

International Institute for Environment and Development



A GUIDE TO ENVIRONMENTAL MAINSTREAMING

Best practice for integrating environmental objectives
into development institutions, policies and plans –
revealed from a 12-country survey and global review

By

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PREFACE

In 2007, the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) launched an initiative to produce a *User Guide* to approaches (tools, methods and tactics) for mainstreaming (or integrating) environment into development decision-making (environmental mainstreaming). An International Stakeholder Panel was established to guide and help steer the project and a website launched as a communication tool (www.environmental-mainstreaming.org).

The initial aim was to develop a guide to a range of approaches to environmental mainstreaming applied at different levels (eg national, district, community) and by a range of users (government, non-governmental and community-based organisations, the businesses and private sector organisations). The core of the guide was envisaged to comprise profiles of the 30 or so top approaches particularly favoured by users rather than those that tend to be emphasised by technical experts in most existing manuals and toolkits.

The focus would be on those approaches which directly help to shape policies, plans and decisions; *not* the wider array of secondary tools applied to implement those decisions (eg market delivery mechanisms and instruments, field management tools).

Our contention is that environmental mainstreaming capacity will be much stronger if stakeholders are able to select appropriate tools, methods and tactics. Some of these are widely used and others still in development; some are easy to do and others demanding of skills and money; some are effective but others are not. Too many approaches are being 'pushed' by outside interests, and too few locally developed (and more informal, or less expensive) approaches are widely known. There is not enough 'demand-pull' information from potential users. Neither is there enough information available that helps them to select the right approaches themselves – as opposed to taking what others want or suggest/promote.

This initiative set out to identify which approaches work best, for what purpose and for which user. Ten regional and country-based survey and dialogues with stakeholders/users were undertaken by partner organisations. Each used a standard questionnaire to structure consultations, workshops, focus group sessions and individual interviews.

But during the country survey work, it proved harder than originally envisaged to secure focused user perspectives on particular approaches/tools. In general, respondents were more exercised on issues of context – drivers and constraints to mainstreaming, rather than the ins and outs of individual tools. As a result it was difficult to achieve the original intention of identifying the most favoured approaches/tools. Despite this, the survey work revealed rich information on institutional and contextual challenges which represent a major issue in the struggle to achieve environmental mainstreaming.

Therefore, in Part 1 of this guide, we analyse these issues and provide a perspective on the challenges facing environmental mainstreaming. In Part 2, we discuss the broad range of mainstreaming approaches and tools that are best suited to particular challenges and decision-making tasks, provide guidance on when particular approaches might best be used, and profile key approaches/tools.

We hope this guide will be of interest and use to all those who are striving to address environmental issues in development policy-making and decision-taking.

In the next phase of our work, we will develop a *Sourcebook on Environmental Mainstreaming* jointly with the OECD, UNDP, and the UNDP/UNEP Poverty Environment Initiative. This will provide in-depth guidance on, and real examples of: policy frameworks

for mainstreaming environment and climate change opportunities and threats; entry points in development decision-making and investment; communication requirements and approaches; approaches to capacity-building; monitoring and indicators; sources of information and support; and a wide range of tools and tactics, drawing on work by IIED, UN, OECD and from many other sources.

*Barry Dalal-Clayton and Steve Bass
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PART 1

**MAINSTREAMING THE ENVIRONMENT:
A PERSPECTIVE ON THE CONTEXTUAL AND
INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES**

Chapter 1.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Why do we need to ‘mainstream’ the environment?

A large proportion of the wealth of developing countries and poor people is comprised of *environmental assets*. These provide the foundations for sustainable development. Fertile soils, clean water, biomass and biodiversity produce a range of goods and services that yield income, offer safety nets for the poor, maintain public health, and power economic growth. Conversely, bad management of environmental assets, poor control of environmental hazards such as pollution, and inadequate response to environmental challenges climate change, threaten development.

Such environmental considerations therefore need to be included (‘mainstreamed’) into the wide range of institutions and decisions that drive development – just as the UN decided gender issues needed to be similarly mainstreamed.¹ As the Global Environment Facility notes:

“The basic reason why environmental mainstreaming is important is that economic and social development and the environment are fundamentally interdependent – the way we manage the economy and political and social institutions has critical impacts on the environment, while environmental quality and sustainability, in turn, are vital for the performance of the economy and social well-being. As such the task of environmental integration and mainstreaming is at the forefront of development planning and policy formulation”

(http://www.gefcountrysupport.org/report_detail.cfm?projectId=175)

Some traditional institutions have long recognised this and treat environment and development together. For example, the two issues are discussed as totally inter-connected in village meetings of the *khotla* system in Botswana and the Maori *hui* system in New Zealand. However, today’s mainstream government and market institutions tend to marginalise environmental issues, prioritising short-term economic growth. This is increasingly unsustainable, especially with growing competition for environmental resources, a ‘resource squeeze’ that particularly affects the poor. It calls for an accelerated effort to mainstream environmental concerns.

Through the 1960s and 1970s, attention to environment concerns rose steadily on national, international and political agendas. There was a blossoming of government departments, legal frameworks and procedures directly concerned with environmental protection and management (eg environmental impact assessment, EIA). The most established ones are concerned with environmental *problems* and the *safeguards* needed to tackle them, rather than environmental potentials and opportunities:

“Environmental issues only get onto the agenda when there is a crisis or an issue that affects a wide sector of the general public” (CANARI, 2008).

There is much legitimate concern at present about the rise in incidence of environmental problems such as droughts, floods and climate change. Many government institutions in

¹ *Gender Mainstreaming* is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. It involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities - policy development, research, advocacy/ dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects (see: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/gendermainstreaming.htm>).

particular increasingly have to bail out failing financial and social institutions and are greatly concerned about the confluence of these with ecosystem and climate system collapse. With persistent poverty, in part entrenched by such system failures, there is a growing interest in ways to minimise the chain of costs that arise from environmental shocks and stresses. Environment is becoming recognised as a key component in policies for security, stability and sustainability.

However, effective environmental mainstreaming will not only help to *minimise such risks and problems*, but also enable stakeholders to discuss, make the case, and pioneer activities that tackle real *environmental potentials*. For example:

- realising renewable energy potential from biomass, whilst ensuring that other economic (e.g. food) and environmental (e.g. biodiversity and water) benefits are sustained – i.e. not just blindly turning land over to biofuel crops;
- realising the potential of natural resources to mitigate climate change, such as pro-poor REDD (reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation) policies that make sense for the country and local context – i.e. not just a response to new global carbon funds;
- big business deals on managing/protecting biodiversity (e.g. corporate/community partnerships and pro-poor protected areas and production landscape management) – i.e. not only low levels of government investment into national parks;
- pro-poor integrated water resource management (WRM), building on current water institutions – but not forcing an idealistic fully ‘integrated’ WRM framework.

In these ways, it is becoming clear that *environmental concerns lie at the heart of all good development*, where development entails:

- increasing the asset base and its productivity per person – including environmental assets;
- empowering poor people and marginalised communities – including their environmental rights;
- reducing and managing risks – including environmental risks;
- a holistic approach to interacting social, economic and natural systems – including multiple environmental feedbacks
- taking a long-term perspective – including subsequent generations – a time frame which encompasses environmental change.

Thus environmental considerations *need to be addressed both at central levels* (i.e. national planning and finance ministries) *and sectoral levels* (i.e. government, business and stakeholder organisations responsible for agriculture, industry, etc) - in other words, they need to be understood and responded to by the ‘mainstream’ of decision-making and not only by the environment ‘sector’ itself. Furthermore, such consideration of the environment needs to cover both ‘positive’ issues (i.e. opportunities and potentials for sustainable use of environmental assets) as well as the ‘negative’ issues (e.g. problems of environmental degradation and pollution) that have been uppermost to date in the development and use of safeguards.

The need for a more high-level and cross-sectoral approach to integrating environment and development has never been more urgent. With pressure on resources, more innovative ways must be found of generating more welfare from limited environmental assets. Infrastructure and agriculture must be climate-proofed. Industry must be energy- and water-efficient. Poor people’s environmental deprivations must be tackled in development activity. 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.

Experience with a truly high-level and cross-sectoral approach to environmental mainstreaming has been limited to date. There has been little sharing of experience on environmental mainstreaming in advocacy, analysis, planning, investment, management, and monitoring. In contrast, there has been too much untested guidance on how to go about the tasks, often pushed as conditionalities by funders. Three *global initiatives* stand out as offering lessons, and we draw on these extensively (for more details, see Annex 1):

1. The Poverty Environment Partnership (PEP) - a multi-agency network² which is attempting to mainstream environment in development aid, in support of national and sector development planning in developing countries (see Box 1.1) (<http://www.povertyenvironment.net/pep/>).
2. The Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) - a joint UNDP-UNEP programme which is working with country teams in several developing countries to support environmental mainstreaming in national and sector development policy, plans and capacity development (www.unpei.org).
3. The Environmental Mainstreaming International Stakeholder Panel and Guide – an IIED-coordinated initiative which aims to investigate a wide range of mainstreaming approaches that work across many developing countries and to share learning (www.environmental-mainstreaming.org).

While the above have their roots in development assistance, professional networks and research, a wider range of networks and initiatives is now emerging. These have more of an advocacy objective – intending to bring the imperatives of environmental integration to the attention of mainstream government, finance, social, business and media interests. They include the emerging Coalition for a Green Economy involving several business, civil society and environmental groups – and indeed the UN.

“The answer is to find common solutions to the grave challenges facing us. And when it comes to two of the most serious – the financial crisis and climate change – the answer is the green economy.”

Ban Ki Moon (International Herald Tribune 10/11/08)

In developing this Guide, we have drawn on the experience of the above initiatives - notably the country surveys, meetings of the international stakeholder panel, and literature review undertaken by IIED as part of 3 above (see Preface), as well as IIED's engagement in PEP, PEI, and a range of other activities, e.g.:

- the SEA Task Team of the OECD DAC Network on Environment and Development Cooperation – for which IIED provides a Technical Secretariat (see www.seataskteam.net);
- country learning groups on environmental mainstreaming, comprising environment and development experts, in Tanzania, Zambia and Vietnam – see Assey *et al.* 2007, and Aongola *et al.* 2009 forthcoming)
- a range of regional workshops organised by IIED and partners to support development of a sourcebook on sustainability appraisal (Dalal-Clayton and Sadler, 2009, in press);
- annual meetings of the International Association for Impact Assessment, IAIA (see: www.iaia.org).

² PEP is a group of donor agencies, multilaterals and some research-focused INGOs. See <http://www.povertyenvironment.net/pep/>

Box 1.1: The PEP case for environmental mainstreaming

The Poverty Environment Partnership (PEP) has concluded that:

- *The environment is disproportionately important in poor nations.* World Bank figures suggest that environmental assets amount to 26% of national wealth in developing countries, as opposed to 2% in OECD countries (World Bank, 2005)
- *Investment in environmental management can generate significant returns, much of this benefiting poor people.* Internal rates of return are competitive (Pearce 2005):³
 - controlling air pollution <15:1
 - clean water & sanitation <14:1
 - natural disaster prevention <7:1
 - mangrove conservation <7:1
 - coral reef conservation <5:1
 - soil conservation <4:
- *Local organisations are key drivers of environmental integration into development, and can be highly effective and equitable at the operational level.* They are a key component of any mainstreaming strategy.
- *National environment and development authorities need to become much more closely linked together in their planning, budgeting and operations.* The underlying causes of both environment and development problems are the same – often to do with poor governance – and environmental mainstreaming thus needs to target appropriate institutions and decisions.
- Development cooperation agencies could do much more to support and scale up good practice in integrating environment and development, especially by supporting indigenous institutional frameworks to be more systemic about environment and development – rather than imposing external frameworks.
- *For these reasons, there is an urgent need to raise awareness about the importance of environment and its key role in underpinning development, and to find ways to ensure that it is fully taken into account in development decision-making.*

Source: PEP papers available at <http://www.undp.org/pei/peppapers.html>

1.2 What is environmental mainstreaming?

‘Environmental mainstreaming’ is the informed inclusion of relevant environmental concerns into the decisions of institutions that drive national and sectoral development policy, rules, plans, investment and action. It results in a better understanding of the capabilities of environmental assets, the consequences of environmental hazards, and the real or potential impacts of development on the environment. Such understanding can consequently improve decisions, especially if there is a systematic institutional framework for making such

³ These rates would be higher still if longer time frames were taken into account in the calculation, and the diverse needs of the poor were given due weighting. Furthermore, investment in social capital, such as common property regimes that improve the management of environmental assets, is also promising. However, a range of policy, institutional, market and information constraints reduce the apparent rate of return and establish a bias against environmental investments. Clearly, several things need to change if under-investment in environmental assets is to be tackled.

decisions. In its emphasis on integrated approaches and informed trade-offs, environmental mainstreaming is a major practical component of sustainable development. It can be assisted by a variety of technical and deliberative tools, but these have to be well suited to context, the decision at hand, and the actors taking the decision – for values and priorities need to change if environment and development are truly to be integrated, and not merely technical aspects e.g. of production functions.

Environmental mainstreaming is therefore a broader affair than prevailing narrower approaches. These tend to fall into two, connected types: firstly, building the capacity of environment authorities and environment interest groups to engage; secondly, creating a system of environmental safeguards such as EIA and SEA. The former tends at best to create a set of ‘supply-push’ guidelines or conditions, but is limited by focusing on the ‘converted’ – i.e. institutions already committed to and responsible for environmental concerns. The latter tends not to be able to address the more positive contributions of environmental management (although SEA is promising here...). Indeed, in large part, the increasing focus on proactive environmental mainstreaming is a strategic response to the limitations of reactive environmental safeguarding activities in moving development towards environmentally sustainability outcomes (Brown and Tomerini, in prep).

Although we have offered a normative description of environmental mainstreaming above, we acknowledge that this is far from universally understood. Understanding and interpretation of what environmental mainstreaming (or integration) means or entails varies considerably. For example, the UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative interprets environmental mainstreaming specifically in terms of “*integrating poverty-environment linkages into national development planning processes and their outputs, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and Millennium Development Goal (MDG) strategies*” (PEI 2007) (understandable as these are key focuses for UNDP and UNEP work with partner countries). During our country survey in Uganda, responses to the survey questionnaire showed that suggested definitions differed in detail, by respondent – even within the same organisation, and by the specific issues to be addressed (Birungi, 2008). Different organisations also emphasise different issues (see below).

Thus it remains the case that *environmental mainstreaming* is a vague term for different and changing (or sometimes unspecified) intentions, i.e.:

- mere ‘*box-ticking*’ – attempting to demonstrate that environmental concerns have been dealt with, even if in a cursory way (i.e. not necessarily changing the ‘mainstream’);
- the task of *informing* – offering environment information to players in the ‘mainstream’ of decision-making in the hope that this influences their own deliberations (on policies, plans, investment, etc);
- ‘*scaling up*’ – aimed at working ‘upstream’ of the project level, such as addressing the policy implications/advocacy component of environmental ‘projects’, or increasing the number of successful activities;
- *power-exercising* or *power-levelling* – using a ‘mainstream’ construct to force acceptance of the view of powerful players (eg some development bank tactics regarding safeguards), or to elevate the concerns of weaker players (eg environmental NGO tactics);
- *institutional change* – systematically integrating a particular environment idea, value or objective into all domains of governance, both central and sectoral (Bass, 2008).

Of the above, it is clear that all (except the first bullet) are components of environmental mainstreaming, but only the last might sum it up. As we began this initiative, we took

environmental mainstreaming (or environmental integration) to encompass 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*. In retrospect, this seems to be a limited, functional view of the wide range of institutional changes that are actually needed, and indeed seems to imply that environmental mainstreaming might be a mere option. One respondent in Kenya commented:

“The definition seems to allude to a process of environmental mainstreaming that is optional, that the environment is considered in the policy process. We need to move to a process that includes the environment as a mandatory part of decision-making. The definition seems to me to take a weak position: trying desperately to make the environment considered by policy-makers. It is not a matter of consider the environment, but to really build it into the process”

(PEI, 2008a)

We would fully agree with this sentiment. But the present reality is that environment is ‘off the agenda’ in many countries. Many might argue that responding to climate change is now one of the top political priorities and that this is the major environmental issue. True. But the concentration of focus on climate change accompanied by huge amounts of funding for mitigation and adaptation has had the effect of crowding out most of the other environmental dimensions – particularly natural resources which are critical to survival and the economies of many poor countries. Furthermore, climate change policy tends to address the economic and social causes and consequences of climate change, but is skewed because it does not also recognise the *environmental* causes and consequences of climate change - and some of the environmental solutions to climate change (building ecosystem resilience).

In the absence of a systemic approach where all central and sectoral actors play their roles, a bipartite approach remains necessary – where distinct environmental interests aim to ‘influence’ a separate ‘mainstream’ through the decision-making cycle.

This Guide is concerned with the variety of approaches that can be used to carry out the above processes, recognising that in most countries it will be less a question of operating an existing integrated system than one of generating that system through influencing current institutions. These approaches 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 indigenous approaches.

1.3 Who should be concerned about environmental mainstreaming?

1.3.1 The actors in environmental mainstreaming and their needs

At the country level, three broad groups should be concerned with environmental mainstreaming:

- Mainstream development organisations – notably central and sectoral planning and finance authorities and delivery organisations, as well as corporations. The national level is key, but so also are local authorities where key policy and planning decisions have been decentralised.

They will need to understand how environmental issues affect their development interests; the associated costs, benefits, risks and their distribution; and how to make appropriate decisions especially to meet international and national environmental obligations; as such, they will need access to efficient information and decision-making tools, and to advice on building a systemic approach.

To fast-track the transition to an integrated, systemic approach, the highest levels of decision-making in government, administration, business and civil society need to be engaged. This is critical because – even more so than with environmental interests above – there is a wide range of perceptions about the importance of environmental mainstreaming (see Table 1.1) Key information needed by such groups is the costs of inaction on environment and associated distributional issues and timeframes; and the rates of return to investment in routine environmental management, environmental infrastructure, and safeguard processes.

- Environmental organisations – whether as regulatory authorities, service delivery organisations, environmental NGOs or civil society groups representing people who are especially dependent upon the environment.

They need to improve efforts to influence the ‘mainstream’ to integrate environmental considerations; as such they will need to have good command of information, tools and tactics, as well as effective ‘entry points’ to influence the mainstream.

In most countries, their intention will be to make the *transition* from a prevailing institutional framework - where environment is divorced from development, to an integrated system - requiring lobbying and case-making tactics. In countries where such an integrated system is forming, this will require collaborative approaches and far more nuanced information. In both cases, however, the wide range of environmental interests need to develop and assert a broad vision of environmental mainstreaming, or their lobbying and tactics will be ineffective. They need to rehearse many of the issues discussed in sections 1.1 and 1.2 and form a shared platform.

- Multilateral and bilateral donors, international organisations and international private investors also need to address environmental mainstreaming. Firstly as an internal need, particularly in terms of how they best delivering against environmental obligations in a range of international agreements and mandates (see next section). But also in terms of how they can avoid the current trend of much development assistance having to be applied to increasing humanitarian and conflict-related expenditure – short-term ‘bail-outs’ from collapses in financial, employment, social and political systems in developing countries, which predicted incidences of collapse in environmental systems will surely exacerbate. Secondly, in terms of what conditions and support they will provide to the above groups in their catalytic roles to improve policy, plans and investment for sustainable development.

Table 1.1: Perceptions of environmental mainstreaming

USER GROUP	PERCEPTIONS
Politicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few are aware of the range of EM concerns beyond negative issues, and the range of approaches beyond safeguards. • However, some environment, development and foreign affairs ministers are broadly aware of international EM obligations (see section 1.3.2). • Most political debate is around environment as a (weak) sector rather than a shared responsibility. • However, this is confused by historical wide distribution of environmental responsibilities and authority across many ministries – offering an ‘entry point’ to some mainstreaming.
Government departments/agencies - both central and sectoral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range from very little knowledge of EM and the application of EM approaches, to highly informed specialists operating at all levels of government (often in a safeguard capacity). • Environment authorities treat EM primarily as a matter of improving environment ‘sector’ budgets and ensuring safeguards adopted. • However, many key decision-makers never use specific EM tools; instead, they used normal budgeting procedures, holding meetings and ensuring legal compliance. • The implementation of international EM obligations tends to be accorded low priority, or in narrow ways ‘to suit local needs’. • There are recent increases in calls for government accountability that has led to e.g. a ‘charter’ approach to environmental responsibility.
Local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accorded increasing responsibility for environmental aspects of development, where in charge of district land and physical development. • Thus, concerned as much about making positive use of environment as about environmental safeguards. • However, inadequate capacity to map development-environment links (both positive and negative) or to develop solutions, means that many adopt outmoded procedures, or none at all, for EM.
Finance institutions and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily use environmental safeguard tools designed to cover their own corporate needs to avoid damage and harm to stakeholders. • However, stakeholder and shareholder demands are increasing and leading to changes in motivation towards more positive approaches (eg organic food, sustainable forestry).
Civil society & communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel that current provisions for EM often fail to empower them to participate, and sometimes alienate them from the decision-making process – for several reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How power works in society; ○ How control of the process is governed; ○ How jargon is used ; ○ Because (they believe) consultants tend to operate EM tools for money-making rather than for environmental and social justice. • Are unfamiliar with EM approaches, but are keen to know more about the environment and receive relevant information in a usable format.
Environment NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between them, rarely have a consistent view of EM and how to go about it – which often leads to ineffective action. • The majority tend to focus on environmental problems and adversarial approaches – rather than opportunities and collaborative approaches. • However, some NGOs are leading brokers of environment and

	development interests, of public and private partnerships, with experience of EM, and are adept at using a range of international obligations (see section 1.3.2).
Academics and experts/consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have produced a wide range of EM tools, not all of them real-world tested; and tend to ascribe to one or two ‘miracle’ tools. • Have inadequately explored the political economy of EM.
Development cooperation agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tend to have high influence on whether and how developing country governments tackle EM. That influence is channelled through policy and programming approaches shaped by the Paris Declaration (see section 1.3.2) • Largely this is a matter of including environmental safeguards in cooperation agreements, although increasingly it is supposed to be about building the capacity of ‘country systems’ to act as safeguards. • It has also involved organising major ‘projects’ to include environmental dimensions in national development plans and poverty reduction strategies – evoking ‘country-driven’ approaches but also associating EM with conditionalities attached to supporting those plans and strategies. • This approach is too technocratic and inadequately supports national political processes for EM. • It is also limited by the fact that, within cooperation agencies themselves, environment is rarely full mainstreamed and ‘high-level’ decision makers in those agencies do not accord EM much more than ‘box-ticking’ importance.

1.3.2 Responses and international mandates for environmental mainstreaming

Table 1.1 above indicates the significance of a range of international obligations in shaping how environment is mainstreamed into development (or not) at national, sector or local levels. Most countries have committed to and become signatories to a range of *international agreements* which set both obligations and challenges. Many of these provide an unofficial ‘mandate’ for taking forward any initiative for integrating environment and development:

- *The Millennium Development Goals* (agreed at the UN General Assembly in 2000) provide a framing focus for development planning and assistance. To be effective, they need to be integrated into national and local policy-making, decision-taking and planning processes. MDG7, in particular, calls for the “integration of the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes” and asserts the importance of water, sanitation, forests and now also biodiversity for development. There are also key environmental underpinnings of MDGs 1-6 (see UNDP 2004, WRI 2008), but most are not included in the MDG targets and indicators.
- *The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI)* agreed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 stressed the importance of “strategic frameworks and balanced decision making ... for advancing the sustainable development agenda”. Given many different circumstances and contexts, this demands a range of mainstreaming tools.
- *The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* (adopted in 2005) commits development agencies to reform the way in which aid is delivered and to work in closer harmony to enhance development efficiency and effectiveness. It also emphasizes the need for donor agencies to better align behind the priorities of developing countries and their strategies to

address these priorities. This commitment was reconfirmed in the *Accra Agenda for Action* (AAA) agreed in Ghana in September 2008 at the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness which reviewed progress in implementing the Paris Agreement.

- *A range of international programmes for environmental mainstreaming* has evolved, most recently in response to the above three agreements. These have adopted various definitions of environmental mainstreaming, and play to different incentives and threats (some internal to the organisation promoting them). Some are more ‘top-down’ in ‘requiring’ environmental mainstreaming, and others are more ‘bottom-up’ in responding to unmet stakeholder needs and building on local systems. The UNEP-UNDP Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) has already been highlighted in section 1.1. Others are outlined in Annex 1.
- *Voluntary market and civil society initiatives* can also be considered to provide a more ‘informal mandate’ for environmental mainstreaming. Some, such as forest and organic agriculture certification schemes, have proven to be powerful forces in ensuring that companies include environmental (and some social) dimensions in their production, and in getting buyers to exercise preferential treatment in their consumption. This has been more effective with both producers and consumers who have the financial and human resources to adopt new ways of working (as well as to cover certification transaction and financial costs), Some of this ‘supply chain soft legislation’ has already influenced territorial legislation in countries that are both dependent on the sectors in question and well-resourced enough to ‘mainstream’ environment in new production systems.

Furthermore, in all countries there is a range of domestic national (and more local) strategies, policy-making and planning process covering environment and/or development (eg poverty reduction strategies, sustainable development strategies, sector-based policies and plans) as well as legislation, institutional procedures and voluntary arrangements. Some specify the use of particular tools (eg EIA) but many are not well implemented, in part because stakeholders lack effective approaches.

It is to be expected that new international institutions and mandates will emerge in the coming years, especially regarding the growing confluence of economic, social and environmental problems. As the UN High-Level Panel on Threats Challenges and Change (2004) concluded:

“There still remains a need for a body that brings together the key developed and developing countries to address the critical interlinkages between trade, finance, the environment, the handling of pandemic diseases and economic and social development. To be effective, such a body must operate at the level of national leaders.” (see: <http://www.un.org/secureworld/>)

Chapter 2

THE CHALLENGES OF ENVIRONMENTAL MAINSTREAMING

The principal challenge of environmental mainstreaming is to *improve governance*. Mainstream institutions such as treasuries, planning departments and corporations have not recognised the environmental underpinnings of development. They treat the environment as a ‘free’ good, and environmental damage as having minimal cost. Thus environment tends to be unvalued, unpriced, unmonitored, and left on the margins of major institutions and their decisions. Although most governments have signed up to a range of international agreements to preserve (global) environmental values, prevailing governance frameworks are not set up to treat these as a priority.

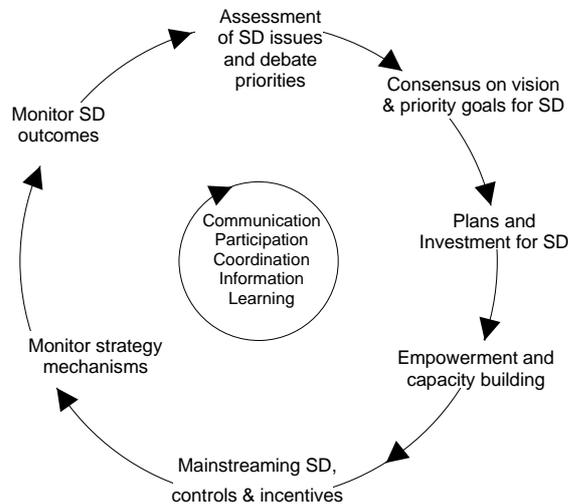
In response, several market-based, community-led as well as governmental approaches have emerged to identify and support environmental values in circumstances where they are threatened or already scarce. Examples include projects to factor environment into poverty reduction strategies, strategic environmental assessments of proposed policies, and payment schemes for carbon, water and other environmental services. In addition, consumer-based and ethical programmes are beginning to influence public behaviour. Some environmental mainstreaming approaches are promoted by external bodies such as donors as ‘silver bullets’. However, none can really mainstream environment effectively on its own. Many are indeed promising, but most have not been adopted system-wide and, consequently, many big decisions go ahead uninformed by environmental considerations. Environmental mainstreaming is a long-term societal/institutional change endeavour that entails bringing together a set of rules, norms, procedures and other tools that works for specific contexts – a governance challenge. That challenge does include issues of data, information, skills and resources that are commonly addressed by environmental mainstreaming ‘projects’. But, more fundamentally, it encompasses values, beliefs and decision-making frameworks that are not so easily dealt with unless the ‘mainstreaming’ endeavour is clearly set up as an institutional development approach. That takes real leadership and careful tailoring to the local institutional context.

2.1 The institutional context for environmental mainstreaming

Environmental mainstreaming is necessary throughout all the processes of development, particularly those concerned with policy-making, strategy development and planning. Experience shows that, to be most effective, such processes should be cyclical and iterative to facilitate learning and enable lessons from experience, practice and implementation to be addressed, and for appropriate changes or correction in direction to be made, where necessary. Figure 2.1 illustrates such a continuous improvement approach for developing and implementing a sustainable development strategy. There are many opportunities and leverage points through all the steps of such processes when information and analysis about environmental issues should be taken into account⁴. Here, the challenge is to enable mainstreaming through the mechanisms which drive the cycle (i.e. those shown in the centre of Figure 2.1).

⁴ All too often, however, these opportunities are not realised by governments, particularly in developing countries, for various reasons, eg inadequate financial resources. It is far more common that opportunities for environmental mainstreaming are ‘pushed’ and funded by international organisations and development cooperation agencies, eg in Ghana (EPA, 2008).

Figure 2.1: The continuous improvement approach to managing sustainable development strategies (Dalal-Clayton & Bass 2002)

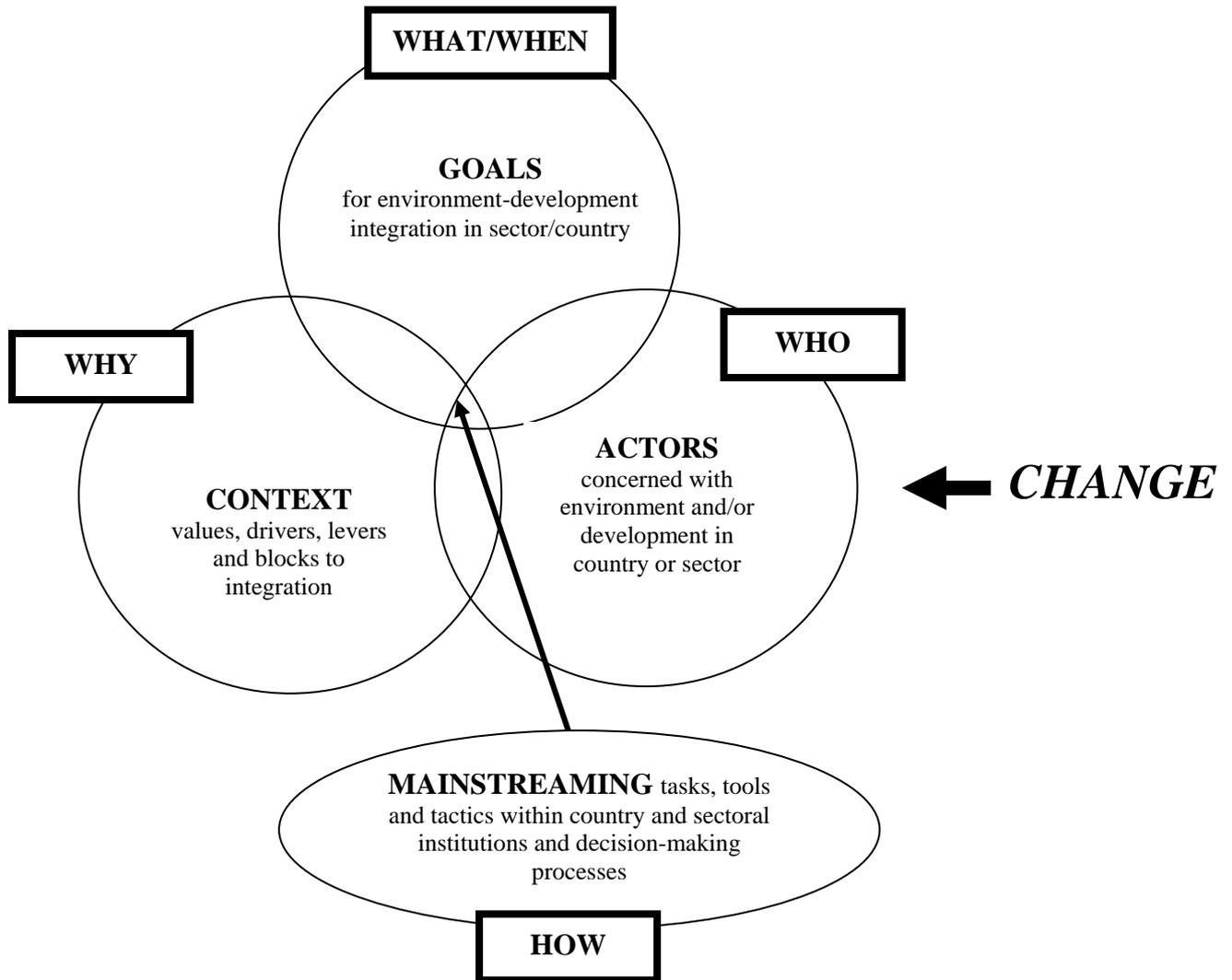


Note: As portrayed, the figure suggests that the overall process involves a rigid sequence of steps. However, in practice, these are on-going and necessarily overlap. Key features of the central tasks are stakeholder identification, strengthening capacity, collaboration and outreach.

By the same token, this does not imply that the national planning cycle should be treated as the sole means for environmental mainstreaming. In reality, a wide range of other institutions shape development aspirations, values, ideas, policies, plans and behaviour. Indeed, many offer their own ‘tracks’ for mainstreaming – political, business, civil society, media as well as in the bureaucracy. As work in Tanzania has shown, all of these tracks can help to shape a more open, and ultimately more systemic, approach to environment in development (Assey *et al.*, 2007).

The preparation of this Guide was preceded by a range of country ‘surveys’ which focused on local contexts and the perspectives of key stakeholders who regularly have need to use, or commission others to use, environmental mainstreaming tools/tactics. These surveys highlighted the generic complexities of mainstreaming, i.e. its multi-issue, multi-layer, context-specific nature. They revealed that issues concerning the choice of a precise tool are often less significant for mainstreaming than the need to tailor approaches to local context, to be clear on the specific mainstreaming goal, or to involve the right actor. Figure 1.2 presents a framework/platform for describing these dimensions.

Figure 2.2: Interacting factors that shape strategy for environmental mainstreaming



2.2 Drivers of mainstreaming

Country surveys highlighted a range of drivers of environmental mainstreaming (Table 2.1), although the motivations for mainstreaming clearly also vary among different groups of actors, as we note in section 1.3. This section discusses each of these drivers in order of their overall importance across all the countries surveyed. Associated antagonists or constraints are discussed in section 2.3

Table 2.1: Drivers of environmental mainstreaming

<i>Major drivers</i>
a. Increasing stakeholder awareness & demands
b. National legislation & regulations
c. Values of progressive organisations
d. Donor conditions and initiatives
<i>Moderately important drivers</i>
e. International commitments
f. Major environmental events and disasters (eg floods)
g. Company/business plans & objectives, regulations / requirements
h. Risk management
i. Traditional cultural reasons
<i>Other drivers</i>
• Visible ‘real’ issues
• Link between development/poverty reduction & environment
• Requirements of clients
• EU accession and approximation process
• Membership of international business groups (that embrace E M.)
• Desire to address rising poverty and inequality
• Need to protect ecosystems and stem environmental degradation

2.2.1 Major drivers of mainstreaming from IIED’s country surveys

a. Increasing stakeholder awareness & demands

In many countries, pressure is brought to bear on politicians, governments and decision-makers to address environmental concerns as a result of organised and opportunistic lobbying and advocacy, mainly by civil society organisations, NGOs and the general public. Such interactions can pave the way for more in-depth discussions. In many countries the voice of civil society is growing. For example, in Uganda there is:

“Pressure from a growing active civil society organization movement, as evidenced in the media and liberalization of both radio and television stations. There is no doubt therefore that if government empowered the general public about their rights, and invested in other potential tools like Public Information Disclosure, the practice of environmental mainstreaming would be more sustained”. (Birungi, 2008)

There is also often a demand, particularly in developed countries, from the public and other stakeholders for companies to adopt measures which will ensure better environmental performance stipulated by standards and limits set by legislation. In developing countries, the demand is much less. Some examples can be found in literature produced by the UNEP/Wuppertal Institute Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production

(see www.scp-centre.org). An interesting case is the support by civil society groups such as Ufadhili in Kenya (www.ufadhilitrust.org) for the application of extra-territorial standards such as Globalgap⁵. Even though Globalgap is seen by many small farmers groups in Africa as imposed, poorly adapted and undemocratic (as is a private standard), Ufadhili opposed weakening the standard, as it was seen (1) to have a positive spill-over into the domestic market and thereby one of the only ways to level the playing field between Northern and Southern consumers in terms of access to safe and green foods, and (2) a way around the compromised and self-serving process of national policy making.

Sometimes *personal and ethical values* play a key role in motivating people, either individually or in their formal roles, to address environmental concerns - what DBSA (2008) describe as “*the moral need to protect ecosystems and their services and use them wisely, love of life and natural/cultural heritage.*”

b. National policies, legislation and regulations, and planning requirements

In an increasing number of countries, the Constitution includes provisions for the environment, although they tend to be minimal and differ in content, context, clarity and detail. Nevertheless, they (should) provide a (potentially) powerful driver for environmental mainstreaming. Commonly they have one or more of the following elements:

- The right to a healthy environment (some add other qualifiers, such as “free of contamination” or “ecologically balanced”; In South Africa, for example, Section 24 of the Constitution states that South Africans “have the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being”.
- A general obligation on the state to protect the environment and/or natural resources;
- An obligation for the rational and/or sustainable utilization of natural resources.

Environmental requirements established in legislation provide a key element of the *raison d’être* for the environmental regulatory, conservation and management departments/agencies of governments (eg those responsible for planning, development control and monitoring; the use of safeguards such as EIA procedures; and managing key public environmental assets such as forests and protected areas). These responsibilities drive their formal roles as environmental ‘guardians’ or stewards’ to ensure compliance and undertake monitoring.

Formal regimes for physical /spatial/land-used planning are usually perceived as key drivers where a conscious effort is made to pursue environmental mainstreaming, often through requirements to undertake EIAs., eg

“A government agency such as the Environmental Management Authority (in Trinidad) or the National Environment and Planning Agency (in Jamaica) draws up Terms of Reference [for an EIA] and makes the final decision as to granting the Certificate of Environmental Clearance or equivalent. The private developer or government agency leading the project then contracts consultants (typically specialist consultancy firms) who put together a consortium of their own staff and independent consultants to collect and present data in the public consultations.” (CANARI, 2008)

The development of environmentally-related policies (such as those framing the application of strategic environmental assessments for policies, plans and programmes) also support mainstreaming. But adopting other policies (eg to boost tourism where this is a key economic opportunity) can ‘force’ both governments and the tourism sector to protect the environment on which such tourism often depends.

⁵ GLOBALGAP is a private sector body that sets voluntary standards for the certification of agricultural products around the globe (see: www.globalgap.org)

Of course, the public and other stakeholder usually see environmental integration to be, by default, the task of such institutions rather than that of a society-wide effort or organised mainstreaming institutional framework:

“A separate Environmental Ministry was established [in India] with the objective of strengthening the regulatory capacity and supporting specific environmental protection efforts. Although it reinforces environmental protection and conservation as a major priority of the Government, it has led to a faulty perception that addressing environmental issues is the exclusive responsibility of the designated agencies and units” (Development Alternatives, 2008)

But formal responsibility is not always matched by serious commitment of individuals or institutional effectiveness. In Kenya, for example, *“the lack of implementation and enforcement of policies and assessments is limiting the effectiveness of mainstreaming”* (Sanford and Vijge, 2008).

In almost all countries, the need to comply with legislation, regulations, standards and limits is a strong motivation for addressing environmental issues – particularly amongst businesses and industries. Where national policy has changed at the top to require an integrated approach, this can lead to significant innovation. For example, national development planning in Tanzania moved from a ‘priority sectors’ approach, which neither included environment as a sector nor was amenable to environmental intervention, to an ‘outcomes-based planning’ approach. The latter put aside presumptions about priority sectors and enabled environmental interests – both government and private – to show what they could contribute to outcomes such as economic growth, improved health, etc. Furthermore, this led to a public environmental expenditure review that examined how much each sector was investing in the environment in relation to likely returns and costs of inaction. It is perhaps no coincidence that the budget of the environment authorities in the subsequent financial year quadrupled. (Assey *et al.*, 2007).

c. Values of progressive organisations

Some organizations have a clearly laid out list of values or principles that they support. These values and principles cover a wide range, e.g. justice for all, commitment to future generations, a balance between business and society as a whole, ecological wisdom. For examples posted by a range of organizations, see <http://progressivespirit.com/Projects/OrganizationsValues/index.htm>. A list of ‘progressive’ organisations (ie those which promote progressive values while not having any regressive ideological ties) is available at http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=List_of_progressive_organizations.

Many progressive organisations internalise environmental values and principles. Often these focus on the sustainability of the earth and the natural environment, the sacredness of nature, and protecting native peoples. They are concerned with stewardship of the planet and of future generations. *Empathy* and *protection* are the primary values.

Many ‘progressive’ organisations advocate and lobby for environmental issues to be taken into account in all stages of development governance, some pushing that such issues are given primacy over others. Other organisations, notably those leading private sector companies that espouse progressive values, commit to promoting sustainable development and sound environmental management, adhering to good practice principles and pursuing corporate social (nowadays including environmental) responsibility.

d. Donor policies, conditions and initiatives

Such conditions have traditionally focused on safeguards. International financing institutions (eg World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, UN Global Environment Facility) impose strong obligations on borrowing countries to include environmental aspects in project proposals submitted for financing. For example, the World Bank has a well-developed system of safeguards, which include the environment and natural resources as well as indigenous peoples as environmentally-dependent groups. These oblige all proponents to check projects against environmental criteria and to develop an Environmental Management Plan to facilitate monitoring of implementation.

Today, however, there is a larger range of environmental mainstreaming ‘encouragement’ from donors that – because it has not yet really built on local mainstreaming processes – has had the effect of conditionalities, albeit not vigorously pursued. Much of this derives from the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (see section 1.3.2). It has led to, for example:

- support to include environmental considerations in poverty reduction strategies;
- the development of SEA guidance and accompanying awareness-raising⁶ and training, and support to undertake SEAs of country policies, plans and programmes;
- efforts to integrate climate change mitigation, vulnerability assessment and especially adaptation in development decisions;
- and a drive to improve natural resource management for long-term pro-poor economic growth.

The real ‘hook’ in the Paris Declaration – *building country-based systems for integrating environment and development* – has not been treated too seriously. In large part this may be due to the Heads of country offices being inundated with cases for ‘mainstreaming’ or ‘special pleading’ regarding a wide range of sectors and issues, and to current incentives to shift towards budget support rather than deal with ‘technical’ issues.

Progress with environmental mainstreaming was addressed at a High-Level Forum held in Ghana in September 2008, attended by donors and 100+ partner countries, to review progress on the Paris Agreement. This forum agreed the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) which states that it is vital that environmental sustainability is addressed in “a more systematic and coherent way” in all policies. The AAA commits developing countries and donors to “*ensure that their respective development policies and programmes are designed and implemented in ways consistent with their agreed international commitments on gender equality, human rights disability and environmental sustainability*”. It remains to be seen whether this commitment will lead to the environment being taken more seriously in practice.

For many years, donors have undertaken environmental studies and analyses as part of preparations for support to countries. During the 1990s, there was considerable focus on country environmental profiles (CEPs). The EC now uses CEPs as a programming tool feeding into country support strategies. These include recommendations for environmental integration in key areas. In recent years, there has been an effort to improve upstream country environmental analytical (CEA) work. The primary producers (and users) of CEA work are the multi-lateral development banks and the European Commission. However, there is also a wide range of secondary users (particularly bilateral donors). The World Bank, for example, introduced CEAs in 2001 in response to its (then) new Environment Strategy. These are typically initiated and carried out by regional teams and aim to integrate environmental issues

⁶ A recent SEA awareness-raising workshop was organised in Zambia in September 2008 by the OECD DAC SEA Task Team, preceded by an environmental mainstreaming retreat (see Box 3.2). Both events were co-hosted and chaired by the Ministry of Finance and National Planning (MFNP) and the Environment Council of Zambia, demonstrating the genuine interest and recognition of the need for environmental mainstreaming by one of the key drivers of development (the MFNP).

into country assistance strategies (CASs), poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), development policy lending (DPL), and development assistance strategies and programmes. By 2008, the Bank had initiated 25 CEAs. A desk review of experience of CEAs (Pillai 2008) notes that:

“it is important that preparation of CEAs be undertaken not only to meet due diligence requirements of OP8.60, but seen as an opportunity to enhance dialogue and engagement with partner countries to strengthen institutional capacity on environmental-development issues”.

There is increasing recognition by the MDBs and EC of the need to anchor CEA work within country domestic processes and promote country government ownership. Aligned to this, some people have suggested that a common assessment on environmental sustainability should be undertaken as a complement to the common country assessments (of development) already prepared to inform all new UN development assistance strategies.

2.2.2 Moderately important drivers of mainstreaming from IIED’s country survey

e. International commitments and external drivers

Country commitments under multilateral environmental agreements or international treaties and accords (see Annex 1) act as a stimulant to develop a variety of plans and strategies which provide vehicles for environmental mainstreaming: National Environmental Plans, National Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plans, sustainable land management plans, etc. These instruments are felt to be generally useful, particularly if the consultative processes are well conducted, although there is a danger of duplication of effort. And such commitments can act as a dominating steer for national activity:

“Commitments to international conventions, combined with access to funding (“we are beggars”) is driving the national agenda [in Trinidad][and] because signature of these conventions is driven by the desire for money, they do not necessarily reflect real ‘internalisation’ or commitment at national level” (CANARI, 2008)

In Caribbean countries, the burden of multiple planning and reporting has resulted in the St George’s declaration of how countries will plan and report to multiple international environmental conventions through a single exercise (see: <http://www.oecs.org/esdu/SGD.htm>). This is now in the process of being agreed with the various MEA secretariats. A similar initiative has recently been launched for Pacific islands.

In this category of driver, we might also include the need to conform with standards and procedures of international and regional organisations and alliances. For example, there is strong pressure within countries seeking to join the European Union to adopt its environmental norms and processes, particularly in order to access EU funds:

“This is emphasized in case of Croatia, an EU-accession country with an economy still in relatively early phase of transition, where both state and non-state stakeholders are responsive to the demands and conditions set by external agents (EU, international banking and donor institutions, etc All applicants for EU funds are obliged to integrate environmental aspects into all their projects in order to apply for pre-accession funding”. (Integra, 2008).

Since 1997, environmental integration has been a requirement under the EC Treaty. Article 6 of the Treaty states that "environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Community policies [...] in particular with a view to

promoting sustainable development" ⁷. The importance of integration is reaffirmed in the EU's Sixth Environmental Action Programme which stipulates that "integration of environmental concerns into other policies must be deepened" in order to move towards sustainable development.

Another example of 'conforming' is provided by Chile which will soon join the OECD.

"Given the importance that the OECD gives to environmental performance and development, it is expected that the pressure to become an OECD country will open up opportunities in the country for mainstreaming environment into development decision-making". (RIDES, 2008).

Membership of, or affiliation with, international business groups that have embraced environmental mainstreaming practices 'forces' domestic ones to adhere to the same rules.

Where national economies are dependent on international markets, environmental preferences and conditions placed on exports can be a key driver of environmental mainstreaming in diverse economic sectors. In Chile, for example, *"industry is, in general, conscious that better environmental performance is at present an element of competitiveness"* (RIDES, 2008).

f. Major environmental trends and events

During the country surveys, a wide range of events were identified that are perceived to be caused by environmental mismanagement or to cause environmental damage. Examples include, pollution, deforestation, hurricanes and storms, droughts, flooding, landslides (see , for example, Box 2.1).

"Much of Chile's environmental progress over the last fifteen years was driven by concerns about pollution's impacts on health" (RIDES, 2008)

"There is a desire [in South Africa] to stem increasing disasters of all kinds relating to the degradation of the environment, climate change and the energy crisis" (DBSA, 2008)

"There is increased fear of risk from environmental degradation [in Uganda] as witnessed by occasional floods, drought, falling water levels in Lake Victoria and outbreak of water-borne diseases" (Birungi, 2008)

Box 2.1: The influence of environmental disasters in The Philippines

"Major environmental events emerged as the strongest driving force to environmental mainstreaming in the Philippines. This is not surprisingly the top choice because the country has been experiencing a string of unprecedented and catastrophic disasters that are mostly attributable to environmental degradation. The Philippines is a disaster-prone area being right on the sea and in the ring of fire. However, the frequency and intensity of recent disasters have been at such catastrophic levels that Filipinos became more worried and watchful. Huge floods, landslides and mudslides, usually caused by deforestation due to illegal logging and land conversion, have buried wide areas, wiped out towns and villages and cost tens of thousands of lives. Over-fishing and destruction of coral reefs have reduced fish catch and worsened poverty especially in fishing villages. Extreme pollution of waters has caused red tides and fish kill phenomena. All these have led to, among others, extreme poverty, adverse psychological and psychosocial impacts, and high cost of rehabilitation that impinge on

⁷ The EC has established an Environment Helpdesk to raise awareness and build capacities of staff to integrate the environmental dimension in EC development cooperation and into partner countries' sector policies and programmes (<http://www.environment-integration.eu/>).

national budget for economic and social development.

Perhaps a blessing in disguise, the fear for these disasters and concern for personal safety and national security are making Filipinos do more to resuscitate the environment and teach or prosecute those who destroy it. They try to learn more about what cause these disasters and initiate actions accordingly. For instance, there is already a good level of awareness that the mega-typhoons and El Niño drought - that often simultaneously hit the country and result in the destruction of crops and other produce - are largely due to climate change and global warming. As these events hit, consideration and integration of environment in decision-making heightens and becomes a priority agenda of government and the people”.

Source: Earth Council/ICLEI, 2008)

Global climate change is clearly seen as a huge challenge facing the world that needs to be tackled at all levels (international, national, local, and by individual action) and that must be fully integrated in all development policies and planning. The growing prominence of climate change in national agendas offers real opportunities to facilitate mainstreaming initiatives:

“Climate change is a hot topic [in Latin America] and has really pushed questions such as energy efficiency onto the political agenda. Effects of climate change are already being noticed with Peru predicted to be the third most vulnerable country in the world to the impacts of climate change” (RIDES, 2008)

g. Company business plans & objectives, and regulations/requirements [see also a-c]

Many companies also see a marketing value (potential to improve their green image) in pursuing an environmental agenda and introducing voluntary tools, eg the ISO1400x series for environmental management systems. Their adoption has a knock-on effect since it demands similar standards through supply chains. The fact that environmental management system (EMS) approaches are about developing regular institutional systems for mainstreaming environment should not be lost on those who are aiming to promote mainstreaming in other sectors: there is much to learn from the EMS approach.

In revising their business plans, many companies respond to the clear economic or ethical benefits of some ‘environmental’ actions (eg adopting energy efficient technologies) or signing up to new market schemes such as carbon credits or offsetting.

Investment in a country by large multi-national companies (which tend to work to higher standards) often stimulates increased attention to environmental issues amongst domestic businesses, particularly where the latter undertake sub-contracts which encourage or require them to improve practices.

Every business is obliged to meet legal requirements designed to protect the environment. For some businesses, fear of prosecution may be the main reason that they consider environmental issues. Others do so because they recognise that protecting the environment can provide significant benefits to businesses in a number of ways - effective environmental practices pay for themselves. Many business are addressing environmental concerns as part of their response to the need to demonstrate a commitment to corporate responsibility as well as to mitigate political and social risk and to manage and enhance their reputation and relations with a range of stakeholders: customers, host governments, local communities, regulators, employees, investors and suppliers.

Effective environmental practices can help a business to save money, as it may face financial pressures from higher energy and waste disposal costs and more environmental taxes. A business may also be able to negotiate lower insurance premiums. A range of guides are available to environmental issues that can benefit a business and make it more sustainable (see, for example, <http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=1079416602>).

Socially responsible investment (SRI) is an increasingly significant business driver, especially since the launch of the FTSE4Good index series in 2001 (see: http://www.ftse.com/Indices/FTSE4Good_Index_Series/index.jsp). FTSE4Good measures company performance against globally recognised corporate responsibility standards and facilitates investment in responsible companies. Mainstream investors are also increasingly accepting that social and environmental risks pose a threat to long-term shareholder value.

Project finance for major industrial projects has been a key driver in promoting high standards of sustainability performance. The World Bank Group, in particular the International Finance Corporation (the private sector arm of the WBG), have been instrumental in developing, and introducing into practice, a set of standards for responsible performance in business, industry and infrastructure development (see: <http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/sustainability.nsf/Content/PerformanceStandards>).

These have set the benchmark standard for other international finance institutions, such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development who revised their Environmental and Social Policy in 2008 (see: <http://www.ebrd.com/enviro/policy/index.htm>). The IFC standards have been adopted by the Equator Principles, which are voluntary performance standards adopted to date by over 50 investment banks (see: <http://www.equator-principles.com/principles.shtml>).

The concept of a 'triple bottom line' is widely used to describe sustainable development in an organisational context. In the business context, this implies that companies will operate not just to deliver profitability and shareholder dividends (the economic bottom line), but to deliver improved performance against the social and environmental bottom lines.

h. Risk management

Over a short period, climate change has become routinely included in government and business scenario planning and risk management strategies, having been on the margins until the reports of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) showed strong scientific consensus. The signs are that related water and biodiversity risks will begin to be included in the near future.

Risk management is a structured approach to managing uncertainty related to a threat, a sequence of human activities including: risk assessment, strategies development to manage it, and mitigation of risk using managerial resources ⁸.

The strategies include transferring the risk to another party, avoiding the risk, reducing the negative effect of the risk, and accepting some or all of the consequences of a particular risk. Some traditional risk managements are focused on risks stemming from physical or legal causes (e.g. natural disasters or fires, accidents, ergonomics, death and lawsuits). Financial risk management, on the other hand, focuses on risks that can be managed using traded financial instruments.

⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Risk_management

The objective of *risk management* is to reduce different risks related to a preselected domain to the level accepted by society. It may refer to numerous types of threats caused by environment, technology, humans, organizations and politics. On the other hand it involves all means available for humans, or in particular, for a risk management entity (person, staff, organization).

A range of guidelines for environmental risk assessment and management are available, eg DEFRA (1995)

i. Traditional cultural reasons

In some countries (eg Philippines) culture was cited as a key driver. This stems from the realization that to ensure environmental sustainability, there is need to respect and consider indigenous and local culture and traditions because they, and the environment they live in, are closely related.

“Indigenous practices provide the basis for local-level decision-making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural-resource management, and a host of other activities in rural communities. A case in point is the Muyong or woodlot, which is living proof of the Ifugao’s knowledge of silviculture, agroforestry, horticulture and soil and water conservation. The Ifugaos attribute value to the forest on the basis of their cultural ways and practices. In recognition of this, forestry development nowadays integrates indigenous systems of forest management”. (Earth Council/ICLEI, 2008)

2.2.3 Further drivers of mainstreaming from IIED’s country survey

Long-standing practices and routine systems – that are familiar and a well-entrenched component of policy and decision-making systems – can continue to have an influential role in environmental mainstream. For example:

“The roots of environmental mainstreaming in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe can be found in the 1970s mainly in the field of land-use or spatial planning. This long tradition maintains its influence and land-use/spatial planning is often perceived as the most important planning tool, capable of serving all purposes including environmental integration” (Integra, 2008)

Consultancy companies, expert institutions and freelance specialists/experts are normally motivated by the requirements and ***needs of their clients***, but, of course, may well be influenced by their personal values.

The development of revised ***school curricula*** presents an opportunity to seed ideas of environmental integration at any early stage in the education process. In Jamaica, for example, *“environmental issues have been incorporated throughout the curriculum for Grades 1-9”* (CANARI, 2008)

Meetings of ***regional forums*** that focus on sustainable development issues provide a platform for mainstreaming environment issues, eg the Forum of Environmental Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean which is held every two years (and declares itself to be a “platform for analysis and discussion and an effective mechanism for promoting regional cooperation on matters of environmental safeguarding and sustainable development”) ⁹.

⁹ See <http://www.pnuma.org/informacion/comunicados/pdf/ForumRepDominic.pdf>

In some circumstances, local governments are motivated to address environmental issues by *budget incentives*. In Uganda, for instance, they can obtain a 20% budget increase if they are assessed to have satisfied environmental requirements. But the reverse is also the case - local governments failing to meet them are given a 20% budget penalty (Birungi, 2008).

2.3 Constraints to environmental mainstreaming

Mainstreaming environmental issues in general, and poverty-environment links in particular, does not have a long history of success. Indeed, there has been much inaction and some failed action. Many constraints explain this.

The country surveys highlighted a number of key constraints to environmental mainstreaming, most of which are of an institutional nature (Box 2.2) and can be related to the perceptions of different actors about the importance of environmental mainstreaming (see Table 1.1). The critical and common constraints are discussed below. Together, they amount to:

- a. The prevailing development paradigm,
- b. Lack of political will for change,
- c. Environment as an institutional and economic ‘externality’,
- d. Weak environmental mainstreaming initiatives to date,
- e. Lack of data and information on environment-development links,
- f. Lack of skills and institutional capacity,
- g. Broader governance constraints.

Box 2.2: Key constraints to environmental mainstreaming

Critical constraints

- Lack of political will
- Lack of understanding & awareness (of environmental issues)
- Lack of data/information
- Lack of skills

Common issues

- Lack of human resources
- Lack of funding
- Lack of awareness of available tools

Less frequently mentioned problems

- Lack of methodologies/tools that work
- Corruption
- Dissatisfaction with tools

Others factors

- Lack of absorption capacity for available financial resources
- Personal short-term interests
- Over-complicated environmental legislation
- Over-regulated environmental protection
- Too much new legislation
- Lack of absorption capacity for financial resources
- Lack of development vision
- Fragmentation of environmental responsibilities
- Impediments to civil society engagement

a. The prevailing development paradigm

The underlying causes of unsustainable development are entrenched:

- Dominant development models are based on economic growth (and considered inviolable) rather than people's rights and welfare, or environmental processes and limits;
- Environmental benefits and costs are externalised;
- Poor people are marginalised, and inequities entrenched;
- Governance regimes are not designed to internalise environmental factors, to iron out social inequities, or to develop better economic models;
- Therefore unsustainable behaviour has not been substantially challenged.

There are three paradoxes here. First, the economic paradigm that has caused poverty and environmental problems to persist is the very thing that we are relying on to solve those problems. Second, this unsatisfactory state of affairs co-exists with a policy climate that espouses sustainable development. Third, change is being neglected just when it is most urgently needed: sustainable development remains at best a 'virtual' world, a planners' dream. The growth-first paradigm remains firmly entrenched. (Bass, 2007).

For real progress, we need an imperative to change. Nick King of South Africa puts the case well (Box 2.3).

Box 2.3: The need for change

"It cannot be ASSUMED there are a bunch of people out there who recognise the need for change and that what is missing are the tools for the change. Well, that may be true amongst the converted, but the converted tend not to include the relevant decision-makers. We need to go back a step in this process, i.e. that the fundamental issue here is that current development/economic/political/social structures of 'western capitalism' (as the current dominant paradigm), built up over 100s of years (and thus all the tools etc are designed to assist this system, not change/oppose it, because that has been what has been valued and rewarded) simply don't allow for long-termism, strategic planning (in terms of new/sustainability model), sustainability etc.

Until and if the majority of MEASURES (e.g. GDP) are changed to reflect this, and reward systems (e.g. World Bank loans not based on 'good economic growth, but improved social and environmental performance!) decision-makers will not change. Once the measures are changed, it will be a simple matter to develop the needed tools – but developing the tools without the measures changed will not change anything.

And despite what we know about our current path, the measures are actually not just changing, but increasingly resisting the changes (witness the INCREASINGLY obscene payouts for top performing CEO's on ONLY financial returns, NOT on social and environmental measures – i.e. the biggest drivers of unsustainability are the highest rewarded! It is much the same as with governments).

When change becomes apparent, those with the power who need to effect the changes, resist the changes because they have the most entrenched interests in the current system, precisely because their power comes from the current system! Dictators do not (voluntarily) give power to the people; otherwise they lose that power and all the privileges which go with it.

Source: Nick King, quoted in DBSA (2008).

b. Lack of political will for change

The most often mentioned constraint to environmental mainstreaming is the lack of political will to look at longer-term needs and ensure environmental responsibility in decision-making. This derives partly from the disinterest of many politicians in the environment and the fact that environment is not a priority for a large portion of many electorates, eg in Kenya (Sandford & Vijge, 2008); and partly the fact some political leaders give precedence to personal preferences over national ones (CANARI 2008), and most tend to focus on the short-term (what can be delivered by the next election). Politicians and senior decision-takers tend to be concerned mainly with achieving economic growth:

“Money drives decisions – capitalism and the environment are not compatible. Environment is viewed as an additional add-on and not as the foundation of our existence” (Sheila Berry, South Africa)

“Political leaders, in general, still have a ‘zero sum’ approach to the environment: protecting it is expensive and might be to the detriment of development..... To date, Chilean political leaders, irrespective of their orientation, have generally shown very little concern for sustainable development or environmental mainstreaming. What undoubtedly dominates the political agenda is economic growth” (RIDES, 2008).

“India’s development process is on its way to incapacitate the environment. The country’s economic prosperity in terms of its GDP at the cost of environment is only making us tread on the path of unsustainability. To clearly understand this, we can say, ‘Environment is often a casualty of rapid developmental processes..... Rapid economic growth and the resulting changes in consumption patterns are drastically changing the nature and scale of impact on the country’s environment and natural resources, thus testing the carrying capacity of the natural ecosystems, upon which much of the country’s economic growth depends”.
(Development Alternatives, 2008)

The environment is often perceived as a negative factors - a ‘green brake’ on development. In Uganda, a NEMA District Support Officer commented that *“the success of [mainstreaming] tools depends on commitment and attitude since most people view environment as ‘anti-development’* “. (quoted in Birungi, 2008)

This reality can be masked by ‘green speeches’ made by politicians that promise action (that is rarely delivered). For example:

“The UK has to ‘go green’ in the face of rises in oil prices and the cost of living, protecting the environment is a ‘necessity’ and not a ‘luxury’ that can only be afforded in the good times”

Speech to environmentalists by UK Conservative Party leader,
David Cameron, 16 June 2008.

Once out of office, politicians amazingly are able to see the problem. In a recent article in a UK newspaper, former Prime Minister Tony Blair wrote

“In the long-term, everyone accepts that the needs of the economy and the environment are in partnership. In the short-term, there is tension. And we live in the short term”

“A climate solution is in reach”,
Article by Tony Blair in the Sunday Times, 23, 29 June 2008

Quite: politically, the long-term is just one persistent chain of short-terms, No surprise, therefore, that difficult trade-offs between environmental needs and economic expansion are consistently avoided.

In many developing countries, there has been opposition to the concept of environmental mainstreaming, because it is regarded as another Northern-driven aid conditionality. This is reflected clearly by their negative attitude for more than a decade towards the Global Environment Facility (GEF) which has been viewed as a donor-dominated initiative that does little to address their development needs. Although they are least prepared to endure the consequences of global environmental deterioration, environmental mainstreaming is often perceived as both an imposition and a threat to their development (Horta, 1998).

Elsewhere (eg Caribbean, Kenya, Philippines) the concept of environmental mainstreaming is not widely used or understood, even though it may be inherent in local culture, and is seen as a nebulous term:

[Environmental mainstreaming] *“is not concrete and it is difficult to measure results..... People need to understand that these approaches are being used for their own benefit”* (Sampson Waso, Economist at the Ministry of Planning and National Development, Kenya, quoted in Sandford & Vijge, 2008)

“One reason is that it is being introduced as a new concept from abroad and not well translated locally. However, it can be seen happening naturally all over the country. It is easily understood once stories of local practices and experiences are told”. (Earth Council/ICLEI, 2008).

In contrast, in some countries (eg Czech Republic), there is a strong demand to strengthen environmental mainstreaming in planning and decision-making and, in others (eg Croatia), the ‘traditional’ understanding is that *“taking care of the environment is a task for the environmental authorities, which is then reflected in the practice of most institutions”* (Integra, 2008). In these countries, there is a strong tradition in land use and spatial planning. But producing a good plan alone is no guarantee of success:

“Even the ‘best plan ever’, perfectly integrating relevant environmental issues doesn’t automatically mean that real changes will follow in the territory or sector, if not supported by the political representatives and leaders” (Integra, 2008).

c. Environment as an institutional and economic externality

Environment tends to be treated as an externality in institutions – it is unowned, unscrutinised, and often unprotected. It is similarly external to prevailing economic systems – environmental assets are largely unvalued, unpriced, and unmarketed. Even within public discourse, environment may be seen as a separate issue – environmental stakeholders often come across with a confused mix of ‘values’ and science, with specialised language, and often a ‘can’t-do’ approach which is not compelling to those interested in development. All of this presents both a clear rationale for mainstreaming and some heavy barriers to it.

The problem of lack of political will can be linked to another pervasive problem – the widespread ***lack of understanding and awareness of the importance of the environment*** amongst many actors: its key role in underpinning development (see section 1.1).

“Participants felt that both the general public and policy-makers do not understand or are not aware of environmental issues in the country”{Kenya} (Sandford & Vijge, 2008).

Some of those interviewed (eg in South Africa) believed that if people understood the nature of the environmental problem, their values would change and other constraints would fall away, whilst others felt that people did understand the issues, but were motivated by other interests and agendas (DBSA 2008).

This signals a continuing need to invest in environmental education and awareness-raising.

A related issue is that many leaders and decision-takers hold the view that the environment cannot take priority over other concerns perceived to be ‘more pressing’ such as job creation or poverty alleviation (as evidence from South Africa shows – see Box 2.4) – even though achieving such goals is often closely linked to sound environmental management. Many environmental practitioners in business, community and government interviewed in South Africa held the view that poverty reduction and environmental management are incompatible goals. A similar view was expressed in Kenya:

“With poverty, the need to put food on the table often overrides environmental traditions and consciousness. Concern for the environment tends to decrease with poverty” (John Nyangena, Senior Economist, Ministry of Planning & National Development, Kenya, quoted in Sandford & Vijge, 2008)

Box 2.4: Divergent views on environmental mainstreaming in South Africa

The South African country survey highlighted major divergences amongst South Africans on world views and values concerning environmental mainstreaming:

- A prevailing view amongst many people interviewed was that short-term economic growth/job creation must have overarching priority over environmental management, if past inequalities are to be addressed and if poverty is to be eradicated.
- Social, environmental and economic aspects of development could not be separated nor one aspect prioritised over another. Social justice and building a healthy society is strongly dependent on holistic, systems thinking and applying sustainable development principles in practice.
- Sustainable development and many of its associated goals are no longer an option. The need is to ensure that future generations are not deprived of essential ecosystems services as a result of current unsustainable developments.
- For any tool to be successfully applied, it must be able to demonstrate a strong link with national priorities such as job creation, poverty alleviation and HIV/AIDS.

“Money drives decisions – capitalism and the environment are not compatible. Environment is viewed as an optional add on and not the foundation of our existence. Decision-makers are not remembering the unwritten rules (culture) which do accommodate environmental concerns”.

(Sheila Berry)

“Poverty and unemployment: there is high demand to deliver services to the people despite the pressure on the environment. Environment mainstreaming is considered secondary to delivery of services. Environment receives attention only when there is guarantee that it will bring about eco-tourism development. Politicians argue that that can not afford to look after butterflies and frogs while people are starving. In cases such as mining versus tourism, for example, mining is considered because it will bring quick physical delivery. The extent of poverty in rural areas makes it impossible to consider the environment - focus tends to be on job creation or development as opposed to environmental protection or mainstreaming. Lack of understanding of environmental systems is another problem, people tend to focus on the social context rather than the environmental context”.

(Gabs Gabula)

Source: DBSA (2008)

But an alternative view was that it was impossible to separate the environmental, social and economic aspects of development, and to do so is dangerous as it involves prioritising one over the others.

Some people are of the opinion that *the environment doesn't actually matter*. They see expressions of concern about the environment as unimportant or overstated and tend to ignore or dismiss reports highlighting negative trends (even when backed by solid evidence, and commanding widespread consensus). In these circumstances, it is difficult to see how environmental assessments such as EIA or SEA, even when mandatory, are likely to influence opinions and judgements. Clearly much remains to be done to persuade such people of the need to reassess their positions and to change their mindsets:

“Many of the environmental mainstreaming tools first require a change in values and mindsets at a leadership level before they will be used to their full potential” (DBSA, 2008)

“For effective environmental mainstreaming, a conceptual shift is required to ensure that this goal should be a primary objective of the development process rather than a mere compliance with environmental standards. (Development Alternatives, 2008)

d. Weak environmental mainstreaming initiatives to date ¹⁰

Much guidance on environmental mainstreaming to date is ‘*supply-push*’ rather than ‘*demand-pull*’ (or at least ‘*real-world-tested*’). It tends to be cooked up around the ‘policy’ table – the result of intellectual or professional debate, the need to develop common principles or lists of desiderata, and corporate posturing on environment. If it is the product of experience, it is usually based on identified failures and promotes ambitious actions to the contrary, rather than (perhaps modest) actions which are based on actual success. Inherent complexity and over-ambitious scope in guidance material is undesirable, as it results in the outsider – often the donor, or other sponsor of the guidance – being too much ‘in charge’. Consequently, it does not effectively ‘sell’ mainstreaming to those in charge of planning and budgets. This is exacerbated by ‘environmental mainstreaming’ being a vague term for different and changing (or sometimes unspecified) intentions, as discussed at section 1.2.

Mainstreaming is *traditionally top-down, not bottom-up*. But it is often top-down from a weak power base – a response from some groups who are marginalized from the centre of power but paradoxically are often still proximate to it (such as environment officials in aid agencies or treasuries). It is pushed by those cut out of mainstream policy, with no funds, but still environmentally ‘pure’ credentials. Too often it is manifest in an approach which asserts ‘*think like me*’ or pushes large guidance documents. There is a need to shift to an approach which asks ‘*what do you think about this issue?*’ or ‘*what can I do for you –to help you better achieve your goals and tasks?*’, or which offers simple principles that people can respond to in their own circumstances.

Being vague and top-down makes ‘mainstreaming’ both *highly ambiguous and a real turn-off* to those who are the ‘targets’ of mainstreaming. There are also ambiguities in perception – concerning:

- *objectivity*, e.g. is it a technical affair or a political/values affair?
- the *confusing universe of ‘environment’*, e.g. are environmental assets *or* hazards *or* limits being promoted?

¹⁰ Much of this section is from Bass, 2008

- *scope*, e.g. is it aiming to change things at the margins (i.e. enter the mainstream) *or* change things fundamentally (change the mainstream), the key example being working with or against the current growth paradigm. This is a turn-off especially for UN country heads, who see this and other forms of ‘mainstreaming’ as an imposition.

Mainstreaming is not often properly reported. On the one hand, it can be over-reported – where all ‘environmental’ activities are counted as mainstreaming, or assumed to contribute to mainstreaming, even if there is no clear link to the two key mainstreaming targets of policy decisions or institutional change. On the other hand, it can be under-reported, where only one activity (in this case, possibly PEI) is assumed to be contributing ¹¹.

Lack of awareness of environmental mainstreaming approaches. Some country surveys (eg South Africa) highlighted a lack of awareness of environmental mainstreaming approaches/tools. Interviewees were aware of only a few environmental mainstreaming approaches, most notably EIA. Perhaps this is unsurprising since EIA is the only environmental tool for which specific legislation exists and institutions responsible for its application are in place (in almost all countries). In Ghana, it is reported that there are no well-defined approaches to mainstreaming and, therefore, it is difficult to decide which approach or tool to apply in a given situation (EPA, 2008). In Chile, there are some isolated mainstreaming activities, and mainstreaming tools are “*confined basically to the requirements of the obligatory EIA system*” (RIDES, 2008). Paradoxically, whilst EIA emerged from the surveys as the most cited and recommended approach for mainstreaming, it was also the most criticised – perceived as an undesirable tool because it is seen to slow down development.

A problem arises where knowledge of approaches to environmental mainstreaming is limited to a small group of advocates. Interviews in Kenya with professionals in the Ministry of Finance, the private sector, and some research organisations revealed that outside of those working for environmental organisations, people do not have a deep awareness of the tools that the country survey focused on (PEI, 2008a). This suggests that more needs to be done to raise awareness about mainstreaming approaches and tools.

e. Lack of data and information on environment-development links

Another problem in many developing countries is the lack of environmental data and information, and also the reliability of some of the information that is available.

“In Chile, we make decisions based on perceptions: we do not have reliable and updated information” (RIDES, 2008)

Box 2.5 discusses the problem in Southern Africa. Often basic data is not gathered or the institutions and facilities with responsibility for data collection are unable to maintain their functions consistently on a long-term basis and at an appropriate geographic or demographic scale. This may be due to under-funding, and/or lacks of staff or skills.

But even where environmental data is available, it is frequently presented in a form that cannot be easily used by decision-makers (eg it is expressed in overly technical jargon) and provided without interpretation in terms of development options and their consequences. As a result, decisions have been taken, and continue to be taken, in ignorance.

¹¹ Hence the value of IIED work on PEI in Tanzania, helping to create a baseline of the many ways in which mainstreaming or its precursors have been occurring; and similar work in Zambia and Vietnam

Box 2.5: Poverty of environmental information in Southern Africa

“Whilst there is a wealth of documentation on the environment in the countries of Southern Africa, a major problem is that, all too often, a significant proportion of the data which they report has not been 'ground truthed' by field observations, but is based on or summarises information from other existing sources, much of which is itself repeated from elsewhere. Furthermore, there is often uncertainty about the reliability of data in the original sources. This means that questionable information continues to be given currency without checking, and various 'environmental myths', which they are used to support, such as the extent and seriousness of land degradation in the region, are perpetuated.

In practice, for many environmental factors for which reliable data are required to assess trends meaningfully and to predict future positions, the available data are either questionable or not sufficiently available. Another example is the difficulty of making comparisons between data for rural and urban populations.

The poverty of information in southern Africa is a serious impediment to predicting future environmental trends. However, whilst there is an undoubted problem with data availability, in some cases the problem is more one of 'invisible information' - i.e. information exists, but it is dispersed, inaccessible (even kept secret) or unrecognized. A key challenge in addressing many sectoral and cross-sectoral information issues is to think creatively about accessing hidden and unconventional information sources as well as making obvious existing information more useful.”

Source: Dalal-Clayton (1997)

In other situations “*the available data is not accessible – either as a matter of protocol (eg data collected under a paid consultancy) or, more frequently, as a result of lack of willingness to share and ‘turfism’*” (CANARI 2008).

Furthermore, having access to good data does not address the fundamental shortcomings of many policy and planning processes and does not guarantee good outcomes. In Trinidad, for example, “*there are several examples of the government making disastrous decisions even after having access to information and data*” (CANARI, 2008).

The Kenya country survey report notes that:

“Overall, respondents felt that sufficient data is collected in Kenya, but data and information is disorganised, not aggregated, and cannot be easily accessed by policy-makers or other practitioners. Tools are needed to reform the data collection and distribution process”.
(Sandford & Vijke, 2008)

f. Lack of skills and institutional capacity

Some approaches to mainstreaming, particularly procedurally or technically complex ones¹² demand good skills and experience in holistic thinking and analysis, and institutional capacity to manage the processes and harness the outputs. But all too often, developing countries lack

¹² For example, strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and sustainability assessments; environmental management and spatial development frameworks; bioregional, integrated development, and land use plans; and growth and development or sustainable development strategies.

the necessary skills and institutional capacity, or at least in sufficient numbers and depth to satisfy the breadth of need. The Kenya survey revealed a pervasive sentiment that:

“Tools are available but they are often too complex or require more capacity or skills than exist. Tools that require too much technical know-how or skills from outside will not be useful in Kenya ” (Sandford & Vijke, 2008)

In the Caribbean skills are scarce in four key areas (CANARI, 2008):

- conducting high quality impact assessments;
- collection, storage and analysis of spatial data;
- conflict management;
- facilitation of participatory and consultative processes.

“While most Caribbean islands have an inherent human resource capacity problem as a result of their small populations, it was felt to be particularly acute in relation to environmental mainstreaming where there is insufficient capacity to effectively meet even the statutory requirements let alone the more proactive actions needed. Consultants often work in islands other than the one they are resident in and foreign companies or individuals are also hired but this can cause problems as a result of inadequate understanding of the culture and context”. (CANARI, 2008)

Inadequate **institutional capacity** can be a matter of insufficient or no available personnel (a human resource problem) with training, knowledge or experience of:

- environmental issues in general;
- specific environmental issues or problems/challenges in particular;
- particular mainstreaming methods, tools or tactics (what exists, how to apply, etc.).

A common situation is that such available skilled and experienced personnel that exist are concentrated at national level within government, agency or organisational headquarters – usually in capitols. There is often a **vacuum at more local levels** (regions, provinces, districts, municipalities). As the Environmental Manager for Durban/eThekweni municipality in South Africa noted, *“Municipalities do not have resources and skills – the few skilled and dedicated carry huge workloads”*.

Even where such human resources with the necessary skills and experience are in place, sometimes national economic situations and/or budget allocations are such that ministries/agencies do not have the financial resources to carry out their responsibilities/tasks effectively (eg vehicles cannot be repaired, fuel cannot be purchased for fieldwork, equipment lies in need of repair, data is not collected, etc.).

In some countries the necessary institutions (eg governmental or administrative departments – at national to local levels, or agencies/organisations with environmental management, research and oversight responsibilities) are not in place, or are **insufficiently resourced** and funded to function effectively, or are poorly managed. There is also a problem that environmental ministries/departments are usually not particularly powerful or influential in relation to other line ministries – and therefore find it difficult to promote the environmental agenda.

“It is widely acknowledged that the environmental authorities [in Latin America] generally lack political weight. Various studies show that there are gaps in the institutional capacity for enforcement of environmental policies and insufficient mobilisation of resources (both technical and human). The mere existence of environmental regulators is not enough; better communication, dialogue and coordination of activities between those responsible for implementing the relevant public policies is required” (RIDES, 2008)

Furthermore, in most (if not all) countries, there is a pervasive ‘territorial’ or **power battle** between government ministries which inhibits the cooperation necessary to integrate consideration of environmental issues in their affairs. And, all too often, government institutions function without transparency and adequate accountability – and this contributes to the perception that environmental concerns are ignored and increases opportunities for corruption (CANARI, 2008). Mechanisms and timeframes for the public and advocacy groups to engage with politicians and government departments on environmental issues are frequently lacking or inadequate. In many countries, environmental legislation is drafted *in camera* without proper consultation with relevant stakeholder groups and with lower-level government (regional and local authorities), eg Croatia (Integra, 2008). This undermines the successful application of new laws (eg because of inadequate capacity to implement at local government levels).

There can also be an imbalance between the ability of the public and NGOs to engage in debate and lobby government and to have influence *viz-a-viz* industry and business interests (which are able to dedicate financial resources and skills for this purpose). In some circumstances, the public administration does not perceive the business sector as an important dialogue partner; rather as a source of environmental problems (eg pollution) – and this undermines their motivation to invest in environmental improvements, eg Croatia (Integra, 2008).

In addition to the above issues, another constraint can be **the lack of a coordinated and synergistic system** for policy-making and planning – so that environmental concerns are not (and cannot readily be) taken into account. In many countries, procedures and institutional structures are weak or lacking, ineffective and inefficient, and coherence between different institutions/agencies absent (sometimes due to lack of foresight or attention, sometimes the deliberate result of pursuing differing interests and agendas). As a consequence, environmental integration is problematic.

“Mainstreaming requires revisions to planning processes within institutions to ensure that environmental sustainability is integrated early and systematically into standard decision-making procedures”. (DBSA, 2008)

“Some participants [in Kenya] mentioned that each sector, each ministry, has its own agenda, sometimes with overlapping mandates, and there is no incentive in the system to integrate cross-cutting issues like the environment. As Taye Teferi, Conservation Programme Director of the WWF said, ‘What is required in terms of mainstreaming the environment on national level is good planning that integrates the environment, not as an ad-on, but really integrates. Environment is in everything: in health, education, infrastructure, development, agriculture, fisheries. If you do not fully embed the environment, you just end up dealing with environment as a small component. So integrated planning at the national level is an important tool’ .”. (Sandford & Vijge, 2008)

[There is] *” an absence of consistent inter-sectoral collaboration and planning at the national level and/or the absence or weakness of integrated institution”* [in the Caribbean] (CANARI, 2008).

A closely-related issue is the **fragmentation of environmental responsibilities** across different sectors which can result in gaps or overlaps in implementation. For example, in Croatia, the poor management of the Adriatic Sea is seen as a consequence of the lack of a strategy and vision for the sustainable development of this important area – due, in part, to weak communication between different state administration authorities responsible for diverse issues such as navigation and transport, tourism, marine water quality and coastal wastewater discharges (Integra, 2008)..

Even when an Environmental Ministry is given a clear coordinating role across government for the environment, this is not always seen as beneficial. For example in Chile the existing National Environment Agency (CONAMA) is due to be transformed into a national ministry by the end of 2008. This may seem a good step, but not everyone agrees that this will necessarily provide a wider space for environmental mainstreaming initiatives. On the contrary,

”Some see this as a source of further difficulties for this task, basically because it will concentrate most environmental faculties and decisions in one institution, furthering the current distance between sectoral ministries and environmental responsibilities, and therefore making their integration of environmental considerations more difficult”. (RIDES, 2008).

But the problems of poor coordination are not confined to government (Box 2.6). For example, in Caribbean countries:

“[There is a] lack of effective cooperation between civil society organisations in all countries...[which] means that consistent advocacy and lobby efforts of environment issues are near impossible”. (CANARI, 2008).

Box 2.6: Some factors limiting the effectiveness of advocacy in the Caribbean

- Lack of funding and human resources makes it difficult for NGOs to continually investigate and research environmental issues so that they are in a position to take early action;
- The failure of civil society organisations to effectively pool their resources on a consistent basis, and other aspects of divisiveness within civil society. In Trinidad, this was described by one person “*a schism between the newer, mainly community-based organisations and an older ‘elite’*”.
- Civil society is not effectively using the media to highlight important environmental issues (sometimes also perceived as “*media disinterest*” in the environment).

Source: CANARI (2008)

Sometimes there can be a stand-off or even hostility between some NGOs and government agencies responsible for environmental issues – which impairs institutional collaboration.

Capacity development for improved environmental management has been a central theme for development cooperation agencies for many years, but much remains to be done. For environmental mainstreaming, the focus might usefully focus on the key mainstreaming approaches covered in this Guide and in relation to the main points of leverage in the policy-making, planning and decision-making cycle (Figure 1.1). But to be effective, specific capacity development efforts need to be informed by needs assessments.. Such assessments need to look at the ability of governments and particular ministries/agencies to absorb financial resources targeted at environmental programmes. A frequent problem is the danger of overloading the few existing, capable and trained ‘environmental’ staff with responsibilities to assume new roles and tasks.

g. Broader governance constraints

A common system-wide constraint (which is not just a problem for environmental management) is **corruption**, although its extent and form differs from country to country. The Caribbean survey report notes a view from the private sector that

“Corruption in decision-making is commonplace; decisions are not based on what is appropriate or best, but often on what serves or provides economic gain for a small group. A fundamental lack of respect for each other influences decision-making: class interests override national interest” (quoted in CANARI, 2008).

A number of country reports mentioned poor administration and **lack of enforcement** of environmental regulations and obligatory formal procedures and implementation of recommendations and outcomes of impact assessments as constraints. Where such enforcement is weak or lacking, this can lead to societal scepticism about the genuine commitment of governments to take environmental issues seriously and to ensure effective links between planning, decision-making and sustainability

In the Czech Republic, it is reported that **over-complicated environmental legislation and over-regulated environmental protection** is one of the key obstacles for businesses and industries to achieve better environmental performance, especially in relation to complicated procedures (eg EIA, SEA, IPPC, various types of permits for environmental issues – waste, etc.). Public administrations face a similar problem, e.g. too many EIA screening procedures (or even pre-screening - to inform a proponent whether a specific project falls under the regime of the EIA Act) for projects with insignificant environmental impacts presents unnecessary workload which, in turn, prevents focusing human and expert resources to address environmentally significant projects (Integra, 2008).

Another related issue is the inability to cope with **‘hyper production’ of new environmental legislation** in countries seeking EU membership (eg Croatia) and the obligations this brings for regional and local environmental authorities:

“New obligations usually come in the form of general directions without concrete guidance/measures from the national level authorities about operational implementation in the field, and without anticipated possibilities for financing of implementation costs. So local and regional authorities are left on their own to find implementation solutions and secure adequate funding. This results in the lack of sufficient staff and/or adequate technical knowledge to perform all administrative tasks in a satisfactory manner and to develop Terms of Reference for provision of goods and services for projects in their competence (primarily infrastructure”. (Integra, 2008)

Chapter 3

EFFECTIVE MAINSTREAMING – WHAT IT TAKES

Effective environmental mainstreaming achieves the twin endeavours of poverty elimination and environmental sustainability *together*. It places environmental issues at the heart of development and poverty reduction institutions and decisions – and vice versa. It targets specific institutions and/or decisions, and as such depends upon effective access to key ‘*entry points*’ in these institutions or in decision-making processes. Those institutions need to include ‘central’ bodies in charge of development policy, planning and budgeting. They should also include key sector bodies that influence development paths and associated environmental demands or damages. These will clearly cover national levels, but also key decentralised levels. Environmental mainstreaming needs strong environmental organisations, but will get nowhere if it is entirely driven by such organisations – it is not a ‘one-way’ affair (except perhaps in initial stages) but, ultimately, a collaborative one.

3.1 A framework and indicators of effective environmental mainstreaming

Mainstreaming entails changing institutions and decisions, in order to improve outcomes. Thus *effective* mainstreaming might be postulated in terms of two key dimensions:

- ***Institutional capacity and performance*** in integrating environment and development issues e.g.:
 - *awareness* of environmental issues is improved;
 - *targeted information* on environmental goods, services and hazards is available and debated;
 - environmental issues are included in *policy, then strategies and plans*;
 - they are budgeted for, distributed, managed, monitored at a *pilot level*; and
 - *institutions* are reformed to do this at a *routine level*.

Certain milestones or sequences might be identified (see, for example, Figure 3.1 on mainstreaming climate change); some might call only the last stage – institutional reform – to be environmental mainstreaming.

- ***Desired outcomes*** e.g. incremental changes to the contribution of environment to income, safety nets, health and economic growth indicators – or the cost of environmental hazards to these benefits

The UNEP-UNDP Poverty-Environment Initiative has developed a short set of indicators for successful environmental mainstreaming (Box 3.1).

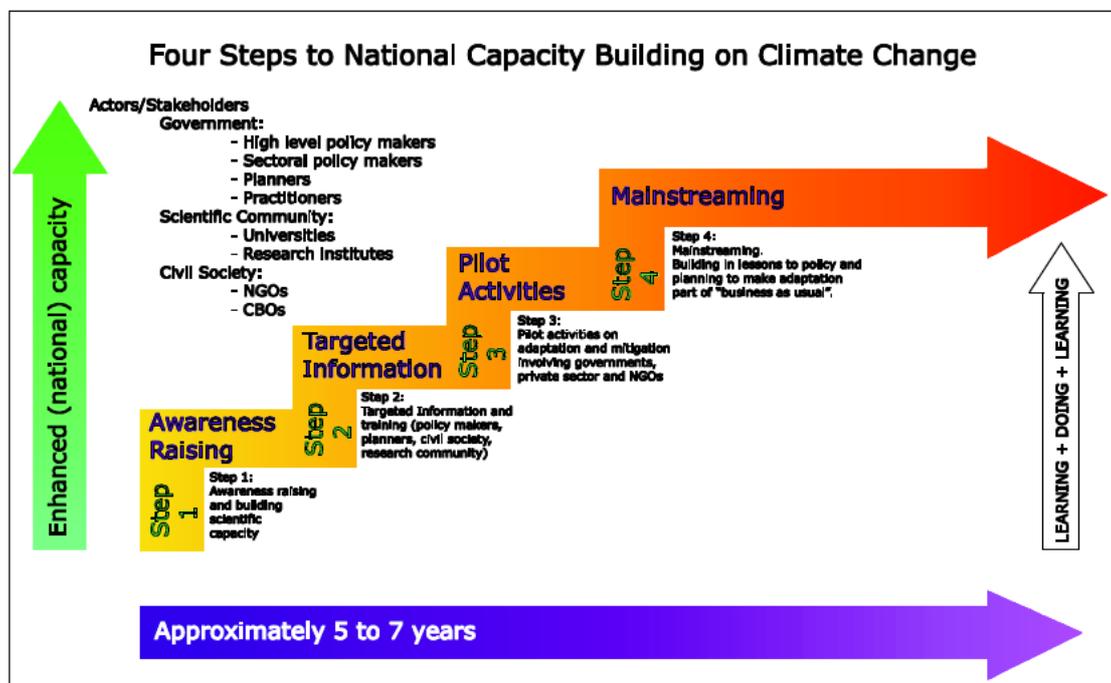
Box 3.1: PEI indicators for successful environmental mainstreaming

- Inclusion of poverty-environment linkages in national development and poverty reduction strategies.
- Strengthened capacity within finance/planning ministries as well as environmental agencies to integrate environment into budget decision-making, sector strategies and implementation programmes.
- Inclusion of poverty-environment linkages in sector planning and implementation strategies.

- Strengthened capacity in key sector ministries to include environmental sustainability into their strategies.
- Widened involvement of stakeholders in making the case for the importance of environment to growth and poverty reduction.
- Improved domestic resource mobilization for poverty-environment investments.
- Increased donor contributions to country-level environmentally sustainable investment.
- Improved livelihoods and access to environmental and natural resources for the poor.

Source: <http://www.unpei.org/about/pe-mainstreaming.asp>

Figure 3.1: Step in mainstreaming: an example



Source : S. Huq and J. Ayers

3.2 Capacity for environmental mainstreaming

First and foremost, effective environmental mainstreaming requires the design or mobilisation of special capacities and institutional processes that are able to span environment-development linkages. These include

- analytical frameworks and information that generate good, specific evidence rather than 'environmental pleading'; and
- new contributions to the main government 'machinery' of planning, expenditure review, budgeting, fiscal policy, and development control.

This is not to say that effective mainstreaming is entirely a technocratic or administrative process; it also takes political and media debate and citizen engagement – participatory ‘platforms’ where issues of environment and development can be debated amongst stakeholders have proven to be key.

More emphasis is needed on the following skills if environmental mainstreaming is to be effective:

- *planning and prioritisation skills*, especially mobilising and refining those used by ‘mainstream’ institutions and processes;
- *economics and business skills* to achieve clarity on environmental benefits, costs and risks, and the distributional effects of big policy decisions and institutional reform;
- *analytical skills* particularly to address environmental trends and poverty-environment links;
- *learning and decision support tools* so that the often pioneering mainstreaming experiences can be built on;
- *foresighting and future-searching skills* in order that long-term environmental issues are well integrated; and
- *communications skills* so that mainstreaming work is clear, well-targeted and influential.

3.3 Work towards a systematic approach

Ultimately, mainstreaming is most effective when environmental issues are taken into account as a fundamental part of planning and decision-making, and as early as possible in these processes. However, it takes time to develop a fully mainstreamed planning system. Thus there tends to be a tension in environmental mainstreaming work between stand-alone initiatives (which tend to be pushed by environment interests) and systemic approaches (which tend to be developed by planning interests).

Stand-alone initiatives try to strengthen environmental organisations or environment-development pilot projects, redressing the imbalance of environment’s invisibility and lack of influence. They can be highly relevant where environmental mainstreaming is at an early stage and a ‘champion’ is needed. They can be easier to fund-raise for, monitor and manage. But ultimately they are difficult to ‘scale up’.

On the other hand, initiatives that aim right from the start to be truly systemic, such as national sustainable development strategies, can be good at mapping needs and rehearsing new approaches, but do not themselves provide all those needs. They often come across as an imposition or a conditionality if pushed by ‘heavyweight’ external players such as the World Bank, or an unrealistic plan if pushed by less powerful players such as IUCN. They are also difficult to monitor or fund over a long period. Their likelihood of success is higher where environmental mainstreaming is at an advanced stage, where the institutional and political climate is right for moving from an ad hoc approach to a systemic approach to mainstreaming.

Effective environmental mainstreaming will therefore involve a mix of approaches, at different stages, over a considerable period of time – perhaps starting with strengthening the capacity of environment groups to engage with others, and then moving on to working directly with the (national) development planning process.

3.4 Communications

Those involved in environmental mainstreaming need to sell their proposition to different target groups, in ways that create incentives for non-environment groups to respond positively. This means avoiding both language that is too environment-specific and developing positive arguments that relate primarily to those groups' own goals and aspirations (as well as some that relate to key fears). Examples of how to pitch the overall intention of environmental mainstreaming include, for example (Bass, 2008):

- 'reversing the downward spiral of environment and poverty',
- 'making poverty reduction irreversible',
- 'securing the environmental foundations for development',
- 'improving country resilience'
- 'policies for better environmental governance',
- 'improving cross-sector environmental benefits and reducing costs',
- 'integrating poor people's environmental needs'
- the focus being on *integration* – a hybrid outcome, and not a one-way environment-into-development outcome ('mainstreaming' in Spanish and French is 'integration' ...)

3.5 Building a platform

A useful way to start addressing the challenge of environmental mainstreaming or to add emphasis and impetus to existing efforts can be to establish a small 'learning group' (of national environmental 'champions', key leaders and decision-makers from different stakeholders). Such a group can work informally to, for example, examine what environmental mainstreaming means in the country context, identify examples of approaches used to date in the country, consider drivers, opportunities and problems, and make recommendations. This approach has recently been used with some success in both Tanzania and Zambia (Box 3.2)

Box 3.2: The environmental mainstreaming learning group approach: examples from Tanzania and Zambia

Tanzania

An IIED-facilitated learning group of environment and development experts met in 2006, co-hosted by the Vice-President's Office and WWF-Tanzania. It addressed the ways in which the national development and poverty reduction plan (MKUKUTA) had included environmental issues. The group concluded that a 'planning gap' had been bridged, notably through:

- The *joint mandate* of the Vice-President's Office for both poverty reduction and environment
- *Outcome-based* development planning processes (as opposed to 'priority sectors'). This allowed environmental interests to show what they can contribute to *all* outcomes.
- A special environmental expenditure review being included in *public expenditure reviews* – asking questions of how environmental assets and hazards are being managed – which was a critical turning point in greatly improving the government budget for environment.

- An effective *donor coordination group* on environment, which worked well in government

The learning group moved on to recommend ways in which to tackle ‘investment, capacity and decentralisation gaps’ to ensure that environment was acted on in development:

- *The environmental investment gap* – firstly requires the identification of priorities amongst the MKUKUTA’s many targets, thus making up for severe under-investment in environmental assets for pro-poor growth and livelihoods. This needs better economic assessment.
- *The environmental capacity gap* – the need especially for environmental information/monitoring systems and institutional development to enable environmental authorities and management bodies to meet new responsibilities for securing environmental services in support of development.
- *A power shift towards localisation and environment-dependent stakeholders* – the MKUKUTA conducted the biggest-ever national consultation on environmental issues: the challenge is how to maintain this momentum and empower people to take part in MKUKUTA implementation.

For report, see Assey *et al.* (2007).

Zambia

An environmental mainstreaming (EM) retreat was organised in September 2008 for 12 leading environmental champions from government, private sector, NGOs and academia. Hosted by the Ministry of Finance and National Planning (MFNP) and the Environmental Council of Zambia (ECZ), and facilitated by IIED, the retreat aimed to review how far the twin endeavours of environment and development had become linked over the years in Zambia. It considered some of the main EM approaches used to date in Zambia and (through brainstorming) identified areas of progress, lessons from this experience and recommendations for improving EM:

- A more systematic approach to EM:
 - EM needs to focus on the central National Development Plan (NDP) process – ensuring that environment is addressed in all sector chapters, and links to all cross-cutting issues;
 - Information and Communications Technology (ICT) solutions can efficiently link environmental information (State of Environment report) with development information;
- Improve capacity for EM:
 - The capacity of Zambian environment authorities needs to be strengthened to collaborate with each other and with mainstream agencies – for the latter in making economic cases;
 - The capacity of the finance and planning ministries and local government as key ‘entry points’ for environment authorities to work with; especially the economics of environmental management and infrastructure, e.g. rates of return and accessing (international) sources of investment
- Enable sectors to integrate positive and negative environmental issues:
 - Develop simple environmental guidelines / standards for each sector;
 - Establish ‘environmental units’ in sector ministries – the experience of such a unit in the Ministry of Mines can be built upon.
 - Introduce new tools especially for policy change, with SEA now positioned to help resolve a number of critical policy issues in e.g. biofuels and new mining developments.

The retreat concluded that a more systematic approach to mainstreaming is needed in Zambia. A report on the key lessons and findings is being prepared to inform the government and development cooperation partners’ environmental mainstreaming initiatives. It will be available at www.environmental-mainstreaming.org by April 2009.

3.6 Basic steps in environmental mainstreaming

The following basic steps might be applied to a sector, or to the whole economy, of a nation or a district. The point is that they should be undertaken *within* a mainstream national, sectoral or local analytical/planning process. The precise steps will depend upon the standard programmatic (cyclical) requirements of that process: ¹³

1. Convening a **multi-stakeholder group** that combines environment and development interests as well as those who bridge such interests – to act as ‘champions’ for environmental mainstreaming, identify/track progress and challenges (in a broad sense), provide policy and other recommendations to government, etc.

An informal approach might be a learning group, as discussed in section 3.5. An example of a more formal one is the National Councils/Commissions for Sustainable Development established in many countries (see profile in Part 2).

2. Identifying/’mapping’ **current links** between development and environment, both positive and negative.

Such links could be, for example, in terms of how specific environmental issues or management initiatives/practices help to achieve or inhibit progress towards each of the MDGs; *or* how development policies, initiatives and practices support or impair particular ecosystem services.

3. Analysing the **outcomes** of these links (e.g. in terms of their contribution to – or deduction from – incomes, livelihoods, health, safety net, growth, etc.).
4. Proposing **desirable links** and environment-development **outcomes** - that can or have good potential to open up and develop environmental opportunities or tackle key environmental constraints or hazards.
5. Establishing or using existing forums and mechanisms to put 1-4 to **public/multi-stakeholder debate** and to agree on/build consensus on what needs to be/can be prioritised.
6. Mapping **institutional (and key actor) roles and responsibilities** for each of the links and outcomes (by local-meso-national-international levels, *or* by sector) – identifying synergies as well as lacunae/clashes,
7. Making the ‘business’ **case for improving environmental inclusion** in each of the specific links (benefits, costs, risks and their distribution – in financial terms, rates of return, etc.).
8. Identifying associated **institutional, governance, capacity changes and investment** required for the above.
9. **Reflecting the above in key mainstream documents** (a) policies, (b) strategies, plans and programmes, and (c) budgets.
10. **Key investments** in development-environment links – by government, private sector and civil society.

¹³ The Environmental Integration Handbook for EC Development Cooperation (2007) gives many permutations of this for projects, programming, implementation and evaluation

11. ***Developing systems and associated capacities*** – coordination, management, financial, information and communication, and monitoring systems – so that they incorporate environment on a sustained basis

The approach does not have to be fully comprehensive, recognising that mainstreaming will take time. For example, one variation would be to focus on significant communities of environment-dependent stakeholders:

- Empower civil society to express a breadth of issues.
- Support process or drivers (above) in sectors or districts that have already expressed the need for environmental action and ‘feel the burn’ to act (e.g. health, infrastructure).

Another would be to select just one priority environmental theme or resource to ‘pave the way’ to broader environmental mainstreaming – rather than push the whole agenda: For example, an initial focus on water, soils or climate change would enable ecological principles to be introduced and help to improve learning.

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Annex 1. Some international initiatives in environmental mainstreaming

UNDP-UNEP Poverty-environment initiative (PEI)

The UNDP-UNEP Poverty Environment Initiative is a joint programme to help countries develop their capacity to “mainstream” poverty-environment linkages into national development planning processes, such as PRSP’s and MDG Achievement Strategies. Based on experience and lessons learned over the past few years of assisting 9 countries in Africa and Asia to launch and sustain poverty-environment mainstreaming programmes, UNDP and UNEP have launched an effort to scale-up the PEI significantly and to work closely with key donors and other partners to expand the effort to other countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The aim is to strengthen UNDP-UNEP support capacity in the different regions and to launch an increased number of country programmes over the coming years. The PEI has produced a guidance note manual on mainstreaming environment into development planning (available at <http://www.unpei.org/>). Its approach is shown in Figure A1

Figure A1: UNDP-UNEP PEI approach to poverty-environment mainstreaming

<i>Preparatory Phase:</i>	<i>Phase 1:</i>	<i>Phase 2:</i>
Finding the entry points and making the case	Integrating environment into national development processes	Meeting the implementation challenge
Preliminary assessments Understanding the institutional and policy context Understanding the poverty-environment linkages	Country-specific evidence Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) Economic analysis Influencing policy processes National: PRSP/ MDG Sectoral and decentralized	Integrating poverty-environment in the monitoring system Indicators and data collection Financing and budgeting for poverty-environment Finance options and budget processes
Raising awareness and building partnerships National consensus and commitment	Developing and costing policy interventions and programmes	Supporting the implementation of interventions and programmes Sectoral and decentralized
Assessing institutional and capacity needs	Strengthening institutions and capacities Tactical capacity building	Strengthening institutions and capacities Longer-term strengthening
Involving stakeholders and coordinating within the development community State actors: environment, finance and planning bodies, sector and local agencies, statistics office, and parliament Non-governmental actors: academia, private sector, civil society, media, and general public Development community: bilateral and multilateral in-country donors and United Nations		

PEI defines poverty-environment mainstreaming as integrating poverty-environment linkages into national development planning processes for poverty reduction and pro-poor growth – such as PRSPs, MDG or growth strategies. It involves establishing the links between environment and poverty and identifying the policies and programmes to bring about better pro-poor environmental management. It is targeted at influencing national plans, budget

processes, sector strategies and local level implementation - reflecting the need to integrate the valuable contribution of environmental management to improved livelihoods, increased economic security and income opportunities for the poor which is largely overlooked in government policy making processes and in the wider debate about development priorities.

In order to coordinate and support the scale-up of the PEI, UNDP and UNEP established a joint Poverty Environment Facility in 2007, based in Nairobi. This effectively makes the partnership between the two organisations operational. The role of the Facility is to provide strategic direction for the PEI scale-up, to coordinate relations with the donors providing funds, to expand technical support and access to knowledge on poverty-environment mainstreaming to the UNDP-UNEP regional teams and the participating countries and to provide a hub for a range of partnerships.

UNDP

“There can be no sustainable social progress or expansion of economic activity unless the natural foundations for human existence are maintained, and there can be no effective protection of the integrity and diversity of natural ecosystems, rational use of natural resources or equitable sharing of benefits unless the necessary institutions are developed”
(UNDP 2004)

In recognition of this interdependence, UNDP has prepared an Environmental Mainstreaming Strategy (UNDP 2004) to ensure that environmental protection requirements will be integrated fully into policies, programming, and operations. The strategy outlines the history and background of environmental mainstreaming initiatives and activities in UNDP as well as opportunities and lessons learned from environmental mainstreaming in policy, programming, and operational processes. Its approach involves integrating sustainability objectives into poverty reduction practices, building internal and external capacities, promoting regional environmental strategies, enhancing environmental soundness and sustainability of UNDP policies, programmes and operational processes, and improving the quality of environment programmes in achieving broader socio-economic and human development goals”. The range of programs that contribute to this strategy is summarised in Table A1.

UNDP (2004) sees the main challenge to environmental mainstreaming as:

“finding a strategic nexus and compatibility between development priorities and environmental management objectives where tradeoffs can be addressed pragmatically and capitalize on potential opportunities that benefit both environmental resources and functions and development priorities. Environmental mainstreaming is, therefore, a policy principle, placing the environment at par with economic and social aspects of decision-making. Environmental mainstreaming goes far beyond the mere application of the conventional Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to each project, and is regarded as a key component of an institution's broader environmental strategy. Stand-alone environmental initiatives are considered insufficient in addressing environmental issues

Effective mainstreaming involves an integration process to pursue environmental policy interests in coordination with other development policies and programmes. Sustainable development involves integration of environmental considerations in substantive, procedural, and methodological dimensions”.

Table A1: Summary profile of PEI and other UNDP environmental mainstreaming programmes and other activities

	PEI	Biodiversity	Chemicals	Climate Change/ Adaptation	Energy	Water	MDG-Support
Main in-country institutions worked with	<i>Central gov – finance, planning, poverty</i>	Environment authority / parks authority	Environment authority (technical sections)	Environment authority	Central gov – finance, planning – <i>for PEI sometimes</i>	Central gov – finance, planning; also transboundary	Central gov – finance, planning in 10 pilot countries
	<i>Sector gov institutions – e.g. agric</i>	Sector government institutions – e.g. agric	Sector gov institutions – agric, water, health, industry, labour, women	Sector gov institutions – agric, water, health, industry	Sector gov institutions – energy, agric, water, health, industry	Water and other sector organisations	Increasingly also sectoral and spatial institutions
	<i>Environment authority</i>	Market institutions	Central gov – <i>via PEI</i>	Central gov – beginning	Local authorities	Basin and x-sector institutions	Local authorities for Mill Villages
	<i>Multi-stakeholder fora</i>	Central gov – finance, planning, poverty				Local authorities	
						Service delivery organisations	
Main in-country decisions targeted	<i>National dev plan / PRS</i>	Protected area plans and budgets	Sector policies, plans, budget	Government policies – in many sectors	National dev plan / PRS	IWRM plans	NDP/PRS – ‘MDG based’
	<i>National budget</i>	Corporate policy and investment	Sector technical procedures	NDP/PRS budget	Energy sector plans and budgets	Water and other sector plans and budgets	Soon also sector plans
	<i>Sector plans and budgets</i>	Community decisions	National dev plan / PRS		National budget	National budget	Sector budget
					Government investment	Local service delivery	
					Local service delivery		
Mainstreaming objective, direction or ‘idea’	<i>Poverty/ environment links (into development)</i>	Environment assets (<i>into development</i>)	Environment hazards (<i>into development</i>)	Environment hazards (<i>into development</i>)	Energy access (<i>into development</i>)	Integrated WRM (including water supply <i>into env and dev work</i>)	MDG targets and programs in PRS
	<i>Pro-poor (into environment)</i>			Sustainable development (<i>into dev</i>)	Cleaning up energy access	Pro-poor (<i>into environment work</i>)	
					Pro-poor, small-scale energy		
Main in-country	<i>Country-driven</i>	Global NGOs e.g.	NDPs, PRSs <i>via</i>	One-off rapid	PRS – esp energy	NDPs, PRSs	PRSs (MDG-

entry points	<i>programs – NDPs, PRSs</i>	Forest Trends, IUCN	<i>PEI</i>	assessments, regionally organised	sections (all big schemes)		based)
	<i>UNDAF, One UN program</i>	International business and investors	UNDAF, One UN program		UN country program, UNDAF	Technical advisers and informal exchange	Sector plans
		UNDAF	<i>PEI team (Uganda)</i>				
Program's practical interventions for mainstreaming	<i>Assessment – p/e links and costs</i>	Economic case making	Situation analysis or review	Rapid situation analysis	Convening: cross-sector dialogue – always	Diagnostics, inc transboundary agreements and regional frameworks	MDG needs assessment diagnostics
	<i>Planning – PRS or NDP</i>	Design of investments, partnerships	Policy/plan document preparation	Policy/plan document preparation	Situation analysis – usually	Tool-kit for IWRM and other water guidance	Millennium Village pov/env
	<i>Advocacy – esp econ case</i>	Brokering deals	Technical tool-kit	Capacity devt of UN country staff	Policy/plan/ targets - sometimes	Capacity devt at various levels	Capacity devt – new phase
	<i>Capacity dev – cross-dept working</i>		Awareness and training	Quality standards			
	<i>Guidance material – handbook</i>			Enabling activities (NCs, NAPAs, and NCSAs)			

Inter-American Development Bank

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) sees considerable benefits in addressing sustainability through the concept of environmental mainstreaming (Box A1). In collaboration with the World Resource Institute, it has set out ideas and recommendations to help identify mainstreaming opportunities to strengthen environmental sustainability across sectors and, in turn, enhance development outcomes¹⁴

At the IDB, mainstreaming refers to addressing environmental issues strategically as a cross-cutting dimension of development, and implies moving beyond environmental impact mitigation to a more encompassing and strategic approach to achieving sustainability.

Mainstreaming is taken to require consideration of the environment in the earliest stages of the decision-making cycle, when development challenges as well as proposed interventions are framed. It prompts consideration of how interventions targeted at environmental and natural resources management can play an integral part in achieving broader development objectives, as well as how initiatives outside the narrowly-defined “environment sector” can be designed to support environmentally sustainable development

Box A1: IDB views on the Benefits of Environmental Mainstream

- ***Increases in the positive development impact of IDB interventions*** – facilitates design of interventions that leverage or produce opportunities to enhance positive development outcomes.
- ***Greater cost effectiveness in program design and operations*** – enables analysis of which interventions deliver the greatest benefits at the lowest economic, social and environmental costs or where the biggest return for a development dollar can be obtained.
- ***Better sequencing of development interventions and technical assistance*** – encourages a broad understanding of the context that influences a particular development problem, which in turn informs decisions about what series and sequence of actions are most critical.
- ***Identification and prevention of legacy issues*** – supports anticipation and avoidance of recurring problems and long-term consequences associated with inadequately designed or irreversible actions.
- ***Reductions in reputational, operational and credit risks at the portfolio, country or sector level*** – determines whether the Bank’s portfolio or its activities in particular client countries are concentrated in geographic areas or industries that may suffer significant environmental, social and economic impacts

Source:

<http://74.125.39.104/search?q=cache:HXjPDj3tWBUJ:www.iadb.org/sds/doc/ENV-EnvironmentalMainstreamingApplications.pdf+environmental+mainstreaming&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=10&gl=uk&ie=UTF-8>

¹⁴ Available at; <http://74.125.39.104/search?q=cache:HXjPDj3tWBUJ:www.iadb.org/sds/doc/ENV-EnvironmentalMainstreamingApplications.pdf+environmental+mainstreaming&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=10&gl=uk&ie=UTF-8>

The World Bank

The World Bank approach is to set environmental priorities during the design of programmes and projects and to encourage linkages between environment and macro-economic measures. It aims to improve quality of both life and growth by focusing on better resource management. It has introduced environmental policies and procedures to integrate good environmental management into its operations; and developed environmental assistance programmes to help client countries integrate environmental issues into their development processes, to address their pressing environmental challenges, and to help them implement global environmental conventions.

The Bank's Environment Strategy ¹⁵ emphasises environment mainstreaming in sector lending by stressing the need for cross-sectoral approaches to environmental issues.

European Union

The EU views environmental integration as a process through which sustainable development should be promoted, namely using management tools, dialogue, aspiration statements, sectoral and institutional reforms, and implementation of EC environmental laws and policies. European Development Policy requires that the environment as a cross-cutting issue be considered in all thematic priorities, including trade and investment, conflict prevention, human rights and governance, and international organisations

Development co-operation strategies between the EU and individual countries or regions, known as Country and Regional Strategy Papers (CSPs/RSPs), must integrate both the country's national strategies for development and EC objectives. The programming phase – the process of consultation between the EU and individual governments through which the utilisation of the money for a given period is planned - is crucial for environmental integration because key decisions on the overall co-operation process are made then. The main tools for environmental integration in programming are the Country and the Regional Environmental Profiles

In 2004, the Commission set up a help-desk and a support and resources website (<http://www.environment-integration.eu/>) in order to assist staff and partner countries to mainstream environmental considerations in European development co-operation. It has also adopted an environmental integration handbook for EC development cooperation (EC 2006) to assist EC staff and partner organisations in integrating the environment into EC development cooperation interventions

¹⁵ World Bank Environment Strategy (available at: <http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/envext.nsf/41ByDocName/EnvironmentStrategy>).