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**Annual subcommittee meeting of
the Committee of Permanent Representatives
to the United Nations Environment Programme
Twelfth meeting**

Nairobi, 1 – 5 September 2025
10:00 – 13:00 and 15:00 – 18:00
Conference Room 2 (in person) and
Microsoft Teams (online)
Item 3 of the provisional agenda

**Programme Performance Report of the
United Nations Environment Programme for 2024**

This document has been developed by the Secretariat to provide an update on progress made on the development of the Global Environmental Data Strategy (GEDS) since the last consultation with the Committee held on 17 April 2025. It includes an overview of the feedback received on the first draft of GEDS (Draft 1) and refers to additional expert groups and regional groups consultations to be held in June 2025.

In addition, it also describes the structural changes that UNEP has implemented to make the GEDS shorter and more action oriented, in line with Member State feedback on the first draft. This includes developing a new “priority action” chapter, setting out potential actions by UNEP and other stakeholders and including illustrative timelines and budgets.

It is complemented by the second draft of UNEP’s Global Environmental Data Strategy (Draft 2) which set out in document UNEP/CPR/ASC/12/Add.1.

Overview of UNEP's Global Environmental Data Strategy

UNEP's mandate to develop GEDS

The Global Environmental Data Strategy (GEDS) is UNEP's initiative to strengthen the global environmental data ecosystem. It aims to address critical gaps in data availability, accessibility, quality and interoperability, ensuring that timely and reliable environmental data is available for decision-making. Mandated by UNEA resolution 4/23 (2019), GEDS has been developed through extensive consultation with Member States, UN entities, scientific bodies and stakeholders. It presents a comprehensive overview of challenges in the environmental data ecosystem, as well as best practices and recommended actions at local, national, and global levels. The strategy will be integrated into UNEP's next Medium-Term Strategy (2026-2029) to provide a structured approach to environmental data governance and align with UNEP's broader strategic priorities.

Stakeholder feedback on draft 1

Since the publication of GEDS draft 1 in March 2025, UNEP received feedback from Member States at the CPR meeting on 17 April 2025, as well as **21 formal submissions** (Annex 1) through the online feedback form. Online inputs came from Member States, intergovernmental organizations, and Major Groups.

Key feedback themes included:

- **Clarity and actionability:** Many stakeholders requested a shorter, more accessible document focused on concrete actions and a roadmap for both UNEP and Member States.
- **Stronger prioritization:** Calls for clearer identification of UNEP's role, proposed activities, and indicative costs/timelines.
- **Inclusivity and equity:** Several submissions emphasized the need for more focus on support for low- and middle-income countries and the integration of Indigenous data and perspectives.
- **Alignment and interoperability:** Stakeholders emphasized the need for greater harmonization of data standards frameworks across use cases, including corporate disclosure, environmental risk analysis, and environmental disaster preparedness.

In parallel with the written feedback, the UNEP Office of the Chief Digital Officer held focused consultations with the following stakeholder groups between April and June 2025 (Annex 2). Discussions with data standards organizations such as ISO, OGC, and CODATA focused on addressing interoperability challenges and coordinating metadata standards and dictionaries across domains. As part of this work UNEP launched a research collaboration with ISO to map out environmental data ISO standards that align with the GEDS framework. The result of this exercise will be available in GEDS draft 2.

The UNEP Office of the Chief Digital Officer also conducted consultations with several teams within UNEP and in partner organizations to explore particular themes. For example, interactions with the UNEP Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) Collaboration Unit and MEA secretariats provided insights into the challenges, best practices and potential areas of collaboration with the MEAs. Engagement with the UNEP Finance Initiative explored how to better integrate corporate sustainability disclosures and ESG data into the GEDS framework. Consultations with life cycle assessment (LCA) experts within UNEP and at the

UN Transparency Protocol centered on harmonizing product-level data standards to support credible sustainability metrics across supply chains.

Collectively, these inputs have shaped a more action-oriented and streamlined structure for the updated draft, which also incorporates a more detailed overview of the existing data governance mechanisms.

Revised structure of GEDS draft 2

Responding to stakeholder feedback, the revised version of GEDS has been significantly shortened. The detailed analysis of challenges and potential responses that underpins the recommended actions has been moved to an annex, with the strategy itself including a much shorter summary. As such GEDS will be structured around two core sections:

1. Summary of challenges and priority responses

This section maps out the key challenges identified across five pillars:

1. Data governance
2. Data quality and provenance
3. Data interoperability
4. Data accessibility and affordability
5. Data capacity-building

For each pillar, a short summary presents core issues and systemic challenges and then maps out the key responses needed to address them.

2. Priority action areas for UNEP and Member States

Based on the consultations with Member States and other stakeholders, this section outlines a set of priority action areas, designed to catalyse transformation of the global environmental data ecosystem. These are:

1. Developing national environmental data strategies and policies
2. Strengthening environmental data quality and trust frameworks
3. Building evidence for action: essential variables and scientific data standards
4. Harmonizing interoperability standards for environmental data
5. Ensuring consistent and credible product sustainability disclosures
6. Enabling federated access to environmental data
7. Guaranteeing equitable access to core data
8. Building needed capacities – human, institutional, technical
9. Enabling uptake of GEDS at country level

For each priority area, the document details:

- Rationale and impact
- Key stakeholders and roles
- A proposed UNEP-led initiative for potential consideration by UNEA-7

- Indicative timelines and budget ranges

A consolidated Roadmap Table will present indicative milestones and funding needs across 2026–2035.

Next steps

To refine GEDS draft 2, UNEP will organize additional informal hybrid consultations between 26 June and 1 July 2025, bringing together Nairobi-based delegates in person and technical experts from capitals online. GEDS draft 2 will then be circulated to CPR members in early August 2025, accompanied by a feedback form to gather targeted input.

Drawing on the outcomes of the consultations and subsequent feedback, the final draft will be presented during a dedicated session at the 12th Annual Subcommittee meeting of the CPR in September 2025.

Annex 1 Countries and Major Groups that provided feedback on GEDS draft 1 via the online form

Group	Entity
Member State	Philippines
Major Group	Atlantic State Legal Foundation Inc (ASLF)
Member State	Haiti
Member State	Oman
Member of a Specialized Agency	INEGI
Member State	Spain
Major Group	Chemichemi Foundation
NGO	Fauna & Flora
Member State	Mexico
LAMG	Global Cities Hub
LAMG	Global Cities Hub
Member State	Norway
Member State	Hungary
Member State	France
Member State	Germany
Member State	Italy
Member State	Switzerland
Member State	Canada
Member State	Iraq
Member State	Chile
Regional Group	EU

Annex 2 Additional Expert Group online consultations taking place April – June 2025

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name
UN	UNEP FI
UN	UNECE
UN	UNEP EWAD
UN	UNEP Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) Collaboration Unit
UN	UNEP IED
SDO	ISO
SDO	OGC
SDO	Ordnance Survey
Committee on Data of the ISC	CODATA