

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Sub-committee Meeting
Thursday 22 November 2018
9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
United Nations Office at Nairobi, Gigiri
Conference Room 3
Agenda Item 1

Agenda Item 2: Update on preparations for the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly

1. Introduction and overview

The [fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly](#) is scheduled to take place from 11 to 15 March 2018 under the theme “Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production” and is preceded by the fourth meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives from 4 to 8 March 2018. The theme was decided upon at the 1st Joint Retreat of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives in Nairobi in March 2018. A Secretariat [concept note on the theme](#), which was subject to in-depth consultation with member States and adopted at the [2nd meeting of the Joint Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives in Tallinn 6-7 September 2018](#), provides additional guidance on the chosen theme.

Invitation letters and a [notification](#) by the Executive Director of UN Environment Programme on the UN Environment Assembly have been sent out to member States and stakeholders. The [official website for the fourth UN Environment Assembly](#) is available online and shares information on [key documents](#) of the Assembly such as the provisional agenda, the concept note of the theme of the Assembly, guidance on submission of draft resolutions and organization of work of the Assembly. [Registration](#) for the Assembly is also available online.

Moreover, the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives will meet jointly on 20 November to provide further guidance with regard to a range of aspects with regard to preparations of the Assembly, including on organization of work, contributions to the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, The Implementation Plan on Pollution, the communication strategy, multi-stakeholder events, and other issues.

An informative and interactive [Roadmap](#) for all relevant meetings of the UN Environment Programme Governing Bodies leading up to and beyond the Environment Assembly is made available online, and regularly updated.

Additional information on each of the topics covered by this note can be found on the clickable links in the document.

2. The Ministerial Outcome Document

A [zero-draft](#) of the Ministerial Outcome Document was distributed to member States at the end of September 2019, and member States and stakeholders are invited to provide comments on the draft. Next steps are as

follows:

- **October – November 2018:** Informal consultations on the Zero-Draft e.g. through the Committee of Permanent Representatives, including at an informal meeting scheduled for 22 November at lunchtime
- **December 2018:** A first full draft of the shared with Member States and stakeholders
- **December 2018 – February 2019:** Consultations with member States and stakeholders
- **February 2019:** Final Draft of the Ministerial Outcome Document shared with Member States and stakeholders
- **5-9 March 2019:** Final consultations led by the President at the meeting of the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives
- **15 March 2019:** Adoption of the Ministerial Outcome Document at the Fourth UN Environment Assembly

3. UN Environment Assembly resolutions

The Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives has adopted [guidelines for member States on the submission of draft resolutions](#) to the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly, setting out the deadline of **15 November 2018** for member States to submit a concept note to the Secretariat which outlines the intention and rationale for tabling of resolutions, and a second deadline of **21 January 2019** for member States to submit final draft resolutions to the Secretariat. During the 5th Annual Subcommittee meeting, several member States and regional groups verbally expressed their intent to submit resolutions. The Secretariat will provide an overview of submission of concept notes at a later stage.

4. The Executive Director's background report

The UN Environment Executive Director's report to the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly is currently under development. It will look at innovation and solutions for tackling environmental challenges, sustainable food systems and sustainable consumption and production, as it will be guided by the *Future We Want*^[1], the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 Conference), in which Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives recognized that "changing unsustainable and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are the overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development". It will also reflect the interlinkages and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals, set out in *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*^[2], and in a number of important resolutions and ministerial declarations of the United Nations Environment Assembly, including the follow-up report on pollution from its third session ^[3].

Member States and stakeholders are currently being consulted [online on the outline of the background report](#) through the papersmart portal. Consultations on a full draft report is planned for a Subcommittee meeting on 29 November 2018, and a final version of the report will be submitted for translation on 7 December 2018.

5. A new Programme of Work and Budget for the Period 2020-2021

The UN Environment Assembly is expected to adopt a new draft Programme of Work and Budget for the UN Environment Programme for the period 2020-21. Subsequent [drafts of the Programme of Work and Budget](#) has been circulated and discussed in-depth with member States at the Committee meeting on 18 September and at the 5th Annual Subcommittee 22-26 October. A revised version of the draft will be made available at

the end of November, which as far as possible, incorporates all guidance and inputs received from Member States to that date.

This draft will be further considered at a subcommittee meeting scheduled for 29 November and at the regular meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives scheduled for 8 January. Discussion on the draft Programme of Work and Budget are expected to continue until the end of the Open-Ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, where Member States who are not represented in Nairobi will have the opportunity to engage in the final phase of the discussions. This will ensure full ownership and engagement by member States on the adoption of a new Programme of Work and Budget.

In 2019, the Open-Ended Meeting of the Committee is held back-to-back with the UN Environment Assembly, whereas in previous cycles, there has been a three-month break in between these two meetings. The schedule of meetings in 2019 thus presents a timeline challenge in terms of respecting the rules of procedure for editing and translation of the 2020-21 Programme of Work in time for the UN Environment Assembly. In previous cycles, discussions and negotiations were close to final by the end of the Open-Ended Meeting of the Committee, giving the Secretariat three months to finalise editing and translation of this sizeable (more than 100 pages) document between the OECPR and the Assembly. This is however not the case in 2019.

In view of deadlines provided by the UN Office in Nairobi for documentation management (2 weeks for editing and 6 weeks for translation) and to comply with the 42-day rule stipulated in the Rules of Procedure (rule 29) to make available all formal documents in all UN languages for the UN Environment Assembly 42 days in advance of the Open-Ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, the draft will have to be submitted to the UN Office in Nairobi for editing and translation by end November at the latest.

On this basis, the following schedule is proposed towards the adoption of the Programme of Work and Budget:

- **23 November 2018:** A final draft of the Programme of Work and Budget will be distributed to member States and simultaneously to the UN Office in Nairobi for editing and translation. At the same time, the secretariat may table a draft resolution on the adoption of the Programme of Work and Budget. The resolution will contain draft budget figures, as a basis for further discussion and negotiation.
- **29 November 2018:** Member States will consider of the draft resolution and negotiation process at a subcommittee meeting, along with the revised Programme of Work and Budget.
- **8 January 2019:** Member States will continue consideration of the draft resolution/decision and negotiation process at the regular meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
- **21 January 2019:** The final draft Programme of Work and Budget will be made available to all member States in all UN languages.
- **January - March 2019:** member States will consult on a possible draft decision or resolution to adopt the Programme of Work and Budget at the fourth Environment Assembly. Any changes to the programme itself can, if necessary, be captured in a revision document, to be incorporated in a revised final version of the Programme after Work and Budget, after the adoption of the resolution/decision by the UN Environment Assembly.

6. The UN Environment Assembly Implementation Plan “Towards a pollution-free planet”

In accordance with the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the third session of the UN Environment Assembly,

the Secretariat has put forward a draft outline of an Implementation Plan “Towards a pollution-free planet” for consideration by member States at the 5th Annual Subcommittee meeting, 22-26 October 2018. The time schedule for finalizing a final draft of the Implementation Plan is subject to the same deadlines for submission to the UN Office in Nairobi for editing and translation as all other formal documents for the UN Environment Assembly (42 days in advance of the Open-Ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives as stipulated in rule 29 of the Rules of Procedure, plus 2 weeks for editing and 6 weeks for translation as required by the UN Office in Nairobi).

A draft Outline of the Implementation Plan “Towards a pollution-free planet” was considered by member States on 26 October 2018 at the 5th Annual Subcommittee meeting. Taking into account the comments received from member States, the Secretariat subsequently made available [a first full draft of the Implementation Plan](#) on 2 November for consideration by member States at the Subcommittee meeting on 8 November 2018. On this basis, the following time schedule is proposed towards the adoption of an Implementation Plan “Towards a pollution-free planet”:

- **23 November:** a second draft of the Plan will be distributed to member States (and to the UN Office in Nairobi for editing), with a deadline for written comments from member States of early December.
- **29 November 2018:** The second draft will be considered by member States at a subcommittee meeting.
- **Early December 2018:** A final draft of the Implementation Plan will be submitted to member States and to the UN Office in Nairobi for translation.
- **8 January 2019:** The final draft will be considered by member States at the regular meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, both with regard to substance and process.
- **21 January 2019:** The final draft will be made available to all member States in all UN languages.
- **January - March 2019:** member States consultation on a possible draft decision or resolution to adopt the Plan at the fourth Assembly.

7. Preparations at regional level

Several regions, including Latin America and Caribbean, Africa, and the Arab States, have organized or, in the case of Asia and the Pacific and Europe, will organize regional or sub-regional preparatory meetings that will directly contribute to the outcome of the UN Environment Assembly.

8. Stakeholder participation at the UN Environment Assembly

Accredited major groups and stakeholders are invited as observers to participate in all relevant Assembly related meetings, including at regional levels. Some of the key events include:

- **7-8 March 2019:** The Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum will take place in parallel with the last two days of the Open-Ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives that starts on March 4, just before the UN Environment Assembly itself.
- **9-10 March 2019:** Major Groups and Stakeholders will also have the opportunity to engage during the weekend prior to the Assembly, for example through the Science-Policy-Business Forum and other events that take place on.
- **14 March 2019 (pm):** The Multi-stakeholder Dialogue is now part of the official programme, and will have full interpretations to the six UN languages. The theme is still under consideration in consultation with major groups and stakeholders and with the UN Environment Assembly bureau.

- Throughout the Assembly week, a “Green tent” is set up as the civil society space where briefings, workshops, presentations and bi-laterals will take place coordinated by the Major Groups Facilitating Committee.

The Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum will also benefit from the outcomes of Regional Consultative Meetings, which in many have been organized in conjunction with the Regional Ministerial Fora (see section 7) or back to back to relevant regional multi-stakeholder meetings. The outcomes and results of those meetings provide direct inputs by Major Groups and Stakeholders into the Assembly’s preparatory processes as well as the Assembly itself. The Forum helps prepares participants for the Assembly and associated meetings, identifies important themes and decisions under consideration by the Assembly, and provides a platform for an exchange of views and expertise on these themes between governments and Major Groups and Stakeholders, as well as UN Environment. For more information and regular updates relating to stakeholder participation please visit: <https://www.unenvironment.org/civil-society-engagement>; and for any questions, please write to: unenvironment-civilsociety@un.org.

9. Side Events

The Secretariat of the UN Environment Programme has launched a [call for proposals](#) on 2 November 2019 for a maximum of 14 official side events that will be organized during the fourth session UN Environment Assembly, to be held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 11 to 15 March 2019. The call is addressed to member States, UN entities, representatives from the Multilateral Environmental Agreements, accredited major groups and stakeholders. Applicants are requested to submit their proposed side event by completing an [online form](#), supported by an online [guidance note](#), by 10 December at the latest.

10. The 2019 Sustainable Innovation Expo

Following previous positive experiences of organizing a sustainable Innovation Expo at occasion of the UN Environment Assembly, the 2019 Expo will focus on the theme *Eco-innovation and Sustainable Financing*. Coined by UN Environment Programme, eco-innovation is a new business approach which promotes sustainability throughout the entire life cycle of a product, while also boosting a company’s performance and competitiveness. The 2019 Expo will comprise of an exhibition space, panel discussions, solution roundtables, pop-up chats and a networking space. [Applications for an exhibition slot at the Expo](#), are to be submitted online before 15 January 2019.