of Staff	Desk review Semi-structured interviews E-mail communications
Q A.3 Which features of the DM and PA support the establishment of a clear 'line of sight'* from local to regional and global interventions and in terms of addressing the three global environmental crises	Dpt. Exec Dir Division Directors Regional Directors PPD Director Dept PPD Director Head of Strategic Operations	Desk review Semi-structured interviews E-mail communications
EFFECTIVENESS: *Broadly considers*….To what extent, and in what ways, will the i) Delivery Model and ii) Programmatic Approach improve UNEP's ability to demonstrate improved programmatic performance and results at the POW level?		
Q B.1 What evidence is emerging that systems are being put in place to enable implementation of the Programmatic Approach across the organisation	Dpt. Div Directors Dpt. Regional Directors GSPCs PCP DRIs/Ch Sci/Ch Dig Off RSPCs Heads of Branch Heads of Unit Project managers	Desk review Semi-structured interviews Focus Group Discussion Small scale case studies E-mail communications
Q B.2 To what extent are PCPs, in both their design and early implementation, showing to be an effective means to generate synergy across initiatives included within a programme and across programmes	GSPCs PCP DRIs/Ch Sci/Ch Dig Off RSPCs Heads of Branch	Desk review Semi-structured interviews Focus Group Discussion Small scale case studies

Sub Question	Sources of information	Methods of data collection
	Heads of Unit Project managers PPD CAG-PRC Unit	E-mail communications
Q B.3 What evidence is emerging that enhanced coordination across the projects within a programme and across programmes is feasible and practiced	GSPCs PCP DRIs/Ch Sci/Ch Dig Off RSPCs Heads of Branch Heads of Unit Project Managers PPD CAG-PRC Unit	Desk review Semi-structured interviews Focus Group Discussion Small scale case studies E-mail communications
Q B.4 What evidence is emerging that UNEP's programmatic engagement with countries and UNCTs has been/is likely to be enhanced	PPD-UNCT Development Coordination Unit / UNCT Focal Points Regional Directors RSPCs UN Resident Coordinators (ex-UNEP)	Desk review Semi-structured interviews Focus Group Discussion Small scale case studies E-mail communications
Q B.5 What evidence is emerging that UNEP is adapting its partnership approach to the new DM/PA in terms of its engagement with partners at global, regional and country levels	Regional Directors GSPCs PCP DRIs/Ch Sci/Ch Dig Off RSPCs Heads of Branch Heads of Unit Project Managers PPD CAG-PRC Unit	Desk review Semi-structured interviews Focus Group Discussion Small scale case studies E-mail communications
EFFICIENCY: *Broadly considers*... **To what extent and in what ways, will the i) Delivery Model and ii) Programmatic Approach improve UNEP's ability to achieve greater results with the same level of resources?**		
Q C.1 What evidence is emerging that UNEP's programmatic efficiency has been enhanced through adoption of the new DM/PA?	CSD Budget Unit Fund Management Officers Dpt. Div Directors Dpt. Regional Directors PCP DRIs/Ch Sci/Ch Dig Off GSPCs PPD UNCT/Dev Coordination Unit	Desk review Semi-structured interviews Focus Group Discussion Small scale case studies E-mail communications
Q C.2 What evidence is emerging that human resources have been structured and capacitated in line with the new DM/PA?	Corporate Services Div CSD Budget Unit Division Directors Regional Directors PCP DRIs/Ch Sci/Ch Dig Off Chief of Staff GSPCs RSPCs	Desk review Semi-structured interviews Focus Group Discussion Small scale case studies E-mail communications

Sub Question	Sources of information	Methods of data collection
Q C.3 What evidence is emerging that resource mobilization and fund allocation has been adapted to the new DM/PA?	Head of Major Donors Partnerships Unit CSD Budget Unit Fund Management Officers Division Directors Regional Directors GEF Coordination Unit GCF Coordination Unit PCP DRIs/Ch Sci/Ch Dig Off RSPCs	Desk review Semi-structured interviews Focus Group Discussion Small scale case studies E-mail communications
Q C.4 What evidence is emerging that other enabling systems have been implemented for the operationalization of the new DM/PA?	Division Directors Regional Directors PPD Director Corporate Services Div Fund Management Officers PCP DRIs/Ch Sci/Ch Dig Off PPD CAG/PRC Unit	Desk review Semi-structured interviews Small scale case studies E-mail communications
MONITORING, REPORTING & EVALUATION (MR&E): *Broadly considers…* **To what extent will the i) Delivery Model and ii) Programmatic Approach facilitate UNEP's systematic monitoring, preparing to report on and evaluating the results from both: i) Delivery Model and the new ii) Programmatic Approach?**		
Q D.1 In what ways has MR&E been integrated into the design and transformation process of the DM/PA, enabling assessment of the process and results at aggregate levels of PCPs and subprogrammes?	PPD – M&R Unit GSPCs Divisional M&R Officers Dpt. Div Directors Dpt. PPD Director PPD - Head of Strategic Operations PPD - CAG/PRC Unit	Desk review Semi-structured interviews Focus Group Discussion Small scale case studies E-mail communications
Q D.2 What evidence is emerging that results-based management is used as part of the Programmatic Approach, informing adaptive management?	PPD – M&R Unit GSPCs PCP DRIs/Ch Sci/Ch Dig Off Divisional M&R Officers Dpt. Div Directors Heads of Unit Project Managers	Desk review Semi-structured interviews Focus Group Discussion Small scale case studies E-mail communications
Q D.3 What evidence is emerging that knowledge management is enhanced to inform organizational development?	PPD – M&R Unit GSPCs PCP DRIs/Ch Sci/Ch Dig Off Dpt. Div Directors Heads of Unit Project Managers	Desk review Semi-structured interviews Focus Group Discussion Small scale case studies E-mail communications

ANNEX VIII: COMPILATION OF EXPECTED BENEFITS OF THE DELIVERY MODEL

This table shows a set of expected benefits compiled from various slides in the final presentation of the Delivery Model to the Senior Management Team in November 2022.

Table 6: Expected Benefits of the Delivery Model

Slide	Delivery	'What is'	'What will be'	Expected Benefits
3 & 9	**Transition Process**			
		Siloed Entrepreneurialism	Aligned Entrepreneurship	
		Constrained Collaboration	Systemic Collaboration and Partnership	
		Stagnant System Capability	Integrated Capability Development	
		Lack of Shared Leadership	Coherent Strategic Leadership	
		Impaired Accountability	Operational Excellence	
4	**Why adjust UNEP's delivery model?**			
				Focus on the triple planetary crises of climate, nature loss and pollution and on the most game-changing solutions
				Teamwork to deliver as one UNEP so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts
				Accountability to ensure a clear line of sight from results to delivery.
10	**Same institutional structure, sharper focus**			
				No change in organizational structure
				Greater focus on strategic objectives
				Clear line of sight
7	**Improved delivery and enhanced impact**			
	Results Framework	7 results areas (the subprogrammes)	7 subprogrammes deliver against the three strategic objectives	**Focus on clear, compelling results- the 'big' issues**
	Implementation Accountability	Shared delivery between Divisions and Regional Offices	Implementation accountability with Divisions	**Accountability aligned with thematic expertise**
	Principles for Delivery	No delivery principles setting out the 'characteristics' of delivery	5 guiding principles for delivery	**Drives culture change in UNEP** *[towards leadership style reflecting 5 principles]*
	Delivery Framework	Project Portfolios gather concepts at subprogramme level	Programmatic approach to delivering on three pillars	**Focus on pillars and integration across subprogrammes**
	Typology of Interventions	Wide range of UNEP interventions	UNEP interventions standardised and categorized	**Help to focus UNEP's 'offer'**
	Programme Guidance	Programme Manual	Revised Programme Manual	**UNEP project management in line with UN Reform**
	Project Review	Concept and Project Review Committees chaired by PPD	Concepts approved by CAG, PRC chaired by DED for high risk projects	**Leadership involvement in programme/project approval**
	SPC Role	Focus on coordination, monitoring and reporting	Thought leadership across priority areas aligned to 3 pillars	**Better programme coherence**
11	**Projects and programmes to deliver the MTS**			

Slide	Delivery	'What is'	'What will be'	Expected Benefits
				Strategic alignment of initiatives improved
				Formal collaboration across organisational boundaries
				Better value for money
				Phase out of projects that don't align
21	**Responding to the Project Cycle Review – Project Design and Approval**			
		Focus on 'quality at entry' through extensive project review	Efforts to balance 'quality at entry' with 'quality of implementation'	*[Improved quality of implementation]*
		All projects receive same review	Risk-based approach to PRC – low risk projects require a lighter touch PRC	*[Greater senior level oversight of higher risk projects]*
		Relatively little implementation follow up after approval	Introduction of some (light touch) tools and processes: Quality enhancement reviews, peer reviews, MTRs for adaptive management Annual Divisional Portfolio Performance Reviews (DPRR) and Regional Performance Reviews (RPPR) to encourage transparency of portfolio management.	*[Stronger follow up after approval]*
25	**Moving towards high-level reporting**			
		Quarterly CPR reports	Yearly CPR Programme Performance Review report more closely aligned with Annual Report	Stronger story, focus on core results areas
		6 monthly Programme Performance Reports	Focus on big picture narrative around the 3 objectives – indicator monitoring included in an annex	Balance between the big picture and the granular detail
		Yearly deep dives into individual subprogrammes	Periodic deep dives into the 'programmes' (@ 15-20 of them)	UNEP's added value shown through its direct, enabling and [inspiring] work
26	**Responding to the Project Cycle Review - Evaluations**			
		Large number of project-level evaluations	Fewer project-level evaluations	*[Evaluations supporting strategic alignment and results]*
		Few programmatic reviews	Terminal Reviews validated by the Evaluation Office	
		Moderate response to evaluation findings	Increase emphasis on strategic evaluations	*[More strategic insights and recommendations]*

Source: Powerpoint Presentation to SMT on Delivery Model, 9th Nov 2022 (marked as Final)

ANNEX IX: UNEP'S BUSINESS MODEL DIAGRAM

Figure 4: *Medium-Term Strategy (2018-21), pg 50*

FIGURE 6: UNEP's Business Model
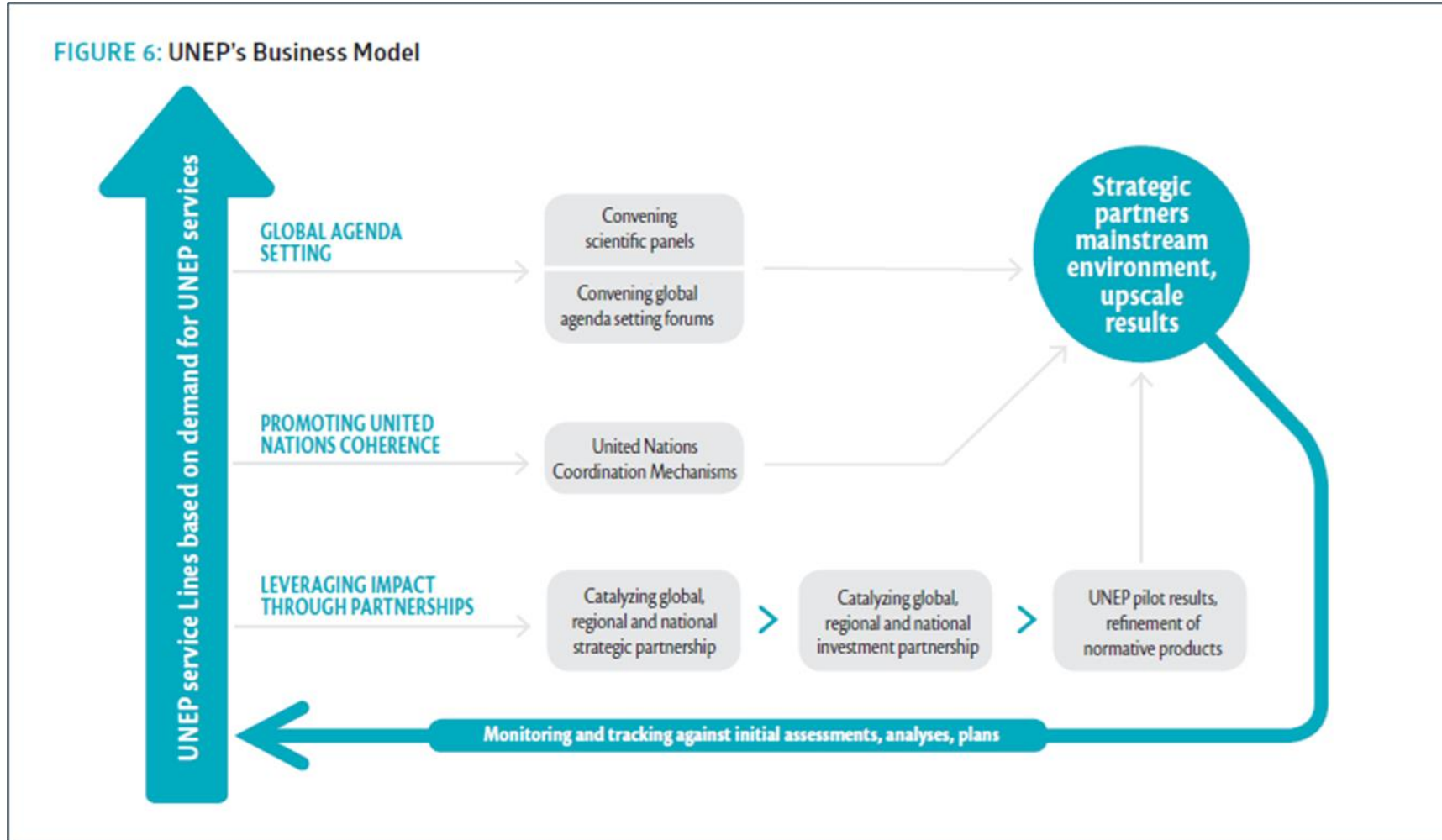
ANNEX X: SCIENCE POLICY INTERFACE DIAGRAM, 2018

Figure 5: *Science-Policy Interface Conceptual Diagram, Resource Efficiency Subprogramme Evaluation, 2018*
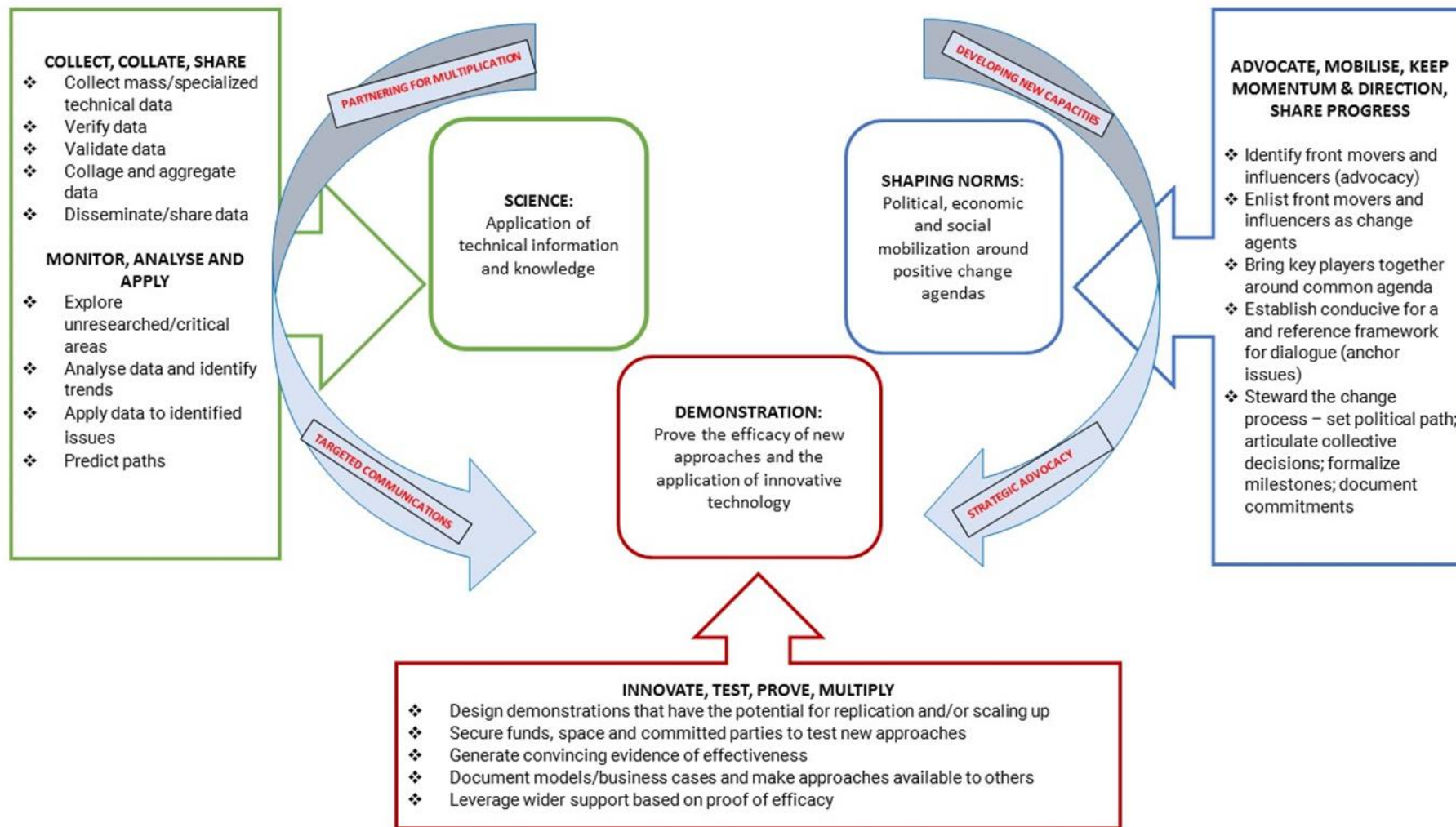
ANNEX XI: PROGRAMME COORDINATING PROJECT DRIS (OCT 2024 – INTERNAL)

UNEP Programme Coordination Projects (PCPs)

INTERNAL

Executive Director Inger Andersen	**Chief Digital Transformation Office** Sally Radwan
Deputy Executive Director Elizabeth Mrema	

DIVISION DIRECTORS

Climate Change Division Dechen Tsering a.i.	**Ecosystems Division** Susan Gardner	**Industry & Economy Division** Sheila Aggarwal-Khan	**Law Division** Patricia Kameri-Mbote	**Early Warning & Assessment Division** Jian Liu

SUB-PROGRAMMES

THEMATIC — ENABLING — FOUNDATIONAL

SUB-PROGRAMME COORDINATORS

Climate Action	Nature Action	Chemicals & Pollution Action	Finance and Economics	Digital Transformation	Environmental Governance	Science-Policy
Niklas Hagelberg	Marieta Sakalian	Steven Stone a.i.	Steven Stone a.i.	Magda Biesiada	Yassin Ahmed	Rula Qalyoubi

PROGRAMME COORDINATION PROJECTS (PCPs)

DIRECT RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUALS (DRIs)

Science & Transparency	Conservation Restoration & Sustainable Use in Biodiversity	Circularity in Sectors	Finance & Economic Transformations	Accelerating Solutions to the Triple Planetary Crisis Through Digital Transformations	Environmental Governance	Science Policy for and Action Programmme
Miriam Hinostroza	Juan Carlos Vasquez	Djaheezah Subraty	Asad Naqvi	Sally Radwan	Andrew Raine	Kelly West
Adaptation & Resilience Jessica Troni	**Governance & Accountability for Biodiversity** Sinikinesh Jimma	**Pollution & Health** Cristina Zucca				
Decarbonization Ruth Coutto	**Mainstreaming Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services** Deborah Kahatano	**Towards Zero Waste** Takehiro Nakamura				