



Regional Multi-stakeholder consultations for Europe in preparation for the 2017 UN Environment Assembly

Nov. 9-10, 2017, Szentendre, Hungary

Background

The third session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA3) will be held in Nairobi from 4-6 December 2017. The Assembly is expected to deliberate on the impact of Pollution to society and ecosystems under the theme of "Towards a Pollution Free Planet". The Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, a meeting of civil society organisations to prepare for the Assembly, will take place on 27 – 28, in Nairobi.

The UN Environment Assembly focus on key pollution risk areas (air, marine, land/soil, fresh including nutrients, chemicals, and waste including electronic and radioactive). It will also show case promising solutions, practices, as well as make the case for transformative actions and commitments from governments, business and civil society.

The multi-stakeholder preparations and engagement in the Assembly is based on:

- (1) The need to reinforce the visibility and impact of the UN Environment Assembly in the context of the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global and regional levels (including the High Level Political Forum and the Regional Forums on Sustainable Development convened by the UN Regional Commissions);
- (2) The mandate set out in the Rio + 20 Conference in 2012, where governments highlighted that the engagement of civil society in the UN Environment Assembly and its decision making process is an important factor that will ensure relevance and success of the new global assembly.¹
- (3) The need to give a space to stakeholders, in particular from civil society, to build early consensus on strategic and structural issues in view of the third session of the Assembly, so that regional inputs can be fed into the preparatory process of the Assembly;

In order to make the third session of the Assembly a success, a proper preparation at the regional, sub-regional and national level, as well as participation of stakeholders in the Assembly itself is of key importance.

¹ See Paragraph 88 of the Rio + 20 Outcome Document "The Future We Want".

1. Participants and target audience

The regional consultation will bring together Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) accredited to UN Environment, non-accredited regional MGS partners, UN Environment staff, the Regional Environmental Center's CSO network, ECO Forum members, and resource people on Environment Assembly's theme.

2. Purpose and Objectives of the Meeting

The scope of the 2 day consultation is to exchange and discuss latest development in UN Environment, including UN Environment's efforts on delivering the environmental dimension of the 2030 agenda and preparation for the 2017 Environment Assembly.

2.1. Getting and understanding about the latest developments at UN Environment, including:

- Priorities of the new Leadership of UN Environment on themes and stakeholder engagement and outreach
- Generating stakeholder inputs on the theme of the 2017 Assembly on the outline of the background document, exchange platforms (to be established) and possible resolutions
- Encourage stakeholders to present good practices of successful multi stakeholder partnerships to combat pollution, case studies, project etc. to the 2017 Assembly. (air, marine, land/soil, fresh including nutrients, chemicals, and waste and keep a focus on ecosystem and human health)
- Updates on other areas of UNEP's work (e.g. SDGs and indicators work, GEO-6 regional reports towards Global report, Environment Live and other tools available to all stakeholders, trainings and other education materials).

2.2. Update on Sub-Regional Activities Relevant to SDG Implementation

- Presentation of the Regional Environmental Center's role as an organisation in supporting the implementation of the SDG's on a sub-regional level.
- Presentation of recently completed and current projects of the Regional Environmental Center which support the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals on a sub-regional level such as:
 - a. Educational Reforms Through the Integration of SDG's into Formal Curricula: Its Role in Combating Air Pollution-Program ESD in the Western Balkans' (2012-2017)²
 - b. Water Resource Management
 - c. Environment and Health in European Cities, Key Drivers in the 2030 Agenda
 - d. Presentation of projects Green Danube, Assessment of Compliance of EU Air Quality Policy, and Methodology for Tracking EU Funding for Air Quality
 - e. SEEDLING (2015-2018)

3. Expected Outcome

The meeting will result into:

- A regional Civil Society Statement for the 2017 Assembly which should be finalised by the time of the Assembly latest to be included in the INF doc for the Assembly. If it is not possible to reach a consensus among various groups, also several statements are possible. The Civil

² <https://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/education-for-sustainable-development/contribution-from-partners/2017/rec-contribution.html>

Society Unit in UN Environment will ensure that the information is shared with member states, i.e. by the preparation of an Information Document that contains all regional statements.

- Assignment of lead coordinators from Major Groups, besides the outgoing and incoming Regional Representatives that take responsibility for different aspects of Major Groups and Stakeholders engagement in the 2017 assembly.

Update stakeholders on sub-regional activities connected to the implementation of SDG's, as well as, discussion on potential joint initiatives.

4. Draft Agenda

Day 1

08:30 – 09:00 Registration

Opening and Introductions

09:00 – 09:30 Introductory Remarks:

- Dejan Komatina, Deputy Executive Director for Programme Implementation

-Jan Dusik, UN Environment

-Jeremy Wates, European Environmental Bureau

09:30—09:45 Introduction to the meeting, agenda, rules, roles (facilitator/ moderator)

Session 1: UN Environment and the UN Environment Assembly

09:45 – 10:00 UN Environment under a new leadership, Presentation by Jan Dusik, UN Environment

10:00 – 10:20 Opportunities for Civil Society to Engage with UN Environment, Wondwosen Asnake, UN Environment

10:20 – 10:40 Questions and Answers

10:40 - 11:00 Coffee break

11:00 – 11:30 Pollution, the theme of the UN Environment Assembly, Alexander Juras, UN Environment

11:30 – 12:00 The 2017 Environment Assembly: organisation of the event, resolutions, NN, UN Environment

12:00 – 12:30 Question and Answer session

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 -15:30 Pollution and European Region, Panel discussion with UN Environment, Experts, REC, Civil Society, Private sector on a European Civil Society view on pollution³

³ Presentation of projects Green Danube, Assessment of Compliance of EU Air Quality Policy, and Methodology for Tracking EU Funding for Air Quality, Peter Szuppinger , REC

15:30 – 16:00 Coffee Break

Session 2: Activities of the Regional Environmental Center to Address Pollution

16:00 – 16:15 Educational Reforms Through the Integration of SDG's into Formal Curricula: Its Role in Combating Pollution-Program ESD in the Western Balkans' (2012-2017) Brendan Duprey, REC

16:15 – 16:30 Environment and health in the European Cities, Key Drivers in the 2030 Agenda, Dr. Eva Csobod, REC

16:30 – 16:45 Water Resource Management, Jovanka Ignjatovic, REC

16:45 – 17:00 SEEDLING (2015-2018) Kornelija Radovanovikj, REC

17:15 – 17:30 Questions and Answers

Session 3: Working Groups, Preparation of the regional statement

17:30 – 19:00 Working Groups on different aspects of pollution: Air, Water, Land and Soil, Marine, Chemicals, Waste, Regional Statement, EECCA views:

It is expected that each working group results in a statement, not more than one page, that lists:

1. Main pollution threats for the region
2. Root causes for pollution and how they could be addressed
3. Main expectations from the UN Environment Assembly

These will become part of the regional statement. The working group on the Regional Statement will be work on the general text that accompanies these outcomes of the working group. The working group on EECCA views will focus on issues that are specific for this region.

19:30 Joint reception

Day 2

Session 3 continues

09:00—09:15 Brief reflection on Day 1 and introduction to Day 2

09:15—10:45 Working Groups continue

10:45 - 11:00 Coffee break

11:00—13:00 Report back on outcome of the Working Groups, discussion

13:00—14:30 Lunch, a small drafting group will put together the Regional Statement

14:30-15:45 Presentation of the draft regional statement

15:45-16:00 Coffee break

16:00-16:45

Any other business and closing

Background documents:

- Report of the fourth Annual sub-committee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
- Latest draft of the 2017 Environment Assembly's background document on Pollution.
- Infographics on environmental pollution in Europe highlighting key issues related to pollution and impacts on society and ecosystems, as well as promising solutions.
- Six Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6) Assessment for the pan-European region (chapters on Regional context and priorities, and Healthy Planet, Healthy People).
- The "Healthy Environment - Healthy People" UNEA2 report.
- Outcome of the UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, and
- Contribution of the UN Environment Assembly to the High-level Political Forum.
- Background documents from the European Environmental Bureau (EEB):
 - o Burning the evidence: How European Countries Share Industrial Pollution Permit Information Online
 - o Lifting Europe's dark cloud: How cutting coal saves lives
 - o Clearing the air: a critical guide to the new national emission ceilings directive
 - o What can be done in our cities to decrease air pollution?
 - o Restricted Success: EEB's appraisal of restriction under REACH
 - o A road map to revitalise REACH
 - o Factsheets on waste
 - o POPs and the Circular Economy
 - o 2nd river basin management plans
 - o Soil: worth standing your ground for