



**United Nations Environment
Assembly of the United Nations
Environment Programme**

**Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives
to the United Nations Environment Programme**

Fifth meeting

Nairobi (online), 15 February–17 February 2021

**Draft Chair’s summary of the fifth meeting of the Open-ended Committee of
Permanent Representatives**

Introduction

1. By United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) decision 4/2 entitled “Provisional agenda, date and venue of the fifth session of the UNEA”, the fifth meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (variously OECPR-5 or the Committee) was scheduled to convene from 15 to 19 February 2021 in Nairobi. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bureaux of UNEA and the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), in consultation of Member States and stakeholders, decided to organize OECPR-5 online, focused on a few agenda items that require Member States’ decision this year, such as the medium-term strategy for 2022-2025 and the programme of work and budget for 2022-2023.
2. The joint Bureaux further decided to organize the fifth session of the UNEA (UNEA-5) in two parts, first online on 22 and 23 February 2021, followed by an in-person meeting in February 2022. Subject to a decision to be taken at the online meeting of UNEA-5, OECPR-5 is expected to resume from 21 to 25 February 2022 to prepare for the resumed, in-person meeting of UNEA-5.
3. Accordingly, OECPR-5 convened virtually from 15 to 17 February 2021.

4. All background documentation for the meeting have been made available online through a dedicated meeting portal¹.

I. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

5. Mr. Fernando Coimbra, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil and Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, opened the fifth meeting of the OECPR (OECPR-5) on 15 February 2021 at 1 pm, with the participation of 88 Member States, 1 Observer States and 29 accredited organizations.
6. The Chair recalled the agreement to defer consideration of substantive matters to a time when face-to-face meetings will be possible, and that subsequently OECPR-5 shall focus considerations on a limited number of urgent procedural matters on the basis of three draft decisions (see also section VIII):
 - a. UNEP/EA.5/L.1: Medium-term strategy for 2022–2025 and programme of work and budget for the biennium 2022–2023;
 - b. UNEP/EA.5/L.2: Management of trust funds and earmarked contributions;
 - c. UNEP/EA.5/L.3: Adjournment and resumption of UNEA-5.
7. Ms. Inger Anderson, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) delivered an opening statement, followed by statements from representatives of regional and political groups and individual Member States. Statements submitted to the Secretariat in writing are available on the [OECPR-5 meeting portal](#).
8. The Committee adopted the agenda as contained in the provisional agenda ([UNEP/OECPR.5/1](#)) without changes.

II. Adoption of the minutes of the 153rd meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives held on 26 January 2021.

9. The Committee adopted the minutes of the 153rd meeting of CPR as set out in [UNEP/OECPR.5/2](#). One delegation expressed concerns with regard to the lack of reference to the common but differentiated responsibilities and loss and damage in paragraph 8, the reference to the concept of “toxic economy” in paragraph 11, the emphasis on fossil fuel production rather than on unsustainable consumption in paragraph 12, and the use of the concept “blue economy” in paragraph 18.

III. Organization of work.

10. Due to technical challenges related to the online meeting platform, the Chair proposed that the opening plenary be suspended and that the Contact Group should convene on a different platform in English only to consider the three draft decisions under agenda item 8. Accordingly, the opening

¹ <https://www.unep.org/events/open-ended-cpr-oepr/fifth-meeting-open-ended-committee-permanent-representatives>

plenary was suspended on 15 February at 2:30 pm and reconvened the following day at 4.30 pm. An additional plenary meeting was organized from 3 to 7pm on 17 February. In addition, three Contact Group sessions were organized to consider the three draft decisions.

IV. Budget and Programme Performance, including implementation of previously adopted Assembly resolutions.

11. At the plenary meeting that reconvened on 16 February, Ms. Joyce Msuya, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, introduced the following reports of the Executive Director submitted to UNEA-5:

- a. [UNEP/EA.5/4](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/1 on innovative pathways to achieve sustainable consumption and production
- b. [UNEP/EA.5/5](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/2 on promoting sustainable practices and innovative solutions for curbing food loss and waste
- c. [UNEP/EA.5/6](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/4 on addressing environmental challenges through sustainable business
- d. [UNEP/EA.5/7](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/5 on sustainable infrastructure
- e. [UNEP/EA.5/8](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/6 on marine plastic litter and microplastics
- f. [UNEP/EA.5/9](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/8 on sound management of chemicals and waste
- g. [UNEP/EA.5/10](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/10 on innovation on biodiversity and land degradation
- h. [UNEP/EA.5/11](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/15 on innovations in sustainable rangelands and pastoralism
- i. [UNEP/EA.5/12](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/17 on promoting gender equality and the human rights and empowerment of women and girls in environmental governance
- j. [UNEP/EA.5/13](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/18 on the Poverty-Environment nexus
- k. [UNEP/EA.5/14](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/19 on mineral resource governance
- l. [UNEP/EA.5/15](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/20 on the fifth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme V)
- m. [UNEP/EA.5/16](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/22 on implementation and follow-up of UNEA resolutions
- n. [UNEP/EA.5/17](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 4/23, entitled “Keeping the world environment under review: enhancing the UNEP science-policy interface and endorsement of the Global Environment Outlook”
- o. [UNEP/EA.5/18](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 3/3 on contributions of the United Nations Environment Assembly to the high-level political forum on sustainable development
- p. [UNEP/EA.5/19](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 3/6 on managing soil pollution to achieve sustainable development
- q. [UNEP/EA.5/20](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 3/10 on addressing water pollution to protect and restore water-related ecosystems

- r. [UNEP/EA.5/21](#): Progress in the implementation of resolution 2/14 on illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products
 - s. [UNEP/EA.5/22](#): Progress in the implementation of decision 4/1 on the programme of work and budget for the biennium 2020–2021, resolution 2/20 on the proposed medium-term strategy for 2018–2021 and the programme of work and budget for 2018–2019 and resolution 1/15 on the proposed programme of work and budget for the biennium 2016–2017
 - t. [UNEP/EA.5/23](#): Action plan for the implementation of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
 - u. [UNEP/EA.5/24](#): Providing options for the future of the Global Environment Outlook
12. Delegations thanked Ms. Msuya for her presentation and expressed their appreciation to the Secretariat for preparing these reports, with some Member States suggesting that additional information could be provided intersessionally, as appropriate, and that the reports should be reviewed at the annual subcommittee meeting of the CPR to be held later this year.

V. Administrative and budgetary matters.

13. At the plenary meeting held on 16 February, Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP, introduced the proposed medium-term strategy for the period 2022-2025² and the programme of work and budget for the biennium 2022-23, as contained in working documents [UNEP/EA.5/3](#) and [UNEP/EA.5/3Add.1](#).
14. Member States generally welcomed the draft proposals and expressed appreciation for the extensive consultative process in the development of these documents.
15. Some Member States expressed their readiness to endorse both documents.
16. In the course of the deliberations on the matter, some other Member States reiterated concerns relating to some aspects of the proposed medium-term strategy, including with regard to the need to ensure a more equitable regional distribution of staff members, the need to respect the mandates and competences of each multilateral environmental agreement as well as the need to avoid concepts which were not multilaterally agreed. These and other issues were further addressed and considered in the Contact Group consultations on the draft decision (see section VIII).

VI. Contributions to the meetings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

17. The Committee decided to defer consideration and finalization of UNEA contributions to the forthcoming meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF)³ to

² "For people and planet: the UNEP strategy for 2022-2025 to tackle climate change, loss of nature and pollution."

³ This year's forum will take place from 6 to 15 July 2021 under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council with the theme "**Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development**". The forum will discuss in depth Sustainable Development Goals 1 on no poverty, 2 on zero hunger, 3 on good health and well-being, 8 on decent work and economic growth, 10 on reduced inequalities, 12 on responsible consumption and production, 13 on climate action, 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, and 17 on partnerships in depth.

future meetings of the CPR subcommittee, with one delegation underlining the need for this process to be inclusive and transparent and another delegation suggesting that these contributions should be succinct and specifically focused on those Sustainable Development Goals that are under review at the 2021 HLPF.

VII. Update on the implementation of United Nations General Assembly resolution 73/333.

18. At the plenary meeting on 16 February, the Committee heard a progress update from Ms. Saqlain Syedah, Vice Chair of the CPR and High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Pakistan and Mr. Ado Lohmus, Vice President of the UNEA and Permanent Representative of Estonia, co-facilitators of the informal consultations set up under the auspices of the CPR for the implementation of General Assembly resolution [73/333](#) entitled “Follow-up to the report of the ad hoc open-ended working group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution [72/277](#)”⁴.
19. The co-facilitators recalled the outcomes of the first informal consultation held on 21 and 22 July 2020 in Nairobi that provided inputs for the preparation of initial building blocks for a political declaration as mandated by General Assembly resolution 73/333, and invited Member States to provide comments to these building blocks by 15 March 2021 in accordance with the roadmap circulated on 19 January 2021. A second consultation was expected to convene as an in-person meeting from 15 to 17 June 2021 in Nairobi, with the aim to further develop the draft political declaration for consideration at the resumed session of UNEA-5 in February 2022.
20. Member States thanked the co-facilitators for their leadership and expressed their readiness to engage constructively in the process, noting that the timing of adoption of the declaration remained an issue for further discussion.
21. The Committee took note of the progress update and decided to defer substantive discussions related to this item to the aforementioned consultation meeting.

VIII. Preparation of decisions and outcomes of the online fifth session of United Nations Environment Assembly.

22. The informal Contact Group convened on the *Go-to-Webinar* platform from 15 to 17 February to consider the three draft decisions, which were posted on the a dedicated online decision portal⁵, reflecting all the written comments from Member States received by the Secretariat as of 1 February. The meetings of the Contact Group were conducted in English only.
23. The Group considered the draft decision on management of trust funds and earmarked contributions (UNEP/EA.5/L.2), which was agreed *ad ref* on 15 February without changes.
24. The Group then considered the draft decision on the proposed medium-term strategy for 2022–2025 and programme of work for the biennium 2022–2023 (UNEP/EA/5/L.1). In response to

⁴ Entitled “Towards a Global Pact for the Environment”.

⁵ Available at: <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/unea5#>

several concerns raised by Member States, the Secretariat committed to making a limited number of technical modifications in the proposed medium-term strategy, with a view to facilitating endorsement by the Committee and UNEA-5. Presented in writing to the Contact Group on 16 February, these modifications were considered a useful basis for agreement on this draft decision. Following further consideration and adjustments in the draft decision, the text was agreed *ad ref* on 16 February.

25. The Contact Group further considered the draft decision on the adjournment and resumption of UNEA-5 (UNEP/EA/5/L.3), resulting in a rich debate.
26. Following in-depth consideration of the three decisions, the Committee agreed, at its plenary meeting on 16 February, to recommend to the Environment Assembly the adoption of the following two draft decisions:
 - a. UNEP/EA.5/L.2: Management of trust funds and earmarked contributions⁶
 - b. UNEP/EA.5/L.3: Medium-term strategy for 2022–2025 and programme of work and budget for the biennium 2022–2023⁷
27. Following the approval of UNEP/EA.5/L.3, the Secretariat made available a statement on its financial implications, which was also read out orally to the meeting by the Secretariat.
28. At its adjournment plenary meeting held on 17 February, the Committee continued consideration of UNEP/EA/5/L.4 - draft decision on the adjournment and resumption of UNEA-5 – and addressed several outstanding issues. Following further consultations, the Committee agreed to recommend a clean text of UNEP/EA/5/L.4⁸ to the Environment Assembly for adoption.
29. Member States thanked the Chair for his able leadership and commitment towards making the meeting a success, in spite of the challenges associated with the online platforms.
30. Subsequently, the Chair invited the President of the UNEA, Mr. Sveinung Rotevatn, Minister of Climate and Environment of Norway, to brief the Committee on the consultations and his proposal for a possible consensual message from the online session of UNEA-5.
31. Following the briefing, Member States thanked the President for his leadership and appreciated his efforts to prepare a draft consensual message from the online session of UNEA-5. Some Member States called for a more ambitious message, while others recalled the agreement to avoid substantive consultations in virtual settings and therefore recommended that it should be broad, avoiding highlighting specific areas of work.
32. The Committee took note with appreciation of the intention of the President to present the proposed message⁹ for final consideration and possible endorsement by the UN Environment Assembly, with

⁶ Final text available here: <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/node/313>

⁷ Final text available here: <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/node/312>

⁸ Final text available here: <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/node/314>

⁹ Available here: <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/node/315>

the understanding that it does not constitute a negotiated outcome of UNEA-5 and shall not set a precedent for either its resumed 5th session or any of the Environment Assembly's subsequent sessions.

IX. Other matters.

33. No other matters were raised by any delegation.

X. Consideration of a draft Chair's summary.

34. The Committee adopted the draft Chair's summary, with the understanding that the summary will be updated to reflect the proceedings of the last plenary meeting, for submission to the online meeting of UNEA-5 as document UNEP/EA.5/INF/2¹⁰.

XI. Adjournment of the meeting.

35. Some Member States provided statements that have been available on the meeting portal¹¹.

36. The Executive Director provided closing remarks, in which she congratulated the committee for the successful outcome and commend the Chair for his able leadership.

37. Chair declared the fifth meeting of OECPR adjourned on 17 February 2021 at 7 pm until 21 February 2022, subject to the confirmation of this date by the online session of UNEA-5.

¹⁰ Available here: <https://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/pre-session-information-documents-unea-5>

¹¹ Available here: <https://www.unep.org/events/open-ended-cpr-oecpr/fifth-meeting-open-ended-committee-permanent-representatives>

ANNEX: Draft list of delegations to the 5th meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives

I. Member States

1. Algeria
2. Angola
3. Argentina
4. Angola
5. Austria
6. Australia
7. Bahrain
8. Bangladesh
9. Barbados
10. Belgium
11. Belarus
12. Bhutan
13. Botswana
14. Brazil
15. Burkina Faso
16. Cambodia
17. Cameroon
18. Canada
19. China
20. Chile
21. Colombia
22. Costa Rica
23. Croatia
24. DRC
25. Denmark
26. Djibouti
27. Egypt
28. Eritrea
29. Ethiopia
30. Estonia
31. European union
32. Finland
33. France
34. Gabon
35. Georgia
36. Germany
37. Ghana
38. Greece
39. Hungary
40. Iceland
41. India
42. Indonesia
43. Italy
44. Iran
45. Japan
46. Jordan
47. Kenya
48. Latvia
49. League of Arab States
50. Libya
51. Madagascar
52. Malawi
53. Malaysia
54. Mexico
55. Monaco
56. Morocco
57. Mongolia
58. Netherlands
59. New Zealand
60. Nigeria
61. Niger
62. Norway
63. Oman
64. Pakistan
65. Peru
66. Philippines
67. Poland
68. Portugal
69. Romania
70. Rwanda
71. Russia
72. Saudi Arabia
73. Senegal
74. Serbia
75. SINGAPOLE
76. Slovenia
77. South Africa
78. Spain
79. Sri Lanka
80. State of Palestine

81. Sweden
82. Switzerland
83. Thailand
84. Tunisia
85. Turkey
86. Ukraine

87. United Kingdom
88. United States
89. Venezuela
90. Vietnam
91. Zambia
92. Zimbabwe

II. Major Groups and Stakeholders

1. Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)
2. Bahrain Women Association for Human Development
3. Birdlife International
4. Center for International Environment Law (CIEL)
5. Australian Citizen Science Association
6. Action Group on Erosion Technology and Concentration (ETC Group)
7. Ocean Care
8. Saudi Green Building Forum
9. Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development (ForUM)
10. Children and Youth International
11. International Council of Environmental Law (ICEL)
12. India Water Foundation
13. Institute of Planetary Synthesis
14. World Federation for Animals (WFA)
15. International Fund for Animal Welfare
16. Asia Indigenous Peoples' Pact (AIPP)
17. TRAFFIC International
18. German Speleological Federation (VdHK)
19. Global Dairy Platform Inc (GDP)
20. African Council of Religious Leaders (ACRL-RfP)
21. WorldWide Fund for Nature (WWF)
22. International Council of Environmental Law (ICEL)
23. Central European University (CEU)
24. Expert Action Group Leading Environmental Sustainability (EAGLES 2030)
25. Emirates Environmental Group (EEG)
26. Japan Association for the United Nations Environment Programme
27. Welfare Togo