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**United Nations  
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**United Nations Environment Assembly of the  
United Nations Environment Programme**

**Fifth session**

Nairobi (hybrid), 22–26 February 2021 and 28 February–2 March 2022\*

Item 5 of the provisional agenda\*\*

**International environmental policy and governance issues**

**Progress in the implementation of resolution 3/3 on  
contributions of the United Nations Environment Assembly to  
the high-level political forum on sustainable development**

**Note by the secretariat**

1. In its resolution 3/3, the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) requested the Executive Director of UNEP to, inter alia, enhance consideration of the annual contributions of the Environment Assembly in the work of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, and to report thereon to the Committee of Permanent Representatives with a view to providing feedback to the Environment Assembly.
2. The meetings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development take place annually in July under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council and every four years in September under the auspices of the General Assembly. In 2021, the forum's annual meeting in July was held 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".
3. The annex to the present note sets out a report outlining the steps taken by the secretariat to provide meaningful contributions to the meetings of the forum. The report outlines progress in the implementation of paragraphs 3 and 4 of resolution 3/3, on substantive inputs and increased interaction between the Environment Assembly and the forum; of paragraph 5, on the role of the President of the Environment Assembly in actively participating in the forum and conveying the main messages of the Environment Assembly to the forum; and of paragraph 7, on supporting preparations for the annual meetings of the regional forums on sustainable development. The annex is presented without formal editing.

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\* In accordance with the decisions taken by the Bureau of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its meeting held on 8 October 2020 and by the bureaux of the United Nations Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives at their joint meeting held on 1 December 2020, the fifth session of the Environment Assembly was adjourned on 23 February 2021 and is expected to resume as an in-person meeting in February 2022.

\*\* UNEP/EA.5/1/Rev.2.

## Annex

### Progress in the implementation of resolution 3/3\*

1. In paragraph 3 of resolution 3/3, the Environment Assembly decided to provide timely, substantive inputs to the annual meetings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Since 2017, UNEP has followed a process whereby it prepares draft inputs for initial consideration by the President of the Environment Assembly followed by consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives. The inputs are only prepared once the invitation from the Economic and Social Council President is received, as the invitation contains concrete questions to be addressed and a template to be used to assess the progress, challenges and lessons learned in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in relation to the overarching theme of each forum.<sup>1</sup>

2. In paragraph 4 of resolution 3/3, the Environment Assembly encouraged interaction between the high-level political forum on sustainable development and the Assembly and the strengthening of that interaction, and in paragraph 5 of the resolution, the Environment Assembly recommended that the President of the Environment Assembly actively participate in and convey the main messages of the Environment Assembly to the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Pursuant to that, the President of the fifth session of the Environment Assembly, Mr. Sveinung Rotevatn, was accorded a separate slot for addressing the ministerial segment of the forum in order to convey the main messages of the Environment Assembly and to present its contributions as an input to the forum's debates. That was an opportunity to reiterate the important role of the Environment Assembly as the highest decision-making body on environmental matters in the United Nations system and to convey key messages and recommendations to the forum. The key messages were also a contribution to the implementation of the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In his statement, Mr. Rotevatn shared key messages from the fifth session of the Environment Assembly. These recommendations included the intergovernmental body's contribution to ensuring that the environmental dimension of sustainable development continues to be fully integrated into recovery efforts and implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The UNEA President acknowledged that the poor and marginalized continue to be those most vulnerable to the impacts of environmental risks, and stressed that equity, inclusion and the eradication of poverty should be addressed. On the outcomes of the Environmental Assembly, he called for scaling up global climate action to deliver on the adaptation and mitigation goals of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement. Moreover, he stressed the need for an ambitious and realistic post-2020 global biodiversity framework and called for the development of measures to mainstream environmental sustainability across economic sectors.

3. Paragraph 7 of resolution 3/3 reflects the importance of the role of regional-level coordination in addressing environmental challenges and the need to build on existing regional mechanisms and frameworks to address Sustainable Development Goal interlinkages and accelerate implementation.

4. UNEP has acted on the request to enhance consideration of the contributions of the Environment Assembly to the high-level political forum on sustainable development. UNEP actively participated in the HLPF with the aim to ensure the balanced consideration of the environmental dimension of sustainable development across different sessions on topics such as: green recovery from the pandemic, addressing the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, the importance of incorporating a one health approach and sustainable consumption and production patterns, among others.

5. UNEP was involved in a number of thematic sessions, special events and side events on issues relevant to its mandate and work during the 2021 forum, with a special focus on the 2021 environmental targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. UNEP organized and co-organized several events, all very well attended, including the side event on Circularity for Resilience and Jobs: Green Recovery Policies are the Global Opportunity Today, co-organised by UNEP and UNIDO, focused on recovery policies, including recovery spending, which offer the opportunity to restore, reset and rebalance our relationship with nature, by addressing the causes of unsustainable consumption and production. Current unsustainable patterns of consumption and production are the major underlying cause of rapidly rising greenhouse gas emissions and other forms of environmental degradation, undermining development prospects and threatening human welfare; "Towards Sustainable, Inclusive and Responsible Mineral Resources Governance Post COVID-19", which

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\* The annex has not been formally edited.

<sup>1</sup> UNEP/CPR/150/5.

provided an opportunity to further implement the UNEA-4/19 resolution on mineral resource governance in the context of a green and inclusive recovery and its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals. Circular Economy as a holistic means to accelerate the implementation of SDG 12 and SDG 13”, “Building resilience against future shocks through structural changes and investment in sustainable infrastructure”, “The impact of climate change on global public health: from prevention to response” and many others.

6. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 3/3, specific activities undertaken by the regional offices in support of the respective regional forums on sustainable development include the following:

(a) In Asia and the Pacific, UNEP played a key role in mainstreaming the environmental dimension in the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, including by ensuring that the biennial outcomes of the Regional Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities also inform the Forum’s discussions. In this regard, UNEP led the roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production, co-led the roundtable on climate change and participated in the roundtables on SDG 16 and SDG 8. Substantive inputs were provided for the SDGs briefs for the aforementioned roundtables. UNEP inputs were reflected in the Outcome Document of the Forum, as well as in the Outcome Document of the Roundtables Document. Furthermore, UNEP supported side events in the Regional Forum.

(b) In Latin America and the Caribbean, the outcomes of the XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean were transmitted to the 4<sup>th</sup> Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development. The Intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and Recommendations of the latter make specific reference to the outcomes of the Forum of Ministers of Environment. During the regional forum and, for the first time, a report of the joint results achieved in the Latin America and the Caribbean region by the United Nations Development System was prepared with the participation of UNEP and under the leadership of the Regional Collaboration Platform.

(c) In Africa, UNEP supported the convening of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), and the 7<sup>th</sup> Session of the African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD-7) as a prerequisite to the HLPF 2021 and contributed to the high-level political forum itself. UNEP contributed to the background paper on SDG 12 for the 7<sup>th</sup> Session of the African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD-7). On SDG 12, UNEP implemented, with assistance from the European Union, the SWITCH Africa Green Programme, a regional initiative that addresses the need for enhanced regional partnerships to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of sustainable consumption and production-related targets. UNEP further supported member states to participate in the AFRSD7 and assisted them to come to a common position through elaboration of key messages and the Brazzaville Declaration. The key messages comprised African priorities, policy options and recommendations to accelerate implementation of Agenda 2030 and Africa’s Agenda 2063 at various levels, and the region’s collective input to the 2021 meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development.