– Inter-Linkages –
International Conference on Synergies and Coordination between
Multilateral Environmental Agreements

UNU Centre, Tokyo, Japan
14, 15 and 16 July 1999

Second Announcement
Official Partners or Supporting Agencies

Organized by:
UNU - United Nations University

Co-Organized by:
GEIC – Global Environment Information Centre
UNU/IAS – UNU Institute for Advanced Studies
UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme

Supported by:
(BASEL) - Secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal
(CBD) - Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
(CCD) - Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification
(CITES) - Secretariat of the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
(CMS) - Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
(LRTAP) - Secretariat of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution
(OZONE) - Secretariat for the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol
(RAMSAR) - Convention on Wetlands of International Importance
(UNCLOS) - Office of Legal Affairs, UN Convention on the Law of the Sea

(DESA) - Department of Economic and Social Affairs
(UNDP) - United Nations Development Programme
(WB) - The World Bank Group
(WMO) - World Meteorological Organization
(WTO) - World Trade Organization

GLOBE Japan - Global Legislators Organization for a Balanced Environment
IISD - International Institute for Sustainable Development

Conference Schedule

14 July 1999
*Plenary: All Conference Participants*
**Morning** (10-12:30) Opening Keynote  
Keynote Addresses
**Afternoon** (2-5:30) Panel Discussion – Special Working Group  
WG Introductions and Presentations

15 July 1999
*Working Group: Core participants separate into four working groups*
**Morning** (9:30-12:30) Working Group Chaired Discussions
**Afternoon** (2-5:30) Working Group Roundtable Discussions

16 July 1999
*Working Group: Core participants separate into four working groups*
**Morning** (9:30-12:30) Working Group Roundtable Discussions
*Plenary: All Conference Participants*
**Afternoon** (2-5:30) Working Group Presentations
Concluding Remarks
I. Background to the Issue of Synergies and Coordination

The global environment, in its entirety, is composed of complex, inter-related, ecosystems. To protect and preserve this complex environment requires a holistic approach that better integrates environmental problem solving at both the national, and the international level.

The key to developing a more integrated approach, is the identification of the inherent synergies that exist between different aspects of the environment, and an exploration of the potential for more effective coordination between multilateral environmental agreements.

The starting point in any discussion of inter-linkages between multilateral environmental agreements is located in the realm of science. Our common understanding of the inter-relationships between different elements and dimensions of the environment, goes far beyond the limitations of current scientific knowledge. We have already recognized that certain inherent links exist. We know for example, that there are common gases that lead to climate change, acid rain, and ozone loss. We recognize that the climate, forests, oceans, wetlands, and biodiversity are naturally co-dependent systems.

It is also crucial that multilateral environmental agreements be considered within the broader context provided by the increasingly more complex web of international treaties, conventions, and agreements. Attempts must be made to provide for compatibility in the regulation of different international regimes. Management of the environment, for example, must be undertaken in a manner that is compatible with the regulation of international trade and investment. If legislation in regard to international regimes, what may first appear to be unrelated, cannot be made to work together effectively, the respective objectives of each may be undermined.

The current international legislative environment is not conducive to the development of coordinated, or synergetic, approaches to collective problem solving. The complexities of the issues involved, as well as the very nature of treaty making, mean that international agreements are often negotiated in relative isolation. They are negotiated by specialized ministries, or functional organizations, in forums that are completely detached from the negotiating arena of other international agreements. Further, the consensus building process that is necessary for effective multilateralism is difficult enough without the additional burden of attempting to provide for issue inter-linkages.

As a consequence, policy-making has been segregated on the basis of topic, sector, or territory. This results in the negotiation of treaties that may overlap and conflict with each other or, inadvertently, override the very principles upon which each is based. It may also result in unnecessary complications at the national level as signatories struggle to meet their obligations under multiple agreements. An integrated national response would be more effective in terms of meeting their requirements under a number of different multilateral environmental agreements.

The recognition of a need to develop natural synergies and provide better policy coordination is gradually making its way into the institutional decision-making process. The response, however, has mostly originated at the policy management level rather than the scientific level. Efforts have been made to improve management of structures, reduce overlap, and improve cost-effectiveness. Little has been achieved in terms of exploring the efficiencies that may be gained through identifying and utilizing the natural synergies within the environment itself. It is these synergies that may provide the basis for more effective coordination between the different multilateral environmental agreements.

Many agencies have taken the lead on this issue and there have been several important initiatives:

Calls from UN governing bodies:

- “The Task Force’s review of existing UN structures and arrangements in the field of the environment and human settlement…has revealed that current UN activities are characterized by substantial overlaps, unrecognized linkages and gaps. These flaws are basic and pervasive.” Report of the United Nations Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements, 1998, General Assembly Document A/53/463.


- “The conference of the parties to conventions signed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development or as a result

There is also a great need to single out the interdependencies and synergetic effects of the Conventions and to better coordinate actions which are crucial keys for effective implementation of our multilateral agreements. This is an important obligation for UNEP as the implementing agency for several environment conventions. UNEP will avoid duplications and incompatible regulations on issues addressed by more than one convention.

– Mr. Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director
In a statement to the first GEF Assembly, New Delhi, India, 1 April 1998
of it, as well as other conventions related to sustainable development, should cooperate in exploring ways and means of collaborating in their work to advance the effective implementation of the conventions to continue to pursue sustainable development objectives.”


- Legal Preparatory Committee Group of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCED), later adopted by Agenda 21.

- 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development.

**Calls from international environmental leaders:**

- “We have observed and indeed been involved in the growth of international environmental agreements…. We are concerned however at the lack of coordination between these instruments, and we urge, therefore the creation of a holistic framework which will eliminate redundancies and fill the gaps in the Rio instruments to create synergies in a global system.” *The Cape Cod Declaration* adopted at the GLOBE International 13th General Assembly, 24-26 August 1998.

- “There is also a great need to single out the interdependencies and synergetic effects of the Conventions and to better coordinate actions which are crucial keys for effective implementation of our multilateral agreements” Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director, Statement made to GEF Assembly, New Delhi, India, 1 April, 1998.

**Initiatives taken by UN organs, specialized agencies and MEA Secretariats:**


**Decisions taken by MEA Secretariats and UN or Specialized Agencies:**

- Decision taken by the Conference of the Parties to the *UN Convention to Combat Desertification* to seek synergies between it and other environmental agreements. ICCD/COP(2)/7, 17 November 1998.

- Decision taken by the 3rd Conference of the Parties to the *Convention on Biological Diversity* to focus on the synergies between it and other bio-diversity-related conventions including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (RAMSAR), and the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (WH). Decision CBD/COP/III/21, November 1996.

**II. Building on Research and Activities at UNU**


- *Scenarios and Options on the Inter-Linkages between the Kyoto Protocol and other Multilateral Regimes* (1999), W. Bradnee Chambers, Shona E.H. Dodds and Jerry Velasquez, 42 pp. (to be released at the 11th session of the Subsidiary Meetings to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Bonn Germany, June 1999).

**III. Core Purpose of the Conference**

The development of effective global governance at the conceptual level is in danger of being outstripped by the need for it at a practical level. Treaty congestion, the negative impacts of globalization, and environmental damage are gaining momentum every day. A synergistic and coordinated approach to international policy making is a concept that has come of age. In an
effort to assist in the development of a synergistic and coordinated approach to environmental policy making, that takes account of the existing inter-linkages between environmental issues, the United Nations University and its partners are convening an *International Conference on Synergies and Coordination* July 14-16. The UNU is an independent research institution within the United Nations framework. It enjoys a unique international position in that it is both a UN body, focusing on issues of importance to the organization and its member states, and an academic institution operating on an assumption of impartiality.

It is from this perspective that the following conference objectives were determined:

- To create awareness at the public, governmental and inter-governmental level of the importance of synergies and coordination.
- To survey existing initiatives on synergies and coordination between MEAs.
- To foster discussion and interaction among international institutions, scholars, and other relevant stakeholders who can cooperate to identify and examine opportunities for synergy and coordination.
- To identify concrete mechanisms, ‘next steps’, and feasible win-win paths forward on this important issue.

### IV. Working Group Themes and Terms of Reference

**Working Group One: Harmonization of Information Systems and Information Exchanges**

The function of this group is to examine ways of harmonizing information in environmental and sustainable development agreements, at the global as well as the national and local levels. The group shall endeavor:

- To identify how to improve the practical sharing of sets of data at the international institutional level;
- To examine methods of harmonizing reporting, planning, strategies/action programmes and information systems for conventions;
- To determine ways to improve collection, organization and dissemination of information relevant to each convention process.

**Working Group Two: Finance**

Finance is one of the keys to achieving sustainable development. The group shall endeavor:

- To examine means by which current financial mechanisms, existing arrangements and donor institutions can encourage and support projects that promote synergies;
- To explore possibilities for creating common lending criteria, reporting, and policies between multilateral and bilateral donor agencies;
- To examine opportunities to strengthen capacity at the national level that promotes integrated and better-coordinated policy making processes and synergistic implementation of environmental and sustainable development agreements;
- To explore innovative and alternative financing methods at national and local levels for projects that have multiple or synergistic benefits.

**Working Group Three: Issue Management**

An issue management system was identified in several UN reports. The group shall endeavor:

- To determine the appropriateness of the issue management approach as a specific way to address problems that cut across MEAs and may require inter-MEA action;
- To discuss new ways and methods for developing synergies around specific issues which can then lead to more permanent and far reaching synergies;
- To examine past and on-going examples of issue management and identify lessons learned from these experiences;
- To identify how issue management might function practically and contribute to improving existing mechanisms between the conventions and organizations;
- To decide on a set of guiding principles that would assist the execution of issue management between secretariats and organizations.

**Working Group Four: Scientific Mechanisms**

The need for this theme was highlighted in the UNEP, NASA and World Bank report *Protecting Our Planet - Securing Our Future*. The group shall endeavor:

- To review existing scientific inter-linkages between environmental conventions;
- To discuss possible inter-linkages between environmental issues and ways of identifying them;
- To explore possible mechanisms to deal with these inter-linkages.

**Special Working Group: Synergies for Sustainable Development**

A number of experienced former officials or ‘wise persons’ will be requested to look into in order to ensure sustainable development. The group shall endeavor:

- To explore the values, attitudes and practices that need to be encouraged or discouraged, for building sustainable development;
- To consider the need for any medium and long term structural re-alignments that may be required in the existing global institutional framework for sustainable development.
Practical Information

Venue:

United Nations University Centre
53-70 Jingumae, 5-Chome, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo
150-0001 Japan

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Fax: +81-3-3407-8164
E-mail:
Mr. Jerry Velasquez {jerry@geic.or.jp}
Mr. W. Bradnee Chambers {chambers@ias.unu.edu}
Web: http://www.geic.or.jp/interlinkages/

To reach the conference:

- From Narita Airport

① It takes about 60 minutes by train or bus to go from Narita Airport to Tokyo Station, and about 100 minutes to Shinjuku Station. From Tokyo or Shinjuku Stations, you can take the JR or subway lines to go the UNU.

② The United Nations University Headquarters is a 5 minute walk from Omote Sando Station (by Subway – Hanzomon, Chiyoda or Ginza Lines), or 10 minutes walk from Shibuya Station (by Subway and JR train - Yamanote Line). The UNU is located in front of Aoyama Gakuin University and is directly beside the Children’s Castle.

③ More information regarding routes and fares can be obtained online at: http://www.narita-airport.or.jp/airport_e/access_e/access_index.html

Registration for the Conference:

- Prior registration is required to participate in the conference due to limited seating availability for the Plenary and working group sessions.

- Access to the premises – You need to clear security in the registration area on the second floor of the UNU main building. A reception desk will be set-up from 9:30 in the morning of 14, 15 and 16 July, 1999. A colored badge will be given to you in exchange for your passport or ID.

- Return of ID – To retrieve your passport, or ID, you must return your badge to the reception lobby.

- Simultaneous translation – English is the official language of the conference. Japanese translation will be available during the Plenary sessions only.

- Luggage cannot be stored at the UNU during the conference.

Note: $1 US is approximately equal to 120 Japanese Yen

Lodgings:

As other events being held in Tokyo, you may have difficulty in making hotel reservations. The following are some hotels that you may want to contact directly. For further assistance in obtaining hotels, please contact the conference secretariat directly.

- Hotel Okura JPY 32,000/night
  Tel: +81-3-3582-0111 Fax: +81-3-3582-3034

- Akasaka Prince JPY 27,000/night
  Tel: +81-3-3234-1111 Fax: +81-3-3262-5163

- Hotel New Otani JPY 25,500/night
  Tel: +81-3-3265-1111 Fax: +81-3-3221-2619

- Dai-ichi Hotel JPY 20,000/night
  Tel: +81-3-35+81-3-5611 Fax: +81-3-35+81-3-5777

- Akasaka Tokyu JPY 19,000/night
  Tel: +81-3-3580-2311 Fax: +81-3-3580-6066

- Grand Palace Hotel JPY 17,000/night **
  Tel: +81-3-3264-1111 Fax: +81-3-3230-4985

- President JPY 10,800/night **
  Tel: +81-3-3497-0111 Fax: +81-3-3401-4816

- Shibuya Tobu JPY 13,860/night
  Tel: +81-3-3476-0111 Fax: +81-3-3476-0903

- Shibuya Tokyu Inn JPY 12,500/night **
  Tel: +81-3-3498-0109 Fax: +81-3-3498-0189

- Hotel Sunroute Shibuya JPY 11,550/night
  Tel: +81-3-3464-6411 Fax: +81-3-3464-1678

- Shinagawa Prince JPY 10,000/night
  Tel: +81-3-3440-1111 Fax: +81-3-3441-7092

- Shanpia Hotel Akasaka JPY 9,660/night
  Tel: +81-3-3586-0811 Fax: +81-3-3589-0575

- Kudan Kaikan JPY 8,500/night
  Tel: +81-3-3261-5521 Fax: +81-3-3221-7238

- Toko Hotel JPY 8,500/night
  Tel: +81-3-3494-1050 Fax: +81-3-3490-4569

- Diamond Hotel JPY 8,400/night
  Tel: +81-3-3263-2211 Fax: +81-3-3263-2222

- Hotel Skycourt JPY 5,000/night **
  Tel: +81-3-3875-4411 Fax: +81-3-3875-4941

** To avail of these special rates, please contact the secretariat.
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UNU Centre, Tokyo, Japan – 14, 15 and 16 July 1999

Registration Form
Deadline 7 July 1999 (5 pm Tokyo time)

Please Fax to: +81-3-3407-8164 or e-mail: yashiro@hq.unu.edu

Name (family, given): ______________________________ Position: ______________________________
Organization: __________________________________________________________________________
Address: ______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________
Telephone (Country code – area code – number): ______________________________________________
Fax (Country code – area code – number): ___________________________________________________
E-mail1: __________________________________ E-mail2: ____________________________________

Professional category: ___ Diplomatic staff of international organization ___ Government official
___ Professor, researcher, or equivalent ___ Student
___ Business person ___ Other

I would like to apply to attend the following sessions (please check):
(Please note that applications will be processed on a first-come-first-served basis – some
sessions have limited seating. Applications need confirmation for registration.)

DAY 1, July 14 1999
Plenary (10:00 am – 5:30 pm)
Reception (6:00 pm – 8:30 pm)

DAY 2, July 15 1999
Scientific Mechanisms Working Group (observer) (09:30 am – 5:30 pm)

DAY 3, July 16 1999
Scientific Mechanisms Working Group (observer) (09:30 am – 12:30 pm)
Plenary (2:00 pm – 5:30 pm)

If the Scientific Mechanisms Working Group Sessions are already full, I would like to attend only the plenary sessions on 14 and 16 July 1999.

Please use one form per person. In cases where seating is limited, a maximum of two participants per organization will be accepted.

This form can also be sent by regular mail to: Attn: Ms. Makiko Yashiro, Global Environment Information Centre, 5-53-70 Jingumae, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0001, Japan. Tel: +81-3-5467-1301
Web: http://www.geic.or.jp/interlinkages/
* Due to insufficient space, please be advised that the parking area at the UNU is unavailable for general public use.