

Multilateral Environmental Diplomacy

**Dialogue on Environment Diplomacy for the
African Diplomatic Corp**

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Outline of Presentation

- ◆ Definitional aspects – Multilateral/Conference Diplomacy
- ◆ Organs of the UN & where does UN Environment Programme & its Environment Assembly fits
- ◆ UN environmental entities (UNGA, ECOSOC, HLPF, UNEA, UNEP)
- ◆ UN Environment Programme governance structure & roles
- ◆ Role of previous multilateral environmental conferences & summits outcomes to current environmental issues/debates
- ◆ Effective regional engagement in multilateral processes -UNEA
- ◆ Other types of multilateral environmental diplomacy – multilateral treaties diplomacy - MEAs
- ◆ Conclusion

Introduction

Diplomacy is traditionally known to be:

- Managing relations between countries through diplomatic relations (Bilateral/Multilateral)
- For Kenya:
 - Embassies with accredited Ambassadors or High Commissioners – Bilateral diplomacy
 - Permanent missions with Permanent Representatives accredited to the United Nations body – Eg: UN Environment Programme or UN Habitat in Nairobi –Multilateral diplomacy
 - Sent from capitals with the latter focusing on different dimensions as mandated.

Multilateral Conference Diplomacy – What is it?

- **Conference Diplomacy:**
 - *Management of relations between governments, and*
 - *Relations between governments and inter-govt'l organizations that takes place in international conferences.*
- Definition covers not only relations between governments but also between governments and the organizations where they are accredited as member states and/or parties in case of treaties.

Main Organs of the United Nations

- UN General Assembly (universal body-193 members)
- Security Council (15 members- 5/permanent)
- UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC- 54 members)
 - Responsible for coordination, policy review & dialogue on economic, social & env'tal issues, sustainable development + implementation of inter'lly agreed development goals (54 members) – **Monitors the implementation of the UN Environment Programme work**
- Trusteeship Council
- International Court of Justice
- Secretariat – led by the UN Secretary General

UN Environmental Governance entities

- ECOSOC – Among other roles, it is responsible for:
 - Achieving balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable devt – economic, social & environmental.
 - Coordinated follow up & implementation of major UN conferences and summits, eg., 2030 Agenda & SDGs.
 - Each year – focuses its work on a specific theme of global importance to sustainable development.
- HLPF – inter alia, annually, reviews progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments
 - SDGs to be achieved by 2030
 - Improve coordination & cooperation within the UN system
 - Promote system-wide coherence & coordination of SD policies

UN Environmental Governance entities


- Replaced the Commission for Sustainable Devt
- Established in 2012 under the Rio+20 “Future we Want” document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development & elaborated by UNGA.
- Its central role – to follow up & review of the 2030 Agenda & SDGs at global level
- Meets every year at ministerial level under ECOSOC auspices on a focused theme & every four years at the Heads of State and Government level under the auspices of UNGA.

Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development

Before Rio+20 (2012)

- Commission on Sustainable Development
- Millennium Development Goals
- UNEP Governing Council (58 Member States)

The
Future we
want



After Rio+20

- High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
- Sustainable Development Goals
- UN Environment Assembly (193 UN Member States)

Past & Future HLPF Focused Themes:

- 2019 – Empowering people & ensuring inclusiveness & equality (SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, 16, 17) – Voluntary National Reports (VNRs)
- 2018 – Transformation towards sustainable & resilient societies (SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 & 17)
- 2017 – Eradicating poverty & promoting prosperity in a changing world (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 & 17)
- 2016 – Ensuring that no one is left behind

How does UN & UN Environment Programme respond to Rio+20 + 2030 Agenda?

- Different inter-agency coordination mechanisms:
 - Executive Committee of Eco & Social Affairs
 - UN Chief Executive Board
 - UN Development Group
 - Environmental Management Group
- Joint follow up actions on specific issues, eg:
 - UN-Water
 - UN-Oceans
 - UN-Energy, etc

Where is UN Environment Assembly in this UN architecture?

- UNEA – Highest level decision-making body on the environment established in 2012 at Rio+20 “Future We Want” doc. para 88
- UNEA – universal body of 193 UN member states with full engagement of UN agencies, specialized agencies, IGOs, civil society & private sector. Meets biennially.
- UNEA - outcomes are reported/reviewed by UNGA through ECOSOC

How is UN Environment Programme Governance Structured?

- UN General Assembly (UNGA)
- UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
 - High Level Political Forum (HLPF)
- UN Environment Assembly (UNEA)
 - Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR)
 - Established by then Governing Council in May 1985 composed by then 58 member states but now universal
 - Composed of accredited Permanent Representatives to UN Environment Programme
 - Prepares UNEA meetings & reviews its implementation of its decisions through the MTS & PoW of UN Env't Programme

Governing Bodies of the UN Environment Programme

- Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR)
 - Strengthened at the 1st universal session of 2013 Governing Council by setting up Open-ended CPR as the main inter-sessional body of UN Env't Assembly
- CPR functions include:
 - Prepares the UNEA agenda & its documentation
 - Provides advice to UNEA on policy issues
 - Convene thematic and/or programmatic debates
 - Reviews the work of the UN Environment Programme & provides guidance inter-sessionally, etc etc

Governing Bodies of the UN Environment Programme – cont...

- Committee of Permanent Representatives is led
 - Led by 5 Bureau members elected for 2 years period (Current Chair is from Botswana).
 - It meets 4 times a year.
 - Intersessionally – Subcommittee of the CPR
 - It uses the same Rules of Procedure of the UNEA
- UN Environment Assembly
 - It meets biennially with exception of 2017 session
 - Led by 10 Bureau members (Chair -Costa Rica)
 - Africa represented by 2 Ministers (Nigeria, Gabon)
- CPR and UNEA – serviced & supported by Secretariat of the Governing Bodies

What is Your Role at UNEA & its Bodies?

- Clear understanding of the outcomes of UN Conferences related to environment & sustainable development so as to effectively monitor their implementation
- Clear understanding of the operational modalities and approved PoW of UN Environment Programme so as to monitor its implementation
- Be aware of previous negotiations & decisions taken & endorsed at previous conferences & build upon them as well as use them in future negotiations & deliberations
- For instance: Connections of outcomes from 1972 to 1992 to 2002 to 2012 to 2015 can enable one to better understand implications to ensure effective implementation.

Any Links of Previous Outcomes to UNEA, Today?

- From 1972 on Human Environment adopted
 - Stockholm Declaration with Environment Principles,
 - Established the UN Environment Programme secretariat in the form by UNGA resolution.
- To 1992 on Environment and Development adopted
 - Rio Declaration on Environment & Development
 - Agenda 21
 - Three MEAs – UNFCCC, UNCCD and CBD
 - Forest Principles
 - Established the UN CSD which was replaced by HLPF in 2013
- To Rio+10 in 2002 on Sustainable Development adopted
 - Johannesburg Declaration + J'burg Plan of Implementation + 300 international partnerships to help to achieve MDGs

Any Links of Previous Outcomes to UNEA, Today?

- To 2012 Rio+20 on Sustainable development
 - Set global envtal agenda for the next 20 years thus adopted
 - The Future We Want within which:
 - Established High Level Political Forum
 - Strengthened UN Environment Programme as a leading global environmental authority by strengthening its governance, universal membership, increase in financial resources, strengthened its engagement in key UN coordination bodies
 - Set the process for the development of SDGs
- To 2015 with four Summits on:
 - Disaster Risk Reduction
 - Finance for Development
 - Sustainable Development – 2030 Agenda for SD + 17 SDGs
 - Climate Change Paris Agreement
- How are all these past & future processes relevant to UNEA debates?

Do you Effectively Participate in the relevant governing bodies (UNEA 3)?..

- Effective preparations & participation in UNEA processes
 - Involves national preparations, national Vs regional positions (AMCEN, African Group, etc), compromises leading to consensus
 - National Vs Regional positions
- CPR and its subcommittee(s) debates on documentation, draft resolutions and draft Ministerial outcome document
- Open-ended CPR – final preparations for UNEA 3
- UNEA 3 through its organs
 - Plenary,
 - Committee of the Whole,
 - Budget Group and/or Drafting Group

Do you Effectively Participate in the relevant governing bodies (UNEA 3)?

- Better understanding of other UN entities also addressing environmental issues, such as: FAO, IMO, UNDP, WHO, MEAs, etc all forming part of Environmental Management Group
- UNEA 2 theme, for example, focused on health and environment
- UNEA 3 theme – Pollution Free Planet
- Need to ensure that UN Environment Programme is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.
- Has UNEA assumed this role/reached its full potential?

At the UN Environmental Assembly

- How can we get diplomats from Africa to be a group to reckon with in terms of its voice from the CPR & its subcommittees meetings to Open-ended CPR to UNEA 3 and beyond in December?
- How can the region be better prepared, organized in setting the agenda or initiating agenda items in the coming UNEA through the CPR to Open-ended CPR to UNEA?
- How can the region be better engaged and effectively participate in regional group meetings to UNEA 3 itself and beyond?
- Does the region has agreed regional positions on key regional environmental issues (from African Union and/or AMCEN) to promote at UNEA 3?

Other types of Multilateral Environmental Diplomacy

- Need to also be familiar with multilateral treaties diplomacy
 - Over 3,000 bilateral/multilateral environmental treaties identified by a Canada-TIPEA Research Project
- Developing and negotiating treaties (ABNJ) and related protocols (Ozone/Kigali Amendment, under the framework of the UN, or countries;
- Participate in their progress review Conferences and Meetings of the Parties of MEAs (UNCCD, Minamata, CMS, UNFCCC)
- Regional (AU, AMCEN), Sub-regional or inter-regional for a (EAC, ECOWAS, SADC, etc)

Conferences and/or Meetings of the Parties of MEAs

- Reviewing implementation of MEAs in COP/MOPs, providing policy guidance and making decisions, intersessionally – Standing Committees, Scientific Committees, etc
 - UNFCCC CoP meet annually;
 - Montreal Protocol on the Ozone Layer MoP meet annually
 - CBD CoP meet every two years
 - CITES CoP meet every three years
 - CMS CoP meet every three years
- All these and others contributes to the work of UNEA

Conclusion

- This presentation outlines types of Multilateral Environmental Diplomacy and how these work through various institutions and conferences and how these feed into UNEA
- There are indeed several UN agencies mandated to address aspects of environmental issues hence collaboration among them is key and you also understanding their work and connections is paramount.

Conclusion

- CoPs and/or MoPs of various MEAs handle environmental issues that delegations and diplomats ought to know & understand.
- It is important for delegates of UNEA to understand the mandate of UN Environment Programme as an institution, its co-operation and relationship with other agencies, relationship with MEAs and other processes and your contribution as Government representatives in their effectiveness.

Conclusion

- As we approach UNEA the challenge is for the region to organize itself so that Africa can be among the regions that are effective in negotiations.
- In all this having the right information and organizing better at regional level is key in articulating relevant issues and influencing action not only in the Plenary, but at the Committee of the Whole and other groups.

Conclusion

I can only finally say, distinguished delegates that,

“the ball is now in your court”

I thank you for your attention