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FOREWORD

In front of you is the fourth volume of RLR collection of papers, this time with a record number of authors from eleven countries in Europe and all over the world. We are doing our best that our efforts become traditional. This is one more chance to read about legal topics from the region and beyond.

This year we have a new partner, the Faculty of Law of the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia. As in the previous years, we tried to encompass most of neighbouring countries from the region. Additionally, we have extended our reach this year to include South Africa, Bangladesh, and Mexico. This expansion was in response to the eagerness of our non-European colleagues to be involved in our venture.

Since the previous conference, RLR collection of papers has been indexed in DOAJ, a widely recognized platform among scientific researchers in our region. Inclusion in DOAJ demonstrates our commitment to the best practices in open access publishing. In the coming years, we hope to include the collection of papers in several other research databases. For the second year, we are partnering with HeinOnline Law Journal Library.

As every year, I would like to express my gratitude to the whole organizing crew for making yet another issue of the collection of papers possible, at the highest standards of editing and publishing. Besides the authors, my gratitude goes to our reviewers, all thirty-five of them, who did exceptional work during the summer months, which is always particularly challenging time of the year to perform tasks of this kind.

Starting from the next year's edition, we will try to focus thematically on several important topics in the current law and practice. Despite many challenges in further development, I hope you will remain loyal contributors and readers in the years to come, all having in mind the joint aim of further improving the quality and visibility of our work.

In Belgrade, October 2023

Dr. Mario Reljanović
RLR Editor

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INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT****

Sustainable development must be supported by strong and well-organized institutions. Institutions that control the rationality of use and the degree of depletion of resources constitute the necessary framework for achieving sustainability. Some countries have adequate institutional frameworks that enable the effective implementation of sustainable development goals, while other countries direct their activities towards its establishment. An important factor in the implementation of the European Green Deal, which can be defined as a set of political initiatives of the European Commission with a comprehensive goal of climate neutrality as well as a catalyst for an inclusive and just transition, is the institution's legal competence. In this sense, the paper will analyse institutional support for sustainable development. The subject of research are international organizations operating in the environmental protection sector.

Keywords: sustainable development, institutional framework, international organizations, environmental protection.

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1. INTRODUCTION

A well-coordinated institutional framework is necessary to achieve sustainable development goals. Institutions that control the rationality of use and the degree of depletion of resources constitute the necessary framework for achieving sustainability. Some countries already have adequate institutional and coordination frameworks that they are further improving and adapting to effectively support the implementation of sustainable development goals, while other countries are developing new institutional and coordination frameworks to better support the implementation of sustainable development goals (United Nations Development Programme, 2017, p. 7). In this context, the question that arises is to what extent underdeveloped countries contribute to their backwardness with outdated legal frameworks and weak institutions that become limiting factors (Ostojić & Maksimović, 2021, p. 219). The European Green Deal is the EU's sustainable development strategy for the 21st century, a roadmap for the sustainability of the European Union economy by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities. The European Commission defines the European Green Deal as "a new growth strategy to transform the European Union into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern and competitive economy that uses resources efficiently, with net emissions of greenhouse gases equal to zero by 2050, and economic growth that is separated from the exploitation of resources" (European Commission, 2019, p. 2). It covers a broad range of fields, e.g. climate neutrality, energy transition, transition to a circular economy, zero pollution strategy, farm-to-fork strategy, sustainable transport, etc. In addition to the level of legal competence of the institutions, especially the European Commission, policy priorities, financial resources and international cooperation are important for evaluating the performance of the European Green Deal. It is evident that the institutions that have been assigned strong mandates will be more decisive in defining the global goals of the new development strategy, but also in negotiations with partners in the international sphere. Therefore it can be concluded that the degree of legal competence entrusted to institutions to a significant extent also determines the importance of policies related to the European Green Deal (Siddi, 2020, p. 10). In the following chapters, the institutional framework for sustainable development will be presented.

2. INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS FOR ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

European Green Deal is an integral part of the Commission's strategy to implement the United Nation's 2030 Agenda and the sustainable development goals (European Commission, 2019, p. 3). The 16th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG16) is to "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels" (United Nations, 2015, p. 25). Inclusive institutions enable the security of private property, an impartial legal system and public services that enable equality in exchange and contracting (Ostojić & Petrović, 2019, p. 313). One of the criticisms of the objective

defined in this way is that there is no explicit reference to internationally recognized political and civil rights norms (Zamfir, 2022, p.1). Declaration of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly, which paved the way for incorporating the rule of law into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), points out that the rule of law applies equally to all states and international organizations. Respect for the rule of law and justice, which is the main guide for the implementation of their activities as well as for the legitimacy of their actions, is one of the development priorities (United Nations, 2012a, p. 1). Fair, stable and predictable legal frameworks are important preconditions for sustainable and equitable development, increasing employment opportunities, investment growth, as well as for encouragement of entrepreneurship. In this regard, the United Nations Commission for International Trade Law, the main United Nations legal body in the field of international trade law, established by the United Nations General Assembly by its resolution 2205 (XXI) of 17 December 1966, has made significant progress in the modernization and harmonization of international trade law (United Nations, 2022, p. 15).

The United Nations document "The Future We Want" emphasizes the importance of strengthening an inclusive, transparent and efficient institutional framework for sustainable development that should integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development- economic, social and environmental, and as such represent a means of achieving sustainable development (United Nations, 2012, p. 19). Also, a more effective institutional framework for sustainable development should follow the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and be based on Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and its goals on an institutional framework for sustainable development, such as commitment to sustainable development, promoting the rule of law and strengthening government institutions, ensuring coordination and monitoring, provision of adequate financial and technological resources and capacity-building programs, especially for developing countries to enable the implementation of Agenda 21, achieving effectiveness and efficiency through limiting the overlap of activities of international organizations, enabling the active participation of civil society and other relevant actors in the process of implementing Agenda 21 to achieve a higher degree of transparency, as well as strengthening international cooperation (United Nations, 2002, p. 65). Special emphasis is put on more intensive cooperation within and between the United Nations system, international financial institutions, the Global Environment Facility and the World Trade Organization.

The Commission for Sustainable Development established by the UN General Assembly in December 1992 to effectively monitor the results of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, with role, functions, and mandate adopted in General Assembly resolution 47/191, should also contribute to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, monitor the progress of the implementation of Agenda 21, as well as the implementation of recommendations and commitments contained in the Rio Declaration (European Parliament, 2012, p. 23).

Unlike at the international level, strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development at the national level implies "promotion of coherent and coordinated approaches to institutional frameworks for sustainable development at all national levels, including through, as appropriate, the establishment or strengthening of existing

authorities and mechanisms necessary for policy-making, coordination and implementation and enforcement of laws“ (United Nations, 2002, p. 71). All countries should promote sustainable development at the national level by, *inter alia*, enacting and enforcing clear and effective laws that support sustainable development and strengthening fair administrative and judicial institutions (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2012, p. 5). Developing countries, as well as transition countries, should improve national institutional arrangements for sustainable development. Depending on the national priorities of each country, national strategies for sustainable development, if possible, could be formulated as poverty reduction strategies that integrate the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. To ensure a focus on sustainable development policies, the establishment and continuous improvement of sustainable development councils and/or coordination structures at the national level is of particular importance (Cordonier Segger, Khalfan & Nakjavani, 2002, p.144).

3. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The urgency of solving problems related to the environment has influenced the scientific research community to raise new questions, improve acquired empirical knowledge, introduce new theoretical concepts and understandings, but also improve the methodology of research on institutional dimensions. Efficiently managing the environment means innovating the decision-making process, as well as improving principles, procedures and rules (Biermann, Siebenhüner & Schreyögg, 2009). Particular attention is given to institutions at the international level that diagnose, analyze, manage and evaluate the consequences of global environmental changes that manifest in the form of deterioration of the quality of the environment. As some authors say (Lenz & Söderbaum, 2023, p. 899) international organizations seek to improve their legitimacy and governance competence through public communication and institutional and behavioural change. The term international organizations refers to "international governmental organizations or organizations with universal membership of sovereign states that are established by treaties that provide legal status and that, as subjects of international law, are capable of concluding agreements among themselves and with member states" (Amici & Cepiku, 2020, p. 7-8).

Under the General Data Protection Regulation, an international organization is an organization and its subordinate bodies governed by public international law or any other body that is set up by, or on the basis of, an agreement between two or more countries (Kuner, 2018, p. 10). According to the definition of The Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law, the four constitutive elements of the international organization are as follows: the formal basis is a treaty; the members are states (and possibly also other subjects); it has its own organs and institutional structure distinct from its member states; and it possesses an international legal personality (Kolb, 2012).

By comparing the previously mentioned two definitions of international institutions, a significant difference can be seen, since the General Data Protection Regulation

definition is broader and does not state that international institutions have their own bodies, or institutional structure different from their member states, or international legal subjectivity. This further implies the conclusion that considering only such broader definition of international institutions, a body established by two or more countries could be considered an international institution even if it is not regulated by international public law (Kuner, 2018, p. 11).

International institutions were founded with the aim of contributing to the collective solution of development problems and certainly, among them, the United Nations with 193 member states should be highlighted. Further in the text, the focus of the analysis will be on international environmental institutions. As early as 1991, Boyle discussed emerging international environmental institutions and emphasized the importance of international institutions, considering them an indispensable factor in the development and implementation of environmental protection rules and standards. In this regard, it is essential to enable these institutions to function effectively (Boyle, 1991, p. 245). Even then, he studied various techniques available to international institutions to bind their members to their decisions on issues of global importance, avoiding the emergence of conflicts between states. As changes in the global environment follow changes in legal instruments and institutions, the authors will analyze how international environmental institutions function, what benefits they provide and what are the goals of their establishment.

3.1. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Secretariat (Climate Change Secretariat)

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Secretariat was established in 1992 when countries adopted the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Its mandate is to ensure the implementation of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement providing technical expertise and climate change analysis in order to respond to the consequences and threats of climate change. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change emphasizes the importance of limiting greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere to a level that would “prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system”. This can be achieved by ensuring that ecosystems naturally adapt to climate change over a period of time, sustainable economic growth and development without jeopardizing food security goals (United Nations, 1992, p. 4).

The goal of the Paris Agreement is also to strengthen the response to global climate change in order to achieve one of the main goals of sustainable development, which is the eradication of poverty and zero hunger. The Paris Agreement foresees how climate-resilient development can be achieved: limiting the increase in temperature in this century below 2 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial levels, but with the aspiration to define the targeted increase in temperature even more restrictively and constrain it to 1.5 degrees Celsius; adapting to the harmful effects of climate change as successfully as possible; mitigating the negative consequences of climate change; developing low greenhouse gas emissions in a way that does not endanger food production. (United Nations, 2016, p. 4).

The Kyoto Protocol proposes the improvement of energy efficiency in the propulsive sectors of the economy, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, sustainable forest management and afforestation, sustainable agricultural production, greater reliance on renewable energy sources, the development of new technologies that favor environmental protection, the abolition of all forms of financial incentives in sectors that pollute the environment with emissions of harmful gases, sustainable transport as well as efficient waste management (United Nations, 1998, p. 2). What can be concluded as common to all three mentioned agreements is the achievement of sustainable development by directing activities towards low-carbon emissions and reducing the carbon footprint. It is also important to limit the negative human impact on the environment. Pollution, deforestation, burning of fossil fuels, and overpopulation of the planet cause consequences for climate change, poor water and air quality and soil erosion.

Since 1995, the UNFCCC Secretariat has been institutionally connected to the United Nations. On the other hand, the Secretariat does not represent a segment of any of UN's special departments, nor is it incorporated into the management structure of any of the United Nations programs (United Nations, 2021, p. 1). The legal personality of the Secretariat is a particularly important issue. Namely, the Secretariat's legal personality is not clearly defined at the international level, since it has not been granted the appropriate privileges and immunities necessary for the effective performance of its functions under the Convention, including immunity from legal proceedings. Also, regardless of the fact that there is an institutional connection with the United Nations, the legal regime of the United Nations cannot apply to the Secretariat (United Nations, 2021, p. 2). After the offer was accepted for the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany to host the Secretariat of the Convention in 1996, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Nations and the Secretariat of the UNFCCC signed the Headquarters Agreement. Consequently, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations apply *mutatis mutandis* to the UNFCCC Secretariat in Germany. This further led to the fact that the Secretariat in the host country “possess the legal capacity to contract, to acquire and dispose of movable and immovable property and to institute legal proceedings” (United Nations, 2021, p. 2). It is important to emphasize that the specificity of the Secretariat's legal status did not raise doubts as to its effectiveness in performing its functions.

The UNFCCC Secretariat consists of numerous departments that contribute to the implementation of its work program. The Adaptation Division was created with the aim of strengthening adaptation, improving resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change. It consists of three subdivisions: Review, Response and Vulnerability subdivision. The Administrative Services, Human Resources, and Information and Communication Technology division deals with operational issues concerning conferences and meetings, intergovernmental processes, related institutions and bodies (United Nations, 2020, p. 3-5). The Department of Communication and Engagement provide relevant information and notices about the Secretariat's activities related to climate change issues to the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and other interested parties as well as the public. The responsibility of the Intergovernmental Support

and Collective Progress division is to ensure that the subsidiary bodies of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement function in a way that will enable progress in the climate process, while The Legal Affairs division provides independent legal services for the implementation of all obligations under the aforementioned three agreements (United Nations, 2020, p. 10-13). The Mitigation division should enable the achievement of the goals related to limiting the increase in temperature through joint action of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The organizational structure of the UNFCCC Secretariat also consists of Means of Implementation division, Transparency division, Operations and Programmes Coordination division, Conferences division and Executives division (United Nations, 2020).

UNFCCC Secretariat provides services to the Conference of the Parties, Subsidiary Bodies, the Bureau and other bodies established by the Conference of the Parties. As stipulated in Article 8 of the Convention, the Secretariat provides support and assistance to Parties, especially in underdeveloped regions, facilitates negotiations and meetings (the specific task includes the preparation of official documentation for the Conference of the Parties and Subsidiary Bodies) and cooperates with other organizations with a similar mission such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and others. The Executive Secretary heads the UNFCCC Secretariat (the Executive Secretary is appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in consultation with the Conference of the Parties) and proposes the program budget every two years (UNFCCC, 2006, p. 36).

3.2. United Nations Environment Programme

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was founded as a subsidiary organ by United Nations General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of December 15, 1972, after the first UN Conference on Human Environment to “meet the urgent need for a permanent institutional arrangement within the United Nations system for the protection and improvement of the environment”. The mandate of the UNEP Governing Council was formulated as “international cooperation in the field of the environment and providing general policy guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programs within the United Nations system” (Desai, 2015, p. 4). At the first session of the Governing Council, the main problems for human health, well-being and quality of life that require priority solutions were defined: water and air pollution; soil degradation and food contamination; deterioration of the marine environment. As a result, the mentioned problems implied the proposal of certain actions in the fields of economy, trade, energy and human settlements (Johnson, 2012, p. 40). UNEP has been assigned a significant role in catalyzing and developing international environmental law, which was best seen in the numerous Multilateral Environmental Agreements, as well as in the adoption of some soft law instruments, such as guidelines (Desai, 2015, p. 4). However, despite this, UNEP became marginalized in other areas of environmental policy creation, due to its organizational structure, insufficient funding, lack of political trust of some of the important member states of the United Nations, as well as due

to lack of stronger support from non-governmental organizations. Factors that thwarted the strengthening of the role of UNEP in the field of the environment include the establishment of the World Commission on Environment and Development as an independent body with a unique ecological mandate; the fact that the organizer of the Stockholm Conference was chosen as the Secretary General of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) instead of a representative of UNEP; the decision that the UNCED should report to the General Assembly, whereas previously this was the role of UNEP (Conca, 1995, p. 451). However, what strengthened UNEP's position was the compilation and presentation of the report "Environmental Perspectives to the Year 2000 and Beyond" which, in the light of General Assembly Resolution 38/161, reflects the intergovernmental consensus on the growing environmental challenges up to the year 2000 and beyond and discusses and analyzes the instruments of environmental action, as well as the role and importance of institutions whose focus is on important environmental issues (UNEP, 1988). This document is also considered the trigger for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) which in 2012 defined the measures for the implementation of sustainable development and influenced the strengthening of UNEP's mandate. The enhancement of UNEP's position to a United Nations body that helps governments address national, regional and global environmental challenges is best illustrated by paragraph 88 of the document "The Future We Want": UNEP receives adequate and increased funding from the regular budget of the United Nations, leads efforts to formulate United Nations strategies on the environment and has an enhanced voice and ability to fulfil its coordination mandate within the United Nations system (United Nations, 2012, p. 23-24).

Today, UNEP is presented within the United Nations system as the basic body of environmental protection activities and leading environmental authority, which is fully justified, since it develops environmental laws and policies both at the regional and global levels, defines the global agenda for the environment and sets goals, programs, policies and action plans responding to the growing challenges in environmental protection. Also, based on the assessment of the current state and quality of the environment, it creates and develops regional and international legal instruments and policies for implementation and enforcement. UNEP also provides support to United Nations member countries by assisting in the development of their national legal frameworks for the implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (Desai, 2022, p. 1). This help is reflected in the fact that they are provided with training and technical assistance in defining and preparing project proposals, legal harmonization, reporting, etc.

UNEP's areas of activity are Climate change, Resource efficiency, Disasters and conflicts, Environmental governance, Harmful substances and hazardous waste, and Ecosystem management (UNEP, 2010). UNEP is making efforts to raise public awareness of the importance of the green transition process toward a green and socially inclusive global economy, the importance of using renewable energy sources, as well as understanding climate science. In countries affected by crises and conflicts, it conducts environmental evaluations and provides guidelines for the implementation of the legislative and institutional framework for improved environmental management. In addition,

UNEP facilitates easier management and restoration of ecosystems through the Global Program of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (UNEP, 2018, p. 2). It supports governments to develop and improve processes, programs, policies and laws, and establish institutions that pave the way for sustainable patterns of development. UNEP directs its engagement to ensure that contaminated waste and chemicals are used in ways that have minimal negative impacts on the environment and human health, as evidenced by the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management - SAICM, a policy framework for international action on chemical hazards whose secretariat is hosted by UNEP (UNEP, 2006, p. 11). On the other hand, The Marrakech Process is a global multi-stakeholder process to support the implementation of sustainable consumption and production, which is also one of the UNEP's strategic environmentally friendly production and consumption of limited natural resources and “doing more with less” (UNEP, 2011, p. 9).

Currently, UNEP supports its 193 Member States and works through seven Headquarters divisions, six regional offices, five sub-regional offices, six country offices, and three liaison offices (MOPAN, 2021, p. 19). The International Ecosystem Management Partnership in Beijing, the World Conservation Monitoring Centre in Cambridge and the Copenhagen Climate Centre are UN Environment Programme collaborative centers of excellence (MOPAN, 2021, p. 20). UNEP cooperates with many global environmental bodies such as the World Health Organization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). With the aforementioned organizations, it manages specialized centers, programs and initiatives such as: Climate and Clean Air Coalition, Climate Technology Centre and Network, Finance Initiative and the Green Growth Knowledge Platform, Regional Seas Programme and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UNEP, 2023).

The Secretariat of Governing Bodies and Stakeholders is responsible for supporting the Governing Council (United Nations Environment Assembly) and its subsidiary inter-sessional bodies (including the Committee of Permanent Representatives) and consists of two units: the Governing Bodies Unit and the Civil Society Unit (UNEP, 2018a, p. 3). UNEP reports to the United Nation General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council - a central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, encouraging international cooperation, as well as formulating political recommendations (Aeschlimann, 2021, p. 14). As the leading global environmental authority and the highest political forum on environmental issues, the United Nations Environment Assembly assesses UNEP's progress and determines its specific development priorities and meets every two years, while the Committee of Permanent Representatives meets more frequently (four times per year) (Das, 2020, p. 603). By General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), the Executive Director of UNEP is responsible to the Secretary-General. The General Assembly elects the Executive Director for four years. The Executive Director enables leadership in environmental policy in the world community, provides support to UNEP in the process of implementing activities for environmental

protection in the world, defines ways to address emerging global environmental issues in collaboration with governments and intergovernmental bodies, scientific institutions, the private sector and community groups, promotes partnerships with other United Nations bodies, manages the Environmental Fund and reports to the Governing Council on environmental issues and participates in the Administrative Committee for Coordination (Ivanova, 2012, p. 577).

3.3. Global Environment Facility

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) was founded in 1989 at the annual meeting of the Board of Governors of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, when it was proposed to create a fund of voluntary grants for the purpose of solving environmental problems as an innovative initiative. The mandate of the GEF was directly related to the promotion of sustainable development in the early 1990s (Chazournes, 2005, p. 193). Since three institutions with a similar mission of preserving and improving the quality of the environment had already been established - the World Bank, UNEP and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in 1991, agreements on cooperation between the GEF and the aforementioned three institutions were defined, and they were given the role of implementing agencies. It is interesting to point out that the GEF was established on a special legal basis. Namely, the Global Environmental Facility was originally established at the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development as a pilot programme and a response to global environmental challenges. In 1992, the Participants of the GEF established the necessary restructuring of the Facility, which was referred to in Agenda 21, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity (GEF, 2015, p. 12). The issue of restructuring was the topic of meetings of GEF participants in Geneva in 1994 when the Instrument for the Establishment of the Restructured Global Environment Facility was adopted by representatives of 73 States, as well as by three implementing agencies (the World Bank, UNDP and UNEP) by resolution or decision of its competent bodies and following its rules of procedure and regulations (GEF, 1994, p. 4; Cléménçon, 2006, p. 50). Being a part of the World Bank system (which has not changed since the pilot phase), the GEF's autonomy and independence were confirmed by obtaining political legitimacy and establishing a functionally independent secretariat, while at the institutional level, the GEF is the result of the joint action of the World Bank and the United Nations (represented by UNDP and UNEP). However, from a strictly formal point of view, only the World Bank had the legal capacity to establish this mechanism, while the inclusion of UNDP and UNEP was only driven by political reasons, indicating the willingness of these institutions to cooperate (Chazournes, 2005, p. 196).

The Global Environmental Facility makes efforts and contributes to climate protection and the conservation of natural resources, serving as the financial mechanism for a number of environmental conventions that create new and improve existing partnerships at the national, regional and global levels, applying the principle of sectoral integration and systemic approaches to financing projects and programs choosing the

best and the most profitable initiatives (Anjanappa, 2022, p. 1). The main areas towards which it directs its investments are climate change, conserving biodiversity, international waters, land degradation, persistent organic pollutants and ozone depletion. The Global Environmental Facility, as an operating entity of the Financial Mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) were designated to serve the Paris Agreement, which confirmed the role of the GEF in solving the issue of climate change as part of the Financial Mechanism of the Convention (United Nations, 2021a, p. 10).

The GEF organizational structure includes the Council as a main governing body, the Assembly which reviews and evaluates the operation based on reports submitted to the Council, the Secretariat, which coordinates the overall implementation of activities, Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, which provides scientific and technical advice on policies, operational strategies, programs and projects, the Implementing and Executing Agencies, which provide operational support, and an Independent Evaluation Office, which is headed by a Director who reports directly to the Council and coordinates a team of specialized evaluators (Rosendal & Andresen, 2011, p. 1910).

4. CONCLUSION

The institutional apparatus should provide support in the implementation of activities related to ecological, economic and social dimensions of sustainable development. Environmental issues are included in the activities of a wide range of international organizations. Raising awareness of the importance of nature conservation and prioritizing climate change, carbon emissions, deforestation, land degradation, and biodiversity has been influenced by the growth of international environmental conventions, funds, programs and donors. As their number grows, so does the degree of fragmentation, which ultimately makes it difficult to coordinate and harmonize the financing of environmental activities at the global level. Some of the key recommendations for improving the institutional framework for sustainable development are changes in international agreements in the field of environmental protection, introduction of new regulations in the international management of the concept of sustainability, better integration of sustainable development policy into the United Nations system, strengthening of the national sustainable development management system, strengthening public-private partnerships. Directives, regulations, strategies and action plans related to the European Green Deal will continue to be developed and adopted in the coming years.

The adequacy of the institutional framework depends on the type, organizational structuring and functioning, business model, and the degree of connection of institutions oriented towards achieving sustainability. It can be noted that the process of institutional arrangement and adaptation of existing institutions and the creation of new ones in the field of environmental protection is constantly present, which completes the structure of institutions.

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