

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Nairobi, 18 July 2023
10:00 - 13:00 and 14:00-17:00(GMT+3)
Hybrid meeting
Conference room 1 & Microsoft Teams

Chair's Summary

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

1. H. E. Mr. Firas Khouri, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the Republic of Kenya and Permanent Representative to UNEP, opened the meeting.
2. The [agenda](#) was adopted.

Agenda item 2: Briefing on the 2022 UNEP Programme Performance Report.

3. The Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, Ms. Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, introduced the 2022 UNEP Programme Performance Report, stating that the report reflects the first year of the implementation of UNEP's 2022-2023 Programme of Work and highlights both opportunities and challenges. She added that UNEP delivered significant results in tackling planetary environmental crises, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. She expressed gratitude to Member States, partners, and donors for their support and looked forward to continued engagement and guidance. She also informed that UNEP has established the new Thematic Funds to achieve the flexibility needed to deliver transformative actions outlined in the Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025.
4. The Secretariat provided a detailed briefing on the [UNEP Programme Performance Report for 2022](#), highlighting UNEP's achievements during the first year of the 2022-2023 Programme of Work (PoW). A [management response](#) was provided on the evaluations. All presentations are available on the [meeting portal](#).

Programme Performance Overview

5. Delegates who took the floor¹ made the following comments:
 - a. Welcomed the report and congratulated UNEP on the achievements of the UNEP sub-programmes.
 - b. Congratulated the Chair and the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives on their election.
 - c. Requested for more information to be provided during the 10th Annual Subcommittee meeting of the CPR on highlights and lessons learned, UN reform, compilation of recommendations made on evaluation and audits and measures to implement, opportunities for poverty reduction as well as work on disasters and conflict.
 - d. Reiterated the importance of gender and requested for more information on the high-level gender taskforce chaired by the Deputy Executive Director of UNEP.
 - e. Welcomed the revised structure of the report and requested the inclusion of a final chapter with conclusions and challenges as well as lessons learned for all sections.

¹ Philippines (on behalf of the Asia-Pacific States group), Spain (on behalf of the European Union and its Member States), Switzerland, United States, China, Finland, Portugal, South Africa, Belgium, Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, France, Children and Youth Major Group.

Strategic Objective 1: Climate Stability

- a. Highlighted the importance of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and requested more information on its work.
- b. Queried the Green Climate Fund (GCF) partnership implementation.
- c. Requested an explanation on the use of the term “climate stability”.

Strategic Objective 2: Living in Harmony with Nature

- a. Acknowledged the continued support UNEP has been providing to Member States in the development, adoption and implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
- b. Encouraged UNEP to communicate more broadly the information on UNEP Finance Initiative’s work on mainstreaming biodiversity into the finance sector.

Strategic Objective 3: Pollution-Free Planet

- a. Highlighted the efforts of UNEP to mainstream chemicals and pollution action in the UN system effort at regional and country levels.
- b. Noted the progress on the implementation of UNEA resolution 5/14 to end plastic pollution, the global momentum built for sound management of waste such as the UN General Assembly resolution 77/161 on “Promoting zero waste initiatives to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and the regional commitment expressed to reduce open dumping, waste burning, air pollution, and cleaning-up of post disaster/conflict debris.
- c. Asked for more details on the United Nations Common System approach towards a pollution free planet.

Enabling Sub-programme: Digital Transformations

- a. Congratulated the Digital Transformation Sub-programme for exceeding expectations, queried if there is a timeline for reassessment of the targets and indicators for the sub-programme.
 - b. Requested the Secretariat to provide more information on the digital platforms of UNEP, for example, by identifying current gaps and pinpointing ways in which Member States can engage on platforms.
6. The Secretariat thanked delegations for their comments and provided the following clarifications:
- a. Noted that a checklist on the UN reform will be presented during the 10th Annual Subcommittee meeting of the CPR.
 - b. Highlighted that the Secretariat will make a proposal to the CPR Bureau to have a deep dive on the Environment Management Group during the 10th Annual Subcommittee meeting of the CPR.
 - c. Highlighted that UNEP continues to reflect on the challenges, lessons learned and will provide proposed solutions for issues raised in future reports.
 - d. Highlighted that UNEP underwent a recent policy review of its contribution to poverty reduction and these recommendations will be implemented over 2023-2024 to strengthen the integration of social and economic pillars of sustainable development in the work of UNEP.
 - e. Confirmed that the designated internal high-level taskforce on gender constructively assesses and guides the implementation of the recommendations that come out of the independent evaluation.
 - f. Informed of the support provided to Member States concerning disaster and conflict including support provided to Mauritania and Nepal on the development of their climate risk reduction plans, to Somalia for preparation of their National Environment Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2026) with disaster risk reduction, deployment of advisors in the Horn of Africa and

- West Africa, and a post-disaster needs assessment after the floods in Pakistan in July 2022.
- g. Updated on the upcoming election of a new IPCC Bureau and a new Bureau of the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories at the 59th Session of the IPCC in Nairobi (25 - 28 July 2023), adding that the Secretary of the IPCC, in a letter dated 28 March 2023, invited IPCC members to submit written nominations for the Chair and all other Bureau and Task Force Bureau positions.
 - h. Informed that the Accreditation Master Agreement (AMA) between the GCF and UNEP was approved by the Board at its meeting in July 2023.
 - i. Briefed that UNEP has seconded staff to the UNFCCC to support the Transitional Committee for the Loss and Damage Fund; UNEP is also piloting the integration of poverty and environment through such initiatives as de-risking investments in vulnerable, fragile and LDCs where renewable investments would not be attracted (SCAF); a guidance note on Human Rights Based approach to adaptation was published during the reporting period that guides our programming with a view to addressing the needs of vulnerable communities; and the Copenhagen Climate Center is supporting Uganda with a vulnerability index to target its actions on climate change adaptation and resilience.
 - j. Clarified that the term “climate stability” is UNEP’s strategic objective in the MTS, and the term “climate action” refers to a sub-programme. Furthermore, climate stability seeks to highlight the element of resilience as Member States wanted to stress the inclusion of adaptation, which has further grown in importance with the progress on loss and damage negotiations under the Paris Agreement.
 - k. Briefed on the drafting of the United Nations System common approach towards a pollution free planet that has been completed by the Small Drafting Group, comprised of FAO, IAEA, OHCHR, UNDP, UNEP, UNICEF, UNIDO and WHO, which was led by three co-chairs including FAO, UNEP and WHO and has been drafted and presented to the Environmental Management Group (EMG) secretariat for submission to the EMG Senior Officials group for endorsement in the 29th meeting of the Senior Officials meeting of the EMG in October this year.
 - l. Explained that the reassessment of targets and indicators of the Digital Transformation Sub-programme is currently underway; the current sub-programme focuses on enabling other sub-programmes to deliver their digital products with technical and financial support from the digital transformation team; use cases are being developed for the World Environment Situation Room, including a Common Country Analysis dashboard, which Member States will be invited to test during UNEA 6; and new UNEP Data and Digital Governance Group is being established to govern the progressive adoption of digital technology across UNEP in a responsible, ethical, and sustainable manner.

Resources and Management

7. Delegates who took the floor² made the following comments:
 - a. Congratulated UNEP for their effort regarding gender and equitable geographical distribution among its staff and meeting its targets, including on professional and senior management levels, but noted the low percentages of underrepresented regions.
 - b. Noted that all budgets were surpassed and requested further clarification on the underlying causes.
 - c. Reiterated the importance of the Environment Fund in implementing the mandate and the work tasked by the Member States at the UN Environment Assembly; while noting that 83 out of 193 Member States contributed to the EF in 2022, encouraged all Member States to make their contributions to help UNEP enhance its work.
 - d. Noted the need to boost engagement with UN country teams (in reference to page 36 of the

² United States, Belgium, Switzerland, Portugal, Kenya.

- report) and requested further background information on the development of specific action plans and to what extent these are based on successful approaches by other UN entities or if these are more innovative solutions developed by UNEP.
- e. Requested financial information across sub-programmes, including exact audit recommendations by UNEP.
8. The Secretariat thanked delegations for their comments and provided the following clarifications:
- a. Welcomed the call for countries to contribute to the Environment Fund and for recognizing the positive trends on gender parity and geographical distribution.
 - b. Advised of the outreach efforts towards underrepresented regions made under the 4-point plan, the benefits of which will hopefully be reaped in the coming months.
 - c. Highlighted that financial information across sub-programmes will be elaborated in the annual subcommittee meeting.
 - d. Noted that information on exact audit recommendations is publicly available, however, UNEP will give an overview of audit practices in UNEP and an updated status of outstanding recommendations at the annual subcommittee meeting.
 - e. Highlighted that the cross-cutting challenges that UNEP faces across the sub-programmes include implementation and engagement with Implementing Partners; noted that in 2022, UNEP has implemented a new project monitoring system and quarterly business review (QBRs) which will help to more closely manage projects and accelerate implementation, further highlighting that engagement with other UN entities on, for example SPOT-checks and audits of Implementing Partners, was established to tighten project management and increase implementation rates.
 - f. Noted that the way in which budgets, incomes and resources are depicted on the graphs is due to the UN accounting practices, for example, the income of an agreement of USD 300,000 signed this year and to be implemented over the next three years has to be recognized in this year; whatever remains unused will be rolled over to the next year, further noting that the income is recorded this way to comply with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards.
 - g. Highlighted that extensive discussions and consultations were held with the Development Coordination Office (DCO), Resident Coordinators (RCs), and the UN entities within the UN Sustainable Development Group and noted that surveys conducted by the DCO indicated that environment is a top priority for the RCs and the UNCTs.
 - h. Noted that last year a joint workshop was conducted on how to best inform in-country analysis through environmental data; and a survey conducted by the Development Coordination Office showed that UN Country Teams felt better access to the Resident Coordinator if there was a physical presence in the country.

Agenda item 3: Briefing on the UNEA sessions and related consequences for UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy and Programme of Work and Budget.

9. The Secretariat provided a [briefing](#) on the UNEA sessions and related consequences for UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy and Programme of Work and Budget, including a third option which was not outlined in the background document. The [presentation](#) is made available on the [meeting portal](#). This was followed by an exchange of views from Member States and Stakeholders.
10. Delegations that took the floor³ provided the following comments:
- a. Noted that the decision to convene UNEA-6 in 2024 was made bearing in mind that the President and the Bureau should have a full two-year term and this provision should be applicable to future

³ Malawi, Spain (on behalf of the European Union and its Member States), Switzerland, Belgium, Kenya, United States, Japan, United Republic of Tanzania, Canada.

- Bureaux of UNEA; and emphasized the need to avoid protracted discussion on the duration of the term of office of UNEA Bureau.
- b. Highlighted that the rules of procedure provide for a regular session of UNEA to be held every two years which should be respected.
 - c. Appreciated that the two options presented in the background document reflected the provisions of the rules of procedure of UNEA [UNEA held every two years] and took into account past decisions on the duration of the term of office of the UNEA Bureau; noted that convening a special session would have financial implication and the silence procedure option may not allow for sufficient consultations; while option two seems most efficient and cost-effective, eliminates the time gap between the formulation and the implementation of the PoW but limits the implementation of significant changes to the MTS and the PoW and the budget before 2027.
 - d. Requested the secretariat to provide information on how lessons learned from the ongoing PoW would be implemented if the current PoW and budget is extended till 2026.
 - e. Highlighted that the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR), which is the mechanism through which the General Assembly assesses the effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and impact of UN operational activities for development and establishes system wide policy orientations for the UN Development System, should be taken into consideration and recommended that UNEA cycles should be aligned with the QCPR cycle and return to odd numbered years as decided in UNEA resolution 2/22.
 - f. Sought clarification whether the Secretariat has discussed the options with the UN Development Coordination Office and how other UN entities were addressing the issue of alignment of their sessions to the QCPR.
 - g. Expressed that for Missions in Nairobi having the UNEA and the Habitat Assembly on different years would be helpful.
 - h. Requested for additional time to review the third option and asked for more clarity on the budget implications of the options.
 - i. Requested for clarification on the way forward including how a decision will be taken.
11. The Secretariat thanked delegates for their engagement and provided the following comments:
- a. Clarified that with respect to option 1, UNEA would approve the MTS for 2030-2023 during UNEA-8 held in 2028 which would be almost two years in advance of the implementation and would imply that UNEP might not be able to address emerging issues and would affect UNEP programmatically; similarly, option 2 would delay making changes to the MTS and PoW for an addition one year until 2026 however the budget and the targets in the PoW can be prorated; and lessons learned would be taken into consideration in the implementation of the PoW.
 - b. Explained that the next QCPR for the period 2025-2028 will be adopted in 2024 and the monitoring framework on the implementation of the QCPR would come into effect in 2025 therefore there would be opportunities to align the MTS and PoW to the QCPR; and assured to consult other UN entities.
 - c. Explained that the options paper will be revised, taking into account the comments provided at the meeting and reflecting financial implications for the options, for further discussion at the 10th annual subcommittee meeting and expected that Member States would give the Secretariat a mandate to prepare a draft decision for UNEA-6.

Agenda item 4: Other matters.

12. Delegates who took the floor⁴ made the following observations:
- a. Expressed concerns on the marine environment associated with the decision of the government of Japan to discharge nuclear contaminated water into the ocean from its Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.
 - b. Explained that the government of Japan engaged in discussion based on scientific evidence in a

⁴ China, Japan, Russian Federation, Colombia, United Republic of Tanzania.

transparent manner in the appropriate fora with the relevant expertise such as the IAEA; has been taking measures in accordance with international law; and the radiological environmental impact of the discharge was assessed in line with the international guidelines taking into account the long-term accumulation. Requested the Secretariat to examine the matter with the representatives of the region.

- c. Called for support of the candidature of Dr. Ladislaus B. Chang'a of the United Republic of Tanzania as a vice-chair candidate for the next IPCC.

Agenda item 5: Closing of the meeting.

13. The meeting closed at 17.00 (GMT+3).