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**Progress Report of the Executive Director on the UNEP/UNEA Resolution  
1/12 on Relationship between the United Nations Environment Programme  
and multilateral environmental agreements**

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## **Note by the Executive Director of UNEP**

### **Background**

1. Pursuant to paragraph 29 of Governing Council decision 27/13 and bearing in mind paragraph 89 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, “The future we want”, which, inter alia, calls for enhancing coordination and cooperation among multilateral environmental agreements as well as between those agreements and the United Nations system in the field, the Executive Director of UNEP presented a report on the institutional and administrative relationship between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the multilateral environmental agreements for which UNEP provides secretariat to the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP /UNEA), UNEP/EA.1/INF/8.
2. The report was prepared in consultation with the secretariats of the following multilateral environmental agreements: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS); Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (OC/MP); Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal (BC); Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade (RC); Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (SC); Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention); Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention); Amended Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean (Nairobi Convention); and Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern Africa Region (Abidjan Convention).

### **Task Team on effectiveness of administrative arrangements and programmatic cooperation**

3. UNEA Resolution 1/12 took note of the report by the Executive Director, welcomed the step taken to establish a Task Team on the effectiveness of administrative arrangements and programmatic cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme and MEAs to which UNEP provides secretariat and requested the Executive Director to submit a final report to the next session of the open-ended CPR, with a view to putting the issue before the second session of the UNEA (UNEA-2). In addition, the Secretariat was also requested to submit progress report of the work of the Task Team and its two working groups to the relevant conferences of the parties to be held in the period before UNEA-2.
4. The Task Team, established by the Executive Director and comprising representatives of the secretariats of UNEP-administered Convention Secretariats and the relevant offices of the UNEP secretariat was established in February 2014 and has since held four meetings. The Deputy Executive Director chairs it and the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Migratory Species serves as Vice-Chair.

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5. The Task Team established two working groups to facilitate its work. They are, namely, the Working Group on administrative arrangements chaired by the representative of the CITES secretariat and the other, Working Group on programmatic cooperation chaired by representative of the CBD secretariat.

6. The Task Team was established to fulfill two objectives. One, on the administrative arrangements, the Team will clarify the administrative relationship between UNEP, UNON, UNOG and the conventions secretariats; identify the range of administrative services required by the convention secretariats while assessing if they are currently provided as well as identify service providers for specific services as well as funding sources for procuring such services. Task Team is also identifying new UN system-wide administrative requirements as well as the new UN Secretariat-wide enterprise resource planning solution (namely UMOJA<sup>1</sup>) including options for, and implications of, implementing these requirements for convention secretariats. Two, on strengthening programmatic cooperation between UNEP and the convention secretariats, the Team will identify priority areas for programmatic cooperation based on directions from the relevant governing bodies and general and specific mandates including identifying thematic and functional areas for potentially greater synergies.

7. Since the inception of the Task Team, a series of consultations and meetings have been held within the two working groups constituted under the Task Team. In addition, the full Task Team has met four times and provided strategic and substantive guidance to the working groups as well as discussed and addressed current issues of relevance, such as the modalities/contingencies for the implementation of UMOJA for the Conventions to which UNEP provides secretariats.

8. The Working Group on programmatic cooperation finalized its work in May 2015. The Working Group on administrative arrangements is currently finalizing its report to the Task Team. The different set of reports so far produced by the working groups highlight a very positive spirit of cooperation across the various offices and encouraging progress in light of the directions given by Member States in UNEA Resolution 1/12.

9. The programmatic working group developed a comprehensive and inclusive table of ongoing collaboration as well as possible future collaboration intended to not only inform the report to UNEA-2 but enable a strategic consideration of the Task Team's recommendations in ongoing planning processes within UNEP, such as the development of the next Programmes of Work (PoW) and the next iteration of UNEP's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) for 2018-2021.

10. On the side of the administrative working group discussions equally involved a number of different offices including UNEP's Office for Operations (OfO) and, as indicated, the work of the Task Team in this area has already resulted in concrete results surrounding the implementation of UMOJA and specific contingencies put in place for MEA to which UNEP provides secretariats, particularly in the area of training, human resources and general preparedness. The working group has also looked at recommendations for the overall streamlining and processes involved in the service provision arrangements in existence.

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<sup>1</sup> UMOJA is an administrative reform initiative designed to help the United Nations operate more effectively by integrating and streamlining business processes that manage financial, human and physical resources within a single global solution for the entire Secretariat. It will provide the UN with modernized business processes and an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system namely SAP which stands for Systems, Applications and Products in Data Processing. It will provide a financially integrated and robust centralized system.

## **Roadmap towards the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly**

11. The final reports from the two working groups were supposed to be submitted to the Task Team for its consideration through the Office of the Deputy Executive Director, its Chair, before the end of April 2015 and a full report of the Task Team to be submitted to the Executive Director by May 2015. The UNEP Executive Director held a consultative meeting with the heads of the convention secretariats on 19 June 2015 to review and consider the final report and recommendations from the Task Team. The meeting approved the report of the Working Group on programmatic cooperation and requested the working Group on administrative arrangement to finalize its work as soon as possible preferably by the end of July 2015. The meeting agreed on the way forward. In line with recommendations made at the MEAs Management Team meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2015 in Vienna, and to further strengthen relations between UNEP and the secretariats, the Executive Director has appointed two staff members as MEA focal points in UNEP: one in the Division of Environmental Law and Conventions (DELIC) as the focal point for supporting and strengthening programmatic collaboration with MEAs and one in the Office for Operations as the MEA focal point for assistance and follow-up on operational and administrative matters.

12. A draft report, as mandated by UNEA Resolution 1/12 covering the relationship between the United Nations Environment Programme and multilateral environmental agreements will then be presented to the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual sub-committee meeting of the CPR in October 2015 and for further review at the open-ended meeting of CPR in February 2016 and finally for consideration at the second session of the UNEA in May 2016.

13. In line with UNEA Resolution 1/12, the Secretariat will continue to provide progress updates on the Task Team to relevant conferences and meetings of parties to be held in the period before the second session of the UNEA, including the Montreal Protocol MoP 27 and AEWAs MoP 6 in November 2015. So far updates have been provided to relevant CoPs and other related meetings under, *inter alia*, the CBD CoP 12, CMS CoP 11, Vienna Convention CoP 10 and Montreal Protocol MoP 26 in October and November 2014 and BRS conventions CoPs in May 2015 respectively.