



## REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

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### Executive Summary

UNEP is the principal UN body in the field of the environment, assisting governments to address global, regional and national environmental challenges. Its mandate was reinforced at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and through the Rio+20 outcome document “The Future We Want” and respective paragraph 88. As a follow up to the Rio+20 Conference, UNEP has been actively engaged with stakeholders in numerous events and online discussions to discuss the development of new mechanisms to promote transparency and effective engagement of Civil Society including Indigenous Peoples. A first draft of the **UNEP Stakeholder Engagement Policy** was presented at the Open Ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and consequently to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) of the United Nations Environment Programme, held in June 2014, but a decision was deferred by member states and postponed to the UNEA 2 to be held in May 2016.<sup>1</sup>

Following the endorsement of the **UNEP Indigenous Peoples’ Policy Guidance** (<http://www.unep.org/civil-society/Partnerships/tabid/104806/Default.aspx>) in 2012, UNEP has continuously improved its engagement with Indigenous Peoples’ representatives and experts and has ensured Indigenous Peoples’ participation, including from previous or current UNPFII Forum members in relevant workshops, meetings and conferences throughout the year 2014. Indigenous experts have

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the UNEP Stakeholder Engagement Policy development, please see:  
<http://www.unep.org/civil-society/GetInvolved/DevelopingNewModalitiesforMajorGroupsandSta/tabid/128498/Default.aspx>

substantially contributed to more integrated perspectives on topics such as the development of indicators on land rights and land tenure in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, changes in the Arctic (UNEP Live), environmental management and monitoring (UNEP Year Book 2014 , Chapter 6, Citizen Science) as well as the first Global Intergovernmental Multi-stakeholder Consultation on -the Sixth Global Environmental Outlook (GEO 6), October 2014, which agreed that the GEO-6 analysis should draw on diverse knowledge systems, including the use of accepted guidelines for using peer reviewed scientific literature, grey literature, data, and indigenous and local knowledge.

The Indigenous Peoples Policy Guidance of UNEP is a supplement to the recently approved **UNEP Environmental, Social and Economic Sustainability (ESES)** Framework, which also includes a specific Indigenous Peoples Safeguard Standard. The ESES Framework is compliant with the requirements of “A Framework for Advancing Environmental and Social Sustainability in the United Nations System (2012),” prepared by the Environmental Management Group (EMG), and the ‘Environmental and Social Safeguards’ and ‘Gender’ Policies of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). This Framework sets minimum sustainability standards for UNEP and its implementing/executing partners, and enables UNEP to anticipate and manage emerging environmental, social and economic issues. The ESES Framework will initially focus on projects and it promotes an integrated approach, combining environmental, social and economic sustainability. The Safeguard Standard 5: Indigenous Peoples aims to ensure that UNEP projects respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and take into account Indigenous Peoples’ views, needs and rights and to avoid any harm and promote opportunities to improve their livelihoods. An **Indigenous Peoples Policy Guidance e-learning toolkit** is currently under development and it will provide UNEP staff with additional background information and the necessary guidance to develop, plan, implement and monitor their relevant projects with the participation of Indigenous Peoples.

In addition to the more important policy decisions, as described above, this year’s report to the UNPFII provides an overview of UNEP’s most relevant projects and programmes in relation to Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Peoples’ issues, which includes updates of projects and relevant recommendations made to UNEP individually or as a partner UN agency.

## Summary of UNEP Activities with Indigenous Peoples

### Environmental sustainability and an integrated Post 2015 Agenda

UNEP organized Senior Expert Meetings on “**Integrated Measures for Monitoring**” in December 2014. As part of the United Nations support to member countries in the development of the Sustainable Development Goals and following on UNEA Resolution 1/4, UNEP has been requested to help establish relevant updateable quality assured environmental data flows and indicators. This work is to be undertaken in collaboration with member countries, multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, relevant UN agencies and programmes, centres of excellence, research programmes, business and experts, and developed as part of UNEP Live (<http://unep.org/uneplive>). UNEP is working with a range of partners to identify ways in which appropriate and integrated measurements can be developed to assess progress on the interlinkages between environment and other dimensions. Such measurements,

whilst challenging to develop and implement, will help to enhance monitoring of the three dimensions of sustainable development, as well as the objectives of the Rio+20 and Post 2015 processes, namely: integration, and achieving a transformative and ambitious agenda. UNEP's efforts build on existing work with various partners and will draw on and contribute to work being undertaken on indicators for the Post 2015 process, including by the UN Statistical Commission and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network. Six areas have been selected because of their interlinkages across the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development: air quality, water quality, biodiversity, chemicals and waste, land tenure, oceans and sustainable consumption and production. The aims of the workshops were to determine the key semantics, ontologies and definitions in order to develop common frameworks for integrated indicators across domains, as well as to identify potential comparable baseline data and statistics for existing indicators and measurements, and where new and/or disaggregated data and statistics will be needed.

The **working group on proposed indicators on common land and natural resources** was able to benefit from the active participation of the UN Permanent Forum Member, Ms. Joan Carling from the Philippines, who brought a wealth of knowledge to the discussion. The meeting also gathered senior experts in law, human rights, environment and economics, from a wide variety of institutions, including the Global Land Indicators Initiative (GLII), the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the International Union of Conservation of Nature and its Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (IUCN CEESP), the Green Economy Coalition, World Resources Institute (WRI), the UN Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UNREDD), the World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism (WISP), Potsdam Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS), Oxfam, WWF, University College London and UN entities (FAO, UNHABITAT and UNEP). Representatives of the Spanish Government also participated. Many more entities are part of a virtual Community of Practice that will aim to peer review and finalize the work.

Forests, rangelands, dry lands and bodies of water worldwide are frequently governed by local communities, through community-based tenure rights and institutions. Empowering local communities with the means and incentives to sustainably manage their ecosystem has been increasingly seen as a critical factor to protect the environment, eradicate extreme poverty, and thereby achieve sustainable development. In 2012, the Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure highlighted the need to secure tenure rights for Indigenous peoples and local communities with customary tenure systems to enhance food security and food sovereignty. Few months later, the Rio+20 Outcome Document emphasized the role secure tenure plays in meeting the needs of rural communities, and called for strengthened forest governance frameworks, and the inclusion of indigenous peoples and local communities in forest, mountain and biodiversity management, echoing guidance by the Convention on Biological Diversity. Tenure rights are also expected to be included throughout the upcoming Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the Post-2015 Agenda.

Community tenure rights are rarely recognized and documented as such, and poor measures are taken to enhance their protection. Tenure is not restricted to formal property rights, it also includes customary tenure regimes, flexible rights, and long term use rights (usufruct). Current indicators often do not

adequately capture the complexity of diverse, flexible and periodic tenure regimes of mobile and remote communities, of the important role that reciprocity and non-marketed goods play, or the voice of users themselves.

It is therefore urgent to measure progress on this issue in a more systematic manner, by taking stock of the wealth of experience gained over the last decades and looking at current promising initiatives, such as ICCAs, (Indigenous Community Conserved Areas) and their land tenure and protection rules, Governance of Tenure in Priority Nature Conservation Landscapes/ Protected Areas, group ranches and conservancies in pastoral areas, and community lands set aside for restoration and rehabilitation.

The Thematic Group recommends a menu of 25 indicators that are directly relevant to 45 different SDG targets, and can be adopted by countries according to their current baseline and circumstances of the management and protection of common lands and natural resources. This is being work in progress and the final report of the working group will be made available on UNEP Live. <http://uneplive.unep.org/community/>

## Environment and Human Rights

UNEP is currently implementing a joint project with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Independent Expert on Human Rights and the Environment, on **good practices in the field of human rights and the environment**. The project objective is to identify, promote and exchange views on good practices related to the use of human rights obligations and commitments to inform, support and strengthen environmental policy making. In this context, and in addition to the regional consultations reported last year, one last regional consultation on environmental human rights defenders with a focus on Asia was held in Bangkok on 22 May 2014.

UNEP, OHCHR and the Independent Expert are currently working on a publication compiling the good practices collected through the consultations that took place in 2014 and 2013. The publication, which aims at improving the understanding and appreciation of the practical applications of the human rights and environment nexus, will be soon available on UNEP's website.

UNEP also published a Compendium on Human Rights and the Environment which addresses the status of recognition of the links between human rights and the environment in international law. The UNEP Compendium takes stock of the normative and jurisprudential developments and describes international instruments that relate to human rights and the environment, such as multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), international human rights treaties, and international resolutions and declarations. It also includes summaries of decisions rendered by the human rights supervisory mechanisms in Africa, Europe and the Americas, as well as the Human Rights Committee, the international Court of Justice and the World Bank's Inspection Panel (UNEP Compendium: [http://www.unep.org/delc/Portals/119/publications/UNEP\\_Compendium\\_HRE.pdf](http://www.unep.org/delc/Portals/119/publications/UNEP_Compendium_HRE.pdf)).

## Pastoralism

IUCN and UNEP have jointly prepared a publication entitled **“Pastoralism and the Green Economy: a Natural Nexus?”** which will be launched during the fourth special session of the Committee on Science

and Technology and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD 3rd scientific conference in Mexico, March 2015). The study focuses on pastoralism's current and future potential for securing sustainable management and green economy outcomes from the world's rangelands. It synthesizes existing evidence and uses practical examples from mobile pastoralism in Europe, Latin America, North America, Asia, Australia and Africa. The report shows the system's inherent characteristics for adaptive sustainability and some of the key opportunities and challenges for promoting development in rangelands. Finally, the study identifies the key enabling conditions required for pastoralism to deliver on its potential role in a Green Economy. The study is published in English, French and Spanish and a briefing note is available in all six official UN languages. (Report: [http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/wisp\\_green\\_economy\\_book.pdf](http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/wisp_green_economy_book.pdf); Briefing note: [http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/policy\\_brief\\_2014\\_english.pdf](http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/policy_brief_2014_english.pdf))

In addition, UNEP and IUCN in collaboration with WAMIP and the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning, as well as the Minister of Land, Environment and Natural Resources, Mendoza, Argentina and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Mainyoto Pastoralists Integrated Development Organization (MPIDO) of Kenya held **a side event at the 13th meeting of the UNPFII on Sustainable Pastoralism and the Post 2015 Agenda**. The side event examined facts, myths and emerging issues impacting pastoralists worldwide. The panel of speakers explored sustainable pastoralism solutions that could help define appropriate targets or indicators for the sustainable development goals. The event recommended that the post-2015 agenda considers the creation of enabling conditions for sustainable pastoralism. For the reports please see: <http://www.unep.org/civil-society/NewsandEvents/Events/PastEvents/tabid/78630/Default.aspx>

## GRID-Arendal- UNEP Collaborating Center

### Many Strong Voices

Many Strong Voices (MSV) brings together people and organizations in the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Arctic to take collaborative and strategic actions on climate change mitigation and adaptation at the local, national, regional and international levels. Its goal is to improve the wellbeing, security, and sustainability of communities and also provides a platform for people in these regions to tell their stories to the world.

Societies and livelihoods in both the Arctic and SIDS are particularly vulnerable to climate change because of their close ties to land and sea environments. While communities in both regions have adapted to changing conditions in the past, it is not clear that those experiences and abilities will suffice in dealing with ongoing social and environmental changes introduced by climate change. These regions are barometers of global environmental change and are considered critical testing grounds for ideas and programmes that will strengthen the adaptive capacities of human societies confronting climate change (<http://www.manystrongvoices.org/>).

## Human Rights and Climate Change

MSV partners worked hard before and during the UNFCCC COP 20 in Lima, Peru to advance the argument for the use of a human rights based approach within the climate change negotiations. The Centre for International Environmental Law (CIEL) is a key MSV partner and coordinates the Human Rights and Climate Change Working Group (HRCCWG). During the 2014 climate change negotiations, the HRCCWG worked with the Indigenous Peoples Caucus and other partners to spread the message about the importance of human rights to climate justice.

The HRCCWG did this with outreach to delegates and calling for references to human rights, rights of Indigenous Peoples, and gender equality in both the COP decision and Paris agreement. A sign on letter calling for human rights to be fully integrated in the Paris agreement was drafted and nearly 250 groups signed, including MSV. The working group also organized the first Human Rights Day at the UNFCCC. Another MSV partner, the Mary Robinson Foundation, secured a commitment from the French government for next year's Human Rights Day to be officially recognized by the COP Presidency and Secretariat.

## Research and Analysis

MSV has begun initiatives on health, covering human and environmental health impacts of climate change, while increasing connections with disaster risk reduction. This includes post-disaster gender-based violence (e.g. Haiti case) as well as ensuring that human rights and inclusiveness are included in improving the integration between climate change and disaster-related work.

## Reindeer Herders Project

During 2014, GRID-Arendal together with its partners, the International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry (ICR) and the Association of World Reindeer Herders (WRH), together with local partners in Mongolia and the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), continued to develop and refine the proposal for a multi-million dollar project to the Global Environment Facility (GEF). If funded by GEF, this UNEP/GEF project will be the largest international collaboration project focused on reindeer husbandry, Indigenous Peoples and the environment.

The project will be driven by partner organisations of Indigenous Peoples and in close collaboration with national governments. The project objective is to develop methods and skills to conserve and enhance biological diversity and reduce pasture degradation in selected areas of reindeer herding in Russia and Mongolia, while enhancing livelihood resilience and sustainability of nomadic herder communities. The project activities are expected to begin in late 2015.

Promoting best practices in the co-management of natural resources with the equal involvement of reindeer herders is an increasing focus of the **Nomadic Herders' project**. In 2014, the project organised a field visit for a group of 15 Russian and Mongolian reindeer herders and decision makers to the Laponia World Heritage Site, allowing the participants to learn about its unique form of governance which enables biodiversity objectives and traditional livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples such as reindeer husbandry to co-exist successfully, a model which could be transported to other reindeer herding regions.

In Mongolia, the project has been working to increase the institutional capacity of the reindeer herding community, the Dukha, which is the smallest Indigenous group and ethnic minority in Mongolia. A number of pilot activities are being implemented for the establishment of the Dukha Reindeer Information Centre in Tsaganuur, north-east Mongolia. These include granting a number of scholarships for students of reindeer herding families to interview their family members and document traditional knowledge about biodiversity, reindeer, land use and food culture. In addition, the project is piloting internet connection through satellite for the Centre in order to connect Dukha reindeer herders with others outside of their community and with other reindeer herders across the Arctic through social media. In order to boost livelihoods of the Dukha and aid in the restoration of traditional migration routes, the project is also undertaking a feasibility assessment on the import of reindeer from Russia. Further Information: <http://reindeerherding.org/projects/nomadic-herders/about/>

### **Global Environmental Outlook (GEO-6):**

The first Global Intergovernmental Multi-stakeholder Consultation on GEO-6 (the sixth **Global Environmental Outlook**), held in Berlin (21-23 October 2014) agreed that the GEO-6 analysis should draw on diverse knowledge systems, including the use of accepted guidelines using peer reviewed scientific literature, grey literature, data, and indigenous and local knowledge ([http://www.unep.org/geo/pdfs/geo6/GEO6\\_IGMS\\_Statement.pdf](http://www.unep.org/geo/pdfs/geo6/GEO6_IGMS_Statement.pdf)). UNEP is pleased to invite governments and stakeholders to nominate experts to participate in the GEO-6 global and regional assessments. The nomination process will run until 31 January 2015; nominate here: <http://www.unep.org/geo/nomination.asp>.

### **Focus on Projects in Asia and the Pacific:**

#### **Ecosystem Based Adaptation in Mountain Ecosystem: Nepal**

The **Ecosystem based Adaptation Nepal (EbA-N)** aims to build the capacity of local communities and enhance the provision of ecosystem services. EbA-N builds institutional capacity of key actors to better integrate ecosystem resilience into national, sub-national and local level plans. It develops ecosystem based decision making tools to buffer the economic case for ecosystem based management. Knowledge gained from EbA-N will help improve national and local climate change adaptation policies and strategies. The German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMU) supported and implemented this programme in partnership with UNEP, UNDP and IUCN.

#### **Enhancing Climate Change Resilience of Rural Communities Living in Protected Areas of Cambodia**

The Adaptation Fund project aims to use the eco-agriculture concept to build the resilience of rural Cambodian communities living in protected areas to climate change. The eco-agriculture concept employs a “landscape approach to natural resource management that seeks to sustain agricultural/food production, conserve biodiversity and ecosystems and support local livelihoods”. This concept will be

implemented using two approaches: i) through the restoration of degraded forests in Community Protected Areas by planting indigenous tree species that provide food, diverse non-timber forest products (NTFPs)) and a range of ecosystem services, such as erosion control and water flow regulation; and ii) by planting multi-use tree species along rice paddy boundaries and other cultivated areas to enhance crop productivity, establish trial plots of drought-tolerant hybrid rice cultivars, intensify/diversify existing agricultural areas, and introduce conservation agriculture practices.

### **GEF-PAS (Pacific Alliance for Sustainability Program) Low Carbon Energy Island Project**

This UNEP-GEF Project, "Low Carbon Energy Islands-Accelerating the Use of Energy Efficient and Renewable Energy Technologies in Tuvalu, Niue and Nauru" is part of the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability Program and is executed by IUCN-Oceania. This three-year project aims for the removal of major barriers to the widespread and cost-effective use of grid-based renewable energy supply and energy conservation measures.

### **The joint UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) in the Philippines.**

The **Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI)**, a joint programme between UNDP and UNEP, supports the integration of pro-poor, environmental sustainability objectives into national, sectoral, and sub-national development policies, plans and budgets to contribute to poverty alleviation and an inclusive, green economy. PEI in the Philippines advocates the need to implement the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP) as a mechanism to empower the Indigenous Peoples who should be integrated into the formulation of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) and the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) of the localities to help achieve sustainable development.

PEI recognizes the need for strengthening the participation of Indigenous Peoples in defining the community and social contexts, policy design and implementation of programs at the local and national levels. The Project has collaborated with the National Anti-Poverty Commission, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, the Department of Interior and Local Government and the Institute of Autonomy and Governance of Notre Dame University to pursue the Indigenous Peoples' ADSDPP and the local governments' CDP/CLUP integration, and has drafted a joint memorandum circular (JMC) on the: (a) harmonization of provisions of Local Government Code of 1991 and Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA); (b) integration of ADSDPP and LGU's CDP and CLUP; (c) allocation of budget for ADSDPP; and (d) participation of Indigenous Peoples' communities in Local Development Council (LDC). Refer to: <https://environment.unep.org/pep/pep-projects/philippines> and <https://environment.unep.org/pep/pep-projects/philippines>

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