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## Introducing the UNU Inter-Linkages Initiative: Focusing on the Implementation of Sustainable Development

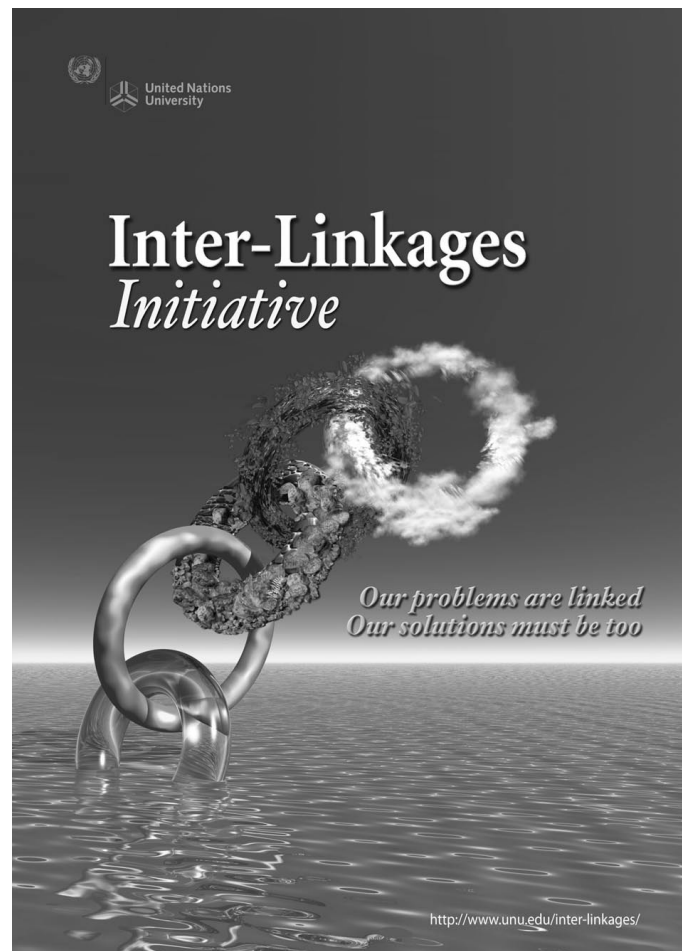
By Jerry Velasquez and Uli Piest

Embedded in the United Nations University's Environment and Sustainable Development Programme (ESD), the Inter-linkages Initiative is an innovative approach to managing sustainable development. Based on the recognition that environmental management is strongly related to human behaviour at all levels of natural and human interaction, it promotes greater connectivity between ecosystems and societal performance. On a practical level, the inter-linkages initiative is based on the assumption that improving the implementation of existing environmental mechanisms does not necessarily require new instruments but, rather, a greater level of coherence among the tools already available. In this regard, Inter-linkages represents a time- and cost-effective approach to strengthening the existing systems of managing sustainable development.

### Linked problems, disconnected solutions

Over the past fifty years, several hundred multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) have been established in an effort to protect and preserve the global environment. While many of these agreements work to support and strengthen each other's aims, in some instances, the objectives of MEAs either overlap or actively contradict each other. The recognition of this fact, along with its associated implications, has resulted in an increasing number of calls for better coordination and harmonization between MEAs during the negotiation, ratification and implementation stages.

In response to these calls the UNU started the Inter-linkages Initiative. It was born out of the need to develop better coordination between MEAs, an integrated approach for the development of



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comprehensive synergistic frameworks for local, national, regional and international stakeholders in the broad field of environmental management.

### Global, regional, national – the importance of subsidiarity

To take better advantage of the linkages between our problem perception and proposed solutions, and to ensure the effective implementation of responses, we need to understand the challenges and opportunities that exist at the various levels of governance. Different issues arise across different levels (global, regional, national and local) and planning phases (negotiation and ratification, implementation, monitoring). Responses need to take these levels into account and have to be tailored to specific requirements. To be effective, our solutions have to be flexible enough to take into account the realities of decision-making processes in distinct global and local societal settings.

The UNU has been engaged in research on inter-linkages among MEAs since 1997. Subsequently, numerous other initiatives at the international level have been initiated both between convention secretariats and within organizations like UNEP, most prominently led by the Environment Ministers Forum on International Environmental Governance (IEG) and the UNEP Division on Environmental Conventions.

Yet, while efforts to promote a more synergistic approach to sustainable development at the global level must continue, e.g. through inter-agency collaboration, there are many opportunities and challenges for coordination at the regional and national levels that also need to be addressed. It is important to examine the dynamics on these levels for a number of reasons.

Firstly, many natural linkages exist between ecosystems that stretch across national and regional borders. Secondly, regional and sub-regional institutions are essential players for the efficient and effective implementation of global agreements. Thirdly, although many useful avenues for mutual support exist among global MEAs

(e.g. the Rio Conventions), a growing number of agreements are regional in scope, such as the various environmental conventions negotiated under the auspices of the UN regional economic commissions or sub-regional organizations and programmes (ASEAN, SPREP, SACEP, *inter alia*). Furthermore, many of the organizational problems experienced at the global level also manifest themselves at regional and local levels in the form of conflicting institutional roles, defective legal frameworks, coordination problems, failure of communication or duplication of efforts.

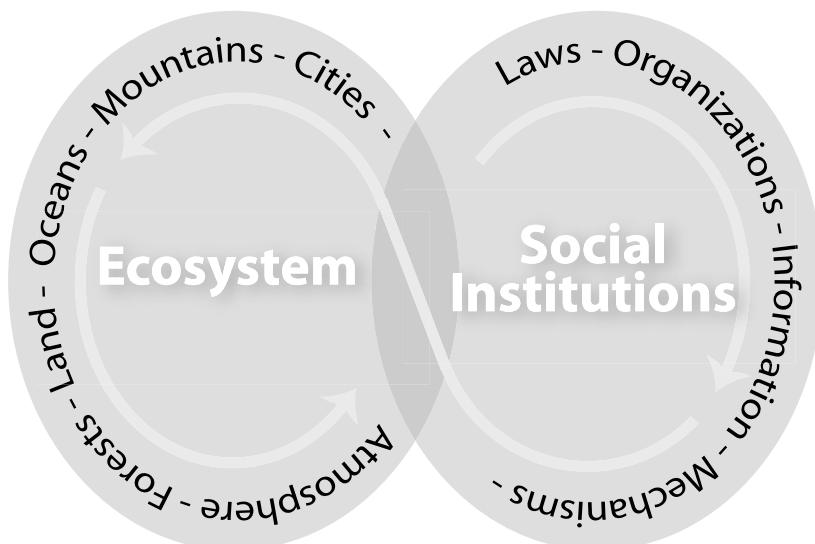
Focusing on governance reform at various levels, such as restructuring organizations to better meet the environmental challenges we are facing today, may contribute to solving some of these problems. What we often overlook, however, especially at the national level, is that it is not only structures that hamper implementation. A useful approach to reform might be to concentrate on functions, such as capacity development, assessment, education, information management, etc., rather than focusing on the formal structures. Function-centred approaches mainly target working levels that tend to be less politicized; hence, such approaches can often be more easily implemented and can be more flexible and responsive to changing demands.

Within the Inter-linkages Initiative, our analysis and any recommendations we make for reforms at either the national or regional level are guided by the following set of principles that were formulated as the initiative developed:

1. The proposed inter-linkages should clearly be in the interest of cooperating partners.
2. The overall goal of promoting inter-linkages is to support countries to pursue sustainable development in all its economic, social and environmental dimensions.
3. The suggested responses to existing challenges have to follow the principle of subsidiarity, i.e. each problem has to be addressed at the most appropriate level of intervention.
4. Any initiatives for inter-linkages should only be taken up upon thorough analysis of their benefits in each specific case.
5. Opportunities for inter-linkages exist across agreements focusing on related issues (e.g., environmental agreements) and between agreements focusing on related tools and approaches.
6. Regional or international organizations can play an important role in fostering inter-linkages at the national level.

This issue of *Work in Progress* focuses on the Inter-linkages Initiative and presents its variety of activities. Carlene Van Toen describes the first attempt of the initiative to determine, through interviews and questionnaires, the real gaps, challenges and opportunities that exist at the national level on the management of these MEAs. Following this, Brook Boyer and Jerry Velasquez analyze project findings from existing national and regional MEA approaches in Asia and the Pacific.

Aware of the differences of these approaches for countries even within a specific region, case studies were carried out initially in fourteen countries. The



Inter-linkages – ensuring our solutions take advantage of the links in our ecosystem

results of the first set of these studies, in the ASEAN region, are described by Raman Letchumanan, Jerry Velasquez and Philip Mathews. Following this, Jacques Mougeot, Uli Piest and Shona Dodds take a closer look at the results of the Pacific island countries case study, and finally Shona Dodds, Uli Piest, Thomas Paka and Joseph Turia discuss the Papua New Guinea case study results.

To further strengthen the academic backbone of the initiative, several thematic areas were also explored. Due to limitations of space, only a select few are highlighted in this newsletter. First, Jerry Velasquez, Jong Malabed and Jacob Park discuss the opportunities for inter-linkages that exist in relation to the task of financing sustainable development. This is followed by an exploration of the issue management approach, looking at the links between the Kyoto and Montreal Protocols, by Jerry Velasquez, Jong Malabed, Raj Shende, Joanne Kauffman and Nazli Choucri. Lal Kurukulasuriya and Jerry Velasquez describe the role of compliance and the judiciary in promoting inter-linkages and sustainable development. These and other similar studies highlight the need to find the proper scale and level where issues can be best approached. Each of these issue-based articles helps to strengthen the analysis and background of the national and regional case studies introduced above.

Highlighting the fact that the UNU does not act alone on the issue, partnerships and other common initiatives are described in the next section of the newsletter. First Jacques Mougeot portrays the role of SPREP in the Pacific, particularly with regard to the promotion of inter-linkages among MEAs. Vijay Samnotra then gives some insights on the work of UNEP in promoting the coordination of MEA Secretariats at the global level. Finally, Hanna Hoffmann introduces

the Joint Liaison Group between the Rio Conventions, an initiative to encourage cooperation, coordination and synergies among the UNFCCC, the UNCCD and the CBD.

## Moving forward

Looking back at the recent conclusion of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the last part of the newsletter describes first steps of the Initiative to analyze the work set out at Johannesburg. A preliminary outline done by Uli Piest examines how WSSD Type II partnerships promote an integrated approach to issues and problem solving. Type II partnerships were placed on the table at the Summit as one of the key models of implementation after the WSSD.

Much learning has been generated on the need for a more intensified and coordinated approach to MEAs – both at various scales and operational phases. Learning needs to continue, but it also needs to be translated into action at the national and regional levels through parallel processes of capacity development and training. In order to move forward, the Initiative will now focus on building partnerships for implementation on specific function-centric themes such as the multiple areas within capacity development, knowledge management, assessment, compliance, resourcing and others. At the national and regional levels in particular, these activities will be based on an evolutionary approach with revolutionary goals, which means that we have to decide on actions that are achievable *in spite of* the real socio-political challenges that exist in MEA management. Through this approach that centres on subsidiarity and feasibility, it is hoped that rather than challenges to implementation, more benefits will be highlighted and shared. W

# Synergies among Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs): Perceptions from the ESCAP Region

By Carlene Van Toen

In September 2000, the UNU embarked on an effort to gauge national capacities to address linkages and identify opportunities for synergistic development between MEAs within the region of the Economic Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). UNU staff administered a questionnaire to address key issues related to the management of the Rio-Agreements: the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD). The exercise was conducted by UNU research-staff through consultations with delegates at the (ESCAP) *Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific* in Kitakyushu, Japan, 4–5 September 2000. The meeting's setting allowed for consultations with environment ministers and delegates responsible for environmental policies within each nation. Such information is considered of relevance since delegates' insights and understanding of environmental issues directly translate into decisions made regarding policies and procedures developed to

manage environmental issues within the respective countries.

Delegates representing approximately 60 per cent of the total 52 ESCAP members and 9 associate member nations completed the questionnaires. The resulting data was collated, categorized and analysed in accordance with the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI), a measurement indicative of a nation's ability to translate economic prosperity into human welfare.

## Survey findings

Consultations with the delegates revealed widespread recognition of benefits that may be derived through pursuing efforts to take advantage of inter-linkages among MEAs within ESCAP nations. Cost-saving efforts to reduce duplication of work by capitalizing on similarities between MEAs were noted by over 75 per cent of delegates from medium human development countries (HDCs) and 65 per cent from high HDCs. Delegates conveyed a diverse range of efforts to identify synergies and establish plans among related MEA

strategies undertaken within their nations. These included the formation of national committees to help guide implementation. These are comprised of representatives from the various ministries responsible for convention plans. Another example is the establishment of environmental legislation stipulating the completion of a formal review of complementary issues among different MEAs. Many of the initiatives described by respondents were relatively recent and their success had yet to be determined. In addition, further results indicate that attempts to foster inter-linkages were not undertaken by the governments of delegates from low HDCs. This may be attributed to limitations on financial and human resources within the organizations responsible for implementing convention plans.

According to survey results, lack of adequate human capacity is a serious factor limiting the progress of convention implementation and synergy development. Due to limited human resources, delegates from low HDCs described efforts to achieve MEA reporting obligations to be of primary concern, leaving little time to undertake other activities including improving current policies by incorporating synergies. Delegates solicited from high HDCs considered apathy among decision makers as a leading obstacle to the ratification and establishment of related MEA programmes.

Delegates were asked to describe national institutional apparatus guiding the negotiation, ratification and implementation of MEAs to identify successful practices for developing synergies. The results imply that policies surrounding the implementation of even a single MEA are typically the responsibility of different national agencies. For example, the CBD promotes measures to protect biodiversity as well as subsequent efforts to regulate trade and intellectual property rights. Findings indicate that nations with systems designed to facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration encounter fewer difficulties in achieving the goals of MEA strategies. Successful execution of MEA plans largely appears to be dependent upon the capacity of different national agencies responsible for agreements to foster collaborative efforts to achieve successful outcomes. Conversely, delegates from nations that encountered significant problems in achieving agreement objectives indicated the absence of a clear working framework to coordinate stakeholder activities within their country. Approximately 50 per cent of delegates from medium HDCs described conflicts between the various agencies responsible for MEA negotiation and implementation. Many voiced concern over inconsistencies that developed when MEA conditions were agreed upon by the body negotiating the agreement without prior consultation or consent from the agency responsible for implementing the plans. Some delegates suggested that lack of transparency and unwillingness to collaborate efforts between all involved parties was significantly jeopardizing the success of MEA programmes.

Frequent communication between the parties responsible for different MEAs appears necessary for synergy development and conflict avoidance. With the aim of exploring the extent of communication between focal points (FP; key individuals or agencies responsible for overall MEA programmes), delegates were asked to describe their interactions. Over 45 per cent of delegates suggested that interactions between FPs occur during personal meetings that are arranged on an ad-hoc basis. In addition, four delegates mentioned

that the ability to hold ad-hoc meetings was relatively straightforward since FP offices are located within the same complex. In addition, over 50 per cent of the delegates indicated that their governments have established national committees to guide the implementation of Rio-instruments and related environmental matters. It was implied that national committee meetings typically provide a formal venue for FP interaction. The findings demonstrate that substantial communication between FPs occurs within most ESCAP nations. Focal points are most inclined to correspond with each other concerning information to be used for the preparation of national reports. Delegates' responses suggest that communication between FPs seldom occurs during the planning stages of strategy development, an appropriate stage to develop linkages between programmes.

Several delegates noted the use of e-mail as well as other technological data management tools was proving beneficial for sharing information generated by different agencies. However, few formal efforts to improve data management systems and to thereby increase transparency and aid efforts to take advantage of synergies between MEAs appear to be undertaken at the national level. Efforts to synchronize the sharing of information, including the use of common data-storage repositories, occur approximately 19 per cent of the time, and predominantly in high HDCs. Surprisingly, efforts to enhance monitoring systems to generate consistent and reliable data were widely held as the least of the delegates' concerns.

Further insight into the limitations surrounding MEA funding was determined through inviting delegates to describe funding sources for the Rio-agreements. The results indicate that countries party to CCD rely predominantly on government funds, whereas nations party to CBD and FCCC receive GEF funding and government funds as well as NGO support. It was generally stated that private sector funding is rarely sought. When asked to suggest measures to acquire private sector funding, respondents generally supported the promotion of government incentives. Delegates from low HDCs suggested the promotion of tax incentives as well as the establishment of new legislation that would require private enterprises to undertake environmental accounting measures, whereas delegates from medium HDCs were more in favour of engaging private sector members during convention implementation through the endorsement of public goods concepts. Approximately 50 per cent of delegates from high HDCs supported the use of education and awareness campaigns to target private donors while raising environmental awareness among government officials.

Many of the individuals consulted appealed to international and regional environmental institutions as well as NGOs to intensify environmental awareness and capacity building efforts. They suggested that these efforts be designed to target government officials as well as the public to increase understanding surrounding the importance of environmental protection and support for treaty ratification. Further appeals for support by delegates were aimed at international agencies. They included the provision of best practices for developing synergistic programmes as well as support in capacity building and awareness exercises.

Delegates' perceptions were sought regarding the need for further research regarding efforts to create inter-linkages MEA programmes. Support for further research on methodologies for developing

synergies and coordinating such efforts were strongly encouraged by 77 per cent of the delegates. Respondents generally indicated knowledge of the benefits of capitalizing on synergies among agreements, yet declared that insufficient guidelines are available detailing measures on how to undertake such endeavours.

## Recommendations

The survey findings indicate that there is substantial support for the development of synergistic programmes between MEAs within the ESCAP region. Yet, attempts to achieve successful outcomes are hindered by weak institutional arrangements and the lack of financial and human capital. In response to these findings, the promotion of a multi-pronged approach for identifying and supporting inter-linkage efforts is suggested. Global environmental institutions are encouraged to continue efforts to identify inter-linkages between agreements and foster support for related programmes. Programmes may include the provision of national capacity building exercises and the supply of materials such as “best practices for developing synergies.” Such efforts can support national agencies to enhance cohesion among the different agencies involved in negotiation and implementation of MEAs.

Regional organizations can contribute by detecting cross-linking regional issues and providing such information to their members. Regional environmental organizations may also initiate efforts to gain

private sector funding on behalf of their members, to supplement national and regional programmes. Many medium and low HDCs appear understaffed and overburdened; regional organizations can continue to provide mobile training teams to enhance in-country expertise, for example in improving data management systems.

At the national level, MEA negotiating bodies are encouraged to undertake consultations among all relevant stakeholders prior to the negotiation of agreements and subsequent decisions. The establishment of national committees comprised of various stakeholders, FPs, policy makers and other relevant participants from line ministries, to provide expertise and advice in steering MEA implementation as well as national sustainable development plans, is encouraged as a first step towards enhancing collaborative efforts. National committee meetings can provide an opportunity for relevant parties to jointly address cross-linked issues, foster collaboration and discuss issues relating to multiple parties. In addition, the adoption of data management standards and the promotion and use of standardized tools, including common data storage repositories, can improve information retrieval and analysis needed by numerous parties. Standardized systems designed to process, store and transmit data can decrease workloads, reduce duplication of efforts, lessen data handling costs, create consistency and generally increase compliance to convention requirements. **W**

## National and Regional Approaches

By Brook Boyer and Jerry Velasquez

Applying the concept of inter-linkages at and across all levels of governance has received growing interest in national and international policymaking circles. Initially, attention focused on improving inter-agency coordination at the global institutional level, following proposals of the UN Secretary General for better issue management and the 1998 Report of the UN Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements. The need to widen attention and look at lower levels of governance, in addition to examining inter-linkages across levels, has surfaced in a number of subsequent reports and papers issued by various organizations and forums, such as the UNU, UNEP and, most recently, the meetings of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or Their Representatives on International Environmental Governance.

### Why national and regional approaches?

Examining the possibilities for synergies at the regional and national levels is important for at least three reasons. Firstly, many natural linkages exist in ecosystems that have boundaries within and across the sub-national, national and regional levels. A geographic grouping can be useful when implementing agreements using a synergistic approach and can help achieve visible as well as tangible results on the ground. At the national level, where the best opportunities may exist for applying the inter-linkages concept, governments are in an optimal position to identify the contours for synergies and set up the

most appropriate institutional framework for coordinating policy responses. It is precisely this level where cross-sectoral issues, such as monitoring and reporting, capacity building, public awareness and financing, can be better coordinated across agreements. National decision makers are also well suited to identify a country's environmental priorities and ensure that they are coherent with overall socio-economic and developmental concerns.

Secondly, in terms of statistics, approximately 70 per cent of the international environmental agreements concluded over the past 30 years are regional or sub-regional in scope,<sup>1</sup> and many have links or functional relationships to global MEAs. Moreover, regional frameworks and cooperative action plans often specify how global agreements can be applied in the context of a geographical or ecological region or sub-region. Such frameworks and action plans are elaborated regularly in the scope of regional or sub-regional intergovernmental meetings, such as the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development, the meeting of ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment or the periodic gatherings in the framework of SPREP. The same reason applies to the country level in the sense that global and regional agreements require national action plans and strategies that provide guidance on how environmental commitments will be implemented at the sub-

1 UNEP, Report of the Executive Director, Global Ministerial Environment Forum, International Environmental Governance, UNEP/GCSS, VII/2, p.15.

national and local levels.

And thirdly, many of the administrative problems experienced at the global level also surface at the regional and national levels in the form of problems related to the fragmentation of convention focal points, conflicting institutional roles in policymaking and implementation processes, communication failures and the duplication of existing efforts. For effective and efficient implementation, it is therefore imperative to correct any deficiencies that may impair proper environmental management.

Synergies between global and regional institutions are, therefore, important for the more efficient and effective implementation of global sustainable development commitments. From a problem-solving perspective, the scales of shared environmental problems, and the connections between them, suggest that a regional and national approach to inter-linkages will be beneficial.

### How can inter-linkages help improve environmental management at various levels of governance?

To understand how the concept of inter-linkages may be part of the solution to better environmental management, it is helpful to briefly sketch some of the problems and challenges facing decision makers.

The implementation of MEAs involves simultaneous and inter-connected processes at the national and intergovernmental levels of policymaking. At the national level, the task of coordinating the implementation of environmental commitments is commonly facilitated by the designation of national focal points (NFPs) or lead agencies, which would usually be the most technically competent ministry or government office. In addition, many governments have formed, through their NFPs, national committees (NCs) to oversee the response to MEA requirements and ensure civil society participation.

At the intergovernmental level, MEAs are often subject to further negotiation and review through annual or biannual Conferences of Parties (COPs) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and, on a more frequent basis, meetings of the subsidiary bodies or technical committees. National preparations for the follow-up negotiations usually have lead agencies, and they sometimes differ from the focal points designated to oversee the implementation of commitments. Thus, for any given MEA, there may be a set of national contacts – one (or several in some cases) for implementation and one for follow-up negotiations. The growing number of agreements to which states are contracting parties has significantly increased the number of focal points and committees required, and these are often spread across government ministries. This dispersion creates administrative and coordination challenges for most countries.

There is a closed-loop relationship between the national implementation process and the follow-up intergovernmental negotiations of MEAs, each contributing significantly to the dynamics of the other. Managing these dual processes requires a mixture of knowledge, skills, legal competence and administrative coordination – at the national level, between the national and the regional or global, and between the national and the sub-national levels of governance.

At the inter-governmental level, ministries of foreign affairs have traditionally overseen diplomatic encounters, including multilateral environmental negotiations. This practice has started to change in

many industrialized countries and some developing ones with the involvement of other functional ministries equipped with the necessary technical and legal understanding of environmental issues. Many developing countries however, lack the needed financial and human resources to field large delegations. As a result, developing countries are often unable to draw upon the combination of diplomatic skills and substantive and technical expertise that would enable them to participate more effectively in negotiations. These capacity constraints make implementing environmental commitments all the more challenging, and coordination with functional ministries all the more essential.

At the national level, a number of obstacles to coordination can arise and hinder the smooth functioning of the policymaking cycle. They may be horizontal in nature, surfacing across government ministries and agencies. Institutional constraints may also arise on the vertical dimension, across different levels of governmental administration.

### Horizontal challenges

The dispersion of NFPs across government ministries and agencies results from the complex and multifarious nature of environmental issues. It is also affected by constitutional constraints, the administrative organization of government and the availability of skilled and trained professional staff in the respective agencies and ministries.

Both positive and negative effects are associated with the dispersion of NFPs across government ministries. On the positive side, dispersion can lead to an appropriate division of labour, pooled resources and shared ministerial responsibility. It responds to a natural need to assign the tasks of managing the implementation of commitments to the most capable department or agency. In fact, policy implementation may be more efficient and effective if this task is assigned to a functional ministry or line agency other than the one overseeing the intergovernmental negotiations.

When focal points are scattered across ministries that do not have open and frequent lines of communication, coordination problems may arise that compromise the efficiency and effectiveness of policy implementation. Problems may develop when lines of communication are broken between or among the ministries assigned to negotiate an MEA and the ministry or ministries overseeing national implementation. Ministries of foreign affairs, for instance, are often accused of not involving NFPs during international negotiations of environmental plans. This practice occurs generally, but it is more striking in some countries than in others.

Institutional fragmentation may also produce competing roles among government ministries or agencies. This is often the case when one functional ministry is designated as the NFP of a particular convention, while another functional ministry may be designated as the lead agency overseeing the implementation of a related and interdependent policy issue.

Important institutional challenges also extend across sectors. It is well known and accepted that environmental objectives of MEAs need to be coherent and integrated in the broader dimensions of sustainable development. The process of policy integration requires a high degree of coordination, particularly given the sector-specific

administrative divisions and occasional bureaucratic turf battles in national governments.

### Vertical challenges

In addition to the need for improved horizontal coordination among government ministries, the implementation of MEAs also requires an administrative and institutional apparatus at the sub-national levels and effective vertical coordination across layers of government. As the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) states, "it is essential that the quest for coordination and synergy at the national level be carried through in implementation to the district and local levels."<sup>2</sup>

The relationship between the national and sub-national (provincial, state, district and local) levels depends largely on the legal, political and administrative structure of countries, the degree of decentralization in policy-making and implementation, and the capacity at sub-national levels to formulate, implement, enforce and monitor policies.

Ownership and management of natural resources may be controlled by a central government or delegated to sub-national political institutions. In both cases, however, the efficiency and effectiveness of policy implementation may be compromised. Excessive central control over resources can create mistrust and result in conflicts with provincial, district or village-level officials, especially when the latter may be launching their own initiatives that do not necessarily support the aims of government-led policies or programmes. Even with decentralization, however, the objectives of national-level environmental strategies and policies may be diluted if provincial, state or local governments assign a higher priority to economic development rather than environmental protection.<sup>3</sup>

A major impediment that many countries face is the lack of sub-

2 UNDP 1999, "Synergy in National Implementation: The Rio Agreements," paper submitted by UNDP to the International Conferences on Inter-linkages: Synergies and Coordination between Multilateral Environmental Agreements, Tokyo, July 1999, p. 7.

3 See UNESCAP 2000, *Integrating Environmental Considerations into Economic Policy Making: Institutional Issues*, Development Paper 21, New York, United Nations.

national capacity and financial resources to implement agreements and policies.<sup>4</sup> This applies not only to provincial, state and local governments, but also to the sub-national offices and staff of national and federal ministries and agencies.

### Responding to coordination challenges

Despite tremendous challenges faced by countries in dealing with the inter-linked nature of these MEAs with segregated institutions, successful responses are visible in countries across the Asia and Pacific region. At the national level, governments have undertaken institutional reform and have created new or revised legal frameworks, information management systems, and partnerships and networking. Specific examples of these responses include the appointment of an individual to coordinate all MEAs, exchanges of information, periodic coordination meetings of various individual focal points, and the establishment of more permanent bodies, such as coordination offices for the conventions, better participation of civil society in MEA management, and frameworks for information exchanges and sharing.

Even when countries undertake specific activities that are designed to leverage benefit from the inter-linkages between sustainable development issues, they are sometimes confronted with a myriad of constraints and barriers to improving the effectiveness of MEA implementation. These barriers are often deeply rooted and may be institutional, historical, political, social, cultural and/or economic in nature. What the fourteen country case studies, conducted within the UNU Inter-linkages Initiative, have shown is that the challenges are often not only difficult to understand, they are also difficult to overcome. While the UNU must continue to address these specific challenges and seek ways and means of overcoming them it must, at the same time, continue to promote the general concept of Inter-linkages, and its practical applicability, with the hope of increasing acceptance by a wide variety of stakeholders. This can only be achieved by focusing on activities that centre on subsidiarity and feasibility, producing clearly defined and measurable results. W

4 See UNDP 1999, UNESCAP 2000.

## Case Study in the ASEAN Region

By Raman Letchumanan, Jerry Velasquez and Philip Mathews

Since its inception in August 1967, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has consistently maintained and fostered close collaboration among its member countries in addressing environmental issues at the national, regional and global levels. Despite considerable differences in geographical, demographic, social, economic and environmental conditions – and different systems of government – the ten ASEAN member countries (AMCs) have identified and collaborated in various environmental issues of common interest. AMCs have established mutually consistent understanding in international forums regarding global environmental

issues and share a common aspiration for continued socio-economic progress while maintaining balanced development based on the principle of environmentally sound sustainable development.

ASEAN member countries are actively engaged in addressing global environmental issues in accordance with the principle of sustainable development, and based on common but differentiated responsibilities. These include protecting the ozone layer, mitigating climate change, sustaining biological diversity and protecting endangered species, controlling transboundary movements and disposal of hazardous wastes, making wise use of wetlands, and

practicing sustainable management of forests. While AMCs are not the major source of global environmental problems such as climate change, ozone layer depletion, and hazardous wastes, they are most vulnerable to their adverse effects. The majority of AMCs are still grappling with domestic environmental problems such as water and air pollution, haze through forest fires, degradation of land and loss of biodiversity, in addition to providing basic human needs and addressing poverty. Nevertheless, AMCs have contributed substantially to addressing these global issues despite their scarce resources and other pressing national priorities.

Recognizing the importance of global environmental issues, ASEAN has established a Working Group on Multilateral Environmental Agreements to discuss common issues and coordinate implementation at the regional level. Among its mandate, the Working Group seeks to enhance synergy and coordination in the implementation of MEAs at the national level, and undertakes regional activities that are of common interest to all member countries. These include establishing common positions or understanding as appropriate, sharing of information and experiences, and undertaking joint training and capacity building activities.

An ASEAN case study with a view to further promoting synergies and coordination in the implementation of MEAs at the regional level was undertaken with the support of the United Nations University and the United Nations Environment Programme. Some of the preliminary findings of the study are as follows:

### **Institutional arrangements and participation in MEAs**

AMCs have shown a strong commitment to accede to Multilateral Environmental Agreements as early as possible. ASEAN has achieved almost 90 per cent ratification for the older and established conventions such as the Vienna Convention, Montreal Protocol, UNFCCC, CITES and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and shows a greater rate of ratification in comparison with the Asia Pacific region. The recent conventions such as the chemical-related conventions have lower rates of accession, as member countries need to study the implications and ensure national preparedness to fulfill the obligations of becoming a party. However the process of ratification is greatly assisted by sharing experiences among AMCs during meetings of the ASEAN committees.

Within the region, the institutional arrangements for the environment vary widely, depending on the national circumstances. Most countries have established full-fledged ministries or agencies devoted primarily to environmental matters. More recently, Thailand and Viet Nam have established ministries devoted solely to environment and natural resource management. In other countries, environmental issues are handled by a commission under the purview of the prime ministers' offices or foreign affairs ministries. Environmental matters come under the purview of the Ministry of Development in Brunei Darussalam.

All of the AMCs have established national focal points (NFPs) for each of the MEAs ratified; they are mostly situated within the ministries of environment, agriculture and forestry, or other agencies. Their functions include liaison with the MEA secretariats and relevant international organizations, coordinating implementation of MEAs

among various sectoral agencies at the national level, and formulating national laws, policies and strategies for implementation of their obligations under the MEAs.

A significant problem facing ASEAN member countries is the capacity of the national focal points to respond to the demands of coordinating and implementing MEAs. Most focal points have only a few officials assigned to handle MEAs, and in addition to a number of MEAs each has to handle, they are also invariably involved in other pressing national environmental activities. The lack of sufficient human resources tends to limit the ability of AMCs to effectively manage MEAs at the national level.

### **Negotiations**

There are significant challenges in the preparations for, and conduct of, negotiations within the AMCs. These include lack of sufficient expertise (especially in the scientific and technical context), lack of relevant data/information, and lack of human and financial resources to undertake sufficient consultation in the preparatory process and to send sufficient number of delegates to respective Meetings or Conferences of Parties to UNFCCC. Time constraints are a particular issue, especially with regard to preparations before negotiations. Significant challenges also exist in terms of coordination among delegations and the related stakeholders (for joint meetings and report composition), including arriving at consensus among sectoral government institutions which may have competing interests and mandates. The complex nature of the issues, coupled with insufficient capacity, results in non-adherence to timeliness in submission of inputs/comments from concerned parties.

To overcome some of these constraints, AMCs have endeavored to work towards sharing views and understating and establishing common positions on a regional basis at meetings of the ASEAN Working Group on MEAs. AMCs have also assigned lead countries for each of the major MEAs whose role is to monitor developments, and provide inputs for the consideration of the member countries collectively. Many times, ASEAN has responded collectively to the negotiations at MEAs.

### **Implementation**

ASEAN faces major constraints in the implementation of MEAs. The most common problem faced by member countries is the lack of technical expertise and financial resources to implement agreements and policies. In ASEAN, the lack of human and financial resources in setting up the institutional framework in response to MEAs is the most-often mentioned problem. However, in spite of these challenges, ASEAN has made significant achievements in implementing the MEAs, most notable among these is the phase-out of ozone-depleting substances.

The main concern has to do more with the effective utilization of internal and external financial resources, rather than the lack of resources itself. Greater coordination among collaborative agencies within and outside ASEAN is needed to ensure that there is no duplication and waste of meagre resources. Often, resources are consumed unnecessarily for management and coordination expenses which do not directly benefit delivery of services and outputs. Also the use of expertise from outside the region, even though such



expertise is available in the region, not only adds extra costs, but does not ensure strengthening of capability and expertise within the region. The tendency to segment activities based on conventions, and implement them on a country basis, when it could have been more effective to implement them regionally, compounds the issue.

ASEAN has, therefore, embarked upon promoting synergies and coordination in the implementation of MEAs. ASEAN encourages the use of expertise available within the region, especially from the older established countries to the newer members of ASEAN. Such activities include training, provision of experts, advice on formulation of laws, policies and strategies, and establishment of mechanisms for enforcement. ASEAN, in accordance with its mandate, has sought to coordinate all regional programmes.

Member countries also face challenges in the coordination of activities at the national level. Often these relate to competing sectoral interests of agencies with specific mandates. However, such coordination issues are continually reviewed and monitored through high-level coordination committees.

Another challenge faced by some member countries is due to the jurisdiction over natural resources among federal, state and provisional governments. In Malaysia, for example, land resources come under the jurisdiction of state governments. This may be one of the reasons for the delay faced by Malaysia in ratifying the Ramsar Convention, which requires designation of a wetland site before acceding to the Convention. However any such problems could be overcome by close cooperation between the various entities. Nevertheless, it is to be noted that such an arrangement provides a distinct advantage in terms of decentralized implementation and supervision at the local level, which is essential for effective biodiversity management.

Monitoring and enforcement measures pose distinct problems for most member countries without sufficient resources, especially for those countries with large land and marine areas such as Indonesia and the Philippines. Therefore, even though many of the ASEAN member countries have enacted laws and regulations, the enforcement of these instruments needs greater attention.

Many of the MEAs deal with complex technical issues, such as the conventions related to biosafety, toxic chemicals and climate change to name a few. Furthermore, they are cross-sectoral and highly integrated, and action in one area may lead to unintended consequences in other areas. As such, ASEAN member countries, as a group of developing countries, have largely been frustrated in effectively implementing these conventions. Furthermore, the lack of

technical expertise and relevant and timely information compounds the problem. ASEAN is therefore working towards addressing these problems on a collective basis.

### Looking forward

At present, the greatest challenge for effective implementation of MEAs in the region is probably the lack of sufficient institutional, financial and human capacity. Capacity in this sense includes aspects that are physical (i.e., the number of professionals actually involved in the negotiation and implementation of MEAs), qualitative (i.e., the knowledge required to analyze information), and sustainability-related (i.e., continuity and transfer of know-how). Capacity building not only improves responses to and the effectiveness of MEA implementation, but also the ability to prepare for and participate in regional and global negotiations.

Much can be done, however, to use existing resources in order to enhance inter-linkages so that national obligations to international treaties can be fulfilled, at the same time as real progress is made with the country's own development strategy. Existing national and regional centres are obvious starting points for coordination and collaboration. For example, they could organize courses for targeted groups on technical issues relevant to a number of MEAs and other agreements that promote sustainable development. It should be noted that even the best capacity building programme could have only limited results if incentives that encourage the trainers to train are not in place.

While international agencies identify coordination and cooperation as key elements of any inter-linkages capacity building strategy, the field remains wide open. There have been efforts to promote cooperation and coordination within national governments, but most have been unsuccessful. For instance, UN agencies and programmes have encouraged governments to establish "multidisciplinary" or "cross-sectoral" committees or forums, but success has been for the most part limited to those countries having a culture for collaborative decision-making.

ASEAN recognizes the limits to increasing resources, even if such resources are readily available. With the proliferation of MEAs, what is needed is effective coordination and synergy, at the international, regional and national levels. ASEAN strives to promote synergy at the regional level, and is well placed to take the lead in the Southeast Asian region in accordance with its mandate. ASEAN welcomes the support of donor countries, international organizations, and other organizations in this effort. W

# Pacific Island Countries Regional Study on Inter-linkages

By Jacques Mougeot, Uli Piest and Shona E. H. Dodds

A regional study of environmental policies and implementation of MEAs in three Pacific island countries was conducted in 2001, in close collaboration with the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). The country studies were part of a series of case studies undertaken in the Asia and Pacific region that was agreed upon during a regional workshop on inter-linkages, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in February 2001. The overall objective of the study was to examine prospects and challenges for environmental management in Palau, Vanuatu and the Cook Islands. The case studies are aimed at providing a practical approach to supporting synergies and coordination on a national and regional level, and providing a means of identifying the gaps and opportunities in both national and regional environmental governance.

## MEAs in the south pacific

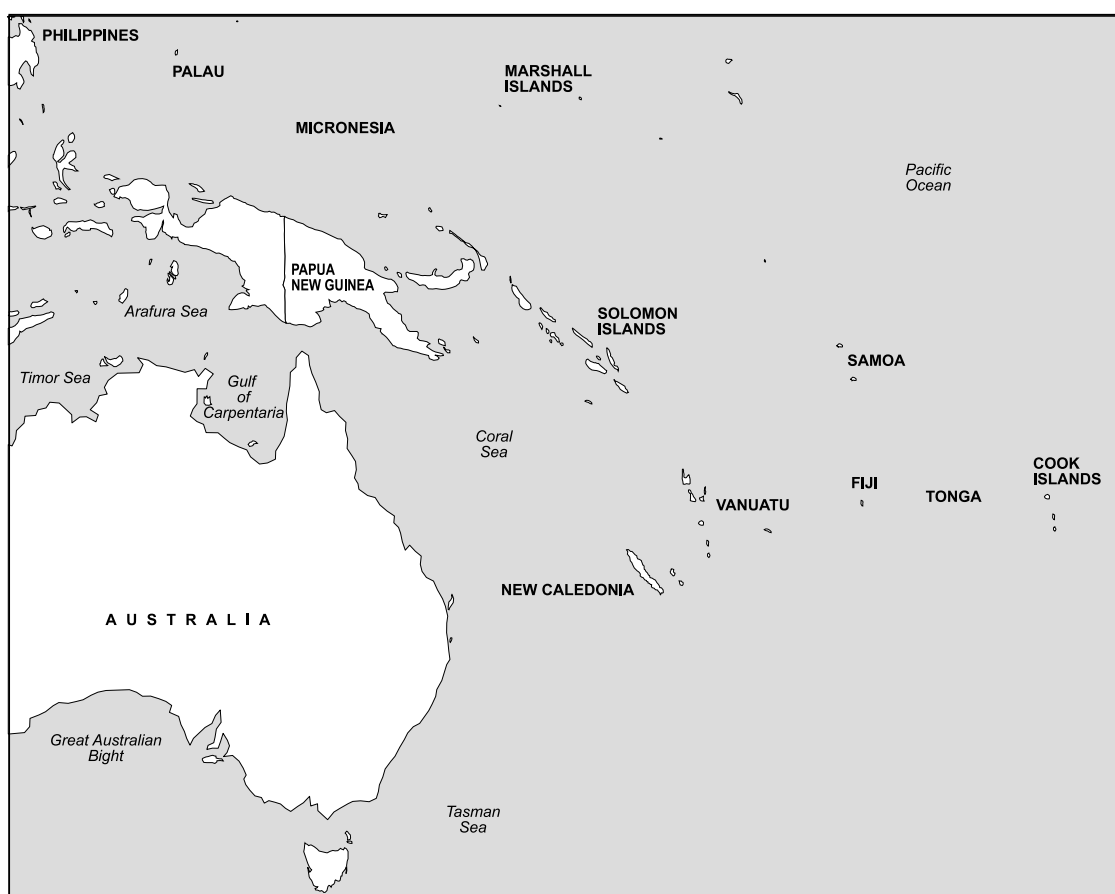
Twenty-nine MEAs were examined in the study. Among these, particular attention was paid to the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Waigani Conventions, which deal with the management of hazardous and chemical wastes and pollutants on a global and regional scale, as examples of possible synergies. In each of the three countries

examined, the MEA processes proved to be placing substantial demands on the capacity of a broad range of government agencies. At times, these international demands actually competed for limited resources against domestic policy implementation.

This shows that while MEA processes may be the key to building up resources and capacities to address the full range of environmental issues over the medium to long term, in the short term they can impose significant additional stresses on small island developing countries. One of the goals of the study was to identify ways in which the inter-linkages approach can be utilized in ways that would reduce these burdens. In this regard, a number of common themes emerged.

## Common themes on inter-linkages

The negotiation and signature of environmental protocols requires substantial internal coordination involving many different government agencies, such as foreign affairs and environment and other departments or agencies that later become involved in implementation and enforcement processes. Where line departments have limited staff, it is often not possible to allocate adequate time to the development of briefings on complex issues. Consequently, and while



Case studies in the Pacific region were undertaken in Palau, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Cook Islands.

each situation was unique, it was generally found that small island developing countries were rarely able to send delegations with high levels of technical expertise to regional and international negotiations. There is a core need, therefore, to achieve an adequate level of technical knowledge for negotiators whose professional background is typically more likely to be legal/diplomatic than scientific/technical. It is also critically important that once these negotiators return, they find the mechanisms in place to report effectively, quickly and widely on negotiation results, and that they are able to disseminate the materials distributed during the negotiating session to all relevant government agencies and departments. This creates scope for convention secretariats and regional organizations to provide meaningful assistance to countries through the development of clear briefing papers with executive summaries of the technical issues. Regional organizations could also help countries develop their responses to key negotiation issues by providing timely, relevant and accurate materials relating to the merits of consolidated regional positions.

The Republic of Palau addressed this challenge through the establishment of the Office of Environmental Response and Coordination, which serves as a national focal point in collecting and disseminating information during negotiations and ratifications of MEAs and subsequent secretariat meetings. Although its initial role was limited to one MEA, it surpassed these restrictions and became a central hub for information sharing and cooperation in implementing activities in Palau. An essential element for the success of such coordination bodies is the position they have and the importance they are given within the political and administrative structure of a country. In Palau, for example, the coordination office is positioned directly under the prime minister's office and gains from his commitment.

The Cook Islands followed Palau's encouraging example by creating its own coordination unit. Initially the unit had difficulties living up to expectations as the procedures for dealing with the other agencies involved in environmental management were not formalized. This meant that several different positions and strategies continued to operate. The situation has recently been improved and a better level of coordination between the main agencies has resulted. Establishing offices to coordinate information flows and the implementation efforts of various agencies offers a model that may prove to be adaptable to the situation of other countries.

The speed and efficacy of the ratification and implementation processes also depend on the constitutional requirements of countries. In terms of formulating and implementing the required legislation, countries differ considerably with regard to timelines and political complexity. The best possible way for convention secretariats, or regional organizations, to support countries with regard to their legal processes is through the production and distribution of clear policy documentation. This should cover the commitments and responsibilities of countries implementing the convention in question, and should, again, include concise executive summaries.

The implementation of MEAs not only requires horizontal synchronization of activities between departments and agencies

involved, but also vertical coordination at the national, provincial, municipal and rural community levels. To ensure that this coordination takes place in an efficient and effective manner (or even at all), focused analysis is required during the early stage of the negotiation and ratification processes. This analysis should aim to identify the broader human and financial resource as well as training and public information requirements that are necessary for the effective implementation of conventions. This is a highly specialized and resource intensive task and, as such, represents an area in which the international community and relevant regional organizations could play a useful, if not crucial, supporting role.

The environments of small island oceanic countries, their marine ecosystems in particular, and their efforts to address their environmental goals are of fundamental global importance. In almost all instances, the achievement of these goals requires resources beyond the internal scope of small island resources. Given this reality it is becoming increasingly important that an overall strategy be developed for the medium- to long-term support of small island developing countries as they attempt to meet their responsibilities under various MEAs. This strategy must be developed on the basis of an appropriate needs analysis and involve all relevant members of the global community, such as UN bodies, regional and bilateral funding agencies, and non-governmental organizations.

## Way forward

Success or failure of environmental policies cannot be explained by choice of instruments or intervention mechanisms alone. Of equal importance are structural conditions such as institutional, legal and information frameworks and human and financial capacities to implement a particular policy. This includes quantitative and qualitative aspects of capacity and its sustainability in terms of continuity and transfer of know-how.

Small island oceanic states have three key needs in this regard:

- *Sufficient means* to enable them to manage and meet their obligations and responsibilities under the conventions and protocols they are parties to.
- *Information policies* to enable the agencies involved to better cooperate and to translate international obligations under MEAs into national and local environmental agendas to receive political support and to make these agendas meaningful to the general public.
- *Effective regional support mechanisms* that reflect the regional interest in promoting in-country capacity development and, at the same time, are able to represent regional concerns in the global context.

For both the global community and the relevant regional mechanism, the ultimate goal is to attain the best balance between the benefits offered by approaching different issues and functions, such as coordination, information management or awareness raising, at regional, national and local levels. It is crucial, for example, that the specific technical capacity and needs that exist at the national level be supported by the benefits and the efficiency to be gained by collective capacity development at the regional level.

# Sustainable Development Governance in Papua New Guinea<sup>1</sup>

By Shona E. H. Dodds, Uli Piest, Thomas Paka and Joseph Turia

While Papua New Guinea (PNG) shares many sustainable development concerns with other states within the region, as the largest of the Pacific island states, the country has to face a number of its own unique challenges. PNG comprises 600 separate islands, representing 463,000 square kilometres of land area, with a further three million square kilometres of sea area. The country is extremely rich in natural mineral resources and is home to more than 5 per cent of the world's biodiversity.

Since independence in 1975, PNG has remained a stable democracy although its development, on all levels, has been hampered greatly by many factors including corruption and political instability. This instability has been exacerbated by the continued decline in economic growth rates and the dramatic drop in value of the local currency since it was floated in the mid-1980s. PNG currently ranks 133 in UNDP's Human Development Index, behind Ghana, Cambodia and Lesotho, and least among the countries of the region listed in the human development index. The majority (approx. 80 per cent) of the 5.3 million population is supported by semi-subsistence agriculture.

PNG's greatest strengths are its natural mineral wealth and biodiversity, and its people. Its greatest challenges are how to manage these strengths effectively so that they can continue to benefit the country and its citizens for generations to come. It is this very goal that informed the work of the inter-linkages research team throughout its mission in PNG.

## Preparation and consultation: the missing linkage

As in the three previous Pacific island case studies, one of the greatest weaknesses regarding PNG's efforts to attain sustainable development is its problem to link the negotiation, ratification and implementation stages of the various MEAs to which it is a party or signatory. In particular, PNG has found it difficult to link the diplomatic process at the international level to the ratification and implementation processes at the national level.

There are currently no formal procedures outlining the process of preparation and consultation that should take place prior to the participation in international environmental negotiations. The Department of Foreign Affairs, which serves as the lead agency for all international negotiations, recognizes the need for technical consultations with other agencies such as the Departments of Environment and Conservation, Mining or Fisheries, and also interested NGOs. Yet, for a variety of mostly capacity-related reasons, this consultation very rarely takes place or does not take place in a meaningful manner.

Because of the heavy burdens already placed upon foreign affairs staff, the process of preparation and consultation often only begins shortly before international meetings are scheduled. This does not allow the technical and line agencies enough time to prepare the relevant technical information that may be needed to brief foreign affairs staff regarding PNG's current situation or future goals in

regard to the specific environmental issues at hand.

## Challenges to implementation of MEAs

Due to space constraints, only some selected examples can be highlighted here. These and other issues that hamper implementation processes in PNG will be further elaborated in the final report, to be released in late January 2003. The issues were chosen as they appear to be central for environmental management within PNG and also show some similarities with the constraints other Pacific island countries face.

*Institutional frameworks and cooperation:* While there are often strong formal linkages between different government departments at the executive level, they do not always lead to effective negotiation, ratification or implementation. One of the possible reasons is that formal linkages at the upper levels are not reflected down the line in the form of working-level linkages among the technical staff. Below the level of deputy secretary, an initial investigation seems to point to a lack of clarity as to specific mandates, roles and responsibilities between departments and sometimes within departments.

Officers at the working level complain that they are seldom adequately briefed about how their departments' or their own responsibilities have changed as a result of new international undertakings. This seems to be due to failures in inter-departmental communication, or to top-down communication weaknesses within each department.

It also seems to be the case that additional budget and human resources required by departments to fulfil any new responsibilities are seldom taken into consideration before new international commitments are undertaken. In this regard there appears to be a general failure, at the planning level, to link ongoing international and diplomatic processes to PNG's national sustainable development strategy. PNG is caught in a vicious cycle in that speedy ratification and effective implementation are often hampered by a failure to take account, during the early planning stages, of the additional capacity that will be required for these tasks. Yet, the failure to consider additional capacity requirements is often due directly to the capacity shortages being experienced while the planning is taking place.

*Legal framework:* PNG also shares with other Pacific island countries a difficulty in turning international obligations into workable policies on the ground. A large part of this difficulty relates to the long delays (often several years) in the process of translating new international obligations into national legislation and specific national, provincial and local-level policies and responsibilities. Such delays are usually due to human and technical capacity shortages within crucial departments. It is worth noting that additional capacity requirements are, again, seldom considered adequately within the documents of ratification. This deepens the capacity shortage cycle and only leads to additional problems further down the track during implementation. With the Montreal Protocol, for example, the enabling legislation only started to be developed once international funding was provided for this purpose through the Multilateral Fund several years after PNG's accession in 1993.

This is a particularly key issue for PNG because its international commitments also have to be translated into legal frameworks that enable implementation at the provincial and local levels. The people

<sup>1</sup> The PNG case study was undertaken by the UNU in close collaboration with SPREP and supported by UNDP/PNG and the Government of Papua New Guinea. A full report is currently under development and will be released in draft form for stakeholder comment in early 2003. The article reflects the personal views of the authors and should not be considered as the respective organizations' position.

of PNG risk missing out on the significant financial opportunities that are available under some of the more recent MEAs (e.g., the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism) unless the required legislation is speedily developed and working-level procedures established.

*Information management and participation:* Effective information management is a key issue that poses a challenge for many Pacific island countries. In this regard, a notable problem in PNG is the lack of access to crucial information and a failure to share it. This is primarily due to basic resource limitations such as lack of access to the Internet, and insufficient funds to support a distribution system. In many cases, information is not shared simply because the continually shifting roles of individuals and sub-sections coupled with a high staff turnover has led to a constant state of uncertainty as to who the information is supposed to be shared with.

The full support and involvement of the people of PNG right down to the village level is crucial for sustainable development. Yet, genuine involvement at this level is extraordinarily difficult to achieve given the country's limited human resources and the geographical challenges to its communication and transport infrastructure. This is the case whether the question is how to gain village level input into the national development strategy or how to fulfil national monitoring and reporting requirements. In short, the central government agencies all fully recognize the need for meaningful engagement with the provinces, but lack the capacity to carry it out effectively.

The lack of government resources creates a vacuum in terms of implementation, which has been, to a certain extent, taken up by the private sector (as in forestry management in some instances), the church (in education), NGOs (awareness raising and locally based activities), and many other stakeholders including international donors. The problem within this process, however, is that the government often fails to leverage these additional inputs in support of national sustainable development priorities. This is partly because there is no solid framework for continued, strategic and mutually beneficial cooperation between the government and these other actors.

*Funding and capacity development:* PNG is already the recipient of a large amount of international donor funds, but not enough of this funding has been directed toward sustainable domestic capacity development, particularly at the local level. A substantial amount of the development aid entering PNG is either "tied" or is driven by donor priorities. It is the responsibility of both the donors and PNG as the recipient to ensure that aid is strategically directed to the priority areas identified within the country's sustainable development plan. In this context it is imperative that the capacity development needs of the country are articulated clearly within all project funding proposals and within any project design, even if it is external in origin.



One of PNG's greatest resources are children like these – multilingual, optimistic and resilient to the country's various challenges.

### What the future holds

The constraints and barriers that hamper PNG's search for its own pathway to sustainable development are significant but not insurmountable. Many of the problems have their root at the senior political level and relate to a failure to protect the public service machinery from ongoing political instability, corruption and inconsistent leadership. This said, the field mission revealed a number of instances in which certain sectors of the public service were successfully being reformed. While these reforms effectively amounted to the corporatization of profitable public service sectors, this still represents an interesting experiment that could provide beneficial examples to the remainder of the public sector. The key challenge would be to replicate the efficiencies and innovation of a corporatized public body within a public sector that does not generate profit from the sale of resources but is instead service oriented.

At the same time, many of the constraints and barriers identified in PNG result from inefficient or ineffective procedures, and everyday information management practices. It is often the case that these inefficiencies can be remedied at the working level with the minimum of will required at the middle or upper management level. This is exactly the type of reform that the Inter-linkages Initiative focuses on and will be attempt to elaborate in the upcoming case study report.

Meaningful reform within the sustainable development governance structures of PNG would have the greatest chance of success if it were approached simultaneously from both the top and the bottom. To a large extent, what is required is inspired political leadership. What is no less important, however, is the talent and dedication of the new generation of young professionals that staff the relevant government offices and departments. In this regard, Papua New Guinea has a very bright future.

# Inter-linkages in Financing Sustainable Development<sup>1</sup>

By Jerry Velasquez, Jong Malabed and Jacob Park

To understand the important relationship between financing and international environmental institutions, it is necessary to understand the history behind the notion of creating a global framework to finance sustainable development activities. International deliberation on the issue of financial assistance to developing countries for global environmental protection can be traced back at least to the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment. Yet, it was not until the 1987 release of the World Commission on Environment and Development report (Brundtland report) that the issue of financing for sustainable development gained global policy prominence.

While the Brundtland report is most often remembered for its focus on framing sustainable development as “environmental protection geared towards the sustainability of development goals,” the report also emphasized the need for a “significant increase in financial support from international sources.” The Brundtland report initiated serious discussions about how funds might best be generated and channeled.

At the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, or Rio Earth Summit), one of the most contentious deliberations focused on finance. One particular aspect of this debate centred on whether industrialized countries should pay the costs of sustainable development, and MEA implementation, in developing countries (according to the “polluter pays principle”). The rationale behind the affirmative side of this debate is that the incorporation of environmental concerns into development efforts increases the costs of development in a way that developed nations did not experience. Also, developed countries continue to put more pressure on the global environment through their more extensive production and consumption.

During UNCED negotiations, developing countries demanded that any funding for sustainable development projects be in addition to, or on top of, existing official development assistance (ODA). Even as the UNCED process was still underway, difficulties were anticipated in regard to the raising of funds for sustainable development implementation. As a result, Chapter 33 of Agenda 21 suggests that UNCED should “identify ways and means of providing new and additional financial resources, particularly to developing countries, for environmentally sound development programmes and projects....”

The euphoria generated during the UNCED negotiations dissipated soon after the Summit ended and as decision makers tried to come to terms with the difficulties of resolving the \$300 billion price tag that had been put on the implementation of Agenda 21. Since that time, the challenge of financing sustainable development on the global level has only worsened. The policy context within which this challenge is being met has also become much more complicated since the Rio Earth Summit.

The institutional context of global environmental financing dramatically transformed in the 1990s. Total foreign aid from industrialized countries to the developing world increased steadily in the 1970s and 1980s, reaching a peak of US\$ 69 billion in 1991. Total aid flow declined by 33 per cent, however, in real (inflation-adjusted) terms between 1991 and 1998. ODA flow to developing countries

amounted to US\$ 53.7 billion in 2000 and US\$ 51.4 billion in 2001.<sup>2</sup>

A different trend can be observed in relation to private investment. Prior to 1990, private investment made up only about half of the total financial flows to the developing world. By 1998, in a complete reversal from the long-standing trend of the previous decades, private capital flows exceeded US\$ 220 billion and constituted almost 90 per cent of the total capital entering the developing world.<sup>3</sup> By the end of the 1990s, overall private capital flows have effectively replaced ODA as the primary source of external financing in many natural resource abundant and ecologically vulnerable countries in the developing world.<sup>4</sup>

There are two inter-related questions that are crucial to the goal of financing sustainability: (1) What financing resources are currently available, or potentially securable, to fund MEA implementation at the global, regional, and local levels? And, (2) are there currently any financing mechanisms or models available to implement projects in support of MEAs that take into consideration the problems and opportunities highlighted by the concept of inter-linkages?

## Inter-linkages issues in financing sustainability

Considering these questions, some of the most important points that have been identified by UNU research as having a potentially significant role in financing sustainable development in the future include:

On financial mechanisms, rapid changes have occurred in the global financial marketplace and, as a result, it is not possible to view sustainable development financing as an exclusively inter-governmental or public sector prerogative. Clearly, the burden of financing pro-poor sustainable development goals has to be shared across sectors and cannot be considered in isolation from other policy concerns. The challenge for national governments, and governance institutions at all levels in fact, is to provide the incentives necessary to ensure that these new funds are drawn into the pursuit of sustainable development.

To sustain an effective long-term development financing strategy, new measures will have to be adopted to influence the flow of private investments to a wider range of countries in a more environmentally beneficial direction. Ensuring environmentally responsible foreign direct investment contributes to stopping environmental degradation at its source and turns a traditional cause of degradation into part of the cure. Both developed and developing countries have a responsibility to ensure that foreign direct investment is regulated in a manner that supports MEA goals. Also, another way to maximize the benefits that host countries can derive from foreign direct investment is to promote strong linkages between foreign affiliates and domestically owned firms. These types of linkages often serve to strengthen capacity within domestic firms and improve competitiveness.

2 OECD (2001), *Foreign Direct Investment and Sustainable Development*, OECD Global Forum on International Investment: *New Horizons and Policy Challenges for Direct Investment in the 21st Century*, Mexico City, 26–27 November 2001.

3 French, Hillary (2000), *Vanishing Borders: Protecting the Planet in an Age of Globalization*, W.W. Norton: New York.

4 Della Senta, Tarcisio and Park, Jacob (1999), “Global threats and opportunities” in Palo M. and Uusivuori, J. (eds.), *World Forests, Society, and Environment* Kluwer: Dordrecht, London, and Boston.

1 This article is based on the policy brief of the same title released by the UNU in 2002.

As official development assistance levels continue to decline, it becomes even more important to clarify the purpose and uses of these funds. It is important, for example, to find an equitable way to distinguish between funding that supports the protection of global public goods and funding that is used to address immediate poverty alleviation concerns of the least developed and most heavily indebted countries. In this regard, there continues to be a need to establish a greater level of harmony between the goals and priorities of funders and the needs and priorities of recipients. Because of the loan content of ODA, there is also an urgent need to clarify the relationship between this form of assistance and high debt levels in the poorest countries.

Much potential exists in terms of the location and generation of new funding sources at the domestic level through such avenues as market-based instruments and debt-for-sustainable-development swaps. Market-based instruments represent a useful way to internalize environmental costs and modify behavioural patterns. Debt-for-sustainable-development swaps, while not the definitive solution, can also play a particularly constructive role in the sustainable development process. These and other sources of domestic funding need to be explored in much more detail.

Regional development banks, such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Asian Development Bank, are by their nature information collectors. These banks could work with countries to synthesize data and reporting and to provide capacity building in basic data collection and collation. The Asian Development Bank is already moving into this role to a certain extent.

Looking at environmental funds, certain examples, such as the GEF, have proved that these are much more than mere financial mechanisms, and are actually becoming, sometimes quite complex, environmental management institutions. According to the GEF, the environmental funds that have tended to do the best are the ones that have gone beyond their financial management role and become involved in building institutional capacity and private-public partnerships, developing flexible and non-bureaucratic management approaches, nurturing community groups involved in environmental management, and contributing to the articulation of environmental priorities and strategies. A particularly useful future role for organizations like the GEF may be the demonstration of effective sustainable development financing models, particularly in the developing world. GEF could usefully strengthen its leadership role in the promotion of locally initiated financing strategies and the replication of successful strategies. Perhaps the most significant challenge for GEF in the 21st century is the need to create an ecologically sustainable development strategy that takes into account

existing inter-linkages between environmental issues, and which explores more effective ways to coordinate policy responses. The three key goals that should shape this challenge are: engagement with the private sector, improvement in both social and environmental outcomes, and the identification of new and innovative financial resources.

There are other local level mechanisms, such as microfinance, that have also proved to be successful. These types of mechanisms face two profound challenges, however, if they are to become more sustainable and better able to serve as comprehensive and effective poverty alleviation and development tools. First, microfinance needs to move beyond its dependence on grants and its charity orientation and become self-sufficient and financially stable. A greater focus is also needed on the capacity side of assistance, that is, the provision of technical advice, management tools, and appropriate and timely information. Second, microfinance must be mainstreamed. This requires a more facilitative and supportive legislative environment to be put in place by national and local government agencies.

While most MEA-related projects have generally been conceived and implemented with a specific agreement in mind, many development and environmental projects end up meeting, at least partially, the objectives of various arrangements because of the natural linkages within various ecosystems. There is increasing awareness in the donor community that a single well-targeted action can bring about multiple benefits. This factor, coupled with the trend toward internally driven projects, could pave the way toward the more effective use of inter-linkages. Projects that are based on the needs of recipient countries as identified in consultation with multi-stakeholder groups, government agencies, and multilateral donor agencies, can represent an effective partnership in the identification of useful inter-linkages among MEAs.

All financing mechanisms must be made more aware of the potential benefits to be gained from greater coordination among the environmental challenges that they are being asked to address, based on the inter-linkages principles. They should also be made more aware of the potentially negative outcomes of not taking these linkages into account at the institutional level. This is not to suggest that these mechanisms be forced to centralize, however; coordination is only beneficial when it is driven by need.

Finally, at the core of the inter-linkages approach is the recognition that no effort at increasing coordination should hinder the capacity of financing mechanisms to remain flexible, adaptable, and able to respond to new scientific discoveries and changing global priorities. W

# An Issue Management Approach to Inter-linkages among Global Accords: The Case of the Montreal and Kyoto Protocols

By Jerry Velasquez, Jong Malabed, Rajendra Shende, Joanne Kauffman and Nazli Choucri

The UN Secretary-General's 1997 report, *Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform*, identified the concept of "issue management" as a useful means of addressing the needs for coordination of activities that require an integrated, systematic approach to issues under the responsibility of different UN governing bodies. The approach is also aimed at involving inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, and brings stakeholders together to address problems that have been identified and to jointly develop solutions.

The follow-up activities to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) provide an important opportunity and target for this work. They do not focus only on past performance, but also serve as an important venue for examining the need and potential for greater coordination during the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). The lessons learned from achieving coherence during the implementation of MEAs – specifically, through this case study of the conventions on ozone and climate change – should also be relevant to other areas covered by MEAs, such as biosafety and land degradation.

## The selected test case: two global conventions

It is generally appreciated that the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer of 1985 and its Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (MP) of 1987 have been a great source of inspiration throughout the negotiations on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) of 1992 and its Kyoto Protocol (KP) of 1997.

The Montreal Protocol is widely considered to be one of the most successful cases of international cooperation on environmental issues. In comparison to the mature regime that has been formed to address the problem of ozone depletion, international cooperation for the protection of the earth's climate is still at an early stage.

At first glance, a number of key linkages appear between the issues of stratospheric ozone depletion and global climate change. These connections have not yet been fully explored, nor are their implications widely understood, but the potential impacts of both issues at international and national levels are significant. Nonetheless, some common features have influenced these two sets of international responses to global challenges. The potential conflict between the MP and the KP in hydrofluorocarbon (HFC)-related policies opened the way to recognize and realize interconnections between the Protocols.

Current HFC emissions are small compared to other greenhouse gases (GHGs), but they are projected to be of concern in the future. As a reference, from 1990 to 1995 HFC emissions grew tenfold in Germany, by 72 per cent in Netherlands, 86 per cent in UK and 74 per cent in the United States.

Restrictive national regulations on the use of HFCs could delay the global phase-out of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) in both developed and developing countries, by creating uncertainties for businesses. The intention of businesses to use HFCs as alternatives when the phasing-out of HCFCs begins could be scuttled by the possible cancellation of investments by multilateral funding agencies, which could lead to the prolonged use of ozone-depleting substances

(ODSs), a consequence of which could be reduced product performance and increased energy use. The prolonged use of HCFCs also implies higher GHG emissions than an early phase-out.

In the case of perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and compound sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>), no alternatives exist for their use in semiconductor manufacturing and high-voltage electric power distribution. Restrictions on these substances under the KP could affect these industries in a negative way.

While the interconnections between the KP and the MP can be a cause for potential conflict, they can also be a vehicle for coordination and cooperation not only between the Protocols but also between environmental institutions.

## Inter-linkages beyond HFC policy conflicts

The MP and the KP are linked not only because of conflicting policies on HFCs but also due to reasons such as the fact that physical and chemical processes in the atmosphere link the problems of ozone depletion and global climate change. Ozone disturbances affect the climate, and climate changes affect the stratospheric ozone.

For example, ODSs are long-lived chemical compounds that contain either chlorine or bromine. They get into the stratosphere and, as they decompose, they release the bromine and the chlorine, which ultimately destroys the ozone layer. Many of the ODSs are also greenhouse gases, which can cool the stratosphere and thus help mend the ozone layer by slowing down the rate of some of the atmospheric chemical reactions outside of the polar regions. In the polar regions, the opposite occurs.

Responses to these issues of ozone depletion and climate change, which are systematically linked as described above, must replicate such linkages at the institutional level or else face conflicts and failures in policy design and implementation.

## Considerations for adaptive approaches and responses

Ozone and climate linkages involve certain problems and friction, which are symptoms of a larger problem: the international institutions concerned have been very fragmented in multiples areas over the last ten to fifteen years. This situation has resulted in a high cost to the international community. A step in the right direction would be to develop more institutional linkages – internationally and with people in areas other than environmental specialties, such as finance. There is a need to think holistically about many major issues at the same time.

The Multilateral Fund finances ozone national focal points, concerned with the ozone layer, not climate change. The Fund would likely oppose the use of its funds by NFPs for work relating to inter-linkages with climate change. Although many ozone coordinators are also involved in climate change and have expertise in both, institutionally, it would be difficult to have them officially working on climate change issues as well.

Funding for climate change focal points is more difficult to obtain. Financially linking efforts for ozone layer and climate protection would result in coordinated investments that are highly cost effective. Such efforts can encourage the shift to non-ODS



alternatives that also demonstrate good life-cycle climate performance (LCCP).

### Policy guidelines and recommendations

Adoption of the "issue management" approach is viewed as a practical method for promoting coordinated and cooperative management of environmental issues, and to improve the rationality and flexibility of existing systems, without requiring deep institutional changes. The framework for issue management is the concept of a task force made up of representatives from the UN, international and non-governmental organizations closest to the issues at hand. One organization is generally chosen to lead, and the rest provide substantive input and act in supportive roles.

In regard to the problem of the lack of fundamental capacity in dealing with an issue as serious as climate change, it is useful to consider the analogy of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and its successor, the World Trade Organization. With trade, involving very complex issues that have far-reaching impacts across society, it took half a century to get to the present institutional situation. Similarly, taking into account the seriousness of global environmental issues, it is essential to consider capacity building with a time horizon of decades.

In decision-making, one must strive to look at the totality of the effects of regulations, but such attempts greatly increase the complexity of consideration. Thus, issues must be labeled in order of priority, and sometimes compromises must be made, balancing short and long-term costs and benefits. In general, there is a need for other regulations related to the different issues (e.g., air pollution, the greenhouse effect, stratospheric ozone, etc.) to function independently. But as many have come to recognize the inter-linkages of these issues in terms of their effects, it has become clear that more cooperation should parallel this independent functioning. This means that it is necessary to screen gases that affect more than one environmental issue even more vigorously. The principle that should be employed is that pollution of one type should not be used to solve the pollution of another type.

Concerns have been expressed that the financing of the Multilateral Fund and long-term investments by industry into HFCs have already so thoroughly "steered the ship" in certain directions that options for technological alternatives that would also satisfy the KP are no longer available. There is a need for intelligent and serious

analysis, not only by industry, but also by the responsible governments.

Developing countries cannot be involved effectively unless they are provided technological choices. Conversely, public opinion in developed countries regarding actions to solve global environmental problems cannot be swayed unless solutions become economically feasible. If the United States were to put a \$4 per ton tax on carbon, it would barely be noticed by consumers, as it would amount to one cent per gallon of gas. This would raise \$5.6 billion and allow more than a tripling of investment in research and development for clean energy.

One difficulty is that both the ozone issue and the climate issue are often being treated as classic pollution problems, when in fact they are issues relating to development for both developing and industrialized countries. If one turns the KP around, from a set of restrictions defining what can and cannot be done, to a description of the kinds of issues that need to be addressed for sustainable development, it becomes a blueprint for sustainable development. This includes aspects such as technology choices, lifestyle choices and poverty alleviation.

Using the concept of issue management, based on the goal of sustainable development rather than separate pollution prevention treaties, might be a useful way to identify the linkages and potential conflicts between these treaties and other treaties and organizations.

Universities should be utilized as platforms for dialogue, by organizing the dialogue of different stakeholders. The institutional design of universities insures cohesion but also diversity. This platform strategy at universities is far more fertile than it could be in the general international arena.

### Moving forward

The potential for learning from the Montreal Protocol is an important opportunity that should not be missed, given the overall thrust of the WSSD. While the treaties and the treaty processes have made some progress towards managing linkages, attempts to actively create synergies between both regimes have received less attention. The case of the fluorinated GHGs points to an important opportunity, namely, to address the need for, and modes of, closer cooperation.

The international community as a whole, and the WSSD process in particular, will be well served if these matters are addressed in impartial, intellectually robust, and pragmatic ways. W

# Compliance and the Role of the Judiciary in Promoting Sustainable Development

By Lal Kurukulasuriya and Jerry Velasquez

Ten years after the Rio Summit, it is evident that the implementation of Agenda 21 is still to meet expectations. Therefore, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) focused much more on implementation, including informal partnerships (Type II partnerships) as one of the main vehicles for promoting practical, implementable actions for realizing the goals of Agenda 21.

Yet, for implementation to succeed we still need to identify what actions need to be taken at the global level, and what actions are necessary within the national or local domain in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. This need highlights the importance of compliance and enforcement as one end of the environmental governance structure that, up to now, has received insufficient attention.

## Compliance and enforcement

Compliance with, and enforcement of, international and national environmental law is widely recognized as one of the principal challenges facing nations in the pursuit of sustainable development. During the past two decades, many countries have enacted environmental legislation (from the protection of public health against environmental pollution, to the restoration and protection of the quality of the natural environment) and become parties to a large number of global and regional environmental conventions, agreements and protocols.

These instruments are essential foundations of human health and environmental protection. But they are not ends in themselves. A more critical aspect is the enforcement of the instruments, and this is where the role of the judiciary comes in. The judiciary is a crucial partner in promoting compliance with, and enforcement of, international and national environmental law. The role of the judiciary is critical since compliance does not happen automatically once legal instruments are set into force, but instead requires encouragement, institutional adaptation and change in human behaviour.

Strictly speaking, compliance occurs when environmental requirements are met or fully implemented, and favoured changes in behaviour are achieved. Although some experts argue that the design of requirements is critical to the success of any sustainable development programme, other experts argue that obligation design alone is not enough to ensure proper compliance. They instead argue that the proper enforcement and interpretation of these instruments by the judiciary is also a critical requirement for success. Enforcement can be defined as a set of actions taken to achieve compliance within a regulated community and to correct or halt situations that endanger the environment or public health. Enforcement usually includes inspections and monitoring, negotiations, and legal action (where necessary), and may also include compliance promotion.

Therefore, the link between the judiciary and the promotion of enforcement mechanisms is vital. In some countries, societal norms have been a powerful force compelling compliance with any form of legal requirement. A system that relies on social norms for enforcement may not be effective in every situation and may become vulnerable to abuse if these norms break down over time. This possibility has stimulated new international debate on the need for

specific enforcement programmes within government and non-governmental organizations.

The usual factors that affect compliance include deterrence, economics, institutional credibility and accountability, knowledge and technical feasibility, and social and psychological factors. These aspects place the burden for compliance on the regulated parties. However, another set of factors that affect compliance are those that regulate the environmental management rules. These aspects, which are partly related to the role of the judiciary, are central in environmental governance both at the national and international levels.

Many of these aspects were discussed at length by over 120 senior judges, among them 32 chief justices, from around the world at the Global Judges Symposium on the Role of Law and Sustainable Development convened in Johannesburg on 18–20 August 2002 by UNEP together with the UNU and other partners, as a parallel event to the WSSD. The symposium adopted the Johannesburg Principles on the Role of Law and Sustainable Development, which set out both a set of principles for the greater involvement of the judiciary in the pursuit of sustainable development, and a strategy for operationalizing these principles.

## The role of the judiciary in environmental governance

“The keys to good governance, as articulated by the United Nations Development Programme, are rule of law, participation, and accountability and transparency.”<sup>1</sup> The role of the judicial branch of government is critical in ensuring the implementation of the principles of both the rule of law and accountability. Firstly, the functioning of a society according to the rule of law is based on the judiciary. Secondly, the judiciary ensures the accountability of other institutions of government and individuals.

In the case of environmental governance, the judiciary also has the difficult role of considering not only environmental instruments, but economic, developmental and political as well as social instruments. The compliance and enforcement of sustainable development instruments also serves in the promotion of synergies or inter-linkages among multiple issues, also known as the inter-linkages approach. This is because compliance and enforcement requires cooperation and coherence in policies across multiple departments and branches of government. For example, as mentioned in the ASEAN case study, Indonesia, with its many islands, and with so many of its species listed in the CITES convention appendices, has problems in controlling wildlife trafficking. Although support from agencies like the customs and quarantine division has been invaluable in this area, the lack of any formal mechanisms for proper coordination is causing problems with enforcement.

In considering the role of the judiciary in environmental governance, there are two issues that need to be considered. The first is the role of the judiciary in the interpretation of environmental law and in law making.<sup>2</sup> The second is the capability of jurists to effectively interpret the increasingly cross-linked issues brought to their

1 “Judiciaries in the Arab World”, <http://www.pogar.org/themes/judiciary/>

attention. For the judiciary, probably the burden of implementation is greater, as they must not only interpret laws that incorporate the Rio Principles of sustainable development, including the polluter pays principle, the precautionary principle, and the principle of continuous mandamus in the corpus of international and national law; inter- and intra-generational equity; importance of traditional values and ideas; interpretation of constitutional rights including the right to life and the right to a healthy environment, etc., but also have to weigh these against economic and political principles.

On environmental law interpretation and law making, although most people would argue that judges are there merely to interpret legislation and not to make laws, several distinguished jurists have pointed out that the judiciary also contributes to de facto “law making” through precedents.

On the capability of jurists, several issues need attention, but one possible solution is the enhancement of their awareness and knowledge of global and regional environmental issues viewed from a wider context of sustainable development. In the Johannesburg Principles, the global judiciary expressly recognized this fact and called on UNEP, UNU and other organizations within and outside the United Nations to actively support a major capacity building programme for judges, prosecutors, enforcement officers and representatives of civil society organizations that are engaged in safeguarding the environmental rights of citizens.

### The way forward

The way forward to promoting the effective use of environmental laws as an instrument for translating sustainable development policies into action will require the balancing of environmental and

<sup>2</sup> David A. Levy, *Strengthening the Legislature and Judiciary for Improving Governance in Africa: A Case for the Rule of Law and Economic Development*, <http://www.ili.org/pubafrika.html>

developmental considerations in judicial decision-making. This calls for an impetus to the incorporation of contemporary progresses in the field of environmental law for promoting sustainable development, including access to justice, right to information and public participation, fostering judicial dialogue and exchange of experiences in the field of environmental law in various regions with sensitivity to the cultures and traditions of the respective regions. It is also necessary to promote discussion on possible conceptual and procedural advances, which will facilitate the development and application of environmental law jurisprudence by the courts and promote compliance with, and enforcement of, environmental law. This will also help to establish a network among the judiciaries, the legal professions and law faculties at universities to share information and data on environmental law. Starting on regional levels could be a first step and also facilitate a focus on region specific issues.

Underpinning these international and national efforts to develop a new juridical regime more responsive to the needs of our time is the role of the courts of law at both international and national levels, which should be seen as an integral part of this process. Several recent judgements have demonstrated the sensitivity of the courts to promoting the rule of law in the pursuit of sustainable development. Recognizing this fact, UNEP has so far organized and convened four regional and one global symposiums on the judiciary’s role in promoting sustainable development. The UNU has actively participated in two of these meetings.

If we are to promote the further implementation of *Agenda 21*, we need to understand the realities that we face, the complexities of the problems and the solutions that we propose, and determine the appropriate level where these solutions could be implemented. We believe that this can be achieved if we look at the increasingly important role of the judiciary in realizing the effective compliance with and enforcement of sustainable development instruments. W

## SPREP’s Perspectives on Inter-linkages among MEAs in the South Pacific

By Jacques Mougeot

The South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) was established in 1982 within the framework of the Regional Seas Programme of UNEP. In 1993, it became an autonomous intergovernmental organization to ensure sustainable development in the Pacific region through its main programme areas of nature conservation, pollution prevention, climate change and variability, and economic development. Its members comprise twenty-five states and territories of which four are developed countries.

SPREP is also the secretariat for the following regional conventions:

- 1) The Convention on Conservation of Nature in the South Pacific Region (Apia Convention),
- 2) The Convention for the Protection of Natural Resources and

Environment of the South Pacific Region (Noumea Convention) and its related protocols, and

- 3) The Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region (Waigani Convention).

SPREP also identifies concerns arising at the global level. Such an approach calls for the need to amend the regional conventions to address global issues of relevance for the region. Synergies become a cornerstone for stronger regional frameworks, ensuring that the specific requests and needs of the Pacific region form part of global environmental initiatives. The UNU’s Inter-linkages Initiative therefore provides a promising approach for the implementation of

global instruments. The region cannot afford to be let aside as global environmental initiatives are also keys for regional and national sustainable development.

In response to growing problems of pollution, storage, transport and disposal of hazardous wastes and toxic chemicals in the South Pacific region, SPREP increasingly collaborates with the Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. Their complementarities in preventing and reducing the impact of toxic chemicals and hazardous wastes at national, regional and global scales are well understood and recognized by Pacific island countries. Well combined, these conventions allow for measures such as the control of production, registration, application, labeling, packaging, marketing, transportation, storage and disposal of hazardous substances. However, recognizing the necessity of an inclusive approach does not automatically lead to joint and improved implementation.

In the Pacific region, the Waigani Convention<sup>1</sup> is becoming a strong synergetic tool for the coordination and implementation of activities under the above-mentioned conventions. The SPREP project on persistent organic pollutants in the Pacific island countries (PICs), for example, includes activities for the identification, removal and disposal of stockpiles of hazardous chemicals and chemically contaminated sites, the review of existing waste management facilities, assessment of legislation, and training and awareness raising. The project brings together countries of the region and relevant secretariats which unanimously support the synergistic approach.

The approach also facilitates SPREP's responses to requests for assistance with negotiation, ratification and implementation of MEAs from PICs. One of the main burdens imposed on parties to conventions is the reporting obligation: As the Waigani parties endorsed the form developed under the Basel convention to meet the reporting obligations under both conventions, this burden is eased.

Other issues are also addressed in a comprehensive approach, such as the lack of human resources and inadequate, fragmented, or sometimes lacking legislative and institutional frameworks to properly manage hazardous chemicals and wastes. Although many PICs are still lacking the resources and capacities to manage MEAs, it is important to become equal partners in these global processes. Given the small size of most of the island states, comparatively small amounts of wastes can already pose a significant threat to their environments. Therefore, the development of inclusive chemical and hazardous waste management legislation is crucial not only for the countries themselves, but also for the global community. In addressing this need, SPREP will adopt a clustering approach to facilitate the ratification and implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Waigani Conventions. Focus has to be put on a combined approach of these conventions to address, among others, international trade in toxic chemicals, transport of hazardous and radioactive waste, reduction and potential elimination of use and production of persistent organic pollutants, remediation of stockpiles,

identification of contaminated sites, avoidance of the introduction of new hazardous chemicals, etc. These are some of the key issues that were covered in the PICs studies on inter-linkages, also portrayed in this newsletter.

As an understanding of the content of conventions is paramount to facilitate implementation and compliance, SPREP in its collaborative efforts with UNU has developed a Waigani Handbook focusing on inter-linkages. It explains, in a user-friendly manner, the obligations under the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and their interrelationship with the Waigani Convention, including the identification of common management requirements for national implementation. An online version is under development and the production of CD-ROMs for those without Internet access is in preparation, to make the Waigani Handbook as widely available as possible in the South Pacific region.

The need to strengthen the collaboration between the Basel Convention secretariat and SPREP will soon lead to the establishment of a regional centre for the joint implementation of both conventions, endorsed in principle at the regional Environment Minister's Forum in July 2002. The main goal of the centre will be to strengthen governmental capacities in the South Pacific region to comply with the technical requirements of the management of hazardous wastes as well as with legal and institutional aspects of the implementation of the two conventions. Once established, the center carries the potential to also cover the regional implementation of the Stockholm and Rotterdam conventions. This synergistic approach will be particularly beneficial by preventing the duplication of efforts through strengthening regional cooperation, such as consultation prior to negotiations, exchange of information, data and documents, joint use of tools, programme development and implementation of multiparty activities, e.g., training workshops. This will not only lead to increased capacities in single countries, but to strengthening regional cooperation and also to reduced costs through sharing.

Another collaborative programme, by SPREP with the UNU and UNEP and other partners, is capacity and awareness building for the judiciary to promote better compliance to MEAs and other sustainable development issues. For more details, see the related article in this newsletter.

## Moving forward

The work on inter-linkages reaches beyond the assessment of existing national institutions and governance systems; it is also an instrument to identify and to act on advantages and challenges within the South Pacific countries. The PICs case studies in particular propose a number of valid recommendations for action at minimal costs through better coordination and sharing of skills at the national and regional levels to improve the involvement of the PICs in MEA processes.

The collaboration between the UNU and SPREP with the full support of South Pacific countries has been an opportunity to assess much-needed information for necessary action to be undertaken to allow for better participation of Pacific island countries in the improvement of environmental frameworks, including international law, as a prerequisite for better compliance.

<sup>1</sup> The Convention was opened for signature and ratification on 16 September 1995 and entered into force on 21 October 2001. Parties to the Waigani Convention are, until today: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu.

# UNEP's Role in Promoting Coordination among the Multilateral Environmental Agreements

By Vijay Samnotra

Coordination implies the arrangement of the nature and timing of activities by the organizers in such a way that individual efforts blend into a harmonious stream of productive action. Coordination connotes a collective interaction among organizations representing complementary resources while focusing on a common but complex issue. Coordination is not an easy process either to establish or to manage and requires flexibility. Coordination amongst organizations cannot be managed either like an organization or a programme. The main challenge – and this is truly a monumental task – is that of developing trust and ensuring communications among partners about the mutuality of shared objectives and benefits for all stakeholders.

This vision of partnership is in line with the definition contained in the UNEP paper entitled “Proposal for a Systematic Approach to Coordination of Multilateral Environmental Agreements”<sup>1</sup> submitted to the Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or Their Representatives on International Environmental Governance. According to this vision, “*coordination is a process rather than a one-time event. (It) ... calls for bringing together all the major actors to discuss, debate and agree on the components that will support the harmonized and coordinated implementation of the conventions at the national level. The centerpiece of the coordination process will be the implementation of the conventions at the national level.*”

The rationale for enhanced coordination among MEAs is apparent: efficient use of collective resources – information sharing, financial and expertise; reduction of duplication and overlaps; emphasis on programme and policy coherence; and averting fragmented sectoral initiatives. At the national level which is the focus of implementation of MEA activities, the concerns are for reduction of governments' burden of reporting under different MEAs; assisting governments in establishing priorities, implementing MEAs through policies, administrative and legal tools, and allocating resources in an era of shrinking budgets; and supporting governments in coordinating preparations/monitoring to reinforce decisions taken under various MEAs and intergovernmental processes. The case for enhanced collaboration is also strengthened by the requirements for coherent global and regional environmental management in face of an expanding global trade regime.

The convergence of various developments, including chapter 38 of Agenda 21, decisions of UNEP's Governing Council (17/25, 18/9, 19/9c, 20/18B, 21/21, 21/23), the recommendations of the United Nations Task Force on the Environment and Human Settlements, the United Nations Secretary-General's report to the Millennium Assembly, the Nairobi and Malmö Declarations, the meetings on coordination of environmental conventions (convened under the aegis of UNEP), and the current debate on international environmental governance, have driven the calls for enhanced coordination/collaboration among MEAs and IGOs to improve the impact of their actions. Also of considerable importance in this regard are decisions VII/I of the Seventh Special Session of UNEP's Governing Council at Cartagena<sup>2</sup> which endorsed the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Group of Ministers to the

Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. This includes the recommendation on “improved coordination among and effectiveness of multilateral environmental agreements.” The World Summit on Sustainable Development at Johannesburg also endorsed this decision in its Plan of Implementation. The WSSD Plan of Implementation makes numerous references to the need to build synergies and linkages between the MEAs.

The United Nations, its specialized agencies and the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements are already active in a number of initiatives to enhance their coordination in a number of areas. These range from the ongoing meetings of the MEA convention secretariats under the aegis of UNEP, the ongoing initiatives in harmonizing national reporting, and the implementation of joint work programmes under MOUs signed between different convention secretariats covering cross-cutting issues, among others.

Yet the implementation of the coordination initiatives has been piecemeal rather than the result of a deliberate, overarching strategic choice. A strategic vision for collaboration and coordination amongst MEAs has to take into account not only the lessons learned but also marshal limited resources – human and financial – to leverage change.

## Suggested international environmental governance actions

In its submissions to the International Environmental Governance process, UNEP had flagged some modest, incremental steps that could be taken to systematize MEA coordination as part of the overall effort to improve international environmental governance. The actions proposed for implementation were as follows:

### Coordination at the policy-making level through regular meetings of the Bureaux of the Conference of Parties

It was recommended that the Bureaux of the Conference of the Parties of the MEAs meet regularly (preferably once a year) to consider in an integrated manner the priorities of their programmes of work and linkages with other MEAs and IGO processes. Agenda for these meetings could encompass objectives such as:

- Promotion of cooperation and complementarity at the policy level;
- Joint efforts in responding to basic human needs such as poverty alleviation, food security, access to clean water and energy demands, among others;
- Building synergies at the programmatic, scientific and technical levels;
- Avoiding potential inconsistencies among decisions adopted by the COPs of the MEAs.

As appropriate, these meetings could be organized at the global level or at the thematic cluster level (for example, the biodiversity related conventions, and the chemicals and hazardous wastes conventions).

1 <http://www1.unep.org/meas/4thconsuloniegd06.doc>

2 [http://www.unep.org/governingbodies/gc/specialsessions/gcss\\_vii/](http://www.unep.org/governingbodies/gc/specialsessions/gcss_vii/)

**Coordination at the scientific and technical level through regular meetings of the subsidiary bodies on scientific and technical aspects (SBSTAs) of the MEAs and collaboration among assessment bodies**

Thus far, scientific and technical assessments are organized to support particular agreements and negotiations. A more coordinated approach could lead to a more effective system of assessments. An annual meeting of the SBSTAs of the MEAs including the STAP of GEF could help in aiding this process of coordination. One suggestion was to convene periodic meetings of the chairs of assessment panels of different conventions and protocols to maximize the benefits of limited human and financial resources available for their functioning and operation.

**Establishment of the Interagency Coordination Group for Supporting the Implementation of Environmental Conventions and Agreements**

There are six United Nations organizations – UNEP, IMO, ILO, FAO, IAEA and the UN General Secretariat – involved with the implementation of programmes and policies that support or influence major global and regional environmental agreements and conventions of relevance to the environment. To bring more coherence and cooperation among the 140 major conventions relevant to the environment, including regional agreements of global relevance, such as the 17 regional seas conventions and action plans and the 30 regional fisheries bodies, consideration should be given to the establishment of the Interagency Coordination Group for Supporting the Implementation of Environmental Conventions and Agreements.

The benefits of interagency coordination are:

- Avoiding duplication of effort.
- Identifying gaps in research.
- Identifying opportunities for collaboration.
- Developing mechanisms for collaboration.
- Promoting synergy through combined resources.
- Sharing information and activities and research findings in order to build a more systematic and cohesive effort.
- Providing an identifiable entity that can disperse information to the policy makers about UN-wide activities.

**Coordination at the national level through the establishment of National Coordination Committees**

An integrated national perspective provides a sound basis for coordination among the MEAs. The benefit of establishing national coordination committees is that they will be a policy-making structure which deals with the strategic planning, implementation and legislative requirements for successful implementation of the instruments and other related activities. Other benefits of a national coordination committee will include engaging a wider group of experts, policy makers and stakeholders than would be possible at the global level and identifying where joint initiatives would be beneficial and cost-effective, for example, in information resources management or capacity building.

**Harmonization of information systems and information exchanges and information access**

Benefits of harmonization of reporting will accrue to all stakeholders, including national governments, MEA secretariats and governance bodies. At the national level, governments will be encouraged to identify a consolidated list of obligations in a cross-sectoral manner, identify national priorities on implementation of MEAs in a holistic manner, improve awareness of national obligations and compliance of MEAs within governments at all levels, identify gaps in national legislation and policies and improve ability to implement country-driven actions in support of treaty commitments.

Harmonization of reporting will also benefit MEA secretariats. It will enable them to encourage and support governments in the implementation of their own national priorities, preparation of global, regional and thematic analyses to help the COPs to assess achievement of treaty objectives and setting future priorities, improve integrated analysis capacity, improve ability to coordinate interagency programmes of work through sharing of information and experience, and improve linkages with international environmental monitoring agencies, major data custodians and regional treaties.

**Compliance and enforcement**

There is a need to focus the attention of the MEAs in a coordinated manner on the advancement and enhancement of the implementation of agreed international norms and policies as well as to foster compliance with environmental principles and international agreements. Proposed areas of coordinated action between the MEAs include:

- Joint promotion and strengthening of regular exchange of information, training and public awareness programmes to support compliance with MEAs.
- Undertaking joint research initiatives to assess and determine the extent, size, magnitude and nature of legal and illegal trade.
- Joint development of guidelines for cooperation at national, regional and global levels on compliance and enforcement of MEAs.
- Coordinated action to support parties to the environmental conventions to develop and/or strengthen national laws and regulations to enhance enforcement and compliance with MEAs.
- Establishment of enforcement focal points for better coordination at the global, national and regional levels.

**Capacity building**

Capacity building for the implementation of MEAs places an imperative on a coordinated approach which crosses administrative and sectoral boundaries, involving the major stake-holders. A coordinated approach to capacity building will involve the following objectives:

- To design joint country-driven multi-stakeholder programmes in capacity development;
- To encourage greater adaptability to local conditions through delegation and decentralization;
- To allow for longer and more flexible time horizons to accommodate a process approach;
- To enhance internal capacity through training and broadening skills in subjects related to capacity development – from mediation to

environmental economics;

- To devise new indicators for capacity development and develop new tools for building capacities.

Implementing systematic coordination of the MEAs requires rational assessment, strategic planning, analysis and consensus building. The papers presented and discussed with the MEA secretariats during the International Environmental Governance process could be perceived as a step in the change process. W

## The Joint Liaison Group between the Rio Conventions: An Initiative to Encourage Cooperation, Coordination and Synergies

By Hanna Hoffmann<sup>1</sup>

The need for improved coordination among the Rio Conventions – the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) – has been recognized and noted in the conclusions and decisions of the governing bodies to these conventions.<sup>2</sup>

In practice, the implementation of the conventions requires actions at the national level which are often the responsibility of a specific institution (for example, the ministry of the environment) and a national focal point. Given that the responsibility for each convention does not necessarily fall to the same institution and focal point of a country, coordination and collaboration are needed at the national level.

Moreover, the roles and responsibilities of the secretariats vary. The UNCCD secretariat has a mandate for scientific and in-country related work; the UNFCCC and CBD secretariats aim to facilitate the convention process, leaving essentially the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to support capacity-building initiatives in countries. In the context of the UNFCCC, scientific questions are dealt with mainly by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), an independent body that cooperates closely with the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), whereas UNCCD relies on the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) and its ad hoc panels, and the CBD on its Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and related ad hoc technical expert groups to assess the relevant scientific literature and to provide advice.

Areas of potential cooperation may include activities at the international level (such as sharing and dissemination of information, harmonization of guidelines for reporting, and outreach) and at the

national level (such as policy integration, cooperation between national focal points, ministries and agencies, coordination of national strategies and action plans, and sharing of data and information systems). Activities by the conventions may conflict if different mandates and measures do not take into account the objectives of other conventions.

### The Joint Liaison Group between the UNFCCC, the UNCCD and the CBD

A Joint Liaison Group (JLG) was established in August 2001, comprising the officers of the subsidiary bodies, the executive secretaries of the three conventions and members of the secretariats. Its purpose is to improve the exchange of information, to explore opportunities for synergistic activities and to increase coordination among the three conventions and their secretariats, for the benefit of their respective Parties.

Activities of the JLG include exchanging information on recent developments in the convention processes, the identification and exchange of experts, the establishment of a joint calendar of events relevant to the three conventions, the secondment of secretariat staff among the conventions and a joint exhibit during the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

In addition, the UNFCCC secretariat, in cooperation with other members of the JLG and based on documentation from international organizations such as the IPCC, prepared a scoping paper to identify cross-cutting thematic areas and activities under the three conventions. The purpose of the paper was to assist Parties in understanding the activities underway in each convention process and to consider possible future activities.

Hereafter, some activities are described under six selected thematic areas: technology development and transfer; education and outreach; research and systematic observation; capacity building; reporting; and impacts and adaptation.<sup>3</sup>

*Technology development and transfer* includes developing and transferring the knowledge/expertise, technologies and financial support needed to pursue and implement the objectives of the conventions. Activities common to all three conventions are the

<sup>1</sup> This article contains personal views of the author, which should not be considered as views of the UNFCCC secretariat or of the Parties.

<sup>2</sup> Collaboration is specifically mentioned in Articles 7.2 (l) and 8.2 (e) of the UNFCCC, Articles 5 and 24 (d) of the CBD and Articles 8.1 and 23 (d) of the UNCCD, which provide that Parties shall encourage the coordination of activities with other relevant international bodies. When collaborating, the different mandates and processes of each convention should be kept in mind. This is recognized by Article 22 of the CBD and Article 8.2 of the UNCCD, which provide that the provisions of each convention shall not affect the rights and obligations of any contracting Party deriving from other international agreements.

<sup>3</sup> More information on specific activities of the three conventions, corresponding articles and an example to illustrate linkages between the conventions can be found in the scoping paper (see FCCC/SBSTA/2002/INF.16).

dissemination of information, assessment of needs, provision of methodologies and transfer of environmentally sound technologies.

*Education and outreach* covers the provision of information and training to stakeholders, and developing the means to actively involve them in the convention processes. Activities common to all three conventions relate to facilitating access to information, development, management and monitoring of information products and systems, sharing information on good practices and lessons learned, development of strategies to raise awareness, training, and outreach to constituencies and international organizations.

*Research and systematic observation* refers to the synthesis of scientific information relating to the conventions. Activities common to all three conventions include the elaboration and identification of indicators, scientific assessments, development of methodologies, analysis of data sets, and monitoring of processes and systems.

*Capacity building* means building and enhancing the capacity of institutions, groups and individuals involved in the convention processes. Activities common to all three conventions relate to strengthening the capacities of countries with specific needs (least developed countries, small island developing states), improving capacities of institutions, training specific groups such as negotiators, and strengthening the capacities of farmers and indigenous and local communities.

*Reporting* activities common to the three conventions include exchanging and assessing information on the implementation of the conventions at the national level, data collection, storage and analysis, preparation of reporting guidelines, and development of national communications and profiles.

Finally, all three conventions try to assess *impacts* on the environment and options for adaptation. Activities common to all three conventions relate to predicting and monitoring impacts, and developing assessments and response measures, for example, methodologies, early warning systems and adaptation strategies.

### Recent developments in the UNFCCC process

The eighth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 8) and the seventeenth sessions of the subsidiary bodies (SB 17) to the UNFCCC took place in New Delhi, India, from 23 October to 1 November 2002 and adopted decisions and conclusions<sup>4</sup> of direct relevance to the work of the UNCCD and CBD.

Under the agenda item of cooperation with relevant international organizations, the COP of the UNFCCC adopted a decision which requests its SBSTA to continue and enhance cooperation with the CST of the UNCCD and the SBSTTA of the CBD. The COP supported the mandate of the JLG and urged it to continue its efforts to enhance coordination between the three conventions and their secretariats. Under the same topic, the SBSTA emphasized the need to strengthen coordination among national focal points.<sup>5</sup> The SBSTA

<sup>4</sup> All decisions and conclusions emanating from COP 8 and SB 17 are currently being compiled in the reports of the sessions and should be available soon on the UNFCCC web site (<http://unfccc.int>).

<sup>5</sup> During the period 2001–2002, UNCCD organized national workshops on synergies between the conventions. This country-driven exercise brought together stakeholders involved in the respective conventions and has, so far, mostly emphasized the need for capacity building. Experiences and lessons learned will be assessed once a critical mass of workshops has been completed.

requested the UNFCCC secretariat to organize a workshop, in cooperation with the UNCCD and the CBD, to increase the exchange of information in areas such as technology transfer, education and outreach, research and systematic observation, capacity building, reporting, and impacts and adaptation.

### The way forward

In theory, cooperation between the Rio Conventions appears to be a logical and meaningful undertaking and should be easy to accomplish. In reality, the different mandates, functions and implementation approaches of the three conventions create considerable challenges at both the national and international levels. These challenges are now being addressed, but much needs to be done to improve understanding among the conventions. As the JLG has been established to improve the exchange of information, to explore opportunities for synergistic activities and to increase coordination between the three conventions, it is well positioned to address these challenges. Practical steps by the three conventions are needed to move along this path and to ensure the efficient implementation of the UNFCCC, the UNCCD and the CBD.

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- UNFCCC – Report of the SBSTA on its 17th session, held at New Delhi, from 23 to 29 October 2002, FCCC/SBSTA/2002/13, to be

published soon

For upcoming events and sessions see the joint calendar at the web sites of the UNFCCC (<http://unfccc.int>), UNCCD (<http://www.unccd.int>) and CBD (<http://www.biodiv.org>). W

## A Preliminary Analysis of the Inter-linkages within WSSD “Type II” Partnerships

By Uli Piest

The World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (WSSD) generated a set of three outcomes: 1) a political declaration called the “Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development”; 2) the “Johannesburg Plan of Implementation” mainly focusing on already existing targets, e.g., the Millennium Declaration Goals; and 3) non-negotiated partnership commitments, named Type II Partnerships. These non-negotiated “Type II” partnerships between governments, intergovernmental agencies and civil society actors were deemed necessary to complement the negotiated “Type I” commitments between governments in order to ensure that Agenda 21 goals are translated into actual implementation.

Although these Type II Partnerships were heralded as one of the main outcomes of the WSSD, the partnership debate started even well before the 1992 Rio Summit. However, the WSSD has innovated in its consideration of partnerships by bringing it to the forefront of the agenda of all stakeholders. But one important characteristic of these initiatives – their informality – also serves as one of their core weaknesses. For example, criticisms have been raised due to the lack of clear definitions for initiatives to qualify as WSSD Type II Partnerships. These include issues such as targets, timetables, coordination and implementation mechanisms, arrangements for predictable funding and technology transfer, as well as procedures for monitoring and evaluation, compliance and how these fit within the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), which has been mandated with the follow-up of the WSSD Plan of Implementation.<sup>1</sup>

The WSSD describes Type II outcomes to “consist of a series of commitments and action-oriented coalitions focused on deliverables and (...) contribute in translating political commitments into action. (...) Only those partnerships and initiatives that are new and are developed specifically in the context of the WSSD and its goals will feature at the official partnership events during the Summit.”<sup>2</sup> This initial restriction to new initiatives was later opened to either new or ongoing partnerships that demonstrate added value in the Summit context.

Existing outside the realms of traditional programming of

multilaterally based agreements, these partnerships present both new challenges and new opportunities in the ways that we deal with sustainable development implementation. For example, it will be critical to determine whether these proposed partnerships qualify as new strategies and activities or if they are merely “repackaged” projects and initiatives. First proposed by the US in one of the preparatory processes, critics also note that Type II Partnerships might be used especially by developed countries as a vehicle to avoid any firm commitments or deadlines to fund global sustainable development efforts and instead move into voluntary processes that lack rules for responsibilities and accountability.<sup>3</sup> Experts are also concerned that misplaced emphasis on these “Type II” outcomes threatens to mask the failure of governments to agree on meaningful action and may result in the “privatization of sustainable development.”<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, the concept also provides important opportunities to acknowledge the specific conditions and needs at regional and national levels, requiring specific measures, the need for multi-stakeholder partnerships, and stakeholders’ roles and responsibilities in sustainable development.<sup>5</sup> It is also interesting to determine if these partnerships actually promote new ways of improving implementation such as the promotion of cross-sectoral or function-centric approaches, which is also one of the themes encouraged by the UNU Inter-linkages Initiative.

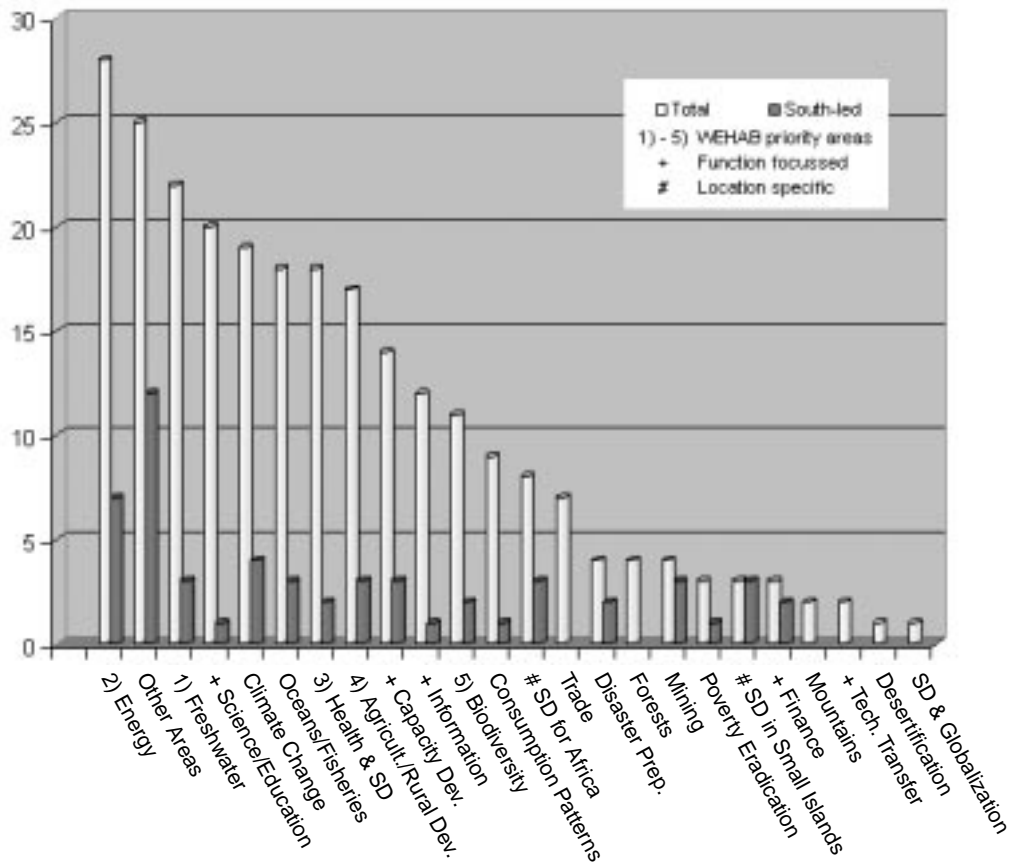
### Quantitative description of Type II Partnerships

As of mid-December, a total number of 246 partnerships were registered with the CSD,<sup>6</sup> clustered along sectors and means of implementation with cross-referencing links, corresponding to other areas of involvement; the figure illustrates the distribution of these partnerships by main themes. The data shows that the key areas identified by the Secretary-General in his report to the WSSD

- 3 WSSD Turned Into Partnership Market, [http://www.cseindia.org/html/eyou/geg/press\\_20020831\\_1.htm](http://www.cseindia.org/html/eyou/geg/press_20020831_1.htm) 4 Critical considerations about Type II partnerships: [http://www.rio10.dk/index.php?a=show&doc\\_id=1040](http://www.rio10.dk/index.php?a=show&doc_id=1040), <http://www.worldsummit2002.org/guide/wssdoutcome.htm>, <http://www.earthsummit2002.org/ic/process/summit.htm> or <http://www.worldsummit2002.org/texts/RIIATypeIIOutcomeDiscussion.pdf>
- 5 Comments on the proposed framework of outcomes documents for Earth Summit 2002, [http://www.iisd.ca/wssd/download%20files/Comments\\_Outcome\\_Framework.doc](http://www.iisd.ca/wssd/download%20files/Comments_Outcome_Framework.doc)
- 6 [http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/html/sustainable\\_dev/partnership\\_initiatives.html](http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/html/sustainable_dev/partnership_initiatives.html)

1 For the set criteria to qualify as a Type II Partnership, see [http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/html/documents/prepcom4docs/bali\\_documents/annex\\_partnership.pdf](http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/html/documents/prepcom4docs/bali_documents/annex_partnership.pdf)

2 Summit Partnerships: Chairman’s Explanation, [http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/html/documents/prep2final\\_papers/wssd\\_description\\_of\\_partnerships2.doc](http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/html/documents/prep2final_papers/wssd_description_of_partnerships2.doc)



WSSD Type II partnerships submitted to the CSD

(WEHAB or water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity) are among the most prominent clusters of Type II Partnerships with 96 proposed partnerships. On the other hand, function-centric partnerships such as education, capacity building, information and financing have 51 proposed partnerships. On the distribution of initiatives between the North and the South, 56 (about 23 per cent) of the leading organizations involved in these partnerships are based in the South.

While there are only a few partnerships stating poverty eradication as the main cluster, it is often specified as an area with strong links to other sectors. The same applies for capacity development, science and education, and technology transfer, having a high proportion of links. Especially, capacity development has a strong linkage through all sectors with 93 initiatives stating capacity development as one of their areas of work. On the other hand, some clusters show a lesser proportion of links across the sectors, e.g., energy and minerals/mining.

These are only some broad and initial observations, further examination will especially focus on aspects of complementarity to “Type I” commitments, e.g., whether and to what extent the partnerships get additional funds or re-direct existing resources. The

European Commission, for example, announced and registered its “Water for Life” initiative with a budget of \$1.4 billion but had to concede that this is no further but re-addressed money. The intended range of their scope and impact on sub-regional regional or international levels will be looked at, too.

### Qualitative aspects of Type II Partnerships

From an inter-linkages perspective, the proposed approach is of special interest. To achieve tangible results on the ground, cross-cutting and inclusive approaches have to be chosen, bridging sectoral thinking not only for specific project or programme implementation, but for policy making and planning as well. Approaches such as “issue management,” “ecosystem management,” or “inter-linkages” that link social institutions and behaviour with different aspects of our environment are just some of the example approaches that could be used within these proposed partnerships.

Closely related to this is the question of equal partner- and ownership, between government agencies, IGOs and NGOs, as well as between organizations of the North and the South. Naturally, partnerships face asymmetries, as some partners might be more experienced, possess more capacities financially or personnel-wise, or

be more influential at different arenas. Nevertheless, equal partnerships have to move beyond mere information sharing; all parties involved should understand each other's motives and objectives, there has to be mutual awareness about respective gains and goals to be accomplished, and there is a need for a common commitment and shared values. To convey achievements beyond the project, the Type II partnerships should establish strong channels of communication internally and externally in order to strengthen links to decision makers on national, regional and international levels and to foster the multiplier effect.

Equally important are mechanisms to ensure accountability and monitoring. If established from the outset of the project, these can help to assess processes within the partnership and outcomes of the initiative. To achieve this, each Type II Partnership should ideally develop different sets of indicators jointly with all partners to constantly measure:

- (a) *processes* through process indicators, reflecting arrangements between partners, planning, resource and information sharing, etc.; and
- (b) *outcomes* through indicators according to the "pressure-state-response" concept, reflecting direct or indirect changes such as

emissions, consumption, resource exploitation, etc. that put weight on the environment (pressure), quality changes of water, air, desertification, health status or access to resources (state), as well as individual, institutional, legal or organizational changes (response).

The mechanisms and structures established at the CSD to ensure compliance with the set criteria are of significance for the success of the Type II process as well, as they ensure follow-up and dissemination.

### Next steps

These preliminary discussions on the nature of these WSSD Type II Partnerships show both a challenging and exciting period for sustainable development. Even though still faced with many uncertainties, the WSSD initiated a mechanism through these partnerships, which many hope will not only promote on the ground implementation of Agenda 21 goals, but could also provide a means of making such implementation strategies sustainable in the long run by its innovative nature. It is hoped that a more detailed analysis of these initiatives will provide us with better insights on how best to assist their success. W

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## Inter-linkages Publications

### *Inter-linkages Policy Brief 1 – Inter-Linkages: Synergies and Coordination among Multilateral Environmental Agreements*



This initial Inter-linkages Report builds on the background papers and presentations submitted to the UNU International Conference on Inter-linkages: Synergies and Coordination among Multilateral Environmental Agreements, held in Tokyo, 14–16 July, 1999.  
UNU, 1999

### *Inter-linkages Policy Brief 4 – Pacific Island Countries Case Study*



The report examines environmental governance regarding MEAs in the Cook Islands, Palau and Vanuatu. It covers aspects of negotiation, ratification and implementation of MEAs, institutional and legal aspects, information management, coordination, capacity development, etc.  
UNU, 2002

### *Inter-linkages Policy Brief 2 – Inter-Linkages between the Ozone and Climate Change Conventions*

The approach by UNU, UNEP and the MIT bridges the gap between science, technological knowledge and policy. It is motivated by the conviction that knowledge-driven strategies must be accompanied by effective on-the-ground measures, and that the interests of all stakeholders involved must be taken into account.

UNU, 2002



### *Inter-linkages Policy Brief 5 – Inter-linkages in Financing Sustainable Development*

The study examines how the inter-linkages approach can be used to help make sustainable development financing more effective and efficient. It provides concrete examples of how the inter-linkages approach can be applied to the issue of financing.

UNU, 2002



### *Inter-linkages Policy Brief 3 – National and Regional Approaches in Asia and the Pacific*



This report looks at the approaches in Asia and the Pacific regarding the national and regional management of MEAs. This covers negotiation, ratification and implementation of these MEAs and looks at the institutional, legal, information, coordination and other aspects of these MEAs.  
UNU, 2002

### *Inter-linkages Brochure – including CD ROM*



This brochure highlights the approach of the Inter-linkages Initiative and its basic principles, being subsidiarity oriented, demand-driven, value-adding, and integrative.  
The brochure contains a CD ROM including all policy briefs issued so far, plus additional background papers and conference reports.  
UNU, 2002

For the detailed reports of the Inter-linkages Initiative and additional information, please visit our website at <http://www.unu.edu/inter-linkages/> or contact Jerry Velasquez (jerryv@hq.unu.edu), or Uli Piest (piest@hq.unu.edu)

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