




MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Evaluation Title:	Evidence-based environmental governance and sustainable environmental policies in support of the 2030 Agenda in South-East Europe		
Period of Review:	1 January 2018- 31 December 2021		
Date of Evaluation Report:	26/04/2022		
Approved by	Nicolas Dath-Baron Chief, a.i. Programme Management Unit	Date	Signature
		05/08/2022	
Cleared by:	Director of Division Francesca Bernardini, OiC	05/08/2022	
Prepared by:	Manager of the evaluation Antoine Nunes	05/08/2022	

Recommendation 1:

Project design: UNECE may consider developing a Theory of Change for projects in the future to describe the processes through which change comes about for individuals, stakeholder groups, ministries, industry or communities. The Theory of Change should provide an assumption (or series of assumptions) about how change will happen in a country, regardless of what a donor or project does or does not do.

Management Response:

UNECE partially accepts the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

A request that project managers develop a Theory of Change for project proposals is included in the ECE Concept Note and Project Document template, namely under sections 1. Context (development challenges), 10. Country level situation analysis and 11. Stakeholder analysis and capacity assessment. UNECE Programme Management Unit (PMU) will continue to monitor that such elements are adequately addressed in projects Concept Notes and Documents.

PMU will also share with ECE project managers existing UN guidance on how to develop a theory of change when designing projects.

Furthermore, PMU will bring this recommendation to the attention of DESA-Programme Management Team, the UNDA project Manager.

Responsibility: Nicolas Dath-Baron, Programme Management Unit

Timeline: 31 December 2022

Recommendation 2:

Regional information sharing:

2.1: Acknowledging that sharing information is already ongoing, continued sharing clean industry practices or step by step approaches for overcoming negative consequences of environmental hazards and waste across countries in the region.

2.2: Depending on funding available, organise a workshop for all project countries inviting representatives of governments, CSOs/ UN system and EU active in those countries, to share experiences, network, and develop partnerships for future needs. Alternatively organise workshops at national level.

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

The Environmental Performance Reviews (EPR) unit will address environmental risks/hazards and waste in reviews of countries at their request and to share information on reviews and recommendations with all countries in the region (2.1).

Subject to the availability of resources, the EPR unit will organize a regional workshop for EPR countries on environmental risks/hazards and/or waste (2.2).

Responsibility: Antoine Nunes, Environmental Affairs Officer

Timeline: 31 December 2023

Recommendation 3:

Climate change: Consider how to best mainstream climate change considerations into all projects, linking with the UNECE Climate Task Force/ Regional Advisors, whilst also ensuring linkages to relevant results groups of UN Country Teams.

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

The Environment Division, in consultation with PMU, the ECE Climate Action Task Force and ECE Regional Advisors, will discuss how to best mainstream climate change considerations into future projects, subject to member States concurrence, to ensure that they contribute to member States' attainment of their UN global commitments, namely those contained in the Paris agreement. The consultation with PMU and ECE Regional Advisors will among others aim at ensuring linkages to relevant results groups of UN Country Teams.

Responsibility: Marco Keiner, Director of Environment Division and Nicolas Dath-Baron, Programme Management Unit

Timeline: 31 December 2023

Recommendation 4:

Capacity building:

4.1 Continue to develop projects where UNECE provides support in prioritizing recommendations arising from EPRs. Continue to work with staff in ministries who understand the SDGs and have energy and enthusiasm to move the agenda forward.

4.2: Encourage countries to develop their own environmental training programmes including systems where training of trainer capacity building becomes systematic and reaches inspection authorities responsible for environmental enforcement.

4.3 Apart from technical environmental issues, UNECE should also unpack related aspects of governance where member States require support– e.g. transparency, accountability aspects; how to develop an accountability chain; or how to be inclusive and unlock citizens participation.

4.4 The UNECE nexus approach must continue to be shared with member states. During UNECE missions hold workshops on the nexus approach in a concrete way. Continue to encourage ministries to engage on the SDGs across sector silos, using projects such as these as a means.

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

The EPR unit, and other units in the Environment Division, will continue to develop project proposals to provide support to UNECE member States in prioritizing recommendations arising from EPRs (4.1).

The Environment Division will encourage countries to develop their own environmental training programmes including systems where training of trainer capacity building becomes systematic and reaches inspection authorities responsible for environmental enforcement (4.2).

The Environment Division will unpack related aspects of governance where member States require support (4.3).

The Environment Division will continue to share with member States the UNECE nexus approach and to encourage ministries to engage on the SDGs across sector silos, including through workshops and projects, subject to the availability of resources (4.4).

Responsibility: Marco Keiner, Director of Environment Division

Timeline: 31 December 2023

Recommendation 5:

EU Accession focus: Any new projects that support Western Balkans countries to implement the SDGs should also try to align (somewhat) with the EU Green Agenda. Highlight how the EPR methodology also facilitates EU law and how EU law is built on and references major UNECE Conventions.

Management Response:

UNECE partially accepts the recommendation, while recalling that UNECE does not promote the instruments of regional economic integration organizations.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

Management Response, Evaluation, PMU, UNECE

The Environment Division will, in any new projects that support Western Balkans countries to implement the SDGs, take into consideration the EU Green Agenda. The EPR Unit will continue to recognize links with EU law in its reviews of countries that are EU members, candidates or partners.

Responsibility: Marco Keiner, Director of Environment Division
Timeline: 31 December 2023

Recommendation 6:

Politics and advocacy

6.1: At policy level, UNECE must continue to work with high level representatives from member State ministries of environment to convey messages of commitments made to SDGs, climate change agreements and human rights.

6.2: Linking to UN information campaigns (twitter cards or other social media methods) may be useful to push the 2030 Agenda and environmental governance issues.

6.3: CSOs should be considered a stronger part of the environment advocacy coalitions. More encouragement could be placed on member States to consult and work closely with CSOs in projects that deal with environmental governance. This means government provides adequate time for others to comment and agree action plans and roadmaps. Preparations for UNECE country missions should ensure that they leave time to engage early with many stakeholders including CSOs and encourage national coordinators to ensure their voice to be brought to the table.

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

The Environment Division will work with member State ministries of environment to convey messages of commitments made to SDGs, climate change agreements and environmental human rights (6.1).

The Environment Division will continue to push the 2030 Agenda and environmental governance issues, through social media (6.2).

The Environment Division will continue to encourage member States to consult and work closely with CSOs in projects that deal with environmental governance and ensure that country missions engage early with many stakeholders including CSOs (6.3).

Responsibility: Marco Keiner, Director of Environment Division
Timeline: 31 December 2023

Recommendation 7:

Implementing legislation

7.1: Follow up on what was approved and how it was implemented in a year or so. Find out which EPR recommendations are not yet being implemented and encourage civil society organisations to continue to play a 'watchdog' role.

7.2: Continue efforts to locate sources of finance to demonstrate and pilot what can be achieved to improve the environment. Funding for conveying meetings that help build environmental advocacy coalitions is also

[Management Response, Evaluation, PMU, UNECE](#)

suggested, so results/innovations are shared more widely. Consider whether resources can be obtained from the Western Balkans Investment Framework

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

The EPR Unit will continue to monitor which EPR recommendations are not being implemented, through requests for updates sent to member States, and encourage civil society organisations to continue to play a watchdog role when meeting them during EPR country missions (7.1).

The Environment Division will continue to raise funds to demonstrate and pilot what can be achieved to improve the environment and will consider whether resources can be obtained from the Western Balkans Investment Framework (7.2).

Responsibility: Marco Keiner, Director of Environment Division

Timeline: 30 June 2023

Recommendation 8:

Learn and draw lessons from the collaborative gender mainstreaming process that took place in Serbia. The need to continue capacity building on gender mainstreaming as it relates to environmental policy and at local level implementation is important. A regional workshop to share experience may be useful.

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

The Environment Division will learn and draw lessons from the collaborative gender mainstreaming process that took place in Serbia, and use the lessons learned in further capacity building on gender mainstreaming in environment policy at national and local levels.

Responsibility: Marco Keiner, Director of Environment Division

Timeline: 31 December 2023