

Committee of Permanent Representatives  
Subcommittee Meeting  
Thursday 8 November 2018  
9:30 a.m. to 13:15 p.m.  
United Nations Office at Nairobi, Gigiri  
Conference Room 1

## **MEETING SUMMARY**

### **Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting**

1. H.E. Mrs. Francisca Ashietey-Odunton, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representative and High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Ghana, opened the meeting. The meeting agenda was adopted.

### **Agenda Item 2: Consideration of a draft Implementation Plan “Towards A Pollution-Free Planet”**

2. Co-facilitators H.E. Ms. Marta Juarez-Ruiz Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Costa Rica and H.E. Ms. Annett Günther, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Germany, represented by her Deputy Permanent Representative Ms. Miriam Ott, and the Secretariat, presented an update on the process to develop the draft Implementation Plan “Towards A Pollution-Free Planet”, as mandated by the third session of the UN Environment Assembly, emphasising inter alia the value added of the draft Plan, including in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Programme of Work of the UN Environment Programme.
3. Member States broadly welcomed the presentation as a good basis for further consideration, and underlined the need to find a balance between realism and ambition in terms of delivering concrete outcomes. Some concerns were raised with regard to the limited time for consultations with member States before submitting the plan to translation in time for the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly. Other comments and requests from member States included the following:
  - More clarity on how the plan interacts with the current Programme of Work without duplicating activities and overburdening the budget;
  - The need for strong synergies with the next Programme of Work;
  - The need for caution about linkages with MEAs, that may conflict mandates and overstretch the UN Environment Programme.
  - The importance of elaborating appropriate benchmarks to measure progress;
  - More on clarity which specific high impact areas should be covered by the draft Plan;
  - Additional information on how resources could be raised to implement the plan;
  - The need to make clearer linkages to other global approaches such as the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management;
  - More clarity on incentives and targeted actions to engage key implementation partners;
  - Additional information on which specific activities and staff required for coordination functions;

- The need to avoid duplication with certain related activities under the Multilateral Environmental Agreements.
4. The Secretariat took note of the comments by member States and clarified that the timeline for consultations was bound by the time needed for the draft Plan to be translated in time for the UN Environment Assembly. The Co-facilitators called on member States to provide further guidance on making the plan more practical and improving the synergy with Programme of Work.
  5. The Chair invited all member States to fully participate in the process, and reminded the meeting that the deadline to provide comments in writing on the draft Plan is 15 November.

### **Agenda item 3: Update on the development of the 6th Global Environment Outlook”**

6. The secretariat provided an update on the development of the 6<sup>th</sup> Global Environment Outlook”, and expressed sincere gratitude for the extrabudgetary financial resources provided by several member States.
7. Member States welcomed the informative presentation on this flagship report of the UN Environment Programme, and raised a number of questions related to the consultation meeting on the Summary for Policy Makers for the Outlook report, which is scheduled for 21-25 January 2019. In particular, questions were raised about why the proposed dates coincides with the dates of the with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific; whether it was cost effective to invite 40 authors to Nairobi for the meeting; whether stakeholders will also be invited to the policy makers meeting; and when the draft report will be made available to member States. It was also raised that there were inefficiencies and excessive costs in the GEO6 process, that need to ne addressed.
8. The Secretariat explained that the clash of dates was highly unfortunate but unavoidable, and committed to enhance communication on the planning of future meeting; explained the importance of having an adequate number (around 25-30) of the assessment’s Authors at the meeting to support member states; clarified that accredited organizations will be invited to the meeting and confirmed that the advance English language version of the draft summary of the report will be shared with member States during the third week of November.

### **Agenda item 4: Secretariat briefing on the work on Life Cycle Approaches under the UN Environment Programme**

9. The Secretariat provided a briefing on the work on Life Cycle Approaches under the UN Environment Programme, as well as on the Life Cycle Initiative, hosted by the Programme.
10. Member States welcomed the briefing and acknowledged the importance of the work, in including in relation to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Some member States asked for more information on the so-called leakage impact, and the links between the work on Life Cycle Approaches and the Implementation Plan “Towards A Pollution-Free Planet”. Others questioned the harmonisation role of the Life Cycle Approaches programme.
11. The Secretariat explained the concept of pollution leakage, and pointed out that that some aspects of the work demonstrably benefit from harmonization efforts, particularly with regard to sharing data across global value chains, and developing common impact indicators.

### **Agenda item 5: Secretariat briefing on the South-South Cooperation**

12. The Secretariat briefed the member States on the work undertaken to promote South-South Cooperation, including with regard to the mandate, the funding modalities, the scope and relation to the Programme of Work.
13. The meeting welcomed the presentation, while reemphasizing the need for full transparency and accountability in this important area of work, in particular on the most significant activities and initiatives. Some member States questioned whether there was a clear mandate for some of the activities and initiatives under this work stream, while others underlined and cited several decisions that gave sufficient mandate to the UN Environment Programme to continue and to scale its work on South-South Cooperation. Some member States also requested additional clarification and more details on how South-South Cooperation is reflected in the Programme of Work and Budget, and additional information on the exact role played by the UN Environment Programme. Some other member States pointed out to the risk of greenwashing in the absence of a prudent scrutiny of projects.
14. The Secretariat welcomed the guidance provided by the member States and committed to share additional responses in writing after meeting.
15. The Chair underlined the need to improve transparency in this area of work, and suggested the Secretariat to brief to the member States more regularly, as well as to pay particular attention to brief and consult with member States well before new major initiatives were launched.

**Agenda item 6: Other matters**

16. No other matters were raised.

**Agenda Item 7: Closing of the meeting**

17. The meeting closed at 13:15 p.m.