Partnership Policy

This document has been approved by UNEP's Senior Management Team and comes into effect 3 months from the date of signature.

Signed by UNEP Executive Director:



Inger Andersen

29 June 2024.

Date

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PARTNERSHIP POLICY

A. Introduction

1. Inclusive Partnerships that build on clear principles and values, a shared vision and common goals, play a vital and transformative role at the global, regional, national and local level in achieving a sustainable future for the planet and people. The United Nations Environment Programme (**UNEP**) recognises the pivotal nature of working with a wide variety of stakeholders to address the urgent environmental challenges of our time. Collaboration forms the backbone of how UNEP can meet its mandate and transformative mission. This is reflected in (i) the biennial Programmes of Work (**PoW**) and quadrennial Medium-Term Strategies[1] through which UNEP delivers its mandate and, (ii) the equivalent documents of UNEP-administrated Secretariats of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (**MEA Secretariats**). Achieving a successful sustainable development agenda therefore calls for UNEP and MEA Secretariats to actively build and strengthen their portfolio of Partnerships.

2. UNEP and MEA Secretariats' mandates contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**)[1] within the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social, and environmental. SDG 17, 'Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development', is particularly relevant in this context. UNEP and MEA Secretariats aim to inspire all stakeholders, whatever their current level of environmental performance or awareness, to continuously improve their environmental governance and management, thereby accelerating transformational changes and concrete actions with positive impacts on the environment.

3. UNEP, in its unique position at the science-policy interface, and MEA Secretariats, with their critical role in the overall framework of environmental laws and conventions,[2] can significantly inform policy, regulatory and investment decision-making processes and build capacities. Through collaborative engagements, UNEP and MEA Secretariats catalyse access to data, innovations, best practices, and technologies to a wide range of stakeholders.

4. The purpose of this Partnership Policy is to facilitate innovative Partnerships with a broad range of Partners. These Partnerships are key to UNEP and MEA Secretariats fulfilling their roles as catalysts for transformative action to protect the environment. The Partnership Policy achieves this by establishing processes that support collaboration, reduce duplication, and contribute to effective and transparent decision-making. In addition, the Partnership Policy (which includes respective Procedures) embed internal controls and risk treatment mechanisms into procedures, templates and tools aimed at enabling UNEP and MEA Secretariats to further scale up their roles as preferred strategic partners, create effective Partnerships for transformational change, strengthening regulatory frameworks, upscaling best practices and delivering 'nature-positive' solutions across sectors.[3]

5. The updated Partnership Policy is developed in response to:

    i. The call for enhanced, systematic cooperation emphasised by the UN General Assembly Resolutions 70/224 (2015) and 73/254 (2018), 'Towards global partnerships: a principle-based approach to enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners', in combination with the call for Partnerships to achieve transformation embedded in SDG 17.

[1] See Sustainable Development Goals and the supporting 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
[2] See Enhancing cooperation among the seven biodiversity related agreements and conventions at the national level using national biodiversity strategies and action plans. United Nations Environment Programme (2016), Nairobi, Kenya
[3] See generally For people and planet: the UNEP strategy for 2022–2025

ii. Internal reviews, audits, and evaluation results at strategic, operative, programmatic and project levels, internal feedback on the 2011 Partnership Policy and Procedures, and existing Partnership management approaches that highlight the need to develop and enact a systematic, pro-active and risk-based approach that enables sufficient and effective governance, risk management and control processes in all UNEP and MEA Secretariat Partnerships.[4]

iii. Conforming with most recent fiduciary standards introduced by global environmental funds and the European Commission, among others.

iv. Calls from Members States to have a consolidated policy and procedures applying to all Partner Categories and Partnership Modalities.

v. The UN Secretary-General's 'Mutual Recognition Statement', signed by the UNEP Executive Director in October 2019. The Mutual Recognition Statement, is in direct response to General Assembly Resolution 71/243 (2016), further reiterated in 2018 in General Assembly Resolution 75/233, which called for entities within the UN development system to "operate according to the principle of mutual recognition of best practices in terms of policies and procedures, with the aim of facilitating active collaboration across agencies and reducing transaction costs for Governments and collaborating agencies." To this end, the partnership policies and procedures of a number of UN agencies have been analysed,[5] and where relevant, best practice has been incorporated in this Partnership Policy.

A.1 Definition and Scope

6. A **Partnership** is a voluntary and collaborative relationship between parties, in which all Partners agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and as mutually agreed, to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits.[6] UNEP and MEA Secretariats should engage in Partnerships when doing so will lead to a greater impact than if UNEP or the MEA Secretariat was acting alone. Partnerships aim at bringing about transformative change, whilst leveraging impact in the environmental dimension of sustainable development and contributing to the social and economic dimensions of sustainable development. Partnerships may involve two or more parties and may vary in size and scope. They may be concluded for one-off undertakings to deliver specific activities or may involve more strategic multi-year collaboration between parties. They may involve funding either to or from UNEP or an MEA Secretariat and in many cases UNEP and MEA Secretariats may cooperate with Partners towards common objectives without any exchange of financial resources.

7. The Partnership Policy (including respective Procedures) **apply to all Partner Categories and Partnership Modalities**, and at all stages of the Partnership management process at UNEP. The Policy sets the principles and guides the processes, whereas the Procedures guide the practical steps to operationalise the Policy.

[4] See for example, 2019-2020 OIOS Audit of Management of Partnerships at the United Nations Environment Programme, 2019 United Nations Board of Auditors Audit of United Nations Environment Programme, 2014 Joint Inspection Unit Review of the management of implementing partners in United Nations system organizations, amongst others

[5] For example, UN-Habitat, UNFCCC, FAO, WHO, UNIDO, UNDP, IFAD, OCHA, UNEP-FI, IOM, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNSDG Common Approach to Prospect Research and Due Diligence for Business Sector Partnerships.

[6] See A/RES/73/254 Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 2018 'Towards global partnerships: a principle-based approach to enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners'.

8. MEA Secretariats administered by UNEP are also subject to this Partnership Policy and its respective Procedures. However, given MEA Secretariats derive their mandates to enter Partnership from their governing bodies, this Partnership Policy is applicable insofar as there is no specific decision from MEA governing bodies mandating a separate process. As UNEP administered entities, such governing body decisions must be consistent with UN regulations and rules, and in case of any conflict, this Partnership Policy shall apply. The same is true for non-MEA engagements for which UNEP provides secretariat services which are subject to this Partnership Policy, unless alternative processes are mandated by their governing bodies.[7] In the case of entities co-administered by UNEP,[8] any agreements signed under delegated authority from UNEP in the co-hosted secretariats will be subject to this Partnership Policy.

A.1.1. Partner Categories

9. Partnerships can be entered into with the following categories of entities:

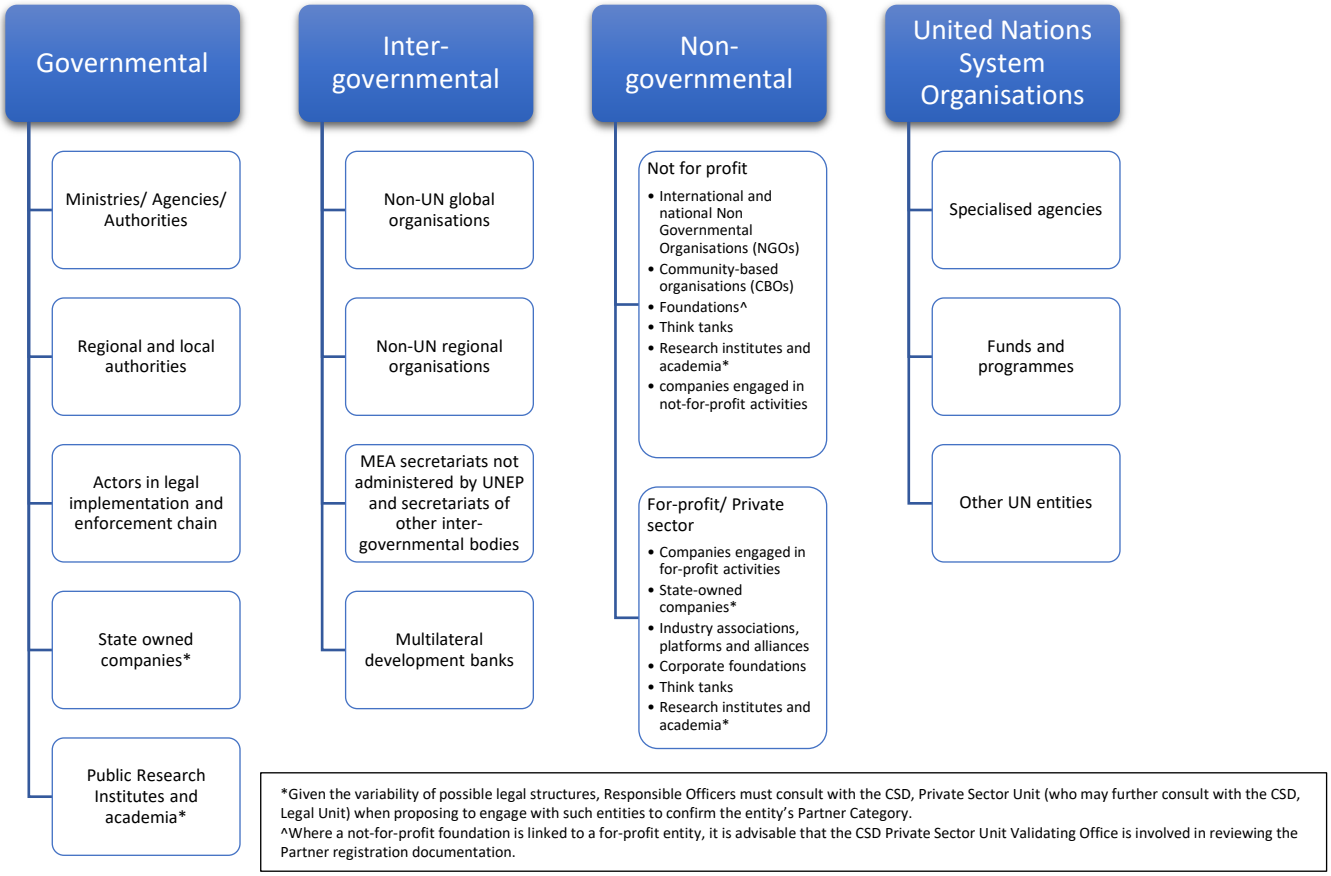
   i. Governmental and Inter-governmental

   ii. Non-governmental, including not-for-profit and for-profit sector[9]

   iii. United Nations System Organisations

   These Partner Categories are further divided into non-exhaustive sub-categories, as illustrated in **Figure 1.**

Figure 1. Partner Categories, including examples



[7] Examples include '10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10YFP)', 'International Resources Panel (IRP)', 'Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE)', 'The African Elephant Fund', 'Climate and Clean Air Coalition', and others.

[8] Such entities include, but are not limited to, Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) Programme, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

[9] See 2019 Strategy for Private Sector Engagement. In addition, UNEP is in the process of developing a Playbook which will be launched in December 2023. The Playbook will be a user-friendly comprehensive guide on the for-profit partnership process and will cover all key steps and best practices for establishing and managing partnerships

A.1.2.Partnership Modalities

10. The purpose and intended outcomes of a Partnership, together with the Partner Category, determine the **Partnership Modality**. The Partnership Modality determines the level of management required, including due diligence and risk management. Engagement with Partners occurs through the following modalities, **Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, Cooperation Partnerships**, **Implementation Partnerships** and **Donor Partnerships**.

11. To determine the correct Partnership Modality, see **Procedure 1**. Furthermore,

    a. **Figure 2** outlines the description of each modality, and the applicability of **Procedures 2 - 4;**
    b. Table 1 also sets out the **Partnership Engagement Documentation** requirements; and
    c. Procedure 1 also sets out the guidance on distinguishing between Partnership engagements and procurement. For Partnership engagements which have elements of procurement, these may be considered as collaborative procurement under UN Financial Rule 105.17(b). Procurement by Implementing Partners shall be actively monitored through a risk based approach. The risk rating of the Implementing Partner will determine the monitoring framework applicable.

Figure 2. Partner Modalities

Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships:

Include membership-based **fora, platforms, networks and engagements established through Multi-Partner Trust Funds** (MPTF). Stakeholders from **all Partner Categories** may join toward knowledge sharing, capacity building and implementation in various sectors. Membership may include fees.

e.g. UNEP Finance Initiative

Procedures vary.

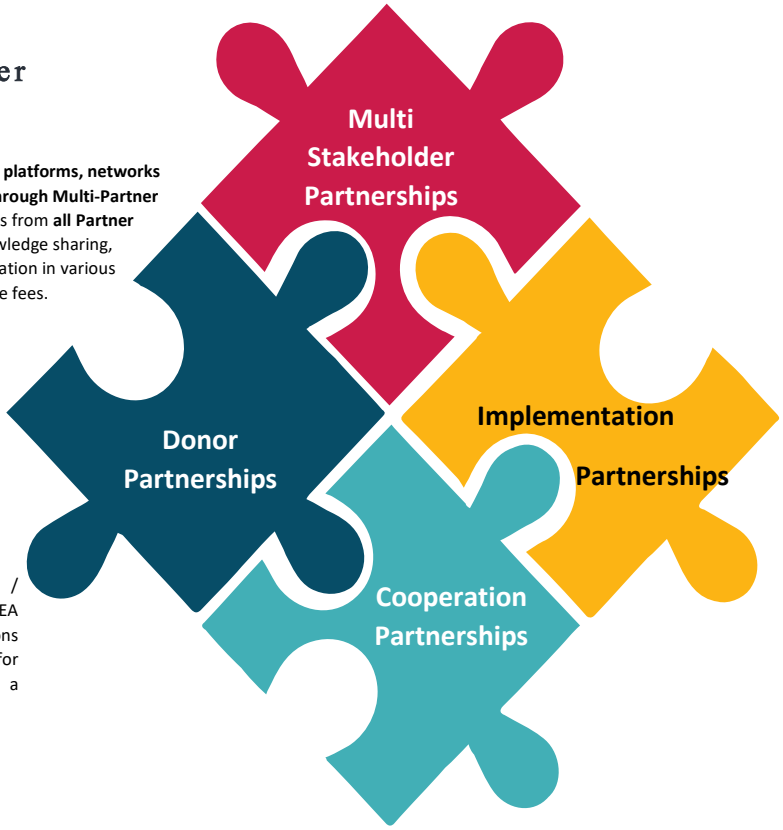
UNEP Partner Portal

Donor Partnerships:

Involve financial transactions / commitments where UNEP or MEA Secretariats receive contributions from a Partner (cash and in-kind) for specific purposes as defined in a legal agreement.

Procedure 4

UNEP Partner Portal



Implementation Partnerships:

Involve financial transactions/ commitments where UNEP or MEA Secretariats disburse funds to the Partner to implement activities pursuant to a legal agreement.

Procedures 2.1 and 2.2

UN Partner Portal, Implementing Partner module (Grantor Program), UNEP Partner Portal

Cooperation Partnerships

Do not involve financial commitments.

Generally used to establish a framework for cooperation involving a **one-to-one relationship** between UNEP or an MEA Secretariat and the Partner toward specific pre-determined areas of cooperation.

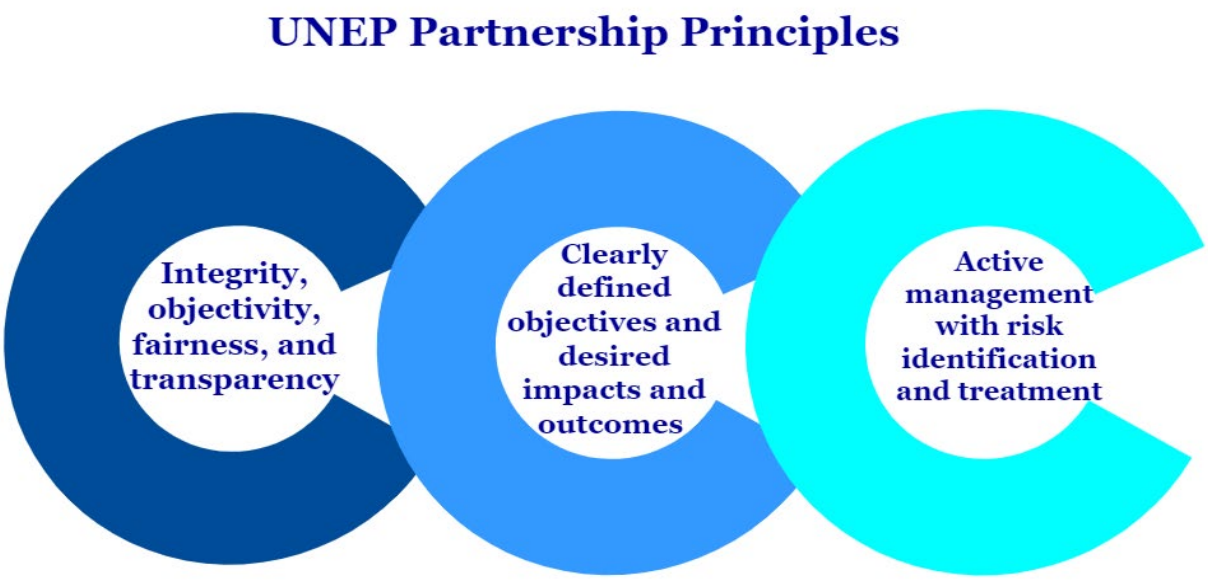
Procedures 3.1 and 3.2

UNEP Partner Portal

A.2 UNEP Partnership Principles

12. This Partnership Policy is anchored in **three key Partnership Principles**. These principles are applied throughout the lifecycle of each Partnership, ensuring that each Partnership is actively managed[10] towards achieving intended outputs, outcomes, and impact, whilst upholding UN regulations and rules.

Figure 3: UNEP Partnership Principles



13. **Partnership Principle I: Partnerships are based on integrity, objectivity, fairness, and transparency, in adherence with the UN Charter[11] and General Assembly Partnership Principles.[12]**

    i. UNEP and MEA Secretariat personnel must maintain integrity, impartiality and independence in all their dealings with prospective and existing Partners. They must employ transparent and openly reported decision-making criteria, based on objective and proportionate assessments of benefits and risks, applied to all Partnerships.

    ii. UNEP and MEA Secretariats must promote openness and transparency regarding Partnership information, regardless of the nature or cost of the activity.[13] This includes the identity of Partners, the nature of the activities undertaken with Partners, the cost of activities, as well as the contribution the Partnership makes towards UNEP's mandate and PoW, or MEA Secretariats' approved workplans.

14. **Partnership Principle II: Partnerships support the objectives, mandate and mission of UNEP and MEA Secretariats and shall lead to pre-defined outputs, sustainable outcomes and impacts, and shall promote transformative change and scalable outcomes.**

    i. Each Partnership shall have clearly defined objectives and desired impacts and outcomes that explicitly and concretely contribute towards the objectives and outcomes of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNEP's PoW, or MEA Secretariats' approved workplans and budgets. Partnerships shall emphasise, amongst other goals, strengthening capacities and dissemination of best practices and innovative solutions to environmental and sustainable development challenges.

[10] See 'Management of an active Partnership' at section B3 of this Policy and in accordance with UNEP's Project management processes and procedures
[11] See UN Charter
[12] See A/RES/73/254 Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 2018 'Towards global partnerships: a principle-based approach to enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners'
[13] As governed by UNEP's 2016 Access to Information Policy. MEA Secretariats may have alternative policies related to access to information and information disclosure.

ii. Partnerships that tackle emerging issues, which are not yet included in the current UNEP PoW, or MEA Secretariats' approved workplans and budgets, can be entered into provided that the emerging issue is within UNEP's or the MEA Secretariat's mandate.

15. **Partnership Principle III: Partnerships are actively managed, and risks are identified, documented and systematically mitigated.**

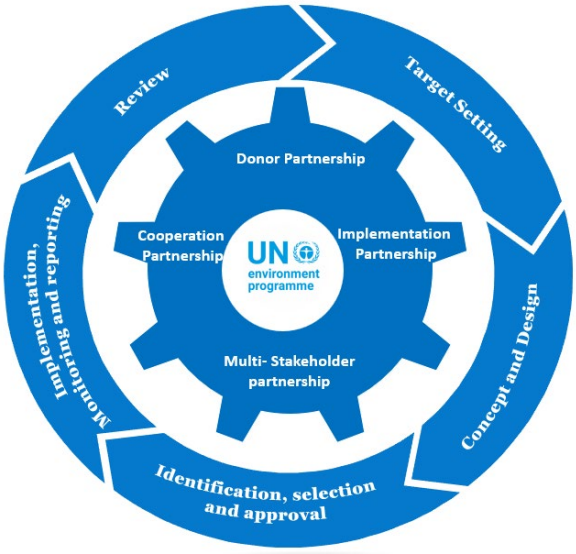
i. To achieve their mandate, UNEP and MEA Secretariats may partner with a broad range of stakeholders. This includes targeted partnering to raise standards with actors who need it most. UNEP and MEA Secretariats recognise that there are risks associated with all Partnerships, and that these risks may relate to the selected Partner.

ii. All Partnerships shall be actively monitored and managed, ensuring that adequate controls and escalation mechanisms are in place and documented. This is done to minimise and mitigate potential risks and to ensure that benefits are realised. Active monitoring and management of Partnerships includes (at a minimum) identifying, assessing and pro-actively managing and mitigating risks arising from the Partnership.[14] The risk level shall influence the Partnership management approach and Responsible Officers, FMOs/AOs, Senior Officers, Deputy Directors, and Designated Senior Officers of MEA Secretariats are accountable for identifying, monitoring and managing risks as applicable. The requirement to actively monitor Partnerships is an ongoing obligation.

B. Engaging Partners and Partnership Management

16. This Policy encourages a Partnership management approach based on continuous improvement principles that should be integrated at all stages of a Partnership, from overall target setting, concept and design, to implementation, monitoring, reporting, and review of projects and project portfolios (see Figure 4).[15]

Figure 4. Partner and Partnership Management continuum



[14] See Procedures 2-4.
[15] This approach ties in with the standard Project Cycle Management

17. Partners and Partnerships are managed through organisational structures that provide the framework for accountability and responsibility.[16] The main actors involved in the management of Partnerships include the Responsible Officer, FMO/AO, Senior Officer, Partnership Committee, Corporate Services Division (**CSD**) Director, CSD Finance Unit, CSD Legal Unit, CSD Programme Advisory Services Unit, CSD Partner Validating Office, Private Sector Unit Validating Office, and Deputy Directors/ Designated Senior Officer s of MEA Secretariats. This combination of actors is based both on required skills and a segregation of duties aimed at embedding internal controls, managing risk and ensuring accountability. Partner and Partnership management roles and responsibilities are detailed in Annex 1 (Partnership Committee Terms of Reference) and Annex 2 (Partnership Management Roles and Responsibilities).

B.1Risk-Based Partnerships

18. A risk-based approach enables UNEP and MEA Secretariats to mitigate risks arising from engaging with Partners. Partner and Partnership risk management includes active management of benefits and risks at both strategic and operating levels.

19. The partnership assessment procedure considers the planned partnership activities specifically from a risk perspective. Risks relating to legal, financial, operational, technical, reputational, economic, political, organizational, environmental, and social aspects, including any specific risks related to breach of contract, ability to deliver outputs, safeguards, fraud, and corruption should be identified and assessed. All risks identified, including those identified during partner validation and due diligence, that are assessed as medium or high must be entered into a risk treatment plan. For Implementing Partners recognized as potentially high-risk, project staff should consider including arrangements for mandatory and regularised performance surveys and reviews (including financial reviews); on-site inspections; follow-ups and spot checks to mitigate delays in project implementation and ensure accountability. These aspects must be resourced, and expressed in relevant Partnership Agreements to ensure agreed risk management.

Figure 5. Partnership Portfolio Risk Landscape



[16] See also UNEP organizational structure and relevant MEA Secretariat structures. See also Annex 1 and 2 of this policy, 2019 UNEP Delegation of Authority Policy and Framework (DAPF) and 2021 Delegation of Authority Policy and Framework for the management and administration of Multilateral Environmental Agreement Secretariats (MEA-DAPF), including revisions or updates to these as may be issued from time to time

20. **Strategic risks** are managed through Partnership portfolio management. Partnership portfolios refer to the collection of Partnerships required to meet the objectives of each sub-programme in the UNEP PoW and the objectives of approved workplans and budgets of MEA Secretariats.[17] Partnerships portfolios and related risks (see **Figure 5**) are managed through existing management processes.[18]

21. At the **operational level**, the risk-based approach requires identifying, understanding and managing risks in a way that is proportionate to the risks presented by the specific Partner and Partnership (see **Figure 6**). This is an ongoing obligation and Responsible Officers should continue to monitor the risk ratings, and adjust the risk ratings as needed.

Figure 6. Partnership risk identification and management



22. Individual Partnerships have a lifecycle. The different lifecycle stages can be related to strategic and operational risks and to Partnership management phases in line with the UNEP Programme and Project Management Manual (PPMM).

[17] As Partnerships are concluded to meet the objectives of each sub-programme in the UNEP PoW and the objectives of approved workplans and budgets of MEA Secretariats, Partners included in UNEP's Partnership portfolio do not necessarily reflect the Partners included in the Partnership portfolios of MEA Secretariats

[18] See section on 'Accountability and Delegation of Authority' in UNEP's Programme and Project Management Manual

B.2 Partnership Engagement and Management

Figure 7. Partnership Management Phases



B.2.1 Target Setting

Applicable for all Partner Categories and Partnership Modalities

Establishing the need for Partnership

23. UNEP, in accordance with the Medium-Term Strategy **(MTS)**, UNEA resolutions, and PoW; and MEA Secretariats, in accordance with governing body decisions, including approved work plans and budgets, shall engage in effective, regional and sector balanced Partnerships. These Partnerships shall support an integrated approach in the implementation of the UNEP PoW, and the approved workplans and budgets of MEA Secretariats, including through South-South and triangular cooperation.

B.2.2 Concept and Design

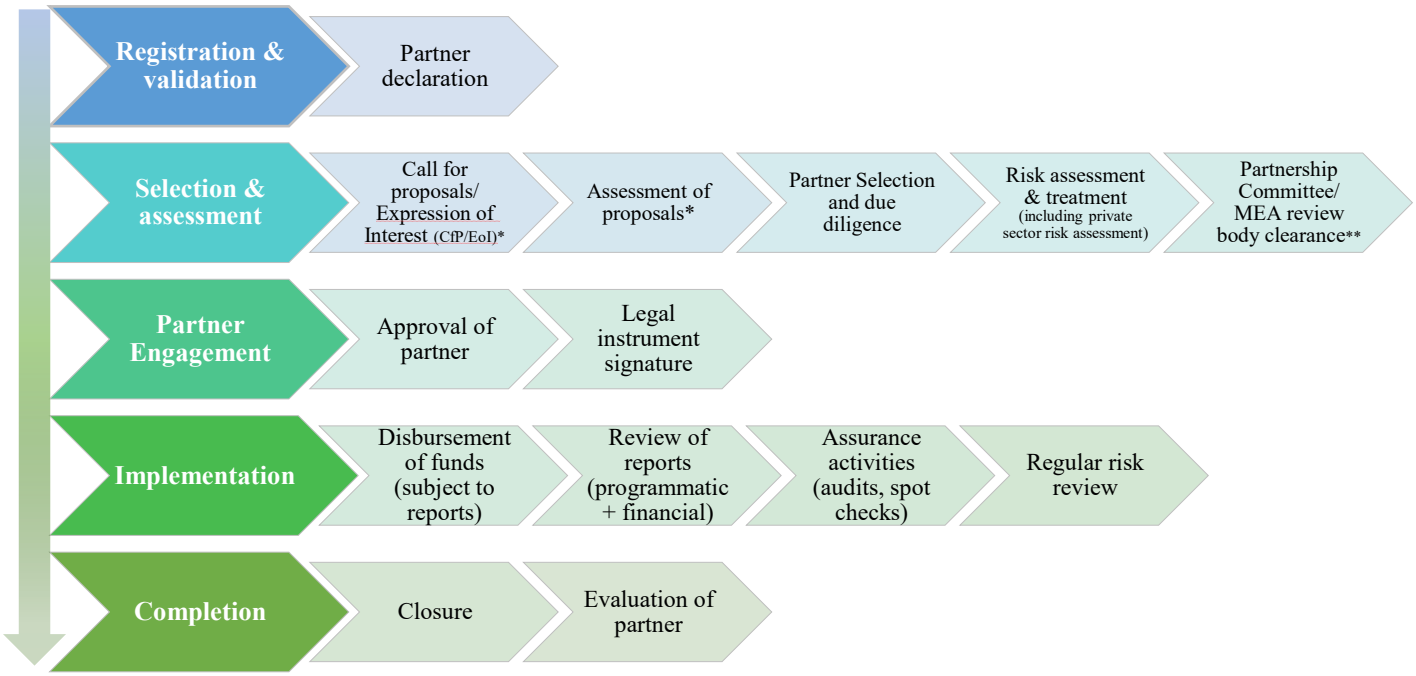
24. Depending on the Partner Category and Partnership Modality, the available systems and tools require UNEP and MEA Secretariats to use a varying combination of online tools and platforms to complete Partner selection, registration, due diligence and completion of legal agreements. Further, the order of the procedures for engaging Partners can change depending on the Partner Category and Partnership Modality. The functionality of online tools and platforms are being continuously enhanced and refined to streamline and better integrate related processes and the Procedures may be updated from time to time to reflect such changes. The current processes are described below in the order that they should be applied and as applicable to different Partner Categories and Partnership Modalities.

25. All applicable due diligence processes shall have a validity of **five years**[19]**.** Following expiry, if UNEP or an MEA Secretariat wishes to continue or renew its engagement with a previously validated Partner, updates to the Partner validation shall require a light touch review and should focus on changes and new information relating to the Partner. In line with the principle of mutual recognition, UNEP will leverage assessments undertaken by other UN entities. For detailed guidance on applying the below processes, including how to proceed if the duration of a Partnership runs beyond the validity of the Partner validation or where a Partner has been previously validated and UNEP/MEA Secretariat wishes to work with them again after the validation has expired, see **Procedures 2 – 4.**

B 2.3. Implementation Partnerships

26. **Implementation Partnerships**[20] will follow the below indicative steps depending on Partner Category:

Figure 8: Process for engaging Implementation Partners



* only for non-governmental, not-for-profit Implementation Partnerships
** if applicable

B.2.3.i Process for engaging non-governmental, not-for-profit Implementation Partners

27. Prospective non-governmental, not-for-profit Partners to be engaged in **Implementation Partnerships** must be identified and selected against pre-determined criteria through a transparent, fair and competitive process, embodying the principle of equal opportunity, with openly informed and documented decision-making. Details of the process are contained in **Procedure 2.1**. There are three aspects to the selection of a prospective Partner that is a non-governmental, not-for profit entity:

[19] For moderate to high risk entities, the due diligence may require a review after 3 years.
[20] As per UNEP Financial Rule 201.4 (ST/SGB/2015/4) , Implementing Partner means "means an entity to which UNEP has entrusted the implementation of programmes and projects specified in a signed document, along with the assumption of full responsibility and accountability for the effective use of resources and the delivery of outputs as set forth in such a document." For Global Environmental Funds, the terms Executing Entity and/or Executing Agency are used.

a. Registration and validation in UN Systems [21]+ UNEP Supplementary Partner Declaration[22];
b. Prospective Partner selection process
   i. Call for Proposal/Expression of Interest (unless an exception to competitive Partner selection applies);
   ii. Comparative Assessment and Selection of Partner;
   iii. Risk assessment of Selected Partner;
   iv. Risk Treatment Plan and Partnership Committee, as applicable;
c. Approval of selected partner by Deputy Division Director / Designated Senior Officer of MEA.

UN Partner Portal Registration

28. In the case of **Implementation Partnerships**, a mandatory pre-requisite to engagement with any UN Secretariat entity, including UNEP and MEA Secretariats, is that prospective Partners register on the UN Partner Portal, and the UN Implementing Partner module. Responsible Officers must alert prospective Partners in this Partner category to complete this step prior to applying to a call for proposal, responding to a request for expression of interest, or otherwise engaging as a Partner of UNEP or an MEA Secretariat.[23]

Selection of Prospective Partner - Calls for Proposal/Expressions of Interest, including capacity and due diligence assessment

29. Prospective Partners can be selected through one of two competitive selection avenues – publishing a Call for Proposal (CfP) or requesting Expressions of Interest (EoI) – unless a specific exception applies (see **Procedure 2.1**). In either case, the process must be well documented and the CfP or EoI criteria must include project specific and standard eligibility criteria for applicants to respond to. Responses will be used to assess and compare the suitability of prospective Partners and inform Partner selection (see Tool 1).

30. For Partnerships funded through global environmental funds,[24] the competitive prospective Partner process may be used where the intended partner is a non-governmental entity. See **Procedure 2.1** to determine which of the above routes can be used in different scenarios and the process where an exception to competitive Partner selection exists.

Assessment Process, development of Risk Treatment Plan, Partnership Committee Review and Approval

31. The assessment process for Implementation Partnerships involving non-governmental, not-for-profit Partners requires a Partner Selection Panel (which includes or is headed by the Responsible Officer, and includes the FMO/AO), to assess responses and documentation provided by prospective Partners to criteria in the CfP/EoI using Tool 1. Tool 1 will generate a score for the top three candidates based on the responses to criteria.

32. The Responsible Officer must set up the assessment framework. Once a candidate has been identified, a risk assessment should be undertaken on selected Partner. Where responses to criteria in the CfP/EoI are partially met, or not met, based on the selected Partner's responses, a justification for the selection must be provided. A Risk Treatment Plan[25] should be prepared to address any moderate or high risks that have been identified in the risk assessment, and must be reviewed by the Senior Officer for completeness and to ensure that any relevant risks are mitigated.

33. If the Responsible Officer is of the view that an assessed prospective Partner with a lower score than another (but over the minimum passing score) should be the selected Partner, justification must be provided as to why the selected candidate is not the top scoring. If the selected prospective Partner does not meet the minimum passing score, the selected prospective Partner should be referred to the **Partnership Committee** to provide a recommendation to the Deputy Director/Designated Senior Officer of the MEA Secretariat on whether UNEP or the MEA Secretariat should proceed with the Partnership. Following the Partnership Committee review, the

[21] UN Partner Portal Registration, Registration to UN Implementing Partner module
[22] See Template 9. For guidance on how to access UN Partner Portal pls see https://youtu.be/8CJXATojv-A More information will be provided on registration to Implementing Partner module.
[23] In future, the functionality of the UN Partner Portal may be enhanced to include other Partner Categories and Modalities.
[24] Including, but not limited to, Global Environment Facility, Green Climate Fund, and Adaptation Fund
[25] See Template 15

final decision on whether to proceed with the selected prospective Partner rests with the Deputy Director/Designated Senior Officer of the MEA Secretariat.

34. MEA Secretariats may choose to have an **alternative review body** in place of the Partnership Committee. Where an MEA Secretariat chooses to establish an alternative review body, their Terms of Reference shall be substantially similar to those of the UNEP Partnership Committee (see Annex 1).

B.2.3.ii. Process for engaging Governmental/Inter-governmental entities and UN System Organisations as Implementation Partners

35. As strategic partners of UNEP and MEA Secretariats, Governmental, Inter-governmental entities and UN System Organisations are not required to go through a competitive Partner selection process[26]. They may be directly engaged as guided by programmatic needs. There are three aspects to the selection of a prospective Partner that is a Government, Inter-governmental entity or a UN System Organisation:
    a. Registration and validation in UN Systems + Partner Declaration[27];
    b. Selection of prospective Partner:
        i. Due diligence and Risk assessment;
        ii. Risk Treatment Plan and Partnership Committee, as applicable;
    c. Approval of prospective Partner.

UN systems Registration

36. Governmental, Inter-governmental entities and UN System Organisations engaged in **Implementation Partnerships** should be registered in the UN and UNEP Partner Portal and the Implementing Partner module.
    a. For Governmental or Inter-governmental entities, the Responsible Officer must submit official documentation showing the legal status of the Partner.
    b. For UN System Organisations, no documentation is required to register the Partner in the UNEP Partner Portal. The Partner record serves as the umbrella under which future legal agreements related to the Partner can be uploaded.

Selection of Prospective Partner – Capacity and due diligence assessment

37. Despite direct, non-competitive selection, a project specific risk assessment against UN System Organisation Partners and a risk and due diligence assessment against Governmental/Inter-governmental Implementing Partners is still required. Responsible Officers should send the risk and due diligence criteria to Governmental/Inter-governmental and UN System Partners to receive responses and relevant documentation where applicable.[28] Assessments do not serve as a screening tool, but rather as a means to understand any risks present at the outset of a partnership and provide for mitigation measures. Governmental/Inter-governmental Partners must also return a completed Partner Declaration.[29]

Assessment Process, development of Risk Treatment Plan and Partnership Approval

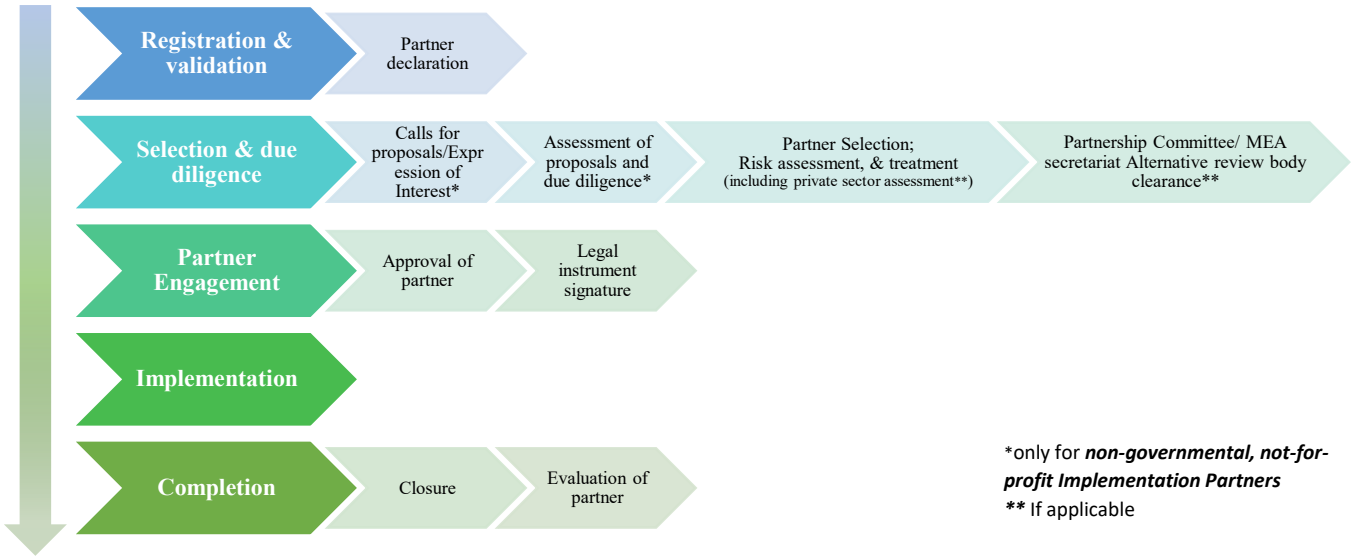
38. The risk assessment process is similar in the case of Governmental, Inter-governmental entities and UN System Organisations as for non-governmental, not-for-profit Partners. Responses to criteria are reviewed and a score is generated for the Partner. Risk Treatment Plans should be reviewed by the Senior Officer prior to final Partnership approval by the Deputy Director/Designated Senior Officer of MEA Secretariat.

[26] For engagements with centres collaborating with UNEP, the 2023 Interim Policy on Centres Collaborating with UNEP should be consulted.
[27] See Template 10
[28] See Templates 3 and 4
[29] See Template 10

B 2.4. Cooperation Partnerships

39. **Cooperation Partnerships** will follow the below indicative steps:

Figure 9: Process for engaging Cooperation Partners



40. All processes relating to **Cooperation Partnerships** occur through the UNEP Partner Portal, including registration, capacity and due diligence assessments, risk assessments, development of risk mitigation plans and approval of Partners. There are three aspects to the selection of a prospective Cooperation Partner:

    a. Registration and validation in UN Systems + Partner Declaration
    b. Prospective Partner selection process
        i. Call for Proposal/Expression of Interest (except for Governmental/Inter-governmental and UN System Organisation Partners or where an exception to competitive selection applies)
        ii. Assessment of prospective Partner responses to CfPs/EoIs and Risk Treatment and Partnership Committee review, as applicable
    c. Approval or prospective Partner

Selection of Prospective Partner – Calls for Proposal/Expressions of Interest

41. The Partner selection process for **Cooperation Partnerships** with non-governmental, not-for-profit (**Procedure 3.1**) and for-profit entities (**Procedure 3.2**) requires selection through one of two competitive selection avenues – a Call for Proposal or Request for Expression of Interest.

    a. In the case of not-for-profit entities, the CfP or EoI criteria must include standard applicable due diligence questions,[30] to be completed by the applicant.

    b. In the case of for-profit entities, the due diligence is to be completed by the Responsible Officer in accordance with **Procedure 3.2** and verified and reviewed by Private Sector Unit validating office. The Private Sector Unit also reviews and provides a suggestion as per Tool 4, based on the assessment and Risk Treatment Plan, to the Partnership Committee/MEA Secretariat alternative review body as to whether UNEP/MEA Secretariat should proceed with the Partnership.

42. As per **Procedure 3.1 and 3.2**, exceptions to competitive selection should be justified and signed by the Deputy Director/Designated Senior Officer of MEA Secretariat.

43. In the case of Governmental/Inter-governmental and UN System Organisation entities (**Procedure 3.1**), Prospective Partners are not required to go through a competitive selection process.

[30] See Template 5

a. For Governmental/Inter-governmental entities, applicable due diligence should be completed through the UNEP Partner Portal by the Responsible Officer using Tool 3 and the Partner must return a completed Partner Declaration.[31] Assessments against Governmental/Inter-governmental entities do not serve as a selection tool, but rather allow UNEP and MEA Secretariats to have a clear view of potential risks upon entry into the partnership.

b. UN System Organisation Partners are not required to undergo any assessment process for Cooperation Partnerships.

Assessment, Development of Risk Treatment Plan, Partnership Committee Review and Partnership Approval

44. Responses to assessment criteria, as applicable, will be assessed using the Tools 2-4, as per **Procedure 3.1 and 3.2**. Where the selected Partner returns a risk rating of medium or above, a Risk Treatment Plan[32] should be developed to address any risks present due to the criteria not being met or partially met. The Risk Treatment Plan must be reviewed by the Senior Officer. Where a Risk Treatment Plan is required in a competitive selection process, the selected Partner must also be reviewed by the Partnership Committee (or alternative review body as applicable to MEA Secretariats) to provide a recommendation to the Deputy Director/Designated Senior Officer of MEA Secretariat on whether UNEP or the MEA Secretariat should proceed with the Partnership.

    a. All for-profit partners must be reviewed by the Partnership Committee. During the assessment using Tool 4, the Responsible Officer is required to explain why the Partnership is worth pursuing based on the responses to criteria.

    b. Partners selected through an exception to competitive selection, Governmental/Inter-governmental and UN System Organisation Partners do not require review by the Partnership Committee (or alternative review body as applicable to MEA Secretariats).

45. In all cases, the final decision on whether to proceed with a Cooperation Partnership rests with the Deputy Director/Designated Senior Officer of MEA Secretariat.

UNEP Partner Portal Registration

46. Once selected, all Partner categories engaged through **Cooperation Partnerships** must be registered in the UNEP Partner Portal.

    a. For non-governmental, not-for-profit and for-profit entities, the Responsible Officer must submit official documentation showing the legal and financial status of the Partner as outlined in **Procedure 3.1 and 3.2**. In both cases, the Responsible Officer must also obtain a completed Partner Declaration.[33]

    b. For Governmental or Inter-governmental entities, the Responsible Officer must upload official documentation showing the legal status of the Partner, where available.

    c. For UN System Organisations, no documentation is required to register the Partner in the UNEP Partner Portal. The Partner record serves as the umbrella under which future legal agreements related to the Partner can be uploaded.

    d. For all Cooperation Partners selected through a competitive selection process, comparison of applicants should be well documented and uploaded to the UNEP Partner Portal upon registration of the selected applicant. Justification for Partners selected via an exception to the competitive selection process must be uploaded also upon Partner registration.

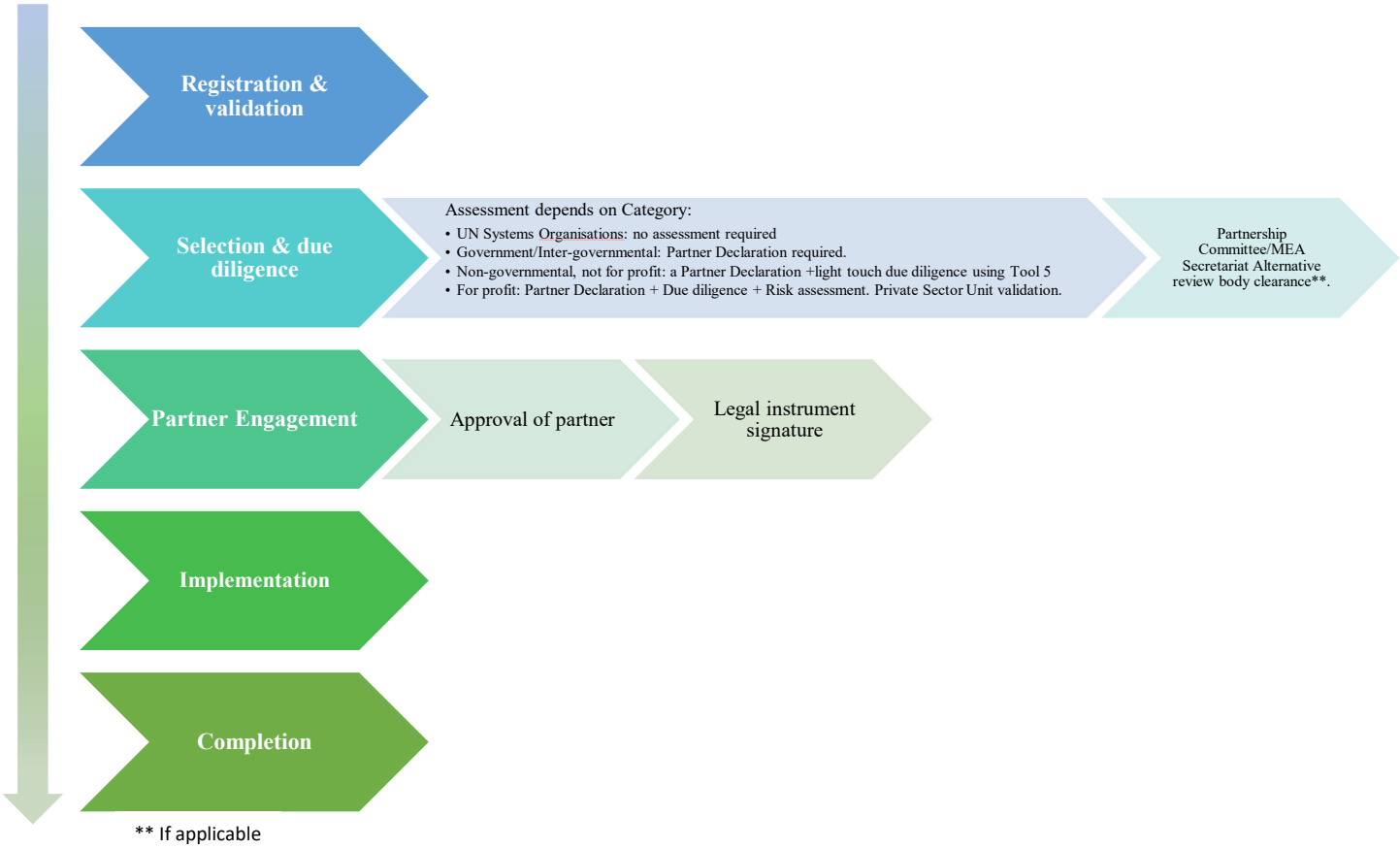
[31] See Template 10
[32] See Template 15
[33] See Templates 11 and 12

B 2.5. Donor Partnerships

Process for Donor Partnerships

47. All processes related to **Donor Partnerships** occur through the UNEP Partner Portal, including registration, due diligence assessments, risk assessments and development of Risk Treatment Plans, and Partnership approval.

Figure 10: Process for Donor Partnerships



UNEP Partner Portal Registration

48. All Partner Categories being engaged through **Donor Partnerships** must be registered in the UNEP Partner Portal in accordance with **Procedure 4**.

    a. For Governmental or Inter-governmental entities, the Responsible Officer must upload official documentation showing the legal status of the Partner, where available.

    b. For non-governmental, not-for-profit and for-profit entities, the Responsible Officer must submit official documentation showing the legal and financial status of the Partner as outlined in **Procedure 4**.

    c. For UN System Organisations, no documentation is required to register the Partner in the UNEP Partner Portal. The Partner record serves as the umbrella under which future legal agreements related to the Partner can be uploaded.

Due Diligence Assessment, development of Risk Treatment Plan, Partnership Committee Review and Partnership Approval

49. For UN System Organisations, no assessment is required.

50. For Governmental/Inter-governmental donors, the Partner must return a completed Partner Declaration.[34] No additional due diligence is required.

[34] See Template 10

51. For non-governmental, not-for-profit donors, the Partner must return a completed Partner Declaration[35] and undergo a light touch due diligence assessment to be completed by the Responsible Officer using Tool 5, in close collaboration with the FMO/AO.[36] Where the risk rating returned is medium or above, a Risk Treatment Plan must be developed and the non-governmental, not-for-profit donor should be referred to the Partnership Committee (or alternative review body as applicable to MEA Secretariats) to provide a recommendation to the Deputy Director/Deputy Head of MEA Secretariat on whether UNEP or the MEA Secretariat should proceed with the Partnership.

52. In the case of for-profit donors, the Partner must return a completed Partner Declaration[37] and undergo a due diligence assessment by the Responsible Officer using Tool 4, in close collaboration with the FMO/AO.[38] A Risk Treatment Plan must also be developed. Both the due diligence assessment and any Risk Treatment Plan shall be verified and reviewed by the Private Sector Unit validating office, who shall also provide a recommendation to the Partnership Committee/MEA Secretariat alternative review body as to whether UNEP/MEA Secretariat should proceed with the Partnership, as applicable. If, during the assessment through Tool 4 the Responsible Officer is required to explain why the Partnership is worth pursuing, based on the responses to criteria, the prospective for-profit donor must be referred to the Partnership Committee (or alternative review body as applicable to MEA Secretariats) to provide a recommendation to the Deputy Director/Deputy Head of MEA Secretariat on whether UNEP or the MEA Secretariat should proceed with the Partnership.

B 2.6. Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships

Process for Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships

53. In the case of **Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships** where the relevant platform/network has separate criteria for registration and due diligence, then those separate criteria will apply.

54. If the relevant platform/network does not have separate criteria, then Partners may be registered in the UNEP Partner Portal and apply relevant due diligence assessments based on Partner Category. In such cases, the Responsible Officers should consult the Private Sector Unit Validating Office or Corporate Services Division Validating Office, as applicable, for further guidance.

B 2.7. Partnerships funded through the Global Environmental Funds

Process for Partnerships funded through Global Environmental Funds

55. For Partnerships funded through the Global Environmental Funds, UNEP will ensure that due diligence is undertaken to assess fiduciary risks, and to ensure that the proposed Implementing Partners have adequate fiduciary controls[39]. Given their unique project cycles, due diligence assessments for Partnerships funded through Global Environmental Funds are carried out as part of project preparation, and prior to project submission to the respective funds. The respective Procedures will provide information and details on the specific requirements for the Global Environment Funds, including details related to assessments and assurance activities. Responsible Officers should consult with the respective Coordination Offices, including the GCF Coordination Office, GEF Coordination Office and the AF Focal Point for further details.

[35] See Template 11
[36] See Procedure 4
[37] See Template 12
[38] See Procedure 4
[39] As required in GEF minimum Fiduciary standards 2019 (Standard 11); GCF Initial Fiduciary principles and standards of the Fund (2.1), Adaptation Fund Fiduciary standards.

56. As GCF, GEF and AF Partners are often indispensable for national implementation, the due diligence assessments (or where applicable, GCF capacity assessment) are an entry point to capacity development, and as a means to understand any risks present at the outset of a partnership, and not necessarily a selection tool. They are conducted for the purposes of understanding the partner's capacity vis a vis the donor requirements, and to assess related implementation risks. The assessments will also propose measures to facilitate efficient implementation and effective partnerships, and enable UNEP to prepare appropriate capacity development measures. To the extent possible, assessments and treatment plans should be uploaded to UNEP systems.

B.2.8 Approval of Partnership

57. Other than for GCF, GEF and AF projects, where partnerships are approved in accordance with the respective fund's specific requirements, for Cooperation, Implementation and Donor Partnerships, the Deputy Director, or Designated Senior Officer of MEA, endorses or rejects Partnerships based on applicable due diligence assessments, the strength of Risk Treatment Plans (where applicable), and the review/recommendation of the Senior Officer and Partnership Committee/MEA Secretariat alternative review body.

58. For Multi-Stakeholder Partnership Modalities, Partners are approved based on the processes applicable to the specific forum/platform/network.

59. Approval of an Implementation Partnership does not automatically endorse the selection of that partner for other programmes or projects. The selection of an Implementing Partner should be tailored to the specific context and should aim to maximise the use of complementary strengths, resources and mandates of the Implementing Partner.

B.3 Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting

B.3.1 Partnership Engagement Documentation

60. Once a Partnership has been approved, UNEP or the MEA Secretariat, and the Partner shall agree on the expected outcomes and outputs, and these shall be reflected in the **Partnership Engagement Documentation**. The expected outcomes and outputs should align with the objectives of the relevant sub-programme, results framework of a programme/project (where applicable), or workplan to which the Partnership contributes.

61. Partnership Engagement Documentation is defined to include the Project Document (where applicable), justification of the Partner selection (including Partner Declaration), Partner assessment and registration documents, Risk Treatment Plan (where applicable), membership forms or other documentation that bind Partners in **Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships** and relevant legal instruments[40] for **Cooperation**, **Implementation** and **Donor Partnerships**, and Partner reviews.

62. In order to select the correct legal instrument, the Responsible Officer should consult the Guidelines for the Use of UNEP's Standard Legal Instruments. **Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships** generally do not require a legal instrument and shall use the required membership form or documentation relating to the specific engagement. Partnership Agreements are approved in accordance with the Delegation of Authority Policy and Framework (DAPF),[41] based on a proportionate assessment of risks, and the Partner's technical and financial capacity to meet the Partnership obligations. For MEA Secretariats, the Delegation of Authority Policy and Framework for the management and administration of Multilateral Environmental Agreement Secretariats[42] applies.

[40] See Guidelines for the Use of UNEP's Standard Legal Instruments and Legal Templates (including any revisions or updates)
[41] Including revisions or updates to the DAPF as may be issued from time to time
[42] Idem

B.3.2 Management of an active Partnership

63. Once the Partnership Engagement Documentation has been completed, the partnership should be monitored by the Responsible Officer using a risk based approach. Close monitoring of the Partnership and open, transparent communication between UNEP, the MEA Secretariat, and the Partner all assist in the monitoring of risks identified through capacity and due diligence assessments, and the identification of emerging risks.

64. Relevant staff are accountable for realised risks in terms of Partner performance, including but not limited to wastage and inefficient use of resources. The Responsible Officer shall closely monitor and report on the Partnership in accordance with applicable project management procedures and, where applicable, the developed Risk Treatment Plan. This includes financial monitoring mechanisms and controls suitable for the Partnership Modality and ensuring consistent delays in project implementation are addressed and reported.[43] Where necessary, such situations may be conveyed for resolution in accordance with appropriate organisational structures and dispute resolution mechanisms contained in documentation that bind Partners in **Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships** and the applicable legal instrument for **Cooperation**, **Implementation** and **Donor Partnerships**.

65. With respect to Implementation Partnerships, monitoring and oversight of Implementing Partners is a key element of good Results Based Management (RBM).

    a. All medium scale or above risks identified during partner assessment, partner validation and due diligence must be entered into a partnership risk treatment plan.

    b. For high-risk Implementing partners project staff should consider including arrangements for mandatory on-site performance and financial reviews, follow up and spot checks to mitigate delays in implementation and ensure accountability.

    c. The Responsible Officer should closely monitor partner performance. This includes monitoring of achievement of agreed outputs and outcomes, monitoring of risks identified during partners assessment, and financial monitoring and controls. Monitoring should take place through regular reporting by the partner(s), monitoring missions, and information gathering from stakeholders, as appropriate.

B.4 Partnership closure, extension, renewal, suspension, and termination

66. **Closure of Partnership:** Partnerships are generally established for a mutually agreed duration, after which the Partnership naturally expires on the agreed date.

    a) The duration of **Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships** are subject to the membership requirements and rules applicable to the specific forum/platform/network.

    b) For **Cooperation, Implementation** and **Donor Partnerships**, the end date of the Partnership shall be indicated in the applicable legal instrument.

67. **Extension of Partnerships:**

    a) **Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships** may extend their engagements subject to the membership requirements and rules applicable to the specific forum/platform/network.

    b) For **Cooperation, Implementation** and **Donor Partnerships**, the duration of a Partnership can be extended prior to the expiry of the legal instrument, based on a mutual assessment of whether the Partnership should continue. Extensions must be formalised through an amendment to the legal instrument.[44]

68. **Renewal of Partnerships:** Reviving an expired Partnership or entry into a different Partnership with the same Partner may require a new or updated Partner engagement process.[45] This will be dependent on whether the Partner Validation has expired or not, and if there are changes to the Partnership activities and risk assessment. A new legal instrument, or renewal of membership in the case of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, will also be required.

[43] See Template 15

[44] See Guidelines for the Use of UNEP's Standard Legal Instruments

[45] See Procedures 2-4

69. **Suspension of a Partnership:** For **Cooperation, Implementation** and **Donor Partnerships**, the applicable legal instrument may contain mechanisms to suspend the Partnership. Suspension may be required where circumstances arise that interfere with, or threaten to interfere with the successful completion of the Partnership.

    a. The Responsible Officer may alert the respective Director/Heads of MEA secretariat on the need to trigger a suspension. The Director/Head of MEA Secretariat will determine the need to issue a suspension notice, and may consult with CSD Deputy Director if needed. The suspension notice should include:

        i. Clear information on the period of suspension;

        ii. Necessary measures to remedy the cause of suspension. The notice may require the recipient to present an action plan, and the completion of actions against the plan should be reviewed regularly by the Responsible Officer during the period of suspension.

        iii. A timeframe within which the plan or remedial action must be taken.

    b. Where the cause of suspension is not remedied in accordance with the plan, the Director or Head of MEA Secretariat, or the Partner may terminate the Partnership in accordance with the terms of the legal instrument.

    c. In case of repeated or consistent non-performance, issues should be escalated to the **CSD Deputy Director**. Suspension may also be triggered immediately where there are legitimate concerns as to possible instances of fraud, corruption, conflict of interest, sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment or where there is a force majeure event

70. Some legal instruments do not specifically provide for a suspension mechanism. In such cases, an amendment[46] to the duration of the legal instrument may be an appropriate option.

71. For **Multi-Stakeholder Partnership Modalities**, any suspension mechanisms will be outlined in the membership requirements and rules applicable to the specific forum/platform/network.

72. **Early Termination of Partnerships:**

- **Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships** may be terminated early in accordance with the membership requirements and rules applicable to the specific forum/platform/network.
- For **Cooperation, Implementation** and **Donor Partnerships,** early termination should occur in accordance with the terms of the legal instrument.

Early termination may be triggered immediately where there are proven instances of fraud, corruption, conflict of interest, sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment, there is a force majeure event which cannot be rectified, or a dissolution of the legal entity or status of the Partner. In case of repeated or consistent non-performance, issues should be escalated to the **CSD Deputy Director**.

73. **Reporting fraud and misconduct:** All staff are required to report[47] any breach of UN regulations, rules and policies, which result from a Partnership as soon as suspected, in accordance with the applicable legal instrument, relevant regulations, rules and procedures. In addition, Partners and their personnel are required to cooperate with UN audits and investigations and should report any wrongdoing and possible misuse of UN funds in the first instance to the relevant UNEP or MEA Secretariat Project Manager and Director of Corporate Services Division.[48]

Review of Partners

74. Upon expiry, closure or termination of the partnership, the Responsible Officer should complete a review of Partners in accordance with **Template 16.** This review enables UNEP and MEA Secretariats to flag both positive feedback and any concerns/issues encountered in the Partnership. Reviews are mandatory and enable staff to measure performance, identify areas of improvement, good practices and lessons learned from the Partnership, thus providing a tool for adaptive management, operational improvement and positive learning for future engagements.

[46] See Guidelines for the Use of UNEP's Standard Legal Instruments
[47] See Guidance on Reporting Misconduct
[48] See Annex 3 and 4

75. Key information captured through reviews on the performance of Partners shall be readily available through the relevant online platform as indicated in **Template 16**. Significantly negative results from reviews may also lead to a Partner being flagged as high risk. In such cases, a brief summary of the justification for such a rating should be provided. All information relating to the reviews of Partners must remain internal to the UN and not be publicly shared with other stakeholders, other than on a need-to-know basis.

C. Branding and Visibility of UNEP and MEA Secretariats in Partnerships

76. Partnerships must maintain the integrity and independence of UNEP and MEA Secretariats and protect the organisation's brand. As such, the name, emblem or logo of the UN, UNEP, or MEA Secretariat cannot be used for "commercial purposes" or for use in any manner that suggests an endorsement by UNEP, or an MEA Secretariat, of a Partner's products, business practices or services. In the case of UNEP engaging hydrocarbon entities, the Memorandum on Guidance for engagement with the hydrocarbon sector must be followed and the Private Sector Unit Validating Office is consulted prior to any engagement.

77. UNEP's name, emblem and logo may only be used by a Partner in an unmodified or modified form only with express authorization in advance, in writing and upon such terms and conditions as may be specified. Responsible Officers should consult the UNEP Policy on the Use of UNEP Name and Emblem[49] to understand the correct process for use of UNEP's name, emblem and logo. For MEA Secretariats, if their logo is to include the UNEP or UN name and logo, or elements of these, they must also consult the UNEP Policy on the Use of UNEP Name and Emblem to obtain authorisation. The UNEP Visual Identity Manual and relevant identity manuals and guidelines for MEA Secretariats should also be consulted as applicable.

78. For the purposes of transparency, once approved, for all **Implementation Partnerships**, the name and locality of the Partner, the nature and purpose of the Partnership, and the amount being transferred by UNEP to the Partner shall be published as publicly available information.

D. Information Management

D.1 Internal Information Management

(UN and UNEP Partner Portal, WeCollaborate and UMOJA Extension 2)

79. Information management is a key factor in ensuring accountable, transparent and efficient processes. The UN and UNEP Partner Portals are accessible to all Personnel with an UNITE ID account. The Implementing Partner module is available to all Personnel with UMOJA access. The Responsible Officer must ensure that all Partnership Engagement Documentation and any other relevant documentation relating to the Partner and Partnership are maintained and uploaded to online platforms as per the relevant Procedures.

80. UNEP and UN corporate guidance on engagement with Partners include, at the time of issuing this Policy, the following:

i. 2018 Memorandum on Online Partners Portal, Partnership Process and Procedures
ii. 2019 Memorandum on the Clarification of Roles between Partners Portal and Umoja Extension 2
iii. 2019 Memorandum on Interim Measures on the Review of Partnerships
iv. 2020 Memorandum on Guidance for Engagement with the Hydrocarbon Sector
v. 2022 Implementing Partner (Grantor) – Assessment in the Grantor Process
vi. 2022 UN Partner Portal Registration Guide

UNEP's corporate guidance is updated on a regular basis and available through WeCollaborate.

[49] Including revisions or updates to the Policy

81. For further guidance on the use of the UNEP Partner Portal, see the User Manual, as updated. Technical issues related to the Partners Portal should be raised via the service desk of the Portal. For further guidance on the use of the UN Partner Portal, see resources or contact the help desk.

D.2. Access to Information, Confidentiality and Integrity

82. UNEP and MEA Secretariats promote and are committed to the spirit of openness and transparency with our internal and external constituencies. For UNEP and MEA Secretariats to fully carry out their mandates, it is critically important to disseminate and make accessible the information concerning their work or information generated though their programmes, particularly with respect to environmental information, as widely as possible. In the context of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, it is of fundamental importance for UNEP to make environmental information available to Member States, other stakeholders and the public in general with a view to supporting their efforts in achieving sustainable development.[50] UNEP and MEA Secretariats have an obligation to handle sensitive information in an appropriate manner consistent with the relevant rules and practice of the United Nations, and UNEP's Access to Information Policy.

D.3. Data protection

83. In situations where a Partnership involves the Partner handling personal data, UNEP and MEA Secretariats must ensure that the Partner has appropriate and adequate policies relating to the protection of personal data. Such policies must meet the standards in the UN Data Protection and Privacy Policy (to be released).

E. Monitoring, Updating and Application of the Partnership Policy

84. The Partnership Policy (including the respective Procedures) are live documents that embody the principle of continuous improvement, identification of flaws, gaps or inconsistencies, adaptive management and incorporation of lessons learned. To this end:
    a) A one-year transition period of this Policy shall be conducted. Based on feedback from users and any changes to UNEP's corporate guidance, a revised version of the Partnership Policy shall be issued following the transition period. During this transition period, the procedures, tools and guidance may be adjusted in line with ongoing reforms by the UN secretariat; and
    b) The Partnership Policy shall thereafter be reviewed and updated in conjunction with UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy (MTS), at a minimum every four years.

85. Updating individual Procedures shall be undertaken on an as-needed basis, in accordance with the continuous improvement principle, and where there are emerging Partnership Modalities which may become appropriate for coverage under the Policy. Such emerging Partnership Modalities could include Consortium Agreements, blended finance modalities, and engagement with High-Net-Worth Individuals. In addition, updates to the applicable online platforms will also be incorporated into the Procedures. Such updates could include new mandatory Partner assessments in the UN Partner Portal related to the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, addition of functionality to register more Partner Categories, etc. Timelines for completing Procedures will also be added following the pilot period. Further guidance may be issued on Implementing Partners and related procedures, including guidance on monitoring of procurement by Implementing Partners.

[50] See UNEP's Access to Information Policy. MEA Secretariats may have alternative policies related to access to information and information disclosure

86. Transitional measures:
    a. For Partnerships that are ongoing[51] as at the date of effectiveness of this Policy: such partnerships were selected and approved under the Partnership Policy applicable at the time of the Partnership approval. Nonetheless, all UNEP staff are encouraged to adopt and implement the Partnership Principles from this Policy towards the monitoring and closure of these partnerships to the greatest extent possible;
    b. For partnerships in advanced stages of negotiation[52], such partnerships shall apply the Partnership Policy in force at the time of initiation of the partnership; however the Deputy Director, or Designated Senior Officer of MEA are encouraged to adopt the Partnership Principles from this Policy to the greatest extent possible.
    c. All new partnerships selected and approved after the effective date on the cover page must be compliant with the Partnership Policy.
    d. Partnerships that are ongoing[53] during any update of the Policy and Procedures shall remain subject to the version of the Policy and Procedures in force at the time of initiation of the Partnership.

87. The Partnership Policy shall enter into force as of the effective date on the cover page and supersedes all prior UNEP policies and procedures related to Partnerships, including the 2011 UNEP Partnership Policy and Procedures, and the 2017 UNEP Private Sector Engagement Policy, Procedures and Workflow.

[51] Partnerships which are under implementation and for which legal agreements with the partners have been signed prior to the date of approval of the policy.

[52] Partnerships which have already undergone the selection and due diligence process and are under advanced stages of negotiations at the date of effectiveness of this Policy, but for which the legal instrument has not been signed.

[53] Partnerships which are under implementation and for which legal agreements with the partners have been signed prior to the date of approval of the updates to the Policy and Procedures.