

UNEA Monitor

UNEA Monitor is a daily newsletter powered by Major Groups during the UN Environment Assembly. The newsletter tracks the most important negotiations and events and delivers the daily news through the lens of civil society.

UNEA-4 Major Groups Feedback

As UNEA4 draws to a close, participants were approached yesterday to give some feedback on their experiences during this momentous event. UNEA4 participants were keen to be heard and shared a wide variety of perspectives.

Each participant was asked the following three questions:

- (1) Why is UNEA4 important, and how has it been useful to you?
- (2) Which resolutions were important to you?
- (3) What would you like to be different at UNEA5?

As **Norine Kennedy** of the United States Council for International Business said: “UNEA4 brings communities together to share ideas and catalyse the actions needed”. This echoed the general positive feedback that UNEA4 offered an ideal opportunity for people from all around the world working on the same issues to meet with colleagues, share ideas and present their agendas on issues ranging from plastics, forestry and agriculture, nitrogen, geoengineering, to green business.

However, there was a strong sense that Member States were unwilling to listen to the agendas presented by many participants. A number of representatives from Major Groups (MG) were disappointed that Member States showed little interest in their initiatives. **Isis Alvarez**, of the Global Forest Coalition, expressed regret that few national delegates, for example, visited the Green Tent. One common perspective, as shared by **Mark Sutton** of the science MG, was that to be heard at all, MGs would have to form an attachment to a Member State.



Giulia Carlini

The alleged watering down of resolutions was also a common complaint. **Giulia Carlini**, of the Centre for International Environmental Law, seemed frustrated that Member States' objectives appeared to lack ambition and were not progressive. Most participants aimed this criticism at a very small number of large Member States, noting that other large Member States, such as the EU, appeared equally frustrated by this approach.



Wali Haider

Several participants expressed dismay at the deliberate exclusion of observers from some meetings. The fact that resolutions are not open to public review disappointed many participants. **Wali Haider**, representing the farmers MG, shared a widely held view that future resolutions should involve binding implementation.

Looking to the future, Carlini shared a common perspective held by many MGs that: “UNEA5 should be a model of transparency with effective participation of civil society and non-state actors.” Transparency and inclusion were keenly felt to be important for

MGs, with some participants complaining that English was the main language of communication. For non-native English speakers, the deliberate use of some Member States of complicated and obscure language led to many MG participants feeling a sense of exclusion from decision-making processes.

For UNEA5, MGs ultimately wish to see a strong, coherent theme that provides the opportunity to work on the root causes and drivers of the environmental crisis, **Janice Cox**.



Janice Cox



See you next UNEA

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