

Annual Subcommittee Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP Third Meeting, Nairobi, 26 – 30 October 2015

CHAIR'S SUMMARY (Version as at 30 October*)

The Third Annual Subcommittee Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was held in Nairobi from 26 – 30 October 2015. It brought together representatives from Members States based in Nairobi and in capitals with the participation of representatives from Major Groups and Stakeholders. All appreciated the opportunity to work constructively together to ensure that the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) engages fully in the implementation of the environmental dimension of the recently adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The following summary represents the Chair's assessment of the main action points ahead of the second meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR) in February 2016 and the second session of UNEA to be held from 23 – 27 May 2016.

Programme Performance Review

1. Good but uneven progress has been made in the implementation of UNEP's programme and resolutions from UNEA-1. The increased confidence in UNEP's capacity to deliver is being reflected in the positive status of the organization's finances despite the ongoing challenges being faced in the global financing landscape overall. UNEP should continue to maintain the positive emphasis on results-based management and regular reporting to Member States, including on the implementation of resolutions from UNEA-1.

MTS, PoW and Budget

2. There has been considerable progress in preparing the new MTS. The inclusion of new sections on monitoring/evaluation and on the '2030 Vision' was appreciated.
3. The adoption of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development calls for a stronger alignment of indicators in the PoW with the indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this regard, indicators should be measureable and supported with baseline data. Consistent terminology should be used throughout the document.
4. Proposals for an adequate consideration of air quality as a priority with the possibility of restructuring the sub-programmes were also discussed along with proposals for a further strengthening of the document from the gender perspective. Also, planning and reporting processes should better reflect the role partnerships and stakeholders play in the delivery and development of the MTS.
5. Delegates expressed their commitment to reach consensus ahead of the second meeting of the OECPR on the options presented for the budget and PoW 2018-19 and on the importance to be given to all the subprograms while retaining continued emphasis on results-based budgeting by the Secretariat at the subprogram level.
6. Member States wished to see a better balance between the Environment Fund (EF) and extra-budgetary resources and further efforts were recommended to broaden the base for contributions and to align extra-budgetary funding with core funding.

Stakeholder Engagement Policy

7. Member States welcomed the engagement of Major Groups and Stakeholders in the work of UNEP, particularly in light of the outcomes of Rio+20 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Furthermore, there was recognition of the need to actively involve and engage all relevant stakeholders in the work of UNEA while upholding its inter-governmental nature.

8. The ongoing efforts by the President of UNEA in conducting an informal consultative process on the Stakeholder Engagement Policy were recognized. Delegates recommended the continuation of this informal process in an inclusive and transparent manner to achieve consensus by the second meeting of the OECPR.

Preparation of resolutions for consideration by the second session of UNEA

9. Member States agreed on the need to cluster and prioritize the existing proposals for draft resolutions in order to have a manageable list of resolutions that is consensus based and demonstrates the strong leadership of UNEA on environmental matters.
10. Furthermore, regarding the organization of work going forward, there was wide support for the proposal by the Chair to have a structured, transparent process with technical support from the Secretariat to work on drafts of proposed resolutions in advance of, and during, the second meeting of the OECPR.

UNEA-2 high-level segment

11. On the organizational structure of the high-level segment, participants stressed the need for ensuring ministerial ownership and productive dialogue amongst Ministers and other relevant actors on the overarching theme of UNEA-2. Delegates appreciated the work that has already been done in preparation for the high-level segment of UNEA. It was agreed that it was urgent to develop an agenda for the high level segment which reflects the common aspirations for all its components.
12. Participants generally supported a strong outcome from UNEA-2 to demonstrate UNEA's authoritative leadership role. UNEA's results should guide, *inter alia*, the implementation and follow-up of the environmental dimension of the Agenda 2030 through the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and other relevant fora. It was agreed to continue work on this important topic through a working group to reach consensus on the actual format of the outcome ahead of the second meeting of the OECPR.

UNEA Cycle

13. There was broad understanding of the advantages of changing the cycle of UNEA to hold its regular sessions in odd years. In this regard, Member States agreed the Subcommittee should continue efforts towards reaching a consensus on the matter on the basis of the budgetary, legal and practical implications such a change would impose. Timing of the Bureau election and the length of term also need further discussion.

Strengthening UNEP's regional presence

14. Delegates welcomed the strengthening of the capacity of UNEP at the regional and sub-regional level and encouraged further enhancement of partnerships and alliances, particularly in light of the universal and integrative nature of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.
15. The financial challenges facing UNEP in strengthening its regional presence were recognized and Member States reiterated the importance of the fulfilment of commitments to the EF in this regard.
16. Moving forward there is a need to provide an overview by the Secretariat on UNEP's current strategic partnerships and alliances as well as an update on the consolidation of HQ functions. Further work is required to enhance communication between regions and headquarters, including regular provision of information to the CPR on activities by the regional offices, the nomination of national focal points for communication with UNEP, and the establishment of a platform for monitoring of regional projects.

Sustainable financial system

17. The meeting received a briefing on the outcome of the Inquiry Team. Member States and stakeholders welcomed the briefing and agreed that the findings of the Inquiry provided a significant step for UNEP to continue to play its role in motivating the relevant international and national institutions to focus on exploring best ways of financing sustainable development. There was a call for the dissemination of these initial findings and proposals to countries so that all Member States can benefit. The possibility to have a resolution presented to UNEA-2 was also discussed.

Interactive debate on promoting air quality

18. Delegates appreciated the opportunity to exchange views on progress made in various regions to tackle the problem of air quality. Suggestions for future action such as regulatory measures, capacity development, technology transfer, monitoring, education and awareness raising in the implementation of the UNEA-1 resolution on this important topic and beyond were discussed. It was agreed that air quality should remain a priority topic within UNEP's and UNEA's work especially with a view to successfully implementing the 2030 sustainable development agenda in partnership with other international organizations and multi-stakeholders involved in the area.

The Secretariat will circulate a note to Member States as part of preparations to guide thematic debates during UNEA-2.

Conclusion

While some concern was expressed about the possible future impact on the delivery of UNEP due to the changeover to the UN's new enterprise resource planning system (Umoja), there was appreciation that Umoja will bring benefits to UNEP and the UN as a whole by increasing accountability, transparency and efficiency in the long term.

The Third Annual Subcommittee Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP was an important step towards preparing for a successful second session of UNEA. Delegates appreciated the good organization of the meeting which allowed focused discussion and prior coordination by groups. The quality and generally timely submission of documentation by the Secretariat allowed for open, productive, constructive and focused deliberations throughout. While there is room for improvement, the Third Annual Subcommittee Meeting laid down the path for a successful and meaningful outcome from the second session of UNEA.
