

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday, 13 October 2022
14:00 – 17:00 (GMT+3)
Conference Room 2, United Nations Office at Nairobi
Hybrid meeting

Agenda item 2: Secretariat briefing on the implementation of UNEA resolution 5/12 on environmental aspects of minerals and metals management.

**Background Note for the Sub-Committee Meeting of Committee of Permanent Representatives
13 October 2022**

This note serves as a background document for consideration under Agenda Item 2: Secretariat briefing on the implementation of UNEA resolution 5/12 on environmental aspects of minerals and metals management.

The document highlights ongoing and planned activities related to the implementation of the resolution including the call from the Executive Director to Member States for:

- a. expressions of interest in nominating co-chairs of the intergovernmental consultations,
- b. nominations for national focal points,
- c. expressions of interest to host any of the intergovernmental regional consultations.

UNEP will also convene an informational webinar in November and December of 2022 for nominated national focal points and the members of the CPR on the implementation of the resolution to outline initial proposals on the format in which the intergovernmental regional consultations as well as the global meeting might be conducted.

Following a presentation by the Secretariat, Member States and Stakeholders will be invited to provide further guidance on the implementation of this resolution.

1. This note provides an update on the implementation of the resolution on Environmental Aspects of Minerals and Metals Management. The resolution can be found [here](#).

2. The resolution contains the following requests to UNEP:

Operative Paragraph 2

Requests the Executive Director, subject to available resources, to convene transparent and inclusive intergovernmental regional consultations, including with relevant international organizations, with regional and multilateral environmental agreements, and with relevant stakeholders acting as observers, to feed into a global intergovernmental meeting, with the aim of developing non-prescriptive proposals to enhance the environmental sustainability of minerals and metals along their full life cycle, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

Operative Paragraph 3

Decides that the intergovernmental regional consultations will:

- (a) Take stock of existing activities and actions in the public and private sectors and by other relevant stakeholders to enhance the environmental sustainability of minerals and metals and identify, among other things, best practices, responsible business practices, standards, guidelines, technical tools, environmentally sustainable technologies and the use of renewable energy in mining;
- (b) Identify opportunities for enhanced international cooperation, including with a view to fostering capacity-building and technological, technical and scientific cooperation in the mining sector, in particular with developing countries;
- (c) Identify possible ways forward for consideration by the Environment Assembly at its sixth session, as appropriate;

Operative Paragraph 4

Requests the Executive Director, through the Global Resource Information Database (GRID-Geneva), to strengthen scientific, technical and policy knowledge with regard to sand, and to support global policies and action regarding the environmentally sound extraction and use thereof;

Operative Paragraph 5

Also requests the Executive Director, subject to the availability of resources, with the engagement of the secretariats of relevant multilateral environmental agreements, organizations and stakeholders, as appropriate, and bearing in mind the launch of the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management, to compile a report on knowledge gaps in relation to the environmental aspects of tailings management;

Operative Paragraph 6

Further requests the Executive Director to report to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its sixth session on the progress achieved in the implementation of the present resolution, including through a summary report on the consultations for consideration by the Environment Assembly at that session.

3. The Executive Director (ED), in a letter dated 29 September 2022 which was dispatched on 5 October 2022, addressed to the Ministers responsible for the Environment, invited Member States to nominate national focal points to be engaged during the intergovernmental regional consultations, and Member States to submit expressions of interest to be appointed as Co-Chairs, one each from a developing and a developed country, to lead the consultations. The letter indicated that the appointment of the Co-Chairs will be coordinated by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, under the leadership of the President of the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, taking account of the need for geographical balance and gender parity. The letter indicates a deadline of 31 October 2022 to receive nominations for focal points and expressions of interest for the Co-Chairs.

4. Member States were further invited to submit expressions of interest should they wish to host any of the intergovernmental regional consultations. The costs for the implementation of the resolution are to be met exclusively by voluntary contributions. While some resources already exist, there is a funding gap of 36.5% of the total estimated costs, or US\$ 359,755, to conduct the intergovernmental regional consultations and to enable the full implementation of the resolution. A budget summary was annexed to the letter. The ED also invited governments and other stakeholders in a position to do so to provide extra-budgetary resources to support the implementation of the process. To date, no such resources have been confirmed.

5. In October 2022, preparations began on the development of background documents and awareness-raising to support the implementation of the resolution. Specifically:

- a) Background document to strengthen the scientific knowledge of the contribution of different stakeholders to enhance the environmental sustainability of minerals and metals, including of critical minerals for clean technologies, needed for combating climate change;
- b) Preparatory activities to strengthen scientific, technical and policy knowledge with regard to sand, and to support global policies and action regarding the environmentally sound extraction and use. Initial ideas include the development of artificial intelligence (AI) to identify unknown sand dredging vessels and to further improve the identification of vessel activity. Early results of this exercise will include a prototype of the AI and new training datasets to create an AI which can correctly identify various dredging activities. The outcomes of this exercise will be a stronger understanding of the locations and amount of sand extracted in various locations, as well as improved transparency on the practices of this sector;
- c) Informal discussions with the UN system i.e. sharing of information on the adoption of the resolution during the Mid-Term Technical Segment of the UN Environment Management Group 28th Senior Officials Meeting in May 2022; sharing of information on the adoption of the resolution with interested stakeholders who have approached UNEP for information on the resolution; and
- d) Exploration of additional opportunities to increase visibility of the UNEA resolution during the 8th Annual General Meeting of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development (to be held from 8-10 November 2022) on the margins of the session focused on the UN Secretary General's Working Group on Extractive Industries.

6. In November and December 2022, UNEP will convene an informational webinar for nominated national focal points and the members of the CPR on the implementation of the resolution. During the

webinar, UNEP will outline initial proposals on the format in which the intergovernmental regional consultations as well as the global meeting might be conducted.

7. For more information on any of these points, please reach out to

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