

Second Joint Preparatory Retreat of the Bureaux
of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives
9 to 10 June 2017
Hotel Villa Caletas (Pacifico Central)
Puntarenas, Costa Rica
Agenda item 2

**Note by the Secretariat on the Global Major Groups and
Stakeholders Forum prior to the 2017 UN Environment
Assembly**

The Secretariat is pleased to present a note on the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum prior to the 2017 UN Environment Assembly, which will take place on 4 to 6 December 2017. It will support discussion under Agenda item 2: Stocktaking on Preparations for the Assembly, at the Second Joint Preparatory Retreat of the bureau of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to be held on 9 to 10 June 2017.

Members of both bureaux are invited to provide comments to the Secretariat on the note on the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum.

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Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum prior to the 2017 UN Environment Assembly

Background

The Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum takes place on the weekend prior to the 2017 UN Environment Assembly and serves as a Major Groups and Stakeholders preparatory meeting to the Assembly. It is *self-organized by Major Groups and Stakeholders*, with support from UN Environment. The Forum prepares participants for the Assembly and associated meetings, identifies important themes and decisions under consideration by the Assembly, and provides a platform for an exchange of views and expertise on these themes between governments and Major Groups and Stakeholders as well as UN Environment. Traditionally, the Forum also features an open dialogue between UN Environment's Head and Major Groups and Stakeholders ahead of the Assembly.

Expectations from the Forum

Main characteristics of the 2017 Forum will be:

- It will focus on the main theme of the Assembly "Towards a Pollution Free Planet"
- It will provide sufficient time for a training and capacity building session for newly incoming participants
- Panel Discussions, if any, will have a multi-stakeholder character
- Strong focus on presenting and initiating new and innovative partnerships on pollution
- It will provide sufficient time for coordination among participants and for preparation of statements and concrete input into the Assembly

Roles and Responsibilities

Main coordinator of the Forum will be the *Major Groups facilitating organization*, responsible for the organization of the event, including its agenda. Major Groups decided that for the 2017 Assembly the Asia Pacific CSO Engagement Mechanism will take this role, working closely with partners from all Major Groups and regions, the Major Groups Facilitating Committee and UN Environment.

Participants

The meeting is open to the participation of representatives of Major Groups and Stakeholders accredited to UN Environment; Representatives of Civil Society organisations *not* accredited to UN Environment, including citizen's networks, youth networks, faith-based organisations; observers from Governments, Private Sector, UN Environment, UN organization, Multi-lateral organisations, Media, Universities.

Speakers and Resource persons will be selected based on their expertise with respect to the themes of the Assembly and available resources to cover their travel to the Assembly.

Remote participation via teleconference facilities will be made possible. Dependent on funding it is hoped that the event will have up to 200 participants from civil-society organizations globally.

Agenda

The agenda will be developed by Major Groups and Stakeholders and will be available by end of October 2017.

Funding Situation

Costs for the meeting space, travel, DSA, coffee breaks, equipment etc. will be covered by UN Environment within available funds. In terms of travel costs, UN Environment will cover the following in order of priority: Major Groups Facilitating Committee and Regional Representatives; Core Team of the Facilitating Organization, Speakers, Resource Persons, Facilitators; Representatives of accredited organizations from developing countries. Currently there is a shortfall of 120,000 USD (out of 220,000 USD) in the budget for the event. Note that representatives of accredited organizations that are funded for participation in the Forum will also be funded for participation in the Open Ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the Assembly itself.

Expectations from Member States

Member States are proposed to consider the following:

- Provide additional funding for the event, increasing the number of participants from Major Groups and increasing the legitimacy relevance and impact of the Assembly
- Consider including representatives of accredited and other civil society organizations in their official delegation
- Encourage relevant civil-society organizations from their countries to seek UN Environment Accreditation (<http://www.unep.org/about/majorgroups/modalities/accreditation>)
- Help publicizing the event (see for opportunities to engage: <http://www.unep.org/about/majorgroups/2017-environment-assembly>)
- Plan for participation of member of the official delegation in the Forum
- Acknowledge and utilize outcomes of the Forum and interventions of Major Groups during the Assembly, thus allowing for an enrichment of the inter-governmental decision making process