

Issue: *Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD).*
Lead Country: Belgium
Draft version 3: 27 October 2010

**The EU and its Member States Common Responses to Questionnaire E
of UNDESA as Contribution to UNCSD2012**

E1 (*reformulated*). Which avenue for reform of institutions : strengthen, merge, improve coordination among, establish new, change mandates of, or streamline them ?

First and foremost the EU would like to stress that the six options suggested in the questionnaire are not mutually exclusive; they can be complementary.

For the same reasons, the EU also thinks that one must avoid any temptations of a ranking exercise, or in other words a oversimplifying hierarchisation of these options.

In a general way, a permanent and first priority in the EU view is always to improve coordination, coherence and synergies between existing institutions wherever possible. The synergies of chemical MEAs is only one example of a recent progress. A succesful reform of institutions must be designed for gathering more effective action while taking into account the principle that form should follow function.

Furthermore, as far as the environmental pillar of the UN is concerned, based on a mandate of the European Council Conclusions in 2005, the EU and its MS have supported and do support upgrading of UNEP to a UN specialized agency for the environment.

At the same time the EU has repeatedly said that the process of strengthening of UNEP and its upgrading into a specialized agency for the environment should be accompanied by strengthening the sustainable development framework in the UN.

This vision of a balanced reform on the environment and on the sustainable development governance in the UN, is contained in the paper annexed.

E2 (*reformulated*). How to achieve synergies between CSD and other existing intergovernmental instruments and processes

Several ideas can be brought forward.

On the strengthening of the CSD itself:

- more effective participation of international entities in the CSD so that CSD decision have more chance of being reflected in their work
- more information by MEAs, funds and programmes to the SG reports for the CSD
- results of regional processes should be better channeled into the CSD

- surmount approaches which even in the CSD have remained sometimes too sectoral, contrary to the objective of integration
- strengthen CSD's role to act as a forum through side events, learning centres, and a combination of formal and informal meetings
- revise the working methods of the CSD towards a more forward looking and action oriented organisation with enhanced coordination and implementation capacities
- revise as well the working methods regarding the reporting system, by establishing a comparative synthesis report based on the various national reports
- apply the existing UN Habitat World Urban Forum as a model to its forum function

On sustainable development in the UN at large

- reflect on how to avoid that the three dimensions of SD are submitted on the UNGA agenda in isolated strands rather than in an integrated form
- upgrading sustainable development to an overarching and more prominent theme of the ECOSOC agenda
- better use of all the already existing interagency mechanisms for coordination through the UN system on matters of sustainable development
- enhance the role of the EMG and the UNDG vis-à-vis the CEB on matters of SD
- the COP's of MEA's, in particular of the three Rio conventions, are crucial to discuss at intergovernmental level aspects pertaining to the three pillars of SD
- enhance the role of IFIs in the provision of adequate funds to support the international institutional framework for sustainable development
- UN funds should be used more effectively for financing sustainability instead of sectoral approaches

Within the environment dimension and without prejudice to the need for structural reforms as proposed clearly in the conclusions of the European Council of 2005 (see already under E1):

- building enhanced synergies among MEAs, comparable to the successful outcome of the simultaneous extraordinary sessions of the COPs of the Basel, PIC, and POP conventions
- implementing all the incremental improvements to IEG identified through the GCSS in Bali in february 2010
- other proposals which will emerge out of the current Group of Minister or High Level Representatives who will report through GC 26
- the strenghtening of UNEP and its upgrading into a specialised agency (see above!)

<p>E3 (<i>reformulated</i>) How to ensure effective coordination among different agencies and organisations responsible for Sustainable Development ?</p>

The strenghtening and upgrade of UNEP into an Agency (see above) is a first and indispensable step. Alongside this reform, several possibilities were suggested:

- further strenghtening of the SGs coordination mechanism , the CEB
- at country level, further pursuing vigorously the UN Delivering as One approach
- promotion of interagency coordination mechanisms as UN Energy and UN Water
- better use of the EMG for interagency coordination within the environmental pillar.

E10 + E11 (*reformulated*) How can lessons from successes be used for SD or be used to enhance the effectiveness of IEG

The strengthening and upgrade of UNEP into an Agency (see again above) can for example :

- build on the excellent synergies model offered by the extraordinary conference of parties of the Basel, PIC, and POP conventions and systems of governance of multilateral agreements that have proved their effectiveness
- reflect on the experience demonstrated in other fields :
 - o reflecting where possible the model of the Millenium Ecosystem Assessment as a cross-UN and integrated analysis
 - o reflecting where possible the model of the IPCCs assessment reports as well as the model of the IPBES which is to be instituted shortly
 - o the instruments of environment assessment and strategic environment assessment existing at UN level
 - o reflect on the experience demonstrated by the Global Fund on aids

E13 What are the most significant challenges facing institutions charged with promoting SD?

Some of the most significant challenges suggested are:

- ensure the integration and balance among the three pillars of SD including a balanced distribution of financial resources
- promote new initiatives such as green economy without neglecting the environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development; therefore analyze the various impacts of economic growth on the environmental and social dimension according to the value chain/lifecycle of the product
- elimination of duplications in the system (see above) and synchronize processes
- responding to lacking financial resources by using a wide range of funding sources in a coordinated way
- continue the conception of global concerted intergovernmental policy guidance
- alternatively develop global norms and standards where appropriate
- promote universality of the intergovernmental bodies

E15 (*reformulated*) What decisions should be reached at UNCSD on IFSD and what threatens a successful outcome ?

During the preparation process of the PrepCom1 the EU and its member states already expressed in the EU position paper that “The final result should be an ambitious reform of the institutional architecture for global environmental and sustainable development governance”. In other words, as indicated in previous answers, results are to be pursued simultaneously on improving IEG and IFSD.

In particular, UNCSD provides a timely opportunity to take a decision on IEG reform with broad political support. The UNCSD 2012 relates well to the IEG-process core issues (enhance efficiency as one main objective). In addition, the outcome from the Ministerial group on IEG reform will provide after GC 26 some concrete options to take decisions.

At the same time, as stressed before, the IFSD needs to be strengthened, building on the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation with a view on actual implementation and outline what has to be changed or needs strengthening. (*)

Furthermore, it is fundamental to ensure that discussions on the institutional framework for sustainable development take into account the other relevant UN processes which address IEG and issues of sustainable development governance such as discussions on the future climate change architecture. In this regard, coherence is also needed with the work of the High Level Panel on Global Sustainability established by the Secretary-General in 2010.

Finally, in terms of threats for failure, several risks must be avoided or reduced:

- not preserving the balance between the three pillars
- lack of flexibility amongst all UN member states
- lack of resources
- inefficient use of time during the preparatory process
- inability of the prepcoms to address these issues in a coherent manner
- sliding back in a status quo of past structures
- dispersion of negotiation efforts because of an overloaded agenda

FOOTNOTE

(*) Important articles of the JPOI are eg. : i) Strengthen collaboration within and between the UN system for SD, art. 140 b); ii) The role of system-wide coordination and the balanced integration of economic, social and environmental aspects of UN policies and programmes art. 144a); iii) The role of CSD and how to undertake further measures to promote best practices art. 150); iv) The CSD follow-up of partnerships art. 156 b);v) Institutional frameworks for SD on the regional level art. 158 – 160.