

International Environmental Governance: 'Developing a Set of Options'

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Ongoing IEG Processes

Currently open IEG processes:

- **2002 Cartagena Package**, UNEP GC/GMEF decision SS.VII/1 – universal membership before 64th General Assembly;
- 2005 World Summit Outcome, **Paragraph 169 - UNGA Informal Consultative Process** on the Institutional Framework for UN Environment Work - request from co-Chairs in Feb., 2009 for ‘pragmatic, creative, constructive proposals’;
- **2008 Commonwealth** Consultations on IEG;
- **2008 Joint Inspection Unit Report** on the Management Review of Environmental Governance in the UN System. Executive Director’s response to be discussed by the CPR on 5 November 2009, to go to GC/GMEF 2010;
- **2009 Consultative Group set up under UNEP GC decision 25/4.**
- Other related processes: UNFCCC COP 15 climate change negotiations; GEF 5th replenishment; IPBES; Global Environmental Goals etc.

IEG Process – GC Mandate

UNEP Governing Council decision 25/4:

- *Decides* to establish a regionally representative, consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives, inviting each United Nations region to propose between two and four Governments to participate, while remaining open to participation by other interested Governments; (done)
- ***Requests* the group of ministers or high-level representatives to conclude its work and present a set of options for improving international environmental governance to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eleventh special session, with a view to providing inputs to the United Nations General Assembly;**
- *Decides* that the group will have two co-chairs, one from a developing country and one from a developed country, and requests the Executive Director to participate as an adviser to the group; (done)
- *Urges* the group to begin its work as soon as possible and, at its first meeting, to determine the structure of its work; (done)
- *Requests* the Executive Director to seek extra budgetary resources, if required, in order to facilitate the participation in the meetings of the developing countries proposed by the regional groups. (done)

Implementation of GC decision 25/4

First meeting of the Consultative Group in Belgrade, 27-28 June 2009:

- Nomination of co-Chairs:
**H.E. Mr. John Njoroge Michuki, Kenya, and
H.E. Ms. Stefania Prestigiacomo, Italy.**
- Outcome: Co-Chairs Summary: ‘The ***Belgrade Process - Moving Forward with Developing a Set of Options on International Environmental Governance***’

“The co-Chairs’ summary is a reflection of the interactive dialogue that occurred among the ministers and high-level representatives attending the Consultative Group meeting. It reflects the ideas presented and discussed.” (*Belgrade Process*, paragraph 5).

The ***Belgrade Process*** – guiding implementation of GC decision 25/4.

The *Belgrade Process*

As per paragraph 7, Ministers and high-level representatives generally supported the following:

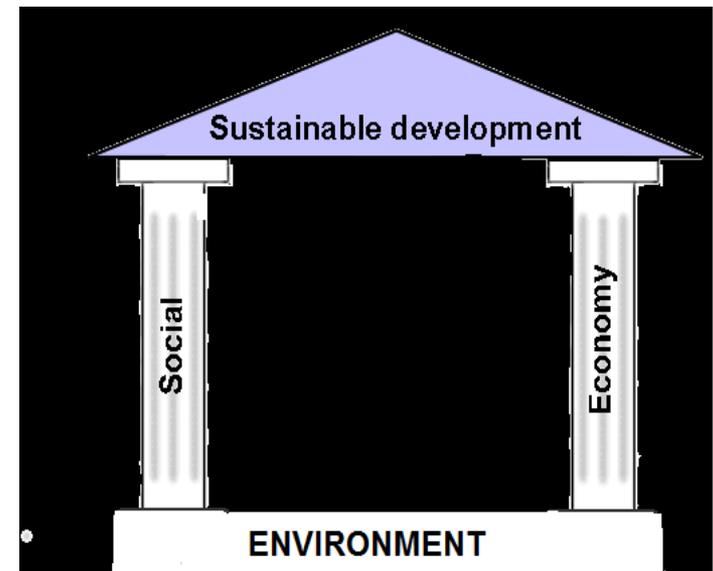
- Developing a set of options for improving IEG should follow from a **fresh examination** of multiple challenges and emerging opportunities.
- Any reform to IEG should be based on the principle that **form should follow function**.
- Consultations on functions will lead to a discussion on forms that could range from **incremental changes to other broader institutional reforms that can be considered alongside each other**.
- The IEG debate should be addressed in **the broader context of environmental sustainability and sustainable development**.
- The work of the Consultative Group should be **political in nature**.

IEG reform and sustainable development

IEG reform in the context of environmental sustainability and sustainable development: ED's paper and intervention in Belgrade

- Recognition of the negative impacts of a degraded environment on the development process – environment moving from often being considered as a marginal issue to the centre of political and economic decision making
- The environmental pillar as the foundation for the economic and social pillars of sustainable development as life on earth is conditioned upon a healthy environment
- Mainstreaming of the concept of a green economy throughout the UN system, including agencies dealing with other pillars of sustainable development
- Linking the Bali Strategic Plan with the transition to a green economy

Belgrade process is about IEG – in context of sustainable development



The *Belgrade Process*

Paragraph 17 invited the UNEP Executive Director to:

- **Prepare a paper** that draws upon the discussion of the Consultative Group during its first meeting and any subsequent written comments provided by participating governments.
- **Propose a number of potential functions and possible forms** to address such functions.
- **Circulate the document for comments electronically** to participating governments through the co-Chairs.
- After receiving comments, **prepare a final version of the paper in consultation with the co-Chairs** to submit to the Second Meeting of the Consultative Group.

Preparation of Executive Director's Rome Paper

As per paragraph 17, the UNEP Executive Director:

- **Prepared a draft paper**, in consideration of comments received during the first meeting, as well as comments received in writing thereafter.
- **Circulated the draft paper** to Governments on 14 August 2009, asking for comments to be submitted by or on 13 September 2009.
- **Reviewed the comments** received from 22 Governments on the draft paper.
- **Prepared a final version of the paper in consultation with the co-Chairs.**
- **Submitted the final paper** to the Second Meeting of the Consultative Group (all Governments, the CPR of UNEP and Permanent Missions to the UN in New York and to be placed on UNEP Website) on 30 September 2009.

Content of Executive Director's Rome Paper

Objectives and functions identified...

1. Creating a strong, credible and coherent science base.

- Data and information collection, exchange and analysis
- Assessment, early warning and awareness raising
- Cross-sectoral data collection and research
- Science-policy interface

2. Developing a global authoritative and responsive voice for environmental sustainability.

- Global agenda setting and policy guidance
- Rule making, standard setting and development of universal principles
- Compliance, monitoring and accountability
- Dispute avoidance and settlement

3. Achieving coherence within the UN system.

- Coordination of policies and programmes
- Coherence among Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and rationalisation of MEA secretariat activities

Content of Executive Director's Rome Paper

Objectives and functions identified - *continued*

4. Securing sufficient, predictable and coherent funding.

- Mobilising funds for the global environment
- Development of innovative market-based financing mechanisms
- Influencing priorities for financing environmental initiatives
- Linking the public and private sector

5. Ensuring a responsive and cohesive approach to meeting country needs.

- Human and institutional capacity building
- Technology transfer and financial support
- Linking international and local levels

6. Facilitating the transition towards a global green economy.

- *The functions for objectives 1-5 will collectively contribute towards achieving the objective of facilitating the transition towards a global green economy, for example through assessment, policy guidance, rule making, mobilizing funds etc.*

Content of Executive Director's Rome Paper

Incremental institutional reform arising from comments...

- **A more country-responsive IEG system:** Building capacity at national level as key to the reform of IEG. The BSP to be fully implemented and the relationship between UNEP and UNDP to be strengthened and UNEP's role in the UNDG enhanced.
- **Strengthening the authoritative voice of the UNEP GC/GMEF:** As stipulated in the 'Cartagena Package', such as through enlarging its membership, strengthening its outcomes and enhancing its legal standing.
- **Advancing the clustering of MEAs:** Using the example of the synergies process taking place between the chemicals and waste conventions, including investigating a possible role that the GC/GMEF could play in providing advice and guidance to the biodiversity-related conventions.
- **Ensuring an independent, authoritative, high-quality and reliable science-policy interface:** Building on existing mechanisms, including the IPCC, International Panel on Sustainable Resource Management, and possibly IPBES, and offering its services to the wider community.
- **Supporting a joint UN system-wide planning framework:** For the management and coordination of environmental activities.

Content of Executive Director's Rome Paper

Broader institutional reform arising from comments...

- **Steps for considering upgrading UNEP to a World Environment Organisation/specialised agency** should be undertaken.
- The Consultative Group should agree on **how a potential new climate architecture might complement the current IEG arrangements.**
- The Consultative Group should **look beyond UNEP** and examine how the multilateral system as a whole can deliver more coherently, efficiently, and effectively on ensuring environmental sustainability and sustainable development.
- Rather than creating new funds, the **current funding architecture should be reviewed** as to its efficiency and effectiveness.

Content of Executive Director's Rome Paper

To consider as a part of broader institutional reform: Global Environmental Principles, as per page 9, Box 4:

- Like most other regimes, the environmental governance regime has a plethora of principles that guide governments in their policy-making, including the polluter-pays principle, the no-harm principle, and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.
- As opposed to other regimes, environmental governance has not succeeded in coherently embedding these principles into legal agreements, giving them less impact.
- How can environmental principles better be embedded into the IEG system?

Additional information provided

Matrix of incremental changes – Note by the Executive Director upon request by a number of Governments.

- Based upon information already contained in the Compendium to the Executive Director's Rome paper to provide assistance in determining a set of options for incremental reform - competencies of Governing Council versus General Assembly and other relevant bodies in making incremental changes.

'Environment in the UN system' – Information note provided upon request by some Governments.

- An historical overview of the status quo – how the UN system as a whole addresses the six objectives.

An emerging convergence of views

Four areas have been identified where there appears to be an emerging convergence of views...

- Objectives and functions – *green economy objective?*
- Incremental changes and broader institutional reforms can be considered alongside each other.
- Areas where incremental changes can be made.
- Establishing a process for considering broader reform.

Consultative Group to determine at its second meeting in Rome.

Objectives of the this meeting

- Two days of technical discussions to facilitate political deliberations of Consultative Group.
- Recommend a set of options to the Consultative Group for improving international environmental governance to be presented to the 11th Special Session of the GC/GMEF.
- Recommend the next steps to be taken to the Consultative Group, including steps that could go beyond the next session of the GC/GMEF.

Next steps...

- **UNEP Consultative Group: 28-29 October 2009, Rome**
 - **UNEP GC/GMEF: 24-26 February 2010, Bali**
 - **UNGA: 2010/2011, New York**
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- **Rio+20 (Stockholm+40) in June 2012: To be decided by UNGA in December 2009**