

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday, 27 April 2023
10:00 – 13:00, 15:00 – 18:00 (GMT+3)
Conference Room 1
Hybrid meeting

Agenda item 6: Briefing on the preparation of the 2023 World Environment Day.

This background document has been developed by the Secretariat to inform the Committee of Permanent Representatives on the preparation of the 2023 World Environment Day. More specifically, it includes detailed information on the following aspects of World Environment Day:

- The fiftieth World Environment Day summary;
- Highlighting UN Member States' activities for 5 June;
- Background to the day;
- Background to the theme.

Following the presentation, Member States and Stakeholders are invited to engage in an exchange of views with the Secretariat regarding the preparation of the 2023 World Environment Day.

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Background document for World Environment Day CPR meeting 27 April 2023

Event: CPR Subcommittee meeting on 27 April (UNON CR1 or CR2)
Title: Briefing about World Environment Day 2023
Speaker: Daniel Cooney, UNEP Director of Communication

The fiftieth World Environment Day summary:

- Event: **World Environment Day 2023**
- Date: **5 June 2023**
- Host country: **Côte d'Ivoire**
- Partner country: **Netherlands**
- Campaign: **Beat Plastic Pollution**
- Hashtags: **#BeatPlasticPollution** and **#WorldEnvironmentDay**
- Thematic focus: **Solutions to plastic pollution**

In 2023 World Environment Day turns 50. Led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and celebrated annually on 5 June since 1973, the event has grown to be one of the biggest global platforms for environmental outreach, with millions of people across the world engaging to protect the planet.

This year World Environment Day is hosted by Côte d'Ivoire in partnership with the Netherlands, and the theme is solutions to plastic pollution.

World Environment Day 2023 will showcase how countries, businesses and individuals are pushing for solutions to the negative impact of plastic pollution that is harming people's health, countries' economies and the natural world.

Over the past five decades, World Environment Day has grown to be one of the largest global platforms for environmental outreach. Tens of millions of people take part along with governments, companies, cities and community organizations.

Highlighting UN Member States' activities for 5 June

UNEP encourages all UN Member States who may be announcing any environmental policies or launching any environmental initiatives around 5 June to please share details about these policies or events with UNEP so these can be highlighted on the World Environment Day updates and also in the World Environment Day 2023 report.

These can be shared using this [this form](https://forms.gle/TKEFkGgBxezVdTJy7) (link <https://forms.gle/TKEFkGgBxezVdTJy7>).

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UNEP is encouraging everyone who takes part in World Environment Day to:

1. Download and **use the Practical Guide** to find sector solutions to overcoming plastic pollution.
2. **Register your #BeatPlasticPollution event** or activity on the World Environment Day map.
3. **Show your support on social media** by sharing the multimedia content, social cards that [are available here https://trello.com/b/XIIUvx3q/world-environment-day-2023](https://trello.com/b/XIIUvx3q/world-environment-day-2023)

Background to the day

On 5 December 1972, the General Assembly adopted a resolution ([A/RES/2994 \(XXVII\)](#)) designating 5 June as World Environment Day, urging “Governments and the organizations in the United Nations system to undertake on that day every year world-wide activities reaffirming their concern for the preservation and enhancement of the environment, with a view to deepening environmental awareness and to pursuing the determination expressed at the Conference.”

Background to the theme

2023: Plastic pollution is out of control

- An estimated [19-23 million tonnes](#) of plastic waste is dumped in lakes, rivers and seas annually. Discarded or burnt single-use plastic harms human health, the economy, the environment and threatens sustainable development.
- Microplastics –tiny plastic particles up to 5mm in diameter– find their way into food, water and air. It is estimated that each person on the planet consumes more than [50,000 plastic particles per year](#).
- Throughout its life cycle, plastic contributes to climate change. About 98 per cent of single-use plastic products are produced from virgin fossil fuels and plastics generate over [3 per cent](#) of greenhouse gas emissions.

The future is circular

Plastic is a durable and versatile innovation that needs to be valued in our economy. A way to solve the plastic pollution emergency is to deploy a circular approach to its production, use, reuse, and waste management. When plastic is introduced into the economy, it should remain there, while problematic and unnecessary plastic items should be eliminated and substituted with sustainable options and practices.

Political momentum is building

Transboundary in nature, plastic pollution needs coordinated international action. In early 2022, representatives from UN Member States endorsed an historic resolution at the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) to end plastic pollution and forge an international legally binding plastics agreement. They will meet in May 2023 to continue the negotiations with the intention to complete the process by 2024.