

U.S. Proposals on the Pollution Theme for the Third UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-3)

The United States is pleased with the emergence of a pollution theme for UNEA-3, which we believe is timely, and can have a positive impact and resonate strongly in many parts of the world. We appreciate the ideas and activities for a successful UNEA-3 proposed by the Secretariat and Member States and have drawn on them in providing further suggestions. Picking up on Norway's phrasing, we would like to suggest a theme title such as: "People, Planet, Prosperity: A Cleaner Planet for Healthy, Prosperous Lives." We look forward to refining the scope to a powerful concept and program of action broad enough to incorporate the many types of pollution and the varied impacts pollution has on people (health), the planet (the environment), and prosperity (economies/human welfare), and yet targeted enough to garner global attention and have meaningful impact through national level action.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including those themes under review at the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2017 ("healthy lives") and 2018 ("transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies"), are a useful framework for UNEP action and enhance the visibility of the organization and its participation in the HLPF. "People, Planet, Prosperity" supports the SDG overarching goals of environment, health, and development, and is in keeping with the SDG's 5P's framing: (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, Partnership).

Data is the foundation of the science policy debate and UNEP is at the forefront of data collection and dissemination. It is worth noting that the UNEP Global Environment Outlook (GEO)-6 regional assessments, released earlier this year, all include pollution in the key findings.

We also believe UNEA-3 should focus on civil society and private sector engagement on pollution issues. As Norway has emphasized, non-government entities are important among sources of innovative solutions to environmental challenges.

Within this theme, UNEA-3 might address the following substantive areas:

- Air pollution, especially in transportation and sharing new data on economic impacts;
- Water pollution, especially wastewater, marine plastics and nutrient pollution;
- Sound management of chemicals and waste, including lead paint, mercury, and waste reduction, including for food waste; and
- Other issues, such as legal and policy solutions to environmental health and economic impacts from pollution.

In addition to resolutions on a select few issues, UNEA-3 could catalyze action on these problems in the following ways:

- Member State pledges of action on a specific environmental challenge, along the lines of pledges made at the 2016 Our Ocean Conference in Washington—we believe this format

would have the added advantage of keeping the Assembly lively, and promoting country engagement; and

- Organization of a forum outside the plenary hall on best practices in combatting specific pollution problems: UNEP Secretariat, Member States and external stakeholders (local and regional governments; environmental NGOs, private companies, implementing agencies, consultants, and others) could present success stories and case studies about measuring, managing, and ultimately reducing pollution through policy advances, adoption of green technologies, and the contributions of citizen scientists.