
Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday 2 July 2020
9:00 – 12:00 (GMT+3)
Online Meeting

**Background Document for Agenda Item 3: Implementation of para 14 of UNEA decision 4/2
related to the development of an action plan for para 88**

This note serves as a background document for consideration under Agenda Item 3: Implementation of paragraph 14 of UNEA decision 4/2 related to the development of an action plan for para 88.

It contains emerging elements that will inform the development of an action plan to further implement paragraph 88 of the Rio+20 outcome document “The future we want” in accordance with UNEA decision 4/2. The report builds on inputs provided by member States at the two consultative subcommittee meetings held on [5 March](#) and [2 April](#) 2020, respectively, on different subparagraphs.

Member States are invited to provide guidance to the Secretariat at this meeting in the development of an effective action plan for paragraph 88, which will be submitted to the 7th meeting of the annual subcommittee and subsequently to UNEA-5. Member states are invited to provide any comments and further guidance on the development of the action plan by 10th July in writing to the Secretariat.

Introduction

1. At the fourth session of UNEA, held in March 2019 in Nairobi, Member States adopted Decision 4/2 entitled “Provisional agenda, date and venue of the fifth session of UNEA”. Paragraph 14 of this Decision “*Requests* the Executive Director to submit an action plan for the implementation of subparagraphs (a)–(h) of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, to be submitted for consideration by UNEA at its fifth session, and invites the Director-General of the UN Office at Nairobi to contribute to the development of the plan in respect of the implementation of subparagraph (g) concerning the headquarters functions of UNEP in Nairobi.”

2. In accordance with Decision 4/2, the Secretariat first submitted a roadmap for the preparation of this action plan for endorsement by Member States at the 6th annual subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) held in October 2019. An updated roadmap was presented to Member States in December 2019. Subsequently, in consultation with CPR Bureau, three CPR subcommittee meetings were organized as follows:

- 23 January 2020 to consider an analytical synthesis report by the Secretariat on the progress made in the implementation of paragraph 88 since its adoption in “The future we want” in 2012.
- 5 March 2020 to discuss areas that require further attention to fully implement the following four subparagraphs – (a. universal membership), (c. coordination), (g. headquarters functions) and (h. stakeholder engagement);
- 2 April 2020 to discuss the remaining subparagraphs – (b. financial resources), (d. science-policy interface), (e. environmental information) and (f. capacity-building).

3. The present report presents emerging elements under each subparagraph that may require additional action to implement paragraph 88, based on the guidance provided by Member States and stakeholders at the subcommittee meetings during which the subparagraphs were considered one by one. Collectively, these elements may inform the development of a draft action plan for the full implementation of paragraph 88, which will be submitted for further consultation with Member States and stakeholders at the 7th annual subcommittee of CPR scheduled for October 2020.

(a) Establish universal membership in the Governing Council of UNEP, as well as other measures to strengthen its governance as well as its responsiveness and accountability to Member States.

4. *Enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the UNEP governing bodies.*

4.1 The ongoing review process by CPR, mandated also by Decision 4/2, to improve the working methodologies of UNEA and CPR and their respective Bureaus provides a timely opportunity to further strengthen UNEP governance. The recently initiated Secretariat efforts to move UNEP’s governance onto an electronic platform in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, through greater use of “virtual meetings”, can complement the process for review by CPR to ensure that UNEP governing bodies are well equipped to deliver on their mandates to better position UNEA as the leading global

environmental authority. Relevant recommendations from the review process, some of which are expected to require decisions by Member States, may complement the action plan on paragraph 88.

5. *Realizing the spirit of universal membership.*

5.1 Despite a major achievement made with the establishment of UNEA to replace the 58-member Governing Council, there remains a gap between the universal membership and the actual level of participation by all Member States in the conduct of UNEP governing bodies. Both the UNEA and CPR agendas and follow-up are driven predominantly by Member States resident in Nairobi and are accredited to UNEP and therefore members of CPR. It would be desirable to broaden the participation of Member States in the deliberations of the CPR during the intersessional period, for example by encouraging a greater number of Member States to become accredited to UNEP as well establish permanent missions in Nairobi. It may be useful to also support expanding countries' capacity to participate in virtual CPR meetings worldwide. In the longer perspective, the aim should be to align the membership of CPR (currently 122 members, of which 84 have diplomatic missions in Nairobi) with that of UNEA (193 Member States), towards a universal CPR. Further progress in standardizing and formalizing online meetings may support this aim by enabling effective remote participation by Member States.

5.2 Achieving universality also relates to broadening the funding base of UNEP (to be further discussed under subparagraph (b) on financial resources) and continuing to enhance the attractiveness of Nairobi as a venue for global environmental meetings in collaboration with the host country and the UN Office at Nairobi (to be further discussed under subparagraph (g) on the consolidation of UNEP headquarters functions).

6. *Improving the Secretariat's responsiveness and accountability.*

6.1 As part of showcasing UNEP's universal reach, the respective roles and compositions of various UNEP regional, sub-regional, liaison and country offices need to be clearly established and communicated to Member States and other stakeholders, including through improvements in the way UNEP offers a comprehensive overview of its presence and activities around the world. This would also increase coherent understanding of the various activities undertaken by UNEP, particularly in connection with the revamped UN country presence.

6.2 UNEP will continue to deepen its efforts to leverage the UN Development System Reforms to enhance effective programme delivery and the environmental dimension of sustainable development across the world, especially as the world grapples with economic recovery in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.3 Additional efforts are also needed to achieve geographical and gender balance in its staffing and to regularly communicate staffing updates to Member States.

(b) Have secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resources from the regular budget of the UN and voluntary contributions to fulfil its mandate.

7. *Adequate and increased financial resources - increasing overall funding and improving ratio between core and earmarked funding*

7.1. UNEP continues to receive insufficient core funding. The UN regular budget and the Environment Fund provide only 20% of the organisation's total income annually (5% and 15% respectively). Further, only about half of the agreed budget for the Environment Fund is provided annually. While the Secretariat should constantly aim to demonstrate the value of the Environment Fund, results achieved with its funding, and the effects that insufficient funding will have on the implementation of the programme of work, it is equally important that all countries meet their voluntary contributions target under the "fair share" principle (VISC).

7.2 Earmarked funding provided by Member States and other partners continue to increase and currently constitute around 80% of UNEP's funding. Most of these resources are tightly earmarked for specific projects, resulting in an imbalanced allocation of financial resources across subprogrammes. Subsequently, the "Environment under review" subprogramme - that enables UNEP to fulfil its core mandate - remains underfunded, while other activities that complement those carried out by other UN entities are adequately funded through projectized funds. Such funding asymmetry could lead to fragmentation in the work of the Secretariat and reduce its ability to "deliver as one". To improve Member States' understanding of the consequences of earmarked funding, the Secretariat could provide a more detailed analysis of the earmarked funding streams and encourage soft or non-earmarking.

8. *Secure and stable financial resources: Broadening the donor base*

8.1 UNEP's financial resources, especially the Environment Fund, continue to depend on a limited number of countries making contributions. Less than half of 193 Member States contribute to the Fund; out of these, only 15-20% comply with their "fair share", or VISC (Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contributions). Over 90% of the Environment Fund income comes from 15 countries. Member States could call on each other to increase their collective efforts to fulfil their commitments to strengthening UNEP's funding. The Secretariat should sustain its efforts to remind Member States to contribute accordingly and continue to give greater recognition and visibility to the contributing Member States, particularly those that meet their "fair share".

8.2 The Secretariat could also conduct a study, including through a questionnaire, on factors that enable or discourage countries from making contributions to UNEP. This analysis could help inform the Secretariat in the development of a more effective resource mobilization strategy. Lessons-learned from the previous strategy could also prove helpful. The Secretariat will also continue the dialogue with the Member States on UNEP's funding challenges, including discussing the outcome of the above-mentioned study and agreeing on joint action to be taken to address the challenges and opportunities identified.

9. In addition, UNEP is taking active measures to mitigate the risk of COVID-19's potential impact on Environment Fund contributions, including by suspending recruitment of non-critical vacant positions supported by the Environment Fund.¹ Funding allocation priority will also be given to providing logistical support for telecommuting and sustaining UNEP's business continuity.

¹ All regular budget posts have been temporarily frozen as directed by the Secretary-General.

(c) Enhance the voice of UNEP and its ability to fulfil its coordination mandate within the UN system by strengthening its engagement in key UN coordination bodies and empowering it to lead efforts to formulate UN system-wide strategies on the environment.

10. Promoting greater linkages with the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

10.1 In line with UNEA resolution 3/3 on “Contributions of UNEA to the HLPF” adopted in December 2017, UNEA is expected to provide Member States-guided inputs on “the overarching environmental perspective of sustainable development”. In this regard, the preparation of inputs needs to remain transparent and consultative, and continue to be profiled in a dedicated [UNEP webpage](#).

10.2 It is also important to leverage the opportunity offered by the standing UNEA agenda item on “contributions of UNEA to the meetings of HLPF,” also mandated by UNEA resolution 3/3, from the environmental perspective and provide specific policy recommendations on how best to integrate environmental sustainability in the follow-up of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Under this agenda item, Member States and stakeholders can also discuss best practices and challenges for the implementation of SDGs at the national, regional and global levels, their priorities for the HLPF as well as concrete ways where UNEP can support Member States, including in optimizing the UN system coordination.

10.3 The Secretariat can support Member States to better articulate UNEA messages through their national delegations to the Regional Sustainable Development Forums and the HLPF, while adopting integrated approaches to sustainable development in respect for the interlinked and indivisible nature of the SDGs. The Secretariat can also support Member States in the development of their voluntary national reviews (VNRs), which are presented at HLPF, to include environmental priorities and challenges requiring greater support from the UN system as well as to highlight best practices in environmental management available for replication.

11. Delivering on the UN development system reform

11.1 The UN Development System (UNDS) reforms provide an opportunity for UNEP to strategically deepen its country and regional presence to support and follow-up with UN Country Teams, enabling effective contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and the common country analysis that underpin these frameworks. The new UNEP medium-term strategy and the programme of work should be designed to include the UN development system reform and to address country priorities agreed in the UN Cooperation Frameworks, as mandated by UNEA.²

² UNEA decision 4/1 “Programme of work and budget for the biennium 2020-2021”: Also requests the Executive Director to ensure that all the activities of the United Nations Environment Programme at the country level are aligned with and included in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, where applicable, as the most important instrument for planning and implementation of United Nations development activities in each country, and are reported on to the respective United Nations Resident Coordinator and the Committee of Permanent Representatives on a regular basis (paragraph 21).

11.2 The UNDS reforms have enabled new opportunities for UNEP to better deliver on its mandate to support the implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs within and as part of the UN Development System and to better deliver support to Member States. Through its strengthened regional presence, UNEP contributes to efforts to ensure that programmes at regional and country level integrate UNEP initiatives to promote synergies and complementarities and integrate work within the overall support of the UN Country Teams.

11.3 UNEP actively supported the various UNDS reforms inter-agency processes to develop the tools to support the Resident Coordinator system and UN Country Teams. UNEP's New York Office continues to lead UNEP's engagement with other New York-based UN Offices with support from the UNEP Divisions and Regional Offices. The Secretariat will continue enhancing cooperation with other UN entities such as UNDP and FAO to catalyse more explicit recognition of environmental challenges and robust integration of environmental priorities in their programmes, bilaterally and through the existing inter-agency coordination mechanisms.

12. *Strengthening the role of the UN Environment Management Group (EMG).*

12.1 The EMG as a coordination body for environmental activities in the UN system can be significantly strengthened. More consideration needs to be given to empower EMG to fully fulfil its mandate of “enhancing inter-agency coordination in the field of environment”³, including by ensuring the uptake of EMG work by the wider UN system and catalyzing its national-level impact.

12.3 The EMG secretariat should continue to brief the CPR on its activities, with a view to sharing information.

13. *Enhancing cooperation among the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and with UNEP.*

13.1 The importance of UNEP's role with respect to MEAs, particularly the 15 MEAs that UNEP hosts, cannot be overemphasized. The reinvigorated work of the Secretariat in promoting regular dialogues with the MEA secretariats should continue as a means to further implement paragraph 89 of “The future we want”. The ongoing discussion to promote cooperation and coherence between UNEP and the MEAs in the context of the CPR review process is also expected to result in concrete outcomes for enhancing cooperation between UNEP/UNEA and MEAs/their governing bodies, namely the Conferences of the Parties.

13.2 More opportunities can be identified to promote coherence and complementarity, including through participation by members of the MEAs and UNEA governing bodies in their respective meetings. The Secretariat will continue to make regular briefings to the CPR on these matters.

³ https://unemg.org/images/emgdocs/about/a_53_242.pdf

(d) Promote a strong science-policy interface, building on existing international instruments, assessments, panels and information networks, including the Global Environment Outlook, as one of the processes aimed at bringing together information and assessment to support informed decision-making.

14. Reinforcing the scientific basis of UNEP.

14.1 As the leading global environmental authority with a significant convening and normative power, UNEP is capable of mobilizing scientists and experts from around the world to inform environmental policymaking. The Secretariat will expand and tap on an even wider network of universities and research institutions, with a view to incorporating the latest scientific findings in UNEP's publications and other norm-setting activities. Special efforts will continue to be made to involve scientists from developing countries.

14.2 The Secretariat needs to play a more active role in translating science into policy options. UNEP's scientific assessments should continue to include clear policy recommendations, and these should be disseminated to Member States and stakeholders well in advance of the meetings of UNEA, MEAs and other pertinent decision-making bodies.

14.3 UNEP should continue to advance the delivery of the relevant legislative mandates adopted to guide UNEP's work in line with paragraph 90⁴ of "The future we want", and in particular:

- Governing Council decision 27/11 – "State of the environment and contribution of the UNEP to meeting substantive environmental challenges"
- UNEA resolution 1/4 – "Science-policy interface"
- UNEA resolution 4/23 – "Keeping the world environment under review: Expand the UNEP science-policy interface and endorsement of the Global Environment Outlook"

14.4 Additionally, the Secretariat should continue to work closely with Member States and the scientific community to fill the gaps identified in the UNEP report "[Strengthening the science-policy interface: A gap analysis](#)" (2017), such as lack of environmental data collection, monitoring and reporting.

15. Increasing funding for science-policy interface as one of the core mandates of UNEP.

15.1 UNEP's work on science-policy interface warrants greater funding, and focused efforts are necessary to increase the proportion of internal core funding allocations to support UNEP's work on science-policy, and to make this area more attractive to donors.

15.2 Strategic integration of science throughout the programme of work and an allocation of adequate levels of core budget for UNEP's science-policy work is critical to ensure that UNEP activities remain at the forefront of environmental governance, in which emerging environmental

⁴ 90. We stress the need for the continuation of a regular review of the state of the Earth's changing environment and its impact on human well-being, and in this regard we welcome such initiatives as the Global Environment Outlook process aimed at bringing together environmental information and assessments and building national and regional capacity to support informed decision-making.

challenges and possible solutions are brought to the attention of the international community in a timely manner.

(e) Disseminate and share evidence-based environmental information, and raise public awareness on critical, as well as emerging, environmental issues.

16. *Developing a long-term global environmental data strategy.*

16.1 At UNEA-4 held in March 2019, Member States adopted a Ministerial Declaration entitled “[Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production](#)” in which Ministers committed to supporting UNEP in developing a global environmental data strategy by 2025 in cooperation with other relevant UN bodies. The Secretariat is working towards the development of this strategy, as presented to the [CPR in August 2019](#), as part of comprehensive knowledge management systems for the environment. Regular updates will be provided to the CPR on the progress of strategy development and how it fits into the broader delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs.

16.2 As a custodian of 26 environment-related SDGs indicators and host to 15 MEAs, UNEP will reinforce its work on environmental data, enabling countries and stakeholder to collect comparable, quality data and use it to formulate sound evidence-based legislations and policies.

16.3 The use of citizen science data and private environmental data will gain increasing currency in the coming years. In this regard, through the UNEP Science Policy Business Forum as well as through partnerships with global citizens science associations, UNEP can pioneer innovative ways towards developing comparable international data.

16.4 Integration and visualization will make data and science more accessible to a wider public. UNEP will increase integration of UNEP data tools, including the World Environment Situation Room (WESR) in the website experience and content. This includes cross-linkages to WESR and other data tools, visualization of data, integration of data in stories and videos, and introduction of easy-to-understand data dashboards across [unep.org](#), pulling in key data from WESR and other tools.

16.5 UNEP will continue its efforts towards digital transformation in line with the UN Secretary General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation. As this roadmap outlined “recent advances in technology offer ground-breaking opportunities to monitor and protect the environment as well as overall planetary health”. The Roadmap also argues that by harnessing them appropriately, “the digital revolution can be steered to combat climate change and advance global sustainability, environmental stewardship and human well-being.” In this context, UNEP’s vision for digital cooperation and transformation in the environmental domain encompass the following three core pillars: 1) catalysing a digital ecosystem for people and planet that can generate real-time insights on environment and health of our planet at any scale; 2) establishing partnerships for digital transformation that can use environmental insights and digital technologies to inform and transform consumption patterns, markets, supply chains, and policy; and, 3) working with parties to build a governance framework for

environmental digital public goods, including business models, incentives, and safeguards for public-private partnerships as well as mitigating the environmental footprint of the information and communications technology sector.

17. *Further improve communication on environmental issues.*

17.1 Improving communication on science, global environmental issues and organizational results makes UNEP more visible, relevant and accessible to a wider public. UNEP will continue to make progress in social and behavior change communication directed at various levels, including the general public through its flagship campaigns and initiatives, with increasing focus on monitoring of implementation and impact.

17.2 UNEP will create new and further strengthen existing partnerships and relations with mainstream media to reach broad readership for UNEP’s environmental messages and data. UNEP is expanding its reach to young people and select target audiences through microtargeting strategies as well as through various channels such as the VOICES portfolio, sports partnerships, and entertainment platforms.

17.3 UNEP is working to strengthen monitoring of usage data, user journeys and page views in order to find the best ways to communicate its data and science. UNEP is improving its metrics on publications usage, including downloads and other metrics, together with other UN agencies. Data will be made readily available to various audiences.

17.4 UNEP will continue to develop and disseminate science-based reports and associated outreach products, ensuring that adequate attention to communication and outreach efforts to ensure that the widest possible audience is reached.

(f) Provide capacity-building to countries, as well as support, and facilitate access to technology.

18. *Catalysing support to countries.*

18.1 Some Member States shared a view that “catalysing support” aligns better with UNEP’s normative mandate than “capacity-building”, which has an operational connotation.

18.2 UNEP should continue to support Member States, upon request, in the formulation and implementation of environmental policies to achieve the internationally agreed environmental goals, while also building developing countries’ capacities to access environmental funds through for example the Green Climate Fund. UNEP’s revamped South-South and Triangular Cooperation strategy, with its three overarching objectives⁵ and supporting actions, provides an entry point to provide capacity building and facilitate access to technology to developing countries.

⁵ Objective 1: Enhance South-South and triangular cooperation in UNEP’s programme of work;
Objective 2: Enhance UNEP’s South-South and triangular cooperation engagement with the UN system;
Objective 3: Fostering and enhancing innovative partnerships.

18.3 The Secretariat will continue to make regular updates to the CPR on the progress of the implementation of this strategy, including in the context of SDG 17, “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development”, which has a specific target related to capacity-building and facilitating access to technology⁶ through South-South and triangular cooperation.⁷

18.4 With the international community’s political capital invested in the realization of the SDGs, UNEP will continue to focus on assisting Member States achieve environment-related SDGs that are identified in various reports as lagging behind. Currently, only 23% of the 93 environment-related SDG indicators are on track to meet the target, with the other 68% not having enough data to assess progress, with addition 9% having made no progress at all. Combined with national commitments, the Secretariat can help fill this data gap through the aforementioned global environmental data strategy.

19. *Developing integrated capacity-building.*

19.1 In view of the various processes undertaken by the Secretariat to deliver on its multiple mandates, it is important to offer capacity-building that integrates these processes. For example, the Fifth Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law, the UN development system reform and other governance frameworks should contextualize UNEP’s capacity-building activities, creating coherence in environmental capacity-building narrative and its contributions to the overall objective of sustainable development.

20. *Facilitating access to technology.*

20.1 Weak access to information and knowledge about technologies that help prevent or solve environmental problems is a general problem in developing countries. In response, Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change created a [Climate Technology Centre and Network](#) (CTCN) hosted by UNEP. As the “operational arm” of the Convention’s Technology Mechanism, CTCN promotes accelerated, diversified and scaled-up transfer of environmentally sound technologies for climate change mitigation and adaptation in line with the sustainable development priorities of developing countries. Technical assistance is provided in response to requests submitted via Nationally Designated Entities. Upon receipt of such requests, the Centre mobilizes its global Network of climate technology experts to design and deliver a solution tailored to local needs, one often linked to financing. Demand for such technology-related services is increasing and UNEP should expand the services offered through the CTCN in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

⁶ 17.6 Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the united nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism.

⁷ 17.9 Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation

(g) Progressively consolidate headquarters functions in Nairobi, as well as strengthen its regional presence, in order to assist countries, upon request, in the implementation of their national environmental policies, collaborating closely with other relevant entities of the UN system;

21. *Ensuring UNEP's impact at all levels.*

21.1 UNEP needs to make strategic efforts to ensure its impact at national, regional and global levels, partnering as necessary with other UN agencies that are present on the ground. The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and the Common Country Assessment processes offer an opportunity for UNEP to embed the environmental dimension in the UN's collective response to help countries address national priorities and gaps in their pathway towards meeting the SDGs.

21.2 At the regional level, the Secretariat can work with Member States to strengthen political messaging from the regional environmental ministers' meetings to the regional forums on sustainable development, which then feed into HLPF. UNEP's Regional Offices have a key role in promoting coherent and effective implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda. The Regional Offices will continue supporting countries in developing integrated approaches to sustainable development including strengthening the environment and health nexus.

21.3 At the global level, the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of UNEP at the UN Conference on Human Environment held in Stockholm in 1972 provides a milestone through which to maximize UNEP's imprint. Furthermore, the Secretariat should seize the momentum provided by the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath to mobilize the international community towards taking concrete action to build back better.

22. *Strengthening the UNEP headquarters in Nairobi as the center of global environmental diplomacy.*

22.1 As one of the two UN entities headquartered in a developing country along with UN-Habitat, UNEP's presence in Nairobi takes on greater significance for its contributions to transforming Nairobi into a conference center for international meetings. In addition to working closely together with the host country, which has already indicated its readiness to address infrastructural challenges, the Secretariat will continue to collaborate with the UN Office at Nairobi (UNON) to improve UNON's capacity to host big meetings, including expanded meeting rooms, enhanced internet connectivity, interpretation capacities, etc. Member States are invited to support the joint call by the UNEP Executive Director and the UNON Director-General on the General Assembly to allocate increased resources to upgrade UNON conference facilities on par with other duty stations.

22.2 Overall, since Rio+20, there have been greater expectations upon UNEP to perform its role as the leading global environmental authority, by strengthening its main functions, as well as growing demands for services of the UNEP secretariat both in the areas of its normative and operational functions. In this context, "consolidation of headquarters functions of UNEP in Nairobi" should be considered as a continuous process of strengthening and making UNEP further "grow" across the organization, so that it better responds to the increasing needs of the international community in the field of the environment.

(h) Ensure the active participation of all relevant stakeholders, drawing on best practices and models from relevant multilateral institutions and exploring new mechanisms to promote transparency and the effective engagement of civil society.

23. *Continuously enhancing the engagement with Major Groups and Stakeholders, including Children and Youth.*

23.1 Although there has not been agreement to date among Member States on a new stakeholder engagement policy (mandated by Governing Council 27/2), UNEP has nevertheless taken a range of effective measures to improve opportunities for stakeholder engagement, within existing mandates, rules and regulations, building on the best practices and models from relevant multilateral institutions, as identified through various assessments done by UNEP. UNEP will continue to strive to be a champion in the UN system with respect to stakeholder engagement.

23.2 In full alignment with the intergovernmental and Member States-led nature of the decision-making process in the governing bodies of UNEP, representatives of Major Groups and Stakeholders accredited to UNEP may participate in all public meetings of UNEA and its subsidiary organs, and have the opportunity to make oral or written statements, including via video connection. UNEP will work closely with accredited Major Groups and Stakeholders to increase the relevance of such statements towards the inter-governmental decision-making process, including by developing and implementing training and capacity building programs.

23.3 UNEP will further enhance opportunities for Major Groups and Stakeholders to engage remotely via interactive video links, thus reducing the need to travel to meetings and thereby widening opportunities for Major Groups and Stakeholders globally to meaningfully engage in UNEP governance. In this context, UNEP is also looking into ways to ensure simultaneous interpretation of online events into all official UN languages.

23.4 UNEP will work closely with the Children and Youth Major Group to further strengthen its cooperation and to open new avenues for Children and Youth to engage. In this context, the Secretariat plans to support the organization of a Global Youth Environment Assembly prior to UNEA-5 and in future sessions of UNEA. Furthermore, UNEP has started – in cooperation with the Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future - an online training and capacity building programme targeting youth in particular.

23.5 UNEP will enhance opportunities for a more active stakeholder engagement in the development of a new UNEP medium-term strategy and the programme of work, allowing for Major Groups and Stakeholders to provide input and comments.

24. *Increasing opportunities and funding to support substantive stakeholder engagement.*

24.1 Stable and predictable funding to support the engagement of Major Groups and Stakeholders in UNEP's work has always been a challenge. While the allocation of financial resources from the Environment Fund to the budget of the Civil Society Unit in the Governance Affairs Office has slightly increased in the past years, only limited additional extra-budgetary resources have been made available by Member States for the implementation of subparagraph (h) of paragraph 88. The Secretariat will work closely with Member States to seek to address this situation.

25. *Leveraging the private sector capabilities.*

25.1 Current socioeconomic and environmental challenges require not only decisive action by governments, but also the financial, knowledge and technological resources from the private sector. UNEP will continue to engage with the private sector to seek to steer it towards more sustainable production models in line with the Ministerial Declaration adopted at UNEA-4, thereby seeking to reduce the sector's heavy impact in terms of climate change, pollution and ecosystem degradation. UNEP will further work with the private sector to assist with environmental technology transfer and capacity building towards developing countries, while contributing to identifying innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production.

25.2 To enhance the contribution of the private sector to UNEA, the setting of the *Sustainable Innovation Expo* will be further adjusted to create a solutions-oriented platform that provides participants from business and industry with the chance to form impactful partnerships with UNEP based on shared environmental goals, including the potential funding that would allow projects to move forward and to be scaled up.

25.3 UNEP will ensure the full implementation of its first corporate Strategy for Private Sector Engagement, which aims to guide collaboration with the private sector in order to achieve the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and UNEP's programme of work.