

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Nairobi, 23 May 2023
14:00 – 18:00 (GMT+3)
Hybrid meeting
Conference room 1 & Microsoft Teams

Chair's Summary

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

1. H.E. Mr. Pirkka Tapiola, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, Ambassador of Finland to the Republic of Kenya and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Environment Programme, opened the meeting.
2. The draft [agenda](#) was adopted.

Agenda item 2: Briefing on the preparations for the second session of the INC on plastic pollution.

3. The Secretariat provided a briefing on preparations for the [second session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee \(INC-2\)](#) on plastic pollution, to be held from 29 May to 2 June 2023 in Paris, France. There were no questions or comments raised by Member States and Stakeholders.

Agenda item 3: Briefing on UNEP's work on strategic foresight and horizon scanning.

4. The Secretariat provided [a briefing on the work of UNEP on strategic foresight and horizon scanning](#), followed by an exchange of views with Member States and Stakeholders.
5. Delegations that took the floor¹ thanked the Secretariat for the presentation and provided the following comments:
 - a. Welcomed the initiative to improve UNEP's capacity to provide the strategic foresight and referred to other relevant processes such as the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and the Global Environmental Outlook (GEO).
 - b. Requested clarification on the role of Member States in nominating an expert focal point to contribute to the online survey on the strategic foresight and horizon scanning, and on how it intends to balance the policy-science nexus in the so-called Delphi method – which uses multiple rounds of questionnaires sent to a panel of experts to work toward a mutual agreement or consensus opinion.
 - c. Further requested clarification on the strategic and regional processes involved in strategic foresight and horizon scanning, the role of intergenerational perspectives, the expected outcomes, the comparison with similar work in other organizations, its relation to UNEP's Programme of Work and Budget, the introduction of a systemic methodology, the possible risk of duplication with work undertaken to develop the 7th Global Environmental Outlook, and the possible role of UNEA-6 for this initiative.
 - d. Recommended strong involvement by stakeholders in this process.
6. The Secretariat thanked delegations for their comments and provided the following comments:
 - a. Noted that a careful review was performed to select the expert panel with a broad spectrum of expertise as part of the Delphi survey.

¹ Malawi, European Union, Indonesia, Canada, Kenya, Argentina, Brazil, France, Women's Major Group, Children and Youth Group.

- b. Noted that other organizations tend to narrow the scope of their horizon scanning, while UNEP seeks to broaden its scanning process.
- c. Underlined that the outputs from the Global Environment Outlook processes will inform and mutually reinforce UNEP's work on strategic foresight and planning.
- d. Considered that this initiative may inform deliberations under the upcoming and future UNEA sessions under various agenda items.
- e. Noted also that the outputs of the process will also help inform the formulation of the next UNEP Medium-Term Strategy.
- f. Clarified that Member States are free to nominate any suitable expert to participate in the Delphi survey.
- g. Announced the organization of two-day regional workshops on strategic foresight planning, held between October and November 2023 and facilitated by UNEP regional offices.
- h. Welcomed inputs from both Member States and Stakeholders, including at local level and from all generations.

Agenda item 4: Briefing on the Montevideo Programme

7. The Secretariat provided [a briefing on the Montevideo Environmental Law Programme](#), which is a ten-year intergovernmental program on promoting and implementing the environmental rule of law, running from January 2020 to December 2029. The briefing was followed by an intervention by Mr. Timothy Epp, one of the co-chairs of the Montevideo Programme Implementation Committee.
8. In the ensuing exchange of views, delegations that took the floor² thanked the Secretariat for the presentation and provided the following comments:
 - a. Expressed strong support for the Montevideo Programme to enhance the development and implementation of the environmental rule of law by Member States and underscored the critical role of funding in sustaining its diverse activities, noting that apart from contributions to the Montevideo Trust Fund, the Programme should equally benefit from core Environment Fund contributions.
 - b. Welcomed improvements to the focus and ambition of the Programme's Implementation Roadmap.
 - c. Requested additional information on requests for the [UNEP Law and Environment Assistance Platform \(UNEP-LEAP\)](#).
 - d. Asked for clarification on the practical implementation and the concrete support to countries regarding the three priority areas identified for the implementation of the Programme, including in relation to UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2025.
 - e. Requested further clarification on how the development under the Programme of so-called model laws may assist Member States in developing environmental legislation at the national level.
9. The Secretariat thanked delegations for their comments and provided the following clarifications:
 - a. Acknowledged that the legal systems of individual countries exhibit distinct characteristics influenced by their national contexts, and in the absence of internationally agreed standards (such as through multilateral environmental agreements), the role of the Secretariat involves the task of mapping existing laws and offering a checklist of facilitative legislative alternatives that enable customization to suit the unique circumstances of each country.
 - b. Reminded delegations that the Implementation Roadmap approved under the Programme is available on [the steering committee webpage](#), and announced that the Secretariat is preparing a progress report on the Implementation Roadmap to be made available in a few months.
 - c. Highlighted that the Secretariat is working on updating the UNEP-LEAP platform and intends to enhance its user-friendliness by making it available in all six UN official languages and by organizing online webinars and trainings to explain and promote the use of the platform.

²European Union, Kenya, Switzerland, Children and Youth Group.

- d. Informed delegations that the Secretariat will endeavor to take strategic and focused action on certain priority areas, such as legal responses to air pollution, waste, plastic waste, biodiversity, nature, and environmental crime.
- e. Confirmed that the Programme is funded by both the Environment Fund and the Montevideo Trust Fund, and that Member States contributions to either of these funds are welcome.

Agenda item 5: Briefing on UNEP plastics spotlight publication.

- 10. The Secretariat provided a briefing on the UNEP spotlight publication [“Turning off the Tap: How the world can end plastic pollution and create a circular economy”](#), which was launched on 16 May 2023, followed by an exchange of views with Member States and Stakeholders.
- 11. Delegations that took the floor³ welcomed the spotlight publication as an important and timely contribution to Member States, with useful observations and recommendations to end plastic pollution.

Agenda item 6: Other matters.

- 12. The Chair mentioned the World Circular Economy Forum hosted in Helsinki from 30 May to 2 June 2023.

Agenda item 7: Closing of the meeting.

- 13. The meeting closed at 17:00 (GMT+3).

³ Kenya, Children and Youth Group.