

Joint meeting of the Bureaux of UN Environment Assembly and
Committee of Permanent Representatives
14 September 2017
5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.
United Nations Office at Nairobi Gigiri,
Executive Office Boardroom
Agenda item 3d

Note by the Secretariat on the proposed “Global Coalition for a Pollution-Free Planet”

As requested at the Joint Bureaux Retreat held in Costa Rica in June 2017. The Secretariat submits a note on a long term programme of action to address pollution. The Secretariat, suggests that the joint bureaux meeting consider the items under Agenda item 3d: Global Coalition for a Pollution-Free Planet, at the Joint meeting of the Bureaux of UN Environment Assembly and Committee of Permanent Representatives, to be held on 14 September 2017.

GLOBAL COALITION FOR A POLLUTION-FREE PLANET

Context and Rationale

- The United Nations Environment Assembly, the world's highest-level decision-making body on the environment, will gather in Nairobi, Kenya, from 4 to 6 December 2017 under the overarching theme 'Towards a Pollution-Free Planet'.
- This forum of Governments, UN organizations and specialized agencies, inter-governmental organizations, civil society and private sector representatives offers a unique opportunity to launch a programme of multi-stakeholder actions to prevent, reduce and control pollution in all its forms, including air pollution, freshwater pollution, land/soil pollution, marine and coastal pollution, as well as pollution from chemicals and waste.
- The report 'Towards a Pollution-Free Planet' provides evidence on the state, impacts and costs of pollution, makes the case for action against pollutants in key risk areas, and outlines actions to be considered by Governments, civil society organizations, private sector entities and individual citizens. All stakeholders are invited to make voluntary commitments around the suggested actions and to register these at:
<http://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/un-environment-assembly>.
- It is expected that a political declaration on pollution will be adopted at this the third session of the Assembly along with resolutions that support specific actions.

With a view to take this work beyond the United Nations Environment Assembly, Member States may decide to establish a **Global Coalition for a Pollution-Free Planet** with an associated **Pollution Control Action Programme** (2018-2030) as a specific outcome of the Assembly. Such a Programme of Action, fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, may inspire the international community and stakeholders at all levels – Member States, UN agencies, development organizations, financing institutions, business networks and entities, cities and local authorities, civil society organizations and individual citizens – to take action.

Proposed goal of the Coalition for a Pollution-Free Planet

To accelerate the transition towards a Pollution-Free Planet by 2030.

The Coalition members will further develop specific targets and an associated Pollution Control Action Programme. Possible clusters of action include:

- (i) Strengthening and creating synergies and building new partnerships on:
 - a. *Communication and education strategies for pollution awareness and behavioural change;*
 - b. *Financing for pollution prevention and reduction – including clean-up actions and development and testing of innovative solutions;*
 - c. *Designing and implementing policy and economic instruments for pollution actions;*
 - d. *Strengthening institutions dealing with pollution-related issues;*
 - e. *Promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns and associated lifestyle changes;*
 - f. *Measuring progress and sharing knowledge.*
- (ii) Supporting voluntary commitments made by Member States, regional and local level authorities as well as by the private sector and civil society organizations

Multi-stakeholder engagement and working modalities

- **The Global Coalition** will bring together interested Governments, UN agencies, secretariats of relevant environmental conventions, development organizations, financing institutions, business networks and entities, cities and local authorities, civil society organizations and individual citizens.
- **A Pollution Control Action Programme** will be developed under the auspices of the UN Environment and with input from all interested stakeholders to catalyse action.

The Pollution Control Action Programme would build on other relevant voluntary coalitions, partnerships and alliances to avoid overlap and focus on the added value of such a synergy. Examples may include but are not limited to:

- the Climate and Clean Air Coalition;
- the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management;
- the Global Waste Partnership;

- the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns with its six programmes;
- the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities;
- the Global Alliance for Health and Pollution;
- the Partnership for Action on the Green Economy;
- the Environment and Trade Hub on enhancing trade in environmentally sound technologies
- the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases.
- **High-level political engagement** would be sought by having relevant Ministers, in addition to Ministers of Environment, engaged right from the beginning;
- **Science and innovation based actions:** A group of scientists and technology/innovation leaders would be established to advise the Coalition. This group could also develop a biennial progress report.
- **A small team would be established by the Executive Director of the UN Environment to:**
 - Report at each UN Environment Assembly on progress to maintain momentum;
 - Support member states and other stakeholders in demonstrating clear and quantifiable impacts from the actions;
- **A Trust Fund**, or a specific financial mechanism, should be established to ensure there are basic resources for the secretariat to manage.

Conditions to be met for the Coalition to be realized

- ✓ Member States and other stakeholders establish a Global Coalition for a Pollution-free Planet at the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly
- ✓ Member States decide to create a Pollution Control Action Programme and request the Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme to establish a small support team to engage interested stakeholders in shaping the Programme and report on progress at subsequent UN Environmental Assemblies and at the High-Level Political Forum
- ✓ Member States and other potential partners commit to provide funding when the Programme is announced to kick start activities
- ✓ Key UN agencies and partners are mobilized and agree to be the “champion” of specific themes, pollution areas or key pollution-related activities

Expected positive outcomes

1. Significantly reduced levels of pollution
2. Reduced mortality and morbidity
3. Improved human health and economic productivity
4. More robust/restored ecosystems and a reduction in the loss of biodiversity due to pollution
5. Increased collaboration and improved knowledge on the environmental and human health impacts of pollution, pollution prevention, control and management
6. Strengthened policies and incentives, increased enforcement of rules and improved compliance on pollution prevention and reduction
7. Job creation and reduced waste through adoption of life cycle, eco-innovation and circular approaches and resource-efficient practices in key economic sectors
8. Enhanced engagement of the private sector, citizens and local governments in tackling pollution including by scaling-up environmentally sound technologies
9. Improved knowledge and intensified research that promotes a preventive approach to pollution, including assessment of economic costs, mitigation, avoidance and remediation.
10. Catalyzed innovation on waste systems, promoting circularity and sustainable product design.