

Statements made by The Netherlands on the briefing on the MOPAN assessment of UNEP

Delivered at the CPR subcommittee meeting of November 23rd 2021

Please allow me, on behalf of Belgium, Switzerland and the Netherlands, as we served as Institutional Leads for the MOPAN members to facilitate the assessment, to provide a brief introduction.

Let me first of all thank the CPR Bureau and the Secretariat for making the arrangements for this briefing.

As arrangements are being made by UNEP to implement the Medium Term Strategy, or as the Executive Director has put this often, to enhance MTS readiness of the organization, and as we are discussing – in the context of UNEP@50 – on how UNEPs role can be further strengthened for the next 50 years, we believe this assessment could not come at a more opportune time.

The MOPAN assessment methodology was developed to assess the effectiveness of multilateral organizations with a view to strengthen their contribution to development results. We believe the MOPAN assessment is a valuable tool that provides relevant and credible information that contributes to organizational learning, in the first place for the organization, but also for their Member States and relevant stakeholders.

The MOPAN assessment of UNEP was conducted through an independent, rigorous process and provides a holistic picture – a photographic still - of UNEPs performance in the assessment period. It takes into account the history, the mission, the context, trajectory and journey of the organization and – knowing that the organization has left behind a period of turbulence and the world facing the global COVID pandemic - we appreciate that this assessment has extended its assessment period, to also look into the initial COVID response by UNEP.

On behalf of the Institutional Leads, let me thank the MOPAN secretariat, and the consultants for the report, that we believe resonates well with our own experience.

I would, on behalf of the Institutional Leads, also like to thank UNEP for their constructive involvement, not only in making available all relevant documents to the Assessment team, but in particular also for their engagement – including at the management level – to provide the necessary background information and response to all questions that have been raised.

With that brief introduction, madam Chair, let us wait no longer and hand it to the MOPAN team for the presentation and to UNEP for their initial response, noting that I might come back to share our comments later in the meeting.

To follow up on my earlier intervention, please allow me to make a few remarks on behalf of my delegation.

As indicated earlier, we appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the report, that overall resonates very well with our own experiences.

On the findings, we would like to share the following observations:

On the strengths identified for UNEP, we concur with the findings of the report identifying the inclusive manner of the formulation of the MTS, its' strategic direction, bringing more focus to UNEPs work, in particular related to the 3 planetary crises, on climate action, nature action and pollution action.

We also believe that the organization can be only effective to achieve meaningful results, not by UNEPs direct engagement, but in particular through their engagement in partnership with other organizations and relevant stakeholders. We welcome that the report identifies a wide range of collaborative arrangements and partnerships based on the comparative advantage of their collaboration to effectively achieve the results envisaged.

We furthermore welcome the assessment that the strategic plans provide sufficient room for maneuver to act in a flexible manner, following consultations with and participation of external stakeholders, as was demonstrated in the organizational response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

And as we in particular value UNEPs normative mandate, including its role as Science Policy Interface, we would like to highlight that according to the assessment UNEPs knowledge products generally are appreciated by partners and other stakeholders, as well as perceived as timely, useful, and of good quality. And as this is an important backbone of UNEPs normative role, we would like to encourage UNEP to continue building on this work and make sure in the future to allocate sufficient resources to this foundational pillar of the work in all action areas relevant to implement the MTS.

On the areas for improvement, please allow me to share the following:

- While we recognize the acknowledgement of UNEPs overarching normative nature, we also noted that a better link can be established with the operative activities, and we believe that the MTS and the POW does provide the necessary flexibility to further strengthen this link.
- In that regard, we also share the finding that many evaluations seem to be tight to project evaluation, whereas the organization may benefit if evaluations can be of more strategic nature, with a view of enhanced learning, as well as better respond to the needs of MS that should benefit from the projects, activities as well as knowledge products or guidance instruments.
- On project implementation, we noted the areas of improvements on Project effectiveness, efficiency, and in particular sustainability. We would strongly encourage the secretariat – in particular with a view to sustain the results of the projects – to take this better into account in the design of the projects: on the one hand by better linking them to the Action areas of the MTS, as well as the normative work done by UNEP in these areas, while at the same

time including activities to sustain the outcomes, in particular where it would imply other stakeholders, international organizations or governments to further scale up.

- And we welcome the Secretariat's views on how they would like to follow up on this.
- And last but not least: we encourage the Secretariat to take due notice of the areas of improvements related to risk management and results-based management and results-based budgeting, in particular also in view of strategic alignment, based on the assessment of results and in that regards, we welcome the consultants observation on the improvements made in the results framework. We encourage the Secretariat to continuously improve on this, based on their experiences under the current POW and implementation of the next POW.