

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday 4 June 2020
9:00 – 12:00 and 13:30 – 16:30
Online Meeting

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

1. H.E. Mr. Fernando Coimbra, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representative and Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil, opened the meeting.
2. The Secretariat provided an overview of the participants present at the meeting. A list of participating member States and stakeholders is annexed to this summary.
3. The meeting [agenda](#) was adopted.

Agenda Item 2: 2018-2019 Programme Performance Report.

4. Ms. Joyce Msuya, the Deputy Executive Director, provided introductory remarks on the Programme Performance Report for the period 2018-2019, noting that global environmental challenges and the emerging opportunities to further the environmental agenda have positioned UNEP to leverage resources through catalytic action, technical and scientific advice, and capacity building. She referred to the current COVID-19 pandemic and pointed to the fact that the crisis reveals the need to continuously adapt and noted that UNEP as a learning organization has been able to do so.
5. The Secretariat presented an [overview of the Programme Performance Report](#) for the period 2018-2019, which assesses the organization's performance against its programme of work over the last biennium of the current 2018-2021 Medium Term Strategy, and highlighted key achievements during the period and the challenges and lessons learnt.
6. The Secretariat also provided an [overview of UNEP's resources and management](#) including human resources, budgetary expenditure, risk management and funding challenges, taking note of the trend for tight earmarking rather than soft earmarking, and referred to the audit report and its implementation to strengthen UNEP.
7. Member States thanked the Secretariat for the comprehensive report, appreciated UNEP's executive leadership and provided the following general comments on the report:
 - Expressed appreciation to the Executive the management and staff of UNEP for the progress achieved in improving the organization of work in support of the implementation of the work programme.
 - Underlined the importance of analyzing and understanding the dynamics behind underperformance and overperformance of subprogrammes in relation to target-setting and

- how this could be improved in the narrative section of future reports, including by identifying the drivers for overperformance and underperformance to guide adaptive management and improve future PoWs.
- Noted that around half (98 of 193) member States contributed to the Environment Fund and that about one fourth (52 out of 193) member States contributed their Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contribution (VISIC) and recommended the Secretariat to identify ways of increasing the volume of non-earmarked and soft funding in support of enhanced delivery of UNEP's agreed work programmes, and to better communicate and explain the concept of VISIC and how it is calculated to ensure maximum fairness among member States.
 - Advised that the report would benefit from more information on:
 - how governments utilize and apply technical advice provided by UNEP;
 - Contributions to the achievement of the environmental dimension of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and to the SDGs themselves;
 - South-South and triangular cooperation;
 - gender and social inclusion;
 - UNEP's cooperation, per subprogramme, with UN country teams in the context of UN reform.
 - Recommended that reporting on human resources is reported by country level as well as regionally and noted an underrepresentation of staff members from some regions as well as underrepresentation of women at some senior management levels.
 - Noted that while the UNEP report demonstrates a high level of achievement as per the applied indicators, the challenges facing the global environment remain significant. And that this discrepancy should be addressed, when discussing the MTS, including the related results framework.
 - Noted that equitable geographic and gender representation still needs to be promoted in the Secretariat, especially considering the severely under-represented countries and regions.
8. The Secretariat thanked Member States for their guidance and took note of the comments received, including with regard to the need to reevaluate the narrative, targets and indicators, improve reporting on linkages to the SDGs, and to step up communication efforts to reach a higher number of member States contributing to the Environment Fund and reaching their VISIC. The Secretariat also pointed out that the current development of a new Medium Term Strategy and Programme of work provides a good opportunity to re-assess how targets and indicators are established and reported on.

Sub-programme on Climate Change

9. For the [sub-programme on Climate Change](#), Member States, in particular:
- Underlined the importance that [Nationally Determined Contributions](#) are implemented, and recognized the opportunity for UNEP to engage with UN country programme coordinators within UN country teams to this end, upon request by the member States concerned, as an avenue to engage on the ground, supporting countries, and preparing entities for implementation.
 - Noted that inadequate estimation of country needs or obstacles in engagement may have contributed to limited attainment of the SP1 target related to [REDD+](#).
 - Requested information on UNEP's strengths in relation to other UN agencies such as UNDP in the field of climate change, and called for closer collaboration between them.
 - Requested for clarification on the criteria that UNEP uses to select the countries it works with
 - Suggested that the subprogramme expound more on fossil fuel subsidies reform in its portfolio
 - Noted the need to identify and address reasons why country teams do not request UNEP support given that UNEP is not present in all country teams.

Sub-programme on Healthy Productive Ecosystems

10. For the [sub-programme on Healthy Productive Ecosystems](#), Member States, in particular:

- Requested clarification on the extent of synergy between UNEP and biodiversity Conventions to support monitoring of ecosystems.
- Underlined the importance of considering ecosystem services in economic decision-making approaches, including in the context of the post-COVID19 recovery.

Sub-Programme on Chemicals, Waste & Air Quality

11. For the sub-programme on Chemicals, Waste & Air Quality, Member States, in particular:

- Expressed concerns about the proposed dates for the [International Conference on Chemicals Management](#), scheduled for 5 - 9 July 2021 in Bonn, noting that several multilateral and intergovernmental meetings will be taking place during the first half of July, and suggested that the date may have to be reconsidered.
- Called for continued support by UNEP to the [Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management process](#).
- Emphasized the importance of achieving the 2020 target on chemicals and waste, as agreed in 2002 at the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development, stressing that it must remain an area of priority for the next MTS.
- Requested the Secretariat to provide more details on collaboration with other UN Economic Commissions and organizations.
- Requested the Secretariat to elaborate on the budget disparity between earmarked funds (ref page 78) and its linkage to UNEP's work on [marine litter and microplastics](#).

Sub-Programme on Resource Efficiency

12. For the [sub-programme on Resource Efficiency](#), Member States, in particular:

- Encouraged the Secretariat to further engage with the private sector in the context of UNEP's work in [marine litter and microplastics](#).
- Highlighted the sustainable consumption and production hotspot tool (ref page 81) as a friendly and interactive tool for the development of national sustainable consumption and production policies.
- Requested the Secretariat to explain how UNEP is working directly at the local level with municipalities and cities and whether there is a role for the [One Planet Network](#), and called for strengthened support to cities and local governments to measure their resource profiles on sustainable management of resources.

Sub-Programme on Resilience to Disasters and Conflicts

13. For the [sub-programme on Resilience to Disasters and Conflicts](#), Member States, in particular:

- Looked forward to receiving the final results from the review of the Sub-Programme, expected to be available in the second half of 2020.
- Noted the link between the [Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool](#) and [World Environment Situation Room](#) (WESR), and requested more information on how they relate to each other.

Sub-Programme on Environmental Governance

14. For the [sub-programme on Environmental Governance](#), Member States, in particular:

- Called for improved reporting under the [Montevideo programme](#).
- Suggested to develop a national reporting tool for Multilateral Environmental Agreements, to reduce the reporting burden.
- Requested further information on the development and implementation of a [system-wide framework of strategies on the environment for the UN system](#) under the UN Environment Management Group.

Environment Under Review

15. For the [sub-programme on Environment Under Review](#), Member States, in particular:
- Re-emphasized the need to ensure adequate allocation of funds from the Environment Fund to this subprogramme, in support of the delivery of one of UNEP's core mandates.
 - Recommended to re-assess the formulation of indicators and targets of this sub-programme.
 - Suggested to improve reporting on how UNEP's work on environmental assessments are utilized and applied by member States and stakeholders.
 - Requested more information on the progress of the [WESR](#), the [Global Environment Outlook process](#) and the [UN Science Policy Business Forum](#).
16. The Secretariat welcomed the guidance provided by member States, and addressed several of the questions, as follows:
- Informed the meeting about the collaboration between UNEP and UNFCCC and that there will be a report on fossil fuel subsidies reform in collaboration with UNDP.
 - Referred to MOUs with other agencies such as UNDP and FAO such as through the UNREDD and underlined the opportunity to identify green stimulus packages to limit climate change and protect ecosystems in order to grow green economies during and post COVID.
 - Efforts are made to ensure appropriate allocation between sub-programmes in the development of the next Medium Term Strategy and Programme of Work.
 - The Science-Policy Business Forum has successfully brought together high-profile representatives from government, the private sector, the science community and civil society to enhance the science policy interface.
 - The WESR is advancing to cover international environmental laws, and improved information-gathering and data collection from 15 pilot countries.
 - A consultation with Member States on a draft environmental data strategy is tentatively scheduled for mid-2020.
 - A new UNEP report on zoonotic disease will be launched in July ahead of High-Level Political Forum
 - Furthermore, a cross cutting report combining various scientific assessments will be launched sometime in September 2020.
17. The written inputs by Member States and stakeholders will be available online on the meeting portal.

Agenda Item 3: Consultation on the development of new UNEP Medium Term Strategy 2022-25.

18. The Secretariat provided an update of the ongoing work to prepare a draft UNEP Mid-Term Strategy (MTS) for the period 2022-25, and [presented an analysis of the outcome of the informal online "Discovery Sessions" with member States](#) organized in May 2020.
19. Member States thanked the Secretariat and provided the following guidance on the MTS development process:
- Welcomed the 'discovery dialogues' as an innovative method to interact informally with delegates, and the vision outlined by the Executive Director for UNEP as a starting point for further consultations.
 - Emphasized that, in addition to UNEP's normative work, the MTS should give due regard to its operational role, ensuring that UNEP can support member States in their efforts to fully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, especially in the context of the UN Decade of Action.

- Proposed that the MTS should integrate UNEP's response to the COVID-19 crisis, as appropriate, particularly with regard to UNEP's efforts to build back better.
- Underlined the need for the MTS to promote sustainable consumption and production, as an enabler for transformational change, and the creation of sustainable and decent jobs
- Emphasized that the new MTS needs to be relevant to the current global and regional contexts and apply an integrated approach by which solutions to environmental challenges also advance inclusivity, equity and poverty.
- Underlined the importance of an MTS with a clear and comprehensive results framework that will translate the strategy into concrete objectives and deliverables for the organization.
- Suggested that the MTS reflect the importance of partnerships to ensure delivery, including within the UN in the context of the current UN reform, but also with non-government stakeholders and private sector actors.
- Recommended that the MTS is designed in support of accelerating the implementation of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements, including the post-2020 negotiating frameworks.
- Recommended that the strategy lead to improved knowledge sharing and communication framework for UNEP, including with regard to its work to advance advocacy and the science policy interface.

20. The Secretariat thanked member States for the guidance provided, as a basis of the further development of a new MTS, and welcomed additional inputs and recommendations, possibly through organization of additional informal sessions at regional level.

Agenda Item 4: Other matters.

21. The meeting was reminded by a representative of the Presidency of UNEA and encouraged to register for the [Act#ForNature Forum](#).

Agenda Item 5: Closing of the meeting.

22. The meeting closed at 4.00 p.m.

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**List of Delegations to the Subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
on 4 June 2020.**

Member States

1. **Algeria**
2. **Belgium**
3. **Bolivia**
4. **Brazil**
5. **Burkina Faso**
6. **Canada**
7. **Chile**
8. **China**
9. **Colombia**
10. **Costa Rica**
11. **Denmark**
12. **Djibouti**
13. **Egypt**
14. **Estonia**
15. **Ethiopia**
16. **European Union**
17. **Finland**
18. **France**
19. **Germany**
20. **Hungary**
21. **India**
22. **Indonesia**
23. **Israel**
24. **Japan**
25. **Kenya**
26. **Korea**
27. **League of Arab States**
28. **Libya**
29. **Malaysia**

30. Mexico
31. Montenegro
32. Morocco
33. Netherlands
34. Norway
35. Pakistan
36. Palestine
37. Peru
38. Philippines
39. Poland
40. Serbia
41. South Africa
42. Spain
43. Sweden
44. Switzerland
45. Turkey
46. United Kingdom
47. Zimbabwe

Accredited Stakeholders

1. African Council of Religious Leaders (ACRL-RfP)
2. Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESA)
3. Society for International Development (SID)
4. Center for International Environment Law (CIEL)
5. Children and Youth International
6. European Students' Forum AEGEE
7. ADEC Foundation Inc.
8. Institute for Sustainable Development and Research (ISDR)
9. Centre for Environment Justice and Development (CEJAD)
10. World Animal Net