

Committee of the Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee meeting
Nairobi, 7 November 2023
14:00 – 17:00 (GMT+3)
Hybrid meeting
Conference Room 1 and Microsoft Teams

Agenda item 2: Briefing on the UNEP Working Group on Nitrogen.

This background document has been developed by the Secretariat to inform the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the establishment and progress of the UNEP Working Group on Nitrogen. The UNEP Working Group on Nitrogen was established pursuant to the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) resolution 4/14 on Sustainable nitrogen management to follow up on the tasks set out in the resolution. The Working Group has held four meetings, with a fifth meeting planned to be held before UNEA-6. UNEA-6 will provide ample opportunity on advancing cooperation on sustainable nitrogen management, and nutrients more generally.

Following this briefing on the establishment and progress of the UNEP Working Group on Nitrogen, Member States and Stakeholders are invited to engage in an exchange of views with the Secretariat.

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The [UNEP Working Group on Nitrogen](#) was established pursuant to the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) [resolution 4/14](#) on Sustainable nitrogen management to follow up on the tasks set out in the resolution. Following UNEA [resolution 5/2](#) the scope of the Working Group was expanded to facilitate the implementation of both resolutions and strengthen the engagement and ownership of their implementation by Member States and stakeholders.

On 30 August 2022 the Executive Director of UNEP invited Member States to nominate focal points and Co-Chairs to the Working Group. The appointment of the two Co-Chairs, Romania and India, was coordinated by the Committee of Permanent Representatives under the leadership of the President of UNEA-6. To date, 78 [focal points](#) have been nominated by Member States to the Working Group.

The Working Group has held four meetings. The first meeting was held online on 8 to 9 June 2020 and established an ad hoc Task Team; the second meeting was held online on 17 January 2023 to resume the work of the Working Group, the third meeting was held in a hybrid format in Bucharest, Romania, on 27 April 2023, followed by an informal expert meeting on 28 April; and the fourth meeting was held in a hybrid format in Nairobi, Kenya, on 28 September 2023, followed by a one-day informal expert meeting. A fifth meeting is planned to be held before UNEA 6.

The Working Group shared information on **voluntary national action plans**, as available, according to national circumstances. Under the leadership of the Co-Chairs, a baseline screening of existing actions and action plans was conducted that resulted in an outline voluntary national action plan comprising of ten action areas. The Working Group has also considered **possible options and modalities for improved coordination of policies across the global nitrogen cycle at the national, regional and global levels**, including an intergovernmental coordination mechanism for nitrogen policies.

The UNEA resolutions 4/14 and 5/2 on Sustainable nitrogen management are linked to the programme of work project 522.4 entitled: Protecting the Marine Environment from Land-Based Pollution through Strengthened Coordination of Global Action.

UNEP would like to thank Member States that have nominated a focal point to the working group, and invite those that have not yet nominated a focal point to please do so to: unep-nitrogenworkinggroup@un.org.

UNEP would also like to thank the Government of Denmark for their generous financial contributions, and invite Member States, in a position to do so, to support the work of UNEP on nutrients through voluntary financial contributions.

UNEA 6 provides an opportunity on advancing cooperation on sustainable nitrogen management, and nutrients more generally. Further recommendations can be found on Section D. *Advancing cooperation around nutrients, especially phosphorus* of the [Report of the Executive Director](#).