

Informal Regional Consultation/Workshop on

Inter-linkages

Synergies and Coordination between Multilateral Environmental Agreements

Crown Princess Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

February 26-27 2001

Organized by

The United Nations University

Co-organized by

The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat
Ministry of the Environment, Japan
Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia

Supporting Organizations

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Malaysian Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MOSTE)
South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
The Carls Duisberg Society (CDS) Germany
The Caribbean Commission (CARICOM)

Programme

26 February, Monday

AM **Opening Plenary**
Opening and Welcome Remarks
Keynote Speech

Tea Break

Case Study Presentations
UNU, UNDP, UNEP, Millenium
Assessment

LUNCH

PM **Working Group Discussions**
WG1 - National and Regional
Approaches
WG2 - Pacific Islands Regional and
National Case Study
WG3 - ASEAN Regional and
National Case Study
WG4 - Civil Society Partnership
and Participation

Tea Break

Working Group Discussions
(continued)

Reception

27 February, Tuesday

Working Group Discussions
(continued)

Tea Break

Working Group Discussions
(continued)

LUNCH

Plenary
WG Chair Presentations

Tea Break

Panel Discussion
Closing

Reception

Background

Over the past 50 years, numerous multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) have been established. Customarily, each agreement has been designed to address a pressing environmental issue. As a result, some agreements support and strengthen the aims of others, while some possess objectives that overlap and contradict one another. The call for better coordination and harmonization between MEAs during negotiation and implementation stages is increasing. It is recognized, that such efforts could promote the elimination of contradictions, lead to the avoidance of overlap, and boost national capacity. Despite increased awareness surrounding the benefits of such actions, efforts to maximize synergies between agreements are generally not undertaken when plans are implemented at regional and national levels.

There have been a number of initial steps towards effective implementation of Inter-linkages, among them have been efforts by UNEP, UNDP and UNU. Realizing the need for further research into environmental policy synergies, the United Nations University (UNU) launched the 'Inter-linkages Initiative' in 1999. One of the initial aims of this initiative was to identify ways to promote a more integrated and comprehensive approach to MEA negotiation and implementation. At the outset, the UNU took stock of the various efforts on synergies being undertaken by governmental, non-governmental, and academic organizations. The UNU then held the *International Conference on Inter-Linkages: Synergies and Coordination between MEAs* to promote international efforts to improve understanding and awareness regarding Inter-linkages issues. The conference also served to highlight the need for a re-prioritization among stakeholders, MEA secretariats, and UN agencies in an effort to move forward on the issue.

Since the conference, various decisions related to Inter-linkages have been incorporated at a number of MEA MOP/COPs (See CITES, UNCCD, UNFCCC), and several MEA secretariats have initiated Inter-linkages programmes and planning. However, much work is still needed.

At present, 'Inter-linkages' remains an illusive and abstract concept that is for the most part only understood in terms of an over-arching principle. Work

is required to develop a greater level of understanding linkages during the implementation of MEA programs and projects. Such an understanding could be fostered through the conduct of comprehensive case studies, designed to provide concrete examples of how Inter-linkages principles may be operationalized at the policy and execution levels.

As part of UNU's Inter-linkages work and in an effort to explore possible entry points for cooperation, the UNU, in partnership with relevant organizations, will organize a regional workshop on Inter-linkages.

Why a Regional Ecosystem Approach?

It is often argued that few environmental problems are truly global in nature. This is true even for so called the "global issues" such as climate change and ozone depletion, as their impact upon the environment is mainly at the regional and trans-boundary level (*See IPCC Report on Regional Impacts of Climate Change: An Assessment of Vulnerability*). Further, most predominate ecosystems including river basins, seas/coastal/ marine systems, mountain ranges and other geographic landforms are transboundary and, thus, more regional in terms of disturbance effects and the required management response. Negative environmental impacts on an ecosystem will result in degradation of that system regardless of national boundaries. Due to the scale of shared environmental problems and the connections between them, a regional ecosystem approach to Inter-linkages is one of the more promising techniques for devising environmental governance frameworks.

Regional Informal Consultation/Workshop on Inter-linkages

The UNU and its partners will examine and promote a regional approach to Inter-linkages by organizing an informal consultation/workshop on *Inter-linkages Synergies and Coordination between Multilateral Environmental Agreements* to be held in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia on February 26 and 27, 2001. The goal of the workshop will be to examine the impacts of en-

environmental degradation at both the national and regional level, and to aid in the formulation of a holistic approach to environmental governance. Through the workshop, lessons or “tool-kits” that focus on particular ecosystems will be created as models for use in other similar ecosystems.

Workshop Objectives

The objectives of the Regional Workshop are:

- To increase awareness surrounding the need for synergistic approaches and coordination among MEAs at the regional level.
- To review and evaluate of existing regional programmes, activities and frameworks related to synergies and coordination among MEAs at the regional level.
- To identify and explore opportunities and entry points for Inter-linkages, both through natural ecosystems and through organizational structures, at the regional level.
- To identify and examine possible new frameworks for linking related MEAs at the regional level.

Methodology

The workshop will be divided into three distinct but interrelated sessions. The event will commence with a series of presentations that outline concepts, ideas, and practical steps towards MEA implementation in relation to Inter-linkages. Efforts will be made to identify ways in which synergies can be undertaken at the regional level and to define the institutions and organizations that are most suited for coordinating and executing Inter-linkage activities. During this session a number of leading academics will be invited to share their views on regarding effective ways for regional mechanisms to function when approaching the implementation of Inter-linkages programmes. This introductory workshop session is designed to establish the baseline situation of Inter-linkages efforts by explaining activities at the regional level. Members of various international and regional organizations will share their experiences and related activities surrounding the issue.

The second session of the workshop will start in the afternoon of the first day. Participants will be divided into working groups according to their area of

expertise. The goals and objectives of each working group are outlined within the following section of this brochure. Participants will be asked to recommend various possibilities on ways to further regional collaboration and cooperation.

Based on the findings of the working group sessions, the third workshop session will serve as a forum to broaden discussion among all workshop participants. Chairs representing each working group will present the findings of each discussion. Based on the discussion and feedback from the participants and an expert panel discussion, the draft proposals and recommendations will be revised and finalized into a single document, detailing the proceedings of the workshop.

Invitees/Target Audience

The workshop will bring together regional and global conventions secretariat members, focal points, experts, and stakeholders on the various conventions, recognized Inter-linkages scholars and thinkers, members of scientific assessment and advisory bodies and other relevant IGOs and NGOs. The meeting will be organized in cooperation with UN Regional Commissions, each of which will share its experiences and best practices. The ultimate goal of this meeting will be to establish regional frameworks and action plans that identify, prioritize, and implement Inter-linkages between MEAs.

Workshop Group Themes and Terms of Reference

Each working group has been designed to focus on issues related to regional and, or national efforts to incorporate synergetic measures into the negotiation and implementation of MEAs.

Each group will be chaired by a recognized expert in the field, and will be limited to 25-30 participants. Allocated reporters will serve to guide group discussions as well as aid the chairman in summarizing group findings and developing presentations to be delivered in the plenary session and the end of the workshop.

Working Group One: ***Regional and National Approaches***

The objective of group one discussions will be to examine key issues faced by regional and national organisations during the execution of synergistic efforts in the implementation of environmental conventions. Working group discussions are intended to explore practical measures to develop greater synergistic efforts between MEAs. Reporters will encourage participants to address the following topics within this session:

- The pros and cons of synergistic efforts between MEAs at the regional and national levels.
- Identify issues that could benefit from the implementation of synergistic efforts at both the regional and national level.
- Identify and examine the challenges faced by regional and national organizations during the negotiation and implementation of MEAs.

Working Group Two: ***Regional and National Case Studies*** ***(Pacific islands case study)***

Issues relevant to the types of synergistic measures undertaken when implementing MEAs in Pacific Island countries and within the region will be explored during group two discussions. The following specific issues are proposed for discussion:

- The identification of existing regional conventions and agreements and related synergistic efforts undertaken during their negotiation and implementation.
- Regional issues that may benefit from the development of synergistic programmes.
- Scale of possible synergistic efforts and suggested practical actions that may be undertaken to implement them.

Working Group Three: ***Regional and National Case Studies*** ***(ASEAN case study)***

The main intention of this working group is to examination of issues directly related to the types of synergistic efforts utilized during the implementation of multiple MEAs in the ASEAN region, specifi-

cally within a country of the region. It is the intention of UNU to use this discussion as a platform to launch a case study in one of the ASEAN countries. Issues to be explored during the discussions include:

- Selection of a possible country for the case study
- Areas where synergies can benefit and contribute to the effective implementation of environmental agreements.
- Scale of possible synergy implementation.
- Possible areas where implementation can be achieved based on the issues identified above.

Working Group Four: ***Civil Society Partnership and Participation***

Discussions conducted during this working group are intended to examine the role that civil society plays in the successful implementation environmental conventions. The challenges faced by civil society and areas that may benefit from improvements in awareness, participation, and partnership development will be discussed. Specific group discussions are expected to address:

- The role of major groups in informing and assisting MEA processes at both the negotiation and implementation level.
- Areas that need more support in raising awareness and encouraging community participation regarding environmental issues.
- Measures to infuse community views into national and global processes.
- Examining existing networks and information management systems of major actors.
- Exploring the links between local actions and global impacts.
- Exploring the cause and effects of environmental issues and ways issues can be linked at the local level.
- The facilitation of environmental policy and legislation by major actors.

Practical Information

Venue:

Crown Princess Hotel
City-Square Centre, Jalan Tun Razak,
50400 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
Tel: (603) 2162 5522
Fax: (603) 2162 4492
E-mail: crownprincess@fhikl.com.my
URL: <http://www.crownprincess.com.my/>

Secretariat:

Mr. Phillip Mathews
Institute for Strategic and International Studies
(ISIS) Malaysia
1 Persiaran Sultan Salahuddin
P. O. BOX 12424, 50778 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Tel: +603 2693-7904
Fax: +603 2693 9430
+603 2693 9475, +603 2691 3210
E-mail: pmathews@isis.po.my
URL: <http://www.jaring.my/isis/>

Main Organizer Contacts:

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

Tel: +81-3-5467-1301

Fax: +81-3-3407-8164

E-mail:

Mr. Jerry Velasquez {jerry@geic.or.jp}

Ms. Hiroko Shimizu {hshimizu@geic.or.jp}

Ms. Carlene Van Toen {vantoen@hq.unu.edu}

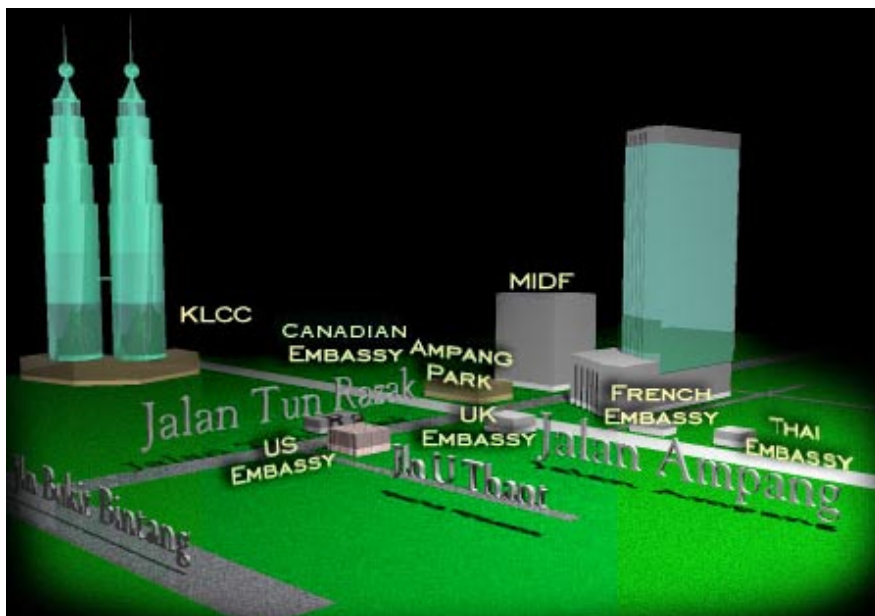
Web: <http://www.geic.or.jp/interlinkages/>

Registration for the Conference:

- Due to the limited seating availability, prior registration is required for all conference participants.
- Access to the premises – A reception desk will be set-up from 9:00 in the morning of 26 and 27 February, 2001. Please register at the desk prior to attending workshop proceedings.
- English is the official language of the conference.
- No space will be provided to store luggage at the conference venue.

Exchange Rate:

\$1 US is approximately equal to 3.8
Malaysian Ringgit



HOTEL LOCATION FACTS

- Distance from Kuala Lumpur International Airport: 70 km
- Approximate time by taxi: 55 minutes
- Distance from railway station: 5 km
- Approximate one-way fare:
 - By Limousine to airport - RM 130
 - By Limousine to railway station - RM40 - RM 50
- Distance to Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC):
 - 20-minute walk and under 5 minutes by LRT (Light Rail Transit)
- Parking is available

Advanced Information on

A Rio+10 Official Global Thematic Round-Table Inter-Linkages

July 2001
UNU Centre, Tokyo, Japan

Organized by
The United Nations University

Co-organized by
UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
Foreign Ministry of Japan
Ministry of the Environment, Japan
GLOBE International

The official global and regional preparatory meetings for Rio+10 are now already underway. The majority of the meetings will not commence until early to mid-2001, with the exception of the CSD preparatory sessions. These sessions are divided into 2 basic categories, namely the regional roundtables that are expected to be hosted by the UN Regional Commissions, and the global thematic round tables, which as the name implies will focus on specific themes relating to Agenda 21 and the 10 year review of the Rio Summit.

Therefore, upon considering these issues it is the UNUs intention to host an official Rio+10 global thematic round table on the theme of "Inter-Linkages". This meeting is intended to bring together 50 of the worlds leading thinkers, experts, eminent scholars, practitioners and policy makers to Tokyo to discuss, over a period of three days, the linkages between issues and the challenges posed by these linkages.

The purpose of the meeting will be:

- 1) To review the state of the environment based on holistic linkages between issues;
- 2) To examine the problems and challenges that have risen due to these linkages;
- 3) To prepare a policy brief on possible solutions that can be adopted at Rio+10 and beyond.

The main issues that would be discussed at the meeting are:

- 1) The linkages between chapters of Agenda 21;
- 2) The linkages between the environment and other related regimes (WTO, investment, etc.);
- 3) The linkages between Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA's).

In preparation for the meeting, the UNU intends to prepare the following documentation, which is to be circulated among the participant's one month prior to the meeting:

- 1) Review of the state of environment based on the linkages between issues;
- 2) Review of the linkages in the environment and other regimes;
- 3) Review of the inter-linkages between MEA's.

It is proposed that the meeting produce a **Policy Brief** on the inter-linkages between issues and the perspectives for the future, which will be submitted to the Rio+10 Summit.