



UN Major Group for  
**Children and Youth**  
the space for children and youth in the United Nations

**30 May 2018**

Civil Society Unit,  
UN Environment Secretariat  
Nairobi, Kenya

Dear Civil Society Unit,

Hope this finds you well.

We want to begin by expressing our deepest gratitude to the members of the Secretariat for their support, and facilitation of participation of children and youth at all the three UN Environment Assembly (UNEAs), including the funding support that has been provided to several members of the UNEP MGCY constituency and for being cognizant and responsive of our requests, such as for intervention slots at COW, or those during contact groups. We acknowledge the continued support and goodwill towards the members of the children and youth constituency.

This letter is regarding the election process currently underway to elect two new representatives of UNEP MGCY who would then be part of the Major Groups Facilitative Committee (MGFC).

UN Environment had sent an email on the 13 March 2018 to the members of the major group facilitation committee (MGFC) asking us how we wanted to organise elections within our respective constituencies - if we would want to do it internally, or have UN Environment facilitate these elections. We are aware that we had responded with an email on the 27 March 2018 asking UN Environment to organise the elections for UNEP MGCY. A copy of the email chain is enclosed in Annexure-A to this letter.

However, we would like to elaborate that - unfortunately, since we had not consulted with the broader constituency in any form before conveying this decision to you - it does not reflect the views from the broader UNEP MGCY constituency. It was a decision, taken in our personal capacity.



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Our rationale was based on our limited personal capacity and our perception of its implications in how the election process might play out. We very much realise our fault, and would like to sincerely apologise for the same.

In last few weeks, as the members of the UNEP MGCY became aware of this and the process underway, we have received significant pushback, not just from the members ( individuals, accredited, and non-accredited organizations) of the UNEP MGCY constituency, but also from the members of the broader UN MGCY Coordination Team.

Keeping in view the principles of self-organization of the Major Groups, given the diversity of actors within the children and youth space, and the nature of the target group - there is a strong request among the members of the UNEP MGCY, that our elections need to be organised internally as per our established *Processes and Procedures*<sup>1</sup>. The same was also echoed in the coordination team of the broader UN MGCY.

Please find in Annexure B attached the email chain with the views that the members of the constituency shared after we asked them if we should proceed with this request. No red flag was raised, and a diverse sample of actors (local, regional, global) supported. Therefore the consultation, as per our decision making procedures, amounts to a consensus.

In light of the developments shared above, we, on behalf of the majority of UNEP MGCY and members of the UN MGCY coordination team, would like to request UN Environment to, without prejudice, please terminate the ongoing election process. We deeply acknowledge and understand that UN Environment has supported us with their best intentions and efforts. We do not see any wrongdoing or breach of trust on the part of UN Environment, and are basing this request on a consultation and coordination misstep on our part and a strong assertion and request from the broader constituency to start afresh with a new constituency run process.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MkO7W8ODwYygJCni1VxwIMnXqAnzU8hF/view?usp=sharing>



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Regarding the human resources, considering the importance of this matter, the election team from the broader UN MGCY, together with the volunteers from UNEP MGCY will be able to dedicate sufficient capacity to conduct the selections, and adhering with the UNEP MGCY election processes and procedures, also attached to this email. We will very much be happy to engage UNEP as an observer in this process. We will share the timeline, and other details, once the process commences from our side. Please trust that we will treat this with the utmost urgency and prioritise allocation of resources accordingly.

Finally, we are very much cognizant that it is us who is at fault and that this request comes very late in the process, but we are trying to do our best to share the views and concerns from our constituency. We take complete personal responsibility for the missteps and the added inconvenience to UN Environment, and once again acknowledge the support that you have provided throughout.

Apologies for the official language as we were trying to convey a complex and important matter as drawn from our Process and Procedures. We hope you will perceive this constructively and move forward with our suggestions. Looking forward to a positive response, putting this chapter behind us and embarking on a fresh journey to continue to enhance meaningful youth engagement in UNEP.

Best Regards,

Mirna Inés Fernández Pradel and Madhav Datt  
Representatives of the UNEP Major Group of Children and Youth