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Agenda item 6

**Climate Change**

**UN system coordination arrangements on climate change**

**Issues paper**

This paper presents issues and options for further consideration by HLCP in developing a proposal to CEB on a UN system coordination framework for climate change. The paper was initially prepared for and benefited from an informal HLCP meeting/videoconference held on 12 February 2008. The current version attempts to capture the various ideas put forward at that meeting, as well as views expressed in the course of the UN General Assembly thematic debate on climate change on 11-13 February 2008.

**HLCP may wish to discuss the options presented in paragraph 12 of the paper and recommend to CEB optimal ways for the UN system to deliver as one in relation to climate change.**

## ***Introduction***

1. The UN Secretary-General concluded at the CEB retreat of October 2007 that there would be two phases in the UN system's work on climate change:
  - a. First phase leading to the UN Climate Change Conference in Bali (December 2007), where an initial presentation of UN system activities on climate change was shared with the UNFCCC Parties/Member States, with a more complete report subsequently prepared for the GA thematic debate of 11-13 February 2008;
  - b. After Bali, further consultations and eventual decisions within CEB on the best way to ensure that the UN system delivers as one on climate change, in view of the formidable challenges facing the international community in terms of adaptation, mitigation, financing and technology related to climate change.
2. The CEB paper presented by the Secretary-General to the UNFCCC Parties in Bali was well received. The subsequent report prepared for the UN General Assembly thematic debate (A/62/644) basically conveyed the CEB paper, as well as an illustrative inventory of current UN system activities on climate change. The inventory was further developed with additional input from the HLCP membership and was issued in matrix format for the GA debate, as a supplement to the Secretary-General's report.
3. The Secretary-General's report had an overall positive reception from Member States, such as Slovenia speaking on behalf of the European Union and associated States. Some concerns expressed, notably by the G-77, can be summarized as follows (see separately a more complete summary of the UNGA debate prepared for the HLCP by the CEB Secretariat):
  - a. There should be no parallel efforts that could detract from the UNFCCC process;
  - b. The response to climate change should be firmly anchored in the broader context of sustainable development;
  - c. Financial resources for climate change should be in addition to those for ODA.
4. In response to the views expressed by Member States and intergovernmental organs, and their expectations for the future, the already scheduled second phase mentioned in paragraph 1 above acquires increased importance. A major milestone is expected to occur at the CEB meeting in Bern on 28-29 April 2008. In preparation for that, HLCP needs to formulate a set of options for the CEB to consider. This paper has been prepared in order to facilitate the HLCP consultations at the meeting in Rome on 13-14 March 2008 and draws on the views expressed during the UNGA thematic debate on climate change (11-13 February 2008), as well as the discussion at the informal HLCP meeting at UNHQ on 12 February 2008. The following are conclusions by the Chair at the end of the meeting (see complete summary of the discussion separately):

- i. We will need to be very attentive to Member States, both to meet their expectations and also not to run too fast. So far we have hit a good balance, but once we go into more proactive territory it may be more difficult. We will need to read the outcome of the GA well.
- ii. We obviously will want to support UNFCCC, which for the system leads on the support to negotiations. As before, it will call on agencies as it sees the need. But there is a complementary role to be played by the UN system that goes beyond the negotiations. Having UNFCCC in a central role in the working group allows for cohesion.
- iii. The SG leads the overall coordination approach, and we will take his guidance. He made it clear at the meeting that he will take further measures to enhance coordination.
- iv. CEB will remain, and should even be reinforced, as the coordination framework for the UN system. This means that HLCP, and its working group, will continue and evolve their practices.
- v. There is need for a framework of some kind to articulate the whole, perhaps a matrix (defined by the four pillars and the sectors), although it was very clear that the desire was for something light and practical, not another reporting mechanism of the usual kind. We need to define some more clear outcomes and outputs for adaptation and mitigation, and equally better define what we expect to do under finance and technology. Once that is done the logical force of a matrix will impact sectoral coordination. We also agreed to revisit the matrix of who does what once we have come further.
- vi. The sectoral approach was welcomed, being the easiest to imagine how it would work. We agreed to not have 'lead agencies' but 'convening agencies'. Three or four specific wins should be sought and made a priority.
- vii. We need to heed the many cautionary comments on what kind of coordination was desirable, but we still need to realize that this is not "business as usual". The sense of urgency that has built up compels us to do things differently, and we have to prepare for it. If not, we will be overridden, lose a fantastic opportunity for the system, with unpredictable consequences.

### ***Scope of system-wide coordination arrangements on climate change***

5. In his conclusions at the CEB Fall 2007 Retreat, the Secretary-General had felt it appropriate to await the outcome of the Bali conference for a refinement of the system's strategic vision and plan for a final approach after the UNGA thematic debate in February 2008. Following the discussions at the HLCP Fall 2007 session and the informal meeting of 12 February 2008, the following have evolved as main objectives for an action-oriented coordination structure:
  - a. Assist Member States with the implementation of the Bali Action Plan and Roadmap, in support of the UNFCCC process;

- b. Facilitate the UN system's input to the negotiations under the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol in terms of further mandates that could be included in a comprehensive agreement concerning the post-2012 period;
- c. Establish a lean coordination framework at central, sectoral and regional/national level geared towards facilitating concrete activities in priority areas related to climate change, minimizing duplication and optimizing the use of scarce resources;
- d. Develop synergies and common approaches in the implementation of existing mandates in response to Member State needs and with a view to achieving actual results on the ground with national ownership;
- e. Address broader policy coordination issues and advise the UN Secretary-General and CEB on system-wide approaches regarding climate change;
- f. Promote broader awareness of the important work already being done within the UN system in terms of assisting with the response to the global challenge of climate change.

***Priority areas and desired outcomes – some broad considerations***

- 6. During the GA thematic debate on 11-13 February 2008 Member States made references to priority areas for UN system action on climate change, such as:
  - a. support to vulnerable countries for adaptation;
  - b. facilitation of technology and fund transfers to developing countries;
  - c. capacity building;
  - d. worldwide awareness raising;
  - e. fostering partnerships among all concerned stakeholders, involving in particular the private sector and local authorities.

The thematic debate concluded with an expectation of further coordinated action by the CEB on climate change. The GA President in his concluding remarks suggested that there should be, in due course, a further, more detailed briefing by the Secretary-General on further work on climate change in the CEB context.

- 7. Indications of expected outcomes on which such an exercise could focus can also be found in the decisions adopted at the UN Climate Change Conference/UNFCCC COP13 in Bali, as well as previous agreements reached by Member States under the UNFCCC. These could include:
  - a. From the Bali decisions:
    - i. Reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries
    - ii. Development and transfer of technology
    - iii. Capacity building
  - b. From earlier agreements:

- i. Nairobi Work Programme on Adaptation, including integration of climate change considerations in national development planning and support for implementation of the NAPAs
- ii. Nairobi Framework for building capacity for the Clean Development Mechanism.

In terms of further action on mitigation, specific priorities may emerge from the discussions at the first session of the newly-established Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA) in late March-early April 2008.

8. The need to ensure Member State ownership of the UN system's work on climate change was echoed by colleagues at the informal HLCP meeting in New York in the sidelines of the GA thematic debate (see separate summary of that discussion). There was a clear preference for "lean and mean" arrangements, with "convening agencies" rather than "lead agencies" for sectoral coordination.
9. Significant work is already undertaken in the various sectors identified in the CEB/HLCP Bali paper, the Secretary-General's report and the inventory/matrix. In some cases, for some sectors, there are already coordination mechanisms in place, such as UN-Energy, UN-Water and UN-Oceans. Moreover, some of the existing mechanisms also have vertical dimensions, down to the implementation level of countries or regions (e.g. UN-Energy Africa). It would be useful to build on those existing mechanisms, thus also demonstrating explicitly in practice that climate change and sustainable development are fully interlinked.
10. Whatever issue-oriented and/or sectoral approach to coordination is adopted, there is a need to have a strategic oversight body at high-level, which provides broad policy direction, decides on the handling of cross-sectoral issues, and involves and/or advises the Secretary-General and the Executive Heads in their respective roles and initiatives.
11. There is general agreement that coordination arrangements should not be heavy in terms of reporting and administrative requirements. The energies, focus and resources of the system should be directed towards specific results, including "quick wins", in countries and groups of countries, especially those more vulnerable.

***Elements for further discussion / Available options***

12. HLCP may wish to explore several options and recommend to CEB optimal ways for the UN system to deliver as one in relation to climate change. In terms of coordination arrangements those could include:
  - a. Issue-oriented arrangements  
The UNFCCC could identify 3 – 4 key issues, progress on which would provide significant momentum to the negotiations and would prove the ability of the UN

system to deliver in that respect (see paragraphs 6 and 7 above). Once these issues have been identified, the key UN actors (including the Bretton Woods institutions, and regional development banks) for implementation of each of these issues could be identified and convened in small working groups under the UNFCCC Secretariat. Work plans could be drawn and actual work scheduled and implemented in accordance with the schedule of the negotiations and the UNFCCC requirements.

b. Sectoral arrangements

Agencies active in specific sectoral areas related to climate change may wish to organize themselves in clusters, establishing a cluster membership and designating one or two among them as convening agency/ies of the cluster in question. A possible breakdown of such clusters is provided in the Annex to this paper, on the basis of the HLCP consultations prior to Bali. Each matrix cell defined by a sector and a negotiating area (of the four agreed under the UNFCCC in Bali, namely Adaptation, Mitigation, Technology and Financing) can constitute a cluster, with consulting agency/ies and members. For clusters for which there is already a coordination mechanism, the membership and convener(s) of that mechanism can be maintained. Some of the clusters may be the same for several negotiating areas, if the same UN system entities and coordination mechanisms are active in all of them.

c. Broader policy coordination structure

There is need for broader strategic direction at high level for the UN system's work on climate change, particularly in relation to the negotiating process within UNFCCC leading up to the Copenhagen Conference in December 2009, which is expected to determine the post-2012 climate change regime. The following options could be considered:

- i. At this stage, and in view of the UN Secretary-General's stated intention to maintain a leadership role with regard to climate change, one could consider the establishment under him of a climate change-specific cluster of Executive Heads. In discussions on the Review of CEB, some Executive Heads have supported this approach. Alternatively, such a CEB cluster could be chaired by an Executive Head other than the Secretary-General, if so decided.
- ii. Another option would be to establish a formal standing body of the CEB, mandated to deal with climate change issues under the leadership of an Executive Head.
- iii. Alternatively, the HLCP could be the venue for interagency consultations in the lead up to the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference in 2009. In this scenario, the HLCP would oversee the work of issue-oriented and sectoral arrangements and would report to the CEB.

## ANNEX

### Key issues /sectors of UN system activity on climate change

NEGOTIATING AREA		ADAPTATION	MITIGATION	TECHNOLOGY	FINANCING
ISSUES / SECTORS					
<i>Cross-cutting issues</i>					
	Science, Assessment, Monitoring and Early Warning				
	Supporting Global, Regional and National Action				
	Climate-Neutral UN				
<i>Key Sectors</i>					
	Energy				
	Agriculture and Fisheries				
	Water				
	Oceans				
	Forestry				
	Health				
	Transport				
	Disaster Risk Reduction				
	Population and Human Settlements				
	Education				
	Public Awareness Raising				
	Industry				

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