Joint meeting of the Bureaux of UNEA and the CPR
10 September 2025 16:00 – 18:00 (GMT+3)
Online meeting

Agenda item 3: Preparations for the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

At the request of some delegations at the 12th annual subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held from 1 to 5 September 2025, this background document has been prepared by the Secretariat for the consideration and possible guidance by the Bureaux of the United Nations Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

The note outlines the estimated budget for the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7), the current funding gap, taking into account the austerity measures related to the conference services, and other cost-saving measures for the consideration and guidance by the UNEA and the CPR Bureaux.

Based on the indication of additional pledges towards UNEA-7 budget, the actual travel expenditures incurred at UNEA-6, and the ongoing resource mobilization efforts of the Secretariat, it is projected that the funding gap can be met.

Preparations for the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

A. Background

1. In accordance with the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) decision 6/7, the seventh session will be held in Nairobi from **8 to 12 December 2025**, and the seventh meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-7) will be held from **1 to 5 December 2025**.

2. Pursuant to Governing Council decision 27/2 and established practice of past UNEA sessions, the following components have formed the structure of the UNEA sessions:
   - Opening plenary meeting;
   - Closing plenary meeting with action on draft proposals;
   - An MEA day;
   - A 2-day high-level segment, which includes national statements, 3 leadership dialogues and a multi-stakeholder dialogue; and
   - A committee of the whole to negotiate any outstanding draft resolutions/decisions, as needed.

3. In addition, UNEA also hosts several other associated events, including pre-session events (such as the self-organized Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum), and in-session events (lunchtime and evening official side events, flagship events to launch publications, media events, activities organized by stakeholders and receptions).

4. The UNEA Bureau, at its meeting of 25 March 2025, approved the provisional agenda and the annotated provisional agenda and the UNEA and the CPR Bureaux, at their joint meeting on 28 May 2025, approved the structure of UNEA-7, which have been made publicly available on the UNEA-7 website under "Meeting documents".

5. The total estimated budget for UNEA-7, OECPR-7, the Global Major Group and Stakeholder Forum and the Youth Environment Assembly is approximately USD 4,580,052.

6. As of 3 September 2025, the Secretariat received USD 1,056,345 in extrabudgetary contributions, primarily to support travel for Member States delegates from developing countries, the additional team of interpreters (USD 121,295) and the Regular Budget deficit (USD 262,762) resulting in a current funding gap of USD 1,134,241.

B. Austerity measures by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM)/Division for Conference Services (DCS) of the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) on the organization of work and budget for UNEA-7

7. Further to the letter from the President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Philemon Yang, dated 25 February 2025 circulating the letter dated 21 February 2025, from the Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General, Mr. E. Courtenay Rattray, and its annex regarding restrictive measures to be taken in the context of the ongoing liquidity crisis, the members of the Committee of the Permanent Representatives (CPR) were briefed on the implications of the austerity measures to UNEA-7 during the briefing on the preparations of UNEA-7 held at the subcommittee meeting of the CPR on 22 April 2025.

8. The spending restrictions will have an impact on the delivery of services with **a 10% cap reduction in both documentation and the number of formal meetings** that the DCS will support. Regarding interpretation the restrictive measures are as follows:
    a. DSC will service a limit of up to 9 meetings a week with interpretation;
    b. No parallel formal meetings of the same calendar meeting body, with or without interpretation services, can be accommodated under the Regular Budget, regardless of the entitlement;
    c. One team of interpreters can handle two meetings per day with 90 minutes of break between each meeting; and
    d. Sessions cannot be held beyond 6 pm or over the weekend unless they are covered through extra budgetary (XB) funding. XB cost estimates will account for any additional requests beyond what is approved.

9. These austerity measures **do not impact on the meetings of the OECPR-7** as the meetings of the OECPR requiring interpretation are less than 10.

10. However, as per the current structure of the meetings of UNEA-7 as approved by the UNEA and CPR Bureaux on 28 May 2025, **a second team of interpreters** at an estimated cost of approximately **USD 121,295** would need to be recruited and covered entirely through extrabudgetary funding.

11. To ensure the effective preparation of UNEA-7, the recruitment of the team of interpreters will need to start in the second week of September 2025.

C. Cost-saving measures already implemented by the Secretariat

12. The Secretariat has identified provisional **cost-saving measures amounting to USD 354,333,** including USD 169,500 through the use of existing UNON infrastructure for bilateral meetings and USD 184,833 from UNON postponing critical system upgrades in Conference Rooms 1 and 2, for which costs would otherwise have been shared with UNEP (see table 1).

13. Therefore, **the current funding gap is USD 779,908** (see table 2).

Table 1: UNEA-7 estimated budget and proposed cost-saving measures

Budget item categories	UNEA-7 ORIGINAL estimates	UNEA-7 REVISED estimates	Comments
RB allocation to UNON for mandated services for UNEA (documentation and interpretation).[1]	708,000	708,000	
RB allocation to UNEP for non-mandated activities for UNEA such as security, facilities and technical support.[2]	200,538	200,538	
Additional team of interpreters	121,295	121,295	Due to austerity measures imposed on RB expenditures
Other UNON costs not covered by UNEP RB allocation (security, medical, IT services, facilities management)	149,119	149,119	
Support to participants from developing countries (2 pax per country for OECPR and UNEA)	1,600,083	1,600,083	
Major Groups participation and meetings cost	163,780	163,780	
Youth Environment Assembly	112,151	112,151	
Communication activities	300,000	300,000	UNEA-7 reduction on the communication activities allocation.
Reporting services, hospitality, App, registration scanners, etc.	156,383	156,383	
UNON rates for Conference Rooms (cost recovery)	**184,833**	**-**	**Critical upgrades in CRs 1 and 2 cancelled.**
Event management vendor	600,008	600,008	
Renting UN Events Centre	46,816	46,816	
Bi-lateral space	**169,500**	**-**	**Use of existing facilities**
Digital documentation management (platform maintenance and content management)	67,546	67,546	
Grand Total	**4,580,052**	**4,225,720**	

[1] RB has been cut by 20% and it is expected that UNON RB will have a reduction of the same to USD 566,400. UNEP is yet to receive information from UNON on their reduction. Austerity measures have been implemented by UNON for UNEA (documentation and interpretation limitations).

[2] UNEP has allocated to UNEA a reduced amount of USD 200,538 in light of the austerity measures and reduced RB allocation to UNEP. Requested amount was USD 463,300.

Table 2: Funding status (revised budget) in light of UNEP cost-saving measures

	UNEA-7 ORIGINAL estimates	UNEA-7 REVISED estimates
	4,580,052	**4,225,720**
Secured funding		
Regular budget	908,538	908,538
UNEP contribution	1,480,929	1,480,929
Total secured funding	**2,389,467**	**2,389,467**
Total funding gap	**2,190,586**	**1,836,253**
Extrabudgetary contribution received/pledged		
Australia	20,000	20,000
Denmark (Pledged)	155,200	155,200
European Commission	600,000	600,000
European Investment Bank (Pledged)	10,464	10,464
Finland	22,936	22,936
Germany	52,680	52,680
Hungary	11,210	11,210
Oman	100,000	100,000
Philippines	10,000	10,000
Sweden (Pledged)	73,855	73,855
Total extrabudgetary contribution received/pledged	**1,056,345**	**1,056,345**
Remaining funding gap	**1,134,241**	**779,908**

Based on the indication of additional pledges towards UNEA-7 budget, the actual travel expenditures incurred at UNEA-6 (USD 950,559), and the ongoing resource mobilization efforts of the Secretariat, it is projected that the funding gap can be met.

Nevertheless, as requested by Member States, alternative options have been provided for the consideration on the UNEA and CPR Bureaux.

D. Options for additional cost-saving measures for the consideration of the UNEA and CPR Bureaux

14. At the request of some delegations at the 12th annual subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held from 1 to 5 September 2025, the Secretariat has prepared the following options for additional cost-saving measures for the consideration and possible guidance by the UNEA and CPR Bureaux.

Option A – Reducing the duration of UNEA from 5 to 4 days.

15. The potential savings of organizing UNEA over four days have been estimated at **USD 165,707** primarily from reduced overtime payments to UNON staff, including security personnel, technicians and facility staff, and fewer days of Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) for funded participants.[3]

16. These savings assume that the High-Level segment remains at two days with national statements, while the Committee of the Whole (COW) and negotiation-related activities are compressed into a shorter timeframe (see figure 1).

17. Reducing UNEA's duration would place a **greater emphasis on the OECPR and intersessional work**, as preparation will be essential to ensure that draft resolutions and decisions are ready for final consideration. While the High-Level segment would remain at two days, the shortened COW schedule could increase the risk of extended negotiating hours or unresolved items if adequate preparation is not undertaken. Lessons from **UNEA-5.2**, which successfully concluded a three-day session through intensive intersessional work, demonstrate that shorter sessions can deliver substantive outcomes, though careful planning and disciplined scheduling are critical.

18. The Secretariat also notes, some **official side events and other activities held in the margins of UNEA** may need to be **rescheduled, consolidated, or curtailed** due to the compressed timeframe, although the High-Level Segment and national statements would be unaffected. Careful management of the agenda, combined with strong intersessional preparation, would help **mitigate risks** associated with a shorter session while preserving potential cost savings and ensuring that UNEA remains efficient and effective.

[3] Note that the adjustment of DSA expenditure has been estimated to reduce by USD 90,630 based on DSA rate of 285 per USD.

Figure 1 – proposed structure for a 4-day UNEA

	Monday 8 Dec	Tuesday 9 Dec		Wednesday 10 Dec		Thursday 11 Dec	
8.00 – 9.00 9.00 – 10.00	Reg/Pol groups/MG meetings [Restricted]	Reg/Pol groups/MG meetings [Restricted] Bureau meeting [restricted]		African Ministerial breakfast High-level segment cultural opening	Bureau meeting [restricted]	EU hosted Ministerial Breakfast	
10.00 –13.00	**[1st plenary meeting]** **Opening plenary of UNEA** ACEFRS [CR2] - Opening of the session [item 1] - Adoption of the agenda and organization of work [item 2 - Opening of the session [item 1] (continued) - Opening statements - Stakeholder engagement [item 7] - Credentials of representatives [item 3] - Report of the CPR [item 4] - Contributions of UNEA to the HLPF [item 8] **Committee of the Whole Opening plenary** [Consideration of agenda items 5, 6 and 11]ACEFRS [CR2] NOTE: COW might go beyond 1 p.m. requiring an afternoon meeting with interpretation	**Committee of the Whole/Contact groups** [Consideration of agenda items 5, 6 and 11] [CR2]	**[2nd plenary meeting]** **Cooperation with MEAs** [item10] ACEFRS [CR1] **High-Level dialogue on Cooperation with MEAs** ACEFRS [CR1]	**[3rd plenary meeting]** **Opening of the High-level segment** [item 9] "Advancing sustainable solutions for a resilient planet" ACEFRS [CR2] **[3rd plenary meeting - continuation]** **National statements** **(List of speakers)** [item 9] ACEFRS [CR2]		**[6th plenary meeting]** **National statements** **(List of speakers)** [item 9] ACEFRS [CR 2] 10 – 1	**Leadership dialogue** ACEFRS [CR1] **Leadership dialogue** ACEFRS [CR1]
13.15 – 14.45	Side events	Side events		UNEP hosted "Women leaders luncheon"	Side events	Side events	
15.00 –18.00	**Committee of the Whole/ Contact groups** [Consideration of agenda items 5, 6 and 11] [CR2]	**Committee of the Whole** **Closing plenary** [Consideration of agenda items 5, 6 and 11] ACEFRS [CR2] [Note: This meeting might have to be moved to after 6 pm but before midnight]	**High-Level dialogue on Cooperation with MEAs** ACEFRS [CR1] **Moderated discussion on the conclusions** ACEFRS [CR1]	**[4th plenary meeting]** **- Credentials of representatives** [item 3] (resumed) **- National statements** **(List of speakers)** [item 9] ACEFRS [CR 2]	**Leadership dialogue** ACEFRS [CR1] **Multistakeholder dialogue** ACEFRS [CR1]	**[7th plenary meeting]** **Closing plenary of UNEA** ACEFRS [CR2] [Note: a second team will be on standby in case the closing plenary goes beyond 6 p.m.] - High-level segment [item 9]: *Presentation of summaries* - Action on the draft Ministerial Declaration [item 12] - Cooperation with MEAs [item 10] - Consideration of the report of the Committee of the Whole [items 5 and 6]- Action on draft resolutions/decisions [item 12] - Stakeholder engagement [item 7] - Election of officers [item 13] - Provisional agenda, date and venue of UNEA-8 [item 11] - Other matters [item 14] - Adoption of the report [item 15] - Closure of the session [item 16]	
18.15 – 19.45	Side events	Side events		Side events			
		MEA Reception [TBC]		**[5th plenary meeting National statements] (List of speakers)** [item 9] ACEFRS [CR 2] 19.30 – 22.30	Host Country Reception [TBC]		

Option B – UNEA documentation

19. DCS will process a total of 226,000 original words for all mandated documentation under its Regular Budget allocation. All documents must strictly adhere to the 8,500-word limit, regardless of the funding source.

20. Any document exceeding these limits will need to be financed through other means, such as UNEP contributions or extrabudgetary resources. UNEP has ensured that all progress reports of the Executive Director for UNEA-7 remain within 3,500 words or fewer.

21. All official documentation of UNEA sessions is currently covered under UNON's Regular Budget allocation. Additional measures, such as considering **alternatives for automated translation, would not affect UNEA's current estimated budget**. Also, such measures would require guidance from Member States and consultation with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) to ensure compliance with quality standards and editorial rules.

22. However, in reviewing the format of the UNEA proceedings report, and mindful of the costs associated with its processing, there is scope to align more closely with the practice of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies. These bodies typically issue **concise procedural reports** that focus on essential information—such as session details, actions taken, and decisions or recommendations adopted—while avoiding extensive narrative accounts. Adopting a similar approach for UNEA would **substantially reduce word count and translation requirements**, thereby lowering processing costs, while ensuring compliance with UN documentation standards and fit for its purpose. The Bureaux may therefore wish to consider revising the format of the UNEA proceedings report into a procedural report as a means of reducing word counts and avoiding reliance on extrabudgetary resources should the 226,000-word ceiling be exceeded.

23. For UNEA-7, the documentation word limit is projected to remain below 226,000 words. Therefore, no cost implications are foreseen nor are cost savings anticipated.

Option C – Travel support

24. Travel support for Member States for UNEA-7 has been estimated at USD 1,600,083 (covering 260 delegates representing 130 developing countries – 2 delegates for each of the 130 identified countries). By comparison, travel support for UNEA-6 was budgeted for USD 1,392,160[4] (250 delegates representing 125 developing countries) and ultimately costed USD 950,559 supporting 173 delegates from 100 developing countries.

25. **As of 3 September, extrabudgetary contributions received for UNEA-7 earmarked for travel support amounts to USD 806,345 (see table 3), leaving a funding gap of USD 793,738. When compared to the actual travel expenditures at UNEA-6 (USD 950,559), the remaining funding gap for travel support is USD 144,214.**

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[4] Inclusive of USD 160,160 programme support cost which was adjusted at a later date

Table 3 – Funding gap related to travel support

	UNEA-7 Travels (estimates)	UNEA-6 Travels (actuals)
Member States travel budget	**1,600,083**	**950,559**
Contributions received to support travel		
Australia	20,000	20,000
Denmark (NV)	155,200	155,200
European Commission	350,000	350,000
European Investment Bank (pledge)	10,464	10,464
Finland	22,936	22,936
Germany	52,680	52,680
Hungary	11,210	11,210
Philippines	10,000	10,000
Oman	100,000	100,000
Sweden	73,855	73,855
Subtotal contributions received	**806,345**	**806,345**
Remaining travel support gap	**793,738**	**144,214**
Additional team of interpreters	**121,295**	
Offset the Regular Budget cuts	**262,762**	
Remaining total gap	**1,177,795**	

Option C (i) – Travel support to countries in special situations

26. Prioritize offering travel support to two delegates each from the Least Developing Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Islands Developing States (SIDS).[5] This would cover 74 countries[6] (see table 4) at an estimated cost of **USD 877,117, reducing overall travel budget by USD 722,966.**

Table 4: Travel support for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS

UN DESA	Total cost	Member States
LDCs	455,356	42
LLDCs	12,793	1
SIDS	408,968	31
Grand Total	**877,117**	**74**

Option C (ii) – Funding based on delegation size

27. Alternatively, offering travel support only to developing countries whose delegations at UNEA-6 were below 8, including representatives from capitals, would **reduce the overall travel funding needs by USD 204,824 to a total of USD 1,395,259.**

[5] UNEP uses the list of developing countries provided in the https://desapublications.un.org/publications/world-economic-situation-and-prospects-mid-2025 published by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the UN.

[6] 74 countries do not represent all LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS but rather those that are projected to travel based on data of countries that requested travel support to attend UNEA-5.2 and UNEA-6.

Annex: Summary table of budget and funding gap scenarios

	UNEA-7 estimated budget	UNEA-7 revised budget (reduced USD 354,333 from Secretariat savings)	UNEA-6 Actuals travels (USD 950,559) against UNEA-7 revised budget	Travel Option 1 (LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS) reduction of USD 722,966 against the revised budget.	Travel Option 2 (Delegation size) reduction of USD 204,824 against the revised budget	Travel option 3 Not included as an option (funding only 1 delegate from developing countries) Reduction of USD 800,041 for travel against the revised budget.	4-day UNEA (Reduction of USD 165,707)
	4,580,052	**4,225,720**	**3,576,196**	**3,502,754**	**4,020,896**	**3,425,679**	**4,060,013**
Secured funding							
Regular budget	908,538	908,538	908,538	908,538	908,538	908,538	908,538
UNEP contribution*	1,480,929	1,480,929	1,480,929	1,480,929	1,480,929	1,480,929	1,480,929
Total secured funding	**2,389,467**	**2,389,467**	**2,389,467**	**2,389,467**	**2,389,467**	**2,389,467**	**2,389,467**
Total funding gap	**2,190,586**	**1,836,253**	**1,186,729**	**1,113,287**	**1,631,429**	**1,036,212**	**1,670,546**
Extrabudgetary contribution received/pledged							
Australia	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Denmark (NV sent)	155,200	155,200	155,200	155,200	155,200	155,200	155,200
European Commission	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000
European Investment Bank (Pledged)	10,464	10,464	10,464	10,464	10,464	10,464	10,464
Finland	22,936	22,936	22,936	22,936	22,936	22,936	22,936
Germany	52,680	52,680	52,680	52,680	52,680	52,680	52,680
Hungary	11,210	11,210	11,210	11,210	11,210	11,210	11,210
Oman	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Philippines	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Sweden (Pledged)	73,855	73,855	73,855	73,855	73,855	73,855	73,855
Total extrabudgetary contribution received/pledged	**1,056,345**	**1,056,345**	**1,056,345**	**1,056,345**	**1,056,345**	**1,056,345**	**1,056,345**
Remaining funding gap	**1,134,241**	**779,908**	**130,384**	**56,942**	**575,084**	**-20,133**	**614,201**