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IDD Policy Brief: Making Environmental Mainstreaming Happen

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The institutional framework for sustainable development is one of two main themes for discussion at the UN Rio+20 Conference taking place this week. This brief highlights lessons from a review of experience in nine countries. Written by **Fiona Nunan (/staff/profiles/government-society/nunan-fiona.aspx)** , **Adrian Campbell (/staff/profiles/government-society/campbell-adrian.aspx)** and **Emma Foster (/staff/profiles/government-society/foster-emma.aspx)** , it asks what can be learnt from organisational arrangements for environmental mainstreaming to contribute to greater success.

Key messages

- Governments use or develop either largely 'vertical' or, more commonly, largely 'horizontal' organisational arrangements to enable mainstreaming. The former emphasise top-down pressure for compliance and the latter cross-sectoral coordination by an environment agency or inter-ministerial task force.
- Mainstreaming often involves the setting up of environment units in ministries and departments or of cross-sectoral working groups. To be effective, however, these need to be supported by strong political commitment – expectations, with adequate resources, from the highest levels of government.
- A combination of elements of both vertical and horizontal approaches could facilitate better mainstreaming. This would involve strong political pressure (demonstrated by a clear vertical reporting structure), combined with two 'horizontal' elements: (1) technical support from a well-resourced environment agency, and (2) cross-sectoral coordination and monitoring.
- A combined approach could be achieved incrementally as capacity for, and commitment to, mainstreaming grows. This might involve a gradual shift from sole reliance on the core of government for monitoring and coordination functions to greater reliance on an inter-ministerial group.

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Read the Policy Brief: **Making environmental mainstreaming happen (PDF 330KB) (/Documents/college-social-sciences/government-society/idd/policy-brief/04-2012-fiona-nunan.pdf)**

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