

Norwegian Written Comments on the Theme for the Third United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-3).

The following comments reflect the Norwegian ideas for a theme. Agreeing on the theme in dialogue with all members is the best way to ensure a successful UNEA-3.

1. Norway welcomes what we see to be an emerging consensus that there be one central theme to UNEA-3. The challenge will be to agree on a level of detail which is both specific enough to facilitate a tangible and action-oriented outcome, but broad enough to be of sufficient interest to all member states and stakeholders alike.
2. We welcome the proposed themes outlined by the Secretariat, but consider that some refinement is needed to find a theme that would be satisfactory to all.
3. From the Norwegian perspective, we consider that theme 1: Pollution-free world/It's time to clean up our planet has particular potential. The issue of resource efficiency, which we see as a key component of theme 2, is however also a very important topic, and we would consider it to be relevant in the context of a pollution discussion as well.
4. While UNEA II broadly addressed the relationship of human health to planetary health, the proposal now it to focus directly on the definite steps that will provide the measurable results in pollution reduction.
5. In the spirit of Agenda 2030, we think that a focus on pollution will allow us to demonstrate both the value of the integrated approach of sustainable development, and the importance of measurable results in the environmental dimension, which is within the mandate of UN Environment.
6. Norway is also of the view that with a focus on pollution, UNEA 3 could provide timely input and momentum to the intersessional process for the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. The universal participation and weight of UNEA could further the involvement of business "champions" in the intersessional process.
7. Such a theme would provide a framework for which resolutions/decisions should be prioritized for UNEA-3, thereby ensuring a more realistic workload in the preparatory process and at the meeting itself.
8. For example, there is a mandate from UNEA 2 for UN Environment to present a report on marine litter and microplastics, and this clearly would fall within the ambit of a pollution free world. Resource effectiveness is a main arena for private sector competitiveness, and a force that can be unleashed even better through incentivizing environmental policy for a pollution-free world. The private-public sector dynamics will take centre stage with such a theme for UNEA III.
9. As noted in the meeting last week, Norway believes it is important that the focus of this theme should be solution oriented, rather than problem oriented. One of UN Environment's key strengths has always been its convening power and we think that we must highlight the innovations and efforts from all actors to contribute to a pollution-free world. We believe that UNEA 3 should showcase solutions and innovations, and gains from, measurable pollution reduction, not just diagnose the problems. And there can be no doubt that actors beyond governments are in fact the source of these solutions and innovations, and so both the private sector, science, technology, civil society and governance actors at all levels must be given a clear place in these discussions.
10. To be clear, Norway believes that choosing a topic like "pollution free world" should have as its ultimate objective to inspire solutions and actions, or we will be failing our mandate to achieve a pollution-free world and transform the world for people, planet and prosperity.

