

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT
PROGRAMME (UNEP)

A Study of the Environmental Management
Group

Evaluation and Oversight Unit

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Executive summary

I. Introduction

1. The Environmental Management Group was approved by the United Nations General Assembly in paragraph 5 of its resolution 53/242 of 1999 on the basis of proposals by the Secretary-General and the report of a United Nations Task Force headed by the Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. Klaus Töpfer. All the agencies of the United Nations system, secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO) are members of the Environmental Management Group. UNEP is to provide the secretariat for the Environmental Management Group. The key points of the Group's mandate are coordinated approaches, information exchange, promotion of joint action by United Nations agencies and synergy among and between the activities of the United Nations agencies on environment and human settlement issues. It is to function through issue-management groups to be set up for dealing with specific issues in a time-bound manner.

2. The Environmental Management Group started functioning in January 2001. A secretariat was established in June 2003. The Group has held nine meetings so far, in 2001, 2003 and 2004. It has established issue-management groups for harmonization of reporting on biodiversity-related conventions, sustainable procurement, environmental aspects of water and sanitation and capacity-building in the areas of biodiversity and chemicals. The water issue was considered in order to provide an input to a meeting of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. The capacity-building issue provided an input to an intergovernmental working group of the UNEP Governing Council. During the meetings, the members exchanged information on each other's activities.

3. The present study is intended to fulfil the requirements of paragraph 30 of Governing Council decision SS.VIII VI, taken at its eighth special session, in March 2004. The study evaluates the efforts to date and recommends additional steps to accomplish the objectives. It has been undertaken through a review of all relevant documents and interviews with 49 stakeholders, including officials of member agencies of the Environmental Management Group and the permanent representatives to UNEP. The interviews were face-to-face, by e-mail or by telephone. During the interviews, the persons interviewed offered many critical as well as constructive comments. Based on those interactions and the experience of the author, the following observations are made.

II. The achievements of the Environmental Management Group so far

4. The Environmental Management Group has made a good beginning in the short time since it was established. It has begun the process of information exchange, formed some issue-management groups and started cooperation with some existing coordination groups.

A. Perceptions and suggestions of members

5. Almost all the members appreciate the importance of the Environmental Management Group. A common thread of their perceptions is that the agencies are not benefiting from the Environmental Management Group. They have made many suggestions for improvement.

B. Recommendations

6. The following recommendations are made to enhance the effectiveness of the Environmental Management Group.

1. Environmental Management Group

7. In the areas of environment and human settlements, the Environmental Management Group is the only institution which hosts all the key stakeholders and is the only mechanism for pursuing synergies at all levels. It is vital to the United Nations for the Environmental Management Group to succeed in its mandate. The success of the Environmental Management Group will enhance the willingness of contributors to United Nations funds to continue and enhance their contributions:

(a) The Environmental Management Group should meet only at a high level once in six months or as needed, back-to-back with the Chief Executives Board for Coordination or with intergovernmental meetings where the members are likely to be present;

(b) Each agency should designate two or three senior officials to attend the meetings. If those officials cannot attend a meeting, the agency would be treated as absent;

- (c) The Environmental Management Group secretariat should send to the members an agenda, with a background note, four weeks in advance of the meetings;
- (d) The Environmental Management Group should deal with the issue of inter-agency policy coherence and synergy, give guidance on new and emerging issues, set priorities and solve the problems brought to it by the sector groups and task forces;
- (e) The Environmental Management Group should consider issues of common concern to members of the Group with the aim of finding solutions that are both very specific and capable of being addressed in the short term, with deliverables clearly identified;
- (f) The Environmental Management Group might wish to dovetail its activities with those of the United Nations Development Group for achieving country-level coordination. The interrelationship between the Environmental Management Group and the United Nations Development Group could be spelled out by the United Nations Secretary-General.

2. Issue-management groups

- 8. The following recommendations are made on the subject of issue-management groups:
 - (a) For many sectors in the area of environment and human settlements, coordination groups have already been functioning for some years, such as United Nations Water, United Nations Energy, the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, the Ecosystem Conservation Group and Sustainable Procurement. The Environmental Management Group should not set up any issue-management group for any issue for which a group already exists. Rather, it should assist such groups by facilitating their work as required, by providing information and by facilitating their meetings and the preparation of reports;
 - (b) If, in the opinion of the Environmental Management Group secretariat, such an existing group needs an expanded membership or mandate to fulfil the needs of the Environmental Management Group mandate, the Environmental Management Group, which consists of senior-level officials of all the agencies, may wish to persuade such groups to adopt its point of view;
 - (c) It should set up a new issue-management group for a sector only when it concludes that the existing groups cannot be influenced to suit Environmental Management Group purposes or there is no existing group;
 - (d) The purpose of such sectoral issue-management groups is to arrive at a coherent approach and agree on a policy on how to promote synergy and joint action. Ideally, such groups should combine or close down when they are no longer needed, as anticipated in the terms of reference of the Environmental Management Group. However, in practice, such groups must continue for as long as is necessary for the achievement of its purposes. The issue-management groups may set up task forces to develop joint action plans and promote synergy between the activities of the relevant agencies;
 - (e) Where necessary, specific issue-management groups may be set up to cover cross-sectoral issues such as capacity-building, or there may be joint meetings of the sectoral groups to discuss cross-sectoral issues;
 - (f) Specific task forces may be needed for cross-sectoral issues where there can be joint action or synergy, such as developing legislative capacity, policy instruments, monitoring and assessment capability, training and technology assessment and absorption;
 - (g) Only professionals who are actively involved in the relevant activities should be members of the task forces;
 - (h) If any Group finds it useful, it may involve any bilateral aid agency, regional development bank or non-governmental organization in its discussions and inform the Environmental Management Group secretariat;
 - (i) The Groups might wish to meet at places convenient to members and to rotate the Chair.

3. Promoting information exchange

- 9. Information exchange would be of great benefit to agencies, the Environmental Management Group secretariat and the governing bodies of the agencies. Agencies could check their proposed programmes, projects and activities with those of other agencies to avoid duplication and explore the potential for joint action and synergy. The Environmental Management Group secretariat could explore potentials for synergy and joint action and bring them to the notice of the issue-management groups. Focused web management by the Environmental Management Group could be used as a diagnostic tool

to detect duplication and promote synergy. The information would be useful to the governing bodies of the agencies and to contributors of funds to the United Nations system before funding of programmes and projects is approved. The following recommendations on information exchange are made:

(a) There are two levels of information exchange. The first level involves information on the sectors and areas of environment and human settlements in which the members of the Environmental Management Group are active and the divisions and branches of the agency dealing with those areas and their contact details;

(b) The second level is information on the agencies' activities. Those activities may be at the global, regional or country level. The activities may be categorized by sector or as cross-sectoral. Cross-sectoral activities may be classified into various areas such as legislation, policy instruments, assessment, monitoring, technology absorption, training and so on;

(c) The information on the sectors and activities could be placed in a structured manner on the web site of Environmental Management Group and updated periodically; this is feasible at a reasonable cost. Many agencies have such information on their web sites. Updating could be carried out by the Environmental Management Group, which would periodically collect information electronically from the agencies, and/or by the agencies themselves, by accessing the Environmental Management Group web site or by collecting the information from the web sites of the other agencies;

(d) The information base must be designed carefully and in consultation with the agencies. The required informatics skills could be inexpensive to obtain if outsourced to developing countries. The skills and experience which exist in many of the member agencies – UNEP, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and so on – could be used. The cost of establishing the information base might be about \$85,000 and the annual cost of maintenance would be about \$20,000. The Environmental Management Group secretariat would need an information/environment professional on a full-time basis for that purpose.

4. Promotion of joint action and synergy

10. Good examples of the promotion of joint action and synergy are some of the existing coordination groups, on issues such as water and chemicals, and the groups involved in the Green Customs Project being jointly executed by UNEP, Interpol, the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the secretariats of three multilateral environmental agreements. Such examples could be multiplied through action by the agencies and the Environmental Management Group.

5. Role of the Environmental Management Group secretariat and its place in UNEP

11. On the role of the Environmental Management Group secretariat and its organizational place in UNEP, the following recommendations are made:

(a) Although it is provided by UNEP, the Environmental Management Group secretariat is an inter-agency unit to serve the interests of all its members. While it submits progress reports to the United Nations General Assembly through the Governing Council of UNEP either annually or on demand, it is not a UNEP unit. It should be borne in mind that Environmental Management Group meetings are not appropriate forums for UNEP or any other agency to ascertain the opinions of other agencies on strategic or policy issues;

(b) The Environmental Management Group secretariat should be treated as an “independent” division, on the lines of the convention secretariats functioning organizationally within UNEP. It should be placed accordingly in the UNEP organizational chart;

(c) The success of the Environmental Management Group should be measured by the extent to which its objectives are promoted. Terms of reference for the secretariat should be specified by UNEP.

6. Strengthening the Environmental Management Group secretariat and meeting its costs

12. To strengthen the Environmental Management Group secretariat and meet its cost, the following recommendations are made:

(a) In order to fulfil its proactive role as mentioned above, the secretariat would need to depend on the cooperation of the member agencies but would also need an environment/information specialist to manage the information exchange and another environment professional to assist the issue-management groups proactively;

(b) Towards that end, the bilateral aid agencies could be requested to spare junior professional officers under the existing UNEP scheme;

(c) The member agencies might wish to second their relevant professionals periodically for assisting specific groups;

(d) Since it benefits the entire United Nations system, it would be appropriate, and would add to the credibility of the Environmental Management Group, if United Nations Headquarters were to meet the modest cost of the Environmental Management Group secretariat.

7. Cost-effectiveness and the location of the secretariat

13. On the question of cost-effectiveness and the location of the secretariat, the following recommendations are made:

(a) Wherever the secretariat is located, the meetings of the Environmental Management Group and its issue-management groups should take place in locations convenient to the members. Those locations will be where all the members likely to be present for a meeting are, or, if the meeting is not held back-to-back with another meeting, at a central location. Most meetings are likely to be away from Nairobi;

(b) Nairobi is a good United Nations location and its facilities are being continually strengthened. The Ozone (Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol) Secretariat, which has been located in Nairobi since 1990, has felt no disadvantage because of its location. However, the clients of the Ozone Secretariat are all 188 States Parties around the world, and any place in the world with good facilities would be equally good as a location;

(c) The Environmental Management Group secretariat should be located where it can have the maximum interaction with its clients – United Nations agencies;

(d) The United Nations system agencies number 108 at the last count: 27 in Geneva, 24 in New York, 3 in Nairobi and the rest in about 25 other cities. By continent, Africa has 5, Asia 4, Europe 62, Latin America 4 and North America 33. The members of the Environmental Management Group interviewed favoured Geneva as the location;

(e) The secretariat, which has two Professional staff, has a budget of \$500,000 of which the staff costs are about \$320,000. Staff costs would be reduced if the secretariat were located in Nairobi. However, that saving could be neutralized by an increase in the travel costs of the secretariat to locations of the meetings of the Environmental Management Group, issue-management groups and task forces.;

(f) It is recommended that the secretariat should continue to be located in Geneva.

Report

I. Introduction

14. The Secretary-General, as a part of his action plan set forth in the document entitled “Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform” (A/51/950), which was submitted, in 1998, to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, established a Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements. The Task Force was established to prepare proposals on reforming and strengthening United Nations activities in the area of the environment and human settlements and in order to assist the Secretary-General in making recommendations to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, including recommendations on coordination.

15. The Task Force, chaired by the UNEP Executive Director, was requested to review and evaluate existing structures and arrangements through which environmental activities are carried out within the United Nations system and make recommendations for improvements to optimize the environmental and human settlements work of the United Nations. The Secretary-General considered the recommendations of the Task Force and presented a report (A/53/463) to the General Assembly.

16. The Environmental Management Group was established as a result of recommendations contained in that report, which were adopted in 1999 by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/242. Subsequently, in 2000, the Administrative Coordination Committee, headed by the Secretary-General, approved (see document ACC/1999/4) the terms of reference of the Environmental Management Group (annex III to the present report).

17. The purpose of the Environmental Management Group is to “enhance United Nations system-wide inter-agency coordination related to specific issues in the field of environment and human settlements”.

(a) Its mandate is:

(i) To provide a United Nations response, and facilitate joint action in finding solutions, to issues of environment and human settlements;

(ii) To promote interlinkages and information exchange, contribute to synergy and complementarity between the activities of its members and add value to the existing inter-agency cooperation.

(b) Its objectives are:

(i) To identify, address and resolve collectively specific problems through securing the collaboration of its members;

(ii) To provide a forum for sharing information on new and emerging issues and deciding collectively the most effective approach to deal with them;

(iii) To assist UNEP and UN-Habitat to promote coordinated approaches to environmental and human settlement issues;

(c) The membership of the Environmental Management Group consists of all the specialized agencies, programmes and organs of the United Nations system and all the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements. Representatives of civil society and international non-governmental organizations may participate by invitation of the Chair of the Environmental Management Group;

(d) The group will function in a result-driven, flexible and cost-effective manner. The Environmental Management Group will have a senior-level decision-making body, chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP, and ad hoc issue-management groups which will be time-bound;

(e) UNEP will provide the secretariat for the Environmental Management Group.

II. Mandate, objective and the scope of the study

18. The Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, in paragraph 30 of its decision SS.VIII VI, which was taken at its eighth special session, in March 2004, requested

“... the Executive Director to present a report on the matter to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its twenty-third session, which should also include a comprehensive assessment of the location of the secretariat of the Environmental Management Group, taking into account, among other things, existing efforts to strengthen the United Nations Office at Nairobi, the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme and the headquarters of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, as well as the mandate and membership of the Environmental Management Group”.

19. The present study has reviewed the documents and procedures which led to the establishment of the Environmental Management Group and its secretariat and also all the activities of the Environmental Management Group to date.

20. The overall objective of the study is to identify successes and challenges in the functioning of the Environmental Management Group, offer lessons learned and make recommendations on how to strengthen the work of the secretariat, including on whether it would be beneficial to change the location of the secretariat from Geneva to Nairobi. Specifically, the study reviews:

(a) The achievement of the objectives of the Environmental Management Group, taking into account its mandate, the objectives set forth in its terms of reference and factors affecting their achievement;

(b) The appropriateness of and criteria for its membership, which was to comprise United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and multilateral environmental agreements, together with an assessment of the appropriateness of involving civil-society actors;

(c) The links with intergovernmental forums and with other coordination mechanisms within the United Nations system;

(d) The adequacy and appropriateness of the organizational structure and resources of the secretariat;

(e) The cost-effectiveness of the location of the secretariat. A comparison was to be made between Geneva and Nairobi considering the pros and cons of physical proximity of the secretariat to its members or to the headquarters of UNEP and UN-Habitat taking into account the efforts to strengthen the United Nations Office at Nairobi. Implications of the possible relocation of the secretariat were also to be assessed.

III. Timing and methodology of the study

21. The study started on 8 November and the present report was finalized on 6 December 2004. The study was conducted using a participatory approach. The following main approaches were used for collecting and analysing information:

(a) All the relevant documents, outputs and reports, such as decisions, resolutions and other documents pertaining to the establishment of the Environmental Management Group and its secretariat, the Environmental Management Group's programme of work for the biennium 2003–2004 and proposed medium- and long-term programmes under preparation were reviewed;

(b) Extensive discussions were held with the staff of the Environmental Management Group;

(c) Discussions were held with staff at UNEP and UN-Habitat who are directly involved in the work of Environmental Management Group;

(d) Discussions were held by telephone with several officials of the member agencies of the Environmental Management Group. Some gave their opinions by e-mail.

(e) Discussions were held with the permanent representatives or deputy permanent representatives to UNEP of five permanent missions in Nairobi.

22. A total of 49 people working in member agencies of the Environmental Management Group in Nairobi, Geneva, Vienna, Paris, Washington D.C. and Montreal were interviewed. A list is attached in annex 1 to the present report. In order to encourage a frank expression of opinions, those interviewed

were assured that their views would not be individually quoted. Only the range of opinions expressed is reflected in the present report. The author of the report has in conclusion given his own considered views, for which he takes responsibility.

IV. A brief history of coordination on environment within the United Nations System

23. In resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 1972, while creating UNEP the General Assembly also established the Environment Coordinating Board, initially under the auspices and within the framework of the Administrative Committee on Coordination. The Environment Coordinating Board was made up of the executive heads of the United Nations agencies and was chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP. Its principal mandate was to ensure cooperation and coordination between all bodies concerned in the implementation of environmental programmes and to report annually to the UNEP Governing Council. The Environment Coordinating Board was supplemented by the mechanism of environmental focal points within each agency.

24. In 1978, when the Administrative Committee on Coordination assumed the functions and responsibilities of the Environment Coordinating Board, each agency appointed a designated official on environmental matters to work with and advise the Executive Director of UNEP.

25. In 1987, UNEP started to promote preparation of a five-year system-wide medium-term environment programme to promote coordination and harmonize the environment programmes of all the agencies.

26. In 1992, the Administrative Committee on Coordination established the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development to ensure effective cooperation and coordination of the United Nations system in the implementation of Agenda 21. The Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development, which reported directly to the Administrative Committee on Coordination, was open to all Administrative Committee on Coordination members and, as observers, related organizations such as the World Tourism Organization, and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). To implement the functions of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development effectively, a system of task managers was established for thematic areas. The Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development ceased to exist after the review of Administrative Committee on Coordination in October 2001 established the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the High-Level Committee on Programmes.

27. In 1995, UNEP established the Inter-Agency Environment Management Group, which evolved from the Environment Coordinating Board and its successor, the designated official on environmental matters. The Inter-Agency Environment Management Group was conceived as a mechanism to provide UNEP with an effective and strong coordinating role within the United Nations system on environmental matters and achieve improvements to optimize the United Nations environment and human-settlements work. The Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements recommended in 1998 that the Inter-Agency Environment Management Group should be replaced by the Environmental Management Group.

28. Several agencies within the United Nations system have, over the last 30 years, established cooperation frameworks in response to the concerns regarding coordination. At the highest level, the Chief Executives Board, headed by the Secretary-General and the two High-Level Committees, on Programmes and Management, promote coordination. Given below are some significant examples of inter-agency cooperation that already exist.

29. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs is responsible as the United Nations agency for coordination in the area of sustainable development:

(a) The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, through the United Nations Water Group, is the inter-agency mechanism for the implementation of the water-related provisions of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and for the Millennium Development Goals concerning freshwater. The terms of reference and modalities of work of United Nations Water cover the elements of a detailed inter-agency plan for addressing water and also sanitation issues, and include mechanisms for interacting with non-United Nations system stakeholders and strengthening inter-agency support for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;

(b) The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs is setting up an inter-agency mechanism to ensure information sharing and coherence in activities relating to oceans and coastal areas;

(c) The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs is setting up United Nations Energy as a new system-wide collaborative mechanism to address the energy-related aspects of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals

30. The Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals is the mechanism for initiating, facilitating and coordinating international action to achieve the Johannesburg Summit's 2020 goal for the sound management of chemicals. The Programme was established in 1995 through a memorandum of understanding signed by the executive heads of participating organizations, including the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UNEP, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). UNDP and the World Bank are currently participating as observers in the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals. The aim of the initiative was to explore synergies for capacity-building.

Ecosystem Conservation Group of UNEP

31. The Ecosystem Conservation Group was established at UNEP in 1974 for the purpose of promoting thematic joint programming and to advise its member organizations on the development and implementation of relevant activities. The work of the Group is aimed at contributing towards promoting interlinkages and complementarity and encouraging the compatibility of different approaches, thus enhancing synergy and harmony among and between work programmes of the Group's members with those of the global environmental conventions.

Rio Earth Summit multilateral environmental agreement Joint Liaison Group

32. The three "Rio Conventions", (on biodiversity, climate change and desertification), have established a cooperation framework: the Joint Liaison Group, which aims at strengthening common approaches and activities, avoiding duplication of effort and collecting and sharing information on the work programmes and operations of each convention. The Joint Liaison Group is comprised of the Executive Secretaries and the Chairs of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It has met four times to date, has published a joint calendar of relevant events and has agreed to deal with a series of issues of common concern to its members. The Joint Liaison Group has invited representatives of the Ramsar Convention for some past meetings, and may do so again, and with other relevant conventions in the future.

Joint UNEP/Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Environment Unit

33. The Joint UNEP/Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Environment Unit (OCHA) is a partnership between UNEP and OCHA which serves as the integrated United Nations emergency response mechanism to activate and provide international assistance to countries facing environmental emergencies.

UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity-building Task Force

34. In March 2000, UNEP and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) jointly established the Capacity-building Task Force, which aims to help beneficiaries in developing countries and countries with economies in transition to address trade-environment-development issues effectively at the national level and to participate in related deliberations at the international level. The Task Force was conceived to combine the strengths of UNEP in building capacity on the environmental aspects of trade and of UNCTAD in building capacity on the development aspects of trade. The initiative provides five clusters of activities, thematic research, country projects, training, policy dialogue and networking.

Green Customs Project

35. The Green Customs Project, which is being jointly executed by the UNEP Division of Trade, Industry and Economics in Paris, Interpol, WCO and the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements which have trade provisions: the Montreal Protocol, the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna, is training the relevant officials (customs officers, prosecutors and judicial officers) of developing countries to curb illegal trade in goods controlled by the conventions.

V. Progress and achievements by the Environmental Management Group so far

A. Basic mandate of the Environmental Management Group

36. The key words in the mandate of the Environmental Management Group are:

(a) Assist UNEP and Habitat to promote *coordinated approaches* on the issues of environment and human settlements;

(b) Provide effective, *coordinated and flexible United Nations system response* to, and to facilitate *joint action* aimed at finding *solutions* to important and newly emerging specific issues of environmental and human settlements concern;

(c) Promote interlinkage, encourage timely and relevant *exchange of data and information on specific issues and compatibility of different approaches* to finding solutions to those common problems;

(d) Contribute to *synergy and complementarities* among and between the activities of its members.

B. Issues considered

37. The first meeting of the Environmental Management Group was held in January 2001. It has so far held nine meetings – seven in Geneva, one in New York and one in Nairobi. A short summary of the issues dealt with by the Environmental Management Group is given below.

1. Harmonized System of Reporting on Biodiversity related issues.

38. Many forums, including the Commission on Sustainable Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the UNEP Governing Council have recognized that the reporting requirements of the many multilateral environmental agreements are imposing a burden on Governments. It was decided that streamlining the requests for national reporting in an efficient and coordinated manner would help all the States Parties. An issue-management group was established under UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre to consider the issue further. UNEP initiated pilot projects in four countries to test the possibilities of harmonized reporting. The issue-management group presented its final report in December 2003, recommending further liaison meetings between secretariats, national-level approaches and collaborative workshops. The Environmental Management Group decided that its own members should implement the recommendations of the report and report back to the Group in 2005.

39. That report, after three years of work on what seemed to be a simple issue at the beginning, has brought out the difficulties in achieving harmonized reporting and has also brought a lot of clarity to what the difficulties are.

2. Environmental aspects of fresh water, sanitation and human settlements

40. At the fifth meeting of the Environmental Management Group, in September 2003, the above issue was discussed in the context of the preparation of the Group's contribution to the meeting of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum in Jeju, Republic of Korea in March 2004 and to the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. At the sixth meeting, in February 2004, the secretariat provided a survey of major programmes and activities across the United Nations system giving details of the partners involved, their objectives and their outputs. That study contributed to the discussions of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in March 2004 and to those of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its twelfth session.

3. Capacity-building

41. At the sixth meeting, in February 2004, the secretariat presented a note on potential work on capacity-building within the framework of the Environmental Management Group. The secretariat has proposed that it could facilitate the establishment of a capacity-building library/information clearing house as a useful tool to access information and to share knowledge and experience in capacity-building in the United Nations system and beyond. The representative of UNITAR presented a proposed joint UNITAR-Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals study to provide an overview of activities of United Nations agencies and chemicals-management-related agreements in the area of capacity-building. It would then identify issues for further information exchange and coordination. The representative of the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre presented the

outline for the Environmental Management Group's study on capacity-building in the area of biodiversity. The objectives were to facilitate information exchange between Environmental Management Group members on their activities and experiences and to enable them to identify common areas of concern and interest. The meeting, after discussing the reports, established an issue-management group on capacity-building. The issue-management group's work contributed to the work of the members in the area of capacity-building, such as the work of UNEP on an intergovernmental strategic plan for technology support and capacity-building, an open-ended working group of the UNEP Governing Council.

4. Sustainable procurement

42. At the seventh meeting, in April 2004, the need to work on the inclusion of sustainable-development considerations in procurement practices was considered. An issue-management group was established on the issue to work on developing supplier codes of conduct, preparation of an inventory of sustainable procurement policies and practices, and the issue of training. The issue-management group was established, although there were already two groups in the United Nations System working on the issue of sustainable procurement.

5. Other issues

43. Two issue-management groups, on waste minimization and handling with UNIDO as convener and on environmental education and training with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as convener, were abandoned as UNIDO and UNESCO did not continue the work of the issue-management groups.

C. Progress in information exchange

44. The objective of information exchange on a number of issues would be achieved to a certain extent through the excellent reports of the Environmental Management Group secretariat on the programmes of the United Nations agencies on environmental aspects of water and sanitation, and the reports on chemicals- and biodiversity-related issues.

45. A prerequisite to the success of the Environmental Management Group is to create conditions for information exchange between all its members. The purpose of information exchange is to enable each of the agencies to use it to develop coherence with the others in its approach to issues and to identify the potential for synergy and joint action to deal with them. Such an information exchange is fruitful only if the needed information is available as and when required by each agency, at the time they finalize their policies and when they finalize their activities for the approval of their governing bodies.

46. Information exchange through Environmental Management Group meetings is generally not adequate since the meeting is time-bound, lasting only a few hours, and since the particular information exchanged may not be relevant to the participants of that meeting. Written bulletins and so on of information sent to each other give more time for the agencies to absorb the information, but are outdated by the time they are read. Very often such documents are simply filed and are not read by the relevant programme officials. Information on each of the agencies collected occasionally through consultants can be of some use, but the data so collected will also soon be out of date. Also, the completeness of information in such reports depends on the willingness of the agencies to provide information to the consultant. There is "information-provider fatigue", since it takes a lot of time to fill out the questionnaires sent.

47. No beginning has yet been made on creating the clearing house suggested by the secretariat. In the absence of such a clearing house, information exchange has been sporadic, through the meetings of the Environmental Management Group and through one-off reports prepared by consultants.

D. Progress by the Environmental Management Group in promoting joint action/synergy and complementarities of United Nations agency activities

48. A number of initiatives had already been taken before the establishment of Environmental Management Group to achieve coordination between United Nations agencies by establishing sector groups, as seen in chapter IV above. The Environmental Management Group has established a cooperative framework with the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals and the United Nations Water Group. The results are to be monitored.

VI. Strengthening the Environmental Management Group – perceptions and suggestions by members

A. Perceptions

49. All the members agreed that the concept of the Environmental Management Group is both necessary and sound. Environmental Management Group members believe that the Group is the only institution that brings all the key stakeholders together and that it is an informal and neutral platform that is likely to succeed in developing synergies between the activities of the agencies.

50. Everyone, however, realizes the difficulties in fulfilling the task of bringing about complementarity and synergy between the many United Nations organizations, each with its own governing body which sets up that organization's strategies, programmes, projects, priorities and budgets. The members' perceptions are further categorized below:

(a) Environmental Management Group members are to commit themselves to and participate fully in coordination activities unless there is a specific benefit for them. That was not yet the case. A strategic vision of the coordination must take into account the goals and mandates of each member organization;

(b) Value added should be demonstrated by the Environmental Management Group to its members to retain their interest;

(c) The Environmental Management Group has, to too high a degree so far, been only a support body for UNEP. It should be more geared to integrating environmental concerns in the work of all relevant bodies, including on the regional level;

(d) The Environmental Management Group has had a very limited impact on information exchange. Its relationship to other inter-agency arrangements is unclear and risks some duplication. It has regrettably, and perhaps unfairly, gained a reputation as being a UNEP grouping rather than an inter-agency mechanism;

(e) The Environmental Management Group has developed much more slowly than desired. UNEP should give greater input. It could send bulletins of its activities to all Environmental Management Group members and catalyse the other United Nations agencies in the environmental dimensions of their approaches and activities.;

(f) The meetings of the Group are not very focused and are dominated by a UNEP-specific agenda;

(g) There has been no significant outcome so far from the Environmental Management Group. The secretariat was appointed too late;

(h) Attendance at Environmental Management Group meetings is poor and at a lower level of representation;

(i) The Environmental Management Group has supplanted other useful bodies, such as the Ecosystem Conservation Group;

(j) The Environmental Management Group is burdened with contributing documents to the UNEP Governing Council, a burden which is not a part of the mandate of the Environmental Management Group;

(k) The Environmental Management Group is not about coordination by UNEP but about cooperation between all the agencies including UNEP.

B. Suggestions by the stakeholders

51. The following suggestions were made:

(a) Environmental Management Group has so far covered issues of concern mainly to the major United Nations actors in the field of environment and development, UNEP and UNDP. There are other relevant issues which should be looked into and could draw the interest of many more agencies. Issues relating to modalities should also be investigated. For example, how should the Environmental Management Group position itself among United Nations agencies? With what added value? Should the Environmental Management Group not restrict its role to coordination, setting quality standards on policies, advocacy, monitoring and indicators?

(b) The Environmental Management Group should act as a counterpart and complement to the United Nations Development Group process and secure stronger engagement by the environmental conventions;

(c) The Environmental Management Group should be more proactive. As the sponsoring agent, the Environmental Management Group should continue to follow up activities. Issue-management group input should be seen as a resource to achieve Environmental Management Group targets. Achieving those targets would include ensuring that joint actions are properly resourced – commitments to joint action made in the Environmental Management Group can be realized only by reallocating financial and/or personnel resources to those joint actions, or by acquiring new and additional resources.

52. It was suggested also that the Environment Management Group needs to change as follows:

(a) By involving, once a year, the heads of the United Nations bodies, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions and secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements which are participating in the Environmental Management Group;

(b) It would enhance the work of Environmental Management Group participants if a survey or study on issues were carried out before those issues are discussed;

(c) Each issue for discussion could be given to a leading organization or organizations to prepare the background material;

(d) Distribution of documentation should be carried out well in advance of the opening of meetings (at least three weeks beforehand);

(e) Synergistic action is possible. The Environmental Management Group must look for synergies without additional costs;

(f) Many United Nations system agencies, such as ILO, work through thousands of Government inspectors in countries. That fact could be used by other agencies to fulfil similar agendas;

(g) Capacity-building should be the major focus of the Environmental Management Group;

(h) The Environmental Management Group should promote increased use of memorandums of understanding between the agencies by standardizing the format;

(i) UNEP should use the Environmental Management Group to fulfil its catalytic role;

(j) The discussions need to be interesting to others, both at high level and middle levels. The Environmental Management Group should be a marketplace for exchanging notes and finding partners;

(k) UNEP should let other agencies talk more during the meetings;

(l) Attendance by a staff member of an agency at an Environmental Management Group meeting should not be taken as agreement by that agency with the report of that meeting. The officers attending do not represent the governing bodies which have approved their mandates;

(m) The Environmental Management Group should prove its added value over the many existing coordination groups. It should concentrate on delivering results. It is currently seen as a UNEP club whereas it should be seen as belonging to all the members. The Environmental Management Group should be positioned properly among the many coordinating bodies. UNEP should achieve its aims by catalysing other agencies and not by starting its own programmes;

(n) The Environmental Management Group should be relevant to countries;

(o) Once the Environmental Management Group's database is well established, the governing bodies and conferences of parties to multilateral environmental agreements must insist, before approving budgets, that the projects and programmes brought for approval must be checked with the Environmental Management Group for duplication and from the point of view of synergy.

C. Some comments on the perceptions

53. The comments above may come as a surprise to UNEP and to the hard-working Environmental Management Group secretariat, but they can take consolation from the fact that anyone attempting to coordinate must be prepared for criticism: if they constantly take the initiative, they will be perceived as domineering, as wanting to occupy the turf of others and as seeking to increase their standing and financial resources at the cost of others; if they do not take the lead, they will be accused of not

providing leadership. That said, it is important to add that those perceptions contain a great deal of useful advice and can be built upon to provide sound direction to the Environmental Management Group. There is no doubt that “coordination” has suspicious connotations and should be replaced by “cooperation”. How that can be achieved is discussed below.

54. It must be emphasized that the Environmental Management Group will be effective only if there is perceived benefit for the participating agencies. Joint action by United Nations agencies and synergy of actions, if realized, would help all the agencies by making their resources go further.

VII. The need and a profile for information exchange

55. The availability, on a near real-time basis, of information on the approaches and activities of the agencies on issues of environment and human settlements is the necessary first step towards promoting coherence of approaches, joint action and synergy. Such information cannot be collected through meetings or occasional reports by consultants since the information so collected is only as accurate as the providers of information choose to make it. Also, it is not often that the information so collected is up to date.

56. The issue of the creation of an accurate information base needs to be taken up as early as possible. The information base will not be perfect to begin with; it will improve with time when agencies fully perceive its uses. The Environmental Management Group secretariat could promote that improvement through cross-fertilization of ideas and expertise. Without such an information base, the Environmental Management Group will not be able to fulfil its mandate of coherence in approach, information exchange and joint and synergetic action by the United Nations agencies. It would be definitely a great added value provided by the Environmental Management Group to its members and also to the many coordination groups now functioning within the United Nations system.

57. The first task in the creation of the information base should be to prepare and agree on a conceptual design for the clearing house in consultation with the agencies. The design would provide guidance on the objectives, concept and scope of information to be put on the web site, periodicity of updating and so on. After the concepts are finalized, the issue is one of the technical determination of the methods to be adopted to create and maintain the information base. Such a technical determination requires trying out different routes for collecting the information from the various agencies. The task would require informatics skills, which can be obtained inexpensively through outsourcing to certain developing countries. Such skills, which are also available in UNEP, the World Bank and in all the member agencies of the Environmental Management Group, could well be made use of.

58. The development over the last 10 years in Internet and web technologies offers us great scope for exchanging information. Clearing houses for information can now be established fairly inexpensively through the web. Such clearing houses could ensure effective coverage of strategic and policy aspects of the various agencies and could include details of all the activities of the agencies in various sectors of the environment, providing an opportunity for each of the United Nations agencies to check, before proposing or approving policies, programmes or projects, whether there is any duplication of effort or whether they can propose joint action with some other United Nations agency already involved in that type of activity, or whether they can take up activities which are synergetic with the activities of other United Nations agencies. The Environmental Management Group secretariat too could study the information available and suggest partnerships between other United Nations organizations on specific activities.

A. What kind of information?

59. Several components of an information system for the Environmental Management Group can be conceptualized. At the first level is information on all the members of the Environmental Management Group and the sectors and areas of environment and human settlements they deal with; the divisions, branches and units of that agency which deal with those issues, and the contact details of their telephones, faxes, e-mail addresses and so on, similar to the UNEP Operational Manual, to facilitate contacts. The sectors could be based, for example, on the chapter headings of Agenda 21 or the classifications used in certain information web sites which already exist. At the second level, information on approaches and activities in each of the sectors could be systematically downloaded. The activities within each sector could, for example, be further classified as capacity-building (in areas such as legislative capacity, policy, monitoring, natural resources assessment, technology assessment, technical assistance, training, enforcement and so on) or as some other type of activity, such as investment on the ground. The activities of the agencies could be further characterized as global, regional or country-wide. It is necessary to arrive at a common understanding of the terminology to be

used in such a web-based information system; agreement on terminology can be achieved only through intensive consultations with each of the United Nations agencies prior to data collection.

60. The web site could also incorporate all the case studies and evaluation reports brought out by the various agencies. The web site could, in addition to the provision of information and documentation, provide value-added services such as discussion rooms, newsletters, the calendars of events of the various United Nations agencies and so on. Also, a feedback mechanism could be established to ensure that the clearing house addresses changing information needs dynamically.

61. The information should be made available to all the members of the Environmental Management Group through a password. Non-members could be charged a fee. It is likely to be of enormous value for many professions such as consultants and donors. The information could be published once a year as a record that can be referred to.

B. Information from other sources

62. Only some of the activities in the areas of environment and human settlements are carried out by the United Nations system: the bilateral agencies, the regional development banks and some of the bigger non-governmental organizations also play a significant role. Together, their financial contributions exceed those of the multilateral agencies.

63. OECD, through its Development Assistance Committee, has already made considerable progress in collecting information on the projects and activities of the 21 bilateral agencies which are the members of OECD. Their activity information base is located within the OECD web site.

64. Similarly, there are a few global non-governmental environmental organizations with considerable budgets which are very active globally, regionally and in countries (the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) are two such organizations). The World Resources Institute is a mine of information and studies, and that information may be integrated into the information base with the Institute's permission. The industrial organizations also have a great deal of information available.

65. If true synergy is to be achieved between all activities on the issues of environment and human settlements, the activities of bilateral aid agencies, the regional development banks and some of the bigger relevant non-governmental organizations should also be incorporated into the information base.

C. Keeping the information up to date

66. Such a clearing house must be reasonably up to date for it to be useful. It is not possible to collect information in writing from various agencies through the efforts of programme officers since it takes a long time for officers to respond to such requests. At the present time, however, the sources of information about agencies are in some cases available electronically on the web sites of those agencies. The World Bank and GEF, the Montreal Protocol Multilateral Fund and some divisions of UNEP, including the OzonAction Management Information System, are examples of such web sites. Where the information is not available on a web site, there may be specific branches of the agencies that have electronic information on their activities. For example, the Programme Coordination and Management Unit of UNEP monitors UNEP activities and their budgets. Approaching the correct branches of the agencies, with the encouragement of the heads of those agencies to share the information with Environmental Management Group, would facilitate the collection of information. The most effective means of information exchange would be to place all the information available on the Environmental Management Group Web site in a structured manner.

67. Some information web sites allow the participating agencies to update the data themselves by accessing the web site directly, with access controlled by password. The OzonAction Monitoring Information System is an example: the regional coordinators of its nine regional networks enter their data directly onto the web site maintained by the head office in Paris. If direct data entry proves to be too difficult, the information could be collected by the Environmental Management Group secretariat on CD-ROMs and entered onto the web site. A study by an informatics expert of the various methods of creating an information base and updating the information would be required.

D. Likely costs of a web-based information system

68. The figures obtained from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe for the costs of their clearing house show that it has spent about \$65,000 to establish the clearing house and that the annual maintenance costs are about \$15, 000. The proposed Environmental Management Group information base must collect its information from all its member agencies, regional development

banks, bilateral aid organizations and select non-governmental organizations. The costs of its creation can be estimated as follows:

A consultant to carry out the conceptual design of the web site	\$15,000
Consultative meetings with the members of the Environmental Management Group	\$10,000
Finalization of the design and informatics consultancy for actual placement of the information on the web site	\$20,000
Collection of the first set of information electronically and placing it on the Environmental Management Group web site	\$40,000
Total	\$85,000

69. Once the system of collection of information is well established, the updating and the maintenance of the web site will be a technical matter and should cost about \$20,000 annually. Also, a full-time information/environment professional will be needed to make the information exchange truly effective.

E. Some examples of web-based information exchange

70. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe has set up a web-based clearing house on transport, environment and health called the PEP clearing house. The UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics Ozone Monitoring Information System connects its nine regional networks through a web site where the information is entered by the network coordinators themselves. The information is used by the head office for monitoring and by the regional coordinators to provide synergy and avoid duplication of their activities. GEF and the World Bank have a good profile of their activities on their web sites.

The OECD experience

71. The members of OECD— the industrialized countries – contribute almost all official development assistance and also over 90 per cent of the contributions to the United Nations system. OECD has set up a Development Assistance Committee for the purpose of coordinating assistance. The Development Assistance Committee realized early that ensuring the effectiveness of aid also requires good coordination of external assistance. Aid coming from many sources and subject to different regulations and policies has the potential for creating confusion and overlap.

72. The Creditor Reporting System of the Development Assistance Committee is a database on all assistance and other lending to developing countries and countries in transition. It consists of two distinct subsets: a project database on all assistance activities, accessible to the public, and a database on all official lending and officially supported export credits, access to which is restricted. For Development Assistance Committee members, the Creditor Reporting System serves as a tool for monitoring specific policy issues, supplementing the information collected at the aggregate level in the annual Development Assistance Committee statistics.

VIII. Conclusions and recommendations

73. It must be realized that the push for coherence between approaches, avoidance of duplication, joint action and synergy of activities has already started in the development area and that all the funding agencies, including the bilateral agencies, have agreed on coordinated approach amongst themselves. Donors are funding more than 60,000 aid projects, including for environment and human settlements, around the world. They are asking whether there are ways in which they could use their resources more efficiently. Their agenda goes beyond the mechanics of how aid is delivered: what began with a focus on transaction costs has moved on to address the issues of how well donors are working together, and to more effective substantive and policy coordination. In February 2003, leaders of the major multilateral development banks and international and bilateral organizations gathered in Rome with donor- and recipient-country representatives for a high-level forum on harmonization. They committed themselves to taking action to improve the management and effectiveness of aid, and to taking stock of actual progress, before meeting again in early 2005. They are bound to apply the same norms practiced by themselves to their contributions to United Nations activities.

74. The contributing countries have already warned that they will ignore United Nations agencies which do not adhere to the norms and will reward agencies which follow the principles of coordination. The Environmental Management Group therefore has a great role to play in continuing and increasing the flow of funds to United Nations agencies on issues of environment and human settlement. The Environmental Management Group could aim to become the mechanism for a consensus on good-

practice standards in the area of environment and human settlements and demonstrate that it can deliver coherent approaches, joint cost-effective action and synergy of activities by the United Nations agencies. It should be used by the agencies to attract increased support from donors. The United Nations system has a responsibility to ensure the success of the Environmental Management Group.

A. Prioritization of issues dealt with by the Environmental Management Group

75. The second meeting of the Environmental Management Group decided on priorities for taking up issues. The priorities for matters to be discussed are that:

(a) The issues should be of common concern to members of the Group, which identifies, addresses and resolves collectively specific problems, issues and tasks on the environmental and human settlement agenda as stated in the Group's objectives;

(b) The aim should be to find solutions to important, newly emerging and specific environmental and human settlements issues which require the advice and substantive input of two or more United Nations and other relevant organizations;

(c) The issues should be focused on the environment and human settlements aspects of sustainable development and should complement and not duplicate the work of other coordination mechanisms;

(d) The issues should be high on the international agenda, and the need for urgent solutions to them should have been recognized by Governments and the general public;

(e) The issues should be very specific and concrete and capable of being addressed in the short term (6–12 months), with deliverables clearly identified.

76. Those criteria are good and the last qualification is particularly important. The Environmental Management Group's goal is to bring about synergy and complementarities and to promote joint action so that the limited resources available are spent cost-effectively. It should be noted that the Group's role is not to discuss policies or strategies, which are decided by the governing bodies of United Nations organizations and coordinated by higher-level coordination bodies such as the Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the High-Level Committee on Programmes.

77. While the strategies already detailed by the intergovernmental bodies can be further fine-tuned by the Environmental Management Group, the Group should be content to bring about synergies in the implementation of strategies which have been agreed. There are many areas, already identified as having potential for synergy in the many intergovernmental meetings since 1972 of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the UNEP Governing Council, not forgetting the Earth Summit and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which still need implementation. Successful examples of synergy are readily available in some areas, and the Environmental Management Group could replicate that experience in other areas in a short time. Demonstration of success on a few issues would lead to the United Nations agencies looking for synergies themselves rather than waiting for the Environmental Management Group.

B. Establishment of issue-management groups

78. As stated above, there are already many coordination groups which have been established within the United Nations system over the years. This is only natural, since the issue of coordination was always a key issue for the United Nations System both before and at the time of the creation of UNEP in 1972. The issue has been reiterated at every subsequent international environmental meeting. In the meetings of the Environmental Management Group, issue-management groups have been established such as those on the environmental aspects of water and sanitation, on capacity-building and on sustainable procurement. There is very strong group of about 26 United Nations organizations in the United Nations Water Group dealing comprehensively with all water-related issues. There are already two inter-agency groups on sustainable procurement. There is an Inter-Organizational Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals. There is a United Nations Energy Group. If a study of the existing coordinating groups shows that a particular group may require additional membership or that its mandate should be expanded slightly, the Environmental Management Group could point out those facts to that group. Only if that proves to be impossible should the Environmental Management Group start a new group. The rule should be that the Environmental Management Group secretariat should identify and make specific recommendations to the meetings of the Environmental Management Group regarding the necessity for any further issue-management groups.

79. It is recommended that the Environmental Management Group should not establish any further issue-management group on any issue on which an existing group is functioning well. It may wish to adopt the groups already in existence as its own and provide them with the benefits of its information exchange. Another way would be to assist such groups with secretariat assistance for their meetings and for the preparation of their reports. Every group would appreciate such assistance.

C. Focus of issue-management groups

80. It is recommended that issue-management groups should operate at two levels: The first level on the issue should be sector groups, which would bring in all the concerned United Nations agencies with activities or interest in that sector to coordinate approaches and compare strategies to mutual advantage. Where specific interlinkages between the sector groups need attention, one or more interlinkage groups could be established or the issues could be resolved through joint meetings. At the second level, under the sector groups, specific task forces could be established for specific areas of activity such as legislation, policies, enforcement, monitoring and assessment, and so on. There may often be scope for combining the task forces for many sectors on cross-sectoral issues such as legislation, training and other capacity-building issues. Only those officers of the agencies who have specific expertise in those areas should participate, at the appropriate level, and the members of the groups should understand each other's languages. To increase the sense of the participation among Environmental Management Group members, the meetings of the sector groups and their task forces could be held in rotation at the headquarters of member agencies, and the Chair of the meetings could also rotate.

D. Promoting synergy and complementarities

81. The Green Customs Project mentioned in chapter IV above is an example of a joint action programme between members of the Environmental Management Group. Any new agency joining in the group would benefit since the group has already identified the facilities and resource persons available in developing countries to continue activities. The Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals and United Nations Water are the other examples.

82. It is recommended that the Environmental Management Group secretariat should multiply such successful cooperation programmes by carefully studying the information available and communicating to the task forces and the sector groups the potential for joint action/synergy.

E. Meetings and agenda of the Environmental Management Group

83. According to the terms of reference of the Environmental Management Group, the member agencies should participate at a senior level; rightly so, since the Environmental Management Group is to guide the agencies on coherence of approach and promotion of joint action and synergy. Each agency could designate two or three senior officials to attend the meetings of the Environmental Management Group. If none of the designated officials can attend a meeting of the Environmental Management Group, that Agency should be treated as absent.

84. The Environmental Management Group could meet once or twice a year. For convenience, the meetings could take place back-to-back with the Chief Executives Board for Coordination or with meetings of intergovernmental bodies where the designated officers designated to participate in the Environmental Management Group are likely to be present.

85. The agenda of the Environmental Management Group may be categorized under the following headings:

- (a) Difficulties of the issue-management groups/task forces brought to the group by the secretariat for solution at a higher level;
- (b) Bringing about coherence in approaches in issues where the issue-management groups are unable to agree internally;
- (c) Setting priorities;
- (d) Emerging issues from a high-level perspective;
- (e) Informal exchange of views.

86. Environmental Management Group meetings should be based on well-prepared agenda with background documentation sent out at least four weeks in advance.

F. Membership of the Environmental Management Group

87. All the specialized agencies, programmes and organs of the United Nations system are members of the Environmental Management Group. The World Bank participates actively in the Environmental Management Group. The Global Environment Facility is invited to the meetings but does not attend, on the plea that its implementing agencies, UNDP, UNEP and World Bank, attend the meetings. The Multilateral Fund for the Montreal Protocol also does not attend, for the same reason.

88. Some of the important players in environmental funding that are left out are the regional development banks, the many bilateral funding agencies and the non governmental organizations – those involved in environment and also the industrial organizations. Among the non-governmental organizations, a few, such as IUCN, WWF, Greenpeace and Friends of Earth, have made a significant impact on the environmental agenda.

89. The Environmental Management Group is a United Nations group and its character need not be changed for the present by inducting others. Bilateral aid agencies, regional development banks and select non-governmental organizations could be involved in the discussions on specific issues by the issue-management groups if the issue-management groups consider such involvement essential.

G. Collaboration with the United Nations Development Group

1. The activities of the agencies must be synergetic not only with each other but also with those of the relevant countries. That is now the main thrust of all development agencies. The United Nations Development Group is understood to be looking at that issue too. The Environmental Management Group may wish to dovetail its activities with those of the United Nations Development Group. The Secretary-General of the United Nations could spell out the nature of the interrelationship between the Environmental Management Group and the United Nations Development Group.

H. Role of the Environmental Management Group secretariat

90. From its terms of reference, it can be deduced that Environmental Management Group is not a UNEP instrument but an instrument of the United Nations. It is an inter-agency group. It is vital that members of the Environmental Management Group should see the Group's secretariat as serving all the members and not merely UNEP.

91. No terms of reference have been drafted so far for the duties of the secretariat and it is necessary for its duties to be clarified. The job description of the Head of the Environmental Management Group secretariat which was used in advertising the post offers us some clues. Most of the description is entirely appropriate. There are a few entries, however, which convey the impression that the Group is a UNEP unit. One states that the Environmental Management Group secretariat should organize effective representation by UNEP at the meetings of Environmental Management Group and its management groups and provide support and policy advice to UNEP participants in Environmental Management Group issue-management groups. It also states that the secretariat should facilitate the linkages between the work of Environmental Management Group and UNEP, prepare reports on specific issues arising from the work of United Nations system in the field of environment and from the policy conclusions of the Environmental Management Group, in consultation with the Environmental Management Group members, which could be considered by the UNEP General Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and other intergovernmental forums as appropriate. It also states that the Group should make strategic policy recommendations with regard to overall UNEP policy on Environmental-Management-Group-related activities.

92. It is clear that that part of the role of the Environmental Management Group secretariat – of assisting UNEP in its inter-agency affairs – does not sit well with the Environmental Management Group members, and that it is a distraction from the work of the Group.

93. It is recommended that terms of reference should be prepared for the Environmental Management Group secretariat.

I. The Environmental Management Group secretariat in the organizational structure of UNEP

94. The Environmental Management Group secretariat should serve all the United Nations agencies, and such a role can be fulfilled only by treating it as an independent secretariat patterned on the convention secretariats. Its place in the organizational structure of UNEP should reflect that fact. Such a placing would also change the perception of other agencies whereby the Environmental Management Group secretariat is regarded as a UNEP unit.

J. Strengthening the Environmental Management Group secretariat and ways of meeting the cost

95. The proactive role of the Environmental Management Group secretariat envisaged above would require small increments to its staffing. The need for an information/ environmental professional to assist in information exchange has already been mentioned. Another Professional member of staff would be needed to assist the sector groups and task forces. The member agencies would have to provide their time to run the meetings of those groups. The staffing could be provided by appropriate junior professional officers from aid agencies. Also, the member agencies may be willing to second staff members as appropriate and as needed by the groups if such seconding promises benefits.

96. It should be noted that the Inter-Organizational Programme on the Sound Management of Chemicals has a small secretariat that is financed by the member agencies. Now is not the right time to request the member agencies to support the Environmental Management Group secretariat. It can be hoped, however, that a stage may come when those member agencies volunteer such support, if and when they consider the Environmental Management Group secretariat's work to be of benefit to them.

97. Another legitimate question is why the United Nations itself cannot meet at least a part of the cost of the Environmental Management Group secretariat, since the United Nations as a whole benefits from the Environmental Management Group. As mentioned above, the costs involved in creating and maintaining an information base and in the small increments to staff numbers are small. The United Nations must demonstrate its support to the Environmental Management Group, which benefits all agencies, by meeting its modest cost. The bilateral aid agencies too could help, since they all now appreciate the importance of the coordination which the Group could offer and would like to promote it among the United Nations agencies.

K. Location of the secretariat in Geneva or Nairobi

98. The Environmental Management Group secretariat is located in Geneva and has two Professional staff members, one at D-1 level, the Head of the secretariat, and one at P-3 level and one General Service member of staff, a secretary at G-4 level. The Head of the Secretariat was recruited in June 2003.

99. What are the factors for choosing the location for the secretariat of an institution? Everyone would admit that it should be located in a place that maximizes its ability to fulfil its mandate and functions and achieve its objectives. The choice of location also depends on the character of the secretariat: is it to serve the interests of one organization or many? Who and where are its clients? How frequently does it have to interact face-to-face with those clients?

100. There is no doubt that Nairobi is good location, with all the facilities necessary for any United Nations office. In recent years, tremendous progress has been made in improving the communication facilities from Nairobi. For over nine years, the author of the present report headed the Ozone Secretariat – the Secretariat of the Montreal Protocol located in Nairobi – and the Ozone Secretariat found no difficulty in discharging its duties as a result of that location. It must be emphasized, however, that the clients of the Ozone Secretariat were, primarily, all the Governments of the world, and any place – assuming reasonable facilities – would be equidistant from the point of view of all those Governments; hence Nairobi was as good a location as any other.

101. Branches of UNEP deal with other agencies and those agencies' main clients are the world's countries. The countries, as the Montreal Protocol Secretariat located in Nairobi illustrates, can be dealt with from Nairobi as well as from any other place. If, however, UNEP has a branch that deals only with some countries in a region (as for regional conventions and the regional offices of UNEP), the rational course is to locate that branch in that region. The case of the Environmental Management Group secretariat is similar. The clients of the Environmental Management Group secretariat, the United Nations system agencies, number 108 at the last count. Of those, 27 are located in Geneva, 24 in New York, 3 in Nairobi and the rest in about 25 other cities. By continent, Africa has 5, Asia 4, Europe 62, Latin America 4 and North America 33. From the point of view of nearness to the clients, New York and Geneva score over Nairobi for the location of the Environmental Management Group secretariat. The secretariat should be located in a place where they can interact frequently with the member agencies of the Environmental Management Group.

102. It must be noted that locating the secretariat in a particular place, whether Geneva or Nairobi, does not mean that all the meetings connected with the Environmental Management Group must be held in that place: the Ozone Secretariat has held most of the Meetings of its Parties and its working groups outside Nairobi, in deference to the wishes of the States Parties to the Montreal Protocol. The

Environmental Management Group will similarly be compelled to hold many meetings away from the location of its secretariat to suit the convenience and budgets of its members.

103. The annual budget for the secretariat for 2004 was \$464,000. The bulk of the cost was for staff salaries, at around \$320,000.

104. The comparative annual standard salary costs, taking into account all commitments, of the three Professional members of staff at Nairobi and Geneva are as follows (figures (in dollars) provided by the United Nations Office at Nairobi:)

	Nairobi	Geneva	Annual difference
D-1	229,300	245,400	16,100
P-3	130,700	147,300	16,600
Secretary	14,900	65,600	50,700

The total annual difference is about \$83,400.

105. Some of the remaining costs, such as meeting expenses, consultancies and so on are common to wherever the secretariat is located. If the secretariat were located in Nairobi and meetings were held in Nairobi, the agencies would have to spend considerably more than for the Geneva location on travel, and many of them frankly said that they do not have any budget provision for such travel and many might either skip the meetings or send their local Nairobi officers. So, if the meetings are to be held fruitfully, they will generally have to be held elsewhere. The Environmental Management Group secretariat in Geneva has travel budget of \$45,000 for 2004. If the Environmental Management Group secretariat were located in Nairobi and had to travel to Europe or North America to attend meetings of the Environmental Management Group, issue-management group meetings or contact the agencies personally, that budget would rise significantly. Each trip by a secretariat staff member might cost \$2,000–\$4,000 more than from Geneva. Any cost savings from locating the secretariat in Nairobi are therefore likely to be insignificant.

Views and perceptions of other agencies

106. As mentioned above, there is an apprehension among the Environmental Management Group members that the Group may serve only UNEP purposes. It is important to eliminate that impression if the Environmental Management Group is to function well. Moving the secretariat to Nairobi would only reinforce that impression. All the member agencies interviewed are in favour of continuing to keep the secretariat in Geneva. The example of the GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, which serves all the implementing agencies of GEF – UNEP, UNDP and the World Bank – is illustrative in that connection. UNEP used to manage the Panel’s secretariat and it was located in Nairobi; however, it was shifted to Washington D.C. because of strong demand by the other agencies.

107. In conclusion, there is nothing to be criticized about locating the Environmental Management Group secretariat in Geneva and, from many points of view, it would be advantageous to keep it there.

IX. Acknowledgements

108. The Evaluation and Oversight Unit of UNEP wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the work and effort of the consultant, Mr. K. Madhava Sarma, in preparing the present management study. His willingness to take on the study at short notice ensured that it would be ready in time for the twenty-third session of the UNEP Governing Council. Also, we wish to acknowledge the helpfulness and willingness of the large number of officials from UNEP and other United Nations agencies, and of the permanent representatives in Nairobi, who contributed their precious time and thoughts to the study.

Annex I

Persons interviewed on the issues of the Environmental Management Group

Face-to-Face Interviews

Nairobi

1. Segbedzi Norgbey, Chief, Evaluation and Oversight Unit, UNEP.
2. Ms Susanne Bech, Assistant Programme Officer, EOU, UNEP
3. Halifa Drammeh, Deputy Director, Division of Policy Development, UNEP
4. Ahmed Djoghla, Director, Division of GEF Coordination, UNEP/Ozone
5. Paul Akiwumi, Office of the Director General, UNON, Nairobi
6. Kalyan Ray, Director, Water and Sanitation Branch, UNCHS (Habitat)
7. Jan Bauer, Deputy Permanent Representative of Netherlands to UNEP.
8. Alexander Barabanov, Director, Division of Administrative Services, UNON
9. Ole Lyse, Coordinator, Urban Environment, UNCHS
10. H.E. Mr. F. Renard, Ambassador of Belgium to Kenya and Vice-President of GC/GMEF
11. Ms Christina Boelcke, Director, Division of Regional Cooperation, UNEP
12. Sven Tveitdal, Director, Division of Environmental Conventions, UNEP
13. Mark Collins, Principal Bio-Safety Officer, DEC, UNEP
14. H.E. Mr. Carlos Gamba, Ambassador of Colombia and Vice-President, GC/GMEF
15. Jamil Ahmed, Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan to UNEP and Chair, G-77 and China
16. Bakary Kante, Director, Department of Policy Development and Law, UNEP
17. Ms Florence Tinguely-Mattli, Deputy Permanent Representative of Switzerland to UNEP
18. Klaus Topfer, Executive Director, UNEP
19. Discussion with Mr. Bakary Kante, Director, DPDL, UNEP and his team of officers
20. Ashbindu Singh, Regional Coordinator, Assessment, North America, UNEP, Washington

Prague (During the 16th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol)

21. Shafqat Kakakhel, Deputy Executive Director, UNEP, Nairobi
22. Rajendra Shende, Head of the Energy and Ozone Action programme Branch, DTIE, UNEP
23. Steve Gorman, GEF Executive Coordinator and Team Leader, Environment/Montreal Protocol, World Bank, Washington
24. Ms Suely Carvalho, Chief and Principal Technical Advisor, Montreal Protocol UNIT/EEG/BDP, UNDP, New York

Geneva

1. James Bertram, Coordinator, Water, Sanitation and Health, WHO, Geneva
2. Jukka Takala, Chief Occupational Safety and Health Branch, ILO
3. S. Chacowry, Director of Cabinet and External Relations, WMO along with Rodolfo A. de Guzman, Director, Strategic Planning Office and Yinka R. Adebayo, Senior Strategic Planning Officer, WMO
4. Ms Nuria Castells, Economic Affairs Officer, Trade, Environment and Development section, UNCTAD, Geneva
5. Kaj Barlund, Director, Environment and Human Settlements, UNECE, Geneva
6. Ms. Monika Linn, Head, EMG Secretariat and Hossein Fadayeh, Programme officer, EMG Secretariat
7. Nelson Sabogal, Senior Programme Officer, Basel Convention Secretariat
8. Achim Halpap, Senior Programme Officer, UNITAR

By Telephone

1. Salvano Briceno, Inter Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, Geneva
3. John Harding, Programme Officer, ISDR
4. John Whitelaw, Deputy Director, UNEP Chemicals, Geneva
5. Mohammed Raza Salamat, Inter-regional Adviser on Energy and Sustainable Development, UNDESA
6. Yannik Glemarec, UNDP/GEF, Deputy Executive Coordinator, UNDP
7. Janos Pasztor, Coordinator, Information, Outreach and Administrative Services, UNFCCC

By email

1. Ms Monique Barbut, Director, DTIE, Paris, UNEP,
2. Peter Bridgewater, Secretary-General, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
3. Jukka Takala, Chief Occupational Safety and Health Branch, ILO
4. Salvatore Arico, Bio-Diversity Programme Officer, UNESCO
5. Ms. Jessica F. Green, Project Manager, Sustainable Development, Governance, Institute of Advanced Studies, United Nations University, New York on behalf of Prof. A.H. Zakri, Director of United Nations University-Institute of Advanced Studies
6. Mukul Sanwal, Coordinator, UNFCCC, Bonn
7. M. J.Campbell, Analytical Chemist, IAEA, Vienna
8. Rene Desiderio, Consultant, UNFPA
9. Kaj Barlund, Director, Environment and Human Settlements, UNECE, Geneva
10. James Bertram, Coordinator, Water, Sanitation and Health, WHO, Geneva

Annex II

Terms of reference For a management study on the Environmental Management Group

1. Background

The Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eighth special session held in March 2004 requested “*the Executive Director to present a report on the matter [Environmental Management Group] to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its twenty-third session, which should also include a comprehensive assessment of the location of the secretariat of the Environmental Management Group, taking into account, among other things, existing efforts to strengthen the United Nations Office at Nairobi, the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme and the headquarters of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, as well as the mandate and membership of the Environmental Management Group*”.

The Environmental Management Group (EMG) was established as a result of recommendations contained in the report of the United Nations Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements (A/53/463) that were adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/242. The purpose of the Group was to enhance UN system-wide inter-agency coordination related to specific issues in the field of environment and human settlements. It was mandated to (1) provide effective, coordinated and flexible UN system response to, and to facilitate joint action aimed at finding solutions to important and newly emerging specific issues of environmental and human settlements concern and (2) to promote interlinkages, encourage timely and relevant exchange of data and information on specific issues and compatibility of different approaches to finding solutions to those common problems, contribute to synergy and complementarity among and between activities of its members.

The Group has a two-tiered structure of a senior-level decision-making body (the EMG) chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP and a number of time-bound ad hoc issue management groups (IMG). The Secretariat of EMG is hosted by UNEP and is located in the International Environment House, Geneva.

The 1st meeting of the EMG was held at the International Environment House in Geneva, Switzerland in January 2001. Since its establishment the EMG has in addition to teleconferences held eight meetings; six in Geneva, one in New York and most recently at UNON in Nairobi.

2. Scope

The study will cover the documents and procedures that led to the establishment of the EMG and its Secretariat as well as all activities of the EMG since its establishment to date. The study will not contain a review of the mechanisms in place within the member organizations of the EMG to implement the decisions of the EMG, except for that of UNEP.

3. Objective

The overall objective of the study is to identify successes and challenges in the functioning of the EMG and provide lessons learned and recommendation on how to strengthen the work of the Secretariat including whether it would be beneficial to change the location of the Secretariat to Nairobi. Specifically, the conductor of the study shall review:

- (a) achievement of objectives of the EMG taking into account the mandate of EMG, objectives laid out in its terms of reference and factors affecting the achievement;
- (b) appropriateness and criteria of the membership that was to contain UN programmes, specialized agencies and multinational environmental agreements. This should also contain an assessment of the appropriateness of involving actors from the Civil Society;
- (c) links with intergovernmental forums and with other coordination mechanisms in the United Nations system;
- (d) adequacy and appropriateness of the organisational structure and resources of the Secretariat;

(e) cost effectiveness of the location of the Secretariat. Comparison should be made between Geneva and Nairobi considering the pros and cons of physical proximity of the Secretariat to its members and to the Headquarters of UNEP and UN-HABITAT taking into account the existing efforts to strengthen the United Nations Office at Nairobi. Implications of the possible relocation of the secretariat should also be assessed.

4. Methodology

The study will be conducted by using a participatory approach where by the Director of UNEP/DPDL and the Chief of EOU are kept informed and regularly consulted throughout the review. The following main approaches for collecting and analyzing data will be used:

- (a) Review of relevant documents, outputs and reports such as decisions, resolutions and other documents pertaining to the establishment of EMG and the Secretariat, EMG's program of work for the biennium 2003-2004 and proposed medium and long-term programmes under preparation;
- (b) Interviews with the management and staff of EMG;
- (c) Interviews with staff at UNEP and UN-Habitat who are directly involved in the work of EMG
- (d) Interviews with members of EMG;
- (e) Interviews with representatives of the permanent missions in Geneva and Nairobi.

Evaluation parameters of appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency, impact and sustainability will be used as appropriate, particularly pertaining to the review of mandate and achievement of goals and objectives, and follow the general guidelines provided in the UNEP project manual pp.13/89-13/99 and also available on http://www.unep.org/Project_Manual

5. Report format and structure

The study report shall be written in English, of which the main report ii)-vi) is no more than 20 pages and include:

- (i) Executive summary (no more than 2 pages)
- (ii) Introduction and background
- (iii) Scope, objective and methodology of the study
- (iv) Findings and conclusions
- (v) Lessons learned
- (vi) Recommendations
- (vii) Annexes, including TOR of the study.

The report shall be submitted in electronic form in MS Word format and addressed as follows:

Mr. Segbedzi Norgbey, Chief, Evaluation and Oversight Unit
UNEP, P.O. Box 30552
GPO 00100 Nairobi, Kenya
Tel.: (254-2) 623387
Email: Segbedzi.Norgbey@unep.org

With a copy to

Mr. Bakary Kante, Director, Division of Policy Development and Law
UNEP, P.O. Box 30552
GPO 00100 Nairobi, Kenya
Tel.: (254-2) 624065
Email: Bakary.Kante@unep.org

6. Schedule and resources

Resources

A consultant will be hired to conduct this study under the guidance of the Chief of the Evaluation and Oversight Unit (EOU) and in close cooperation with the Director of Division of Policy Development and Law (UNEP/DPDL).

The consultant should have the following qualifications: i) Basic expertise in international environmental governance, ii) UN experience and relevant inter-agency coordination experience and iii) evaluation experience or familiarity an advantage.

The consultant will receive his payment upon satisfactory completion of work and submission of final report. The fee is payable under the individual SSAs of the consultant and is *exclusive* of all expenses such as travel, accommodation and incidental expenses. Tickets and DSA will be arranged by EOU/UNEP.

In case, the consultant cannot provide the product in accordance with the TORs, the timeframe agreed, or the product is substandard, the payment to the consultant could be withheld, until such a time the product is modified to meet UNEP's standard. In case, the consultant fails to submit a satisfactory final product to UNEP, the product prepared by the consultant may not constitute the report.

Schedule

The contract will begin on 6 November and end 18 December 2004 (3 weeks spread over 6 weeks).

The consultant will travel to Geneva to interview relevant staff and visit members of EMG located in Geneva and travel to Nairobi to interview relevant staff of UNON, UNEP and UN-Habitat and representatives to the permanent missions.

The consultant will submit the draft report to EOU on 4 December 2004. Comments on the draft report will be sent to the consultant after a maximum of one week. After incorporating the comments, the consultant will submit the final report by 18 December 2004.

Annex III

Terms of reference of the Environmental Management Group

Background

The General Assembly in its resolution 53/242, paragraph 5, supports the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish an environmental management group for the purpose of enhancing United Nations system-wide inter-agency coordination related to specific issues in the field of environment and human settlements.

Mandate

Taking into account the views expressed by Member States on the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements (A/53/463), and also taking into account the mandates of the relevant United

Nations system organizations and bodies, as well as the views expressed by ACC (see ACC/1999/4) and IACSD at its thirteenth and fourteenth meetings, the Environmental Management Group is entrusted with the following responsibilities:

- To provide an effective, coordinated and flexible United Nations system response to and to facilitate joint action aimed at finding solutions to important and newly emerging specific issues of environmental and human settlements concern, through an issue management approach as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform" (A/51/950);
- To promote inter-linkages, encourage timely and relevant exchange of data and information on specific issues and compatibility of different approaches to finding solutions to those common problems, contribute to the synergy and complementarity among and between activities of its members in the fields of environment and human settlements, and hence act in a complementary manner and add value to the existing United Nations system-wide inter-agency cooperation.

Objectives

In fulfilling its mandate, the Group shall aim at attaining the following objectives:

To identify, address and resolve collectively specific problems, issues and tasks on the environmental and human settlements agenda requiring enhanced inter-agency cooperation in a given time-frame through securing effective and collaborative involvement of the relevant United Nations system agencies, programmes and organs and of other potential partners, as appropriate;

To provide a forum for an early discussion and sharing of information on emerging problems and issues in the field of environment and human settlements geared at finding collectively the most effective coordinated approach to the solution of the new tasks;

To assist UNEP and Habitat in carrying out their functions related to the promotion of coordinated approaches to environmental and human settlements issues in the United Nations system and to enhance the environmental and human settlement perspectives, in particular their normative and analytic aspects, in the work of other United Nations system organizations;

To facilitate, in this vein, the work of UNEP and Habitat in carrying out their responsibilities as IACSD task managers for a number of environment and human settlements-related chapters of Agenda 21 with a view to enhancing their contributions to the work of IACSD, its subcommittees and the task managers system and other related inter-agency mechanisms, as well as the Commission on Sustainable Development, as appropriate.

Membership

In line with the mandate and objectives of the Group set out above, making it an instrument to enhance further inter-agency cooperation and coordination across the United Nations system on specific issues in the field of environment and human settlements, members of the Group shall be the specialized agencies, programmes and organs of the United Nations system, including the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements.

Modus operandi

The Group will function in a results-driven, flexible and cost-effective manner, using modern telecommunication technologies whenever possible and appropriate. It will take into account work in progress under the aegis of the Ecosystem Conservation Group and utilize that Group, to the extent possible, to facilitate its own work on ecosystem management and conservation.

UNEP will be providing the secretariat for the Environmental Management Group.

The Group will have a two-tiered structure:

- A senior-level decision-making body, entitled the Environmental Management Group, chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP and consisting of senior level officials from member organizations of the Group;
- Time-bound ad hoc issues-management groups set up by the Group. They will cease to exist after completion of their tasks.

The members of the Group will meet at least once a year on the invitation of its Chairman, after appropriate consultations. They will, in particular:

- Identify the specific issues to be addressed by the Group;
- Establish, as appropriate, an ad hoc issue management group for each specific issue identified;
- Decide on the mandate and time-frame of each ad hoc issue management group;
- Adopt the reports of the ad hoc issue management groups.

In cases where an issue is of an urgent nature and demands prompt action, the Chairman of the Group will immediately inform the members of the necessity to form an ad hoc issue management group and invite members to participate in the task. While all Group members have the right to accept or decline participation in any given ad hoc issue management group, any such group should benefit as much as possible from the participation of those organizations of the United Nations system which are most concerned with the issue at hand.

Each ad hoc issue management group is responsible to fulfill its mandate within the given time-frame. In case a group is not able to meet the deadline, it will submit a proposal on how and when to accomplish the task to the secretariat of the Group at least six weeks before expiration of the deadline. The Group will decide on the proposal.

UNEP will normally be the lead agency and chair the ad hoc issue management groups, the work of which will be organized and supported by the secretariat of the Group. However, an ad hoc issue management group may nominate by consensus a lead agency other than UNEP if this is found appropriate in light of the specific task. The lead agency will then prepare the documents, organize and chair the meetings, and prepare the report on the results of the group's deliberations.

Participation of non-members

Representatives of relevant sectors of the civil society and of international non-governmental organizations with a potential and specific expertise related to issues being deliberated by the Group may participate upon the request of Group members in meetings of the Group by invitation of the Chairman of the Group, taking due account of respective United Nations rules and procedures. They may also participate in the work of an ad hoc issue management group if required by the specific issue under discussion and so decided by the group. Accordingly, the lead agency of the ad hoc issue management group will invite the respective additional participants.

Reporting

The lead agency of each ad hoc issue management group will submit the report on the results of the group's work to the Chairman of the Group through its secretariat. The secretariat in turn will submit copies of the report for comments and adoption to the representatives of those organizations-members of the Group who have participated in the respective work. In order to enhance efficiency the deadline for comments should not exceed four weeks. Immediately after the report has been adopted, the secretariat will distribute copies of the report for information to Group members. When appropriate and in the case of an ad hoc issue management group having been chaired by an organization other than UNEP, after having consulted this lead agency, the Chairman of the Group may bring the report to the attention of the Secretary-General.

In the event that the results of the meetings of the Group and/or its ad hoc group's work have a bearing on United Nations system work in sustainable development, the Chairman of the Group will inform ACC and the secretariat of the Group will communicate the relevant report to the secretariat of IACSD.

Annex IV

Bibliography

1. Reports of the eight meetings of the EMG and draft report of the ninth meeting and the background documents of these meetings INCLUDING THE REPORTS OF THE issue Management Groups.
 2. Reports of the UNEP Governing Council 7th and 8th Special sessions
 3. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly (A/53/242)
 4. Report of the Secretary-General on Environment and Human Settlements (A/53/463)
 5. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly (A/58/209)
 6. The United Nations System-Wide Medium-Term Environment Programme 1990-1995
 7. ECE/AC21/2004/3- of the Economic and Social Council-“Clearing House on Transport, Environment and Health” prepared by WHO/Europe and the UNECE Secretariat
 8. The background paper 2 –financial flow statistics of the CSD8 held in April-May 2000
 9. A comparison of management systems for development co-operation in OECD/DAC members) by Hyun-sik Chang, Arthur M. Fell and Michael Laird with the assistance of Julie Seif from the website www.oecd.org
 10. The websites of UNEP, EMG, UNDP, GEF, Harmonization Forum
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