

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

**Comments by the Republic of Costa Rica on Agenda Item 4: Consideration of a draft
UNEP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025 and Programme of Work 2022-2023.**

The Republic of Costa Rica thanks UNEP for providing the background documentation and for submitting a revised draft **Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023 (PoWB)**.

Costa Rica strongly supports the considerations on science-policy as a foundation (section 1.1.1) and encourages to include references to enlarging and strengthening the database, making it accessible and action-oriented.

Costa Rica welcomes the reference to the UN system-wide action plan on gender equality and geographic representation in the indicator table and looks forward to furthering elaboration and mainstreaming of gender and geographic representation indicators throughout the subprogrammes. Costa Rica agrees with the European Union that it would be beneficial to include indicators for UN cooperation as described in PoWB outcomes for nature action as well as chemicals and pollution action and climate action.

With regards to the *Executive management, programme management and support*, Costa Rica supports UNEP's strong engagement in the UN Development System reform and its approach to taking advantage of opportunities for enhanced cooperation through the UN system, including through the Country Teams and the Resident Coordinator systems to deliver the 2022-2023 Programme of Work and encourages the ED to continue UNEP's role in UN System-wide strategies on the environment.

Costa Rica also strongly welcomes and supports the mentioning of "responsiveness to human rights" in the evaluation plan as among the evaluation criteria and considers this should remain and used more frequently.

Regarding budget, Costa Rica appreciates that the document contains one clear budget proposal based on a conservative approach that is taking into account the impact of COVID-19 and welcomes the comprehensive overview of the proposed allocation of funding from the different funding sources, in comparison with the budget allocation for 2020/2021.

Regarding the **Draft Medium Term-Strategy 2022-2025 (UNEP/CPR/ASC.7/2) and summary of comments to CPR-151 (UNEP/CPR/ASC.7/2.Add.2)**, Costa Rica welcomes the ambition and priorities presented by UNEP. Costa Rica States agrees with the expanded, amended and more data-driven situation analysis of the current MTS draft and in particular so that environmental crises addresses if the international community is to succeed in eradicating poverty, protecting people and ensuring sustainable development, during COVID and also with a post COVID recovery approach.

Also, Costa Rica considers crucial that the MTS makes explicit reference to socio-economic inequality and inequity and underline the importance of UNEP's work, reflecting this. Also, Costa Rica considers of importance to see more emphasis on the cross-cutting issues of Sustainable Consumption, Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency through more concrete objectives like resource decoupling in the outcomes.

Costa Rica considers of extreme importance maintaining the term "nature-based solutions" on its reports, documents, discussions, media... Although this term lacks a current consensual understanding, it is a necessary term which is in the process of being agreed upon should under no circumstance, be removed from UNEPs approach, if anything, should be strengthened.

Costa Rica considers that the challenges associated with the mitigation of climate change and adaptation, as well as to the conservation, sustainable use and fair sharing of benefits arising from biodiversity are indeed pressing and require coordinated action by the international community and UNEP has a critical role to play, aligned with its mandate.

Costa Rica strongly welcomes that the gender and human rights integration strengthened throughout the document, with gender identified as a critical aspect of environmental sustainability and an emphasis on training of staff to "get gender right".

When referring to "indigenous peoples", Costa Rica considers of extreme importance using the term "indigenous peoples" only, which has been agreed internationally and it is of extreme importance to be adequately recognised. Costa Rica also considers vital to refer to the Right to Prior Informed Consultation of indigenous peoples whenever environmental issues are to be discussed or may have a direct or indirect impact on their lifestyles.

Costa Rica encourages UNEP to reach and engage with a diverse and expanding range of stakeholders and see national lawmakers (parliamentarians) as an essential group in this regard and also encourages to continue using the language on environmental rights as much as possible.

In terms of programme implementation, Costa Rica welcomes more significant consideration in the Medium-Term Strategy of how UNEP could better utilise and strengthen its regional contribution, including in Latin-America.

Finally, Costa Rica welcomes the overall text in respect of oceans but agrees with Norway that a reference should reflect cooperation with the UNESCO-IOC in respect of outcome 3.

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**Comments by the Republic of Costa Rica on Agenda Item 5: Implementation of UNEA
decision 4/2 entitled "Provisional agenda, date and venue of the fifth session of the
United Nations Environment Assembly".**

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

Costa Rica supports further efforts on standardising and formalising CPR online meetings to enable remote participation of MS in the deliberations of the CPR, as well as further improvement of providing the documents for the meetings online, in a timely and transparent manner. Moreover, regarding paragraph 2.2, in the context of virtual CPR meetings, particular attention should be given to reliable interpretation in all six official languages of the United Nations.

Regarding subparagraph (d) on the science-policy interface, Costa Rica considers that providing high-quality environmental data is essential for a robust science-policy interface. On subparagraph (g), referring to headquarters functions, Costa Rica welcomes the engagement with UNON for enhancing the UNON facilities in Nairobi and encourages regular updates to the CPR on progress and what UNON in Nairobi plans concrete improvements.

Agenda items 5 c and d: UNEA-5 preparations & UNEA@50 preparations

For Costa Rica, it is essential maintaining the initial dates for UNEA-5 as far as possible. During the Bureau meeting -it was expressed by the Costa Rican delegation- the support to the proposal presented by the distinguished delegation of Norway, adopting a "two-step" approach that will allow convening UNEA-5 in February 2021 at the dates previously agreed, preferably in a virtual format with a revised and streamlined agenda for administrative matters.

However, Costa Rica considers this session should be complemented by a second component in the form of a resumed UNEA-5 in Nairobi, at the second semester of **2021**, and not February 2022.

For Costa Rica, resuming UNEA as soon as possible is a priority as well as is it ensuring a method of work which will guarantee the participation of all member states inclusively and transparently allowing for positive action-oriented environmental outcomes with the least impact possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Costa Rica also considers of importance the necessity of having a first UNEA session at the beginning of 2021 to discuss a Ministerial Declaration and also, to discuss administrative matters, which will allow the work continuity of the Programme.

Costa Rica also indicates its support to Sweden's proposal on Stockholm 2022 to request a mandate by the UN General Assembly, for which a resolution could feasibly negotiate at the beginning of 2021.

Costa Rica agrees that UNEP@50 is an essential moment to celebrate UNEP and its achievements in Nairobi. Whilst UNEP@50 is distinct in aim, mandates and process, Costa Rica as well as Sweden, wishes to see that Stockholm 2022 and UNEP@50 complement each other.

Costa Rica considers this opportunity as a chance to strengthen multilateralism and a more integrated approach across the UN system for the implementation of the environmental agenda over the past 50 years and to enhance progress towards the 2030 Agenda. Costa Rica, however, seeks further clarification from the Secretariat on how to shape this commemoration.
