



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2021/050

Audit of the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Africa

**The audit indicated the need to strengthen
risk management and project monitoring**

29 October 2021

Assignment No. AA2020-220-02

Audit of the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Africa

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Office for Africa (ROA). The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes in ensuring effective implementation of ROA's programme of work. The audit covered the period from January 2018 to December 2020 and included a review of: (a) implementation and monitoring of programme of work; and (b) resource mobilization.

ROA had developed and implemented annual work plans aligned to the UNEP medium-term strategy and programme of work. However, the audit indicated the need to strengthen risk management and project monitoring.

OIOS made six important recommendations. To address the issues identified in the audit, ROA needed to:

- Strengthen its risk management practices by: (a) establishing a mechanism for identifying, tracking and updating project risks to ensure that they are adequately mitigated; and (b) specifying the criteria for selecting countries in which to implement projects, taking into consideration the risks and their impact; and
- Develop and implement an action plan to strengthen project monitoring mechanisms.

UNEP needed to:

- Strengthen its support to African Member States to effectively integrate environmental issues in the countries' national development plans as mandated by the United Nations Environment Assembly;
- Assess the need for evaluation of projects being implemented by ROA to confirm their relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability;
- Clarify and delineate the monitoring responsibilities for projects under joint implementation by UNEP divisions and regional offices to ensure that the projects are effectively monitored; and
- Ensure that the updated resource mobilization strategy and implementation plan is executed in close collaboration with the regional offices including ROA.

UNEP and ROA accepted the recommendations and have initiated action to implement them.

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Audit of the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Africa

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Office for Africa (ROA).
2. UNEP is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system, and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment. UNEP's medium-term strategy for 2018-2021 focused on seven cross-cutting thematic priorities: (i) climate change; (ii) resilience to disasters and conflicts; (iii) healthy and productive ecosystems; (iv) environmental governance; (v) chemicals, waste and air quality; (vi) resource efficiency; and (vii) environment under review.
3. ROA is one of the six regional offices of UNEP, covering 54 countries from its main office in Nairobi, Kenya. It has a sub-regional office in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, country offices in Pretoria, South Africa and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and a liaison office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. ROA also hosts the secretariat for the forum of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment whose mandate includes providing advocacy for environmental protection in Africa, ensuring that basic human needs are met adequately and in a sustainable manner, ensuring that social and economic development is realized at all levels, and ensuring that agricultural activities and practices meet the food security needs of the region.
4. The annual budget for ROA was \$3.65 million, \$4.29 million and \$4.35 million for 2018, 2019 and 2020, respectively. As of 31 March 2021, ROA had 55 staff including 29 professional and 26 General Service distributed in its various offices in Africa.
5. Comments provided by UNEP are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

6. The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes in ensuring effective implementation of ROA's programme of work.
7. This audit was included in the 2021 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to the risk that potential control weaknesses in implementation of the programme of work for ROA could have an adverse impact on the achievement of its mandate.
8. OIOS conducted this audit from November 2020 to June 2021. The audit covered the period from January 2018 to December 2020. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered risk areas in the management of ROA, which included: (a) implementation and monitoring of programme of work; and (b) resource mobilization.
9. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews with key personnel; (b) review of relevant documentation; (c) analytical review of data; and (d) sample testing of project data. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the audit team was unable to travel to various countries to conduct onsite verification of projects. Therefore, the audit team relied on: (i) progress and monitoring reports produced by implementing partners and ROA staff; and (ii) data in Umoja and the Programme Information Management System (PIMS).

10. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

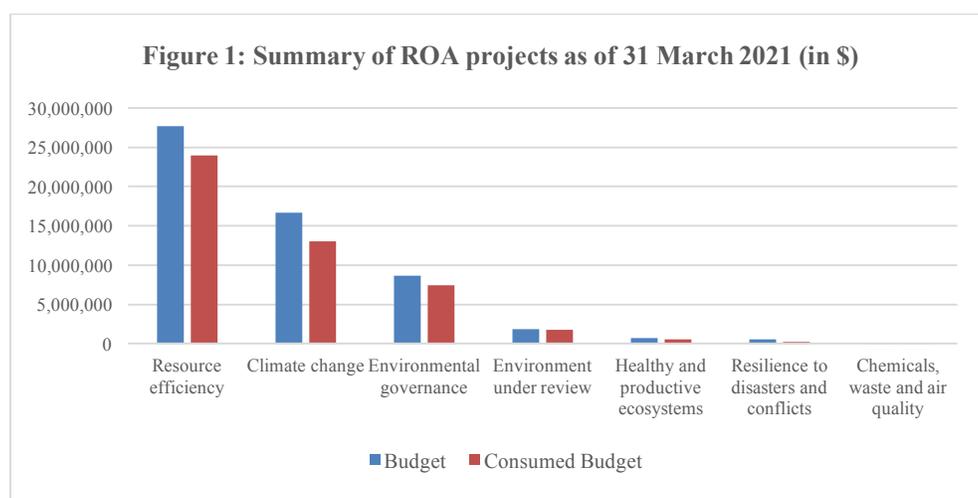
III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Implementation and monitoring of programme of work

Annual work plans were aligned to the UNEP medium-term strategy and programme of work

11. The results-based management approach is fundamental to demonstrating results achieved in tangible terms. It emphasizes the achievement of outputs, outcomes, intermediate state results, and long-term impact.

12. The annual work plans of ROA for 2018-2021 were aligned to the UNEP medium-term strategy for the same period. The work plans focused on UNEP's seven cross-cutting thematic priorities. The budget allocation and expenditures for the period 2018-2021 (up to 31 March 2021) are shown in Figure 1.



Source: Umoja

13. ROA was implementing 42 projects with a budget of \$56 million on various environmental issues in Africa. As of 31 March 2021, 13 projects had been completed and closed in Umoja, 13 others were under closure, and a further 16 were under implementation. Additionally, ROA was implementing 139 projects (with a total budget of \$23 million) jointly with other UNEP Divisions. However, ROA did not systematically monitor these joint projects and did not include them in its progress reports, as explained later in this report.

14. ROA prepared quarterly reports covering the 42 projects for the period 2018 to 2020 in which it reported progress and project achievements, among others.

Need to improve project risk management

15. Risk management involves identifying the relevant risks, assessing their potential impact, and implementing mitigation measures during the project life cycle.

16. ROA did not fully comply with the risk management guidance provided in UNEP's Programme Manual. For example, project documents relating to seven projects did not contain pertinent details such

as risks identified, mitigation measures to address the risks, and criteria used to select countries for project implementation. Furthermore, ROA had not developed tracking mechanisms for risks identified at the project development stage.

17. ROA explained that under the new medium-term strategy for 2022 to 2025, projects will be implemented through close engagement with Member States based on their national development priorities, with the United Nations development system in the countries playing a clear role.

(1) The UNEP Regional Office for Africa should strengthen its risk management practices by: (a) establishing a mechanism for identifying, tracking and updating project risks to ensure that they are adequately mitigated; and (b) specifying the criteria for selecting countries in which to implement projects, taking into consideration the risks and their impact.

UNEP accepted recommendation 1 and stated that all approved projects have an inbuilt risk management provision specific to the underlying project activities. Mandatory periodical reporting in PIMS also ensures that all pertinent project risks are captured and addressed in a timely manner. In collaboration with the Project Review Committee process leads, UNEP will review the corporate dashboard and PIMS to include mechanisms for identifying, tracking and updating project risks. It will also revise and refine the criteria for selecting project countries to include project risks and their impact. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of evidence that: (a) a mechanism has been established for identifying, tracking and updating project risks; and (b) criteria have been specified for selecting countries in which to implement projects.

Need to strengthen support to African Member States

18. The United Nations Environment Assembly's resolution 5 on "Delivering on the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development" requires UNEP to: (i) actively promote the integration of environmental dimensions into the United Nations Development Assistance at the country level; and (ii) enhance institutional and human capacity at the national, regional and international levels, among others. To achieve these objectives, ROA is required to assist Member States to develop Cooperation Framework documents that address the relevant environmental issues they face.

19. UNEP had established a task force to issue guidelines on the development of Cooperation Framework documents, articulating how support would be provided to Member States in the context of developing their national plans. The guidelines were to clarify how technical teams at UNEP headquarters would effectively contribute and work with regional offices including ROA in providing effective support to Member States. ROA explained that it had assigned a staff to ensure that the guidelines are adapted into its projects as part of implementing the new medium-term strategy for 2022 to 2025.

20. ROA is mandated to support African countries in integrating the environmental dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). OIOS noted the following:

(a) For the period from 2018 to 2020, ROA offered technical support to 37 out of the 55 African States in integrating the environmental dimensions of SDGs at various stages in the development of Cooperation Framework documents. However, there was no plan to ensure that the remaining 18 Member States receive similar technical support, if required.

(b) ROA indicated that it lacked the capacity to effectively offer technical support for completion of the Cooperation Framework documents. For example, the office only had one staff member (P-5) to support 16 West African countries. Moreover, a P-5 Regional Coordinator position based at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi with key responsibilities of assisting Member States to build capacity in integrating

environmental issues in the development of Cooperation Framework documents fell vacant in March 2017 but was yet to be filled as of May 2021 due to funding constraints.

21. Inadequate technical support to Member States could diminish UNEP's ability to influence effective integration of environmental issues in the countries' national development plans.

(2) UNEP should strengthen its support to African Member States to effectively integrate environmental issues in the countries' national development plans as mandated by the United Nations Environment Assembly.

UNEP accepted recommendation 2 and stated that the integration of environmental considerations in the national development plans of countries is the responsibility of national environment management agencies. UNEP continuously provides capacity building to these agencies for this purpose. In addition, UNEP as part of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) provides support to the national planning authorities and ministries to integrate environmental sustainability and climate action into their plans. All interventions developed through consultations with countries and defined in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) are required to integrate environmental sustainability and climate action, a role that UNEP plays as part of the UNCT. UNEP will continue to strengthen its engagement with UNCTs to ensure that the UNSDCFs integrate environmental issues in the United Nations-led development plans. UNEP will work within the established UNEP budget mechanisms and available resources to strengthen where possible the resources for this process. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of evidence that UNEP has strengthened its support to African Member States to effectively integrate environmental issues in the countries' national development plans.

Need to strengthen performance monitoring

22. The UNEP Programme Manual defines monitoring as a continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and stakeholders an indication of the extent of progress in the achievement of desired outcomes, as well as progress in the use of allocated funds. Monitoring activities are required to be properly documented in PIMS. Such documentation included a log of problems/issues arising and management response, record of risk changes, progress assessment, routine meeting summaries, mission reports, and reports on project accomplishment.

23. ROA did not consistently conduct and document evidence of monitoring activities to adequately support the reported results. In a sample of ten projects reviewed, OIOS noted the following:

(a) There was no evidence of planned monitoring activities recorded in PIMS for four projects that were being implemented as of 31 March 2021 (S1-32GCL-000014, S1-32GCL-000018, S1-32GCL-000020 and S1-32GCL-000032). Also, there was no documented monitoring plan and evidence of monitoring activities for two other projects (S1-32CPL-000347 and M1-32NFL-000048).

(b) There was no project profile in PIMS for a \$1.2 million project (M1-32CPL-000393) planned for implementation between April 2018 and September 2022. PIMS profile is important for monitoring key activities and their impact.

(c) The project document for project S1-32CPL-000326 did not have output and outcome indicators, baseline data, targets, and budgets. Such details are essential for monitoring progress and achievement of results.

(d) There was inadequate review of completeness and accuracy of monitoring activities in PIMS. For example, in three of the ten sampled projects, supervisors did not sign off on six-month progress reports. The projects were S1-32CPL-000326, M1-32AML-000002 and M1-32NFL-000048.

24. Lapses in monitoring activities contributed to adverse project performance as noted in 27 projects reviewed. For example, there were:

(a) Unspent balances totaling \$6 million for 13 of the 27 projects reviewed, including 10 projects whose implementation period had expired. ROA attributed this to disruptions by the COVID-19 pandemic, delays by some Member States in selecting implementing partners, delays in recruiting key staff, delays in receipt of donor funds, and security restrictions in some project areas; and

(b) Delays of one year in sending financial reports to donors for two projects. ROA explained that it was working with the Corporate Services Division of UNEP to ensure timely closure of grants and reporting to donors.

25. Robust monitoring is essential to ensure timely identification and correction of project performance issues and realization of the intended benefits.

(3) The UNEP Regional Office for Africa should develop and implement an action plan to strengthen project monitoring mechanisms.

UNEP accepted recommendation 3 and stated that ROA has already initiated a project monitoring action plan under the oversight of the Deputy Regional Director. This strategy aligns with the corporate dashboard that has been implemented at UNEP corporate level since 2020 under which a quarterly business review process for the Office is executed by the Executive Office. UNEP will establish an appropriate mechanism to strengthen project monitoring in collaboration with Corporate Evaluation Office, PIMS and Corporate Dashboard teams. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of evidence of strengthened project monitoring mechanisms.

Need for evaluation of projects

26. The UNEP Evaluation policy requires that programmes and projects be subjected to a systematic and objective evaluation process that assesses their relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

27. As of June 2021, out of the 42 projects that ROA was implementing during the audit period, only one project was under evaluation and another project was undergoing a mid-term review. The Evaluation Unit explained that due to resource constraints, evaluations were prioritized at the sub-programme thematic levels, and only individual projects that met either the criteria of a \$1 million budget or funded by the Green Environmental Fund were selected for evaluation.

28. In the absence of evaluation, it was not possible to objectively assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of ROA's projects and their contribution to the overall goals of UNEP.

(4) UNEP should assess the need for evaluation of projects being implemented by the Regional Office for Africa to confirm their relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

UNEP accepted recommendation 4 and stated that all projects that meet the evaluation threshold as per UNEP policy are evaluated. Projects implemented as a result of sub-allotments are evaluated at the division or office level in which the project was approved or is domiciled. UNEP will ensure that all projects are evaluated within the recently approved evaluation approach for UNEP projects. The selection of projects to be evaluated or reviewed is governed by the UNEP Evaluation Policy. All evaluations or reviews assess project performance against a common set of criteria, which includes strategic relevance, effectiveness, likelihood of impact, efficiency and sustainability. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of evidence of assessment of ROA projects for evaluation, and a plan to evaluate all projects that meet the established evaluation threshold.

Need to improve coordination between ROA and UNEP Divisions

29. As of 31 March 2021, ROA was jointly implementing 139 projects in conjunction with other UNEP Divisions, involving a total budget of \$23 million. The status of these projects was that 56 were under implementation, 52 were under closure, and 31 had been closed.

30. UNEP had not clarified the coordination and cooperation mechanisms for supporting projects that were jointly implemented by UNEP Divisions and ROA. Consequently, ROA staff at the out-posted offices did not systematically monitor such projects, and their results were not included in the progress reports.

31. The absence of coordination and cooperation mechanisms between UNEP regional offices and divisions implementing projects in Africa could compromise their efficiency and effectiveness, result in duplication of efforts, and weaken knowledge sharing which is essential for project implementation.

(5) UNEP should clarify and delineate the monitoring responsibilities for projects under joint implementation by UNEP divisions and regional offices to ensure that the projects are effectively monitored.

UNEP accepted recommendation 5 and stated that it is currently proceeding with a new approach towards project implementation between divisions and regional and national offices. This new plan will outline the responsibilities and will have mechanisms in place at the Senior Management level to hold regional offices accountable for monitoring and information sharing on programme/projects progress. In the interim, Internal Cooperation Agreements or Sub-allotment memos clearly delineate the monitoring responsibilities for projects under joint implementation by UNEP divisions and regional offices to ensure effective implementation. UNEP will continue to engage other divisions/offices with which it executes joint projects to ensure that monitoring responsibilities are clearly defined. Recommendation 5 remains open pending receipt of evidence of delineated monitoring responsibilities for projects under joint implementation by UNEP divisions and regional offices to ensure that projects are effectively monitored.

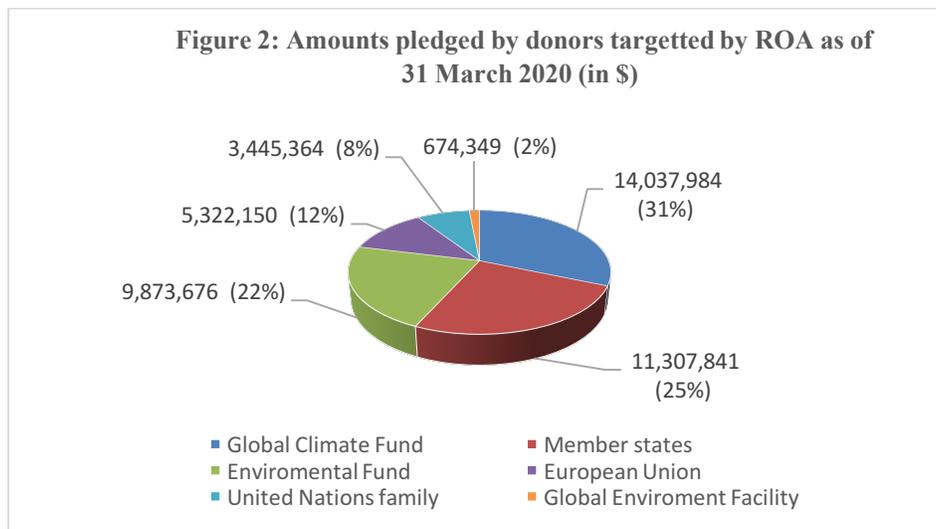
B. Resource mobilization

Need to enhance resource mobilization activities

32. The UNEP resource mobilization strategy of 2017 aims to ensure that enough funding is available to implement the approved medium-term strategy and programme of work for 2018-2021. The strategy requires the regional offices to take a leading role in piloting and rolling out fund-raising in coordination with UNEP headquarters and spearhead public outreach to create opportunities for funding.

33. UNEP had not operationalized its corporate resource mobilization strategy. As a result, there were no clear targets, responsibilities, coordination mechanisms and timelines for UNEP headquarters and ROA. Furthermore, there was no systematic tracking and reporting on the progress achieved in resource mobilization.

34. ROA had not defined the funding gaps and resource mobilization activities and targets to support the implementation of its work plan. Further, staff including key liaison staff in out-posted offices were not assigned resource mobilization responsibilities despite their regular contact with Member States and other partners. Figure 2 shows the breakdown of the \$44.7 million that had been pledged by various donors as of 31 March 2020 to fund ROA activities.



35. Effective resource mobilization is essential to raise the resources required by regional offices for implementing their activities.

(6) UNEP should ensure that the updated resource mobilization strategy and implementation plan is executed in close collaboration with the regional offices including the Regional Office for Africa.

UNEP accepted recommendation 6 and stated that it has recently implemented an updated Resource Mobilization Strategy and its implementation plan recognizes the role of the regional offices and establishes a coordination mechanism for this purpose. The implementation plan will be executed in close collaboration with regional offices/ROA, taking into account the programmatic needs and funding opportunities provided by the region. Recommendation 6 remains open pending receipt of the revised resource mobilization strategy and implementation plan.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

36. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the Management and staff of UNEP for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

(Signed) Eleanor T. Burns
 Director, Internal Audit Division
 Office of Internal Oversight Services

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Africa

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	C/ O ³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁴
1	The UNEP Regional Office for Africa should strengthen its risk management practices by: (a) establishing a mechanism for identifying, tracking and updating project risks to ensure that they are adequately mitigated; and (b) specifying the criteria for selecting countries in which to implement projects, taking into consideration the risks and their impact.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that: (a) a mechanism has been established for identifying, tracking and updating project risks; and (b) criteria have been specified for selecting countries in which to implement projects.	31 March 2022
2	UNEP should strengthen its support to African Member States to effectively integrate environmental issues in the countries' national development plans as mandated by the United Nations Environment Assembly.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that UNEP has strengthened its support to African Member States to effectively integrate environmental issues in the countries' national development plans.	31 October 2022*
3	The UNEP Regional Office for Africa should develop and implement an action plan to strengthen project monitoring mechanisms.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of strengthened project monitoring mechanisms.	31 December 2021
4	UNEP should assess the need for evaluation of projects being implemented by the Regional Office for Africa to confirm their relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of assessment of ROA projects for evaluation, and a plan to evaluate all projects that meet the established evaluation threshold.	31 October 2022*
5	UNEP should clarify and delineate the monitoring responsibilities for projects under joint implementation by UNEP divisions and regional offices to ensure that the projects are effectively monitored.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of delineated monitoring responsibilities for projects under joint implementation by UNEP divisions and regional offices to ensure that projects are effectively monitored.	31 October 2022*

¹ Critical recommendations address those risk issues that require immediate management attention. Failure to take action could have a critical or significant adverse impact on the Organization.

² Important recommendations address those risk issues that require timely management attention. Failure to take action could have a high or moderate adverse impact on the Organization.

³ Please note the value C denotes closed recommendations whereas O refers to open recommendations.

⁴ Date provided by UNEP in response to recommendations. Dates marked with an asterisk (*) have been indicated by OIOS for implementation monitoring purposes.

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Africa

6	UNEP should ensure that the updated resource mobilization strategy and implementation plan is executed in close collaboration with the regional offices including the Regional Office for Africa.	Important	O	Receipt of the revised resource mobilization strategy and implementation plan.	31 March 2022
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APPENDIX I

Management Response

Memorandum

To: **Ms. Eleanor T. Burns,**
Director, Internal Audit Division
Office of Internal Oversight Services

Date **22 October 2021**

From: **Inger Andersen, Executive Director**
UNEP 

Reference **UNE-2021-01997-**
Africa

Subject: **Draft report on an audit of the United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Office for Africa (Assignment No. AA2020-220-02)**

1. This memo refers to the draft report on an audit of the United Nations Environment Programme, Africa Office (Assignment No. AA2020-220-02).
2. Management has reviewed the draft report and I am happy to say that all recommendations are accepted.
3. Please find attached the Management Response (Appendix I) for you to include in the final draft of the report.
4. The Management Response includes an action plan with target dates and the titles of the individuals responsible for implementing the recommendations.

Management Response

Audit of the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Africa

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	The UNEP Regional Office for Africa should strengthen its risk management practices by: (a) establishing a mechanism for identifying, tracking and updating project risks to ensure that they are adequately mitigated; and (b) specifying the criteria for selecting countries in which to implement projects, taking into consideration the risks and their impact.	Important	Yes	Director and Regional Representative UN Environment Programme – Regional Office for Africa	March 2022	<p>a) All approved projects in UNEP have an inbuilt risk management provision specific to the underlying project activities. Mandatory periodical reporting on the corporate Project Management Information System (PIMS) also ensures that all pertinent project risks are captured and addressed in a timely manner. UNEP will build on this recommendation to establish a mechanism for identifying, tracking and updating project risks to ensure that they are adequately mitigated. This will be done in collaboration with UNEP's PRC process leads, PIMS and Corporate dashboard reviews by March'2022.</p> <p>b) UNEP, through its Africa Office indeed developed criteria in 2018 for the selection of countries in which to implement projects. All other projects are either earmarked by specific donors or</p>

¹ Critical recommendations address those risk issues that require immediate management attention. Failure to take action could have a critical or significant adverse impact on the Organization.

² Important recommendations address those risk issues that require timely management attention. Failure to take action could have a high or moderate adverse impact on the Organization.

Management Response

Audit of the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Africa

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
						are sub-allotments from divisions with project countries pre-indicated. UNEP, through its Africa office provides inputs to this portfolio of projects in line with the donor earmarking or specific approved projects. UNEP will revise and refine the criteria developed in 2018 and specifically those for selecting countries to integrate both project risks and their impacts. This will be done by March'2022.
2	UNEP should strengthen its support to African Member States to effectively integrate environmental issues in the countries' national development plans as mandated by the United Nations Environment Assembly.	Important	Yes	Director and Regional Representative UN Environment Programme – Regional Office for Africa		The integration of environmental considerations in the national development plans of countries is the responsibility of national environment management agencies. UNEP continuously provides capacity building to these agencies for this purpose. In addition, UNEP as part of the UN Country Team (UNCT) provides support to the national planning authorities and ministries to integrate environmental sustainability and climate action into their plans. All UN interventions developed through consultations with countries and defined in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation

Management Response

Audit of the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Africa

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
						<p>Framework (UNSDCF) are required to integrate environmental sustainability and climate action, a role that UNEP plays as part of the UNCT. Recently completed UNSDCFs for African countries are available for review.</p> <p>UNEP will continue to strengthen its engagement with UNCTs under the leadership of UNRCs to ensure that the UNSDCFs integrate environmental issues in the UN led development plans.</p> <p>UNEP will work within the established UNEP budget mechanisms and available resources to strengthen where possible the resources for this process.</p>
3	The UNEP Regional Office for Africa should develop and implement an action plan to strengthen project monitoring mechanisms.	Important	Yes	Director and Regional Representative UN Environment Programme – Regional Office for Africa	December 2021	UNEP Regional Office for Africa has already initiated a project monitoring action plan under the oversight of the Deputy Regional Director. This strategy aligns with the corporate dashboard that has been implemented at UNEP corporate level since 2020 under which a quarterly business review process for the office is executed by the executive office.

Management Response

Audit of the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Africa

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
						UNEP will establish an appropriate mechanism to strengthen project monitoring in collaboration with Corporate Evaluation Office, PIMS and Corporate Dashboard teams.
4	UNEP should assess the need for evaluation of projects being implemented by the Regional Office for Africa to confirm their relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.	Important	Yes	Director and Regional Representative UN Environment Programme – Regional Office for Africa		<p>All projects that meet the evaluation threshold as per UNEP policy are evaluated. Projects implemented as a result of sub-allotments are evaluated at the division or office level in which the project was approved or is domiciled.</p> <p>UNEP will ensure that all projects are evaluated within the recently approved evaluation approach for UNEP projects.</p> <p>The selection of projects to be evaluated or reviewed is governed by the UNEP Evaluation Policy. All evaluations or reviews assess project performance against a common set of criteria, which includes strategic relevance, effectiveness, likelihood of impact, efficiency and sustainability.</p>
5	UNEP should clarify and delineate the monitoring responsibilities for projects under joint implementation by UNEP	Important	Yes	Director and Regional Representative		UNEP is currently proceeding with a new approach towards UNEP project implementation between Divisions and Regional and National Offices.

Management Response

Audit of the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Africa

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
	divisions and regional offices to ensure that the projects are effectively monitored.			UN Environment Programme – Regional Office for Africa		<p>This new plan will outline the responsibilities and will have mechanisms in place at the Senior management Team level to hold regional offices accountable for the monitoring and information sharing on programme/projects progress.</p> <p>In the interim while the new approach is implemented, Internal Cooperation Agreements (ICAs) or Sub-allotment memos clearly delineate the monitoring responsibilities for projects under joint implementation by UNEP divisions and regional offices to ensure effective implementation.</p> <p>UNEP will continue to engage other divisions/offices with which it executes joint projects to ensure that monitoring responsibilities are clearly defined.</p>
6	UNEP should ensure that the updated resource mobilization strategy and implementation plan is executed in close collaboration with the Regional Offices/Regional Office for Africa.	Important	Yes	Director and Regional Representative UN Environment Programme –	March 2022	UNEP has recently implemented an updated Resource Mobilization Strategy and its implementation plan recognizes the role of the regional offices and establishes a coordination mechanism for this purpose. The

Management Response

Audit of the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Africa

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
				Regional Office for Africa		implementation plan will be executed in close collaboration with the Regional Offices/Regional Office for Africa, including taking into account the programmatic needs and funding opportunities provided by the region.