

Joint retreat of the Bureaux of the United Nations Environment Assembly
and the Committee of Permanent Representatives
6 and 7 July 2023
In-person

Agenda item 2b: Concept note on the supplementary item entitled “Cooperation with Multilateral Environmental Agreements”

This note, entitled “*Supplementary agenda item entitled “Cooperation with Multilateral Environmental Agreements”*”, has been developed by the Secretariat for the consideration of and possible guidance by the Bureaux of the United Nations Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives, under agenda item 2b [Draft annotated agenda and structure for UNEA-6] at the joint retreat of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to be held in Tangier, Morocco on 6 and 7 July 2023.

The note outlines the proposal for consideration of the supplementary agenda item during the sixth session of the Environment Assembly.

Supplementary agenda item entitled “Cooperation with Multilateral Environmental Agreements”

Concept note in preparation of UNEA-6

1. Background

1. At the fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2) held in March 2022, Member States, in [decision 5/4](#), endorsed the [outcomes of the review by the Committee of Permanent Representatives](#) (CPR) to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of UNEP governing and subsidiary bodies as agreed at the eighth meeting of the annual subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held in Nairobi from 25 to 29 October 2021.

2. In a follow-up to the UNEA decision, the President of UNEA-6, on behalf of the UNEA Bureau, has requested the Executive Director of UNEP, in accordance with rule 11 of the rules of procedure of the Environment Assembly, the inclusion of a supplementary agenda item entitled “Cooperation with multilateral environmental agreements” in the provisional agenda of the sixth session of the Assembly (26 February – 1st March 2024 in Nairobi) (see document [UNEP/EA.6/15](#)).

2. Overall objective of the supplementary agenda item

3. In light of UNEP’s medium-term strategy (MTS), the overall goal of strengthening the engagement of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in UNEA-6 to promote coherence between the resolutions of the Assembly and the decisions of the governing bodies of the MEAs, while fully respecting the autonomy of the MEAs and without introducing new and additional requirements for the contracting parties to the MEAs, can be seen as *supporting the Environment Assembly in enhancing its relationship with the MEAs and its contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, by strengthening convergence of action and dialogue on common strategies and sharing of experiences while also providing increased visibility to the decisions of the governing bodies of the MEAs.*

4. The UNEA-6 theme “Effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution” is well aligned with MEAs objectives, and the UNEA-6 supplementary agenda item provides a structured entry point to highlight the importance of cooperation with MEAs under this theme. In addition to possible draft resolutions tabled by Member State(s) relevant for the supplementary item, the high-level discussions focusing on specific thematic areas of cooperation will provide further substantive inputs to the Assembly. Furthermore, a dedicated Secretariat background document will be prepared in advance of the meeting to support the consideration of this agenda item. UNEP will consult MEA Secretariats on the preparation

of the document. The document¹ will include guiding questions to direct the discussions at the MEA high-level dialogue referred to below and possible key messages for action.

5. The consideration of the supplementary item is expected to result in tangible outcomes reflected, as appropriate, in decisions, resolutions and conclusions of the meeting.

3. Consideration of the supplementary agenda item at UNEA-6

6. The supplementary agenda item will be presented as part of the UNEA 6 agenda to be formally adopted during the opening of UNEA-6 on 26 February 2024. This will be followed by the organization of an “MEA Day” on Wednesday, 28 February, in parallel with the Committee of the Whole.

7. It is foreseen that the MEA day will be formally opened by the UNEA President, followed by a statement by the Executive Director and possible brief introductory remarks from a selection of ministers who hold the role of MEA COP Presidents and a limited number of MEA Executive Secretaries. The President will then conclude this stage of the consideration of the item and adjourn the formal meeting. Immediately thereafter, two 3-hour moderated high-level MEA dialogues will begin.

8. Formal consideration of the agenda item would resume on 1st March 2024 in the afternoon, with a presentation of summaries from the two dialogues by the moderators. The Assembly would be invited to take note of the outcomes, to be included in the proceedings report of UNEA-6, and then close the item. The sequence of consideration of the agenda item is illustrated in figure 1. The meeting(s) which will form part of the 5-day UNEA session will be interpreted and webcast.

9. It is also expected that the outcomes of the item on MEA cooperation will be brought to the attention of the governing bodies of the MEAs as appropriate.

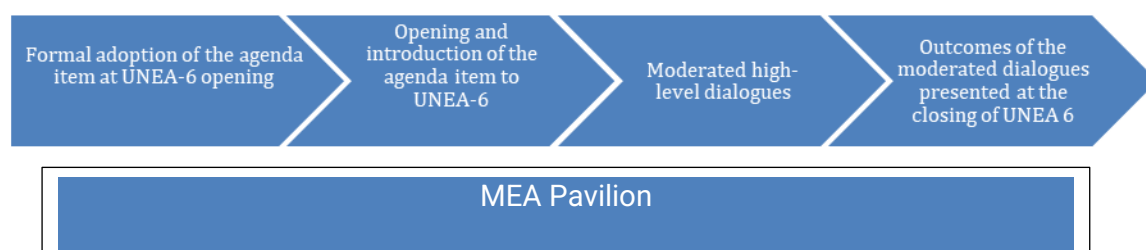


Figure 1: Sequence of consideration of the supplementary agenda item

¹ The document will be drafted by UNEP together with MEAs through the MEAs focal at point network which is a technical cooperation platform between UNEP and UNEP-administered MEA Secretariats.

4. MEA high-level dialogues

10. It is proposed that the MEA high-level dialogues will be held on 28 February from 10:15 am - 1 pm and 3 – 6 pm.
11. It is proposed that the two high-level dialogues will focus on two broad programmatic areas:
 - Strengthening the science-policy interface for effective implementation of environmental commitments
 - Fostering coherent implementation at the national level to address the three planetary crises through increased cooperation between UNEP and MEAs
12. The topics and the content for the dialogues will be refined and further developed as necessary.

5. Participation in the MEA Day

13. The participation in the MEA Day will be open to all UNEA participants.
14. In addition to UNEP-administered global and regional MEA Secretariats², the invitation to effectively participate in UNEA-6, including the MEA Day, will be extended to the two other Rio Conventions (UNFCCC and UNCCD) and the five non-UNEP-administered MEA Secretariats of the Liaison Group of Biodiversity related Conventions³ as well as the London Convention⁴.
15. Similar to the UNEA high-level dialogues (leadership dialogues) planned for the UNEA high level segment on 29 February and 1 March, participation is open to all Member States, Heads of MEA Secretariats and relevant UN entities and Specialized Agencies and intergovernmental/international organizations, as well as accredited major groups and stakeholders. The panelists and introductory speakers in the high-level dialogues will be determined at a later stage but it is envisaged that a number of ministers who also serve as COP Presidents will play a role in the high-level dialogues.

² UNEP-Administered MEA Secretariats: Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Minamata Convention on Mercury, Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone layer, Bamako Convention, Carpathian Convention, Abidjan Convention, Barcelona Convention, Cartagena Convention, Nairobi Convention and Tehran Convention.

³ In addition to CBD, CITES and CMS, the BLG includes the International Plant Protection Convention, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the International Whaling Commission, the Ramsar Convention and the UNESCO World Heritage Convention.

⁴ The Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter.

6. MEA Pavilion

16. It is proposed that an “MEA Pavilion” will be organized during the full week of UNEA-6, subject to available financial resources, as a multipurpose space to showcase cooperation between UNEP and MEAs, the other UN entities and MEAs as well as among the MEAs on cross-cutting topics of interest which are relevant to the theme of UNEA-6. It will also provide a room for individual MEAs to showcase their work, including through presentations and exhibitions.

17. The Pavilion would be open to all UNEA participants providing space for networking, knowledge sharing and additional panel discussions and other events. In addition to UNEP and MEA Secretariats, the pavilion could also provide space for MEA-related events organized by national entities/ Member States and relevant organizations and stakeholders including scientists, business, civil society and youth groups.

18. The summary of the discussions at the Pavilion will be made available on the UNEA-6 website.
