Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee meeting
Nairobi, 12 March 2026
09:00 – 12:00 (GMT+3)
Hybrid meeting
Conference Room 4 (in person)
and Microsoft Teams (online)

Agenda item 3: Assessment of the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly

This document has been prepared by the Secretariat for consideration under agenda item 3, entitled "*Assessment of the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly"* and is based on the responses from the participants to the survey conducted after the conclusion of the Global Youth Environment Assembly which was held on 29 and 30 November and 7 December 2025 prior to the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) held from 8 to 12 December 2025.

Youth Environment Assembly

2025 Delegate Evaluation

Executive Summary

Introduction and Demographics

Following the conclusion of the **Global Youth Environment Assembly (YEA)**, held on 29 and 30 November 2025, prior to the **seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly**. A post-event survey was conducted to capture feedback, reflections and lessons learned from youth delegates who participated in the **YEA** as well as its high-level closing on 7th December.

The survey was open from 27th January to 8th February 2026, and while there were 2,357 participants in total at YEA, the survey received 211 responses. Its purpose was to evaluate preparation, participation and engagement during **YEA**, with the aim of improving its future iterations and fostering greater youth involvement in governance processes. While all respondents completed the multiple-choice sections, only about half provided detailed and concrete comments.

Of the 211 respondents, 82% attended the Assembly in person, 9.5% did not attend and 8.5% attended both in person and online. Most of the participants, namely 63.5%, were based in Nairobi, with others spread across Kenyan cities and international locations spanning five continents. African representation was strongest, with participants from countries such as Cameroon, Ethiopia, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda, alongside smaller numbers from regions such as Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and North America.

Ages ranged from 6-52 years, with the largest group between 27-30 years. Gender distribution was relatively balanced, with 55.9% of respondents being male, and 44.1% being female, which relatively reflects the gender distribution of total YEA attendees (51% male, 49% female and 3% other)

Lastly, of the 211 respondents, 57.3% were identified members of the Children and Youth Major Group.

Key Successes

The overall experience at the YEA was rated positively, with 81% of the respondents reporting satisfaction or high satisfaction. Participants emphasized the strong visibility of youth voices and praised the sessions for being vibrant, educational, and aligned with global priorities such as climate change and biodiversity. An overwhelming 85% of respondents credited the YEA with advancing their advocacy at UNEA-7, underscoring its pivotal role in amplifying youth voices and shaping outcomes.

Additionally, the variety of sessions were also well received, with 82% of the respondents expressed satisfaction with the balance between panels, presentations and interactive elements, with participants praising the mix of formats for maintaining engagement and covering key environmental aspects.

Speakers and presentations were another highlight, with 88.1% of respondents satisfied with their quality and relevance. Presentations were described as engaging, informative, and youth-friendly, offering both policy-level and practical perspectives. Speakers were praised for their impactful contributions, and the respondents valued their expertise and relatable delivery styles, making the sessions accessible and inspiring.

Networking opportunities overall were described as valuable and inspiring with 80.4% of the respondents satisfied with the level of interaction, highlighting the openness of peers and the chance to connect across regions and organizations as key strengths. The dedicated networking reception co-sponsored by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), held on 7 December 2025, was especially appreciated by the accredited participants who were able to attend, with 83.6% reporting overall satisfaction with the event, as it was described as welcoming and effective in fostering informal dialogue and meaningful connections in a relaxed setting.

Moreover, for the first time, UNEP organized an exhibition booth and dialogue space for the Major Groups and children and youth. Over half of the respondents visited the space, commending its visibility, accessibility, and role in encouraging informal engagement and intergenerational dialogue, with many describing it as a significant step forward in inclusivity and stakeholder visibility.

Lastly, different sessions at the YEA also contributed to the success, with 51% of the respondents attending the sessions such as Ocean Action, Generation Restoration, and UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy discussions. Those who participated described these events as inspiring and well-coordinated, offering opportunities for meaningful engagement and dialogue.

Challenges:

- **Session design and engagement**

Some participants noted that certain sessions were perceived as time-constrained or heavily presentation-focused, which limited opportunities for interactive dialogue and substantive youth engagement.

- **Inclusivity and representation**

Concerns were expressed regarding the limited participation of grassroots organizations, Indigenous communities and underrepresented regions.

- **Logistics and accessibility**

While some Kenyan-based participants received support, including transport and accommodation, the overall costs associated with participation were cited as barriers, particularly for those travelling from rural areas and remote communities.

Respondents highlighted the need to strengthen accessibility provisions for persons with disabilities, including improved transport assistance within the venue as well as enhanced availability of sign language interpretation, live captions and multilingual support.

Respondents also noted concerns regarding the availability of meals, refreshments and affordable catering options. Owing to budgetary constraints, UNEP could not provide complementary meals or refreshments.

- **Communication and organization**

Some participants experienced delays in registration confirmations and indicated that event schedules were not always communicated.

Some indicated that advance information could have been shared earlier.

Participants suggested the establishment of centralized communication platforms and real-time updates to improve coordination.

- **Networking limitations**

Participants indicated that time allocated for networking was limited and suggested introducing more structured activities, such as themed discussion tables and facilitated introductions. They also recommended clearer logistical arrangements, including improved signage and designated meeting spaces, as well as more clearly defined pathways for meaningful youth input into UNEA outcomes.

Limited access to the High-Level YEA closing ceremony, due to accreditation requirements or invitation constraints, was also noted.

- **Follow-up and policy influence**

Some participants expressed the need for clearer and more structured mechanisms through which youth contributions could inform UNEA outcomes, noting limited clarity on how their recommendations and participation in YEA translate into impact at UNEA.

Limited post-event mechanisms to sustain engagement and collaboration were also highlighted, with participants expressing interest in continued opportunities to engage, collaborate and better understand the longer-term impact of their contributions on UNEA outcomes.

Recommendations:

- **Enhance session formats**

Increase interactive formats, including workshops, breakout groups and peer-to-peer learning and exchange opportunities.

Allocate additional time for questions and dialogues and explore follow-up discussions to strengthen youth engagement.

- **Strengthen inclusivity**

Promote broader representation of grassroots, Indigenous and marginalized communities.

Review accreditation processes to facilitate wider and more diverse youth participation.

- **Improve logistics and accessibility**

Explore options, subject to available resources, to support transport, financial access and affordable catering.

Further strengthen accessibility measures for persons living with disabilities, including assistive services and improved signage.

- **Optimize Communication**

Consolidate updates through a centralized communication platform (e.g., app or daily briefings).

Share timetables and guidance well in advance to enhance clarity and preparedness.

- **Expand Networking Opportunities**

Introduce structured networking formats such as mentorship circles, themed discussion tables and guided introductions.

Consider post-event engagement platforms (WhatsApp groups, mailing lists, online forums) to sustain collaboration.

- **Ensure policy impact and follow-up**

Clarify pathways through which youth inputs may inform UNEA deliberations.

Strengthen follow-up mechanisms to track contributions and maintain engagement beyond the event.