

Informal Meeting on Inter-Linkages



Report and Recommendations



Energy & OzonAction Unit
Division of Technology, Industry and Economics

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REPORT OF THE INFORMAL MEETING ON INTER-LINKAGES

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years there have been increasing awareness of the positive and negative implications of the inter-linkages between Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), and between MEAs and other multilateral regimes such as the international trade and investment regimes. Overlapping (i.e. "cross-cutting") technical, policy and social issues increasingly makes the single-treaty approach untenable in the long term if the global environmental commons is to be adequately protected.

The central challenge is how to better co-ordinate and exploit synergies between MEAs to enhance effectiveness and coherence at the negotiation and implementation levels, and minimise the implementation costs both to the global community and to individual countries, while at the same time reaching the environmental objectives set out in the individual MEAs.

For "mature" MEAs that are well defined and operational (e.g. the Montreal Protocol), this translates into the need to ensure the continued smooth implementation of the treaty while responding to the emerging inter-linkage issues. Responses can involve modifying the treaty itself, and adapting the management, and implementation policies and structures to respond to the inter-linkage issues. For newer MEAs that are in relatively early stages of negotiations (e.g. the Kyoto Protocol), the challenge is to resolve current conflicts, exchange "lessons learned" with other MEAs (e.g. implementation, non-compliance mechanisms, approaches for regional and national co-ordination), identify and address the inter-linkage issues early on so as to avoid future conflicts and need for modifications.

Improved communication and exchange of experience and information between MEA communities on all levels and by all stakeholders is an essential element to meeting this challenge. Lately the inter-linkage issue has attracted more attention from the UN system, intergovernmental organisations, academic circles, industry and NGOs.

- The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has undertaken several major initiatives (see Annex 2), including convening a *Consultative Meeting On Collaboration Among Multilateral Environmental Conventions* and a *Meeting To Assess The Need For A Second Inter-Linkages Assessment* (October 1999, Bonn).
- The United Nations University (UNU) convened a landmark international conference on *Inter-Linkages: Synergies and Coordination between Multilateral Environmental Agreements* (14-16 July 1999, United Nations University, Tokyo)
- UNEP DTIE OzonAction Programme held a seminar on *Inter-linkages between Ozone Layer Depletion and Global Warming* (28 November 1999, Peking University, Beijing).

As one of the implementing agencies of the Montreal Protocol's Multilateral Fund, UNEP through its DTIE OzonAction Programme provides developing countries with technical and policy information to help them to make informed decisions related to the implementation of the Montreal Protocol. Feedback through the Programme's Networks of ODS Officers indicates that developing countries are aware and concerned about inter-linkages, and urgently need a clearer picture of how inter-linkage issues affect their choice of technology options, national policy-setting objectives, and institutional arrangements.

With this need in mind, and within UNEP's existing framework for addressing inter-linkage issues, as a follow-up to preceding events (in particular the UNU workshop), UNEP DTIE's OzonAction Programme organised an informal meeting in its offices on 12 May 2000 to further investigate issues and solutions related to inter-linkages between ozone layer protection and climate change.

2. MEETING OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Exchange experience and information about the inter-linkage work done by the participating organisations;
- Identify ways in which existing information exchange mechanisms (e.g. the OzonAction Programme's information clearinghouse and ODS Officers Network) could address inter-linkage issues;
- Establish partnerships to further explore specific inter-linkage issues; and
- Agree on the next steps to help meet the requirements of developing countries, in particular for the implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

3. PARTICIPANTS

The meeting involved 9 participants representing the UNEP DTIE OzonAction Programme, the United Nations University (UNU), the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and the Alliance for Global Sustainability (AGS). See Annex 1 for details.

4. SUMMARY

Mrs. Jacqueline Aloisi de Larderel, DTIE Director, welcomed the participants. The participants shared information about their activities in general and on issues of inter-linkages in particular.

UNU

- UNU activities on inter-linkages started in 1998 after a case study it did on the Kyoto Protocol and other multilateral regimes.

- UNU sponsored a major inter-linkages event Inter-Linkages-Intentional Conference on Synergies and Coordination between Multilateral Environmental Agreements, 14-16 July 1999, Tokyo Japan.
- UNU Initial follow-up to that conference includes a 3-year work plan undertaken in preparation for Rio+10.
- A primary focus of the programme will include creating awareness of the Inter-Linkages issue and promoting it on to the agendas of intergovernmental meetings such as the G8, ESCAP Ministerial, CSD, and COPs/MOPs of MEAs.
- Since some stakeholders view "coordination" of MEAs in a negative light, the UNU will concentrate on the positive synergies.
- In terms of national and regional implementation of MEAs the UNU is conducting a review of a clustering of MEAs at the regional level beginning with ESCAP. Similarly, UNU will also conduct a number of indicative national case studies (depending on resources), starting with Malaysia.
- Regarding research, 5 items have been identified in the UNU report *Inter-Linkages: Synergies and Coordination between MEAs* these are: information, institutions, issue management, finance and scientific mechanisms.
- On information, UNU is focusing on the development of a web site that will include all documents and videos related to inter-linkages. The URL is inter-linkages.net and it is expected to be on line by June.
- On the scientific front, UNU is working on developing the understanding, in cooperation with inter alia FIELD, of the precautionary principle.
- On issue management, UNU is conducting studies on cross-cutting issues such as bio-safety.
- On institutions UNU is doing an academic study on the implications of some proposed reforms such as the creation of a world environmental court of justice, inter-trusteeship council etc.
- On finance UNU is producing a review, in the way of book, that will look at financing from the Inter-Linkage perspective. The book is intended to be finished in time for the UN conference on finance in 2001.
- UNU is currently developing a CD-ROM for briefing convention delegates on cross-cutting issues.

MIT/AGS

- AGS is a strategic alliance of three of the world's leading research universities - MIT, the Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology and the University of Tokyo. It was created in 1994 to address the problems of global sustainability.
- They work closely with industry, notably WBCSD.
- AGS goes beyond creating knowledge to applying that knowledge generated within the academic research community to achieving goals in the real world.
- Besides the natural sciences, AGS members work in the economics and social science fields. AGS currently has projects underway in climate change, energy, mega-cities, cleaner technologies, and mobility.
- The multidisciplinary aspect of MEAs - involving scientific, technical, legal, societal elements - make the inter-linkage issue directly relevant to the work of AGS.

- The multi-disciplinary research teams formed through AGS can be brought to bear on the inter-linkage between the Montreal and Kyoto Protocols. They can provide experts on specific issues who can participate in forums.
- AGS will convene the YES (Youth Environment Summit) in 13-26 August 2000. This may be an appropriate forum to introduce the interlinkage issue to young people and initiate their thinking on solutions. They are also investigating the "green scouts" idea.
- Through the Leadership for Environmental Development (LEAD) programme, AGS is bringing negotiating knowledge to the universities by inviting key members of treaty negotiations.

GSSD/ Global Accords

- GSSD is an interactive knowledge meta-networking system for using state of the art knowledge management targeted to supporting for decision-making.
- Designed as a adaptive internet collaborative platform, it serves as the core of the Consortium on Global Accords for Sustainable development.
- UNEP sponsored the initial Feasibility study leading to the formation of the Consortium, and has since then been associated with its work.
- GSSD serves as the internet outreach system for the AGS (and for other major Technology-based international programs at MIT).
- Currently GSSD supports mirror sites in China, Lebanon France and, shortly, Latin America (all in the local languages).

UNEP

UNEP initiated the actions related to inter-linkages and cross-cutting issues in:

- Coordination of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, a meeting on regional seas conventions and action plans was held in the Hague from 5 to 8 July 1999.
- Discussion paper on *Cross-Cutting Issues and Options* was prepared by UNEP DTIE Energy and OzonAction Unit in February 1998.
- Participated in, and presented at, *Joint IPCC/TEAP Expert Meeting on Options for Limitation of Emissions of HFCs & PFCs* by UNEP DTIE OzonAction Programme in May 1999, Petten.
- Roundtable on *Climate Change and Ozone Protection Policy – Two Protocols One Response* was held during the Earth Technology Forum by UNEP DTIE Energy and OzonAction Unit in September 1999, Washington, D.C.
- Report was launched on *Protecting Our Planet Securing Our Future: Linkages Among Global Environmental Issues and Human Needs* jointly with World Bank, NASA in November 1998;
- Network of Ozone & Climate Change Officers in Baltic States has been initiated as pilot programme jointly by UNEP DTIE Energy & OzonAction Unit and Government of Finland in October 1999.

- *Workshop on Inter-Linkages* during COP5 of UNFCCC was held by UNEP Division of Environmental Conventions (DEC) in October 1999, Bonn
- As a member of HFC/PFC Task Force of the Technology & Economic Assessment Panel – UNEP DTIE Energy & OzonAction Unit from October 1999 to present.
- Organised a Seminar on *Inter-linkages between Ozone Layer Depletion and Global Warming: Urgency for An Integrated Response*” by UNEP DTIE OzonAction Programme & Peking University in November 1999, Beijing.
- Project on *Clearinghouse for Technology & Know-How Transfer & Development of Network as Part of Global Strategic Partnership* – UNEP DTIE & UNEP GEF in December 1999.
- Development and Implementation of win-win projects that contribute to climate change mitigation and ozone layer protection, including technology fact sheets, case studies, training manual for chillers, joint activities with the World Bank in Thailand & Mexico to phase out CFCs by improved energy efficiency (1999-2000) – UNEP DTIE OzonAction Programme.
- Organise *Annual Meetings of Convention Secretariats* – UNEP Division of Environmental Conventions.
- Issue paper on *Promoting Integrated Approaches to Ozone Layer Protection and Cross-Cutting Issues With Other Environmental Conventions*” by UNEP DTIE OzonAction Programme in January 2000.

There was agreement that the activities, experience and expertise of each partner can be leveraged to establish useful collaboration. The infrastructure already under OzonAction Programme (Networks, publications on data reporting, public awareness, customs training, etc) and lessons learned during implementation of the Montreal Protocol can be used cost-effectively for Kyoto Protocol.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

UNEP/UNU/MIT & AGS agreed to collaborate on inter-linkages issues identified the following areas for initiating activities:

1. Exploring the process consisting of activities that will contribute to RIO+10 on issues related to inter-linkages;
2. Based on the comparative advantages of the partners, particularly for UNEP DTIE and its Energy & OzonAction Unit, the priority issue will be inter-linkages between ozone layer protection and climate change
3. As a first step, a small expert group meeting will be organized jointly and held in MIT-Boston before the end of September 2000 (tentative) to discuss and explore the ways to operationalize the “issue management” approach for inter-linkages between ozone layer depletion and climate change;

Further discussions on the agenda and background paper for such a meeting will take place through correspondence, email and conference calls. Participants for this meeting will be experts of Assessment Panels, TEAP, IPCC, Presidents of the Montreal Protocol's Meeting

of the Parties and the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties, Chairs of SBSTA, SBI and Convention Secretariats.

4. The expert meeting will be followed by a one-day meeting held back-to-back to the annual meeting of AGS, to be held in Lausanne in January 2001. In this meeting, the issues related to harmonization of information systems, finance and institutional synergies will be discussed;
5. UNU will contribute to the symposium on *Global Accords for Sustainable Development* to be held in 2001 jointly by MIT and UNEP (with the collaboration, participation, or co-sponsorship of other institutions.);
6. *UNEP's Division of Environmental Conventions will be kept informed on this collaboration.*

ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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