



Terms of Reference¹

1. Introduction

The International Partnership for Sustainable Resource Management is a partnership that promotes sustainable development in the context of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and its follow up. It follows the criteria and guidelines for partnerships as decided at the eleventh session of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD 11, 2003).²

2. Core principles

The partnership's objective is to provide coherent and authoritative scientific assessments on the environmental impacts of resource use over the full life cycle.

The partnership aims at providing added value and seeking effective synergies with existing global, regional and national initiatives.

Participation in the work of the partnership is open to all interested partners, governments and relevant stakeholders who share its objectives.

3. Structure

The International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management (Resource Panel) is the main substantive body of the partnership and is convened by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The Panel may have working groups on specific issues. The Steering Committee brings together the supporting partners (governments and relevant stakeholders, e.g. major groups and institutional stakeholders) and provides guidance on panel composition, work plan and budget. The Secretariat, hosted by UNEP, supports the partnership with administrative tasks as needed and takes and implements decisions according to UN rules and regulations.

¹ As agreed upon by the second meetings of the Resource Panel and Steering Committee, 19-20 May 2008

² See http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships/csd11_partnerships_decision.htm for an overview of criteria and guidelines



International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management

3.1 Resource Panel

3.1.1 Objectives

The objectives of the Panel are to:

- a. provide independent, coherent and authoritative scientific assessments of policy relevance on the sustainable use of natural resources and in particular their environmental impacts over the full life cycle;
- b. contribute to a better understanding of how to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation.

3.1.2 Composition

The Panel aims at maintaining a balance in the following areas:

- geographical representation;
- gender; and
- areas of expertise over the full life cycle, including extraction and recycling of resources, manufacturing of products and services (specific areas of expertise may include cleaner production, life cycle analysis, and eco-design), and consumption (including sustainable consumption and material flows).

The members are prominent scientists and experts in the area of sustainable resource management and are not representing any government or organisation.

The Panel may suggest establishing Working Groups, to be led by one or more Panel members, but also consisting of external experts. Working Group terms of reference (ToR) and composition needs advice from the plenary Panel, the Steering Committee and final approval by the Secretariat. The operational co-ordination of the Working Groups will be determined by the leader of such groups who will normally be a member of the Panel.

3.1.3 Tasks

The Panel has the following tasks:

- suggests elements of its work programmes, by providing proposals in which based upon motivated analyses - the added value of the work element is



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identified, as well as existing work to build on and research gaps to address;

- produces independent, coherent and authoritative scientific assessments of policy relevance as included in the agreed work plans;
- proposes working groups for specific elements of the work programme, which may include scientists and other experts from outside the panel, which prepare assessment or technical reports;
- discusses proposals and (interim-) reports from the working groups and suggest changes, modifications, additional research;
- arranges an adequate quality assurance (peer review) process which ensures quality and independence;
- highlights opportunities for linkages with contributions to other related international, regional and national initiatives;
- recommends interim and final reports and communications for publication to the Secretariat.

3.1.4 Working arrangements

The Panel meets twice a year and can suggest the establishment of working groups for specified elements of the work programme as long as they meet the objectives as described in section 3.1.1.

3.2 Steering Committee

3.2.1 Objectives

The objective of the Steering Committee is to provide inspiration and resources, to provide advice about annual work plans and to provide recommendations for the Resource Panel's work.

3.2.2 Tasks

The tasks of the Steering Committee are to:



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- provide recommendations on the strategic direction and priorities of the Resource Panel. The Steering Committee may provide guidance on the contents of individual reports but does not approve or endorse these and is therefore not responsible for their contents;
- highlight opportunities for linkages with or contributions to other related international, regional and national initiatives;
- highlight opportunities to support institution building and social learning on the use of natural resources in both developed and developing countries;
- provide recommendations about work programme, budgets and resource mobilisation; and
- provide general recommendations about the panel composition, and may also recommend individual candidates for the Panel, including its working groups.

3.2.3 Criteria for participation

Representatives from governments and organisations from civil society which contribute to the partnership can participate in the Steering Committee.

3.2.4 Working arrangements

The Steering Committee meets twice a year and is responsible for the tasks described in section 3.2.2.

3.3 The Secretariat

3.3.1 Objective

The Secretariat is hosted by UNEP's Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, based in Paris, and supports the Resource Panel with document preparation and various administrative, substantive and logistical tasks.



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3.3.2 Tasks

The Secretariat has the following tasks:

- **organise and facilitate panel and steering committee meetings;**
- **identify, contact, present candidate members of the Panel and appoints them after consultation with the Panel Chairs and the Steering Committee;**
- **prepare and present proposals for strategic directions, priorities, work plans and budgets of the Panel, and implement, monitor and report about them, after consultation with Panel and Steering Committee;**
- **prepare and implement Memorandums of Understanding, financial contracts and related documents to implement the Panel's work plan in accordance to UN rules and regulations;**
- **support and assist panel chairs and members, as well as the members of the Steering Committee with advise and logistical support according to UN rules and regulations;**
- **organise and oversee the publication of Panel reports and ensure that the findings are being made available for relevant target groups, including by means of websites, newsletters, training and education programmes, and press releases.**