

Dear secretariat,

Please find a recap of Belgium's intervention during the session of the ASC-9 on funding challenges below. Once again, thank you for this interesting session in a very pleasant format that stimulated an interactive discussion.

"Alignment with intervention made by EU. Support for insights from the panel; we share most experiences.

Belgium provides core funding to UNEP, a multi-annual contribution of 17,3 million EUR for the period 2021-2024, because we believe in the mandate and the mission. We take ownership of all the results achieved and the objectives we, at UNEA, after intensive consultations with all MS, collectively agreed upon through the approval of the medium term strategy. Also, we are concerned about the impact a too large proportion of earmarked funding has on the organizations operational effectiveness. This is not a stance we take on our support for UNEP alone, BE has these kinds of multiannual partnerships with our 15 priority UN partners, such as UNDP, UNICEF, FAO, UN Women and others

A contribution to UNEPs thematic fund for climate stability is under consideration at the moment.

If this is to be approved, Belgium will, again, make a shift from earmarked contributions to flexible funding.

Still, as a core donor, we experience challenges, where we feel improvements could be made:

- The proliferation of funds and initiatives outside of UNEP that we can't seem to contain.
- Mobilization resource strategy: everybody in UNEP staff needs to get on board, thematic funds can probably help with that
- Visibility of donors, and not only here in these rooms. In this regard we appreciate efforts already made by UNEP
- Visibility of UNEPs work in the UN system: others have to make room as well, this needs to be discussed with other UN organizations. We are pleased to see that, after we have made this remark to UNDP, f.i. with regards to their Climate Promise (gluing all of their initiatives on climate together) - their partnership with UNEP has been properly reflected on the website; but still, improvements can be made in their messaging on the importance of UNEP's work to implement the Climate Promise.
- Visibility on the ground! Very important, because our embassies in partner countries give headquarters feedback on the effectiveness of the UN, so it should be very clear how UNEP works on environmental issues through partnerships with others with a bigger footprint. What we heard in this regard on implementation of UN reform and work of UNEP on country common analyses and frameworks sounds promising in this regard.
- Having a seat at the table: specific initiatives or flagship where we as a member state can contribute based on our experience - sometimes not possible if it doesn't come with a contribution. Needs to be discussed between UN organizations, not UNEP specific problem.

Let me conclude by underlining that, despite the areas of improvement I pointed out, we remain committed to UNEPs work and will keep being a champion for the Environment Fund. We call on others to join us. "