



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

## The Director-General

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Deputy Director-General  
Assistant Directors-General  
Directors of Bureaux, Offices and Divisions at Headquarters  
Directors and Heads of Established Offices and Institutes  
away from Headquarters

### Objet : **Reorganization of the Natural Sciences Sector**

1. In order to enhance the capacity of UNESCO's Natural Sciences Sector (SC), I have decided to make a number of adjustments to the Sector's structure at Headquarters. These structural changes are designed to enable greater strategic focus, as well as promote enhanced interdisciplinary and intersectoral collaboration. Presented in the attached organigramme, the changes all fall within the budget ceiling for the approved programme and budget for 2010-2011 (35C/5).

2. I have designed two primary mechanisms for attaining the goals of enhanced focus and interdisciplinary collaboration. The first is the creation of cross-cutting thematic units, each of which is of significant strategic importance to UNESCO, and corresponds to a thread of activity that is common to most, if not all, divisions in the Sector. The second mechanism is modification in the structure of existing divisions.

3. Henceforth, the Natural Sciences Sector will have three divisions. The three divisions, described in more detail in Section 7 below, are: the Division of Water Sciences (SC/HYD), the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences (SC/EES), and the Division of Science Policy and Capacity-Building (SC/PCB). The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) will maintain the degree of autonomy it has enjoyed to date, while making every effort to further enhance its contribution to the work of the sector. It will continue to be served by its own Assistant Director-General, as well as by separate Executive and Administrative units.

4. The most innovative feature of the organizational changes I am putting in place is the creation of the four cross-cutting thematic units. We are all aware of the challenge, at UNESCO, of overcoming existing organizational silos. In creating these new cross-cutting thematic units, we have chosen topics which correspond closely to the priorities of Member States, as expressed in the most recent Executive Board meetings, and which represent key global scientific challenges that UNESCO is well positioned to address. These themes include natural disasters, biodiversity, science education and a "UNESCO Engineering

Initiative". For each of these themes, significant expertise exists in most, if not all, of the divisions in the Natural Sciences Sector, as well as in the other programme sectors of UNESCO. Some of these cross-cutting thematic units will build on work previously carried out in stand-alone units within individual divisions; empirically that organizational structure did not promote effective collaboration. By creating these new cross-cutting units and developing the leadership potential of younger staff, we expect to be far more dynamic and creative in meeting the needs of Member States.

5. Additional advantages to the new approach of creating cross-cutting thematic units include:

- Cost-effectiveness: by more effectively mobilizing the talent and energy of existing staff, the Sector can accomplish much more within its resource constraints;
- Enabling more effective collaboration with other sectors in UNESCO;
- Mapping, in a more effective manner, emerging strategic opportunities, and aligning with trends in international science and engineering;
- Positioning the Sector to be more successful in working with a variety of external partners, including from the private sector, civil society and the non-profit sector.
- Each of the themes chosen is deemed to be of significant importance for the future of science and engineering, and will be effective in capturing the attention of potential donors.

6. The leaders of the cross-cutting thematic units will each report directly to the Assistant Director-General for the Natural Sciences (ADG/SC), reflecting the high strategic priority of the themes.

7. The new divisional structure of the Natural Sciences Sector will incorporate:

- The Division of Water Sciences, including the Secretariat of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), and the Sections on "Urban Water Systems", "Hydrological Systems and Climate Change", "Water and Sustainable Development", and "Groundwater Systems". This Division also will oversee the work of the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) located in Perugia (Italy).
- The Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences, which includes the Secretariats of the Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) and the International Geoscience Programme (IGCP), as well as Sections on "Biosphere Networks and Capacity Building", "Ecological Sciences and Biodiversity", and "Global Earth Observations".
- The Division of Science Policy and Capacity-Building, including the Secretariat of the International Basic Sciences Programme (IBSP), the "African Union/Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA) Implementation" unit, as well as Sections on "Science Policy and Reform", "Science Policy and Foresight Studies", and "Small Islands and Indigenous Knowledge".

The various activities of the previous Division of Basic and Engineering Sciences are reassigned to the Division of Science Policy and Capacity-Building, and to several of the new cross-cutting thematic units, while the management of the L'Oréal-UNESCO Prize will be under the direct supervision of ADG/SC.

8. In addition to the four cross-cutting themes listed above, the Natural Sciences Sector will continue to play lead roles in two of the UNESCO-wide intersectoral platforms: *UNESCO contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation*, and *UNESCO's contribution to the Mauritius Strategy for Small Island Developing States*. ADG/SC currently leads the SIDS platform, and the Assistant Director-General of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (ADG/IOC) the climate change platform. The Natural Sciences Sector also will contribute effectively to all other intersectoral platforms, as appropriate.

9. In all of its work, SC is deeply committed to the two global priorities of UNESCO - Africa and Gender Equality. The SC focal points for these priorities will be part of the ADG/SC's core senior leadership team, in addition to the Division Directors, the heads of the cross-cutting theme units, the heads of the Executive Office (SC/EO) and the Administrative Office (SC/AO), and the managers for the intersectoral platforms.

10. Policy advice and management support to ADG/SC will be provided by the Executive and Administrative Offices. The Executive Office will be responsible for the coordination of programme planning, monitoring and reporting, for strategic human resource and budgetary planning, as well as for information and knowledge management services and the coordination of training activities. The Administrative Office will be in charge of all aspects of the financial and general administration of the Sector, including human resources management.

11. This re-organization is a work in progress and is expected to continue to evolve based on experience with the new structure and, in particular, with the cross-cutting thematic units.

12. This decision takes effect immediately.

Irina Bokova

# Natural Sciences Sector

