

Summary of the Joint meeting of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme

3 December 2019

On 3 December 2019, Members of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the UN Environment Programme held a meeting via video conference at the UNON Director-General Board Room located in the UN complex in Nairobi. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Ola Elvestuen, President of the UN Environment Assembly and Minister of Environment and Climate of the Norway, and H.E. Mr. Fernando Coimbra, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil. A list of participants is available in the annex to this summary. Agenda and meeting documentation is made available on the [meeting portal](#).

The Joint Bureaux meeting addressed the following topics:

- Theme of the fifth session of UN Environment Assembly;
- Follow up of UN General Assembly Resolution 73/333;
- Process for review by the Committee of Permanent Representatives;
- Organization of work of the Bureaux

This summary summarizes the key decisions and points of discussion during the joint Bureaux meeting.

Before commencing its work, the meeting observed a moment of silence, in honor of H.E. Mr. Winston G. Lackin, Vice President of the Bureau of the UN Environment Assembly and Ambassador in charge of Environment and Presidential Advisor of the Republic of Suriname, who passed away recently.

Overview of main decisions:

1. The UNEA Bureau, in consultation with the CPR Bureau, decided that the theme for the fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) is as follows: **“Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”**
2. The Bureaux jointly agreed on a way forward with regard to the follow-up on UN General Assembly resolution 73/333.
3. The UNEA Bureau agreed to an adjusted roadmap of its meetings for 2020.

Agenda Item 2: Consideration of the theme of the fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly

1. The Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) and the representative of the UNEA President, H.E. Ms. Elin Rognlie, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Norway, informed the meeting of the outcomes of the recent consultations on identifying a theme for UNEA-5.
2. The President referred to the meeting background document entitled [“Revised consensual elements for the theme for the fifth Session of the UN Environment Assembly”](#), and asked the meeting to support the proposed theme “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”, suggesting that this formulation represents a balanced proposal that takes into account all key aspects brought up in the consultations.
3. While Members of both Bureaux expressed general support for the proposal, several Members expressed a preference for a formulation which explicitly includes the concept of Nature-Based

Solutions. Two Members of the Bureau of the UN Environment Assembly proposed a theme entitled “Nature Based Solutions for Sustainable Developing Goals”, and one Member of the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, representing the position of a regional group, tabled an alternative proposal entitled “Enabling environmental actions for people to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”, with the purpose of better capturing Principle One of the [Rio Declaration](#) in the theme.

4. Following the discussion, the President took note of the various views and proposals, and asked the Members of the UNEA Bureau to adopt the proposed formulation “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals” as the theme for the fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly as set out in the Revised consensual elements for the theme of the UN Environment Assembly distributed [as a document](#) dated 28 November 2019. It was so decided.

Agenda Item 3: Report on consultations on the follow up on General Assembly Resolution 73/333

5. The representative of the President of UNEA and the Chair of the CPR reported back to the meeting on the outcome of the informal consultations with regional groups on the follow up on [General Assembly resolution 73/333](#). A written report of the consultations is available [here](#).
6. Following the introduction of the Report there were discussions among members of the Bureaux related, in particular, to the division of work between the UNEA Bureau and the CPR taking into account the rules of procedure and established practices. The role of the CPR in the process going forward concerning the implementation of General Assembly resolution 73/33 was also discussed.
7. In conclusion it was agreed to continue the process of consultations on the follow up on General Assembly resolution 73/333, on the following basis:
 - Member States and stakeholders will be invited to express their views in writing on the relevant aspects related to the way forward regarding UNGA resolution 73/333, based on a questionnaire, using the previous questions for the consultations with the regional and political groups as a basis.
 - Bearing in mind the contextual relevance of the consultations in the CPR regarding the commemoration of the creation of UNEP by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, a similar and coordinated invitation should will be sent to all Member States and Stakeholders to allow member States to approach both processes in a coordinated manner.
 - In light of the heavy workload ahead, the secretariat was requested to identify possible dates for meetings to allow member States to further consider the UNGA resolution 73/333. This would allow for an open and inclusive consultation in the CPR during the first quarter of 2020, on the basis of the written inputs which would result in a clear roadmap leading to UNEA-5.
 - In the meantime, the President, through his representative in Nairobi, and the Chair of the CPR, will continue to consult with member States on the best way forward to ensure open and inclusive consultations on the matter.
8. In order to implement these decisions, the Chair of the CPR announced his intention to convene a meeting of the CPR bureau to decide on the date of the first consultation meeting. In addition, the Secretariat was requested to develop a draft questionnaire for review by the

President, through his representative in Nairobi, and by the Chair of the CPR, who will jointly chair the open and inclusive consultation in the CPR.

9. One Member State emphasized the need for the President and the Chair of the CPR to regularly consult on this process with their respective Bureaux. One Member also proposed that an additional meeting of the UNEA Bureau should be organized in January 2020.

Agenda Item 4: Update on the process for review by the Committee of Permanent Representatives

10. The Chair of the CPR provided an update to the meeting on the consensual process for review by the CPR to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of UNEA and its subsidiary bodies, as mandated by paragraphs 9- 13 in UNEA Decision 4/2. Following guidance provided by member States at the 146th meeting of the CPR on 20 June and at the 6th Annual Subcommittee Meeting on 9 October, two co-facilitators, Mr. Marcus Davis of Canada and Mr Mapopa C. Kaunda of Malawi, had been appointed to lead the consultations, and a roadmap with several consultation meetings under the CPR had been adopted, with the aim to agree on a set of recommendations for UNEA-5 at the 7th Annual Subcommittee meeting scheduled for October 2020. So far, two consultation meetings had been held; on 31 October and 26 November 2019. At these meetings, discussions focused on the preparation, working arrangements and scheduling of UNEA sessions, and of the objectives, preparation, working arrangements and scheduling of meetings of the CPR. Contributions in writing to the process are available on a [dedicated website](#).

Agenda Item 5: Organization of work

11. The President announced that the date of the next UNEA Bureau meeting will be changed from 4 to 3 March 2020 and informed the meeting that the tentative dates for the first Joint Bureaux retreat in Oslo, Norway, initially planned for April 2020, will have to be changed to a later date which will be announced in due course. The President further announced that the retreat is likely to be preceded by a stakeholder forum in preparation for UNEA-5, and that members of the Bureaux are expected to be invited to take part in this event.
12. One member of the UNEA Bureau suggested that, if needed, possible additional meeting dates should be considered before the next meeting of the UNEA Bureau, in particular to consider the follow up of UN General Assembly resolution 73/333.

Agenda Item 6: Other matters

13. The delegation of Suriname thanked the meeting for its messages of condolence following the passing away of Ambassador Winston Lackin and emphasized that Suriname remains committed to working towards a successful UNEA-5.

Agenda Item 7: Closing of the meeting

14. The meeting closed at 19:15

List of participants Joint meeting of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme, 3 December 2019

UN Environment Assembly Bureau	
COUNTRY REGIONAL GROUP	NAME DESIGNATION
Norway Western European and Others Group	H.E. Mr. Ola Elvestuen , President, Minister of Climate and Environment
Costa Rica Latin America and Caribbean Group	H.E. Mr. Carlos Manuel Rodriguez Echandi , Vice President and Minister of Environment and Energy of the Republic
Estonia Eastern European Group	Mr. Ado Lohmus Vice President and Permanent Representative of Environment
Indonesia Asia-Pacific Group	Ms. Laskmi Dhewanthi , Vice President and Senior Advisor to the Minister of Environment and Forestry
Serbia Eastern European and Group	Ms. Biljana Filipovic Djusic , Representing H.E. Mr. Goran Trivan , Vice President and Minister of Environment
Suriname Latin America and Caribbean Group	Mrs. Safyra Duurham and Mrs. Meredith Henry-Cumberbatch , Coordination of Environment – Cabinet of the President
France Western European and Others Group	Mr. Thomas Rossignol , Representing H.E. Ms. Brune Poirson , Vice President, Secretary of State for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition
South Africa Africa Group	Ms. Shakira Parker , Representing Hon. Ms. Barbara Creecy , Vice President, Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries
Committee of Permanent Representatives Bureau	
Brazil Latin America and Caribbean Group	H.E. Mr. Fernando Coimbra , Chair, Ambassador and Permanent Representative
Netherlands Western European and Others Group	H.E. Mr. Frans Makken Vice Chair, Ambassador and Permanent Representative
Nairobi Based Representatives	
Norway	H.E. Ms. Elin Rognlie Ambassador and Permanent Representative; Ms. Guri Sandborg Deputy Permanent Representative
Costa Rica	H.E. Ms. Marta Juarez-Ruiz Ambassador and Permanent Representative
France	H.E. Mrs. Aline Kuster-Ménager Ambassador and Permanent Representative Ms. Estelle Halimi Deputy Permanent Representative
Brazil	Mr. Patrick Luna Second Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative
Burkina Faso	Mr. Yago L. Abdoul Kader First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative
Serbia	Ms. Irina Zarin First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative
Netherlands	Mrs. Gudi Alkemade Deputy Permanent Representative

UN Environment Programme	
	Ms. Inger Andersen Executive Director
	Mr. Jorge Laguna-Celis Secretary of Governing Bodies and Director – Governance Affairs Office
	Mr. Rafael Peralta Chief of Staff a.i.
	Mr. Ulf Bjornholm Deputy Secretary of Governing Bodies and Deputy Director – Governance Affairs Office
	Mr. Stadler Trengrove Legal Officer