



**148th meeting
of the Committee of Permanent Representatives of UNEP
10 December 2019**

**Interventions on behalf of the European Union
and its Member States**

Agenda Item 4: Report of the Executive Director

- Chair, Madam Deputy/Executive Director, distinguished colleagues; it is my privilege to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. Serbia and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.
- Allow me to start by thanking the Deputy/Executive Director for her report. As we also said on previous occasions, this is a very useful and appreciated information tool and we encourage you to maintain it.
- Among many important pieces of information, the report brings to us this very alarming message from the "fresh from the press" **Emissions Gap report**: that our planet is on its way to warm up to 3.2 degrees Celsius instead of the 1.5 that we believed so far. This grave perspective adds up to this year's environmental assessments, including the Global Environment Outlook, the IPCC and IPBES reports, telling us that we are not on track at all to achieve the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.
- At our end, we take this extremely seriously. Tomorrow, the new European Commission will present a legislative package called the **European Green**

Deal, which will become a new growth strategy for the European Union. It will provide for achieving climate neutrality by 2050, a strategy to protect our biodiversity, and for a just transition towards a non-polluting, circular economy and sustainable agriculture. We will look to partnering on this ambitious agenda beyond our borders, also recognising that we will continue supporting our development partners to implement their national programmes. I am therefore pleased to share with you that the European Commissioner for International Partnership, Jutta Urpilainen chose Nairobi for her first visit abroad to attend the ACP summit.

- We will also look forward to **collaborating with UNEP** and I would also like to thank particularly the Deputy Executive Director for taking part in our discussions on cooperation with Africa and on the Arctic, to mention just the two most recent ones.
- Chair, it has been short but intense time since our October CPR meeting. We have made some important steps, advancing us on the road to UNEA-5. We would like to thank you, the UNEA Presidency and the Secretariat for the great job and skilful handling of these processes. However, UNEA-5 taking place in just a bit more than one year from today, we would like to offer a few thoughts.
- First, we congratulate the UNEA Bureau on having chosen **the theme for UNEA-5**. It has been timely, inclusive and respectful process. Choosing a theme that gives a chance to highlight the important role that nature-based solutions play for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals also accommodates the broad consensus amongst member states and stakeholders. We look forward to further developing a background documentation for UNEA-5 to help prepare meaningful outcomes guided by the theme.

Second, the UN General Assembly requested UNEA-5 to prepare a political **declaration for a UN high-level meeting** to strengthen the implementation of international environmental law and international environmental governance. Ladies and Gentlemen, the EU and its Member States believe that the substantive recommendations agreed earlier this year in Nairobi provide a good basis to identify the building blocks for that declaration. We therefore see the need for an inclusive and transparent process, involving the CPR as well as non-resident Member States and relevant stakeholders, that should be agreed following the ongoing consultations. The EU and its Member States believe that the first meeting should take place no later than in first half 2020 in Nairobi, in order to identify and discuss possible building blocks and work towards an agreement well ahead of UNEA-5. A clear and well scheduled inter-sessional process will be the best service to UNEA-5 which will receive a consensus-based product for its consideration and will not be overshadowed by lengthy negotiations of that document, as also realised by other member states. We recommend that the Secretariat is tasked to prepare an input paper that lists possible options to address the substantive recommendations agreed by the Ad Hoc Open Ended Working Group in order to assist member states in taking well informed decisions.

- Related to that, the EU and its Member States welcome the ongoing consultations on the **commemoration of UNEP and the 1972 Stockholm** conference. We must not waste the opportunity to reflect on where we progressed and where we failed over the last 50 years in protecting the environment, and use the momentum to agree on actions that will be critically needed to fully achieve the environmental dimension of sustainable development. The EU and its Member States believe that one single ambitious high-level UN meeting in 2022 will have the most impact. We

welcome the offer of Sweden to host such a meeting in Stockholm and the collaboration with Kenya in this regard.

- There are many more processes, some of which will be discussed later today. Allow us to just recognise and thank for the good progress so far on the **Review** of UNEA and its subsidiary bodies co-facilitated by Mr. Marcus Davies of Canada and Mr. Mapopa Kaunda of Malawi in an inclusive and effective manner.
- I thank you Chair, I thank you colleagues.

Agenda Item 5: Funding of UNEP

- The EU and its Member States thank UNEP for sharing the document listing the outcomes of the panel discussion “Why paying your fair share matters – the Future of UNEP’s funding” and highlighting the main challenges in UNEP’s funding.
- As pointed out in the document, we agree that a balanced funding between core and non-core resources of UNEP’s Programme of Work is essential in order to ensure a predictable and complete implementation of all sub-programmes, as well as UNEP’s independent position and focus on multilateral initiatives.
- We note the deficit in the Environment Fund and the continued increase of non-core funding. It is important to continue the discussions on how to achieve a better balance between core and non-core funding, the impacts of this non-balance and how to find measures to attract new donors to the Environment Fund.
- We encourage the Secretariat to continue active outreach to all Member States to pay their fair share to the Environment Fund. The advantages of flexible funding should be underlined in all outreach and results communication.
- We stress the importance of understanding better what the barriers are and/or what practical steps can be taken in order for Member States to consider initiating or increasing their contributions to the Environment Fund.
- In that light, we believe it is also important to recognise positively those countries that do pay their fair share by raising their visibility as contributors to the flagship products of UNEP.
- We thank UNEP’s new leadership and its suggested actions to tackle the challenges in funding - such as the Secretariat’s focus on strategy, culture and results and better positioning itself in the UN Reform. We believe that increasing transparency, accountability and credibility of the organization, as well as a results/impact oriented strategy, more focus and better communication of results and impacts would contribute in increased trust in UNEP.
- We encourage the Secretariat to continue to illustrate the importance of UNEP’s core normative functions and their long-term benefits as well as to provide better visibility for its flagship actions. We appreciate the efforts done to this end so far.
- Communication that is more transparent creates more confidence among donors and hopefully increased levels of funding. The annex on Environment Fund FAQs sent to donors this year as well as the monthly donor reports are good examples of improved reporting by UNEP.
- We believe that further transparency in the budget allocation to the subprogrammes is important. Efforts to ensure that earmarked funding is not at the expense of sufficient non-earmarked funding of the core functions in UNEP sub-programmes is important. Otherwise, cost-recovery measures should be taken.
- We see that that it is also important to communicate clearly, what cannot be done due to not having enough core-funding.
- We would be interested to hear more about the prospects of receiving more funding from the private sector and other non-state actors.

Agenda Item 6: Mid-Term Strategy

- The next MTS is an opportunity to refocus UNEP's efforts based on those lessons as well as experiences from previous work, the knowledge on challenges ahead and a clear vision on how to tackle them with an emphasis on UNEP's normative role translating science into policy.
- The context of the UN reforms is another opportunity. It can better frame and show added value of UNEP within the UN Development System. A compatibility should be established with the UNGA Management Reform to avoid duplication of efforts.
- The EU and its Member States thank UNEP the analysis on lessons learned from relevant evaluations and we look forward to an increased use of the forthcoming evaluations. We find this document very useful and largely answering our requests during ASC-6. However, it would be helpful if the Secretariat provided some information on how the lessons will be taken up, which ones are “low-hanging fruit” and what options exist to implement the recommendations even if faced with challenges.
- In particular, we do not see yet so much discussion of the gap between the positive programme performance review and the negative trends of indicators on the state of the global environment, with a view to potentially increasing the ambition enshrined in the MTS and bringing it in line with the necessary scale of urgent transformative action. This dichotomy was clearly visible during the ASC-6.
- The EU and its Member States agree with the need to strengthen the results orientation of the MTS, the PoW and projects and the related resource allocation process, as outlined in the document.
- While aware of the challenges, we expect important improvements in this regard, not only in the next MTS-period, but also for the implementation of the next POW. It is also important that the resource mobilisation is conducted in a needs/results based approach and do not only depend on “supply” and we do recognise UNEP’s recent efforts in this regard.
- Once the MTS provides results oriented and streamlined framework for UNEP to effectively deliver on its mandate, and that – if carefully crafted in an inclusive process – the MTS together with a balanced PoW/B could also contribute to reducing the need for specific resolutions.
- We support the finding of the UNEP’s document that the project design phase is critical and that it should be strengthened and geared towards sustainability from the outset. An important factor in helping to achieve success is the inclusion of human rights, gender and social issues.
- We would welcome further information on the transformational change referred to in the document: what that would mean in practice? how will UNEP ensure a buy-in and the necessary staffing capacity? In that regard the JIU report’s findings referred to in the document might be useful.
- The EU and its Member States underline the importance of UNEP's normative role. In this context tackling the increasing imbalance between flexible and earmarked contributions should also be part of the reflection on the next MTS. We would like to know if lessons learned and positive examples are available for cases in which normative activities are combined with implementation and scaling up activities (such as minor facilitation efforts, pilot projects, facilitating sharing of experiences).

Agenda Item 7: Emission Gap Report

- The EU and its Member States thank UNEP for the tenth edition of the Emissions Gap report. We highly appreciate the scientific work of UNEP over the years to gather and analyze latest information on emissions.
- In addition to being a scientific report, it also provides an important communication tool globally to demonstrate to the world the gap between “where we are likely to be and where we need to be”.
- Publication of the report just prior to the climate COPs is well timed, as was the lessons learned document before the climate summit in September.
- The report clearly shows that while some progress has been made to reduce emissions and update NDCs, a lot of work remains to get the world on a sustainable track. Most notably, there is a need to get all the G20 countries more on board in order to have impactful transition, as they account for 78% of global emissions.
- It is worrying that, collectively, countries have failed to stop the growth in global greenhouse gas emissions, and instead overall emissions have continued increasing, including in the past year.
- Countries collectively will have to increase their ambition, and the EU will again make that point in all its contacts at COP25 in Madrid and beyond on the road to COP26 in Glasgow. The EU is determined to do its utmost to work together with its partners to implement the policies necessary to close the emissions gap.
- As far as the European Union is concerned, the Emissions Gap Report acknowledges the range of measures already adopted, which put the EU on track to achieve its NDC.
- These measures include notably the ETS Directive reform, the Effort sharing Regulation, the Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry Regulation, Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency targets, CO2 standards for cars and vans as well as for Heavy Duty Vehicles.
- The European Commission has estimated that if all policies are fully implemented, EU greenhouse gas emissions can be reduced by around 45% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.
- It is now our ambition to go even further and to look into emission reductions of 50% to 55% by 2030, and to reduce emissions to net zero by 2050, achieving climate neutrality.

Agenda Item 8: Follow-up of UNEA-4
8a: UNEA-4 Ministerial Declaration

- The EU and its Member States thank the Secretariat for its presentation of the revised background document on implementation of UNEA-4 Ministerial Declaration.
- Follow-up and review of commitments, including those set out in UNEA-4 Ministerial Declaration would contribute to achieving SCP and scale up development and implementation of innovative solutions to overcome common environmental challenges. We would like to stress, however, the importance of follow up and review of all the decisions, resolutions and commitments made in UNEA and we would like to refer to the resolution that we also agreed at UNEA-4 on this issue.
- The EU and its Member States underline the importance of monitoring and access to relevant data and information, which are key for sound and evidence-based policy making. One of the most prominent requests in the Ministerial Declaration is the development of a global environmental data strategy. We continue to support that there is a need for that and we are positively open to further elaborate proposed three strategic objectives for the global environment data strategy.
- We understand that the purpose of the background document is to give an overview of the overall implementation of the Ministerial Declaration. Therefore we would find it useful if Secretariat could provide guidance, examples of best practices and tools for enabling its adequate implementation. While we welcome the improvements in the revised background document, we still find some content related ambiguities.
- With regard to the monitoring framework for the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration, the EU and its MS would like to seek clarification on the term „key performance indicators“. Will there be new indicators in addition to the SDG indicators that have been identified relevant for the commitments?
- We strongly emphasise that the purpose of a global environmental data strategy should not be only to set a monitoring framework for UNEA-4 ministerial declaration. These are distinct processes and should be developed and carried out separately, while taking into account their interlinkages. Unfortunately, the current structure of chapters 3 and 4 of the background document do not seem to demonstrate the same understanding and we would like to ask the Secretariat to adapt the document accordingly.
- In relation to the to the global data strategy, the EU and its Member States welcome the initiative to form a task team internally to ensure a more integrated approach and assume that this will improve and lead to more efficient data management. We also believe that the strategy will contribute to and will benefit from the discussions on the future of GEO and other important environmental assessments.
- Concerning the intention to develop a One Global Partnership, we would welcome further information, in particular on its purpose and objectives; we also seek clarification of the meaning of „digital transformation platforms“; as well as we would like to understand how the One Global Partnership, digital transformation platforms and World Environment Situation Room are related to the global environmental data strategy.
- The EU and its Member States would like to ask that in the next subcommittee meeting the Secretariat presents in a comprehensive manner how the global environmental data strategy will be developed and what would be its objectives, key partners involved and the milestones towards its development.
(See detailed comments in the Annex)

8b: Decision 4/2 (implementation of paragraph 88 of TFWW)

- The EU and its Member States thank the Secretariat for the updated roadmap to prepare an action plan for the implementation of paragraph 88 of TFWW.
- We understand from the CPR calendar that the implementation plan of paragraph 88 is scheduled for discussion in the subcommittee meeting on 23 January 2020, but this is not reflected in the updated Roadmap. Could the Secretariat clarify?
- We would also like to receive a confirmation that the Secretariat's report scheduled for December will be distributed as planned.

8c: Resolution 4/22 (Implementation and follow-up of UNEA resolutions)

- The EU and its Member States thank UNEP for the clear options provided for the follow-up of implementation of the resolution (UNEP/EA.4/Res.22) as well as their useful comparison.
- We recognise the challenges of the current reporting framework described in the document.
- The EU and its Member States in general support a proposal for a reporting mechanism that fulfils the mandate of UNEP/EA.4/Res.22 while avoiding an unnecessary added reporting burden for UNEP Secretariat, and makes use of existing structures, where possible. We see that the monitoring mechanism has potential to reduce the number of formal reports (e.g. on specific resolutions) by providing regular and up-to-date information on the status of implementation.
- We believe that the design of the monitoring and reporting mechanism should be built upon existing data collection systems, and it should be ensured that the results will be used to guide future decisions by both UNEP and the Member States to improve and/or guide future implementation.
- In summary, the EU and its Member States offer the following answers to the questions by Secretariat:

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1. Preferred reporting option?

Option 2 (more detailed comments in the Annex)

2. Are the parameters fit for purpose?

For the Figure 1 “Proposed monitoring and reporting parameters for Secretariat” practical requests in the operational parts of the resolutions and explanations of their implementation could be added. In general, we think that the parameters outlined in figure 1 are useful. However, it would be good to see how this information is formulated with an example (one resolution).

For the Figure 2 “Proposed Voluntary Reporting Parameters for Member States”, we think that the parameters are relevant and useful. To make voluntary reporting as easy as possible, we would suggest that some of the fields could be non-mandatory (e.g. gaps, risks and challenges).

3. Suitable frequency of reporting in the monitoring mechanism?

In option 2, reporting would be integrated into Programme Performance Reviews, Quarterly Reports as well as annual reports and also presented in sub-committee and committee meetings (following guidance from CPR bureau, these presentations could refer to information available in the monitoring mechanism to promote use of the tool). This frequency is suitable.

(See detailed comments in the Annex)

8d: Resolution 4/23 (Future of GEO)

- The EU and its Member States appreciate the progress to date; the Steering Committee for the Future of the GEO has been established and is fully functional and committed to the work.
- It is commendable that the timeline of work has been revised so that the draft options paper will be presented to ASC-7 (Oct. 19-23 2020), which allows for a timely preparation of a resolution on the Future of GEO to be decided upon at UNEA-5.
- The preparation of the options paper includes an analysis of the current global integrated assessments landscape, and the most appropriate form and function of future GEOs within that landscape. We urge that the analysis genuinely considers an open-ended range of options taking into account the role of the GEO in bridging the gap between science and policy. Bold and innovative approaches may be considered to harness the full potential of GEO in serving the knowledge needs of the Member States to incite needed transformative action, as opposed to small, incremental changes to the model of the previous GEOs. In that respect it could be part of options that GEO in the future would focus more on providing services (e.g in the area of improving regional monitoring and data management) instead of, or as a supplement to, providing more traditional products.
- Also, while developing and elaborating options for GEO, other elements, such as capacity building for regions on monitoring, data management and information gathering should be considered as elements of those options.
- The EU and its Member States find that consideration of any resourcing and staffing questions should take place only after a thorough analysis of the most appropriate form and function of the GEO and the recommendations of the Steering Committee regarding the options for the future of the GEO. That is, resources and staffing shouldn't be limited to considerations on the basis of previous GEO-processes.
- The Secretariat has proposed that a series of separate consultation meetings are held in the regions and will present a concrete proposal with dates and locations, as well as cost estimates, to the Steering Committee. We are concerned about the costs of such a separate process. While recognizing that face-to-face consultation might increase the legitimacy of the process among the MS, we would like the Secretariat to look at options to hold meetings in conjunction to other meetings (as discussed in the Prague meeting), and where this is not possible consider virtual consultations or written procedures.
- As a general principle, the EU and its Member States also underline the need for identifying best practice in other fora and improved collaboration between different assessments, further coordination of underlying scenarios and datasets, mutually strengthening key messages and dissemination efforts to improve efficiency.
- The EU and its Member States would also welcome more information on the implementation of the full UNEA resolution, especially on the status of developing a strategy for the improvement of gathering data, data management and processing, in all regions.
- The EU+MS would welcome further information on the process of preparations of the synthesis report for the commemoration of 50 years since the Stockholm conference in 1972.

ANNEX - Detailed comments

I – Ministerial Declaration and the global data strategy (agenda item 8a)

On chapter 2 Principles guiding the overall implementation:

- The EU and its Member States would like to note that the guiding principles mentioned seem to be mixing principles relevant to implementation and follow up of the Ministerial Declaration (by MS, International organisations, including UNEP, and other relevant stakeholders) with principles relevant for developing a monitoring framework for the implementation and follow up of the ministerial declaration.
- The principles, listed in chapter 2, are specified mainly how to ensure an overview of the Ministerial Declaration and not which follow-up measures are needed for implementing actions. We would like to recommend UNEP to complement these principles in a comprehensive, overall manner.
- As the principles should describe the overall implementation of the Ministerial Declaration, the Secretariat should provide the guidance, best practices and tools for Member States for enabling full implementation of the action areas set in the Ministerial Declaration.
- We would like to seek further clarification of the substance and the format of the „knowledge system“ and of the „key performance indicators“. In the annexed table 1, we can find relevant SDG indicators next to each actions of ministerial declaration. In chapter 4.2 2 it is said that for each and every global Key Performance Indicator there will be defined a baseline and targets. Will there be new indicators in addition to SDG's? Or will be the UNEA-4 Ministerial Declaration's implementation measured through SDG indicators? If so, using term „SDG indicators“ would be less confusing.

On chapter 3 Why a Global Environmental Data Strategy matters in tackling environmental challenges:

- We understand that the purpose of knowledge platform would be to provide implementation platform for the Ministerial Declaration, which will be related to the world environment situation room. What is the relation of this platform with the global environmental data strategy, described in the latter part of this chapter?
- We would also like to learn more about the progress reports on the implementation of the strategy, provided in 2021, 2023 and completed in 2025, as the strategy will be adopted only in 2025, according to the table 2.
- We find the inward and outward looking pathways that the global data strategy should be built on interesting, however, we are don't fully understand the meaning of the „digital transformation platform“ and „one global partnership“ and seek further clarification.

On chapter 4 A monitoring framework towards implementing the Ministerial Declaration:

- We strongly emphasise that the purpose of the global environmental data strategy should not be only to set a monitoring framework for UNEA-4 ministerial declaration. Therefore we would like to get more insights from the Secretariat, as current structure of the chapter 3 and 4 would make us believe so.
- We would like to better understand which are these „19 actions set-out above“ and key performance indicators, mentioned in para 1.
- Regarding the para 2, we would like to highlight, that Big Data is not a technology itself but a type of data and we would like to understand, what measures could be taken to assist citizens to use big data as a tool.
- We find that the three main strategic objectives for the global environmental data strategy are incomplete and need further improvement and elaboration. For example, the document is missing identification of data gaps and measures for filling them, providing analytical tools for national and global level, not only data collection as governments, private sector and citizens need actionable information.

And for ensuring comparable data, we need standardisation and transparency, open and accessible data, rules for ethical and fair use and sharing of data etc.

- We would like to understand, what is meant by „positive change“ under the 3rd objective.

On chapter 4.2 Next steps/ Actions for implementing the Ministerial Declaration

- We strongly stress that the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration should not be only focusing on data collection and improving monitoring systems, as it is reflecting the implementation of the actions only partially.
- Therefore, we find it important to supplement the Annex 1 with the supportive guidance, examples of best practices and policy measures for Member States, understanding at the same time, that these lists would not be exhaustive.

In summary:

- As indicated, the EU and its Member States welcome the consultation on the issue of implementation of UNEA-4 Ministerial Declaration and would like to continue to be engaged in the 2 subjects related to the follow up of the Ministerial Declaration:
 - The development of a monitoring framework for the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration (and possibly other resolutions)
 - The development of a Global Environment Data Strategy
- In our view, these are distinct processes and should be developed and carried out separately, while taking into account their interlinkages.
- We would also like to get a clear explanation on the proposed advisory and coordination mechanism.
- We therefore would like to request the Secretariat to revise the Document in light of our comments and of other MS and present a revised version to the next CPR subcommittee meeting.
- Furthermore, we would like to request the Secretariat to include in the next presentation an overview of the estimated budgetary implications and the related sources of funding.

II – Implementation and follow-up of UNEA resolutions (agenda item 8c)

Improved framework for reporting:

- The EU and its Member States note that – as also mentioned in the document – the follow-up of this resolution should be seen in conjunction with the decision UNEP/EA.4/2 and should be implemented simultaneously in an iterative process.
- We believe that the implementation of UNEA resolutions and implementation of the POW should be considered in conjunction, including with a view of providing further guidance for preparation of resolutions in a manner that will facilitate their consecutive follow-up. We believe that thematic resolutions intended to guide the POW should be integrated to the POW and the budget to the extent possible and their reporting should be in line with the reporting of the POW and the budget to the extent possible. That said, we recognise that there are different types of resolutions and some are not meant to directly be linked to POW or include new subjects and elements that could be added to the POW sometime in the future.
- The report states that “Unlike the Programme of Work, UNEA resolutions are adopted without metrics for progress reporting.” Adding considerations of monitoring and evaluation to the resolutions could be beneficial, and could also improve the planning and negotiations of resolutions. Reporting could be made easier by e.g. using SDG and MEAs indicators. However, we see scope for improvement of the document in describing how the different options respond to the 4 key challenges identified (i.e. integrating and rationalising the relationship between the mandate in resolutions or the Ministerial Declaration with the activities in the POW; lack of a standardised process/procedure for monitoring and encouraging/facilitating reporting by other stakeholders, improved feedback and guidance on reports on implementation of past resolutions; and improved guidance on financial implications of resolutions beyond the POW/B), in particular in chapter 4 (page 6).
- We would welcome UNEP to provide further clarifications on this (both at the CPR meeting, as well as in the follow up of the document).
- We reiterate that the reference to Briefings is misleading. It should remain a prerogative of the CPR/Bureau to request various briefings (whether or not on the implementation of resolutions). Hence, these elements should not feature as a method distinguishing between proposed options.

Monitoring mechanism:

- The EU and its Member States would like to note that the guiding principles mentioned seem to be mixing principles relevant to implementation and follow up of the Ministerial Declaration (by MS, International organisations, including UNEP, and other relevant stakeholders) with principles relevant for developing a monitoring framework for the implementation and follow up of the ministerial declaration.
- Initially, we support option two: rationalisation, but we would welcome further information on how in practice the monitoring mechanism will be organised, with a view to respond to the challenges identified. We underline the need to integrate work on the monitoring mechanism (as specified in para 3 and 4 of the resolution) and work on the reporting framework (para 5) together, as well as to develop a comprehensive calendar to get feedback from the CPR on related work-streams to implement the resolutions and the POW/B on related issues.
- Therefore, we tend to support option 2 rationalisation, but would need to see how the work on the monitoring mechanism is to be incorporated in the different scenarios.
- We agree it will be very useful to enable reporting also by Member States, other UN organisations as well as stakeholders, and to take this into account when designing the monitoring mechanism. We welcome that this is now included in the proposal. Member states that have implemented resolutions could also be spotlighted on the website, showing UNEP’s impact.