

How green is our office? - UNEP takes stock year 2009

Summary

At World Environment Day 2009, the voluntary staff initiative at UNEP headquarters Step-by-Step presented the results of a stocktaking exercise for all UNEP offices. The aim of the stocktaking was to raise awareness among staff and to find out where UNEP is in terms of implementing green office procedures. The stocktaking will be repeated every year, and the publicity may also create an incentive for UNEP staff to improve their office greening efforts.

15 UNEP division offices and regional offices participated in the stocktaking for year 2009. The results showed that the greenest office of year 2009 was the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC), in Panama. On a shared second position came the Regional Office for Europe (ROE), in Geneva, and the Division for Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI) in Nairobi.

The stocktaking exercise received a good interest, and many divisions and staff members gave very positive remarks and were happy to contribute. During the stocktaking, a number of other ongoing greening initiatives were also identified at different regional offices and divisions.

Conclusions:

We would like to suggest that this becomes an annual event for monitoring progress, to be done during World Environment Day. This will inspire UNEP staff members and groups to green their habits.

We would also suggest that the stocktaking is coordinated with the development of the UNEP environmental management system.

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Introduction

In relation to the World Environment Day 2009, Step-by-Step asked all UNEP Divisions and Regional Offices to ‘take stock’ of their office facilities. The offices were asked to provide information on issues such as the number of printers per staff member and if desk lamps used energy-saving bulbs.

This report briefly describes the stocktaking exercise, the method used, the results and the suggested way forward.

Methodology

A questionnaire was sent out to the directors of all UNEP Divisions and Regional Offices. The full questionnaire is included in Annex 1 and the accompanying Email in Annex 2.

The following parameters were selected for the stock taking:

- Network printer per staff in the Division/Regional Office
- Desk printer per staff in the Division/Regional Office
- Desk printers removed after 2008 WED per staff in the Division/Regional Office
- Number of staff who used double sided printing as default, compared to all staff in the Division/Regional Office
- Number of staff with screensavers turned on per total staff
- Number of staff with power schemes activated per total staff
- Number of staff using desk lamps per total staff
- Number of staff having energy-saving bulbs on their desk lamps

Scoring Criteria

The results of the stocktaking were put in a table as illustrated in Table 1 below. The best performing Division/Regional Office was given 15 points, the second best/s were given 14 points and so on. The total points awarded were then summarised, and the Division/Regional Office with the highest total score was identified as the Greenest UNEP Office of 2009.

Results

According to the scoring criteria, the greenest office of year 2009 was UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC), in Panama. On a shared second position came UNEP Regional Office for Europe (ROE) in Geneva and the UNEP Division for Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI) in Nairobi (The initial results revealed ROE as number two and DEPI Nairobi as number three and this was communicated at WED. However, at a second review after WED, it turned out that the two offices shared the same score).

The detailed scores for each division following the scoring criteria are shown below:

Table 1: Results of UNEP taking stock of green office procedures 2009 – rating of performance

Office Facilities																		
Rank	UNEP Office	Network Printer per staff	Marks	Desk Printer per Staff	Marks	Printers removed after WED	Marks	Double sided printing	Marks	Staff with Screen savers per total staff in the office	Marks	Power schemes Enabled	Marks	Desk lamps per staff	Marks	Staff using energy-saving bulbs on lamps	Marks	TOTAL
1	ROLAC	0.25	11	0.2	14	0	9	1	15	1	15	1	15	0.2	13	1	13	105
2	ROE	0.30	10	0.4	11	0	10	1	15	1	15	1	15	0.4	9	1	9	94
3	DEPI	0.08	14	0.2	14	0.4	15	0.6	14	0.3	13	0.3	12	0.3	11	0.1	1	94
4	DELC	0.70	5	0.5	10	0.3	14	1	15	0.5	14	1	15	0.3	11	0.8	8.8	93
5	ROWA	1.00	2	0.9	7	0.1	11	0.4	13	0.3	12	0.3	11	0	15	N/A	15	86
6	DRC	0.50	6	0.6	9	0.2	12	1	15	1	15	1	15	0.6	7	1	7	86
7	RONA	0.75	4	1	6	0	0	0.2	12	1	15	1	15	0	15	N/A	15	82
8	DTIE-Paris	0.09	13	0.1	15	0	8	1	15	0	0	1	15	0.2	13	0	0	79
9	QAS	0.10	12	1	6	0	0	1	15	0	0	1	15	0	15	N/A	15	78
10	NYO	0.30	10	0.6	9	0	0	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	5	1	5	74
11	DTIE/Urban	0.05	15	1	6	0	0	1	15	0	0	0.5	13	0.4	9	0.6	5.4	63
12	DGEF	0.80	3	1	6	0	0	1	15	1	15	1	15	0.7	6	0.2	1.2	61
13	DCPI	0.40	8	0.3	12	0	0	1	15	0.2	11	0	0	0.2	13	0.1	1.3	60
14	EOU	1.00	2	1	6	0	0	1	15	0	0	1	15	1	5	1	5	48
15	DEWA	0.40	8	1	6	0	0	1	15	0	0	0	0	0.2	13	0.2	2.6	45

The questionnaire sent out also asked for information on other aspects that are related to environmental performance of the office. However, this information was not used to award marks. It may however be used to monitor progress over the years as it further explains the status of sustainability of the office. The questions sought to find out the following:

- If water dispensers are provided in the office, if so, are they connected to electricity
- If ovens or microwaves are provided
- If water boilers are provided
- If environmental housekeeping rules were in place such as waste recycling, use of personal water bottles, and switching off electronics not in use
- If building facilities have light timers installed
- If toilets are equipped with dual flush
- The modes of transport used by staff-staff: walking or cycling, staff bus, public transport, or carpooling

The answers to the questions that were included in the questionnaire but not given any rating marks are summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Results of UNEP taking stock of green office procedures 2009 – non-rated aspects

UNEP Office	Microwave	Oven	Water boiler	Personal appliances	Dispenser	Environmental Housekeeping	Light timers?	Dual Flush?	Staff walking/cycling	Staff Buses	Public transport	Staff Carpooling
ROLAC	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	1	0	4	3
ROE	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	3	0	5	1
DEPI	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	29	1	5
DELC	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	0	31	3	0
ROWA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0
DRC	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	2	18	8	8
RONA	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	0	13	1
DTIE-Paris	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	27	0	31	0
QAS	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	3	1	1
NYO	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	3	0	9	2
DTIE/Urban	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	3	2	2	1
DGEF	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	2	14	1	10
DCPI	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	0	8	1	0
Evaluation and Oversight Unit	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	0	2	0	0
DEWA	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	0	24	1	2

Some UNEP offices also reported on voluntary environmental initiatives aiming at reaching the goal of environmental sustainability and climate neutrality, such as:

- **UNEP RONA Washington, DC:** the office is located in premises holding LEED Gold Certification. The LEED Green Building Rating System™ is the industry-recognized, voluntary standard that defines high performance green buildings and interiors. Other important criteria for selecting these premise was closeness to public transportation (bus and metro).
- **ROE Geneva:** has acquired a hybrid vehicle as the official car; transitioned to video-conferencing when possible to reduce the number of travels by staff; placed aluminium, plastic and glass recycling containers within their premises; and has switched to the most environmentally friendly electricity plan(Blue electricity) offered by the electricity provider.
- Some offices had strict rules for staff not to bring personal electronic appliances such as water kettles to the office. Other offices allow staff to bring kettles which staff share among themselves. Some offices use the open-space office layout which reduces the need for lighting and therefore reduces electricity consumption and saves on cost.

Way forward

The exercise was well received and we believe that the UNEP staff are interested and willing to continue to improve their efforts to “walk the talk” and to share their ideas and experiences with the rest of UNEP. We would like to suggest that this becomes an annual event at the same time of commemorating WED to raise awareness and inspire staff members to green their habits. A rewarding scheme could also be part of the exercise that would recognize the efforts of staff towards making UNEP a climate neutral organisation. We would also like to widen the scope of the stock taking to create more incentives for staff to act green in their offices as well as outside the four walls of UNEP offices and create a “green attitude” towards all activities in life. We therefore suggest that the criteria be reviewed and updated yearly.

We would also suggest that the stocktaking is coordinated with the development of the UNEP environmental management system, so that data retrieved through the stocktaking is used in the EMS and vice versa.

Annex 1 – Questionnaire for Stocktaking

Items	Quantity/Yes/No
What is the printer/staff ratio in your Division?	
How many desk printers are used by how many staff?	
How many desk printers have been removed since last WED?	
How many staff have double sided printing installed on their computer?	
How many staff have their screen savers switched off?	
How many staff have power schemes enabled in their computers?	
How many staff have desk lamps?	
How many staff have desk lamps with energy saving bulbs?	
Do you have a fridge in your Division? Is the fridge ozone friendly?	
Do you have a microwave in your Division?	
Do you have an oven in your Division?	
Do you have a water boiler in your Division?	
Does staff have any other private electronic appliances, such as heaters, water kettles, etc.?	
How many water dispensers does your Division have? Are they connected?	
Does all your staff have easy access to paper recycling boxes? Do you have boxes in your copy rooms?	
Actions	
Have you put up notices to remind staff of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recycling paper - switching off lights, if no one is in the office - shutting down their computers, if going to a meeting - switching off printers, if leaving the office - encouraging staff to use their own water bottles 	
Does your Division have timers for lights in bathrooms?	
Does your Division have a dual flush system installed in bathrooms?	
How many of your staff walk or cycle to work?	
How many of your staff use UNON buses?	
How many of your staff use public transportation?	
How many staff car pool?	
Comments:	

Please respond by 20 May 2009

Organisation/Division:	Name of Director:	Name of assignee:
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Annex 2 – Email to all Division Directors

**Chef De-
Cabinet/UNEP/NBO/UN
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Sent by: Melissa
Bettocchi/UNEP/NBO/U
NO

13/05/2009 06:37 PM

To Ibrahim Thiaw/UNEP/NBO/UNO@UNON, Carmen Tavera/UNEP/NBO/UNO@UNON, Angela Cropper/UNEP/NBO/UNO@UNON, Bakary Kante/UNEP/NBO/UNO@UNON, Sylvie Lemmet/OCHA/GE@OCHA, Peter Gilruth/UNEP/NBO/UNO@UNON, Maryam Niamir-Fuller/UNEP/NBO/UNO@UNON, Christophe BOUVIER/UNEP/GVA/UNO@UNGVA, Amy.Fraenkel@rona.unep.org, mara.murillo@pnuma.org, Habib.elhabr@unep.org.bh, Young-Woo Park/BKK/UNO@ESCAP

cc Patrick Tiefenbacher/UNEP/NBO/UNO@UNON, Segbedzi Norgbey/UNEP/NBO/UNO@UNON, Theodor Kapiga/UNEP/NBO/UNO@UNON, stepbystep@unep.org, Executive Office/UNEP/NBO/UNO@UNON, Clara Nobbe/UNEP/NBO/UNO@UNON

Subject Message on behalf of Step by Step to all UNEP Division and Regional Directors

Dear colleagues,

In line with UNEP's Governing Council decision 18/10* and the count-down to World Environment Day on 5 June 2009, 'Step-By-Step' requests all UNEP divisions and regional offices, UNON and UNHABITAT to take stock of building facilities, office systems and staff practices. The inventory will eventually provide the basis for UNEP's implementation of the Environmental Management System later on in the year.

It is further planned to turn the stock-taking into a 'green office competition', held annually on WED between all offices.

To facilitate smooth data collection, Directors are kindly asked to assign a staff member to fill in the attached inventory list and return it to Step-by-Step (stepbystep@unep.org) **by 20 May 2009**. Step-by-Step also recommends Directors to raise the issue in staff meetings as part of its awareness-raising campaign.

If you have any questions related to the campaign or if you require assistance in filling in the inventory list, please contact Diana Musyoka (dtiein01@unep.org, ext. 5268).

Your cooperation is very much appreciated by the Step-by-Step Team - and the environment!

Thank you!

Step-by-Step

*GC decision 18/10 requests the Executive Director of UNEP to consider and recommend strategies for the promotion of good practices in environmental housekeeping for use by UNEP and other UN agencies and programmes, with the aim of:

- Reducing waste;
- Expanding recycling and use of recycled materials;
- Conserving energy, water, wood, paper and other natural resources;
- Phasing out ozone-depleting substances and minimizing the release of greenhouse gases, volatile organic compounds, vehicle emissions and other substances damaging to the health and the environment;
- Using their spending power to encourage suppliers to design and provide products, materials, technologies and services which are friendlier to the environment;
- Advising architects, builders, engineers and other professionals to take fully into account global warming, acid rain, the depletion of the ozone layer and other environmental issues in the design and maintenance of new and existing buildings for the United Nations system.