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**RESPONSES TO THE UNEP QUESTIONNAIRE
REGARDING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARIES OF
THE STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT AND UNEP**

Overarching Comments

The simultaneous fiftieth anniversaries of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment and the United Nations Environment Programme offer an unparalleled opportunity to generate momentum for future progress in terms of improved environmental protection and governance. In addition to engaging governments in traditional diplomatic activities, it will be important to engage the creativity of individuals, communities and other stakeholders around the world and to catalyze education about the environment and sustainable development.

Three points should be emphasized: (1) there should be one high-level meeting in Stockholm and a commemorative event in Nairobi, and a variety of activities should be promoted at national and local levels; (2) the focus and outcomes of the Stockholm meeting should not be restricted to a political declaration but rather should be broader and encourage participation, engagement and education by individuals, communities and other stakeholders around the world; and (3) planning and engagement should begin immediately. Aspects of these are elaborated upon below.

In order to cover the full array of issues, maximize involvement and impact, and avoid duplication of effort and expense, events should occur at several levels. These include a high level meeting in Stockholm, celebratory and other commemorative events in Nairobi, and educational and other activities at national and local levels across the globe. As many of these as is possible should be webcast and available to viewers at no cost.

- The high-level meeting should be held in Stockholm, both for the obvious historical reasons and because Sweden has taken the lead by volunteering to host such a meeting. The high-level meeting should cover the full range of issues considered at the Stockholm Conference, including the relation of the environment to human rights and economic development, and including outstanding environmental issues such as chemicals governance, microbial antibiotic resistance and the impact of social media on environmental protection. The focus and outcomes of the high-level meeting should not be restricted to a political declaration because, inter alia, that would waste a great deal of the potential of the commemoration. It would be duplicative and weaken collaboration to hold more than one high level meeting.
- An event or set of events should occur at UNEP's headquarters in Nairobi, recognizing UNEP's role as the world's premier environmental body and Kenya's important role in hosting UNEP. These events could focus on UNEP's activities and

promise; and active engagement by civil society – one of UNEP’s strengths -- could be a defining theme.

- A variety of activities should be encouraged at national and local levels, in recognition of the critical role of national laws and implementation in environmental protection and to encourage participation by and education of individuals and communities who cannot afford to travel to Stockholm or Nairobi. Activities at this level could be organized or otherwise catalyzed by a variety of actors, including governments, agriculturalists, business entities, educational institutions, nongovernmental organizations, religious institutions, and youth.
- Other environmental protection regimes reaching decadal milestones in 2022 (see partial list below), and perhaps ones that are not, should be encouraged to provide appropriate input about their area of expertise and responsibility to the Stockholm high level meeting. Such input would enrich the substance and educational impact of the activities in Stockholm, as well as perhaps stimulating useful stocktaking and planning activities in those regimes.

The Government of Sweden, UNEP and the Government of Kenya are obvious leaders regarding the commemorations, but a variety of other actors might also play major roles. A partial list follows (in alphabetical order by category).

- Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) such as (in alphabetical order) African Union, ASEAN, EU, IAEA, IFIs (e.g. the World Bank), ILO, IMO, IUCN, League of Arab States, OAS, WHO and WMO.
- MEAs that will celebrate decadal anniversaries in 2022, and perhaps others. Conventions reaching decadal milestones include the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992); Convention on Conservation of Antarctic Seals (1972), Marine Dumping Convention (1972), United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992), and World Heritage Convention (1972).
- NGOs such as the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), Climate Action Network (CAN), Conservation International (CI), Environmental Law institute (ELI), European Environmental Bureau (EEB), International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN), and World Wildlife Fund (WWF).
- Private sector entities such as IKEA.
- States such as Brazil (because of UNCED and Rio + 20), India (because of the critical role played by Indira Gandhi in facilitating the Stockholm Conference), South Africa (because of the World Summit on Sustainable Development), and Switzerland (headquarters of the Human Rights Council and home of UNEP’s European office), and Australia (because of its role in the Antarctic Treaty System).
- UN entities other than UNEP, such as the Human Rights Council and UNDP, presumably with UNEP providing information and inviting participation through the Environmental Management Group.
- Youth, such as exemplified by Greta Thurnberg and other young people not affiliated with any organization.

There is a virtually unlimited number of possible activities regarding environmental themes, either general or specific such as birds, climate, farming, forests, human health, landscape, oceans, wetlands, wildlife. Examples include:

- Visual art (painting, drawing, collages, photography, etc.) competitions or other exercises for young people;

- Banners and flag competitions for young people;
- Video competitions for young people on themes such as “What aspects of the environment are particularly important where I live” or “What the world will look like at the 100th anniversary of the Stockholm Declaration”;
- Writing competitions for teenagers on topics such as “What the environment means to me” or “What needs to be done before the 100th anniversary of the Stockholm Declaration”;
- Writing competitions for university or law students on topics such as “The Stockholm Declaration and Human Rights”, “The legal legacy of the Stockholm Conference”, or “The future of international environmental law”;
- Music composition competitions or music performances;
- Library exhibits on environmental literature;
- Museum exhibits on environmental topics;
- Bird watching exercises;
- Nature hikes;
- Joining or starting an Environment Club at their school; and
- Conducting an environmental audit of their school.

I. Guiding questions concerning the preparatory process

1. **The outcome reads: “Forward these recommendations to UNEA for its consideration”.**
 - a. *Under which agenda item should UNEA 5 consider these recommendations?*
 - b. *One option being under the inclusion in the already established item 5 of the provisional agenda entitled “International environmental policy and governance issues” or by recommending the establishment of a new item?*
2. **The outcome mandates: “to prepare, at its fifth session (...) a political declaration (...):**
 - a. *What level of detail should a text have in order to be considered by UNEA 5?*
 - b. *When should the “preparation of a political declaration” begin and what should be the recommended format, leadership and timeline of the preparatory process before UNEA 5?*
 - c. *How can accredited stakeholders be involved, and member States without representation in Nairobi participate, in the process?*

The process should be wholly transparent and participatory. For example, proposed agendas and texts should be placed online in a timely manner, and there should be ongoing opportunities for commenting publicly online available to all member States, UNEP-accredited stakeholders, and the general public throughout the process.

II. Guiding questions related to the a “United Nations high-level meeting [...] in the context of the context of the commemoration of the creation of UNEP

3. **The outcome speaks about “a United Nations high-level meeting, subject to voluntary funding, in the context of the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme by the United Nations Conference on the Human**

Environment (...)"

- a. *What is meant by "a United Nations high-level meeting, subject to voluntary funding, in the context of the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment"?*

As explained above, there should be one high-level meeting, to be held in Stockholm, and there should also be an event in Nairobi commemorating UNEP. Also, activities should be encouraged around the world to engage and educate individuals, communities and other stakeholders. The high-level meeting would cover the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment and its impacts and what remains undone, not just UNEP; and the focus and outputs of the high-level meeting should not be restricted to a political declaration. The Nairobi event should focus on UNEP's activities and promise.

- b. *Who is expected to convene the UN high-level meeting? What should its format be?*

As explained above, the Government of Sweden should convene the high-level meeting, with the blessing of the United Nations General Assembly and UNEA-5 if necessary. The format should allow a wide array of activities by UNEP and other IGOs, governments, and other stakeholders from all across civil society.

III. Guiding questions regarding the content of the political declaration and the support by the UNEP Secretariat

4. **The outcome also signals that the objective of the political declaration is "with a view to strengthening the implementation of international environmental law and international environmental governance, in line with paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled 'The future we want'".**

- a. *what 'elements' or 'building blocks' in the objectives guiding the recommendations and in the substantive recommendations contained in the Annex to Resolution 73/333 could be identified for inclusion in the political declaration to achieve the overall objective of "strengthening the implementation of international environmental law and international environmental governance, in line with paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on*

Sustainable Development”?

The declaration (and other commemorative activities) should emphasize the close ties between environmental protection and human rights.

- b. How should the political declaration relate to the five objectives guiding the recommendations and to the thirteen substantive recommendations of the ad-hoc open-ended working group established pursuant to UN General Assembly resolution 72/277 and endorsed in UN General Assembly resolution 73/333?*
- c. Should there be a substantive connection between the political declaration and the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment?*
- d. How should the political declaration be in line with paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development?*
- e. What kind of inputs should the Secretariat prepare in order to best assist member States in the preparation of the political declaration?*

This question should be broadened to include inputs to assist the full array of stakeholders to participate meaningfully in the preparation of the political declaration.