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Joint Meeting of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly  
and the Committee of Permanent Representatives  
5 February 2019  
4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
Agenda Item 3

### **Agenda Item 3: Preparations for the UN Environment Assembly**

#### **Guidance note: Leadership Dialogues at fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly**

A key feature of the high/level segment of the 2019 UN Environment Assembly will be a series of high-level, interactive Leadership Dialogues, as well as a Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue. These Dialogues are designed to provide ministers and leaders from civil society, business community, and international organizations with the opportunity to engage in an interactive exchange of views on priorities, best practices, challenges and actions relating to the overall theme of the Assembly: **Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production.**

During the Dialogues, high level participants will have the opportunity to address key issues relating to the theme of the Assembly and to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, to create a political momentum and direction towards addressing key policy and action gaps at the global, regional, national and local levels. Participants are invited to share “real-life” narratives, best practices and innovative ideas for overcoming challenges and scaling up solutions. The Dialogues will be guided by the report of the Executive Director for the high-level segment and informed by the negotiations on the draft Ministerial Outcome Document and relevant resolutions to be adopted by the Assembly.

In line with the guidance provided by the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives, as well as informal consultations with interested member States and Stakeholders, the Secretariat proposes the following Focus Areas for the Dialogues<sup>1</sup>:

- Leadership Dialogue 1 (3 to 4.30 pm, 14 March 2019): “**Environmental challenges related to poverty and natural resources management, including sustainable food systems, food security and halting biodiversity loss**”;
- Leadership Dialogue 2 (10 to 11.30 am, 15 March 2019): “**Life-cycle approaches to resource efficiency, energy, chemicals and waste management**”;

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\*Document revised on 21 January 2019

<sup>1</sup> The Focus Areas are identical with those identified in the Secretariat Concept Note on the theme of the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly, available here:

<http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/25994/English.pdf?sequence=15&isAllowed=y>

- Leadership Dialogue 3 (11.30 to 1 pm, 15 March 2019): “**Innovative sustainable business development at a time of rapid technological change**”.
- Multi-stakeholder Dialogue (4.30 to 6 pm, 14 March 2019): “**Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Consumption**” – see separate guidance note for this Dialogue

The sessions will be open to high level representatives from Member States, non-Member States, UN specialized agencies and bodies, other intergovernmental organizations and accredited major groups and stakeholders. Each dialogue will be led by a qualified moderator with prior experience in the field, and the audience will be invited to target their interventions to answer the following cross-cutting questions:

- *How do political commitments in the Ministerial Declaration to be adopted by the Fourth Session of the UN Environment Assembly contribute to finding solutions within the Focus Area?*
- *How does the Focus Area relate to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals?*
- *How can the global community promote science-based decision making in this Focus Area, building on the findings in the sixth Global Environment Outlook?*

With the aim to promote dynamic and interactive discussions, in light of the limited time available, there will be no panel discussions. However, the Secretariat will identify a limited number of high level introductory speakers that will help guide and give context to the discussion, which will be announced in advance of the session, similar to the practice applied at UNEA 3. After these short introductory remarks, participants will be invited to signal their intention to speak and await their turn. The Dialogues will be webcast on the Internet, and a summary of the outcome of each of the Dialogues prepared by the Secretariat will be presented during the closing plenary of the Assembly on 15 March 2019.

**Leadership Dialogue 1: *Environmental challenges related to poverty and natural resources management, including sustainable food systems, food security and halting biodiversity loss***

Time: 3.00 – 4.30 pm, 14 March 2019

Venue: Conference Room 1 (interpretation into all official UN languages); two additional meeting rooms (English only) to be announced at a later stage

Secretariat Focal Point: **TBD**

Key messages from the Executive Director’s report to the fourth UN Environment Assembly:

- Poverty eradication, changing unsustainable and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production, protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, are the overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development.
- Maximizing sustainable agricultural productivity is critical to eradicating poverty, creating income opportunities, enhancing inclusive socio-economic growth and reducing vulnerabilities across the globe.
- Food systems are putting increasing pressure on our environment.
- Food systems are failing to provide for the world’s food insecure people, both in terms of agricultural yield and nutritional quality.
- Long-term global food security depends largely on a shift towards sustainable food systems.

- Sustainable food systems offer a holistic, integrated way to address food security, environmental health and human well-being.
  - Embracing at all levels a holistic approach to food security and nutrition will help to eradicate poverty and achieve multiple Sustainable Development Goals.
  - We can create the momentum to reduce food losses and halve waste among consumers and promote more sustainable and healthier diets.
  - We need to invest in resilient, climate-smart agriculture and sustainable value chains.
  - Individual actions can go a long way to achieve sustainable food-systems.
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### **Leadership Dialogue 2: *Life-cycle approaches to resource efficiency, energy, chemicals and waste management***

Time: 10.00 – 11.30 am, 15 March 2019

Venue: Conference Room 1 (interpretation into all official UN languages); two additional meeting rooms (English only) to be announced at a later stage

Secretariat Focal Point: **TBC**

Key messages from the Executive Director's report to the fourth UN Environment Assembly:

- Life-cycle approaches and strategies are essential tools to decoupling economic activity and human well-being from resource use and negative environmental impacts.
  - Regulations can be used to set environmental targets, or to mandate or prohibit specific practices.
  - Public procurement policies can stimulate demand for sustainable products.
  - New governance approaches and partnerships are required to support the transition to sustainable consumption and production.
  - We must support governments and other stakeholders to act on the ground.
  - Research and innovation are key to strengthening life-cycle management and resource efficiency.
  - Transparency can unlock practical, affordable and innovative environmental solutions and open opportunities for sustainable investments
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### **Leadership Dialogue 3: *Innovative sustainable business development at a time of rapid technological change***

Time: 11.30 am – 1.00 pm, 15 March 2019

Venue: Conference Room 1 (interpretation into all official UN languages); two additional meeting rooms (English only) to be announced at a later stage

Secretariat Focal Point: **TBC**

Key messages from the Executive Director's report to the fourth UN Environment Assembly:

- Rapid technological change, if managed properly, can help unlock a vast set of opportunities to widen prosperity and generate long-term sustainable value from innovative solutions that encourage natural systems to flourish and entrepreneurship to grow.
- We need to support innovative business models that work for people and planet.
- We need to harness the power of businesses and citizens as active co-creators and problem solvers.
- We must invest in data sharing and participatory science.
- Governments, companies and citizens should consider how a digital ecosystem for planetary data will be built, financed and governed to benefit the environment.