

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday 16 January 2020
9 – 12 and 1:30 - 4:30 p.m.
United Nations Office of Nairobi
Conference Room 4

MEETING SUMMARY

Process for review by the Committee of Permanent Representatives

Agenda item 1: Implementation of paragraphs 9-13 of Decision UNEP/EA.4/2 entitled “Provisional agenda, date and venue of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly”.

1. The second consultation meeting on “Process for review by the Committee of Permanent Representatives: Implementation of paragraphs 9-13 of decision UNEP/EA.4/2 entitled Provisional agenda, date and venue of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly” was chaired jointly by the co-facilitators, Mr. Marcus Davies, Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada, and Mr. Mapopa C. Kaunda, Deputy Permanent Representative of Malawi.
2. The meeting discussed the “[Emerging consensual elements](#)” developed after the first two consultation meetings held on 31 October and 26 November 2019, respectively, and then focused on subparagraph 10(b): “The respective roles and responsibilities of the Bureau of the Environment Assembly and of the Bureau of CPR, including those related to interactions with their respective constituencies.”
3. On the “Emerging consensual elements”, CPR members shared, among others, the following views:
 - Many member States welcomed the approach and expressed general support on the main content of the paper by the co-facilitators. Some member States stated that they intend to provide detailed written submissions.
 - Recommendations that require financial resources should include a caveat along the lines “subject to available resources”.
 - One group of member States proposed to consider that the meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR) – which may be designated “Preparatory Committee for UNEA” – should be chaired by the UNEA President/Bureau, for efficiency purposes.
 - Others considered that this proposal would not be in accordance with the existing mandates of CPR – namely, to prepare draft resolutions (Governing Council decision 19/32) – and the UNEA Bureau – to assist the President in the general conduct of UNEA business (UNEA rules

- of procedure rule 18.1) and that rather than changing the chairmanship of the OECPR, the intersessional period should be more effectively used in the preparation of draft resolutions.
- General support was expressed with regard to the objective of paragraph 6 in the background document on need to encourage closer engagement and cooperation between the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and UNEA, but the wording needed careful consideration. The co-facilitators announced that a supporting document from the Secretariat with proposals from MEAs on how to strengthen cooperation will be shared with member States by the end of January.
 - On paragraph 7 on strengthening preparations for UNEA at regional level, it would enable Bureau members better contribute to and harness inputs from the regional forum if the secretariat provided guidance on their contributions.
4. On options emerging from the written inputs from member States and stakeholders related to UNEA and CPR Bureaus, as outlined in the [background document](#) for the meeting, member States made the following salient points:
- While generally supporting the recommendations, member States opted to exclude option 7.3 on possibly merging the two Bureaus, focusing instead on promoting coordination and cooperation between these Bureaus.
 - Member States generally supported the notion to clarify the respective roles and functions of CPR/OECPR and UNEA, noting that both CPR and UNEA Bureaus are, among others, responsible for preparing a successful outcome from UNEA. In this context, the challenge of the limited membership and representation in Nairobi of the CPR was highlighted.
 - To the end of clarifying the respective roles and functions of the two Bureaus, there was also general support for continued consideration of the draft terms of reference (TOR) for the two Bureaus, keeping in mind existing UNEA rules of procedure and relevant UNEA resolutions/Governing Council decisions. It was noted that such TORs would not have a legal effect, but that they could consolidate existing rules and decision as well as ad-hoc practices and established working arrangements and thus provide useful guidance to the UNEA governing bodies.
 - Some member states noted that the TORs could be revised to reflect, among others, UNEA Bureau's role in managing the resolution preparation process and expectations relating to the contribution of the UNEA President's to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. In this discussion, some member states highlighted the relevance of practices used in other forums such as FAO and WHO.
 - It was suggested, based on UNEA's universal membership, that the functions of the Committee of the Whole during the sessions of UNEA could be carried out by the UNEA plenary.
 - On option 7.4 to strengthen consultation with the regional groups, it was noted that although consultation is a goal supported by member states as general practice, not all regional groups coordinate joint positions. As such, member States agreed that consultation with regional groups and coordination of positions as appropriate could be encouraged for Bureau members under the terms of reference but not directed as such by the Bureaus. To this end, member States concurred that it was important that the Bureau members endeavor to actively communicate with the members of the regional groups and to listen to their respective constituencies.

- On option 7.5, for the Bureau members to help increase the visibility of UNEA, it was suggested to apply a general recommendation encouraging such action, given that each Government has different ways of following up on UNEA.
5. Member States indicated that it would be helpful to have additional information on what constitutes the established practices of the two Bureaus as well as clarification on the scope of participation by “ex officio” members in the respective Bureau meetings. It would also help to learn how Bureaus function in other the UN system governing bodies. The secretariat suggested that such information could be provided in the context of revised TORs for consideration by the Committee at a later stage in the process.
 6. The Chair concluded the meeting by requesting member States to send any inputs in writing by 28 January 2020 and requested the Secretariat to present a revised proposal of the TORs based on the guidance provided at the present meeting.

Agenda Item 2: Closing of the meeting.

7. The meeting closed at 4:00 p.m.