

**EU/MS comments on
Programme performance / implementation of resolutions
UNEP CPR ASC-4**

Background documents:

- 2016 Programme performance overview
- UNEP annual report 2016
(<http://web.unep.org/annualreport/2016/index.php?page=8&lang=en>)
- Note on the implementation of the resolutions of the 2nd session of the UNEA

Comments:

Programme Performance Review and Annual Report

- The EU+MS thank UNEP for the very comprehensive and appealing presentation of the Annual Report on the internet which is a good tool for UNEP communication. However, we would not like to see the end of printed Annual Reports for those who need quick access to details. We would also like to see more financial information in either the Report or the Review.
- We are equally grateful for the presentation of the Programme Performance Review. The hard work done on devising and monitoring indicators for Results Based Management has given us a much better evidence base for evaluating UNEP's contributions to protecting the environment.
- We would like to congratulate UNEP on the impressive results and progress made in several subprograms in 2016 as well as the good results of the recent MOPAN evaluation. This shows the quality of the service delivered by UNEP as well as the success of its upgrading and strengthening after Rio+20.
- We now know much better how UNEP is performing in what we have agreed it should do. It is good that this meeting is devoted to looking back and learning lessons. We will be able to draw on the lessons from 2016 and those of 2017 and 2018 when we next have to agree on a Programme of Work and Budget at UNEA 4 which will be the next opportunity to decide whether further changes are needed to better align UNEP's Programme with the progress made in the implementation Agenda 2030.
- The EU+MS would like to commend the important efforts made by UNEP to underline what can be attributed to its specific actions, even though, in some of the subprograms, we believe some efforts could still be made to better reflect UNEP's actual role in the achievement obtained, including what was done by UNEP and what was achieved through initiatives/MEAs supported by UNEP.
- It would also be useful for UNEP to provide some more details on the barriers to implementation and on why some targets/objectives could not be achieved, in order to understand how greater progress could be made in future years. For example, the information provided on the chemicals and waste subprogramme raises questions on the factors underlying the lack of progress reported (e.g. why was progress linear rather than exponential as expected : staffing issues,

underfunding of country implementation, lack of uptake of tools and methodologies?). In such cases the Review should also consider whether the indicators were over-ambitious.

- We welcome and agree with the conclusions on page 16 of the Performance Review PPT on the possible evolution of the Programme of Work but we would like to understand better how this can be done within existing resources and while respecting the policy agreements reached in the UNEA 2 Resolutions and the need to implement all 7 agreed themes of the Programme of work.
- In particular we agree with the importance of giving greater emphasis to sustainable finance, environmental security, climate change, biodiversity, health and pollution. However, we would not want this to mean that key thematic sub-programmes such as resource efficiency or environmental governance get forgotten.
- The Review's conclusions also mention increasing UNEP engagement with the private sector. The EU+MS welcome the existing engagement as well as interactions with some other partners in different ways (funding, partnerships in implementation) that is well illustrated throughout the report, as long as it is in line with UNEPs mandate and work outlined in resolutions, MTS, PoW, resolutions etc.. We believe that these are useful lessons to build on, including for the preparation of a new resource mobilization strategy.
- Furthermore, in the diagrams in the presentation, it would be useful if UNEP could indicate again what the indicators relate to (instead of using: success in indicator c(iii) for example) so as to better communicate what the goal and the result achieved were.

Funding

- In relation to funding the EU + MS would like to discuss both expenditure and revenue. The report OIOS report (2016/78) on the implementation of UMOJA noted that after its deployment, UNEP was slow in implementing projects and that there was significant underspending/under-utilisation of funds. Can UNEP indicate if these challenges have been overcome?
- The EU+MS would like to express concern that, once again, the gap between the agreed 2016-2017 budget for the Environment Fund and the actual contributions remains too wide.
- The EU+MS are especially concerned that the lack of balance between earmarked and un-earmarked contributions means “an unbalanced delivery of the work program” of UNEP.
- The EU+MS would be grateful if UNEP could explain a bit better how it deals with shortfalls in the Environment Fund and how UNEP prioritizes work and decides what can be financed through core budget/XB budget in order to ensure that delivery remains as close as possible to the adopted POW.
- As major contributors to the Environment Fund, the EU+MS would like to recall the importance of increasing the range of contributors to UNEP funding, especially through the Environment fund. All of us are responsible to provide UNEP with the resources needed to implement the POW we adopted.
- One element that we think will be vital is greater transparency about financial flows and we hope that once UMOJA is fully operational this will become easier.
- The website provides information about the 15 largest contributors to the Environment Fund but it does not give recognition to the handful of countries who have contributed every year since UNEP was established, or to those states whose small contributions represent full payment of their VISC assessment.

- While we agree with the desirability of increasing the share of resources to the Environment Fund we would not want to ignore other contributions and we think details of earmarked giving should also appear on the website.
- The EU+MS would like to thank UNEP for the clarifications on “income” versus “available resources” for the different types of funding, we think it could however it could be further clarified as the presentation can sometime be a bit confusing about exactly what resources UNEP has (or has not).
- In particular we wonder why other earmarked contributions in the pie-chart on pg 8 of the document have not been broken down in the same way as those of the GEF. Without this breakdown it is difficult to know whether those other contributions also cover multiple years and draw any conclusions on long-term financial trends.

Implementation of UNEA-2 resolutions

- The EU+MS would like to thank UNEP for this very useful table which indicates the state of play for the implementation of the different UNEA-2 resolution.
- We welcome the format of the reporting which structures the resolutions within the different subprogrammes of UNEP. However, we would like clarification of some of the choices. Resolution 2/3 on education and training is shown under Ecosystem Management but would seem to fit better under Environmental Governance since it concerns ensuring that stakeholders interested in all the subprogrammes are well informed. Similarly 2/18 on the relationship between UNEP and MEAs should probably be part of Environmental Governance and not Corporate Services since it goes beyond administrative matters.
- We also welcome the identification of the main partners in the implementation of the resolutions.
- The EU+MS are pleased to see that implementation of all 25 resolutions seems to be on track and welcome UNEP's role in that.
- The EU+MS would however, like to underline that the reporting on the different Resolutions should be more precise, including in the parts on “issues facing implementation”. It is not very clear for example if lack of funding is a major problem for some Resolutions or if UNEP is working to mobilise more funding, or if the challenges identified are only issues that UNEP will need to take into account in the implementation of the resolution or if there is a risk that the Resolution cannot be implemented because of these challenges, etc.
- We are concerned on the lack of progress on implementation of some resolutions due to budgetary constraints. EU/MS considers this an important lesson learned from UNEA-2 and that it illustrates the importance for UNEA to carefully consider the financial impact of resolutions to be agreed. We urge UNEP to analyze these impacts in the coming months, when proposals for resolutions are put on the table, and provide UNEA-3 with estimates for consideration of member states.
- The EU/MS would also like to point out that for some of the resolutions where a lack of funding is identified, it seems that the funding should be done through the POWB by reallocating resources within the 2016-2017 and 2018-2019 budgets rather than through new funding. For example, we are surprised to see that UNEP requests specific funding to produce a report on the management of trust funds, which, from our point of view seems more to us a task of the office for corporate service.
- We are also concerned that in some Resolutions, UNEP seems to go further than was asked in the Resolution, like in the resolution 2/25 (Application of Principle 10 of the Rio declaration on

environment and development in the Latin America and Caribbean) where the actions requested in the resolution are oriented towards countries and not towards UNEP.

- comparable between the different Resolutions.