

## **Agenda Item 4.6: Note on Regional preparatory meetings for the Fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly**

### **1. African region: Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN)**

**Dates:** 17-19 September 2018

**Venue:** Nairobi, Kenya

**Theme/context:** Preparations for the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Environment Assembly. The AMCEN meeting will be held under the theme “Turning Environmental Policies into Action through Innovative Solutions” with the aim of contributing to the theme of the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the Environment Assembly “Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges and Sustainable Consumption and Production”. The meeting will also consider inputs to upcoming meetings of the Conference of the Parties under the biodiversity and climate conventions.

**Outcome:** A declaration and decision with key messages and positions for the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the Environment Assembly.

**Attendance:** About 250 participants from all the 54 African countries are expected to attend; senior officials and experts for the first two days, followed by a one day high level meeting at ministerial level.

**Plans to engage with major groups and stakeholders:** A pre-AMCEN meeting of Representatives of Major Groups and Stakeholders in Africa will take place on 15 to 16 September whose outcomes will contribute to the AMCEN meeting.

### **2. The Asia Pacific Region: Third Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific**

**Dates:** 23-25 January 2019

**Venue:** Singapore

**Theme:** Preparations for the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Environment Assembly under the theme “Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges and Sustainable Consumption and Production”. The meeting will also review the implementation of the resolutions and secretariat functions in Asia Pacific.

**Outcome:** Expected a political declaration and regional contribution to 4<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Environment Assembly.

**Attendance:** Around 400 participants from 41 countries (geographical coverage of the UN Environment’ Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific) are expected to attend the Third Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific. The Forum will comprise of: i) one-day meeting with Major Groups and stakeholders; ii) one-day meeting with Senior Officials; and iii) one-day Ministerial Segment. A half-day site visit will be organized by the Government of Singapore on 26 January 2019.

**Plans to engage with major groups and stakeholders:** A full day meeting with major groups and stakeholders is planned for 23 January 2019. Representatives of major groups and stakeholders will also attend and contribute to the senior officials and ministerial segment.

### 3. The West Asian Region:

- **Joint Committee for Environment and Development in the Arab region (JCEDAR) 21-23 Oct**
- **Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) 24-25 Oct**

**Dates:** 21-25 October 2018

**Venue:** Cairo, Egypt

**Theme:** UN Environment Programme, in cooperation with League of Arab States, secured a half-day session about the fourth session of UN Environment Assembly at the JCEDAR meeting leading to the tabling of respective decisions to the Ministerial Council (CAMRE) about the same. The main topic of JCEDAR and CAMRE 2018 sessions would be the reform of CAMRE mandates and operation in addition to the standard ongoing business, which is mainly covering topics of follow-up on decisions from Arab summits, environmental status at countries in conflict, MEAs implementation and coordination, State of Environment and environmental indicators at the Arab region plus others.

UN Environment is part of the Technical Secretariat of CAMRE, jointly with the League of Arab States (LAS) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). UN Environment will be running the session of the fourth session of UN Environment Assembly at JCEDAR/CAMRE with the aim of building links between the CAMRE agenda and the path of the fourth session of UN Environment Assembly.

**Outcome:**

- Clear understanding on the pathway to fourth session of UN Environment Assembly
- Collation of comments and ideas of topics and concerns to be tabled by Arab region at fourth session of UN Environment Assembly
- Agreement on consultation and coordination mechanism amongst Arab countries and at interregional level especially with the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) groups

It is likely that there will be a call for another high-level dedicated coordination meeting about fourth session of UN Environment Assembly by the Arab group in early 2019 (Jan-Feb) for overview and discussion of the detailed agenda and topics of the fourth session of UN Environment Assembly. A decision about such meeting will be considered at the JCEDAR/CAMRE October session.

**Attendance:** Around 100 participants from 22 countries and 15+ regional organizations working with CAMRE are expected to attend; Senior officials (at under-secretary and/or senior management levels from respective ministries in the Arab region) and experts meet during the first 3 days, followed by a high-level segment at ministerial level during the last 2 days.

**Plans to engage with major groups and stakeholders:** Several representatives from Major Groups, mainly NGOs, are participating at JCEDAR/CAMRE sessions as organizations/entities registered with LAS/CAMRE. There is currently no plan or practice for engaging other major groups or private sector in such preparatory work till the process of restructuring major group in the region is completed by West Asia Office.

#### 4. The North American region

North America does not have an established regional ministerial forum that can be used for consultations of the fourth session of UN Environment Assembly. The North America Office is developing plans for a series of informal stakeholder consultations with diverse groups in the region. In addition, the North America Office will:

- Engage selected private sector companies regarding innovations they have developed to address priority environmental challenges, who are seeking to showcase these on a global stage, for possible participation in the fourth session of UN Environment Assembly. The target will be small and medium size companies who seek to act as 'disrupters' to drive market change and generate positive social impact.
- Organize briefings for Embassies in Washington DC on the UN Environment Assembly to keep them abreast of the process and generate support for the potential outcome of the Assembly.

#### 5. The European region

No dedicated pan-European preparatory regional ministerial forum is planned. Preparations will take the form of a series of different sub-regional meetings in the region, in combination with briefings through the Geneva Environment Network and the regular 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee on Environmental Policy under the UN Economic Commission for Europe (28 January – 1 February 2019), where a dedicated discussion is envisaged on Environment Assembly preparations.

Dedicated discussion on preparation for the Environment Assembly has taken place at the annual high level meeting between UN Environment and the European Commission on 20 June 2018 in Brussels. UN Environment will engage with the Austrian and Romanian presidencies of the European Union and the EU institutions and member states in presenting and discussing the agenda and draft outcomes of the Assembly in the relevant EU coordination and ministerial meetings. This will inform the positions taken by the EU and its 28 member states.

On 4-5 December 2018, the Government of Serbia and UN Environment will host in Belgrade a Ministerial Conference "*Innovative Solutions to Pollution for South East Europe*", a subregional forum which will gather both government and private sector representatives and will bridge the agendas and deliverables of the third and fourth Environment Assembly sessions. It is expected that more than 20 countries will participate. No formal declaration in relation to the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the Environmental Assembly is envisaged.

**Plans to engage with major groups and stakeholders:** The regional coordination meeting of the major groups and stakeholders is taking place back to back with the Joint Bureaus retreat in Tallinn, Estonia on 3-4 September and the bureaus will be informed about its outcomes. Additional engagement will be through the Committee on Environmental Policy and through the ministerial conference in Belgrade.

#### 6. The Latin America and the Caribbean region

**Dates:** 9-12 October 2018

**Venue:** Buenos Aires, Argentina

**Theme:** The Forum will address key topics for the region, in the context of the UN Environment Assembly theme. The High-level segment will consist on a series of High Level Dialogues on the What (Detoxify, Decarbonize, Decoupling and Ecosystems resilience) and the How (environmental rights, Sustainable Development Goals, and financing) The meeting will serve as regional preparatory meeting for the Fourth Environment Assembly.

**Outcome:** Agreed Political Declaration with the message of the Latin American and Caribbean region on the environmental agenda and its contribution to the Fourth United Nations Environment Assembly. It is also envisaged that a number of initiatives on specific topics will be adopted (Regional Plan on Chemicals, electric mobility, etc.)

**Attendance:** Representatives of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, representatives of the Forum's Interagency Technical Committee (ECLAC, IDB, UNDP, World Bank), Executive Secretaries of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements, representatives of other regional and sub regional organizations and Special Guests. The Presidency is extending invitations to the Chair of UN Environment Assembly and the Chair of the GRULAC in Nairobi.

The Forum's sessions will be organized in two segments: high level officers will meet on 9 and 10 October, and the Ministerial segment will be held on 10 and 11 October.

**Plans to engage with major groups and stakeholders:** A regional consultative meeting with Latin America and Caribbean Major Groups will take place in Buenos Aires prior to the Forum, on 7-8 October. The regional facilitators will present the outcome of the deliberations to the Forum's plenary.

**Meeting website:** <https://bit.ly/2vRIPHS> or <https://www.unenvironment.org/es/regions/america-latina-y-el-caribe>