



UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente
Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

联合国环境规划署



Our Reference: EMG-IMGsm/1-09

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Dear Colleague,

As we embark on the new year, I would like to share my satisfaction at the achievements in moving towards a climate-neutral UN and improving environmental sustainability that we have made through the Environment Management Group. We have succeeded in preparing the first-ever greenhouse gas footprint of the UN system using a common methodology and have taken the first steps to manage these emissions. Through our collective efforts, I believe that we have demonstrated cohesion as a family of UN institutions and a commitment to achieving a credible and accountable UN system. I would like to thank you for the support provided to this initiative, the fruit of which was presented at the recent Copenhagen climate change summit.

I wish to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to the climate-neutral focal points and other staff who have contributed to the 2008 greenhouse gas inventory for the UN system, as well as the sustainable procurement focal points and the members of the Procurement Network of the High-Level Committee on Management.

We have also set ourselves an ambitious programme for 2010. As you may recall, the fifteenth senior officials meeting of the Environmental Management Group held in New York on 23 September 2009 considered the ongoing and future work related to moving towards climate-neutrality, sustainable procurement and a coherent approach to sustainable management of the United Nations system. The senior officials decided to consolidate the work of the issue management group (IMG) on climate-neutral United Nations and on sustainable procurement under a single issue management group on sustainable management in the United Nations system for a period of two years. These two IMGs will be replaced by the newly-constituted IMG on sustainable management as of January 2010.

In this regard, I am pleased to attach the terms of reference for the group which are based on the decision taken by senior officials at their 15th meeting. The responsibility for the implementation of sustainable management practices in the UN, including the UN Climate-Neutral Strategy, will continue to remain within each organization. The IMG will serve as a forum for the development of common tools and approaches, sharing of expertise and lessons learnt and providing advice to the senior officials of the EMG and other UN bodies and networks. UNEP's Sustainable UN facility (SUN) will provide secretariat and substantive support to the joint work under the IMG in line with the recommendation from OIOS.

To Executive Heads of members of the Environment Management Group

Executive Office

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The first meeting of the IMG is scheduled to take place from 9 to 10 February 2010, in Geneva. The meeting will be chaired by the SUN and will provide the opportunity to discuss the work-plan and working modalities of the group. In particular, I suggest that the meeting agenda focus on: -

- Adoption of workplan and modalities for the IMG on Sustainable Management of the United Nations system;
- Annual preparation of greenhouse gas inventories: lessons learned from the 2008-2009 process, outstanding issues, and adoption of a semi-automatic reporting process;
- Format and process to develop emission reduction plans for each UN organization by the end of 2010 and current approaches and lessons learned to offsetting under the climate-neutral strategy;
- Update on sustainable procurement and cooperation with the HLCM Procurement Network;
- The process for exploring how sustainable management in the United Nations system can be developed, including by identifying options for developing sustainable management systems.

The new IMG on Sustainable Management of the United Nations system will require a focal point in each UN institution. I would therefore be grateful if you could designate a representative of your institution to act as the sustainable management focal point to the IMG, together with alternate focal point. The new sustainable management focal points will coordinate the work on sustainability issues across the UN system, including work on procurement and climate-neutrality. The names of the persons designated, together with any views on the agenda and working modalities of the IMG, should be communicated to Niclas Svenningsen (niclas.svenningsen@unep.org), head of the SUN facility, by 12 January 2010. The provisional agenda and background documentation will be sent to all nominated focal points at least two weeks before the meeting.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for your contribution to the efforts of moving toward sustainable management practices in the UN system and look forward to the participation of your agency in the IMG and our continued cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Achim Steiner
Executive Director and
Chair, Environment Management Group

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