



# UNEP/UNIDO Enhancing Synergies

UNEP DTIE  
SPECIAL EVENT

Division of Technology, Industry and Economics • Sustainable Consumption and Production Branch • [www.unep.fr/pc](http://www.unep.fr/pc)  
United Nations Industrial Development Organisation • Energy and Cleaner Production Branch

## Panel Summary

The partnership between UNEP and UNIDO is long standing. This event will review the success factors that have underlined previous activities and focus on the ways and means for further strengthening this cooperation. The UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner and UNIDO Director General Kandeh Yumkella together with Ministers of the Environment from Tanzania and Brazil will present. The discussions will focus on the cooperation in the areas of the National Cleaner Production Center Programme, biofuels and chemicals/persistent organic pollutants.

## Background

UN reform highlights the importance of cooperation and coordination between different agencies and organizations within the UN system. There is a great potential for synergy. UNEP and UNIDO are a good example of cooperation. They have overlapping mandates in the areas of environmental protection/conservation and sustainable industrial development. Instead of competing, they cooperate to create synergies and make the best use of available resources. This cooperation is to a large extent the result of a mutual recognition and respect for the other organization's mandate and capacities, as well as both organizations' common goal: sustainable development.

## Synergy: the NCPC network

In the area of sustainable industrial development both UNEP and UNIDO aim to influence private sector behaviour. In 1994 UNEP and UNIDO jointly started the National Cleaner Production Center (NCPC) Network whose purpose was to establish centers that could act as catalysts with industry and governments to support the adoption of the CP approach to industrial environmental management and development.

The NCPC network consists of 26 centers and there are others with whom UNEP and UNIDO work. UNIDO is responsible for the set-up and provision of basic capacity building in NCPCs. UNEP develops new tools and approaches for the NCPCs to tackle environmental issues. Funding for the centers comes from different donor countries and host countries. UNEP and UNIDO use the NCPC network for CP promotion and as a regional and national delivery mechanism for programmes.

UNEP and UNIDO also work with other organizations, such as UNDP, and in with the NCPCs themselves that have superior technical capacity, and better contacts with industry.

Notwithstanding success, UNEP and UNIDO recognize the need to further strengthen the network. Ten years ago CP was focused on improving the efficiency (and reducing the waste and pollution from) production processes in industry. Today CP is an integrated and central part of the Sustainable Consumption and Production approach (SCP), applicable to production processes, as well as services and products. The CP methodology is linked with other tools and approaches such as LCA, product design, product-service systems, EMS, and consumer recognition tools. While UNEP refers to this expanded mandate as SCP, UNIDO calls it CP plus (CP+). They essentially are the same. Therefore there is a need to equip the NCPC network with the skills to function as a catalyst for sustainable development and as a delivery mechanism for UNEP and UNIDO programmes and activities. To this end, UNEP and UNIDO are carrying out a needs assessment that will provide the basis for joint project called "Strengthening the UNEP-UNIDO NCPC Network" (SUN).

## Synergy: cooperation on Biofuels

Biofuels is a good example of where UNEP and UNIDO share goals and objectives and they are exploring opportunities to work together. Biofuels have received heightened interest by governments and the private sector. They have the potential to meet 50% or more of the world's energy demand over the next century while addressing some of the most pressing challenges: climate change, air pollution, access to energy in rural areas and energy security.

While there is no question about the potential benefits, the excitement of new markets and new technologies can

cloud the realities of hidden costs and unseen - in some cases irreversible - impacts. Biofuels present a complex challenge of natural resource management and land use planning. For the industry to develop sustainably, key steps are needed urgently: --Develop international rules that assure that biofuels are produced and sold taking into consideration environmental and social criteria. Such rules can protect producers from

*Cleaner Production is the continuous application of an integrated preventive environmental strategy to processes, products, and services to increase overall efficiency, and reduce risks to humans and the environment. Cleaner Production can be applied to the processes used in any industry, to products themselves and to various services provided in society.*



reputation risk and assist governments to use natural resources sustainably. Several initiatives exist in this area, amongst which the one by the GBEP, which gathers not only the G8 countries but also Mexico, Brazil, India and China as well as UN agencies including the FAO, UNDP, UNCTAD, UNEP and UNIDO.

--Help set up of small businesses that produce the biomass and do the conversion (to Straight Vegetable Oil or biodiesel rather than ethanol as ethanol production requires big refineries to be economically viable) and thereby deliver energy services needed by large parts of the rural population in developing countries. This is an area with good potential to work with the NCPC network and to apply experience from UNEP's work with entrepreneurs to set up sustainable energy businesses in rural areas by providing seed capital and support during set up of operations.

## **Synergy: cooperation on Chemicals and Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)**

Chemicals management is another area where both UNEP and UNIDO are active. In this area UNEP performs the secretariat functions for the Montreal Protocol, Basel, Rotterdam (together with FAO) and Stockholm Conventions on POPs, and supports their implementation, e.g. through the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The UNEP-led Strategic Approach to Integrated Chemical Management (SAICM), which was developed together with UNIDO, other specialized UN Agencies and related partners, attempts to unify action on chemicals, and UNEP undertakes a variety of sectoral industry, trade and finance engagement activities on environment.

UNIDO is spearheading, together with the NCPC network, some exciting new approaches under the CP+ concept to promote "chemicals leasing", where the services of chemicals are traded, rather than the chemicals themselves. The opportunities for costs savings, as well as environmental improvements, on both the suppliers and consumers side are significant. UNEP looks forward to see how the organizations can work together on this.

A chemicals issue of particular interest to both UNIDO and UNEP is, of course, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). Since its adoption in May 2001, more than 130 countries around the world, including 35 least developed countries (LDCs), have become Parties to the Convention. Parties to the Convention are required to develop national implementation plans (NIPs) to demonstrate how the obligations of the Convention will be implemented.

UNEP is one of the Implementing Agencies of the GEF and with regard to POPs and sound chemicals management, has a primary role to establish and apply technical, socio-cultural and economic knowledge to facilitate global risk reduction, and to coordinate and oversee the step-wise application of this knowledge.

UNIDO is focussing on POPs in the industrial sector. In fulfilling this role, UNIDO seeks to identify, assess and understand industrial sources of POPs, reduce the generation and release of unintentionally-produced POPs through technology transfer and improved management (BAT/BEP), and improve the management, disposal and destruction of POPs wastes.

UNEP and UNIDO are now developing a joint UNEP/UNIDO GEF programme on POPs in particular in LDCs, combining the roles that, based on optimizing its comparative advantages within this partnership, each agency can play in assisting the LDCs to meet their obligations under the Convention.

## **Lessons learned: Enhancing More Synergies**

SCP, Biofuels and POP's are all key issues on the top of the international environmental agenda. Both UNEP and UNIDO have limited resources and could in principle compete for external funding for activities. Creating synergies between the two is a more efficient way to address the situation.

The NCPC network can be a useful way to promote other tools and approaches, e.g. in the biofuels and chemical leasing areas. The fact that this was, and still is, a joint effort by UNEP and UNIDO makes it an excellent platform for strengthening cooperation in various areas. As the same time however, it emphasizes the importance that UNEP and UNIDO remain committed to develop and strengthen the network itself.

## **Challenges**

The lessons learned from UNEP-UNIDO cooperation pose some challenges that may be addressed at the special event.

As stated at the outset – overlapping and/or unclear mandates for different UN organizations sometimes result in direct competition between the organizations for resources. What can be done to avoid such situations:

- when the mandates are defined by member countries?
- during implementation when UN organizations implement programmes?
- in discussions with donor and beneficiary countries about specific projects/programmes?

Can the UNEP-UNIDO model be replicated through formal agreements with other organizations, or are there other conditions that need to be put in place?

In the areas of biofuels, POP and SCP what can key stakeholders do, such as the Brazilian and Tanzanian governments, to ensure that cooperation and coordination among all stakeholders are optimized?

For more information: [www.unep.org](http://www.unep.org); [www.unep.fr](http://www.unep.fr) and [www.unido.org](http://www.unido.org)