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United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme

**Annual Subcommittee Meeting
Committee of Permanent Representatives
United Nations Environment Programme
Tenth Meeting**

Nairobi, 20-24 November 2023

10:00 – 13:00 & 15:00 – 18:00 (GMT+3)

Conference Room 1 (in person)

And Microsoft Teams (online)

Draft Chair's Summary – REISSUED for technical reasons

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting.

1. H. E. Mr. Firas Khouri, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), Ambassador of Jordan to the Republic of Kenya and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Environment Programme, opened the meeting and welcomed the members and observers, including Major Groups and Stakeholders.
2. The Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Ms. Inger Andersen, delivered a statement.
3. Regional and Political Groups followed by individual Member States delivered opening statements.
4. Major Groups and other Stakeholders also delivered opening statements.
5. All written statements submitted to the Secretariat, as well as Secretariat presentations, meeting documents and reference documents have been made available on the [meeting website](#).

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda.

6. The meeting [agenda](#) was adopted.

Agenda item 3: Implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023 of the United Nations Environment Programme.

Agenda item 3 (a): Review of UNEP thematic programmes in the UNEP Programme of Work.

7. The Secretariat provided an introduction and several detailed presentations on the status of implementation of the 2022-2023 Programme of Work of UNEP, with a focus on 13 thematic programmes.

Climate Stability

8. The Secretariat provided a [presentation on the thematic programme on Climate Stability](#).
9. Comments by delegations included:

Adaptation and Resilience

- a. Requested additional information on the funds received and promised, blended finance, the private sector engagement, partnerships, the different funding institutions, the Climate Security Mechanism, Carbon Markets, specific support to the African continent, and collaboration with UN-Habitat, and clarification on the distinction between the Global Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) Fund and the Adaptation Fund.

Decarbonization

- b. Requested additional information on the access to finance in the context of the new Climate Division, the work to ensure a balanced approach between earmarked and flexible funding, the importance of further linking the climate and environmental agendas, and the latest developments of the Methane Alert and Response System (MARS).

Science and Transparency

- c. Requested additional information on capacity building initiatives, including support to reporting, how to ensure the knowledge remains with recipient countries, and the work on early warning systems.

10. The Secretariat provided the following clarifications:

Adaptation & Resilience

- a. The \$60 million referred to in the presentation derives from adaptation resources, which represents a snapshot (2023) of the value of UNEP's adaptation portfolio and of the global portfolio on adaptation. The UNEP's Annual Report provides an overview of the overall funding. The Adaptation Gap Report provides an overview of global funding to adaptation. UNEPs' work in this area is funded beyond 90% by extra-budgetary resources, notably the vertical funds.
- b. Explained that the Adaptation fund is a vertical fund, while the EbA fund is a UNEP managed fund jointly run by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature with funding from Germany and Norway, and its focuses small grants to local communities and civil society organizations on locally led adaptation support.
- c. UNEP is one of the founding agencies of the Climate Security Mechanism together with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In this context, UNEP has deployed a Special Advisor to Somalia and to Honduras in a non-UN mission setting. UNEP has also provided guidance to vertical funds (Global Environment Facility and Green Climate Fund) to enable programming and access to funds by fragile states.
- d. Demand for UNEP's support to countries on adaptation far outstrips current capacities. Taking into consideration UNEP's model as a non-resident agency, some of these requests are steered to other agencies or partners.
- e. UNEP will co-host the Cities Ministerial at UNFCCC COP 28 with the presidency and UN-Habitat. A lot of collaboration and joint work is underway with UN-Habitat, at country level e.g., in Mozambique, or at global level e.g. on embedding nature for resilience in Urban Ecosystems.

Decarbonization

- f. The new Climate Division will continue to support countries on demand, with funds from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF).
- g. Most financial resources under the decarbonization work stream derive from extra-budgetary funds.
- h. Many projects fall under the climate and environment workstream, including work on Nature-based Solutions, ecosystem approaches, and Climate and Clean Air Coalition's work on improving air

quality.

- i. The first results of MARS and the public data portal will be launched at UNFCCC COP 28 in December 2023 and the “Buildings Breakthrough” as well as the “Global Cooling Pledge” will both be launched at the COP.

Science and Transparency

- j. UNEP has a large enabling activities portfolio, with a majority of projects in Africa, and in addition, the Global Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency, the Global Support Programme and the Initiative for Climate Action Transparency also support countries in their reporting.
- k. UNEP supports the development of early warning systems, based on Member State requests.
- l. UNEP has developed networks, trainings and tools for national experts to ensure knowledge and skills remain in the country.

Living in Harmony with Nature

11. The Secretariat provided a [presentation on the thematic programme on Living in Harmony with Nature](#).
12. Comments by delegations included:

Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity and Mainstreaming Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Across Sectors and Systems

- a. Noted the references to Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) in Articles 8 and 11 of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), and the need to balance different approaches in implementation.
- b. Noted mix of convergent and divergent views on the current definition of NbS, and requested further clarification on the continued implementation of [UNEA resolution 5/6](#).
- c. Requested additional information about financial resources for biodiversity.
- d. Requested additional information on UNEP’s collaboration with FAO to address food systems transformation.
- e. Inquired about the project integration of monitoring and social safeguards, gender-sensitive indicators and targets of the GBF, the interests of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), the role of South-South, North-South, and Triangular cooperation, the Accelerator Partnership for National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.
- f. Requested information on UNEP priorities as chair of the One Health Initiative.
- g. Expressed concern on the delayed finalization of the report requested in paragraph 1 of UNEA resolution 5/1; urged UNEP to share the draft scoping report as soon as possible; called upon UNEP to work closely with the friends of the resolution; and requested UNEP to explore innovative funding.

Governance and Accountability for Biodiversity

- h. Highlighted the importance of indicators on monitoring gender inclusion as part of the GBF and welcomed efforts to integrate the Gender Plan of Action into the Data Reporting Tool for the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).
- i. Welcomed multilateral efforts on driving inclusive action and reporting for the GBF and underlined the need to mainstream indicators for the inclusion of IPLCs.
- j. Welcomed UNEP’s efforts to play a catalytic role for actions to protect fragmentation of international efforts in support of GBF delivery.
- k. Highlighted the importance of South-South cooperation, North-South and Triangular Cooperation.
- l. Requested more information on NBSAP Accelerator Partnership initiative and a dedicated presentation on this.

13. The Secretariat provided the following clarifications:

Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity and Mainstreaming Biodiversity and

Ecosystem Services Across Sectors and Systems

- a. Noted that the NbS consultations demonstrated that there are both divergent and convergent views among Member States on how to implement NbS projects and that UNEP will support Member States in advancing the discussions as needed.
- b. Offered to share lessons learned and enhance guidance for countries and programme design on NbS.
- c. Underlined the need to bring together biodiversity and climate change actions to promote co-benefits and mainstream approaches.
- d. Pointed to efforts to ensure financing and investment sustainably from various sources including GEF.
- e. Highlighted the impact of direct investments for nature and the need to address the challenge of conflicting financial flows.
- f. Clarified that financial resources are needed, but also an issue of societal choices, political will and human and institutional capacity needed.
- g. Highlighted UNEPs cooperation with UNDP and FAO.
- h. Highlighted the priorities of the One Health Joint Plan of Action (2022 - 2026) on country-level implementation, prevention and integrating of climate and pollution.
- i. Noted the points raised on IPLCs and pointed to existing cooperation supported by GEF on NBSAPs.
- j. Welcomed the request to present on the NBSAP Accelerator and will plan accordingly.

Governance and Accountability for Biodiversity

- k. Gender aspects are well implemented within the GBF due to improved tools.
- l. Improved financing of the GBF will be informed by the Programme for targeted actions and Country Partnership.
- m. Allocations to the nature fund will mobilize and scale-up the value of conserving and restoring nature across the UN system.
- n. With respect to triangular cooperation, the UN Common Approach provides an opportunity to keep the UN accountable and synergized on biodiversity across the UN system.

Towards a Pollution Free Planet

14. The Secretariat provided a [presentation on the thematic programme Towards a Pollution-Free Planet](#).

15. Comments by delegations included:

Towards Zero Waste

- a. Welcomed the establishment of the new International Day for Zero Waste as well as a Global Framework for Chemicals, underlining the importance of integrating the SDGs in pollution work.
- b. Suggested to frame the work on zero waste and on circularity more clearly in the context of sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- c. Requested further information on the nexus of waste and gender, and on UNEP's work with the informal sector.
- d. Requested clarification on how UNEP and UN-Habitat are coordinating on the waste related issues.

Circularity in sectors

- e. Supported work on the nexus between gender and plastic pollution beyond waste management and with a life cycle approach to better understand the opportunities of gender-responsive interventions throughout the value chain of plastics, including in the future text on plastic pollution.
- f. Highlighted the importance of multilateral cooperation towards market-based solutions, encouraging enabling policies, raising awareness among consumers and the private sector, strengthening a human rights-based approach, and supporting the dialogues and negotiation processes of the INC on plastic pollution.
- g. Requested more information on the coordination mechanism across UNEP on the high-impact sectors addressed under this programme.

Pollution and Health

- h. Welcomed the adoption of the Global Framework on Chemicals and expressed support for the work of the ad hoc Open Ended Working Group on a science policy panel on chemicals, waste, and pollution prevention.
- i. Welcomed the UN-wide commitment to a pollution-free planet through the UN Common Approach to a Pollution-Free Planet, noting a mismatch between the limited availability of funding and the general priority given to chemicals and waste.
- j. Welcomed progress made on the implementation of [UNEA resolution 5/7](#) and inquired whether reports on endocrine disrupting chemicals, issues of concern and on asbestos would be made available to UNEA-6.
- k. Provided inputs on the importance of the One Health approach to addressing antimicrobial resistance and requested updates on UNEP's work on antimicrobial resistance and for the implementation of the Global Framework for Chemicals.
- l. Requested clarification about the reasons behind the limited funding dedicated to minimizing the risk of pollution to human health, and the availability of gender disaggregated data, calling for inclusion of a gender perspective, a rights-based approach, and youth participation in the effort to phase-out pollution.

16. The Secretariat provided the following clarifications:

Towards Zero Waste

- a. UNEP's work towards Zero Waste is closely linked to the promotion of Sustainable Consumption and Production and the good practices database established under the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns.
- b. UNEP cooperates with UN-Habitat's to promote national policies for waste management, including through a joint workplan.
- c. Efforts are made to work with partners to collect and compile relevant gender disaggregated data on pollution.

Circularity in sectors

- d. UNEP works with several sectors to promote circularity, including alternative packaging reuse systems.
- e. Key partners include the GEF, the World Wildlife Fund, and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation.

Pollution and Health

- f. UNEP's work on air pollution is hampered by limited financial resources but efforts are ongoing to identify additional funding sources and opportunities for investment.
- g. The UNEP report [Bracing for Superbugs: Strengthening environmental action in the One Health response to antimicrobial resistance](#) identified pollution from farms, pesticides, antibiotics, and leaching into water bodies as key sources of pollution.
- h. The reports on issues of concern and asbestos are expected to be finalized before UNEA-6.
- i. Regarding implementation of the Global Framework on Chemicals, several efforts have taken place since its adoption, including the establishment of the Bureau; internal functional review of the secretariat to inform the transition from SAICM to the new Framework. The new Global Framework on Chemicals Fund has to date received pledges totaling approximately USD22,5 million from France, Germany and the Netherlands. More contributions are expected. Next steps include establishing the funding criteria and the bureau for the Global Framework for Chemicals Fund itself.

Foundational Programmes

17. The Secretariat provided a presentation on the thematic programmes on [Science for Policy and Action](#) and [Environmental Governance](#).

18. Comments by delegations included:

Science for Policy and Action

- a. Noted that the work under this programme is foundational for UNEP, and therefore sufficient core funding must be allocated.
- b. Highlighted the need for UNEP to collect and analyze scientific data for new and emerging issues, including in relation to the World Environment Situation Room (WESR).
- c. Suggested that land degradation, desertification and drought should be taken into account in the deliberations to develop GEO-7.
- d. Emphasized the need for inclusion of different knowledge systems, for example, local and indigenous knowledge, to mitigate risks and ensure participation in decision-making.
- e. Requested information on how to better promote evidence-based decision-making.
- f. Requested clarification on how UNEP intends to engage with other scientific assessment bodies to enhance its work, for example, IPCC and IPBES.
- g. Requested that UNEP provides a calendar overview of its publications that are underway.
- h. Requested clarification on how assessments such as GEO-7 ensure broad geographic representation of scientists.

Environmental Governance

- i. Acknowledged the need for upscaling stakeholder engagement, especially for youth, and requested more information on related challenges and opportunities.
- a. Highlighted a need for a better understanding of the different workstreams on Sustainable Development, including on how to facilitate the work of MEAs to foster synergies and to share lessons learned.
- b. Requested more information regarding the UNEP-UNDP Poverty-Environment Initiative, the implementation of the UNEP Montevideo Programme, and the criteria used for providing technical assistance to Member States.

19. The Secretariat provided the following clarifications:

Science for Policy and Action

- a. UNEP is committed to investing more in outreach and advocacy work from the start of the assessment process, promoting collaboration and exchange amongst the environmental assessments, collaborating on an environmental glossary, standardizing assessment methodologies, modelling, and scenarios.
- b. While the GEO-7 authors have identified desertification and land degradation as a priority area of study, the UNEP's MTS 2022-2025 has encompassed these issues within the 'nature' and 'climate' subprogrammes.
- c. A list of planned UNEP publications is published twice a year in the Quarterly Reports to the CPR, with key reports and publications made available at <https://www.unep.org/publications-data>.
- d. GEO-7 is integrating different knowledge systems in its work, including indigenous and local knowledge.
- e. More than 150 authors contributing to GEO-7 are selected with respect to gender and geographic representation under the leadership of Co-Chairs from China, Costa Rica, Malawi, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Environmental Governance

- f. The implementation of the Montevideo Programme is on track to effectively deliver on the established targets under the Environmental Governance Subprogramme, as noted by the establishment and meetings of the Programme Steering Committee and the national focal points.
- g. Acknowledged the importance of ensuring that Poverty-Environment dimensions are well integrated into the programme and clarified that the secretariat was working to ensure the effective mainstreaming of poverty-environment dimensions into programs across the Secretariat.
- a. UNEP promotes synergies amongst the different Multilateral Environmental Agreements, including by utilizing the different innovative tools within the Programme such as the Data Reporting Tools

- for MEAs (DaRT).
- b. There is a need to explore potential synergies between the Multilateral Environmental Agreements and the Montevideo Programme.
 - c. The Secretariat reviews delegations for technical assistance via the Montevideo Programme through the UNEP Law and Environment Assistance Platform, which serves as the central mechanism for the implementation of the Montevideo Programme.

Enabling Programmes

20. The Secretariat provided a presentation on the [Finance and Economic Transitions](#) and [Digital Transformations](#).
21. Comments by delegations included:

Finance and Economic Transformations

- a. Requested further information on how special conditions, needs, and capacities of developing countries, as well as engagement of stakeholders, are considered in UNEP programmes, to ensure a focus on just transitions, and on how UNEP is supporting the National Cleaner Production Centers to advance resource efficiency, sustainable consumption and production and circular economy.

Digital Transformations

- b. Highlighted the transformative power of data to design and implement good and efficient policies, further noting that there is a need of structured statistical information and more disaggregated data pertaining to the most vulnerable groups.
- c. Requested updates on the coordination among the Global Environmental Data Strategy, the World Environmental Situation Room, the Secretary-General's Global Digital Compact, also enquiring how UNEP envisions the management of the risks related to Artificial Intelligence.
- d. Requested support for the development and integration of innovative data sources such as geospatial information and Earth observation to enhance the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals within countries.
- e. Requested an update on the meeting of Data for Environment Alliance at the Science Policy Business Forum that took place in Vienna in September 2023.

22. The Secretariat provided the following clarifications:

Finance and Economic Transformations

- a. UNEP is providing ongoing support to a number of Member States especially in the area of Economy and Finance Transformation. The issues of poverty and inequality are incorporated, for example, in the work of Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE), which, together with other four UN agencies, is supporting 22 Member States in transformation their economies to be low carbon, resource efficient, jobs-rich and socially inclusive. In many countries, for example Argentina, the main focus of PAGE work is on Just Energy Transition. Local ownership, and engagement of indigenous communities and women's groups are important considerations for Finance and Economic Transformations Programme.
- b. The support programme for the National Cleaner Production Centers is part of UNEP's cooperation with UNIDO, and a recent focus of this work has been on chemicals management.

Digital Transformations

- c. Consultations on the Global Environmental Data Strategy are ongoing with Member States, Stakeholders, Secretariats of MEAs, as well as the European Environment Agency and the United States' National Aeronautics and Space Administration to leverage Earth observation data.
- d. There is a focus on the environmental and equality agendas in the technical brief to the Office of the Technology Envoy on the Global Digital Compact.
- e. The consultations from the Science-Policy Business Forum in Vienna resulted in an agreed focus on three areas: ensure good quality for environmental data, set up a global exchange framework for

- inter-operability, and establish efficient environmental data governance.
- f. UNEP is planning to launch the Technology for Environment Alliance to build the ecosystem and support stakeholders.
- g. There is a clear need for standardization or a framework for the global exchange of environmental data to ensure data compatibility and governance.
- h. Work on AI governance is ongoing with the SG's newly appointed advisory board, and UNEP is contributing to the conversation by sharing best practices from its governance process, also emphasizing the environmental agenda in relation to Artificial Intelligence.

Agenda item 3 (b): Management and administration of UNEP.

23. The Secretariat provided a presentation about the [Management and administration of UNEP](#).

24. Comments by delegations included:

Climate Division

- a. Suggested that the new Climate Division focuses on providing scientific and technical expertise on climate change, on addressing the sciences policy gap, and on the issue of carbon markets and encouraged the division to support countries in meeting their climate commitments by developing and implementing national action plans.
- b. Requested clarification on where the funding of the new Climate Division will come from, if there will be any redundancies, efficiencies or cost-saving measures associated with the establishment of the new Division, if funds will be diverted from other divisions and projects as a result, how the organizational change will affect the other two strategic objectives of UNEP on biodiversity loss and pollution and how the division will cooperate with UNFCCC and other MEAs.
- c. Requested that Member States be consulted before making any significant changes to UNEP's Program of Work.

Sexual Exploitation and Harassment

- d. Encouraged the Executive Director to further develop indicators and systems, building on the UN system-wide tools and mechanisms, to effectively ensure and monitor that all personnel, implementing partners and beneficiaries are adequately protected against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, and to ensure that victims and survivors are put at the center of UNEP's approach.
- e. Requested clarification on sexual exploitation and abuse in UNEP and noted that racial discrimination and abuse may also be a problem that requires attention.
- f. Proposed the following draft decision, for further consideration by the Committee at its next regular meeting:

"Taking note of the presentation on UNEP's action to strengthen protection against sexual and any other type of exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment in the workplace.

Encourages the Executive Director to further develop indicators and systems, building on UN system-wide tools and mechanisms, to effectively ensure and monitor that all personnel, implementing partners and beneficiaries are adequately protected against sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment and to ensure that victims and survivors are put at the center of UNEP's approach."

Gender Parity

- g. Welcomed the progress made on gender parity within UNEP and requested clarification on the status of the gender pay gap, in addition to updated information about a revised gender policy and strategy.

Global Environment Facility

- h. Highlighted the positive mobilization of funding for the eighth phase of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-8) and appreciated the emphasis on biodiversity and nature action in the upcoming GEF cycle.
- i. Requested an explanation for the absence of budget allocation for subprograms that address resilience, disaster, and conflict and called on UNEP to scale up funding allocation for these

subprograms.

Regional Representation and Support

- j. Welcomed the progress made towards regional diversity among UNEP staff, noting that achieving regional balance is a long-term project.
- k. Highlighted the need for UNEP to enhance regional and national representation to address the planetary crises and challenges.

Private Sector Engagement

- l. Welcomed progress on private sector engagement and in aligning it with the medium-term strategy of UNEP, highlighted the pivotal role of private sector for the environment and the importance of due diligence to avoid blue washing, and requested more information on UNEP's private sector engagement to consider entry points for increased Member State engagement and support.

Follow up of the 2021 Audit Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

- m. Appreciated the updated on how UNEP is following up recommendations made by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in their 2021 audit report, requested UNEP to make all audit and evaluation reports available to CPR members and sought further elaboration on how UNEP is responding to the recommendations, including progress and obstacles in addressing any outstanding recommendations, particularly on the low implementation rate for GEF funded projects.

Green Climate Fund

- n. Welcomed the mitigation portfolio starting in 2025 under the Green Climate Fund and questioned UNEP's capacity to deliver GCF projects on up to 250 million USD.

Procurement

- o. Welcomed information on measures taken to increase efficiency of procurement and requested more information on green procurement elements, also relating to the work of the Environment Management Group.
- p. Requested clarification on the systematic approach taken by UNEP to identify significant environmental aspects and impacts from UNEP activities and facilities.

25. The Secretariat provided the following clarifications:

Climate Division

- a. Noted that UNEP holds a portfolio of over half a billion dollars in climate finance and that the establishment of a Climate Division is therefore necessary to ensure fiduciary responsibility of the portfolio and highlighted that a transitional period would ensure the smooth management of projects, donors, and staff.
- b. Clarified that the 1.5 million dollars needed to set up the Climate Division will be sourced from UNEP's internal Savings Reserve Fund.
- c. Confirmed that UNEP is an implementing partner of the UNFCCC, and that climate change, biodiversity and pollution goals are being implemented through partnerships, so that a new Climate Division will not compromise the work of MEAs.

Sexual Exploitation and Harassment

- d. Confirmed that UNEP takes the issue of sexual harassment and abuse very seriously and explained that as part of the United Nations Secretariat, UNEP is required by the Secretary-General to report annually on compliance with the special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, which is shared with Member States for their information as well as information on fraud and corruption for transparency purposes.
- e. Noted that UNEP recorded five reported cases of sexual misconduct in 2022, to which the organization took administrative and managerial action, and underlined that sexual misconduct is not a widespread issue in UNEP notwithstanding that every case is highly regrettable. Further noted that the 2023 reports on (i) Insert full title of the fraud and corruption and (ii) insert full title of the Sexual

discrimination report will be issued in the first quarter of 2024 and will be – as with all previous such reports – available on UNEP’s website.

Gender Parity

- f. Confirmed that there is no gender pay gap in UNEP and all staff are paid according to their pay category.
- g. Highlighted that a new gender policy is currently being drafted to respond to the recommendations of the previous gender policy strategy and is expected to be implemented in the first quarter of 2024.

Global Environment Facility

- h. Explained the funding allocation to GEF-8 is the highest in the history of organization which demonstrates a substantial amount of funding allocated to disaster and conflict and to the efforts to mainstream disaster and risk work across divisions and programmes.

Regional Representation and Support

- i. Reiterated that UNEP is striving for regional balance and clarified that a limited number of leadership positions might explain why there is still regional imbalance in high-level positions and encouraged Member States to view regional diversity of staff as a long-term project to which UNEP is actively engaged in outreach to underrepresented regions and nations.
- j. Reminded Member States that 12 regionally diverse personnel have been hired through the Young Talent Programme.

Private Sector Engagement

- k. Confirmed that UNEP has a robust due diligence process, risk analysis from service providers and established partnership committee to review private sector partners to avoid blue or green washing.

Procurement

- l. Explained that UNEP limits its environmental footprint through reducing travel, increasing hybrid meetings, implementing energy and water efficiency measures, and conducting mandatory training for all staff on sustainable consumption.

Agenda item 3 (c): Consideration of relevant UNEP evaluation reports.

- 26. The Secretariat provided a presentation about [consideration of relevant UNEP evaluation reports](#).
- 27. The Secretariat made a statement, outlining the management response as reflected in document [UNEP/CPR/ASC/10/2](#).
- 28. Comments by delegations included:
 - a. Acknowledged and appreciated UNEP's initiative to adopt a more cross-cutting and mainstreamed approach by integrating environmental governance across divisions rather than as a separate subprogramme.
 - b. Noted the potential risk of the environmental governance subprogramme being absorbed in the mainstreaming exercise, and expressed concerns about potential reduced visibility, further requesting the secretariat to provide an overview of how it intends to address this risk, especially given the differing attention levels between thematic areas and environmental governance.
 - c. Recommended the positive evaluation of the subprogramme and highlighted its potential for further contributions, particularly within the UN Reform.
 - d. Emphasized the potential of responding to country needs especially on the integration of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and other demands from developing countries.
 - e. Requested clarification on the perceived lack of shared organizational understanding of the environmental governance contribution and the absence of linkages with other subprogrammes in

- organizational and strategic tools.
- f. Commended the positive aspects of the evaluation, expressing encouragement for the delivery of the evaluation, especially through recommendations and compliance status.
 - g. Requested clarification on UNEP's need to enhance executive, technical, financial, and programmatic cooperation to support MEA Secretariats through a dedicated team and acknowledged that such efforts could strengthen effectiveness and efficiency, allowing for easier exploration of synergies.
 - h. Highlighted concerns about the lack of cohesiveness, discernible strategic direction, and a well-defined path toward stated objectives.
 - i. Noted the absence of concrete and focused indicators and units of measurement for the subprogramme, as reflected in the evaluation.
 - j. Requested clarity on whether the subprogramme is in the process of developing the indicators recommended by the report.
 - k. Requested clarity on whether the evaluation of the UNEP subprogramme on environmental governance covered the scope of the Montevideo programme, which is implemented within the subprogramme.

29. The Secretariat made the following clarifications:

- a. The evaluation indeed conducted an in-depth review of the Montevideo Programme during the period covered by the evaluation.
- b. The subprogramme holds substantial potential, recognizing an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement through synergistic approaches.
- c. The subprogramme consistently seeks opportunities within the challenges it faces by closely collaborating with other divisions, subprogrammes, including regional offices, and regional subprogramme coordinators.
- d. UNEP has dedicated two branches to support Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA), with one in the Law Division focusing on technical and programmatic areas and another in CSD addressing administrative issues
- e. The Law Division also provides support on intergovernmental procedures, guidance to MEA governing bodies, and administrative support.
- f. The subprogramme is actively reviewing indicators and associated baselines during the planning phase of the next Medium-Term Strategy and the associated programme of work.
- g. UNEP is committed to reviewing historical indicators to enhance them, as outlined in the evaluations.

Agenda item 3 (d): UNEP in the context of the repositioning of the UN development system and country delivery.

30. The Secretariat provided a presentation about [UNEP in the context of the repositioning of the UN development system and country delivery](#), followed by a panel discussion and an exchange of views with Member States and Stakeholders.

31. Comments by delegations included:

- a. Highlighted the need for more financial resources to implement the Programme of Work and encouraged UNEP to explore innovative sources of funding.
- b. Inquired about the connection between the Mid-Term Strategy and Programme of Work and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and how they inform each other.
- c. Suggested that UNEP continues its efforts to integrate environment in Common Country Analyses and Cooperation Frameworks and other programming processes of UN Country Teams (UNCTs) and to explore options to prioritize its interventions.
- d. Invited the Secretariat to report on the progress on the Country Engagement Plans.
- e. Highlighted the green economic transition as a critical element and called for the development of strategies and plans with environmentally savvy economists to develop sustainable solutions adapted to the reality to each country.
- f. Invited the Secretariat to report on the UN Development System Reform Checklist annually.

- g. Encouraged the Secretariat and the Development Coordination Office to provide a clear narrative on integrated efforts and development impact at UNCT level in future briefings in addition to updates on progress on processes.
 - h. Took note of the suggestion of embedding Environmental Advisors in the Resident Coordinators Offices, encouraging UNEP to continue striving for more country presence and explore options for further enhancing its support to Resident Coordinators and collaboration with UN country teams.
 - i. Requested more information on shared premises, common back-office services and the efficiency gains that UNEP reports.
32. The Secretariat made the following clarifications:
- a. There is a need for strengthened technical expertise and resources at country level, including to address the imbalance between biodiversity and pollution.
 - b. UNEP has six country offices, and the organization is using common back offices in three of them, in addition to its Headquarters and regional offices that are hosted in common premises.
 - c. Increased staffing at country level in Resident Coordinator Offices is not possible in UNEP's current structure and with UNEP's current funding, but UNEP will continue to explore options and remains open to further discussion with Member States for increasing its presence and support at the country level. In this context, UNEP urged Member States with the ability to do so to explore expanded support to UNEP so that UNEP's country presence could be further strengthened.

Agenda item 3(e): Coordination within the UN system on the environment, including in the Environment Management Group.

33. The Secretariat provided a presentation about [coordination within the UN system on the environment, including in the Environment Management Group](#).
34. Comments by delegations included:
- a. Recognized the significant role of the United Nations Environment Management Group (EMG) in coordinating environmental efforts within the UN System.
 - b. Highlighted challenges associated with unsustainable production and consumption in addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution.
 - c. Noted collaboration between the 10-Year Framework Programme and the EMG in organizing nexus dialogues.
 - d. Emphasized the importance of intensifying collaborations through heightened multi-stakeholder engagement for sustainable consumption and production and a circular economy.
 - e. Acknowledged the upcoming publication of the third edition of the System-Wide Framework of Strategies to highlight the latest progress on Environmental SDGs in the UN System and requested clarity on whether the report would be available before UNEA-6, further requesting the Secretariat to present the report in one of the CPR subcommittee meetings once published.
 - f. Recognized the value of EMG nexus dialogues that bring together experts from diverse institutions and disciplines to explore emerging persistent and systemic cross-cutting issues and welcomed the opportunity to hear the results of these dialogues more often.
 - g. Suggested that UNEP's coordination within the UN System should focus on expanding its reach to countries through partnerships with UN entities, collaboration, and enhancing synergies among UN agencies, as this is essential to supporting countries in implementing environmental sustainability.
 - h. Encouraged the EMG to continue identifying pressing environmental challenges requiring coordinated efforts and further requested the EMG to focus its endeavours on those areas.
 - i. Acknowledged the importance of EMG's work in overcoming silos and enhancing synergies within and across the United Nations.
 - j. Requested more clarity on whether it was the EMG's view that the Common Approach initiatives were resulting in increased impact on the ground.
 - k. Requested more clarity on how the EMG was leveraging the mandates of other UN organizations to further its work, both in mainstreaming implementation and in elevating the profile of the

environment in UN processes and the three pillars of the UN Environment Programme.

- l. Requested more clarity on opportunities for greater impact within the UN system which the EMG could explore.
 - m. Acknowledged the contributions made through the Greening the Blue Initiative to the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) and requested more clarity on whether misalignment between the QCPR by any UN Agency would inhibit advancing coordination on the environment in the UN.
35. The Secretariat made the following clarifications:
- a. The Common Approaches to pollution and biodiversity were in the process of implementation, emphasizing that the Framework for the Common Approach on Biodiversity could serve as a tool to support UN system wide delivery in support of the Global Biodiversity Framework.
 - b. The collaborative nature of these approaches brings together UN Agencies for more effective implementation.
 - c. The Common Approach on Pollution could be a significant mechanism for scaling up delivery on the UNEA 4 Implementation Plan on Pollution by the UN coming together to address pollution.
 - d. The EMG is committed to ensuring the readiness of the third system-wide framework of strategies report by UNEA-6, unless unforeseen issues arise.
 - e. The EMG has received positive feedback on the nexus dialogues, and it has been noted that there is value in fostering synergistic thinking on integrated approaches and exploring diverse perspectives on environmental issues from partners outside the UN.
 - f. Acknowledged that the System-Wide Framework of Strategies (SWFS) was delayed due to challenges within the UN system in the Covid period that required in gathering information on environmental aspects of the SDGs.
 - g. There is a need for Member States to provide regular feedback and interactions with the CPR.
 - h. The EMG is grateful for the Governments of Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Finland and the EU for mentioning the limited resources of the EMG and requesting enhanced contributions to support the the delivery of the Common Approaches.
 - i. The QCPR serves as a valuable mechanism for agencies to report on the implementation of their sustainability efforts and identifying gaps and needs to inform the future system wide policies and approaches.

Agenda item 4: Preparations for the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

36. The Executive Director provided an update on the state of preparations for the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6).
37. Comments by delegations included:
- a. Welcomed the open, inclusive, and consultative consultations on the draft Ministerial Declaration with the President of UNEA holding the pen.
 - b. Recalled that the UNEA rules of procedures should guide the submission of draft resolutions to UNEA.
 - c. Advised all delegates to engage in negotiations in good faith, to ensure meaningful outcome from UNEA-6.
 - d. Suggested to make good use of the lessons learned from the previous UNEA sessions.
 - e. Underlined the need to consider means of implementation, the Rio Principles, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, as well as aspects of equity, just transition, national circumstances and capabilities when drafting resolutions.
 - f. Welcomed the inclusion of the supplementary item in the provisional agenda of UNEA-6 on “Cooperation with multilateral environmental agreements”.
 - g. Highlighted the importance of providing travel support for two delegates from developing countries to OECPR-6 and UNEA-6.

Agenda item 4(a): Secretariat presentations of advanced versions of mandated reports to UNEA-6.

38. The Secretariat informed Member States that advance English versions of the mandated progress reports of the Executive Director to UNEA-6 on the implementation of UNEA resolutions have recently been made available on UNEA-6 website on the meetings documents [page](#).

Agenda item 4(b): UNEA sessions and related consequences for UNEP's Medium-Term Strategies and Programmes of Work and Budget.

39. The Secretariat provided a presentation about [UNEA sessions and related consequences for UNEP's Medium-Term Strategies and Programmes of Work and Budget](#).
40. Delegates noted that all options will have some negative consequences and that more time is needed to consider the matter.
41. Many delegations expressed a preliminary preference for option 3.
42. No support was expressed for option 1 due to the extra costs involved.
43. The Secretariat was requested to present a draft decision on the matter, as a basis for further consultations.

Agenda item 4(c): Announcement of possible draft resolutions and decisions for UNEA-6.

44. The Secretariat provided a brief presentation on the guidance on submission of draft resolutions and decisions for UNEA- 6.
45. Delegations announced the submission of the following draft resolutions for UNEA-6:
- a. United States of America: Promoting regional cooperation to improve air quality globally.
 - b. Saudi Arabia: Strengthening international efforts to halt land degradation, restore degraded lands and increase ecosystem and communities' resilience to drought.
 - c. Japan: Promoting synergistic approach to address the triple crisis on climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and support sustainable development.
 - d. European Union, on behalf of its Member States: Stepping up efforts for enhancing the circular economy transition domestically, regionally, and globally.
 - e. European Union, on behalf of its Member States: Effective and inclusive solutions to strengthen water policies for sustainable development in the context of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.
 - f. Malawi: Enhancing the role and viability of regional forums for environmental ministers and environmental authorities and regional offices in achieving multilateral cooperation to tackle environmental challenges.
 - g. Malawi and Morocco: Fostering national action to address environmental challenges through increased cooperation between UNEA, UNEP, and MEAs.
 - h. Ukraine: Environmental assistance and recovery in areas affected by armed conflicts.
 - i. Senegal and Switzerland: Follow-up to [UNEA resolution 5/12](#) on the environmental aspects of minerals and metals management.
 - j. Ethiopia: Global alliance on highly hazardous pesticides.
 - k. Switzerland: Sound management of chemicals and waste.
 - l. Switzerland: Solar radiation modification.
 - m. Dominican Republic: Addressing complications caused by sargassum seaweed.
 - n. Cameroon, on behalf of several States: Standards, norms and criteria for the implementation of Nature-based Solutions for supporting sustainable development.

46. The Secretariat informed of its intention to submit two draft decisions, as follows:
 - a. Amendments to the Instrument for the Establishment of the Restructured Global Environment Facility, as contained in the report of the Executive Director ([UNEP/EA.6/12](#)).
 - b. Management of trust funds and earmarked contributions.
47. Some delegations highlighted the need for financing the implementation of future UNEA resolutions.
48. The Secretariat was requested to prepare, in consultation with the bureau, a strategic scheduling plan of subcommittee and OECPR meetings to allow for effective, inclusive, and participatory consultations and negotiations on draft UNEA resolutions and decisions, to avoid the scheduling of more than two parallel meetings during the OECPR and UNEA, and to make the plan available to Member States as early as possible and before the end of 2023.
49. The UNEA-6 Presidency and the CPR Chair were invited to guide appointed co-facilitators to organize, as appropriate, early consultations with Major Groups and Stakeholders, to collect views and positions on draft resolutions for possible consideration by Member States, and proponents of resolutions were encouraged to engage with the Major Groups and Stakeholders Facilitating Committee, with the support of the secretariat.
50. The UNEA-6 Presidency delivered a [statement](#).

Agenda item 5: Widening the funding base of UNEP.

51. The Secretariat provided an updated [overview](#) of UNEP's financial trends and funding status, analyzed the current funding base, and provided a recap of the challenges of the current funding structure, followed by a panel discussion and an exchange of views from Member States and Stakeholders.
52. Comments by delegations included:
 - a. Appreciated the continued dialogue on UNEP's funding and the efforts made by the Secretariat in implementing the recommendations of the previous funding dialogue held at the 9th annual subcommittee meeting in October 2022 and encouraged continuation of the efforts.
 - b. Commended the Secretariat for the increased visibility and appreciation to Member States who contribute their full share to the Environment Fund and provide multi-year contributions.
 - c. Noted that the growth in earmarked funding was still outpacing the growth of core funding to the Environment Fund.
 - d. Highlighted that the funding base of Member States remained narrow with a high reliance on the top 15 Member State contributors.
 - e. Welcomed the funding dialogue as a permanent feature of the agenda of the annual subcommittee meeting and appreciated the recent expansion of the dialogue to regional fora.
 - f. Encouraged the Secretariat to continue engagement with all Member States together with the lead of the senior management and to be persistent in reminding Member States of their financial commitments towards UNEP, particularly those who do not contribute.
 - g. Urged all Member States to proactively revisit their financial support to UNEP and encouraged contributions at their full share according to their Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contributions (VISC) to ensure that UNEP can be strengthened and can successfully implement its Programme of Work.
 - h. Noted that flexible funding complements core funding and encouraged Member States to consider shifting earmarked funding to the thematic funds and to also consider in-kind contributions, such as Junior Professional Officers (JPOs).
 - i. Highlighted the importance of transparency and oversight, including that of the Committee, as an important element to securing continued and increased core contributions.
 - j. Encouraged better recognition of in-kind contributions and provision of visibility of contributors also at country level.
 - k. Appreciated the Secretariat's efforts on more communication on UNEP's value and results as well as the communication tools such as the booklet "UNEP – your partner for people and planet".

1. Requested the Secretariat to continue exploring alternative sources of funding besides Member States, for example, with international financial institutions, and requested the Secretariat to analyze and address the barriers of engaging with new funding sources.
53. The Secretariat provided the following comments and clarifications:
- a. UNEP appreciates all the financial support provided by Member States.
 - b. The Environment Fund, which provides the core funding to UNEP for the foundational work and the implementation of the Programme of Work as expected by Member States, remains, considering the exponential increase in country demand for environmental support and capacity building from UNEP, --significantly underfunded from a narrow base of contributors.
 - c. Member States are requested to consider softening tightly earmarked contributions.
 - d. UNEP will strengthen its outreach to Member States, including targeting the appropriate Ministries and clarifying the explanation of the results, support, and additional financial resources that countries benefit from by partnering with UNEP.
 - e. Recognized the importance of increasingly showcasing the connection between the environment agenda and the climate agenda, which can help to convince various types of Ministries of the importance of providing core funding to UNEP.
 - f. The Secretariat will continue to reach out, remind and highlight to Members State responsibilities to support UNEP, including Member State commitments to increase core funding as per the UN funding compact objectives.

Agenda item 6: Future perspectives on environmental multilateralism.

54. The Secretariat provided a briefing on the Future perspectives on environmental multilateralism. The Co-Chair of the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, H. E. Mr. Stefan Löfven, former Prime Minister of Sweden, and a member of the Board, Mr. Donald Kaberuka, former President of the African Development Bank, presented key recommendations in the report entitled "[A Breakthrough for People and Planet: Effective and Inclusive Global Governance for Today and the Future](#)", in particular, recommendation 4 in the chapter on "Planet and People", and a summary of the discussion from the General Assembly preparatory ministerial meeting of the Summit of the Future held on 21 September 2023.

55. Comments by delegations included:
- a. Welcomed the Summit of the Future as an opportunity to reinforce environmental multilateralism, noted that the recommendations in the report should inform the Summit and requested how UNEA-6 can help achieve this.
 - b. Welcomed the General Assembly resolution on the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment and noted with appreciation the report of the Secretary General entitled "Our Common Agenda".
 - c. Noted that the report calls for strengthening of the mandate of UNEP and UNEA; more equitable access to a sustainable financing that can deliver for an inclusive economic development; the elevation of environment within the multilateral system; and the reference to an effective environmental multilateralism inclusive of a broad range of actors including youth, women, civil society, private sector and local and regional governments.
 - d. Asked how UNEP can be empowered to act as a more effective global environment agency and raised concerns about widening the scope of UNEP's work beyond its mandate.
 - e. Welcomed the call in the report to drive the global shift to circular economy and just transition, in addition to implementing MEAs in a complementary and synergic way and asked for clarification of UNEP's relationship vis-à-vis MEAs.
 - f. Supported the recommendation to strengthen global water governance through the establishment of a water diplomacy platform.
 - g. Noted the recommendation on the special rapporteur group.
 - h. Called for clarification on synergies and relationships between UNEP, the World Bank (WB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), highlighting that no new conditionalities should be placed

on developing countries and called upon the inclusion of developing countries in the governance of international financial institutions without excluding middle-income countries.

- i. Supported the recommendation to establish a global hub for the conservation, preservation, and dissemination of Indigenous knowledge.
- j. Noted that a Science Policy Action Network (SPAN) is a welcoming proposal, but it needed to be linked to existing science-policy panels and possible new panels to avoid duplication.
- k. Requested elaboration on the role of and collaboration between the UNHQ, Nairobi and Geneva.
- l. Requested information on what structural shifts were needed within the organization to elevate the environment to the extent detailed in the report.
- m. Requested regional and gender balance in the panel of experts, authors and reviewers, in addition to the incorporation of indigenous knowledge systems and highlighted that although digitalization has been outlined as an accelerator of SPI, there is a lack of universality in digital capacity.
- n. Requested that UNEP strengthen its existing environmental commitments and implementation of existing mandates as stipulated in paragraph 88 of “The future we want”.
- o. Called for careful assessment of issues of decarbonization and reforms of global trade and intellectual property architecture.
- p. Suggested that the recommendations needed further discussion.

56. The members of the HLAB and the representative of the United Nations University provided the following comments:

- a. Confirmed that the proposals of the HLAB report aim to elevate and strengthen environmental governance, emphasizing a bolstered monitoring and accountability role to address climate change.
- b. Reiterated the need to support low-income countries financially in the green transition.
- c. Clarified the integration of UNEP with the financial system through an advisory role in MEAs and organizations like the World Bank and IMF.
- d. Clarified the establishment of a SPAN to consolidate information for fast and efficient action.
- e. Confirmed the need for a public accountability platform and a global hub for the conservation, preservation, and dissemination of indigenous knowledge.
- f. Clarified that inclusion of civil society in environmental multilateralism does not alter government mandates but rather enhances decision-making.
- g. Acknowledged the importance of a fair and equitable shift in digitalization, highlighting the need to decrease global gaps.
- h. Reminded Member States of the two annexes in the report which lists indicators and core goals to follow up on the recommendations of the report.
- i. Acknowledged the ongoing discussion on climate altering technology and the need for a platform to discuss the issue.
- j. Clarified there can be alignment of UNEA resolutions and the recommendations in the report.
- k. Agreed on the need for better coordination between UNEP and existing MEAs while respecting the autonomy of the MEAs.
- l. Recognized the importance of mainstreaming environmental considerations across all pillars, with an emphasis on gender equality.

57. The Secretariat provided the following comments:

- a. Highlighted that the multilateral environmental system has been designed over a 50 year period and may therefore not have the synergistic clarity that might have been more optimal.
- b. Highlighted that the United Nations Member States and the UN itself have long considered the peace, security and development agendas the overarching organizational elements of the UN structure. However, as the environmental dimension of securing sustainable development has become ever more critical, observed that due regard to the strong existential foundation that a stable climate, a vibrant natural environment and a pollution free existence provide to secure economic and social development
- c. Noted, that UNEA is only in its 6th edition, but that the upcoming UNEA is indeed seeking to respond to the perceived fragmentation by setting a holistic theme and by deliberately creating a platform for dialogue with and amongst the multilateral environmental agreements and UNEA.

- d. In response to questions reflected that the idea of independent rapporteurs in a manner similar to that which operates under the UN Commission on Human Rights would be an interesting field to explore but observed that this is an issue for Member States to opine on.
- e. In response to questions, observed that while “environmental crime” is not a crime recognized by the International Criminal Court, Member States increasingly reflect environmental crimes in their national legislations and in their constitutions. Further, of course, aspects regulated under the UNEP-hosted MEAs such as illegal dumping transport of hazardous waste, illegal wildlife trade of listed species are recognized as criminal activity and can be prosecuted as such.
- f. Noted that the GEO-7 process is essentially an equivalent to the suggested “SPAN” and noted further, that Member States might wish to further elevate the GEO process so that it can play a more prominent role in the science-policy space.
- g. Observed that UNEP’s MEAs are the primary manner in which UNEP influences other entities, such as the World Bank and the IMF, since these entities are obliged to align their programmes with these global commitments, but also observed that close collaboration with the IFIs, especially in the science-policy area, is most welcome.
- h. Highlighted that UNEP-hosted MEAs regularly publish metrics that outline compliance with MEA goals. An integrated metric of these, however, has not yet been published by UNEP, but could be an interesting element to step into. Observed that such metric would also have to include aspects of financial commitments and technology access. Clarified further that UNEP’s Gap Reports already provide a degree of public accountability on environmental issues.
- i. Observed that UNEP’s One Atmosphere report was published earlier in 2023. Similarly the ED’s Report to UNEA has been issued and that both provide some basis for further Member State reflection on the topic of SRM.

Agenda item 7. Consideration of a draft Chair’s summary of the meeting.

- 58. To be completed.

Agenda item 8: Other matters.

- 59. To be completed.

Agenda item 9: Closing of the meeting.

- 60. Several Member States, Major Groups and Stakeholders and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Ms. Inger Andersen, delivered closing remarks.
 - 61. The meeting closed at 18:00 (GMT+3).
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