



MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF ENVIRONMENTAL MAINSTREAMING

**An initiative focused on
stakeholder experience and
needs**

International Institute for Environment and Development

in association with

**Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)
Development Alternatives, India
Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA)
Earth Council Asia-Pacific and ICLEI (Southeast Asia).
Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana
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UNEP-UNDP Poverty Environment Initiative**

[Project website: www.environmental-mainstreaming.org]

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THE CHALLENGE OF MAINSTREAMING THE ENVIRONMENT

The challenge to integrate environment and development has never been more urgent. Infrastructure and agriculture must be climate-proofed. Industry must be energy-, materials-, and water-efficient. Poor people's environmental deprivations must be tackled. Their environmental rights must be recognised and supported. Environmental institutions need to work more closely together with other institutions – for too many of which the environment is treated as an externality.

There has been considerable effort to achieve such mainstreaming, with some successes. But, overall, we are still struggling in this endeavour. Change remains slow. There persists a tendency to pursue supply-driven approaches rather than responding to genuine demand. There is too much untested, expert-driven guidance on how to go about the tasks, but there has been little sharing of experience on conducting 'environmental mainstreaming' tasks in advocacy, analysis, planning, investment, management, and monitoring. We need to focus much more on linking institutions and learning from experience of 'what works' for environmental mainstreaming.

This is why, in early 2006, IIED led discussions at meetings of the PEP (Poverty and Environment Partnership ¹) on an initiative to address what approaches (tools, methods and tactics) have been found to work well in mainstreaming/integrating the environment into development decision-making. In 2007, with support from Irish Aid and DFID, IIED and a range of partners launched an initiative to investigate the challenges of environmental mainstreaming and to develop a guide focusing on user views on such approaches.

The work has focused on the perspectives of those who need to mainstream the environment and who use mainstreaming approaches (eg users such as planners and decision-makers themselves). We set out to identify which approaches work best, for what purpose and for which user. Environmental mainstreaming capacity will be much stronger if stakeholders are able to select appropriate approaches based on information and views from actual users of those approaches.

Explanation of key terms

Environmental mainstreaming / integration

Understanding of what environmental mainstreaming (or integration) means or entails varies considerably. In this initiative, we take these two terms to mean the same thing - encompassing the process(es) by which environmental considerations are ***brought to the attention*** of organisations and individuals involved in decision-making on the economic, social and physical development of a country (at national, sub-national and/or local levels), and the process(es) by which environment is ***considered in taking those decisions***.

Approaches

A variety of approaches can be used to carry out the above processes. They include:

- broad tactics (ways of raising issues and making a case/getting heard);
- specific instruments, technical tools and analytical methods (eg for gathering information, planning and monitoring);
- methods for consultation and engaging stakeholders; and also
- a range of more informal, voluntary and local approaches.

¹ PEP: a group of donor agencies, multi-laterals and some research-focused INGOs (www.povertyenvironment.net/pep/)

The aim was to produce a guide would help people to make more informed choices, whether they are working on internationally recognised initiatives such as MDG-based national strategies, or national budgetary processes, or local level plans. It would also inform donors and others who are developing and promoting mainstreaming approaches, by offering a 'demand-side' perspective.

INTERNATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS PANEL

An International Stakeholders Panel has steered the project. This includes a mix of practitioners engaged in the initiative directly (eg through conducting country surveys), agencies providing financial support to the project, and independent individuals (senior decision-makers from government, private sector, international organisations and/or NGOs in developing countries).

International Stakeholders Panel

- **Ella Antonio**, President, Barint Trust Inc., Manila, The Philippines
- **Christine Asare**, Deputy Director, Environmental Protection Agency, Accra, Ghana
- **Hernan Blanco**, Executive Director, RIDES (Research and Resources for Sustainable Development), Santiago, Chile
- **Julie Clarke**, Environmental Analyst, Development Bank of Southern Africa, Midrand, South Africa
- **Jon Hobbs**, Environmental Policy Adviser, Department for International Development, London, UK
- **John Horberry**, Director, UNEP-UNDP Poverty-Environment Initiative, Nairobi, Kenya
- **Aban Marker Kabraji**, Regional Director for Asia, World Conservation Union (IUCN), Bangkok, Thailand
- **Sarah McIntosh**, Director Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), Trinidad
- **Penny Urquhart**, Associate, Khanya-African Institute for Community-driven Development, South Africa
- **George Varughese**, President, Development Alternatives, Delhi, India

COUNTRY SURVEYS – GATHERING USER PERSPECTIVES

During September 2008 – June 2009, ten country/regional surveys were conducted by partner organisations/teams:

Chile	(Research and Resources for Sustainable Development, RIDES)
Ghana	(Environmental Protection Agency, EPA)
India	(Development Alternatives)
Kenya and Uganda	(UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative)
Philippines	(Earth Council/ICLEI)
South Africa	(Development Bank of Southern Africa)
Caribbean	(Caribbean Natural Resources Institute)
Czech Republic and Croatia	(Integra Consulting)

The surveys comprised a mix of literature review, semi-structured interviews, round tables, focus groups and workshops. Each aimed to secure user 'on-the-ground' feedback about:

- the challenges faced by the users of particular mainstreaming approaches;
- their needs related to mainstreaming/integrating approaches,
- their perspectives of which approaches they find useful or not, those that are the most effective in environmental mainstreaming and why they are effective; as well as the main problems associated with integration approaches;
- baseline information on mainstreaming approaches.

SCOPE

The focus of enquiry has been on those approaches *which directly help to shape policies, plans and decisions*; **not** the wider array of secondary approaches applied downstream of decision-making (eg market delivery mechanisms and instruments, field management tools). Box 1 lists some selected approaches to illustrate (only) the range of approaches that are available for particular 'tasks' in the decision-making cycle.

Box 1: Illustrative range of mainstreaming approaches

(A) Information tools:

Economic and financial assessment: cost-benefit analysis/ IRR; public (environmental) expenditure review; 'green/natural resource/environmental – accounting'

Impact assessment and strategic analysis: EIA and EHSIA; SEA; country diagnostics (eg state of environment report, country environmental assessment); social impact assessment and variants (eg PSIA, HRIA, assessment of indigenous peoples, vulnerability, gender, livelihoods, etc), PPA; regulatory impact assessment ; poverty monitoring; business approaches (eg production assessment, Natural Step, life cycle analysis, Equator Principles, Global Compact)

Spatial assessment: poverty mapping; land use planning (including bioregional planning, landscape valuation, cultural heritage assessment, and sectoral variants).

Monitoring and evaluation: SD indicators + variants (e.g. poverty-environment indicators, MDGs); census and household surveys (including specific sampling surveys); audits and administrative reporting; sustainability reporting – national (CSD), business (CSR - obligatory and voluntary, GRI tools)

Policy analysis: stakeholder, institutional, governance and policy mapping,

(B) Deliberative tools and tools for engaging:

Participation and citizen action: participatory learning and action (PLA), PPA; citizen movements and fora/dialogues/juries/ scorecards; multi-stakeholder fora and processes, inc NCSD; consultation methods inc focus groups

Political analysis and action: Discourse-shaping, coalition-forming and common programme, tactics for making a case inc trade-off matrix, political/election manifestos, dual-track diplomacy (para-diplomacy), white papers, green papers, commissions and hearings

Conflict management: dispute resolution, arbitration

(C) Planning and organising tools:

Legal tools: public interest litigation; legal instruments that derive from MEAs, rights regime, etc

Visioning: scenario development

Management planning and control: QMS/EMS + ISO 1400 series of environmental management standards; risk assessment/management, threshold analysis, precautionary tools e.g. hotspot strategy

DEVELOPING A SYNTHESIS OF EXPERIENCE AND PERSEPTCIVES

During the country survey work, respondents and workshop participants were more exercised on issues of context – drivers and constraints to mainstreaming - than by the ins and outs of individual tools, although some were frequently mentioned (Box 2). As a result, the survey work revealed rich information on institutional and contextual challenges which represent a major issue in the struggle to achieve environmental mainstreaming.

Box 2: Survey findings: drivers, constraints and most mentioned tools

(A) Drivers

Major drivers

- Increasing stakeholder awareness & demands
- National policies, legislation, regulations & planning requirements
- Values of progressive organisations
- Donor policies, conditions & initiatives

Moderately important drivers

- International commitments & external drivers (eg standards)
- Major environmental events and disasters (eg floods) & trends
- Company business plans & objectives and regulations/requirements
- Risk management
- Traditional cultural reasons

International initiatives as drivers, eg

- National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPA) for climate change
- Low-carbon investment
- Reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD)

(B) Constraints

- The prevailing development paradigm (driven by economic growth),
- Lack of political will for change,
- Environment as an institutional and economic 'externality',
- Weak environmental mainstreaming initiatives to date (supply-push, not demand-driven)
- Lack of data and information on environment-development links,
- Lack of skills and institutional capacity,
- Lack of understanding & awareness (of environmental issues, and of available tools)
- Broader governance constraints (eg corruption, over-regulation)

(C) Most mentioned tools

- Environmental impact assessment (EIA)
- Cost-benefit analysis (CBA)
- ISO standards
- Strategic environmental assessment (SEA)
- Monitoring (general)
- Indicators
- Land use planning
- Environmental audits
- Environmental management systems (EMS)
- Public participation (general)
- Geographic information systems (GIS)

The first product of this initiative will be a ***synthesis report*** (Box 3) (due in May 2009). This will analyse the contextual and institutional issues in depth and provide a broad perspective on the challenge of environmental mainstreaming. It will include discussion of the broad range of mainstreaming approaches/tools related to particular challenges and decision-making tasks, and give some

guidance on when particular approaches might best be used. Profiles of a few key approaches/tools that are most commonly used in environmental mainstreaming are now available on the project website (www.environmental-mainstreaming.org).

Box 3: Synthesis Report: Meeting the Challenges of Environmental Mainstreaming:

Revise

Acknowledgements

Preface

Executive Summary

1 Introduction:

- 1.1 Why do we need to 'mainstream' the environment?
- 1.2 What is environmental mainstreaming?
- 1.3 Who should be concerned about environmental mainstreaming?
 - 1.3.1 The actors in environmental mainstreaming
 - 1.3.2 Responses and international mandates for environmental mainstreaming

2 *The challenges of environmental mainstreaming*

- 2.1 The institutional context for environmental mainstreaming
- 2.2 Drivers of mainstreaming
 - 2.2.1 Major drivers of mainstreaming from IIED's country surveys
 - 2.2.2 Moderately important drivers of mainstreaming from IIED's country surveys
 - 2.2.3 Other drivers of mainstreaming from IIED's country surveys
- 2.3 Constraints to environmental mainstreaming

3 *Effective mainstreaming; what it takes*

- 3.1 Typical environmental mainstreaming outcomes
- 3.2 Strategic and institutional tasks
- 3.3 A framework, principles, criteria and indicators of effective environmental mainstreaming
- 3.4 Capacity for environmental mainstreaming
- 3.5 Work towards a systematic approach
- 3.6 Communications
- 3.7 Building a platform
- 3.8 Basic steps in environmental mainstreaming

4 *A roadmap to operational methods and tools for environmental mainstreaming*

- 4.1 What approaches are available?
- 4.2 Choosing appropriate approaches

References

Annexes

- 1 Some international initiatives in environmental mainstreaming
- 2 Interview questionnaire for country surveys

This synthesis will be of interest and use to all those who are struggling to address environmental issues in development policy-making and decision-taking.

NEXT PHASE: SOURCEBOOK ON ENVIRONMENTAL MAINSTREAMING

In the second phase of this initiative, starting in June 2009, we will build on the ground work undertaken to date and begin to develop a common **Sourcebook on Environmental Mainstreaming**. It will be partly modelled on the UNDP/OECD/IIED sourcebook for national sustainable development strategies (2002) and will draw from the experience and materials of all the partners and other organisations. IIED is discussing with the OECD DAC, UNDP and UNDP-UNEP Poverty Environment Initiative (PEI) to undertake this work as a collaborative initiative.

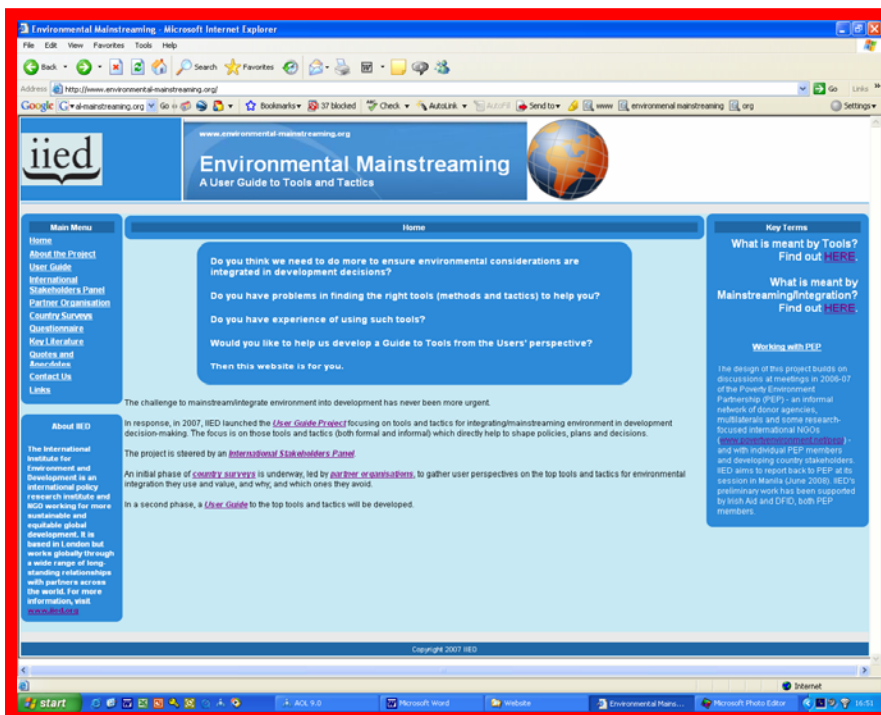
The Sourcebook will provide more in-depth analysis of the contextual and institutional elements. It will also contain guidance on, for example, a framework for mainstreaming (eg concepts, principles, key steps, entry points for mainstreaming in development decision-making and investment), communication requirements and approaches, approaches to capacity-building, illustrative case studies, sources of information and support, as well as a wide range of profiled tools and tactics.

The development of the sourcebook will be supported and complemented by targeted work in selected countries and amongst communities/networks of approach/tool expert networks to deepen our understanding of when and how particular core approaches/tools can best be used and the challenges they face can best be faced/overcome.

OUTREACH

A roll-out strategy for the Synthesis report, Sourcebook and associated products will be developed: Opportunities will be used, where possible, to organise events and provide briefings, information and showcase illustrative proto-products (tasters) at various upcoming events – to raise interest

Visit the project website: www.environmental-mainstreaming.org



About IIED

IIED is an international NGO and a pioneer of sustainable development, established in 1971. Through its five key areas of research — climate change, governance, human settlements, natural resources and sustainable markets — IIED seeks solutions to the shifting array of challenges emerging on a planet in rapid transition. IIED's wide-ranging, long-term partnerships are one of its great strengths. Through them, IIED engages with a range of people and institutions, from urban slum-dwellers to global institutions (website: www.iied.org).

Further information

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