

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Tuesday 7 May 2019
2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
United Nations Office at Nairobi, Gigiri
Conference Room 4

MEETING SUMMARY

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting

1. H.E. Mrs. Elizabeth Taylor-Jay, Vice-Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Colombia, opened the meeting and conveyed apologies from the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, H.E. Ms. Francisca Ashietey-Odunton for not being able to attend and chair the meeting due to unavoidable circumstances.
2. The meeting agenda was adopted.

Agenda Item 2: Initial assessment of the fourth session of UN Environment Assembly

3. The Secretary of the Governing Bodies, Mr. Jorge Laguna-Celis, presented an initial assessment of the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly based on a number of post-UNEA survey completed by participants. Mr. Laguna-Celis highlighted the main political outcomes, the participation statistics, including on gender, the overall perception of the Assembly, as well as follow-up action. The presentation will be made available on the meeting portal.
4. All member States who took the floor welcomed the outcomes of the fourth UN Environment Assembly, congratulated the Bureaux of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and of the UN Environment Assembly for their effective steering of the UNEA process, and praised the Secretariat for professional support and hard work during and prior to the Assembly in dealing with logistical as well as political challenges.
5. The meeting stressed the need for the outcomes of the Assembly to be regarded as an investment which needs strong follow-up to ensure relevance for the multilateral environmental community, also serving as a knowledge sharing platform.
6. Looking at the lessons learned, many delegations underlined the need to focus on quality rather than quantity and suggested that for future sessions measures be taken to ensure that fewer draft resolutions are tabled at an earlier stage to ensure sufficient time for adequate preparatory consultations, and to allow for smaller delegations to fully participate in negotiations. It was suggested that a clear and focused theme for the Assembly can help framing the Assembly sessions and bring down the number of political initiatives. The Secretariat was encouraged to continue the practice of linking resolutions to the Programme of Work and Budget, and to indicate the cost implications of the resolution.
7. One member State considered that the practice of holding the Open-Ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the Assembly back to back was a key reason for the successful outcomes of UNEA 3 and 4, and recommended renaming the

Open-Ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to attract more attention and interest from capital-based technical experts.

8. The delegate of Norway, speaking on behalf of the Presidency of the fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly, informed participants of the commitment of the President to build on the success of previous Assemblies, in particular by maintaining the transparency and inclusivity of the process. The delegate also underlined that the Presidency values an inclusive process of consultations that allows for a broad consensus on a forward-looking theme for UNEA 5 that captures international attention and mobilizes increased political commitment. She recalled the positive experience of the third Assembly which had one clear theme (Towards a Pollution-Free World) which contributed to reducing the number of resolutions and agreeing on concrete outcomes.
9. The meeting requested the Secretariat to actively engage with the Committee of Permanent Representatives in the follow-up of the outcomes of the fourth Assembly, after the conclusion of the UN Habitat Assembly scheduled for 27-31 May 2019, and stressed the importance of making full use of the intersessional period through a structured workplan of meetings (possibly thematic) that will allow for greater focus and productivity with regard to monitoring of mandates and commitments, in close consultation with member States.
10. The Secretariat was also encouraged by some member States to adopt a more interactive manner of drafting UNEP documents by presenting them as a blueprint instead of a completed draft, to allow for member States to contribute to the final development of the documents.

Agenda item 3: Contribution to the 2019 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

11. Assistant Secretary General Mr. Satya Tripathi, Head of the New York Office, gave a presentation on UN Environment Programme's engagement and preparations for the upcoming High-Level Political Forum sessions in New York, to be held under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council in July, and under the auspices of the General Assembly in September 2019. Specific details are outlined on the briefing note available on the meeting portal.
12. The delegate of Norway confirmed that the President of the UN Environment Assembly will be attending of the High-Level Political Forum on 16 July with the objective to present the outcome of the fourth session of the Assembly to the Forum and to meet with key stakeholders.
13. A representative of Major Groups and Stakeholders, referring to a recent report by the International Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, expressed concern about the prediction that many of the Sustainable Development Goals will not be met due to inadequate action on biodiversity, and called on member States to step up action in this area.
14. The meeting took note of the 2019 UN Environment Assembly contribution to the High-Level Political Forum, which was submitted by Secretariat to the ECOSOC Secretariat on 18 March 2019, following consideration of a draft contribution at the Open-Ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly.

Agenda item 4: Secretariat Briefing on UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021 – 2030).

15. Ms. Monica MacDevette, Deputy Director for the Ecosystems Division, and Ms. Musonda Mumba, Chief - Terrestrial Ecosystems Unit, gave a briefing on the implementation of UN General Assembly Resolution A/73/L.76 on the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), pointing out that the resolution inter alia called on the UN Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization to be in the lead of preparations. Additional information is available in a dedicated briefing note available on the portal.

Agenda item 5: Secretariat Briefing on the preparations for the World Environment Day 2019.

16. Mr. Daniel Cooney, Deputy Director of the Communications Division provided a briefing on UN Environment Programme's preparations for the 2019 World Environment Day, hosted by China under the overall theme "Beat Air Pollution", informed the meeting of the 2019 World Environment Day media outreach and digital campaign which will be launched on 24 May, and announced a toolkit for member States to facilitate active engagement in World Environment Day campaign at national level.
17. The delegate of China thanked UN Environment Programme for its support in organizing and preparing for the World Environment Day and informed the meeting of China's significant investments on limiting air pollution domestically.
18. One member State urged the Secretariat to share information and toolkits at least one month before the date of the World Environment Day to allow for more impactful preparations by member States.

Agenda Item 6: Other matters

19. One delegation requested information on how UN Environment Programme is co-organizing or organizing activities during the upcoming UN Habitat assembly in Nairobi 27-31 May. The Secretariat announced that an information note on this topic would be shared as soon as available.

Agenda Item 7: Closing of the meeting

20. The meeting closed at 5:00 p.m.