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United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme

**148th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
to the United Nations Environment Programme**

Nairobi, 10 December 2019

Conference Room 1

9:00 – 12:00, 13:30 – 16:30

Agenda Item 7c): Follow-up of the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly - Implementation of resolution UNEP/EA.4/Res.22

This note serves as a background document for Agenda Item 7c): Follow-up of the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly - Implementation of resolution UNEP/EA.4/Res.22, entitled “Implementation and follow up of United Nations Environment Assembly Resolutions”, which highlights the process in developing a note on “Implementation of UNEA Resolutions: Revised Options for an Improved Framework for Reporting. A revised options paper is annexed to this note.

Note on Implementation of UNEP/EA.4/Res.22: Implementation and follow up of United Nations Environment Assembly Resolutions.

UNEA resolution UNEP/EA.4/Res. 22, entitled “Implementation and follow-up of UN Environment Assembly Resolutions,” requested the Executive Director of the UNEP to develop a monitoring mechanism, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to track and assess UNEP’s implementation of resolutions in the framework of the Programme of Work and Budget. It also requested the Executive Director to propose to the CPR at its 146th meeting options for an improved framework for reporting on the implementation of UNEA resolutions to be integrated with the reporting on the Programme of Work and budget.

At its 146th meeting on 14 June 2019, the Committee of Permanent Representatives considered a paper prepared by the Secretariat, on, “Options for an Improved Framework for Reporting on Implementation of UN Environment Assembly Resolutions.” Based on existing reporting practice, the Secretariat proposed three options, Option One: Improved Status Quo, Option Two: Rationalization and Option Three: Minimalistic.

The Committee requested that the Secretariat submit for consideration at its next regular meeting, a revised options paper based on comments received from Member States by the 30 June deadline, and a proposal for the monitoring mechanism.

The 6th Annual Sub-Committee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held from 7-11 October 2019, considered the revised paper prepared by the Secretariat. In addition to the revised reporting options, the paper provided a detailed proposal for a web-based monitoring mechanism.

Member States provided additional guidance and agreed to continue consultations on the proposal and the reporting options at forthcoming sub-committee meetings. On the reporting options, initial preference was expressed for options two and three. No additional comments were received by the 11 November deadline.

The Secretariat seeks guidance from Member States on:

- ✚ Their preferred reporting option on the implementation of UNEA resolutions
- ✚ Whether the parameters for voluntary reporting by Member States and Secretariat monitoring and reporting are fit for purpose?
- ✚ Suitable frequency of reporting in the monitoring mechanism

Timely feedback from Member States will enable the Secretariat to adhere to the timelines in the roadmap contained in the proposal. The Secretariat continues work on content development and technical ICT components.

The revised paper, entitled, “Implementation of UNEA Resolutions: Revised Options for an Improved Framework for Reporting, including Monitoring Mechanism Proposal” is available [here](#).

Annex

Implementation of UNEA Resolutions: Revised Options for an Improved Framework for Reporting, including Monitoring Mechanism Proposal

I. Background

The UN Environment Assembly (UNEA), at its 4th session, adopted resolution UNEP/EA.4/Res. 22, entitled “Implementation and follow-up of UN Environment Assembly Resolutions”. The operative paragraphs of the resolution read as follows:

- 1. *Affirms the importance of the implementation of, and the adequate reporting on, resolutions of the UNEA;***
- 2. *Encourages member States and other actors to continue to provide support, according to their capacity, with a view to advancing the implementation of UNEA resolutions;***
- 3. *Requests the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to develop a monitoring mechanism, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to track and assess UNEP’s implementation of resolutions in the framework of the Programme of Work and Budget;***
- 4. *Requests that the monitoring mechanism:***
 - a. *Builds on and improves existing formats of reporting and monitoring;***
 - b. *Provides an inventory and a brief summary of implementation of UNEA resolutions via a dedicated webpage;***
 - c. *Identifies existing linkages between each resolution and the Programme of Work and Budget;***
 - d. *Provides links to existing reports related to UNEA resolutions;***
 - e. *Provides the opportunity for Members States to voluntarily report on national implementation efforts;***
 - f. *Based on available information, including existing UNEP and national voluntary reports, summarizes specific challenges that have hindered implementation efforts, including those of member States;***
- 5. *Requests the Executive Director to propose to the CPR at its 146th meeting options for an improved framework for reporting on the implementation of UNEA resolutions to be integrated with the reporting on the Programme of Work and budget;***
- 6. *Also requests the Executive Director to report on the implementation of this resolution at the next UN Environment Assembly.***

At its 146th meeting on 14 June 2019, the Committee of Permanent Representatives considered a paper on *Options for an Improved Framework for Reporting on Implementation of UN Environment Assembly Resolutions*, prepared by the Secretariat. The Committee requested that the Secretariat submit to its next regular meeting (at the 147th Committee meeting):

- (i) a revised options paper based on comments received from Member States by the 30 June deadline, and;
- (ii) a proposal for the monitoring mechanism for consideration.

This revised options paper addresses the comments received. These included: focus on all UNEAs as the scope of work, more information on opportunities for voluntary reporting by Member States, clarity on the web-based monitoring mechanism and its link to the reporting options, more information on resources needed and, some specific comments on the different reporting options. This version of the paper sets out a concrete proposal for a web-based mechanism to monitor the implementation of UNEA resolutions. It outlines the website parameters, presents a monitoring framework for work by the Secretariat on mandates to the Executive Director and proposes parameters for voluntary reporting by Member States. It also provides a roadmap for work on the monitoring mechanism and highlights outstanding issues and next steps.

II. Current Reporting Practice

The Executive Director reports to Member States on the programme and budget performance through Programme performance reports and quarterly reports, which are structured in line with the expected accomplishments and indicators of performance in the approved programme of work. Programme of work reporting is based on an approved results framework that specifies clear metrics for measurement such as expected accomplishments, indicators of achievement and targets, based on units of measure, baselines, data sources and analysis plans. Sub-Programme coordinators report on the implementation of the programme of work under the supervision of Lead Division Directors.

Unlike the Programme of Work, UNEA resolutions are adopted without metrics for progress reporting.

UNEA resolutions are assigned Focal Points, who are responsible for taking the lead on implementation and reporting of the resolutions, under the supervision of designated lead Division Directors.

In response to formal reporting requests by UNEA, as specified in individual resolutions, the Executive Director provides pre-session official reports translated into the 6 UN languages. For UNEA-4 those reports are available [here](#).

In addition, for UNEA 1, 2 and 3, comprehensive pre-session information documents have provided updates on progress of implementation of mandates to the Executive Director in the resolutions adopted.

The latest such background information document is available [here](#).

Information of implementation of resolutions is also provided through dedicated presentations on the implementation of specific resolutions organized by the Secretariat at sub-committee or regular CPR meetings.

Table 1 below outlines 6 different ways in which the Secretariat currently reports on the implementation of resolutions.

Table 1: Reporting on Resolutions: Current Frequency and Format				
	Method	Where	When	How/Format
1	Pre-session official reports per resolution by the Executive Director, as required by the resolutions.	OECP/UNEA	Every odd year at OECP/UNEA session ¹	By resolution, UNEA working or information documents, published on the papersmart portal
2	Comprehensive information documents on implementation of resolutions adopted at previous UNEA Sessions²	Annual Subcommittee meetings ³ and OECP/UNEA Sessions	Annual/4 th Session of UNEA	Compilation report covering many individual resolutions
3	Secretariat presentations in support of Agenda items at Sub-Committee meetings or Committee meetings	Sub-Committee meetings or Committee meetings	As mandated by Governing Body, requested by the CPR Bureau or Ad-hoc	Note from the Secretariat and verbal presentation
4	Dedicated Secretariat briefings on implementation of individual resolutions to Member States	Briefing sessions to the CPR	Ad-hoc, as requested by the CPR bureau, CPR members, or suggested by secretariat	Note from the Secretariat and verbal presentation Verbal and PPT presentations
5	References in Programme Performance Reports	OECP/UNEA/CPR/Annual Subcommittee meeting	Every six months in line with Programme of Work reporting	As relevant to Sub-Programme performance

¹ Following transition from even to odd years in 2017.

³ No Information document is presented at the 6th Annual Sub-committee Meeting pending decision on reporting option

Table 1: Reporting on Resolutions: Current Frequency and Format				
6	References in Quarterly reports of the Executive Director	Regular CPR meetings	Covers 3-month periods (Jan-March; April-June; July-Sept; Oct-Dec) ⁴	As relevant to Sub-Programme updates

The requests to the Executive Director in the resolutions and the Programme of Work vary from a reporting perspective. Some link to specific performance indicators; others to expected accomplishments. Some are cross-cutting while some have tenuous links at the Sub-Programme level. An important element of a new monitoring mechanism (see below) is to facilitate improved progress reporting and comparison across resolutions.

Further consideration and clarification are needed with regard to the relationship between the implementation of UNEA resolutions and the implementation of the Programme of Work. Such consideration could be undertaken in the context of the Committee of Permanent Representatives based review of UNEA and its subsidiary bodies mandated by UNEA- 4.⁵ This should include consideration of how best to incorporate relevant mandates into the programme of work.

There are four key challenges to be addressed in getting a comprehensive picture of the implementation of resolutions in the context of the Programme of Work and Budget:

- (i) Integrating and rationalizing the relationship between mandates given in a resolution, or in a ministerial declaration, with the activities mandated through the approved programme of work and budget.
- (ii) Developing a standardized process/procedure for monitoring and motivating reporting back on actions to implement resolutions by actors other than the Executive Director such as Member States and UN organizations.
- (iii) Motivating greater feedback and guidance from Member States on reports produced by the Secretariat on implementation of UNEA resolutions.
- (iv) Seeking additional guidance from Member States on resolutions with financial implications going beyond what has been provided for under the approved Programme of Work.

This proposed web-based monitoring mechanism and reporting options will help address these challenges.

⁴ Frequency may be adjusted to avoid duplication with Programme Performance Reporting

⁵ UNEP/EA.4/2, Provisional agenda, date and venue of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, Ops. 9 and 10

III. Proposed Options

All three options outlined below seek to improve overall reporting of implementation of resolutions to Member States and by Member States, strengthen the link between reporting on implementation of resolutions and the Programme of Work and its expected accomplishment indicators and address possible gaps in existing monitoring and reporting processes. A new and complementary monitoring mechanism (see Section VI) to track progress on implementation of all UNEA resolutions, once developed, would complement the selected reporting option. Consideration is given to the need for greater efficiency and to minimize the reporting burden on the Secretariat. This will include preventing duplication of reporting through programme performance reporting through Quarterly reports of the Executive Director, Programme Performance review and reporting and reports on implementation of resolutions.

1. Option One: "Improved Status Quo"

Option One builds upon and improves the existing reporting framework. Improvements would include clearer parameters for reporting on all resolutions based on a monitoring framework; better scheduled and structured presentations at Sub-committee or Committee meetings agenda items; and advance communication in the governing bodies calendar of meetings.

Components of Option One

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pre-session official reports of the Executive Director to future UNEA sessions as mandated by UNEA in the resolutions (no change).2. Information document on implementation of resolutions of previous UNEA by UNEA Sessions.3. Presentations in support of Agenda items at Sub-Committee meetings or Committee meetings at least once in the inter-sessional period, according to a structured schedule approved by the CPR bureau.4. References in Programme Performance Reports as relevant to POW performance indicators.5. Progress updates provided in Quarterly reports of the Executive Director to the CPR, in relation to activities under the Programme of Work.6. Reports to be generated by the Secretariat using proposed web-based monitoring mechanism |
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Main benefits: More structured, predictable, comprehensive and comparable reporting compared to current practices

Main disadvantages: Focus is largely on the resolutions where there is progress; reporting burden on the Secretariat is significant, often requiring double-reporting.

2. Option Two: "Rationalization"

For the second option, reporting on resolutions would be entirely integrated into the programme performance reporting, combined with dedicated presentations on resolution implementation at Sub-committee or Committee meetings, upon request. Programme performance reporting is adjusted and rationalized, to eliminate any overlap between Programme Performance Reporting and quarterly reports to the regular meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives in reporting periods. Presentations communicated ahead of time in the calendar of meetings.

Components of Option Two

1. Pre-session formal reports of the Executive Director to future UNEA sessions as mandated by UNEA in the resolutions. (no change)
2. Reporting on resolutions are fully incorporated into reporting into Programme Performance Reports, as relevant to approved Programme of Work performance indicators.
3. Progress in implementation of the resolutions is also reported in Quarterly reports of the Executive Director, as part of activity highlights as per Expected Accomplishment in each Sub-Programme.
4. Dedicated presentations on the implementation of specific resolutions, as they relate to the Programme of Work, are organized at Sub-Committee meetings or Committee meetings in a structured manner following guidance from the CPR Bureau.⁶
5. Reports to be generated by the Secretariat using proposed web-based monitoring mechanism

Main benefits: Reporting on resolutions and Programme of Work is more streamlined and structured. Also allows for in-depth intersessional consideration of individual resolutions in a structured manner, following guidance from the CPR Bureau.

Main disadvantages: Reporting burden for the Secretariat still substantial. Will lead to longer Programme Performance reports.

3. Option Three: "Minimalistic"

The third option maintains current referencing of resolutions into Programme of work reporting (PPR and Quarterly), in addition to mandated resolution reports. It also rationalizes programme performance reporting, to eliminate overlap of Programme Performance Reporting Quarterly reporting periods and updates/Reports by the Executive Director mandated as by the UNEA. It assumes that since Member

⁶ This could borrow from the SDG review model used by the HLPF.

States will have access to online information through the proposed web-based monitoring mechanism, fewer specific reports and briefings on resolution implementation to them will be needed.

Components of Option Three

1. Pre-session formal reports of the Executive Director to future UNEA sessions as mandated by UNEA in the resolutions. (no change)
2. References to progress in implementation of UNEA resolutions is made in Programme Performance Reports and in the Quarterly reports, as the relate to the implementation of the Programme of Work Subprogrammes.

Main benefits: Meets mandatory UNEA resolution reporting, and integrates reporting on resolutions with the reporting on the Programme of work, while creating and lower reporting burden for the Secretariat thereby allowing for more resources being devoted to implementation.

Main disadvantages: Requires member States to proactively track progress on the implementation of resolutions through the online monitoring tool, with limited opportunity to review the implementation of specific resolutions in the context of subcommittee and regular meetings of the CPR.

IV. Overview of the Three Options

Table 2 below provides an overview summary of the three options proposed above.

Table 2: Reporting on Resolutions in POW context: Comparison of Options			
Method	Option One	Option Two	Option Three
Updates/Reports by the Executive Director mandated by the UNEA	√	√	√
Information documents on implementation of resolutions by UNEA Sessions ⁷	√	X	X
Presentations in support of Agenda items at Sub-Committee meetings or Committee meetings by resolution	√	X	X
Presentations in support of Agenda items at Sub-Committee meetings or Committee meetings by Sub-Programme	X	√	X
References in Programme Performance Reports	√	X	√
References in Quarterly reports of the Executive Director	√	√	√
Full integration into Programme Performance Reports	X	√	X
Reports Generated by Secretariat using proposed Web-based Monitoring Mechanism	√	√	X

⁷ Parameters: Mandate to the Executive Director, implementation plan, progress, partners, financial implications, challenges, opportunities, gaps.

V. Current Monitoring Practice for the Programme of Work

Current monitoring of the Programme of Work is based on self-assessments carried out at subprogramme and project levels by lead Divisions and Regional Offices, under six-monthly intervals. These self-assessments are subjected to a rigorous validation process. Assessments of UNEP projects provide essential inputs to the monitoring process and therefore the quality of project data and project assessments are central to its success.

Our internal system, the Programme Information and Management System (PIMS) provides the main database tool where collected assessment data (including evidence) is uploaded to allow for analysis and observation of trends by division and by subprogramme. A transition from PIMS to the UMOJA extension 2 PPM module is expected to be rolled out in 2019 and 2020, but the exact time frame is not yet known.

As further outlined below, it is foreseen that the new online monitoring mechanism as requested by UNEA resolution 4/22 will build on the existing monitoring practice.

VI. Proposal for a New Online Monitoring Mechanism for UNEA Resolutions

1. Potential Benefits

- Robust, accessible and timely implementation tracking of individual resolutions, as well as comparison across resolutions;
- Opportunity for voluntary online reporting on the implementation of resolutions by member States and other stakeholders;
- Renewed focus on impacts and outcomes from UNEA resolutions;
- Additional relevant information on contribution to overarching goals (Sustainable Development Goals and intergovernmental agreements) and relevance to regional and national levels;
- Opportunity for learning, including peer learning among Member States.
- Support to decision making for future UNEA resolutions

2. Website

The proposed web-based monitoring mechanism will build on existing tools and formats. A landing page will provide, a. summaries of the resolutions and links to resolutions texts, b. links to the Programme of

Work, existing reports, SDGs and their targets, and MEAs, c. link to status of implementation of the mandates of the Executive Director.

From the landing page, Member States and stakeholders will also be able to access the space for voluntary reporting on their work or contribution to implementation of resolutions. Figures 1 and 2 outline key parameters for monitoring and reporting on implementation by the Secretariat of the mandates to the Executive Director and for voluntary reporting by Member States.

3. Monitoring and Reporting by Secretariat

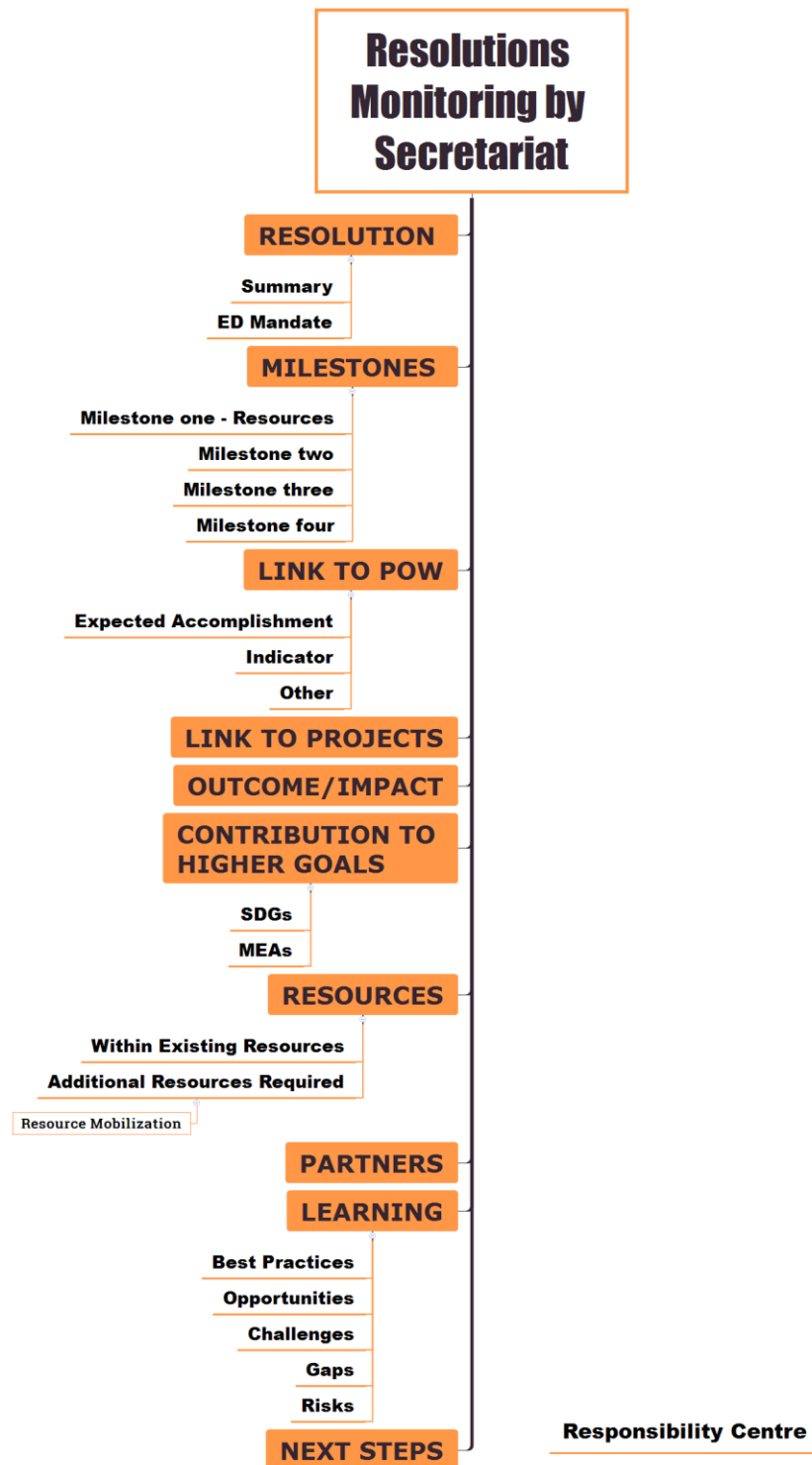


Figure 1: Proposed monitoring and reporting parameters for Secretariat

4. Voluntary Reporting by Member States

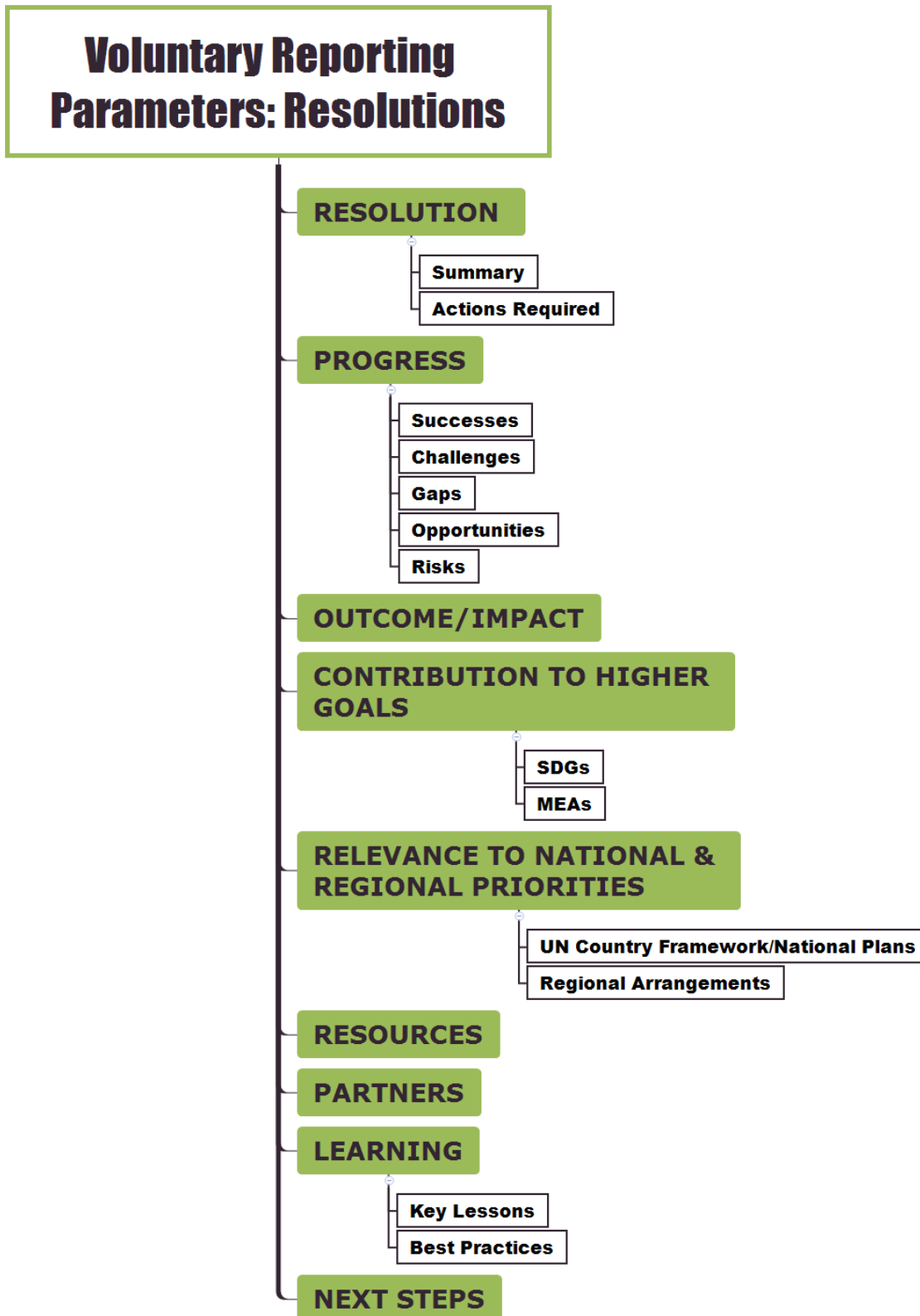


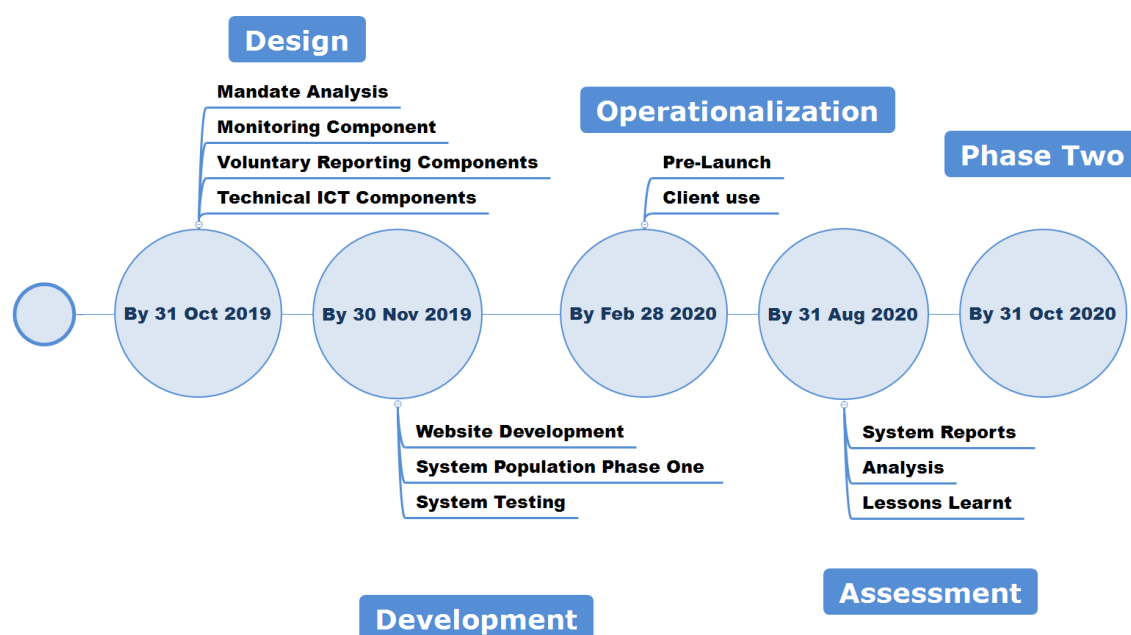
Figure 2: Proposed Voluntary Reporting Parameters for Member States

5. Roadmap for Monitoring Mechanism

Figure 3 below sets out a proposed roadmap for the development of a Monitoring Mechanism on resolutions.

It covers the design, operationalization, development and assessment of phase one. By 31 October mandate analysis, work on technical ICT components, and parameters for Secretariat and Member State reporting will be completed. Work on content development is already ongoing. The website design is expected to be completed by 30 November 2019 and the full monitoring mechanism will be launched by the end of the first quarter of 2020.

Figure 3: Roadmap for Resolutions Monitoring Mechanism



The proposed monitoring mechanism can make a positive contribution to the quality and effectiveness of future UNEA decisions and help track the overall impacts of UNEA as the leading global authority that sets the environment agenda.

VII. Outstanding issues.

1. Resources

For meaningful monitoring and reporting it is important to differentiate between resolutions to be implemented within existing resources and those for which additional funding is required. Further work is needed to clarify to which extent UNEA resolutions cannot be implemented through the adopted Programme of Work and Budget, and to which extent implementation will require action where the UNEP Secretariat is not in the lead.

In the case of UNEA/EA.4/Res.22, as indicated to the 146th CPR meeting, while resources are available for the options paper (for an improved framework for reporting on the implementation of UNEA resolutions), there is a shortfall with respect to work on the online Monitoring Mechanism. Table 3 below outlines the additional resources needed.

Table 3: Additional Resources required for Monitoring Mechanism			
Item	No. (Years)	Annual Cost (US\$)	(Cost US\$)
<u>Staff costs</u>			
One P2 40% Staff time	0.4	125,200	50,080
Two UNVs	1	36,000	36,000
One Graphic designer	0.25	42,000	10,500
<u>Other</u>			
Cost for server Hosting	1	500	500
Total Cost for One year			<u>97,080</u>

It is envisaged that work on the mechanism will be carried out in phases. The second phase is expected to:

- Cover reporting by other actors like Major Groups and stakeholders, UN agencies, private sector and other partners.

- Continue work on the UNEA resolutions that may not be covered under the first phase in light of the available resources.
- Incorporate feedback received from the first phase

VIII. Next Steps

- ✚ Member States are invited to indicate their preferred option of the reporting framework, based on this revised paper, at the sixth Annual Sub-committee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
- ✚ Member States are invited to provide comments on the proposal for a monitoring mechanism for resolutions, including the voluntary reporting parameters by member States, at the sixth Annual Sub-Committee meeting.
- ✚ The Secretariat will continue work on the development of the monitoring mechanism with regard to content development, IT system development, and additional costing analysis on the relationship between resolutions and the Programme of Work.

IX. Annexes

- Annex 1: UNEP/EA.4/Res. 22 (L.26): Implementation and follow-up of the UN Environment Assembly Resolutions: Mandates for the Executive Director ([available here](#))
- Annex 2: List of Resolutions and Decisions: First to Fourth Sessions of the UN Environment Assembly ([available here](#))