



GOBIERNO DE COSTA RICA
MISION ESPECIAL DE COSTA RICA

San José, Costa Rica, 23 November 2016

First input on the selection of a theme for UNEA 3

Reference: 2016/SGB/JL-C/mm

Costa Rica truly appreciates the efforts put forth by the Secretariat and the CPR in terms of reviewing, drafting and distributing the criteria for the selection of the theme for UNEA 3.

Selecting a theme is an important milestone in the process towards the third session of the United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA-3). The consultation process for the theme is intended to be integral and democratic, in order to open up the floor for problematic that affect the entire world, and give a voice to those countries with no representation in the CPR. A letter was sent by the President of UNEA in that sense. However, due to the actual date sent, the delegation of Costa Rica considers that an extension on the time limit given for regional consultations must be extended until November 30th, 2016. This would leave a 5-day period for opinions to be received and categorized before the meeting of the Bureau of UNEA to be held on December 5th, 2016.

Nonetheless, this delegation would like to address the letter distributed by the Secretariat and signed by the President requesting regional offices to initiate the consultation process on the theme, as well as the criteria determined for selecting the themes and the proposed options compiled by the Secretariat and reviewed during the CPR meeting held on November 17th, 2016.

The delegation of Costa Rica considers that it is of essence to provide a clearer definition of the negotiated criteria as an annex to the letter sent by the Presidency. This must be provided when the notice of the extension for receiving proposals is communicated.

In regards to the criteria that need to be socialized amongst member states for selecting the theme, we consider that the main objective must be that the theme allows for UN Environment to develop its mandate by delivering resolutions that promote international policies for addressing key environmental issues. With this final objective in mind, the following criteria must be met when proposing a theme: ¹

1. Be significant in both scope and substance that delivers tangible and specific global solutions that have sufficient breadth that all members can engage in.
2. Result in an actionable outcome that is meaningful and inspiring to the world, so that in a declaration, the resolution delivers new and ambitious political will and energy on the selected theme.

¹ Criteria listed by Secretariat in document reviewed at CPR meeting on 17 November. This criteria is a summary of inputs provided during the Bureaux retreat.



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3. Support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, and resonates with the themes of the High Level Political Forum1;
4. Be framed and presented so that the visibility and profile of the UN Environment Assembly is increased.
5. Be viable such that it can be implemented with UN Environment's own capacity;
6. Inspire citizens and generate partnerships with both with the private sector, media and civil society who are engaged to take the agenda forward.
7. Contribute to unify the environmental agenda of the United Nations

In regards to the theme, we consider that selecting a single theme that relates to the theme of the High Level Political Forum is of essence.

We feel that of the three options studied by the CPR, proposed theme 1 on addressing pollution and "detoxifying the world" is a good starting point for establishing the theme. However, it is important to widen its focus while at the same time delimitating the scope of the theme. In this sense, we consider that the following topics and issues must be considered in the drafting of the final theme, and the creative process of selecting an engaging title:

- ❖ Short-lived gases.
- ❖ Contamination of soils
- ❖ Waste treatment
- ❖ Marine pollution and Micro plastics
- ❖ Air contamination
- ❖ Opening of forums between Ministers of Finance and Ministers of Environment.
- ❖ National Environmental Accounting
- ❖ Studies on the economic impact of environmental damage caused by pollution
- ❖ Education policies

The consideration of the previous issues, along with others that may arise from the upcoming discussions, will make it easier to deliver and actionable outcome.



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We must take into consideration that UNEA has already issued resolutions regarding pollution, and the development of the theme and resolutions on UNEA 3 must be oriented in the sense that they add to previous resolutions.

Also, if pollution is the final theme selected for UNEA 3, a strong and coordinated effort must be made to create a synergy in the actions and resolutions of the Rotterdam, Stockholm and Basel Conventions. This must be supported by a financial mandate, which allows for integrated action on this subject. The strengthening of these conventions will reflect directly and improve the presence and mandate of UN Environment.

In view of the above, the Costa Rican delegation advocates for selecting a single global theme, that could be theme 1 presented by the Secretariat and regarding to pollution, as long as its content is broadened in a focused way. All possible themes must be presented to the Bureau for consideration and decision-making.

Costa Rica looks forward to further discussions on the matter which include the voice and needs of all member states.
