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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Update on evaluation activities

Report on the evaluations for the biennium 2014-15

Introduction

At its eighty-second meeting the Executive Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations of its event "Evaluation for Accountability and Learning" which took place in November 2015. In particular, it agreed to include evaluation as an agenda item at the ECE Executive Committee (EXCOM) meetings and at the Commission session to enhance participation and ownership of evaluation by member States. It was also agreed that the secretariat would regularly inform EXCOM about the results of current evaluation and plans for future evaluations.

This note informs member States about the results of the internal evaluations undertaken in the period 2014-2015. As per the disclosure policy contained in the UNECE Evaluation Policy approved by EXCOM in 2014, full evaluation reports and management responses are available on Open UNECE at: <http://www.unece.org/info/open-unece/evaluation.html>.

Part I: Programme Level Evaluations

As part of its Evaluation Work Plan 2014-2015 UNECE (see ANNEX) undertook one evaluation at the programme level, namely the *Review of the Role of Information and Communication in Promoting the Visibility of the Work of the ECE*.

Below is a synthesis of the evaluation's main results, conclusions and recommendations.

Title: Review of the role of information and communication in promoting the visibility of the work of the UNECE

Timing: Concluded in 2015

Division/Unit responsible: Programme Management Unit

Scope: The evaluation assessed the relative contributions, value added, relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the various communications activities conducted in UNECE during 2008-2014.

Methodology: The methodology consisted of the following data sources and collection methods:

- Analysis of existing information including communications products from the UNECE secretariat, previous evaluations and relevant reviews; IT platforms and services used for communications and outreach; products and templates;
- An electronic survey of key stakeholders of UNECE;
- An electronic survey of UNECE staff members;
- Interviews with selected stakeholders.

Data analysis methods included both quantitative and qualitative measures.

Key findings: The evaluation found that external views of UNECE visibility are generally positive, though scope for improvements remains. There is a strong perception internally that UNECE has poor visibility in the mainstream media. There is significant uncertainty regarding the identity and relative importance of UNECE's external stakeholders. This negatively affects the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation's overall communications. Similarly, UNECE staff's limited awareness of the organisation's communications strategy undermines its ability to communicate clearly with one voice. The Information Unit, as the primary communications centre for UNECE, is performing with limited resources and expertise to call upon. Digital communications through UNECE's website and its official social media platforms, primarily Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram, represent the strongest aspects of the organisation's communications and are used effectively, notwithstanding the fact that the many UNECE staff, together with external stakeholders, lag behind in their use of modern communications tools. There is a strong demand for better Russian

language communications. There is also considerable internal and external appetite for more high-profile promotional events to communicate UNECE activities to a wider audience. UNECE products could be communicated more efficiently with a greater use of electronic publications. Specialist media is a key communications platform for UNECE and there is plenty of scope to develop further coverage in this sector.

Conclusions: The evaluation concluded that UNECE has not yet demonstrated its lustre to a wider audience. Its visibility in mainstream media in particular is extremely limited. The new website is a significant step in the right direction and even before the re-design, was rated positively as an information source. UNECE's decentralised structure negatively affects its communications, as do the limited understanding within the organisation of the importance of communications and the lack of diplomatic experience at some levels when it comes to political communications. There appears to be no formal breakdown of responsibilities between communications done at a central and subprogramme level. UNECE's brand is undermined by the absence of a clear understanding of the identity and relative importance of its key stakeholders. Promotional, profile-raising events occur in an *ad hoc* fashion. UNECE could take more advantage of existing communications resources within the UN. UNECE's presentations to UN media briefings have insufficient impact and there is limited media interest in UNECE from the mainstream media corps and outlets at present. UNECE's written products can appear uninteresting, overwhelming and inaccessible to outside audiences.

Recommendations: The Information Unit needs to be strengthened with additional resources. To tackle the issue of UNECE's decentralised structure, a properly trained Communications Focal Point should be selected for each sub-programme with formal responsibility for this task. The formal delineation of responsibilities for communications between the Information Unit and subprogrammes needs to be clearly defined. Regularly updated communications training should be instituted across the organisation to improve all aspects of communications, with particular focus on writing skills. UNECE should agree a realistic and adequately resourced annual programme of events as part of its profile-raising activity. Political communications are in need of greater sophistication and sensitivity to external stakeholders. Existing free-of-charge communications resources within the UN should be exploited more robustly and routinely. UNECE media briefings need to be made more user-friendly and effective while media engagement more broadly should be intensified, with particular attention towards both high-profile mainstream media, where coverage is extremely limited, and specialist media. A limited stakeholder analysis is required to identify and prioritise key UNECE audiences. Once this is complete, the organisation would benefit from a review of UNECE's communications strategy. The primacy of the UNECE website should be maintained alongside robust and successful digital engagement. Written products for key external audiences need to be improved across the board and editorial capacity strengthened.

Part III Subprogramme Level Evaluations

As part of its Evaluation Work Plan 2014-15, UNECE also undertook three evaluations at the subprogramme, namely:

1. *The role of UNECE Country Profiles on Housing and Land management and related follow-up activities in development of national housing legislation programmes*
2. *Review of UNECE activities under the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*
3. *The global and regional impact of the UNECE regulations on transport of dangerous goods.*

Below is the synthesis of these evaluations:

Title: The role of UNECE Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management (HLM) and related follow-up activities in development of national housing legislation programmes

Timing: Concluded in 2016

Division/Unit responsible: Forests, Land and Housing Division, Housing and Land Management Unit

Scope: The evaluation includes all UNECE member States that has a country profile performed (Bulgaria (1996), Poland (1998), Slovakia (1999), Lithuania (2000), Romania (2001), Republic of Moldova (2002), Albania (2002), Armenia (2004), Russian Federation (2004), Serbia and Montenegro (2006), Georgia (2007), Belarus (2008), Kyrgyzstan (2010), Azerbaijan (2010), Tajikistan (2011), Ukraine (2013), Republic of Moldova (2015) and Uzbekistan (2015)). The evaluation process engaged host government representatives, national consultants, CP focal points, international and regional consultants, and NGOs. The evaluation did not include other housing, urban planning and land management work done by the HLM Unit. Gender aspects were also covered.

Methodology: The following data collection methods were employed:

1. Review of background documents and information on the CPs;
2. In-depth interviews (Skype/telephone) with a selected number of UNECE and external stakeholders involved in the CP exercise; and
3. An online survey among UNECE member states, project participants and external stakeholders.

Key findings: The findings demonstrate that governments highly value the CPs as an instrument for the analysis of the countries' HLM policies, which supports the governments' efforts in developing, reforming and advancing national legislation, strategies, plans and institutional frameworks on housing, urban planning and land management. The CP Guidelines allow a great degree of flexibility in adapting its content and structure to changing political, social and economic contexts. The CP exercise creates a unique opportunity for different branches of the national governments to consolidate their work, engage in interministerial committees, and cooperate on issues of housing, urban planning and land management.

Conclusions: The evaluation concludes that the CP programme is relevant, and is effective in achieving its objectives. However, the absence of programme impact indicators and monitoring mechanisms, a number of inefficient and bureaucratic procedures, and a lack of sustainable funding negatively affect its effectiveness.

Recommendations: The report makes a set of recommendations aimed at improving mechanisms for the preparation, execution, monitoring and follow-up of the CP analytical study. Based on findings and subsequent conclusions, the evaluation recommends the improvement of fundraising, the broadening of partnerships, the promotion of peer-review and online tools for collaboration, the alignment of the goals and objectives of the programme with SDGs, embedding the programme with necessary impact indicators, the establishment of follow-up and monitoring mechanisms, the broadening of the application and the monitoring of gender issues, the update of the Guidelines with more efficient provisions, and the creation of web-based tools for exchanging and sharing of information and best practices.

Title: Review of UNECE activities under the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Timing: Concluded in 2016

Division/Unit responsible: Environment Division

Scope: The scope of the review was to assess the relevance, the effectiveness and the efficiency of UNECE activities in implementing the Convention and the Protocol. In particular, it was meant to assess the role of the Secretariat of the treaties in servicing and supporting the work of the governing and subsidiary bodies under the Convention and the Protocol, including Meetings of the Parties to the Convention (MoP); Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (MOP/MOP); Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment; Implementation Committee; and the Bureau. The evaluation also reviews work from 2011 to 2015, carried out under joint work plans for 2011–2014 and 2014–2017 adopted by the Parties. The evaluation results can be used to ensure the relevance of policy and workplan activities for 2017–2020, and enable more effective procedures for the delivery of future activities, where necessary.

Methodology: The findings of the review are based on a desk review of the relevant documentation, a survey with a questionnaire covering the most important aspects of the UNECE work for servicing the Convention and the Protocol, and interviews with the representatives of selected Parties to the Convention or Protocol from the various sub-regions of UNECE.

Key findings: The review found that most of the activities have been implemented in accordance with the workplans adopted by the Parties, and that the activities undertaken were mostly relevant to the goal and tasks of the Convention and the Protocol. The respondents, representing 20 stakeholders (19 countries and one non-governmental organization), were mostly satisfied and very satisfied with the work of the UNECE secretariat to the two treaties, which most of them considered as very effective and efficient. The review also provides an assessment of the gender aspects of the UNECE activities under the Convention and the Protocol. The report concluded that no gender discrimination has been observed by the stakeholders, and that the gender equality principle is well implemented within the relevant UNECE activities.

Conclusions: Overall, the Review showed that the UNECE activities on implementation of the Convention and the Protocol are highly appreciated by the Parties and stakeholders, especially regarding the Secretariat performance. The Secretariat plays a crucial role in coordination of the relevant activities among the Parties, communication, preparation of the reports, development of workplans, reviewing the performance of the Parties, etc.

The overall performance of the UNECE on implementation of the Convention and the Protocol is considered as satisfactory. The report also summarizes the strengths and shortcomings of the UNECE activities under the Convention and the Protocol, including, amongst the strengths, the performance of the Secretariat in all aspects of the process and their work, and amongst the weaknesses, financial certainty affecting different activities.

Recommendations: Building on an analysis of factors contributing or creating obstacles to the achievement of the goals of the Convention and the Protocol and to implementation of the workplans, the evaluation report provides a wide range of recommendations on improving the work of the governing and subsidiary bodies of the Convention and the Protocol, with a focus on the role of the UNECE secretariat. The recommendations relate to: improving the procedures and the working methods of the treaty bodies; funding and in-kind contribution issues; raising awareness on the Convention and the Protocol within and beyond the UNECE region; improving the relevancy of the Convention and the Protocol; the process of planning of new activities; reporting; and enhancing the communication and interactions between the Parties and between the secretariat and the Parties.

Overall, the main recommendation for the secretariat by the survey participants was to maintain the high level of performance in servicing the treaties that has been achieved to date.

Title: The global and regional impact of the UNECE regulations on transport of dangerous goods.

Timing: Concluded in 2016

Division/Unit responsible: Transport Division

Scope: The evaluation covers UNECE and the ECOSOC Recommendations their relationship to the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals(SCEGHS) related to the transport of dangerous goods, and their impact at both the regional (UNECE Member States) and global levels. The period specified to be covered by the review is 2005 to 2014.

Methodology: The evaluation built on existing reviews and relevant information previously gathered to minimize duplication in the data gathering phase. A desk review covered mandates, legal instruments, and regulations ; biennial reports of the Secretary-General to the ECOSOC on the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals; relevant mandates and reports of other organizations active in international cooperation on these issues. Moreover, new data were gathered from both internal and external stakeholders through electronic surveys and interviews. The evaluator also reviewed statistics concerning the transport of dangerous goods, meetings and correspondence.

Key findings: This evaluation had a very high number of findings, summarized briefly below. The evaluation found there is no global consistent data relating to the transport of dangerous goods and the UN provisions for the transport of dangerous goods provide a straight forward harmonized procedure for consignors, carriers and enforcement staff. Not only does a standardised system assist in safety, but it also provides enormous benefit to consignors and carriers of dangerous goods. The report noted that the protection of the environment came about originally through major accidents at sea in the 1970s and 1980s but environmental damage is now a recognised problem for all surface modes. In this regard, the standardised system of UN numbers for chemicals, groups of chemicals (generic, n.o.s. entries) along with the marking and labelling requirements has led to the development of relatively simple emergency response systems around the world. The evaluation also noted that many accidents are the result of human error and training personnel in the rules relevant to their job function reduces the risks. As far as the role of the UN is concerned, the evaluation found that the UN provisions offer a harmonised system for use by all stakeholders whether at a national or international level. The UN Committee structure plays a significant part in ensuring effective and efficient control and dissemination of the regulations and the administration of the committee structure at the UN offices in Geneva with an efficient and dedicated secretariat ensures the whole system works in a timely manner. The efficiency and effectiveness of the ECOSOC committee and UNECE is surely revealed by the results achieved over the last sixty years. The application of the various dangerous goods Conventions/Agreements shows that most countries of the world apply some or all aspects of the UN regulations.

Conclusions/Recommendations: The evaluation had a number of recommendations can conclusions, which are reported in detail and commented by the Secretariat in its management response. This can be found on the Open UNECE website. In general, the evaluation concluded that the provisions of UN Model Regulations on the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods are widely applied through international, regional and national legislation. There remains further scope to ensure even wider application and, importantly, regular updates of legislation to apply the latest versions of the UN instruments. It has been demonstrated that UNECE can respond rapidly and effectively by working together with UN experts/contracting parties when faced with major new challenges. The UNECE Secretariat, together with the other relevant UN Secretariats, provides a universally well

respected and highly professional performance in servicing the instruments for which they have the remit to support. However, there is little available facility to do much more than service meetings and prepare regulatory text revisions for publication. Outreach to governments and NGOs is on an ad-hoc and unstructured basis dependent on staff availability. Without a formal technical support programme it is difficult to envisage how the UNECE can impact greatly on the wider adoption and application of its various instruments.

Part III: Evaluation of projects

In the biennium 2014-2015 UNECE undertook the evaluation of two United Nations Development Account (UNDA) Projects:

12/13 AB Promoting energy efficiency investments for climate change mitigation and sustainable development /8th Tranche.

12/13AB Sustainable forest management for greener economies in the Caucasus and Central Asia/ 8th Tranche.

Below a short summary of the evaluation results:

Title: Promoting energy efficiency investments for climate change mitigation and sustainable development

Timing: Completed in 2015

Division/Unit responsible: Sustainable Energy Division

Scope: The evaluation considered the impact of the project on the capacity of the member States of the UN Regional Commissions (RCs) to attract investments in support of energy efficiency projects in the context of climate change mitigation and sustainable development.

In accordance with its ToR, the evaluation included an assessment of:

- a) the *project relevance* with regard to the objectives;
- b) the *effectiveness of the project* in terms of implementation of planned activities and achievement of target outcomes;
- c) the *efficiency of the project* in terms of cost-effective utilization of allocated funds.

Methodology: The evaluation was based on a desk review of documentation provided by the lead implementing UN Department, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, and by the four other Regional Commissions (ESCWA, ECA, ESCAP and ECLAC). Information was also obtained from project files, relevant conference and workshop documentation and other official records, as well as internet resources. In order to ensure availability of complete and comparable data sets, a detailed questionnaire was sent to all implementing partners. The evaluation consultant conducted brief visits to UNECE in January 2015, and to ESCAP in February 2015 to collect relevant data, and to discuss achievements and challenges of individual project components. Relevant staff members of the other Regional Commissions were contacted via email.

Key findings: The evaluation found that the project was well formulated and highly relevant to achieving the development objective. The project objective and activities fell well within the mandates of the five Regional Commissions and were fully aligned with approved programmes of work. Project implementation was guided by clearly defined indicators of achievement and all essential outputs were produced as planned. The training courses were well attended by candidate project developers, and the policy dialogues regularly involved key stakeholders and leading policy decision makers. Implementation of proposed energy efficiency policy reforms will take time, and ultimate outcomes cannot always be predicted, but the evaluation found that the project can be

credited for having successfully initiated several national consultation processes. The project has also enabled professional networking not only at regional, but also at inter-regional and global levels.

Conclusions: The evaluation concluded that the project has been implemented effectively and efficiently. UNECE clearly demonstrated leadership, not only in the project initiation, but also in project execution. UNECE also shared its experiences, its information materials and its training curricula with the other Regional Commissions, inspiring a concerted global cooperation to enhance sustainable development. By providing the project with its budget, the Development Account has enabled all five Regional Commissions to synchronize their political messaging on energy and energy efficiency policies for sustainable development. The Development Account has enabled the five Regional Commissions to work together in a productive way, to gain greater visibility, and to demonstrate effective international cooperation in the spirit of a “One UN”.

Recommendations: The evaluation recommended that UNECE should review the format of the online publications of the country reports (on UNECE webpage). Greater standardization of cover pages and uniformity of layout can improve the visibility of project outputs and attract additional readers. UNECE should increase its use of electronic media for dissemination of training materials and project outputs. It was also recommended that RCs should publish the Synthesis Report, as planned, in electronic and printed formats, and disseminate it widely among project participants and other potentially interested stakeholders. Moreover, RCs should continuously monitor and document progress and success of selected projects as ‘best practice’ examples in the area of energy efficiency financing. In this regard, RCs may consider formulating follow-up project proposals for further extra-budgetary funding from bi- or multi-lateral sources. Future DA project proposals should include an explicit budgetary provision for electronic publications to ensure the maximum use of the investment in training materials. Essential training materials should be translated into all relevant (regional) UN languages to increase the readership and the effectiveness of the capacity building efforts. Future DA projects should also place greater emphasis on gender balance in their implementation, e.g. by setting more ambitious indicative targets for women participation as beneficiaries, resource persons or consultants. Administrators of the Development Account may consider supporting similar “global project initiatives” in future that can enable UN Departments, including the Regional Commissions, to “act as one”, on enhancing sustainability in the energy sector, or on addressing other relevant global sustainable development concerns.

Title: Sustainable forest management for greener economies in the Caucasus and Central Asia

Timing: Completed in 2016

Division/Unit responsible: Forests, Land and Housing, Forestry and Timber Section

Scope: In line with the TOR, the evaluation covered all seven project countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan). The evaluation process engaged national consultants, national focal points, international and regional consultants, as well as NGOs involved in the project implementation. Main activities (workshops) and outputs (training package, reports) and their impact and usefulness were assessed. The evaluation covered the organizational contribution of UNECE only. The evaluation focused on the period spanning from the first regional workshop (April 2014) through the second regional workshop (April 2015) to the last national workshop (September 2015), which is the period of implementation. The thematic scope of the evaluation was forest sector development in relation to the green economy, forest policy development, forest data collection and wood energy. The evaluation excluded other capacity building or forest reporting work by the UNECE-FAO Forestry and Timber Section. Gender aspects were also covered.

Methodology: An external evaluator carried out an extensive desk review of existing project documents. The evaluation was also carried out by using a tailored questionnaire, which was elaborated together with the UNECE project manager. The questionnaire included open and closed questions and was available in English and Russian languages. The questionnaire was e-mailed to

over 130 participants of the project in all CCA countries. In addition, interviews were conducted with the project manager and national focal points via phone and Skype. The project logical framework (log frame) and time table were analyzed to evaluate their effectiveness. Planned activities were compared with achieved results using indicators established in the log frame and time table of the project.

Key findings: The evaluation found that most of the activities were implemented in accordance with the project log frame and timeline. This resulted in fully meeting the objective on capacity development and partly meeting the objectives on a coaching program for the development of national action plans. The evaluation report reveals that awareness raising and capacity activities combined with active multi-stakeholder cooperation is vital for introducing green economy and SFM principles in the Caucasus and Central Asia region (CCA).

Conclusions: The evaluation concluded that awareness raising and capacity building activities combined with active multi-stakeholder cooperation are vital for the introduction of green economy and SFM principles in the countries of the CCA region. Specifically on the two objectives of the project, the evaluation concluded that the first objective, “enhanced knowledge of countries to develop policies for enhancing the forest sector’s contribution to greener economies” was fully met, as a number of capacity building activities were effectively implemented at the local, national and regional levels through trainings, seminars and coaching sessions. Objective 2, on conducting of coaching program in three countries for the development of national action plans for implementing sustainable forest management was partially achieved. Despite the fact that participatory planning methodology and tools were considered to be effectively transmitted to the stakeholders, the process of adoption of the action plans proceeded differently in the pilot counties. There are tangible results achieved: informed and trained groups, information consolidated on the webpage, developed and/or adopted country action plans or strategy document that will be sustained after completion of the project. However, in order to achieve a long-term sustainable outcome towards policy adoption in the CCA countries, it is critical to promote these activities and keep the effort going into the future.

Recommendations: The evaluation noted that mainstreaming the green economy and SFM with decision makers needs more efforts. Multi-stakeholder cooperation should be considered as one of the effective tools for building the capacity of state agency employees, but the result is capacity development of individual employees rather than for institutions. Closer cooperation with state agencies, focusing on creating ownership from their side, including (but not limited to) development of a memorandum of cooperation was recommended. Another tool to lead decision-makers to implement inclusive policy development processes could be advocacy processes from civic groups. It might be useful to provide them with the knowledge and skills for advocating their vision from the bottom up. The project documentation showed that information placed on the webpage is widely visited and used by different stakeholders. It is very important that the webpage is maintained and/or expanded into an information portal (web-hub) as it was initially planned by the project. It would be beneficial to expand the webpage, uploading more results oriented documents – action plans, programmes and strategies on the webpage. It was also noted that it is important to a) develop information packages in local languages, b) develop printed information packages and disseminate them on the local level c) develop national awareness raising campaigns with involvement of local youth, women groups, and local leadership. Specific recommendations on how to improve trainings were made. Last, but not least, the evaluation noted that traditionally, in the CCA region, the forest is considered to be a “men’s” place, and the sector (both at national and local levels) is managed mostly by males. However, women are one of the primary users of the forest non-timber resources. Therefore, female involvement in decision-making process, inclusion in the forestry sector management and empowerment of female groups, can have substantial effect for the promotion of SFM principles.

Part IV: PMU evaluation activities

a) EXCOM event on Evaluation for Accountability and Learning

PMU organized an event for EXCOM members on 24 November 2015, on the Occasion of the International Year of Evaluation. EXCOM member States had an opportunity to learn from representatives of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) about the evaluation functions of the United Nations and to interact with evaluation experts to discuss how to develop an evaluation culture which is supportive of organisational learning and accountability in UNECE.

The meeting developed a number of recommendations, which were subsequently endorsed by EXCOM. Member states agreed that UNECE should ensure a balanced approach between learning and accountability in evaluation. It should select the themes and prepare its evaluation work plan on the basis of the regular risk assessment. It was also agreed that UNECE principal, subordinate and expert bodies should take into account the results of evaluations when making policy decisions and strategic planning. For example, decisions on the changes to the strategic framework and proposed programme budget should draw, *inter alia*, on the results of evaluations.

UNECE should include the evaluation as an agenda item in the programme of work of the EXCOM and the Commission session, to enhance participation and ownership by its member states. This report is prepared in response to this decision.

EXCOM also agreed that UNECE should increase regular budget resources and integrate gender and human rights in evaluation. Moreover, it should establish a certain ‘a firewall’ between the evaluation and other management functions.

b) Evaluation training workshop for UNECE staff

On 24 June 2016 the Programme Management Unit (PMU) held a training session for UNECE staff on evaluation. The objective of the training was to strengthen the capacity of UNECE staff for evaluation. In particular participants learned:

- What are the UNEG Norms and Standards for evaluation;
- How to conduct evaluation of normative work;
- How to better plan and manage an evaluation;
- How to ensure effective-follow up to evaluation

The training consisted of presentations on the theory and process of evaluation and practical exercises. A total of 32 staff members participated in the training. At the end of the session, participants were asked to evaluate the training workshops and results were very encouraging. Participants felt their knowledge had improved and that they were able to use what they had learned in their work and even advise colleagues on matters related to evaluation.

According to PMU, the training session highlighted a need for proper information and learning opportunities for UNECE staff. If the evaluation culture is to be enhanced, staff needs an opportunity to learn how best to use this function, to the benefit of their programmes and projects. PMU can organize additional trainings, if provided with funds to allow PMU staff to be professionally trained and to purchase relevant material. A more structured way to develop and provide trainings should be identified.

c) Review of TORs and quality control

In line with the UNECE Evaluation policy, PMU oversees all evaluations undertaken at UNECE, provides guidance to the divisions concerned and controls quality. In particular, PMU has developed a template for the development of terms of reference and all ToRs developed after July 2015 were thoroughly checked for compliance with UNEG guidance. PMU also oversees the selection of the

external evaluator, provides him/her with regular guidance and reviews the draft reports for compliance with UNEG guidance.

d) Roster of evaluators

In 2016, PMU thoroughly reviewed and completely renewed the roster of evaluation experts. In particular, it eliminated those evaluators who do not meet the UNEG Core and Ethical Competencies for Evaluators. In addition, it reached out to expert evaluators through professional evaluation networks worldwide. As a result, 45 new evaluators have been identified through a robust selection process added to the roster of experts, bringing it to the total number of 90 qualified evaluators. This will enable UNECE staff to choose evaluators from the list of vetted and pre-screened candidates who meet UNEG Core and Ethical Competencies for Evaluators.

UNECE staff can now easily access the roster through a dedicated webpage in the UNECE intranet, and identify the best candidate for their needs. Should UNECE staff require a very specific expertise, PMU can issue external calls for such evaluators, through professional evaluation networks worldwide.

e) Open UNECE

PMU is responsible for the creation and maintenance of the Open UNECE webpages, which were created to enhance transparency and provide member states with updated information on:

- The UNECE accountability Framework;
- The UNECE Strategic Framework
- Programme Budget
- Programme Performance Reports
- Evaluations
- Audits
- The work of the UNECE Grant Committee

It also includes also the Project Monitoring Tool (PMT), which provides information on all projects and activities funded from extra-budgetary resources, in particular: (i) project documents, (ii) progress reports, and (iii) end of project completion reports.

Specifically on evaluation, Open UNECE provides information on:

- The UNECE Evaluation biennial work plans;
- The UNECE Evaluation Policy
- OIOS Evaluation Scorecards of UNECE
- Internal evaluations
- External evaluations.

f) Contribution to UNEG Evaluation Week

This year the UNEG annual Evaluation Week took place in Geneva from 25 to 29 of April 2016. The theme of the week and of the High Level Event was “Evaluation Fit for 2030” and addressed several evaluation challenges facing the United Nations, in particular implementation of the 21030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

The Annual Meeting of UNEG, which was part of the week, revised the old and approved the updated UNEG Norms and Standards. It also discussed how evaluation can support accountability and learning; presented different system-wide evaluation initiatives and discussed the issue of professionalization of evaluation

The week benefitted from the participation over 100 UN staff from 46 UN agencies, and other partners.

The UNECE was actively involved in the organization of the week. PMU was a member of the Steering Committee for the High Level Event, contributed to the logistics, outreach and communications during the week.

g) Coordination of the RC's evaluation network

At the Regional Commissions coordination meeting held in Beirut in 12-16 September 2015, it was decided that 2016 was the turn of UNECE to coordinate the work of Regional Commissions. In line with this decision, PMU organized a meeting of evaluation focal points in Geneva on 28 April 2016, in the margins of the UNEG Evaluation Week. At the meeting, Regional Commissions shared their experiences and challenges faced in performing their evaluation functions. The RCs evaluation focal points also discussed potential themes for the OIOS thematic evaluation of RCs, the OIOS evaluation scorecard, the meta-review of Development Account evaluations and the meta-evaluation of the UN-SWAP performance.

h) Inputs to OIOS, JIU and BoA reports

In the biennium 2014-15 PMU coordinated and provided its own inputs to the following reports:

Office for Internal Oversight Services

- Evaluation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
- Audit of selected subprogrammes and related technical cooperation projects in the Economic Commission for Europe
- Thematic evaluation of monitoring and evaluation of the millennium development goals (MDGs): lessons learned for the post 2015 era.

Joint Inspection Unit

- Cooperation among United Nations Regional Commissions
- Post-Rio+20 review of environmental governance within the United Nations Systems
- Analysis of the evaluation function in the United Nations System
- Review and activities and resources devoted to address climate change in the United Nations system organizations
- Knowledge management in the United Nations system
- Evaluation of the contribution of the UN Development System to strengthening national capacities for statistical analysis and data collection to support the achievement of the MDGs and other Internationally-Agreed Goals
- Succession planning in the United Nations system organizations
- Fraud prevention, detection and response in United Nations system organizations
- Evaluation of mainstreaming of full and productive employment and decent work by the United Nations system organizations
- Donor-led accountability and oversight reviews in the in the United Nations system organizations

Board of Auditors

Review of the management of grants and transfers to implementing partners in the United Nations

i) Gender meta-review

In January 2016 PMU prepared a meta-review of gender related aspects for the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, or UN-SWAP for 2015. Only three 2015 evaluations were completed by December 2015 and thus included in the meta-review. The overall average rating for the evaluations was 2, which corresponds to assessment ‘missing requirements’ according to the UN SWAP criteria.

The review noted that Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW) considerations were not included in the Terms of Reference of these evaluations. As a result, gender was not integrated in evaluations. Given the results of this meta-review, PMU made sure to revise the TORs of the evaluations which had not yet been completed and to include GEEW considerations.

Conclusions

All evaluations planned for 2014-15 were completed, and those developed after mid-2015 were in compliance with UNEG guidance. The evaluation function of UNECE has strengthened as a result of the development and adoption of the UNECE Evaluation Policy in 2014 and a number of actions initiated in 2015, including training, events and activities related to evaluation. Efforts are underway to strengthen the evaluation culture even further and enhance the use of evaluations as tools for organizational learning.

ECE Biennial Evaluation Workplan 2014-2015

Evaluation Title		Purpose	By Whom	Resources (Financial & Human)	Responsible Staff / & SP Focal Point	Schedule (Q/Y)	Type
No.	Internal Evaluations						
1	Review of the role of information and communication in promoting the visibility of the UNECE work	The Evaluation will review the effectiveness of information and communication in promoting the visibility of the UNECE work	Consultant	\$18,000 (external consultant) P5 – 3 months G6 – 0.5 month	<i>Programme Management Unit</i>	Q1 / 2015	Programme-level
2	Role of UNECE Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management and related follow-up activities in development of national housing legislation and programmes	The Evaluation will review the role of the UNECE Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management and related follow-up activities in development of national housing legislation and programmes	Consultant	\$10,000 (external consultant) P4 – 1 months P2 – 1 month	<i>Housing & Land Management</i>	Q2 / 2015	Subprogramme-level
3	Review of UNECE activities under the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	The Evaluation will review relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the UNECE activities under the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA	Consultant	\$10,000 ¹ (external consultant) P4 – 1.5 months G4 – 0.5 month	<i>Environment Division</i>	Q4 / 2015	Subprogramme-level
4	The global and regional impact of the UNECE regulations on transport of dangerous goods	The Evaluation will review the global and regional impact of the UNECE regulation on transport of dangerous goods.	Consultant	\$20,000 ² (external consultant) P5 – 0.5 month P3 – 1.5 months	<i>Transport Division</i>	Q3 / 2014	Subprogramme-level
				Unit Monthly Cost³		Total	
				Consultancy		\$58,000	
				P5 – 3.5 months		\$73,906	
				P4 - 2.5 months		\$44,832	
				P3 – 1.5 months		\$22,425	
				P2 – 1 month		\$12,000	
				GS – 1 month		\$12,133	
				Total:		\$223,296	

¹ Calculated on 1 month of consultant's work. Division may need up to additional two weeks.

² Division requests 8 weeks of a P4 level consultant, estimated by PMU at USD\$20,000 based on UNOG salary scales (2013)

³ Based on Standard Salary Costs Version 7 Year 2015