**UNFCCC/CCNUCC**

**CDM – Executive Board**

EB 55
Proposed Agenda - Annotations
Annex 8
Page 1

<div align="center">

**Annex 8**

**INFORMATION NOTE**

**A RECRUITMENT STRATEGY FOR VACANT POSTS IN
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MECHANISMS (SDM)**

**I.  Introduction**

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1.      The new Sustainable Development Mechanisms **(**SDM**)** structure centres on three core operational units, Standard Setting Unit (SSU), Project and Entity Assessment (PEA) and Process Management Unit (PMU), with three other units supporting core operations and the wider functions of the programme. While approving the structure, several new posts, and taking into account the current level of backlog and staff workload, the CDM Executive Board (hereinafter referred to as the Board) has renewed its calls for the recruitment process to be expedited, concrete plans to be established on how and when the vacant posts will be filled and other mechanisms pursued in order to deal with backlogs, such as framework contracts to engage external experts and the appropriate use of outsourcing.

2.      The SDM programme currently has a total of 75 vacant CDM positions.  This relatively large number is the accumulation of 24 vacancies carried over from 2009 and before, 23 posts approved at the fifty-second meeting of the Board in February 2010 and a further 28 approved at the fifty-fourth meeting of the Board in May 2010 respectively.  In 2009 58 posts were advertised and 50 were filled of which 19 were by internal candidates.

3.      The SDM Human Resource team have now completed an extensive and detailed draft resource planning exercise in order to forecast when future full time resources are likely to become available.  This is now presented to the Board for information.

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**II.  Prioritising and grouping our SDM recruitment needs**

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4.      The work required for recruitment against all Board approved vacancies has been ongoing for some time within the secretariat. In order to give more focus and impetus to this important task, the need to rapidly fill the more senior positions in each sub programme was identified.  This not only provides much needed capacity at this level but also assists in expediting the UN job grading process, as it gives a context for the vacant positions below.  Of the eight such positions identified, only three are still at the finalisation of the Job Description (JD) stage.  The remaining JDs should be completed very shortly. The major exception to this prioritisation are the many professional positions that have been relatively recently approved and are therefore currently vacant in PEA.  These, as motivated to the Board at its fifty-second and fifty-fourth meetings, are urgently required to address both the current registration and issuance case backlogs and also create a sustainable capacity for the secretariat to perform future work.  The grouping of similar vacancies in this regard should result in eleven vacancies at the P2 level being filled using just two vacancy announcements.  At the P3 level in PEA three posts should be filled using just one vacancy announcement.  A similar approach has been used in the Organisation and Stakeholder Development (OSD) and Services and Management Support (SMS) units with two P3 positions respectively linked to a single vacancy announcement in both of these instances.  At the general staff (G4) level, a generic JD is now finalised.  The use of this JD now allows multiple recruitment for the seven vacancies at this level using just the one vacancy announcement leading to substantial reductions in both the time and effort required.

**UNFCCC/CCNUCC**

**CDM – Executive Board**

EB 55
Proposed Agenda - Annotations
Annex 8
Page 2

### III. Ensuring that SDM has fit for purpose recruitment requirements

5.      The recent re structuring exercise has also created an opportunity to re visit some of the relatively stringent criteria that were, until recently, applied in selecting certain professional staff members with particular reference to the amount of direct CDM experience actually required.  The presence of a strong core of seasoned case officers in the project and entity assessment unit (PEA) is a factor that has been used in re visiting some of the requirements in the  Job Descriptions at the P2 level specifically. Although the requirement for at least three years of relevant work experience remains, the need for these three years to be *directly related* to project-based mechanisms has been removed given that mentoring within such a larger group is now possible.  It should also be noted that the recent creation of a new team called skills development in the new structure has begun.  This team is specifically tasked to address both internal and external capacity building.

### IV. Planning and expediting the recruitment process

6.      In order to manage recruitment as a holistic process, a set of indicative baselines, based on historic performance, has been established.  This exercise has identified two distinct but interrelated recruitment processes that occur in the recruitment cycle.  These are (1) creating and classifying an appropriate job description for a position and (2) the subsequent recruitment process against these specifications.  These two elements have been deconstructed to identify the various internal processes and estimated times for each.

7.      The use of existing, previously approved, JDs and the identification of candidates to fill multiple vacant positions through the  appropriate use of a process called rostering, have been recognised as major factors in expediting future recruitment.  The current status of SDM recruitment, as at 1st July, is shown in Annex 9 of the proposed annotations to the fifty-fifth meeting of the Board.  In addition, a detailed breakdown of the current status each vacancy announcement, including planned / confirmed interview dates and the date of the subsequent internal Review Boards has been created and populated in conjunction with each Manager. The data detailing performance against these agreed target dates is now being collected and will be made available as part of the recruitment report at future Board meetings.

### V. Attracting the appropriate profile of applicants

8.      Efforts continue to be made to ensure that the largest possible group of potential applicants are made aware of the existence of the CDM vacancy announcements.  In addition to the publication of vacancy announcements on the CDM website, a list of specialist publications is used to promote specific vacancies.  In addition, and given the specialised nature of some of the CDM vacancies, specific additions to presentations made by the secretariat highlight the part of the website where such vacancies are placed.  Similar effort is being expended, and information provided, by staff manning the CDM booth at those events where this is a feature.

9.      The possible role of specialist recruitment services to head hunt for specific posts has already been identified as a potential source of new applicants.  Further investigation has however indicated that this might not deliver the benefits envisaged and could not be directly undertaken with an external recruitment organisation without a UN tender process.  Options to only partly utilise the services of a specialist recruitment services organisation were also considered and discussed externally but did not bear fruit.

### VI. Role and use of the framework contract

10.      While efforts continue to be directed at focusing and expediting the recruitment process, the appropriate use of consultants is also being aggressively pursued.  The initial version of a new framework

**UNFCCC/CCNUCC**

**CDM – Executive Board**

EB 55
Proposed Agenda - Annotations
Annex 8
Page 3

contract has now been finalized.  This new framework contract, while not creating any specific obligations on either party, does specify the terms and conditions that would apply for a specified duration.  This modality will enable the secretariat to engage experts at short notice for one or more periods within the duration specified within the contract.  This should dramatically shorten the time taken to secure needed skills, especially to help manage periodic peaks in workload. In terms of this contract the secretariat will pay the Expert upon confirmation that a pre agreed assignment has been satisfactorily completed.  A call for interest has recently been published on the secretariat web site and has already resulted in more than 60 expressions of interest being received.

## VII.  Enhanced induction of new recruits

11.      Given the rapid growth in the CDM staff numbers coupled to the workload of the existing staff, it has not always been historically possible to provide new staff members with a suitably detailed and technically focused induction.  An important initial task for the newly created skills development unit in SDM has been to plan for such future expanded, periodic, induction sessions.  These will be now scheduled according to the finalised recruitment plan and associated target dates.

## VIII.  Skills development of new and current staff

12.      The many challenges involved in filling some of the technically specialized vacant posts has already been highlighted in the Board approved CDM Management Plan (CDM-MAP) document. As already mentioned, in order to address this challenge, a new team within the secretariat has been created to focus on skills development, both within and beyond the secretariat. The skills development activities will ensure that identified best practices are now effectively packaged and presented, so as to strengthen the skills of existing and future staff, as well as the skills of employees of CDM stakeholders, all with the aim to enhance the quality of work provided and submitted to the Board. Given the appropriate relaxation in directly related CDM experience requirements previously mentioned in order to create a larger pool of potential new recruits, especially at P2 level, future skills development and mentoring is now a priority.

## IX.  Conclusion

13.      Noting the call by the Board for the recruitment process to be expedited, concrete plans to be established on how and when the vacant posts will be filled and other mechanisms pursued in order to deal with backlogs, such as framework contracts to engage external experts and the appropriate use of outsourcing, this report details the various initiatives currently being undertaken by the secretariat.  The Board is asked to note its content and the associated, initial, data provided in Annex 9 of the proposed annotations to the fifty-fifth meeting of the Board.

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