

## **Draft**

### **Implementation of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”**

#### **Report of the Executive Director**

*Summary*

This report, prepared in response to United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 3/11, presents highlights on the progress in the implementation of subparagraphs (a) to (h) of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want.

## **I. Introduction**

1. Paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”, as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/288 of 27 July 2012, in subparagraphs (a) to (h), sets out the manner in which the United Nations Environment Programme is to be strengthened and upgraded, so that it can play its role as 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.

2. The General Assembly, in its resolution 67/213 of 21 December 2012, decided to strengthen and upgrade the United Nations Environment Programme in the manner set out in subparagraphs (a) to (h) of paragraph 88 of the outcome document, and decided to establish universal membership in the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme.<sup>1</sup> The General Assembly, in the same resolution, mandated the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, as from its first universal session in Nairobi in February 2013, to expeditiously initiate the implementation of the provisions contained in paragraph 88 of the outcome document in their entirety.

3. Accordingly, the Governing Council at its first universal session<sup>2</sup>, in its decision 27/2 of 22 February 2013, decided on measures to implement paragraph 88 of the outcome document.

4. Upon recommendation of the Governing Council on its new designation reflecting the universal membership, the General Assembly, in its resolution 67/251 of 13 March 2013, decided to change the designation from “the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme” to “the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme”.

5. This report, prepared in response to United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 3/11, presents highlights on the progress in the implementation of paragraph 88 of the outcome document. Pursuant to the resolution, information on relevant areas was provided to the Committee of Permanent Representatives through briefings and other means.

## **II. Progress in the implementation of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”**

### **A. Governance – *implementation of subparagraph (a) of paragraph 88***

6. The Governing Council at its first universal session, in its decision 27/2, decided on a range of measures aimed at strengthening governance of the United Nations Environment Programme. The Governing Council, in its decision 27/1 of 22 February 2013, adopted the new rules of procedure consistent with universal membership.

7. In accordance with Governing Council decision 27/2, sessions of the Environment Assembly was set to be held in Nairobi on a biennial basis, starting with its first session in June 2014, followed by the second session in May 2016. In view of the experience gained in particular in relation to the budget preparation process, the Environment Assembly, at its second session, decided to hold its regular sessions in odd-numbered years commencing with its third session in 2017.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, the Environment Assembly held its third session in December 2017, and its fourth session will be

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<sup>1</sup> The membership of the Governing Council was henceforth extended to include all 193 Member States of the United Nations.

<sup>2</sup> The twenty-seventh regular session of the Governing Council was convened as its first universal session in Nairobi in February 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Environment Assembly resolution 2/22, setting out the relevant arrangements on an exceptional basis.

held in March 2019. Thereafter, its sessions will be held biennially in odd-numbered years, during the last week of February unless otherwise decided.<sup>4</sup>

8. Paragraph 88 of the outcome document reaffirmed General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 establishing the United Nations Environment Programme and other relevant resolutions that reinforce its mandate, as well as the 1997 Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme and the 2000 Malmö Ministerial Declaration. The Environment Assembly, at each session, is to carry out the above-mentioned mandates, as well as the 2010 Nusa Dua Declaration and paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.<sup>5</sup>

9. During the Environment Assembly sessions convened to date, the high-level segment was held for the period of two days at the concluding part of each session as its integral part. Ministers and heads of delegation were engaged in debates on strategic policy issues, focusing on the specific themes selected for the respective sessions of the Environment Assembly. The Global Ministerial Environment Forum was discontinued.<sup>6</sup>

10. The number of members of the Bureau of the Environment Assembly, as compared to the Governing Council Bureau, was increased from five to ten, composed of a President, eight Vice-Presidents and a Rapporteur. At the commencement of the first session, the Environment Assembly elected those ten officials, two from each region, by amending the rules of procedure.<sup>7</sup> The Environment Assembly, at its second session, decided<sup>8</sup> to change the timing of election of Bureau members, so that it takes place at the final meeting of a regular session, and their terms of office commence at the closure of the session at which they are elected and they remain in office until the closure of the next regular session. This change enabled the Bureau to be fully engaged in the preparation of the session for which they serve, including the inter-sessional period.

11. Enhancement of stakeholders' participation in the work of the Environment Assembly has been pursued through practical measures, pending finalization of a new stakeholders' engagement policy. Further details are found in section H below.

12. The Committee of Permanent Representatives, as the inter-sessional subsidiary body of the Environment Assembly, has been discharging the mandated functions, including through its regular and extraordinary meetings, sub-committees and other informal meetings. The Committee, in the form of the open-ended meeting, held three sessions in Nairobi to date<sup>9</sup>, with the participation of capital-based representatives as well as stakeholders, in particular to prepare draft resolutions for the forthcoming session of the Environment Assembly. The annual subcommittee held five meetings to date<sup>10</sup>, *inter alia*, to review the implementation of the medium-term strategy and programme of work and budget and to guide the preparation of a new medium-term strategy and programme of work and budget.

13. The membership of the Committee of Permanent Representatives remains limited, as compared to the universal membership of the Environment Assembly. As of September 2018, 118 States and the European Union had accredited representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme and therefore become members of the Committee. This leaves approximately forty percent of United Nations Member States still outside of the Committee membership. Member States, if they have not done so, may be invited to consider becoming members of the Committee through the required accreditation.

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<sup>4</sup> Environment Assembly decision 3/2, paragraph 3.

<sup>5</sup> Governing Council decision 27/2, paragraph 3.

<sup>6</sup> Governing Council decision 27/2, paragraph 4.

<sup>7</sup> Environment Assembly Resolution 1/2.

<sup>8</sup> Environment Assembly Resolution 2/1.

<sup>9</sup> Held in Nairobi from 24-28 March 2014, from 15-19 February 2016, and from 29 November -1 December 2017, respectively. The fourth session will be held from 4-8 March 2019, back-to-back with the fourth session of the Environment Assembly.

<sup>10</sup> Held in Nairobi in September 2013, October 2014, October 2015, March 2017 and October 2018, respectively.

14. Pursuant to paragraph 17 of Governing Council decision 27/2, the Executive Director established in June 2014 a written Access-to-Information Policy of the United Nations Environment Programme. In the ensuing period, the secretariat convened a series of consultations with Governments and stakeholders, inviting their comments on the Policy. By taking those comments into account, the Executive Director established the revised Access-to-Information Policy in January 2016.

15. The United Nations Environment Programme secretariat continued its efforts to improve the timeliness and responsiveness to the needs and requests by Member States, for instance through the provision of relevant information, documents and briefing. However, some challenges still existed in such areas as conference servicing and documentation for the governing bodies where resources were constrained.

## **B. Financial resources - *implementation of subparagraph (b) of paragraph 88***

16. The United Nations Environment Programme needs secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resources, so that it can respond effectively to the Member States' call for it to fulfil the mandate and play its role as the leading global environment authority. This should be pursued through the increased United Nations regular budget allocation and contribution to the Environment Fund, as the core resources. Earmarked funding should complement these funds.

### **1. United Nations regular budget allocation**

17. As a result of the analysis carried out on the cost implications of the requirements set out in paragraph 88 of the outcome document, an increase in the allocation of the United Nations regular budget to the United Nations Environment Programme was proposed for the biennium 2014-2015 and for the subsequent biennia.

18. With regard to the biennium 2014-2015, the General Assembly approved 47 new positions and a revised increase for non-staff items, for a total of \$34.4 million, out of \$47.7 million requested by the Secretary-General on the basis of the programme of work and budget approved by the Governing Council at its first universal session. By comparison, the regular budget allocation for the biennium 2012-2013 amounted to \$18 million. The number of staff under the regular budget was doubled, from 48 to 95, and non-staff allocations were substantially increased.

19. Regarding the biennium 2016-2017, the General Assembly approved an appropriation in the amount of \$35.3 million for the United Nations Environment Programme, out of \$49.7 million proposed. 21 out of 35 proposed regular budget posts were approved, all of which were for the regional offices. The total number of the posts funded by the regular budget was increased from 95 to 116. On the other hand, there was reduction of 10 per cent on costs for consultants and 5 per cent for other staff, supplies and furniture in regular budget. Funding for servicing the enhanced governing bodies was not included in the Secretary-General's request and therefore not included in the regular budget for the biennium.

20. With regard to the biennium 2018-2019, the General Assembly approved the allocation of the regular budget to the United Nations Environment Programme in the amount of \$39.6 million. For this biennium, the United Nations Environment Programme secretariat did not request additional regular budget allocation, such as the increase in the allocation for the Governance Affairs Office (formerly the Secretariat of Governing Bodies), travel tickets for participants from least developed countries, and conference servicing costs for the governing bodies. No additional post has been funded by the regular budget for 2018-2019.

### **2. Environment Fund**

21. The Environment Fund budget allocation for the biennium 2014-2015 and the subsequent biennia was intended to ensure that the United Nations Environment Programme would be able to supply the core deliverables of the programme of work and to provide for a significantly higher impact in terms of outputs and more ambitious outcomes in terms of capacity-building and regional-

level and national-level involvement. The General Assembly, in its resolution 67/213, urged donors to increase voluntary funding to the United Nations Environment Programme, including to the Environment Fund.

22. With regard to the biennium 2014-2015, the Governing Council at its first universal session, in its decision 27/13, approved appropriations for the Environment Fund in the amount of \$245 million, which was reaffirmed by the Environment Assembly in its resolution 1/14. However, the financial resources actually received for the Environment Fund in the biennium was \$154 million, which was approximately two-thirds of the approved budget.

23. Regarding the biennium 2016-2017, the Environment Assembly, in its resolution 1/15, approved the programme of work for the biennium 2016–2017 and approved also appropriations for the Environment Fund in the amount of \$271 million. The amount of the financial resources actually received for the Environment Fund, however, was \$ 136.9 million during the biennium, which was about a half of the approved budget.

24. The table below compares the amount of the approved Environment Fund allocation in each biennium for the period from 2002 to 2017 with the funds actually received during the same period.

Biennium	Approved Environment Fund allocation (in millions of US dollars)	Funds received for Environment Fund (in millions of US dollars)
2002-2003	119.9	96.7
2004-2005	130	121.3
2006-2007	144	136.2
2008-2009	152	177.1
2010-2011	180	164.7
2012-2013	190.962	152.2
2014-2015	245	154
2016-2017	271	136.9

25. Regarding the base of contributions to the Environment Fund, less than 10 percent of Member States provide nearly 90 percent of the contributions, while there has been gradual increase over the years in the total number of Member States that provide contributions to the Environment Fund. For instance, during the biennium 2016-2017, 15 Member States that were top funding partners provided 88 per cent of the core funding, and the other 85 Member States contributed to the Environment Fund.

### 3. Earmarked contributions

26. Earmarked contributions, including trust funds and other forms of contributions, constituted a significant proportion of the total financial resources made available to the United Nations Environment Programme in recent years. Earmarked contributions enable upscaling and replication of results of the organization’s core work, including capacity building in more countries and with more partners. During the past three biennia, earmarked contributions made available to the United Nations Environment Programme (i.e. earmarked income) comprised as shown in the table below. Source of earmarked contributions included Member States, European Commission, Global Environment Facility, Green Climate Fund, foundations, private sector and other United Nations organizations.

Biennium	Earmarked contributions (other than Global Environment Facility and trust funds for multilateral environmental agreements) (in millions of US dollars)	Global Environment Facility (in millions of US dollars)	Total earmarked contributions (in millions of US dollars)
2012-2013	391	131	522
2014-2015	415	306	721
2016-2017	368	372	740

27. The amount of the earmarked financial resources made available to the United Nations Environment Programme in the past three biennia far exceeded the amount of the approved Environment Fund budget. It remains a challenge to reduce the distorting effect of earmarking on the balanced programme delivery.

#### **4. Resource mobilization strategy**

28. In accordance with Environment Assembly resolution 2/20, the new resource mobilization strategy has been developed by the secretariat. The actions envisaged in the strategy are to: retain the top donor Member States that currently provide majority of the organization's funding; gain new commitments from high and middle-income countries that do not yet contribute in line with the voluntary scale of contribution or do not contribute at all; and engage low income and least developed countries to stress that even small contributions make a difference and demonstrate political support for the mandate of the organization.

29. Through the strategy, it is aimed to increase contributions to the Environment Fund from the current 50% to 75% of the 2018-2019 approved programme of work and budget and to 100% for the 2020-2021 approved programme of work and budget; and to increase the number of Member States contributing from 46% to 75% of the 193 Member States by 2020 and thus reduce the dependency on 15 top donors that currently contribute about 90% of the funds received.

30. The secretariat will develop an implementation plan for the strategy and continue consultations with Member States on its delivery. The secretariat is actively reaching out to Member States through bilateral meetings to achieve the objectives of the strategy.

### **C. Coordination within the United Nations system - *implementation of subparagraph (c) of paragraph 88***

31. Fostering United Nations system-wide coordination and collaboration has been integral to the mandate and work of the United Nations Environment Programme. The 2030 Agenda offers a tremendous opportunity to enhance coordination across the United Nations system in the field of the environment.

#### **1. Intergovernmental coordination**

32. The Environment Assembly, in the light of its mandate, has an important role to provide a strategic oversight in agenda setting, general policy guidance and coordination concerning the global environment, in the backdrop of the current decentralized system of international environmental governance in which environmental and environment-related issues are addressed through a multitude of intergovernmental decision-making processes within and beyond the United Nations system, including multilateral environmental agreements. The Environment Assembly, through its resolutions and ministerial outcomes, has carried out its functions to play that role.

33. The interactions between the Environment Assembly and the high-level political forum on sustainable development have been progressively advanced in recent years, including through the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly<sup>11</sup> and the Environment Assembly.<sup>12</sup> For the 2018 meeting of the forum, the United Nations Environment Programme contributed with inputs to the Secretary-General's progress report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition to providing written inputs to the forum, the President of the Environment Assembly was made a statement during the ministerial segment of the forum to present the messages of the Environment Assembly at its third session. The forum, through a ministerial declaration, welcomed the main outcomes of the third session of the Environment Assembly. Also, United Nations Environment Programme regional offices contributed to the preparation and participated in the regional sustainable development forums organized by the respective United Nations regional commissions.

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<sup>11</sup> Resolution 71/231 of 21 December 2016, paragraph 3.

<sup>12</sup> Resolution 3/3.

## 2. Inter-agency coordination

34. United Nations system-wide cooperation and collaboration have grown organically out of the needs and requests of the Member States following the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and through the process to negotiate the 2030 Agenda, the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development, and the resulting reform of the United Nations development system, as well as the other inter-related United Nations system reforms.

35. The 2030 Agenda demands enhanced and agile collaboration across the United Nations system. Coordination in a time of integration means drawing on the comparative advantages of the United Nations system's diversity and specialization, working in collaboration and delivering as one. The United Nations system needs to be a responsive and agile provider of integrated, specialized support to Member States, effectively operationalizing normative frameworks in a coherent and collective system-wide effort.

36. The United Nations Environment Programme is executing its mandate to integrate environment across United Nations agendas, working collaboratively through the Environment Management Group and many other mechanisms, strategies and innovative partnerships to deliver better, more impactful, results and create synergies, strengthen collective action and maximize the potential for environmentally sound development. It has worked to enhance its ability to fulfil its coordination mandate within the United Nations system by strengthening its engagement with key United Nations coordination bodies, leading efforts to formulate system-wide strategies on the environment and strengthening its regional presence to better serve the needs of Member States.

37. The United Nations Environment Programme works within – and as part of – the United Nations system, differentiating diverse levels and modes of engagement to facilitate and leverage coordinated approaches and synergies and consolidating the system's support for the delivery of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

38. The United Nations Environment Programme works through the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its related mechanisms; the United Nations Sustainable Development Group and its related mechanisms; thematic coordination mechanisms at the global level and through regional and national coordination mechanisms; bilateral United Nations partnerships; and multi-stakeholder partnerships and issue-based coalitions; to enhance United Nations system-wide policy coherence in addressing environmental matters.

39. Pursuant to Governing Council decision 27/5 and Environment Assembly resolution 1/11, the United Nations System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment was prepared through consultations among United Nations system organizations through facilitation of the Environment Management Group. The Framework was endorsed by the Senior Officials of the Environment Management Group in March 2016, and launched at the second session of the Environment Assembly in May 2016. Its objectives are to enhance cooperation and collaboration across the United Nations system on environment in support of implementing the 2030 Agenda, and to strengthen the United Nations systems' capacity and synergies to enhance integration of the environment dimension of the 2030 Agenda.

## **D. Science-policy interface - *implementation of subparagraph (d) of paragraph 88***

40. The Environment Assembly has the functions and responsibilities to keep under review the world environmental situation, to promote international cooperation in the field of the environment and recommend policies, and to provide general policy guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programmes within the United Nations system.<sup>13</sup> In this regard, the science-policy interface is at the core of the functioning of the Environment Assembly, and strengthening of the

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<sup>13</sup> Part I of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII).

United Nations Environment Programme requires the Environment Assembly to strengthen its functions to promote a strong science-policy interface on the global environment.

41. The Global Environment Outlook supports Member States to uphold the work of the Environment Assembly to promote the science-policy interface on the global environment. It presents the environmental trends for air, climate, water, land and biodiversity. The Global Environment Outlook draws on all the major global assessments from international science panels and United Nations bodies.

42. The sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook, with the overall theme “Healthy Planet, Healthy People”, is designed to inform policy decisions by Governments, underpinning decision-making processes of the Environment Assembly, supporting the entire United Nations system to address environmental dimension of the Agenda 2030 and informing the discussions at the high-level political forum on sustainable development. This edition of the Outlook will be the only United Nations report that offers an overarching analysis of all major global environmental issues. It will provide a coherent picture of progress to-date, remaining policy challenges and forward-looking scenarios, with policy options for achieving the environmental dimension of Agenda 2030 with multiple co-benefits across all the Sustainable Development Goals. Including its Summary for Policymakers, the Outlook will be submitted to the Environment Assembly at its fourth session.

43. In addition, the United Nations Environment Programme secretariat has produced a broad range of reports and assessments to inform policy-making processes, including: the report entitled “Strengthening the Science-Policy Interface: A gap analysis”; “Frontiers Report”, an annual report on emerging environmental issues; “The Global Gender and Environment Outlook”; a global assessment of sand and dust storms; and the Global Waste Management Outlook. The secretariat provided parties to the selected multilateral environmental agreements with support for evidence-based decision-making, by providing reports on pertinent subjects. The annual Emissions Gap Reports and the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, for example, are used at sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

44. Furthermore, the United Nations Environment Programme has been undertaking assessment work, in collaboration with other partner organizations, in such areas as ambient outdoor air pollution and transboundary water system. It also provided inputs to assessment work of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and provided scientific and technical support for capacity-building workshops for the first United Nations World Ocean Assessment through the Regional Seas Programme.

45. Also, the United Nations Environment Programme continues to provide secretariat support to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, among others.

46. Partnerships have been strengthened through the network of collaborating centres and thematic centres of excellence, such as the Global and Regional Integrated Data centres, with multilateral environmental agreement secretariats and regional bodies. The organization is committed to working with partners in the framework of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems, including on Sustainable Development Goals indicators based on remote-sensing data. Also, a partnership was formed to assess the challenges to global water quality, under the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism on all Freshwater Related Issues, Including Sanitation (UN-Water).

47. The United Nations Environment Programme has been serving as one of the organizations contributing to the preparation of the Global Sustainable Development Report, since the inception of the 2014 prototype edition, followed by its 2015 and 2016 editions, up to the preparation of the 2019 edition. The secretariat has been involved in generating data and statistics for monitoring progress in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals, and serves as the custodian agency for 26 of the Sustainable Development Goals indicators.



## **E. Environmental information and awareness-raising - *implementation of subparagraph (e) of paragraph 88***

### **1. Environmental information**

48. The United Nations Environment Programme works towards bringing coherence and synergy in data collection processes, develops capacity to strengthen national and regional reporting, and ensures that the most pertinent data and information will be both available online and easily accessible for everyone.

49. Environment Live is a common knowledge infrastructure, built on advances in technology, to connect individual efforts with collective intelligence and understanding to share authoritative environment and other data and knowledge. Environment Live services include support to integrated environmental assessment processes by making accessible global, regional and national data and knowledge flows, which are available as real-time maps, entitled “Environment Situation Room”,<sup>14</sup> and indicators that can be compared and charted as well as scientific reports and regional and national knowledge assets, multi-media content, and web intelligence.

50. Environment Live Sustainable Development Goals Synergies portal provides an effective way to retrieve relevant indicator-level data, track a country’s progress in reporting on data and show relationships between Sustainable Development Goals-multilateral environmental agreements related data.

51. More countries and regional forums are seeking Environment Live’s data streams and using the platform, including United Nations Environment Programme’s assessment reports, as a credible data source.

52. The Online Access to Research in Environment programme enables academic, research and government institutions gain free or low cost access to an impressive body of research in the environment and related fields.

53. The InforMEA Initiative has continued to bring together multilateral environmental agreements to develop harmonized and interoperable information systems for the benefit of the Parties and the environment community at large. InforMEA provides easy access to a range of information concerning those agreements. ECOLEX has continued to provide a comprehensive global source of information on environmental law.

54. In addition to the above online information services, the secretariat has continued to produce reports and other publications, which are increasingly made available online, to disseminate information on a wide range of issues to inform decision-makers and the public.

### **2. Communications**

55. The United Nations Environment Programme secretariat has strengthened its activities for raising public awareness on global environmental issues, in particular through strengthened programmatic alignment, intensified campaigns and improved creation and dissemination of strong content. The communication function was restructured to better serve the different programmatic streams. Efforts in improving communication on global environmental issues make the organization more visible, relevant and accessible to a wider public.

56. The secretariat initiated a new multimedia approach in 2016 focused on social media-friendly content, shareable across multiple platforms. The new strategy quickly resulted in a threefold increase of viewership across all main platforms in the first year. New, innovative techniques to multimedia storytelling, like Virtual Reality, are also being tested, and a new Digital Asset Media library to house 40 plus years of readily-available digital assets was launched in 2018.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://environmentlive.unep.org/situation>

57. The secretariat has undertaken a major overhaul of media outreach since the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Its new approach has helped to insert its voice in the global media cycle and promote the organization's high-profile pieces of new research, such as the Emissions Gap report, and draw attention to big events, including the Environment Assembly.

58. The secretariat has revamped its digital presence to engage citizens and Governments. At the end of 2017, the organization launched a new website. The organization's social media presence across platforms and languages has grown and strengthened every year. It now has 21 social media accounts representing all six United Nations languages and more than 2 million followers across accounts. Innovative digital activations include WildforLife's morphs and the 2018 World Environment Day "Tag Challenge" against single-use plastic.

59. An increasing number of influencers and celebrities is advocating for environmental issues and promoting the United Nations Environment Programme's campaigns, extending its reach to broader audiences. Another strategy to extend the reach of its messaging is through partnerships.

60. The United Nations Environment Programme secretariat is running three campaigns to provide an intensive advocacy and social mobilization push for key issues. These include the Clean Seas campaign against plastic pollution, the Wild for Life campaign against illegal wildlife trafficking, and the Breathe Life campaign against air pollution. In addition to global awareness raising, the campaigns have mobilized citizens, governments and the private sector to act on environmental issues and had impact on policy change: Government action for clean air under BreatheLife is to benefit 230 million people; 53 Governments – accounting for more than 60 per cent of the world's coastline – have joined the Clean Seas campaign with action plans to reduce plastic pollution; Wild for Life has reached more than 1.2 billion people around the world and engaged 5 million in a deeper level of involvement through morphs, pledges and social media interactions.

61. The Environment Assembly and its issues have been promoted through press releases, media partnerships, storytelling, video and visual content, and social media. For the third session of the Environment Assembly, the secretariat conducted a global campaign, BeatPollution, to raise awareness and mobilize action on the theme of the Environment Assembly. BeatPollution successfully demonstrated the relevance of the Environment Assembly on people's lives. The campaign garnered 2.5 million citizen pledges, while 69 Governments, 23 businesses and 97 civil society entities made voluntary commitments. The campaign reached over 100 million people on social media and is still running as the umbrella campaign for the organization's work on the issue of pollution. At the same time, the campaign helped to profile the Environment Assembly itself, which was covered by over 3800 media outlets in 125 countries worldwide.

62. The United Nations Environment Programme secretariat runs annual events to maintain, and build on, the reputation of the organization as being a leader in environmental issues and agenda-setting. World Environment Day on 5 June mobilizes millions and has seen private sector and government commitments on the topic of the year. In 2018, under the theme "Beat Plastic Pollution" – chosen by the host India – nations, organizations, businesses, celebrities, the United Nations, media and individuals united to turn the tide on single-use and non-recoverable plastics. The secretariat-led Champions of the Earth, the United Nations' highest environmental honour, celebrates outstanding figures from the public and private sectors and from civil society whose actions have had a transformative positive impact on the environment. Young Champions of the Earth is a global initiative designed to showcase and accelerate the ambitions of talented young environmentalists around the globe.

## **F. Capacity-building and technology support - *implementation of subparagraph (f) of paragraph 88***

63. Capacity-building and the facilitation of technology development and sharing in countries underpin the delivery of all United Nations Environment Programme's support to countries and have been mainstreamed in its programmes of work, in line with the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building. Highlights of the relevant activities during the past five years include the following.

64. The United Nations Environment Programme continued to support countries to equip them

to adapt to climate change. It provided assistance to enable their access to adaptation finance for ecosystem-based adaptation, and to integrate ecosystem-based and other adaptation approaches into national plans. It supported countries in the uptake of renewables, and brought together first-mover financiers and renewable energy project developers to mitigate risks. It also provided support to countries to develop policies and undertake actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other climate pollutants, and to achieve low-emission growth.

65. Under the partnership with the Global Environment Facility, the United Nations Environment Programme has been assisting a number of countries worldwide to build their capacities to meet their commitment to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in an integrated way.

66. The United Nations Environment Programme supported developing countries to reduce the environment-related risks of natural disasters, industrial accidents and conflicts. It also responded to acute environmental emergencies in countries as part of humanitarian response teams. Its work included conducting post-crisis assessments to assess the environmental damage and recovery needs, and providing guidance to those involved in recovery.

67. While the United Nations Environment Programme provided environmental assessments immediately after a crisis on request from the country concerned or the United Nations system organizations, it also supported those countries that require more sustained environmental assistance for recovery. Moreover, it supported countries emerging from crisis as they seek to put in place critical environmental policies, plans and institutions as part of a wider recovery process.

68. The United Nations Environment Programme has been helping countries take account of ecosystem services, and use the valuation results and scenario analysis to inform policy, assess freshwater ecosystems, water quality and water resource management, and incorporate considerations of the health and productivity of ecosystems and landscapes into their policy frameworks. As a result, those countries have incorporated ecosystem services values into their planning processes, taken steps to adopt and implement the international water quality guidelines to improve water quality, or incorporated the health and productivity of ecosystems as an element of their policy frameworks. The organization had also enabled a number of water basins to take steps to secure the health and productivity of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. It also supported the establishment of protected areas and the advancement of ecosystem restoration.

69. The United Nations Environment Programme provided support to countries to establish action plans to address marine litter and wastewater at the regional, national and sub-national levels, which resulted in the increase in countries' action on marine litter and wastewater. Also, through the Regional Seas Programmes and the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities, the organization supported countries in integrating the ecosystem approach in their efforts to sustain coastal and marine ecosystems.

70. The United Nations Environment Programme has been supporting countries to develop national legislation and strengthen institutional measures to improve the implementation of internationally agreed environmental goals, including the obligations under multilateral environmental agreements, focusing on a variety of issues such as water management, biodiversity conservation, law for a green economy, and chemicals management. It supported countries, based on their national priorities, to develop framework environmental laws, as well as environmental legislation in such areas as wildlife, extractives, climate change and crimes with serious impacts on the environment. Also, it continued to work with and provide support to Governments, in collaboration with other organizations, to uphold environmental rule of law and environmental justice by integrating critical environmental considerations into the essential elements of the rule of law, including the judiciary and prosecution sectors.

71. The United Nations Environment Programme has been assisting countries to mainstream environmental sustainability objectives into national and regional development policies and plans. Through the Poverty-Environment Initiative, run jointly with the United Nations Development Programme, a number of countries have integrated environmental objectives into national policies,

plans and processes focusing on poverty reduction. It also promoted political dialogue and cooperation through regional environment ministerial forums and related mechanisms.

72. An increasing number of governments, businesses and industries addressing priority chemical issues have used risk assessment and management tools provided by the United Nations Environment Programme. The organization has, for example, been working with the World Health Organization and civil society under the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint to help countries phase out of lead paint and put in place appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks for that purpose.

73. The United Nations Environment Programme works with governments, businesses and industries, and civil society organizations to help them use innovative tools and methodologies to address priority waste issues. As an integral part of the pilot and demonstration projects on the integrated solid waste management and management of specific waste streams, the United Nations Environment Programme International Environmental Technology Centre has organized regional training programmes for policy makers and personnel involved in waste management in developing countries, and convened regional university consortia in the development of academic curricula on holistic waste management for professional postgraduate degrees and training for practitioners and policy makers.

74. The United Nations Environment Programme has supported countries and regions in their transition to an inclusive green economy and their adoption of sustainable consumption and production action plans at national and sub-national levels. With the support of the organization, an increasing number of governments, businesses and other stakeholders adopted sustainable production and consumption practices in global supply chains in building and construction, food and agriculture, finance and tourism sectors and with small and medium enterprises across a number of manufacturing sectors. It supported a number of Governments to develop or implement action plans on sustainable public procurement, in close coordination with the related 10-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Public Procurement programme

75. The United Nations Environment Programme is assisting countries to strengthen national reporting, which it foresees will improve the access and quality of key data flows available for decision-making. It developed a national reporting system with support from the Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative to streamline data collection and facilitate information sharing for multiple purposes.

## **G. Consolidation of headquarters functions and strengthening regional presence – *implementation of subparagraph (g) of paragraph 88***

### **1. Consolidation of headquarters functions in Nairobi**

76. The Governing Council at its first universal session, in paragraph 13 of its decision 27/2, committed to progressively consolidate headquarters functions of the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi.

77. Pursuant to that decision, the Executive Director submitted to the Environment Assembly at its first session a report on the consolidation of headquarters functions<sup>15</sup>. The report provided an overview of the organization's strategic presence worldwide, and identified a way forward for implementing subparagraph (g) of paragraph 88 of the outcome document.

78. As defined in the same report, the following are headquarters functions of the secretariat of the United Nations Environment Programme:

- (a) Corporate leadership;
- (b) Relations with governing and oversight bodies;

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<sup>15</sup> UNEP/EA/1/2/Add.5

- (c) Corporate institutional relations;
- (d) Strategic decision and work planning;
- (e) Corporate management;
- (f) Corporate communications;
- (g) Coordination of donor relations.

79. As at April 2014 when the above-mentioned report was issued, those functions had been performed at headquarters in Nairobi with the exception of the following:

(a) The Director of the then Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (currently the Economy Division), who is a member of the Senior Management Team and accountable director for three subprogrammes, and fulfils corporate responsibilities, especially related to the corporate leadership and corporate management functions. The Director was based in Paris then;

(b) The coordination of four out of the seven subprogrammes, which include elements of the strategic direction and work planning functions, was carried out by the respective Sub-Programme Coordinators from Paris and Geneva then (climate change and resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production in Paris, and chemicals and waste and disasters and conflicts in Geneva);

(c) The New York Office performs functions related to corporate institutional relations vis-à-vis the United Nations Headquarters, including with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and United Nations coordinating bodies. The Director of the New York Office also oversees and manages the Environment Management Group secretariat.

80. To date, the Director of the Economy Division has been relocated to Nairobi and performs the relevant functions from headquarters. Following that change, all members of the Senior Management Team of the organization have been located at headquarters, and corporate leadership and corporate management functions have been consolidated in Nairobi.

81. Also, all Coordinators of the seven subprogrammes of the organization are now located in Nairobi to perform their coordinating functions from headquarters.

82. The New York Office continues to perform functions related to corporate institutional relations vis-à-vis United Nations Headquarters, in order to effectively perform the mandate of the organization to coordinate environmental programmes within the United Nations system.

83. With a view to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the consolidated headquarters functions, the following changes have been made to the organizational arrangements of the secretariat since 2016:

(a) Establishment of the Corporate Service Division, replacing the Office of Operations, to consolidate administrative management functions and to safeguard corporate interests;

(b) Establishment of the Policy and Programme Division to consolidate the policy, programme, monitoring, gender and social safeguards functions of the organization as well as its engagement with the United Nations system and key global processes such as the 2030 Agenda, and to ensure coherence and coordination at the strategic, policy and programmatic levels.

(c) Establishment of the Governance Affairs Office, which includes the Secretariat of the Governing Bodies and assists Member States, major groups and relevant stakeholders, such as the private sector, to engage with the work of the organization, and provide services to the Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

## 2. Strengthening regional presence

84. The United Nations Environment Programme, through its strengthened regional presence, engages with Member States on substantive and strategic issues in regions and countries.

85. The United Nations Environment Programme has six Regional Offices: for Africa, in Nairobi; for Asia and the Pacific, in Bangkok; for Europe, in Geneva; for Latin America and the Caribbean, in Panama City; for North America, in Washington D.C.; for West Asia, in Manama.

86. The United Nations Environment Programme's sub-regional, country, liaison and programme offices that fall under the Regional Offices and work under the supervision of the Regional Directors are:

(a) Five sub-regional offices: for the Caribbean, in Kingston; for Central Asia, in Almaty; for the Pacific, in Apia; for the Southern Cone (South America), in Montevideo; and for West Africa, in Abidjan.

(b) Six country offices: for China, in Beijing; for Brazil, in Brasilia; for Mexico, in Mexico City; for the Russian Federation, in Moscow; for India, in New Delhi; for South Africa, in Pretoria.

(c) Two liaison offices: in Addis Ababa, for the African Union, and in Brussels for the European Commission.

(d) One programme office in Vienna.

87. In addition, the United Nations Environment Programme serves as the secretariat of a number of international conventions and action plans and many of them contribute to the organization's regional presence. It has also other programmatic initiatives, for example those related to disasters and conflicts, which also require the organization's presence in a number of locations around the world.

88. As of June 2013, the total number of staff members of the United Nations Environment Programme was 1118 (consisting of 633 professional staff and 485 general service staff), which included those assigned in the secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements provided by the organization. Among those staff, 682 were posted outside Nairobi. By July 2018, the total number of staff member was increased to 1189 (consisting of 713 professional staff and 476 general service staff), including 312 staff members assigned in the secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements provided by the United Nations Environment Programme. The total number of staff members posted outside Nairobi was increased to 726 (455 professional staff and 271 general service staff).

89. Through the increased appropriations from the United Nations regular budget, the Regional Offices' capacity has been enhanced to respond to the needs of Member States in the regions, particularly through the establishment of the posts of regional sub-programme coordinator and regional development coordinator. The increased number of staff located in the Regional Offices has made a significant difference in strengthening strategic regional presence of the organization. However, the Regional Office teams are still relatively small to meet the growing demands of Member States, the United Nations Country Teams and other partners for expertise, and technical support and services.

90. The strengthening of strategic regional presence through decentralization has been pursued also by delegation of authority to the Regional Directors. Since October 2013, the Regional Directors report directly to the Deputy Executive Director, and they have become part of the Senior Management Team of the organization.

91. The United Nations Environment Programme, through its Regional Offices, actively engages in the United Nations regional coordination mechanisms and regional thematic working groups. Also, it has been increasingly engaged in the United Nations common country programming processes to mainstream environmental sustainability in the United Nations Development Assistance

Frameworks and Delivering as One Programmes.

92. Despite significant progress in supporting United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and Delivering as One, the United Nations Environment Programme still faces some challenges, such as those arising from the difference in cycles of programme of work planning and budgeting processes. Limited operational and staffing budget has constrained the ability of the United Nations Environment Programme to consistently and actively engage in the relevant country-level processes.

93. Engagement with regional ministerial environment forums has been an important element to strengthen the organization's regional presence. The United Nations Environment Programme provides institutional and technical support to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, the Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia-Pacific, the Forum of Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment. While engagement with Member States is being enhanced in regions through those forums, some challenges remain, including mobilizing adequate resources to finance successful ministerial forums or similar events.

## **H. Stakeholders' participation and engagement of civil society - *implementation of subparagraph (h) of paragraph 88***

94. Enhancement of stakeholders' engagement was pursued in particular through a process, initiated in 2013, to enhance and broaden the scope of the existing Stakeholder Engagement Policy. Although Member States have not been able to agree on a new Stakeholder Engagement Policy document to date, the United Nations Environment Programme has put in place, after consultation with the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, various new approaches towards stakeholder engagement, including the following:

(a) While respecting the intergovernmental nature of the process, representatives of major groups and stakeholders accredited to the United Nations Environment Programme may participate in all public meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, including its subcommittee meetings and briefings, with the opportunity to make oral statements, including via video connection.

(b) Representatives of major groups and stakeholders accredited to the United Nations Environment Programme have the opportunity to provide written and oral inputs to all deliberations of the Environment Assembly and its subsidiary organs, including working groups. These inputs are distributed by the secretariat to Member States and are uploaded on the relevant websites.

(c) Representatives of major groups and stakeholders accredited to the United Nations Environment Programme have access to information relevant to the work of the Environment Assembly and its subsidiary body. This information is distributed to Member States and at the same time to accredited organizations. Furthermore, they may request access to the Committee of Permanent Representatives website and portals.

(d) Organizations working in the environment and/or sustainable development and that meet the other accreditation criteria will be granted accreditation.

(e) The granting of consultative status to a non-governmental organization by the United Nations Economic and Social Council is considered as evidence of having an international scope of work but does not replace the need to apply for a separate accreditation to the Environment Assembly, as organizations have to work in the area of the environment or sustainable development.

(f) Working with international partners, including from within the United Nations, is considered as sufficient international scope of work to meet the related accreditation criteria. Nongovernmental organizations do not necessarily have to prove that they have a physical presence (e.g. an office) in more than one country. In practice, this means that organizations with a mainly national scope of operations can be considered for accreditation.

(g) Back-to-back with sessions of the Environment Assembly, the secretariat organizes Science-Policy or Science-Policy-Business Fora. These allow for an additional opportunity for stakeholder to give expert input and advice, prior to Environment Assembly sessions.

(h) Regional consultative meetings, held in all United Nations Environment Programme regions and the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, held prior to sessions of the Environment Assembly in Nairobi, give a unique opportunity for major groups to come together and to discuss and prepare their input to the intergovernmental decision-making process.

95. Through these measures, an important progress was made to advance the objectives set out in subparagraph (h) of paragraph 88 of the outcome document. The approach described above is reflected in the United Nations Environment Programme's Stakeholder Engagement Handbook.

96. In addition, the Executive Director put in place the Access-to-Information Policy which is one of the most advanced within the United Nations system, giving access to most information held by the United Nations Environment Programme.

97. Furthermore, in order to enhance engagement with private sector, the Private Sector Unit was established within the Governance Affairs Office in January 2018.

98. Funding of the participation of major groups and stakeholders still remains a concern. While the allocation of financial resources from the Environment Fund to the budget of the Civil Society Unit in the Governance Affairs Office has been increased to \$220,000 in 2018, very limited additional extra-budgetary resources have been provided by Member States for the implementation of subparagraph (h) of paragraph 88, leading to a situation in which the participation of major groups and stakeholders, including at the regional level and in meetings of the Environment Assembly, is chronically underfunded.

99. Looking forward, it would be desirable if the organization could invest more financial and human resources into creating enabling conditions for civil society engagement at the regional and national levels, including by supporting the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, for example by facilitating the establishment of legal instruments, similar to the Escazu Convention on Access to Information, Participation and Access to Justice, adopted in March 2018 in Costa Rica, for the Latin America and the Caribbean region.

### **III. Conclusion**

100. An important progress has been achieved in strengthening and upgrading the United Nations Environment Programme, through the actions taken to date to implement paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, "The future we want". Nevertheless, further action would be required to tackle the challenges in certain areas and to continue strengthening the United Nations Environment Programme, so that it can fully carry out its mandated functions and play its role as the leading global environmental authority to uphold a reinforced international environmental governance.