

UNEP Partnerships with Major Groups and Stakeholders to implement the Programme of Work 2010-11 Initial Findings and Key Points

The United Nations Environment Programme is committed to engaging and working with civil society, and the Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch is dedicated to meeting those ends. As such it has requested Stakeholder Forum¹ to conduct research into how the role of Major Groups and Stakeholders can be enhanced and partnerships¹ can be developed to strengthen UNEP capacity to implement the Programme of Work 2010-11 (POW). To this end, the research is looking at the following areas:

- Mapping and analysis of planned and proposed partnerships across the Major Groups to implement the POW
- Suggested partnerships and frameworks for partnerships to deliver the Programme of Work 2010-11
- Examples of successful partnerships with Major Groups and Stakeholders
- Knowledge Management and Communication
- Broader Function of the Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch

As part of the research, Stakeholder Forum has conducted a number of interviews with UNEP staff across the various Divisions, as well as those who have been assigned responsibility for the co-ordination of the six priority Sub-Programmes of the Programme of Work: Climate Change, Disasters and Conflicts, Ecosystem Management, Environmental Governance, Harmful Substances and Hazardous Waste; Resource Efficiency.

The research is ongoing, and will be supplemented with telephone interviews and surveys where necessary. It is also the objective to consult key Major Groups representatives at the Regional Meetings to gauge their views on how best Major Groups and stakeholders can contribute to the implementation of the Programme of Work 2010-11.

Based on the research so far, Stakeholder Forum presents some initial findings below. Please note that the presentation of these findings is intentionally concise and that any final report will build more thoroughly on the consultation conducted. This is a draft document and it is intended that the findings presented within it will provide food for thought for the UNEP Regional Civil Society Consultation Meetings, and that recommendations may be framed on the basis of consultation both within and outside UNEP.

¹ Partnerships refer to any written agreement between UNEP and an external organization representing Major Groups and stakeholders to deliver a particular output in relation to the Programme of Work 2010-11

Mapping and analysis of planned and proposed partnerships across the Major Groups to implement the POW

The data for this exercise is not yet available in its entirety. The mapping and analysis will be completed upon receipt of the final data of finalised and proposed partnerships across the Divisions and Sub-Programmes.

Suggested partnerships and frameworks for partnerships to deliver the Programme of Work 2010-11

➤ Strategic Partnerships

The thematic approach of the POW across six priority Sub-Programmes is broadly welcomed as offering the opportunity to focus, streamline and better co-ordinate UNEP's work. There is a general feeling that in the past Divisions have tended to work as separate entities with perhaps successful but nonetheless uncoordinated projects and partnerships. This has resulted in a plethora of partnerships across Divisions that do not necessarily contribute to one coherent vision and goal: indeed, it is frequently the case that different Divisions or branches partner with the same organisation for different purposes, without an awareness of each other's activities.

It has therefore been suggested by a number of representatives that UNEP develop 'strategic partnerships' with particular key organisations in relation to each priority area. Prerequisite to the establishment of such partnerships will be a stakeholder mapping exercise that ascertains which organisations and Major Groups are most appropriate to join such a partnership. It is recommended that the co-ordinators of the six Sub-Programmes identify relevant stakeholders with the help of the Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch. It has been suggested that a meeting with representatives from these partnerships take place annually, possibly prior to the Governing Council and complementary to the Global Civil Society Forum – this will allow decision-makers and policy developers to assess implementation and allow lessons-learned from implementing partnerships to feed into the policy cycle.

➤ Specific Recommendations for Partnerships

The following broad requirements were identified by those UNEP staff members who were interviewed (see list in annex):

- Enhancing UNEP's role as a convener and 'honest broker' to encourage dialogue and knowledge exchange between different stakeholders: developing more Multi-stakeholder Partnerships
- Improving communication of International Environmental Law, Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) to a range of Major Groups and stakeholders to enhance transparency and accountability.
- Developing partnerships with Major Groups to communicate the findings and implications of Global Environmental Outlook in a format accessible to a range of stakeholders
- Developing a UNEP-wide partnership under the Resource Efficiency and SCP thematic area on Sustainable Agriculture, including representatives from Farmers Associations and Agri-business
- Developing a multi-stakeholder partnership including the Oil and Gas sector
- Developing a partnership with relevant private sector bodies and NGO representatives to look at renewable energy solutions and share cases of best practice
- Enhancing UNEP's relationship and partnerships with Indigenous Peoples especially in relation to the REDD agenda (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation)

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- Enhancing partnerships to communicate UNEP's work to national decision-makers and relevant sectors e.g. developing partnerships with national Education NGOs or institutions to integrate valuable UNEP resources into school curricula.
- Assessing the role of National Committees in making UNEP's work go further at a national level e.g. presenting policy tools; helping to disseminate training manuals and literature to target groups; holding national level consultations across the Major Groups.
- Involving Trade Unions in dialogue on Resource Efficiency and the implications of sustainable consumption and production for labour
- Acknowledging the role of Consumer Groups in environmental issues e.g. harnessing the energy of the ethical and green consumer movement to encourage responsible policy on Sustainable Consumption and Production
- Enhancing UNEP's relationship with Development NGOs in addition to environmental NGOs in order to promote sustainable and low carbon development

Examples of successful partnerships

A number of partnerships were identified as being successful – a handful are presented here, with observations as to why they worked particularly well

- **Sustainable Building and Construction Initiative**
UNEP fulfils its role as convenor and honest broker, encouraging knowledge exchange at a sectoral level, helping to enhance business expertise, and offering a bridge to policy-makers. This represents a win-win situation where UNEP builds on its strengths, business learns more about new methods and opportunities in the sector, and policy-makers are familiarised with the issue and the necessary frameworks.
- **Global Environmental Outlook**
This is a long-standing partnership with Collaborating Centres and scientists, where all partners bring expertise and added value to the partnership. The partners involved in GEO feel a sense of ownership over the work. A key to success is that the partnership has long-term and strategic objectives.
- **African Environmental Journalists Network**
This is partnership where both sides bring added value – UNEP brings environmental expertise and awareness of emerging issues, the environmental journalists the ability to communicate and disseminate valuable information to a range of audiences
- **Partnership on Clean Fuels and Vehicles**
This worked particularly well as it engaged a range of stakeholders and the outcomes had more weight as they were seen to represent a wider range of views. It also secured external funding and so fulfilled more obviously the requirements of a 'partnership' rather than a contractual arrangement with UNEP. UNEP brought added value to the partnership through providing a Secretariat who could aid implementation.
- **Paint for the Planet**
Again, this partnership involved a range of different stakeholders: Children and Youth, Business, UN agencies, NGOs. It had a clear objective and output, it attracted sufficient funding and UNEP was well-placed to co-ordinate and attract interest from governments and decision-makers.

Guidelines and Criteria for Successful Partnerships

In addition to the the identification of particular partnerships as successful, more general pre-conditions for success were also highlighted which should be discussed further and elaborated upon throughout the course of this research, including:

- Partnerships should have clear, defined and measurable objectives and outputs
- All partnerships should establish a monitoring framework from the outset
- The roles and responsibilities of each partner should be identified from the outset
- Every partnership should conduct stakeholder mapping prior to its establishment to identify which Major Groups are relevant to its implementation – where necessary the Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch should be contacted to help identify partners
- Where Partnerships have emphasis on a particular region, the Regional Offices must be consulted at the *initial stages* of its development, not informed as an afterthought.
- Sustainable funding must be ensured for the Partnership to function – where the partnership is not a simple contractual agreement with UNEP, partners should not compete for funds from one pot, but rather collectively design a fundraising strategy, utilise existing relationships, and allocate funds according to activity
- The partnership should fit into UNEP-wide goals – as such there should be mechanisms for communicating the examples of successful partnerships to UNEP as a whole, so that similar successful models can be replicated, and unsuccessful models not duplicated.
- The strengths of the partners must be in balance – this is especially critical where business is involved, as relatively small amounts of money can buy business a lot of kudos yet potentially compromise UNEP's position
- As far as possible Partnerships should be established according to the priorities outlined in UNEP's Programme of Work across the six priority areas, as agreed by Governing Council. Substantive considerations should override political considerations in the execution of partnerships so as to ensure efficiency and coherence.
- All projects and partners should be registered and information about them accessible across UNEP
- UNEP must be demonstrated to add value to the partnership – it must provide technical expertise and assistance, and be sure not to replicate but complement the work of other agencies

In light of the above recommendations, which are open to addition and amendment based on further consultation, it is recommend that **UNEP-wide guidelines** are produced on forming partnerships and working with partners, and that **specific recommendations tailored to each Major Group** should be available. This is especially relevant for partnerships with **business** – though guidelines exist and are used as a reference for predominantly within DTIE, this is not institutionalised across UNEP, and many Divisions remain unclear as to the criteria that should be followed. As UNEP's partnerships with business increase, more attention must be given to **how partnerships can be 'win-win'**.

Equally, where it is identified that partnerships with particular Major Groups are few and far between, whilst there may be valid reasons for why a particular group is less prevalent in implementation, the existence and awareness of guidelines across UNEP will enhance the ability to engage that group where it is identified as necessary.

Knowledge Management and Communication for Partnerships

➤ The Problem

A recurring issue raised by *all* those interviewed was the need for enhanced knowledge management and improved communication within UNEP in order to make the implementation of partnerships successful, relevant and impactful. Pre-requisite to the above recommendations is the ability of UNEP to manage partnerships in a coherent manor across the organisation, and ensure that the engagement of Major Groups and stakeholders in implementation leads to a common goal.

Whilst the re-structure of UNEP across priority Sub-Programmes areas will enhance coherence and communication across the Divisions, it will still remain a challenge to avoid duplication and enhance the sharing of best practice whilst no UNEP-wide knowledge management system exists. Whilst a number of those interviewed quite rightly stressed that they have built established relationships with partners in particular areas and do not feel that they need to necessarily consult outside their area of expertise, there was equally an acknowledgement that a lack of awareness of existing projects and partners forestalls institutionalised learning and better design of partnership activities, and the identification of new partners where necessary. A database of projects and partners, searchable according to key words, priority areas and Major Groups would therefore be extremely useful for all UNEP staff.

➤ The Role of the Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch

It is recommended that the Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch could play a role in facilitating the gathering of such information, and that their lists of accredited organisations should be enhanced with lists of all partner organisations so that there is a consistency of Major Groups and stakeholders engaged through the MGSB, and those engaged in implementation of the Programme of Work. This will allow the MGSB to assist in recommending potential partners, as well as identifying implementing organisations to contribute to policy discussions where necessary.

➤ Outreach

Further to gathering data of existing projects and partners, it was further recommended that UNEP should engage in partner scoping and outreach, in order to identify new organisations, networks and potential collaborators across the Major Groups. This is especially relevant in the area of development NGOs, as there exists a broad consensus that UNEP should be establishing closer relationships with such organisations.

Broader Function of the Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch

The role of the MGSB in relation to all of the above is that of facilitator, advice-giver and interface between Major Groups and UNEP. It is widely felt it should not engage in implementing partnerships of its own with Major Groups unless providing a supporting role to other Divisions and Sub-Programmes, or building capacity more broadly for Major Groups organisations to engage with and understand the work of UNEP as a whole.

Interviews and meetings have been conducted with the following UNEP staff:

- Leo Heileman: Sustainable Consumption and Production Branch, Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
- Arab Hoballah: Co-ordinator of Resource Efficiency Subprogramme, Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
- Bas De Leeuw, Head, Integrated Resource Management
- Destra Mebratu: Head, Business and Industry Unit
- Kaveh Zavedi: Co-ordinator, Climate Change Sub-Programme
- Bernard Jamet, Climate Change Senior Programme Officer, DGEF
- Balakrishna Pisupati: Programme Officer, Biodiversity and Land Law and Governance Unit, Division of Environmental Law and Conventions
- Marko Berglund: Associate Legal Officer, Biodiversity and Land Law and Governance Unit, Division of Environmental Law and Conventions
- Ms Margaret M. Oduk, Programme Officer, Biodiversity and Land Law and Governance Unit, Division of Environmental Law and Conventions
- Haddy Guise, Associate Legal Officer, Biodiversity and Land Law and Governance Unit, Division of Environmental Law and Conventions
- Sheila Aggarwal-Khan: Senior Advisor on Programme, Strategic Implementation Team, The Executive Office
- Tim Kasten: Deputy Director, Division of Environmental Policy Implementation and Co-ordinator, Ecosystems Management Sub-Programme
- Jan Betlem, Task Manager, POPS, Division of GEF Coordination
- David Ombisi, Associate Programme Officer, Regional Office for Africa
- Matthias Kern, Senior Programme Officer, POPS, Division of GEF Co-ordination
- Fanina Kodre-Alexander: Head, Internet Unit, Division for Communications and Public Information
- Kilaparti Ramakrishna, Senior Advisor, Environmental Law and Conventions
- Patrick J Tiefenbacher, Chief, Quality Assurance Section, Executive Office
- David Smith, Manager – Africa, Poverty and Environment Initiative
- Gerard Cunningham, Assessment Partnership Management, Division of Early Warning and Implementation
- Marion Cheadle, Division for Early Warning and Assessment and Sub-Programme Focal Point
- Fatou Ndoye, Programme Officer, Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch, Division of Regional Cooperation
- Olivier Deleuze, Chief, Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch, Division of Regional Cooperation
- Alexandra Karekaho, Cooperation with Major Groups and Stakeholders, Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch
- Ms. Laetitia Zobel, Environment and Indigenous Peoples, Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch
- Ms. Hortense Palmier, Environment and Workers & Trade Unions, Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch