

USA Comments on Para 88 Action Plan under UNEA 4/2
July 2, 2020

The United States offers the following comments regarding UNEP/SC/2020/9/3

5. Realizing the Spirit of Universal Membership

5.2 What is the connection between broadening the funding base and improving universality? Each country makes a national choice to participate in UNEP meetings and establish a presence in Nairobi. We encourage greater virtual participation and steps that may be taken to further enhance virtual capabilities but the current paper does not provide a cogent argument that supports the relationship between universal membership and broadening the funding base.

7.1: Every budgetary problem has a supply side and demand side. The Secretariat's paper addresses only the supply side of the issue by focusing contributions. Another option is reduce the demand side, i.e. the Environment Fund budget, to be in line with historical contribution levels. The response presented in paragraphs 7-9 only focuses on the supply side and is unbalanced. We ask that future iterations of this section highlight adjustments to the WPB to serve as a potential response option.

A balanced approach would emphasize realistic budgeting and a work program that corresponds to a budget based on historical funding levels. How many countries would meet their "fair share" if budget levels were more realistic? Finally, it's important to recall the "voluntary" element of the VISC. Naming and shaming countries for failing to meet a "voluntary" target is not a constructive way encourage greater contributions.