



Objectives of the review (Sept 19- Feb 2020)

- Take stock of where DG ECHO and its partners stand on the issue of environmental mainstreaming
- Identify good and bad practices to be capitalised/mitigated
- Map out what other humanitarian donors are doing with regards to environmental mainstreaming
- Put forward recommendations to DG ECHO

Key points:

- The environment in the humanitarian sector is everyone's business but nobody's responsibility
- Environmental impacts of humanitarian interventions are numerous and complex and therefore are difficult to prioritise: CO2 emissions, air pollution, generation of waste, soil and water contamination, water table depletion, deforestation linked with the purchase of palm oil, or shelter construction, GMOs etc
- Donors have a key role to play in making change happen and humanitarian donors are addressing these issues at different levels, with some are more advanced than others in this process

Key points:

- Some of ECHO's partners are currently addressing environmental footprint issues. This is the result of internal pressure/thinking in these agencies for more accountability and coherency + in some cases donor pressure: ICRC, UN, INGO (Environmental Policies, travel policies, environmental impact assessment tools, carbon footprint/offset)
- We need to accept that there is a cost linked with environmental mainstreaming (HR, time, support costs) at least at the beginning although saving may happen very soon

Initial recommendations for DG ECHO (1/2)

- Need for an environmental policy and/or to green their existing food, wash, shelter etc. policies (+ new logistics policy) to provide overarching guidance to partners
- Have dedicated staff at DG ECHO whose job it is
- Invest in training/sensitising ECHO staff in HQ and in the field.
- Greening ECHO's own offices in a systematic way is a great way to raise awareness and trigger the necessary behaviour change



Initial recommendations for ECHO (2/2)

- Integrate environmental issues in the HIP, Single form and M&E mechanisms (ex: environmental indicators)
- An environmental marker could be an entry point if properly used
- Longer project cycles would enable a move away from short-term emergency thinking
- Provide technical guidance to partners. This would not be necessarily difficult because other organizations have-already invested time to develop guidance, tools and policies that could be adapted by DG ECHO



Conclusions

- Environmental mainstreaming is not necessarily about technological innovation, a lot of it is common sense, changing the humanitarian mindset and our ways of working (i.e : preparedness, anticipate environmental risks, reduce energy consumption, avoid waste of resources, negotiation with suppliers etc.)
- There is no need to reinvent the wheel - a lot is already out there
- It is time for the sector to move forward with this – mainstreaming environmental considerations needs to be seen as essential to maintaining the “do no harm” principle

