

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday 21 January 2021
2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. (GMT+3)
Online Meeting

MEETING SUMMARY

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

1. H.E. Mr. Fernando Coimbra, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representative, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil, opened the meeting.
2. Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director, wished the CPR a happy new year and expressed hope to see the pandemic come to an end in the coming year and to resume in-person meetings at the complex.
3. The meeting [agenda](#) was adopted.

Agenda Item 2: Briefing on the preparations for the 2021 Food Systems Summit.

4. Dr. Agnes Kalibata, UN Secretariat-General's Special Envoy for the 2021 Food Systems Summit, provided an update to delegations on the preparations for the Summit, which aims at maximizing the co-benefits of a food systems approach across the UN 2030 Agenda and meeting the challenges of climate change and provided an overview of progress, including the creation of a [community platform](#) to connect various stakeholders, such as, young people and their initiatives, and highlight the champions networks. The presentation is available [here](#) and is complemented by the information note available [here](#). Further information on the 2021 Food Systems Summit is available on the [website](#).
5. Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP, noted that the discussion on how food systems affect our environment and health is taking place in the context of the preparations for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework discussed under the framework of the Convention of Biological diversity. She informed the meeting that the UN system is also looking forward to making a contribution, allowing for UNEP to play a coordination role and provide a platform to consider the environmental dimension of sustainable development as it relates to food systems. Subsequent to the online session of the fifth UN Environment Assembly, UNEP is planning to host a global food systems dialogue linked to the UNEA-5 theme, with the aim of ensuring strong and inclusive participation by member States and stakeholders.

6. Member States welcomed the presentation and information provided and provided the following comments on the state of preparations for the Summit:
 - Expressed strong support and commitment towards the success and expected outcomes of the Summit.
 - Underlined that the Summit will provide an opportunity to speed up the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including on its overarching goals of eliminating poverty and hunger, and accelerate the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, and that it will further contribute to the implementation of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. Shared information on relevant regional and country-led initiatives in relation to sustainable food systems and the objectives of the Summit, with one delegation highlighting the 3rd global conference of the One Planet network's Sustainable Food Systems Programme, which as a partnership initiative that joins together Member States, stakeholders, UN organizations and key leaders in the area of food systems. The report of this meeting is available [here](#).
 - Highlighted the importance for the Summit to address the need for mainstream sustainable consumption and production within the agri-food sector.
 - Advocated for engaging stakeholders, especially farmers and food producers, in the preparatory process.
 - Welcomed initiatives to garner and incentivize regional perspectives in the preparation and follow-up of the Summit.
 - Welcomed UNEP's engagement in the Summit, noting that UNEP could play an especially important role in science- and evidence-based assessments of current food systems.
 - Called for increased engagement with Member States in the shaping of the Summit, supported efforts to increase representation of participants from developing countries and recalled the importance of aligning the proposed Action Tracks with multilaterally agreed-upon language.
 - Acknowledged the need for a higher level of engagement from many Member States in the preparatory process, including within the Summit's Scientific Committee, to ensure a successful Summit.
7. Dr. Agnes Kalibata took note of the guidance received, thanked member States for their commitments and expressions of support, and recognized the financial contributions made by some member States to the Summit. She urged representatives especially from developing countries to engage more actively in the dialogues and the action tracks, to allow for a broad and inclusive process. She recognized the strong links between science and policy in this area, underlined the importance of engaging at country-level, and recognized the role of oceans, blue economy and applying an integrative approach to food systems. With regards to regional perspectives, particularly from the Africa region, she referred to ongoing cooperation with the African Union Development Agency. She called on countries to nominate a convenor and propose champions for the Summit as a means to increase engagement at country-level, and called on member States to engage by taking advantage of the many avenues available through the Summit's [online community platform](#) and encouraged Member States to facilitate National Dialogues in the run up to the Summit.
8. The Executive Director thanked the Committee for a rich exchange and reiterated UNEP's commitment to a continued strong engagement in pursuit of a successful 2021 Food Systems Summit.

Agenda Item 3: 2020 Annual report for UNEP's Private Sector Engagement.

9. The Secretariat presented the [2020 UNEP Annual report for UNEP's Private Sector Engagement Annual](#). The Report covers the period from September 2019 to October 2020, focusing on partnerships with the private sector through platforms, initiatives, projects, and stand-alone partnerships that contribute to the implementation of the Programme of Work. The presentation is available [here](#).
10. Member States thanked the Secretariat for the comprehensive report and provided the following feedback:
 - Welcomed the reorganization whereby the Private Sector Unit now lies under the Corporate Services Division.
 - Recognized and welcomed UNEP's collaboration with the private sector in the context of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Recommended the secretariat to continue to provide annual updates on the implementation of the private sector engagement strategy, including on lessons learned.
 - Recognized the important role of private sector in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and in tackling the three environmental crises in order to promote effective and rapid investments in support of the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda.
 - Suggested a review of the Science Business Policy Forum and its strategic engagement with private sector and asked for more information on which companies are engaged in this Forum.
 - Requested more information on if and how member States can oversee the due diligence process and on the so-called fast track process.
 - Recommended that future reports focus more on the results achieved in relation to the Medium Term Strategy and Programme of Work rather than on activities undertaken.
 - Suggested that secretariat may wish to continue to explore concepts related to ecosystem-based approaches when engaging with the private sector.
11. The Secretariat thanked member States for the comments received and committed to provide additional information as requested including with regard to the Science Business Policy Forum. The secretariat also clarified that all applications for private sector engagement are now being submitted to a dedicated private partnership review committee.

Agenda Item 4: Briefing on regional preparations for UNEA-5.

12. On the basis of a [summary note](#) circulated in advance of the meeting, UNEP's Regional Offices provided brief updates on the preparations for UNEA-5, including with regard to stakeholder engagement. The presentations are available [here](#).
13. Delegations thanked the Regional Directors for their informative presentations and expressed appreciation for the work undertaken by UNEP's regional offices to support regional engagement despite the ongoing pandemic, and provided the following feedback:
 - Welcomed the rich information in the background document.
 - Supported the commitment by regional offices to address regional priorities.

- One delegation representing a political group expressed appreciation for the engagement from regional offices through various fora including on the linkages between COVID 19 pandemic and the environment, as well as green recovery.
- Some delegations suggested that there was a great potential for regional offices to contribute more in specific areas such as the future of the GEO process, the implementation of General Assembly resolution 73/333, and the work on marine litter and microplastics, as well as support Member States and stakeholders not represented in Nairobi.
- A representative of the UNEA Presidency expressed specific appreciation for the support from regional offices to the President of UNEA and welcomed additional support for the process to seek agreement on a possible message from the online session of UNEA-5, noting that regional offices have an important role in keeping unrepresented member States well informed on all UNEA-related matters.

14. The Chair thanked the Committee for their contributions, expressed appreciation for the participation of the Regional Directors, and suggested that similar session be organized at future subcommittee meetings.

Agenda Item 5: Other matters.

15. No other matters were raised.

Agenda Item 6: Closing of the meeting.

16. The meeting closed at 5:00 p.m.