EVALUATION OF

THE ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION OF UNDP IN ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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FOREWORD

This report presents the results of an independent evaluation of the role and contribution of UNDP in environment and energy conducted by the UNDP Evaluation Office. Environment and energy related topics have in various forms featured centrally in UNDP's programme for a long period of time. Recognizing the importance of the topic, the Executive Board in its annual session in June 2006 (2006/19) approved the inclusion of this evaluation in the Evaluation Office's work plan.

The main purpose of this evaluation was to assess UNDP's positioning and contributions to managing environment and energy for sustainable development. The scope of the evaluation covered all programmatic and operational aspects of the environment and energy area in all UNDP's geographic regions and at the global, regional and country levels. The evaluation primarily focused on the period from 2002 to 2007. However, the evaluation also considered how events before this period shaped UNDP's approach to environment and energy. Building upon an independent and objective analysis of the past, the evaluation has provided perspectives towards how UNDP is positioned to move forwards in its environment and energy work.

The evaluation concludes that environment and energy remain central to UNDP's core mission of poverty reduction. It is evident that the negative consequences of environmental degradation are borne disproportionally by the poorest countries and people. UNDP programmes in environment and energy have made significant contributions to international environmental efforts. However, the organization's responsiveness to national priorities has been uneven. While UNDP's environment and energy work in many middle income countries has been highly complementary to the organization's overall programme, the match has been less evident in the least developed countries and the small island developing states. Similarly, the capacity for planning, managing and implementing environment and energy work varies significantly within UNDP and many country offices lack the expertise needed to engage in high level policy dialogue with the governments and other partners. Importantly, mainstreaming of environmental considerations into other major areas, such as poverty reduction and democratic governance, has been limited, leading to missed opportunities to link environment and development in a comprehensive manner.

The evaluation makes a number of recommendations. UNDP should formulate its environment and energy priorities in a more strategic manner, building upon its poverty mandate and comparative advantages. It should strengthen its policy dialogue in order to better identify and respond to national sustainable development priorities of the programme countries, in particular in the least developing countries and small island developing States. The organization should also incorporate environment and energy into the focus areas of poverty reduction, democratic governance, and crisis prevention and recovery. Such mainstreaming will require leadership and commitment at all levels of the organization. Likewise, it will require strong partnerships with governments and other partners. In order to fulfil its goals in this important area, UNDP must also strengthen its own capacities in environment and energy, especially in the country offices.

We are very grateful to the Executive Board members, governments and civil society representatives in the case study countries who very generously shared their time and ideas. I would like to express our particular gratitude to all the resident representatives, UNDP staff and members of the UN country teams in the countries visited by the evaluation team, as well as the colleagues in New York who provided vital

feedback to the team to enable them to reach their conclusions.

This report is the result of the dedication and hard work of a number of people who participated in the evaluation team. The Evaluation Office is deeply grateful to the team leader, Michael Wells, who ably guided the evaluation through these highly complex issues and led the drafting of the report. Other members of the core evaluation team included Henrik Secher Marcussen as well as Evaluation Office staff Juha Uitto (task manager) and Howard Stewart. The country case studies all benefited from the participation of additional experts, including Slavjanka Andonova (FYR Macedonia), Fidèle Hien (Burkina Faso), Kazi Jalal (China, Malawi and Thailand), Peter Johnston (Pacific Islands), Violet Matiru (Kenya), Hugo Navajas (Ecuador) and Susan Tamondong (Kenya and Malawi). Lamia Mansour contributed to desk studies at the early stages of the evaluation.

The Evaluation Office invited leading experts to serve on an independent advisory panel for the evaluation. I would like to express our gratitude to Yolanda Kakabadse (Executive President of Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano), Nancy MacPherson (Special Adviser, Performance Assessment, IUCN) and Jon Teigland (Senior Advisor, Evaluation Department, Norad). The final report benefited from their advice and suggestions.

Other colleagues in the Evaluation Office made important contributions to the report, including Nurul Alam, S. Nanthikesan and Sukai Prom-Jackson who reviewed various versions of the draft report; Kutisha Ebron who handled administrative support; and Anish Pradhan supported the production of the report. Research support and data analysis was provided by Nurit Bodemann-Ostow. I would also like to express my appreciation to Elizabeth Mook for her editorial contribution.

I hope that this evaluation will be useful in helping UNDP respond more systematically and effectively in supporting developing countries to cope with the urgent challenges posed by environmental degradation and global climate change, and to move towards sustainable development for their populations.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADR	Assessment of Development Results
AECID	Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo
BDP	Bureau for Development Policy
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCF	Country Cooperation Framework
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CPD	Country Programme Document
DDC	Drylands Development Centre
EE	Environment and Energy
EEG	Environment and Energy Group
ESDG	Environmentally Sustainable Development Group
GCF	Global Cooperation Framework
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
HDR	Human Development Report
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LDC	Least developed country
MA	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDG7	MDG Goal Seven: 'Ensuring Environmental Sustainability'
MEA	Multilateral environmental agreements
MFF	Mangroves for the Future
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MYFF	Multi-year funding framework
NDI	National Dialogue Initiative
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PEI	Poverty-Environment Initiative
PIRs	Project Implementation Reviews
POPs	Persistent organic pollutants
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

RAF	Resource Allocation Framework
RBAP	Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific
RBEC	Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS
RCF	Regional Cooperation Framework
REP-PoR	Regional Energy Programme for Poverty Reduction
ROAP	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
ROAR	Results-oriented annual report
SGP	GEF Small Grants Programme
SIDS	Small Island Developing State(s)
SURF	Sub-Regional Resource Facility
TOR	Terms of reference
TRAC	Targeted Resource Allocation from Core
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNSO	Office to Combat Desertification and Drought (formerly UN Sudano-Sahelian Office)
UNV	United Nations Volunteer
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RATIONALE, SCOPE AND APPROACH

The UNDP Executive Board, in its decision 2006/19, approved the 2006-2007 programme of work for the Evaluation Office, including the conduct of the evaluation of the role and contribution of UNDP in environment and energy. The present report sets out the findings of the evaluation, which assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of UNDP's work at the global, regional and national levels. While focused mainly on the period 2002–2007, the evaluation also considered how events before 2002 shaped the approach of UNDP to environment and energy as well as how the organization is positioned to move forwards.

The goals and objectives of UNDP for the evaluation period are identified in two multi-year funding frameworks (MYFFs), for 2000–2003 and 2004–2007, recently succeeded by the strategic plan, 2008–11. Both MYFFs as well as the new strategic plan indicate a strong UNDP commitment to environment and energy.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has been by far the most significant financing source for UNDP environment and energy programmes. The present evaluation did not evaluate the performance or mandate of GEF but considered the implications of GEF funding for UNDP, its effect on priority setting and its impact on resource allocations at different levels within UNDP.

Country-level case studies provided the principal information source and focus of analysis. The evaluation team visited eight countries and two regional centres, while specific studies on key programmatic areas in environment and energy were also undertaken. Global consultations focused on UNDP headquarters staff and management, as well as on organizations whose interests and goals overlap with those of UNDP, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The evaluation was hampered by a lack of reliable data on the financial resources used for environment and energy activities not financed by GEF, and a lack of useful performance measures.

ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY IN UNDP

UNDP became significantly involved in the area of environment following the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, where GEF was officially launched and the first two major multilateral environmental agreements were adopted. UNDP emerged from Rio with the mandate of becoming the 'Sustainable Development' organization of the United Nations. The role of UNDP in the environment field expanded dramatically in the 1990s, encouraged by supportive administrators, especially during the second half of the decade. From 2000 onwards a new Administrator significantly downgraded environment and natural resource management as having relatively little to contribute to the core UNDP mandates of poverty and governance. Since the early 2000s, the most significant changes have been decentralization from headquarters and a sharp decline in the number of core staff positions in environment. At present, the majority of staff working on environment and energy are supported by GEF funding.

The formulation 'environment and energy' used by UNDP presents some challenges. While clearly an important player in the area of environment in developing countries, UNDP has only a small role in the overall energy picture and has very modest resources available for energy.

While reliable data on the overall use of UNDP financial resources for environment and energy have been hard to obtain, there are strong indications that core-funded environment and energy activities were in decline as UNDP was progressively

increasing its share of GEF resources. To date UNDP-GEF project approvals have a cumulative total value of more than $2.3 billion. The average annual value of UNDP-GEF projects approved since 2002 has exceeded $200 million. During the most recent GEF funding phase (2003–2006), UNDP had the highest value of project approvals among the GEF implementing agencies.

The main focus of the UNDP-GEF team has been projects generating significant global environmental benefits. This goal effectively separated their efforts from other UNDP activities. UNDP-GEF had access to substantial new financial resources during a period when the rest of UNDP was facing severe funding cutbacks. Staff were, and continue to be, encouraged to identify and prepare the greatest possible number of projects likely to be approved by the GEF Secretariat and the GEF Council, in what frequently became a competition with the World Bank and UNEP.

Differences between the GEF activities and core activities of UNDP emerged at an early stage, and there was little sense that GEF resources came in response to a prioritization of overall environment and energy needs and opportunities at national levels. This division was reinforced as UNDP moved away from project implementation while GEF remained almost entirely project driven. To many in UNDP, the well-resourced GEF programme, while widely recognized as professionally managed, innovative and effective, has been of limited relevance to the main UNDP mission of poverty reduction. Since 2005 there have been serious efforts to improve the collaboration between UNDP-GEF and the rest of the Environment and Energy Group.

UNDP has many areas of active collaboration with UNEP, including jointly implemented GEF projects. The potential benefits of such collaboration arise from the UNDP network of country offices with considerable experience implementing national projects, combined with the scientific and technical expertise of UNEP and its networks in specific environmental areas. However, there has been a less-than-constructive rivalry between UNDP and UNEP over financial resources. During the last two years, several new partnerships and memoranda of understanding have emerged between the two organizations, with strong support from the UNEP Executive Director and the UNDP Administrator. This has helped build and improve relationships at the operational levels, although most of the current collaborative arrangements are so new that it would be premature to attempt to assess their results.

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES

The project design and in most cases the implementation work carried out by UNDP and its partners is generally of high quality. The most impressive projects often appear to be those where other donors have been encouraged to support parallel activities that complement GEF projects, leading to a more diverse set of activities responding to a range of local and national priorities.

However, the availability of GEF funding has been the most important driving force determining where, how and when UNDP country-level environment and energy work was undertaken. Partly as a result, UNDP environment and energy country portfolios often appear to be a series of opportunistic projects for which funding was available. In the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS) in particular, there is almost total reliance on GEF support for environment and energy activities, as other donors have scaled back and government commitments are often miniscule. The reliance of UNDP on GEF to support its environment and energy work has caused high-priority national environmental issues—such as environmental health, water supply and sanitation and energy management—to be replaced by GEF priorities related to climate change mitigation, biodiversity and international waters.

While many current projects appear impressive and innovative as stand-alone initiatives, sustaining gains and benefits over the longer term is a ubiquitous problem, with a fragile institutional memory of terminated initiatives that declines

rapidly over time. Sustainability is clearly impaired by weak counterpart institutions with staffing and budget constraints and limited coordination among institutions and projects, as well as cycles of political instability. Those factors are compounded by the meagre allocation of core resources, the uncertainty and unpredictability of future GEF funding and the fact that few recipient countries share the GEF environmental priorities, particularly where global issues overshadow local issues.

The headquarters' environment and energy programme has focused on studies and advocacy work. Much of this has been of high quality, although the impacts of such work are unclear and synergies with the country programmes are not easy to detect.

There is virtually no sign that the global plans and strategies of UNDP have had any significant influence on the allocation of financial resources or the selection of programme priorities and activities for the decentralized country programmes. The shift from MYFF-1 to MYFF-2 had little practical impact beyond requiring country offices to retrofit some of their reporting to fit the new guidelines from headquarters, and there seems little expectation of any significant difference during the shift to the strategic plan, 2008–11. This finding appears to be systemic and UNDP-wide, rather than a particular feature of the environment and energy practice.

Mainstreaming within UNDP has been limited. There has been relatively little collaboration between environment and energy and the other UNDP practice areas. There is little evidence of clearly developed or articulated strategies or practical initiatives linking or genuinely mainstreaming environmental initiatives into the UNDP core work on poverty, governance, human rights or sustainable livelihoods. At the country level, too, mainstreaming has been limited. Systemic barriers to country-level mainstreaming include the often weak position of ministries of environment with which UNDP mainly works and the dominance of GEF-funded portfolios that focus on global, rather than national, environmental problems. The UNDP-managed GEF National Dialogue Initiative has helped countries better coordinate their GEF-financed activities.

The still relatively new UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative is attempting to address the vital need to mainstream environment into development planning and implementation. While there are promising signs, progress on the ground has not been problem-free. Current efforts to scale up the initiative will require both additional support and operational clarification if they are to be effective. Engaging the rest of UNDP in environmental mainstreaming is a critical unmet need.

Since 2005, a variety of efforts have been made to bring together and synergize the GEF and non-GEF environment and energy work of UNDP. A unified approach to water governance has been the most successful example of convergence thus far. Other notable efforts towards harmonization have taken place in the Bratislava and Bangkok regional centres. While these are promising initiatives, time will tell whether they become successful and can be replicated in other areas.

At the country level, UNDP is valued by national governments as a long-term trusted partner, supporting national planning and contributing to capacity development. UNDP has also been a major avenue to GEF funding. The relevance and effectiveness of UNDP's environmental programming is, of course, directly influenced by the commitment and capacity of recipient governments, and UNDP has long struggled with how to build and retain capacity in partner countries. Even so, long-term capacity gains in the areas of environment and energy are seldom apparent, especially in LDCs and small island developing states.

UNDP capacity in environment and energy leaves much to be desired. While staff at headquarters and in the regional centres are recognized for their expertise and the results they achieve, most are funded through extra-budgetary sources, which is not conducive to long-term capacity or career development. With a few notable and impressive exceptions, the environment and energy teams in

country offices are few in number and often lack the relevant technical expertise. These hard-working teams are often stretched to the limit, especially in the smaller country offices. Lacking the capacity to engage in policy dialogue with the governments, their main role is usually limited to administrative management tasks.

MAJOR THEMATIC AREAS

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change has been a major component of the environment and energy work of UNDP and is central to its future plans in these areas. Since 1992 UNDP has mobilized about $3 billion to fund over 400 large-scale and 1,000 small-scale energy and climate projects, almost entirely with GEF funding and related co-financing. Climate change is also prominent in the UNDP strategic plan, 2008–2011. UNDP has built up a significant body of expertise and experience in the climate change area, mostly at headquarters and in the regional centres.

The fit between UNDP's poverty reduction mandate and the GEF objective of mitigating global climate change has been less than convincing. Most of the climate change activities—of GEF and therefore of UNDP—at the country level have been aimed at mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, a global concern rather than a specific concern of individual developing countries. Such projects are often marginally relevant to the mainstream development agendas of countries, especially LDCs and small island developing countries, and have distracted attention from the importance of providing affordable energy services to the poor. UNDP recently established the 'Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Carbon Facility', a pioneering initiative for UNDP, as a model of collaboration with the private sector as well as governments, although it is too early to assess this activity and to determine how it will contribute to development.

Using GEF resources, UNDP has helped over 100 countries prepare national climate change vulnerability assessments, national adaptation plans, and national communications to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). A variety of studies indicate that the LDCs and small island developing states will be hardest hit by climate change and are most in need of support. Climate change adaptation therefore seems a more natural area for UNDP to engage in than mitigation, where the benefits are largely global.

ENERGY

The energy-related portfolio of UNDP has increased significantly since the 1990s. The evaluation found examples of important country-level work introducing energy efficiency and clean renewable energy, mostly in larger middle-income countries. Most of the increase in the energy-related activities of UNDP has been in climate change projects funded by the GEF, however. The activities funded by UNDP's regular resources have actually declined during the past decade. This has reduced the focus on the LDCs, particularly in Africa. Here, while energy is closely related to poverty reduction and economic opportunities, the potential for achieving global environmental benefits through greenhouse gas emission mitigation—and consequently for mobilizing financial resources—is relatively small. Although the MYFF performance report states that over half of the UNDP energy-related projects and financing have dealt with expanding energy access to the poor, the evaluation did not find convincing evidence of this in the countries visited.

Most of the funding for UNDP 'energy' work has been GEF support for mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, relatively little of which flows to LDCs and small island developing states.

The ongoing dependence on GEF funding—or even on the emerging MDG Carbon Facility—will not encourage a meaningful energy programme that addresses poverty and sustainable development issues. The problems related to energy-poverty linkages are fundamentally different from those related to climate change mitigation and cannot be addressed through the same means and mechanisms.

BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity conservation and sustainable use has been a substantial focus for UNDP, with a cumulative total of $820 million in GEF project funding to date. UNDP has made a major contribution to biodiversity conservation, often working effectively with a broad range of stakeholders from governments and international conservation groups to local communities.

The 'Millennium Ecosystem Assessment', a recent scientific assessment of the state of the world's ecosystems, determined that the condition and sound management of ecosystems is a 'dominant factor' determining the chances of success in fighting poverty in all regions, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Well protected and sustainably used biodiversity in turn is a key element of well managed ecosystems; it is as important as effective water management for ensuring effective and sustainable poverty alleviation.

While it seems clear that UNDP should continue to work in biodiversity because the condition and management of ecosystems is important for poverty alleviation, such arguments appear to have done little to engage UNDP as a whole. Links with the poverty and governance practices of UNDP have been few and far between. At a corporate level UNDP simply has not viewed biodiversity as a priority. Environment and Energy Group's limited biological diversity resources have been used at very local levels (such as the Equator Initiative) and at the global level for advocacy and participation in international conservation processes. While the poverty and governance practices of UNDP have shown little interest in biodiversity, the UNDP-GEF biodiversity portfolio has started to evolve away from site-specific protected area work towards an emphasis on poverty and governance, emphasizing strengthening capacities and governance of biodiversity resources.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1. Environment and energy are central to the mission of UNDP.

The relevance of environment and energy to the principal UNDP mission of poverty reduction seems overwhelmingly clear. The negative consequences of the deteriorating international environmental situation on the poorest countries and communities have been elaborated unequivocally by a variety of credible international bodies and studies, notably the International Panel on Climate Change and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.

UNDP programmes in environment have made significant contributions to international environmental efforts. Programmes in environment and, to a lesser extent, energy have expanded significantly since the 1990s, and UNDP is now among the leading global organizations working in these areas. It has produced high-quality analytical knowledge products recognized for their value in policy dialogue, advocacy and awareness raising. These have not, however, translated systematically into programming.

UNDP plans and strategies have emphasized environment and energy as high priorities for the organization throughout the last decade. The strategic plan, 2008-2011, and its predecessor MYFFs (for 2000–3 and 2004–7) all highlighted environment and energy, while UNDP's senior management and headquarters staff have been energetic in representing UNDP in a variety of important international environmental fora, although leadership within country-level programmes is less evident.

Conclusion 2. UNDP corporate plans and strategies have had little influence on the selection of programme priorities and activities for the country programmes. In practice, the availability of financial resources from GEF has had a far greater influence on the priority setting and choice of activities of country offices.

Environment and energy programmes in UNDP have relied predominantly on outside funding, mobilizing an average of over $200 million annually from GEF and $30 million from the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer during the past five years, supplemented by significant co-financing from project partners. The use of core budget resources for environment and energy has been very limited since about 2000.

UNDP has been effective and efficient in implementing GEF projects and has made a significant contribution to GEF's overall success. Using GEF funding, UNDP has built up a specialized and capable technical team at headquarters and in the regional centres that is a credit to the organization.

While the success in mobilizing funds is to be commended and the GEF-funded projects implemented by UNDP are generally of high quality, the former has steered UNDP's environment and energy programming towards the so-called 'global' environmental issues. In contrast, national sustainable development priorities—such as water supply and sanitation, energy services, waste management and local and indoor air pollution—have received scant attention.

UNDP has not developed a clear corporate position, competence or niche for environment and energy that is independent of its role implementing GEF projects. Governments and other national stakeholders generally consider UNDP environment and energy work at the country level as synonymous with GEF projects. There is little sign that the environment and energy agenda resulting from GEF priorities is perceived as important or even particularly relevant within much of UNDP, which continues to regard GEF primarily as a potential source of funds for country offices that are highly dependent on their ability to mobilize resources.

Conclusion 3. UNDP responsiveness to national priorities has been uneven. The type and effectiveness of environment and energy work done by UNDP vary significantly between partner countries, with some project portfolios appearing opportunistic and uncoordinated.

UNDP responsiveness to national priorities in environment and energy has been varied and largely dependent upon the type of countries involved. UNDP programmes in the LDCs and small island developing states tend to be dominated by support for the preparation of plans and strategies. Those efforts have been of variable quality, rarely provide a sound guide for future investments and do not always appear relevant to the most pressing needs of countries. Countries viewed many such plans as worthwhile only as a step towards further international funding, little of which has materialized. There are indications of a better fit between national priorities in environment and energy with the services provided by UNDP in the larger, higher income countries where government environment programmes are able to draw on additional resources, including China.

The project-based country portfolios suffer from many of the problems endemic to development projects, notably a limited focus on longer term impacts and significant challenges to sustaining benefits after project completion. There are few obvious signs of genuine improvements in government capacities for environmental management over the last decade or two, especially in the LDCs and small island developing states, and lack of capacity is continually cited as a principal barrier to progress. Significant capacity often exists outside government, and this could be developed and utilized more effectively.

Conclusion 4. Imbalances in priority setting and programming arising from the substantial reliance of UNDP on GEF funding have received insufficient attention.

Insufficient efforts have been made by UNDP senior management at a strategic, global level to encourage staff to identify the key differences between UNDP and GEF priorities and to alert donor partners that there are important gaps to be filled. Rather, staff have been encouraged implicitly, if not pressured, to seek whatever funding is available and make the most of it, which they have generally done with considerable skill and persistence.

While UNDP has sought opportunities to broaden access to the significant resources for greenhouse gas mitigation available through GEF, more eligible project opportunities are obviously found in relatively well-off industrialized countries rather than in LDCs and small island developing states. Opportunities for greenhouse gas mitigation in

Africa, for example, have so far been limited. Partly as a result, the pervasive challenge of supporting low-cost energy access for the poorest countries and communities has tended to receive less attention from UNDP than carbon mitigation, for which funding has become easier to obtain.

Within UNDP, recent efforts to harmonize GEF with other environment and energy work are both commendable and long overdue. Notable progress has been made at the regional and global levels. The urgency of such convergence efforts has been fuelled by some uncertainty over the level of future UNDP access to GEF resources and increased awareness of the need for more diversified funding sources, apparently assuming that core budget support would remain very limited. Even so, further integration or convergence of GEF teams with the rest of the Energy and Environment Group remains challenging.

Conclusion 5. Capacity for planning and managing environment and energy work varies considerably within UNDP. Most country offices lack the capacity to engage in high-level policy dialogue with the governments.

With a few notable and impressive exceptions, country office environment and energy teams do not appear strong, and they only rarely participate in high-level policy discourse with governments and other donors on environment and energy topics outside the areas of specific interest to GEF. Project implementation tends to absorb most of the attention of country office environment and energy teams. Overstretched staff and the limitations of UNDP management capacities mean that many national stakeholders are dissatisfied with project management while headquarters and regional centre staff have also expressed concerns.

Within the country offices, enthusiasm for and effectiveness in environment and energy work appear to vary significantly depending on the interest and convictions of the respective resident representatives, which differ substantially.

In some countries frequent turnover among country office staff and among their government counterparts has led to losses of institutional memory that undermine learning processes. This may be at least partly attributable to the lack of attractive career paths for technical staff within the organization. Country offices are also burdened with poor administrative systems and reporting demands from headquarters that are burdensome and shift frequently.

Conclusion 6. Mainstreaming within UNDP—that is, including environmental considerations in other major practice areas such as poverty reduction and democratic governance—has been very limited at any level (headquarters, regional centres or country offices).

Within countries, there are few indications that UNDP has played an influential role in helping governments develop and implement sound environmental policies of direct relevance to the sectors where economic growth is anticipated (such as agriculture, industry, transport and mining). The emerging UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative holds some promise in this area, but requires careful nurturing and cannot do the job alone.

Adaptation to climate change seems likely to emerge as one of the most prominent issues in international development and thus attract substantial resources. It seems clear that adaptation measures will need to be implemented across a broad spectrum of development sectors, especially in the most vulnerable countries, the LDCs and small island developing states. So far, UNDP has treated adaptation as an environmental issue, even though it is very closely linked with poverty, economic development, governance and disaster management. UNDP must start to treat adaptation as a multisectoral development issue, not just an environmental one, if it is to play a leadership role in this area. This shift will require genuinely mainstreaming adaptation within the organization through effective integration with poverty work.

Advocating for the need to integrate environmental thinking and considerations across the entire range of development sectors within governments will continue to be a 'hard sell' for country offices if the case for mainstreaming cannot be made effectively within UNDP.

Conclusion 7. The role of UNDP in environment and energy within the United Nations system is potentially important but not fully realized.

UNDP has the potential to play an extremely important role in the area of the environment and energy in the context of sustainable development within the United Nations system, where its operational and country-driven focus, augmented by a growing technical capacity in emerging priority areas, seems broadly complementary to the normative and scientific focus of UNEP.

The relationship and quality of operational collaboration between UNDP and UNEP have improved significantly during the last two to three years, although there continue to be challenges at the operational levels. There has been positive collaboration on the implementation of GEF projects, several new partnerships have been entered into and the senior management of both organizations have sent strong signals of support for further collaboration. A review of longer term cooperation has revealed that competition for resources, incompatibilities in organizational culture and systems, a lack of clarity over respective roles at the field level and lingering distrust among staff are in some cases still proving hard to overcome.

Further opportunities for enhancing cooperation with other United Nations agencies active in environment and energy, such as the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, exist.

Conclusion 8. Measuring progress in environment and energy continues to be a challenge.

Substantial efforts have been and continue to be invested in results-based management in all UNDP programme areas. Yet UNDP reporting on environment and energy continues to focus on inputs and activities rather than on outcomes. Developing reliable, cost-effective indicators for environmental and energy investments, policy changes, and capacity development remains a worthwhile but exceedingly difficult goal. Despite some commendable progress within individual technical areas, it is evident that not everything important can be measured, and it is not easy to establish what would have happened in the absence of the activity being assessed. The performance reporting challenge is compounded by the fact that UNDP is only one contributor to the development results of a programme country. The key is to assess carefully the impact and national results that UNDP helps achieve, and to analyze and document these in coordination with other partners, rather than trying to separate the impact of the UNDP contribution. Without clear results frameworks and reporting on outcomes, UNDP has allowed itself to be drawn into making representations and commitments on performance reporting that are unrealistic given its resources.

Conclusion 9. UNDP has taken some important steps to reposition for future work in environment and energy, including seeking more diverse funding sources, although progress seems likely to be limited unless genuine mainstreaming of environment and energy takes place within the organization.

The strategic plan, 2008-2011, presents a coherent set of energy and environmental priorities for UNDP, but is unconvincing insofar as these are not tied to resource allocations, and the plan does not acknowledge or react to the major issues resulting from the high level of dependence on GEF resources.

While the emergence of some new funding sources is encouraging, the emphasis still appears to be on going after available money rather than allocating core resources to sets of activities that are consistent with the UNDP mandate. As a result, there appears to be a real risk that environment and energy will continue to receive insufficient or unbalanced attention, particularly in the LDCs and small island developing states.

The ability of UNDP to realize exciting new opportunities to work with a more diverse set of funding sources such as carbon market and adaptation funds may be constrained by limited capacity in its country offices. The move to a 'One United Nations' approach may help overcome those limitations to some extent. Yet even if it achieves greater cooperation with UNEP and other specialized agencies, UNDP will still need to strengthen its in-house environment and energy

capacities if the country offices are to provide high-quality support to programme delivery at the country level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1. UNDP should demonstrate more clearly the pursuit of its defined mandate in environment and energy rather than the specific priorities of a limited number of major donors or funds.

- UNDP must formulate its strategic environment and energy priorities in response to its mission and capabilities, as well as to the national sustainable development priorities of its partner countries. It should start to build coherent corporate plans for the environment and energy in the context of sustainable development. UNDP must mobilize and allocate resources that support these plans, rather than choosing priorities and activities opportunistically based on the availability of funding.
- UNDP should reformulate strategic environment and energy priorities, identify resource gaps, and present these to donors. In particular, the plans should (i) identify national sustainable development priorities not eligible for GEF funding and indicate how they will be addressed, especially in LDCs and small island developing states; (ii) make overall resource allocations among countries and topics based on actual needs and opportunities and (iii) develop a coherent UNDP-wide energy strategy that identifies a realistic niche for the organization reflecting needs in the poorest countries.
- To monitor progress in the above areas, UNDP should regularly report on the source and allocation of financial and human resources to the goals, priorities and programmes adopted.

Recommendation 2. UNDP should assume a proactive role to respond to national priorities.

- UNDP should strengthen its policy dialogue with programme countries to better identify national sustainable development priorities, in particular in LDCs and small island developing states. It should also advocate and seek opportunities to incorporate environment and energy concerns into national development plans and programmes and develop country-level capacities to work on these.
- In developing the country programme document with the governments, UNDP should conduct periodic stocktaking of country-level environment and energy portfolios. Partners should be invited to participate in the reviews. In countries where governmental capacity is limited, UNDP should encourage collaboration with and enhanced roles for capable individuals and organizations outside government.

Recommendation 3. UNDP should identify and implement institutional arrangements and incentives to promote the mainstreaming of environment throughout all major practice areas.

- UNDP should incorporate environment and energy within its main practices of poverty reduction, democratic governance and crisis prevention and recovery. This will require leadership and commitment at all levels of the organization, not only within the environment and energy practice.
- Mainstreaming will require strong partnerships with governments, other United Nations organizations and other actors active in the field, such as civil society and academic organizations which UNDP must foster.
- UNDP should accelerate the transition of climate change adaptation from an environmental issue to a mainstream development concern that engages the entire organization. Climate change adaptation should be considered as a flagship priority for UNDP as a whole.

Recommendation 4. UNDP should identify options for strengthening the environment and energy capacities of the country offices.

- UNDP should intensify existing efforts to focus resident representatives' attention on

environment and energy as a key component of sustainable development and build their individual capacities in these areas.

- UNDP should consider establishing new positions, upgrading existing posts and increasing the availability of staff based in the regional centres.
- UNDP should explore improvements in longer term career opportunities for technical specialists currently based at the regional centres and country offices.

SECTION I CONTEXT

Chapter 1

RATIONALE, SCOPE AND APPROACH

The UNDP Executive Board, in its decision 2006/19, approved the 2006-2007 programme of work for the Evaluation Office, including the conduct of the evaluation of the role and contribution of UNDP in environment and energy. The present report sets out the findings of the evaluation, which assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of UNDP's work at the global, regional and national levels. The evaluation supports the UNDP Administrator's substantive accountability to the Executive Board.

Environment and energy in various formulations has featured as one of the key thematic areas of UNDP's work since the 1980s. In the 2004–2007 multi-year funding framework (MYFF), 'Managing Environment and Energy for Sustainable Development' was one of the five main practice areas. The new UNDP strategic plan, 2008–2011, identifies 'Environment and Sustainable Development' as one of four focus areas.

The objective of the evaluation is to assess UNDP's positioning and contributions to managing environment and energy for sustainable development. The evaluation is both retrospective and prospective, i.e., taking stock of the past while looking into the future with respect to UNDP's role. The intended audience of the report includes the UNDP Executive Board, senior management, the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP), regional centres, country offices, national governments and counterparts, other UN agencies and the international development community at large.

The evaluation covers all programmatic and operational aspects of the environment and energy practice in all UNDP's geographic regions and at all levels—global, regional and country levels. The evaluation covers the period from 2002 to 2007. In order to contextualize and situate the current programme in its historical context, the evaluation also considers how events before 2002 shaped UNDP's approach to environment and energy as well as how the organization is positioned to move forwards. The most recent initiatives obviously cannot yet be evaluated and are noted as being underway.

The evaluation does not aim to analyze individual projects, programmes or advocacy and policy initiatives in environment and energy. It analyzes a selection of major technical areas of environment and energy that UNDP is active in.

1.1 EVALUATION ISSUES

There are two basic issues: (i) UNDP's contributions to environment and energy in relation to its main mission of poverty reduction and (ii) its effectiveness in using the financial resources that were made available from core and external sources. This evaluation focuses on both issues, with an emphasis on the first one.

Assessing UNDP's performance in environment and energy based on its contributions to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is hindered by the way the MDGs address environment and energy. MDG-7 on environment has four targets, two of which are quantified, but these apply to clean water and sanitation as well as urban slums, areas in which UNDP does not work. Energy was not an explicit goal in the MDGs. While it can be argued that environment and energy are implicit in all of the MDGs, this does not provide a basis for assessing progress.

In addition, the evaluation looks specifically at the following issues:

Mainstreaming: UNDP has aimed to incorporate environmental management across its entire range of programming since well before 2002. Two aspects of environmental mainstreaming were assessed by this evaluation: (i) mainstreaming within UNDP, for example, within the poverty reduction and governance practices and (ii) mainstreaming at the country level, that is, how UNDP has incorporated environment and energy into its country programmes and helped the partner countries to incorporate these considerations into their own policies and productive sectors.

Availability of resources: The evaluation has analyzed how UNDP allocated and mobilized resources for environment and energy from its own and external sources. It also focused on how resources have been used and how this has affected the direction and performance of UNDP's work in this area. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has been by far the most significant financing source for UNDP environment and energy programmes.[1] Within UNDP, GEF programmes have received significantly more resources than environment and energy work financed from UNDP's core budget. This evaluation did not evaluate GEF's performance or mandate but rather whether UNDP's partnership strategy with GEF has enabled UNDP to provide effective and relevant support to programme countries.

Responsibility for environment and energy within the United Nations: UNDP's role within the UN system, especially its relationship and division of responsibilities with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other agencies, has come under increasing scrutiny since the 2006 high-level panel report, 'Delivering as One'.[2] This evaluation assessed the effectiveness and added value of partnerships between UNDP and UNEP on environment and energy topics.

1.2 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The essential criteria included under objectives-based evaluations, that is, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, were addressed:

1. Relevance, or the rationale for UNDP's involvement in the field vis-à-vis other actors and its own organizational mandate supporting the development results of partner countries;
2. Effectiveness, or the positioning of UNDP's programmes and non-programmatic activities at the global, regional and national levels and their effectiveness in achieving results;
3. Efficiency, or the relative ability of the approaches used, partnerships forged and resources allocated and mobilized to enable UNDP to achieve its stated goals; and,
4. Sustainability, or the contribution of UNDP's work to sustainable human development and to lasting change in the areas of environment and energy.

1.3 EVALUATION APPROACH

This was an objectives-based evaluation, focused on whether actual outcomes are likely to achieve stated objectives. The evaluation considered the changing global environmental debate as well as evolving international concerns and priorities. The evaluation lines of inquiry recognized the following:

1. **Positioning and performance:** Inquiries primarily consisted of (i) an analysis of the policies, strategies and priorities adopted by UNDP in defining its role in managing environment and energy for sustainable development, (ii) an overview of the programmatic and non-programmatic activities undertaken and (iii) a performance assessment of the various activities at the global, regional and national levels. The evaluation also considered the links between country-level

1. At the end of 2007, the GEF Project Database online showed 1,107 UNDP projects since 1992 have received GEF grants amounting to $2.7 billion, approximately half of which have been approved since 2002.
2. 'UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment' 2006.

operational programmes and higher level planning processes for environment and energy, including the two MYFFs and the development of the strategic plan for 2008–2011.

2. **Programmatic and thematic architecture:** The evaluation considered the effectiveness of the organizational architecture for environment and energy within UNDP since 2002, including the expansion of the regional centres. These inquiries included such areas as setting priorities for environment and energy within the organization, promoting organizational learning and feeding lessons into policies and programmatic development. The evaluation also examined human and financial resource allocations at the country, regional and headquarters levels and assessed the consequences of these allocations on operational activities. Consideration was also given to the value that each *vertical* level (country, regional, global) adds to information flows and decision-making in the practice area. The *horizontal* organizational configurations established for different environment and energy technical areas were also studied for their influence on the priority-setting and coherence of these areas.

The evaluation thus analyzed UNDP's policy, praxis and performance along two principal axes. First, the entire environment and energy practice area was analyzed holistically at the main levels of operations, i.e., national, regional and global. Then the evaluation assessed a selection of the most important technical areas, namely climate change, energy and biodiversity, at all of the above levels. Important cross-cutting issues, mainly mainstreaming and partnerships, merited specific attention in the evaluation.

The evaluation took place between June 2007 and February 2008, with country and regional centre visits between August and November 2007.

1.3.1 CASE STUDY APPROACH

To this end, this evaluation adopted a case study approach. Country-level case studies provided the principal information source and focus of analysis for the evaluation. These case studies were particularly important for the insights they provided on UNDP's work in environment and energy at the country level, where the organization's operational focus and most of the programmatic resources are allocated.

Extensive consideration was given to the selection of case study countries. Given the time and resource limitations, a purposive approach was adopted to reflect: (i) a regional balance (with a significant emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa, which is UNDP's stated region of emphasis), (ii) a mix of country types, including large, middle-income and least-developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS) and (iii) an overall mix of both UNDP core and external funding (notably from GEF) for environment and energy operations. An attempt was made to give greater weight to countries with relatively significant UNDP environment and energy portfolios during the second MYFF phase, that is, since 2004. In finalizing the country selection, the Evaluation Office consulted closely with the BDP, in particular the Environment and Energy Group (EEG), as well as all regional bureaux. Logistical and practical issues were also taken into account, including the number of recent evaluation visits to particular countries. The evaluation team was requested not to consider the eight countries participating in the 'One UN' pilot exercises.

Eight countries were visited (Table 1), including Fiji and Samoa where UNDP has multicountry offices covering a total of 14 countries (10 from Fiji, 4 from Samoa). Two UNDP regional centres as well as the Pacific sub-regional centre were also visited. In connection with the visit to the Bangkok regional centre, a less detailed review of the Thailand country programme was conducted.

The selected UNDP country offices were asked to prepare background information, including detailed data sets of environment and energy operations and programmatic resources in the countries, before evaluation team visits. Country

Table 1. Case Study Countries and Regional Centres/Sub-Regional Resource Facilities		
UNDP Region	**Case Studies**	**Regional Centres/SURFs**
Africa	Burkina Faso, Kenya, Malawi	-
Asia & the Pacific[3]	China, Fiji, Samoa	Bangkok, Suva
Latin America & the Caribbean	Ecuador	-
Europe & the Commonwealth of Independent States	FYR Macedonia	Bratislava

offices also were asked to organize meetings with key national stakeholders, including government, donors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector and academia, based on guidance by the evaluation team. NGOs, including IUCN, suggested key individuals and organizations from civil society to consult with in each case study country, to supplement proposals from the country offices and to ensure a balanced set of consultations.

Pilot country visits to Malawi and Kenya enabled the evaluation team to refine the approach and key questions. Four members of the international evaluation team participated in the pilot country visits to Malawi and Kenya. The other countries and regional centres were visited by two members of the evaluation team, in most cases supplemented by national consultants. Fiji and Samoa were visited by one team member supported by a consultant from the region.

Global consultations focused on UNDP headquarters staff and management, as well as organizations whose interests and goals overlap with UNDP.

The evaluation team visited UNEP headquarters in Nairobi and its Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) in Bangkok to discuss past, present and future partnerships and collaboration with different UNEP divisions, as well as UNDP's future positioning on environment and energy within the UN system.

Other global consultations included interviews with the staff of international organizations with overlapping interests, priorities and concerns. These included the GEF Secretariat, the GEF Evaluation Office, the World Bank, IUCN, the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), and the World Resources Institute (WRI).

The primary data collection methodology used was a semi-structured interview with internal and external stakeholders identified based on a mapping of key actors. Information sources *within* UNDP were mainly staff working on environment and energy at global, regional and national levels, as well as resident representatives/coordinators in the countries visited. Information sources *outside* UNDP included staff at major partner organizations and other stakeholders with an informed view of UNDP operations, such as government departments, donor agencies, research organizations and civil society. Consultations with external stakeholders were undertaken at national, global (or multilateral) and, where feasible, regional levels.

1.3.2 DESK STUDIES

Secondary evidence was gathered through a study of key documents related to UNDP policies and strategies as well as evaluative evidence from existing evaluations.

3. A brief visit to the Thailand country office and to key government and NGO partners was made in connection with the visit to the Bangkok Regional Centre.

The evaluation studied UNDP's goals and objectives elaborated in the 2000–2003 and 2004–2007 MYFFs,[4] the first of which coincided with the introduction of results-based management at UNDP. The two MYFFs, together with associated reports on progress and performance, provide the defining overview of objectives, priorities and achievements from UNDP management's perspective. These were a critical starting point for the evaluation.

A significant body of project and programme evaluations already carried out by UNDP were relevant to this evaluation. These included outcome evaluations of environment and energy programmes, country-level Assessments of Development Results (ADRs) and Regional and Global Cooperation Framework evaluations. For the case study countries selected for the evaluation (see below), all outcome evaluations and ADRs were reviewed, as well as individual project evaluations and GEF Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs) on a sample basis.

Applicable evaluations carried out by the GEF Evaluation Office were also reviewed, including the 2003 GEF Overall Performance Study and its background papers on specific focal areas, plus the 2007 'Comparative Advantages of the GEF Agencies' study.

UNDP performance reporting at the country level has been based on the results-oriented annual report (ROAR), which provides the framework for the country/regional programmes' annual critical review. ROARs were reviewed as part of the country case studies.[5]

A variety of UNDP documents were reviewed, including relevant guidance materials, practice notes and performance assessments on environment and energy. Available financial data on UNDP's environment and energy programmes were also analyzed.

Specific studies were carried out on the major topics contained in this evaluation, including UNDP's relationship with UNEP and GEF, as well as the central thematic areas. These studies used centrally available data, policy documents, reviews and evaluations, as well as information from the country and regional centre visits undertaken as part of this evaluation.

1.3.3 EVALUATION CHALLENGES

Evaluating UNDP's role in environment and energy is a demanding and complex task. Several factors made the task more challenging:

- Shortcomings of case studies – A sample of eight countries represented the LDCs, especially in Africa, and the SIDS. However, middle-income countries in Latin America and Asia are not equally well represented. The case studies involved country visits of about one week each, generally carried out by two evaluation team members. Despite the useful preparatory work carried out by the country offices, the intensive itineraries arranged and the significant amounts of information collected, in-depth analysis of individual projects and programmes was not possible.
- Limited financial information – UNDP headquarters was unable to provide reliable data on the financial resources used for environment and energy prior to the selection of case study countries. While this information is available for GEF-funded programmes, it could not be provided in a usable form for activities supported by UNDP core budgets or other sources. Similarly, the selected case study country offices had difficulty in providing coherent and consistent financial information on their environment and energy projects. The fragmented and unreliable nature of the available financial information has hampered efforts to obtain an overview or insights into trends over time, or to analyze the national project portfolios.

4. 'Environment and Natural Resources' was one of six critical areas in MYFF-1 and 'Managing Energy and Environment for Sustainable Development' was one of five strategic goals in MYFF-2.
5. 'Comparative Advantages of the GEF Agencies.' GEF Council GEF/C.31/5 2007.

- Paucity of aggregated performance measures – While individual project inputs and outputs are monitored, performance monitoring systems were found to provide little usable information on goals, results or outcomes (a result consistent with the recent evaluation of results-based management in UNDP[6]). No significant application of performance indicators at a programme level was apparent, and no systems or procedures are in place to adequately measure performance at the country level or higher. There seems no reason to assume this situation is limited to UNDP's environment and energy practice; the practice areas' reliance on common systems suggests this may well be true across UNDP.
- Reviews of the individual technical areas that UNDP has focused on in environment and energy were restricted to climate change, energy and biodiversity. Other important areas are referred to in the context of the case studies.

To address these limitations, extra care was taken to map the stakeholders and design the semi-structured interviews with the identified stakeholders.

1.3.4 QUALITY ASSURANCE

An independent advisory panel of three international authorities with expertise in various aspects of environment and energy, as well as evaluation methodologies and approaches, was constituted. The panel reviewed the validity and quality of evidence and verified both that findings were based on evidence and the conclusions and recommendations were based on findings.

This was complemented by the standard quality assurance and review processes for evaluations conducted by the Evaluation Office. These included detailed reviews of the concept paper, terms of reference (TOR), inception report, and draft evaluation report.

The inception report was developed and the evaluation approach and questions refined based on consultations with a number of stakeholders in UNDP headquarters and following the pilot case studies. Stakeholder feedback was sought on draft reports for factual inaccuracies, errors of interpretations and omission of evidence that could materially change the findings of the report.

1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report is organized as follows. The next chapter in this background section traces the justification and evolution of environment and energy in UNDP against a global context and emerging priorities. It then describes how UNDP sets goals and objectives and how performance is reported on. It describes the organization of environment and energy in UNDP as well as the major partnerships. Then the available financial resources are identified. Section II contains the evaluative evidence and findings related to activities and programmes at the country, headquarters and regional levels. It analyzes the findings related to environment and energy mainstreaming, as well as UNDP's strategies and performance reporting related to the programmes. The second part of the section focuses on major thematic areas before closing with an analysis of the role of the Global Environment Facility. Section III presents the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation.

6. 'Evaluation of Results-based Management at UNDP.' UNDP Evaluation Office 2007.

Chapter 2

ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY IN UNDP

This chapter describes UNDP's role in environment and energy in the context of (i) major global developments, (ii) emerging priorities within UNDP, (iii) setting goals and objectives and reporting on them, (iv) the evolving organization of UNDP's environment and energy work, (v) UNDP's relationships with major partners, notably UNEP and GEF and (vi) the financial resources available for environment and energy at UNDP.

2.1 GLOBAL CONTEXT

UNDP's role in environment and energy since 2002 has been significantly shaped by several key developments during the last three to four decades as environment has emerged as a global concern. This chapter begins with a brief review of some of the more important landmarks as a prelude for discussing how UNDP established its goals and objectives in environment and energy since 2002.

The UN Conference on the Human Environment (the Stockholm Conference) in 1972 was the first major conference on international environmental issues and led to UNEP's establishment, a key development in the current international environmental architecture. At this point UNDP was not active in the environment field, which barely existed as a component of international development assistance.

During the late 1980s, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, a.k.a. the Brundtland Commission) promoted an integrated approach to improving environmental management while accelerating economic development in developing countries, introducing the concept of 'sustainable development' to a much broader audience.

UNDP's first programmatic environment role came in 1973, however, in response to the severe Sahelian drought and famine of 1968–1974. The United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) was created under UNDP, even though in practice UNSO was managed autonomously. In 1994 UNSO became the UNDP Office to Combat Desertification and Drought. UNSO was active in the environment field for more than 25 years, initially in providing infrastructure to access disaster areas in 22 Sahelian countries and later under a broader mandate to combat desertification and drought worldwide. This wider mandate appeared to contribute to UNSO's ultimate demise as donors perceived its earlier, more effective efforts being dissipated; as a result, they gradually phased out support for UNSO in favour of their own programmes. UNDP relocated the remaining UNSO staff to Nairobi in 2002 under a new Drylands Development Centre (DDC) that continues to provide global support for drylands development worldwide. Relevant to this evaluation, the director of DDC leads the Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI), an important UNDP-UNEP partnership programme.

UNDP became much more involved in environment in connection with the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, or the Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro. UNDP took an active role in the conference, notably through the Global Forum which for the first time brought a wide range of civil society organizations to the table in an intergovernmental meeting. The first two major multilateral environmental agreements—the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)—were adopted at UNCED. The Desertification Convention was agreed as part of Agenda 21, a plan of action for sustainable development.

The GEF was also officially launched at UNCED. It was set up specifically to fund projects and programmes that protect the global environment in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The funding was to be new and additional, that is, not converting official development assistance to environmental programmes. Since its creation in 1991 the GEF has provided a total of $7.4 billion in grants and generated over $28 billion in co-financing from other sources to support close to 2,000 projects. One purpose of the GEF was to help the two major development agencies, UNDP and the World Bank, to mainstream environmental concerns into their programming. The three original implementing agencies of GEF projects were UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank, which still dominate the partnership even though other agencies were later added[7].

In terms of specific thematic areas, UNCED, the GEF, and the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) have had the effect of singling out biodiversity conservation and climate change as 'global' environmental problems as opposed to 'local' or 'national' concerns, such as water supply and sanitation, land degradation, waste management and the lack of affordable energy. This led swiftly to increased funding for these newly defined global problems and, consequently, to diminished official development assistance for what came to be defined as 'national' and 'local' problems, despite their ubiquitous presence. The desertification convention may have been an exception where 'local' and 'global' environmental problems coincided, although it wasn't accepted as a GEF priority until early in the current decade.

International development cooperation was profoundly influenced by the adoption of eight Millennium Development Goals at the 2000 UN Millennium Summit. Goal 7 (MDG-7) is to ensure environmental sustainability, but its targets are vague and the MDGs are silent on energy. While it can be argued that environment and energy are implicit in all of the MDGs, they certainly are not explicit.

MDG-7 originally had three targets, while a fourth was added retroactively: (i) integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources; (ii) reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss; (iii) reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation and (iv) achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020. UNDP has focused only on the first two targets because neither of the two other, quantified MDG-7 targets has been seen as central to UNDP's mandate nor a priority of GEF's global environmental programming. Reliance on GEF funding has in practice meant that UNDP has had limited financial resources to address these principal environmental targets of the MDGs. Furthermore, the primary mandate for water supply and urban slums lies with UNICEF and UN-Habitat respectively.

The 2005 World Summit on Sustainable Development reviewed progress towards the MDGs to date and reported the following for Goal 7: "Most countries have committed to the principles of sustainable development. But this has not resulted in sufficient progress to reverse the loss of the world's environmental resources. Achieving the goal will require greater attention to the plight of the poor, whose day-to-day subsistence is often directly linked to the natural resources around them, and an unprecedented level of global cooperation." This assessment helped to re-emphasize the importance of integrating environmental protection with economic development at national levels.

7. African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Inter-American Development Bank, FAO, IFAD, and UNIDO.

2.2 EMERGING PRIORITIES

Prior to UNCED, UNDP had not developed any significant environmental competence beyond the largely autonomous UNSO. In 1991 UNDP had one environmental staff member and then appointed a high-level advisor who subsequently became the Secretary-General of the Earth Summit. However, with a presence in virtually every developing country, UNDP had by this time become established as the UN's principal development agency. This enabled UNDP to emerge from Rio with the mandate of becoming the UN's "Sustainable Development Agency" and to become one of the three initial GEF implementing agencies. During the 1990s, UNDP took on a more active role, placing sustainable development advisers in the country offices and emphasizing sustainable development concerns in the country programmes.

With its focus on the interaction between people and their natural environment, the 1992 UNDP Human Development Report (HDR)[8] emphasized the role of sustainable development in improving people's choices, both for current and future generations. Consistent with its role as a development agency, UNDP conceptualized environment within sustainable human development. The HDR stated that "one of the greatest threats to sustainable human and economic development comes from the downward spiral of poverty and environmental degradation that threatens current and future generations." The report further recognized that "the poor are disproportionately threatened by the environmental hazards and health risks posed by pollution, inadequate housing, poor sanitation, polluted water and a lack of other basic services. Many of these already deprived people also live in the most ecologically vulnerable areas." Outlining the justification for UNDP to broaden its focus, the HDR concluded that: "...sustainable development implies a new concept of economic growth—one that provides fairness and opportunity for all the world's people, not just the privileged few, without further destroying the world's finite natural resources and without compromising the world's carrying capacity" (p. 17).

For UNDP the 1990s were a period of dramatic expansion in the environment field encouraged by supportive administrators, especially during the second half of the decade. From 2000 onwards, however, this trend changed significantly with a new Administrator who significantly downgraded UNDP's emphasis on and interest in environment and natural resource management, which was viewed as having relatively little to contribute to UNDP's core mandates addressing poverty and governance.

As part of a broader UNDP shift in emphasis upstream towards policy and capacity development, staff positions in forestry, agriculture and sustainable livelihoods were all eliminated, as were sustainable development advisory positions that had been established in more than 40 country offices during the 1990s. These changes demoralized UNDP's environment staff, increased dependence on GEF resources for environment and energy programming and further divided GEF-supported activities from UNDP's major programmes.

2.3 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES AND REPORTING ON PERFORMANCE

UNDP's goals and objectives for the evaluation period are identified in two MYFFs, for 2000–2003 (MYFF-1) and 2004–2007 (MYFF-2). The MYFF approach was recently succeeded by the strategic plan for 2008–11, adopted in late 2007. 'Environment and Natural Resources' was one of six strategic results frameworks (or priorities) in MYFF-1, and 'Managing Energy and Environment for Sustainable Development' was identified as one of five core goals in MYFF-2 (hence the title of this evaluation). Subsequent achievements in environment and natural resources were included in the Administrator's reports to the Executive Board on MYFF-1 and MYFF-2 (Box 1).

8. *Human Development Report:. Global Dimensions of Human Development.* UNDP 1992.

Box 1. Performance reported in the MYFFs

MYFF-1 (2000–2003)[9]

- UNDP expended $451 million in donor co-financing to the environment, including contributions from the Montreal Protocol and the GEF.
- The total core contribution to the sector amounted to around $113 million, while government cost-sharing came to around $227 million.
- 'Sustainable energy' has had an increasing role in country offices' environment portfolios (70 percent of country offices reported having programmes).
- Twelve percent of the country offices' 'most significant achievements' were reported in environment and natural resources.
- 'Strengthening national policy and legal frameworks' was the predominant mode of assistance.
- About 70 percent of outcomes were reported as achieved in environment and natural resources, although 'monitoring and assessment of environmental sustainability' was one of the poorest performing areas with 40 percent of outcomes reported as unlikely to be achieved by the end of 2003.
- In biodiversity, using GEF resources, UNDP promoted conservation of 27 million hectares and supported operations in 285 protected areas.
- Capacity building and technical assistance were reported from climate change mitigation projects in 111 countries. Thirty LDCs received support in preparing national action plans to adapt and respond to climate change.

MYFF-2 (2004–2007)[10]

- Environment and energy received $963 million (11 percent) of total UNDP programme expenditures of $10.6 billion.
- Annual spending on environment and energy increased by 30 percent from 2004 to 2006, largely due to GEF resources.
- Environment activities were underreported by 'at least $130 million', due to many environmental projects being misclassified under other service lines.
- About 28 percent of UNDP's environmental resources went to sustainable development frameworks and strategies, 28 percent to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and 20 percent to access to sustainable energy resources.
- During 2006, country offices reported that 34 percent of environmental outcomes were associated with support for sustainable development frameworks and strategies in 84 countries.
- $108 million was spent on effective water governance.

During the formulation of both of the MYFFs, consideration was given internally to excluding environment as a specific priority. An internal debate on whether UNDP should be giving priority to environment, and to a lesser degree, energy, has continued until today and reappears each time UNDP enters a new round of strategic planning. The new strategic plan, however, clearly confirms UNDP's commitment to the area.

2.4 ORGANIZATION

2.4.1 ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY PRACTICE

Significant changes in the organization and title of UNDP's environment and energy practice have reflected key shifts in the roles, priorities and physical location of staff. This section covers the period since the early 2000s, during which time two main features stand out: continued

9. DP/2003/12.
10. DP/2007/17.

decentralization from the headquarters and a sharp decline in the number of core staff positions in environment.

As with other practice areas, the strategic development of environment and energy is the responsibility of BDP. The practice area was extensively restructured in 2001 to combine energy and environment under an Energy and Environment Group[11] within BDP. The role of EEG is to provide orientation and a coherent intellectual position to UNDP on global issues as well as to engage in global debates on core issues with external partners. EEG also manages the environment and energy part of the Global Cooperation Framework (GCF) as well as a number of projects, most of which are externally funded. EEG's core function is to link with global processes, provide knowledge management and ensure that all of the organization's operations in environment and energy draw upon a common understanding, lessons from experiences and a solid evidence base.

In 2000, the 'New BDP Implementation Plan' defined two general corporate roles for the bureau: (i) translating Executive Board decisions on UNDP's development priorities into specific policy instruments, products and service for practical use by global, regional and country programmes and (ii) actively engaging with regional bureaux and country offices to help provide policy support to programme countries and systematize the ensuing lessons into a more coherent corporate approach.

EEG is charged with providing intellectual leadership to the organization in environment and energy while engaging in global processes with external actors and partners. EEG is also expected to unify the organization's policies and approaches, thus ensuring that the operational units are aligned according to a consistent and informed UNDP position and common understanding. EEG and other BDP headquarters units are intended to possess the substance matter specialist knowledge and space to focus on such policy research on behalf of the rest of UNDP, which is occupied with more operational aspects. An important function of EEG is therefore to disseminate corporate thinking and provide policy advice to the operational units, including the regional bureaux and country offices.

Organizationally EEG also includes UNDP's GEF and Montreal Protocol units. Both the GEF and Montreal Protocol units have specific mandates—to mobilize funding from their respective funding sources and support the development, management and monitoring of the ensuing projects—which differ considerably from that of the EEG as a whole.

2.4.2 COUNTRY-LEVEL OPERATIONS

At operational levels environment and energy are the responsibility of the regional bureaux and the country offices, each of which have focal staff members responsible for the practice area. At the regional bureau level, the focal point is normally one of the programme specialists who handles environment and energy practice matters in addition to her or his other duties related to certain sub-regions or countries.

The country offices are quite autonomous and work under the overall oversight of the regional bureaux. Guided by the MYFFs and now the strategic plan, country office management has full authority in allocating both financial and staff resources within the country programme. Using the Targeted Resource Allocation to Countries (TRAC) fund, country offices are allocated resources through a complex process managed by the regional bureaux. However, it is at the resident representative's discretion how these funds are used. In addition, it is expected that the country offices mobilize additional funds for their operations. The country offices report back to the headquarters through the ROAR as well as other mechanisms, such as the Resident

11. Its immediate predecessor had been named the Environmentally Sustainable Development Group (ESDG) and, prior to that, Sustainable Energy and Environment Division.

Coordinator's Annual Report. Their performance is assessed through mechanisms such as the balanced scorecard, which contains indicators related to client satisfaction, internal efficiency, learning and growth and financial resources. It is worth noting that none of the indicators in the balanced scorecard pertains to substantive performance of the programme.

All country offices have environment and energy teams that are in charge of developing and managing the programme pertaining to the practice area. This will include both upstream activities, such as policy dialogue and capacity development, as well as day-to-day operations. Most country offices rely on national execution for programmes and projects. The capacity of the country offices' environment and energy teams was assessed in connection with the country case studies and is discussed elsewhere in the report (see especially Chapter 5.5).

2.4.3 REGIONALIZATION

UNDP initiated a regionalization process in the early 2000s designed to move the headquarters services closer to its clients. First, Sub-Regional Resource Facilities (SURFs) were established in the main developing regions. Over time, some of these SURFs were converted into full-fledged regional centres set up to support the country offices with analysis, policy advice and support for national capacity development, knowledge networking and sharing of good practices. Regional centres also carry out advocacy and run their own regional programmes. The first regional centres were established in 2003–2005 in the Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region (Bratislava) and the Asia-Pacific region (Bangkok and Colombo, with a sub-regional centre in Suva for the Pacific Islands). Regional centres for Southern Africa (Johannesburg), Latin America and the Caribbean (Panama), and the Arab States (Cairo) were established later. SURFs are still operating in West Africa (Dakar) and in the Arab States (Beirut). All of the centres, with the exception of Colombo and the Pacific centre in Suva, have policy advisers and programmes in environment and energy.

The organization of the SURFs and regional centres as well as their role vis-à-vis the country programmes has evolved even over the short period of their existence. Initiated as BDP outposts, they have transformed into joint operations with the regional bureaux. The latter now manage the regional centres, although some BDP staff still work as policy advisers. There have been efforts to define the correct balance between demand-driven work (notably, support for the country offices) and programmatic work on strategic and emerging regional issues (for example, transboundary natural resource management or environmental externalities).

2.5 MAJOR PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are essential for UNDP to achieve its goals. This is particularly true at the country level where UNDP works with a large number of partners, not only from the partner governments but from civil society organizations, especially, national and international NGOs, academia and the private sector. They also include donors and other UN agencies. Such partnerships were assessed in connection with the country case studies and will be featured throughout the report. Two major partnerships have been of particular importance for UNDP, those with UNEP and with GEF.

2.5.1 UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

As mentioned above, UNEP was established in 1972 as a result of the Stockholm Conference, with three core functions: (i) knowledge acquisition and assessment, (ii) environmental quality management and (iii) international supporting actions, now referred to as capacity building and development. UNEP's role was to be normative and catalytic, and it was not expected to have operational functions conducted through national programmes.

UNDP has identified a number of areas where there has been active collaboration with UNEP:

- UNDP and UNEP collaborate on a significant portfolio of approximately $210 million in GEF-funded projects that are under joint implementation.

- UNDP and UNEP co-organized and co-managed the establishment of the Spain MDG Achievement Fund and oversaw the allocation of $95 million in funding to 18 countries.
- UNDP and UNEP-WCMC (World Conservation Monitoring Centre) undertook a large work programme of workshops and publications linking biodiversity and the MDGs.
- On climate change, UNDP and UNEP:
  - Co-created the 'Nairobi Framework' during the Nairobi UNFCCC Conference of Parties in 2005;
  - Are implementing a joint project on capacity building for climate change negotiators in developing countries; and
  - Co-organized, with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNFCCC, the September 2007 High-Level Event on Climate Change (with participation by over 80 heads of state).
- UNDP and UNEP are now co-managing the Millennium Assessment Follow-up by co-hosting the secretariat and co-chairing the technical work.
- UNDP is supporting UNEP with its environmental management group activities to make the UN carbon neutral and 'green' UN Procurement.
- UNDP and UNEP have launched a joint sustainable energy programme.

There are many potential benefits from operational collaboration between UNDP and UNEP. Perhaps most important, UNDP has a network of country offices with considerable experience implementing national projects that UNEP does not, while UNEP has scientific and technical expertise and networks in specific environmental areas that UNDP does not.

Since GEF was established, UNEP has been the third largest implementing agency (after UNDP and the World Bank). Joint implementation of GEF projects represents the most substantive set of collaborative activities during the period covered by the evaluation. These joint projects were noted in some of the case study countries, but were not subject to individual or detailed study as a full assessment of the relationship and division of labour between UNEP and UNDP's environment and energy programmes was beyond this evaluation's scope.

While there are many positive examples of the two organizations working well together, as listed above, there has been strong competition between UNDP and UNEP for financial resources, especially GEF resources. This has had some negative effects on relationships at both staff and management levels, exacerbated by what was perceived by UNDP as an unwelcome expansion of UNEP into country-level work. From 2007 onwards UNEP could no longer use GEF resources to support in-country work.

During the last two years, several new partnerships and memoranda of understanding on specific operational issues have emerged between the two agencies, with strong support from the UNEP Executive Director and the UNDP Administrator. The principal areas of collaboration include climate change and capacity development related to the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and chemicals management. The willingness of senior managers of UNDP and UNEP to work together has evidently improved significantly during the last few years. This is an important development in helping build and, where necessary, improve relationships at operational levels.

Most of the current collaborative arrangements are so new that it would be premature to attempt to assess their results. This evaluation has reviewed (but not evaluated) the experience of one particular partnership, the Poverty-Environment Initiative. While relatively small (only $12 million had been spent as the evaluation began), this is an important case study for three reasons: (i) although still a relatively young programme that is just starting

to scale up significantly after a pilot phase, PEI is one of the longest-running examples of operational collaboration between the two agencies and therefore constitutes an important test; (ii) PEI is aimed at environmental mainstreaming, which this report and others identify as needing particular encouragement and strengthening within UNDP and (iii) PEI is one of very few substantive UNDP programmes in environment that does not rely on GEF resources.

2.5.2 GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

GEF provides grants and concessional resources for projects and programmes that address six complex global environmental issues: biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, climate change, international waters, land degradation, ozone layer depletion and persistent organic pollutants (POPs). As GEF started up in the early 1990s, UNDP appointed regional GEF advisors who were physically located in the respective regional bureaux. Starting around 2000, a separate UNDP-GEF team was formed reporting to the head of BDP.

When GEF was first established, considerable emphasis was put on the funding stream being new and additional, rather than being existing development assistance redirected for the environment. However, contrary to this goal, GEF soon became the most important source (sometimes the only source) of international financing for government environmental programmes, especially in the LDCs and SIDS.

Consistent with GEF's mandate and priorities, the main focus of UNDP's GEF team has been projects generating significant global environmental benefits, that is, benefits reaching beyond the boundaries of the countries in which projects were being implemented, rather than national or local benefits. While there are clearly projects that can deliver both national and global benefits, and UNDP staff have often worked hard to stretch GEF criteria to support such projects, generating national benefits is not the main purpose of GEF.

2.6 FINANCIAL RESOURCES

While reliable data on UNDP's overall use of financial resources for environment and energy have been hard to obtain, there are strong indications that core-funded environment and energy activities were in decline as UNDP was progressively increasing its share of GEF resources. UNDP's overall core budget declined significantly during the 1990s, from a high of $928 million in 1994 to $634 million in 2000, recovering to $842 by 2004. By then UNDP was mobilizing nearly $100 million of GEF funding per year. In response, UNDP came to rely more and more on GEF resources to support environment and energy programmes. During the most recent GEF funding phase (2003–2006), UNDP had the highest value of project approvals among the GEF implementing agencies.

It has been suggested that environment and energy resources from the core budget were underreported by about $130 million during 2004–2006 due to environmental projects being recorded by country offices as governance or poverty activities. This estimate of *under*reporting may well be correct, although environment inputs were significantly *over*reported in at least two of our case study countries. Further investigation revealed that the financial reporting database used by headquarters to capture core resource use under MYFF-2 was unreliable. The evaluation team was then advised to seek more accurate data directly from the country offices. Table 2, drawn from the database in use at headquarters, provides only an indicative general overview of how financial resources were allocated among the priority areas.

To date UNDP-GEF project approvals have a cumulative total value of more than $2.3 billion.[12] The average annual value of UNDP-GEF projects approved has increased steadily from about $70 million in the early 1990s to $100 million in the

12. The most readily available data is based on GEF approvals, although this does not give a full picture of activity levels due to the often considerable time lag between project approval and the start of implementation.

late 1990s, $170 million around 2000 and over $200 million since 2002. UNDP has also increased its share of GEF projects relative to the other implementing agencies. During the most recent GEF funding period, UNDP's share of GEF programming reached 43 percent, more than any other implementing agency. UNDP's cumulative average share since 1992 is about 37 percent.[13]

Within the entire set of UNDP-GEF projects to date, the most important focal areas have been climate change (36 percent), biodiversity (30 percent) and international waters (13 percent). Projects combining two or more focal areas account for 14 percent. Biodiversity has declined over time in relative, but not absolute, terms while climate change has had a stable share since about 2000. Other focal areas have been much smaller: land degradation (4 percent), POPs (2 percent), ozone depletion (1 percent), and integrated ecosystem management (<1 percent), largely because these are still new areas that (with the exception of ozone depletion) were not eligible for GEF funding during the first decade. Land degradation and POPs have each grown rapidly since 2002, however, and currently account for 14 and 12 percent of approvals, respectively. International waters funding has declined in both relative and absolute terms during the last five to seven years.

In regional terms, the overall data are skewed by unusually high approvals for Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean and low Africa approvals from 1998 to 2001. Since then the pattern has been more consistent, with Africa and the Asia-Pacific region sharing 55-60 percent of approvals fairly equally, while Latin America and the Caribbean received about 20 percent. The Arab States have received about 8 percent over the last ten years, and Europe and the CIS have averaged 15 percent overall.

Comparing focal areas across regions, the total value of approved projects for climate change has exceeded biodiversity in Asia and the Pacific during every GEF phase since 1994, while

Table 2. Total UNDP Environment and Energy Expenditures by Service Line during MYFF-2 Phase[14]

Service line	2004	2005	2006	Total	%
Frameworks and strategies for sustainable development	61.7	90.1	110.4	**262.2**	28
Effective water governance	26.0	41.6	40.1	**107.7**	11
Access to sustainable energy services	52.6	59.7	76.1	**188.4**	20
Sustainable land management and desertification	15.5	19.2	14.2	**48.9**	5
Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity	86.0	86.7	90.7	**263.4**	28
Ozone and POPs	25.9	27.3	14.1	**67.3**	7
Others	0.9	6.3	4.5	**11.7**	1
Total	**268.6**	**330.9**	**350.1**	**949.7**	**100**

13. These percentages include programmes implemented by UNDP on behalf of GEF 'corporate', notably the GEF Small Grants Programme.

14. Includes expenditures from core resources, bilateral contributions, thematic trust funds and related co-finance, as well as recipient government contributions.

biodiversity has led climate change in every other region. Biodiversity funding has been more than double climate change funding in Latin America and the Caribbean, and slightly less than double climate change in Africa. In Latin America and the Caribbean this pattern has been more or less stable over time, while in Africa climate change has exceeded biodiversity since 2002 after having been much lower previously.

The implementing agencies receive a flat fee of 9 percent from GEF for the projects they implement. UNDP has recently obtained access to additional funding, notably the Spain MDG Achievement Fund. This fund was launched in 2007 to programme over €500 million over four years through the UN system, of which $95 million has been allocated for environment and climate change projects. As this fund has not yet disbursed significant programme funds, it fell outside the scope of this evaluation. UNDP has also reported Japan's 2007 commitment of $92.1 million to EEG for climate change adaptation work.

SECTION II ASSESSMENT OF UNDP'S WORK IN ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

Chapter 3

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES

This chapter presents the findings of the country case studies with regard to the country programmes and their performance, as well as the broader non-programmatic role of the country offices. It also reviews the results of UNDP in policy, advocacy, knowledge management and programmes at the global and regional levels. It focuses on mainstreaming as one of the major strategic considerations for UNDP, as well as the role of learning in strategy development.

3.1 COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

The evaluation placed particular importance on the environment and energy work at the country level because this is the crux of UNDP's programmes aimed at supporting the partner countries' development efforts. This chapter draws primarily on the findings of the eight country studies undertaken by the evaluation team as well as some evidence from earlier evaluations.

3.1.1 PRIORITY SETTING OF COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

The objectives and priorities of UNDP programmes in each country are periodically documented in Country Cooperation Frameworks (CCF) and Country Programme Documents (CPD). The drafting and finalization of these documents, generally every four or five years, is a major event in each country office, involving extensive consultations and negotiations with government and other stakeholders on the inclusion or exclusion of specific priorities. More recently, following the push towards UN coordination at the country level, these discussions have frequently involved other UN agencies within the framework of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). These strategic documents are therefore a potentially important source of information on the degree of priority given to environment and energy (Annex 5).

In practice, any tension between local and global priorities, as expressed in the MYFFs, has usually been diffused by a widespread view among country office staff that higher level UNDP plans and strategies can be interpreted to cover almost any activity deemed worthy within the broad practice areas and for which financial resources are available. Including a specific topic in UNDP's country programme does not guarantee an allocation of financial resources from the core budget. This is especially the case with environment and energy, where the availability of external funding substitutes for core funds and has significant influence over real priority setting. As a result, the inclusion or exclusion of environment and energy topics in UNDP country-level planning documents does not appear to be a strong indicator of their ranking among competing country office priorities. For a true picture of UNDP's country-level work on environment and energy, it is necessary to look at the actual use of resources in country programmes.

Since its launch, the availability of GEF funding has been the most important driving force determining where, how and when UNDP country-level environment and energy work has been undertaken. This was overwhelmingly confirmed by all available information sources, including all of the country case studies. The case study country portfolios appear to be from 71 to 99 percent supported by GEF resources (except for China where GEF funding covers only 67 percent) and related co-financing, supplemented in some cases by funding through the Montreal Protocol (for example, in China and Malawi).

In a moderate number of cases UNDP has secured or helped mobilize significant financing from other partners to support complementary activities. TRAC funds have sometimes been

used as seed money to attract GEF funding, for example, by supporting project feasibility studies or proposal development. In a few cases TRAC funds have been allocated to support specific priority environment or energy initiatives unrelated to GEF, for example in the South Pacific (Box 4).

A typical country programme in the LDCs and SIDS consists of a handful of full-size GEF projects and a relatively large number of small (less than $250,000) 'enabling activities' linked to the reporting requirements of MEAs. In the larger country programmes there are usually more full-sized and sometimes medium-sized GEF projects but not more enabling activities as there is typically only one of each type per country. The information available on project activities undertaken by each of the case study countries during the 2002–2007 period together with their financing sources is listed in Annex 7.

As stated earlier in the introductory chapter, it has been very challenging to gather accurate and comprehensive financial data, especially for periods predating the introduction of the new enterprise software in UNDP. We focused on collecting accurate and comprehensive data sets in connection with the country case studies. Unfortunately, even the selected country offices have faced challenges in providing financial information on their environment and energy projects in a coherent and consistent manner.

3.1.2 RESPONSIVENESS TO NATIONAL PRIORITIES

Since the early 1990s, national priorities within various aspects of environment and energy have typically been set out in a series of plans and strategies referred to as enabling activities. GEF funding has been available for enabling activities related to conventions on biodiversity, climate change and POPs. There are two major types of enabling activity: (i) a plan or strategy to fulfil commitments under a global environmental convention or (ii) a national communication to a convention. UNDP has been particularly active in supporting these national government efforts to participate in the evolving regime of international environmental governance. The smaller UNDP environment and energy portfolios tend to be dominated by these enabling activities, which typically have a budget of less than $250,000. These smaller projects often require a considerable effort to manage, particularly in LDCs and SIDS where government capacities are limited, contributing to high transaction costs for the country offices.

The succession of plans and strategies required from developing countries in relation to the various MEAs has produced an impressive array of environment-related plans and strategies in many poor countries, but little evidence of effective action to implement these plans. Despite a discourse emphasizing national ownership, many countries clearly only undertook these activities because they were fully funded from outside, and there was an expectation that they would lead to further international funding on a significant scale. In many cases these expectations have not been realized, which is hardly the fault of UNDP.

The plans and strategies developed through enabling activities, often with UNDP support, are not consistently highly regarded. Common criticisms include a lack of national engagement from decision makers, inadequate consultations and the excessive use of consultants to meet deadlines. Most are prepared under the auspices of environment ministries. While working through environment ministries may have supported these emerging institutions, the lack of serious dialogue on plans and strategies with more powerful and influential ministries such as finance, energy and infrastructure automatically limited how seriously these products would be taken at a national level. These plans and strategies do not seem to provide a good guide to investment or future programming either for government or for other donors, and there is still limited local capacity to objectively assess national needs in environment and energy. This is the case in all of the case study countries except China, where the government's internal coordination ensures

cohesiveness of policies. Enabling activities are particularly dominant in UNDP's environment and energy portfolios in Malawi and the 15 Pacific Island countries covered by the Fiji and Samoa multicountry offices.

Environmental issues in general appear to have been compelling for the rapidly growing, more prosperous middle-income countries of East Asia with alternative funding sources available (like China and Thailand) as well as the former communist countries now building relationships with the European Union (for example, FYR Macedonia). Environmental issues, and the global environment agenda in particular, appear to be relatively low priorities for the governments of sub-Saharan Africa, however, as noted in the Burkina Faso, Kenya and Malawi case studies. These and other LDCs are heavily dependent on international donors for developing balanced environment and energy portfolios or supporting the most pressing national priorities.

China's development strategy is largely based on identifying and testing new approaches on a small scale and replicating those that prove successful through policy measures. China uses UNDP's support to bring in ideas and experiences from abroad and test them. Unlike many other countries, the resources mobilized by UNDP, through GEF, the Montreal Protocol and other sources, pale in comparison with those of the government.

UNDP-GEF projects are usually developed by or *with the support of* regional centre (or sometimes even headquarters) staff with particular technical areas of expertise, while the country offices are primarily responsible for implementation. The country offices do initiate projects at government request, but seldom have the technical capacity to develop them to the level required for approval by GEF. Projects are approved within the focal areas on a global basis rather than by reference to national-level activities in other environment sectors, which is not always conducive to creating a coherent country-level portfolio.

Recent efforts to develop more coherent national project portfolios based on GEF funding have been considerably enhanced by the UNDP-managed GEF National Dialogue Initiative (NDI). The NDI provides opportunities for the countries to present their vision for environment work and brings together various actors from the governments, civil society, academia and so on.

GEF funding, by definition, is intended to support incremental activities that will generate global environmental benefits, with the assumption that 'baseline' activities with direct national benefits will be undertaken using other financial resources. In reality this baseline barely exists in many countries, especially not in LDCs and many SIDS. So work considered to be in the national interest as a precondition for GEF programming is not getting done in many cases. Furthermore, these projects are intended to be pilot initiatives to demonstrate what is possible, so that other donors or national governments can finance their expansion or replication.

The result is that most UNDP environment and energy country portfolios appear to be composed of a series of opportunistic projects for which funding was available. In many cases these are high-quality projects in their own right. But strategic portfolio development, the matching of activities with priority needs and significant attempts to compensate for the distortions inherent in the reliance on GEF funding are largely absent. This finding emphasizes the importance of considering GEF as one, rather than the only, funding source in order to address national environment and energy priorities, especially in LDCs and SIDS.

In LDCs and SIDS in particular, there is an almost total reliance on GEF support for environment and energy activities, as other donors have scaled back and government commitments are often miniscule (for example, Danida had recently withdrawn from Malawi, leaving few other environmental donors). Elsewhere, and particularly in China and Central and Eastern Europe, these priorities have overlapped more

directly with national environment and development priorities.

Assessing consistency with national priorities highlights the difficulty in following UNDP's practice of considering environment and energy as one. Most countries have 'energy portfolios' that cover a wide range of energy supply and distribution activities and issues in which UNDP has little or no role. National budgets for these portfolios are orders of magnitude greater than budgets for 'environmental portfolios'.

3.1.3 EFFECTIVENESS OF PROJECTS

Virtually all UNDP monitoring and performance reporting takes place at the project level, and there is an absence of environment and energy performance reporting at the country office outcome level. This section describes some of the main trends that emerged from a strategic review of projects in each of the case study countries.

The scope of the evaluation did not provide for an extensive sample of individual projects to be reviewed. However, in each case study country a number of key projects were discussed in some detail with the country office staff and local stakeholders. A few projects were visited and previous project evaluations were reviewed, including those highlighted in this report. While such a sample does not provide the basis for rigorous extrapolation, it was generally evident that the design, and in most cases implementation, work being carried out by UNDP and its partners is of high quality.

UNDP has been found by the GEF Evaluation Office to provide quality supervision to the projects that it implements. The GEF 2006 Annual Performance Report rated 88 percent of UNDP-implemented projects as receiving supervision that is moderately satisfactory or better.[15] Quality of supervision has been found to correlate strongly with the likelihood of projects achieving their outcomes.

While many current projects appear impressive and innovative as stand-alone initiatives, sustaining gains and benefits over the longer term is a ubiquitous problem. Systemic constraints limit insight into post-project sustainability issues, especially the lack of an ex-post monitoring and evaluation culture and a fragile institutional memory of terminated initiatives that declines rapidly over time. Sustainability, however, is clearly impaired by weak counterpart institutions with staffing and budget constraints, limited coordination among institutions and projects, as well as cycles of political instability. These factors are all compounded by the uncertainty and unpredictability of future funding and the fact that few recipient countries share the environmental priorities in particular with regard to the global issues.

One particularly successful stand-alone project, financed by the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol, is the Phase Out of Methyl Bromide in Malawi (Box 2).

Projects have often taken a long time to develop and begin implementation. Over such long preparation periods, the underlying context often changes or is overtaken by events, threatening project relevance and effectiveness. Other problems are associated with projects' short duration. For example, implementation timeframes are often insufficient to consolidate change or capacity development processes, and many projects follow boom-to-bust cycles that provide high levels of support that exceed local absorptive capacities and then terminate abruptly. Projects often lack realistic exit strategies, thereby limiting opportunities for an effective transfer of activities. The latter is particularly problematic within projects that do not reflect genuine national priorities.

The most impressive projects often appear to be those where other donors are encouraged to support

15. 'GEF Annual Performance Report 2006'. GEF Council (GEF/ME/C.31/1). GEF Evaluation Office. 2007.

Box 2. Phase Out of Methyl Bromide in Malawi

Methyl Bromide (MeBr) is an ozone-depleting substance that is being phased out globally. Until the early 2000s, Malawi was the second largest user of MeBr in Africa, mainly due to its use in the tobacco industry (lesser amounts are used in grain storage). In 2000, UNDP mobilized funding from the multilateral fund for the Montreal Protocol to phase out the use of the estimated 111 metric tons of MeBr used annually in the country and introduce more ozone-friendly technologies for farmers. MeBr had been used for tobacco seedbed sterilization since the early 1970s, especially by large-scale tobacco farmers.

The project took a multi-pronged approach that turned out to be very effective. There were awareness campaigns on the need for the phase out using radio and TV spots, posters and printed media in addition to traditional agricultural extension services. The project also promoted recommended alternative technologies and undertook research, testing existing alternatives under Malawian conditions. It demonstrated effective alternative technologies to the farmers and trained them in their use. The project also developed a legal framework for banning MeBr in Malawi. The subsequent import ban has been accompanied by training to help customs officials recognize the chemicals.

The project, executed through the Department of Environmental Affairs and the Agricultural Research and Extension Trust, was highly successful in phasing out virtually all of the MeBr used in the tobacco sector by the time it closed at the end of 2006. Its success can be attributed to several factors, most importantly the well-defined target of MeBr within a known sector and the availability of alternatives that were both effective and economically viable. Although the initial investment is higher, the newer technology will produce savings both in labour and land area required, as well as in water use and transportation costs. The alternative technologies were therefore accepted and rapidly adopted by the farmers once their initial reluctance was overcome by convincing demonstrations.

parallel activities that complement UNDP's GEF-funded projects, leading to a set of activities that is more diverse and is responsive to a range of local and national priorities. In such cases it is often easier to see the potential for poverty reduction, and it becomes easier to see how environmental considerations can effectively be integrated with economic development. Examples of these more promising broader approaches in the case study countries include the Prespa Lake project in FYR Macedonia (linking to transboundary efforts in Greece and Albania, see Box 3) and the Galapagos Islands project in Ecuador (see Box 8).

The Burkina Faso country office has explicitly targeted a move towards fewer, larger projects that address environmental issues within a broad development approach. This transition in approach has helped UNDP become more relevant in relation to government priorities. While the opportunities for demonstrating impact, sustainability and broader-based results appear to have improved, reporting specifically on achievements in environment and energy is more complicated in such programmes.

Biodiversity projects have increasingly tried to demonstrate the local and national benefits from more effective conservation while building policy relevance. These projects frequently include impressive work supporting policy and legislation. Such projects are gradually shifting away from a focus on individual protected areas towards the governance of overall protected area systems and the institutional, financial and economic sustainability of these systems within broader governance frameworks. Separate work on invasive species management has helped governments to gauge the true scope of associated economic damage and then develop policy and programme responses that match the potential risk. Implementing such changes in emphasis has been an enormous challenge in an area that was not considered central by much of the mainstream development community and which still receives little attention within UNDP. The biodiversity portfolio is discussed further in chapter 4.3.

The impacts of international waters projects have been easier to demonstrate in terms of their contributions to governance, with most aimed at supporting the development of new or

Box 3. Prespa Lake International Ecosystem Management Project

This project provides an important example of UNDP drawing on both GEF and non-GEF funding sources to achieve national and global environmental benefits.

The GEF-supported Transboundary Prespa Park Project is the focal point for a series of linked activities in a region shared by The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania and Greece. The region's unique flora and fauna are threatened by unsustainable exploitation and inappropriate land use practices. The project explicitly adopted an ecosystem approach that brings environmental objectives into policy and planning and involves spatial planning, water use management, agriculture, forestry, national park and fishery management and conservation and protected area management. The strengthening of transboundary coordination mechanisms appears promising so far.

The broader Prespa region programme now encompasses several projects funded by international donors that are clearly complementary to the original UNDP-GEF international waters project. These include restoring the Golema River, reducing agrochemical use and improving solid waste management services in 20 settlements. This waste collection programme is consistent with broader efforts to generate revenues from users' payments to local service providers, of which there is little tradition. So far, revenue collection from households, although insufficient to ensure self-sufficiency of the operation, has been higher than elsewhere in the country. Local tree fruit producers' associations appear satisfied with UNDP support that has allowed them to reduce the costs of key inputs (pesticides, irrigation water and fertilizers) while also reducing their ecological impacts. The mayor is also satisfied because these environmental activities support the local government's primary goal: the economic growth of the municipality. These parallel and linked investments, mainly managed by UNDP, seem to have increased the original project's prospects of having genuine and sustainable impacts.

strengthened institutions for international governance of shared rivers, lakes and seas. The Danube Regional Project was characterized by the final evaluation as "the culmination of fifteen years of GEF assistance and a lynchpin of the Danube-Black Sea Strategic Partnership...a highly successful project, and well-deserving in its characterization as one of the flagship efforts under the GEF International Waters Focal Area."[16] This programme helped to catalyze some $5 billion in new investments in waste water treatment in the Danube Basin since its launch in the early 1990s. This is a case where the priorities of the countries and their UNDP offices coincided with those of GEF and, not incidentally, those of the expanding European Union.

UNDP's efforts in support of the Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer are generally very highly regarded, although these are sometimes hard to integrate with other development programmes.

While GEF-funded projects in the past several years have increasingly been directed to focus on policy issues, such as market transformations and barrier removal for the adoption of new technologies, these efforts naturally focus on global environmental issues. While this does not prevent country office environment and energy teams from focusing on broader sets of environmental and natural resource management policy issues—which a few have managed to do with support from particularly motivated resident representatives—there is little practical incentive to do so, and most country offices lack the requisite capacity. The country office environment and energy teams report that their UNDP-GEF colleagues, undoubtedly driven by perceptions of the types of projects that GEF is likely to finance, are mainly interested in projects and have little time for policy issues that are not specifically related to these projects. Nevertheless, there is considerable scope for projects where global environmental issues merge with national

16. Fox, A. and S. de Mora, 'Final Evaluation of the UNDP/GEF Project RER/01/G32 – Danube Regional Project: Strengthening the Implementation Capacities for Nutrient Reduction and Transboundary Cooperation in the Danube River Basin', UNDP, 2007.

development priorities, such as in the case of energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Staying current on GEF funding priorities and documentation requirements is an extremely challenging task that clearly could not be replicated in each country office. UNDP-GEF project design tends to be well regarded but there are widely held concerns over the general quality of project implementation supervised by the country offices. As a rule, UNDP relies on national execution of projects by an implementing partner at the country level. Adequately supervising projects located far from the capital cities where the country offices are located appears to be a challenge in some case study countries (notably Ecuador, Kenya and FYR Macedonia). It would be unfair, however, to assign all implementation difficulties to UNDP. The lack of capacity in the environment and energy sectors in many countries makes effective project implementation very difficult indeed. Past periods of political instability and rapid turnover in government counterparts have also undermined projects' effectiveness.

While some country offices expressed a strong desire to focus on more strategic environment and energy activities, rather than many relatively small projects, it is not clear under current approaches how this could be financed, and many country offices do not appear to have sufficiently strong staff to sustain such an approach.

3.1.4 CIVIL SOCIETY INVOLVEMENT

UNDP manages the corporate GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), widely recognized as one of the most successful initiatives of UNDP. The SGP makes grants of up to $50,000 in more than 100 countries and is unique among GEF programmes in targeting poor and marginal communities. It helps such communities contribute to achieving global environmental goals while responding to local socio-economic development imperatives. The SGP has probably been the most consistent and effective among the GEF programmes in contributing directly to poverty reduction at local levels. In many countries SGP is heralded as having really 'made a difference' by responding quickly and effectively to local and national priorities.

The SGP's success in working with the non-governmental sector and at the community level has had some influence on UNDP (and GEF) programming. SGP has had to respond to frequent criticism, usually from within the GEF Council and Secretariat, that its aggregate impacts are not significant for remediation of global environmental problems. A recent independent global evaluation of the SGP was extremely favourable,[17] matching the findings of two previous evaluations. The governments of several countries even requested additional funds to be allocated to SGP from their national GEF allocations, thereby reducing the money the government would have discretion over.

The SGP is highly regarded within UNDP and often serves as a flagship programme for the country offices to demonstrate that they have effective environment programmes on the ground. The SGP national coordinators, although autonomous and reporting directly to the SGP's Central Programme Management Team in New York, are usually based in the country offices, and the resident representatives appoint the National Steering Committees that make grant decisions. In some cases the relationship between SGP and the country office is close and constructive, as in Ecuador, where the collaboration was commended by the recent global SGP evaluation, and Burkina Faso, where learning from SGP experiences has been incorporated into the country office's two main projects. In other countries, such as Kenya, the relationship is distant or strained. The potential benefits and opportunities for synergies—not just in environment, but in poverty reduction, governance and other areas—

17. 'Joint Evaluation of the GEF Small Grants Programme', Evaluation Report No. 39, GEF Evaluation Office and UNDP Evaluation Office, 2008.

do not seem to have been fully grasped by all country offices.

Relatively little other funding has been used to complement and build on SGP successes, suggesting that there are still few linkages to other UNDP work, even after more than a decade of SGP operations. This appears partly due to SGP operating fairly autonomously, with project selection strictly subject to the global programme criteria. As a result, country offices have limited influence on SGP operations.

Many of the strongest and most experienced national SGPs are being requested by the GEF Council and Secretariat to prepare for 'graduation' out of the programme. To the extent that the country offices consider SGP an integral part of their operations—and it seems almost inconceivable for this not to be the case—they need to engage more with SGP in helping map out its future, ideally one that links SGP operations more closely with country office programmes.

3.1.5 SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

UNDP has multicountry offices in Fiji and Samoa, managing programmes in 10 and 4 countries, respectively, with environmental teams in both multicountry offices. These case studies provided the evaluation's main inputs on the issues facing SIDS. The bulk of sub-regional environment programmes in recent years in the Pacific and a substantial percentage of energy initiatives have been implemented by UNDP with GEF funding, although the European Community has a sizeable presence in both areas. Most of the UNDP projects take the form of Pacific sub-regional programmes, seeking economies of scale in sharing services, skills and experiences among the countries.

Box 4. Kiribati – A Solid Waste Management Success

Kiribati is a fragile, isolated LDC of 92,000 people on small Pacific islands scattered over an area larger than Western Europe. Densely populated South Tarawa, the national administrative centre, has long experienced difficulties with solid waste management and disposal, threatening the ground water used by households.

In 2003, a civil society organization long active in Kiribati, the Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific Kiribati, approached UNDP Fiji with a concept for improved solid waste management that built upon existing activities, including a UNDP-GEF International Waters project. With strong endorsement from government, community groups, the private sector and other donors, UNDP provided $227,000 in core (TRAC) funds for a government-executed, three-year project. It was agreed that operations would be contracted to the private sector once a viable business concern had been established.

An independent evaluation in late 2006 and a final Tripartite Review in early 2007 concluded that the effort had been successful and highly relevant for Kiribati in terms of improved access to essential services by low-income people and improved local capacity to deal with environmental vulnerability. The project provided a good model for Kiribati and other Pacific atoll nations for better management of solid waste:

- The key achievement has been the establishment of an income-generating venture for South Tarawa, with improved island cleanliness and hygiene. Pollution has been reduced appreciably.
- The commercially viable recycling system has been a very effective model of government, community and private sector collaboration.
- Over 100 households were financially supported with $260,000 in 2007 payouts.
- The volume of rubbish dumped at landfills has fallen by over 50 percent.

Practical opportunities have been identified to extend the project and there is potential for replication. Nearby countries are well aware of the achievements, and UNDP Fiji has received three proposals for similar solid waste management initiatives based on the Tarawa experience. This is a good example of UNDP's ability to build effectively on earlier work, cooperate with other donors, and build a successful government, NGO and private sector coalition with excellent prospects of sustainability, environmental improvement and modest poverty reduction.

Operational weaknesses in the environment and energy programmes of the two multicountry offices are elaborated in an annex to this report. These have been exacerbated, and to some degree caused, by the extraordinary logistical challenges of working in this sub-region with its small population widely dispersed over enormous areas. Despite extraordinarily high operational costs, the multicountry offices do not receive additional financial resources to offset these costs. Senior staff characterize the situation as a negative spiral where extraordinarily high operating costs reduce the quality of service, leading in turn to even lower resource allocations. This situation is particularly extreme for UNDP Fiji with its responsibility not only for managing 10 country programmes with its tiny staff, but also responding to headquarters' planning and reporting information needs for each of them. Not surprisingly, UNDP's credibility in environment within the sub-region appears to be eroding.

While GEF funding dominates the Pacific environment agenda and choice of activities, at least two impressive programmes have demonstrated what can be achieved when UNDP commits its core or other funds to these areas. Box 4 describes a project in Kiribati under UNDP Fiji.

3.2 COUNTRY OFFICES AND NON-PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES

UNDP is valued by national governments for several reasons, notably being a long-term partner, supporting national planning and strategy development processes and contributing to capacity development. These strengths are clearly relevant in all of the sectors where UNDP provides development assistance, not just environment and energy. In addition, both donor and government partners in many countries recognize UNDP's suitability as an appropriate spokesperson or coordinator for the international community due to the agency's objectivity and neutrality. Environment and energy work benefits considerably from these strengths.

From the countries' perspective UNDP has obviously been a major gateway to the GEF, and for that reason it has been a key partner for anyone hoping to access GEF funding. Community-level initiatives of the SGP are widely appreciated. Also with GEF resources, UNDP has been a major supporter of government activities in compliance with MEAs. Many environment ministries would not have been able to respond adequately to the reporting requirements of these global agreements without the substantial technical support they have received from UNDP. The country offices have been an important factor in mobilizing international resources for environment ministry activities, even though a lot of this work seems to take place outside mainstream policy formulation and decision making.

3.2.1 ENHANCING GOVERNMENT ATTENTION

The relevance and effectiveness of UNDP's environmental programming is directly influenced by the commitment and capacity of recipient governments. Many national stakeholders expressed the view that international donors are tending to support a global environmental agenda that diverges from national environment and development agendas, especially in LDCs and SIDS. UNDP's reliance on GEF funding does not enable it to counter this view. Our assessments of LDCs and SIDS in particular suggested that governments' interest in environmental management issues is stagnating. Very few of the stakeholders interviewed suggested that environmental issues figure high among their government's priorities. Among the case study countries, feedback from national stakeholders and experienced observers in Burkina Faso, Fiji, Kenya and Malawi give little room for optimism regarding the priority these governments are assigning to environment and energy. FYR Macedonia is starting to give environment more attention in the context of EU accession, while in China the issue is highly visible, the national government is becoming fully engaged and it is local governments' commitment that may be inconsistent.

It is somewhat paradoxical that governments, particularly of LDCs and SIDS, do not give

higher priority to the environment, given the fundamental importance of the natural resource base for their economic growth (for example, in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Malawi and the Pacific Island states). UNDP, with the encouragement of other international partners, often acts as an advocate trying to ensure that principles of sustainable natural resource management are not ignored. However, a lack of resources hampers important work in this area on a significant scale.

Environmental legislation is now in place in many countries, and UNDP has helped bring this about. Unfortunately the capacity and decisiveness needed for effective implementation are often lacking, especially among relatively new environment ministries and departments that tend to lack political influence and have no field presence. Environmentally related shocks and disasters do periodically lead to a renewed focus on natural resource management, for example, in cases of drought and famine in sub-Saharan Africa, but there appears to be little sustained appetite for addressing the long-term structural constraints to reduce vulnerability to such events.

3.2.2 BUILDING COUNTRY CAPACITY

Based on the observations of the evaluation team members and their discussions with national stakeholders in the case study countries, there is little sign that the capacities of many developing government agencies responsible for environment and energy are improving; in some cases these capacities appear to be deteriorating, especially in LDCs and SIDS. This is despite UNDP's efforts aimed at capacity development, including the enabling activities. This pattern applies equally to environment ministries and to departments within ministries with environmental mandates such as forests, fisheries, wildlife, soil conservation, pollution control and waste management.

While some bright, motivated people are making a difference, not enough seem to remain in government for long. Fiji's Ministry of Environment had lost 14 of its professional staff of 22 during the last year, although it is important to note that in Fiji, as elsewhere, former government employees whose capacities have been developed may still be contributing in the country either within NGOs or as consultants. According to national and international stakeholders, none of the Pacific Island states has significantly improved their government capacity to manage environment and energy during the last fifteen years (Samoa may be an exception). Assessments written ten to twenty years ago in some of the case study countries elaborating and lamenting limited capacities in the environmental sector appear equally applicable today, despite significant investments in capacity development over recent decades. Compounding unattractive career prospects for trained staff and continual recruiting of capable people by international organizations, a massive shortage of skilled workers over coming decades in Europe seems likely to fuel a continuation and expansion of the brain drain, further depleting limited national human resources.

In LDCs and SIDS there often seems to be a greater capacity and even engagement in the NGO and private consulting sectors than in government. In the case study countries it is evident that governments are often unwilling or unable to tap this expertise through partnerships with NGOs. In several countries where government capacities in environment and natural resource management are modest, certain NGOs are notably knowledgeable and effective in a variety of sectors, including sustainable land management, water, food security, famine relief and community-based development (notably in Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Fiji, Kenya, Malawi and Samoa). It is not clear that UNDP is taking full advantage of this, although there are recent, emerging signs of cooperation in some countries. There are exceptions, notably the Sustainable Socio-economic Empowerment for Poverty Reduction project in Malawi, where NGOs have been engaged in a highly regarded literacy and learning initiative that seems more typical of an SGP project.

UNDP and others have long struggled with how to build and retain capacity in extremely small countries, most of which will never have the critical population mass for a wide range of skills,

and nearly all of whom lose a high percentage of skilled government staff to emigration and non-government sectors. Capacity limitations continue to be universally, and justifiably, cited as a barrier to progress, most recently in the case of climate change. Looking at recent models, there seems little basis for expecting increased capacity development investments to yield significant benefits. While most UNDP environment and energy initiatives have had significant capacity development elements, long-term capacity gains in government seldom seem apparent in LDCs and SIDS. Capacity may indeed be built on a short-term basis through project-supported interventions, but it is not at all clear how can any such gains be sustained. The implications of the many failed efforts over recent decades for current and future capacity development programmes do not seem to have been analyzed at a strategic level, either within UNDP or elsewhere.

3.2.3 CAPACITIES FOR DECENTRALIZED ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Capacity limitations come into even sharper focus in countries that have decentralized environmental management. UNDP has supported decentralization in several of the case study countries, with some promising results. But the challenge is massive. Decentralization often results in shifts of authority and responsibility for decision making and provision of services to local levels without adequate financial resources and with extremely modest local human resource capacities. If environment and energy capacities in national government are limited, they are often almost nonexistent in local government. Decentralization in the forestry sector in Malawi, for example, appears to have virtually eliminated the capacity in the centre with no significant gain in local capacity, considerably exacerbated by personnel losses due to HIV/AIDS.

In FYR Macedonia, UNDP project staff placed within ministries or local governments serve as resource people to these organizations while also contributing to their longer term capacity development. UNDP also provides its national counterparts with access to global networks of knowledge and expertise. However, FYR Macedonia faces the need to rapidly develop local environmental management capacities as part of its EU accession process. Even in such a small country UNDP's approach of supporting local governments cannot come close to meeting the capacity development needs for decentralized environmental management.

Even excellent national legislation and policies will prove ineffective without dramatically enhanced local capacities, not least to offset the widespread tendency for local authorities and their private sector partners to emphasize increased economic activity above any environmental considerations.

3.2.4 COORDINATION ROLE

The coordination role played by UNDP vis-à-vis the UN Country Teams and donors in environment and energy varies considerably. Coordination has been carried out to the satisfaction of all major donor partners in some cases, for example, in Burkina Faso and in Ecuador, specifically for the Galapagos Islands, while in others, like Kenya, UNDP has lacked the staff resources and credibility to carry out the role adequately. In some smaller countries like FYR Macedonia, the donor community is so small that informal coordination suffices. In yet other cases UNDP has been unable to successfully promote donor coordination because of a combination of capacity limitations in the country office and a lack of sustained government interest (as in Malawi). Here again, the personal commitment of the resident representative or a senior UNDP staff member who can command respect among other partners seems a prerequisite.

In a promising example in Ecuador (separate from the Galapagos), UNDP's Sustainable Development Unit chairs an Environment Working Group composed of several UN agencies, the Spanish cooperation agency AECID and the Ministry of Environment. This working group has been effective in coordinating agency roles for the recently approved Yasuní Biosphere Reserve project. Procurement and contracting for

the Yasuní project will be managed by an interagency panel with oversight by the Ministry of Environment. This model has worked so well that it is being considered for other projects in other sectors.

3.2.5 COUNTRY OFFICE HUMAN RESOURCES

The technical capacities of the country offices are not highly regarded by many national stakeholders (in both governments and civil society), donors or UNDP staff at headquarters and the regional centres. The country offices rely on poor systems and overstretched staff hampered by endless requests and requirements from headquarters, including frequently shifting administrative and financial reporting requirements. Too much time is being used on cumbersome reporting systems. This has led to significant delays in very basic project management procedures (such as procurement, contracting and disbursements), poor communications with partners, inadequate supervision of technically challenging projects and limited capacity to effectively engage with governments on key policy issues.

Many environment and energy staff are relatively inexperienced, work on short-term contracts, lack technical expertise and spend a significant amount of time on reporting. This does not aid delivery of timely, relevant and effective services to the countries. There is a lack of consistent evidence-based advice to countries and a similar lack of people with the time and often expertise and stature to provide advice. It seems clear that the country offices are frequently driven more by funding opportunities in their general areas of concern than by the systematic analysis of priority issues.

With a few notable and impressive exceptions, such as China, the country office teams have very limited capacities to identify, prepare and manage projects, especially in the LDCs and SIDS.

The environment and energy teams in the country offices vary from one person in the smaller offices to up to 15 in China (see Table 3). The LDCs and SIDS tend to have one lead person who may be a regular international or national staff member or a UN Volunteer, supported by a few temporary or junior staff with uncertain funding support, often consultants or junior professional officers. Our observations were that these teams are very hard working and stretched to the limit, especially in the smaller country offices. But junior, inexperienced staff are often playing too broad a role, without adding a lot at a policy level or having credibility with government. The addition of volunteers and junior professional officers cannot make up for the need to have more permanent staff on board, ideally with a professional background in natural resource management.

The post of environmental focal point in a country office is very demanding, requiring the incumbent to stay current on a wide range of rapidly evolving technical issues while managing a broad portfolio of projects and facing tremendous pressure to mobilize resources. In the LDCs and SIDS, this means operating in a sector where the national capacity is often extremely limited and where project proponents and implementers (such as environment ministries) often lack political support. These challenges are compounded by frequent changes in key government counterparts and long periods where government staff positions remain unfilled.

Some of the case study country offices are expanding their environment and energy teams. China has increased the size of its team significantly, from 6 to 15 staff members since 2005. Burkina Faso, FYR Macedonia and Malawi as well as the Fiji and Samoa multicountry offices have also expanded their human resources focused on environment and energy, although the funding for most of the additional positions is uncertain and fragile, and it is unclear if this increased momentum will be sustained. Again, the personal commitment of the resident representatives to the environment and energy agenda and their ability to be entrepreneurial in finding additional resources has been critical.

The country offices have suffered from high rates of staff turnover. In some cases this has led to

Table 3. Country Office Environment and Energy Team Staff Details Supplied by Case Study Countries

Country	Total No. of Staff	Staff Position	No. of Staff	Source of Funds	Time Period Employed
Burkina Faso	4	National Staff	1	UNDP Core	1990-present
			1	UNDP Core	1996-present
			1	UNDP Core	2006-present
		Junior Professional Officer	1	Government of Luxembourg	2006-present
		UN Volunteer	1	Japan International Cooperation Agency/UNDP Core	2005-present
China	18	International Staff	1	Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific	2005-present
		National Staff	6	Extra-Budgetary	2006-present
		Seconded Staff	1	Italian Government	2007-present
		Support Staff	3	Extra-Budgetary	2006-present
		Long-term Consultants	5	EU Project	2006-present
			1	Extra-Budgetary	2007-present
			1	UNDP Core 3	2007-present
Ecuador	4	National Staff	1	UNDP Core	2001-present
			1	National Project	2004-present
		Support Staff	1	National Project	2001-present
			1	National Project	2004-present
Kenya	10	International Staff	1	UNDP Core (PEI)	2006-present
		National Staff	1	Regular Budget	1997-present
			1	Extra-Budgetary	2001-present
			1	UNDP Core	2001-present
			1	UNOPS (SGP)	2001-present
			1	UNOPS (SGP)	2000-present
			1	UNOPS (SGP)	1994-present
		UN Volunteers	1	UNV	2007-present
			1	UNV	2007-present
		Long-term Consultant	1	UNDP Core	2004-present
FYR Macedonia	3	National Staff	1	Extra-Budgetary and UNDP Core	2003-present
			1	Extra-Budgetary	2007-present
		Junior Professional Officer	1	Government of Japan	2006-present
Malawi	1	National Staff	1	Extra-Budgetary	1998-present
Pacific Island states (Fiji MCO)	5	National Staff	1	UNDP Core	1999-present
			1	Extra-Budgetary	2005-present
			1	Extra-Budgetary	2006-present
		Young Professionals on Service Contracts	2	Extra-Budgetary	2006-present
Pacific Island states (Samoa MCO)	8	International Staff	1	Extra-Budgetary	2001-present
		National Staff	1	UNDP Core and Extra-Budgetary	2000-present
			1	Extra-Budgetary	2000-present
		Junior Professional Officers	1	Government of Netherlands	2005-2007
		Support Staff	1	Extra-Budgetary	2006-present
		Short-term Interns	1	UNDP Core	2007-present
			1	-	2007
			2	-	2008

disquieting lapses in institutional memory. In at least two of our seven case study countries, the country office staff were unaware of earlier UNDP activities that had generated lessons or experiences relevant to current or planned initiatives. In many country offices where the environment and energy programme is led by a strong and experienced national officer, the real 'lessons learned' are mostly possessed by and limited to this individual.

3.3 GLOBAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS

The role of EEG at the global and regional levels combines different functions, including 'think tank' research, policy advice and programme implementation. However, with the emphasis and relative weight given to each role changing continually, there are various opinions within UNDP on the value of these functions. The country offices tend to appreciate the policy advice received through EEG (especially from the GEF unit, because this is directly and practically linked to specific projects), while the global programme's contributions are not always understood. This mutability combined with the internal incentives to raise external funds for EEG's own programmatic activities has resulted in a certain lack of direction and has diluted the impact of any of the three basic functions. BDP appears aware of this, and there are efforts underway to consolidate the GCF.

The regionalization process started in the early 2000s was intended to bring UNDP closer to its clients. Initially motivated to allow BDP to provide more efficient policy support to the programme countries by outposting its policy advisers to the regions, the process was taken over by the regional bureaux, which gradually assumed a greater role in management of the decentralized units. Now the regional centres are integral units of the regional bureaux. BDP's role remained to provide intellectual inputs to their work. As discussed earlier in chapter 2, the regionalization process has proceeded at highly varying paces in the different regions.

3.3.1 POLICY, ADVOCACY AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Over the years UNDP, through EEG, has participated in important intergovernmental and global policy events and discussions, such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002, the annual sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the UN Climate Change Conference held in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007. A particular contribution was through the 'Greening of WSSD' effort, which was the first-ever attempt to reduce the environmental impact of a major UN conference on the host city, in this case Johannesburg, South Africa. UNDP joined GEF and IUCN to help local authorities and communities manage critical areas like transport, waste, energy and water more sustainably during the summit.

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) was a major, international, multi-actor effort to provide a state-of-the-art scientific assessment of the condition and trends pertaining to global ecosystems and the services they provide for human well-being. Between 2001 and 2005, MA involved well over one thousand scientists and was sponsored by 16 international agencies, amongst them UNDP, although its role in the MA was limited.

Through EEG's work, and activities such as the HDRs, UNDP has played a role in global policy dialogue on environment and energy issues, although it is not generally recognized as a major player in the field. The two latest HDRs[18] both focused on environment-related themes. The HDRs are arguably the best-known products of UNDP and are widely cited. Several other studies and reports produced by EEG have been

18. *Human Development Report 2006. Beyond Scarcity: Power, Poverty and the Global Water Crisis.* UNDP 2006. Also *Human Development Report 2007/2008. Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World.* UNDP 2007.

recognized for their high quality, in particular their ability to extract experiences and lessons from the field and draw broader conclusions.[19]

The Equator Initiative, a partnership programme run by EEG since 2002, was designed to "reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity by identifying and strengthening innovative community initiatives."[20] The initiative is primarily concerned with advocacy work through four action areas: (i) the Equator Prize is awarded biennially to communities from the tropical developing countries for efforts that conserve biodiversity while also reducing poverty; (ii) Equator Knowledge promotes knowledge management through research, documentation and sharing of lessons learned and through raising public awareness concerning biodiversity; (iii) Equator Dialogues are intended to create a platform for community dialogue and events and (iv) Equator Ventures promotes small- and medium-sized business enterprises that conserve and use natural resources to generate sustainable income opportunities. The Equator Initiative is supported by 12 organizations, including donor agencies, NGOs, academics and the CBD. While the Equator Initiative has created interest and awareness through its well-received advocacy work, it is difficult to gauge its impact on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use or how it connects with the country office programmes.

3.3.2 EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMMES

Apart from providing intellectual leadership and policy advice, BDP is also the custodian of the GCF, within which EEG develops and manages the global programme on environment and energy. The stated purpose of the GCF is to create and share knowledge through a global network and to link global advocacy and analysis to the policy support function. The GCF is thus intended to contribute to policy development at UNDP.

The environment and energy global programme has consisted of a wide range of activities, many of which have been small and somewhat scattered. The Second GCF (2001–2003) contained no fewer than 46 environment and energy projects with a total value of $42 million. Out of this sum, just $6.4 million was from the GCF core; the rest came from cost sharing and trust fund contributions. The smallest project in the environment and energy practice area amounted to just $55,000. A 2004 GCF evaluation concluded that the global programme had not fully articulated what it intended to do.[21]

The current global programme still contains activities under all MYFF-2 service lines, identifying four crosscutting themes: poverty-environment, climate change, environmental governance, and community-based initiatives. The global programme's main projects are: MDG Carbon Facility, Access to Energy Services, Drylands Development Centre 2005 Operations, Effective Water Governance, Biodiversity Global Programme, Sound Management of Chemicals, Climate Change, Equator Initiative and Frameworks and Strategies for Sustainable Development.[22] As is apparent from the list, these projects are closely related to larger operations funded by GEF and the Montreal Protocol. Additional funding through Thematic Trust Funds (TTFs) from various donors has been raised for these activities. A separate evaluation of the Third GCF is currently underway.

Apart from the GCF, there are global programmes funded and implemented under GEF. Their nature, however, is quite different because they

19. For instance, 'Energizing Poverty Reduction: A Review of the Energy-Poverty Nexus in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers', UNDP 2007, and 'Making Progress on Environmental Sustainability: Lessons and Recommendations from a Review of over 150 MDG Country Experiences', UNDP 2006.

20. 'Equator Initiative Annual Narrative Report 2007' UNDP 2007.

21. 'Evaluation of the Second Global Cooperation Framework of UNDP'. UNDP Evaluation Office 2004.

22. 'UNDP Global Programme 2006 Annual Report'. UNDP/BDP 2007.

are projects with practical objectives addressing specific global environmental issues. Examples of these include the projects on 'Removal of Barriers to the Introduction of Cleaner Artisanal Gold Mining and Extraction Technologies' (GEF grant: $7.1 million) and the recent 'Supporting Country Early Action on Protected Areas' (GEF grant: $9.5 million).

Each of the five regional bureaux manages a Regional Cooperation Framework (RCF) consisting of regional programmes in each of the practice areas. The direction and emphasis given to the various programmes varies considerably by region. Independent evaluations have been recently completed of three of the five RCFs, in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean,[23] revealing highly diverse approaches to the environment and energy programme. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the main effort was under the banner of energy and climate change, where the focus was on knowledge generation and sharing, advice for policy formulation and support to specific programmes in energy, climate change, risk management and biodiversity. The evaluation found that their results were mixed, with only 4 of the total of 18 initiatives performing as expected. Similarly, in Africa, the integration of environmental sustainability into the regional programme was found to be weak. In Asia and the Pacific, sustainable development was initially one of the three main thematic areas of the RCF, but during implementation, activities under it were submerged within the poverty and governance themes and core funding for environment was cut significantly.

Established in 2005, the Regional Centre in Bangkok (RCB) supports 25 country offices and their national partners in the Asia-Pacific region. Energy and environment for sustainable development is one of the three main focus areas. The overall strategic outcome of the practice area in RCB has been framed in the context of achieving the MDGs and social and economic development,[24] implying close linkages between environment and energy and the poverty and democratic governance areas.

The Asia-Pacific region has a large portfolio of GEF-funded projects, consisting of 160 approved projects of which 130 are under implementation, amounting to a total of $307 million in GEF funding and $530 million leveraged in cash and in-kind co-financing.[25] The portfolio is focused on climate change mitigation, which accounts for more than half of the resources and half of the projects. This is followed by biodiversity with slightly over a quarter of the resources and projects. While there is demand from the governments in the region, regional technical advisers have found that this is not always the case with the country offices. GEF is primarily seen as a source for generating revenue for the country offices, while the programmatic work tends to be driven by the GEF technical staff in RCB. Furthermore, GEF is project-driven with its own logic and cycles, which are difficult to integrate into the country programmes. The country offices don't feel that they are in control of the GEF-funded projects. Recent changes in GEF policies, such as the introduction of the resource allocation framework (RAF), have aggravated these difficulties. Consequently, the regional GEF staff foresee that future programming will become harder, with more emphasis on a larger number of smaller projects with high requirements for co-financing and leveraging additional financing.

A significant new initiative without GEF funding is the joint UNDP-IUCN Mangroves for the Future (MFF) partnership, which aims to promote investment and action in ecosystem

23. 'Evaluation of the Second Regional Cooperation Framework in Africa'. UNDP Evaluation Office 2007; 'Evaluation of the Second Regional Cooperation Framework in Asia and the Pacific'. UNDP Evaluation Office 2007; 'Evaluation of the Second Regional Cooperation Framework in Latin America and the Caribbean'. UNDP Evaluation Office 2007.
24. '2007 Consolidated Workplan', Regional Centres in Bangkok and Colombo. UNDP 2007.
25. 'Regional Business Plan for 2007'. Asia and the Pacific Region. UNDP Environment Finance Group 2007.

conservation in coastal areas.[26] The initiative emerged from the response to the Indian Ocean tsunami, recognizing the need to go beyond the short-term responses to develop a longer term vision for sustainable coastal development. The Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP) allocated $400,000 of core funds for 2008–2011 to the initiative. Several bilateral donors have pledged to invest $12 million, and the project is seeking private sector funding from coastal industries, such as ports and tourism. The project has begun work in a number of countries along the Indian Ocean. Even some tsunami-affected African countries have expressed interest in joining, thus raising the option of turning MFF into a cross-regional initiative. MFF is also intended to operate as an umbrella for relevant projects funded from different sources (including GEF) and implemented by different agencies (such as UNEP and FAO).

As the only major environmental initiative outside of the EEG ambit in the region (apart from the ongoing Regional Energy Programme for Poverty Reduction (REP-PoR); see section on energy in chapter 4), MFF shows a very promising approach to partnership building. However, the collaborative mechanisms at the national level are unclear. In Thailand, one of the early countries to join, the relationship between RCB and IUCN is strong, but the relationship with the country office is non-existent. Logically, the country office should facilitate the implementation of MFF at the national level, but as this is a RCB project it has not been included in the country office work programme, nor can the country office dedicate resources to the project unless it is compensated financially for it. This demonstrates the generally problematic link between RCB and the country office in the host country.

Recently, there have been efforts to integrate the core and GEF-funded environment and energy agendas in RCB. The distinction between the modes of operation is blurring as the GEF strategy is moving from site-specific project implementation upstream towards systemic capacity and policy. However, it is often difficult to discern the results of policy dialogue unless it is linked to implementation on the ground. UNDP's comparative advantage as a development agency is that it can link environment and energy to multisectoral work in governance and poverty reduction using its country office network. However, there are significant challenges to such integration.

A specific challenge is posed by the RAF, which favours large middle-income countries that have high potential for global environmental remediation, while UNDP must give priority to LDCs and other poor countries. UNDP can no longer expect that GEF resources will be available to subsidize environment work in the poorest countries. For this, core and other resources will be needed. However, many country offices still fail to see environmental sustainability as a basic development issue. In particular, climate change adaptation and risk management are crosscutting development considerations within UNDP's core mandate. PEI (see chapter 3), which is evolving in the region as a joint UNDP-UNEP initiative, may in the future play an important role.

Four years into operation, the Bratislava Regional Centre (BRC) has pioneered an integrated environment and energy programme and serves as a model for reform in other regions. Significant progress has been made towards integrating the GEF-funded and other programmes within the regional centre both administratively and technically. A particular positive result has been that BRC now can speak with one voice to the region's governments and other partners. GEF still dominates by providing approximately 90 percent of the funding, resulting in some important thematic areas not receiving very much attention, notably waste management, water and sanitation, all priorities for the countries in the region but none eligible for GEF support.

26. 'Mangroves for the Future: A Strategy for Promoting Investment in Coastal Ecosystem Conservation', 2007-2012. UNDP and IUCN 2006.

Nevertheless, it is evident that strong synergies in information flow, coordination and common missions result from an integrated environment and energy practice. The downside is that such integration absorbs more time through participation in meetings and being kept informed about what is happening both in UNDP and GEF. Some resistance to this integration has stemmed from the differing cultures, for example with accountability on the GEF side tending to be more rigorously linked to the delivery of projects and financial results. Experiences with integrated projects and activities are still limited, and it is not yet clear how much further integration can proceed. Practical integration opportunities have so far been mostly in the climate change area. The regional priorities are developing markets for environmentally friendly technologies and protecting national development prospects from the risks of climate change.

BRC has proved itself as an important centre of innovation within the environment and energy practice, particularly in the area of international lake and river basin projects. The region boasts an impressive portfolio of relatively few, large multicountry projects with long (ten to fifteen year) time horizons in Eastern Europe. The eleven-country Danube project that was recently handed over to the countries is a flagship. It and the overall Danube/Black Sea partnership have demonstrated exemplary cooperation between UNDP, the World Bank and the European Union. Other notable projects include those around the Caspian Sea, Lake Peipsi and Prespa Lake, which all have followed the process starting with a scientific transboundary diagnostic analysis to identify the environmental threats, leading to strategic action programmes and establishment of mechanisms for coordinating actions across the countries. Some of them have led to international conventions around the water bodies.[27]

These projects, primarily funded by GEF, have received limited support or inputs from the country offices in the region because the country offices lack the human resources to participate and it is unclear how to involve them in regional projects. The Prespa Lake project, which is supported by the FYR Macedonia and Albania country offices, is an exception. Other water activities in the region involve the country offices more, although there are few examples yet of integrative activities on the ground.

UNDP has the mandate to lead UN Water, started at WSSD in 2002. In the region UNDP has established a solid role in integrated water resources management and water governance and, as an on-the-ground project development and implementation organization, UNDP also leads coordination efforts in the Danube and Black Sea basins, the Caspian, and the South Caucasus (Kura/Aras basin).

Other notable water activities initiated by BRC include the UNDP-Coca-Cola Water Partnership 'Every Drop Matters' (funded with $5 million by the Coca-Cola Company); SNS Real, a partnership with a private Dutch bank investing in affordable loans for water-related investment projects in the region; and the Water Wiki, a new and innovative approach to support and facilitate knowledge management.

The biodiversity portfolio, while more recent, is impressive. Important progress has been made in helping countries implement conservation legislation, especially in Central Asia, as well as supporting the ratification of the Ramsar and Bonn conventions. Work on fisheries and water law improvements has been generally successful. One constraint in this area has been the weak capacity of the country offices to identify, prepare and manage projects. As in other programme areas, the understaffed and overworked environment units in the country offices are under tremendous pressure to mobilize resources, resulting in inadequate support to project development and implementation.

27. While most of these projects are classified by GEF under International Waters, the Danube and Prespa Lake projects are both GEF Integrated Ecosystem Management projects.

3.3.3 ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY STAFFING

UNDP began significantly reducing BDP staff in 2000, especially at headquarters. In the first year, staff positions were reduced from 250 to 215, of which only 117 would remain in New York. Out of 110 approved professional positions in BDP, what was then ESDG was to receive nine positions in the headquarters and seven in decentralized locations. By 2004, a further three of the headquarters positions had been retracted.[28]

At the time of this evaluation,[29] EEG had 123 posts at headquarters and in the regions. This constituted about a third of all 353 BDP posts. However, only 18 percent of these were funded from core resources.[30] At headquarters, EEG core professional positions consisted of 10 posts (the director, practice manager, six policy advisers and two knowledge managers). In addition, several non-core professionals have been hired using project funds. The bulk of EEG staff in the headquarters, however, consists of those working with the GEF and Montreal Protocol units, amounting to 22 professional staff in January 2008.

Outside headquarters the contrast is even starker. EEG has only four core-funded, outposted policy advisers globally. For example, at the end of 2007, the RCB environment and energy team consisted of 21 staff members. Of these, two were core-funded BDP policy advisers (half of the global total), while 14 were funded through GEF or the Montreal Protocol, three by RBAP and two through shorter term donor arrangements.

EEG staff feel that they have been 'punished for their success' in raising funds, notably GEF resources, to support staff positions by being denied core resources for functions such as knowledge management and global advocacy.

Of the operational units in the headquarters, each of the five regional bureaux, as well as the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, has a staff member serving as the environment focal point, although this is not a full-time position and is usually not filled by a technical specialist.

3.4 MAINSTREAMING POVERTY AND ENVIRONMENT

The 2004 UNDP Environmental Mainstreaming Strategy, states that "Environmental mainstreaming is the integration of environmental considerations into UNDP's policies, programming and operations to ensure the coherence and sustainability of our mission and practices." A policy of environmental mainstreaming has been promoted since the late 1990s, with an action plan adopted in 1999. Most recently, the UNDP strategic plan for 2008–2011 includes 'Mainstreaming Environment into Development' as one of UNDP's four 'Environment and Sustainable Development' priorities.

A certain lack of clarity over mainstreaming persists, however, including how mainstreaming should be interpreted in practice. For this evaluation, two aspects of environmental mainstreaming have been considered: (i) mainstreaming within UNDP, that is, how environmental considerations have been integrated within the poverty reduction, democratic governance and crisis response and recovery practices and (ii) mainstreaming at the country level, or whether the environment is taken into account not just by environment ministries but by ministries and departments responsible for key economic development sectors, including industry, agriculture, transport, water and energy, as well as local governments. In addition, this chapter considers the promising joint UNDP-UNEP initiative, PEI, which is explicitly aimed at mainstreaming.

3.4.1 MAINSTREAMING WITHIN UNDP

There has been relatively little collaboration between environment and energy and the other

28. 'Evaluation of the Second Global Cooperation Framework of UNDP'. UNDP Evaluation Office 2004.

29. UNDP BDP, June 2007. Updated data from BDP HR Adviser.

30. In contrast, 96 percent of the MDG Support Team, 77 percent of the Poverty Group, 73 percent of the Democratic Governance Group and 70 percent of the Capacity Development Group are funded from the core.

main practice areas within UNDP, giving a strong impression that environmental mainstreaming has not taken place to any significant extent. This observation seems equally applicable at headquarters, regional centres and country offices. Even in smaller country offices, staff report minimal communications between the environment team and the rest of the office. There is every indication that this is not a new development.

While UNDP staff working in environment and energy are thoroughly convinced of the need for mainstreaming, there seems to be little interest on the part of UNDP's poverty reduction and democratic governance practices. Crucially there are very few institutional incentives for mainstreaming to take place within the organization. We were told there is no structure to facilitate collaborative work with poverty and governance. It would not be exaggerating to say that in significant parts of UNDP, including some country offices, environment work is only tolerated because it is very largely externally funded.

There have been numerous planning and programming documents in the past decade that indicate the broad role of energy and environment within UNDP regional and national programmes, and there are government national planning documents that discuss environmental issues. But there is little evidence of clearly developed or articulated strategies that link or genuinely mainstream environmental initiatives into UNDP's poverty, governance, human rights or sustainable livelihoods core work.

The HDR has been a barometer of priorities within the organization since it was launched in 1990 and has emerged as a key document in the development literature. The 2007/08 HDR on climate change, and the 2006 HDR on water, suggest that these topics have recently engaged UNDP more broadly. An internal UNDP discussion was launched on both the Environment and Energy and the Human Development Report networks regarding the implications to UNDP of the HDR and, in particular, climate change adaptation. This discussion clearly shows that environment, including climate change adaptation, is still seen primarily as a separate sector and the linkages to poverty reduction have not received due attention.

One of the early arguments for engaging UNDP as a GEF implementing agency was the opportunity to introduce and embed, in other words to mainstream, environmental considerations within UNDP's principal mission of poverty reduction. Instead, GEF resources have been used to develop a separate and autonomous environment function within UNDP that—while broadly recognized as competent and well organized—has generally exchanged neither resources nor knowledge with the rest of the organization during the last fifteen years. Ironically, one result of UNDP's success in accessing GEF resources seems to have been to minimize the incentive for mainstreaming.

UNDP does not have a safeguards policy like, for example, the World Bank. There is an implicit assumption that UNDP projects do not cause environmental or social harm, although no set of procedures are in place to monitor this. While it might be argued that UNDP's goals of technical assistance and capacity development are less likely to cause inadvertent harm than the large investment or infrastructure projects frequently supported by the development banks, the lack of safeguards does seem an unusual omission. It also provides even less incentive for the poverty and governance practices of UNDP to routinely consider environment as part of their work.

3.4.2 MAINSTREAMING AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL

UNDP tends to focus its environmental relationships on ministries of environment, especially in smaller countries, LDCs and SIDS, although its overall counterpart is most often the ministry of finance or planning. Many of the environment ministries were set up during the early 1990s following UNCED in Rio de Janeiro. UNDP has helped many of these ministries mobilize financial resources, especially for the national plans, strategies and other communications

required for compliance with MEAs. However, most of these relatively new and often junior ministries lack resources, capacity and influence. Few are able to have a significant impact on major social and economic development decisions. As a result, their ability to promote or contribute significantly to mainstreaming environment within national development processes is often modest.

The types of work carried out by UNDP in environment and energy can be difficult to mainstream within countries. The environment portfolio is almost entirely based on individual projects of limited duration in the areas of climate change, biodiversity and international waters. Such projects can become very complex when they involve several ministries or departments from different sectors, while lead ministries are sometimes reluctant to share the resources or benefits attached to projects. Furthermore, GEF priorities are related to global environmental benefits and are not always perceived as supporting national environment and development priorities linked to poverty reduction. Outside the context of specific projects, country office staff do not consistently engage with government counterparts on the environmental issues arising in key economic development sectors. To do so would require staff who have broad development experience based on solid environmental knowledge; this is lacking in most country offices.

GEF has periodically asked UNDP for evidence of mainstreaming.[31] A 2007 submission to the GEF Council on this topic highlighted the relative paucity of unequivocally convincing examples within UNDP's country work. A few individual successes were reported. For example, UNDP reports facilitating consultations in Kenya between the Ministry of Energy, parliamentarians, civil society organizations and the private sector that led to new energy laws. The other examples of mainstreaming provided were scattered and did not add up to a significant impact.

Malawi illustrates the dilemmas faced by the country offices, especially in Africa. The government has prioritized economic growth, agricultural development and food security, and these are reflected in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2008–11. Although it is a crosscutting concern, environment is usually treated as a separate sector. While there are key environmental issues and opportunities within agriculture, the mainstay of the economy, UNDP has had neither the people nor the financial resources to engage the ministries and departments concerned. Instead, UNDP's environment and energy portfolio in Malawi largely consists of stand-alone projects and enabling activities related to MEAs, largely funded by GEF and the Montreal Protocol, and executed by the Department of Environmental Affairs. While these projects have positive aspects, they are not mainstreaming. This particular situation may be improved by some anticipated changes, including (i) an expansion of the country office environment and energy team, with renewed links to crisis prevention and recovery, (ii) the start up of a PEI pilot with the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development and (iii) the launch of a national SGP.

Variations on this theme were noted in Burkina Faso and Kenya where government efforts to promote economic growth do not seem closely tied to sustainably managing the natural resource base. While environmental responsibilities in Burkina Faso are spread over several ministries, which suggests the potential for mainstreaming, many stakeholders do not see evidence that it has strengthened priority setting and decision making related to natural resources management. UNDP has helped develop new energy legislation in Kenya but has not been able to engage consistently with the government on environmental policy issues, largely due to the demands of managing an extensive portfolio of small, stand-alone environment and energy projects.

31. See, e.g., 'Report of GEF Agencies on Efforts to Mainstream Global Environmental Challenges into Core Development Work'. GEF Council (GEF/C.32/Inf.4), 2007.

In many countries it is proving difficult for UNDP to consistently and convincingly engage in environmental issues within those economic development sectors and programmes that aim to increase incomes and productivity. Instead, UNDP's efforts to mainstream environment usually start from the limited set of global environmental issues, a more challenging task and one apparently viewed by countries as less responsive to their national priorities. This issue came up repeatedly in discussions with government departments, NGOs and donors. Governments do not often recognize UNDP as principal policy adviser on environment and energy issues. UNDP's ability to articulate its role in natural resource management as countries pursue economic growth strategies seems very limited at the country level, with a few impressive exceptions. UNDP prides itself on helping governments get policies right. But the country offices, with individual sector specialists from headquarters or regional technical advisers more focused on projects, rarely have the appropriate staff to help governments develop policy. Thus UNDP does not consistently give the kind of advice that is needed (a notable exception would be the important work done to pass environmental legislation in many countries). If UNDP is to do more high-level strategy work to help governments genuinely mainstream environment, it will need to make significantly more experienced people available to the country offices.

The inclusion of environmental considerations in national development plans and strategies (including Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers–PRSPs) is conventionally presented as evidence of environmental mainstreaming. The same is true for key UNDP documents such as the CCF. While the *absence* of environment from such plans and strategies would be a cause for concern, its *inclusion* is clearly only a first step towards demonstrating that mainstreaming is actually taking place.

The NDI aims to strengthen intersectoral and interagency coordination and partnerships. This programme facilitates country-level multi-stakeholder dialogues aimed at strengthening priority setting in the GEF focal areas, but it serves a broader purpose. The approach relies on providing government agencies, NGOs, communities, academic and research institutions, private sector, donors and the media with opportunities to participate more effectively in national decision making. The closely related Country Support Programme aims to strengthen country-level coordination and promote country ownership of GEF-financed activities. These important programmes appear to have helped countries coordinate more actively the range of GEF-financed activities they are undertaking with support from UNDP and the other GEF implementing agencies. This has been a useful contribution to mainstreaming, although it is mainly focused on activities in the GEF focal areas that aim to generate global benefits, rather than on environment and energy from the perspective of national priorities.

UNDP has also taken some promising steps towards developing capacity in and implementing strategic environmental assessments, most active so far in Eastern Europe, which could also make an important mainstreaming contribution.

3.4.3 POVERTY-ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE

The UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative directly and explicitly supports environmental mainstreaming at the country level. PEI has worked with key decision-making ministries in several pilot countries and is in the process of expanding. It responds to the following diagnosis: "poverty-environment linkages have been poorly integrated into PRSPs...have not been operationalized...[and] there is still a general lack of understanding of how environment and poverty are linked and/or how to include environmental sustainability in national, sectoral and district development processes."[32]

32. PEI documentation.

PEI gives nine countries in Africa and Asia financial and technical support to build capacity for mainstreaming poverty-environment linkages into national development plans (such as PRSPs and MDG Achievement Strategies), budgets and sector programmes. Recent efforts have begun to expand PEI to other countries and regions, coordinated by a joint facility established in 2007 in Nairobi.

UNDP and UNEP had begun working in this area separately and were subsequently encouraged to join forces by governments and by other donors. UNDP had started piloting 'poverty and environment' programmes in six countries in 2000, including Kenya and Tanzania, with support from DFID, the European Commision and Danida. UNEP, encouraged by its Governing Council to advise governments on how to incorporate environmental considerations into PRSPs and national development plans, started to develop comparable pilot projects in seven African countries, also including Kenya and Tanzania. At this point there was no coordination.

Recognizing that these two parallel and similar initiatives risked showing the UN system as unable to coordinate, cooperation became essential. A joint initiative was eventually negotiated and then launched at WSSD in Johannesburg in 2005, based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) emphasizing that UNDP's experience in working with governments at the country level would be combined with UNEP's normative and advocacy role in environment at global, regional and sub-regional levels. This MOU designates UNDP as the country-level executing partner with UNEP providing substantive expertise and capacity to the programming. Joint pilot projects were then launched in Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania with fully integrated work plans, pooled resources and shared staffing. PEI has been consistently supported with advice from the Poverty-Environment Partnership, an informal network of development agencies and international NGOs that aims to address key poverty-environment issues within the MDG framework.

The new UNDP-UNEP partnership duly moved forwards, progress was made and PEI began to be cited as an example of how the UN family of organizations could and should work together. Scaling up to more than 40 developing countries over the next five years is now anticipated. The expectations of donors and other stakeholders appear very high, with PEI regarded, at least informally, as a test case for the UN 'Delivering as One' model.

Progress on the ground has not been free of problems, however. Interviews for this evaluation showed the actual experiences from the joint pilot projects in Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania to be varied. On the positive side, at least some senior government decision makers have been engaged and are enthusiastic, there is expanded awareness of the issues, a programmatic model has been developed, a range of analytical tools have been tested, some indicators have been developed and an exchange of capacity development experiences has taken place. In Kenya and Tanzania in particular, effective steps have been taken to coordinate with existing bilateral programmes with comparable objectives, mainly funded by Danida.

Similarly, in Asia, PEI is building upon existing work, initially in Vietnam. In 2007 a joint workshop was organized to develop PEI work in several new countries. PEI is seen as an umbrella under which related work, including selected projects funded by GEF, could contribute. The cooperation between RCB and UNEP's ROAP is close, with joint management of funds and joint missions. Environmental expertise from UNEP is also being used by the region's UNDP country offices that lack capacity.

PEI clearly has some way to go before tangible impacts are likely to become apparent. Bringing UNDP and UNEP together operationally has proved challenging, with a variety of problems still to be resolved. These include inconsistencies in procedures, document formats, implementation and funding protocols, and reporting standards, many of which have contributed to significant

delays.[33] These factors appear to have hindered both effectiveness and efficiency. More broadly, the impacts of the PEI pilot projects have also been influenced by local differences, such as national interest, ownership and capacity.

These challenges have not been helped by the often tenuous state of trust and respect between the staff of UNDP and UNEP, exacerbated in some cases by the unclear roles of the UNDP country offices. Difficulties have ranged from some country offices resenting being treated "as a contractor," to others that insist on treating PEI as "just one more project" to be implemented. These difficulties have not gone unnoticed at higher levels, with the UNEP executive director emphasizing the need to "...encourage the support and engagement of senior managers in UNDP and UNEP to ensure that habits of the past do not get in the way of dynamic and effective partnerships between our two institutions." [34]

History clearly cannot be ignored or overcome in a short period, although there are regions where cooperation between UNDP and UNEP staff is exemplary, such as in Bangkok. Here, differences in procedures, formats, allegiances and so forth were overcome. A series of joint regional workshops were held that engaged national policymakers, and the UN resident coordinator's role was enhanced to set the tone for the joint effort. This effort also had strong buy-in from the poverty and governance practices in several UNDP country offices.

UNDP and UNEP have signed a joint programming agreement designating UNDP as the 'managing agent' for PEI. The exact function of the coordination unit recently established in Nairobi is still evolving, however, and the division of labour between UNEP and UNDP requires further clarification, especially during the very ambitious scaling-up phase now being launched. Convincing arrangements do not yet seem to be in place to ensure that effective communications and decision making will reduce complexity and minimize transaction costs. Within UNDP, the roles of BDP, the regional bureaux and the autonomous country offices also need further definition.

The scaling up of PEI, while promising and obviously necessary at some point to achieve significant impacts, currently appears fraught with risk. PEI's potential could easily be lost if organizational complexity, administrative practices and routines, decision-making structures, agency rivalries and duplication, and the struggle for institutional territory are not effectively addressed. The project document itself—a generally frank and admirable analysis—does not define outcome, achievement and impact indicators, explaining that "appropriate" poverty-environment indicators and monitoring systems will be developed later. This is a tall order given the nature of the capacity development that will be needed across the various ministries and other local and national stakeholders.

To be effective, mainstreaming must eventually lead to action on the ground with positive outcomes. Seen in this light, some members of the Poverty-Environment Partnership would like to see PEI connect more clearly with local communities and their daily struggle for survival. There may be a role here for SGP with its experience in linking community-level initiatives to policy issues, especially as SGP has strong programmes based in the UNDP country offices of each of the PEI pilot countries.

A more critical issue is how to engage the rest of UNDP in environmental mainstreaming. There is a certain irony in the level of effort being made through PEI to persuade governments that environment is an essential consideration in national development planning and fighting poverty, while the major UNDP departments

33. 'Harmonization of UNEP and UNDP Operational Procedures for Joint Programming'. Dalberg Final Report, 2006.

34. 16 August 2006

responsible for poverty reduction and governance remain uninvolved and apparently unmoved by this line of argument. PEI needs champions within UNDP beyond the environment team. There may be opportunities to link with UNDP's emerging efforts in strategic environmental assessments, although so far this initiative has also stayed mainly within UNDP's environment team.

The principles of the PEI approach appear logical, sensible and badly needed. If environment is indeed to be mainstreamed into development planning and implementation, which is widely regarded as a precondition for sustainable development (and recognized as such in UNDP's new strategic plan), then an approach based on these or very similar principles seems essential. PEI appears an excellent complement to much of UNDP's GEF-financed work. Few other international environmental initiatives have so explicitly and consistently focused on communicating environmental issues to key national decision makers, such as the ministries of finance, planning, economic development and so on. PEI actually appears to have the potential to help fill this crucial gap, not only in UNDP, but in international environmental work in general. There is a lot at stake here: mainstreaming environment, the numerous UNEP-UNDP partnerships that have recently been launched and even the viability of translating 'One UN' into operational reality.

3.5 STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE REPORTING

3.5.1 LEARNING AS A CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Despite a stated emphasis on generating lessons learned, there appears to have been little systematic analysis of experiences to date as a basis for developing future strategies (exceptions include a useful review of lessons learned by countries striving to meet MDG-7 and some high-quality lessons learned publications by the GEF unit[35]). Future priorities are instead identified and selected through an internal discourse between staff and management that is based on perceived fundraising opportunities and a limited understanding of the impacts of previous strategies.

The Regional Bureau for Africa developed a regional strategy related to poverty reduction and natural resources management, which provides important guidance to the country programmes. However, this strategy does not seem to have had much more influence than the MYFFs in guiding the country offices, which are, not surprisingly, more responsive to both the government and the prospect of accessing diverse external funding sources.

Led by BRC and building on the integration of the regional and GEF teams within the centre, a regional environment and energy strategy for Europe and CIS was being developed during the evaluation. Now being replicated in other regions, this has the potential to emerge as a best practice model of strategic planning linked to practical goals and objectives. One of the most important thrusts of the Europe and CIS strategy development process has been aligning funding at different levels within the organization. Historically, financial resource allocations between different themes and priority areas have been carried out separately at the headquarters, regional and country levels. In practice, this means that a particular theme may be prioritized and supported by one level but not the others. Implementing effective strategies at global, regional and national levels throughout the organization must be extremely challenging under such arrangements.

The Europe and CIS strategy was apparently the first to try to align TRAC funding at all levels, and this is being done for each sub-practice—climate change, biodiversity, international waters and so on. This model seems likely to increase

35. 'Making Progress on Environmental Sustainability: Lessons and Recommendations from a Review of over 150 MDG Country Experiences'. UNDP 2005; 'Conserving Forest Biodiversity: Threats, Solutions and Experiences', UNDP-GEF 2003; 'Solar Photovoltaics in Africa: Experiences with Financing and Delivery Models', UNDP-GEF 2004.

overall programme coherence, providing countries with the opportunity to invest in activities (with their own TRAC funds) that are assured of institutional support throughout all levels at UNDP. This should result in better service to the governments while providing adequate technical support to the country offices.

3.5.2 PERFORMANCE REPORTING

While the MYFFs may have provided useful guidance on UNDP priorities, the goals and objectives articulated are quite general. Staff at country offices and headquarters, including resident representatives, did not regard the MYFFs as identifying performance goals and targets that were particularly relevant to them. One reason why the influence of the MYFFs seems limited is that they were disconnected from the allocation of financial resources, especially at the country level where resident representatives have full control over the country office budget. Several respondents characterized the MYFFs as a menu of potential activities for countries to choose from. This has had two results:

1. In a positive sense, UNDP has retained considerable flexibility to focus on areas of emerging interest, especially where and when funding becomes available. In some ways this is essential as UNDP develops its work programmes without knowing what financial resources may become available.
2. On the other hand, a basis for measuring performance had not been established. Even in the detail underlying the MYFF, there are no targets against which progress could be assessed. The MDGs themselves contain targets, but these are intended for nations, supported by the entire development community, not just for UNDP.

Nevertheless, it does appear that the MYFFs encouraged the country offices to work within broad programme areas, thus providing UNDP with a more focused programme than had been the case before 2001.

The Administrator's reports on UNDP's performance during the two MYFF periods are expressed almost entirely in terms of money spent and numbers of countries worked in. Because it is much easier to measure these kinds of inputs rather than outcomes or results, that is what most organizations do, even though this tells little about impacts or effectiveness. A persistent problem is the confusion between activities and outcomes, with these two often treated as if synonymous.

Setting targets in environment and energy and selecting indicators that will be useful in assessing performance is hard, as all major organizations working in these areas have experienced. The specific problem here, however, is UNDP's assertion that MYFF-1 supported the introduction of results-based management for reporting, monitoring and setting targets with identified indicators, with no indication that this actually happened in either MYFF-1 or MYFF-2.[36]

Finding meaningful indicators and measuring progress in a way that is useful has been particularly elusive in the case of capacity development. While UNDP has constantly reiterated that capacity development is its comparative advantage, there have been no effective progress assessments beyond reviews of individual, short-term projects. Many stakeholders do not consider that the overall government capacity for environmental management in UNDP partner countries has improved significantly over the past decade or so; in LDCs and SIDS it appears to have declined.

While the ROARs introduced during MYFF-1 were for assessing country-level outcomes and impacts, no reliable mechanisms have been established for aggregating the national ROARs or any other performance indicators above the level of individual projects (Annex 2). Beyond measuring and assessing individual project performance, the MYFF/ROAR approach did

36. A finding consistent with the results of the 2007 evaluation of results-based management.

not enable assessing the performance of country programmes, regions, thematic areas nor—it appears—the organization as a whole.

Many of the methodological problems are attributable to a lack of indicators and baseline data, a lack of effort in quantifying outputs and the difficulty of isolating impacts of a single actor on the country development scene. The outcomes documented in the ROARs more accurately describe the general areas in which UNDP plans to work. Another performance management tool, the Balanced Scorecard, does not have any indicators measuring the technical substance of the programme.

Although performance reporting was simplified for MYFF-2, it was still based mainly on inputs: the amount of money spent, the number of countries worked in and so on. None of the case study country offices made significant programmatic changes in the shift from MYFF-1 to MYFF-2, although ongoing programmes were repackaged into a new format for reporting purposes. The difference in emphasis between the two MYFFs did not seem to reach down to affect the country programmes. Resident representatives and environment team leaders feel that headquarters focuses more on delivery, that is, on spending the budgeted allocation, rather than achieving performance targets.

Given these limitations, it is evident that little effective performance reporting takes place at the country level or above. While there are standard procedures to evaluate completed projects, there are no aggregation processes in place to reliably collect all the impacts of the initiatives undertaken to assess overall progress within national UNDP programmes in environment and energy.[37]

37. A finding confirmed by the recent evaluation of results-based management in UNDP.

Key Points

- UNDP country programmes are intended to respond to priorities negotiated with the partner governments, within the boundaries of UNDP's global planning frameworks. However, instead of following clear strategies and showing leadership, UNDP has tended to allow available funding from external sources to shape these programmes. Consequently, the country programmes often appear to be a collection of opportunistic projects rather than coherent portfolios.
- How well UNDP programming has reflected national priorities depends largely on the type of country. In middle-income countries and especially China there has been a good match. In LDCs and SIDS, the focus on global environmental problems has left large gaps in national priority areas related to environment and energy.
- In all case study countries, the evaluation reviewed a number of key projects. It was found that in general the design and, in most cases, implementation work carried out by UNDP and its partners is of high quality.
- The headquarters environment and energy programme has focused on studies and advocacy work. Much of this has been of high quality, but the impacts of such work are unclear and synergies with the country programmes appear limited.
- The programmatic activities by the headquarters and regional centres were assessed largely based on separate evaluations of the global and regional cooperation frameworks and visits to two centres. In Europe and CIS, the BRC has proved itself as an important centre of innovation within the environment and energy practice. The centre has pioneered an integrated environment and energy programme and serves as a model for reform in other regions.
- Mainstreaming within UNDP has been limited. There has been relatively little collaboration between environment and energy and the other practice areas within UNDP. There is little evidence of clearly developed or articulated strategies that link or genuinely mainstream environmental initiatives into UNDP's poverty, governance, human rights or sustainable livelihoods core work.
- Mainstreaming at the country level has also been limited. There are systemic barriers to this, which include the often weak position of ministries of environment with whom UNDP works as well as the dominance of portfolios that focus on the global, rather than national, environmental problems.
- The still new UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative is attempting to address the vital need to mainstream environment into development planning and implementation. Current efforts to scale up PEI will require both additional support and operational clarification to be effective. Engaging the rest of UNDP in environmental mainstreaming is a critical unmet need.
- At the country level, UNDP is valued by national governments as a long-term trusted partner, supporting national planning and contributing to capacity development. UNDP has also been a major avenue to GEF funding. The relevance and effectiveness of UNDP's environmental programming is directly influenced by the commitment and capacity of recipient governments. UNDP has long struggled with how to build and retain capacity in partner countries. Still, long-term capacity gains in the areas of environment and energy are seldom apparent, especially in LDCs and SIDS.
- UNDP's own capacity in environment and energy leaves much to be desired. While the staff in headquarters and the regional centres are recognized for their expertise and the results they achieve, most of them are funded through extra-budgetary sources, which is not conducive to long-term capacity or career development for the staff. The environment and energy teams in the country offices are mostly small and often lack technical expertise in the field. Their main role is usually limited to administrative management tasks, without capacity to engage in policy dialogue with the governments.
- UNDP's strategy has not been formulated in a clear and cohesive manner. The planning documents and performance reporting systems, rather than focusing on well-defined goals and results, focus on broad areas where UNDP operates, as well as inputs and activities.

Chapter 4

MAJOR THEMATIC AREAS

While resource and time limitations prevented the evaluation team from conducting in-depth reviews of all the major thematic areas, this chapter provides an overview and assessment of the performance and positioning of UNDP in three priority areas: climate change, energy and biodiversity. It also discusses the impact of the dominance of GEF on priority setting in UNDP's environment and energy programme.

4.1 CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change has been a major component of UNDP's environment and energy work and is central to the organization's future plans in this area. Since 1992 UNDP has mobilized about $3 billion to fund over 400 large-scale and 1,000 small-scale energy and climate projects, almost entirely with GEF funding plus co-financing. Climate change is also prominent in UNDP's strategic plan for 2008 onwards. The broader attention that climate change has received recently virtually guarantees that this will be the pre-eminent environmental issue during the next decade, with climate change adaptation emerging as a key development issue.

Most of UNDP's climate change activities at the country level have been aimed at mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, a global concern rather than one of developing countries in particular. Such projects are often of marginal relevance to countries' mainstream development agendas, especially in LDCs and SIDS. Projects have included support for renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable transportation and new clean energy technologies. A shift from technology-based to market-based approaches has encouraged tackling barriers that inhibit countries' progress towards more 'climate-friendly' energy policies. Minor activities targeting climate change adaptation planning have helped developing countries prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change, and support has also been given to help countries fulfil UNFCCC reporting obligations.

4.1.1 GHG EMISSION MITIGATION

Direct impacts are obviously in terms of reduced greenhouse gas emissions (Table 4), although as the portfolio shifts more towards barrier removal this will become a less important indicator. As reported by the PIR, emissions of about 89 million metric tons of CO_2 were avoided during 2007, with projects in the portfolio having cumulatively avoided emissions of about 386 million metric tons. Energy efficiency projects avoided virtually all of these amounts, with 86 and 377 million metric tons, respectively.[38] While interesting, these data have limited significance to the countries concerned.

Only six projects accounted for 98 percent of the emissions reductions of the entire global portfolio (Table 5). Five of these are in the Asia-Pacific region and three in China. The other 58 projects in the global portfolio contribute just over 1 percent to the total emissions avoided. The market transformation indicator has proved significantly more difficult to quantify and has to be assessed on a project-by-project basis. Renewable energy projects have in some cases had a socio-economic impact by providing households with energy.

Reviews of the performance of UNDP's climate change projects by GEF have generally been

38. According to the PIR, CO_2 emission savings should be calculated over 10-20 years.

Table 4. CO_2 Emissions Avoided during PIR 2007 Period

UNDP Region	Total CO_2 Emissions Avoided (million tons CO_2)
Africa (S&E)	1.44E–03
Arab States	3.44E+00
Asia and the Pacific	8.52E+01
Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States	8.94E–02
Global	0.00E+00
Latin America and the Caribbean	2.19E–01
Grand Total	**8.89E+01**

Source: 'UNDP-GEF Project Implementation Review: Climate Change Focal Area Summary Report 2007'.

Table 5. Summary of Projects that Avoided the Greatest Amount of CO_2 Emissions during the PIR 2007 Period

Country	Project Title	OP	Emissions avoided (million tons CO_2 per year)	Cumulative CO_2 Reduction (million tons CO_2)
Egypt	Energy Efficiency Improvements and Greenhouse Gas Reduction	5	2.97	11.79
China	Energy Conservation and GHG Emissions Reduction in Township and Village Enterprise Industries in China Phase II	5	2.05	2.24
China	Barrier Removal for the Widespread Commercialization of Energy-efficient CFC-free Refrigerators in China	5	75.00	347.90
China	End Use Energy Efficiency Project (EUEEP)	5	3.84	5.84
Malaysia	Industrial Energy Efficiency and Improvement Project	5	2.04	7.57
Philippines	Capacity Building to Remove Barriers to RE Development Project	6	2.01	6.55
Total			**87.91**	**381.89**

Source: 'UNDP-GEF Project Implementation Review: Climate Change Focal Area Summary Report 2007'.

favourable. However, the selection of projects and allocations of resources between countries for all GEF climate change projects (i.e., those implemented by World Bank and UNEP as well as UNDP) was described by the GEF's independent programme study in 2004[39] as "not revealing any evidence of strategic choice."

UNDP has built up a significant body of expertise and experience in this area, although this expertise is located mostly at headquarters and the regional centres, and there is limited expertise in most country offices. There are concerns that the stream of projects entering the pipeline is beyond the capacity of many country offices to implement effectively[40], raising the prospect that the 'resource mobilization successes' of headquarters and the regional centres will become 'implementation liabilities' for the country offices and UNDP as a whole.

Climate change mitigation has had a somewhat uncomfortable fit with the rest of UNDP's agenda, reflecting the differing objectives of UNDP and GEF. In the developing world the major opportunities for emission reductions can be found in the more industrialized, middle-income countries plus the former Soviet bloc. Potential carbon gains from investing in sub-Saharan Africa or in the SIDS are almost non-existent, although there are opportunities to ensure that future development of energy sources will be carbon-friendly. Recently the GEF's new RAF has begun to concentrate support for mitigation activities in the countries that are the main greenhouse gas emitters. This means that the poorest countries are among those least likely to benefit from international investments in reducing carbon emissions.

Most climate change efforts within UNDP have been focused on energy efficiency and conservation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Synergies, or even cooperation, with non-GEF UNDP staff interested in enhancing the access of the poor to reliable and affordable energy sources (especially rural electrification) have been limited. Following the argument that poor communities cannot develop without access to electricity, it appears that heavy reliance on GEF has moved UNDP towards an approach where the needs of the poorest countries are not being prioritized. This dilemma has not escaped the attention of UNDP staff who recognize that GEF climate change funding will largely be unavailable to LDCs and SIDS. The only solution to serve these countries' energy and environment needs is therefore to allocate funds from UNDP core funds or other external sources.

4.1.2 CARBON FINANCE

One of the most promising features of the global response to climate change has been the rapid growth of carbon trading, or the buying and selling of emission permits, an area that is not in the GEF mandate. Of particular interest to UNDP and its mission, the Clean Development Mechanism has allowed industrialized countries to invest in projects that reduce emissions in developing countries as an alternative to more expensive emission reductions in their own countries.

CDM benefits have so far been limited to a small group of countries (notably China, India, Brazil and Mexico). Very few LDCs or SIDS are ready to participate in carbon markets on a significant scale, although their carbon sequestration potential may increase significantly if credits for sustainable land management or avoided deforestation are approved during the negotiations for a successor to the Kyoto Protocol, which expires in 2012.

In response to this emerging source of funds, UNDP has recently established the MDG Carbon Facility, which aims to realize 'development benefits' from the sale of carbon credits. The target market is countries that have not benefited

39. 'Climate Change Program Study'. GEF Office of Monitoring and Evaluation, 2004.

40. See, for example, 'UNDP Environment Finance Group Regional Business Plan for 2007: Asia and the Pacific Region'.

significantly from CDM (due to lack of capacity, opportunity and so on) as well as regions within countries (notably China) that have not benefited so far. To underwrite its MDG Carbon Facility, UNDP succeeded in attracting bids from major banks, one of which has committed to guaranteeing an attractive carbon price for carbon offset projects around the developing world for 15 million carbon credits. This is a path-breaking initiative for UNDP as a model of collaboration with the private sector (that is, the bank and the investors in the facilities generating the carbon credits) as well as the governments concerned. Critically, it also promises full cost recovery and does not rely on GEF funding.

It is too early to assess how UNDP's entry into this arena is likely to turn out and whether UNDP has found a unique niche. While this market has already attracted some institutions with considerably more carbon finance experience, few possess UNDP's developing country experience. UNDP is not an early starter here and the MDG Carbon Facility is small. The World Bank, for example, has 10 funds, a decade of experience, and $2 billion under management, but even so is no longer a significant player in the rapidly expanding carbon market. Among the World Bank funds, there are community, forestry and biocarbon funds. Because these areas all overlap with UNDP interests, they may ultimately prove to be appropriate areas for UNDP's focus. The World Bank's experience with projects that do not readily attract private sector investments, which is exactly the type of projects UNDP is looking for, is that such deals are hard to close. This corresponds with early UNDP experience, underscoring that considerable hands-on work by highly capable and knowledgeable staff is usually required to close deals between project promoters, investors and governments.

However, UNDP has started to assemble a promising pipeline of projects following high-

Box 5. Carbon Finance in Eastern Europe and the CIS

Eastern Europe and the CIS have been slow to participate in the carbon finance market due to low awareness and understanding, even though these countries include some of the world's worst greenhouse gas producers. Six CIS countries are counted among the most carbon-intense economies globally. But potential investors have been deterred by the absence of needed institutional and legal frameworks as well as problems with the overall business environment.

UNDP has launched 'Leveraging Carbon Finance for Sustainable Development in Southeastern Europe and the CIS', a project aimed at developing public and private sector capacities to access carbon finance, identifying opportunities and providing project management services to individual projects. Under this impressive initiative, capacity development and pilot initiatives have been launched in several countries. FYR Macedonia recently presented a strategy for CDM participation, with other countries following.

A key objective was to identify viable projects for support by the MDG Carbon Facility. This has been difficult, however. Early experience showed that proactive efforts would be needed, going well beyond simply declaring the fund open. The capacity development effort for both governments and UNDP staff appears to have worked well following effective collaboration between BRC, the country offices and respective headquarters units (EEG, UNDP-GEF and the Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS at the headquarters). As a result, over 70 percent of the global pipeline for the MDG Carbon Facility has originated from this region (as of late 2007).

UNDP capacity development and training support to the FYR Macedonia Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning has supported an effective government climate office (to be closed in 2008 but possibly absorbed by the ministry). More recent UNDP-supported efforts to mobilize carbon finance, admittedly supply-driven, have generated innovative CDM proposals to the emerging MDG Carbon Facility. FYR Macedonia's strong progress in this area seems largely attributable to UNDP capacity development with strong support from BRC. The country office, which is particularly strong in this area, is now addressing 'climate proofing' of its entire project portfolio, not just environment and energy, inspired by similar work in the Armenia country office.

quality preparation work, mainly led by the Bratislava and Bangkok regional centres, and four projects had been approved by early 2008. UNDP has made considerable progress in building carbon finance capacity within its own organization as well as certain partner governments, while deepening staff understanding of the carbon markets and gaining valuable experience in collaborating with the private sector (Box 5).

The main justification for UNDP's participation in carbon markets—in other words the link to poverty reduction—appears to rest on the generation of local and national development benefits in the following areas: food security, education, biodiversity protection, community benefits, water purification, watershed protection, gender equality, health care, secure land tenure, improved sanitation, poverty alleviation and human rights. But the mechanisms for transferring resources to these areas will all need to be negotiated and established separately as part of each carbon 'deal'. This will be a complex institutional challenge, especially given the lack of capacity and relevant experience in the countries that UNDP is targeting. How and on what scale these 'development dividends' can be realized therefore remains to be seen. But unless these dividends can be realized on a significant scale and with clear welfare gains, UNDP may appear to be ignoring the interests of the countries, as well as the constituents within these countries, that are most in need of its support.

4.1.3 ADAPTATION

Very modest levels of international funding have so far been provided for climate change adaptation. GEF administers three small funds and on an interim basis will administer a new Adaptation Fund that will be governed directly by the UNFCCC.[41] This fund will receive 2 percent of CDM projects plus direct contributions, although the scale of financial resources likely to become available is not yet clear. Most needs estimates for the next decade or so are at least several billion dollars.

UNDP has helped over 100 countries prepare national climate change vulnerability assessments, national adaptation plans and national communications to the UNFCCC using GEF resources. Based on this experience, UNDP expects to be in a position to help countries access adaptation resources. The recently launched UNDP-Spain MDG Achievement Fund is also expected to provide direct support for climate change adaptation. UNDP has also recently formed climate change partnerships with the World Bank, regional development banks, UNEP and other UN agencies, although it is still unclear how these arrangements will develop. It is important to note, however, that the scale of financial and human resources dedicated to climate change adaptation within UNDP has so far been tiny.

A variety of studies indicate that the LDCs and SIDS will be hardest hit by climate change, and these are the countries most in need of adaptation support for awareness raising, capacity development and action on the ground. In many ways climate change adaptation therefore seems a more natural area for UNDP to engage in than mitigation, where the benefits are largely global. The adaptation challenge cannot be overstated, however. The countries most in need of support for climate change adaptation are UNDP's weakest constituents in terms of resources and capacity and have so far shown little sign of effectively integrating their development planning across multiple sectors, a prerequisite for adaptation to be effective. At a minimum, country offices in these countries will require significantly enhanced human and financial resources to be effective in this area.

While climate change is regarded within UNDP as an environmental issue, adaptation to its impacts is primarily a question of sustainable development and risk management. Climate

41. UNFCCC will approve Adaptation Fund projects on a one-country, one-vote basis, in contrast to GEF Council project approval voting on the size of donor contributions.

change impacts vary considerably from location to location, are harder to predict and cover a very wide range of impacts from sea-level rise and storms and floods, to shifts in growing seasons, vegetation cover and water resources depletion. Preparedness and responses must therefore cover a huge range of issues. The common denominator, as usual, is that poor people living in marginal areas are the most vulnerable and have the least resources to cope with and recover from a short-term disaster or longer term degradation. Capacity plays an important role in reducing people's vulnerability to climate change. Defining capacity, and UNDP's role in building it, in the context of climate change adaptation poses new challenges.

So far UNDP has had a very small team working on adaptation at headquarters, and this effort needs to increase dramatically. This team is helping raise awareness and train staff throughout the organization and also is working with some regional programmes to incorporate adaptation into their planning and strategy development. Reviews of country programmes are underway to assess the vulnerability of current and planned activities to climate change as a prelude to 'climate proofing'. This is a good start. Climate risk assessments of new projects are expected to become standard procedure in UNDP and throughout the international development community. Institutionally, the current arrangements for adaptation work, which have generated useful experience to date, do not appear sufficient as adaptation needs gather increasing momentum.

UNDP seems uniquely positioned within the UN system to take the lead on adaptation based on its broad range of responsibilities and competencies across a range of development sectors as well as its experience supporting national development planning and strategy development. The 2007/08 HDR on climate change is an excellent product. While it is unfortunate that the organization has waited so long to focus on this topic, the report gives UNDP a key opportunity to use its collective power to help make the case for mainstreaming through adaptation, especially in poorer countries.

Continuing business as usual within UNDP, that is, treating adaptation as one more new environment programme, cannot be effective, however. Resource mobilization, country office capacities and mainstreaming within the organization all require major adjustment and realignment. Adaptation measures will certainly require integration with national development plans and programmes across a range of sectors. This seems unlikely to happen if adaptation continues to be perceived primarily as an environmental issue, which is very much the case at present, both within UNDP and outside. While the need to mainstream crisis prevention and recovery strategies seems obvious and has begun in a few cases, UNDP will have little credibility unless it can demonstrate that its own poverty reduction and democratic governance practices are also full participants.

4.1.4 UNDP CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

UNDP is currently developing its first climate change strategy, hampered by considerable uncertainty over the course of negotiations towards the successor to the Kyoto Protocol. The arguments for UNDP to increasingly prioritize this area are clear: "Climate change threatens developing communities' economic, social and physical well-being, pervading all areas of human development. It could negate or reverse decades of progress and obliterate any hope of reaching the MDGs. And those most affected, and least responsible for its onset, are least able to cope. It is an issue of inequality and an issue of insecurity. It has the potential to widen the already yawning gap between the haves and have-nots. The way the world deals with climate change today will have a direct bearing on the human development prospects of a large section of humanity. Failure will consign the poorest 40% of the world's population—some 2.6 billion people—to a future of diminished opportunity."[42] This argument seems irrefutable.

42. HDR 2007/08.

The new climate change strategy aims to defuse tensions between UNDP's GEF and core activities related to energy and climate change and to merge the objectives of the two groups. Achievement of this goal appears critical.

4.2 ENERGY

Energy appears to be a prerequisite for lifting people and communities out of poverty. A large segment of the world's population still has inadequate access to energy: at least 1.6 billion people live without electricity in their homes and more than a third of humanity relies on wood, charcoal and dung as their main sources of energy for cooking and heating.[43] If UNDP cares about poverty, it must care about energy. In fact, EEG has undertaken some excellent analytical work on the relationship between energy and poverty, such as 'Energy Services for the Millennium Development Goals', the report on 'Energizing the Millennium Development Goals' cited above and a recent study on energy in the PRSPs.[44]

The formulation 'environment and energy' used by UNDP presents some challenges. While clearly an important player in environment in developing countries, UNDP has a very small role in the overall energy picture and has miniscule resources available for energy. Most funding for UNDP 'energy' work has in fact been GEF support for mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, little of which flows to LDCs and SIDS. Based on resource allocations, there is little sign that supporting the provision of affordable energy services to the poor—arguably the principal energy challenge for development agencies—has been an institutional priority.

UNDP's niche in energy is specific and defined in the context of poverty reduction and sustainable development. It works neither in the oil and natural gas sectors nor in large-scale infrastructure, which is in the purview of the development banks. MYFF-2 in 2004 defined the organization's energy goal in the following way:

> "UNDP supports energy activities to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development objectives at the local, national and global levels. Its work is focused on strengthening national policy frameworks to support energy for poverty reduction; promoting rural energy services to support growth and equity with specific focus on the situation of women; promoting clean energy technologies to mitigate climate change; and increasing access to investment financing for sustainable energy, including through the Clean Development Mechanism. Activities in these areas complement and help integrate GEF programmes in the field of climate change and support sustainable livelihoods."

Promoting rural energy services for household and productive activities covers both non-renewable and renewable energy. It is intended to address social, economic and environmental considerations. The thrust of the work is on capacity development, studies and policy analysis and pilot projects. Priority is also given to energy efficiency and clean energy technologies that support the transition to lower emissions. In this context, the EEG energy work under the TTF is complementary to the UNDP-GEF programmes by supporting activities that are not eligible for GEF support and that address local sustainable development needs. Similarly complementary to GEF-funded climate change work is the energy programme supporting developing countries' access to new energy finance mechanisms, including CDM.

43. 'Energizing the Millennium Development Goals: A Guide to Energy's Role in Reducing Poverty'. UNDP/BDP Energy and Environment Group. 2005.

44. 'Energy Services for the Millennium Development Goals. UNDP, UN Millennium Project', World Bank and ESMAP (2006); 'Energizing Poverty Reduction: A Review of the Energy-Poverty Nexus in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers'. UNDP (2006).

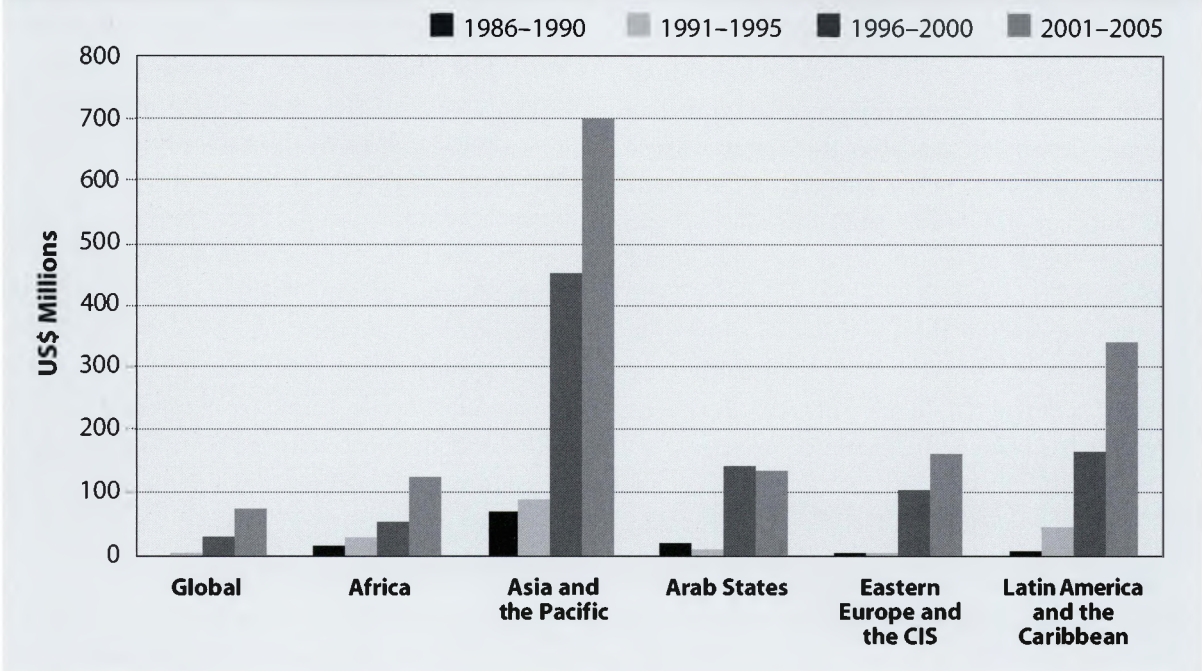
4.2.1 RESOURCES

UNDP's energy-related portfolio has increased significantly since the 1990s. Apart from quantity, there has also been a distinct qualitative change from conventional energy sources to a focus on sustainable energy. This shift has coincided with the increased attention to sustainable development and climate change. The growth in funding has been marked in all regions, but particularly so in the Asia-Pacific and Latin America and Caribbean regions (Figure 1).

A closer look at this positive trend reveals an important factor (Figure 2). Although UNDP's energy-related activities as a whole have increased substantially, most of this increase has been in climate change projects funded by the GEF. In fact, the activities funded by UNDP's regular resources have actually declined during the past decade, thus having a negative effect on LDCs and Africa, especially. In these places, energy is closely related to poverty reduction and economic opportunities, but the options for achieving global environmental benefits through greenhouse gas emission reductions is minimal. One GEF initiative that has addressed such local issues is the SGP, albeit on a small, local scale.

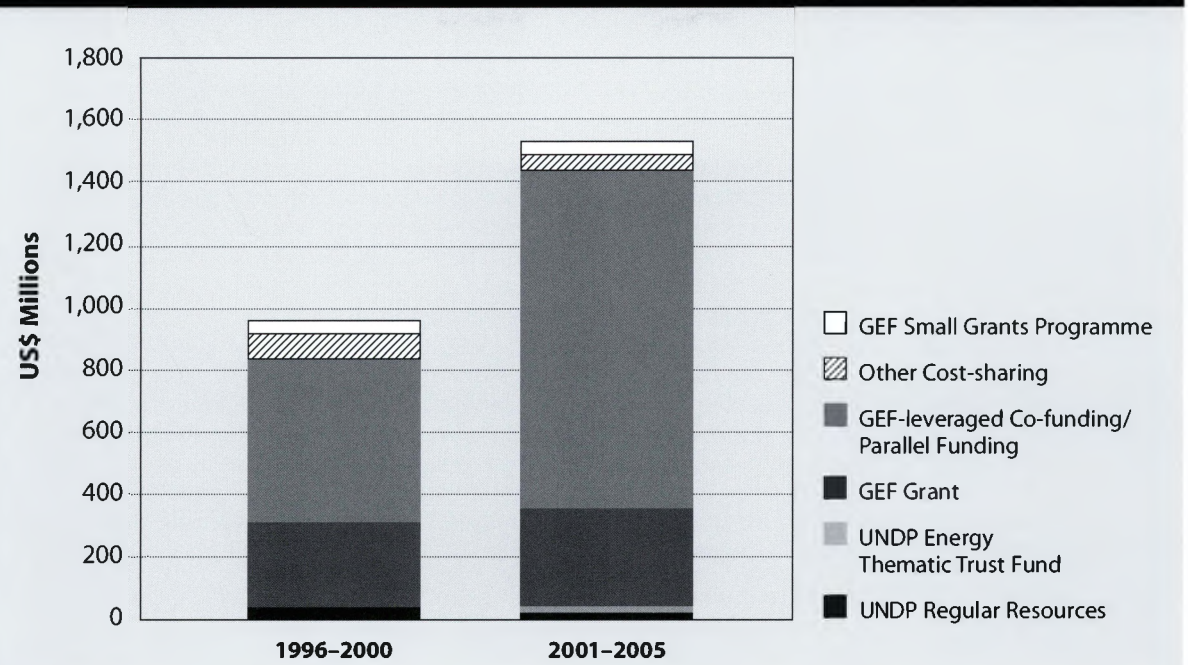
In order to mobilize resources to address country demand in areas that are beyond the mandates of GEF, the Montreal Protocol and DDC, UNDP established and managed two TTFs: on energy for sustainable development and on environment. In late 2004, these funds were merged to form the TTF for Environment and Energy, managed by EEG, designed as a flexible co-financing modality for both country-level and global initiatives. Altogether, these TTFs, from their inception in 2001 to 2006, attracted $26.8 million in funding from a number of bilateral donors, including Austria, Germany, Luxembourg, Norway and Sweden.[45] While commendable, these funds pale in comparison to those mobilized from the GEF, which has provided $1.89 billion to UNDP

Figure 1. Regional Funding Growth for UNDP Energy Projects: 1986–2005



45. 'Thematic Trust Fund on Environment and Energy: 2006 Interim Report'. UNDP/BDP 2007.

Figure 2. UNDP Energy Portfolio: 1996–2005



since 2002, of which climate change funding alone was $306.8 million.

4.2.2 RESULTS

According to the MYFF Cumulative Report 2004–2006, a total of 51 countries reported outcomes under the 'sustainable energy services' service line in 2006 and about 22 percent (63 of 282) of all environmental outcomes reported by country offices were related to energy. Almost half of these outcomes (30 of 63) were related to low-emissions energy technologies, which would principally be GEF-funded projects.

The evaluation found examples of important country-level work introducing clean renewable energy and energy efficiency, largely through GEF funding. Most of this work was in larger middle-income countries. In China, the 'Energy Conservation and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction in TVEs (Township and Village Enterprises)' project has achieved considerable success in promoting new technologies in this burgeoning sector. It is now leading to a new project focusing on the housing sector (including the brick industry) in small towns. The 'Capacity Development for China Green Lights Programme' supported the country in setting the first efficiency standards for lighting products. Since then, the government has strategically expanded the programme with significant success.

Although over half of UNDP's energy-related projects and financing have dealt with expanding energy access to the poor, according to the MYFF report, the evaluation did not find convincing evidence of such access in the countries visited. As evident from Figure 1 above, the share of Africa, where lack of access to energy services by poor people is widespread, is very low. There are a few successful small-scale projects, such as the 'Multifunctional Platforms' in Mali and Burkina Faso, which are addressing local communities' demand for affordable energy, using a diesel motor to produce a variety of 'goods' in villages (see Box 6).

UNDP's regional energy programmes were designed to enhance knowledge sharing between the various country programmes and help scale

Box 6. Multifunctional Platforms in Burkina Faso

The technology behind the project component 'Les Plateformes Multifonctionelles' within the ARSA Programme ('Le Programme d'Amélioration des Revenus et de Securité Alimentaire') was originally developed by UNIDO. In Mali, a similar programme showed promising results and has now spread widely in the country.

The multifunctional platforms may provide electricity to parts of the surrounding community, recharge batteries, allow for TV or video presentations in the village, assist in pumping water from the local borehole, provide water to small-scale irrigation in the village or provide electricity for hand tools used by local artisans. But the critical goal may be cheap financial solutions for women who are situated at the lower end of the energy chain and struggle with heavy, cumbersome and time-consuming tasks, such as grinding and milling of agricultural produce. By using the diesel engine installed for a variety of purposes, women may be relieved of some heavy daily duties, like breaking shea nuts or husking and hulling the rice or maize manually. Now instead they can use time gained for attending literacy classes, participating more actively in public life, attending courts (for resolving conflicts over land access, for instance) or speaking at public meetings. They may even generate surpluses to eventually invest in small businesses. In general, the results may be improved livelihoods, greater income and an improved quality of life. Moreover, the involvement of women's associations in running the diesel engine may reduce inequality and establish a more equal gender balance in the local community. And the higher agricultural output and ability to invest in improved land management measures are also believed to benefit the environment.

The idea behind 'Les Plateformes' is simple but as always, when technological solutions to complex development problems are sought, the solution's potential is only realized where local complexities are seriously addressed. The potential exists to address pertinent energy challenges, in this case those faced by women heavily involved in manual agricultural tasks, but there is no single (and simple) 'technological fix'.

So far around 120 motors have been installed, and before the end of 2008 this will have doubled. The ambitious longer term task is to have a 'platform' established in each of Burkina Faso's 8,000 villages! Whether this will happen or not is highly dependent on a number of factors: that maintenance and repairs are regularly attended to, that the women's associations tasked with managing the motors are legitimate and recognized bodies within the local community structure and that a number of additional measures are evaluated (for example, marketing aspects, improved quality of produce and transport). Thus the platforms are seen primarily as one element in the much wider and complex chain of challenges that any good idea within the development sphere is faced with. If these broader considerations are dealt with, the platforms may build on their proven potential and multiply.

up successes. The recent evaluation of the Africa RCF[46] recognized that the programme had supported the development of an ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) Regional White Paper on increasing access to energy for rural and peri-urban populations, which had been ratified by the member states. The document was now being used to attract financing and donor interest. The member states also approved guidelines for developing and piloting MDG-based energy access strategies and costing methodologies. The TTF activities also included support for the Global Village Energy Partnership to help countries develop national plans to expand access to energy services for the poor.

REP-PoR, started in mid-2005 by RCB as part of the Asia-Pacific RCF, is concerned with promoting an understanding of the relationship between poverty, energy and gender. The project is aimed at enabling countries to formulate their responses to energy security concerns. One of the main outputs of REP-PoR was a major oil pricing study publicly launched in October 2007.[47] The study contains an innovative

46. 'Evaluation of the Second Regional Cooperation Framework for Africa'. UNDP Evaluation Office 2007.

47. 'Fuel to Change–Overcoming Vulnerability to Rising Oil Prices: Options for Asia and the Pacific'. UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok, 2007.

composite oil price vulnerability index. It provides policy prescriptions and options to countries based on their vulnerability to changes in oil prices. The study attracted considerable attention from the press and the public, along with governments in the region. In the Pacific SIDS, UNDP's role in energy has been recognized positively by stakeholders (Box 7).

4.2.3 ENERGY FOR POVERTY REDUCTION OR FOR CLIMATE MITIGATION?

Limited access to energy services remains a key constraint to the poor people in developing countries. Recognizing this, EEG has focused its energy work on mainstreaming energy considerations into national development strategies and developing local capacities to expand energy service delivery. One of the key goals in the new UNDP strategic plan, 2008–2011, is 'Expanding access to environmental and energy services for the poor: developing national capacity for service delivery'.

Yet UNDP's work in energy tends to be dominated by climate change projects funded by GEF. These are hardly compatible with the focus on LDCs and SIDS, where climate change mitigation is not a national priority and even the potential gains for greenhouse gas emission reductions are minimal. Potential contradictions between UNDP and GEF priorities can be illustrated by the 'Barrier Removal to Renewable Energy Project' in Malawi, one of three large environment or energy projects implemented by UNDP in Malawi since 2002, and thus a major

Box 7. UNDP Energy Assistance in the Pacific

Virtually all stakeholders interviewed about UNDP's energy initiatives in the Pacific had positive responses. This comment from a knowledgeable observer was typical: "UNDP Apia has been unusually good about working in conjunction with others, particularly the Secretariat of the Pacific Geosciences Commission, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Most of their energy and environment projects ... have been multiple-donor ... or have specifically worked in cooperation with others. ... Energy projects have generally been very relevant and have been created in close cooperation and coordination with other agencies and the governments affected. The efficiency in use of resources [has been] the best I've seen for similar projects of UNDP and others in Asia and the Pacific over the past fifteen years." Many of the benefits appear attributable to having an outsourced energy officer from RCB based at UNDP in Fiji. Numerous informants referred specifically to the success of the multicountry 'Pacific Islands Energy Planning and Strategic Action Planning' project (PIEPSAP), which serves 14 Pacific Island countries and is financed through a $2 million Danish grant to UNDP, less than $50,000 per country served per year on average. There has been no GEF support.

Why has PIEPSAP been successful? Among the reasons given are the following:

- PIEPSAP has a wide menu of options, from which individual countries can select assistance that suits their needs. This built-in flexibility in design allows PIEPSAP to respond quickly to changing national priorities and needs.
- The project works directly with governments, power utilities and others, according to the need.
- The project was embedded within the energy section of a Pacific regional organization, the Secretariat of the Pacific Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), and could tap into wider SOPAC experience and skills.
- Project staff do not push pre-ordained solutions but listen well to country views.
- The service is demand-driven and practical.
- There has been genuine 'leveraging' with PIEPSAP advice linked directly to, or followed up by, related assistance from the ADB, European Commission, World Bank and others.
- International staff used personal networks to mobilize additional funding from their home countries.

PIEPSAP is a good example of how a regional UNDP project can respond effectively and efficiently to national demands in a geographically widespread region with widely differing needs. However, it never would have occurred, or succeeded, without an officer based at UNDP with good technical skills in the energy sector and the ability to locate and bring to the region extra-budgetary funding.

component of the national environment portfolio. This project has aimed to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging increased use of photovoltaic panels by households, institutions, commercial entities and agro-industries. While the project has moved more slowly than anticipated, it does appear to have generated some momentum in encouraging banks to offer loans to off-grid households wishing to invest in solar panels. It also seems to have boosted the emergence of a new, albeit unregulated, industry in solar panel installation and maintenance. More households in poor communities are now receiving enough power for lighting. Although unquantified, this seems a notable welfare gain and a potentially significant contribution to poverty reduction that is environmentally neutral. However, the mid-term evaluation of this project rated its performance as unsatisfactory, largely because the emission reduction impacts were 'miniscule'.[48] While it is not clear why there was ever an expectation of more significant carbon savings from such a project in Africa, the reaction to this project does illustrate how hard it is to use GEF financing to expand the provision of affordable energy services to the poor, widely regarded as a prerequisite for off-grid communities to escape from poverty. Furthermore, had comparable funding been available for a project with the provision of affordable energy services to the poor as a principle objective, consistent with UNDP's poverty reduction mission, there can be little doubt that a totally different set of activities would have been undertaken.

Due to its key link to poverty, energy can be mainstreamed into the sustainable human development approach that is UNDP's main emphasis. The problems related to the energy-poverty linkages are fundamentally different from those related to climate change mitigation and cannot be addressed through the same means and mechanisms. Consequently, it is essential for UNDP to organize its energy work differently and to mobilize funds for it separately. The ongoing dependence on GEF funding—or even on the emerging MDG Carbon Facility—will not encourage a meaningful energy programme that addresses poverty and sustainable development issues. There is also little geographical overlap between the two. Climate change mitigation is most effectively advanced by assisting middle-income countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from industry, traffic and the urban sector, while the greatest need for energy services for poverty reduction lies in LDCs, especially in Africa. This discrepancy in goals is concretely demonstrated by comparing the priority countries within GEF's RAF to those countries with the lowest access to electricity (Table 6).

A clear challenge for UNDP will be to ensure funding for programmatic activities in the poorest countries whose needs are related to enhancing the penetration of energy services and which are not eligible for significant funding from GEF. These countries are moreover at the heart of UNDP's poverty reduction and human development mandate, as recognized by the strategic plan, 2008-2011.

The Associate Administrator summarized UNDP's approach at the Commission for Sustainable Development meeting in May 2007, stating that UNDP aims to mainstream energy needs of the poor in national development plans and poverty reduction strategies in over 160 countries. Although energy's centrality to the MDGs is accepted conceptually, it has not been internalized at an operational level in the countries or in UNDP[49]. Energy is still largely seen as a single sector, hardware-driven issue with limited linkages between energy service delivery and impacts on poverty reduction. Neither is there a single energy goal amongst the MDGs, as this was considered too political an issue. Yet, energy access is critical to the achievement of virtually all MDGs.

48. Project Mid-Term Evaluation 2007 and Climate Change Project Implementation Review 2006.

49. 'Energizing Poverty Reduction: A Review of the Energy-Poverty Nexus in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers'. UNDP 2007.

Table 6. Top 10 Countries with (a) Lowest Electrification Rates and (b) Highest GEF Resource Allocations for Climate Change

(a) Electrification Rate (%) 2000–2005	(b) GEF-4 Resource Allocations for Climate Change (US$ million)
1. Congo DRC (6)	1. China (150)
2. Mozambique (6)	2. India (74.9)
3. Burkina Faso (7)	3. Russian Federation (72.5)
4. Malawi (7)	4. Brazil (38.1)
5. Uganda (9)	5. Poland (38.1)
6. Lesotho (11)	6. Mexico (28.3)
7. Myanmar (11)	7. South Africa (23.9)
8. Tanzania (11)	8. Ukraine (18.9)
9. Kenya (14)	9. Turkey (17.5)
10. Ethiopia (15)	10. Iran, Islamic Republic of (16.5)

Sources: (a) Human Development Report 2007/2008. UNDP. (b) GEF Resource Allocation Framework.

Energy is thus at the heart of UNDP's poverty mandate. However, the energy agenda in the organization appears to have been largely displaced by climate change mitigation. There would be ample scope for UNDP to advance energy access in those regions and countries where access remains a key poverty issue by promoting cheap renewable and non-renewable energy sources for rural and productive electrification. It could do so with other UN agencies, such as UNIDO, but these partnerships have been clearly underutilized. Also, the interest from the UNDP country offices for energy work appears to be low.

To some extent senior UNDP management has recognized this issue. The strategic plan, 2008-2011, the Regional Programme Document for Asia and the Pacific (2008–2011), and the Asia-Pacific Climate Change, Energy and Ecosystems Project all highlight an intention to align energy for poverty reduction with climate change mitigation and adaptation. There is, however, a need for corresponding resource allocations and more clarity on how carbon finance can be expected to benefit the poor in LDCs and SIDS.

Between EEG and the regional bureaux, notably in Africa, there already exist promising plans for programmatic development in energy services for the poor. It will be essential to ensure that such programmes receive adequate funding. It will also be important that similar programmes be developed in LDCs in other regions and integrated into the overall country programmes in the respective countries where they operate.

4.3 BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity has been a very important thematic area for UNDP in terms of financial resources, with a cumulative total of $820 million in GEF project approvals to date, including $330 million since 2002, plus significant co-financing.

Table 7. GEF Biodiversity Portfolio Summary Impact

Regions	GEF expenditure to date (US$ millions)	Cofinance to date (US$ millions)	New PAs established (number)	PAs established (million ha)	PAs where management effectiveness improved (number)	PAs where management effectiveness improved (million ha)
SEA	38.95	125.59	11	3.46	80	0.96
ECIS	52.51	98.65	10	1.28	83	14.00
LAC	74.00	133.17	43	2.04	137	3.20
WCA	11.92	14.33	58	0.34	36	20.27
AP	48.91	77.19	28	2.80	75	8.30
AS	16.21	9.04	4	0.03	8	5.01
Total	**242.50**	**457.97**	**154**	**9.95**	**419**	**51.74**

Note: PA = Protected Area, SEA = Southern and Eastern Africa, ECIS = Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, LAC = Latin American and the Carribean, WCA = West and Central Africa, AP = Asia and the Pacific, AS = Arab States.

Biodiversity has been the number one recipient of UNDP-GEF funding to date in every region except Asia-Pacific (where it is number two). Remarkably, a large number of projects funded by these significant resources has been carried out in almost total isolation from any other UNDP activities (some notable exceptions are referred to below). This leads to two key questions: (i) what has been achieved and (ii) how does this support UNDP's overall mission?

The short-term achievements of individual biodiversity projects can usually be figured out, even in the frequent cases where baseline studies are absent. Tracking and reporting on the longer term impacts of projects is harder as few locations and fewer projects have mechanisms set up to do this. Aggregating the results of individual projects has not proven a very meaningful process so far for UNDP or for other organizations active in this field. UNDP has cooperated with continuing efforts by international conservation organizations to improve the effectiveness of biodiversity monitoring.

Biodiversity is the only UNDP-GEF focal area to have a Global Portfolio Performance Report, the first of which was prepared in 2007. This valuable and refreshingly frank document makes a number of useful observations and provides an overall summary of performance data for projects focused on protected areas (Table 7).

However, while such data is useful, its limitations are well understood by practitioners: (i) the establishment of a protected area, although an important first step often reflecting a sustained effort over a long period of time, is not always a strong indicator of conservation progress as many such areas are under severe pressure or already degraded; (ii) the size of a protected area is not always a reliable indicator of its conservation value; (iii) management effectiveness is a critical variable, but it tends to be assessed in terms of inputs like budget, staff and equipment rather than outputs like how effectively a protected area is meeting its conservation goals and (iv) while protected areas are a cornerstone of conservation, they cannot substitute for the importance of conserving biodiversity in other types of managed landscapes, such as forests and agriculture, making the integration of biodiversity with other development sectors absolutely essential.

Despite these data limitations, there is no doubt that UNDP has made a major contribution to biodiversity conservation by supporting some extremely important protected area sites and systems in a variety of countries, often working very effectively with the entire set of stakeholders: governments, international conservation groups, local authorities and communities.

Although GEF funding represents the largest ever international investment in biodiversity conservation, its resources are insignificant compared to the challenges. At a global level the GEF Overall Performance Study of 2005 found that "the GEF biodiversity programme [in practice being implemented by UNDP, the World Bank and UNEP], as likely the world's largest government-funded mechanism for biodiversity conservation in developing countries, has had notable impact on slowing or reducing the loss of biodiversity, although global trends in biodiversity loss continue to be downward." But the situation remains bleak: "even though more areas are being protected, the proportion of species threatened with extinction continues to increase, and individual populations continue to decline. Unprecedented efforts will be required to conserve habitats and to manage ecosystems and species in a sustainable way if the rate of species loss is to be significantly reduced by 2010."[50] Beyond existing challenges, climate change is likely to emerge as the single greatest threat to biodiversity, if it has not already done so, bringing about wholesale changes to ecosystems upon which humanity depends.

Several notable biodiversity initiatives have been launched within the case study countries. The China country office has overcome some less successful early initiatives by helping establish the new China Biodiversity Partnership Framework. This framework provides a coordination structure for all biodiversity work in the country. It is based on a diverse partnership that UNDP played a key role in assembling (with $12 million through GEF and $30 million from the European Union). This initiative is said to have raised awareness in several provinces, ministries, universities and the media, despite a complex and challenging management structure. Bringing civil society partners into the project under terms acceptable to the government has been contentious. As in other sectors, China has a very clear idea of how it plans to use international development assistance and asserts strong and direct national ownership.

Two-thirds of UNDP's environment and energy portfolio in Ecuador consists of activities in the Galapagos Islands, a World Heritage Site, continuing a long-standing UNDP commitment to this area (Box 8). GEF funds have been used for biodiversity conservation and renewable energy. UNDP is attempting to bridge the gap between conservation and socio-economic development—a major concern on the archipelago. By seeking institutional coordination and promoting sustainable development within regional development planning, UNDP has attracted funding from a variety of sources. However, the overall environmental situation in the Galapagos continues to decline, partly due to the pressures of uncontrolled migration and excessive tourism.

A recent global, scientific assessment of the state of the world's ecosystems determined that in all regions, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, the condition and management of ecosystems is a 'dominant factor' affecting the chances of success in fighting poverty. Many of the regions facing the greatest challenges in achieving the MDGs also face significant problems of ecosystem degradation.[51] The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, for which UNDP was a funding partner, also provided an articulate and compelling set of arguments showing how sustainable social and economic development depends on biodiversity conservation, and notably the maintenance of

50. '2007 Millennium Development Goals Report' quoted in 'UNDP-GEF Biodiversity Portfolio Performance Report', p. 22.

51. 'Assessing Environment's Contribution to Poverty Reduction: Environment for the MDGs'. UNDP, UNEP, IIED, IUCN and WRI for the Poverty-Environment Partnership. 2005.

Box 8. Galapagos Islands, Ecuador

UNDP Ecuador has dedicated over 70 percent of its environment and energy resources to the Galapagos Islands. Conservation of the archipelago's celebrated biodiversity is threatened by accelerated population growth, uncontrolled immigration, booming tourism and the spread of invasive plant and animal species. These factors are aggravated by institutional capacity limitations and a lack of coordination between donors, counterparts and projects. Local residents perceive a gap between conservation and development, with international assistance having largely focused on conserving protected areas despite the area's rapid population growth, basic service deficiencies and limited public investment. The islands have been host to a succession of environmental projects and research activities. Yet despite the scale of funding, technical expertise and studies, there has been relatively little sustained success. Good progress has been made in combating invasive species, and this is among the most tangible outcomes achieved.

UNDP is possibly the most consistent and high-profile development actor here, having implemented several projects using both GEF and other resources. UNDP has played a crucial role in supporting the institutional stability of key government organizations, including the Galapagos National Park Service. Two projects are very relevant but face constraints that have weakened their effectiveness. The Galapagos 20/20 initiative produced a strategy document (the 'Galapagos Blueprint') to build local governance capacities, control illegal immigration, develop a new tourism model and strengthen productive sectors through credit and public works programmes. Yet the initiative is little known on the archipelago and considered a missed opportunity by many due to the limited involvement and ownership of local stakeholders. The PROINGALA (Institutional Strengthening and Systematic Integration of Sustainable Development and Conservation in Galapagos) project is undermined by design flaws, slow implementation and weak capacities of local institutions, with a recent evaluation recommending major changes. UNDP also played a key role in creating the Galapagos Donor Roundtable, which although supported by stakeholders, has not so far improved coordination or impact on the ground. More successfully, a UNDP project targeting alien species eradication is considered a global best practice.

Among the lessons are the need to apply an integrated strategy that can link development and conservation visions in order to reverse current trends. For this to happen, support modalities must also be reconsidered. For example, instead of the standard project cycle of three to five years, medium-term processes that combine capacity development and technical support seem more likely to consolidate and sustain impacts. UNDP faces the challenge of generating enabling conditions that local institutions can appropriate. Once established, these conditions can be managed effectively and carried forward on the basis of a strategic vision that is understood and supported by the various Galapagos stakeholders, even as the country office considers redirecting its environmental portfolio to Ecuador's mainland.

ecosystem services such as provision of fresh water, flood control and local climate stabilization.

Such arguments appear to have done little to engage UNDP as a whole even though country offices have certainly supported biodiversity projects when UNDP-GEF has provided access to the funding. Links or exchanges of information—let alone collaboration—with the poverty and governance practices of UNDP have been rare. There is no evidence that UNDP at a corporate level has viewed biodiversity as a priority. EEG's limited biological diversity resources have been used at very local levels (such as the Equator Initiative) and at the global level for advocacy and participation in international conservation processes.

While the poverty and governance practices of UNDP have shown little interest in biodiversity, the UNDP biodiversity portfolio is showing signs of evolving away from site-specific protected area work towards an emphasis on poverty and governance. Even the earliest biodiversity projects had often set out to provide social and economic benefits from conservation to local communities, although the results were often mixed. UNDP's more recent biodiversity work has emphasized strengthening capacities and institutions to ensure effective governance of biodiversity resources, for example, by identifying the benefits from conservation for local communities. In a promising example, collaboration with PEI in Botswana has helped link poverty mitigation strategies directly with protected area

management. Such links should not be overemphasized, however, as the social and economic benefits from protected areas tend to be local, indirect and hard to quantify.

There is clearly a need for analogous conceptual breakthroughs on a larger scale if biodiversity is to become an influential and important, and not just a large, component of UNDP's programming. Unfortunately the dialogue appears to suffer from an abiding caricature of the biological diversity agenda as being driven by northern environmentalists more concerned about wildlife or plants than the welfare of poor people, which so far UNDP has not been able to overcome.

4.4 RELIANCE ON GEF

UNDP's reliance on GEF to support its environment and energy work has caused priority national environmental issues like environmental health and safety, sanitation, water resource management, soil management, energy management and so on to be passed over in favour of GEF priorities related to climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, and international waters. There was a concurrent loss of interest in issues related to desertification and land management, both of which became fully eligible for GEF funding only early in this decade. The lack of core budget resources for environment provided strong internal incentives to maximize UNDP's share of GEF resources. Staff were encouraged to identify and prepare the greatest possible number of projects likely to be approved by the GEF Secretariat and GEF Council, in what frequently became a fierce competition with the World Bank and UNEP. This emphasis continues today, as senior UNDP-GEF staff receive performance assessments based—up to 30 percent—on the value of new project money they generate.

Within EEG, the imbalance of financial and human resources between UNDP-GEF and the rest of EEG has been evident at all levels—at headquarters, the regional centres and the country offices. Very few policy advisers are funded from the core budget, with negative implications for career prospects and institutional continuity. In areas such as biodiversity, where UNDP has secured GEF approval for projects worth over $800 million since 1991, there is still very little core capacity to carry out relevant analytic studies or reviews. The separation of GEF from other activities in environment and energy sometimes even led to competition for funding from the same external donor, most often at the country level.

Planning documents from 2006 (the latest date for which such information was available) show that the GCF, all TTFs, and the Drylands Development Centre/Poverty Environment Centre were each expected to receive about one percent of the $266 million anticipated to be available for environment and energy activities in 2007, while GEF and Montreal Protocol activities were expected to receive 92 percent.

Our case study countries' experiences suggest that this remains the situation. In a number of countries UNDP has become the spokesperson for the dwindling community of donors still active in environment. This reflects not so much the advance of UNDP as the retreat of other donors. UNDP has held its ground almost entirely as a result of its access to GEF funding. China is an important exception here, as in many other regards. China has used UNDP and GEF funding strategically to pilot initiatives that it has ample financial resources to replicate and scale up if they prove successful.

To many in UNDP, the well-resourced GEF programme, while widely recognized as professionally managed, innovative and effective, has been of limited relevance to UNDP's main mission of poverty reduction. A pattern became established in which the UNDP environment and energy teams working on GEF and other projects seldom coordinated or exchanged information, leading to a 'two-track world' of programme and project approval that rarely intersected. As GEF became more established, differences in both style and substance between UNDP's GEF and

core activities emerged. These differences were reinforced by specialized GEF terminology as well as unclear and frequently changing criteria for the allocation of GEF financial resources between countries and projects, all of which proved hard to communicate to outsiders. In particular, there was little sense that GEF resources came in response to a prioritization of overall environment and energy needs and opportunities at national levels. These factors led to a situation where comparatively few technical specialists within UNDP had deep insights into how GEF operated and how to access GEF resources (a circumstance mirrored in the other GEF implementing agencies). The emerging division between UNDP's GEF and core environment staff was reinforced by UNDP deemphasizing project implementation while GEF remained almost entirely project-driven.

While GEF has had a very strong influence on UNDP, it is fair to observe that UNDP has had some important influence on GEF policies and programmes, although this is not easy to document nor is it the focus of this evaluation. Certainly there are indications that UNDP staff have had some success in persuading the GEF Secretariat and the other implementing agencies to interpret their project selection priorities and criteria in ways that provided greater support for national benefits in partner countries. This has been most evident in biodiversity conservation and climate change and in capacity development for all GEF focal areas.

UNDP's adoption of the MDGs as an overarching priority had relatively little direct impact on the situation. GEF also embraced the MDGs, which may have contributed to a greater effort to design GEF projects with a more visible poverty and governance focus. Progress in monitoring MDG-7 appears to have been modest at best, and the measurement of progress has been severely hampered by insufficient monitoring capacity and systems, especially in LDCs and SIDS.[52] Our case studies generally found little or no systematic information available related to MDG-7 in the LDCs and SIDS.

There have been serious efforts to improve the collaboration between UNDP-GEF and the rest of EEG. This report documents some notable signs of progress amidst clearly enhanced willingness to work together. The availability of GEF funding continues to drive country-level environment and energy work. Since 2005, however, there have been more convincing, sustained efforts to find areas of common ground, share knowledge and undertake joint work programmes. Consistent with these efforts, all UNDP-GEF staff were recently instructed to start spending 10-20 percent of their time on non-GEF matters, which in practice means increasing the amount of time they spend responding to country office requests for support and information. More recently, convergence efforts have become more urgent because of increased awareness of the need to seek more diversified funding sources, apparently under the assumption that core budget support would remain very limited.

A unified approach to water governance within BDP has been the most striking example of convergence between GEF and non-GEF groups so far. Considerable impetus was provided by the 2006 HDR on water management issues and their importance for achieving the MDGs. The success of this HDR led senior management to support the preparation of UNDP's first Water Governance Strategy encompassing all UNDP activities related to water. A unified water team was launched in mid-2006, with the team's head spending 80 percent of his time on GEF and 20 percent on other matters. This is an interesting contrast to the situation twenty years earlier, when most UNDP resources for water were focused on issues of more obvious national and local concern such as potable water supply and sanitation. The unified water group has recognized this imbalance

52. 'Making Progress on Environmental Sustainability: Lessons and Recommendations from a Review of over 150 MDG Country Reports'. UNDP 2006.

and aims to address it with a programme that focuses on developing capacities for sound water governance at national and international levels. There have been some promising early signs of progress. The Stockholm-based Water Governance Centre has now been fully integrated with the new UNDP Water Governance Strategy. There has also been support for integrated water resource management planning in SIDS supported by UNDP-GEF's international waters programmes, now operating in the Caribbean and soon to start elsewhere.

In another contribution to convergence, the entire EEG met, for only the second time, in 2006. The main outputs of this meeting were a set of papers on the opportunities and constraints facing the introduction of a unified work programme. Future priorities identified or re-emphasized here included (i) a renewed emphasis on environment and energy policy and governance and (ii) a strong focus on environmental finance, especially the MDG Carbon Facility, climate change adaptation, and payments for ecosystem services. Such payments were recently highlighted by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment as a promising mechanism for linking biodiversity conservation with economic development. This agenda of priorities was largely reflected in the environmental and energy sections of the UNDP strategic plan, 2008-2011, and in the preparation of joint work programmes that included all work in the sector.

Other notable convergence activities have taken place in the Bratislava and, more recently, Bangkok regional centres, as discussed elsewhere. In February 2008 EEG's Core Management Team Retreat took some further decisions to promote better integration. This included sharing the salary costs of the UNDP-GEF executive coordinator and principal technical advisors between GEF and BDP, thus allowing these individuals to spend more time on non-GEF work.

Key Points

- Climate change has been a major component of UNDP's environment and energy work and is central to the organization's future plans. Since 1992, UNDP has mobilized about $3 billion from GEF and related co-financing, mostly for projects aimed at mitigating greenhouse gas emissions. UNDP has built a significant body of expertise and experience in this area, mostly in the headquarters and the regional centres, but not in the country offices. The fit between UNDP's poverty reduction mandate and the GEF objective of mitigating global climate change has been less than convincing, however, especially in the LDCs and SIDS.
- Through the establishment of the MDG Carbon Facility, UNDP has entered into the area of carbon finance, one of the most rapidly emerging global responses to climate change. UNDP's target market is countries and regions that have not benefited significantly from the CDM. The organization has started to put together a promising pipeline of projects mainly led by the Bratislava and Bangkok regional centres. However, it is too early to assess UNDP's effectiveness in this area, where some larger and more experienced organizations have already carved out significant roles. Ensuring that carbon finance benefits make genuine contributions to poverty reduction, especially in the LDCs and SIDS, will be a complex institutional challenge, especially given the lack of capacity and experience in the countries, both in the governments and UNDP country offices.
- UNDP seems uniquely positioned within the UN system to take the lead on adaptation to climate change based on its competencies across a range of development sectors. It will also present an opportunity to focus on the LDCs and SIDS that will be hardest hit by climate change. However, it will be important for UNDP not to continue treating adaptation solely as an environmental issue. Effective adaptation measures will require integration with national development plans and programmes across all sectors and will need to engage all of UNDP, not just EEG. There is little evidence so far that these requirements are being met.
- UNDP's energy-related portfolio has increased significantly since the 1990s. Most of this increase has been in climate change projects funded by GEF while UNDP's regular resources have declined. This has resulted in an emphasis on countries and sectors where the opportunities for GHG mitigation are greatest, with negative effects on work in Africa, and LDCs in general, and limited practical engagement in supporting the provision of affordable energy to the poor. The evaluation found examples of important country-level work introducing clean renewable energy and energy efficiency, mostly in larger middle-income countries.
- Energy would provide excellent opportunities for mainstreaming. There are promising plans for programmatic development in energy services for the poor, although current resource allocations are well below the levels that would be required for such work to become strategically significant.
- Biodiversity conservation and sustainable use has been a large thematic area for UNDP, with a cumulative total of $820 million in GEF project funding to date. UNDP has made a major contribution to biodiversity conservation, often working effectively with a broad range of stakeholders from governments and international conservation groups to local communities.
- UNDP should continue to work in biodiversity because it is a critical determinant of the health of ecosystems, which in turn is important for poverty alleviation. While the UNDP-GEF biodiversity portfolio is moving towards an emphasis on poverty and governance, the poverty and governance practices of UNDP have shown little interest in biodiversity.
- Since 2005, serious steps have been taken to move towards an integrated environment and energy practice encompassing all groups irrespective of funding source. There has been emphasis on finding areas of common ground, sharing knowledge and undertaking joint work programmes. A unified approach to water governance within BDP has been the most striking example of this convergence so far.

SECTION III CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions

1. **Environment and energy are central to the mission of UNDP.**
2. **UNDP corporate plans and strategies have had little influence on the selection of programme priorities and activities for the country programmes. In practice, the availability of financial resources from GEF has had a far greater influence on the priority setting and choice of activities of country offices.**
3. **UNDP responsiveness to national priorities has been uneven. The type and effectiveness of environment and energy work done by UNDP vary significantly between partner countries, with some project portfolios appearing opportunistic and uncoordinated.**
4. **Imbalances in priority setting and programming arising from the substantial reliance of UNDP on GEF funding have received insufficient attention.**
5. **Capacity for planning and managing environment and energy work varies considerably within UNDP. Most country offices lack the capacity to engage in high-level policy dialogue with the governments.**
6. **Mainstreaming within UNDP—that is, including environmental considerations in other major practice areas such as poverty reduction and democratic governance—has been very limited at any level (headquarters, regional centres or country offices).**
7. **The role of UNDP in environment and energy within the United Nations system is potentially central but not fully realized.**
8. **Measuring progress in environment and energy continues to be a challenge.**
9. **UNDP has taken some important steps to reposition for future work in environment and energy, including seeking more diverse funding sources, although progress seems likely to be limited unless genuine mainstreaming of environment and energy takes place within the organization.**

Conclusion 1. Environment and energy are central to the mission of UNDP.

The relevance of environment and energy to the principal UNDP mission of poverty reduction seems overwhelmingly clear. The negative consequences of the deteriorating international environmental situation on the poorest countries and communities have been elaborated unequivocally by a variety of credible international bodies and studies, notably the International Panel on Climate Change and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.

UNDP programmes in environment have made significant contributions to international environmental efforts. Programmes in environment and, to a lesser extent, energy have expanded significantly since the 1990s, and UNDP is now among the leading global organizations working in these areas. It has produced high-quality analytical knowledge products recognized for their value in policy dialogue, advocacy and awareness raising. These have not, however, translated systematically into programming.

UNDP plans and strategies have emphasized environment and energy as high priorities for the organization throughout the last decade. The strategic plan, 2008-2011, and its predecessor MYFFs (for 2000–3 and 2004–7) all highlighted environment and energy, while UNDP's senior

management and headquarters staff have been energetic in representing UNDP in a variety of important international environmental fora, although leadership within country-level programmes is less evident.

Conclusion 2. UNDP corporate plans and strategies have had little influence on the selection of programme priorities and activities for the country programmes. In practice, the availability of financial resources from GEF has had a far greater influence on the priority setting and choice of activities of country offices.

Environment and energy programmes in UNDP have relied predominantly on outside funding, mobilizing an average of over $200 million annually from GEF and $30 million from the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer during the past five years, supplemented by significant co-financing from project partners. The use of core budget resources for environment and energy has been very limited since about 2000.

UNDP has been effective and efficient in implementing GEF projects and has made a significant contribution to its overall success. Using GEF funding, UNDP has built up a specialized and capable technical team at headquarters and in the regional centres that is a credit to the organization.

While the success in mobilizing funds is to be commended and the GEF-funded projects implemented by UNDP are generally of high quality, the former has steered UNDP's environment and energy programming towards the so-called 'global' environmental issues. In contrast, national sustainable development priorities—such as water supply and sanitation, energy services, waste management and local and indoor air pollution—have received scant attention.

UNDP has not developed a clear corporate position, competence or niche for environment and energy that is independent of its role implementing GEF projects. Governments and other national stakeholders generally consider UNDP environment and energy work at the country level as synonymous with GEF projects. There is little sign that the environment and energy agenda resulting from GEF priorities is perceived as important or even particularly relevant within much of UNDP, which continues to regard GEF primarily as a potential source of funds for country offices that are highly dependent on their ability to mobilize resources.

Conclusion 3. UNDP responsiveness to national priorities has been uneven. The type and effectiveness of environment and energy work done by UNDP vary significantly between partner countries, with some project portfolios appearing opportunistic and uncoordinated.

UNDP responsiveness to national priorities in environment and energy has been varied and largely dependent upon the type of countries involved. UNDP programmes in the LDCs and small island developing states tend to be dominated by support for the preparation of plans and strategies. Those efforts have been of variable quality, rarely provide a sound guide for future investments and do not always appear relevant to the most pressing needs of countries. Countries viewed many such plans as worthwhile only as a step towards further international funding, little of which has materialized. There are indications of a better fit between national priorities in environment and energy with the services provided by UNDP in the larger, higher income countries where government environment programmes are able to draw on additional resources, including in China.

The project-based country portfolios suffer from many of the problems endemic to development projects, notably a limited focus on longer term impacts and significant challenges to sustaining benefits after project completion. There are few obvious signs of genuine improvements in government capacities for environmental management over the last decade or two, especially in the LDCs and small island developing states, and lack of capacity is continually cited as a principal barrier to progress. Significant capacity often exists outside government, and this could be developed and utilized more effectively.

Conclusion 4. Imbalances in priority setting and programming arising from the substantial reliance of UNDP on GEF funding have received insufficient attention.

Insufficient efforts have been made by UNDP senior management at a strategic, global level to encourage staff to identify the key differences between UNDP and GEF priorities and to alert donor partners that there are important gaps to be filled. Rather, staff have been encouraged implicitly, if not pressured, to seek whatever funding is available and make the most of it, which they have generally done with considerable skill and persistence.

While UNDP has sought opportunities to broaden access to the significant resources for greenhouse gas mitigation available through GEF, more eligible project opportunities are obviously found in relatively well-off industrialized countries rather than in LDCs and small island developing states. Opportunities for greenhouse gas mitigation in Africa, for example, have so far been limited. Partly as a result, the pervasive challenge of supporting low-cost energy access for the poorest countries and communities has tended to receive less attention from UNDP than carbon mitigation, for which funding has become easier to obtain.

Within UNDP, recent efforts to harmonize GEF with other environment and energy work are both commendable and long overdue. Notable progress has been made at the regional and global levels. The urgency of such convergence efforts has been fuelled by some uncertainty over the level of future UNDP access to GEF resources and increased awareness of the need for more diversified funding sources, apparently assuming that core budget support would remain very limited. Even so, further integration or convergence of GEF teams with the rest of the Energy and Environment Group remains challenging.

Conclusion 5. Capacity for planning and managing environment and energy work varies considerably within UNDP. Most country offices lack the capacity to engage in high-level policy dialogue with the governments.

With a few notable and impressive exceptions, country office environment and energy teams do not appear strong, and they only rarely participate in high-level policy discourse with governments and other donors on environment and energy topics outside the areas of specific interest to GEF. Project implementation tends to absorb most of the attention of country office environment and energy teams. Overstretched staff and the limitations of UNDP management capacities mean that many national stakeholders are dissatisfied with project management while headquarters and regional centre staff have also expressed concerns.

Within the country offices, enthusiasm for and effectiveness in environment and energy work appear to vary significantly depending on the interest and convictions of the respective resident representatives, which differ substantially.

In some countries frequent turnover among country office staff and among their government counterparts has led to losses of institutional memory that undermine learning processes. This may be at least partly attributable to the lack of attractive career paths for technical staff within the organization. Country offices are also burdened with poor administrative systems and reporting demands from headquarters that are burdensome and shift frequently.

Conclusion 6. Mainstreaming within UNDP—that is, including environmental considerations in other major practice areas such as poverty reduction and democratic governance—has been very limited at any level (headquarters, regional centres or country offices).

Within countries, there are few indications that UNDP has played an influential role in helping governments develop and implement sound environmental policies of direct relevance to the sectors where economic growth is anticipated (such as agriculture, industry, transport and mining). The emerging UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative holds some promise in

this area, but requires careful nurturing and cannot do the job alone.

Adaptation to climate change seems likely to emerge as one of the most prominent issues in international development and thus attract substantial resources. It seems clear that adaptation measures will need to be implemented across a broad spectrum of development sectors, especially in the most vulnerable countries, the LDCs and small island developing states. So far, UNDP has treated adaptation as an environmental issue, even though it is very closely linked with poverty, economic development, governance and disaster management. UNDP must start to treat adaptation as a multisectoral development issue, not just an environmental one, if it is to play a leadership role in this area. This shift will require genuinely mainstreaming adaptation within the organization through effective integration with poverty work.

Advocating for the need to integrate environmental thinking and considerations across the entire range of development sectors within governments will continue to be a 'hard sell' for country offices if the case for mainstreaming cannot be made effectively within UNDP.

Conclusion 7. The role of UNDP in environment and energy within the United Nations system is potentially important but not fully realized.

UNDP has the potential to play an extremely important role in the area of the environment and energy in the context of sustainable development within the United Nations system, where its operational and country-driven focus, augmented by a growing technical capacity in emerging priority areas, seems broadly complementary to the normative and scientific focus of UNEP.

The relationship and quality of operational collaboration between UNDP and UNEP have improved significantly during the last two to three years, although there continue to be challenges at the operational levels. There have been positive collaborations on the implementation of GEF projects, several new partnerships have been entered into and the senior management of both organizations have sent strong signals of support for further collaboration. A review of longer term cooperation has revealed that competition for resources, incompatibilities in organizational culture and systems, a lack of clarity over respective roles at the field level and lingering distrust among staff are in some cases still proving hard to overcome.

Further opportunities for enhancing cooperation with other United Nations agencies active in environment and energy, such as the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, exist.

Conclusion 8. Measuring progress in environment and energy continues to be a challenge.

Substantial efforts have been and continue to be invested in results-based management in all UNDP programme areas. Yet UNDP reporting on environment and energy continues to focus on inputs and activities rather than on outcomes. Developing reliable, cost-effective indicators for environmental and energy investments, policy changes and capacity development remains a worthwhile but exceedingly difficult goal. Despite some commendable progress within individual technical areas, it is evident that not everything important can be measured, and it is not easy to establish what would have happened in the absence of the activity being assessed. The performance reporting challenge is compounded by the fact that UNDP is only one contributor to the development results of a programme country. The key is to assess carefully the impact and national results that UNDP helps achieve, and to analyze and document these in coordination with other partners, rather than trying to separate the impact of the UNDP contribution. Without clear results frameworks and reporting on outcomes, UNDP has allowed itself to be drawn into making representations and commitments on performance that are unrealistic given its resources.

Conclusion 9. UNDP has taken some important steps to reposition for future work in environment and energy, including seeking more diverse funding sources, although progress seems likely

to be limited unless genuine mainstreaming of environment and energy takes place within the organization.

The strategic plan, 2008-2011, presents a coherent set of energy and environmental priorities for UNDP, but is unconvincing insofar as these are not tied to resource allocations, and the plan does not acknowledge or react to the major issues resulting from the high level of dependence on GEF resources.

While the emergence of some new funding sources is encouraging, the emphasis still appears to be on pursuing available money rather than allocating core resources to sets of activities that are consistent with the UNDP mandate. As a result, there appears to be a real risk that environment and energy will continue to receive insufficient or unbalanced attention, particularly in the LDCs and small island developing states.

The ability of UNDP to realize exciting new opportunities to work with a more diverse set of funding sources such as carbon market and adaptation funds may be constrained by limited capacity in its country offices. The move to a 'One United Nations' approach may help overcome those limitations to some extent. Yet even if it achieves greater cooperation with UNEP and other specialized agencies, UNDP will still need to strengthen its in-house environment and energy capacities if the country offices are to provide high-quality support to programme delivery at the country level.

Chapter 6

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1. UNDP should demonstrate more clearly the pursuit of its defined mandate in environment and energy rather than the specific priorities of a limited number of major donors or funds.

- UNDP must formulate its strategic environment and energy priorities in response to its mission and capabilities, as well as to the national sustainable development priorities of its partner countries. It should start to build coherent corporate plans for the environment and energy in the context of sustainable development. UNDP must mobilize and allocate resources that support these plans, rather than choosing priorities and activities opportunistically based on the availability of funding.
- UNDP should reformulate strategic environment and energy priorities, identify resource gaps and present these to donors. In particular, the plans should (i) identify national sustainable development priorities not eligible for GEF funding and indicate how they will be addressed, especially in LDCs and small island developing states; (ii) make overall resource allocations among countries and topics based on actual needs and opportunities; and (iii) develop a coherent UNDP-wide energy strategy that identifies a realistic niche for the organization reflecting needs in the poorest countries.
- To monitor progress in the above areas, UNDP should regularly report on the source and allocation of financial and human resources to the goals, priorities and programmes adopted.

Recommendation 2. UNDP should assume a proactive role to respond to national priorities.

- UNDP should strengthen its policy dialogue with programme countries to better identify national sustainable development priorities, in particular in LDCs and small island developing states. It should also advocate and seek opportunities to incorporate environment and energy concerns into national development plans and programmes and develop country-level capacities to work on these.
- In developing the country programme document with the governments, UNDP should conduct periodic stocktaking of country-level environment and energy portfolios. Partners should be invited to participate in the reviews. In countries where governmental capacity is limited, UNDP should encourage collaboration with and enhanced roles for capable individuals and organizations outside government.

Recommendation 3. UNDP should identify and implement institutional arrangements and incentives to promote the mainstreaming of environment throughout all major practice areas.

- UNDP should incorporate environment and energy within its main practices of poverty reduction, democratic governance and crisis prevention and recovery. This will require leadership and commitment at all levels of the organization, not only within the environment and energy practice.
- Mainstreaming will require strong partnerships with governments, other United Nations organizations and other actors active in the field, such as civil society and academic organizations which UNDP must foster.
- UNDP should accelerate the transition of climate change adaptation from an environmental issue to a mainstream development concern that engages the entire organization. Climate change adaptation should be considered as a flagship priority for UNDP as a whole.

Recommendation 4. UNDP should identify options for strengthening the environment and energy capacities of the country offices.

- UNDP should intensify existing efforts to focus resident representatives' attention on environment and energy as a key component of sustainable development and build their individual capacities in these areas.
- UNDP should consider establishing new positions, upgrading existing posts and increasing the availability of staff based in the regional centres.
- UNDP should explore improvements in longer term career opportunities for technical specialists currently based at the regional centres and country offices.

ANNEXES

Annex 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE

BACKGROUND

Managing environment and energy for sustainable development is one of the five practice areas of UNDP under the current multi-year funding framework (MYFF 2004-07). UNDP has for a long time been involved in the area in different ways but its role and contribution has never been evaluated.

The normative underpinnings place managing environment and energy firmly within the concept of sustainable human development in UNDP. The 1992 Human Development Report[1] emphasized the interconnections between poverty, environment and human development. It stated that "one of the greatest threats to sustainable human and economic development comes from the downward spiral of poverty and environmental degradation that threatens current and future generations." The report further recognized that "the poor are disproportionately threatened by the environmental hazards and health risks posed by pollution, inadequate housing, poor sanitation, polluted water and a lack of other basic services. Many of these already deprived people also live in the most ecologically vulnerable areas." Outlining the justification for UNDP, a development agency, in the field concluded that:

> "...sustainable development implies a new concept of economic growth – one that provides fairness and opportunity for all the world's people, not just the privileged few, without further destroying the world's finite natural resources and without compromising the world's carrying capacity." (p. 17)

The concept of intergenerational equity was central to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), or Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. UNDP played an important role in the Summit and was also designated as one of the three implementing agencies of the newly created Global Environment Facility (GEF). The purpose of this move was to explicitly mainstream environmental concerns into the development policies pursued by UNDP.

The 2004-07 MYFF defines Energy and Environment for Sustainable Development[2] as the third Goal for UNDP. The area consists of six Service Lines:

3.1 Frameworks and strategies for sustainable development – UNDP seeks to develop country capacity to manage the environment and natural resources; integrate environmental and energy dimensions into poverty reduction strategies and national development frameworks; and strengthen the role of communities and of women in promoting sustainable development.

3.2 Effective water governance – Supports the sustainable use of marine, coastal and freshwater resources and improved access to water supply and sanitation services. This requires the appropriate local, national and regional water governance frameworks, and application of integrated water resources management approaches. This service line also promotes cooperation in transboundary waters management.

3.3 Access to sustainable energy services – UNDP supports energy activities to reduce

1. *Human Development Report 1992. Global Dimensions of Human Development,* UNDP 1992.
2. Second Multi-year Funding Framework, 2004-2007, UNDP.

poverty and achieve sustainable development objectives at the local, national and global levels. Its work is focused on strengthening national policy frameworks to support energy for poverty reduction; promoting rural energy services to support growth and equity with specific focus on the situation of women; promoting clean energy technologies to mitigate climate change; and increasing access to investment financing for sustainable energy, including through the Clean Development Mechanism. Activities in these areas complement and help integrate GEF programmes in the field of climate change and support sustainable livelihoods.

3.4 Sustainable land management to combat desertification and land degradation – Land degradation is one of the major causes of rural poverty, as well as one of its effects. UNDP works to break this cycle and reduce poverty through sustainable land management and by maintaining land-based ecosystem integrity, particularly in drylands where the poorest, most vulnerable and marginalized people live. UNDP assists countries and communities in land governance, drought preparedness, reform of land tenure and promotion of innovative and alternative sustainable land practices and livelihoods. Special emphasis is given here to the situation of rural women. UNDP supports institutional and systemic capacity building to address desertification and land degradation for rural poverty reduction, through local, national and global multi-stakeholder dialogue and action. UNDP promotes the mainstreaming and integration of major environmental conventions to reduce land degradation, help land users adapt to climate change, and maintain services through ecosystem integrity.

3.5 Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity – Through a close integration of GEF and core activities, UNDP helps countries and communities maintain and benefit from the biodiversity and ecosystem services that underpin human welfare and economic development, and provide the poor with food security, fuel, shelter, medicines and livelihoods – as well as clean water, disease control, and reduced vulnerability to natural disasters. UNDP supports the sustainable management of agriculture, fisheries, forests and energy, and a pro-poor approach to conservation and protected areas, biotechnology and the development of viable, new markets for ecosystem services.

3.6 National/sectoral policy and planning to control emissions of ozone-depleting substances and persistent organic pollutants – The Montreal Protocol and GEF programmes of UNDP support governments as they develop and strengthen national and sectoral strategies for the sustained reduction and elimination of ozone-depleting substances (ODS) and persistent organic pollutants (POPs). Enterprises are assisted in maintaining their economic competitiveness through provision of best available alternative technologies and opportunities for capacity development.

OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The overall objective of the evaluation is to assess UNDP's positioning and contributions to managing environment and energy for sustainable development. The evaluation will be both retrospective and prospective, i.e. taking stock of the past while looking into the future with respect to UNDP's role in the field, especially with regard to the UN reform process. While taking a longer term perspective on the issue, the evaluation will focus on the period of the past five years since 2002.

The results of the evaluation will be reported to the UNDP Executive Board, both to ensure UNDP's accountability for achieving its intended results, as well as to guide decision-making regarding its future niche and strategies in the area. The evaluation will provide recommendations for enhancing UNDP's performance and strategic positioning, in particular with regard to its role within the UN system.

This evaluation will not study or attempt to conclude on the impact of UNDP's myriad of individual projects, programmes, advocacy and policy initiatives in environment and energy, nor will it analyze in depth each major technical area of environment and energy that UNDP is active in. The emphasis, rather, will be on the overall effort by the organization to optimize its contribution in environment and energy within the context of sustainable development.

KEY EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

The essential criteria included under objectives-based evaluations will be addressed, i.e., relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability:

- Relevance – The rationale for UNDP's involvement in the field viz. other actors and its own mandate.
- Effectiveness – Positioning of UNDP's programmes and whether they have been effective in achieving their results.
- Efficiency – Use of approaches, partnerships, resources.
- Sustainability – Whether the results of UNDP's work have contributed to sustainable human development and whether they have contributed to lasting change.

METHODOLOGY

APPROACH

This will be an objectives-based evaluation, focusing on whether the programme's actual outcomes are likely to achieve its stated objectives. The evaluation will take into account the changing global environmental debate as well as evolving international concerns and priorities.

DATA COLLECTION

Primary data collection methods will consist of: (a) reviews of key documents and financial information, (b) country case studies, (c) regional consultations, (d) global consultations, and (e) a survey questionnaire. All of these approaches will focus on the questions listed in the section above. Studies on specific themes of importance will also be carried out.

DOCUMENT REVIEWS

UNDP's goals and objectives are elaborated in the multi-year funding frameworks (MYFFs) for 2000-3 and 2004-7,[3] the first of which coincided with the introduction of results-based management at UNDP. The two MYFFs, together with the associated reports on progress and performance, provide the defining overview of objectives, priorities and achievements from UNDP management's perspective. These will form a starting point for the evaluation.

A variety of other relevant guidance material, practice notes, performance assessments and evaluations on environment and energy have been produced by UNDP and will be reviewed. Similarly, applicable evaluations carried out by the GEF Evaluation Unit will also be reviewed.

Available financial data on UNDP's environment and energy programmes will be summarized and analyzed.

COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

A representative sample of countries will be selected based on transparent criteria for either a detailed study involving a country study or for a thorough desk study based on a review of documents and evaluations and interviews with key claimholders. The main criteria for the selection of countries will be to achieve (a) a regional balance (with emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa), (b) a mix of country typologies (e.g., large countries, least-developed countries and Small Island Developing States) and (c) an overall mix of core UNDP versus GEF funding. More weighting will be given to countries that have

3. *Environment and Natural Resources* was one of six 'critical areas' in MYFF 1 and *Energy and Environment for Sustainable Development* was one of five 'strategic goals' in MYFF 2.

had a significant UNDP environment and energy portfolio during the second MYFF phase, i.e., since 2004 (the reason why some UNDP country programmes have had smaller environment and energy portfolios will be explored through other inquiries).

In the full country studies, both qualitative and quantitative approaches will be used. Evaluation methods will include interviews, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and reviews of key documents, including outcome and project evaluations, progress reports and other relevant documents. Each country study will produce a country report which will also undergo stakeholder validation.

A pilot country visit will be carried out to test and provide an opportunity for the evaluation team to reflect on the approach and key questions.

REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS

Selected regional centres will be visited by the evaluation team to interview UNDP staff and to consult with partner organizations operating at regional levels.

GLOBAL CONSULTATIONS

Global consultations will focus on UNDP headquarters staff and management, and organizations with overlapping interests and goals with UNDP. These will explore past, present and future collaboration with key partners as well as UNDP's future positioning on environment and energy within the UN system.

Special attention will be given to UNEP, including the experience to date and future plans for the joint UNDP and UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative. Other global consultations shall include interviews with selected staff of international organizations, government agencies, the private sector, national and international NGOs with overlapping interests, priorities and concerns. These will include the GEF Secretariat, the GEF Evaluation Office, the World Bank, IUCN, the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and World Resources Institute (WRI).

QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

The main purpose of the questionnaire survey will be to give a range of UNDP staff working on environment and energy as well as the resident representatives and country directors an opportunity to provided structured inputs to the evaluation process. The survey is expected to capture information on UNDP's staff views on UNDP's role and positioning for environment and energy from different perspectives within the organization.

THEMATIC STUDIES

Specific studies will be undertaken on themes of relevance to the topic of the evaluation. These will be specified during the inception phase of the evaluation and may focus on topics such as environmental mainstreaming; country office thematic priorities; the role of GEF in determining the direction of UNDP's work in EE; and/or selected themes in UNDP's EE work.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND TIMEFRAME

The main output will be a final evaluation report, not exceeding 50 pages, excluding annexes. The final evaluation report will synthesize the evidence from all three components of this evaluation. The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation will be summarized in an Executive Summary.

There will also be reports from the country studies that will not exceed 30 pages each, not including annexes. The country reports will be summarized in an annex to the main report.

The main evaluation report is to be submitted to the Evaluation Office by the Evaluation Team Leader no later than 31 March 2008. The final report will be approved by the Evaluation Office and the findings will be presented to UNDP's Executive Board in June 2008. The report will also be circulated to the participating UNDP units and country offices, partner organizations and other key stakeholders.

EVALUATION TEAM

The core evaluation team will comprise three international consultants. One of the international consultants will be designated as the Team Leader, the other two will be designated as Principal Consultants. In addition, and depending on the evaluation methodology developed by this core team, other consultants (international and national) and advisers may be engaged to contribute to the evaluation process. The Evaluation Office Task Manager will take part in the evaluation as a member of the core team. The team will be supported by one research assistant in the Evaluation Office in New York.

The composition of the team shall reflect the independence and substantive results focus of the evaluation. The Team Leader and all other members of the evaluation team will be selected by the Evaluation Office taking into account the technical qualifications of the consultants in the subject matter as well as in evaluation.

Each of the core team members will conduct the evaluation in at least two of the selected case study countries. The country studies will be supported by the UNDP country offices, which will designate a focal point to provide such support in connection with the respective country missions.

ADVISORY PANEL

As part of the consultative process in undertaking the evaluation, an external Advisory Panel comprising three individuals from different countries, including representatives of international agencies, will be set up by the Evaluation Office. The members will be selected on the basis of their recognized stature in the fields of environment, energy, international development and evaluation. The Advisory Panel will ensure quality control of the evaluation. It will review and provide comments on the draft evaluation report before submission to the Evaluation Office. The Evaluation Office will form part of the extended Advisory Panel, which will remain in existence until the completion, dissemination and final review of the evaluation. The inputs and comments of the Advisory Panel are expected to enrich the process and enhance understanding of the issues among a wide audience.

MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Evaluation Office will manage the evaluation process. It will provide backstopping support and ensure coordination and liaison with all concerned UNDP units and other key agencies. The Evaluation Office Task Manager will provide overall guidance, ensure substantive supervision of all research, and determine the evaluation team composition.

In the case study countries and regions, the country offices and regional centres will support the evaluation team in liaising with key partners and in discussions with the team, and make available to the team all relevant evaluative material. They will also provide support on logistical issues and planning for the country visits by the evaluation team. In addition, each country office and regional centre will appoint a focal point for the evaluation who will assist in preparing relevant documents, hiring national consultants, and setting up meetings with all relevant stakeholders.

The evaluation team will be responsible for the development, research, drafting and finalization of the evaluation, in close consultation with the Evaluation Office and other relevant units of UNDP, notably the Bureau for Development Policy.

The Evaluation Office will meet all costs related to conducting the evaluation. It will be responsible for the production of the Evaluation Report and presentation of the same to the Executive Board.

FOLLOW-UP AND LEARNING

This corporate evaluation is expected to help UNDP identify key lessons on strategic positioning and results that can provide a useful basis for strengthening UNDP's role in managing

environment and energy for sustainable development. It will present good practices from country case studies and also draw lessons from unintended results. The country offices will be able to use the evaluation to strengthen their strategic position and vision vis-à-vis partners, while the UNDP headquarters and regional centres are expected to use the evaluation as a tool for advocacy, learning and buy-in among stakeholders.

The evaluation report and recommendations will be shared within the organization through a variety of means. The evaluation will be presented to the UNDP management who will be responsible for preparing a management response to the findings and recommendations of the evaluation. Innovative ways of disseminating the evaluation findings will be sought to reach as wide a range of stakeholders as possible.

Annex 2

UNDP PRIORITY SETTING AND PERFORMANCE REPORTING

UNDP's goals and objectives for the evaluation period are identified in two Multi-Year Funding Frameworks for 2000-2003 (MYFF-1) and 2004-2007 (MYFF-2). The MYFF approach was recently succeeded by the strategic plan, 2008-11, adopted in late 2007. 'Environment and Natural Resources' was one of six strategic results frameworks (i.e., priorities) in MYFF-1, and 'Managing Energy and Environment for Sustainable Development' was identified as one of five core goals in MYFF-2 (hence the title of this evaluation). Subsequent achievements in environment and natural resources were included in the Administrators' reports to the Executive Board on MYFF-1 and MYFF-2.

MYFF-1

At its introduction, MYFF-1 was described as a key building block in the application of results-based management: "it is against this framework of specific organizational goals and intended results, reinforced by the business plan, that the results-oriented annual reports (ROARs) will review our progress in future."[4]

Environment and Natural Resources was one of six 'strategic results frameworks' (i.e., priorities) in MYFF-1. Related goals and objectives were intended to "build on the organization's experience in environmental matters particularly in strengthening national capacity for natural resources management, and integrating the goals of global international agreements, conventions and action plans."

The main goal was spelled out as "To protect and regenerate the global environment and natural resources asset base for sustainable human development," and three sub-goals were identified: (i) to promote the integration of sound environmental management with national development policies and programmes, (ii) to contribute to the protection and regeneration of the environment and to promote access to natural resources assets on which poor people depend and (iii) to promote equity and burden-sharing in international cooperation to protect and enhance the global and regional environment.

These goals were to be met by "focusing on specific aspects of capacity building," such as: (i) ratification of, and national follow-up to, international conventions, (ii) legal/regulatory framework and policy implementation, (iii) national/local programmes for sustainable environmental management, (iv) management capacity of national environmental agencies and (v) capacity for local participation in programme design/implementation.

MYFF-2

Consistent with its predecessor, MYFF-2 was "designed to be a key instrument for the strategic management, monitoring and accountability of UNDP." This MYFF again drew on country programmes' identification of priority areas, this time supplemented by three other considerations—the MDGs, the Secretary General's reform programme and the "transformation of UNDP in terms of operational effectiveness" launched with MYFF-1.[5]

4. DP/1999/30.
5. DP/2003/32.

Enhancing development effectiveness was "at the core" of MYFF-2, to be achieved by focusing on five "drivers of development effectiveness": (i) building national capacities, (ii) promoting national ownership, (iii) advocating and fostering an enabling policy environment, (iv) promoting gender equity and (v) forging strategic partnerships.

'Managing energy and environment for sustainable development' was identified as one of five core goals in MYFF-2 (hence the title of this evaluation). The others were: achieving the MDGs and reducing poverty, fostering democratic governance, supporting crisis prevention and recovery and responding to HIV/AIDS. In an effort to simplify the Strategic Results Framework, which in the previous MYFF had "comprised six goals, 14 sub-goals and 45 strategic areas of support," the second MYFF had the five goals mentioned above, but made a reduction in the number of sub-goals, now termed 'service lines', to 30.

The following service lines were identified for energy and environment: (i) frameworks and strategies for sustainable development, (ii) effective water governance, (iii) access to sustainable energy services, (iv) sustainable land management to combat desertification and land degradation, (v) conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and (vi) national/sectoral policy and planning to control emissions of ozone-depleting substances and persistent organic pollutants.

The Administrator's 2007 Report to the Executive Board on MYFF-2 adopted more assertive language than its predecessor, reporting for environment the emergence of a "clear role for UNDP." The report goes on to give an impression of considerable progress in identifying indicators, targeting, benchmarking and proving impact of activities, and generally "improving organizational effectiveness." Considerable progress is noted in contrast to MYFF-1, with its three-tier structure of goals, sub-goals, and 45 strategic areas of support, UNDP was now engaged in only 30 service lines and supporting 90 types of outcome.

RESULTS-ORIENTED ANNUAL REPORT

The ROAR "is UNDP's principal instrument for reporting on the entire range of activities implemented by operational units. It provides the most comprehensive analysis of the performance of UNDP and is a key element in meeting UNDP's commitment to manage for results." A ROAR was required each year from every country office during the two MYFF phases. The ROARs related to environment and energy programmes should therefore be expected to provide useful insights on UNDP's performance.

The first reaction on looking at a country office ROAR for a particular year is that an impressive amount of performance-related information appears to have been assembled. There is no doubt that a considerable level of staff time and effort has been invested in preparing and updating these reports. A closer look, however, highlights a number of issues that limit the utility of this tool in assessing performance:

- Although the ROARs apparently intend to document the eventual *outcome* of activities, they are often more focused on immediate *outputs* and *activities*. As a result, they give little idea of whether, or to what degree, a particular outcome has been achieved, and they are not helpful in identifying longer term impacts.
- Difficulties also arise from the use of terminology and a tendency to assume that the concepts used are universally clear. For example, 'drivers' are a key element of the ROAR structure although the term does not seem to be used consistently. There is considerable vagueness in the use of the following drivers: 'developing national capacities', 'enhancing national ownership' and 'creating an enabling policy environment'. It is not clear exactly what these terms mean in operational terms, how progress might be assessed or what success might look like. The looseness of the terms would be less problematic if appropriate indicators of expected achievements had been formulated, but this is rarely the case.

- Many other terms included in goals and targets lack the precision necessary to be useful in performance assessment, including frequent plans to 'support capacities for dialogue', to 'lobby', to 'influence', to 'effectively deliver', to 'coordinate', to 'simplify', to 'harmonize', to 'promote effective and innovative approaches', to 'empower', to 'facilitate' and so on. Given these limitations in defining planned results and outcomes, it obviously becomes very hard to report progress. For example, how should a respondent answer this: "Did efforts in this area help improve capacities to identify and coordinate a comprehensive agenda of specific actions to attain international, national and local development goals and targets"? The actual answer given was "yes." But is this a 'yes' to help, improve, identify, coordinate or attain, and at what levels? All of this, or just some? And here's another example: "Did efforts in this area support or allow domestic stakeholders assume a coordinating role in the formulation and implementation of national, sectoral and local development plans and strategies?". Again, the response is "yes," but 'yes' to what?
- Some activities that may well have been worthwhile undertakings are sometimes included under headings that grossly mischaracterize their scale and potential influence. For example, and this is by no means an untypical case, we encountered the outcome 'integration of the environment and poverty into national policies and strategies' with a twofold 2006 target: (i) produce a report on the 'state of the environment' and (ii) produce advocacy material 'for sustainable pastoralism at global levels and commemoration of WCSD nationally'. In fact, this state of the environment report was simply the latest in a sequence of similar efforts produced periodically, while the second seems a tall order, and its value is unclear from the documentation. How significant a contribution are these to integrating the environment and poverty into national policies and strategies? This seems more to be a convenient way of categorizing some modest activities for which funding was available.
- Some of these limitations were recognized by the ROAR compilers and some small improvements over time are evident. For example, the concise 'yes' answers referred to in the previous point were sometimes replaced in future years by slightly more informative responses such as 'substantial ongoing effort' or 'some effort', although notably the language has reverted back to that of *inputs* and gives little information on any impacts achieved.
- There is a lack of clear indicators and targets for each 'driver', with the indicators in use needing to be much more specific in relation to separate and clearly defined activities, outputs and outcomes. Even applying these indicators would be hard in many cases due to an almost total lack of baseline information, meaning that any activity and output is likely to be categorized as an improvement or an 'outcome'.
- Most activities are undertaken in partnership with stakeholders and/or donors, leading to drivers such as 'forging partnerships for results'. This naturally makes it hard to isolate and attribute the influence of UNDP or any of the other individual partners, which of course is a key rationale for partnerships in the first place. Identifying the actual UNDP impact on such components as continuing processes, dialogue meetings, workshops, formulation of strategies and plans is notoriously hard. Yet it raises the key question: What would the situation be if UNDP had not taken part? Would comparable results or outcomes still have been achieved due to the actions of the other active partners?

Annex 3

CASE STUDY COUNTRY DATA

Basic Data on the Case Study Countries

Country	Population (2004)	GDP per capita (PPP US$) (2005)	Human Development Index (2005)		Environmental Performance Index (2008)*		Electricity Consumption per Capita (kilowatt-hours) (2004)	CO_2 Emissions per Capita (metric tons) (2000)	Protected Areas (as % of Total Land Area) (2004)**
			Index	Rank of 177	Score	Rank of 149			
Burkina Faso	13,933,000	1,213	0.370	176	44.3	144	31	0.1	11.5
China	1,312,979,000	6,757	0.777	81	65.1	105	1,684	2.7	11.3
Ecuador	13,061,000	4,341	0.772	89	84.4	22	1,092	1.7	9.3
Kenya	35,599,000	1,240	0.521	148	69.0	96	169	0.3	6.0
Macedonia FYR	2,034,000	7,200	0.801	69	75.1	74	3,863	4.4	7.1
Malawi	13,226,000	667	0.437	164	59.9	121	100	0.1	8.9
Fiji	828,000	6,049	0.762	92	69.7	92	926	0.9	9.9
Samoa	184,000	6,170	0.785	77	-	-	619	-	-

Sources: UNDP Human Development Report 2007/2008: Population 2004, GDP per Capita 2005, Human Development Index 2005, Electricity Consumption Per Capita 2004. Yale University, Columbia University 2008: Environmental Performance Index 2008. United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, The World Bank, World Resources Institute 2005, World Resources 2005, The Wealth of the Poor: Managing ecosystems to fight poverty: CO_2 Emissions Per Capita 2000, Protected Areas 2004

*Note: The EPI focuses on two overarching environmental objectives: 1) reducing environmental stresses to human health and 2) promoting ecosystem vitality and sound natural resource management. These broad goals also reflect the policy priorities of environmental authorities around the world and the international community's intent in adopting Goal 7 of the Millennium Development Goals, to "ensure environmental sustainability." The two overarching objectives are gauged using 25 performance indicators tracked in six well-established policy categories, which are then combined to create a final score. The 2008 EPI deploys a proximity-to-target methodology, which quantitatively tracks national performance on a core set of environmental policy goals for which every government can be—and should be—held accountable. By identifying specific targets and measuring the distance between the target and current national achievement, the EPI provides both an empirical foundation for policy analysis and a context for evaluating performance. Source: The Environmental Performance Index Executive Summary (http://epi.yale.edu/ExecutiveSummary).

**Note: All areas under IUCN management categories I-V, 2004. Extent of protected areas may include marine components that artificially inflate the percentage of land area protected.

Annex 4

ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY IN THE UNDP COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS

Focus Areas, Programme Components and Outcomes/Outputs by Country			
Country	**Strategic Focus Areas**	**Environment and Energy Programme Components**	**Planned Outcomes/Outputs**
Burkina Faso	**CPD 2006-2010**		
	■ Élargir les opportunités d'emplois et d'activités génératrices de revenus ■ Réduire la vulnérabilité de l'économie rurale et l'insécurité alimentaire pour les groupes vulnérables et promouvoir une gestion durable de l'environnement ■ Stabiliser/inverser la tendance du VIH/SIDA ■ Promouvoir la bonne gouvernance	Réduire la vulnérabilité de l'économie rurale et l'insécurité alimentaire pour les groupes vulnérables et promouvoir une gestion durable de l'environnement	
		■ La gestion durable des ressources naturelles (eau, sols, forêts) est renforcée au profit des groupes défavorisés tels que les femmes et les jeunes	■ Les politiques, la réglementation des ressources naturelles sont revues
		■ Accroissement de superficies forestières et de terres aménagées	
		■ Taux de croissance des revenus par an dans les zones rurales	■ Les rendements d'une exploitation rentable durables des ressources sont accrus
China	**CCF 2001-2005**		
	■ Deepening reforms and governance ■ Poverty reduction ■ HIV/AIDS and development ■ Sustainable environment and energy development	Sustainable environment and energy development	
		■ Environmental governance that emphasizes building national capacity in implementing policy, legal and regulatory measures	■ Incorporation into micro-economic and sector policies of approaches to new and renewable energy sources and end-use energy efficiency that have been pilot tested and shown to be effective ■ Acceptance and use of market-based instruments for sustainable environmental management, notably in the western region ■ Strengthened national capacity and empowerment of local stakeholders in environmental management and in promoting biodiversity and conservation

Focus Areas, Programme Components and Outcomes/Outputs by Country			
Country	**Strategic Focus Areas**	**Environment and Energy Programme Components**	**Planned Outcomes/Outputs**
China cont'd	CCF 2001-2005 cont'd		
		■ Capacity development to negotiate and implement global environmental commitments	■ Increased national capacity to address climate change ■ Successful phase out of ozone-depleting substances being used by several enterprises in the manufacture of solvents
	CCF 2006-2010		
	■ Achieving the MDGs and reducing human poverty ■ Environment and energy for sustainable human development ■ Responding to HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases	Environment and energy for sustainable human development	
		■ Support improved end-use energy efficiency in manufacturing industries and buildings, and enhanced application of new and renewable technologies	■ Voluntary agreements to improve energy efficiency and reduce CO_2 emissions implemented by pilot enterprises ■ Regulations, codes, guidelines, standards and labels for energy efficiency and conservation designed and applied to selected buildings and equipment ■ Capacities increased of energy conservation centres to provide energy efficiency services ■ Implementation of the Energy Conservation Law supported ■ Commercialization of new and renewable energy technologies supported through demonstration and development of strategies, guidelines, standards and regulations
		■ Mainstream biodiversity conservation concerns and actions into the socio-economic sectors and the development vision	■ A coordination mechanism among national/international partners for the effective management of biodiversity strengthened in the following areas: biodiversity conservation and mainstreaming biodiversity into planning and investment processes
		■ Strengthen disaster management efforts for natural and industrial, particularly mining sector-related, disasters.	■ Coordination mechanism among national partners strengthened ■ Capacity to analyze and assess risk improved ■ Integrated risk management at the national and community level enhanced ■ Existing policies and risk scenarios reviewed ■ Local risk reduction plans formulated

Focus Areas, Programme Components and Outcomes/Outputs by Country			
Country	**Strategic Focus Areas**	**Environment and Energy Programme Components**	**Planned Outcomes/Outputs**
Ecuador	**CCF 1999-2003**		
	■ Sustainable development ■ Governance ■ Poverty eradication	Sustainable development	
		■ Establish regulations in the public and private sectors to achieve sustainable development of production potential and of the country's natural and environmental resources ■ Provide support to the local and national governments through the introduction of non-polluting technologies, emissions controls and monitoring of compliance with environmental standards ■ Planning and implementation of environmental management projects ■ Strengthen protected areas and support the development of strategies to protect areas which are of global importance with respect to biodiversity and climate change ■ Reconstruction of the la Costa region after El Niño, including land use planning, development of catchment basins and reforestation ■ Take part in conservation programmes in the Galapagos Islands which provide for the needs of the islands' population and establish a sustainable development model ■ Continue to promote the rights of indigenous peoples and their active participation in the life of the nation, as in the principles of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Convention (ILO Convention No. 169)	
	CP 2004-2008		
	■ Combat poverty and create opportunities for all ■ Democratic governance and transparency ■ Sustainable development: capacities for the future	Sustainable development: capacities for the future	
		■ Strategic areas of support to national policy, legal and regulatory framework for environmentally sustainable development	■ A comprehensive approach to environmentally sustainable development integrated into national development planning and linked to poverty reduction, including sustainable energy and major basic environmental needs

Focus Areas, Programme Components and Outcomes/Outputs by Country			
Country	**Strategic Focus Areas**	**Environment and Energy Programme Components**	**Planned Outcomes/Outputs**
Ecuador cont'd	CP 2004-2008 cont'd		
		■ Institutional framework for sustainable environmental management and energy development	■ Improved capacity of national/ sectoral authorities to plan and implement integrated approaches to environmental management and energy development that respond to the needs of the poor ■ Improved capacity of local authorities, community-based groups and private sector in environmental management and sustainable energy development
		■ Regional cooperation and coordination in natural resource management and sustainable energy development	■ Improved regional capacity to coordinate and harmonise national policies and programmes for management of shared natural resources and sustainable energy development
Kenya	**CPAP 2004-2008**		
	■ Opportunities ■ Empowerment ■ Security ■ Sustainability	Sustainability	
		■ Integration of the environment and poverty into national policies and strategies	■ Policies, thematic action and strategic plans developed, reviewed, and approved; national plans reviewed through the poverty environment initiative and better donor coordination achieved ■ Overall national policy framework and principles, and specific framework for forestry and wildlife sectors developed ■ Environment management information system, tools for integration of environment into MTEF and PER guidelines and state of environment reports developed
		■ Improve community level of environment and natural resource governance and use to build capacity and achieve local and national benefits in biodiversity and land management, to support alternative livelihoods and sustainable income-generating activities	■ Action plans prepared by communities for site-specific projects on equity, access, sustainable use for generating benefits ■ Community experiences and expertise scaled up to support locally relevant policy formulation in the areas of agriculture, water, biodiversity and solid waste management

Focus Areas, Programme Components and Outcomes/Outputs by Country			
Country	**Strategic Focus Areas**	**Environment and Energy Programme Components**	**Planned Outcomes/Outputs**
Kenya cont'd	CPAP 2004-2008 cont'd		
			■ Evaluation of land tenure systems to increase individual and/or joint ownership of land in targeted areas for better land management ■ Improvement of rural livelihoods involving diffusion of appropriate land management innovations and techniques through local environment communities and farmer field schools ■ Improvement of local resource use in arid and semi-arid districts to combat land degradation and desertification ■ Increased sanitation levels and improved livelihoods through sustainable solid municipal waste management acitivites in the urban area, with particular emphasis on the informal settlements
		■ Development and distribution of sustainable energy services to meet household needs, to offer income-generating and employment opportunities and to service all sectors of the economy	■ Sustainable energy strategies, action plans and pilots that support broader development goals and objectives, including information tools and development of standards and regulations ■ Capacity built for investment and resource mobilization for sustainable energy options
		■ Domestification of global conventions through project development to build capacity of institutions at all levels and to support the country to achieve its commitments towards global agreements on environment	■ Intervention projects on climate change and reduction of greenhouse gases emissions ■ Management of international waters and other water bodies projects realized ■ Phasing out ozone-depleting substances project operationalized ■ Intervention projects on sustainable management of biodiversity and land degradation realized

Focus Areas, Programme Components and Outcomes/Outputs by Country			
Country	**Strategic Focus Areas**	**Environment and Energy Programme Components**	**Planned Outcomes/Outputs**
Macedonia FYR	**CCF 2001-2003**		
	■ Local governance and municipal development ■ Environmental governance and sustainable development	Environmental governance and sustainable development	
		■ Strengthen the policy framework for environmental management and sustainable development	■ Finalize preparations for a national strategy for sustainable development to establish and make operational the National Council for Sustainable Development ■ Assist government in efforts to meet its commitments to international conventions
		■ Support the implementation of priority policy goals at the local level	■ Support operational activities that strengthen the capacities of local stakeholders, in particular local governments, to promote environmental protection and sustainable development ■ Test and develop mechanisms for local implementation of policy goals ■ The four priority areas will support: (a) mainstreaming of the national strategy for sustainable development into the activities of the Municipal Development Programme; (b) implementation of the solid waste management plan in selected municipalities; (c) conservation of biodiversity by reinforcing management capacities in protected areas in selected ecosystems and (d) sustainable management of international waters.
	CP 2005-2009		
	■ Capacity-building for good governance and rule of law ■ Promoting an enabling economic environment for poverty reduction ■ Sustainable development, environmental protection and management of natural resources	Sustainable development, environmental protection and management of natural resources	
		■ Support government in making operational basic environmental laws in order to achieve good environmental governance on local and national level	■ Policy, institutional, regulatory/financial capacities for environment management, energy efficiency in place ■ Improved ability to monitor state of the environment
		■ Improve the state of environment and livelihoods in watersheds; put in place integrated watershed management and transboundary cooperation	■ Capacities for transboundary cooperation strengthened ■ Mechanisms on watershed management supported

Focus Areas, Programme Components and Outcomes/Outputs by Country			
Country	**Strategic Focus Areas**	**Environment and Energy Programme Components**	**Planned Outcomes/Outputs**
FYR Macedonia cont'd	CP 2005-2009 cont'd		
			■ Community outreach programmes developed and implemented
		■ Assist the country in meeting its obligations under environment conventions such as the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change, United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification	■ Capacities to implement the ratified multilateral environmental agreements/ protocols improved
Malawi	**CCF 2002-2006**		
	■ Poverty Reduction Strategy Support Programme ■ Poverty reduction through good governance ■ HIV/AIDS management	Poverty Reduction Strategy Support Programme	
		■ Poverty policy analysis, programming and monitoring: includes environmental research, impact assessment and monitoring	■ The adoption by government and endorsement by civil society by 2003 of a holistic poverty reduction programme with monitorable targets and agreed benchmarks, covering income and other identified dimensions of poverty
		■ Promotion of sustainable social and economic empowerment: includes the promotion of an integrated approach for improved environmental management, and development of community-level technologies to improve the living standards of vulnerable groups	■ Adoption of community-level technologies for improved environmental protection
	CPD 2008-2011		
	■ Environment and energy for sustainable economic development ■ Disaster risk reduction and emergency management ■ Mainstreaming HIV/ AIDS in the national and sub-national development agenda ■ Responsive governance, human rights and the rule of law	Energy and environment for sustainable development	
		■ Assist in addressing climate change and balancing economic growth with utilization of environmental assets	
		■ Develop national capacity to mainstream environmental sustainability concerns and sustainable use of natural resources in socio-economic sectors and the overall development strategy	■ Promotion of sustainable and affordable energy services ■ Enhanced application of new and renewable technologies ■ Assistance with multilateral environmental reporting requirements

Focus Areas, Programme Components and Outcomes/Outputs by Country			
Country	**Strategic Focus Areas**	**Environment and Energy Programme Components**	**Planned Outcomes/Outputs**
Pacific Island States: Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu	**Multi-Country CPD 2008-2012**		
	■ Poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals ■ Good governance and human rights ■ Crisis prevention and recovery ■ Environment and sustainable management	Environment and sustainable management	
		■ Mainstream environmental sustainability into regional and national policies and planning frameworks	■ National capacity to develop and implement environmental policies, legislative and management frameworks developed and mainstreamed through national policies and budgets ■ Strengthened capacities for improved access and management of multilateral environmental agreements
		■ Support Pacific communities to effectively manage and sustainably use their environment and natural resources	■ Sustainable livelihoods of vulnerable groups, including women and youth, strengthened through institutional support and leveraging indigenous governance systems, to contribute to sustainable environmental management
Pacific Island States: Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa and Tokelau	**Multi-Country CPD 2008-2012**		
	■ Equitable economic growth and poverty reduction ■ Good governance and human rights ■ Crisis prevention and recovery ■ Sustainable environmental management	Sustainable environmental management	
		■ The environment-economic-governance nexus demonstrated through community-based natural resource management and use that supports implementation of gender-sensitive national policies as well as the mainstreaming of environment into national plans	■ An engendered 'environment hub' of international, regional and Samoa-based experts supported to provide coordinated and gender-sensitive policy and technical advice on serious environmental challenges facing the Pacific ■ Community-based environmental management activities scaled up in the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa and Tokelau ■ Engendered MDG-based village and local-level plans developed by communities ■ Gender-sensitized environmental sector plans mainstreamed into NDPs/ SDPs in the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa and Tokelau ■ Gender analysis conducted on the differential impacts on men and women of environmental degradation and natural disasters ■ Energy efficiency improved and renewable energy use promoted ■ Best practices and lessons learned documented and disseminated ■ South-South cooperation enhanced

Annex 5

COUNTRY CASE STUDY SUMMARIES

BURKINA FASO

CONTEXT

Burkina Faso is a landlocked country in the Sahel region of West Africa with a population of 13.7 million (2006) and a GDP per capita of $376 (2004). The country has experienced economic growth averaging 5.5 percent during the period 1995–2002 (a real per capita growth of around 2 percent). The economy remains vulnerable to external shocks and highly dependent on export earnings from cotton, livestock and, increasingly, gold. Agricultural production fluctuates with variations in rainfall while the unstable political situation in neighbouring Ivory Coast has forced more than 350,000 Burkinabè migrant workers to return home in recent years. Poverty levels, estimated at 41 percent in 2006, have diminished little in recent years. The socio-economic group most affected by poverty is subsistence farmers, who account for close to 75 percent of Burkina Faso's poor.

Burkina Faso's development is closely linked with management of its natural resources. Agriculture is Burkina Faso's key economic sector, and it is challenged by water shortages, soil and wind erosion, deforestation and overgrazing. Since 2004 the country's national poverty reduction strategy has included several environmental management targets. This national strategy recognizes that sound natural resource management is necessary for national economic performance but does not assign an important strategic role to environmental issues. In general, government interest in environmental management challenges has declined precipitously over the past ten years, as the combined threats of drought and desertification have diminished.

UNDP'S ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY PROGRAMME

'Environment and energy' was identified as one of five priority areas in UN's Common Country Assessment (CCA) in 2000. In the CCA of 2004 the environment was assigned a more marginal role. In the UNDAF for 2006–2010, environmental concerns appear as a dimension of one of the five priorities areas for the UN team—'addressing the vulnerability of the rural economy, food insecurity issues and the *sustainable management of the natural resources*'.

UNDP's core funding for environment and energy in Burkina Faso has been limited, averaging around $900,000 per year during the second MYFF, 2004–2006. This is roughly the amount that might be disbursed in Burkina Faso annually by a mid-sized international NGO. According to country office estimates, the main donor contributions to environment and energy in 2007 came from the African Development Bank (more than €10 million), the European Community, Italy and Sweden (each with between €1 and €5 million) and the World Bank, Belgium, France and Luxembourg (each contributing under €1 million).

UNEP and UNDP have begun collaboration in Burkina Faso on their shared multi-country Poverty-Environment Initiative though the results have not been significant to date. In the past, UNDP helped UNEP deliver the Burkinabè component, a regional programme for the development of environmental legislation.

The country office contributed to the Regional Bureau of Africa's regional strategy on poverty reduction and management of natural resources. This in turn helped shape UNDP's country programme in Burkina Faso. On the other hand,

the country office found that headquarters often didn't listen to their views or try to learn from the country office's experience. The country office complained that headquarters 'dumped' new administrative and financial systems upon them without proper consulting. The country office found the advice provided by the Dakar Regional Centre to be of uneven quality and utility.

UNDP's enhanced interest in environment and energy issues in the past several years is apparently the result of decisions by the management team in the country office. The growing importance of the environment and energy practice area within UNDP's Burkina Faso programme is reflected in the growth of their environmental team, from one environmental officer in 2003 to six officers today. Some major bilateral donors have withdrawn from the sector over the same period, leaving UNDP to play a more prominent role.

Core environment and energy resources provided have been widely dispersed thematically and geographically and devoted to a large number of small projects. The Environmental Team in the country office is reshaping its portfolio to focus on fewer, larger projects and programmes, such as the Programme to Improve Incomes and Food Security (ARSA) and the Programme for Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (PGDRN).

The 'Multifunctional Platform' project, a key component of the ARSA Programme, was originally developed by UNIDO. Primarily intended to address local communities' demand for affordable energy, the project employs a simple diesel motor to produce a variety of village-level services. The motors provide surrounding communities with electricity that they can use, for example, to recharge batteries, to make TV or video presentations, to pump water for drinking or small-scale irrigation or to power local artisans' electrical tools. Indirect environmental benefits are likely as a result of communities' enhanced capacities to invest in improved land management.

The platforms primarily support local women, helping them with arduous and time-consuming tasks such as husking and hulling grains, grinding and milling grain or shea nuts and so on. Women relieved from the most tiring physical tasks have more time to attend literacy classes, participate more vigorously in public life or generate surpluses to invest in small businesses. Local women's associations play a lead role in running the multi-functional platforms; this is aimed at strengthening gender balance in local communities.

At the time of the evaluation visit, some 220 multifunctional platforms had been installed in Burkina Faso, with double this number expected by the end of 2008. The longer termed ambition is establish a 'platform' in each of the country's 8,000 villages. For this to happen their longer term financial and institutional sustainability within the communities will need to be ensured. The first generation of multifunctional platforms was 90 percent subsidized by funds from outside the communities where they were installed. These communities' capacities to sustain the operations of the multifunctional platforms over the longer term—particularly to cover the costs of operation, maintenance and eventual new capital investments—are still uncertain.

GEF funding has played a modest but significant role in UNDP's environment and energy programming to date. On the one hand, GEF money has enabled the country office to provide support related to international conventions, notably those on biodiversity and desertification. On the other hand, and much more significantly, the GEF Small Grants Programme has provided the country office with valuable lessons in working on participatory local community-based projects. These are reflected in the country office's two largest current projects, the ARSA and the PGDRN.

ASSESSMENT OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION

An earlier generation of UNDP projects in the 1990s included support for natural forest management that appears to have been highly relevant and appropriate to Burkinabè needs. This project was funded for more than fifteen

years and has provided a basis for much of UNDP's subsequent efforts in the sector. A more recent GEF-funded project in support of wildlife ranching had only modest results and was not successful in developing sustainable approaches to wildlife management involving local communities.

The current generation of environment and energy projects is largely focused on sustainable livelihoods approaches and appears well adapted to Burkinabè needs, though it is too early to predict how much they will contribute to positive lasting change. The high-profile multifunctional platforms discussed above, for example, clearly still need to address issues of longer term financial sustainability.

On another level, the Burbinabè government appreciates UNDP support, which has enabled them to draft national environmental plans and strategies and to deal with a growing number of international environmental conventions, frameworks and protocols.

Yet, as in many countries, there is concern that the considerable body of Burkinabè plans and strategies related to different global environmental challenges that have been underwritten by UNDP-GEF over the past decade have not led to commensurate levels of activities to implement these strategies. The task of implementing these strategies remains overwhelmingly dependent on the availability of ongoing GEF financing, which in the case of Burkina Faso looks likely to be modest.

Most partners in international organizations, national and regional NGOs and the GEF Small Grants Programme expressed a high level of satisfaction with their collaboration with UNDP. They appreciated the leadership UNDP provides to the international community and its support for the environment and energy sector in general.

Overall, UNDP's environment and energy programme is relevant to Burkina Faso's environment and energy needs and is being implemented with considerable effectiveness and efficiency. Recent moves towards focusing UNDP support on fewer, larger projects and programmes are likely to enhance the sustainability of results.

Where higher level outcomes of UNDP support can been identified, these tend to be more of a process nature. For instance, UNDP support was instrumental in retrofitting Burkina Faso's national poverty reduction strategy in 2004 to better reflect environmental management issues. In general, however, there is a dearth of monitoring and evaluation information and particularly of high-quality information related to the quality of performance or progress towards higher level results.

CONCLUSIONS

Commitment to environmental sustainability is now part of the country's political discourse. There are environment offices within key ministries responsible for energy, agriculture, livestock and infrastructure and requirements for systematic environmental impact assessment of government initiatives in these sectors. On the other hand, there is considerable concern that Burkina Faso may be moving away from environmental mainstreaming *de facto*. As the combined threats of drought and desertification recede from public consciousness, the political and development agendas focus more exclusively on maximizing short-term economic growth. Similarly, the UNDP country office is not mainstreaming environmental concerns in its own governance programme.

UNDP's greatest strength in Burkina Faso is its human resources, in particular a senior Burkinabè officer who is well known and experienced, with a relevant professional background and respected among his peers. A stable, knowledgeable, long-term presence in the sector gives UNDP a voice that most international partners—especially those with resources as modest as those of UNDP—do not have.

UNDP's biggest weaknesses are first, the modest and sometimes hard-to-predict nature of the financial support it has to offer and second, the

cumbersome financial management procedures associated with the 'direct procurement' approach currently used. For example, the country office is counting on support from the GEF-financed Country Partnership Programme to help them lobby for the systematic integration of sustainable resource management practices into Burkina Faso's rural development policies and programmes. Yet they worry that by the time this support is available in the country, the whole approach may need to be redesigned to reflect the steadily evolving situation.

CHINA

COUNTRY CONTEXT

China is immensely important for the global community and the global environment. China's 1.3 billion people constitute over 20 percent of the global population, and its rapidly growing economic and political role in the world make the country's sustainable development choices and strategies particularly important for the global community. Since the country began opening its economy in the 1980s, China has seen extraordinary economic growth, sustained at close to 10 percent annually for most of the past quarter century. In late 2007, China overtook Germany as the world's third largest economy and is expected to become the world's largest economy by 2020. Yet hundreds of millions of Chinese citizens are still faced with chronic hardship. Despite the country's unprecedented growth in recent decades, the Human Development Report 2007/2008 ranked China only 81 of 177 countries, with a 'medium' Human Development Index of 0.78.

China's sustained rapid economic development has had numerous negative consequences for the environment at local, national and global levels. Crucial natural resources, such as water, land and clear air are becoming scarce, especially in the coastal provinces and rapidly expanding urban areas. China is an increasingly prolific consumer of energy, contributing to severe air, water and soil pollution and rapidly rising greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change is recognized as a major threat to China's future economic development due to its likely effects on water resources, agricultural land productivity and coastal zones. These issues in turn are linked explicitly to poverty, especially in rural areas where livelihoods remain highly dependent on natural resources and people lack the capacities needed to adapt to a changing climate. Rapid growth of China's agriculture and industry also threatens biodiversity in this mega-diverse country.

Minimizing the environmental impacts of economic development—particularly in the energy, water and transport sectors, in both urban and rural areas—will be one of China's key environmental management challenges for the future. Urban environmental management problems (including air pollution and water pollution, collection and treatment disposal, including recycling and reusing wastes) will be especially daunting. Of the 20 most polluted cities in the world, 16 are located in China. Experts believe the declining availability of water for domestic, agricultural and industrial consumption— China has just 8 percent of the world's fresh water— could well become a major environmental crisis for 21st century China.

UNDP'S ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY PROGRAMME

UNDP's environment and energy strategy in China is focused on helping the country achieve the goals of its 11th Five-Year Plan while also improving compliance with Multilateral Environmental Agreements such as those related to climate change, biological diversity, persistent organic pollutants and the protection of the ozone layer. China's 11th Five-Year Plan (2006–2010) sets ambitious targets for achieving energy security and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It focuses on improving industrial energy efficiency, expanding use of renewable energy for power generation and poverty reduction, increasing China's share of the global carbon market and enhancing the availability of commercial finance for locally made renewable and alternative technologies. The plan further emphasizes the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation into poverty reduction, in particular

in production landscapes for livelihoods and rural development. Reflecting rising concerns about environmental health hazards, the plan also calls for better management of hazardous chemicals. Overall, it emphasizes the importance of environmental governance, including policy and legal measures, enhanced citizen awareness and participation in decision making and improved capacities.

UNDP's programme in China responds to the priority areas identified in China's latest 5-year plan. The obvious overlap with the GEF focal areas, notably climate change, biodiversity and chemicals, allows UNDP to tap into GEF financial resources. The current programme is organized into the following areas: (i) Climate Change and Sustainable Energy, (ii) Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, (iii) Environmental Governance and (iv) Toxic Chemical Management. Issues related to water and natural resources management, mining and disaster reduction are of growing interest for UNDP in China.

ASSESSMENT OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION

Since the 1990s UNDP has been playing a significant role in building capacity and providing technical assistance on environmental management and sustainable development in China. UNDP has mobilized $467 million for the environment and energy sector, much of these funds channeled from the GEF and MPF. Though UNDP's TRAC funds in China have been limited, the organization has been able to make a significant contribution in China's achievement of its environment and energy goals, including its national energy policy.

From the point of view of the global environment and sustainable development, China is arguably the most important country in the world. In response, UNDP's own environment and energy programme in China is its largest worldwide. The GEF as well has allocated more resources to mitigating climate change in China than anywhere else, much of this passing through the UNDP country office. In recent years, UNDP has also invested considerable human resources in China, more than doubling the size of its country office environment and energy team between 2005 and 2007.

UNDP's role in China is well defined and the programme is nationally driven, reflecting the Government of China's priorities. UNDP's strategic positioning in China cannot be judged on the same terms as in other countries. In this giant, centrally planned country, the government has a high degree of control over its development priorities and how environmental and energy policies relate to these. Programmes and priorities of international organizations do not drive Chinese policy; international projects do not have direct policy impacts. The role of such projects is rather to introduce new concepts, such as energy efficiency or market-based mechanisms, which can be piloted and tested. Those deemed promising may be replicated by the government, and the successful ones may contribute to policy development. Policy development in itself is the government's role. UNDP does not provide direct inputs to Chinese national policy formulation, but UNDP serves as an important channel of information and knowledge about internationally available concepts, ideas and technologies that are relevant to China's policy development.

This is not to say that UNDP cannot have an impact on environment and energy issues in China. In consultation with the Government of China, UNDP can select areas where it can contribute by bringing in international experience and approaches and testing their application in the Chinese context. Examples include the 'Energy Efficient Refrigerators' project and the 'Energy Conservation and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction in Chinese Township and Village Enterprises' project. UNDP's global knowledge networks are a critical asset in these undertakings.

UNDP can and does enhance the impact of its work through carefully selecting which partners to work with. For example, well-positioned national organizations such as the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC)

and State Environmental Protection Administration can ensure that lessons from projects are fed into policy-making processes. A key example is the End-Use Energy Efficiency Programme with NDRC.

Another role for UNDP is more symbolic. Cooperating with authorities, especially at local levels, can provide an added level of legitimacy to its projects and thus help UNDP to attract additional funding, partnerships and attention. Similarly, it can promote alternative ways of designing and implementing projects and involving partners, including NGOs or the private sector, which can eventually demonstrate their added value to Chinese policy makers. Examples of this approach include the 'China Green Lights' programme and the 'Capacity Building for Rapid Commercialization of Renewable Energy' project. Both of these successfully introduced market-based instruments into the planning and implementation processes by exposing participants to international experiences and providing training to national and local officials.

UNDP's Environment and Energy programme has been effective, particularly in helping establish an energy policy coordination mechanism as well as pilot renewable energy technologies. UNDP played a unique role in developing capacities among local entrepreneurs, bringing international experiences and an understanding of global concerns for environment and energy.

The efficiency of UNDP-funded projects is sometimes adversely affected by a lack of the required level of technical capacities within UNDP's counterpart agency, the Chinese International Centre for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE).

UNDP's environment and energy programmes are sustainable wherever they are closely aligned with national priorities and policies. For example, the energy efficiency programmes are closely aligned with the country's mainstream energy policy and priorities and were highly sustainable as a result. The wetlands biodiversity programme, on the other hand, was not.

CONCLUSIONS

Financial contributions from UNDP's core funding to environment and energy activities in China have been low. It would be desirable for UNDP to provide more TRAC funding as a demonstration of its corporate commitment to environmental sustainability. Nevertheless, overall funding mobilized by UNDP China through the GEF, Montreal Protocol, the private sector and, most importantly, government counterpart contributions has enabled the development and implementation of a number of successful projects. UNDP has established a niche for itself and the necessary funding and leverage to play a lead role in coordinating environment and energy activities within the UN system in China. What has been missing is the deployment of truly high-level expertise in the UNDP country office to enable UNDP to effectively engage in policy dialogue with the Chinese government and other international partners on key environment and energy issues. The absence of this capacity in the country office is recognized as a weakness by both the government and UNDP.

From a corporate point of view, UNDP China should document Chinese experiences and transfer its successful practices to other programme countries through the UNDP development network. Again, to effectively support this kind of function, the country office will need to further develop its analytic capacities.

ECUADOR

CONTEXT

Ecuador is a middle-income country on the Pacific coast of South America characterized by high levels of ecological and ethnic diversity. Economic growth in recent years has been rapid but significant inequalities in income distribution and living standards remain between rich and poor, urban and rural, and different ethnic groups.

The country has gone through several bouts of political instability over the past decade. These have weakened the institutional capacities of the central government, affecting its performance and coordination.

The expansion of the agricultural frontier into eastern Ecuador's tropical forest regions with high biodiversity values, the intensive banana cultivation in the western coastal plains and the growth of the petroleum extraction industry have all had significant environmental impacts in recent decades. The National Development Plan for 2007-2010 is Ecuador's first national plan in ten years. Its objectives include a healthy and sustainable environment, and it guarantees citizens' access to safe water, air and soil. The new plan highlights the following environmental management priorities: (i) conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; (ii) integrated forest management; (iii) integrated watershed planning; (iv) development of a response to climate change; (v) sustainable and renewable energy development; (vi) a consolidated institutional framework for environmental management and promoting sustainability policies; (vii) pollution prevention and control; (viii) improved state management of socio-environmental conflict and (iv) reduced public risk and vulnerability to natural disasters.

UNDP'S ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY PROGRAMME

UNDP's 2004-2008 Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) targets three related areas:

- Incorporating sustainable development principles into national/local policies and programmes,
- Improving the availability and access of environmental goods and services, and
- Supporting the prevention and management of natural disasters.

These areas are aligned to the core goal of 'Energy and Environment for Sustainable Development' set forth under UNDP's 2004-2007 Multi-year Funding Framework, where the following outcomes are also foreseen:

- Improved capacity of national/sector authorities to plan and implement integrated approaches to environmental management and energy development that respond to the needs of the poor;
- Improved capacity of local authorities, community-based groups and the private sector in sustainable energy development; and
- Improved capacity of local authorities, community-based groups and the private sector in natural resources and environmental management.

An environment working group, one of several inter-institutional technical groups created by UNDP Ecuador, is chaired by the country office's sustainable development programme manager. This arrangement has created opportunities for inter-agency collaboration among several UN agencies and the GEF Small Grants Programme in the recently approved Yasuní Reserve project. An environmental 'Response Fund' managed by UNDP's Sustainable Development Unit and the GEF-SGP has been incorporated into UNDP's extensive Northern Border Peace and Development Programme. UNDP is also producing a methodological guide on gender that is based on one used by GEF Small Grants Programme. All these developments reflect the gradual shift towards the 'one UN' approach that is expected to continue in the next programme cycle. The government's decision to cease channelling public funds through UNDP—combined with a gradual decline in donor resources due to Ecuador's status as an oil-exporting, middle-income country—may encourage further collaboration among UN agencies to rationalize available resources.

UNDP is gradually reducing its focus on the Galapagos Archipelago and will be focusing more resources on the mainland during the next country programme cycle. This shift is already visible with new projects like 'Adaptation to Climate Change through Effective Water Management' and 'Creation of the Yasuní

Table A1. Ecuador's National Development Plan Policy Priorities

National EE Policy Priority	Relevant UNDP Projects
Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity	■ Control of Invasive Species in Galapagos ■ GEF Small Grants Programme
Integrated forest management	■ Yasuní Reserve ■ GEF Small Grants Programme
Integrated management of water resources through watershed-based planning	■ Adaptation to Climate Change through Effective Water Management
Prevention and mitigation of the effects of climate change	■ Adaptation to Climate Change through Effective Water Management ■ Second National Communication for Climate Change
Renewable energy development and efficiency	■ Renewable Energy for Galapagos – ERGAL
Articulating environment with social and economic policies	■ Galapagos 20/20 ■ PROINGALA
Improving state management in areas of social and environmental conflict caused by extractive activities	■ Yasuní Reserve ■ Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development
Effective risk management and reduced vulnerability to natural disasters	■ Galapagos Oil Spill ■ Adaptation to Climate Change through Effective Water Management

Reserve', which enhance the relevance of UNDP's environment and energy programme to mainland Ecuador while strengthening UNDP's already good relations with the Ministry of Environment. This shift towards more projects on the mainland will also expand opportunities for inter-agency collaboration.

UNDP core resources represented less than 3 percent of total UNDP expenditures in their environment and energy (sustainable development) programme between 2004 and 2006. These 'non-core' resources for environment and energy activities were important for the overall UNDP Ecuador programme as well, representing 93 percent of all the non-core and non-government resources available to the country office. Of this, some 80 percent came from the GEF.

ASSESSMENT OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Two-thirds of the current environment and energy budget commitments are focused on the Galapagos Islands. This reflects a long-standing UNDP recognition of the archipelago's global importance as a biodiversity site. GEF-funded projects support biodiversity conservation and the development of renewable energy sources, while UNDP's core projects there help close the gap between conservation and development, with support for institutional coordination and integrated regional planning.

The most important outcome achieved to date in UNDP's environment and energy programme has been in the area of controlling invasive species in the Galapagos. Other significant impacts foreseen are related to renewable energy generation and sustainable financing for invasive species control. At the central government level, UNDP's support to the Ministry of Environment on strategic planning, project development and stakeholder consultations is much appreciated by the government.

The links between the sample environment and energy projects reviewed by the evaluation and Ecuador's National Development Plan policy priorities are summarised in Table A1.

CONCLUSIONS

UNDP's environment and energy projects are relevant to Ecuador's national environment and energy priorities—particularly those related to biodiversity conservation and renewable energy—as defined in their 2007-2010 National Development Plan and other policy documents.

The effectiveness and sustainability of UNDP Ecuador's environment and energy projects and programmes varies. They are influenced by low institutional capacity, inadequate coordination, past periods of political instability and systemic efficiency constraints within UNDP. Environment and energy projects, particularly in Galapagos, have been vulnerable to administrative delays that in some cases have led to increased costs and affected performance.

Improvements in the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of UNDP's environment and energy programmes in Ecuador will require (i) more attention to developing capacities of national partners, (ii) a shift from short and medium-term projects towards support for longer term processes, (iii) streamlined administrative procedures and quicker response times and (iv) greater environment and energy staff involvement in programme management, strategic planning, field monitoring and knowledge management.

KENYA

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Kenya is endowed with a diversity of landscapes, ranging from mountains to savannah grasslands, arid and semi-arid lands and a coastline bordering the Indian Ocean. The Great Rift Valley runs the length of the country, with mountain ranges on the western and eastern fringes and lakes on the valley floor. Kenya's population of 32 million is unevenly distributed, ranging from about 300 people per km^2 in the areas with high agricultural potential to as low as 3 people per km^2 in the arid and semi-arid lands. Less than 20 percent of the country is classified as having high agricultural potential while arid and semi-arid lands and lakes account for the rest. Half of Kenya's population lived below the poverty line in 2005. The majority of Kenyans are highly dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods. The government's 'Economic Strategy for Growth and Wealth Creation in 2003-2007' set out its poverty reduction strategies, and a national 'Vision 2030' lays out an ambitious economic development plan based on comprehensive industrialization.

Over the past decade Kenya has felt the impacts of natural resource mismanagement in the form of diminished hydro-electrical generation potential. This has been the result of forest destruction in the watersheds of major dams, especially around Mount Kenya. Water supplies to the cities have also been disrupted. Droughts have become more prolonged and severe, with ensuing rains coming more often in the form of destructive flash floods. Growing pollution of Lake Victoria has contributed to the proliferation of invasive water hyacinth that threatens the fishing industry and water transportation networks. This pollution has also resulted in fish products from Africa's largest lake being banned in the European Union, with a predictably negative impact on the newly emerged fish export industry.

Kenya has formulated a series of policies and laws to improve its natural resource management in recent years. These followed a period of unprecedented environmental degradation in the 1990s. Policies and laws on wildlife, arid and semi-arid lands and land use are currently being reviewed. The government has ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). National priorities and plans for implementing these conventions have been developed through GEF enabling activities, mainly with UNDP as the implementing agency.

UNDP'S ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY PROGRAMME

The UNDP country office environment and energy unit was set up in 1999 as a single programme

officer supported by junior professional officers and interns. A further programme officer and an assistant joined in 2002, and there have usually been at least two local UN Volunteers as well. As elsewhere, the Small Grants Programme (SGP) is run separately by a national coordinator supported by several support staff.

The office has seen 49 projects approved since 1999 with a total budget of $32 million, consisting of $4 million from TRAC funds, $12 million from GEF and $16 million in co-financing. Five full-sized GEF projects account for $20 million, or over 60 percent of the total budget. The remaining $12 million in the portfolio finances a large number of small projects, including various GEF enabling activities and support for NGOs. An explicit shift was made during the implementation of the 2004–2008 Country Programme. The country office now aims to work more with NGOs to generate faster results and to more effectively reach communities. Several UNDP projects have demonstrated both the feasibility and the importance of NGO-government collaboration. For example, support for the Kenya Forest Working Group helped this activist organization play a key role in forest protection in a region where degradation was reaching critical proportions.

Project management has proven very time-consuming for the environment and energy team, who have consequently had less opportunity to focus on more strategic or policy-related issues. Inefficient administrative systems within UNDP have led to significant delays in processing transactions and transferring funds, causing considerable frustrations among project partners and stakeholders. The country office team has been obliged to focus more on project procedures and mechanisms than on working closely with grantees and executing agencies to enhance impacts and results.

The scattered nature of the many small projects also seem to lead to a risk of overlap with other donor initiatives or situations where UNDP's role is reduced to that of a subcontractor to larger projects or programmes, which may hamper UNDP's ambitions of being the UN organization from which the government seeks advice on environmental issues. This is not a clear-cut case, however, as some of the smaller projects were influential, helping build capacity outside government, and UNDP (as an institution, not just the country office) needs to learn how to manage these more efficiently. It would be unfortunate if UNDP was to move away from NGO support when government capacity and commitment seems insufficient to deliver effective larger projects.

ASSESSMENT OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION

The overall quality of UNDP projects in Kenya is difficult to measure or assess. The office deserves credit for establishing an elaborate system for monitoring project progress. The office is struggling to demonstrate outcomes or impacts; however its reports focused mostly on activities and outputs. The overall portfolio, while it contains some worthwhile projects, lacks coherence and is clearly driven largely by the availability of GEF funding.

There are high levels of dissatisfaction among partners due to (i) frequent funding delays that jeopardize communities' trust and UNDP's credibility, (ii) frequent and sudden shifts and turns, for example, in budgets and reporting requirements, (iii) a lack of sustained technical input and (iv) poor communications. These challenges undermine the trust needed for solid partnerships, such as little or no feedback on progress, no discussion or information on budget cuts, no information on significant events taking place in the country office, or frequent summons to meetings that are perceived by partners as sudden 'ambushes'.

The SGP is highly regarded by stakeholders in Kenya. Established in 1993, by the end of 2006 it had supported over 200 projects through NGOs and community-based organizations, with grants from $20,000-30,000. As elsewhere, the SGP in Kenya is often seen as the visible face of not just UNDP but the GEF in the environment field, since the larger projects tend not to be as visible

at local levels. Increasing media interest in environmental issues has resulted in significant coverage of Kenya's SGP projects in the national, regional and international media. Two GEF medium-sized projects have been developed by scaling up earlier SGP grants: 'Market Transformation for Efficient Biomass Stoves for Institutions and Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises' and 'Developing Incentives for Community Participation in Forest Conservation through the Use of Commercial Insects in Kenya'. Notwithstanding these examples, SGP usually operates independently from the country office, making their relationship difficult and impeding their ability to pursue opportunities for synergies. SGP's experience working with local communities could provide useful inputs to other UNDP programmes, not just in the environment field but also in poverty and livelihoods. Furthermore, Kenya is one of the SGP programmes faced with the prospect of graduation—a polite term for a discontinuation of GEF funding—and there is a risk that this valuable programme could be lost if the country office does not begin to play a more proactive and supportive role.

Institutionally, UNDP has played a role in the establishment of the National Environmental Management Authority and, more recently, the Kenya Forest Service. Cooperation with UNDP's Drylands Development Centre has contributed to the development of strategies for coping with drought. A National Cleaner Production Centre was established in 2003 in collaboration with UNIDO.

UNDP support has contributed to new legislation and policy shifts in the environment sector, notably the 1999 Environmental Management Coordination Act, which provided the initial national framework for environmental management, even though it has not been effectively implemented. More recently UNDP has contributed to the preparation of national forestry and energy acts. An inaugural national State of the Environment report was supported in 2003. It is hard to accurately assess how important UNDP's role was in these interventions.

Kenya has been host to one of three pilots for the UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) that aims to mainstream environmental considerations into the development programmes in all sectors. The PEI is emerging as a critical test case for the UNDP-UNEP partnership. Despite strong support from the top leadership of both agencies, coordination between UNDP and UNEP is proving to be a practical challenge that is hampered by system and procedure incompatibilities as well as staff reluctance in both agencies.

UNDP also helped establish and has chaired the Government of Kenya's joint consultative meetings on environment. But UNDP Kenya does not seem convincingly integrated with donor harmonization efforts or efforts to establish Joint Assistance Strategies, and it does not seem actively involved in the mainstream development discourse. For the most part UNDP is perceived by the other donors more as an implementing agency than a policy influence. The perpetual demands of project management make it hard for UNDP to consistently and significantly influence government. Other donors and government stakeholders would like to see UNDP focus its efforts more on the policy dialogue and capacity building, rather than managing large portfolios of small projects which, apart from SGP, does not seem to be UNDP's comparative advantage.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, UNDP is a valued development partner for both government agencies and NGOs in Kenya. UNDP is appreciated by its partners in Kenya as an effective mobilizer of funds, a neutral broker and, in a few cases, a source of technical support and policy influence. NGOs in particular are more positive than government partners, citing several examples of project replication or scaling up, effective organizational capacity building and strong outreach achieved through UNDP support. UNDP staff are generally recognized as competent, but overwhelmed by project implementation demands.

FYR MACEDONIA

CONTEXT

The Former Yugoslav Republic (FYR) of Macedonia is a relatively small country covering roughly 25,000 square kilometres with a population of just over two million. It is a young country with a long history in a turbulent region. Like its western Balkan neighbours, FYR Macedonia's overarching goals today are EU accession and regional security. The many challenges of EU accession include the need to greatly enhance local environmental management capacities.

The current priorities of FYR Macedonia's Ministry of Environment are solid waste management, water and waste management and climate change. UNDP helps them face these issues as well as helping them address short-term environmental crises and the longer term challenge of developing decentralized capacities.

UNDP'S ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY PROGRAMME

Environment has been a focus of UNDP support since their first Country Cooperation Framework in 1999-2001. Not long after UNDP opened its office in FYR Macedonia it launched the innovative 'Municipal Employment Assistance Programme—Clean and Green Macedonia' project. With cost-sharing support from Norway and Sweden, the project started in the two major towns of Skopje and Tetovo. By 2001 the project had expanded to include FYR Macedonia's 80 largest municipalities. The project provided emergency employment by recruiting unskilled workers to clean up illegal dump sites, stream beds and river banks, to properly dispose of solid wastes and to rehabilitate urban parks and other green spaces. These activities reflected the priorities of the country's first National Environmental Action Plan, which had identified solid waste management as the country's top environmental priority. Not incidentally the project also created some 7,400 months of temporary employment at a time of severe economic downturn.

In the subsequent period of 2002–2007 UNDP helped FYR Macedonia to:

- Introduce integrated watershed management in the Prespa Lakes watershed;
- Mitigate and prevent pollution at industrial pollution 'hotspots';
- Meet its obligations under multilateral environmental agreements;
- Develop its capacities to respond to natural and man-made disasters;
- Develop its capacities for crisis management;
- Develop national and local environmental management capacities;
- Develop a national sustainable tourism strategy; and
- Launch an environmental small grants programme that helps communities to address local environment and development challenges.

UNDP's core resources in FYR Macedonia are modest in comparison with larger international partners. UNDP TRAC funds spent or available for environment and energy programmes in the period 2002–2010 amounted to $950,000 by late 2007, or less than 15 percent of the total environment and energy funding for this period. Relatively abundant GEF funding—accounting for around 60 percent of funds spent or available in the same period—has had a considerable effect on the character of the overall UNDP programme. Much of this programme is concentrated around an international waters project financed by GEF in the Prespa Lakes region.

The integrated watershed management programme around the Prespa Lakes accounts for the lion's share of the current UNDP environment and energy budget in FYR Macedonia. Of a budget of approximately $6.7 million spent and projected for the period 2002–2010, approximately $4.7 million or 70 percent is committed to the Prespa Lakes region. Of this $4.7 million, $3.5 million are GEF funds and the remaining $1.2 million are from the Swiss government.

The GEF-financed project serves as a hub for a number of complementary projects in the Prespa Lakes region of FYR Macedonia, Albania and Greece. Home to a unique flora and fauna, surrounded by wetlands rich in endemic species and an important breeding and feeding site for vulnerable bird species, the region is also threatened by unsustainable natural resource management and land use practices. The UNDP-GEF project aims to ensure a well-coordinated and integrated regional approach to ecosystem management. The goal is to conserve globally significant biodiversity by reducing the pollution of these transboundary lakes from all three neighbouring countries.

In FYR Macedonia, the GEF project is complemented by three other UNDP projects. The first one is helping restore the Golema River, the main Macedonian tributary feeding the Prespa Lakes. A second project helps reduce the environmental impacts of agriculture by strengthening capacities among the region's tree farmers to optimize and reduce their use of agrochemicals (fertilizers and pesticides) and irrigation water. The third project supports improved solid waste management services and waste minimization in the communities of the watershed. These complementary contributions all help enhance the local relevance of the GEF-financed project.

ASSESSMENT OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTIONS

UNDP is a relatively small player compared with larger, mostly European donors who provide assistance for Macedonian infrastructure projects, legislative reform and reforms in the energy and agriculture sectors. UNDP aims to complement these bigger interventions and to provide support in areas where others don't, such as helping FYR Macedonia meet its obligations under multilateral environmental agreements.

Theoretically the roles of UNDP and other UN agencies active in FYR Macedonia are complementary. In reality, sometimes these agencies work well together and sometimes they don't. UNDP has worked effectively with the UN's World Tourism Organization to support development of the national sustainable tourism strategy and with UNESCO, which is working to establish a Biosphere Reserve in the Ohrid and Prespa Lakes region. UNEP and UNDP played a valuable joint role in responding to FYR Macedonia's forest fire emergency of mid-2007; but UNDP's overall relations with UNEP in FYR Macedonia, as with UNIDO, need improvement if the agencies are to work together as parts of a coherent single UN programme in FYR Macedonia. These agencies still operate quite independently in the country much of the time.

UNDP Macedonia has made good use of support from the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery at UNDP headquarters and, especially, support from the UNDP Regional Centre in Bratislava. The Bratislava centre has helped FYR Macedonia develop its portfolio of projects related to climate change as well as an initiative to reduce agriculture input consumption.

The country office has not documented its achievements very effectively to date, though project evaluations in 2001 and 2003 reported impressive results, including the development of substantial technical capacities among local administrations, industrial firms and NGOs as well as increased public awareness of local environmental challenges and the options for dealing with them. By 2003, according to these evaluations, there had been 'significant improvement' in several industrial enterprises' responses to environmental problems, including greater recycling of waste materials that produced considerable savings for the firms and wastewater recycling that eliminated local effluent streams into the main river. Substantial training capacity was developed in a local NGO-run 'Regional Centre for Cleaner Production' while environmental monitoring equipment allowed the local public health institute to compile data on municipal pollution levels.

Outcomes are beginning to emerge as well for the more recent Prespa Lakes projects where local government and NGO partners perceive

UNDP as having been very successful. With UNDP support, effective solid waste collection and disposal systems have been developed in twenty settlements, generating revenues from users' payments to local service providers. Support to local orchardists allows them to reduce their costs for pesticides, fertilizers and irrigation water while also reducing their ecological impacts. These environmental activities have also contributed to achieving local governments' primary goal of stimulating economic growth in this relatively depressed region.

UNDP Macedonia does not mainstream environmental concerns effectively in their own office. Yet they do appear to be helping their partners to mainstream environmental concerns in a number of modest but significant ways, such as helping the national crisis management centre to improve protection of forests and soils and supporting development of a national sustainable tourism strategy.

CONCLUSIONS

On one hand, the country office's environment and energy team works effectively and productively with a wide range of government, civil society and international partners who clearly appreciate the country office's openness and professionalism. On the other hand, larger scale UNDP interventions are plagued by cumbersome administrative procedures dictated by global headquarters and beyond the control of UNDP Macedonia.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's key future environmental management challenges will be to develop decentralized environmental management capacities, to 'approximate' EU environmental standards and practices and to move quickly towards more preventive rather than curative approaches to environmental management. The country office recognizes that these challenges represent emerging opportunities for UNDP in FYR Macedonia but its capacity to respond to them will be constrained by limited human resources and especially the modest TRAC funds available to them.

MALAWI

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Malawi is a land-locked least developed country in southeastern Africa bordered by Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia. With a high population density and per capita annual income of US$667, Malawi faces significant development and environmental challenges. Approximately 65 percent of Malawi's 13 million people live below the poverty line, and average life expectancy is just 46 years. The Human Development Index (HDI) ranked Malawi 164 out of 177 countries. Despite the fact that Lake Malawi is the third largest body of freshwater in Africa, one-third of the country's population lacks access to safe drinking water, and child mortality is precariously high, at 133 per 1,000 deaths before age 5. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS among residents 15-49 years of age is 14 percent. Malawi's economy is highly dependent on agriculture, which accounts for 90 percent of export earnings and three-quarters of total employment. The country is highly vulnerable to climatic variations; droughts in recent years have led to widespread food shortages and famine. With 40 percent of Malawi's annual development budget supported by donor assistance, the country is heavily dependent on external financing.

During the period 1994–2003, the government set out its development and environment goals in a series of documents including a National Environment Action Plan (NEAP), Vision 2020, the State of the Environment (SOE) report and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS). The government has signed the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and ratified the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Despite such steps, little has been done to address the country's environmental challenges through comprehensive policy, due to the lack of a concrete action plans, overlapping priorities and, most significantly, a shortage of financial resources.

Environment as a specific area of focus is languishing in Malawi; there is limited interest, and few resources are being invested by the

government or donors. Government budgets for environment and forestry are declining. Though decentralization is a policy priority for the government, environmental management capacity at district levels is almost non-existent, a situation exacerbated by losses of district-level staff due to HIV/AIDS.

Only limited data are available on the state of the environment, including deforestation rates and the MDG7 target of improved access to clean water (one partial baseline survey was conducted in 2002). UNDP was designated to lead an initial donor coordination effort on environment but this did not go well, apparently due to insufficient UNDP capacity and limited government interest. There is little sign of genuine harmonization among the donors.

UNDP'S ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY PROGRAMME

The UNDP Malawi Country Office had only had one energy and environment staff member during the evaluation period. To date, the total budget allocated to the environment and energy programme has been $15 million, consisting of $5 million in UNDP core funding, $4.9 million from GEF, $3 million from MPF, and $2.1 million from bilateral donors (primarily from DANIDA).

Environment was identified as an explicit goal in the UNDP's First Country Cooperation Framework (CCF, 1997–2001) in Malawi and as a cross-cutting issue (under poverty reduction) in the Second CCF (2002–2006). In addition, the adoption of community-level technologies for improved environmental protection is identified as one of the key expected results under the Poverty Reduction Strategy Support Programme. The country office did not allocate TRAC funds to environment and energy because they anticipated funds would be mobilized through the GEF and Montreal Protocol Fund. GEF resources did not materialize on the scale anticipated. DANIDA's withdrawal from Malawi further reduced the availability of funds, and Malawi is now almost entirely reliant on lower-than-expected GEF financing for its environment and energy work.

The UNDP Malawi's environment and energy portfolio contains three major projects: (i) 'Phase-out of Methyl Bromide in the Tobacco Sector in Malawi', a $3-million project financed by the Montreal Protocol Unit; (ii) 'Barrier Removal to Renewable Energy (BARREM)', a $3-million GEF-financed project that promotes the use of solar power for homes outside the rural electrification grid and (iii) the 'Sustainable Socio-Economic Empowerment Project for Poverty Reduction', a participatory development project built upon earlier UNDP work on community-based capacity development and benefiting from strong collaboration with several NGOs. This project has had positive impacts and the use of African UN Volunteers at the community level appears sustainable, though the proposed implementation period seems too short to hope for structural change.

Other environment and energy activities largely consist of GEF-financed enabling activities, communications for international environmental agreements and biodiversity projects. The GEF-funded Sustainable Land Management in the Shire River Basin, part of a larger World Bank/GEF TerrAfrica programme, is under preparation.

UNDP led the process of preparing an UNDAF for 2008–2011, consistent with the government's expressed priorities of economic growth, agricultural development and food security. UNDP's own CPD shows little connection to UNDP's global strategies; it has apparently been more influenced by the Strategic Plan of the UNDP's Africa Bureau.

ASSESSMENT OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION

The government's view of UNDP's support for environmental programming is neutral. UNDP is not regarded as having any particular comparative advantage in this sector. UNDP Malawi's staff is respected but both government and donors complained of slow disbursements and financial reporting. Some government departments appreciated UNDP's local presence as well as the ease of access to technical experts in the regional centres and at headquarters (e.g., for work on methyl bromide and renewable energy).

The country office works mainly with Malawi's Department of Environmental Affairs, which

handles most of the GEF funding and is responsible for international environmental obligations. However, the country's most pressing environmental management challenges are not 'GEF-able' issues; rather the primary issues are in agriculture and other key sectors aiming to enhance sustainable livelihoods and lower poverty levels.

Currently, UNDP appears to have limited credibility with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and the Department of Land Conservation, though these are the government agencies that UNDP needs to influence and support with policy and technical advice if it is to have a strategic impact on high-priority environmental management issues in Malawi. This issue came up repeatedly in discussions with various government departments, NGOs and donor agencies. The forthcoming launch of a Poverty-Environment Initiative in Malawi may provide an opportunity to address these issues, with the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources being the focal point for this initiative.

Malawi's NGO sector appears relatively strong in sustainable land management, water, food security, famine relief and community-based development, although the government has not taken advantage of this capacity. UNDP is providing some support to the sector, and the Sustainable Socio-Economic Empowerment Project for Poverty Reduction involves several NGOs.

UNDP Malawi lacks in-house capacities and resources and its strategic impacts in environment and energy have been limited, despite what appear to be at least two relatively large and effective projects. The country office is about to increase its capacity significantly with a new GEF Small Grants Programme, PEI (together with UNEP), a climate change adaptation programme under a new disaster risk/recovery advisor and additional consultants.

CONCLUSIONS

UNDP's role in managing the environment and energy programme in Malawi has generally been relevant and effective. Removing barriers to the provision of energy services is a good example of successful project activities. Another is the phasing out of methyl bromide use in the tobacco sector. UNDP's interventions in Malawi have strengthened government capacities to deal with environment and energy issues. UNDP has also achieved positive results at the policy level, helping the government comply with international treaties on climate change and biodiversity conservation. Yet neither UNDP nor its non-GEF partners show much interest in making long-term commitments to support environment and energy programming in Malawi. As GEF funds diminish, environment and energy will decline commensurately.

The government and UNDP country office are mostly focused on food security, poverty reduction and human health concerns—for very valid reasons. For the environment and energy programme to be more sustainable over the longer term in Malawi, two things must happen. First, UNDP needs to allocate a significant portion of its own resources and tap other, non-GEF resources for environment and energy programming. Second, the environment and energy programme must find entry points related to economic growth, poverty reduction and food security. UNDP will need to be more proactive in strengthening partnerships with such organizations as UNEP, FAO and WFP.

PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES

CONTEXT

The Pacific Island Countries (PICs) are characterized by small populations (all have less than 0.9 million inhabitants and most have far fewer), remoteness, vulnerable economies, very high transaction costs for almost any investment initiative, very small cadres of skilled people, high population mobility with exceptionally high rates of overseas emigration rates, extreme dependence on imported petroleum fuels for energy needs and fragile ecosystems. These countries are typically very vulnerable to externally generated economic and environmental change such as climate change.

Government departments dealing with environmental and energy matters are very small, poorly resourced and generally do not exert much influence on key policy decisions. Many Small

Island Developing States (SIDS) share these characteristics, although in the Pacific the distances within and between countries and the extent of isolation are extreme. Furthermore, per capita economic growth in the Pacific has been very low for a decade.

Several PICs (Fiji, Tonga and Solomon Islands) have suffered from political instability. Significant levels of inequality and poverty remain in a number of PICs, particularly in Melanesia. In many, depletion of land and marine resources continues apace. For the atoll countries, rapid urbanization has led to serious overcrowding on main islands along with growing sanitation and waste management issues.

UNDP'S ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY PROGRAMME

UNDP has multi-country offices (MCOs) in Fiji and Samoa, managing programmes in ten and four countries, respectively. There is also a national UNDP office in Papua New Guinea, which is not covered by this case study, although many of the sub-regional programmes handled by the two MCOs also include Papua New Guinea. There are environmental teams in both MCOs. UNDP is viewed by the PICs as a neutral and solid partner, with a long history in the region and a good understanding of how to access GEF resources.

GEF has historically been the most important funding source for regional/multi-country environment and energy activities in the Pacific sub-region,[6] with over 90 percent of all GEF projects implemented by UNDP. No other GEF implementing agency has offices within the region, although UNEP has a small presence in Samoa, and the World Bank provides some sub-regional services to the PICs from Sydney, Australia, which is about 3,200 km from Fiji and 4,300 km from Samoa. The use of UNDP core funds for environment and energy work has been extremely limited, few other donors have had a consistent presence and government budgets are minimal. GEF projects implemented by UNDP have thus constituted the bulk of sub-regional environment and energy programmes in recent years, although the European Community has a sizeable and growing presence.

Genuine links to the MDGs, poverty reduction, governance and sustainable livelihoods—or any other signs of mainstreaming—are hard to detect within the governments and are almost nonexistent within the UNDP MCOs. Although UNDP is viewed positively by the PICs, its influence appears to be waning, and it is seen as an organization lacking any clear environment and energy niche or expertise, weak in technical skills, inconsistent in project design quality and perhaps less flexible than some other potential implementing agencies. There is little perception among key donors that UNDP is a source of real environmental or energy expertise in the region. UNDP has been complacent and could easily lose its preeminent GEF role.

ASSESSMENT OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION

GEF funding in the PICs has been short term and project based. Considerable resources have been provided for enabling activities that have led to a variety of plans, strategies and communications related to MEAs, few of which appear to be clearly connected to genuine national priorities. On the other hand much valuable information from these initiatives has been synthesized in various studies and forms a potentially valuable basis for decision making and future project development. A number of more recent, larger projects appear to be increasingly relevant to such national and regional concerns as protection of fish stocks, water resources management, adaptation to climate change and renewable energy. Largely through UNDP-GEF assistance, the PICs as a group have been very active in global environmental forums and have worked effectively with other SIDS to help focus global attention on their shared concerns.

Another clear result in these small countries, however, has been a series of distortions:

6. GEF is the most important funding source for *regional* TA studies in energy and environment for the PICs. It is not so for investment, where ADB has invested a lot into energy systems, as have bilateral agencies from Australia, New Zealand, Japan and China.

Governments suffer reduced capacities to address other energy and environment needs outside the scope of these mostly GEF-financed projects. Staffing patterns are distorted because the majority of staff is project funded. Staff retention patterns are disrupted because local bureaucracies cannot absorb staff financed by projects, once project funding ceases. There is also distortion in the type of skills developed; these projects have nurtured primarily skills in analysis and reporting rather than more action-oriented capacities. Yet, because other potential sources of financial support are limited, the governments consider that they have little choice but to continue to seek GEF funding. There is little evidence that most of the 14 governments consider environmental protection or sustainable resource management as areas in which it is worth investing much of their own resources.

Most UNDP-GEF projects take the form of Pacific sub-regional programmes, seeking economies of scale by sharing services, skills and experiences among the countries. The perception among governments, NGOs and others in the region however is that regional organizations often benefit more from these initiatives than do the individual countries. Although regional organizations compete fiercely for funds, most have not convinced many stakeholders they can deliver practical services at national levels. This leads to increased pressure from governments for more national-level projects, even though many PICs have not effectively implemented national components of sub-regional activities and the transaction costs of single-country projects in this region can be excessive.

Although operational costs are extraordinarily high in the sub-region, the MCOs do not receive additional financial resources to offset these costs. As a result, according to one UNDP staff member: *"...we are stuck in a situation where it is very expensive to operate so we provide lousy services and therefore get even less to spend."*

CONCLUSIONS

The PICs have often felt pressured to sign and ratify environmental agreements that are of current concern to the global community. These are not necessarily high priorities locally, relevant to the island states or even necessarily in their interests. Reporting requirements can easily distort the work plans and priorities of small national agencies. A commonly expressed view within the region is a perceived donor tendency toward new emphases every few years, little long-term continuity in their programming, a lack of willingness to support specific national efforts for the period of time needed to make much impact, sudden switches to new programming priorities and progressively shorter project cycles.

Despite significant GEF funding, and capacity-building elements in nearly all projects, these have seldom built long-term government capacities. The capacity of the PIC governments to manage environment and energy has not notably improved in the last one to two decades, with the arguable exception of Samoa. The Pacific sub-region has, nonetheless, developed a sizeable cadre of skilled environmental—and to a lesser extent energy—professionals working for regional organizations, numerous environmental NGOs and a few small consulting companies. The overwhelming bulk of this capacity is concentrated in Fiji and Samoa. UNDP projects have played a significant role in developing this capacity. The donor community draws upon it regularly. Governments of the region, on the other hand, seldom use this capacity directly. UNDP could play a valuable role by helping these countries more effectively draw upon this capacity within the region, using it to better access environmental funds and to design and implement projects well adapted to the needs, constraints and capacities of the PICs.

UNDP has not sustained its previously good relationships with donors active in energy and environment in the region, nor developed effective relationships with prospective new partners. In principle there have been significant recent opportunities for UNDP to leverage its impact through coordination and cooperation with a number of bilateral and multilateral initiatives in both environment and energy, to the mutual benefit of the region, UNDP and the other organizations. These opportunities have not been seized; insufficient efforts have been made to retain and cultivate relationships.

Annex 6

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