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United Nations Environment Programme

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة • 联合国环境规划署
PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT • PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE
ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

Twenty Sixth Session of the Governing Council/
Global Ministerial Environment Forum
Nairobi, 21-24 February 2011

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Ministerial Consultations Information Note - REVISED

A. The objective and focus of the Ministerial Consultations

The objective of the Ministerial Consultations of the twenty sixth session of the UNEP GC/GMEF is to focus on emerging policy issues in the field of the environment. Building on the positive feedback from previous sessions of the GC/GMEF, the Ministerial Consultations have been organized to alternate between plenary discussions, panel discussions, and ministerial roundtables to facilitate an interactive dialogue.

The sessions are aimed at providing ministers and heads of delegations with a thought provoking overview of possible pathways for the future, drawing upon work of the United Nations system, governments, civil society and the private sector.

The overarching theme of the Ministerial Consultations is “**Contribution of UNEP to the preparatory process of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)**”. Under this overarching theme, two specific themes related to the UNCSD will be addressed. The two themes are:

I. ‘Green Economy: benefits, opportunities and challenges of a green economy transition’

Under this theme, the GMEF will discuss “Green Economy in the context of Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development” and new findings on pathways towards sustainable development via the transition to a green economy. More specifically, the GMEF will enable a discussion on:

- Historical context – Rio 1992 and Johannesburg 2002 – and recent international developments, including calls for greening amidst global financial crisis;
- Policy dialogue on challenges and opportunities, considering initial findings from UNEP’s forthcoming Green Economy Report;
- Country needs, support and capacity building for governments and industries on the use of new policies, economic instruments, including those related to sustainable consumption and production (SCP) approaches;
- Learning from others: country experiences on designing and implementing policies and instruments for low carbon, resource efficient and equitable growth;
- Vehicles to track progress: indicators for measuring and communicating progress on green investment, job creation, resource efficiency, poverty eradication, ecosystems’ integrity and wealth creation beyond GDP.

II. ‘International Environmental Governance’

Under this theme, the GMEF will discuss which reforms of the current institutions in the United Nations system are required for sustainable development. The GMEF will enable a discussion on:

- How would a strengthened IEG be integrated in a reformed institutional framework for sustainable development, including economic and social pillars;
- Coordination of financing for sustainable development and that for environment;

- The outcome of the consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives on IEG.

A **Special Ministerial Lunch** on UNEP's contribution to the nineteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-19) will complement the discussions of the Ministerial Consultations. The lunch will explore the significance of the five themes of CSD-19 (transport, mining, chemicals, waste, and the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production) as they relate to UNEP's Programme of Work and to major global issues.

Some key questions which will help to inform the discussions on the two specific themes and on the Special Ministerial Lunch on CSD-19 will be presented in background papers¹.

B. Organization of Ministerial Consultations

The themes for the Ministerial Consultations are interrelated and build upon the Ministerial Consultations from 2009 and 2010². Each theme is high up on the international agenda and the Consultations will be designed to draw upon recent developments and to contribute towards the current debates within the preparatory process of the UNCSD.

The discussions of the Ministerial Consultations will be reflected in a President's Summary which focuses on high-level political messages to be provided to the preparatory process of the UNCSD, and in particular to the second meeting of the Preparatory Committee to be held in March 2011.

C. Format of the Ministerial Consultations

The Ministerial Consultations (MC) will be held through a total of 5 sessions, beginning in the afternoon of Monday, 21 February until the afternoon of Wednesday, 23 February.

MC Scene-setting session (plenary): In the scene-setting session, ministers will be provided with a comprehensive update on the status of preparations by the international community to UNCSD and actions being taken by UNEP to contribute to it, with particular reference to the two topics to be addressed by subsequent sessions of the ministerial consultations. This session will serve as a platform upon which participants can engage in informed debate and dialogue.

The **two plenary sessions (#1 & #3)** after the scene-setting session will address topics relevant to the two themes. They will each include keynote presentations, a moderated panel session and an open feedback session.

The **roundtables (sessions #2 & #4)** will address the issues raised during the related plenary session but in more detail. Each roundtable will be moderated by co-chairs to assist the sessions in reaching tangible conclusions, which should include possible messages for inclusion in the President's Summary to be relayed to the UN system, to governments, the business community, and civil society. **It is important that the co-Chairs of the Ministerial roundtables attend the related plenary session so as to bridge the plenary/panel discussion to the roundtables.**

During the **closing plenary session** on Thursday afternoon, the President's Summary will be presented, summarising the discussions of all five MC sessions.

The Ministerial Consultations will be complemented by a Special **Ministerial lunch** on UNEP and CSD-19 (English only).

¹ Background papers: UNEP/GC.26/17 (Contribution of UNEP to the preparatory process of the UNCSD), UNEP/GC.26/17Add.1 (Green Economy), UNEP/GC.26/17Add.2 (International Environmental Governance), UNEP/GC.26/INF/18 (Contribution of UNEP to the nineteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development), and UNEP/GC.26/7 (Sustainable Consumption and Production, Report by the Executive Director).

² The ideas presented and discussed during the Consultations in 2009 and 2010 can be found in the President's summaries: Annex III, UNEP/GC.25/17, and Annex IV, UNEP/GC.SS.XI/11. The President's summary is a reflection of the interactive dialogue that occurred among the ministers and other heads of delegation attending the Council/Forum. It reflects the ideas presented and discussed rather than a consensus view of all points raised by participants.

The outline of the Ministerial Consultations is presented below:

	Title	Date and time	Type of session
MC scene setting session	<i>“Contribution of UNEP to the Preparatory Process of the UNCSD”</i>	Monday, 21 February 15:00-18:00	Keynote/moderated panel/plenary session
MC session 1	<i>‘Green Economy: benefits, opportunities and challenges of a green economy transition’</i>	Tuesday, 22 February 10:00-13:00	Keynote/moderated panel/plenary session
Special Ministerial Lunch	<i>“UNEP and the CSD-19” (English only)</i>	Tuesday, 22 February 13:00 – 15:00	Lunch roundtable
MC session 2	<i>‘Green Economy: benefits, opportunities and challenges of a green economy transition’</i>	Tuesday, 22 February 15:00-18:00	4 parallel roundtables
MC session 3	<i>‘International environmental governance’</i>	Wednesday, 23 February 10:00-13:00	Keynote/moderated panel/plenary session
MC session 4	<i>‘International environmental governance’</i>	Wednesday, 23 February 15:00-18:00	4 parallel roundtables

D. Structure of plenary, roundtable, and plenary/panel sessions

The following provides guidance and a general structure (subject to further review and revision) of the different types of sessions in the Ministerial Consultation:

I. The scene setting session: Keynote speech with moderated panel and plenary discussions

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| • Welcome remarks by the Chair (GC President) | 5 min |
| • Keynote speech | 20 min |
| • Overview presentation on UNCSD | 10 min |
| • Interventions by panellists | 35 min |
| • Open plenary discussions | 40 min |
| • Feedback from panellists | 25 min |
| • Open plenary discussions | 40 min |
| • Chair summary of discussion | 10 min |
| • Final remarks by Chair | 5 min |

II. The MC session 1 -- Keynote speeches with moderated panel and plenary discussions

- Opening remarks by the GC President 5 min
- Keynote speech(es) – 15 minutes each speaker 30 min
- Moderated panel discussions 35 min
- Interactive open plenary feedback and responses from panel 90 min
- Closing remarks by Session Chair 15 min
- Final remarks/close of session by GC President 5 min

III. The MC session 3 Keynote speech with moderated panel and plenary discussions

- Opening remarks by the GC President 5 min
- Intro comments by IEG Consultative Group co-Chairs (5 min each) 10 min
- Keynote speech 20 min
- Moderated panel discussions 35 min
- Interactive open plenary feedback and responses from panel 90 min
- Closing remarks by Session Chair 15 min
- Final remarks/close of session by GC President 5 min

NB: The plenary sessions 1 & 3 (above) are designed to facilitate interactive dialogue between the panellists and the plenary. Rather than formal presentations, panellists are asked to make brief interventions on the subject matter to stimulate dialogue and then respond to questions posed by the session chair and comments made by plenary speakers or other panellists.

IV. The MC sessions 2 and 4: Four parallel roundtables

- Opening and introduction by the co-Chairs 10 min
- Brief power point presentation by UNEP resource person 10 min
- Open floor discussions moderated by co-Chairs 65 min
- Co-Chairs observations 15 min
- Open floor discussions 65 min
- Co-Chairs summarize discussions, make their final considerations and close the session 15 min

The roundtable format is proposed to encourage interactive dialogue as it allows for discussions to take place in smaller, less formal groups, which may encourage a more open and frank discussion among the Ministers. The format for participation at the roundtable is Head of Delegation + One.

Special invitees and representatives of Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) are invited to participate in the dialogue throughout the session.

The co-Chairs of each roundtable will build up on the related plenary/panel session in the morning. The co-Chairs will start up the discussion bridging the morning discussion and its outcomes to the Ministerial roundtables.

The proposed structure of the roundtables is set out below:

1. Introduction by the co-Chairs

The co-Chairs will provide a short introduction to the roundtable, which could include:

- The objective of the roundtable
- Quick summary of plenary/panel discussions and key questions to be considered
- The structure of the roundtable discussions
- Introduction of UNEP Resource person
- The expected outcomes of the Ministerial roundtables

2. Presentation by UNEP Resource person

3. Open-floor Discussions and Observations by co-Chairs

To the extent possible, the co-Chairs should try to maintain an open and constructive debate among the Ministers and other heads of delegation. The co-Chairs may wish to establish the following guidelines to aid in this process:

- Interventions limited to three minutes and priority given to fresh interventions in order to ensure as much a participatory discussion as possible maximize the number of participants
- When a question has been discussed for 15-20 minutes, a new topic will be opened for discussion in order to ensure that all relevant questions are addressed.

4. Summary of Discussions

The co-Chairs may wish to briefly summarize the main issues discussed during the roundtable, highlighting points of convergence and divergence, in order to ensure that these points are accurately reflected in the report of the Ministerial roundtable.

E. Expected outcomes

A President's Summary is expected as the main outcome of the Ministerial Consultations of the GMEF.

A bullet point summary of the roundtable sessions will be produced by the Rapporteurs with the support of the UNEP resource persons for each of the four parallel roundtables in each of the Ministerial Consultation sessions. The ministerial roundtables bullet point reports will be consolidated with the related plenary/panel session report to form the consolidated report of the Ministerial Consultation session.

The consolidated report/messages of the whole Ministerial consultation will result in a Conference Room Paper (CRP), as developed by the Rapporteurs, and will form the basis for subsequent preparation of the draft summary report of the President on the Ministerial Consultations. The President's Summary will be formally presented in the plenary session on Thursday afternoon.

The President's Summary will succinctly reflect the main points/messages made by delegations through the Ministerial Consultations, and will include messages from the world's environment ministers to the UN system, to governments, the business community, and civil society.

The Summary, rather than providing a consensus view, is expected to reflect the interactive dialogue and provide high-level messages on the themes of the GMEF:

- UNEP's contribution to UNCSD and its preparatory process;
- Views expressed by ministers on benefits, challenges and opportunities associated with a green economy transition; and

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- Views on the report of the consultative group on IEG, as well as composition of views expressed by ministers as to what reforms may contribute to improving the current state of IEG.

The President's Summary will be presented to the Governing Council plenary meeting on the afternoon of Thursday, 24 February.