

UN Environment Programme CPR Subcommittee 8 November 2018

EU and its Member States' comments on

South-South Cooperation

General comments:

- The EU and its Member States (EU+MS) thank UN Environment Programme (UNEP) for the comprehensive background documents on South-South-Cooperation (SSC).
- We welcome initiatives aiming at improving South-South and triangular cooperation in the environment. SSC can be a prime mechanism for the delivery of support at country or regional level while being complementary to North-South cooperation and triangular cooperation.
- UNEP's involvement in SSC should be in line with its mandate and its Program of Work (PoW). Additionally, UNEP's involvement should be based on the merit of the specific South-South initiative. This aims to prevent UNEP's involvement in supporting greenwashing projects based purely on political or national interests.
- SSC also relates to the request of several Member states for UNEP to provide an overview of their flagship initiatives, including initiatives such as the coalition on Greening the Belt and Road. These flagship initiatives require additional scrutiny given their high impact, political relevance or financial significance.
- It is therefore important that all foreseen and new activities, which require substantial resources from UNEP, are politically relevant or could generate significant political interest, are substantially consulted with Member States.
- In this respect the EU + MS urge UNEP to also take into account its existing and developing due diligence procedures, as recently presented during 5th Annual Subcommittee (ASC-5), when engaging in SSC.
- It is our understanding that countries in transition (e.g. no longer DAC-countries) are engaging in UNEP SSC. We would like to know more on the possibilities for other countries in transition or developed countries to engage in similar initiatives with UNEP.
- We believe that it would be useful to clarify how activities under SSC are reported and what standards and managing guidelines are used in this regard. To which extent are activities reported as ODA according to DAC-rules?
- Developing countries are becoming increasingly involved in SSC and recognize the value of triangular cooperation. There is a clear trend towards enhanced SSC in various fields. Triangular cooperation also has a pivotal role in facilitating cooperation between developing countries by fostering communication and providing support.

– SSC fosters knowledge-sharing and practical learning through the involvement of experts and practitioners from regions with similar local circumstances. Knowledge sharing through South–South and triangular cooperation at the local level can inform policymaking at the national level.

Specific comments:

– The policy guidance on the integration of SSC into UNEP PoW is from 2011. Is this guidance still be taken into account by UNEP’s staff?

– The aim of the policy guidance is to achieve coherent and coordinated implementation of SSC approaches across the PoW. The Briefing Note by the Secretariat lists various key areas of work, coordination and provision of support to projects, innovative partnerships etc. How is coherence and coordination across the board ensured?