

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Tuesday 7 May 2019
2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
United Nations Office at Nairobi, Gigiri
Conference Room 4

Briefing note on UN Environment Programme contribution to the 2019 High-Level Political Forum sessions

1. The High-Level Political Forum, which convenes annually in July under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council and every four years in September under the auspices of the General Assembly, is the most important platform through which global, regional and national progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is monitored, challenges identified and solutions and lessons-learned shared.
2. Marking the full cycle of the review of the 17 SDGs, in 2019, the HLPF will be held – as noted above – under the auspices of both (a) the Economic and Social Council (9-18 July)¹ at the level of experts and ministers and (b) the General Assembly (SDGs Summit, 24-25 September) at the level of Heads of State and Government.
3. 2019 is a particularly important year for UN Environment and the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) to make meaningful and impactful contributions to the progress review process at all levels, with the view to contribute to accelerate progress and strengthen governance for the SDGs and put in place strategies to translate the common vision i.e. the 2030 Agenda into tangible results for all people, everywhere. It also represents an opportunity to provide substantive inputs to the stock taking of lessons learned and advance ideas for strengthening the regional and global forums, on how the thematic and voluntary national reviews could be further improved, building on the experience of the first three years, to promote a more integrated approach to thematic reviews of SDGs, given the interlinkages among them. Through UNEA resolution 2/5 “Delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” and resolution 3/3 “Contributions of the UNEA to the HLPF”, Member States have reiterated their commitment to conveying the main messages from UNEA to the HLPF.

Under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council: 9-18 July

4. The meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2019 convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, will be held from 9 to 18 July 2019; including the three-day ministerial meeting of the forum from 16 to 18 July 2019.
5. The theme will be "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality". The set of goals to be reviewed in depth is the following:

¹ SDGs under review at the July 2019 HLPF are as follows:

SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

SDG 9: Reduce inequality within and among countries

SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

- Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Under the auspices of the General Assembly – the SDG Summit, 24-25 September

6. The High-level Political Forum under the auspices of the UN General Assembly – the “SDG Summit” - will assess progress achieved so far in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs since their adoption in September 2015 and provide leadership and guidance on the way forward to help accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.
7. The Summit will be at the Heads of State and Heads of Government level and will be chaired by the President of the 74th session of the General Assembly.
8. The Summit will help leverage progress in key areas to kick-start an acceleration process and facilitate the sharing of experience and best practices and provide access to tools that can accelerate change for pursuing an integrated approach of sustainable development.
9. The expected outcomes of the Summit are:
 - A Political Declaration of Heads of State and Government giving political guidance how to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs will be adopted. The co-facilitators who will lead the negotiations for the Political Declaration are H.E. Ms. Sheila Gweneth Carey, Permanent Representative of Bahamas to the United Nations, and H.E. Mr. Olof Skoog, Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations.
 - Voluntary Commitments for the implementation of SDGs may be announced at the Summit and submitted online in advance of the Summit. Commitments can be made from all countries and stakeholders, including local authorities, the private sector, foundations and philanthropic organizations.
 - The SDG Summit could demonstrate the benefits of an inclusive multilateralism through the reaffirmation of the 2030 Agenda and the revitalization of the United Nations role in linking peace and security, human rights and development, and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

UN Environment participation in the 2019 High-Level Political Forum

10. The UN Environment Programme actively participates in the preparatory process of the High-Level Political Forum 2019 sessions through:
 - a. Participating in thematic discussions related to the SDGs under review;
 - b. Supporting and participating in the regional sustainable development forums, as an important mechanism to enhance the integration of the environmental dimension;
 - c. Preparing and sending the contribution of the UNEA President in response to the invitation sent by the President of the UN Economic and Social Council (the submission was sent by the Secretariat on 18 March 2019, in accordance with the deadline set by ECOSOC);
 - d. Preparing technical briefings on the SDGs under review;

- e. Contributing to the progress report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including the SDGs under in-depth review, coordinated by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Regional Economic Commissions;
- f. Participating in the interagency SDG task team to ensure that the environmental dimension is considered, as well as emerging environmental issues relevant to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, considering the integrated, indivisible and interlinked nature of the 2030 Agenda.
- g. Following up and reviewing progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development and the SDGs, in particular of the environmental targets (launch of the GEO-6 derivative report 'Measuring Progress: Towards Achieving the Environmental Dimension of the SDGs').
- h. Proposing side events and an exhibition relevant to the SDGs under review for the session under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council.

11. The President of the fifth session of the Environment Assembly has been invited to convey the key messages from the fourth session to the High-Level Political Forum during the first day of its high-level segment on 16 July.