

**Comments on behalf of the European Union and its Member States  
on the Overview of the development of the Programme of Work 2020-2021**

**CPR Subcommittee meeting  
26 June 2018**

The EU and its Member States (EU+MS) would like to thank UNEP for this first view on the development of the Programme of Work (PoW) 2020-2021.

The EU+MS would like to recall what the UNEA-2/20 resolution requested which is a “prioritized, result-oriented and streamlined POW for the period 2020-2021. This should guide UNEP in the preparation of the PoW. We underline the importance that the PoW is prioritized and policy relevant, especially at the indicators level, so as to better reflect the role of UNEP and its added-value.

UNEP indicates the preparation of the new PoW will be an opportunity to establish a stronger alignment to the 2030 Agenda and highlight linkages with UNEA resolution. We believe it should also be an opportunity to potentially include new priorities for UNEA, or update the PoW if some issues are no longer priorities for UNEP.

a) On the alignment between the UNEP-results framework and SDG-indicators

The EU+MS support this process to align the results framework of the PoW with the SDG-indicators. The first results of this exercise are promising, although we are still at an early stage. However, in some examples given in the annex the link between the UNEP-indicator and the SDG-indicator is still not so clear.

With regards to choices to be made between PoW-indicators and A2030 indicators, when they are quite similar, UNEP proposes to keep UNEP’s indicator (cf p 4: *The Resilience to Disasters and Conflicts Sub-Programme aligns strongly at objective level, with a more general alignment to the indicators. Thus, the existing indicators for this Sub-Programme will continue to be appropriate for the biennium 2020-2021.*). Could UNEP clarify this option? Wouldn’t it be preferable to use the SDG-indicator in that case?

Could UNEP clarify if this document primarily intends to discuss the setting of indicators at impact and outcome level? Will suggestions relating to a full results framework be developed later, or are these the main indicators of the PoW?

b) With regards to the proposal to add UNEA-resolutions to relevant subprogrammes

The EU+MS support this approach which would give a clear and useful overview on how the objectives of the programme of work connect with UNEA requests through different resolutions. This approach supports a coherent delivery of the different tasks UNEP is set

out to undertake. Could UNEP clarify if the complete set of resolutions would be linked to the programme of work? Could UNEP indicate if all of the resolutions could be integrated or has UNEP identified some (components of) resolutions that are completely out of scope of the PoW?

The EU would also reiterate the comments we previously made on the importance of integrating and clearly explaining in the next PoW/B 2020-2021 various activities initiated by UNEP. For instance, certain activities that are not spelled out in the current PoW/B, such as the BRI initiative or other so called "special initiatives" lead to questions about their legitimacy, and how they contribute to agreed objectives of the PoW.

c) On Lessons Learned

The EU+MS would like to recommend developing the part on lessons-further, based on the lesson-learned from the current biennium or the evaluation, including what didn't work, what difficulties UNEP had to face so that appropriate measures can be taken during the development of this new PoW. The evaluation synthesis report for example contains several recommendations to further improve UNEP's results based management.

d) On further efforts to improve UNEP's results framework

UNEP states in the document: "At the same time, the UN Environment Programme acknowledges that ultimately Governments will achieve the goals of Agenda 2030, and that direct attribution of results cannot happen solely due to the support and facilitation role provided by the UN Environment Programme, but due to the contribution of several other actors including UN Agencies."

The EU+MS acknowledge the difficulty of attribution in the case of monitoring of higher level outcomes, impact and indicators. However, the EU+MS emphasize the importance for UNEP to demonstrate how their efforts contribute to these results measured.

In this context the EU+MS believe that some of the suggested indicators for UNEP are very general, which makes it difficult to see what would be UNEP's specific action. (e.g. Increase in the proportion of countries in which environmental issues are addressed in national disaster risk reduction strategies). It could be useful that UNEP systematically add more concrete and specific indicators which would allow us to measure in a simpler what each subprogramme concretely do.

It is relevant to follow up changes on country level, as proposed, however this need also be complemented with an analysis of attribution, or contribution, and preferably indicators at programme level in order to be able to follow up how UNEPs initiatives contribute to the outcome or impact level indicator.

The EU+MS would also like to request more clarifications on how UNEP will align the results framework of this new POW with the different portfolios of projects that were approved in 2017. As the document states "A set of seven Project Portfolios, one for each UN Environment Sub-Programme, for the period 2018-2021 were also developed and

approved in 2017. The project portfolios outline how the results in the Medium-Term Strategy and the Programme of Work will be delivered, in support of Agenda 2030”. Each project will of course have its own result framework and what is monitored on the project level should be useful to gather data on SDG-indicators at the POW-level. So there should be a clear theory of change for each subprogramme connecting the results framework of the PoW with UNEP’s portfolio of projects.

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