

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday 4 March 2021
3:00 p.m. – 6:00 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. The Chair welcomed all the participants to the meeting, including the stakeholders, and recognized the success of the recently concluded online fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly that took place virtually from 22 – 23 February 2021.
3. The Secretariat provided an overview of participants to the meeting.
4. The [meeting agenda](#) was adopted.

Agenda Item 2: Presentation of the UNEP Emission Gap Report and Adaption Gap Report.

5. The secretariat presented the [main findings](#) from two UNEP flagship reports; the Emissions Gap Report 2020, which was released by UNEP on 9 December 2020; and the Adaptation Gap Report 2020, released on 14 January 2021, and announced that the work on the next iteration of the reports has already started. The presentations on the reports are available [here](#) and [here](#).
6. Delegations who took the floor thanked the secretariat for the presentations, welcomed the reports, and provided the following comments:
 - Expressed appreciation for including aspects related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Stressed the need to continue to make use of the best available scientific information, to ensure that core funding is provided for this work, and that development process for the reports should be transparent, participatory and unbiased.
 - Acknowledged that the reports indicate that that current trends related both to climate change mitigation and adaptation demonstrate that increased ambition levels are required to meet agreed goals and targets in the Paris Agreement.
 - Provided complementary information on various national initiatives and best practices related to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
 - Underlined that the Emissions Gap Report provides good insights in strategic areas that can contribute to overall promote climate change mitigation, and mentioned decarbonization, carbon sequestration, financing strategies, and carbon trading as important examples for consideration also in future reports.

- Recognized that inadequate financing for climate change adaptation often creates implementation gaps and called on UNEP to continue to support adaptation efforts by countries upon demand, including through policy and technical support.
 - Requested further information on the role of ocean-related work in climate change mitigation and adaptation.
 - Asked for clarification on how UNEP intends to invest in improved assessment technologies for measuring adaptation efforts, as well as emissions from the maritime and aviation industries.
 - Some delegations welcomed nature-based solutions as a cost-effective solution within the adaptation portfolio, with some other delegations pointed out that there is no agreed-upon definition for the concept and that the second step of UNEA 5 may be an opportunity to address this shortcoming.
 - Some delegations expressed concern that COVID-19 recovery efforts may undermine the achievement of agreed climate change commitments and welcomed the focus on low carbon pathways in the Emission Gap Report to limit carbon emissions.
7. The secretariat thanked member States for their constructive feedback, took note of the comments received and informed delegations that both reports were largely (about 75%) financed by UNEP's core funding, supplemented by funds from several other sources. The secretariat informed delegations that UNEP and the World Adaptation Science Programme is working together to develop improved methodologies for climate change adaptation impact monitoring, but that goes beyond the budget and timeline for the Adaptation Gap Report and will require a dedicated new initiative. The secretariat noted that UNEP uses a definition for nature-based solutions developed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and pointed out that the newly launched UNEP synthesis report [Making Peace with Nature](#), which will be presented to the subcommittee on 11 March, responds to many of the other issues raised.

Agenda Item 3: Inputs to the 2021 High Level Political Forum

8. The secretariat presented draft inputs of the UN Environment Assembly to the 2021 High- Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which will meet under the auspices of ECOSOC from 6 to 15 July 2021 under the theme "Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development". The draft was prepared by the UNEP Secretariat on the basis of inputs submitted in writing from Member States by 12 February 2021, in view of finalizing the inputs to HLPF by 15 March 2021, as requested by the President of ECOSOC in his [letter dated 18 November 2020](#).
9. The Chair opened the floor for comments and guidance and reminded delegations that the meeting is a consultation meeting, whereby the Committee will guide the secretariat towards a document that enjoys broad agreement and acceptance, and not a drafting exercise or a line-by-line negotiation.
10. Delegations who took the floor thanked the Secretariat for a good basis for the discussion, and provided the following general comments:
- Recognized that it is timely that the HLPF will focus on the COVID 19 pandemic which goes beyond the health sector and is likely to pose significant challenges to the

achievement of the SDGs and recalled the impact of the pandemic on global efforts to fight poverty and hunger;

- Noted that the UNEA input should remain short, focused and include clear policy recommendations.
- Supported the “one health approach”, as well as other holistic approaches, underlining the need to build back better and more sustainably
- Requested that changes in the document be clearly marked and made available as much in advance of upcoming meetings as possible.
- Reiterated the need to use terminologies and definitions agreed upon by member States intergovernmentally, and that the inputs need to be fully aligned with the agreed texts in the relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements.
- Noted that the emergence of zoonotic diseases should be considered in the context of biodiversity loss and climate change, with some delegations cautioning against singling out agriculture as the sole anthropogenic cause of zoonosis.
- Some delegations suggested further references to SDGs 16 and 17, for example to highlight the importance of global cooperation in post-COVID recovery efforts, and to add language regarding eradication of poverty and means of implementation.
- Some delegations considered that the Secretariat’s summary of the UNEA-5 leadership dialogues is a relevant source of information for the further development of the draft, while other delegations recalled that this summary is not to be considered an official outcome of the virtual session of UNEA-5.
- Several delegations stressed the importance to promote circular economy as part of the COVID-19 recovery.
- One delegation questioned the concept of “collective leadership” which may be interpreted in different ways.
- One stakeholder representative emphasized the need to strengthen the focus on agriculture and welcomed the inclusion of the one health approach.

11. The secretariat took note of the inputs provided and invited Member States to submit them in writing in view of presenting a revised draft in advance of the next meeting of the subcommittee on 11 March.

12. The Chair thanked delegations for their substantive guidance, took note of the inputs provided, and called for inputs in writing by 5 March at the latest.

Agenda Item 4: Other matters.

13. No other matters were raised.

Agenda Item 5: Closing of the meeting.

14. The meeting closed at 6:00 p.m.