

Workshop

Bridging the Knowledge Gap – A Green & Circular Economy Development Intelligence Platform for Greater Impact

23 June 2026, 14:30 – 16:00 CEST

Online - Register [here](#)

Exploring how a shared knowledge intelligence platform can reduce fragmentation, improve coordination, and enable better-informed investment decisions and more targeted project design across donors, development organisations, and the UN system.

Introduction

The development landscape faces an unprecedented convergence of challenges. Official development assistance (ODA) is estimated to have declined by 9–17% in 2025, with bilateral aid to the least developed countries potentially falling by 13–25%¹. Major bilateral donors have announced significant budget cuts, fundamentally reshaping the development cooperation environment. Meanwhile, the environmental challenges facing Member States – from climate change to biodiversity loss and pollution – demand ever-more coherent, integrated and coordinated international action.

In this constrained fiscal and political context, the cost of fragmented and siloed knowledge across the sustainable development ecosystem has become untenable. Whether a donor institution is planning its next funding cycle, a development organisation is designing a new project proposal, or a UN body is seeking to align its environmental programmes with those of its sister agencies, access to comprehensive, up-to-date intelligence on what has already been funded, implemented, and learned is essential. Yet this intelligence is systematically absent.

This knowledge fragmentation affects three interdependent communities:

- **Donors** (bilateral agencies, multilateral organisations, and private foundations) often lack real-time, searchable visibility into each other's project portfolios. This results in inadvertent duplication of funded activities, missed opportunities for complementarity and co-financing, and difficulty identifying where new investment is most needed.
- **Development organisations** (implementing agencies, NGOs, research institutes, and national development bodies) design new project proposals without access to a coherent picture of past and current donor-funded work. Proposals are crafted in an information

¹ OECD (2025). Cuts in official development assistance.

vacuum – at risk of duplicating prior efforts, failing to build on existing evidence, and missing alignment with emerging donor priorities and gaps.

- **UN system entities** coordinating on environmental action face analogous challenges: with more than 50 entities working on environmental mandates across overlapping thematic and geographic areas, there is currently no systematic, real-time mechanism to map the full landscape of UN environmental activities, identify synergies and collaboration opportunities, or produce the evidence base needed for coherent system-wide reporting.

For sustainable development projects in developing countries, this triple fragmentation leads to clear negative consequences: resources that could support SME transitions to circular business models, strengthen policy frameworks on climate change, or build capacity for social inclusion are instead dissipated through overlapping assessments, parallel technical assistance programmes, and duplicated research efforts. Conservative estimates suggest that improved coordination alone could save up to \$2 billion annually from the existing ODA envelope².

The current economic and environmental climate demands a fundamental shift. There is a compelling case for a shared, public good AI-powered knowledge intelligence solution – the Green & Circular Economy Development Intelligence Platform – that connects donors, development organisations, and UN system entities around a common, living intelligence layer across the full landscape of sustainable development activity.

Workshop Objectives

The UN Environment Management Group (EMG) and the Green Growth Knowledge Partnership (GGKP) invite bilateral donors, multilateral agencies, foundations, development organisations, and UN system partners to a joint online workshop designed to:

- Highlight the practical knowledge fragmentation challenges experienced by donors, development organisations, and UN system entities: the gaps, the silos, and the inefficiencies that reduce the quality and impact of sustainable development investments.
- Present EMG's dashboard on UN environmental action, GGKP's AI-powered knowledge ecosystem and the Green & Circular Economy Development Intelligence Platform concept in terms of how they can support improved planning and implementation of targeted sustainability activities by all relevant actors.
- Gather structured feedback from participants on platform design priorities, functional requirements, and governance preferences, grounded in real operational needs across all three communities.

About UN EMG

The UN EMG is the UN system's principal inter-agency coordination mechanism on the environment. Established by the UN General Assembly, it convenes more than 50 UN agencies, funds, programmes, and specialised bodies to foster system-wide coherence, collaboration, and effectiveness on environmental issues.

² Anderson, Edward, Aid Fragmentation and Donor Transaction Costs (2011). Available at: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=1852563>

EMG's work encompasses three core areas: enhancing environmental and social sustainability within UN operations; facilitating collaborative responses to global environmental challenges including biodiversity, pollution, and human rights-environment linkages; and supporting the delivery of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda through system-wide coordination.

A central instrument of EMG's coordination work is the UN System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment (SWFS) – a collaborative framework developed to achieve greater synergy, coherence, and effectiveness in the UN system's collective response to environmental challenges. The SWFS provides a common strategic architecture across all member agencies, enabling identification of overlaps, gaps, and collaboration opportunities in environmental programming.

To support this work, EMG requires a mechanism to gather, categorise, and visualise information on UN system environmental activities at scale and that can demonstrate how the UN system is collectively supporting Member States in addressing the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda. The Green & Circular Economy Development Intelligence Platform – with its capacity to automatically collect, classify, cross-analyse, and visualise activity data across multiple organisations – would be directly suited to meeting these requirements.

About GGKP

GGKP is a global knowledge broker led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), World Bank, OECD, and Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI).

Its mission addresses a fundamental challenge: the world already knows how to build a green and circular economy, but this knowledge is scattered, fragmented, and not easily accessible or translatable into action. GGKP exists to connect knowledge sources and experiences at speed and scale, enabling the policy, industry, and finance communities to compare, contextualise, and understand solutions that work across different contexts.

GGKP is currently developing an AI-powered federated library of green and circular economy knowledge, built upon a globally connected network of knowledge platforms. This infrastructure – which automatically aggregates, classifies, and analyses knowledge from partner platforms using AI – provides the technical foundation for the proposed Green & Circular Economy Intelligence Platform.

The Green & Circular Economy Development Intelligence Platform

The Green & Circular Economy Development Intelligence Platform is an AI-powered, multi-stakeholder intelligence platform proposed by GGKP that would aggregate project, funding, and knowledge data from across the sustainable development ecosystem and transform it into actionable intelligence for donors, development organisations, and the UN system.

Key capabilities of the platform would include:

- **Portfolio visibility and gap mapping:** a continuously updated, searchable map of donor-funded development activities by geography, sector, theme, and implementing organisation, enabling any user to understand what is being done, where, by whom, and where the gaps lie.
- **Duplication and synergy analysis:** automated identification of overlapping activities, flagging potential duplications while highlighting opportunities for coordination and collaboration – supporting more strategic deployment of scarce resources.
- **Proposal intelligence:** a functionality enabling development organisations to assess proposed projects against the existing landscape, understanding duplication risk, opportunities to build on prior work, and alignment with current donor priorities before a proposal is submitted.
- **Lessons learned synthesis:** AI-driven extraction and synthesis of evidence from completed projects, evaluation reports, and knowledge products, making institutional learning accessible at scale.
- **UN system coordination analysis:** collection, categorisation, and visualisation of UN entity environmental activities to support SWFS reporting, identify collaboration opportunities, and provide the data needed for analysis of coordination effectiveness under the UN80 reform agenda.
- **Custom analytical services:** deep-dive, parameter-driven analyses for specific partners – for example, a full knowledge gap analysis across all projects in a given sector or region, or a cross-portfolio evaluation synthesis for a single donor or implementing organisation.

The platform would be structured as a public good, with an openly accessible core and deeper analytical services available to contributing partners. GGKP would seek partnerships with research institutions and AI specialists to maintain analytical capability at the cutting edge, while development organisations and knowledge partners would contribute through structured knowledge partnerships.

Workshop Details

Participants: Bilateral donors, multilateral agencies, private foundations, development organisations, and UN system partners active in green and circular economy and broader sustainable development.

Expected outcomes:

- A shared and clearer understanding of the most critical knowledge fragmentation challenges affecting donor-funded programming, development organisation project design, and UN system environmental coordination.
- Substantive feedback on the design and priorities for the Green & Circular Economy Development Intelligence Platform, grounded in participants' real operational needs across donor, implementor, and UN system perspectives.
- A clearer picture of appetite for partnership and data contribution from across the participant community.

Registration link: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/q8OCkjZFQqW2AMF5puCoNw>

Agenda:

Time	Session	Speaker(s)
14:30 – 14:35	Welcome and overview of workshop objectives	Jannica Pitkanen, UN EMG
14:35 – 15:00	Understanding knowledge fragmentation challenges Brief perspectives on experience with knowledge gaps and silos: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development organization• Foundation Participant poll to explore: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The extent to which knowledge fragmentation affects project design, investment decisions, and UN system coordination• The main knowledge access challenges faced when designing or funding new initiatives	Speakers: Andrew Gartside, UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Foundation representative (TBC)
15:00 – 15:20	Presentation of EMG’s dashboard on UN environmental action, GGKP’s intelligent knowledge ecosystem and the Green & Circular Economy Development Intelligence Platform concept <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overview of EMG’s dashboard on UN environmental action• Overview of GGKP’s AI-powered knowledge ecosystem• Introduction to the Intelligence Platform concept and intelligence capabilities in addressing donor and development organisation needs, and supporting UN system coordination	Jannica Pitkanen, UN EMG Hannes Mac Nulty, GGKP
15:20 – 15:50	Exploring options for the Green & Circular Development Intelligence Platform Participant poll to collect: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Level of interest in the platform from donor, development organisation, and UN system perspectives• Key functional priorities: e.g. portfolio visibility, gap mapping, proposal assessment, UN coordination analysis• Governance and partnership preferences Open floor discussion to obtain feedback and insights from all participants	All participants
15:50 – 16:00	Conclusion and next steps	Fabienne Pierre, GGKP

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