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**Committee of Permanent Representatives**

**173<sup>rd</sup> meeting**

Nairobi, 20 April 2026

10:10 – 13:10 and 15:05 – 17:15 (GMT+3)

Conference Room 2 and online

**Chair's Summary of the 173<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives**

*Note: This Chair's Summary complements the detailed meeting report prepared by the United Nations Office at Nairobi in advance for the adoption at the next meeting of the Committee. All pre-meeting and post-meeting documents, including statements provided in writing by Members of the Committee, are available [here](#).*

**Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.**

1. H. E. Mr. Sultan Hajiyeve, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Kenya and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), opened the 173<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the CPR on Monday, 20 April 2026 at 10:10 (GMT+3). The newly arrived representatives were welcomed and the departing representatives bid farewell.

**Agenda item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda of the 173<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.**

2. The Committee adopted the provisional agenda of the 173<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the CPR, as set out in [UNEP/CPR/173/1](#).

**Agenda item 3: Adoption of the draft minutes of the 172<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.**

3. The representative of Saudi Arabia sought clarification regarding the status of recommendation on UNEP's portfolio on desertification, drought and land degradation in 2025, and noted the recommendation had not been reflected in the draft minutes of the 171<sup>st</sup> and 172<sup>nd</sup> meetings of the CPR. The Chair took note of the request and asked the Secretariat to provide the necessary clarification to the delegation.
4. Upon resuming consideration of the item in the afternoon, the Committee adopted the draft minutes of the 172<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the CPR, as set out in [UNEP/CPR/173/L.1](#).

**Agenda item 4: Report of the Executive Director to the 173<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.**

5. The Committee was invited to consider the [Executive Director's Quarterly Report to the 173<sup>rd</sup> meeting](#)

[of the CPR](#), providing an update on key developments relevant to UNEP for the period from October to December 2025 and a [statement](#) by the Executive Director of UNEP, Ms. Inger Andersen.

6. Delegations<sup>1</sup> welcomed the report and provided the following comments:

- a. Commended the Executive Director for the overall progress achieved in the implementation of the programme of work during the reporting period. Reaffirmed UNEP's role as the leading global environmental authority, including its mandate to strengthen the environmental dimension of sustainable development across the UN system.
- b. Welcomed the successful convening of the [seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly](#) (UNEA-7) and the adoption by consensus of all [decisions, resolutions and the Ministerial Declaration](#), noting this as an affirmation of multilateral environmental cooperation, while expressing concern over growing challenges in reaching consensus, including their impact on science-based outputs.
- c. Expressed support for the [UN80 Initiative](#), including Work Package 27, viewing it as an opportunity to clarify and strengthen UNEP's role within the UN system. Delegations emphasized the need for coherence, coordination and avoidance of duplication across the UN system and [Multilateral Environmental Agreements](#) (MEAs), and called for transparency, continued information sharing and consultation with Member States, including opportunities for input by Nairobi-based delegations.
- d. Emphasized the centrality of science and evidence-based decision-making and encouraged stronger visibility and use of UNEP's scientific outputs, including the [Global Environment Outlook](#) (GEO), with active Member States engagement in shaping its future.
- e. Welcomed UNEP's work on environmental data, foresight, early warning systems and digital platforms, such as the [World Environment Situation Room](#) (WESR) and the [Global Environmental Data Strategy](#) (GEDS), and efforts to enhance accessibility, standardization, and national capacity.
- f. Welcomed UNEP's support to national and regional priorities, including climate planning, sustainable taxonomy development, plastics and circular economy initiatives, youth green employment programmes, and technical support to environmental governance reforms.
- g. Highlighted the urgency of addressing interconnected environmental challenges, including climate change, biodiversity loss, land degradation, desertification, and pollution, particularly in vulnerable regions, and called for scaled-up financing, technology transfer, and capacity-building to support adaptation, mitigation and resilience.
- h. Called for strengthened focus on desertification, land degradation, and drought (DLDD), particularly in Africa, including support for continent-wide initiatives such as the [Great Green Wall](#), and requested regular updates on related programmes including those supported by the [Global Environment Facility](#) (GEF).
- i. Noted environmental governance challenges, including environmental crime, pollution, and deforestation, and called for strengthened UNEP support, including capacity-building and technical assistance.
- j. Emphasized the need to shift focus toward effective implementation of UNEA outcomes and the [Medium-Term Strategy \(MTS\) for the period 2026–2029](#), particularly in light of the timeline for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and highlighted the importance of enhanced national capacities, especially in developing countries, to deliver on agreed commitments.
- k. Reiterated support for key multilateral processes, including the [Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution](#) (ISP-CWP) and the [Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Sierra Leone, on behalf of the African States Group; Kenya, on behalf of the G77 and China; European Union; Costa Rica, on behalf of the Latin America and Caribbean States Group; Costa Rica; Chile; Mozambique; Norway, Egypt, Armenia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Colombia; Uganda; India; Saudi Arabia; Brazil; Japan; China; Ukraine; Peru; Mexico; Germany; Finland; Somalia; Tunisia; Kenya; Indonesia; Switzerland; France; Australia; Argentina; Algeria; Philippines; Netherlands (Kingdom of the); Jordan; Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of); State of Palestine; Children and Youth major group; Women major group; NGO major group.

- [pollution, including in the marine environment](#) (INC), and requested clarity on UNEP's coordinating role, the need to avoid duplication and ensure efficient use of resources, while calling for an ambitious and inclusive instrument on plastic pollution addressing the full life cycle of plastics in line with [UNEA resolution 5/14](#).
- l. Called for timely submission of revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) to support global review and reporting processes ahead of the [seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity](#) (CBD COP17) in October 2026.
  - m. Emphasized the need for predictable, adequate and sustainable financing to support UNEP's Programme of Work and to ensure that mandates can be effectively implemented, including through increased core and unearmarked funding to the [Environment Fund](#), diversification of funding sources, and strengthened alignment between resources and programme ambitions. One delegation highlighted a report by the UNEP Finance Initiative, entitled "[Unlocking Circular Economy Financing](#)" as practical guidance for implementation.
  - n. Noted concerns regarding fragmentation of programmes and called for a shift toward more coherent, programmatic, and results-based approaches, supported by improved monitoring, evaluation, and impact measurement systems.
  - o. Requested updates on the updated Resource Mobilization Strategy and the Monitoring, Measurement, Learning, and Reporting Policy.
  - p. Requested clarification on resource mobilization strategies, including broadening the donor base, increasing core funding, and ensuring adequate means of implementation for developing countries.
  - q. Welcomed progress on climate governance support, including assistance for [Biennial Transparency Reports](#) (BTRs), and requested further information on beneficiary countries and selection criteria.
  - r. Recognized the role of regional cooperation mechanisms and ministerial fora in advancing environmental priorities and called for stronger alignment with UNEP.
  - s. Highlighted the importance of national sovereignty and country-driven approaches, ensuring that global initiatives translate into tangible national-level impacts while respecting national circumstances.
  - t. Encouraged strengthened regional, South–South, and triangular cooperation across regions, including Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, small island states and fragile contexts, and welcomed UNEP's regional programmes while calling for improved follow-through and delivery at the country level.
  - u. Highlighted national and regional progress reflecting increased ambition, such as revised [Nationally Determined Contributions](#) (NDCs), environmental standards, legal reforms, sustainable energy targets and contributions to the [Environment Fund](#).
  - v. Emphasized inclusive and participatory approaches, highlighting the need to strengthen gender responsiveness, youth engagement, and the involvement of local communities, Indigenous Peoples and other stakeholders in environmental governance.
  - w. Recognized UNEP's progress in advancing gender balance and women's representation at the professional and senior levels.
  - x. Stressed the importance of equitable geographical representation across all levels of UNEP staffing, noting in particular the underrepresentation of Latin America and the Caribbean at the professional and senior levels, and called for proactive recruitment measures and further information on steps being taken to address these imbalances.
  - y. Requested further information on UNEP's methane mitigation work, including;
    - i. Contributions of the [International Methane Emissions Observatory](#) (IMEO) and the [Methane Alert and Response System](#) (MARS) to reducing emissions from food waste and landfills;
    - ii. Role of regional methane programmes, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, in supporting the [Global Methane Pledge](#).

- z. A number of delegations<sup>2</sup> underscored the growing link between environmental degradation, conflict and fragility, highlighting impacts on water, land, ecosystems, energy and infrastructure, and calling for strengthened assessment, monitoring, early warning, and technical support, including rapid environmental assessments, pollution management and environmental recovery efforts in conflict-affected areas. Some delegations drew attention to environmental risks arising from military escalations and attacks in West Asia; others welcomed [UNEP's ongoing assessment](#), [debris management](#), and recovery efforts and others emphasized that UNEP should focus its work on its core mandate.
  - aa. Requested further clarification on how UNEP, in its role as co-chair of the UN Task Force on Critical Energy Transition Minerals, will ensure coherent coordination between the Task Force's workstreams and the implementation of [UNEA resolution 7/3](#) and related minerals and metals resolutions, while avoiding duplication, strengthening system-wide coordination and country-level support through existing UN system structures.
7. In response, the Executive Director thanked delegations for their comments and provided the following clarifications:
- a. Reaffirmed UNEP's commitment to addressing DLDD, noting that Africa, despite its low emissions, continues to face disproportionate climate impacts.
  - b. Clarified that while UNEP can mobilize resources from GEF, the [Green Climate Fund](#) (GCF), and the [Adaptation Fund](#), such efforts are strictly country-driven and undertaken only upon formal request by Member States.
  - c. Informed that UNEP is supporting 40 African countries in preparing BTRs, with approximately USD 34 million in support, and highlighted UNEP's role in leveraging private sector investment, including through the [Seed Capital Assistance Facility](#) (SCAF) that mobilized approximately USD 300 million from an initial USD 3 million.
  - d. Further noted that UNEP is supporting 70 countries on updated NBSAPs, including 45 in Africa, and 112 countries under activities related to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), including 52 in Africa, demonstrating a substantial DLDD-related portfolio.
  - e. Informed that UNEP is undertaking an internal "tagging" of approximately 600 projects to identify contributions to DLDD, with consolidated reporting expected by the [13th annual subcommittee meeting of the CPR](#) in September 2026.
  - f. Clarified that Africa holds UNEP's largest regional portfolio (296 projects; USD 871 million), compared to Asia-Pacific (183 projects; USD 552 million), Latin America and the Caribbean (196 projects; USD 516 million), Europe and Central Asia (104 projects; USD 145 million), and West Asia (67 projects; USD 81 million).
  - g. Further clarified that support for BTRs is demand-driven, noting that 25 countries have formally requested UNEP's assistance, the majority of which are in Africa.
  - h. Emphasized UNEP's ability to leverage catalytic finance, noting that in addition to donor funding, programmes have mobilised significant private sector investment, including through innovative financing facilities.
  - i. Expressed appreciation for donor support and stressed the importance of sustained and predictable financial support to ensure effective implementation of UNEP's mandate.
  - j. Acknowledged underrepresentation in Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, and parts of Africa, while noting that recent downsizing did not materially alter overall regional representation. It was emphasized that recruitment remains merit-based and stressed ongoing outreach efforts to broaden the applicant pool, raise awareness of UNEP and Nairobi as a duty station, including more than 70 engagement sessions since 2022 targeting underrepresented regions.

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<sup>2</sup> Algeria; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Jordan; Saudi Arabia; Somalia; Ukraine; State of Palestine.

- k. Outlined plans to strengthen GEO through expanded briefings in capitals, fellowships, training, and regional outreach, alongside stocktaking of the global environmental assessment landscape and structured consultations with Member States on its future.
  - l. Emphasized UNEP's commitment to strengthening digitalization and environmental data systems, including tools accessible through handheld devices to support rapid, evidence-based decision-making.
  - m. Noted UNEP's engagement on transnational environmental crime through the [High-Level Committee on Programmes](#) (HLCP), collaboration with partners including the [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime](#) (UNODC), and work under the [Montevideo Environmental Law Programme](#), including research, capacity-building for judiciary and enforcement agencies, and the Green Customs Initiative.
  - n. Reaffirmed UNEP's role in monitoring environmental impacts of conflict, emphasizing long-term pollution risks and the importance of cessation of hostilities to enable environmental assessment, remediation and protection of human health and ecosystems.
  - o. Outlined UNEP's role in the UN Task Force on CETM, co-chaired with the [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development](#) (UNCTAD), including coordination of UNEA-mandated work, integration of knowledge platforms, and capacity-building efforts.
  - p. Highlighted progress on methane mitigation, including expansion of [IMEO](#) and [MARS](#) to better capture emissions from waste and landfills, as well as efforts to address food waste and improve waste separation systems.
  - q. Noted the role of the [Climate and Clean Air Coalition](#) (CCAC) in supporting methane-related projects, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean.
  - r. Reaffirmed UNEP's commitment to science-based decision-making, stressing that environmental policies must be grounded in peer-reviewed science and cautioning against the politicisation of scientific evidence.
  - s. Committed to continue briefings and engagement with Member States on the ongoing [UN80 Initiative](#) while clarifying that inputs provided will inform, but not determine, the Secretary-General's final report to the UN General Assembly.
8. The representative of the United States, in exercising the right of reply, stated that the meeting should remain focused on UNEP's core technical and scientific work and rejected the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding actions by the United States and its allies.
  9. The representative of Israel, in exercising the right of reply, aligned itself with the statement of the United States, and emphasized that the Committee should remain focused on environmental priorities and mandate-based discussions. The representative also requested that references made to Israel be reflected in an appropriate manner consistent with UN practice.
  10. The representative of the Russian Federation, in exercising the right of reply, rejected the statement made by the representative of Ukraine and expressed concern regarding alleged attacks on civilian vessels, which it stated posed significant environmental risks.
  11. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in exercising the right of reply, rejected statements made by other delegations and stated that actions against its territory had caused significant environmental damage, adding that actions taken by Iran were in response to aggression against its country.
  12. The representative of Ukraine, in exercising the right of reply, stated that the environmental damage under discussion was a consequence of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine and referred to impacts on infrastructure, ecosystems and natural resources, including long-term environmental consequences.

#### **Agenda item 5: Consideration of relevant evaluation reports and audits.**

13. The Chair recalled that, at the [subcommittee meeting held on 12 March 2026](#), the Evaluation Office presented the [evaluation of the Chemicals and Pollution Action Subprogramme](#), followed by a

[management response](#) from the UNEP Secretariat and an exchange of views with members of the Committee and stakeholders.

14. Delegations<sup>3</sup> provided the following additional comments in summary:

- a. Welcomed the [evaluation findings](#) and supported UNEP's strengthened results management framework, including the development of a theory of change, the One Impact Framework, and improved indicators to better capture long-term impact and sustainability, while stressing the importance of full implementation of recommendations and regular progress updates.
- b. Affirmed the continued strategic global relevance of the Chemicals and Pollution Action Subprogramme, while noting structural issues including: i) fragmented portfolios, ii) reliance on GEF funding, iii) duplication of efforts, and iv) a focus on output-level rather than outcome-and impact-level measurement.
- c. Supported a shift from fragmented, project-based approaches toward more integrated, programmatic, sectoral, and lifecycle-based approaches, including stronger coordination across chemicals, waste, and pollution portfolios, and the advancement of circular economy and zero-waste approaches.
- d. Stressed the need to strengthen country-level implementation, including greater involvement of the Regional Offices, enhanced country ownership, and improved alignment of projects with national priorities.
- e. Encouraged UNEP to place pollution more prominently within UN country processes and national development planning, given its linkages to health, economic development and social outcomes.
- f. Emphasized improved coordination and collaboration across UNEP, the Regional Offices, and partners, including MEAs such as the [Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm \(BRS\) Conventions](#) and the [Minamata Conventions on Mercury](#), [Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals](#) (IOMC) organizations, and science-policy bodies such as the ISP-CWP, as well as better use of existing global clusters, including the Geneva-based chemicals and waste cluster.
- g. Underscored the importance of strengthening science-policy linkages and cross-sectoral collaboration, including engagement with the labour sector through the [International Labour Organization](#) (ILO), and enhanced integration within UN system-wide cooperation.
- h. Highlighted the importance of addressing plastic pollution through collective action, including ongoing initiatives such as the [Global Plastics Hub](#), and broader chemicals and waste governance efforts.
- i. Called for more predictable, diversified, and sustainable financing, including increased use of blended finance, reduced inter-agency competition, and reduced reliance on GEF resources, alongside improved transparency and governance of funding mechanisms.
- j. Highlighted the need to address overlaps and inefficiencies in funding mechanisms, including [planetary funds](#), and to strengthen coherence in resource allocation.
- k. Stressed the need to strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems, including improved indicators, stronger outcome-level tracking, and better assessment of long-term impact, sustainability and replication.
- l. Encouraged knowledge sharing, replication, and scaling up of successful initiatives, including exchange of good practices, technologies, and lessons learned among Member States.
- m. Emphasized that future UNEA resolutions should be more implementation-focused and ambitious, moving beyond reaffirmation of existing mandates to drive transformative impact.
- n. Reiterated the importance of preserving the intergovernmental nature of processes, ensuring alignment with UNEP's mandate, and avoiding unnecessary reporting burdens.
- o. One delegation<sup>4</sup> expressed concern about the environmental implications of attacks, including impacts on infrastructure, maritime routes, and ecosystems, and emphasized the importance of regional stability, environmental protection and freedom of navigation.

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<sup>3</sup> Brazil; European Union; Mexico; Switzerland; Kenya; Norway; China; Canada; Argentina; Peru; Netherlands (Kingdom of the); Indonesia; Saudi Arabia; Women major group.

<sup>4</sup> United Arab Emirates.

15. In response, the Executive Director and the Secretariat thanked delegations for their comments and provided the following clarifications:
- a. Acknowledged the evolving priority of pollution within UNEP's mandate, noting that while pollution was central at UNEP's establishment, it has received comparatively less attention than climate change and biodiversity in recent years, but is now regaining momentum, including through internal restructuring and strengthened engagement with industry.
  - b. Reaffirmed UNEP's country-driven mandate, emphasizing that all activities are undertaken at the request of Member States, co-developed with governments, and aligned with the [MTS for 2026-2029](#), and that UNEP does not impose policies or approaches.
  - c. Recognized structural challenges, including fragmentation and reliance on project-based approaches, largely due to dependence on GEF as the primary funding source, with comparatively limited bilateral funding.
  - d. Outlined efforts to diversify and complement financing, noting that while GEF remains the primary large-scale funding mechanism, UNEP is leveraging additional sources, including unearmarked funding and the [Special Programme](#), to support areas such as legal and regulatory frameworks and institutional capacity, and is preparing for more integrated programming under [GEF-9](#).
  - e. Outlined efforts to address fragmentation and strengthen coherence, including the integration of circular economy and chemicals work into programmatic, lifecycle and sector-based approaches across key value chains such as plastics, textiles, agriculture, buildings and construction, electronics, and mining and minerals.
  - f. Emphasized a shift toward holistic, sector-based approaches, combining the management of hazardous chemicals with promotion of green and sustainable chemistry, moving beyond chemical-by-chemical approaches toward broader outcomes such as safe food systems and sustainable materials.
  - g. Highlighted increasing country demand for circular economy solutions, including upstream interventions such as product design, reuse and refill systems, and [Extended Producer Responsibility](#) (EPR), including as a means to generate domestic resources.
  - h. Highlighted strong partnerships and collaboration, including with the BRS and the Minamata Conventions, IOMC organizations, and UN agencies such as the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO), [United Nations Industrial Development Organization](#) (UNIDO), [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](#) (FAO), ILO, the World Bank and others, to enhance coordination and delivery across sectors.
  - i. Provided an update on ongoing science-policy processes, noting continued engagement with Member States and the Bureau of the ISP-CWP to advance its operationalization, and highlighting the role of the [International Resource Panel](#) (IRP) in supporting analysis on circularity and resource use.
  - j. Outlined efforts to strengthen the evidence base and awareness, including analytical work on the cost of inaction on air pollution under CCAC, and studies on the benefits of action on chemicals and pollution, to better demonstrate links to health, economic development and investment opportunities.
  - k. Highlighted knowledge-sharing platforms, such as the [Green Growth Knowledge Partnership](#) (GGKP) and the [Digital Knowledge Hub on Environmental Aspects of Minerals and Metals](#), as tools to disseminate data, best practices and lessons learned.
  - l. Committed to strengthening results monitoring and reporting, including regular updates aligned with the MTS outcomes and enhanced engagement with Regional Offices to scale implementation.
  - m. The Evaluation Office informed delegations that implementation of the [management response](#) to the evaluation recommendations will be tracked in line with standard evaluation follow-up procedures.
16. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in exercising the right of reply, stated that actions taken by Iran were in exercise of its right to self-defence.

**Agenda item 6: Report of the subcommittee.**

17. One representative<sup>5</sup>, on behalf of several delegations, recalled [CPR decision 171/1](#) and noted that deadlines for the provision of disaggregated data on affiliate personnel and the updated resource mobilization strategy had passed. The representative encouraged the Secretariat to provide updates on these pending items, including through briefings and the Executive Director's quarterly reports to the Committee.
18. The Committee endorsed the draft report of the Subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives as contained in document [UNEP/CPR/173/5](#).

**Agenda item 7: Any other business.**

19. No other matters were raised.

**Agenda item 8: Closing of the meeting.**

20. The meeting closed at 17:15 (GMT+3).

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<sup>5</sup> Netherlands (Kingdom of the).