

Meeting of the Bureau of the UN Environment Assembly  
Wednesday 3 July 2019,  
09:00a.m. – 12:30p.m.  
Trondheim, Norway

**Note to Bureau of the UN Environment Assembly**  
**“The role and expectations of the UNEA Bureau”**

This document serves as the background document for Agenda Item 4: From Vision to reality

The note sets out the composition, mandates, standard practices as well as a visual overview and draft terms of reference for the UNEA Bureau. The draft terms of reference were initially considered by the Bureau of the fourth session of UNEA.

## **Role and expectations for the UNEA Bureau**

### **1. Composition and election of the UNEA Bureau**

The UNEA Bureau is composed of 10 members, 2 from each region with 1 President, 8 Vice Presidents and 1 Rapporteur, which are elected at the end of each regular session of UNEA, based on regional rotation. A visual overview of the UNEA bureau as part of UNEA governing bodies is found in [Annex I](#).

The current composition is as follows:

|                  |                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| President:       | Western Europe & Others Group (Norway)                                                                                                                                          |
| Vice Presidents: | Africa Group (Burkina Faso)<br>Asia Pacific Group (Bahrain & Indonesia)<br>Eastern European Group (Estonia & Serbia)<br>Latin America & Caribbean Group (Costa Rica & Suriname) |
|                  | Western Europe & Others Group (France)                                                                                                                                          |
| Rapporteur:      | Africa Group (South Africa)                                                                                                                                                     |

### **2. Relevant mandates for the Bureau**

Rule 18 of the UN Environment Assembly Rules of Procedure states that:

*“The Bureau shall assist the President in the general conduct of business of UNEA.”*

Governing Council Decision 27/2 states the following (paragraph 6):

*“Decides that the Bureau of the governing body of UNEP shall be composed of 10 members to reflect the universality of the governing body, in accordance with equitable geographical distribution, and will assist the governing body and perform the functions as set out in the rules of procedure of the governing body.”*

UNEA decision 4/2 states the following (paragraphs 2-5):

2. Decides also that, in accordance with paragraph 10 of Governing Council decision 27/2 of 22 February 2013 and paragraph 2 of its resolution 2/22 of 27 May 2016, the 5th meeting of the Open-ended CPR will take place from 15 to 19 February 2021, without prejudice to decisions on further meetings of the Open-ended CPR, and requests the CPR to discuss, in consultation with the Bureau of the UNEA, and decide, on the format and agenda of the meeting;

4. Requests the CPR, in consultation with the Bureau of the UNEA, to contribute to the preparation of the annotations to the provisional agenda set out in paragraph 3 above;

5. Requests the Bureau of the UNEA, in consultation with the CPR, to define a theme for the Environment Assembly no later than 31 December 2019;

### **3. Standard practice of the Bureau**

Standard practice also suggest that the Bureau members should support the President in the preparations for each upcoming session of the UN Environment Assembly, including the development of a draft Ministerial Declaration and also increase visibility of the UN Environment Assembly by representing the Bureau at relevant international conferences and events, including global and regional fora addressing issues relating to environment and sustainable development.

The Secretariat has developed draft terms of reference, which were considered by the Bureau of the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly. The draft is annexed to this note (Annex 2).

## ANNEX 1: Overview of the current governance structure of UN Environment Programme

# UN Environment Programme Governance Structure

Governed by mandates in resolutions, rules of procedure and established practises

## United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA)

The leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda; established at Rio + 20 in 2012  
Universal membership; Chaired by the UNEA President

UNEA-1: 23-27 June 2014 - UNEA-2: 23-27 May 2016 - UNEA-3: 4-6 December 2017  
UNEA-4: 11-15 March 2019 - **UNEA-5: 22-26 February 2021**

### UNEA Bureau

- 10 members from 5 regions; leads the preparation of UNEA
- Chaired by UNEA President
- Meets 4-6 times per year, sometimes jointly with CPR Bureau

### CPR Bureau

- 5 Members from 5 regions; leads the preparation of CPR meetings
- Current Chair from African region
- Meets monthly, sometimes jointly with UNEA Bureau

## Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR)

- Subsidiary inter-sessional body of the Environment Assembly
- Responsible for review and follow-up of the UNEP Programme of Work and UNEA decisions and resolutions, and for preparing for the OECPR and UNEA
- Composed of about 120 member States representatives accredited to UNEP (90 in Nairobi)
- Meets formally 4 times per year – usually full day meetings
- Meets informally as a subcommittee about once per month to address specific issues

### Open-Ended CPR Meetings

- Meets in odd years for 5 days, either back-to-back with UNEA or 2-3 months ahead
- Chaired by the CPR Chair
- Acts as a "PREPCOM" for UNEA
- Pre-negotiates UNEA resolutions
- Next meeting 15-19 February 2021

### Annual Subcommittee Meetings

- Meets annually for 5 days, usually in October; chaired by the CPR Chair
- Review and oversight of the current PoW
- Guidance on future PoW
- Representatives from Capitals invited

## **ANNEX 2: Draft terms of reference of the Bureau of the UN Environment Assembly**

### Election and composition of the Bureau

1. During the final meeting of a regular session, the United Nations Environment Assembly shall elect a President, eight Vice-Presidents and a Rapporteur from among its members who shall constitute the Bureau. The Bureau shall assist the President in the general conduct of business of the United Nations Environment Assembly. The chairpersons of sessional committees or working parties shall be invited to participate in Bureau meetings. In electing its officers, the United Nations Environment Assembly shall ensure that each of the five regions is represented by two members. The Offices of President and Rapporteur shall normally be subject to rotation among the five regions.

### Replacement of a Bureau member

2. During a session of the Assembly, if a Bureau member, except the President, is unable to permanently carry out any of her or his functions, the Assembly may elect an alternate upon appointment by a Member State or by the regional group to which that member belongs. During the intersessional period, if a Bureau member resigns or is unable to exercise her or his functions, the Member State or the regional group to which that Member belongs shall nominate a replacement for the remainder of the term. The Executive Director shall inform all members of the Assembly of the nomination in writing. If within one month no objections are received in writing, the nominee is elected. If a Member State objects, the nominee is elected if a majority of member States responding support the nominee.

### Term of Office

3. The President, the Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur shall hold office until their successors are elected. They shall commence their terms of office at the closure of the session at which they are elected and remain in office until closure of the next regular session. They are eligible for re-election.

### Meetings of the Bureau

4. The Bureau shall meet at least [4] times annually. Depending on the agenda, the President may invite observers to attend Bureau meetings. The President may also invite other individuals or organizations as observers if they have qualifications with regard to matters on the agenda.

### Quorum

5. The President may declare a meeting open when at least on third of the members of the Bureau that have been elected by the Environment Assembly to the Bureau are present. The present of a majority of members shall be required for any decision to be taken.

### Joint Bureau Meetings

6. Joint Bureau meetings may be held between the Bureau of the Environment Assembly and the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives. The Chairs of both Bureaus may alternate in chairing a joint meeting. Joint meetings shall be convened for the purpose of conducting consultations between the Bureaus and shall not take decisions, which should be adopted separately by each Bureau.

### Functions of the Bureau

7. The Bureau with the support of the Secretariat shall:

- a) Carry out the tasks entrusted to it by the Environment Assembly;
  - b) Assist the President in the general conduct of business of the Assembly, including the review of credentials;
  - c) Prepare for the sessions of the Assembly, including by providing guidance on the selection of an over-arching theme for the Assembly, advising and providing input on the preparation of the provisional agenda, the draft programme of work and the scheduling of items for the Assembly;
  - d) Consider and facilitate the negotiation of draft resolutions and decisions for consideration by the Assembly;
  - e) Recommend the allocation of items to subsidiary bodies of the Assembly;
  - f) Provide guidance on relevant meetings of an informal nature related to the Assembly;
  - g) Ensure that there is coherence and complementarity between the work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the Environment Assembly.
8. The Bureau shall perform its functions in a manner that is without prejudice to the role and mandate of the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives, which is the subsidiary inter-sessional body of the governing body of the United Nations Environment Programme.

Final provisions

9. The Bureau shall conduct its business in English.

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the Bureau on \_\_\_\_\_ and may be amended with the agreement of all the members of the Bureau.