

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Tuesday 23 November 2021
10:00 a.m. – 13:00 p.m., 15:00 p.m. – 18:00 p.m.
Conference Room 1, United Nations Office of Nairobi
Hybrid Meeting

MEETING SUMMARY

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

1. H.E. Ms. Selma Malika Haddadi, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and Ambassador of Algeria to Kenya, opened the meeting.
2. The meeting [agenda](#) was adopted.

Agenda Item 2: Preparations for the special session on the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP@50).

a. Secretariat update on progress in the preparations for the special session

3. A representative from the UN Office in Nairobi provided an overview on the preparations and measures for the in-person participation at the special session for UNEP@50, as well as outlining the latest thinking relating to in-person participation on the UN meeting facilities for UNEA-5.2 and UNEP@50 during the CPR subcommittee.
4. The Secretariat [presented](#) a [concept note](#) outlining the implementation of a World Environment Situation Room (WESR) as well as an [update on the preparations of a report on the science policy interface for UNEP@50](#), as requested by Member States during the 8th Annual Subcommittee meeting.
5. Delegations thanked the secretariat for the updates and the presentations and provided the following comments and feedback, in summary:
 - Expressed general support for the proposal to upgrade the WESR;
 - Suggested that UNEP@50 should address underfunding within the science-policy interface;
 - Underlined the need to ensure a balanced gender and geographical representation, covering the Global South, in the context of UNEP's work with science-policy interface;
 - Encouraged alignment between the WESR and the UN Data Strategy, with the relevant initiatives of the Secretary General on digital transformation and in the UN Development System;
 - Requested further updates from the secretariat on the development of the Global Environmental Data Strategy;

- Requested further updates from the secretariat on the development of the science-policy report;
 - Underlined the importance of capacity building on environmental monitoring, reporting and data collection to promote science policy interface, especially for developing countries;
 - One delegation stressed the need for more in-depth consultations with the CPR prior to the publication of scientific reports by UNEP, while some other delegations considered that the scientific reports should remain independent from political influence from Member States.
6. The secretariat thanked delegations for their inputs and invited Member States to send them in writing. The secretariat underlined efforts that were taken to ensure a geographically balanced representation for the WESR, and that capacity building is provided to Member States upon request to facilitate data collection. The secretariat also clarified that duplication of data will be avoided, particularly through interoperability across platforms, that inputs will build on existing data, that it will also provide analytical information in support of policy action, and that WESR will be made available in all official UN languages. The secretariat committed to present an update to the CPR on the development of the Global Environmental Data Strategy for consultation with Member States. The secretariat also recognized the usefulness of Member State WESR focal points in the development of the platform. With regard to the science-policy report, the secretariat committed to take into account the need for inclusivity, a broad geographical coverage and inputs from relevant stakeholders.

b. Provisional structure for the special session

7. The secretariat presented the [draft provisional agenda](#) and a [revised draft structure](#) for the special session of UNEP@50.
8. Delegations expressed general support for the draft structure and welcomed the proposed agenda, with several delegations suggesting that the political declaration should be adopted at the opening ceremony, and that the major group and stakeholders report “The UNEP We Want”, as well as the science-policy interface report, should be presented in plenary format on the first day or at the beginning of the second day as a background for the leadership dialogues.
9. Several delegations also recommended that the special session should be attended at head of state or ministerial level and stressed the need for invitations to be sent out as soon as possible.
10. Some delegations also underlined the need to ensure that sufficient time was allocated for national statements.
11. Delegations expressed divergent views on a proposal from one delegation for UNEP to develop a gap report on means of implementation for consideration at the special session.
12. The Chair took note of the comments, including on the urgency for invitation letters for Heads of State, and clarified that the science policy interface report will be made available in January 2022.

13. The secretariat clarified that guidance notes on the leadership dialogues were under preparation, informed about the significant cost implications if the plenary time for UNEP@50 was to be expended outside normal meeting hours, and gave an update on the budget indicating that the remaining funding gap for the special session and UNEA-5.2. is of about 1 million USD. It further updated on the process to select side events for UNEA 5.2 and UNEP@50.
14. A representative from a major group and stakeholders announced availability to present the initial findings of the report “The UNEP We Want” to the CPR, at one of its upcoming meetings.

c. Possible political outcome of the special session

15. The cofacilitators for the 73/333 process provided a short briefing on the second informal consultations that took place from 17 – 19 November 2021 and announced that a third informal consultation would take place on 16 - 18 February 2022.
16. Several delegations welcomed the outcome of the 2nd informal consultation, with a view to ensure an impactful, meaningful, and realistic negotiation process, and expressed general support for the adoption of the 73/333 Political Declaration as a political outcome of the special session, alongside a Chair’s summary that reflects the outcome of the special session on UNEP@50 as a whole.
17. Some delegations reflected on how to adopt the political declaration as one of several outcomes, while others cautioned against a proliferation of outcomes which would distract from providing a clear message from the special session.
18. A brief discussion took place on the modalities for the adoption of the 73/333 Political Declaration in the context of UNEP@50. One delegation proposed to consider annexing it to a decision to be adopted by the Assembly, whereas another one cautioned against this approach and suggested that, if needed, additional paragraphs on the commemorative aspects could be considered in the Political Declaration.
19. The Chair stressed the need to make best use of the special session in order to meet Member States’ expectations and suggested to continue to further consider the best way forward at the 156th meeting of the CPR on 30 November 2021.

d. Consideration of a possible theme for the UNEP@50 commemoration.

20. Several delegations expressed support for a proposal put forward by two regional groups to hold UNEP@50 under the theme “UNEP@50: Towards the Implementation of the Environmental Dimension of the Sustainable Development for the Future We Want”.
21. Some other delegations questioned the need for a dedicated theme and did not feel that the proposed theme focused on the commemorative nature of UNEP@50 and on the need to strengthen UNEP.

22. One delegation proposed an alternative theme - “Strengthening UNEP for the implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda”. Several delegations welcomed the proposal as a good base for a possible compromise.
23. The Chair took note of the comments received as well as the new proposal and proposed to convene an informal contact group composed of 2 representatives from each regional group, to be constituted briefly, in order to find consensus on the way forward on a possible theme for the special session, ahead of the 156th meeting of the CPR. She called on the regional groups to nominate representatives by the subcommittee meeting scheduled for 25 November 2021.

Agenda Item 3: Briefing by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN)

24. The Secretariat of Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) provided a briefing on the findings of the [2020 MOPAN evaluation on UNEP](#). The presentation is available [here](#).
25. The Committee thanked the MOPAN secretariat for the briefing and provided the following comments and feedback:
 - Welcomed the findings and recommendations in the report as guidance towards strengthening UNEP, improved implementation of its Programme of Work, and more effective use of resources, also noting the conclusion that UNEP’s Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW) are fully aligned with the UN 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development.
 - Requested the Secretariat to report on the progress in the context of the Programme Performance Review at the next meeting of the annual subcommittee.
 - Recognized the inclusive manner by which the MTS and POW had been developed, recognized UNEP’s effective partnerships with other organizations and stakeholders, highlighted UNEP’s important role in the science-policy interface, and encouraged UNEP to continue to build on these strengths.
 - Highlighted the need to improve the reporting at outcome levels under the MTS to enhance better understanding of UNEP’s contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
 - Requested further information on how gender parity is being integrated in MTS readiness and in the reporting at project level and emphasized the need to place greater attention on awareness raising.
 - One stakeholder representative stressed the need for capacity building to ensure the engagement of the youth in UNEP’s work and processes.
26. The secretariat appreciated the comments and guidance received, clarified that that it is working to address the areas of improvement identified in the MOPAN assessment and committed to continue updating the CPR on the progress made, including through upcoming Programme Performance Reviews. The secretariat also clarified that it will continue to ensure gender balance in UNEP’s strategic planning, including through gender indicators, improve project design, and intensify the collaboration with relevant UN agencies to scale up impacts.

27. The MOPAN secretariat thanked Member States for the comments received and announced that they stand ready to continue to engage with UNEP and Member States in the context of the MOPAN assessment.

28. One MOPAN Member thanked all Member States for their participation in the briefing and for sharing their views and underscored that MOPAN assessments are an important instrument to consider Member State's partnerships with UN organizations.

Agenda Item 4: Other matters.

29. No other matters were raised.

Agenda Item 5: Closing of the meeting.

30. The meeting closed at 6:00 pm.