



United Nations Environment Programme

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة • 联合国环境规划署
PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT • PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE
ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

International Workshop Resource Efficiency and the Environment: Identifying Key Resource Flows

Tokyo, 25 September 2007

Mita Meeting Hall (Mita Kaigisho)
2-1-8 Mita, Minato-ku
Tokyo 108-0073, Japan

Background

Decoupling economic growth and environmental degradation is a growing concern for both scientists and policy makers worldwide. It is increasingly understood that an efficient use of resources is of vital importance for achieving sustainable consumption and production patterns, with benefits for the economy and the environment. 'Doing more with less', or satisfying growing consumers needs using fewer resources and causing less pollution is the underlying driving force for programmes and initiatives such as the G8's '3R' programme, the UN's Marrakech Process, China's Circular Economy approach, the EC's Thematic Strategy on the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and the OECD's programme on Material Flows and Resource Productivity.

Scientists and policy makers worldwide therefore need to be gathered to discuss the development and rapid implementation of robust concepts, methodologies, definitions, tools, strategies and indicators. Key questions to date include whether or not an identification and prioritization of key resource flows is needed, and if so, on what level (global, regional, national) these need to be identified and how to do this.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is in the process of establishing a scientific Resource Panel which will address the challenge of decoupling environmental impact from economic growth from this resource perspective. The panel will provide technical assessment on the environmental impacts of the use of resources (renewable and non-renewable) over the full life cycle. Currently a consultation process is going on with regards to the scope of the Panel with scientists and governments at the regional and national level.

Objective of the workshop

The workshop is part of this consultation process and will provide the opportunity for experts to exchange their views, serving to build an understanding of the needs and ways of identifying key resource flows and their efficiency through a variety of approaches and tools. The workshop will compile basic knowledge on the environmental impacts and the socio-economic relevance of resource flows and will try to come up with a first approximation of which resource flows could be the most important ones.

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The workshop is organized the day before the OECD-Japan Seminar on “Material Flows and Resource Productivity From Knowledge to Practical Policies” (which will take place on 26 and 27 September) in order to allow for a broad international information exchange between ongoing initiatives. The participants will include international experts (both scientists and experts from consultancy) in the field of resource efficiency, material flows and environmental impact analysis from a life cycle perspective. A number of places are reserved for the participants of the OECD-Japan Seminar.

The **specific objectives** of the workshop are to:

- Exchange information on the needs and ways of identifying the key resource flows based on existing scientific methodologies of resource efficiency and environmental impacts of resource use from a life cycle perspective
- Compile basic knowledge on the environmental impacts and the socio-economic relevance of resource flows based on existing scientific assessments for material flows and products
- Explore linkages between the work of UNEP to establish a Resource Panel, the work of the OECD on Material Flow Analysis, and other international initiatives. The outcomes will be used to identify the scope of a joint OECD-UNEP conference on this issue, to be held in Paris, early 2008, and to contribute to the work programme of the Resource Panel.

The workshop is organised by UNEP with the support of the EC and in collaboration with OECD and the Ministry of Environment of Japan.

Registration contact and further information:

Please register by **24 August 2007** by contacting the Panel's Secretariat.

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