

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Nairobi, 11 September 2025
9:00 – 12:00 and 13:00 – 13:20 (GMT+3)
Hybrid meeting
Conference Room 4 (in person)
and Microsoft Teams (online)

Chair's Summary

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

1. H. E. Mr. Sultan Hajiyeve, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), opened and chaired the morning meeting; and H. E. Mr. Anouar Ben Youssef, Vice Chair of the CPR, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Tunisia to UNEP, chaired the afternoon meeting.
2. The [agenda](#) was adopted.

Agenda item 2: Consideration of evaluation reports and audits.

JIU Report and UNEP management response

3. The Chair recalled that on 20 August 2025, the Secretariat circulated, on behalf of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of the United Nations, the [report](#) on the Review of Management and Administration in UNEP and its [expanded report](#).
4. The JIU Inspector, Mr. Conrod Hunte, delivered an online [briefing](#) on the report of the JIU, followed by a [presentation](#) by UNEP Secretariat on the management response.
5. Delegations¹ that took the floor welcomed the JIU briefing and UNEP presentations and provided the following comments in summary:
 - a. Welcomed JIU's impartial external perspective and underlined the importance of drawing good practices from other UN agencies.
 - b. Stressed the need to obtain further information on equitable geographical distribution, highlighted the need to recruit staff from diverse regions, considering regional diversity in appointments. Emphasized that merit should remain the primary factor, while still addressing historical imbalances.
 - c. Expressed concern regarding the feasibility of implementing the recommendations within the planned timeframe and requested clarification on whether UNEP has designated timelines for each JIU recommendation in line with standard practice.
 - d. Requested JIU to provide further information on:
 - i. The distinction and criteria for "formal" vs. "informal" recommendations and asked for a comparison of UNEP's recommendations with other UN agencies.
 - ii. The recommendation on establishing a monitoring framework for the Policy for One UNEP Delivery for Better Collaboration and Country Support, and requested examples of best practices to inform the implementation of this recommendation.

¹ European Union, Russian Federation, Japan, Brazil, Portugal, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Saudi Arabia, Spain, Canada, Belgium, Cameroon.

- e. Requested UNEP to provide clarification on:
 - i. Allocation of time during CPR meetings dedicated to audits and evaluations, with at least one meeting annually focused on management and oversight matters.
 - ii. The availability of an updated resource mobilization strategy.
 - iii. Challenges of the three-tier model and details on the organization of regional administrative hubs in relation to the functional review.
 - iv. The continuity of Programme Cooperation Projects (PCPs) under the draft medium-term strategy (MTS) for the period of 2026-2029.
 - v. More information on the functioning of UNEP's Budget Steering Committee (BSC) and its alignment with the MTS.
 - vi. The work and outcomes of the initiative aimed at strengthening UNEP's scientific role, including how the initiative incorporates the JIU recommendations on updating UNEP's Knowledge Management Strategy.
 - f. Raised interest in the ratio between senior management and lower-level staff, noting concern that reductions could disproportionately affect lower-level positions, and inquired how staff categories would be balanced in light of reductions to the Environment Fund (EF).
 - g. Questioned the impact of fixed-term limited contracts and requested clarification on how UNEP intends to maintain a stable workforce under such arrangements.
 - h. Requested the provision of disaggregated data on affiliate personnel, with a breakdown by gender, geographical distribution, and type of contract.
 - i. Inquired about the voluntary separation of staff, the termination of posts and its impact on UNEP's delivery capacity.
 - j. Questioned why risk management considerations had not been sufficiently addressed and requested clarification on feasible approaches in light of budgetary constraints.
 - k. Requested UNEP to provide an assessment of the measures implemented since 2024 to enhance the alignment between UNEP's publication release capacity and the number of approved publication concepts. This assessment should focus on how UNEP identifies the target audience for each publication and on efforts to improve internal coordination for publications and co-authoring teams.
6. In response, JIU and the Secretariat thanked delegations for their comments and provided the following clarifications:

JIU Response

- a. JIU provided the following clarifications:
 - i. Formal recommendations are reflected in the JIU tracking system, whereas informal recommendations are suggestions to the Organization and are therefore not recorded or tracked through the JIU web-based system.
 - ii. Regarding the recommendation concerning the monitoring framework for the Policy for One UNEP Delivery, comparable frameworks exist in other UN entities, such as UNDP, where governing boards systematically track the implementation of policies.

UNEP management response

- b. Confirmed that UNEP has designated in its Management Review specific timelines for each JIU recommendation, in line with established practice for audit and oversight recommendations.
- c. Noted that several actions have already commenced, with slight delays expected for those requiring inputs from external stakeholders, including United Nations Headquarters (UNHQ).
- d. Clarified that; 1) most affiliate personnel are engaged under time-bound, donor-funded projects, a modality essential for flexibility, technical expertise and responsiveness; 2) while staff are reflected

- under UN staff data, affiliate personnel are shown in budgetary terms due to variable project cycles; 3) affiliate personnel data can be provided biennially, aligned with UNHQ reporting frequency.
- e. Reiterated that fixed-term limited (FTL) appointments are used as a prudent measure under UNEP's project-based funding model, offering full benefits while avoiding long-term liabilities.
 - f. Stressed that selection processes remain subject to independent review and that any conversion to regular fixed-term contracts requires review by the Central Review Board/Panel.
 - g. Explained that there is no prescribed ratio between different staff categories across the UN Secretariat, noting that UNEP staffing balance reflects its normative and technical mandate, with the functional review aiming to optimize staffing while protecting entry-level professional posts.
 - h. Reaffirmed UNEP's commitment to merit-based recruitment under Article 101 of the UN Charter, with due regard to geographical diversity.
 - i. Confirmed that PCPs will be discontinued, and that the MTS implementation plan will take their place.
 - j. Noted the ongoing strengthening of scientific role as a core priority of UNEP, and outlined the envisaged arrangements for the new Office of Science, structured around three core pillars: strategy and operations, data analytics and intelligence, and evidence and synthesis. Further noted that additional details would be shared as the formalization process advances.
 - k. Highlighted that, under the leadership of the Chief Scientist and with a cross-organizational working group established to define its parameters, initial progress on the Knowledge Management Strategy is expected to be reported in the first quarter of 2026, with finalization at the end of 2026.
 - l. Noted that, under the leadership of the Chief Scientist, significant progress has been made in UNEP's publication processes and release capacity, including reducing duplication, improving focus and audience targeting, decreasing the overall number of publications and addressing delays.
 - m. Addressed the three-tier model, noting that UNEP is streamlining layers of review without compromising internal control, supported by business process simplification and enhanced key performance indicators (KPIs).
 - n. Recalled that in line with UN 80 initiatives, UNEP is assessing regional hub consolidation where efficiency gains can be achieved and provided examples of roles between UNEP and service providers.
 - o. Stated that voluntary separations and post terminations are managed carefully to safeguard delivery capacity, with adjustments made in line with needs and available funding.
 - p. Acknowledged the importance of risk management and confirmed that the Chief Risk Officer function will be assigned to a senior position, aligned with UNEP's Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Control Framework.

Board of Auditors

- 7. The UNEP Secretariat provided an [update](#) on the recommendations issued in the 2024 audit report, including implementation plans and progress on all outstanding recommendations.
- 8. Delegations² that took the floor welcomed the JIU briefing and UNEP presentations and provided the following comments in summary:
 - a. Raised questions on whether the transfer of procurement tasks to the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) may present challenges.
 - b. Stressed the importance of full implementation of audit recommendations, in particular Recommendation on the disposition of unspent balances on closed grants and Recommendation on strengthening guidance on private sector engagement.
 - c. Referred to reported data gaps in the Integrated Planning, Monitoring and Reporting (IPMR) system, highlighting challenges in documentation and monitoring of projects.

² European Union, United Kingdom, Brazil.

9. In response, JIU and the Secretariat thanked delegations for their comments and provided the following clarifications:
- Confirmed that, with respect to Recommendation on private sector engagement, efforts are underway through the ongoing partnership review and simplification exercise, applying a risk-contextualized approach.
 - Confirmed that clear guidance under the IPMR system will be issued twice annually to address documentation and monitoring challenges, while acknowledging that adaptations may be required to align the UNHQ-designed system with UNEP's specific project context.
 - Clarified that UNEP has increased reliance on UNON for Long Term Agreement services where economies of scale apply, while prioritizing in-house efforts for better planning for UNEP-specific requirements and will continue identifying further enhancements.

Recommendations submitted for consideration at the 171st meeting of the CPR scheduled for 16 September 2025, as follows:

- Taking note* of the Review of management and administration in the United Nations Environment Programme report by the Joint Inspection Unit, as contained on JIU/REP/2025/1, the extend report and the UNEP's management response to JIU's report - review of Management and Administration, as contained in document UNEP/CPR/171/8.
- Requests* the Executive Director to:
 - Brief the Committee of Permanent Representatives, before the end of the first quarter of 2026, on the initiatives taken to strengthen UNEP's science function, including the results of the process of consolidation of the Early Warning and Assessment Division's relevant functions with the Chief Scientist Office, and the reassignment of its project-based operations to other Division and Offices.
 - Continue to brief the Committee of Permanent Representatives on the Functional Review, including on the possible reduction of posts funded by the Environment Fund.
 - Present to the Committee of Permanent Representatives, before the end of the second quarter of 2026, a monitoring framework for the Policy for One UNEP Delivery for Better Collaboration and Country Support, that allows for the assessment of progress against expected results.
 - Report to the Committee of Permanent Representatives, before the end of the first quarter of 2026, disaggregated data of the affiliate personnel, with a view to provide Member States with a more comprehensive understanding of the composition and structure of the UNEP workforce.
 - Continue the development of an updated resource mobilization strategy by the end of 2025 and present a draft version thereof to the Committee of Permanent Representatives before the seventh United Nations Environment Assembly and present the final version during the first quarterly meeting in 2026 to the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
- Requests* the Secretariat to:
 - Report, on a regular basis, on the status of implementation of decisions adopted by the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
 - Invite, in collaboration with the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, representatives of the Office of Internal Oversight Services audit team to provide, as appropriate, an annual briefing to the Committee of Permanent Representatives
 - Include on its briefing on the forthcoming Resource Mobilization Strategy, relevant information on UNEP's philanthropic engagement strategy, its playbook for private sector engagement, its partnership policy, and its related due diligence procedures.

Agenda Item 3: Recommendations from the 12th annual subcommittee meeting for consideration at the upcoming CPR quarterly meeting.

10. The Committee considered a draft decision containing [draft recommendations proposed by delegations at the 12th annual sub-committee meeting of the CPR](#).
11. The Committee recommended that the draft decision as set out in document [UNEP/CPR/171/L.3](#), be submitted for consideration by the Committee at its [171st quarterly meeting](#), scheduled for Tuesday, 16 September 2025.

Agenda item 4: Other matters.

12. No other matters were raised.

Agenda item 5: Closing of the meeting.

13. The meeting closed at 13:20 (GMT+3).