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United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme

Annual subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme Seventh meeting

Nairobi, 12-16 October 2020

Online meeting

1.00 pm – 6.00 pm (GMT+3)

Agenda Item 5: (b) Action plan for the implementation of subparagraphs (a)–(h) of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

The attached draft action plan has been developed in accordance with paragraph 14 of [UNEA decision 4/2](#), entitled “Provisional agenda, date and venue of the fifth session of UNEA”, which “*Requests the Executive Director to submit an action plan for the implementation of subparagraphs (a)–(h) of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, to be submitted for consideration by the UNEA at its fifth session, and invites the Director-General of the UN Office at Nairobi to contribute to the development of the plan in respect of the implementation of subparagraph (g) concerning the headquarters functions of UNEP in Nairobi.*”

The draft action plan has been informed by and builds on a series of meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) held to review the progress of and identify remaining gaps in the implementation of paragraph 88:

- [23 January 2020](#) – CPR subcommittee meeting, which considered a progress synthesis report in the implementation of paragraph 88.
- [5 March 2020](#) – CPR subcommittee meeting, which discussed areas requiring further implementation of subparagraphs (a), (c), (g) and (h).
- [2 April 2020](#) – CPR subcommittee meeting, which discussed areas requiring further implementation of subparagraphs (b), (d), (e) and (f).
- [2 July 2020](#) – CPR subcommittee meeting, which considered a report identifying emerging elements for further implementation of paragraph 88 based on the subcommittee meetings held on 5 March and 2 April.

Given the aspirational nature of paragraph 88, which seeks to upgrade and strengthen UNEP and reinforce its mandate, the implementation of the action plan is expected to be a continuous process, whereby a commitment by Member States to support UNEP in the implementation of the action plan, once it is finalised, will be essential.

Member States and stakeholders are invited to provide further guidance on the attached draft action plan, which will be considered by the Secretariat in view of presenting a final action plan to UNEA-5.

Draft action plan for the implementation of paragraph 88 of the Rio+20 outcome document, “The future we want”

(a) Establish universal membership in the Governing Council of UNEP, as well as other measures to strengthen its governance as well as its responsiveness and accountability to Member States.

1. *Realizing the full potential of universal membership.*

1.1 Promote increased participation of Member States in the deliberations of the CPR during the intersessional period between UNEA sessions, particularly for Member States without diplomatic representation in Nairobi.

1.2 Encourage more Member States to accredit themselves to UNEP.

1.3 Broaden the funding base of UNEP towards universal contributions, taking into account that the universal membership of the Environment Assembly also entails universal funding responsibility, as expressed by the Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contributions, VISIC, as reflected in UNEP Governing Council decision SS.VII/1 (see also paragraphs 9.1-9.5 below).

2. *Enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of UNEP governance.*

2.1 Implement the decisions reached in the process for review by the Committee of Permanent Representatives as mandated by paragraphs 9 to 13 of UNEA decision 4.2.

2.2 Improve universal access to UNEP intergovernmental meetings by fostering effective ways to participate in virtual meetings, enhancing information technology (IT) interface, providing accessible online documentation, and offering adequate IT support, especially for developing countries.

2.3 Develop or review, as appropriate, relevant supporting tools and manuals to ensure for effective virtual meetings.

3. *Reinforcing communication efforts for continued increase in the impact and visibility of UNEP’s policymaking organs and the Secretariat’s responsiveness.*

3.1 Provide comprehensive, accessible information about UNEP’s policymaking organs and its decisions including through the UNEA and CPR websites as well as through the resolution platform set out in response to UNEA resolution 4/22 on “Implementation and follow-up of UNEA resolutions”.

3.2 Continue to emphasize timeliness of distribution of documents and improved accessibility of information in all UN official languages.

(b) Have secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resources from the regular budget of the UN and voluntary contributions to fulfil its mandate.

4. Adequate and increased financial resources - increasing overall funding and improving ratio between core and earmarked funding.

4.1 Improve and increase communication to Member States on UNEP's strengths and comparative advantages, including UNEP's role as the global authority on the environment; provision of strong science-policy data; global convening power; capacity building of partners; advocacy and awareness raising on environmental matters; capacity to leverage partnerships for the environment; and support to countries to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the UN System.

4.2 Increase and strengthen information sharing on the value of the Environment Fund, results achieved with its funding; and how funding from the Environment Fund is allocated and which activities it funds.

4.3 Explain the effects that insufficient core funding will have on the implementation of the programme of work, in particular activities related to the science-policy interface and environmental governance, which are core mandates of UNEP.

4.4 Provide more detailed analysis of earmarked funding streams and demonstrate the implications of the current ratio of earmarked funding and core funding.

4.5 Instead of tight earmarking, encourage soft earmarking by explaining its benefits and exploring options to make it more attractive to Member States through measures such as: counting funds that are earmarked towards UNEP's thematic subprogrammes as contributions towards a Member State's "fair share" (as represented by the Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contributions, VISC); and decreasing programme support costs for softly earmarked funds.

5. Secure and stable financial resources: Broadening the donor base.

5.1 Increase information sharing about the VISC with a view to better explaining (a) how it is calculated, and (b) how it represents the "fair share" that each Member State is requested to contribute to the Environment Fund, acknowledging that universal membership of the Environment Assembly carries a universal responsibility.

5.2 Encourage Member States to explore options to make the VISC more binding, for example, through stronger wording in UNEA resolutions.

5.3 Continue to give greater public recognition and visibility to the contributing Member States, especially those that are in the top 15 category of contributors to the Environment Fund, and/or meet their "fair share" and/or provide soft/flexible funding.

5.4 Continue the dialogue with Member States on UNEP's funding challenges and opportunities in different fora, such as the meetings of the CPR.

(c) Enhance the voice of UNEP and its ability to fulfil its coordination mandate within the UN system by strengthening its engagement in key UN coordination bodies and

empowering it to lead efforts to formulate UN system-wide strategies on the environment;

6. *Promoting greater linkages with the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).*

6.1 Continue to provide timely substantive inputs to the annual meetings of the HLPF on the overarching environmental perspective of sustainable development, in accordance with UNEA resolution 3/3 on “Contributions of the UNEA to the HLPF”, including key messages adopted through UNEA resolutions, and explore possibilities for a dialogue on the importance of such contributions at the future sessions of UNEA.

6.2 Promote the active participation of the President of UNEA in the HLPF in order to convey the main messages of the UNEA with the aim to further strengthen the already existing linkages between UNEP and HLPF including through substantive policy interaction and political engagement at the highest level.

6.3 Continue improving communications between the President of UNEA, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council to enhance consideration of the contributions of the UNEA in the work of the HLPF.

6.4 Cooperate with the UN Regional Commissions to ensure that environmental priorities are strategically fed into and highlighted in the preparation process of the Regional Forums on Sustainable Development as well as in other regional inter-governmental processes.

7. *Delivering on the UN Development System reforms.*

7.1 Align UNEP’s policies, processes and procedures with the guidelines, tools and mechanisms of the UN Development System reforms.

7.2 Strengthen the capacity of staff in UNEP to support the implementation of the UNEP medium-term strategy and the programme of work in the context of the guidelines, tools and mechanisms of the UN Development System reforms at the country, regional and global levels.

7.3 Promote stronger collaboration between UNEP’s Regional Offices, and the regional UN entities, including the Regional Development Cooperation Office and the Regional Economic Commissions as well as relevant forums such as the Regional Forums on Sustainable Development (which report to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development).

7.4 Strengthen UNEP’s participation in the UN Country Teams and with the UN Resident Coordinators system to support the design and implementation of the Common Country Analyses and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, including by fostering partnerships with the UN entities at country and regional levels.

7.5 Strengthen UNEP’s participation in regional platforms and processes such as the Regional Collaboration Platforms, Opportunity/Issue-Based Coalitions and Regional Knowledge Platforms by conveying key messages from UNEP-administered multilateral environmental agreements and other scientific findings through UNEP’s Regional Offices.

7.6 Contribute to the implementation, monitoring and reporting on the UN Development System reforms¹ in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review to the General Assembly; the Economic and Social Council; the UN Sustainable Development Group; UNEA and the HLPF.

8. *Strengthening the role of the UN Environment Management Group (EMG).*

8.1 Define, lead and support measures in the EMG to enhance coordination and coherence of the UN system on the environment through the System-wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment to ensure concrete and collective activities as well as impact and visibility in support of integrating the environmental dimension in sustainable development, in line with UNEA resolution 1/11 “Coordination across the UN system in the field of the environment, including the Environment Management Group”.

8.2 Identify and support measures to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of the EMG and its secretariat based on the recommendations of the report on “Maximizing the Effectiveness of the EMG in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.

8.3 Advance the UN system corporate environmental performance, supporting the delivery of the UN 2020-2023 Sustainability Strategy and its follow-up process, through upgraded reporting, coordination, and technical assistance, including through partnerships with sister agencies.²

8.4 Provide briefings to the CPR on the above-mentioned actions including on the uptake of the EMG work by the rest of the UN system and how it trickles down to the country level.

9. *Enhancing cooperation among the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and with UNEP.*

9.1 Continue to systematically involve the MEAs secretariats in UNEA preparations, including on organization of side events, documentation and provision of technical input to proposed resolutions.

9.2 Continue to identify concrete means to promote policy coherence, cooperation and coordination between UNEP and the MEAs and among the MEAs in accordance with paragraph 89³ of “The future we want” outcome document.

¹ General Assembly resolution 72/279 “Repositioning of the UN development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the UN system”; and UNEA decision UNEP/EA.4/1 “Programme of work and budget for the biennium 2020-2021”.

² Strategy for Sustainability Management in the UN System 2020-2030
https://unemg.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/INF_3_Strategy-for-Sustainability-Management-in-the-UN-System.pdf

³ 89. We recognize the significant contributions to sustainable development made by the multilateral environmental agreements. We acknowledge the work already undertaken to enhance synergies among the three conventions in the chemicals and waste cluster (Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal,³ Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade³ and Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants³). We encourage parties to multilateral environmental agreements to consider further measures, in these and other clusters, as appropriate, to promote policy coherence at all relevant levels, improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary overlap

9.3 Continue to organize regular meetings with the UNEP-administered MEAs secretariats including through the MEAs Focal Points Network coordinated by UNEP to share information and identify areas for cooperation and to carry out any activities that may be prioritized by the UN Executive Director and the Heads of MEAs secretariats through their joint meetings.

(d) Promote a strong science-policy interface, building on existing international instruments, assessments, panels and information networks, including the Global Environment Outlook, as one of the processes aimed at bringing together information and assessment to support informed decision-making;

10. Reinforcing the scientific basis of UNEP.

10.1 Continue to support the ongoing ad-hoc global assessment dialogue to improve coherence and synergy among all major global environmental assessment processes, with particular focus on methodologies and communications and outreach.

10.2 Publish the underlying datasets of different UNEP assessment products as digital public goods and ensure they are connected into the wider UN Data Cube and global data ecosystem in line with the UN Secretary-General's Data Strategy and the UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation.

10.3 Work closely with Member States and the scientific community to fill the gaps in environmental data collection, monitoring and reporting, including through the use of automated techniques using earth observation, cloud computing and artificial intelligence.⁴

10.4 Strengthen internal capacity for early warning and foresight by allocating additional resources and reinvigorating partnerships with the existing network of UNEP collaborative centres as well as other technical partners.

10.5 Improve the availability and access to the latest scientific findings and environmental data in digital formats by enhancing linkages between UNEP's World Environment Situation Room (WESR) and major global environmental assessments processes, including through the development of a Global Environmental Data Strategy.

10.6 Enhance the interface and tailored use of WESR by the entire UN system organizations and Member States by providing the latest global, regional and national-level environmental data, geospatial analysis and statistics in digital formats and application programming interface (APIs) to support, among others, the formulation of UN Common Country Analyses.

10.7 Continue strengthening the science-policy-technology interface and GEO as an important intergovernmental process for bringing the latest environmental science to the attention of decision makers, including an emphasis on digitalizing the GEO process itself and releasing the underlying data and analyses in digital formats as digital public goods.

and duplication and enhance coordination and cooperation among the multilateral environmental agreements, including the three Rio conventions, as well as with the United Nations system in the field.

⁴ Such as those identified in UNEP report "[Strengthening the science-policy interface: A gap analysis](#)" (2017).

10.8 Act as a catalyst for science-informed transformative shifts that can drive progress towards the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through multi-stakeholder partnerships and through the publication of audience-focused products.

(e) Disseminate and share evidence-based environmental information, and raise public awareness on critical, as well as emerging, environmental issues;

11. *Digital transformation for the environment.*

11.1 Amplify and accelerate the structural transformations needed to achieve our collective climate, nature, and pollution goals and monitor progress at the global level in a transparent and robust manner through digital transformation, in line with UNEP's medium-term strategy.

11.2 Explore how a combination of environmental data and digital technologies can catalyse and drive forward the incentives, business models and structural changes needed to achieve the environmental SDG targets in the next ten years.

11.3 Strengthen the capacity of citizens and diverse stakeholders to engage in the environmental dimensions of digital transformation and related policies, particularly in developing countries.

12. *Developing a long-term global environmental data strategy.*

12.1 Make regular updates (reports in 2021 and 2023 and a final report in 2025) to the CPR on the progress of developing the global environmental data strategy⁵ and how it fits into the broader delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs.

12.2 Harness environmental data, predictive analytics and digital technologies to drive transformative changes in three key pillars of the economy: financing and investments, supply chain management and consumer behaviours.

12.3 Develop a governance structure that unlocks and unleashes the power of national and global data from countries, companies, civil society and international institutions for environment monitoring.

12.4 Strengthen UNEP's role as a custodian of 26 environment-related SDGs indicators, by reinforcing UNEP's work on environmental data, providing an integrated data and knowledge platform such as the WESR, and by enabling countries and stakeholders to collect comparable, quality data and use it to formulate sound evidence-based legislations and policies.

12.5 Promote innovative ways to develop comparable international data through the UNEP Science Policy Business Forum as well as through partnerships with global citizens science associations.

⁵ At UNEA-4 held in March 2019, Member States adopted a Ministerial Declaration entitled "Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production" in which Ministers committed to supporting UNEP in developing a global environmental data strategy by 2025 in cooperation with other relevant UN bodies. The Secretariat is working towards the development of this strategy, as presented to the CPR in August 2019, as part of comprehensive knowledge management systems for the environment.

12.6 Strengthen UNEP's active role in the UN Geospatial Network of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM) of the Economic and Social Council and the UN Chief Executives Board's UN High-level Committee on Programmes Strategic Foresight Network.

12.7 Align the development and implementation of the global environmental data strategy with the overall UN Secretary General's Data Strategy, the UN Secretary-General's Strategy on New Technologies and the UN Secretary General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation

13. *Further improving communication on environmental issues.*

13.1 Continue improving communication on science, global environmental issues and organizational results, also making UNEP more visible and accessible to the wider public, by using a full range of multimedia and audience-specific approaches, with increased focus on monitoring of implementation and impact of communication.

13.2 Ensure that supporting social and behavioral change is a key aspect of UNEP's flagship campaigns and initiatives, directed at various levels, including the general public.

13.3 Continue creating and strengthening partnerships and relations with mainstream media to reach broader audiences for UNEP's environmental messages and data.

13.4 Continue increasing the integration of data tools in the UNEP website, visualization and integration of data in stories and vides and creation of easy-to-understand data dashboards to make science more accessible to the wider public.

<p>(f) Provide capacity-building to countries, as well as support, and facilitate access to technology;</p>
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14. *Catalysing support to countries.*

14.1 Strengthen the capacity of developing countries to identify technology options, make technology choices, and operate, maintain and adapt technology with a view to supporting the implementation of the SDGs.

14.2 Promote institutional capacity-building primarily in the areas of technology identification, prioritization, and adaptation to local conditions, as well as monitoring and information systems for decision-making.

14.3 Facilitate the involvement of locally based experts in the capacity-building delivery process and gap analysis to ensure ownership and sustainability of the efforts.

14.4 Promote effective gender mainstreaming in capacity-building efforts.

15. *Developing integrated capacity-building.*

15.1 Further mainstream the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building into UNEP's work.

15.2 Identify and collect good practices, challenges, experiences, and lessons learned from work on environment-related capacity building by other organizations, with a view to making available online relevant resource materials, tools and methodologies to support triangular and South-South cooperation.

15.3 Work closely with the UN Resident Coordinators system, and in partnership with other international and regional organizations, to foster a coherent response to developing countries' capacity-building needs, particularly in the implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

15.4 Build capacity for integrating environmental sustainability in national economic policies and development planning, through peer-to-peer learning and exchange between countries.

16. *Facilitating access to technology.*

16.1 Facilitate link between technical assistance and financing for climate technologies including through enhanced collaboration between the Technology Mechanism and the Financial Mechanism of the Climate Change Convention.

16.2 Improve understanding of climate technologies through various approaches such as technical and technological trainings, training of trainers, development of educational programmes and university curricula, development of guides and manuals on technologies, evaluation of national capacity-building programmes and institutions.

<p>(g) Progressively consolidate headquarters functions in Nairobi, as well as strengthen its regional presence, in order to assist countries, upon request, in the implementation of their national environmental policies, collaborating closely with other relevant entities of the UN system;</p>
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17. *Reinforcing the role of the UNEP headquarters in Nairobi as the centre of global environmental diplomacy.*

17.1 Build inclusive environmental multilateralism that leverages UNEA as the world's highest-level decision-making body on the environment, identifying bold transformative actions, while focusing on solutions that speak to all.

17.2 Continue to strengthen UNEP's main functions and strive for continuous improvement to meet the growing demands by Member States and stakeholders in a manner that fully leverages UNEP's capacities and those of the UN Development System.

17.3 Continue to strengthen UNEP governing bodies, particularly through the implementation of recommendations emerging out of the process for review by the Committee of Permanent Representatives mandated by UNEA decision 4/2, including on promoting policy coherence and cooperation with and among the UNEP-administered MEAs.

17.4 Continue to engage with the UN Office at Nairobi (UNON) in its process, through the General Assembly, to enhance UNON conference facilities and services on par with other UN duty stations, and continue to share ideas with the host country on how to reinforce the role of Nairobi as the global hub for environmental conferences.

18. *Strengthening UNEP's regional presence (to be read in conjunction with section 11)*

18.1 Provide strategic support to regional ministerial environmental forums, interministerial forums, joint ministers' meetings, regional climate, disaster and pandemic risk forums and the regional sustainable development forums to facilitate coherence, consistency and linkages in their decisions with UNEA resolutions.

18.2 Communicate achievements made by UNEP in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in the context of the UN Development System reforms at national, sub-regional and regional levels to Member States including providing updates on the achievements made by UNEP's regional and subregional offices in delivering on their respective mandates.

(h) Ensure the active participation of all relevant stakeholders, drawing on best practices and models from relevant multilateral institutions and exploring new mechanisms to promote transparency and the effective engagement of civil society.

19. *Continuously enhancing meaningful engagement with Major Groups and Stakeholders, including children and youth.*

19.1 Develop training and capacity building programmes for representatives of Major Groups and Stakeholders interested in UNEP and UNEA targeting in particular children and youth.

19.2 Further strengthen the meaningful engagement of children and youth at all levels of UNEP's work within rules of procedure.

19.3 Improve UNEP's ability to allow effective and meaningful online engagement of representatives of Major Groups and Stakeholders through tailor-made web-based platforms.

19.4 Encourage Major Groups and Stakeholders organisations that meet the criteria set out in the rules of procedure to become accredited to UNEP in accordance with applicable rules and procedures and continue to make available to Member States the list of accredited organizations.

19.5 Strengthen the participation of representatives of Major Groups and Stakeholders in relevant UNEP advisory bodies, including to support the implementation of the UNEP's medium-term strategy and programme of work.

20. *Increasing opportunities and funding to support meaningful stakeholder engagement.*

20.1 Encourage Member States to provide extra budgetary financial resources in support of meaningful engagement of Major Groups and Stakeholders

20.2 Ensure stable and adequate allocation of financial resources from UNEP's Environment Fund towards supporting the engagement of Major Groups and Stakeholders, including at the regional level.

21. *Leveraging the private sector capabilities.*

21.1 Leverage and promote engagement with the private sector to support the implementation of the medium-term strategy and the programme of work, including through enhanced collaboration on digital transformation.

21.2 Strengthen the capacity of UNEP to transparently engage with business and industry at the regional and sub-regional levels.

21.3 Increase the effectiveness of UNEP's alliances, platforms, and initiatives and promote the engagement of small and medium enterprises in such platforms in order to contribute to UNEP's work.

21.4 Promote and facilitate active engagement by relevant private sector representatives in relevant UNEA processes.

21.5 Ensure risk recognition, risk assessment, and risk mitigation, including the decision-making process on prospective private sector partnerships.

21.6 Catalyse fundraising from the private sector for the implementation of UNEP's programme of work through effective advocacy and resource mobilization.

21.7 Encourage UNEP's private sector partners to join the UN Global Compact and adhere to its Ten Principles covering human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption.
