8 March 2019

Implementation of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want"

Supplementary information

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This note presents supplementary information concerning the implementation of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", in particular in the following areas: coordination within the United Nations system; science-policy interface; and financial resources, particularly the Environment Fund.

I. Coordination within the United Nations system, in particular through the System-wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment

1. Environmental issues, in particular those of global concern to the international community, are inherently multidimensional and the various subsets of environmental, economic and social issues and interests are interconnected. At the same time, however, individual institutions, including most of the bodies, funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the UN system, are each established with specific mandates and limited jurisdiction. As a result, policies and actions on environmental and environment-related matters within the UN system have often been handled in a manner independent from the decision-making processes and activities of other organizations dealing with the same or similar matters. Efforts are thus required to enable more effective coordination in the handling of environmental and environment-related matters within the UN system.

2. The Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in its decision 27/5, requested the Executive Director in his capacity as the Chair of the Environment Management Group (EMG), mainly through the Group and in line with Paragraph 88 of the "The future we want", to develop system-wide strategies on the environment and to invite the engagement of the United Nations Secretary-General and the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) to facilitate its broad ownership in the United Nations at all levels. Furthermore, the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP at its first session in June 2014, in its resolution 1/11, reiterated that decision to develop system-wide strategies on the environment.

3. Pursuant to the above mandates, the UNEP secretariat prepared, as a thought-starter, the draft outline of a UN system-wide strategy on the environment in August 2014, which was circulated to members of the EMG in September 2014. In the ensuing period, the UNEP secretariat, in consultation with Environment Management Group members, produced also an analytical report concerning environment-related mandates, strategies and activities of the UN system bodies in March 2015. The report revealed that most of 41 UN system bodies that were members of the EMG had the environment-related mandates and strategies, respectively, while there were gaps in certain areas.

4. Against the background above, the development of a UN system-wide framework of strategies on the environment was initiated by a series of consultations among UN system organizations, mainly through facilitation of the EMG, which continued between 2015 and early 2016.

5. Subsequently, the UN System-wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment was prepared through collective efforts of EMG members. The Framework was endorsed by the Senior Officials of the EMG in March 2016, followed by its submission to the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in April 2016. The CEB took note of the Framework as an important tool for the UN system to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by providing a flexible approach to achieving greater synergy and collaboration in the area of the environment. CEB members were encouraged by the UN Secretary General to support the implementation of the Framework in their respective organizations. The Framework was launched at the second session of the Environment Assembly in May 2016.

6. The System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment has two main, mutually reinforcing objectives, as follows:

(a) To enhance cooperation and collaboration across the UN system on environment in support of implementing the 2030 Agenda, by identifying the steps taken by individual UN organizations to deepen the consistency of their strategies and activities with the 2030 Agenda, in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, as well as by facilitating a structured and timely exchange of relevant knowledge and information.

(b) To strengthen the UN systems' capacity and synergies to enhance integration of the environment dimension of the 2030 Agenda by, inter alia, drawing on the experiences of others, exchanging good policy and practice, leveraging the research and data systems of UN system entities,

and identifying new opportunities for cooperation.

7. Following the launch of the System-Wide Framework of Strategies, a plan of action to follow up and implement the Framework as well as an outline of the System-Wide Framework of Strategies Synthesis Report was shared with the Consultative Process for its consideration.

8. In November 2016, the first System-Wide Framework of Strategies survey was launched to gather information on EMG members' support and contributions to the implementation of the environmental dimensions of the 2030 Agenda.

9. On the basis of the survey and inputs from 31 UN system agencies, the first "System-wide Collaboration on the Environment: Synthesis Report on UN System-wide Contributions to the Implementation of the Environmental Dimension in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2016-2017" was published in November 2017. The synthesis report provides examples of how individual agencies are aligning their organizational strategies with the environmental dimensions of the SDGs; how the UN and stakeholders are collaborating on the environmental areas of the Goals; and where there are opportunities for scaling up and strengthening coordination in existing or new environmental areas of the Goals

10. The key trends within the UN system, as presented in the synthesis report, included the following:

(a) An ongoing alignment to the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs was reported by most EMG member agencies at the strategic level.

(b) Several agencies reported to have explicitly aligned their programmes to the SDGs framework, specifically with targets and indicators that are within the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda.

(c) Nexus issues and partnerships are at the core of successfully addressing the environmental dimension of sustainable development. Examples of nexus issues reported by EMG member agencies included the environment-health nexus, the environment-migration nexus, the poverty-environment nexus and the cities-environment nexus.

(d) Mainstreaming the normative and programmatic work of each EMG member agency into national plans and strategies for the successful implementation of Agenda 2030 by Member States provides both an opportunity and challenge for the agencies, especially in the context of the proposal by the Secretary-General to reposition the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda.

(e) The importance of properly tracking progress towards Sustainable Development Goals implementation is highlighted by many agencies.

(f) A clear call to the UN Environment Management Group System-Wide Framework of Strategies process and the Nexus Dialogues to continue to foster discussion and information exchange among its Member Agencies.

11. Following the approval of the first synthesis report, the Consultative Process agreed on the preparation of an annual thematic report, complemented by a comprehensive triennial Synthesis Report on UN System-wide Contributions to the Implementation of the Environmental Dimension in the Sustainable Development Goals as outlined in the Framework.

12. Through consultation with EMG Members, it was decided that the topic for the first System-Wide Framework of Strategies thematic report section would focus on a crosscutting theme of biodiversity. The resultant review will provide information about ongoing efforts by the UN system to protect biodiversity, their focus (including in terms of the Sustainable Development Goals targets that they impact), challenges, and opportunities for further engagement with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Examples of partnerships among UN agencies, potential gaps in implementation of the biodiversity agenda, and areas of intersection between biodiversity and other development, human rights and humanitarian issues will be illustrated with a view to harnessing further collaboration.

13. Finally, the report will highlight opportunities for UN agencies to enhance their own core objectives by advancing the biodiversity agenda; areas within the UN system that may benefit from further collaboration among agencies at a strategic level; innovations that can help mainstream the UN system's work on biodiversity, globally; and synthesize recommendations gathered from among UN agencies. The thematic report is expected to be published in 2019.

14. The Consultative Process is envisaged to discuss the second edition of the System-Wide Framework of Strategies Synthesis Report which will build on and provide updates on the information collected and presented in the first edition with a view to highlight potential development in terms of contributions to the implementation of the environmental dimension in the SDGs.

15. The EMG secretariat has also proposed the organization of an annual event to convene the UN system and member States to consider progress made in the implementation of the environmental dimensions of the SDGs and to showcase member agencies' best practices and interagency collaboration efforts. The event may be informed by previous System-Wide Framework of Strategies reports and provide ideas to future iterations.

16. In addition to the work under the System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment, the Environment Management Group Nexus Dialogue Series promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, by contributing to a common understanding of the integrated goals and targets of the SDGs, as well as of the requirements and opportunities which these bring to UN agencies in supporting the implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda in a coherent and collaborative manner. The dialogues provide key recommendations and policy messages to the relevant forums including the Environment Assembly and the high-level political forum on sustainable development, as well as to the System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment. To date, nine Nexus Dialogues have been held, focusing on different environmental nexus areas.

II. Science-policy interface

17. The Governing Council at its first universal session, in paragraph 8 of its decision 27/2, decided that the governing body of UNEP will promote a strong science-policy interface by reviewing the state of the environment, by building on existing international instruments, assessments, panels and information networks, including through an enhanced summary for policy makers of the Global Environment Outlook. The General Assembly, in paragraph 10 of its resolution 68/215 of 20 December 2013, reiterated the continuing need for UNEP to conduct up-to-date, comprehensive, scientifically based and policy-relevant global environmental assessments, in close consultation with Member States, in order to support decision-making processes at all levels.

18. Furthermore, the Environment Assembly at its first session held in June 2014, in its resolution 1/4, entitled "Science-policy interface", among other things, requested the Executive Director to: further explore ways of communicating key scientific findings of the assessment work of UNEP in all UN languages to citizens, policymakers, the media and the research community in order to support informed decision-making at all levels; promote a strong science-policy interface by expanding partnerships with centres of excellence and research programmes, promoting integrated and peer-reviewed environmental assessments and policy analysis and working closely with member States, business and experts to establish up-to-date quality-assured data flows; and to foster collaboration with multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, relevant UN agencies and programmes and scientific panels for joint efforts to strengthen the science-policy interface and provide tools for integrated approaches and informed decision-making.

19. In his report to the second session of the Environment Assembly on the implementation of Environment Assembly resolution 1/4, the Executive Director recommended that, in order to address emerging environmental problems, all regions would need a wide range of scientifically sound and actionable solutions, including: environmental institutional reform (governance, coordination, capacity and funding); stronger compliance across a range of regulatory frameworks; increased investment in data and statistics; use of economic instruments to integrate the environment with other policy areas; increased involvement of the private sector and civil society in environmental

management and sustainable production and consumption; enhanced regional cooperation to manage transboundary issues, especially those related to major ecosystems and major environmental challenges such as air and water pollution and sand and dust storms. Although the above recommendations were based on the regional assessments under the GEO – process and made from regional perspectives, they might illuminate the ways in which the science-policy interface could be strengthened at the global level, including at UNEP.

A. Institutional arrangements for science-policy interface within the UNEP governing structure

20. One of the unique features of UNEP in international environmental governance is that its governing body – the Governing Council, followed by the Environment Assembly - is designed to serve as a global intergovernmental forum to promote science-policy interface in the field of the environment.

21. As stipulated in part I of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, it has the functions and responsibilities to "keep under review the world environmental situation in order to ensure that emerging environmental problems of wide international significance receive appropriate and adequate consideration by Governments", which enables the governing body to carry out other responsibilities to "promote international cooperation in the field of the environment and to recommend, as appropriate, policies to this end", and to "provide general policy guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programmes within the UN system."

22. Such science-policy interface is supported by the governing body's mandate to "promote the contribution of the relevant international scientific and other professional communities to the acquisition, assessment and exchange of environmental knowledge and information, and, as appropriate, to the technical aspects of the formulation and implementation of environmental programmes within the UN system."

23. UNEP's ability to set the global environmental agenda, coordinate environmental dimension of sustainable development and advocate for the global environment depends on effective functioning of the science-policy interface in the governing structure of UNEP. Promoting a strong science-policy interface is a key to strengthen the role of UNEP to serve as the leading global environmental authority.

24. In spite of such mandate, the science-policy interface at the previous sessions of the Environment Assembly (also formerly the Governing Council) had often been undertaken on an ad-hoc approach, normally driven by assessments and reports on environmental matters prepared by the secretariat, rather than a systematic institutional approach. Exceptionally, Global Environment Outlook process involves Governments in structured engagements to materialize science-policy interface in particular in the preparation of summaries for policymakers of Global Environment Outlook reports, though it occurred only once in January 2019, after the previous process held in early 2012, due to the cycle of Global Environment Outlook process.

25. Moreover, it should be recalled that the governing body of UNEP is the sole intergovernmental body with the mandate to address the environment in its entirety within the UN system, unlike other entities that deal with certain portion of environmental or environment-related matter. It poses a specific responsibility upon the Environment Assembly to exercise its oversight on the global environment, in particular hinged on a holistic science-policy interface concerning global environmental changes on the planet, and guide the international community to determine a way forward for its future. This is the exact function already envisaged in the constitutional mandate by which UNEP was established in 1972.

26. Bearing in mind the above background, consideration may be given to ways and means to further strengthen the scientific base of the work of the Environment Assembly as well as its ability to monitor the implementation science-based policies that it sets for the international community. Possible ways and means for achieving that purpose might include the establishment, within the governance structure of the Environment Assembly, of a standing arrangement to actively engage scientific communities and experts to assist Governments in their work to address emerging and

important environmental issues, consistent with one of the main functions of the Environment Assembly stipulated in part I of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII).

B. Gap analysis

27. The report entitled "Strengthening the Science-Policy Interface: A gap analysis", prepared pursuant to Governing Council decision 27/2 and Environment Assembly resolution 1/4, among other things, points out that gaps can be found in three areas, namely: gaps in the chain of capable, motivated people exchanging evidence between scientists and final decision makers; gaps in available evidence; and gaps in the effective transfer of evidence between the people in this chain. It goes on to state that many gaps are persistent or recurring, suggesting that existing practices in the science-policy interface are hard to change. Steps to change existing practices are needed to fill gaps, for example, by changing the governance frameworks of organizations involved in the science-policy interface.

28. The report, in the conclusion of its executive summary, states that gaps in evidence or between actors engaged in the science-policy interface mean that desired outcomes are unlikely to be achieved. As knowledge on effective science-policy work has grown over the last decades, it has driven an evolution in the practice of science-policy activity. This evolution reflects innovation and experimentation by the leading actors in science-policy interfaces. Science-policy organizations require dedicated change processes to their governance models to have impact in the future, including providing information for achieving the SDGs.

C. Global Environment Outlook

29. The Global Environment Outlook (GEO) is UNEP's flagship integrated assessment on the state of the global environment. Its first edition was published in 1997, followed by the second edition in 1999, the third in 2002, the fourth in 2007, the fifth in 2012, and the sixth in 2019. 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 UN bodies. The assessment looks at the interactions and feedback loops between social, economic and environmental drivers to assess the effectiveness of different policy responses in moving the world onto a more sustainable pathway.

30. 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 UN System to address environmental dimension of the Agenda 2030 and informing the discussions at the high-level political forum. This edition of the Outlook will be the only UN report offering 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 SDGs.

31. The Global Environment Outlook-6 process began in early 2015 with six Regional Environmental Information Network conferences that identified environmental priorities in each region. From these priorities, six regional environmental assessments were produced. These have formed the foundation of the global assessment.

32. The Summary for Policy-Makers of the Global Environment Outlook 6 has been reviewed and approved through an intergovernmental process represented by representatives of 95 countries in late January 2019. The full report is expected to be endorsed by the Environment Assembly at its fourth session.

33. The UNEP secretariat is planning a proactive outreach programme to make sure Governments, targeted user groups and the public are well informed with the key messages of the report and take actions accordingly (e.g. youth and business groups). Scoping activities for the next phase of the Global Environment Outlook will be organized in consultation with member States and stakeholders.

D. Assessments

34. In addition, the UNEP secretariat has continued to produce a host of assessments, including the following:

(a) "Frontiers Report", an annual report commenced in 2016, each volume of which will be based on a review of emerging environmental issues identified over the previous year as likely to have significant impacts on the environment, ecosystem health and human well-being. It succeeded the Year Book series, , and has been used as a reference in scientific journals and a book, including academic publications, among others.

(b) "The Global Gender and Environment Outlook", launched in 2016, is the first comprehensive, integrated assessment on gender and the environment, with the objective to inform decision makers about how environmental conditions affect the lives of women and men in different ways as a result of existing inequalities while underlining the interplay between human activities and the environment from a gender perspective.

(c) Climate change: the annual Emissions Gap Report; the Adaptation Gap Report, prepared in collaboration with the Global Centre of Excellence on Climate Adaptation; the Adaptation Finance Gap Report, prepared under the partnership with the Technical University of Denmark.

(d) Chemicals: the first edition of "Global Chemicals Outlook: Towards Sound Management of Chemicals" was published in 2013. Its second edition, "Global Chemicals Outlook II: From Legacies to Innovative Solutions – Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" will be launched during the fourth session of the Environment Assembly in March 2019, and its summary for policymakers has been submitted to the Environment Assembly.

(e) Air quality: Assessment work related to the Global Platform on Air Quality and Health is ongoing, with UNEP working with other UN agencies, the World Bank and Governments to assess the impacts of ambient outdoor air pollution. UNEP has been involved in producing assessments of short-lived climate pollutants for the Asia-Pacific and Latin American and Caribbean regions, as part of a project led by the Climate and Clean Air Coalition.

(f) Sand and dust storms: a global assessment of sand and dust storms was published in 2016, in partnership with the World Meteorological Organization, the secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and Governments. It was used in consultations prior to the General Assembly. Some countries have since used the assessment in their decision-making and policy action plan to early action plans and mitigation measures.

(g) Freshwater: the Transboundary Waters Assessment Programme, coordinated by UNEP and funded by GEF, has been working through a network of partners to complete the first global indicator-based assessment of five transboundary water system categories: aquifers and small island developing State groundwater systems, lakes and reservoirs, river basins, large marine ecosystems and the open ocean. A partnership was formed, led by UNEP, to assess the challenges to global water quality, under UN-Water (UN Inter-Agency Mechanism on all Freshwater Related Issues, Including Sanitation).

(h) Marine resources: Regarding the first UN World Ocean Assessment, including its summary, approved by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects, in September 2015, UNEP provided scientific and technical support, including financial resources, for capacity-building workshops through the Regional Seas Programme.

(i) Biodiversity and ecosystem services: The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, as part of its work programme for 2014–2018, is undertaking four regional and subregional assessments for Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe and Central Asia, together with one thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration. The findings of GEO-6 regional assessments are being used by Platform experts in the development of those assessments. Two further assessments, with summaries for policymakers, on pollinators, pollination and food production and on scenario analysis and modeling of biodiversity and

ecosystem services were presented to the Platform's Plenary at its fourth meeting, in 2016. Those assessments were referred to in the UNEP assessment guidelines and used in developing the GEO-6 assessments. The Intergovernmental Platform is also scoping three future assessments, i.e., a global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services and thematic assessments of invasive alien species and of the sustainable use of biodiversity.

(i) Waste: UNEP Global Waste Management Outlook provides an integrated global solution to the waste problem, based on improving waste collection and disposal, preventing waste and maximizing reuse and recycling of resources, and a major policy shift away from the linear "take-make-use-waste" economy towards the circular "reduce-reuse-recycle" approach to the lifecycle of materials.

(j) Natural resources: UNEP International Resource Panel has produced a number of assessments. Its report entitled "Assessing Global Resource Use: A Systems Approach to Resource Efficiency and Pollution Reduction" was submitted to the Environment Assembly at its third session. "Global Resources Outlook 2019: Natural Resources for the Future We Want" was published in March 2019, and its summary for policymakers has been submitted to the Environment Assembly at its fourth session.

35. Forty-eight per cent of member States and 39 per cent of other UNEP partners and stakeholders surveyed in 2015 recognized that UNEP's information on emerging issues or environmental scenarios has influenced to a large or very large extent their agencies' assessment work or policy development processes in the past five years. The Global Environment Outlook and Emissions Gap reports were specifically mentioned in this regard. 28 per cent of stakeholders and partners surveyed acknowledged being involved to a large or very large extent in the generation of environmental information made available by UNEP. 37 per cent of respondents noted that they had accessed or used environmental information generated by UNEP.

36. The utility of UNEP's assessments and data is measured through the number of institutions, political forums and processes using them in their policy-and decision-making. In 2017 information from those assessments and data influenced 14 additional UN agencies or multilateral environmental agreements.

E. Institutional support to scientific panels

37. With regard to strengthening science-policy interface through scientific panels, UNEP continues to support:

(a) Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) by providing administrative support to the secretariat, inputs to assessment of land degradation, four regional and one global assessments and a scoping study on invasive alien species and sustainable use of biodiversity, in addition to capacity building;

(b) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) through staff support to the Secretariat and hosting of the 41st Session of the Panel in Nairobi in 2015, where the future work of the panel was agreed including a decision framework on its 6th Assessment Report;

(c) The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) through thematic assessments on agriculture and country applications;

(d) Programme of Research on Climate Change Vulnerability, Impacts and Adaptation (PROVIA) through a secretariat and planning of the 2016 PROVIA international conference and the launch of an on-line open course;

(e) The UN Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UN SCEAR) through staffing and secretariat;

(f) International Resource Panel by hosting and supporting the Panel in its efforts to provide independent, coherent and authoritative scientific assessments of policy relevance on the sustainable use of natural resources and their environmental impacts over the full life cycle, and to

contribute to a better understanding of how to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation.

F. Partnerships

38. Partnerships are being strengthened through the network of collaborating centres and thematic centres of excellence, such as the Global and Regional Integrated Data (GRID) centres, with multilateral environmental agreement secretariats and regional bodies, especially where specific scientific or policy expertise is provided, and coordinating activities are being put in place to maximize synergies.

39. UNEP reports provide multilateral environmental agreements with support for evidence-based decision-making; the UNEP's 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 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

40. UNEP is committed to working with partners in the framework of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems, including on SDGs indicators based on remote-sensing data, to ensure that countries have access to the relevant data flows that allow them to undertake regular indicator-based assessments and to report on progress towards relevant SDGs targets.

41. An example of a key partnership with a focus on data and information for effective decision-making towards sustainable development is the Eye on Earth Alliance, of which UNEP is a member.

42. Under the auspices of the Chief Scientist Office of UNEP, a Global Assessment Dialogue process has been launched to keep the various streams of environmental assessments coherent and consistent in presenting the science for policy, to fully cover the environment dimension of the SDGs. Initial members of the process include the Global Environment Outlook, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the International Resource Panel and the Global Sustainable Development Report.

G. Global Sustainable Development Report

43. Since the inception of its 2014 prototype edition, followed by its 2015 and 2016 editions, up to the preparation of the 2019 edition, UNEP has been serving as one of the organizations contributing to the preparation of the Global Sustainable Development Report, produced every four years by an independent group of 15 experts to inform the high-level political forum convened under the auspices of the General Assembly. The report brings together dispersed information and existing assessments and provide guidance on the state of global sustainable development from a scientific perspective.

44. As part of global efforts towards delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in pursuance of Environment Assembly resolution 2/5 on the subject, UNEP, among other things, has been involved in generating data and statistics for monitoring progress in the implementation of SDGs, and serves as the custodian agency for 26 of the SDGs indicators.

45. The work on SDGs indicators for the environment also provides a powerful measuring tool to reflect the progress and gaps on advancing the environmental dimension of the SDGs.

III. Financial resources, particularly the Environment Fund

46. For UNEP to fully carry out its main functions and responsibilities as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), the Nairobi Declaration and other mandates and to fully implement paragraph 88 of "The future we want", it is critically important to ensure that secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resources are made available to the Environment Fund, along with the UN regular budget.

47. In the light of paragraph 88 of the outcome document, the Environment Fund budget allocation for the biennium 2014-2015 and the subsequent bienniums were intended to ensure that the UNEP has the core capacity and resources to deliver the programme of work and to provide for a

significantly higher impact in terms of outputs and more ambitious outcomes including capacity-building and regional-level and national-level involvement.

48. Hence, after the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, the Governing Council and the Environmental Assembly approved a significantly increased Environment Fund budget compared to the previous years. However, the actual income received for the Environment Fund during the 2014-2015 was approximately two-thirds of the approved budget, and about a half of the approved budget was received during the 2016-2017 biennium.

49. As a comparison to the situation in the previous years, the following shows the amount of the Environment Fund allocation approved by the governing body of the UNEP for the period from 2002 to 2017 under the respective bienniums and the amount of 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	190.9	152.2
2014-2015	245	154
2016-2017	271	136.9

50. With regard to the base of contributions to the Environment Fund, among the 193 member States of the UN which are also the members of the Environment Assembly, less than 10 percent of Member States provides around 90 percent of the contributions, while there is 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, the top 15 funding partners provided 88 per cent of the core funding, and the other 85 member States contributed to the Environment Fund during the biennium.

51. The Environment Assembly at its second session, in its resolutions 2/20, entitled "Proposed medium-term strategy for 2018–2021 and programme of work and budget for 2018–2019", having been encouraged by its universal membership, urged member States and others in a position to do so to increase voluntary contributions to UNEP, notably the Environment Fund, and also requested the Executive Director, in accordance with the partnership policy rules and the Financial Regulations and Rules of the UN, to mobilize increased voluntary funding to the Programme from all member States and others in a position to do so as well as to continue to broaden the contributor base.

52. In the same resolution, the Environment Assembly noted the positive effect of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions to broaden the base of contributions to, and to enhance predictability in the voluntary financing of, the Environment Fund, and requested the Executive Director to continue adapting the voluntary indicative scale of contributions, inter alia, in accordance with Governing Council decision SS.VII/1 and any relevant subsequent decisions. Furthermore, the Environment Assembly encouraged the Executive Director, in close consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to design and implement a resource mobilization strategy with the priority to broaden the contributor base from member States as well as other partners so as to improve the adequacy and predictability of resources.

53. The new resource mobilization strategy was presented to the Committee of Permanent Representatives in June 2018. Through the resource mobilization 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 members by 2020 and thus reduce the dependency of 15 top funding partners contributing about 90%

of the funds received. The UNEP secretariat has been actively reaching out to member States through bilateral and regional meetings to ensure that the actions envisaged in the strategy are achieved.

54. Regarding the 2018-2019 biennium, the approved budget is $271million. As of December 2018, the total amount of funds received for the Environment Fund was approximately $68 million, which was about half of the annual budget. Regarding the funding base, the top 15 donor member States provided over 90 percent of the contribution for the Environment Fund in 2018: they were Netherlands, Germany, France, United States, Sweden, Belgium, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Norway, Canada, Japan, Finland, China, Russian Federation and Ireland. The total number of Governments that contributed for the Environment Fund was 83, out of 193 member States of the UN that are also members of the Environment Assembly.

55. In summary, as of end 2018, the overall trend of contribution for the Environment Fund in the present biennium 2018-2019 appeared to be similar to that of the last biennium 2016-2017. Although the current resource mobilization strategy of UNEP aims at securing 75% of the approved Environment Fund budget for the biennium 2018-2019, it was not possible to meet that goal during 2018.

56. UNEP's core functions enshrined in its mandate and underscored in paragraph 88 of "The future we want", such as coordination within the UN system, promoting science-policy interface, advocacy for the global environment, and the engagement of stakeholders require a sound financial base, particularly the Environment Fund. Although those are fundamental elements of UNEP's core activities, they have not attracted the interest of the funding partners to provide earmarked contribution outside of the core funds. The reason for failure to attract earmarked funds might be precisely because those are core responsibilities of UNEP at the global level. Consequently, irrespective of the amount of earmarked contributions available for UNEP, the lack of adequate financial resources for the Environment Fund negatively affects UNEP's ability to deliver on its mandate.

57. The degree to which Governments contribute to the Environment Fund may be influenced by their judgment as to the direct benefit emanating from UNEP's core functions to protect the global environment, as well as their confidence in UNEP to manage the funds they contribute effectively and efficiently. The lack of ability to secure adequate level of contribution to the Environment Fund for more than two consequent bienniums may indicate the need for corrective measures, including increased transparency and accountability in the allocation and utilization of the Environment Fund and the results achieved.

58. Also, it may be important to keep Governments seized with or involved in the functioning of UNEP's core mandate, so that Governments appreciate the benefit of utilizing UNEP as a key international mechanism to handle environmental dimension of sustainable development. For instance, coordination within the UN system of environmental programmes, science-policy interface regarding world environmental situations and engagement of science and expert communities are all integral part of the main responsibilities of the Environment Assembly, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII). Such intergovernmental aspects of the core functions of UNEP may be reinvigorated as a key aspect of strengthening UNEP, which in turn might reinforce among Governments the notion of their collective "ownership" of UNEP and enhance their commitment to financing the core functions of the organization through the Environment Fund.

59. On the part of the UNEP secretariat, in order to gain confidence among donor Governments, it should take further measures to improve transparency and the management of financial resources, including the accounting and other administrative procedures and human resources management. The secretariat could also strengthen the communication on results it has achieved to assist member States and other partners to better understand the return on their investment in the organization.

60. As highlighted in the Joint Inspection Unit report (JIU/REP/2014/1) on an analysis of the resource mobilization function within the UN system, member States agree that UN bodies need a critical mass of core funding, i.e. flexible, more predictable and longer-term financial support in order to effectively plan, programme and deliver. It is also needed for retaining the organization's independence. Earmarking leads to fragmentation of mandates as donor priorities trump organizational or legislative priorities. Yet, earmarking has increased significantly. To shift funding

towards the core, the following issues need to be addressed: need for visibility and attribution; pressures from parliaments – easier to align earmarked funds with donor priorities; call for greater accountability by media and taxpayers; increased scrutiny of budgetary, audit and parliamentary authorities; growing concerns on value for money and results-based management of organizations and their expenditures. The funding decisions are based on the donors' own assessments.