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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Item X of the provisional agenda

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Result of the evaluation "UNECE Efforts to Promote Cross-sectoral Collaboration and an Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development Work"

Management Response

Evaluation Title:	Review of UNECE Efforts to Promote Cross-sectoral Collaboration and an Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development Work	
Period of Review:	2013-2017	
Date of Evaluation Report:	3 November 2017	
Approved by: Olga Algayerova	Executive Secretary	Date: 15 December 2017
Cleared by: Catherine Haswell	Acting Director of PMU	Date:
Prepared by: Catherine Haswell	Manager of the evaluation	Date:

Recommendation 1: *Become a more integrated organization*

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation. The Executive Secretary is presently leading the organization through a strategic visioning and planning exercise in line with the Secretary General’s proposed reform of the UN Development System. Ensuring an integrated response by UNECE to supporting member States for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda will be a key element of this vision.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

UNECE will implement decisions resulting from the deliberation of Member States on the management reform initiatives proposed by the Secretary-General.

Recommendation 2: *Include “nexus dialogues” in the UNECE strategic planning & budgeting process*

Management Response:

UNECE partially accepts this recommendation. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, UNECE has started aligning its work to the SDGs, taking into account linkages between subprogrammes, and setting up a number of cross-divisional cooperation arrangements. Discussions on how to further strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration and an integrated approach to sustainable development work already take place in different formats, including on-going dialogue with member States in UNECE intergovernmental bodies, regular meetings of senior management and a number of ad-hoc initiatives undertaken to tackle issues that require cross-sectoral cooperation, including with the support of SDGU. These substantive discussions have broader aims than planning and budgeting processes. However, their outcomes will be taken into account more strongly when defining the new strategic framework for 2020-21.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

The Executive Secretary will ensure that the development of the new Strategic Framework for 2020-21 includes appropriate cooperation between related thematic areas.

Recommendation 3: *Encourage and institutionalize information and knowledge sharing among subject-matter experts*

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation as it reiterates the UNECE Knowledge Management Strategy adopted in 2017, and will identify suitable information- and knowledge-sharing activities among subject-matter experts for inclusion in the 2018 Knowledge Management Action Plan.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

The Office of the Executive Secretary will lead organization-wide discussions on priorities for the 2018 Knowledge Management Action Plan by end February 2018. Action items will be demand-driven, and aligned to the UNECE Knowledge Management Strategy. Related activities will be undertaken as needed and within existing resources. The Chef de Cabinet will ensure that these discussions are implemented.

Recommendation 4: *Capitalize on existing corporate coordination bodies*

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation. The consultant identified the senior management meetings, and the Working Group on Technical Coordination (WGTC) as examples of existing mechanisms where cross-sectoral cooperation could be included. The consultant also proposed senior management retreats, the first of which was organized by the Office of the Executive Secretary in November 2017. Noting the numerous other formal and informal means of meeting cross-division in UNECE, the Secretariat favours, as identified by the consultant, informal arrangements to enable an agile approach in responding to new and emerging issues.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

The Executive Secretary will ensure that senior management meetings include substantive content in line with her evolving vision for UNECE for the 2030 Agenda. The PMU will continue efforts to facilitate potential cooperation between Regional Advisers and focal points responsible for technical cooperation activities. Informal arrangements between various work teams will be encouraged.

Recommendation 5:

Establish a network of Secretaries to Sectoral Committees in support of Sectoral Committee bureau

Management Response:

UNECE partially accepts the recommendation and, in line with the UNECE Knowledge Management Strategy, will establish a virtual Community of Practice of Secretaries to Sectoral Committees. Building on existing informal practice, the objective of the group is to exchange good practices and discuss issues of common concern, for example related to the servicing of the subsidiary bodies. It does not, however, aim to support the Bureaux of the Sectoral Committees directly, as this would duplicate work already undertaken within the respective subprogrammes.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

The Office of the Executive Secretary, as Focal Point for Knowledge Management, will facilitate the establishment of an online forum (Community of Practice) of Committee Secretaries by February 2018. Working methods, agenda items and joint activities will be determined by the group based on actual demand. Related activities will be undertaken as needed and within existing resources.

Recommendation 6: *Introduce human resource measures that facilitate cross-sectoral cooperation*

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation, while noting that human resource measures are governed by UN staff rules and regulations. These provide the framework within which some complementary measures can be assessed for their feasibility. It may also be possible that measures included in the Secretary-General's management reform stream (expected January 2018) may contribute to such cooperation.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

Following the approval by Member States of the Secretary-General's reform measures, the Executive Secretary will ensure that measures relating to UNECE are implemented.

Recommendation 7:

Address structural inefficiencies linked to cross-sectoral cooperation

Management Response:

UNECE partially accepts the recommendation. The consultant identified various factors hindering cross-sectoral cooperation in UNECE, namely administrative processes, tight oversight role of Sectoral Committees, and organizational barriers to cooperation. A number of related actions have already begun. The Executive Secretary has launched a review of UNECE administrative processes with the Executive Office/Programme Management Unit, and a review of items within the control of senior management which could be streamlined to facilitate the implementation of important substantive work. The Sustainable Energy, and the Forestry, Housing and Land Management Divisions have established a joint task force on energy in buildings. The consultant also identified better prioritization of work, including discontinuing redundant activities. The DES recently encouraged staff at a Town Hall in November to reflect and propose such activities as part of the Executive Secretary's vision for UNECE's support to the 2030 Agenda.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

The Executive Secretary will finalise the review of UNECE administrative processes, and of items within the control of senior management, by 30 March 2018. As per the response to Rec 1, the Executive Secretary will ensure the implementation of her vision following endorsement by EXCOM by 31 December 2018. Respective Directors may consider related areas across subprogrammes that merit working together.