

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Nairobi, 10 September 2024
9:00 – 12:00 and 13:00 – 16:00 (GMT+3)
Hybrid meeting
Conference Room 4 (in person)
and Microsoft Teams (online)

Draft Chair's Summary

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

1. H. E. Mr. Wael Nasreldin Attiya, Vice Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt to United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), opened the meeting and chaired the morning meeting. 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, chaired the afternoon meeting.
2. The [agenda](#) was adopted.

Agenda item 2: Review of UNEP Thematic programme:

3. The Secretariat provided a review of the following two UNEP thematic programmes: "[Climate Science & Transparency](#)" and "[Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity](#)".
4. Delegations¹ that took the floor welcomed the presentation and provided the following comments in summary:

Climate Science & Transparency

- a. Inquired about UNEP's policy on the use of AI tools.
- b. Stressed the importance of standardized and interoperable data for transparency and data usage across countries and sectors, noting that UNEP's work on climate data and support for countries' reporting under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is a prime example.
- c. Referring to the lessons learned presented by the Secretariat regarding the stakeholder engagement, it was noted that stakeholders sometimes perceive transparency as a threat and inquired whether the Secretariat could assist stakeholders in changing this perception.
- d. Highlighted the importance of leveraging technology for environmental monitoring, data collection, analysis, and reporting, which would provide meaningful insights into environmental changes for all economic sectors.
- e. Requested further clarification on:

¹ Spain, European Union, Norway, Morocco, Colombia, Egypt, Kenya, Brazil, Finland, Germany, Argentina, United States of America, United Kingdom.

- i. Impacts the subprogramme could bring to countries beyond fulfilling reporting requirements, particularly in supporting transitions towards net-zero emissions and climate-resilient development.
 - ii. Whether the subprogramme offers capacity building for gas emissions assessments and how UNEP plans to expand digital solutions for transparency to more countries.
 - iii. If there is an existing list of beneficiary countries and regions for the implementation of digital solutions and asked if the Secretariat could elaborate in the upcoming months on the criteria used to select such regions and countries and how UNEP intends to expand support to bring digital solutions to countries, and if there is a clear timeline of implementation of projects.
 - iv. Lessons learned from the implementation of projects in beneficiary countries and regions.
 - v. The role digital solutions have played in enhancing climate transparency and asked for examples of how this has been achieved in UNEP's programs.
 - vi. How UNEP ensures its work complements the UNFCCC's efforts and avoids duplication, and how the climate transparency program fits within the broader UN climate agenda.
- f. Suggested that UNEP expand its capacity-building programs to developing countries, particularly in Africa, to enhance digital solutions for transparency and reporting efforts.
 - g. Advocated for an inclusive transparency framework that starts from grassroots levels and scales up to national and international levels.

Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity

- h. Highlighted the importance of reaching a common understanding of Nature based Solutions (NbS) across countries.
- i. Requested that the Secretariat shares findings from ongoing regional workshops and sought clarification on whether NbS is the only approach being pursued by UNEP.
- j. Invited countries benefiting from conservation and biodiversity restoration projects on the ground to provide feedback and lessons learned on the implementation of such projects.
- k. Requested more information about i) plans to diversify funding sources for the implementation of the programme, ii) and whether there has been an increase in funding after the adoption of the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework \(KMGBF\)](#).
- l. Suggested that UNEP expands its programme portfolio to address land degradation and desertification, as these issues are currently addressed primarily under the biodiversity pillar and enquired on UNEP's efforts to mobilize financial resources for land degradation and desertification projects.
- m. Further suggested linking the thematic programs on conservation and restoration with relevant United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) resolutions, with a view to enhancing the implementation of these programs.
- n. Requested clarifications on habitat types being addressed under the programme and whether the figures presented include results from the flagships of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.
- o. Suggested that the Secretariat avails in advance a presentation on UNEP's thematic programmes, a brief background document developing the objectives of such programmes.

- p. Requested clarification on how UNEP ensures alignment of the projects with countries' National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).
5. In response, the Secretariat thanked delegations for their comments and provided the following clarifications:

Climate Science & Transparency

- a. Noted that UNEP collaborates with UNFCCC and other UN agencies through various initiatives, and that UNFCCC and UNEP are in the process of signing a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to address transparency elements.
- b. Highlighted UNEP Copenhagen Climate Centre's (UNEP-CCC) engagement in non-state actor initiatives.
- c. Clarified that UNEP's work on the Global Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT) and Biennial Transparency Reports (BTR) has strengthened institutional capacity and provided support to countries for more robust data, yielding tangible results from early warning systems projects, while political and technical challenges remain, which UNEP is addressing through collaboration with various partners.
- d. Underlined that the funding for the science and transparency subprogram primarily comes from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and highlighted UNEP's efforts to diversify funding sources, noting support from the European Union for data and information on SDG reporting as well as core funding from the GBF and regular budget allocated to support the [Climate Information and Early Warning Systems](#) and regional offices.
- e. Noted that the Climate Technology Centre & Network is undertaking a series of capacity-building activities on the use of AI and highlighted UNEP's ongoing efforts to explore the potential of AI in addressing climate change.
- f. Clarified that UNEP supports 43 countries in Africa for their reporting at two levels, national transparency projects and CBIT global regional networks through UNEP-CCC and reiterated that the Secretariat is committed to strengthening this area of work.

Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity

- g. Acknowledged the need for sharing guidance, tools and practical examples of NbS, and affirmed that NbS is one of the several promising approaches followed by UNEP including bioeconomy, and ecosystem-based and other approaches.
- h. Confirmed that UNEP's work on NbS is grounded in [UNEA resolution 5/5](#) and highlighted the multilaterally agreed definition as the foundation for this work, emphasizing that no single approach is sufficient and that NbS holds promise for connecting different environmental agendas.
- i. Emphasized that the projects under this thematic programme are informed by relevant UNEA resolutions and biodiversity related conventions, and further agreed to highlight linkages with UNEA resolutions in future reports.
- j. Acknowledged the request to present a short lesson learned narrative from countries benefitting from the projects in future presentations.
- k. Provided details on the habitats and geographic locations addressed under the projects and referred to additional details available on [interactive map](#).
- l. Mentioned that UNEP is seeking to diversify the pool of donors to support the implementation of the programme, applying synergetic approach.

- m. Noted that UNEP has a portfolio of land degradation projects amounting to US Dollar 261 million benefitting from support from GEF, and further mentioned the Great Green Wall initiative being scaled up across the Sahel countries as well as ongoing collaboration with other sub-programmes to expand this portfolio.
- n. Highlighted UNEP's effort on exploring innovative financing strategies to bridge the funding gap and invited Member States to provide ideas on how to best align funding efforts with national priorities and avoid fragmentation.
- o. Reiterated that UNEP is supporting national plans and finance requirements through the NBSAP accelerator initiative and supported countries to directly deliver on specific GBF targets.

6. One member of the subcommittee submitted a recommendation for consideration at the 168th meeting of the CPR scheduled for 17 December 2024, as follows:

- a) Recommended that UNEP expands its technical support and capacity building programs for personnel from developing countries, particularly from Africa, in areas such as employing digital solutions for enhancing transparency efforts, with the aim of enhancing data collection and analysis processes and preparing relevant reports.

Agenda item 3: Briefing on the Global Foresight Report on planetary health and wellbeing.

- 7. The Secretariat provided a [briefing](#) on the [Global Foresight Report on planetary health and wellbeing](#).
- 8. Delegations² that took the floor welcomed the presentation and provided the following comments in summary:
 - a. Acknowledged that the findings of the report provided both realistic and important insights on trends that could be valuable in the strategic planning of the secretariat (i.e. inputs into the Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for the period 2026-2029 and Programme of Work (PoW) for the period for 2026-2027 and appreciated that the report includes elements beyond the triple planetary crisis, particularly inequality.
 - b. Requested additional information about the next steps for the Foresight and Horizon scanning workstreams and how UNEP intends to move forward with foresight in the future.
 - c. Raised concerns on the language used in the [report landing webpage](#), which suggests that the report may be incorporated into UNEP's strategic planning and could influence the next MTS of UNEP.
 - d. Asked whether the report may have addressed areas going beyond the scope of Secretariat's mandate (i.e. environment) and areas of expertise (e.g., biological warfare, AI and autonomous weapon systems, environmental health).
 - e. Stressed the need for the Secretariat to adapt existing systems and planning processes to integrate such forward-looking tools like foresight and horizon scanning that can help inform its programme and activities (including mid-cycle) while remaining within the realms of its authorizing mandate and approved PoW/MTS.
 - f. Enquired if the findings of the report will help inform other UNEP core activities such as the seventh Global Environment Outlook (GEO-7).
 - g. Emphasized the need for the Secretariat to continue with environmental monitoring e.g.

² European Union, Argentina, United States of America, Russian Federation, Norway, Brazil, Spain, Finland, Morocco, United Kingdom, Germany, Colombia, Egypt, Canada, Mexico, Children and Youth.

- tracking aspects such as tipping points, trends, impacts thus ensuring environmental governance
- h. Requested the Secretariat to:
 - i. Invite Member States and other stakeholders to be further engaged in future foresight process and including regional-based efforts.
 - ii. Verify the findings of the report against the work of other UN agencies, particularly regarding health governance and digital transformation.
 - iii. Correct the out-facing communications regarding the Foresight report including the Website to remove explicit mention that the report is “UNEP’s contribution to the Summit of the Future”.
 - i. Suggested that UNEP ensure that key findings of the report and lessons learned are adequately reflected into its programme of work.
 - j. Emphasized the need for the Secretariat to:
 - i. Adapt existing systems and planning processes to integrate such forward-looking tools like foresight and horizon scanning that can help inform its programme and activities (including mid-cycle) while remaining within the realms of its authorizing mandate and approved MTS/POW.
 - ii. Address existing inequalities and development gaps between developed and developing nations, especially in relation to extractive models that primarily benefit developed countries.
 - iii. Continue with environmental monitoring e.g. tracking aspects such as tipping points, trends, impacts thus ensuring environmental governance
 - iv. Call for youth leadership in governance systems that integrate advanced environmental monitoring.
9. In response, the Secretariat thanked delegations for their comments and provided the following clarifications:
- a. Informed that a regional toolkit on foresight is being developed for use by the regions, outposted offices and country offices to support the dissemination, ongoing monitoring of signals, and future foresight and planning processes.
 - b. Affirmed that foresight seeks to advance and enhance the Secretariat’s anticipatory culture and capabilities that together with other existing functions and processes help identify emerging issues, blind spots and what should be integrated into planning processes.
 - c. Affirmed that the outcomes of the foresight process will inform the next MTS for the period 2026-2029 and the next PoW for the period 2026-2027, noting however that the specific information is to be deliberated and discussed with Member States.
 - d. Clarified that the report was designed as an external-facing product to share insights from an extensive process, but that it also serves UNEP’s internal needs by fostering an anticipatory culture, allowing UNEP to consider future shifts and incorporate foresight into planning processes rather than continuing on its current path without adaptation.
 - e. Highlighted that the foresight process helped in the identification of issues that may affect the environment and thus gives the Secretariat an opportunity to determine appropriate interventions, course corrections and blind spots.
 - f. Informed that other UN agencies have also conducted foresight exercises and noted that UNEP is collaborating with them to ensure environmental factors are included in these exercises, particularly where technological and health sector developments may have significant environmental impacts.

- g. Acknowledged the accidental misrepresentation error on the website. The corrected webpage can be found [here](#).
- h. Stressed that the report's findings, including migration, extreme weather events, and temperature changes, are crucial for adaptation and resilience efforts, noting that if these issues aren't factored into UNEP's planning, it risks failing to address key vulnerabilities that could hinder environmental and community resilience.
- i. Reaffirmed that the signals of change identified in the report, such as AI and the environmental impacts of conflict, are meant to help UNEP and Member States anticipate potential challenges, with many of these signals being well-documented and aligned with UNEP's existing mandate, particularly in conflict recovery.
- j. Clarified that UNEP's role in identifying emerging environmental issues, like space debris and Solar Radiation Modification (SRM), is not necessarily to address them directly, but rather to inform the broader UN system and help guide interventions by other agencies, ensuring that environmental considerations are included in future responses, clarified that while UNEP is not currently addressing SRM, it remains a signal for future consideration due to its potential global environmental impacts.
- k. Acknowledged concerns about the environmental and social impacts of critical minerals extraction, particularly regarding how to balance resource extraction for net-zero goals with environmental health and equity for resource-rich developing countries, noting this issue will be key in UNEP's future work.
- l. Reassured that the foresight process is focused on how emerging global issues impact UNEP's environmental portfolio, ensuring that UNEP remains within its mandate while considering how these issues may influence future programmatic planning and environmental responses.

Agenda item 4: Briefing on the Global Electric Mobility Programme.

- 10. The Secretariat provided a [briefing on UNEP's Electric Mobility Programme](#).
- 11. Delegations³ that took the floor welcomed the presentation and provided the following comments in summary:
 - a. Requested further clarification on how GEF funds are used for the implementation of electric mobility projects, in the absence of international air quality agreement.
 - b. Encouraged UNEP to collaborate with UN-Habitat to share good practices on sustainable public transportation systems.
 - c. Emphasized the need for UNEP and UN-Habitat to coordinate efforts in financing infrastructure projects in developing countries, particularly in providing adequate technology for transitioning to electric vehicles and promoting investments in renewable energy sources like solar and wind for electric vehicle (EV) charging.
 - d. Requested UNEP's support in raising public awareness and providing technical assistance for the implementation of pilot programs to serve as models for broader implementation.
 - e. Inquired about UNEP's work with open standards for EV charging infrastructure and stressed the importance of ensuring accessibility and inclusivity in the transition to electric mobility.
 - f. Request further information on how UNEP incorporates synergies between pedestrian mobility, cycling, and electromobility in its work, particularly in promoting more

³ United States of America, Malawi, Russian Federation, Chile, Czechia, Egypt, Netherlands (The Kingdom of the), Children and Youth.

- sustainable transport options.
- g. Raised concerns about the limited supply of critical minerals like copper and lithium necessary for electric vehicles, and highlighted the need for international cooperation, investment, and sustainable production of these minerals to meet future demand and requested UNEP's consideration of these factors.
 - h. Encouraged UNEP to help low- and middle-income countries set national electric mobility targets and facilitate stakeholder platforms for promoting electric mobility benefits.
 - i. Stressed that used fuel vehicles pose a significant challenge to countries transitioning to electric mobility and called for UNEP's leadership in ensuring that this issue remains a priority on the mobility agenda, as addressing it is crucial for a successful shift to electric transportation.
12. In response, the Secretariat thanked delegations for their comments and provided the following clarifications:
- a. Clarified that 40 out of the 60 countries in which the projects are implemented are funded by GEF climate change funding, with countries deciding to use their allocations to join UNEP's electric mobility program, and emphasized UNEP's role in connecting countries seeking investment in electric mobility with available financing.
 - b. Noted that many countries in Africa share similar challenges in transitioning to electric mobility, highlighted that UNEP has created regional support in that regard and investment platforms open to all countries, including those without GEF-funded projects.
 - c. Announced that UNEP is about to release a report on trolleybuses, a form of electric mobility successfully used in parts of Europe.
 - d. Acknowledged the issue of EV recycling and stated that end-of-life management is now a priority in UNEP's electric mobility program, noting the need to reduce reliance on mining for materials like lithium, cobalt, and copper.
 - e. Reaffirmed UNEP's collaboration with UN-Habitat, explaining that UNEP focuses on technology and policy, while UN-Habitat concentrates on planning and infrastructure, both of which are essential for successful electric mobility programs.
 - f. Highlighted the importance of locally sourced renewable energy for electric mobility, explaining that renewables enable countries to use domestically produced energy for transportation, which is an attractive proposition for many governments.
 - g. Addressed concerns about the export of used vehicles, stating that it is crucial to prevent low-quality vehicles from being dumped in developing countries and explained that UNEP is working with both exporting and importing countries to establish quality standards for used vehicles.
 - h. Stressed the need for a systems approach that includes not only technology but also public transport, walking, and cycling, reaffirmed that UNEP is working on these areas with various partners to integrate different sustainable transport approaches into cities.

Agenda item 5: Recommendations from the subcommittee for consideration at the upcoming CPR quarterly meeting.

13. The Secretariat provided a briefing on the preliminary cost implications of implementing the [29 draft recommendations](#) proposed by delegates at the [11th annual subcommittee meeting of the CPR](#) held from 8 to 12 July 2024.

14. Delegations⁴ that took the floor welcomed the presentation and provided the following comments in summary:
- a. Questioned some of the figures in the presentation on cost assessment made for the implementation of the recommendations, and asked for clarification on how the costs had been calculated.
 - b. Noted that some of the recommendations address substantive/thematic topics that may require consideration by UNEA rather than by the CPR, and suggested to limit any recommendations to be put forward by the CPR to procedural decisions that remain within the CPR's mandate.
 - c. Requested the Secretariat to prepare a note on the mandate of the CPR and present such note in a future CPR Sub-Committee meeting.
 - d. Proposed to include subtitles for the draft recommendations as reflected in the [Chair's summary of the 11th Annual Subcommittee meeting](#) to make it clear from which agenda item they emanated.
 - e. Proposed to consolidate the list of draft decisions or draft recommendations proposed by members of the Committee at subcommittee meetings as a separate draft decision document in a standardized format, to facilitate consideration and possible adoption at the quarterly meetings of the Committee.
15. In response, the Secretariat thanked delegations for their comments and provided the following clarifications:
- a. Provided an oral overview on the CPR's history, establishment, mandate and its evolution.
 - b. Reminded delegations that the costing assessment was undertaken at the request of Member States and that this exercise had been challenging and had required considerable staff time.
 - c. Emphasized that the cost estimations were preliminary and that more time and resources would be needed in order to arrive at more detailed and accurate costings, should delegations request this.
 - d. Pointed out that a number of the recommendations were vaguely worded and lacked clarity which further complicated the costing assessment.
- 16. Some members of the subcommittee submitted recommendations for consideration at the 167th meeting of the CPR scheduled for 12 September 2024, as follows:**
- a. Requested the Secretariat to prepare and present, at a subsequent meeting of the subcommittee and prior to the 168th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, a note on the mandate of the Committee.
 - b. Requested the Secretariat, as a general rule, to compile and circulate, as a separate draft decision document in a standardized format, draft decisions or draft recommendations proposed by members of the Committee at subcommittee meetings for consideration at quarterly meetings of the Committee.
 - c. Requested that the subcommittee continues its consideration of the draft recommendations contained in paragraph 3 (b) of document UNEP/CPR/167/8/Rev.1 entitled "Draft Report Subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives", with a view to preparing a draft decision for consideration at the 168th meeting of the

⁴ Norway, European Union, United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom, Portugal, Japan, Brazil, Costa Rica, Argentina, France, Morocco, Colombia.

CPR.

Subsequently, the CPR, at its 167th meeting, adopted a decision on improving identification, formulation and recording of decisions and conclusions from meetings of the CPR. The decision may be accessed [here](#).

Agenda item 6: Other matters.

17. No other matters were raised.

Agenda item 7: Closing of the meeting.

18. The meeting closed at 16:00 (GMT+3).