

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday 11 November 2021
10:00 – 13:00, 15:00 – 18:00
Conference Room 1, United Nations Office of Nairobi
Hybrid Meeting

MEETING SUMMARY

The meeting agenda and supporting documentation are available on the [meeting page](#).

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

1. H.E. Mr. Erasmo Roberto Martínez, Vice Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mexico, opened the meeting.
2. The meeting [agenda](#) was adopted.

Agenda Item 2: Consideration of draft resolutions for the resumed session of UNEA-5

3. The secretariat provided an in-depth presentation and assessment of the different scenarios outlined in the implication matrix for rescheduling UNEA-6. The presentation is available [here](#).
4. Member States thanked the secretariat for the presentation and provided the following comments:
 - Requested further clarification on the limitations and barriers to change the UNEA cycle to even years.
 - Recognized the budgetary implications for the secretariat with each of the different options and requested clarification on which option would be most in line with the spirit of the UN Reforms.
 - Noted that the different scenarios would have different impact on the time frame for upcoming terms of UNEA presidencies.
 - Requested additional information on what options can be considered to avoid an upfront extension of Programme of Work for 2024/2025 without Member States consultations and asked the secretariat if UNEA can mandate the CPR to adopt a new Programme of Work.
 - Asked the secretariat to further clarify the effects of the different options on the UN General Assembly Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR).
 - Indicated the need for further time to assess the various options and review the implications before they are in a position to develop final positions.
5. The secretariat suggested that the scenarios with a lower time gap between the formulation and implementation of a new Programme of Work are better aligned with the UN Reforms, and committed to revert to the question on whether UNEA can mandate the CPR to adopt a new Programme of Work and to the effects of the different options on the QCPR.

6. The Chair thanked Member States and the secretariat for their contributions and announced that the Committee will reconsider the draft decision on the provisional agenda, date and venue of UNEA-6 at the subcommittee meeting on 25 November.
7. The meeting then turned to the 4 draft resolutions and 5 concepts notes submitted by Member States to date.

i) Draft resolution from Rwanda and Peru, supported by several co-sponsors, on an internationally legally binding instrument on plastic pollution

Rwanda and Peru presented the [draft resolution on an internationally legally binding instrument on plastic pollution](#), supported by over 40 co-sponsors. The purpose of the resolution is to convene an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC), establish an open mandate for negotiations, identify key elements of the global response, and promote a comprehensive approach to address the full lifecycle of plastics. They explained the key elements of the resolution and welcomed co-sponsors and support, as well as further engagement and exchange of views. The intervention is available [here](#).

Many Member States expressed their support for the draft resolution in principle and noted the growing number of co-sponsors for this important initiative.

ii) Working paper on a draft resolution from Japan on an international legal instrument on marine plastic pollution

Japan presented a [working paper for a draft resolution on an international legal instrument on marine plastic pollution](#), and highlighted that the paper provides a general outline of an INC, but without prejudging in detail the scope and substantial outcomes of the upcoming negotiations. The paper also emphasized the importance of the whole lifecycle approach, whereby all actions ranging from upstream to downstream would be encouraged in a balanced manner. They explained that the draft is a living document and has been submitted as a working paper, and that they intend to formally submit a finalized version of the draft resolution well before the suggested deadline of submissions, 20 December. The intervention is available [here](#).

Member States took note of Japan's working paper on marine plastic pollution and suggested that they consult closely with Rwanda and Peru to explore options for merging the two initiatives.

iii) Draft resolution from Sri Lanka on Sustainable Nitrogen Management

Sri Lanka presented the [draft resolution on Sustainable Nitrogen Management](#), by providing the background, current context and main elements. The draft builds on UNEA resolution 4/14 on the same topic and supports the ambition to halve nitrogen waste by 2030 by covering all the spheres of the nitrogen cycle, drawing upon the Colombo Declaration on Sustainable Nitrogen Management. The draft resolution also suggests operational dimensions and elements to define the mandate of an "Inter Convention Nitrogen Coordination Mechanism" (INCOM). The resolution further seeks to support the mobilization of human, financial and technical resources, including capacity building and know-how and technology transfer for promoting innovation on anthropogenic nitrogen use and recycling, emphasizing the opportunities for the circular economy. The resolution will also coordinate existing platforms to catalyze a comprehensive global assessment on quantitative and qualitative nitrogen cycling, covering scientific aspects,

policy, regulation, implementation, nitrogen budgeting, impacts, solutions, and valuation of natural nitrogen fixation, while identifying best available knowledge including traditional agricultural knowledge. Finally, the resolution seeks to facilitate the understanding of the natural nitrogen cycle and how anthropogenic activities alter its balance. The intervention is available [here](#).

At the request of Sri Lanka, Prof. Mark Sutton of the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology provided a complementary presentation in which he underlined the urgency of adopting the resolution and pointed to potential savings of up to US\$100 billion annually. He highlighted the importance of establishing an INCOM to support UN-wide coordination, called for the establishment of an intergovernmental process on nitrogen pollution, and outlined emerging issues that need further consideration, such as the need to develop definitions of nitrogen waste. The presentation is available [here](#).

iv) Draft resolution from Indonesia on Sustainable Lake Management

Indonesia presented the [draft resolution Sustainable Lake Management](#), which is closely linked to the SDG 6, and stressed the need for a more focused global agenda to protect lakes. The draft resolution would be in line with UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2025, in particular Paragraph 77 and Paragraph 78. The draft resolution calls for protection, restoration and wise use of lakes, concerning water quality, erosion and sedimentation, and aquatic biodiversity; integration of lake management plans into national and regional development plans and policies; engagement and capacity building for communities; involvement of all stakeholders; research and scientific guidance; and development of international networking and collaboration, for sustainable lake management. The intervention is available [here](#).

Some delegations expressed support for the resolution, noting the importance of lakes and ponds for local livelihoods and rural communities, and requested the secretariat to analyze how the draft resolution relates to the two global conventions for managing shared water resources (the 1992 Water Convention and the 1997 UN Watercourses Convention). One delegation noted that most of the SDG 6 targets were not on track to be achieved and suggested that the draft resolution should link to the mid-term review of the UN Water Action Decade scheduled for March 2023. The proponents were also requested to clarify if the draft also covers man-made lakes and dams, as well as wetlands, and how the resolution will address transboundary lakes or lakes within transboundary basins.

v) Concept note from Switzerland on a draft resolution on mineral resource governance

Switzerland presented the [concept note on mineral resource governance](#), noting that the draft would build on the UNEA resolution 4/19 on mineral resource governance and take into account several regional workshops on the topic. The extraction of minerals and metals plays a key role with respect to addressing climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, and minerals are essential to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. The draft includes consideration of environmental management permits and stresses the need for urgent global action bearing in mind the existing fragmented international governance in this area. Member States were invited to co-sponsor the resolution and to ask for clarifications where needed.

vi) Concept note from Switzerland on a draft resolution on the sound management of chemicals and waste

Switzerland also presented the [concept note on a draft resolution on the sound management of chemicals and waste](#) and underlined the links to previous UNEA resolutions to promote the sound management of chemicals and waste. To minimize the workload, the draft will be short and focus on the following issues: i) A five-year extension of the UNEP Special Programme on Institutional Strengthening for the chemicals cluster set up at UNEA-1; ii) Call for an ambitious outcome and effective instrument from the meeting of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM-5), which is expected to adopt the beyond 2020 framework that would replace SAICM and give a mandate to UNEP to host the Secretariat; iii) Acknowledge and respond to relevant UNEP reports in response to requests made at UNEA 3 and 4, including progress assessments and identifying areas requiring increased efforts, and guidance to Member States and other stakeholders regarding the sound management of chemicals, and waste. The draft resolution will be submitted in December.

Some delegations expressed support for the initiative, including the extension of the special programme. One delegation highlighted the need to involve SAICM experts in the consultations.

vii) Concept note concept note from Costa Rica, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay on a draft resolution for a science policy panel on chemicals waste and pollution

Switzerland briefly presented the [concept note from Costa Rica, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay on a draft resolution for a science policy panel on chemicals waste and pollution](#).

Some delegations expressed support for the draft resolution and suggested that the establishment of such a science policy panel is a cost-effective way to increase information on how to avoid chemical pollution. The gap between best available science and policies around chemicals and waste was highlighted, as well as the need for geographical balance and inclusion of academia from the global south. One delegation expressed support for the idea in principle, but called for further reflection on the appropriate form for how to best strengthen the science-policy interface in this area.

viii) Concept note from the EU on a draft resolution on Nature-based Solutions for supporting sustainable development

The EU referred to the presentation of this concept note at the 8th meeting of the annual subcommittee, and welcomed comments and feedback from Member States.

Several delegations welcomed the draft resolution on nature-based solutions, highlighted the importance of protecting biodiversity and nature and their ecosystem services, and recognized the interdependency between biodiversity loss, climate change and human well-being.

ix) Concept note from the EU on a draft resolution on accelerated adaptation measures to secure water quality and strengthened climate resilience in aquatic ecosystems

The EU referred to the presentation of this concept note at the 8th meeting of the annual subcommittee, and recognized potential convergences and similarities between this resolution and the draft resolution on sustainable lake management.

One delegation noted that the world is far from achieving the water-related sustainable development goals and targets by 2030, based on the current rate of progress, and highlighted the efforts to tackle ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss, and water scarcity, as well as the importance of international cooperation on water management. Furthermore, the delegation recognized links between this draft resolution and the draft resolution on sustainable lake management.

8. The Chair thanked delegations for their contributions and invited all proponents of the drafts to take this discussion into account in order to move towards a broader consensus. He further encouraged Member States who have presented concept notes, as well as Member States who have announced their intention to submit draft resolutions, to submit the drafts as soon as possible, bearing in mind the recommended deadline of 15 November agreed at the 8th meeting of the annual subcommittee.

Agenda Item 3: Other matters.

9. No other matters were raised.

Agenda Item 4: Closing of the meeting.

10. The meeting closed at 5:00 pm.