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ENGAGING THE BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY (B&I) MAJOR GROUP: A BUSINESS COALITION UPDATE

A Non-Paper for the Bureau Retreat, submitted by the B&I Major Group to UNEP

Italics = Activities proposed to be organized through the Business Coalition, subject to adequate funding support

Since preparations began last year for the 3rd U.N. Environment Assembly (UNEA3), the Business and Industry (B&I) Major Group has been aware of increased interest in the role of the private sector in UNEA3 topics and in UNEA3 itself. In our view, this UNEA3 interest should build upon long term involvement and partnership by business with UNEP across many of its work-streams, offices, initiatives, partnerships and treaties. In addition, we believe it should set the stage for a strengthened interaction with the private sector looking ahead to UNEA4 and beyond.

To improve substantive engagement opportunities, the B&I Major Group has developed a business sector-led and governed alliance – **the Business Coalition** -- to serve as an interlocutor for business vis a vis UNEP, including in UNEA and UNEA relevant meetings. Its vision is to support the B&I Major Group and represent the widest possible range of sectors, business sizes, and regions from the for-profit sector. This would be a scaling up of the existing focal point process which has co-ordinated B&I Major Group engagement at UNEP to date.

The Business Coalition is organised and will operate in a transparent, inclusive and constructive manner that:

- Encourages greater business group participation
- Allows substantive engagement with UNEA and UNEP
- Strengthens the voice and presence of Business in UNEA and UNEP

The underpinning principles for the activities of the Business Coalition are:

- **Full range of expertise:** The BC, through its participating partners, can provide UN Environment Programme/UNEA with policy, technical, expert and implementation input, at the appropriate level and expertise.
- **Comprehensive and inclusive engagement:** The BC will reflect the full economic and commercial spectrum through the involvement of companies of all sizes and sectors from developed and developing countries.
- **Self governing:** The BC will work autonomously and manage its own interface, internal coordination and selection of representatives for engaging with Member States and other stakeholders. Such self-governing principles would include transparency, consensus where possible, or a range of responsible business views when there is more than one perspective.
- **Distinct voice:** The BC will present a distinct and representative voice for its participating partners, as stakeholders who are deeply involved in delivering partnerships, livelihoods, and incomes, and who can implement environmental stewardship programmes.
- **Full life-cycle of policy through dialogue:** The BC engagement will inform all stages of policy development and implementation, including agenda setting, and policy formulation, at all levels.

- **Enhanced representation:** The BC will serve as a support structure for the Business and Industry Major Group, allowing business opportunities for participation that reflect its unique role in implementing environmental aspects of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

This update outlines proposed Business Coalition involvement to:

- inform the development, deliberation and outcomes of UNEA3,
- suggest options for business role in key meetings and events and
- encourage consideration of voluntary actions to be pledged by business.

Some important “grey areas” remain that are determinative to Business Coalition action and representation, including whether UNEA3 will include a technology expo, how many business representatives can attend and be actively involved in various UNEA3 events, and how UNEA3 side events will be organized.

In that context, envisioned Business Coalition activities cover the following:

I. Mobilizing the B&I Major Group to Inform preparations for and proposed outcomes of UNEA3

Inviting business and industry comments – first through nominated expert reviewers, and then from the B&I Major Group on the draft Thematic Report on Pollution for UNEA3

- Attending as possible relevant meetings of the UNEP CPR Sub Committee and CPR en route to UNEA3 and/or monitoring these discussions via webcasts.
- Through BCU, provide compiled business and industry priorities, perspectives and recommendations relating to the topics under consideration at UNEA3
- Review draft resolutions as they become available and share business views with governments and UNEP
- *Organize a business meeting with technology innovation “speed dating” reception either during CPR meeting just prior to UNEA3 or on Sunday afternoon, December 3*

II. Mobilizing Business Awareness and Action on the UNEA3 Theme: Towards a Pollution Free Planet

Business Coalition Partners: Croplife International; International Council of Chemicals Associations (ICCA); International Fertilizer Association (IFA); International Organization of Employers (IOE); International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA); United States Council for International Business (USCIB); World Ocean Council

The Business Coalition will

- Expand the circle of the B&I Major Group to UNEP
 - Encourage all currently accredited business and industry groups to engage more actively en route to UNEA3
 - Invite more business organizations (focus on developing countries) and sectors to engage in the UNEA3 preparations – target green tech, retail, SMEs etc.
- Launch a Business Coalition campaign to notify B&I Major Group organizations, BC partners and business at large of the opportunity to pledge environmental sustainability actions on the occasion of UNEA3 and

encourage those business organizations to reach out broadly -- accompanied by social media -- through their networks, affiliates and partner organizations to invite consideration of such pledges.

III. Business Participating at UNEA3

- The B&I delegation (range of sectors, nationalities) to attend UNEA3 (and previous CPR meeting, November 29 – December 1), depending on space and quality opportunities to engage during UNEA3.
- The Business Coalition will:
 - o Nominate high level business representatives to take part in the Leadership Dialogue
 - o Nominate business representatives to take part in the Multi-stakeholder Dialogue
 - o Hold business and industry major group coordinating meetings as needed from Nov 29 to December 6
 - o Provide business input and presenters as possible in designated side events at UNEA3
- Represent the Business and Industry Major Group in the Major Group and Stakeholder Forum (December 2 – 3)