

**USA Comments on UNEP Programme of Work 2022-2023 Budget Envelope
July 14, 2020**

The United States offers the following comments regarding UNEP/SC/2020/10/3

The United States has consistently been one of UNEP's strongest supporters in terms of financial, technical, and scientific support. We recognize that UNEP's work is increasingly in-demand as evidenced by the steady increase in requests for assistance and in nearly all funding types. However, given the ongoing financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the likely effect it will have on multilateral funding, it would be prudent for Member States to adopt either option C, which anticipates reduced contributions from Member States, or option A, which holds funding at 2020-2021. And even these assumptions will need to be carefully reviewed over the course of 2021.

In addition, we are concerned that the secretariat's expectations for voluntary contributions to the Environment Fund are not realistic, given historical funding levels, and the United States consequently recommends that the Environment Fund budget be amended to reflect historical trends.

The United States regularly champions UNEP's work on the Science-Policy Interface. This data and information-driven approach to policy-making should also be applied to UNEP's budget. For the past three biennial budgets, actual incomes have fallen well short of budgeted amounts, at times as much as 50%. The background paper correctly identifies the many financial challenges national budgets will face in the post-pandemic recovery. We therefore ask why the same data-driven approach is not being applied for the 2022-2023 budget?

We specifically suggest that the 2022-2023 Environment Fund budget be reduced to \$150 million, which is more accurate given recent funding levels.