United Nations

UN80 INITIATIVE

# Environment

Streamlining environmental support to Member States for more impactful action.

**Secretary-General's Information Brief | Work Package 27**

October 2026

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# Rationale

## Why the UN system needs to streamline and better coordinate environmental support for more impactful action.

**Today, a stable climate and healthy environment are widely viewed as the foundation of stable, prosperous and peaceful societies.** However, this was not the case in 1945, when the UN Charter was created. This might well have been different if the Charter were conceived today. However, of course, being authored in 1945, the Charter did not include explicit references to the environment.

**Since then, a complex – often fragmented – architecture has evolved within and outside the UN system to respond to the growing environmental challenges.** General Assembly resolution 2997 established the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1972 and mandated it to coordinate and catalyse global environmental action. The 1992 Rio Conference reaffirmed this role, while recognizing that all other organizations of the United Nations system will have an important role in supporting and supplementing national efforts.

**Many global multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) have also been established in response to specific environmental challenges or risks**. These include, inter alia, the three Rio Conventions: the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Environmental action has accelerated through the distinct mandates, expertise and contributions of UN system entities, including funds and programmes, and specialized agencies. The global community has also repeatedly affirmed the importance of a healthy environment, including through the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 and the recognition by the General Assembly of the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment in 2022.

**These responses have helped to spark the acceleration of solutions.** The cost of renewable energy has plummeted over the past two decades. The global coverage of protected areas has reached 18 per cent of terrestrial areas. Successes such as protecting the ozone layer and historic agreements such as the 2023 Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction demonstrate that progress is possible when the world unites. Innovations and solutions are accelerating at the local, national and regional levels.

**However, the planet is under escalating pressure:** from accelerating climate change, the acceleration of biodiversity and species loss, land degradation, desertification, and the growing harms and risks that pollution and waste cause to ecosystems and human health. These issues all need to be urgently addressed, as they are undermining the very foundation of human life on the planet.

**A healthy environment can deliver more security, more well-being and more growth, creating the conditions for progress to accumulate and spread over the long term.** However, the UN must increase its collective ability to support countries in delivering at the scale and speed required. To do so, the multilateral environmental architecture and the UN must overcome the fragmentation that has developed within the system over the decades as the result of an iterative process of establishing new mandates and initiatives to address emerging challenges. The current brief presents an assessment of current arrangements and the recommendations on possible changes and programme realignments on environmental issues.

# Focus

## What UN80 work package 27 on the environment is focused on.

**One of the UN's roles is to support Member States in fostering sustainable development**, supporting local, national and regional solutions to fill implementation gaps, enable experience sharing and showcase innovation – while considering national and regional specificities. The purpose of the recommendations contained in this information brief is to streamline this support for more impactful action.

**This assessment focuses on four interconnected areas: science, governance, coordination and integration, and implementation.** Strengthening each area, and the links between them, is critical to secure faster progress. The information brief builds on progress made over the past years to strengthen cooperation, coordination and information-sharing on environment in the United Nations system to serve Member States more effectively. The brief further seeks to complement and align with relevant ongoing reform and coordination efforts across other work packages. Twenty-seven UN entities participated in the work package using multiple methods of review.

**The environmental work across the United Nations system is broad, multidisciplinary and grounded in the respective mandates, expertise and delivery capacities of its entities**, including specialized agencies, funds and programmes, as well as in governing arrangements established by Member States. Effective responses to climate change, nature and land loss, desertification, land degradation and pollution and related sustainable development priorities require contributions from a broad range of UN entities, Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), scientific bodies, observation systems, assessment systems, funds, programmes and other entities operating under distinct governance frameworks.

**The assessment and its findings do not seek to provide an exhaustive account of all contributions or alter existing mandates, governance structures or decision-making arrangements.** The recommendations focus on strengthening coherence, connectivity and accessibility across the system, with the aim of moving from fragmentation to more effective and coherent implementation support for Member States.

**In shaping its recommendations, WP27 focused on seven core principles:**

1. **Build** on existing mandates and platforms
2. **Respect** institutional autonomy, including governance arrangements for MEAs, while enabling and strengthening collaboration
3. **Prioritize** functional optimization and alignment over structural consolidation
4. **Strengthen** the interconnections between science–policy–action-impact
5. **Facilitate** implementation of MEA commitments
6. **Improve** transparency, accountability and system intelligence
7. **Maintain** flexibility and voluntary engagement

# What we found

## SCIENCE

**Environmental science is produced and used in parallel across entities, with limited reliance on each other's outputs.** This drives duplication and inefficiencies. Translation of global scientific outputs into country-level action remains weak, and engagement in developing shared environmental benchmarks is limited. This gap is relevant not only for UN system processes, but also for the implementation of MEA commitments, where countries increasingly require integrated scientific, economic and financial analysis to operationalize their relevant national plans and associated strategies. Overall, major structural reform is not required; the greatest gains can be made by connecting, aligning and leveraging existing capacities.

## GOVERNANCE

**Negotiated at different moments to address specific challenges, MEAs vary in scope – from single-issue instruments to broad framework conventions.** This diversity has enabled focused action and results, but has also contributed to fragmentation, overlaps, gaps and heavy reporting and integration burdens for Member States. Existing initiatives demonstrate a growing interest by many governing bodies, parties and secretariats to enhance coherent approaches to MEA implementation. These represent important steps to foster further synergies and coherence to ensure that global programmatic ambitions across MEAs are translated into positive impact on the ground, and to support programmatic synergies to evolve from managing complexity to more coherently supporting implementation and delivery across the environmental governance landscape.

**More than 10 years into its existence, UNEA has continued to evolve, yet it has not fully realized its potential as the central convening platform for coherent, system-wide environmental action.** Key issues to further explore include its role in connecting science and policy for strengthened and better coordinated environmental action across the UN system; its institutional linkages with other intergovernmental processes, particularly the UNGA and ECOSOC; its engagement with MEAs, to promote coherence and synergies in implementation; and the need to enhance participation in and engagement with UNEP and the wider Nairobi-based UN system, including through expanding Member State environmental representation in Nairobi (currently only 96 of 193 Member States have diplomatic missions at UNEP HQ).

## COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION

**Environmental engagement is system-wide and growing, but often dispersed and siloed.** Effort is strongest on climate change, biodiversity and ecosystems, land restoration, oceans, freshwater resources, and environment finance. Pollution and the links between urban spaces, the environment and health are less consistently covered, probably as a function of the absence of a stand-alone financing facility to support such work.

**Coordination mechanisms exist but are loosely connected.** Links between global coordination, regional platforms and country delivery remain uneven. Existing science–policy links do not always translate global priorities into coordinated support for Member States or feed country lessons back into global processes. Fragmented funding further undermines coordination and policy coherence.

## IMPLEMENTATION

**Despite many UN-supported initiatives and tools, Member States face complexity, uneven information access, limited delivery capacity and parallel support streams. In addition, financing needs linked to some MEAs are estimated to be at least USD 5–7 trillion per year.** Public finance cannot meet this demand: it must catalyse private capital by reducing risk and enabling new markets. Yet MEA–private sector engagement remains fragmented, and MEA decisions often lack clear transition pathways for investors and companies – diluting policy signals and slowing the flow of capital into investable opportunities.

# Goals and recommendations

## GOAL A: ELEVATE THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM

**RECOMMENDATION 1:**

### Recognize that a healthy environment undergirds all three UN Charter pillars: peace and security, human rights and development

SCOPE

The recognition of a healthy environment as foundational to development, peace and security, and human rights would help reframe environmental action as a core condition for stability and wellbeing, not a sectoral add-on. It would also strengthen integrated prevention by making explicit how environmental risks amplify conflict, displacement, inequality and rights impacts.

SPECIFIC POSSIBLE ACTIONS

1.1 **Consolidate** the recognition that a healthy environment underpins the three UN Charter pillars and is fundamental to prosperity, peace and security, and human rights.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:**

### Enable UNEA to achieve its potential as the UN universal body serving as the convening platform for coherent, system-wide environmental action

SCOPE

For UNEA to achieve its potential, a number of enabling actions should be considered, including strengthening its science–policy interface, its institutional links across the UN system, the facilitation of connections and coordination among MEAs, and the ability to provide high-level political direction for coherent system-wide environmental action.

SPECIFIC POSSIBLE ACTIONS

2.1 **Institutionalize** a periodic science–policy dialogue anchored in UNEP's science function that informs UNEA, as well as MEAs and other UN system entities' governing bodies, as relevant and appropriate.

2.2 **Strengthen** UNEA's institutional links with intergovernmental processes, including with UNGA and ECOSOC, so UNEA outcomes inform these processes and are systematically reflected in broader UN follow-up and guidance.

**2.3** **Enhance** UNEA's high-level segment, as a strategic and outcome-driven platform for policy review, peer learning and political guidance.

**2.4** **Convene** a Global Environment Leaders' Summit every four years at Heads of State level to review progress, set priorities and accelerate implementation of the environmental global agenda, as well as identify emerging issues.

**RECOMMENDATION 3:**

## Reposition environmental science as a shared UN asset

SCOPE

To reposition environmental science as a shared asset that can support decision-making across the three pillars of the United Nations, it would be necessary to strengthen coordination, accessibility and coherence across the UN system with a view to reducing duplication and fragmentation, while respecting existing mandates and specialized areas of responsibility.

SPECIFIC POSSIBLE ACTIONS

**3.1** **Promote structured** coordination and collaboration among chairs of MEA scientific/technical bodies and other science-policy interfaces, using existing mechanisms while respecting mandates.

**3.2** **Build** a user-driven, modern knowledge ecosystem and repository of environmental science and knowledge to serve as a shared UN asset, linking country to global data, information and knowledge and existing science platforms through shared standards and interoperable search—reducing fragmentation while respecting mandates.

**RECOMMENDATION 4:**

## Elevate the environmental coordination function: EMG 2.0

SCOPE

The UN Environment Management Group (EMG), established by UNGA resolution 53/242 of 1998, should be enhanced as a mechanism that more effectively contributes to the environmental coordination across the UN system, promoting collaboration and coherence. There is a need to make better use of this existing mechanism and to feed into wider interagency coordination mechanisms, in particular the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG). This could be achieved by iteratively modernizing the EMG's positioning, leveraging its existing network, and strengthening member ownership, while avoiding duplication with existing system-wide coordination and reporting arrangements. It is anticipated that the EMG would, inter alia, support the adoption and mainstreaming by UN system entities of more climate- and environment-responsive approaches into their programmes and strategic plans, contributing to the implementation of MEAs and the right to a healthy, clean and sustainable environment.

## SPECIFIC POSSIBLE ACTIONS

**4.1** **Develop** and roll out a new EMG strategy and operating model.

**4.2** **Adopt** a common UN system-wide results framework for environmental mainstreaming

**4.3** **Strengthen** effective linkages with governing bodies of EMG members, as appropriate (e.g., UNEA, World Health Assembly, Human Rights Council, World Meteorological Congress, etc.).

**4.4** **Deepen** linkages with the HLCP, the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG), the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and the Human Rights Group, and build structured collaboration with UN-Water, UN-Oceans, UN-Energy and other relevant coordination bodies, through shared initiatives. In particular, the EMG and the UNSDG will strengthen their strategic collaboration to better integrate EMG environmental approaches and guidance into development system activities at the country level. Relevant EMG analyses and recommendations will help inform UNSDG deliberations and decision-making, and vice versa.

## GOAL B: STRENGTHEN ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

**RECOMMENDATION 5:**

### Explore consolidation options across the landscape of MEAs.

SCOPE

Building on successful experiences of collaboration, and recognizing current resource constraints, as well as the legal autonomy of individual MEAs, UN Member States may wish to consider opportunities for more systemic consolidation across the landscape of MEAs. Such consolidation would aim to strengthen programmatic coherence, including consideration of anchor institution roles for MEAs on cross cutting and common issues.

Potential consolidation would also help streamline national implementation efforts by Member States across multiple MEAs, including through less burdensome monitoring and reporting efforts, reduced administrative duplication and less competition for resources, while offering more compelling investment opportunities – both horizontally across MEAs and vertically at the national level.

The focus of consideration could be in the biodiversity cluster, where the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework has created a unifying umbrella for action, and in the domain of mercury given its linkages with other chemicals conventions.

SPECIFIC POSSIBLE ACTIONS

5.1 **Establish** a time-limited, independent and regionally representative Consultative Group of Ministers or High-level representatives of UN Member States to evaluate benefits, feasibility and possible options for MEA consolidation.

**RECOMMENDATION 6:**

### Strengthen Programmatic Synergies Across MEAs

SCOPE

Programmatic synergies across MEAs should be strengthened by building on good practices, coordination arrangements and implementation tools, while fully respecting the legal autonomy and party-driven nature of individual MEAs. Opportunities for improved coherence across related environmental agendas should be identified and delivered through better alignment of planning, implementation support, technical cooperation, monitoring and reporting, and resource mobilization.

The aim is a more coherent delivery within existing governance architectures, so that Parties to the MEAs can benefit from more integrated and effective support with improved efficiencies, reduced duplication of effort, and greater impact across the MEAs. Actions could be applied across multiple configurations of the landscape of global and regional MEAs.

SPECIFIC POSSIBLE ACTIONS

**6.1** **Strengthen** and expand existing synergies mechanisms within and beyond current clusters.

**6.2** Develop joint work programmes and associated resource-mobilization strategies.

**6.3** **Commission** an options study to explore how MEA monitoring and reporting could be better harmonized to reduce burdens and improve alignment.

**RECOMMENDATION 7:**

## Advance Administrative Synergies Across UNEP-administered MEAs

SCOPE

Cross-MEA exchange and co-creation efforts could be enhanced by building on shared-service models and accelerating uptake of shared digital tools for administrative synergies, thereby also promoting greater efficiencies among the UNEP-administered MEAs.

SPECIFIC POSSIBLE ACTIONS

**7.1** **Institutionalize a cross-MEA/UNEP** community of practice for peer learning and continuous professional development.

**7.2** **Streamline** common functions where feasible (e.g., registration, credentialing, NGO accreditation where rules allow) and develop pooled meeting support and surge capacity.

## GOAL C: SCALE DELIVERY OF COUNTRY COMMITMENTS AND PRIORITIES

**RECOMMENDATION 8:**

### Leverage coordination mechanisms for greater UN system-wide policy and programme coherence and delivery

SCOPE

Existing coordination arrangements can be strengthened to enhance support to Member States on environmental issues that is more integrated, aligned and complementary, while minimizing unnecessary overlaps, fragmentation and competition among UN system entities, at global, regional and national levels. This includes, in close correspondence to Recommendation 4 and in line with relevant UN80 work packages, better aligning environmental coordination with the UNSDG, relevant MEA mechanisms and other existing coordination arrangements within the UN development system to enable a stronger chain of support to Member States in implementing global environmental commitments via regional and national-level policies and programmes.

SPECIFIC POSSIBLE ACTIONS

8.1 **Consolidate** an inter-agency and multi-level (global-regional-national) offer to Member States on integrated and issue-specific environmental action, as part of the UN system's broader sustainable development efforts.

8.2 **Promote** funding models that actively reward joint delivery and collaboration among UN agencies, aligned with the funding review carried out under Work Package 18.

**RECOMMENDATION 9:**

### Provide Member States with better access to knowledge, expertise and advice from across the UN system.

SCOPE

Member states should receive improved access to thematic expertise, tools, initiatives and lessons learned from across the UN system, including to better respond to country-level requests. These efforts will include an envisaged Joint Knowledge Hub on climate through the UN80 Initiative (WP7), thereby reducing duplication of knowledge-related activities and infrastructure. In the context of the Expertise-on-Demand Mechanism of the UN80 Initiative (WP8), they will also help extend services from the initial access to expertise to the generation of proposed solutions.

SPECIFIC POSSIBLE ACTIONS

**9.1** **Support** relevant work packages under the UN80 Initiative, including through a Joint Knowledge Hub on climate as a pilot, to inform future scaling for other thematic areas, as appropriate (see UN80 Work Package 7 for detailed actions).

**9.2** **Invest**, in alignment with recommendations from UN80 work package 5 (UNCT configuration), in capacity building for UNCTs on environmental commitments, including on climate, to support MEA implementation.

**RECOMMENDATION 10:**

## Institutionalize direct engagement with real economy actors to accelerate implementation and shift private capital toward sustainable outcomes

SCOPE

To mainstream environmental objectives into investment and business decisions, the UN system's ability – within existing mandates – to convene governments, companies, investors and implementers should be strengthened, to help translate MEAs into practical implementation pathways. The objective is to catalyse a shift in private investment from business as usual towards sustainable investment options by reducing uncertainty, facilitating derisking, improving implementation readiness and enabling delivery partnerships.

SPECIFIC POSSIBLE ACTIONS

**10.1** **Engage the real economy** through: MEA hosted implementation forums; and support to early government - private sector dialogues on MEA implementation plans.

**10.2** **Convene targeted public-private** sector pathways and UN facilitated sectoral partnerships that link policy signals to bankable implementation opportunities.

**10.3** **Enable** faster, clearer modalities to broker private sector partnerships, with fit-for-purpose safe-guards.

**10.4** **Identify** and mobilize scalable innovations and implementation solutions by connecting innovators, governments, investors and delivery partners.

# Pathway tables

## RECOMMENDATION 1:

### Recognize that a healthy environment undergirds all three UN Charter pillars—peace and security, human rights and development

| POSSIBLE SPECIFIC ACTION | FURTHER DETAILS | PROPOSED DELIVERY METHOD | POSSIBLE PATHWAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1.1 Consolidate the recognition that a healthy environment underpins the three UN Charter pillars and is fundamental to prosperity, peace and security, and human rights.** | - | - | • Member States may wish to consider reflecting this recognition in relevant General Assembly resolutions. |

## RECOMMENDATION 2:

# Enable UNEA to achieve its potential as the UN universal body serving as the convening platform for coherent, system-wide environmental action

| POSSIBLE SPECIFIC ACTION | FURTHER DETAILS | PROPOSED DELIVERY METHOD | POSSIBLE PATHWAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2.1 Institutionalize a periodic science–policy dialogue** | • Subject to the availability of resources, convene periodic science-policy roundtables during the UNEA intersessional period or during UNEA.<br>• Facilitate exchanges among Member States, scientific bodies, and assessment processes, on emerging environmental issues and implementation gaps.<br>• Develop synthesis inputs on nexus issues, emerging risks, and opportunities for coordinated action.<br>• Prepare an outcome in the form of a President's summary. | • Convened by UNEA President and organized by UNEP, in collaboration with MEA Secretariats and relevant science-policy interfaces, as appropriate.<br>• Drawing on ongoing assessments, foresight work, and data-driven analysis from UNEP, partner bodies and other UN system entities.<br>• Implemented initially through informal arrangements endorsed by the UNEA and CPR Bureaux, as appropriate. | • Step 1: At UNEA8, pilot it through informal arrangements endorsed by UNEA and CPR Bureaux, allowing flexibility in the focus of discussion, modalities, participation, and format.<br>• Step 2: Institutionalize through a UNEA mandate (resolution/decision), potentially adopted as early as UNEA-9 for implementation from UNEA-10. |
| **2.2 Strengthen UNEA's institutional links with intergovernmental processes, including with UNGA and ECOSOC.** | • Establish an annual informal dialogue of the UNEA President with the UNGA, as appropriate, to share the key outcomes of UNEA to inform GA discussions and deliberations.<br>• Promote regular exchanges between the Presidents of the UNGA, ECOSOC and UNEA. | • Through a UNGA-mandated institutional arrangement.<br>• Regular exchanges and coordinated engagement between the Presidents of UNGA, ECOSOC and UNEA, as appropriate. | • UNEA-8, through a resolution/ decision, inviting the UNGA to consider establishing annual dialogue between the UNEA President and the UNGA.<br>• UNGA adopting a resolution at its 83rd session to mandate establishment of an annual dialogue between UNEA President and UNGA. |
| **2.3 Enhance UNEA's high-level segment, as a strategic platform for system-wide environmental governance and implementation coherence.** | • Subject to the availability of resources, establish a voluntary peer-learning and -sharing process, inspired by Voluntary National Reviews at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and OECD Environmental Performance Reviews, through which countries share cross-cutting policy and implementation experiences, lessons learned, capacity needs and solutions to systemic and nexus issues that extend beyond individual environmental agreements. | • Through a UNEA mandate and in coordination with the UNEA and CPR Bureaux.<br>• Supported through structured guidance, synthesis reports, President's summaries, and analytical inputs.<br>• Delivered through voluntary participation of countries and inter-agency coordination. | • UNEP ED report to UNEA-8 to provide further details on the concept and proposed modalities, followed by consideration and possible adoption of a resolution establishing enhanced high-level segment modalities, with implementation beginning at UNEA-9 on a pilot basis. |
| **2.4 Convene a Global Environment Leaders' Summit every four years (Heads of State level).** | • Subject to the availability of resources, Member States may wish to consider convening a Global Environment Leaders' Summit every four years as the apex of UNEA's governance cycle.<br>• Convened under UNEA either as: (i) a replacement for the UNEA high-level segment every four years; OR (ii) a special session in Nairobi or hosted by a Member State while remaining institutionally anchored in UNEA. | • Organized by UNEP in coordination with the UNEA Bureau, Member States, MEAs and relevant UN entities.<br>• Built on existing reporting and review processes to avoid additional reporting burdens. Supported by informal coordination mechanisms. | • UNEP ED report to UNEA-8 to provide further details on the concept and proposed modalities, for the consideration of UNEA and possible adoption of a resolution establishing the Leaders' Summit and its modalities. |

## RECOMMENDATION 3:

# Reposition environmental science as a shared UN asset

| POSSIBLE SPECIFIC ACTION | FURTHER DETAILS | PROPOSED DELIVERY METHOD | POSSIBLE PATHWAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **3.1 Promote structured coordination among chairs of MEA scientific/technical bodies and other science-policy interfaces** | • Subject to the availability of resources, UNEP could convene regular meetings of the Chairs of MEA scientific bodies/technical bodies and other science-policy interfaces to:<br>  • Map scientific capacities across the UN system & the MEAs;<br>  • Identify opportunities for collaboration,<br>  • Strengthen coherence on cross-cutting issues and reduce duplication and fragmentation of environmental science activities, and<br>  • Foster cooperation on research, assessments and policy design, by leveraging each organization's comparative expertise. | • Work could be carried out through representatives of environmental science related work across the UN including Chairs of relevant scientific and technical bodies of MEAs, as well as Chairs of the IPCC, IPBES and ISP CWP. Other UN entities could also nominate Chairs of relevant environmental bodies under their respective work programmes.<br>• The group could operate by leveraging existing mandates and mechanisms (e.g., the Bern Process, Ad hoc Global Assessment Dialogue (AGAD) , Rio Conventions Joint Liaison Group) building a sustained community of practice that could identify joint priorities and catalyse collaborative initiatives where appropriate. | • Establish an informal network of Chairs of MEA scientific and technical bodies, science-policy assessment platforms and relevant scientific advisory bodies, with participation from specialized agencies and other UN entities, initially facilitated by UNEP (by Q4 2027).<br>• Subject to the availability of resources and the interest of participating organizations, the network could be progressively institutionalized and its activities further expanded to support ongoing coordination, knowledge exchange, and joint initiatives |
| **3.2 Build a user-driven, modern knowledge ecosystem and repository of environmental science and knowledge** | • Establish common governance standards and AI-enabled discovery capabilities that connect existing knowledge platforms, enabling smoother/ enhanced access to information while avoiding duplication and reducing coordination costs.<br>• Develop shared standards and statistical capacities to improve the interoperability, integration and reuse of data across UN entities. | • Subject to the availability of resources, develop and pilot an interoperable, AI-enabled knowledge ecosystem that connects existing UN environmental science platforms, enhances the discovery, synthesis and translation of scientific knowledge into policy-ready products, strengthens the application of global science to national and sub-national contexts, and supports earlier collaboration through shared analytical resources and joint assessments. | • Develop a pilot concept of the proposed knowledge ecosystem to test a collaborative, scalable model for connecting environmental science and knowledge across participating UN entities (Q4 2027 – Q1 2029).<br>• Building on the pilot, additional activities could be undertaken subject to the availability of resources. |

## RECOMMENDATION 4:

# Elevate the environmental coordination function: EMG 2.0

| POSSIBLE SPECIFIC ACTION | FURTHER DETAILS | PROPOSED DELIVERY METHOD | POSSIBLE PATHWAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **4.1 Develop and roll out a new EMG strategy and operating model, drawing on lessons learned and areas to improve from its past strategy.** | • Develop and implement an updated EMG strategy, value proposition and incentives as relevant to the diversity of EMG membership.<br>• Strengthen and socialize EMG member engagement and strategic direction-setting and goals.<br>• Enhance communication, outreach and visibility of EMG contributions.<br>• Track progress and lessons learned on the implementation of the Common Approaches. | • Revise the Terms of Reference of the EMG, map coordination mechanisms and roles, and implement a reform process.<br>• Promote as part of such process coherence, consistency and alignment in the application of environmental science in UN programming. | • Design the new strategy, including – as needed – its operating model (Q2 2027).<br>• Develop an EMG engagement and outreach strategy (Q3 2027).<br>• Identify priority gaps and areas where common UN approaches (including benchmarks; standards and guidelines) would strengthen system-wide coherence and support their coordinated development through relevant agencies and expert bodies. (Q3-2027).<br>• Amplify effective application of issue-based collaboration (Issue Management Groups and Common Approaches on Biodiversity, Pollution and Right to a Healthy Environment), and knowledge-sharing (nexus dialogues, and knowledge tools and products). (Q3 2027). |
| **4.2 Adopt a common UN system-wide results framework for environmental mainstreaming** | • Common UN system-wide results framework for the UN system to integrate the environment into UN policies, programmes and operations from global to country level (as requested by the 2020-2024 QCPR). | • EMG to lead this work respecting and building on ongoing experiences and modalities (e.g., System Wide Framework of Strategies; Greening the Blue; the next iteration of the UNSDG indicator framework, and Cooperation Framework results frameworks; Joint Programming reports; and others), ensuring complementarity with, and avoiding duplication of existing frameworks. | • EMG secretariat to map ongoing reporting on environmental mainstreaming to prepare a proposal for consideration by EMG senior officials for the development of a UN system-wide results framework for environmental mainstreaming (Q2 - Q4 2027).<br>• Collaborations with relevant interagency mechanisms and entities established for the development of a common UN system-wide results framework for environmental mainstreaming (Q1 2028).<br>• Framework proposed for endorsement to EMG senior officials and other interagency mechanisms as appropriate (Q3 2028). |

Recommendation 6 (continued)

| POSSIBLE SPECIFIC ACTION | FURTHER DETAILS | PROPOSED DELIVERY METHOD | POSSIBLE PATHWAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **4.3 Strengthen effective linkages with governing bodies of EMG members, as appropriate (e.g., UNEA, World Health Assembly, Human Rights Council, WMO Congress, etc.).** | • Regularly engage with senior UN leadership, and governing bodies of EMG members as appropriate.<br>• Position the EMG as a key UN system-wide environmental coordination mechanism, as part of the broader UN development system.<br>• Strengthen strategic coherence and collaboration between the EMG and the UNSDG, while ensuring that relevant analysis and recommendations from EMG can help inform UNSDG deliberations and decision-making. | • Subject to the availability of resources, strategic briefings, nexus dialogues and joint outreach by the EMG Chair, its Secretariat and members.<br>• Regular briefings to Member States in different fora on impact of repositioned EMG. | • Intensify interaction with senior UN leadership through existing channels, as appropriate. (Q4 2027).<br>• Develop outreach engagement plans with selected governing bodies, on jointly identified flagship topics (Q4 2027). |
| **4.4 Deepen linkages with the HLCP, the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG), the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and the Human Rights Group, and build structured collaboration with UN-Water, UN-Oceans, UN-Energy and other relevant coordination bodies, through shared initiatives.** | • Establish closer collaboration between the EMG and key UN system-wide coordination mechanisms (e.g., UNSDG, IASC; the Human Rights Group), while recognising their respective roles and mandates, to strengthen environmental integration across the system.<br>• Advance a focused set of joint priorities and initiatives with thematic coordination platforms (e.g., UN-Water, UN-Oceans, UN-Energy) to improve system-wide coherence and impact.<br>• Support cohesive engagement of environment entities within the UNSDG to better integrate environmental approaches and guidance into development system activities at the country level.<br>• Ensure relevant analysis and recommendations from the EMG are designed so as to help inform UNSDG deliberations and decision-making. | • Joint Exchanges of information on workplans and coordinated inter-agency initiatives.<br>• Subject to the availability of resources, develop shared analytical products and policy inputs.<br>• Designated focal points and coordination arrangements across mechanisms. | • EMG Secretariat to map strategic coordination mechanisms relevant to the environmental agenda and define joint UN offers on key environmental issues (Q1 2027).<br>• Propose formal or informal collaboration arrangements with other mechanisms, as appropriate, where these add value and do not duplicate existing structures or processes (Q2 2027).<br>• Monitor progress through periodic reviews of joint initiatives and results (Q4 2027). |

## RECOMMENDATION 5:

# Explore consolidation options across the landscape of MEAs.

| POSSIBLE SPECIFIC ACTION | FURTHER DETAILS | PROPOSED DELIVERY METHOD | POSSIBLE PATHWAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **5.1 Establish a time-limited, independent and regionally-representative Consultative Group of Ministers or High-level representatives of Member States to evaluate benefits, feasibility and possible options for MEA consolidation.** | • Subject to the availability of resources, establish a time-bound independent Consultative Group of Ministers or High-level Representatives of Member States, supported by UNEP, to evaluate benefits, feasibility and options for any structural and/or systemic adjustments to deliver programmatic consolidation across MEAs.<br>• A review of benefits, feasibility and possible options for MEA consolidation to be undertaken as input to the deliberations of the High-Level Consultative Group.<br>• The High-Level Consultative Group could make its findings available to UNGA/UNEA for consideration.<br>• Based on the findings of the High-Level Consultative Group, UNGA/UNEA could invite the governing bodies of relevant MEAs to consider opportunities for strengthening collaboration and consolidation as appropriate. | • The Consultative Group could be co-chaired by representatives of Member States, ensuring regional balance. UNEP could provide support, in line with existing mandates from UNGA and UNEA.<br>• The High-Level Consultative Group's work could draw on the results of a review of opportunities and implications of consolidation options across MEAs. The review could be facilitated by UNEP, in collaboration with MEA Secretariats, partner bodies and other UN entities and stakeholders.<br>• UNGA/UNEA could consider the findings and recommendations of the High-Level Consultative Group and invite MEAs to consider opportunities for strengthening collaboration and consolidation, as appropriate. | • Three possible pathways for establishment of High-Level Consultative Group:<br>  • UNGA to establish it.<br>  • UNGA to invite UNEA to establish it.<br>  • UNEA to establish it.<br>• Review of opportunities and implications of consolidation to be facilitated by UNEP, in collaboration with MEA secretariats and other UN entities as appropriate.<br>• The High-Level Consultative Group's findings could be considered by UNGA or UNEA (depending on the establishing body), which could result in a resolution inviting relevant MEA governing bodies to consider the findings and take any appropriate action. |

## RECOMMENDATION 6:

# Strengthen Programmatic Synergies Across MEAs

| POSSIBLE SPECIFIC ACTION | FURTHER DETAILS | PROPOSED DELIVERY METHOD | POSSIBLE PATHWAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **6.1 Strengthen and expand existing synergies mechanisms within and beyond current clusters** | • Collectively strengthen programmatic cooperation among MEA secretariats and presidencies through enhanced information-sharing, joint mapping of COP decisions, alignment across stocktake cycles, and development of joint thematic guidance on issues of common interest. Exploring opportunities to build on existing clusters, such as on biodiversity, chemicals and waste, and the Rio conventions | • Strengthen existing MEA coordination networks, including secretariat exchanges, UNEA MEA Day, Presidency coordination mechanisms, thematic task teams and informal/formal collaborative arrangements among parties and stakeholders.<br>• UNEP can continue to support and leverage existing processes and exchanges and joint analytical work, while respecting the autonomy of MEAs and the party-driven nature of decision-making. | • UNEP could map thematic COP decisions and implementation priorities across global MEAs, and make this analysis available to MEA Secretariats and governing bodies for information.<br>• MEA Parties and governing bodies may wish to identify opportunities for enhanced programmatic cooperation to deliver on common themes through existing coordination mechanisms and mandates.<br>• Relevant governing bodies may wish to strengthen, align and provide any additional mandates as necessary to support more coherent within-cluster and cross-cluster cooperation.<br>• MEA Secretariats to report on progress in delivering programmatic synergies to governing bodies as part of existing reporting requirements, and to provide updates, as relevant, to UNEA (e.g. MEAs Day). |
| **6.2 Develop joint work programmes and associated resource mobilization strategies** | • Develop joint work programmes in areas of shared priority, supported by coordinated resource-mobilization approaches, joint implementation initiatives and harmonized technical support.<br>• Example areas for consideration might include ecosystem restoration, food systems, pollution reduction, adaptation and resilience, water, and other cross-cutting priorities. | • Building on existing practice, existing coordination mechanisms could identify joint work programmes that could be proposed by MEA Parties, secretariats, presidencies and technical bodies, and considered by relevant governing bodies, COPs or subsidiary bodies for guidance, endorsement or mandate for delivery. Individual MEA CoPs could also invite collaboration with other MEAs.<br>• Delivery could be through either existing or new mechanisms, shared planning processes, joint technical assistance packages and coordinated engagement with financing mechanisms and implementing partners. | • Through existing coordination mechanisms and implementation arrangements, Secretariats and Parties to MEAs may wish to identify further opportunities for priority thematic areas where joint implementation would provide added value across MEAs. If requested, UNEP and other UN agencies could support such assessment and review of opportunities.<br>• MEA Secretariats to develop joint work programmes and associated resource-mobilization strategies for consideration by MEA governing bodies and in coordination with the vertical funds as appropriate. This may include piloting joint work programmes and scaling successful approaches. |

Recommendation 6 (continued)

| POSSIBLE SPECIFIC ACTION | FURTHER DETAILS | PROPOSED DELIVERY METHOD | POSSIBLE PATHWAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **6.3 Commission an options study to explore how MEA monitoring and reporting could be better harmonized to reduce burdens and improve alignment.** | • Study undertaken to review options for harmonized monitoring, reporting and indicator frameworks across MEAs, with a view to reducing reporting burdens, improving alignment across systems and providing a more coherent overview of progress towards global environmental goals.<br>• The study could explore opportunities for modular, interoperable and/or more coherent approaches to monitoring and reporting while recognizing individual MEA obligations and strategic frameworks. | • Subject to the availability of resources, a study could be undertaken through a time-limited ad-hoc technical expert process involving MEA secretariats, Party representatives, other technical experts and relevant UN entities, subject to availability of additional resources.<br>• The study could assess reporting requirements, indicators, reporting cycles and data systems, and identify opportunities for greater interoperability and alignment. The study could be considered by UNEA, which might then invite the governing bodies of MEAs to consider its findings, as appropriate<br>• UNEP could facilitate and support the process, building on existing coordination networks and multi-stakeholder processes that bring together MEAs and other relevant partners (BLG, JLG, EMG etc). | • Two possible pathways to initiate the options study:<br>• UNEA-8 may wish to consider requesting UNEP and inviting relevant MEA secretariats to convene an ad-hoc technical expert process to undertake the study. Based on the outcome of the process, UNEA-9 may wish to invite relevant MEA governing bodies to consider the outcomes of the study and/or propose additional operational pathways for its implementation, including piloting approaches.<br>• UNEP and relevant MEA secretariats may initiate the process informally and convene a technical expert group to undertake the study. Next steps are defined by MEA governing bodies (e.g. piloting approaches etc). In the biodiversity cluster the Bern process provides an additional forum for discussion. |

## RECOMMENDATION 7:

# Advance Administrative Synergies Across UNEP-administered MEAs

| POSSIBLE SPECIFIC ACTION | FURTHER DETAILS | PROPOSED DELIVERY METHOD | POSSIBLE PATHWAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **7.1 Institutionalize a cross-MEA/UNEP community of practice for peer learning and continuous professional development** | • Establishment of a community of practice.<br>• Peer-learning; pilots, option papers. | • Soft coordination approach could be facilitated by UNEP (coordination meetings, leveraging existing mechanisms and networks engaging MEA Focal Points from secretariats). | • UNEA-8 may wish to consider requesting UNEP secretariat support to engage/facilitate an informal process leveraging existing networks to institutionalise a cross-MEA/ UNEP community of practice for peer learning and continuous professional development. (UNEA8). |
| **7.2 Streamline common functions where feasible and subject to the availability of resources (e.g., registration, credentialing, NGO accreditation where rules allow) and develop pooled meeting support and surge capacity** | • Options to streamline common functions, IT and data systems, guidance on cross-convention implementation could be prepared informally and discussed through existing MEA coordination mechanisms.<br>• Alternatively, they could be prepared formally if mandated by COP decisions, in which case MEA Secretariats would have to report on them. UNEP may also have a role depending on whether a specific mandate would be given to facilitate such processes. | • Soft coordination approach could be facilitated by UNEP (coordination meetings, leveraging existing mechanisms and networks engaging MEA Focal Points from Secretariats).<br>• OR could be mandated by related COP decisions, which could entrust MEA secretariats and/or UNEP to facilitate such a process. | • Option 1. UNEP to facilitate a process, in coordination with the MEA secretariats. (Q4-2027)<br>• Option 2. Parties at respective upcoming COPs could consider mandating MEA secretariats to explore the creation of a structured platform for cross-MEA exchange and co-creation, building on shared-service models and accelerating uptake of shared digital tools to advance admin synergies and to present a report at the next COP with options and the associated efficiencies. (Timeline tbc) |

## RECOMMENDATION 8:

# Leverage coordination mechanisms for greater UN system-wide policy and programme coherence and delivery

| POSSIBLE SPECIFIC ACTION | FURTHER DETAILS | PROPOSED DELIVERY METHOD | POSSIBLE PATHWAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **8.1 Consolidate an inter-agency and multi-level (global-regional-national) offer to Member States on integrated and issue-specific environmental action, as part of the UN system's broader sustainable development efforts.** | • Provision of a science-based consolidated, comprehensive offer of support to Resident Coordinators (RCs) and UN Country Teams (UNCTs), serving country needs on specific environmental issues.<br>• Leveraging regional platforms for integration (RPIs) and relevant Issue-Based Coalitions (IBCs) to connect global and regional environmental mandates to UNCT planning and the actual needs of countries via specific issues.<br>• Use existing coordination mechanisms to promote and advocate for joint results. | • A pilot would run consultations with RPIs, UNCTs and interagency mechanisms to select issues that are relevant to countries. | • Considering the guidance developed by Inter-Agency mechanisms such as the EMG, UNEP in collaboration with UN development system entities could select issues and pilots based on country needs as identified by RCs and UNCTs (Q2 2027). |
| **8.2 Promote funding models that actively reward joint delivery and collaboration among UN agencies, aligned with Work Package 18 recommendations and decisions.** | - | - | • Member States on the boards of vertical funds may wish to consider ways to incentivise joint delivery.<br>• EMG and other inter-agency mechanisms, as relevant, could explore the adoption and piloting of UN system-wide voluntary commitments for collaborative approaches to engagement with vertical funds, including GEF, GCF and others. (Q3 2027). |

## RECOMMENDATION 9:

# Provide Member States with better access to knowledge, expertise and advice from across the UN system.

| POSSIBLE SPECIFIC ACTION | DETAILS | PROPOSED DELIVERY METHOD | POSSIBLE PATHWAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **9.2 In alignment with recommendations from WP5 (UNCT reconfiguration), invest in capacity building for UNCTs through training, staff exchanges and dedicated expert posts when possible.**<br><br>---<br><br>For details on 9.1, see UN80 Work Package 7 on Joint Knowledge Hubs | • 1. Develop capacity building for RC and UNCT staff, including on States' needs in relation to implementation of MEA obligations and commitments, annual updates about COP outcomes, and what support the UN system can provide.<br>• 2. Facilitate staff exchanges between UNCT and expert organizations for specific environment/ climate needs that the UNCT is facing.<br>• 3. Subject to funding and alignment with WP 5 & 6: establish expert advisor posts in UNCT, as appropriate, to support their work with the host country.<br>4. Align capacity-building and expert-adviser proposals with WP5's approach to configuring UN Country Teams around national needs and priorities, including by identifying where environmental and MEA expertise is most needed and how it can be accessed through existing regional and system-wide capacities. | • Subject to the availability of resources and aligned with WP5 and WP6 outcomes, this could include:1. Develop a training program tailored to the needs of RCs and UNCTs and other relevant stakeholders.2. Establish an annual survey with UNCTs and UN organizations with relevant expertise with the aim to identify opportunities for staff exchanges.<br>• 3. Develop a model Job Description for expert advisors embedded in UNCTs.<br>• 4. Ensure that proposed training, staff exchanges and expert-adviser functions complement the agreed UNCT configuration and are based on country-level needs assessments, avoiding a one-size-fits-all model. | • 1. Interested MEA secretariats, UNEP, in coordination with DCO, could conduct a survey with RCs/ UNCTs and relevant Issue based Coalitions, as well as regional knowledge and coordination partners in a selected pilot on capacity-building needs on MEA support.<br>• 2. Interested MEA secretariats, UNEP, in collaboration with other interested UN entities, could develop a capacity building program responding to needs identified in step 1.<br>• 3. Could deliver the capacity building program.<br>• 4. Could develop a process for undertaking an annual survey of needs and opportunities for staff exchange.<br>• 5. Could develop the model Job Description for expert advisors embedded in UNCTs.<br>• 6. Could coordinate with DCO and the relevant WP5 process so that pilot findings on MEA support needs can inform UNCT configuration and decisions on the most appropriate mix of in-country, regional and on-demand expertise. |

## RECOMMENDATION 10:

# Institutionalize direct engagement with real economy actors to accelerate implementation and shift private capital toward sustainable outcomes

| POSSIBLE SPECIFIC ACTION | DETAILS | PROPOSED DELIVERY METHOD | POSSIBLE PATHWAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **10.1 Engage the real economy through: MEA hosted implementation forums; and support to early government - private sector dialogues on MEA implementation plans** | • Create MEA hosted implementation forums where policy makers and real economy representatives can seek collaboration on issues, solutions, barriers and enablers to implement MEA commitments. Collaboration would complement Party-led processes by translating national priorities into investable and implementable opportunities.<br>• Through MEA hosted implementation forums, support governments and real economy leaders to<br>• A) identify and develop solutions to specific challenges to MEA implementation.<br>• B) Create focused partnerships between the public and private sectors, and<br>• C) Organize government and industry groups to work jointly on targeted priorities<br>• D) Incorporate existing UN guidance to help governments, financial institutions and businesses integrate MEA implementation into investment planning, transition strategies, corporate decision-making and sustainable finance frameworks. | • Subject to the availability of resources, this could include:<br>• 1. Conduct mapping of existing environmentally focused collaborations with the real economy, including potential synergies and gaps.<br>• 2. Convene meetings of the parties to MEAs to take stock of current practices, lessons learned, and improvement opportunities, and design model(s) for implementation forums hosted by meetings of the parties to MEAs, in collaboration with relevant UN entities. Consider joint forums for related MEAs | • 1. MEA secretariats in collaboration with relevant UN entities, could organise implementation forums hosted by meetings of the parties to MEAs, 2. could launch such forums, and 3. could initiate government-private sector dialogues in the context of such forums. |
| **10.2 Convene targeted public-private sector pathways for key sectors (energy, food, buildings, transport, consumer goods etc.) and UN facilitated sectoral partnerships that link policy signals to bankable implementation opportunities.** | • Develop common indicators and reporting methodologies to measure private sector contributions, including investments mobilized, technologies deployed, infrastructure delivered, partnerships established, and improved access to solutions, particularly in developing countries.<br>• Publish periodic global and regional assessments highlighting progress, gaps, and opportunities for scaling impact.<br>• For identified gaps in priority sectors, develop UN supported sector initiatives, implementation roadmaps and project pipelines that accelerate scalable, investable climate solutions. | • Initially, for a limited set of priorities across e.g. Rio conventions, could develop common metrics to measure and assess private sector investments in relation to key MEA priorities<br>• Could pilot voluntary reporting through country platforms; conduct periodic reviews to inform future investment, partnerships, and implementation support.<br>• Based on the reporting, could develop implementation roadmaps and project pipelines that accelerate scalable, investable climate solutions. | • 1. With concerned MEAs, UN entities and private sector collaboration initiatives, could map and identify priority sectors and issues, and seek consensus on common metrics to be applied.<br>• 2. Could pilot voluntary reporting and feed findings into relevant implementation forums, dialogues and pathways.<br>• 3. Could promote focused dialogues for creating public-private sector collaboration, policy making and investments around implementation roadmaps and project pipelines that will facilitate MEA implementation. |

Recommendation 10 (continued)

| POSSIBLE SPECIFIC ACTION | DETAILS | PROPOSED DELIVERY METHOD | POSSIBLE PATHWAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **10.3 Enable faster, clearer modalities to broker private sector partnerships, with fit-for-purpose safeguards.** | • Develop common partnership principles, due diligence standards, engagement models, and guidance across UN system entities to reduce fragmentation and provide greater clarity for governments and the private sector. | • In collaboration with the UN Global Compact and other relevant UN entities, this could include:<br>• Assess how current guidelines are applied in practice through a sampling of cases across different UN system entities.<br>• Identify lessons learned, bottlenecks and possible streamlining of procedures.<br>• Identify potential risks and legal requirements and the process for updating guidelines, including the potential need for approval by Member States. | • As relevant, necessary steps could include:<br>• Step 1: Conduct sampling of practices across 5-10 UN system entities with private sector focus.<br>• Step 2: Establish a small design group with UN system/ MEA partnership, legal, ethics and due diligence colleagues.<br>• Use existing UN and MEA rules where possible, while proposing streamlined procedures<br>• Step 3: Verify legal requirements and potential risks and adjust as needed before implementation. |
| **10.4 Identify and mobilize scalable innovations and implementation solutions by connecting innovators, governments, investors and delivery partners.** | • Convene existing UN and partner innovation networks to identify, showcase and connect proven environmental solutions, technologies and business models with countries seeking to implement MEA commitments.<br>• Develop a portfolio of implementation-ready solutions. Prioritize solutions that are scalable, investable and have demonstrated impact linked to priority sectors and country needs, highlighting enabling policies, financing models, implementation partners and lessons learned. | • Relevant steps could include: 1. Build on existing UN and partner innovation networks, accelerator programmes, regional platforms and implementation initiatives rather than creating new structures.<br>• 2. Use MEA implementation forums, sector partnerships and country platforms to identify priority implementation challenges, match them with proven solutions, and facilitate connections between governments, innovators, investors, MDBs, development partners and implementing organizations. | • As relevant, necessary steps could include:<br>• Step 1: Map existing UN system, government, private sector and partner innovation platforms and identify proven solutions relevant to priority MEA implementation challenges.<br>• Step 2: Develop a curated portfolio of scalable solutions, organized by sector and implementation challenge, including evidence of impact, financing options and delivery partners.<br>• Step 3: Present solution portfolios through MEA implementation forums and sector partnerships to facilitate matchmaking between countries, innovators, investors and implementation partners.<br>• Step 4: Update the portfolio regularly and promote replication across regions through peer learning and South-South and triangular cooperation. |