

UN Environment Management Group (EMG)

UN LAND

Presentation for the 6th session of the
UNECE working party on land administration
(18-19 June 09)

United Nations Environment Management Group

- A UN System-wide coordination body. Established in 2001 pursuant to the General Assembly [resolution 53/242](#) in July 1999.

EMG identifies issues on the international environmental agenda that warrant [cooperation](#), and finds ways of engaging its collective capacity in coherent management responses to those issues.

Membership consists of the specialized agencies, programmes and organs of the United Nations including the secretariats of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

The group is **chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP**. A secretariat provided by UNEP in Geneva, Switzerland.

- **Terms of Reference**: the EMG works through technical meetings, [Issue Management Groups](#) and task forces. Representatives of intergovernmental bodies, civil society and international non-governmental organizations can be invited to contribute.

Areas of EMG focus

1- Emerging intergovernmental environmental/SD Issues require a UN wide response:

- Support to MEAs (Land and biodiversity)
- International environmental governance (UN GAprocess.2005 summit-views of the UN system-MEAs synergies)
- UN wide support to intergovernmental fora (contributing to agendas of UNEP,CSD,MEAs)

2- Sustainability of UN Operations

- One UN green operations
- Sustainable procurement
- UN Climate Neutrality
- Social safeguards of UN operations

3- Information exchange and knowledge management

EMG and UN Land

Drivers for action

- **Support to UNCCD and its 10 year strategy**

Aligning relevant UN organizations work to the operational objectives of the UNCCD strategy according to their respective mandates.

- **Need to reintroduce the land concept in a positive way**

- Looking at land from a wider sustainable development scope and not from desertification and dry land (looking at problematic of land from a UN system view)
- Value of land as an opportunity for investment, as part of ecosystem services, as means to combat climate change and enhance food security
- Enhancing scientific assessments on land and establishing a strong land science-policy interface
- Promoting scientific analysis on the profile and value of land in curbing climate change and enhancing food security (mitigation and adaptation-carbon sequestration, sustainable land management practices)

- **Lack of a UN wide land network**

- **Lack of a common vision on pressing land issues**

- **Lack of a common agenda for action and more holistic approach on land issues in the UN system**

EMG role and contribution to land

Promoting the concept of sustainable land management and use including agriculture, biodiversity, and sustainable urban development

Providing a platform for information exchange and knowledge on emerging land issues

Strengthening the science, policy interface, (a land stern report)

EMG's role and contribution to land

Developing a more holistic and comprehensive approach to land issues

Bilateral or trilateral cooperation on specific land issues exist (e.g the GEF fund projects, LADA, KM-lands, the carbon benefit projects, TerAfrica) but need is for EMG to go beyond one community and bridge the gap between different UN communities, i.e. those that perceive land issues from an essential economic standpoints (to support poverty alleviation) and those that address the environmental dimensions of land.

- EMG to help achieve a better buy-in to the land issues through linking it to the emerging issues.

This is especially appropriate considering EMG mandate to forge collaboration on emerging environmental issues. "Emerging" issues mentioned include land in relation to:

- Carbon sequestration
- Food security
- Agricultural soil
- Humidity index
- Water scarcity and drought
- Scientific research
- Base line and targets
- 'Stern'-type report on drylands to demonstrate the economic benefits of actions and costs of non-action-investment opportunities
- Metrics of economics

Agenda for action

- preparation of (“rapid response”-type) action-oriented/targeted policy report to highlight the importance of dry-lands as they relate to a few key emerging issues in the global agenda, including climate change and food security and the investment opportunities offered.

A UN-wide Land Report

- The policy/action-oriented report, would not be prescriptive but be built on the existing knowledge, science and experiences of the agencies (including actions already being taken), focused on the positive side (economic, social and environmental) of drylands and supported by a strong communication plan (possibly benefiting from marketing advice).
- Agencies will be engaged and responsible for each chapter according to their areas of expertise and focus.
- The report provides concrete recommendations on opportunities in the land for energy production, carbon sequestration and the associated social and economic spin offs, including a strong emphasis on the economic incentives of effective land use and management in arid areas (sinks, payments for environmental services, etc.).
- It focuses on drylands as an economical viable investment opportunity to help mitigate the global impacts of climate change and address increasing demands for alternative energy resources.
- The report includes the current status of the land droughts, the opportunities for investment (including scenario analysis – visions of what will happen if investments in land are made), and brings the science and policy together.

Milestones

- Establishment of an Issue Management Group on land (September 2009- EMG SOM)
- Launching of the outline of the report (UNCCD COP – September 09- Argentina)
- Launch of the report, UNCCD COP in 2010

EMG webiste

More information on land

WWW.UNEMG.ORG