

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Memorandum of Understanding

between

**the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural
Organization
(UNESCO)**

and

**the United Nations Environment Programme
(UNEP)**

Paris, 18 March 2016



Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and UNEP

Preamble

1. This Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter referred to as the "Memorandum of Understanding") is entered into by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (hereinafter referred to as "UNESCO"), a specialized agency of the United Nations, and the United Nations Environment Programme (hereinafter referred to as "UNEP"), a subsidiary organ of the United Nations General Assembly. When referring to both UNESCO and UNEP, the term "Parties" is employed.
2. UNESCO and UNEP signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a duration of five years on 4 April 2009. The present Memorandum of Understanding reflects the long history of cooperation between UNESCO and UNEP in the field of the environment and environmental sciences: water, biodiversity, land resources, marine and ocean health, and education for sustainable development. It reflects the strategic vision of the medium-term strategies and programmes of work of the Parties, as well as the recent international developments of relevance to the Parties' mandates and programmes of work, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) and the COP 21 Paris Agreement.
3. The main goal of this Memorandum of Understanding is to avoid duplication and to maximize synergies between UNESCO and UNEP, drawing on their distinct but complementary roles, to support national governments in their efforts to reach the Sustainable Development Goals, the target date being 2030.
4. The objective of this Memorandum of Understanding is to contribute to UN reform aimed at enhanced efficiency, effectiveness and coherence, and to "delivering as one" in support of national development goals that reflect the ambition of the SDGs.
5. The implementation of the joint activities shall be subject, as appropriate, to the conclusion of supplementary agreements setting forth terms and conditions for the implementation of a project.

Specific areas of joint activities may include the following:

a. Policy dialogue and mutual cooperation:

6. Regular consultations involving members of the Parties' senior management teams, with technical backstopping by programme specialists, to provide technical and advisory support to governments and other stakeholders in areas of common interest including, but not limited to, integrated management of freshwater resources, ocean and coastal resources, biodiversity and protected areas, climate change mitigation and adaptation, renewable energy and energy efficiency, education for sustainable development, and strengthening the science-policy-society interface.



7. Joint collaboration in the context of inter-agency mechanisms, including but not limited to, UN-Water, UN-Oceans, UN-Energy, the Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction, the Environment Management Group, and the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production in order to develop common UN joint positions on issues of strategic relevance.
8. Engaging in multi-partner trust fund modalities in areas in which both Parties are active, as appropriate, with special emphasis on the focal areas defined under the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

b. Areas of cooperation, including, but not limited to:

9. Strengthening support to countries in achieving the SDGs, in particular SDG 4 on education, SDG 6 on water, SDG 7 on energy, SDG 12 on sustainable consumption and production, SDG 13 on climate change, SDG 14 on oceans, and SDG 15 on biodiversity through developing global scientific assessments that provide important baseline data for countries, and providing joint support for research activities, capacity-building and observations, in the following main areas:

I. Integrated Management of Freshwater Resources

- collaborating in the area of water quality for ecosystems in view of the common mandate of both Organizations to improve globally the deteriorating quality of freshwater resources and prevent pollution threats to the sustainability of the world's water resources and ecosystems, which form the basis of human health and livelihoods;
- collaborating on the preparation of the World Water Development Report, coordinated by UNESCO with other agencies that are part of UN Water. The Report serves as an important mechanism for the follow up and review of SDG 6;

II. Biodiversity

- cooperating on protecting biodiversity through the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES); the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP), the World Atlas of Mangroves (2011), cooperation between UNEP's World Conservation Monitoring Center (UNEP-WCMC) and MAB on biosphere reserve data;
- strengthening linkages between biodiversity and cultural diversity in the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, as well as through the UNESCO-SCBD Joint Programme on Biological and Cultural Diversity;

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- cooperating on biodiversity research and observations for societal benefit and in support of ecosystem-based management tools and initiatives addressing coastal and ocean environmental issues and resource use;

III. Oceans

- cooperating to support the World Ocean Assessment (WOA), including through relevant GEF-funded marine assessments, as well as related WOA capacity development activities, and the Global Ocean Science Report, coordinated by UNESCO's IOC, which will be used as a mechanism for the follow up and review of SDG 14 on oceans;
- cooperating on the global observing systems for the ocean, climate and terrestrial systems through the established inter-related global systems – Global Climate Observing System (GCOS), Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), and Global Terrestrial Observing System (GTOS);
- developing and strengthening linkages between the UNEP Regional Seas programmes, Large Marine Ecosystems projects and the UNESCO-IOC Regional Sub-Commissions;
- cooperating on the promotion of integrated ocean and coastal management principles, specifically in the development of initiatives related to i) marine spatial planning; ii) marine-protected areas; iii) mitigation of coastal hazards and risk reduction; and, iv) nutrient management;

IV. Climate Change

- cooperating on climate change mitigation and adaptation programmes and initiatives, including in UNESCO's protected sites (World Heritage Sites, Biosphere Reserves and Global Geoparks), through assessment of the impact of climate change on the ocean and the development of policy responses at various levels (e.g. blue carbon); climate change impacts on mountain hydrology and ecosystems within the framework of UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme, and climate change education;
- contributing to shaping a common UN strategy on climate change through the CEB/HLCP;

V. Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

- jointly exploring opportunities for partnership on renewable energy and energy efficiency as a UNESCO/UNEP contribution to the United Nations 2014 – 2024 Decade on "Sustainable Energy for All";



- enhancing national capacities, particularly in developing countries, to use and apply renewable energy technologies, including by providing technical assistance to countries in formulating energy policies and promoting the sharing of related technological knowledge and best practices;
- jointly developing renewable energy activities, including through the Global Renewable Energy Education and Training Programme;

VI. Strengthening the Science Policy-Society Interface

- cooperate to develop STI indicators through the UN interagency task team on the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (IATT-STI);
- cooperate to develop a UN system-wide framework for environmental strategies;
- strengthen joint contributions to UNEP's Global Environment Outlook and to UNESCO's Science Report;
- cooperate on the Future Earth initiative, disaster risk reduction programmes and building synergies between local and indigenous knowledge systems and science, technology and innovation systems;

VII. Education for Sustainable Development

- cooperate in the area of education, awareness-raising and training in the framework of follow-up to the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development, in particular on climate change education and education for responsible consumption and lifestyles.

Information Exchange

10. The Parties will exchange and cooperate to manage relevant data and information systems, statistics and other products, and jointly promote open access to those data, information and related products, including in terms of their work to promote gender equality.

Modalities for Entering into Force, Renewal and Cessation

11. This Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into force upon its signature by the Parties. It shall remain valid for a period of five years from the date of its signature by both Parties. Termination of the Memorandum of Understanding will take place upon notification by one of the Parties to the other at least six months (6) prior to the expiration of the Memorandum of Understanding.



Monitoring and Evaluation

12. The Parties shall hold biannual consultations to review and report regularly on the progress of joint collaboration, and to plan future activities in the priority areas mentioned in section b above.

Settlement of Disputes

13. All disputes arising out of or in connection with, the present Memorandum of Understanding shall be settled by mutual understanding.

Privileges and Immunities

14. Nothing in or relating to the present Memorandum of Understanding shall be deemed a waiver of any of the privileges and immunities of UNESCO or of the UN/UNEP.

For UNESCO

Handwritten signature of Irina Bokova in black ink.

Irina Bokova
Director-General

For UNEP

Handwritten signature of Achim Steiner in black ink.

Achim Steiner
Executive Director