

USA Comments on Implementation of Para 8 of UNEA Decision 4/2
June 23, 2020

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to share some comments from the United States. And thank you to the staff who have worked on this issue. We found many good ideas in the Note, but a few points did cause us concern.

On a positive note, the proposed synthesis report and other related reports could be constructive tools to help the public understand how global environmental issues affect them and what can be done. The synthesis report aligns well with the Note's emphasis on the Science-Policy Interface, which we strongly support.

A high-level event at UNEA-5 makes sense to us to celebrate the accomplishments of UNEP@50. We would welcome more insight on what is envisioned by a "launch" and events throughout the calendar year given a full 2021-2022 calendar and uncertainty about in-person meetings and how this would relate to the Stockholm+50 planning.

Even before-COVID-19, we found it difficult to imagine finding the time, resources, and justification to hold three major UNEP-related meetings in one year. So now more than ever we support a small celebration in Nairobi, as health conditions permit, and welcome the Concept Note's idea of "gathering the few and connecting the billions."

An area concern for us is the UNGA 73/333 proposal. As you are aware, the UNGA 73/333 process has its own track of meetings, led by co-facilitators, and its own expected outcome. Our view is that the 73/333 process should be concluded at UNEA-5. While we recognize not everyone agrees with that view, we can agree that there has been no intergovernmental decision to promote or otherwise intermingle the 73/333 process with the UNEP+50 celebration. We ask that future planning notes take this into consideration.

Our final point Mr. Chairman is that the proposal to "strengthen UNEP's support to MEAs towards more effective multilateralism in the field of the environment" must be considered very carefully. One of the clear messages delivered over the past year, in the lead-up to 73/333, was that MEAs are independent, have their own unique membership, and their own legal structure. The United States firmly believes that that independence should be maintained and we would ask for more details on what is envisioned with a proposal for "more effective multilateralism" before we could agree to such a concept.

Thank you very much.