

»» INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) welcomes the report of the MOPAN 2020 assessment cycle, which represents an integral input as the Organization continues to strengthen the delivery of its programmes. The assessment process was constructive, allowed for engagement from across UNEP, and the findings have been accepted by UNEP.

The assessment identified areas of strength as well as areas of improvement. UNEP confirms that it is building on the strengths that have been outlined in the report.

The following sections focus on key findings of the MOPAN assessment.

»» POSITIVE COMMENTS

UNEP welcomes the positive comments which indicate that its Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for 2022-2025 and Programme of Work for 2022-2023 are fully aligned with the 2030 agenda. This new strategy, which has been informed by the latest science, points to three planetart environmental crises: climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and waste, underpinned by the current unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. The Strategy seeks to deliver a transformational change for people and nature through addressing the root causes of the tripple planetary crisis.

The Strategy includes three cascading Theory of Changes (ToCs) that seek to address the triple planetary crisis. These will impact delivery by elevating individual project outputs and outcomes to the level of the Programme of Work direct outcomes.

The Programme of Work 2022-2023 sets an ambitious and focused results framework for UNEP. It operationalizes the Medium-Term Strategy for the first biennium of the four-year MTS.

A second area of strength noted, was in UNEP's knowledge projects and publications. It is noted that the assessment found that UNEP's knowledge products are highly valued, and UNEP will continue to ensure that these and all publications are coordinated through annual planning mechanisms geared to increase impact and focus on supporting the delivery of the MTS and PoW.

A third area noted by the assessment related to the organizational response to COVID-19. In addition to the assessment report, the Office of Internal Oversight Services in its final 2021 review concluded that UNEP *“established adequate structures to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and assisted United Nations personnel and their dependents to better cope during the pandemic.”* UNEP's response to coping with the pandemic included the following:

- Establishment of the Executive Director's Crisis Management Group (CMG) in March 2020;
- COVID-19 country coordinators appointed for each duty station to assist with monitoring, compliance and reporting on established protocols;

- UNEP’s intranet (We-Collaborate) page on COVID-19, UNEP townhalls, various pulse / wellbeing survey’s;
- Project reviews and mitigating measures put in place to manage the programmatic impact of COVID.

The assessment also found that new policies and frameworks have strengthened UNEP across performance areas. Notably, the following policies and guidelines have been updated by the Organization:

- Pilot phase Partnership Policy 2020;
- Updated Resource Mobilization Strategy 2021;
- Introduction of Quarterly Business Review (QBR) reports;
- Publication of Statement of Internal Control with financial statements;
- Enterprise Risk Management (ERM/IC) implementation;
- UNEP Corporate Risk Register with 9 validated priority Risks;
- Drafting and implementation of the ERM Risk Register Treatment and Response Plans ongoing

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The report provides insights into areas requiring further improvement including in relation to programme management, strengthened programme accountability and an over reliance on tightly earmarked funds among others. UNEP takes note and wishes to note that several actions are already underway to addressing these recommendations. UNEP wishes to highlight the following:

- **UNEP is currently finalizing a Standardized Delivery Model** - this will strengthen project design, monitoring and results-based management through a new results framework and the revision of UNEP’s programme and project manual. This will include: greater clarity on roles, responsibilities and accountability of project management; an enhanced project risk tiering system; a new project implementation support function; an enhanced programmatic approach to project design and implementation to ensure greater integration of project delivery towards achieving Programme of Work results with a focus on delivery impact; and increased attention to address country needs, working through the UN system and the UN Country Teams through the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks.
- **UNEP is strengthening its strategic “line of sight” and the coherent delivery of UNEP’s project portfolio with a clear accountability framework.** Ensuring a ‘line of sight’ from results to delivery requires clear roles and responsibilities in the project development process to ensure accountability accordingly. UNEP has among other things established quarterly business reviews, a new digital transformation subprogramme and is now working towards an Integrated Planning, Management and Reporting solution, also known as IPMR. The Quarterly Business Reviews hold all Directors accountable for reporting and knowledge sharing on Project Delivery, Finances, Human Resources and Audit.
- **With a view to address tightly earmarked funding related challenges, UNEP intends to launch three new thematic trust funds** to address the three strategic objectives in the Medium-Term Strategy in order to allow dedicated voluntary contributions while maintaining programme coherence.

- These thematic trust funds will enable a comprehensive implementation of the Medium-Term Strategy and associated Programmes of Work, as supported by contributions from Member States, International Financial Institutions, foundations, other multilaterals and a group of private sector champions. It will also enable pooling of funding from different donors to make maximum impact on the activities of the three planetary crises.
- UNEP continues the dialogue with Member States for their leadership in effecting the shift towards increased core and softly earmarked funding, in line with the commitments made by all member states.
- UNEP also continues to advocate for all Member States to contribute to the Environment Fund.

»» CONCLUSION

UNEP very much appreciates and has embraced the findings and recommendations of the MOPAN report. UNEP is working diligently to address them, both through the new Medium-Term Strategy as well as in its efforts to improve management overall, towards an ever more efficient and effective delivery.