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**146<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives  
to the United Nations Environment Programme**

Nairobi, 20 June 2019

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; 2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Conference Room 1

**Agenda Item 7d): Follow-up of the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly -  
Implementation of resolution UNEP/EA.4/Res.22**

The annexed note, “Options paper for an Improved Framework for Reporting on Implementation of UN Environment Assembly Resolutions”, responds to a request in paragraph 5 of UNEP/EA.4/Res.22 (L.26) entitled “Implementation and follow up of UNEA resolutions and related activities”, by describing the current overall reporting regime and presenting options for an improved and integrated framework for reporting on the implementation of UNEA resolutions. It also provides an update on current monitoring practices of the programme of work, and the way forward to develop a monitoring mechanism.

Member States are invited to indicate and motivate their preferred option in writing by 30 June 2019, after which the Secretariat will present a final proposal for an improved reporting regime based on the inputs received.

Further, the Secretariat also will develop a proposal for a monitoring mechanism for resolutions for consideration at the 147<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

# Options paper for an Improved Framework for Reporting on Implementation of UN Environment Assembly Resolutions

## 1. Background

The UN Environment Assembly (UNEA), at its 4<sup>th</sup> session, adopted resolution UNEP/EA.4/Res. 22, (L.46) entitled “Implementation and follow-up of UN Environment Assembly Resolutions”. The operative paragraphs of the resolution read as follows:

1. *Affirms the importance of the implementation of, and the adequate reporting on, resolutions of the UNEA;*
2. *Encourages member States and other actors to continue to provide support, according to their capacity, with a view to advancing the implementation of UNEA resolutions;*
3. *Requests the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to develop a monitoring mechanism, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to track and assess UNEP’s implementation of resolutions in the framework of the Programme of Work and Budget;*
4. *Requests that the monitoring mechanism:*
  - a. *Builds on and improves existing formats of reporting and monitoring;*
  - b. *Provides an inventory and a brief summary of implementation of UNEA resolutions via a dedicated webpage;*
  - c. *Identifies existing linkages between each resolution and the Programme of Work and Budget;*
  - d. *Provides links to existing reports related to UNEA resolutions;*
  - e. *Provides the opportunity for Members States to voluntarily report on national implementation efforts;*
  - f. *Based on available information, including existing UNEP and national voluntary reports, summarizes specific challenges that have hindered implementation efforts, including those of member States;*
5. *Requests the Executive Director to propose to the CPR at its 146th meeting options for an improved framework for reporting on the implementation of UNEA resolutions to be integrated with the reporting on the Programme of Work and budget;*
6. *Also requests the Executive Director to report on the implementation of this resolution at the next UN Environment Assembly.*

This paper responds to the request in paragraph 5 of resolution 22, by describing the current overall reporting regime and presenting options for an improved and integrated framework for reporting on the implementation of UNEA resolutions. Given the close link to paragraphs 3 and 4, it also provides an update on current monitoring practices of the programme of work, and the way forward to develop a monitoring mechanism.

## 2. Current Reporting Practice

The Executive Director reports to Member States on the programme and budget performance through

Programme performance reports and quarterly reports,<sup>1</sup> which are structured in line with the expected accomplishments and indicators of performance in the approved programme of work. Programme of work reporting is based on an approved results framework that specifies clear metrics for measurement such as expected accomplishments, indicators of achievement and targets, based on units of measure, baselines, data sources and analysis plans. Sub-Programme coordinators report on the implementation of the programme of work under the supervision of Lead Division Directors.

Unlike the Programme of Work, resolutions are designed and adopted without metrics for progress reporting.

Adopted UNEA resolutions are assigned resolution Focal Points, who are responsible for taking the lead on implementation and reporting, under the supervision of Division Directors of designated lead Divisions.

In response to formal reporting requests by UNEA, as specified in the respective resolutions, the Executive Director provides pre-session official reports translated into the 6 UN languages. For UNEA-4 those reports are available [here](#).

In addition, for UNEA 1, 2 and 3, comprehensive pre-session information documents have provided updates on progress of implementation of all mandates requested of the Executive Director.

The latest such background information document is available [here](#).

Information of implementation of resolutions is also provided through dedicated briefing sessions on specific resolutions and presentations to Sub-Committee or regular CPR meetings.

Table 1 below outlines 6 different ways in which the Secretariat currently reports on the implementation of resolutions.

Table 1: Reporting on Resolutions: Current Frequency and Format				
	Method	Where	When	How/Format
1	<b>Pre-session official reports per resolution by the Executive Director, as required in the resolutions.</b>	OECPR/UNEA	Every odd year at OECPR/UNEA session <sup>2</sup>	By resolution, UNEA working or information documents, published on the papersmart portal
2	<b>Information documents on implementation of resolutions adopted at previous UNEA Sessions<sup>3</sup></b>	Annual Subcommittee meeting and OECPR/UNEA at the 4 <sup>th</sup> Session	Annual/4 <sup>th</sup> Session of UNEA	Compilation report covering many individual resolutions
3	Presentations in support of Agenda items at Sub-Committee meetings or Committee meetings	Sub-Committee meetings or Committee meetings	As mandated by Governing Body or Ad-hoc	Note from the Secretariat and presentation
4	<b>Dedicated briefings on implementation of individual resolutions to Member States</b>	Briefing sessions to the CPR	Ad-hoc, as requested by CPR or suggested by secretariat	CPR background note and presentation Verbal and PPT presentations

<sup>1</sup> Governing Council decision 25/13 (op.11) requested the Executive Director to report to the CPR on a six-monthly basis on the implementation of the Programme of Work. Governing Council decision 26/9 (op.14) changed the reporting frequency from six-monthly to annual. UNEA Decision 4/1 (op.13) confirmed requirement for quarterly reporting.

<sup>2</sup> Following transition from even to odd years in 2017.

**Table 1: Reporting on Resolutions: Current Frequency and Format**

<b>5</b>	<b>References in Programme Performance Reports</b>	OECP/UNEA/CPR/Annual Subcommittee meeting	Every six months as required in the Programme of Work	As relevant to Sub-Programme performance
<b>6</b>	<b>References in Quarterly reports of the Executive Director</b>	Regular CPR meetings	Quarterly or at CPR meeting	As relevant to Sub-Programme updates

The requests to the Executive Director in the adopted resolutions and the Programme of Work vary from a reporting perspective. Some link to specific performance indicators; others to expected accomplishments. Some are cross-cutting while some have tenuous links at the Sub-Programme level. An important element of a new monitoring mechanism is to facilitate improved progress reporting and comparison across resolutions.

Further consideration is needed with regard to the relationship between the implementation of UNEA resolutions and the implementation of the Programme of Work, for example in the context of the Committee of Permanent Representatives based review of UNEA and its subsidiary bodies requested at UNEA- 4.<sup>4</sup> This should include consideration of how best to incorporate relevant mandates into the programme of work.

There are four key challenges to be addressed in getting a comprehensive picture of the implementation of resolutions in the context of the Programme of Work and Budget:

- (i) Integrating and rationalizing the relationship between mandates given in a resolution, or in a ministerial declaration, with the activities mandated through the approved programme of work and budget.
- (ii) Developing a standardized process/procedure for monitoring and motivating reporting back on actions to implement resolutions by actors other than the Executive Director such as Member States and UN organizations.
- (iii) Motivating greater feedback and guidance from Member States on reports produced by the Secretariat on implementation of past resolutions.
- (iv) Guidance from Member States on resolutions with financial implications additional to what has been provided for under the approved Programme of Work.

### 3. Proposed Options

All options 1-3 seek to improve overall reporting of implementation of resolutions to member States, strengthen the link between reporting on implementation of resolutions and the Programme of Work and its expected accomplishment indicators and address possible gaps in existing monitoring and reporting processes. They also aim to ensure greater efficiency and to minimize the reporting burden on the Secretariat. This will include preventing duplication of programme performance reporting through Quarterly reports of the Executive Director and Programme Performance reporting.

For all options, the monitoring mechanism, once developed, would be used to track progress on implementation of resolutions. The reporting focus is on UNEA-4 resolutions and future Assembly resolutions as well as pending reports mandated by previous Environment Assemblies. As requested by the resolution in paragraph 4(d), links to existing reports related to resolutions will be provided in the monitoring mechanism.

<sup>4</sup> UNEP/EA.4/2, Provisional agenda, date and venue of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, Ops. 9 and 10

### 3.1 Option One: “Improved Status Quo”

This option builds upon and improves the existing framework. Improvements would include clearer parameters for reporting on all resolutions based on a monitoring framework; better scheduled and structured dedicated briefings and presentations at Sub-committee or Committee meetings agenda items; and advance communication in the governing bodies calendar of meetings.

#### Components of Option One

1. Pre-session official reports of the Executive Director to future UNEA sessions as mandated by UNEA in the resolutions (no change).
2. Information document on implementation of resolutions of previous UNEA by UNEA Sessions (no change).
3. Dedicated briefings to regular or Subcommittee meetings of the CPR provided by the Secretariat for each resolution in a two-year inter-sessional period, according to a structured schedule approved by the CPR bureau.
4. Presentations in support of Agenda items at Sub-Committee meetings or Committee meetings at least once in the inter-sessional period.
5. References in Programme Performance Reports as relevant to POW performance indicators.
6. Progress updates provided in Quarterly reports of the Executive Director to the CPR, when relevant to Sub-Programme activities by expected accomplishment.

Pro: More structured, predictable and comparable reporting, comprehensive reporting

Con: Practice has been more focus on the resolutions where there is progress; Heavy uncoordinated and unconsolidated reporting burden on the Secretariat, often requiring to “re-invent the wheel”.

### 3.2 Option Two: “Rationalization”

Reporting on resolutions is completely integrated into the programme performance reporting, combined with presentations on resolutions at Sub-committee or Committee meetings, by Sub-Programme. Programme performance reporting is adjusted and rationalized, to eliminate any overlap between Programme Performance Reporting and quarterly reports to the regular meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives in reporting periods. Clearer parameters for reporting on all resolutions based on a monitoring framework. Presentations communicated ahead of time in the calendar of meetings.

#### Components of Option Two

1. Pre-session formal reports of the Executive Director to future UNEA sessions as mandated by UNEA in the resolutions. (no change)
2. Reporting on resolutions fully incorporated into reporting into Programme Performance Reports, as relevant to approved Programme of Work performance indicators.
3. Progress in implementation of the resolutions is also reported on in Quarterly reports of the Executive Director, as part of activity highlights as per Expected Accomplishment in each Sub-Programme.
4. Presentations in support of Agenda items at Sub-Committee meetings or Committee meetings by sub programme at least twice in the inter-sessional period.<sup>5</sup>

Pro: Combined reporting on resolutions and Programme of Work reporting, balanced with opportunity for in depth intersessional consideration of individual resolutions by sub-programme.

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<sup>5</sup> This could borrow from the SDG review model used by the HLPF.

Con: Longer Programme Performance reports. Medium reporting burden.

### 3.3 Option Three: “Minimalistic”

In addition to mandated reports, maintains current referencing of resolution into Programme of work reporting (PPR and Quarterly). It also rationalizes programme performance reporting to eliminate overlap of Programme Performance Reporting and Quarterly reporting periods. Updates/Reports by the Executive Director mandated by the UNEA.

#### Components of Option Three

1. Pre-session formal reports of the Executive Director to future UNEA sessions as mandated by UNEA in the resolutions. (no change)
2. References in Programme Performance Reports.
3. References in Quarterly reports of the Executive Director.

Pro: Meets mandatory resolution reporting at next UNEA, higher level linkage of resolution to Programme of Work reporting, and lower reporting burden.

Con: Limited opportunity to review progress by specific resolution before the OECPR and UNEA in the Committee of Permanent Representative setting.

## 4. Comparison of the three options proposed

Table 2 below compares, in summary form the three options proposed above.

Table 2: Reporting on Resolutions in POW context: Comparison of Options			
Method	Option One	Option Two	Option Three
Updates/Reports by the Executive Director mandated by the UNEA	√	√	√
Information documents on implementation of resolutions by UNEA Sessions <sup>6</sup>	√	X	X
Presentations in support of Agenda items at Sub-Committee meetings or Committee meetings by resolution	√	X	X
Presentations in support of Agenda items at Sub-Committee meetings or Committee meetings by Sub-Programme	X	√	X
Briefings to Member States	√	X	X
References in Programme Performance Reports	√	X	√
References in Quarterly reports of the Executive Director	√	√	√
Full integration into Programme Performance Reports	X	√	X

## 5. Current Monitoring Practice of the Programme of Work

Current monitoring of the Programme of Work is based on self-assessments carried out at subprogramme and project levels by lead Divisions and Regional Offices, under six-monthly intervals. These self-

<sup>6</sup> Parameters: Mandate to the Executive Director, implementation plan, progress, partners, financial implications, challenges, opportunities, gaps.

assessments are subjected to a rigorous validation process. Assessments of UNEP projects provide essential inputs to the monitoring process and therefore the quality of project data and project assessments are central to its success.

Our internal system, the Programme Information and Management System (PIMS) provides the main database tool where collected assessment data (including evidence) is uploaded to allow for analysis and observation of trends by division and by subprogramme. A transition from PIMS to the UMOJA extension 2 PPM module is expected to be rolled out in 2019 and 2020, but the exact time frame is not yet known.

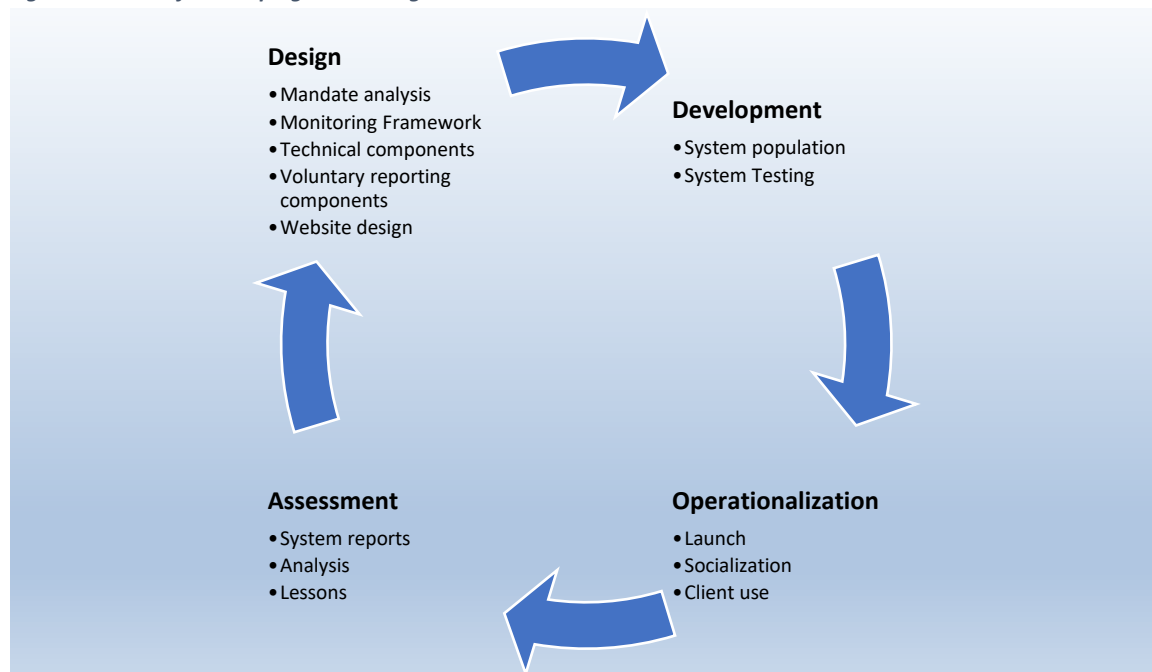
## 6. Monitoring Mechanism for UNEA resolutions

The Secretariat has yet to develop a full proposal for an appropriate monitoring mechanism, to track and assess UNEP's implementation of resolutions in the framework of the Programme of Work and Budget. The mechanism will be based on an existing internal UNEA Resolutions reporting tool linked to PIMS, developed in 2018. It can be noted that the request to develop the mechanism is expected to require additional resources which were not included in the approved Programme of Work and budget.

It is foreseen that the monitoring mechanism will also provide opportunity for Members States to voluntarily report on national implementation efforts, in accordance with paragraph 4 e) of resolution 22. It will include an inventory and brief summary of implementation of UNEA resolutions via a dedicated website. The mechanism could also capture, as relevant, links to other reporting frameworks for instance for SDGs, Multi-lateral Environment Agreements and the High Level Political Forum.

Initial thinking on the development of the monitoring mechanism is summarized in fig. 1.

*Figure1:Phases of Developing Monitoring Mechanism*



Work is currently in the design phase.

## 7. Next steps

- Member States are invited to indicate and motivate their preferred option in writing by 30 June 2019.

- The Secretariat will present a final proposal for an improved reporting regime based on the inputs received from member States.
- The Secretariat will develop a proposal for a monitoring mechanism for resolutions for consideration at the next regular meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

## **8. Annexes**

Annex 1: UNEP/EA.4/Res. 22 (L.26): Implementation and follow-up of the UN Environment Assembly Resolutions: Mandates for the Executive Director.