

**NINTH ANNUAL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CPR TO UNEP
(24-28 OCTOBER 2022, NAIROBI, KENYA)**

OPENING STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE EU AND ITS MS

Your Excellency, Chairman of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme,

Dear Madam, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, here in Nairobi as well as in the capitals around the Globe,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27-member states.

First of all, I wish to align my statement with the intervention that was just made by the UK, speaking on behalf of a group of countries.

Today, the first day of the Ninth Annual subcommittee meeting of the CPR, we mark also the 77th anniversary of the UN Charter. UN Day, celebrated annually, offers the opportunity to amplify our commitment to the UN common agenda and reaffirms the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. This is even more relevant now when the world faces many crises, including the triple planetary crisis. The 2022 year represents a challenge for multilateralism and international cooperation in the interest of both nations and peoples.

It is our view that the protection of peace and human rights, including the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, politically recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in July 2022 through the resolution A/76/L.75, should be our common responsibility and priority for action.

Your Excellency, Mr. Chairman,

The EU and its member states highly appreciate the opportunity offered during this week to thoroughly review the implementation of the UNEP Programme of Work and Budget and the Mid-term Strategy at all levels from global to local.

EU and MS understand the short period of implementing the Programme of Work and the MTS to gain experience and gather useful data to report on results at this meeting. We welcome the opportunity to be able to gain insights, including lessons learned, in particular on progress made at the regional and sub-regional levels of delivery.

EU and MS will continue to follow the trend of increased operational efficiency and effectiveness in delivery as well as in use of available financial resources.

In particular, we are interested to hear on progress made in developing more integrated approaches for the delivery of the Programme of Work and budget, keeping in mind that multiple benefits can be gained from activities with cross-cutting impacts that help moving to more sustainable patterns of consumption and production (e.g. to address nexus areas, including on climate-biodiversity-land-water), as well as on how to make relevant links with the foundational work done on environmental governance and science.

We welcome the integrated approach taken by UNEP to implement those and other interrelated activities, to reach multiple benefits from the implementation of the Programme of Work. Therefore, the EU and its member states acquainted with high interest with the findings of the assessments of UNEP Evaluation Office as well as MOPAN on the performance of UNEP in the context of the UN reform and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We note in this regard a need for UNEP to improve result-based management at the project level.

At the last United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), the Member States adopted 14 resolutions related to the environment, nature, health, pollution and circular economy nexus. The resolutions provide mandate for the UNEP and its Executive Director to act on their implementation, but also invites Member States and their governments, other UN agencies, multilateral environmental agreements and stakeholders to act. For their successful implementation inclusiveness and collective and individual responsibility, as well as adequate resourcing is of paramount importance and adequate financing by all MS. The strengthening of coordination and coherent action among existing and new partnerships, initiatives, organizations and institutions working on environment as well as with UNEPs Programme of Work should be fostered and further strengthened to achieve the impacts and results envisaged. At this meeting the EU and its Member States expect a detailed dialogue on the status of the implementation of UNEA resolutions and decisions taken at UNEA 5 and earlier, recognizing their relevance, in line with MTS implementation, to achieve progress in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The EU and its member states remain committed to this promise for a healthy planet for the prosperity of all.

The EU and its member states are looking forward for the exchange of views on the potential theme of the next UNEA. We share the opinion that the theme should be aligned with the UNEP mandate, relevant to the UN Reform and achievement of the Agenda 2030 as well as implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, relevant UNEA resolutions and emerging environmental issues. We hope that these consultations will help to agree the theme at the UNEA Bureau in February 2023 and the EU is ready to engage in these initial exchanges of views.

The EU and its member states are committed to work together with partners during this Annual subcommittee meeting to have fruitful and useful discussion on the implementation of main tasks and challenges by the UNEP. We wish the meeting every success.

Thank you for your attention.

“AGENDA ITEM 3: UNEP IN THE CONTEXT OF THE REFORM OF THE UN AND THE AGENDA 2030 FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT”

- EU + MS appreciate the analysis by UNEP on the state of mainstreaming environment on the common country analysis as well as co-operation frameworks.
- As the presentation clearly shows, regrettably environment is still weakly mainstreamed, in particular to combat pollution and to protect biodiversity in national strategic planning as well as action implementation plans. It is also regrettable that environmental considerations are inadequately mainstreamed in human rights and peace and security. The EU expects UNEP to strengthen its work to implement the MTS paragraphs 38; 40 and 41. There is a crucial need to promote synergies between climate change, biodiversity and pollution including in funding.
- Implementation of MEAs strategic/implementation/action plans are under-addressed or absent in co-operation frameworks, despite increased efforts by UNEP to participate in the UN country teams and the UN resident coordinator system in the past years. EU and its MS strongly encourage to continue their efforts, to support member states in making sure that commitments made at the global level, regional and subregional level to implement the goals of very broad spectrum of MEAs are reflected in action on the ground.
- EU + MS welcome the suggested actions to improve the situation through strengthening of UNEP’s programmatic coherence of its country level activities, including fostering a network of focal points based at the regional/sub-regional/country offices as well as in headquarters based thematic divisions. We look forward to remain regularly updated on progress.
- Strengthening environment in the common country analysis and co-operation frameworks requires integrated approaches at all levels and involvement of other UN entities working in the field of sustainable development and development agendas, under the leadership of UN resident coordinators. UNEP does not have the resources to achieve all this alone. Therefore, engagement of other UN entities is a must and requires dialogue, joint approaches and action that can be facilitated by interagency groups such as the Environment Management Group (EMG) and UN Chief Executive Board (CEB).
- EU + MS would like to hear more about the role of the EMG and the role of ED as the EMG chair, how EMG could be used even more strategically to accelerate mainstreaming of environment across the UN system? For example, how to increase the use EMG’s products such as the system-wide strategies on environment?
- It would also be interesting to hear how UNEP will be involved in preparation and deliberation of 2030 SDGs Summit that was convened by the UN Secretary General and how to achieve equal attention for all SDG’s, including finance in the UN Development System and the co-operation frameworks? As the QCPR report shows, not all SDGs are receiving the same funding attention as e.g., the substantial funding is devoted to SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions, i.e., peace-keeping missions) and SDG 2 (hunger, i.e. humanitarian assistance).

“AGENDA ITEM 4: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET 2022-2023 OF UNEP”

- EU + MS thank UNEP Secretariat and its regional offices for the extensive amount of information provided for this agenda item before the meeting.
- We appreciate today’s succinct presentation by the Secretariat to support MS understanding on how different targets were reached through specific regional activities and initiatives.
- Looking at the detailed implementation of the POW and budget from this regional perspective is a different approach than what was presented in previous years. It offers new deeper insights for MS, a comprehensive overview of how UNEP’s priority issues are tackled in the different regions around the world and provides overview on how synergies can be fostered between different workstreams reflecting specifics of regions.
- EU+MS highly appreciate the engagement of UNEP through regional offices in implementation of the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals that are crucial for ensuring environmental sustainability not mentioning only related to climate change, biodiversity, pollution, land degradation, water, but also to the governance issues, rule of law and human rights.
- The successful implementation of thematic projects at regional, sub-regional and country levels (e.g., related to climate change, nature protection, green and circular economy, governance, air quality, chemicals management, water) is proof of the fact that the expertise and knowledge of UNEP and of its regional offices is valued and on demand by the UNEP member states and partners in the UN family.
- The engagement of and support by UNEP and its regional offices in/to regional environment ministerial forums should be highly recognized as well as in supporting the implementation of global, regional and sub-regional multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). In the case of some regional and sub-regional MEAs, at the request of the Parties, UNEP and its regional offices are providing the administrative support (secretariat) to those MEAs.
- The efforts of UNEP to be closer to the clients using the network of regional, sub-regional, country and project offices should be supported. This might contribute to the strengthening of integrated and synergistic approaches, bringing multiple benefits and cost effectiveness at regional and country level and thus to ensure successful implementation of PoW and MTS. It can also assist with funding mobilization from international public and private resources.
- The EU+MS will individually share during the dialogue with the participants of this meeting their experience with implementation of the POW in individual regions as well as the best practices from the projects they were actively engaged.
- The Programme Performance Review 2020-2021, which gives an insight in how UNEP delivers on the MTS and POW, and reports on the agreed results framework has of course already been discussed in the CPR previously. This remains an important background document for the deliberations of the Annual Subcommittee Meeting (ASCM), which is supposed to “dive deep” into UNEP’s work, and so EU+MS welcome the invite from the secretariat to consider how to better align the timing of the ASCM with the reporting cycle of UNEP.