

**7th Annual Subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP
(Nairobi, 12-16 October 2020)**

**Agenda item 7
Implementation of UNEA resolution 4/23**

Comments by the European Union and its Member States

OP4: promotion of environmental monitoring and assessment and a strong science policy-interface

- The EU and its Member States positively acknowledge UNEP's activities performed for the implementation of OP4. In our view capacity building at national and regional level on data provision and management as to information management is pivotal for a strong policy-interface. As there is still a gap concerning the provision of environmental data, UNEP should continue promoting capacity building in order to ensure the full participation of developing countries and enhance the implementation of science-based environmental policies and national and regional levels.
- This should be done in close coordination with the work on UNEP's Global Environmental Data Strategy and involve other relevant Agencies in order to foster synergies.
- The EU and its Member States would like to ask what other capacity building activities are planned.

OP5: development of a long-term data strategy

- The EU and its Member States very much welcome the progress made concerning the World Environment Situation Room. Most notably because, a standardization of data exchange, such as geospatial data and APIs, is needed.
- The EU and its Member States are pleased to hear about the development of UNEP's Global Environment Data Strategy. They deem such a Strategy to be essential to strengthen UNEP's science policy interface function. In order to promote the development of such a strategy, Estonia has proposed to initiate the establishment of the Data for the Environment Alliance, which will support UNEP in developing a global environmental data strategy by 2025 and advocate for accessible, interoperable and authentic environmental data.
- With regards to the implementation of OP5(c), i.e. the provision of tools and policy advice for integrated approaches to support evidence based decision-making, the EU and its Member States would like to hear what has been already done so far or is envisaged to be implemented.
- The EU and its Member States positively acknowledge the work done so far by UNEP in assisting MS in developing their national environmental data management systems (OP5(d)). Such efforts are viewed as central in order to effectively fill data gaps. The EU and its Member States wish for this to remain a key aspect to be addressed by UNEP's Global Environment Data Strategy.

OP6: Future of the Global Environment Outlook

- The EU and its Member States consider the on-going work to assess the future of GEO to be very important for ensuring that this flagship activity by UNEP remains a valid and useful contribution for both scientists and policy makers in the future as well.
- The EU and its Member States favour the development of options for consideration by UNEA that fully comply with the key mandates for UNEP, i.e. in keeping the environment under review, and enhance the level of knowledge amongst countries and stakeholders.
- GEO should be service-oriented, with a view to providing knowledge that facilitates the implementation of environmental objectives and related sustainable development goals and policies, at global but also sub-global levels, taking into account varying needs for support in different regions and different circumstances.
- The EU and its Member States emphasise that in developing these options, the link with the development of the Global Environment Data strategy is essential. Also synergies with MEAs and similar should be considered.
- A model should be considered for which there is a determined process regarding timing, products, activities and services as well as resources. This is pivotal so that UNEA will not need to decide ad hoc on these aspects for every new GEO.
- The governance and implementation structure should be able to provide legitimacy and acceptance of key findings and recommendations.
- The EU and its Member States favour a strengthening of the financial structure of GEO in order to allow a stable and predictable basis for work of the core functions of GEO. These reforms need to be, however, cost-neutral and aim at obtaining a structure which is lean and not overburdened by functions.

OP7: Preparation of a science-policy input on the global environment

- The EU and its Member States welcome the elaboration of the new “Synthesis Report of Major Global Assessments – Transforming our World” (working title) as a very concrete result stemming from the Ad-hoc Global Assessment Dialogue (AGAD). In our view synergies should be fostered in order to strengthen the main take-aways but also avoid unnecessary overlap.
- The EU and its Member States is looking forward to the publication.

OP9: Strengthening of policy relevance of the Global Environment Outlook with view to the progress made by MEAs

- The EU and its Member States acknowledged the publication of the report “Measuring Progress Towards achieving the environmental dimension of the SDGs” in March 2019.
- It is important that GEO continues to assess the impact of environmental change on the implementation of the SDGs, but also the progress made in achievement of the environmental SDGs.
- The EU and its Member States believe that this should be accounted for in the options for the Future of GEO process, to be tabled at UNEA5.

OP10: Promotion of greater coherence and coordination of global assessments undertaken within the UN system and in cooperation with secretariats of other MEAs

- The EU and its Member States are very pleased with the progress made concerning the establishment of the AGAD as they believe increasing synergies, coherence and consistency across major global assessments is essential.

- The EU and its Member States welcome the fact that the GEO team in the Science Division coordinated the first convening of AGAD, as GEO is key in the assessment of the global environment.
 - The EU and its Member States want to ask in what regularity AGAD is convened.
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