Programme coordination desks meeting
Knowledge management workshop

22th of May 2019, UN Environment, Paris
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MEETING REPORT

Key messages
✓ Knowledge is the most important resource in the One Planet network: knowledge from people, documented knowledge, and knowledge from relationships and experience. ✓ Knowledge management is a targeted, systematic and integrated approach to identifying, acquiring, creating, sharing, applying, capturing and measuring knowledge relevant to achieving the goals of the One Planet network. ✓ Knowledge management is a way for the network to become aware of all its resources available for implementation. Those resources go beyond knowledge in terms of documentation and codified assets, to encompass also the vast amount of human and relational knowledge provided through the network. ✓ There are existing knowledge management structures and processes in place such as the knowledge map, to help determine the relevant knowledge we want to provide, and concretely link this knowledge to activities. ✓ Determining which knowledge the One Planet network really wants to provide is critical, to avoid information overload. ✓ Existing tools such as portfolios, reporting and data visualisation can provide an evidence base for determining the knowledge in the network and sharpening the offer of services we can provide.

Proposed next steps

✓ Continue knowledge map exercise within each programmme, to concretely link activities with knowledge needs in a systematic way.
   o Changes in practice can be the focus of the steps of this map, in order to be as operational as possible. What needs to change for 'xx' to be possible?
   o Once a draft of the steps identified, wider consultation within network to determine required knowledge.
   o Determine the list of 3-5 concrete services your programme can offer to countries for changes in practice to happen at country level. Concrete, operational, and branded.
✓ Determine entry points in your programme to establish communities of practice.
   o Quick-win, bringing together likeminded people around themes, practices, regions.
   o Identify community facilitators in the network.
✓ Determine knowledge management roles in your programmes (KM leaders, managers, experts, consultants...)
✓ Develop an overarching knowledge concept for the network

This meeting gathered the coordination desks of the programmes of the One Planet network on the 22nd of May in Paris. The objectives of the meeting were to: understand the fundamentals of knowledge management as a targeted, systematic and integrated approach; integrate knowledge management strategies into the programmes of the One Planet network and identify concrete actions to be taken forward.

In 2018, the One Planet network saw a huge increase in the amount of knowledge made available. The amount of projects and resources in the programme portfolios more than tripled in size, and the number of activities reported increased by nearly 50% with respect to the total from all other years combined. There has been an increasing realization that while the potential of this vast knowledge base is great, there are challenges in how to best organize, measure and exploit this information most effectively to pursue the concrete objectives of the One Planet network.

As such, the meeting examined existing structures and tools of knowledge management, to assist the programme coordination desks moving forward. The meeting took the form of a knowledge management training, led by an outside expert who guided the coordination desks through a series of presentations and exercises.

The meeting was composed of three main sessions: 1) Knowledge management – a targeted, systematic, and integrated approach; 2) Knowledge management for the One Planet programmes; 3) Community facilitation. The meeting concluded with a discussion of the session on knowledge management taking place at the Executive Meeting the following day, which would be facilitated in part by the coordination desks, as champions of the knowledge management techniques learned during this meeting.

All presentations can be accessed on the One Planet network website here.

SESSION 1: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT – A TARGETED, SYSTEMATIC, AND INTEGRATED APPROACH

This session aimed at familiarizing participants with the backbone elements of knowledge management, as a targeted, systematic and integrated approach with existing structures and processes. The session also included a presentation of some existing tools, how they have been applied in the past and how they could be applied by the One Planet network.

Introduction to the fundamentals of knowledge management

The following important observations emerged from the introductory presentation of knowledge management:

- Knowledge is the most important resource that we have in the 21st century and is not one-dimensional. This refers to human knowledge (e.g. experts, facilitators…), to codified knowledge (e.g. documents, tools..) and to relational knowledge (e.g communities of practice, networks…).
- Effective knowledge management means utilizing past knowledge, but also innovating and co-creating new knowledge to help us in the future. We are not just a library of the past.

- **Knowledge management** refers to **a targeted, systematic and integrated approach** to **identifying, acquiring, creating, sharing, applying, and capturing knowledge**, relevant to **achieving specific objectives.**
  - ○ *Targeted* means that we do not just increase the amount of knowledge for its own sake, but we do so in pursuit of specific objectives.
  - ○ *Integrated* means that the full knowledge cycle (see below) is considered.
  - ○ *Systematic* means that knowledge management is consistently a part of our thought processes, planning, activities, and follow-up.

The knowledge cycle

The knowledge cycle is a graphical illustration of the definition of knowledge management written above.
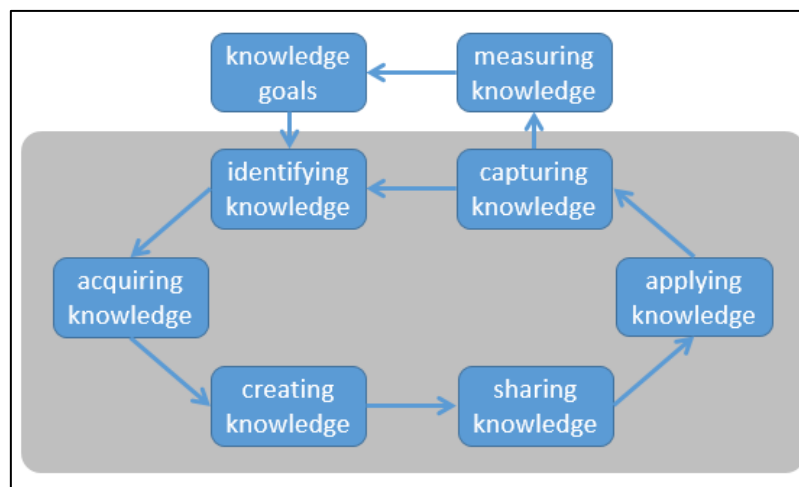
- The top two boxes mean that we have targets, and we are measuring against those targets in a systematic and integrated way.
- The six lower boxes refer to the interlinkages that need to be maintained to have effective knowledge management.
- Breaking the knowledge cycle will significantly limit its effectiveness
  - ○ For example, if we can successfully **identify** the correct knowledge, but it is not user friendly, or not in the right language, etc, then we are not able to **acquire** it.
  - ○ Or, if we are very good at **sharing** knowledge, but not at **applying** it successfully, then we will not have desired impact.

Determining necessary knowledge

The central importance of knowledge has been formalized in the context of organisations, through an ISO standard (ISO 9001:2015), stipulating that an organisation "*shall determine the knowledge necessary for the operation of its processes…*"

In the One Planet network, there is a challenge **to determine which knowledge we really want to provide to achieve our desired outcomes**.

- If we don't know this, then everything and nothing is important = information overload

- The more precise we are in terms of our real knowledge needs, then we can pay less attention to what is not relevant.

Overview of knowledge management methods and tools

An important aspect of this training was to provide concrete ways for the coordination desk, and the entire network to be more effective at knowledge management. This part of the session presented tools at the practical level that could be utilized by the One Planet network.

The graphical representations of these tools are available in the presentation, here.

- **Knowledge Maps** are a way to more systematically link our activities and objectives with actual knowledge needs. Only once we determine knowledge needs can we move forwards with action. These maps are an essential instrument to define not only processes, but the knowledge needed to perform tasks.
- **Knowledge sharing** means sharing at all stages, and is a personal responsibility as well as the responsibility of leadership to require knowledge sharing and to lead by example.
  - Knowledge sharing is not only about what we already know but taking on board the knowledge of those who are new to the network.
- **Knowledge transfer plans** can be employed systematically to determine who has critical knowledge, and what measures can be taken to ensure that this knowledge is not lost.
- Making **knowledge attractive** to others is key, if we expect them to take the time to engage.
- **Knowledge networking** means socializing knowledge. We cannot only learn from documents and the social aspect is critically important to establishing a **knowledge culture.**

SESSION 2: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR THE ONE PLANET NETWORK

The second session of the meeting looked specifically at knowledge management in the One Planet network: Where we are, where we would like to be, and how the existing structures and processes of knowledge management can help us to get there.

Results of the One Planet network knowledge assessments

Over the course of several weeks in April 2019, a series of knowledge management assessments took place with 29 stakeholders across the One Planet network programmes and National Focal Points. These assessments gathered qualitative and quantitative feedback on aspects of knowledge management in the One Planet network, including recommendations for the future.

The summarized feedback from the assessments can be found here.

The preliminary recommendations for the One Planet network, based on this feedback, were presented:

1. **Sharpen the focus of the One Planet network:** Determine more clearly the knowledge that the One planet network really wants to provide, enabling a larger number of people to work towards fewer specific targets, rather few people working towards too many broad targets.

2. **Strengthen and connect communities:** Socialize knowledge (even more) through professional facilitation of communities. Foster local/thematic communities to contextualize and adjust knowledge to user needs
3. **Foster knowledge services:** The One Planet network needs to have a clearer offer of well branded and concrete services that it can provide.
4. **Optimize use of documents and resources:** Structure knowledge - documents, people, external knowledge – based on common goals of the network.
5. **Provide guidance and training in Knowledge Management.**

Existing tools of the One Planet network that support knowledge management processes

The One Planet network already has tools that support, and can be supported, by improved knowledge management processes. This presentation examined how these tools – the programme portfolios, reporting, and data visualisation – are relevant to established knowledge management processes.

- When looking at the portfolios and reporting, and how they map on to the knowledge cycle, we can see there are certain pain points where the cycle is broken.
  - The portfolio and reporting exercises have allowed for the **identification** of large amounts of knowledge, but the **acquisition** of that knowledge in order to contextualise it to the needs of stakeholders has been limited, stemming from difficulties in reading and understanding the data.
  - Going from knowledge **acquisition** to knowledge **creation** is another challenge, in terms of how this information can be used to innovate and co-create further with partners.
- The Data visualisation tool can help connect these dots, by pulling on reported data from 2013-2018. Users can filter the data along different criteria to zoom in or out on different elements.
  - Users can think about what their real knowledge needs are to move towards certain objectives, and ask the data questions to determine if their network possesses that knowledge.
  - Provides an added value to the reporting by bringing data reported by partners out into the open.
  - Identify relevant products and people, through a structured and evidence-based process.
  - Complete **knowledge maps**, by narrowing down the scope of relevant knowledge by using the data visualisation
  - Developments are ongoing to provide a view in the data visualisation tool which looks specifically at what countries are doing.

Group Exercise: Knowledge maps

Each programme coordination desk was tasked with filling out a knowledge map, as an exercise in linking activities and processes to concrete knowledge needs. The knowledge map is designed to sharpen focus, to really determine what knowledge we are, or are not, working on.

Steps	People's knowledge	Codified knowledge	External knowledge

For each step identified, it is necessary to link the corresponding knowledge that is needed, in terms of human knowledge, codified knowledge, and external knowledge.

The main points deriving from the exercise and discussion on the knowledge maps were:

- **Knowledge maps are critical to identify the knowledge we need and the knowledge we have**. Until we have determined the actual knowledge that we need to achieve specific steps, and the actual knowledge our network is working on, it is difficult to effectively move forward.
- **The maps help determine if we have identified the right knowledge**. Reaching out to the network to check our map against the actual knowledge used in a similar, real-world process.
- **Knowledge map can help to make broad targets more concrete and practical,** by pinning them to the actual knowledge needs.
- **The One Planet network can use these maps to have a more service-oriented approach.** Looking at the knowledge needs identified on the map and developing a portfolio of services that the One Planet network can offer.

Specifically on how the data visualization tool relates to the knowledge maps, the main observations were as follows:

- The data visualization is helpful to estimate the existing knowledge already present in the network, and if it is relevant to the knowledge needs as articulated on the map.
  - Do current partners in the network possess the knowledge needed to achieve the goals of the programme?
- Data visualisation is an opportunity to identify the topics that the programmes focus on, **based on what their network is reporting.**
- By looking at the data we can see what we have and what we are missing, and give the partners something more specific to report on (e.g. plastics) so that that it is relevant to the programme, and the partners feel like they are reporting something useful.

- Data visualisation can help to identify what other programmes are doing and where it might make sense to collaborate.
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SESSION 3: COMMUNITY FACILITATION

One of the main recommendations following the knowledge management assessments was the importance of communities of practice to the One Planet network, to foster thematic discussions and contextualize and adjust knowledge for different user needs. This session was designed to look closer at the ingredients to successful communities of practice and how they could be better applied to the One Planet network.

The coordination desks participated in an exercise in which they were hypothetically able to create, if imagining there were no limits financial or otherwise, either the best or the worst community of practice possible. The resulting discussion had the following observations:

- Removing the mental barriers allowed for a more open and innovative discussion regarding the best solutions that can create the most added value. Not focusing on constraints allows for a freer discussion of what the community of practice would like to achieve.
- The counter-exercise of identifying the worst elements for a community of practice was also useful for identifying the pain points, and how they can be flipped around to contribute positively to a community of practice.
- Since community work is voluntary, communities of practice need a quality facilitator whose role is to bring members of the community together, build trust and appreciation, develop targets and strategies, and design formats and methods for creativity, collaboration, learning...
- Communities of practice can be in specific thematic fields, but also in specific practices (e.g. funding, consulting), or in a specific region.
    - A community of practice is different than a working group, which has a specific number of people and clear targets. Communities of practice are spaces where all those that have the knowledge or need the knowledge can come together to share experience and share their knowledge needs.
- Communities of practice can be a central resource to developing a theme in an integrated, targeted and systematic way. People realize they are not the only ones working on something, and together they are stronger.
- The very important outputs need some resources behind them to be produced in the best possible way.