



SUMMARY OF THE FIRST UN ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY OF THE UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME: 23-27 JUNE 2014

The first United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was held at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, from 23-27 June 2014. More than 1,200 participants, including environment ministers, heads of international organizations, government representatives, civil society representatives and business leaders, attended the assembly. The overarching theme of the session was “Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, including sustainable consumption and production.”

During the week, delegates convened in plenary sessions, a Committee of the Whole (COW), and several working and contact groups to consider draft decisions. Ministers and international leaders including UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and John Ashe, President of the 68th UN General Assembly, gathered during UNEA’s High-level Segment (HLS), themed “A Life of Dignity for All.” Participants addressed two issues: sustainable development goals (SDGs), including sustainable consumption and production (SCP); and illegal trade in wildlife, focusing on the escalation in poaching and the surge in related environmental crime. In addition to the ministerial discussions, the UNEA convened two symposia addressing two key aspects of environmental sustainability: the environmental rule of law and financing a green economy.

Delegates adopted one decision and 17 resolutions on, *inter alia*: strengthening UNEP’s role in promoting air quality; the science-policy interface (SPI); ecosystem-based adaptation (EBA); implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development; illegal trade in wildlife; chemicals and waste; and marine debris and microplastics. During the closing plenary on Friday, the Ministerial Outcome Document of the UNEA of UNEP was adopted, although several member states noted their reservations with the document.

Many described the first session of the UNEA as a historic event but called for continued efforts to strengthen UNEP to support implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF UNEP

As a result of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, the UN General Assembly (UNGA), in resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 1972, established UNEP as the central UN node for global environmental cooperation and treaty making. The resolution also established the UNEP Governing Council (GC) to provide a forum for the international community to address major and emerging environmental policy issues. The GC’s responsibilities included the promotion of international environmental cooperation and the recommendation of policies to achieve it, and the provision of policy guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programmes in the UN system. The GC reported to the UN General Assembly, which had been responsible for electing its 58 members, taking into account the principle of equitable geographic representation. The Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF) was constituted by the GC as envisaged by General Assembly resolution 53/242 (1998). The purpose of the GMEF was to institute, at a high political level, a process for reviewing important and emerging policy issues in the field of the environment.

GCSS7/GMEF: This meeting was held from 13-15 February 2002, in Cartagena, Colombia. In its decision SS.VII/1, the GC/GMEF adopted recommendations aimed at strengthening international environmental governance (IEG), including

IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of UNEP	1
Report of the Meeting	3
Parallel Symposia and Forums	4
Committee of the Whole	4
High-level Segment	11
Closing Plenary	13
A Brief Analysis of the Meeting	14
Upcoming Meetings	16
Glossary	18

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Beate Antonich, Asheline Appleton, Wangu Mwangi, Delia Paul, Mihaela Secieru, Jessica Templeton, Ph.D., and Brett Wertz. The Digital Editors are Manu Kabahizi and Kiara Worth. The Editor is Pamela Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James “Kimo” Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Bulletin* are the European Commission (DG-ENV and DG-CLIMATE) and the Government of Switzerland (the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC)). General Support for the *Bulletin* during 2014 is provided by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB), the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, SWAN International, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Japanese Ministry of Environment (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Specific funding for coverage of this meeting has been provided by UNEP. Funding for translation of the *Bulletin* into French has been provided by the Government of France, the Wallonia, Québec, and the International Organization of La Francophonie/Institute for Sustainable Development of La Francophonie (IOF/IFDD). The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD or other donors. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 300 East 56th St., 11D, New York, NY 10022 USA.



<http://enb.iisd.mobi/>

through: improved coherence in international environmental policy-making; strengthening the role and financial situation of UNEP; improved coordination among, and effectiveness of, multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs); and capacity building, technology transfer and country-level coordination. Delegates also adopted decisions related to, *inter alia*, the strategic approach to international chemicals management (SAICM).

GC22/GMEF: This meeting took place from 3-7 February 2003, in Nairobi, Kenya. Delegates adopted more than 40 decisions on issues relating to IEG, post-conflict environmental assessment, UNEP's water policy and strategy, SAICM, a mercury programme, support to Africa, production and consumption patterns, and the environment and cultural diversity.

GCSS8/GMEF: This meeting took place from 29-31 March 2004, in Jeju, Republic of Korea. At the conclusion of the ministerial consultations, delegates adopted the "Jeju Initiative," containing the Chair's summary of the discussions and decisions on: small island developing states (SIDS); waste management; water resource management; regional annexes; and the implementation of decision SS.VII/1 on IEG.

GC23/GMEF: This meeting took place from 21-25 February 2005, in Nairobi, Kenya. Ministers adopted decisions on, among other things: the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building; IEG; chemicals management; UNEP's water policy and strategy; gender equality and the environment; poverty and the environment; and strengthening environmental emergency response and developing disaster prevention, preparedness, mitigation and early warning systems.

GCSS9/GMEF: This meeting was held from 7-9 February 2006, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Ministerial consultations addressed, *inter alia*: policy issues relating to energy and the environment, chemicals management, and tourism and the environment. The plenary discussions on environmental governance and universal membership of the GC did not produce an agreed outcome, and delegates decided that the report of the meeting should reflect the divergence of views expressed.

GC24/GMEF: This meeting convened from 5-9 February 2007, in Nairobi, Kenya. Delegates adopted 15 decisions on issues relating to, *inter alia*: chemicals, including a provision to establish the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group to Review and Assess Measures to Address the Global Issue of Mercury; the world environment situation; IEG; South-South cooperation; waste management; 2010-2020 UN Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification; UNEP's updated water policy and strategy; and support to Africa for environmental management and protection.

GCSS10/GMEF: Convening in Monaco from 20-22 February 2008, ministerial consultations addressed the emerging policy issues of mobilizing finance to meet the climate challenge, and IEG and UN reform. The GC/GMEF adopted five decisions on: the UNEP Medium-term Strategy 2010-2013; chemicals management, including mercury and waste management; the Global Environment Outlook; sustainable development of the Arctic region; and the International Decade for Combating Climate Change.

GC25/GMEF: GC25/GMEF convened from 16-20 February 2009 in Nairobi, Kenya. The GC/GMEF adopted 17 decisions on issues relating to, *inter alia*: chemicals management, including mercury; the world environment situation; environmental law; and an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). Decision 25/4 on IEG established a regionally representative, consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives to present a set of options for improving IEG.

GCSS11/GMEF: GCSS11/GMEF convened from 24-26 February 2010 in Bali, Indonesia, and adopted eight decisions on: IEG; enhanced coordination across the UN, including the Environment Management Group; a follow-up report on the environmental situation in Gaza; IPBES; strengthening the environmental response in Haiti; oceans; a consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes; and environmental law.

GC26/GMEF: This meeting took place from 21-24 February 2011 in Nairobi, Kenya. Seventeen decisions were adopted on issues relating to, *inter alia*: chemicals and waste management; the world environment situation; IEG; IPBES; South-South cooperation; and strengthening international cooperation for environmental crisis response.

GCSS12/GMEF: Convening from 20-22 February 2012, in Nairobi, Kenya, this meeting marked the 40th anniversary of the establishment of UNEP. Eight decisions were adopted, including on: "UNEP at 40;" IEG; the world environment situation; SCP; and the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes.

RIO+20: The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), or Rio+20, convened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 13-22 June 2012. With regard to UNEP, the outcome document, *The Future We Want*, called for the UNGA to take decisions on, *inter alia*: designating a body to operationalize the 10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, and strengthening and upgrading UNEP, including: universal membership in the GC; secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resources from the UN regular budget; enhanced ability to fulfill its coordination mandate within the UN system; promoting a strong science-policy interface; disseminating and sharing evidence-based environmental information and raising public awareness; providing capacity building to countries; consolidating headquarters functions in Nairobi and strengthening its regional presence; and ensuring the active participation of all relevant stakeholders.

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY: On 21 December, 2012, the 67th session of the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 67/213 on strengthening and upgrading UNEP and establishing universal membership of its Governing Council. The resolution also calls for UNEP to receive secure, stable and increased financial resources from the UN regular budget and urges other UNEP donors to increase their voluntary funding. On 13 March 2013, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 67/251, which changed the designation of the UNEP GC to the

United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme.

GC27/GMEF: Convening from 19-22 February 2013, this meeting was the first universal session of the Governing Council. The GC adopted decisions on, *inter alia*: institutional arrangements, state of the environment; justice, governance and law for environmental sustainability; climate technology centre and network; UNEP's follow-up and implementation of UN summit outcomes; and budget and programme for work for the biennium 2014-2015.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

Hassan Abdel Hilal, outgoing GC-27/GMEF President and Minister of Environment, Forests and Physical Development, Sudan, opened the meeting on Monday, 23 June 2014.

Welcoming participants he stressed that UNEA represents a ground-breaking platform for leadership in environmental policy, and is set to make strategic decisions, provide political guidance and promote a science-policy interface.

Sahle-Work Zewde, Director-General, United Nations Office at Nairobi, said the first UNEA marks an important milestone in the implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes and in the upgrading and strengthening of UNEP.

UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner welcomed delegates to a global conversation "at the environmental capital of the world." Assuring delegates that "together we can move forward," he expressed hope that discussions would focus on substance to make a difference during the five-day meeting.

Noting growing global environmental challenges, Judi Wakhungu, Minister of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Kenya, urged delegates to provide leadership for the attainment of sustainable development objectives.

The plenary elected Oyun Sanjaasuren, Minister of Environment and Green Development, Mongolia, as the first UNEA President. Judi Wakhungu (Kenya), Mahmoud Samy (Egypt), Sargon Lazar Slewa (Iraq), Attila Korodi (Romania), Khatuna Gogaladze (Georgia), Idunn Eidheim (Norway), Chris Vanden Bilcke (Belgium), and Mariano Castro Sánchez Moreno (Peru) were elected Vice Presidents. James Fletcher (Saint Lucia) was elected Rapporteur.

Sanjaasuren reminded delegates of the grave environment and development challenges that stem from a growing global population that is projected to hit 11 billion by the end of the century. She highlighted UNEA's unique position to deliberate on two priority areas: the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda, and the illegal trade in wildlife.

The provisional agenda (UNEP/EA.1/Add.1/Rev.1) was adopted. Delegates agreed to the establishment of a COW, chaired by Fernando Lugris (Uruguay), and a Working Party on the rules of procedure and stakeholder engagement policy, chaired by Julia Pataki (Romania).

POLICY STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE

DIRECTOR: UNEP Executive Director Steiner underscored UNEP's progress towards transparency and accountability through results-based planning, budgeting and reporting. He said this is a profound moment of change in the UN and that UNEA's

HLS can shape that change by focusing on SDGs, the post-2015 development agenda and SCP.

Steiner highlighted the illegal trade in wildlife—a US\$200 billion per year market—and connected it to human and arms trafficking, stating that it not only threatens endangered species, but human livelihoods, and that this issue should receive more attention from the judiciary.

Noting that today 85 people have as much wealth as the poorest 3.5 billion people, Steiner urged delegates to look at inequality and "unsustainable development" in an effort to understand the root causes of global problems.

OPENING STATEMENTS: Thailand, for the Group of 77 and China (G-77/China), stressed the importance of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) and the need for means of implementation for achieving sustainable development. Emphasizing UNEP's role in the implementation of the Rio+20 outcome on SCP and on chemicals and waste management, he called on member states to make financial contributions to allow UNEP to achieve the goals in its programme of work (POW).

Egypt, for the African Group and the African Union Commission, called for: collective ownership of a member state-driven post-2015 development agenda; means of implementation; and a strong monitoring and reporting system to ensure fulfillment of commitments.

Algeria called for an official decision to establish a specialized UN agency on South-South cooperation.

Colombia, for the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), highlighted the need for, *inter alia*: a global framework for sustainable development based on economic equity; substantial funding and provision of appropriate technology; strengthened institutional and technical capacity in developing countries; developed country leadership; and effective cooperation at regional and sub-regional levels.

On governance, the European Union (EU) said that the rules of procedure and stakeholder engagement policy must be implemented in line with the mandate from Rio+20. The Russian Federation noted UNEP must step up its work with states, other UN bodies and civil society.

Japan, for the Asia-Pacific Group, welcomed as "timely" the UNEA high-level meeting to discuss clear goals for the post-2015 agenda, and advocated decisions on chemicals, waste and air pollution that call for concrete action.

Emphasizing the historic significance of the session, Farmers, on behalf of Major Groups and stakeholders, urged UNEA to deliver a "bold, forward-looking and meaningful" outcome, and stressed the centrality of a human rights and science-based approach in transitioning toward a paradigm in harmony with nature. He called for a "robust and inclusive" policy on stakeholder engagement and expressed concern about "serious inadequacies" in UNEP's new access to information policy.

Sunu Soemarno, Chair of the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR), reported on the work of the CPR in preparation for the first UNEA session, including on stakeholder engagement, amendments to the rules of procedure and 12 draft decisions.

PARALLEL SYMPOSIA AND FORUMS

On Tuesday, 24 June, the Global Symposium on the Environmental Rule of Law took place. For detailed *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* coverage of the ministerial plenary see: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol16/enb16119e.html>

The Global Symposium on Financing the Green Economy was held on Wednesday, 25 June. For detailed *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* coverage of the symposium see: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol16/enb16120e.html>

The Gender and Environment Forum convened on 23-24 June. For detailed *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* coverage see: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol16/enb16119e.html>

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Opening the session on Monday, COW Chair Lugris called for delegates to work efficiently and introduced the proposed schedule of work (UNEP/EA.1/CW/CRP.1), to which delegates agreed. Mahmoud Samy (Egypt) was appointed as COW Rapporteur.

The Secretariat introduced a compilation of draft decisions (UNEP/EA.1/L.1). Bolivia, with Ecuador, lamented the absence of a reference to traditional knowledge and the practices of local communities and indigenous peoples in the draft decisions, and called for a greater balance within UNEP in this regard. The US, Norway and the Republic of Korea supported improving the SPI.

POLICY ISSUES: Stakeholder Engagement: This issue (UNEP/EA.1/2 and UNEP/EA.1/L.1/Add.1) was introduced in the COW on Tuesday and subsequently discussed in the Working Party chaired by Julia Pataki (Romania). Introducing the item, Pataki, Vice Chair of CPR noted that while considerable progress has been made since the policy was debated in the OECPR, unresolved issues include: accreditation criteria; the accreditation process; and access to information. China welcomed the participation of stakeholders but underscored that: member states have the “final say” in decision-making; sufficient time and resources must be dedicated to the work of the member states; and decisions made by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) must be strictly followed.

The EU underscored that: the Rio+20 outcome requires a policy promoting effective engagement of stakeholders; and current practices should be improved, while regression should be avoided. Mexico emphasized that civil society participation is essential to UNEA’s work. The Stakeholder Forum emphasized that the policy should allow for maximum involvement of stakeholders at all levels of UNEA.

The COW agreed to continue discussions in the Working Party. During the UNEA closing plenary on Friday, Pataki reported that the Working Party concluded with outstanding issues on accreditation criteria and process, and submitted amendments included in the draft policy paper (UNEP/EA.1/L.1/Add.1) to be considered in the future for possible inclusion in the provisional agenda of the second session of UNEA. No decision was taken.

Science-Policy Interface: On Monday the Secretariat introduced this agenda item (UNEP/EA.1/2/Add.1). On Tuesday, Idunn Eidheim (Norway) reported that most of the bracketed text

on the SPI had been resolved in a drafting group and would be included in the omnibus resolution.

Final Outcome: The final omnibus resolution on the SPI (UNEP/EA.1/L.6) includes sections on: SPI; strengthening the environmental dimension of sustainable development; assessments; and UNEP Live. The UNEA resolution recognizes the potential benefits of evidence-based assessments for awareness-raising, policy formulation and decision-making in the context of sustainable development.

On SPI, the UNEA:

- recognizes gaps in knowledge on the state of the environment and requests the Executive Director to present a gap analysis report on environmental data as well as recommendations on policy instruments for a strengthened SPI; and
- requests the Executive Director to explore ways to communicate UNEP’s scientific findings, to promote SPI by expanding partnerships with centers of excellence and research programmes, and to foster collaboration with MEAs, relevant UN agencies, and programmes and scientific panels for joint efforts to strengthen SPI.

On strengthening the environmental dimension of sustainable development, the UNEA requests the Executive Director to:

- provide expert input on the environment in relation to the SDGs; and
- work with UN bodies, including UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, on the Global Sustainable Development Report.

On assessments, the UNEA requests the Executive Director to undertake preparation of the sixth Global Environmental Outlook (GEO-6) and to strengthen the policy relevance of GEO reports by measuring progress toward achievement of previously agreed global environmental goals and targets.

On UNEP Live, a knowledge management platform used to manage information at its source, the UNEA requests the Executive Director to prepare a long-term plan for the development and use of UNEP Live, with particular reference to its contribution to, *inter alia*, future GEO reports and stakeholder engagement

Contributions by the Regional Ministerial Environmental Forums: This issue (UNEP/EA.1/2/Add.2) was introduced in the COW on Tuesday. Tanzania called for increased support for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and requested UNEP to include African regional priorities in its POW. Cuba underscored the importance of continued support for regional offices. During the HLS on Thursday, Mexico, on behalf of GRULAC, anticipated a ministerial declaration on environmental cooperation and setting of priorities at the next regional ministerial forum.

Access to Information: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the Executive Director’s report on access to information policy (UNEP/EA.1/2/Add.4 and UNEP/EA.1/INF/23). In her report on stakeholder engagement on Tuesday, Julia Pataki, Vice Chair of the CPR, noted that access to information was among the unresolved issues that the drafting group would need to work on throughout the week. The EU expressed concern about the debate’s focus on restriction rather

than access to information, as well as the policy's lack of consideration of the implications of UNEP Live.

Consolidation of UNEP Headquarters Functions in

Nairobi: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced documents on this agenda item (UNEP/EA.1/2/Add.5 and UNEP/EA.1/INF/16), noting the progressive consolidation of UNEP headquarters functions is being undertaken in the context of the strengthening and upgrading of UNEP.

International Water Quality Guidelines for Ecosystems:

The Secretariat introduced the document on this item (UNEP/EA.1/3) on Tuesday, noting that the report highlights arrangements put in place to date, including the conceptual approach and proposed process to develop draft guidelines for review by July 2015. Argentina expressed support for UNEP's role but noted that standards are specific to geo-climatic conditions and patterns of water use and should therefore be voluntary in nature.

Mid-term Review of the Montevideo Programme IV:

This issue (UNEP/EA.1/3/Add.3 and UNEP/EA.1/INF/10) was introduced in the COW on Tuesday, with the Secretariat reporting on a process for the midterm review of the 27 areas under the Programme covering, *inter alia*: effectiveness of environmental law; conservation, management and sustainable use of natural resources; challenges for environmental law; and relationships with other fields. NGOs welcomed UNEP's leadership, noting in particular the inclusive process adopted in the reviews, and observed that UNEP is "uniquely positioned" to identify best practices on a rights-based approach to the environmental rule of law. Cuba highlighted the close link between human rights and environmental governance.

Chemicals and Waste Management: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced documents on chemicals and waste management (UNEP/EA.1/5; and UNEP/EA.1/5/Add.1 and Add.2). Uruguay, on behalf of the G-77/China, *inter alia*: said new and additional funds are required to address emerging policy issues; underscored the value of regional centres; and reiterated the importance of developed countries' obligations related to funding, technology transfer and capacity building. Tanzania, on behalf of the African Group, said chemicals and waste management should be reflected in the sustainable development agenda and called for a strong management mechanism. The US urged delegates to focus on the outcomes of the process on enhancing cooperation and coordination within the chemicals and waste cluster and the consultative process on financing chemicals and waste. Kenya called for a stand-alone integrated finance decision. The EU urged delegates to endorse the outcome of the consultative process on financing and, supported by Cuba, Venezuela, Côte d'Ivoire, Colombia and Switzerland, called for finalizing the terms of reference for the Special Programme to support national-level implementation of the chemicals conventions.

Argentina stressed the importance of external financing to promote the mainstreaming of chemicals management in national budgets. Switzerland called for continuing the POW on lead and cadmium. Colombia supported this, with the understanding that it would not generate a process for negotiating a legally-binding

instrument on these substances. Workers and Trade Unions, on behalf of Women, NGOs, Farmers, Local Authorities, Children and Youth and Indigenous Peoples Major Groups, lamented slow progress on chemicals and waste, lack of information on related risks, and many countries' lack of regulatory capacity. Business and Industry expressed support for the multi-stakeholder approach established under SAICM and the Special Programme to build national capacity for chemicals management.

The COW agreed to establish a contact group, which was chaired by Alf Wills (South Africa). On Tuesday, Chair Wills said the group had met Monday evening, embarked on a first reading of the text and had agreed to focus on text relating to financing and the Special Programme. The group continued its work on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

On Friday afternoon, Chair Wills reported to the COW that the group had developed a consensus draft omnibus decision providing an "excellent" conclusion to the main tasks set out in the GC decision 27/12: continued strengthening of the management of chemicals and waste; fostering an integrated approach through the Special Programme; establishing a special task fund for chemicals and waste; and providing policy guidance for chemicals and waste management in the context of sustainable development.

The resolution submitted by the COW was adopted on Friday. The EU welcomed the omnibus resolution on chemicals, highlighting agreement on the terms of reference that will enable the launch of the Special Programme as one element of an integrated approach to financing.

Final Outcome: The resolution on chemicals and waste (UNEP/EA.1/L.17) contains sections on: continued strengthening of the sound management of chemicals and waste in the long term; the integrated approach to financing sound management of chemicals and waste; sustainable development; mercury; SAICM; lead and cadmium; waste; and regional centres.

On continued strengthening of the sound management of chemicals and waste in the long term, the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- recognizes the continued relevance of the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020;
- requests the Executive Director to forward, for information regarding policies and actions, the outcome document, to: the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development; the Open Working Group (OWG) on SDGs; the sixth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) of the Minamata Convention; the open-ended working group (OEWG) of SAICM and the fourth meeting of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM); the Conferences of the Parties (COPs) to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) conventions; the Inter-Organization Coordinating Committee of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals; and
- emphasizes the importance of complying with existing international chemicals and waste-related commitments through appropriate implementation at the national, regional and international levels.

On the integrated approach to financing the sound management of chemicals and waste, the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- adopts the terms of reference for a Special Programme to be funded by voluntary contributions, to support institutional strengthening at the national level to enhance implementation of the BRS conventions, the Minamata Convention, and SAICM;
- requests the Executive Director to establish and administer the Special Programme trust fund and to provide a secretariat to deliver administrative support;
- requests the Executive Board to review the effectiveness of the operational arrangements for the Special Programme and provide a report on the review to the UNEA in 2018;
- requests the Executive Director to submit for information the terms of reference for the Special Programme to the COPs of the BRS, the INC of the Minamata Convention and the OEWG of SAICM; and
- encourages governments in a position to do so, as well as the private sector, to mobilize financial resources for the effective establishment and quick start implementation of the Special Programme.

On sustainable development, the UNEA emphasizes that sound management of chemicals and waste is an essential and integral cross-cutting element of sustainable development and is of great relevance to the sustainable development agenda.

On mercury, the UNEA, *inter alia*: requests the Executive Director to facilitate cooperation, as appropriate, between the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention, the Secretariat of the BRS conventions and others.

On SAICM, the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- emphasizes the need for continued and strengthened multisectoral and multi-stakeholder involvement;
- emphasizes the need for the continued strengthening of SAICM;
- invites the OEWG of ICCM at its fourth meeting to consider ways to improve the involvement and participation of all relevant stakeholders and thereby enable efficient and effective responses to emerging issues and challenges;
- invites the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) to assume a leading role in SAICM and provide appropriate staff and other resources to its Secretariat; and
- invites members of the Inter-organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals to consider ways to support the SAICM Secretariat, including possible staffing support.

On lead and cadmium, the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- requests UNEP, in coordination with WHO, to continue to build capacity on lead paint through possible regional workshops; and
- looks forward to the compilation of information on techniques for emission abatement and on the possibility of replacing lead and cadmium with less hazardous substances or techniques.

On waste, the UNEA requests the Executive Director to consider the interlinkages between chemicals and waste policies in the global outlook on waste prevention, minimization and management, which is currently being developed.

On regional centres, the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- invites parties to the Basel and Stockholm conventions and other stakeholders to consider ways to promote an effective and efficient network of regional centres to strengthen the regional delivery of technical assistance under these conventions to promote the sound management of chemicals and waste, sustainable development and the protection of human health and the environment;
- requests the Executive Director and invites the parties to the BRS conventions, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other relevant international financial institutions, instruments and programmes, to consider opportunities for effective and efficient cooperation with the regional centres in implementing regional sound management of chemicals and waste projects.

The UNEA requests the Executive Director to present a report on progress on implementation of this resolution to the second session of UNEA.

Relationship between UNEP and MEAs: On Tuesday the Secretariat presented the Executive Director's report on the subject (UNEP/EA.1/INF/8), noting that it is a "living document" subject to change. There was much discussion during the week on the relationship between UNEP and MEAs. Some developed countries expressed regret that work was unfinished and that the report had not yet progressed beyond being an information document. Although there were calls for UNEP to step up its work with MEAs, many delegates commented that it was important for UNEP to avoid duplicating work.

Final Outcome: The final resolution on the relationship between UNEP and MEAs (UNEP/EA.1/L.9) recalls GC decision 27/13 on the 2014-2017 biennial POW and 2014-2015 budget, takes note of the relationship between UNEP and MEAs, and requests the Executive Director to:

- finalize the report on the relationship between UNEP and MEAs so that it can be presented at the next OECPR; and
- submit information on progress made by the task team and its two working groups to the relevant conferences and meetings of the parties held in the period before the second session of UNEA.

GEO 6: This item (UNEP/EA.1/4/Add.1) was considered on Monday during the COW plenary. The EU, supported by Switzerland, emphasized that time is needed to define the scope, objective and process for GEO 6 and welcomed the intergovernmental meeting scheduled for September 2014. She also stressed ownership of data as pertinent and called for clarification on whether UNEP's data rules are sufficient in this regard. Highlighting the region-specific nature of policy recommendations, Iran suggested an initial feedback process by policymakers prior to the finalization of the "summary for policymakers." Emphasizing the need for wide participation of diverse stakeholders in the multilateral consultation process on GEO 6, the Scientific and Technological Community also noted data could be enhanced with citizen data and open data dissemination.

Illegal Trade in Wildlife: This issue was introduced in the COW on Wednesday. Kenya presented the draft decision (UNEP/EA.1/CW/CRP.5) prepared in collaboration with the EU, noting

inputs were received from many parties. He said the aim was to mobilize political will, leadership and resources in response to the Rio+20 call for “firm and strengthened” action on this issue. The EU urged delegates to send a strong message to the High-level Segment, “to ensure there is a lasting legacy and a concrete result of our efforts this week.”

Many delegations expressed their support for the draft declaration, including Monaco, Canada, the US, Nepal, China, Norway, Mexico, Chile, the Russian Federation, Iran, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Benin, Brazil and Indonesia. Monaco and Chile called for recognition of threatened marine species. While noting “UNEP’s engagement on this issue is long overdue,” the US, supported by China, Switzerland and Iran, stressed that UNEP should work “within its mandate” to avoid duplication of efforts. Iran stressed the need to address the “cultural dimension” through “devaluing” private wildlife ownership, while China called for addressing “all the links” in illegal wildlife trade through increased information exchange and enforcement. Mexico highlighted unequal national capacity to tackle this issue. Brazil welcomed the “balanced” focus on the three interrelated pillars of: improving enforcement; addressing demand; and supporting alternative and sustainable livelihoods for affected communities.

The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) drew attention to a draft resolution on transboundary wildlife crime due to be adopted at CMS COP 11 in Quito, Ecuador, in November. NGOs expressed support for the decision and called on delegates to “make it even stronger” by including explicit references to: tackling illegal financial flows; conducting due diligence and verification in trade by companies and in public procurement; adding a fourth protocol to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; and illegal harvesting in several paragraphs referring to origin. The issue was subsequently discussed in a drafting group and in a ministerial dialogue session on Thursday evening.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution (UNEP/EA.1/L.16), the UNEA, strongly encourages member states and regional economic integration organizations to:

- implement their commitments already taken in other forums;
- provide leadership and mobilize resources;
- take targeted action to eradicate the supply, transit of and demand for illegal wildlife products;
- support work to reinforce the legal framework and strengthen capacity of the entire enforcement chain;
- promote cross-agency cooperation at all levels to tackle the environmental, economic, social and security dimensions of the illegal trade in wildlife and its related products;
- initiate and promote action to further strengthen regional and international cooperation between source, transit and destination countries;
- promote and implement policies of zero tolerance toward all illegal activities, including associated corruption;
- support the development of sustainable and alternative livelihoods for communities affected by the illegal trade in wildlife and its adverse impacts with the full engagement of communities; and

- enhance cooperation for the timely and cost-efficient repatriation of live illegally-traded wildlife.

The UNEA also, *inter alia*:

- urges all those engaged in efforts to combat illegal trade in wildlife to promote synergies, cooperation and coordination and avoid duplication;
- calls upon the UN General Assembly to consider the issue of illegal wildlife trade at its 69th session;
- stresses the importance of addressing the issue in the context of the post-2015 development framework; and
- requests the Executive Director of UNEP to provide at the second session of UNEA an analysis of the environmental impacts of illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products and to raise awareness about the problems and the risks associated with the supply of, transit in, and demand for illegal wildlife products.

Ecosystem-based Adaptation: On Monday, Rosemary Semafumu-Mukasa (Uganda) highlighted progress made during the intersessional period on this draft resolution contained in the compilation document (UNEP/EA.1/L.1). On Wednesday afternoon, she reported to the COW that the main outstanding issues were financing and links between EBA and traditional systems. In the evening, she presented a revised draft decision (UNEP/EA.1/CW/CRP.9), which the COW provisionally adopted.

Final Outcome: The final resolution (UNEP/EA.1/L.12) recalls the Rio+20 outcome document and bears in mind that adaptation and mitigation actions generate multiple co-benefits. It recognizes the adverse impact of climate change on ecosystems and their ability to meet the needs for local food production and national food security. The resolution, *inter alia*:

- requests the Executive Director to continue providing and enhancing support to developing countries for the development and implementation of community-based, national and regional EBA programmes and activities;
- encourages all countries to consider indigenous, local and traditional knowledge systems, where appropriate; and
- requests the Executive Director to continue its collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other relevant institutions and organizations to integrate ecosystems as a key element in national adaptation planning processes.

Marine Plastic Debris and Microplastics: On Tuesday, Norway introduced their proposed draft decision contained in the compilation document UNEP/EA.1/L.1, which encourages strengthened cooperation under the Global Partnership on Marine Litter and requests the Executive Director to undertake a study to strengthen knowledge on measures and techniques to reduce microplastics in the marine environment.

The US supported the proposal and suggested framing the issue more broadly as a marine debris problem that includes marine plastics and microplastics. Australia, Chile, Switzerland and the EU welcomed the proposal and called for development of the text.

The CMS underscored the impact of marine debris on migratory wildlife and highlighted related work done by CMS parties. NGOs called upon governments and WHO to raise awareness of related threats to human health and the environment. Business and Industry expressed concern about singling out plastics over other forms of marine debris and questioned the need for a new study.

Chair Lugris referred the text to the drafting group for further elaboration.

On Wednesday evening, drafting group Chair Eidheim reported that the group had concluded work on the proposal, with brackets remaining on references to extrabudgetary resources. Chair Lugris referred the issue to the budget group for further review.

Final Outcome: In the resolution on marine plastic debris and microplastics (UNEP/EA.1/L.8), the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- stresses the importance of the precautionary approach;
- recognizes the significant risks arising from the inadequate management and disposal of plastic and the need to take action;
- encourages governments, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, industry and other relevant actors to cooperate with the Global Partnership on Marine Litter;
- recognizes the need for more knowledge and research on the source and fate of microplastics and their impact on biodiversity, marine ecosystems and human health;
- emphasizes that further urgent action is needed to address the challenges posed by marine plastic debris and microplastics;
- requests the Executive Director to support countries, upon request, in the development and implementation of national or regional action plans to reduce marine litter;
- requests the Executive Director to undertake a study on marine plastic debris and marine microplastics, building on existing work and taking into account the most up-to-date studies and data;
- invites the Secretariats of the Stockholm and Basel conventions and relevant organizations involved in pollution control and chemicals and waste management, and the Secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity, CMS and the regional seas conventions and action plans to contribute to the study;
- encourages governments and the private sector to promote the more resource-efficient use and sound management of plastics and microplastics;
- encourages governments to take comprehensive action to address the marine plastic debris and microplastic issue through, where appropriate, legislation, enforcement of international agreements, provision of adequate reception facilities for ship-generated wastes, improvement of waste management practices and support for beach clean-up activities, as well as information, education and public awareness programmes;
- invites governments, intergovernmental organizations, the scientific community, NGOs, the private sector and other stakeholders to share relevant information with the Executive Director;
- invites those in a position to do so to provide financial and other support to conduct the study identified in paragraph 10; and
- requests the Executive Director to present the study on microplastics for consideration by the second session of UNEA.

Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS)/Water Programme:

On Tuesday, the EU introduced their draft decision contained in the compilation document UNEP/EA.1/L.1, noting that it recognizes the vital role played by “good water quality and adequate water quantity” to sustainable development. Brazil expressed support for the resolution, noting her delegation would present modified text to the drafting group. Switzerland, the US and Chile noted the contribution made by the GEMS/Water Programme in facilitating data exchange. Switzerland called for actions proposed under this decision to be included in the UNEP POW for 2016-17 for consideration at the next UNEA session. Bolivia called for GEMS/Water Programme to recognize the right of the poorest populations to water.

The draft resolution was forwarded to the drafting group chaired by Idunn Eidheim and was subsequently approved by the COW on Wednesday evening.

Final Outcome: In its final resolution (UNEP/EA.1/L.7), the UNEA emphasizes that the water-related SDGs and other assessments on the state of freshwater resources will require timely, relevant and reliable data and information from the revitalized GEMS/Water Programme in order to inform policymaking at the relevant levels. The UNEA also underlines the need to further improve the global coverage and consistency of water quality data, as well as to expand the GEMS/Water network, and requests the Executive Director to:

- collaborate closely with member states to identify additional key elements of GEMS/Water and to ensure the necessary resources for enabling the GEMS/Water global coordination unit in UNEP to effectively and efficiently operate;
- initiate discussions with member states, UN agencies and others on a common data policy for the purpose of building a consistent database in GEMStat, supporting UNEP Live and informing sustainable development policies; and
- draft a revised GEMS/Water Programme for adoption at the second session of UNEA, including a budget, while linking it clearly to UNEP’s next biennial POW.

Promoting Air Quality through UNEP: The COW discussed this draft decision, as contained in the compilation document UNEP/EA.1/L.1, in plenary on Tuesday. Nigeria called for addressing air quality in a holistic and integrated manner, noting this requires, *inter alia*, enhancing public-private partnerships and technical training on compliance management “beyond workshops and seminars.”

Local Authorities, on behalf of all Major Groups, stressed the need to recognize existing policy options and good practices at the local, national and regional levels. She noted that GEO 5 contains a portfolio of legislative, public awareness and direct actions on, *inter alia*: enhancing urban planning; public and non-motorized transport; energy efficiency and waste management; appropriate financing; governance; and technology transfer

models for scalability. NGOs highlighted the impact of long-range environmental transport of pollutants on air quality in the Arctic region.

On Wednesday, drafting group Chair Eidheim informed the COW that agreement had been reached on this issue, and the draft decision was provisionally adopted.

Final Outcome: In the final decision on promoting air quality through UNEP (UNEP/EA.1/L.5), the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- encourages governments to take action across sectors to improve air quality;
- encourages governments to formulate action plans and establish and implement nationally-determined ambient air quality standards;
- encourages governments and intergovernmental, regional and international organizations to make air quality data more easily accessible and understandable to the public; and
- encourages governments to share with the UNEP Secretariat and member states the results and experiences of their efforts.

The final decision also requests the Executive Director to:

- undertake capacity-building activities on air quality and to raise awareness of the public health and environmental risks of air pollution and the benefits of improved air quality;
- explore opportunities for strengthened cooperation on air pollution within the UN system;
- facilitate the operation of existing UNEP-supported intergovernmental programmes on air quality;
- undertake global, regional and sub-regional assessments by 2016 to identify gaps in capacity to address air quality issues; and
- submit and present a report on the information provided by governments; and provide an update on progress made in implementing the present resolution to the second session of UNEA.

Implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration

on Environment and Development: On Monday, Chile, the Dominican Republic and Mexico introduced the proposed resolution (UNEP/EA.1/CW/CRP.2) on a regional process to strengthen the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration (on appropriate access to information for the public at the relevant level), noting that it is a step toward strengthening environmental democracy in the region. During the follow-up discussion on Tuesday, the EU underscored the importance of Principle 10 but called for referencing other regional instruments such as the Aarhus Convention.

Final Outcome: The final resolution (UNEP/EA.1/L.13) recognizes the importance of good governance and the rule of law for sustainable development and underlines the need for broad participation by the public. It notes the progress made in the Latin American region and, *inter alia*:

- encourages countries to strengthen international dialogue, cooperation, technical assistance and capacity building in support of the implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration; and
- requests the Executive Director to further enhance access to information in future policies.

Promoting Different Approaches, Visions, Models and Tools for Environmental Sustainability: On Tuesday, Bolivia introduced its proposed resolution (UNEP/EA.1/CW/CRP.3), noting that it builds on paragraph 39 of the Rio+20 outcome and UNEP GC decision 27/8, which recognize the concept of “living well in balance and harmony with Mother Earth” as a holistic and integrated approach to sustainable development that can lead to efforts to restore the health and integrity of the Earth’s ecosystems. The text was referred to the drafting group for further consideration.

On Friday, the UNEA adopted a draft resolution that takes note of the declaration of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Group of 77 and China, “For a New World Order for Living Well,” adopted on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary on 15 June 2014.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution (UNEP/EA.1/L.14), the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- requests the Executive Director to provide a report on the basis of the information resulting from paragraph 3 of GC decision 27/8 and to submit the report to UNEA 2;
- requests the Executive Director to consider organizing a workshop on this issue at UNEA 2;
- requests the Executive Director to provide guidance and facilitate, through UNEP Live, the visibility of different visions, approaches, models and tools to achieve sustainable development;
- requests the Executive Director to take into consideration the different visions, approaches, models and tools referred to in the resolution during the consultation processes for the GEO and UNEP Live; and
- invites countries that wish to do so to implement the “living well in balance and harmony with Mother Earth” approach in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

COORDINATION ACROSS THE UN SYSTEM IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENT INCLUDING THE ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP (EMG):

The Secretariat introduced the relevant documents (UNEP/EA.1/2/Add.3 and UNEP/EA.1/INF/22) on Tuesday. In response to comments made by member states, the Secretariat explained that the impetus for the draft resolution was the Rio+20 outcome document, reaffirmed in GC decision 27/5, calling for UNEP to coordinate system-wide strategies on the environment.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution (UNEP/EA.1/L.15), the UNEA, *inter alia*, requests the Executive Director to:

- develop system-wide strategies on the environment;
- prepare, in consultation with regions, and submit to the second session of UNEA, a report that includes proposals developed in conjunction with the EMG describing the integration of the outcome of the post-2015 development agenda into the environmental work of the UN; and
- identify possible measures to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of the EMG and to submit a report with recommendations to the second session of UNEA.

COORDINATION AND COOPERATION WITH MAJOR GROUPS: This issue (UNEP/EA.1/INF/7) was introduced on Tuesday. The Secretariat emphasized that the document reflects the views of the Major Groups and stakeholders, and not necessarily those of UNEP. There was no further discussion on this item.

BUDGET AND POW FOR THE BIENNIUM 2016-2017: This item (UNEP/EA.1/6; UNEP/EA.1/7; UNEP/EA.1/7/Add.1; UNEP/EA.1/INF/24; UNEP/EA.1/8; UNEP/EA.1/INF/5; UNEP/EA.1/INF/6; UNEP/EA.1/INF/17; UNEP/EA.1/9; and UNEP/EA.1/INF/21) was introduced and briefly addressed on Tuesday. A contact group chaired by Bart Ouvry (Belgium) met throughout the week to consider the revised biennial POW and budget for 2014-2015, the biennial POW and budget for 2016-2017 and new proposals under the draft decision on trust funds.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution on the revised POW and budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (UNEP/EA.1/L.10), the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- reaffirms GC decision 27/13 on the proposed medium-term strategy for the period 2014-2017 and the POW and budget for the biennium 2014-2015, by which the GC approved appropriations for the Environment Fund in the amount of US\$245 million;
- notes the approval by the UN General Assembly of US\$34.9 million from the regular UN budget to UNEP;
- approves the revised POW and budget for the biennium 2014-2015, taking into account the implications of the level of resources from the UN regular budget; and
- notes that the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Executive Director, will make available a review of the functions of UNEP staffing to redefine and recategorize its posts into three categories—management and administration, programme support and operational programme posts—to determine by April 2015 which posts should be financed from the UN regular budget and to consider the scope for efficiency savings in the numbers of staff posts.

In its resolution (UNEP/EA.1/L.11) on the proposed POW and budget for 2016-2017, the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- approves the POW for the biennium 2016-2017, taking into account relevant decisions of the UNEA and appropriations for the Environment Fund in the amount of US\$271 million;
- stresses the need for the POW and budget to be based on results-based management and the importance of early, extensive and transparent consultations between the Executive Director, member states and the CPR;
- authorizes the Executive Director to adjust, in consultation with the CPR, the level of Environment Fund allocations to sub-programmes;
- requests the Executive Director to ensure that the POW supports and brings together regional and national programmes and activities in the medium-term strategy for the period 2018-2021 and the biennial POW and budget for 2016-2017 and takes into account regional priorities and regional frameworks, where they exist; and
- requests the Executive Director to provide the subcommittee on budgetary matters of the CPR at its second session with

options to secure the participation at the OECPR and UNEA delegates from developing countries, in particular the least developed countries (LDCs) and SIDS.

The final resolution on management of trust funds and earmarked contributions (UNEP/EA.1/L.18) contains sections on: trust funds in support of the POW of UNEP, including general trust funds and technical cooperation trust funds; and trust funds in support of regional seas programmes, conventions, protocols and special funds, including general funds.

AMENDMENTS TO THE GEF INSTRUMENT: This item (UNEP/EA.1/9 and UNEP/EA.1/INF/21) was introduced in the COW on Tuesday. The US supported the resolution saying it would help with implementation of the new GEF POW.

Final Outcome: In the resolution (UNEP/EA.1 L.4) on the amendment of the instrument for the establishment of the restructured GEF, the UNEA decides to, *inter alia*: enable the GEF to serve as one of the financial mechanisms of the Minamata Convention; and amend paragraph 2 of the instrument inviting the GEF to revise its focal area structure and strategy to address the chemicals and waste agenda and replace the “ozone layer depletion” and “persistent organic pollutants” focal areas with a “chemicals and waste” focal area.

DATE AND VENUE OF FUTURE SESSIONS: This item was taken up on Wednesday. The US and Switzerland said that June is a difficult time of the year to schedule meetings and that it would be important to consider going back to February.

Final Outcome: In its final decision (UNEP/EA.1/L.19), the UNEA decides to hold the second session of UNEA at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi from 23-27 May 2016, and it requests the CPR, in consultation with the UNEA Bureau, to contribute to the preparation of the draft provisional agenda for the second session of the Assembly.

COW CLOSING PLENARY: Chair Lugris convened the COW closing plenary on Friday afternoon. He invited the Chairs of the contact groups to present reports on their progress. Chair Lugris recalled that the COW had already approved decisions on: amendments to the restructured GEF; strengthening the role of UNEP in promoting air quality; GEMS/Water; SPI; and the relationship between UNEP and MEAs. He then invited the COW plenary to approve the decision on EBA, which delegates did.

Chair Lugris then invited the COW to approve the remaining draft decisions and resolutions, on: coordination across the UN system, including EMG; implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development; different visions, approaches, models and tools to achieve environmental sustainability; illegal trade in wildlife; chemicals and waste; management of trust funds and earmarked contributions; and marine plastic debris and microplastics, as amended by the budget contact group. The COW approved all decisions and resolutions by acclamation.

Chair Lugris invited COW Rapporteur Samy to present the draft report of the COW (UNEP/EA.1/CW/L.1) with its two addenda (UNEP/EA.1/CW/L.1/Add.1 and UNEP/EA.1/CW/L.1/Add.2), which were approved without comment.

Uruguay, on behalf of the G-77/China, and the EU welcomed the conclusion of an omnibus decision on chemicals and waste. Algeria expressed disappointment that a paragraph on desertification submitted on behalf of the Arab League, the G-77/China and the African group met “tremendous objection.”

Chair Lugris expressed gratitude to the delegates, working group chairs, and the Secretariat for their hard work throughout the week and gavelled the COW to a close at 4:12 p.m.

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

Welcoming delegates to the High-level Segment on Thursday, UNEA President Oyun Sanjaasuren underscored that environmental, social and economic opportunities can have mutually-reinforcing outcomes for sustainable development, and expressed hope that the outcomes of UNEA establish UNEP as the leading authority that sets the global environmental agenda.

UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner said UNEA is historic in both size and operation with the active participation of major groups and stakeholders, and highlighted convergence between the environmental world and experts in areas such as law and finance.

John Ashe, President of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly, called on ministers to send a clear message to the world and, with UNEA’s outcomes, inform the post-2015 development agenda.

Prince Albert II of Monaco, Chairman of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Sport and Environment Commission, highlighted the IOC’s partnership with UNEP and its support for sustainable city building, empowerment of women and promotion of non-violence.

Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya, stressed the need to address, *inter alia*, the challenge of balancing rapid urbanization with the protection and conservation of wildlife. He urged member states to use UNEA to send strong messages to the international community on the post-2015 development agenda and SDGs, showing leadership that “complements and uplifts” work being done elsewhere.

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT BRIEFING: Steiner briefed delegates on the state of the environment, citing statistics indicating that, despite global efforts, the planet’s resources must be better managed. He highlighted, *inter alia*, loss of cropland, food waste, temperature increases, and sea-level rise as a potential “death sentence” for SIDS. He also noted positive trends, such as countries including natural assets in their national accounting systems.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS: Brazil emphasized the need for stakeholder input and announced that her country is allocating US\$1 million to UNEP towards SCP activities in developing countries.

Underscoring that UNEP is mandated to provide science-based policy advice, Norway highlighted the need for action on marine plastic litter and microplastics.

Oman, for the Arab States, said UNEP can “place us in a better position” to address environmental challenges. Egypt, for the African Group, called for a “stable, predictable and accessible” financial mechanism for implementation of the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs.

The EU noted “a coming of age for the global environmental community” with a new level of representation and legitimacy.

Mexico, for GRULAC, anticipated a ministerial declaration on environmental cooperation and priority setting at the next regional ministerial forum.

Stressing the importance of technology transfer for implementation, India suggested using the Green Climate Fund to purchase intellectual property rights that are essential for public goods and services.

Saudi Arabia, for the Asia-Pacific Group, emphasized that SDGs should address, *inter alia*: poverty eradication; natural resource management; sustainable, inclusive economic growth; and building resilience to climate change. Colombia stressed, *inter alia*, the importance of including chemicals and waste in the SDGs.

Reiterating support for a “strong and efficient UNEP,” Finland announced his country has doubled its yearly contribution to UNEP.

Nigeria cautioned against developing countries becoming the “dumping ground” for obsolete and polluting technologies.

Algeria, for the Non-Aligned Movement and the G-77/China, highlighted the importance of South-South cooperation and the need to address desertification.

Cuba called for technology transfer and access to information for developing countries and, with Venezuela, stressed the importance of CBDR.

Argentina called for “inclusive, flexible and participatory” consultation mechanisms and consensus-based decisions in multilateral fora.

Children and Youth called on governments to, *inter alia*, establish an intergenerational dialogue for sustainable development.

MINISTERIAL BRIEFING ON THE TWO THEMES OF THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT: On Thursday during the lunch break, Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director, UNEP, welcomed delegates to the briefing.

Amb. Macharia Kamau (Kenya), Co-Chair of the Open Working Group (OWG) on SDGs, gave an overview of OWG negotiations, highlighting the 17 draft SDGs and the unprecedented scale of the UN consultative process.

Amina J. Mohammed, Special Advisor to the UN Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning, said the UN Climate Summit in September is a “refueling” point on the way to Lima and Paris, and invited delegates’ feedback to ensure greater synergy with the climate discussions. She stressed the need for a sufficient level of ambition for the SDGs and associated financing framework.

Christian Nellemann, UNEP, gave an overview of the current scale of environmental crime, noting the killing of elephants and rhinos and the illegal export of timber and its by-products such as charcoal, which he said generates two to three times as much profit as the illegal drug trade.

John Scanlon, Secretary-General, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), highlighted the scale and nature of the illegal wildlife trade, saying it now involves transnational organizations and criminal

gangs. He outlined the outcome of CITES COP 16, which addressed wildlife crime in source, transit and destination states. He called for increased support for programmes working with rangers, police and others working on the front lines.

Aldo Lale-Demoz, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, encouraged delegates to: strengthen partnerships under the Convention on Transnational Organized Crime; strengthen prosecution and sentencing for wildlife crime; focus on the needs of vulnerable communities; and promote public awareness. He highlighted the International Consortium to Combat Wildlife Crime toolkit as a useful guide.

MINISTERIAL PLENARY ON THE SDGS AND THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA: Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator, opened the session on Thursday, explaining that inequality, poverty and environment are linked and require a “business unusual” approach to “connect the dots.” Moderator Erik Solheim (Norway) invited delegates to discuss ways of merging economic development with environmental protection.

Denmark said that to achieve SDGs, states must set aside their national interests and unite. The Holy See called for rejection of “unbridled” consumption and production, saying natural resources are the property of everyone and that creation should be respected and safeguarded.

The Netherlands said SCP and recognizing the impact of global supply chains are critical to sustaining economic growth. Mexico said that changing consumption patterns requires integrated, long-term policies involving all stakeholders. China called for low-carbon, green and sustainable development.

Emphasizing that the environment is fundamental to the SDGs, Germany said economies must develop within planetary boundaries. Italy cited four objectives: capturing the value of natural capital; promoting SCP patterns linked to planetary boundaries; prioritizing resource efficiency in all sectors; and shifting taxes from labor to resource depletion.

Poland highlighted access to affordable energy as critical to poverty eradication. New Zealand emphasized the role that healthy oceans play for people’s livelihoods and global trade.

Portugal said UNEA must have a strong voice in the SDG process regarding implementing, monitoring and reporting on the environmental dimension of the post-2015 framework. The EU said UNEP should play an important role in setting the post-2015 development agenda, particularly on SCP, and thus UNEA should arrive at a consensus that reflects UNEP’s newly-strengthened mandate. While recognizing UNEP’s role in strategic direction-setting, Georgia stressed governments’ responsibility to implement decisions involving all sectors. Switzerland said environment ministers should seize the opportunity to influence the post-2015 development agenda. The Republic of the Congo stressed the need to raise awareness among national authorities for effective action.

The UK said UNEA should make the case for full integration of the environment into the SDGs, rather than emphasizing specific goals and targets. Kiribati called for reflecting SIDS issues such as sea-level rise, hazardous wastes and the need for technology transfer in the UNEA POW. Romania underscored the need to avoid duplicating work done by MEAs.

Japan, *inter alia*, stressed low-carbon approaches and harmony with nature as necessary for sustainable societies. IUCN said nature provides solutions and that sustainable development cannot be achieved without well-functioning ecosystems. Uruguay called for sustainable and equitable growth. Women, on behalf of all Major Groups and stakeholders, except Business and Industry, highlighted potential conflicts around the term “growth” and called for ensuring that the SDGs provide for a “true transitional process.” Finland called on industrialized countries to take leadership in the transition.

On Friday Rolph Payet, Minister for Environment and Energy, Seychelles, moderated the second session on SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda. Jordan noted how fiscal policy can assist environmental policy. Norway announced the creation of a green tax commission to “make the polluter pay” and reduce market distortions. Cuba urged that the post-2015 development agenda be universal and flexible, and respect countries’ different approaches to development.

On SDGs and SCP, many stressed that UNEA should send a strong message. Costa Rica called for clarity on the HLS’ role and links with work on SDGs in other fora, as well as on UNEP and UNEA’s role in the broader UN system. Sweden said chemicals and waste must be mainstreamed under the relevant SDGs.

The US encouraged governments to ensure “all interests” of their diverse government agencies “inform the SDG discussions.” Malawi said the green economy is an alternative vision for growth that is consistent with sustainable development.

The Czech Republic underscored that the private sector should play a major role in shifting to a green economy and emphasized the importance of communicating evidence-based information about environmental degradation. The Republic of Korea said the ultimate question is how to strike a balance between social equity, economic growth and environmental protection. Mauritius cautioned against letting the SDGs become “just another unfunded mandate.”

Nepal underscored the need to support vulnerable LDCs, which he described as “victims of climate change.” Underscoring its experience with a harsh climate, Israel expressed intent to share its expertise globally and underscored the potential benefits of regional cooperation.

Other issues highlighted included, *inter alia*, the need to: engage in public-private partnerships and benefit-sharing; address means of implementation, including through innovative financial mechanisms; ensure accountability and reporting to measure progress and effectiveness of efforts, including through social and natural capital indicators; and involve all government sectors in mainstreaming the SDGs in their work, including addressing technical barriers to trade and sustainable procurement to facilitate green investment.

Some delegates also addressed the need to: consolidate the goal of access to water as a human right; limit the import of wildlife products; include peace and security and gender in the SDGs; ensure education for sustainable development and consumption; account for environmental externalities; mainstream SCP in the SDGs; and ensure that measures under

the post-2015 development agenda are relevant for all countries and regions, including SIDS. Samoa noted the importance of the upcoming Third International Conference on SIDS.

NGOs, on behalf of Children and Youth, Farmers, Workers and Trade Unions, Women, and Local Authorities, called for a standalone goal on SCP, as well as cross-cutting targets. Business and Industry underscored the importance of trade liberalization to sustainable development.

MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE ON ILLEGAL TRADE IN WILDLIFE: Introducing the session on Thursday evening, Moderator Marco Lambertini, Director-General, World Wildlife Fund, invited delegates to address three main issues: the most important gaps in knowledge and action, as well as barriers to enforcement at the national and international level; how to ensure a coordinated UN response; and maintaining momentum from UNEA onwards.

Many countries underscored the inextricable link between poverty and illegal trade in wildlife, with a large number of delegates stressing the need for UNEP to play a coordinating and awareness-raising role on the underlying causes, strengthen synergies between CITES and other MEAs for an integrated response, and send a message that reaches beyond the environmental community.

Other issues highlighted included, *inter alia*, the need to: understand and address the socio-economic drivers of illegal trade among source, transit and consumer communities; ensure zero tolerance on corruption and illicit financial flows associated with wildlife crimes; focus on transit points for illicit goods; consider timber alongside wildlife; educate youth; and involve local communities in affected areas in order to find economic alternatives for sustainable livelihoods.

Most countries shared their implementation strategies to combat illegal trade in wildlife and called for a strong ministerial declaration on this issue. Others called for wildlife to remain on the agenda for the second session of UNEA, in order to maintain momentum on national and international implementation. One delegate called for recognizing the outcomes of other fora and agreements, noting “what is needed is leadership and coordination,” not more debate.

CLOSING PLENARY

UNEA President Sanjaasuren convened the closing plenary on Friday afternoon. Delegates approved the verbal report on credentials. COW Chair Lugin presented the report of the COW (UNEP/EA.1/L.1 and Add.1-2), which was adopted. Delegates then adopted the draft proceedings of the UNEA at its first universal session (UNEP/EA.1/L.2 and Add.1).

Welcoming Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, UNEA President Oyun Sanjaasuren said the first historic session of UNEA had tackled important issues including on the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda, the environmental rule of law and illegal trade in wildlife, and has been characterized by interactive debates and dialogues. She said UNEA has been recognized as the new platform to forge sustainable societies.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described the inaugural meeting of UNEA as a “coming of age” for UNEP and global environmental governance. He credited Executive Director Steiner for his leadership, saying UNEP is “better placed than ever” to provide the science, governance and tools to help mainstream environment into policy-making processes. He underscored that UNEA has the “power and the responsibility to promote a global transformation of attitudes and practice,” noting that while the job will not be easy, the arguments for environmental sustainability are “compelling and winning.” He urged delegates to take on the challenge since “change is in the air, the race is on, solutions exist and it’s time to lead.”

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta congratulated all participants on their work, stressing that UNEA’s deliberations on the SDGs will add clarity, precision and expertise to the new global framework for sustainable development. He highlighted the importance of means of implementation and called for continuity on the “unfinished business” of the Millennium Development Goals.

The meeting was then suspended at 7:00 pm to facilitate finalization of the UNEA Ministerial Outcome Document. President Sanjaasuren reconvened the meeting at 9:36 pm, presented the Ministerial Outcome Document to delegates and invited comments. Colombia said that among GRULAC countries the understanding is that the outcome document includes the principles of the Rio Declaration, including Principle Seven on CBDR. Bolivia, with Nicaragua, opposed adoption of the document on the grounds that it does not include an explicit reference to CBDR.

Mexico highlighted a reference to “all of the principles of the Rio Declaration,” and said nothing in the document should be understood as saying that any principle or agreement made in the past is less important than it has ever been.

The plenary then adopted the Ministerial Outcome Document. Bolivia with Ecuador, Nicaragua, Iran and Iraq requested that the report of the meeting reflect their objections to the adoption of the Ministerial Outcome Document.

Egypt said he could live with the document for the sake of a positive political outcome, but emphasized that it lacks the principle of CBDR, the basis for cooperation on environmental issues.

Peru emphasized that at no time during UNEA did any delegation oppose the Rio Principles, adding that the document reaffirms the principles and reflects what happened during the meeting. South Sudan supported the document and said that while some countries are disappointed, “the glass is half full rather than half empty.”

Kenya thanked participants for engaging in discussions with “such determination,” thereby honoring the host country.

Final Outcome: In the Ministerial Outcome Document of the first UNEA session, ministers of environment and heads of delegation reaffirm their commitment to the full implementation of the Rio+20 outcome document and all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. Moreover, they call on the international community and reaffirm their commitment to, *inter alia*:

- ensure the full integration of the environmental dimension, especially throughout the sustainable development agenda;
- achieve an ambitious, universal, implementable and realizable post-2015 development agenda;
- accelerate and support efforts for the promotion of SCP patterns, including through sustainable lifestyles and resource efficiency;
- take action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products;
- undertake urgent actions to address climate change to achieve sustainable development, which requires cooperation by all countries, in accordance with the objective, principles and provisions of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);
- keep working towards the adoption of an ambitious outcome in the form of a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the UNFCCC applicable to all parties in 2015;
- reinforce efforts to halt biodiversity loss and combat desertification, drought and land degradation; and
- foster and encourage the development of genuine and durable partnerships to address environmental challenges faced by SIDS.

During closing remarks, the EU stressed the need for resolutions to be translated into concrete actions, lamented the lack of agreement on a stakeholder engagement policy, and congratulated the “clear and strong” UNEA ministerial outcome.

Colombia, for GRULAC, called for continued efforts to ensure UNEA is “truly universal” through guaranteeing resources for participation.

Peter Denton, United Church of Canada, on behalf of all Major Groups and stakeholders, expressed concern over the “limited opportunity” for engaging in UNEA debates, particularly on stakeholder engagement. He emphasized, *inter alia*, that UNEP’s work on the environmental rule of law lays the foundation for environmental democracy and sustainable development, and that a green economy must be grounded in a human rights-based approach that ensures humanity’s ability to remain within planetary boundaries.

Thailand, for the G-77/China, said much remains to be done to attain economic prosperity while preserving the environment, and reaffirmed the G-77/China’s commitment to contribute constructively to the process.

UNEP Executive Director Steiner thanked member states for the “extraordinary commitment” shown throughout the week, stressed the principle of “sufficient consensus” and said their efforts will make a difference for people and the environment in the years to come. UNEA President Sanjaasuren closed the meeting at 11:00 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING

UNEA IS BORN: IS IT FIT FOR PURPOSE FOR A POST-2015 WORLD?

If the first universal Governing Council last year was a trial run for UNEP under universal membership, the formal launch of UNEP’s new governing body could be viewed as a “stress test” of whether UNEA is “fit for purpose” to be the environmental voice of the UN System, as called for in paragraph 88 of *The Future We Want*. By the time UNEA meets again in 2016, the ever-changing geo-political and socio-economic landscape will have thrown up new challenges for international environmental governance and UNEA will be seeking its place within a new global sustainable development framework, with likely implications for UNEA’s mandate. For this reason, UNEA delegates were keenly aware of the need to “seize the moment” and send a strong message to the UN General Assembly on UNEP’s role in the post-2015 development agenda.

This brief analysis sifts through the key themes discussed, and decisions adopted by UNEA to assess whether this UNEA has done enough to position UNEP to fulfill its mandate in the post-2015 sustainable development landscape.

MAINTAINING UNEP’S PLACE AS THE ENVIRONMENTAL VOICE OF THE UN SYSTEM

UNEA’s Committee of the Whole worked through more than 20 decision texts during the week, most of which had been tabled and discussed at the OECPR meeting in March, while a number were introduced by governments during the intersessional period, or at UNEA itself. While roughly half cover institutional or procedural issues, the OECPR also worked through a number of substantive themes, including two broad-ranging (omnibus) decisions on the science-policy interface and the chemicals and waste cluster. Other important themes were UNEP’s role in promoting air quality, as well as water monitoring and standards through the GEMS/Water Programme; marine waste and plastics; and ecosystem-based adaptation. As expected, illegal trade in wildlife, which was allotted a special ministerial dialogue session at UNEA, was also a strong theme at the meeting.

While a number of these issues were reflected in the final Ministerial Outcome Document, not all delegates were convinced that UNEP is the natural leader on all these themes. A case in point was the discussion on illegal trade in wildlife. Despite its high profile at UNEA, several observed that the close links to organized crime, corruption and insecurity requires that this issue is coordinated by ministries of internal security or even the office of the president, to ensure sufficient mobilization and enforcement at the highest levels. A delegate from Uganda also noted that many African countries have dedicated ministries of wildlife and tourism, and a number of international fora have already taken place on this issue. The prevailing view during the HLS seemed to be that while environment ministers should send out a strong message, it might be more feasible for UNEP to support ongoing initiatives at the international and national levels.

By contrast, while some had expressed skepticism about UNEA's ability to influence the SDGs and post-2015 process in the lead up to its meeting, the full day devoted to this issue during the High-level Segment revealed a great deal of engagement, with repeated calls for UNEP to ensure that sustainability is fully integrated across all the SDGs. Fresh from OWG-12 in New York, OWG Co-Chair Macharia Kamau and the UN Secretary-General's Special Advisor Amina Mohammed flew into Nairobi specially to brief Ministers on progress in the discussions and to take stock of environmental stakeholders' views ahead of the second meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and the final meeting of the OWG in New York. Despite awareness that UNEA should not be seen to be "stepping on the institutional toes" of the OWG, many stressed that UNEP can offer practical tools for ensuring that sustainability is fully integrated across the social and economic SDGs.

Ahead of UNEA, Maryam Niamir-Fuller, UNEP's Special Advisor on SDGs, proposed an overarching framework of three "transformational" and integrative goals (leaving no one behind, living within a safe operating space, and building assets for the future) around which the 17 goals could be clustered. Civil society representatives at the pre-meeting Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF) welcomed this proposal as a promising way of dealing with the dilemma of "prioritizing" the SDGs, noting it could help retain the level of complexity needed to reach agreement on a universal set of goals. Several non-governmental observers close to the SDG process also said they were encouraged by ideas being floated for a limited set of five targets for each SDG, noting that calls for these five targets to incorporate one target for each of the three pillars of sustainable development and two addressing means of implementation offers a real chance for an integrated approach to implementing a post-2015 agreement on sustainable development.

The discussions at UNEA reaffirmed the view that UNEP has a central role in finding more integrated approaches to tackling sustainable development challenges. This was reflected during the closing of the High-level Segment, when many speakers underscored that member states continue to value UNEP's flagship assessments, such as the Global Environmental Outlook or the GEMS/Water Programme, which help to bridge the science-policy-practice gap.

CLARIFYING UNEP'S INSTITUTIONAL MANDATE

If UNEP's leadership on a number of core themes is relatively well acknowledged, the institutional implications of an upgraded UNEA—as the UN General Assembly's subsidiary organ charged with safeguarding the global sustainability agenda—are still being "processed" within the UN system. The sensitivities around the SDG discussions at UNEA, where lines were repeatedly drawn to remind delegates not to "preempt the outcome of the post-2015 process in New York," exemplify the tricky balancing act that UNEP must perform to hold its own in an increasingly competitive institutional environment. Other institutional lines were drawn during COW discussions on

institutional matters, notably UNEP's role in coordinating UN system-wide strategies on environment, strengthening regional centres, and the budget and POW negotiations.

At the same time, the HLS in particular showcased UNEP's "convening power," as evidenced by the well-attended symposia on "pet" UNEP themes: Financing the Green Economy, and Environmental Rule of Law. Many heads of MEAs and UN specialized agencies attended in person, notably UNDP's Administrator Helen Clark who announced UNDP has joined the UNEP-led Partnership for Action for a Green Economy. The two symposia, in particular, which brought in a broad range of stakeholders outside "the usual suspects," revealed an organization that is increasingly self-confident about its legitimacy to drive a transformational global agenda, despite the fact that it is not an implementing agency. Some of these included chief justices and senior business executives, for instance the Vice-President of the Bank of China and the head of one of the divisions of the Stock Exchange of Brazil.

However, a core part of UNEP (and UNEA's) institutional legitimacy is dependent on its success in drawing on a broad constituency of views and perspectives on environmental matters. Over the years UNEP has made substantial investments in ensuring that Major Groups and stakeholders are fully integrated in its decision-making processes. The two-day GMGSF held prior to each Governing Council meeting is firmly established, with the 15th Forum taking place ahead of UNEA. A highlight of the event in recent years is the two-hour free-ranging exchange with the Executive Director, which participants at this year's GMGSF characterized as particularly frank and substantive in nature. But this year many were also left wondering whether this "cozy" relationship had struck a sour note when Major Groups and stakeholders expressed their strong opposition to the UNEP's draft stakeholder engagement policy.

During the week, it emerged that progress on this issue in the Working Party was painfully slow, due to calls by some countries, notably the G-77/China members, for stricter accreditation criteria and limited access to information for non-governmental stakeholders. One Major Group representative involved in the Working Party negotiations observed that UNEP may have made a strategic blunder in introducing the draft at such a sensitive stage in the transition from a CPR-driven governance structure to universal membership. Perhaps, noted another NGO participant, not all governments are aware of the constructive role that UNEP Major Groups and stakeholders play in the process and were bound to react defensively to the idea of "too much inclusion." The hopeful and constructive tone set during GMGSF had, therefore, largely dissipated towards the end of the week, culminating with a protest by some civil society participants on Friday urging parties not to stifle the different voices at UNEA. With UNEA unable to adopt a decision on the stakeholder policy and related rules of procedure, a lot of bridges will need to be mended during the intersessional period to get this process back on track.

GETTING ITS HOUSE IN ORDER: PROCEDURAL AND OTHER ISSUES

The perception that the UNEA's bureau had perhaps not fully thought through the rules of procedure prevailed during the COW, which was initially allotted just three days to complete its work (compared to a full week in the past). Some delegations complained that the Bureau was "bulldozing" them into adopting decisions without allowing sufficient time for consultations and consensus building. Some have suggested that UNEA consider moving to a 1.5 week format, allowing the COW to meet for a full week and continue into the weekend if necessary, segueing into 2.5 day HLS during the second week. Proponents of this more relaxed format noted that UNEA meets biennially, which requires more time to get everyone on the same page. Others called for experimenting with more inclusive, information technology-driven, consultative processes during the intersessional periods to help build consensus and make progress on substantive issues, freeing up valuable time during UNEA. The format of the Ministerial Dialogue is also likely to come under discussion, with many feeling that more effort could have been made to facilitate more interactive debate among ministers, although hope was expressed that the gathering indeed provides ministers space to engage behind the scenes.

Finally, it has not escaped the attention of most that UNEP will enter the post-2015 era with a new Executive Director, as Achim Steiner's final term will come to an end immediately following the next UNEA in 2016. Steiner has been an untiring advocate for a strengthened UNEP, admired by many for his charisma, grasp of emerging issues and ability to craft innovative partnerships around these issues bringing together multilateral agencies, governments, business, science and finance communities, and civil society. At the same time, there has been criticism from some that UNEP has not delivered much beyond conceptual frameworks and does not take on board the needs of members, especially countries with insufficient technical or institutional capacities. In this regard, one of Steiner's true legacies might well be the successful launch of the UNEP Live knowledge platform, which provides a space for enriching the latest scientific knowledge with practical experiences from the ground.

LOOKING TO UNEA'S FUTURE

So what has this meeting revealed? Is UNEA fit for purpose? The bumpy closing session of the first-ever UNEA is illustrative of some of the hurdles this newly-born institution will have to cross to find its place in a new global sustainable development architecture. There were high moments, such as when UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon observed that the inaugural meeting marks a "coming of age" of environmental governance, reminded delegates that the world expects a lot from them, and challenged UNEA to seize the moment as it has "the power and the responsibility" to promote a global transformation of attitudes and practice. But delegates soon faced a reality check as negotiators returned to the "famous Room 6" soon afterwards for last minute efforts to try and salvage the Ministerial Outcome Document, in a scene reminiscent of many climate negotiations. Perhaps, not surprisingly, the bone of contention was not

explicitly mentioning CBDR in the outcome document in which Ministers "reaffirm" their commitment to "all the principles of the Rio Declaration." After some dramatic moments when some countries said they could not accept an outcome document that could not embrace this fundamental principle, there were also conciliatory calls to view such differences as "healthy," with Steiner urging delegates to work on the basis of "sufficient consensus." Citing former US Vice President Al Gore, South Sudan reminded delegates that this is a high stakes game where "we either pay in cash—or in kind—with our lives and the lives of future generations."

UPCOMING MEETINGS

High-level Political Forum: The second meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development will take place in conjunction with the 2014 substantive session of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), from 30 June - 3 July, with a three-day ministerial segment from 7-9 July. The theme for the forum will be "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals and charting the way for an ambitious post-2015 development agenda, including the sustainable development goals." **dates:** 30 June - 9 July 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **phone:** +1-212-963-8102 **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1768>

OWG-13: The OWG will conclude its consideration of sustainable development goals, targets and indicators. Informal-informal consultations are scheduled for 9-11 July. **dates:** 14-18 July 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **phone:** +1-212-963-8102 **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/owg13.html>

UNGA Dialogue 4 on Technology Transfer Mechanism: In General Assembly Resolution 68/210, UN Member States decided to hold a series of four, one-day structured dialogues to consider possible arrangements for a facilitation mechanism to promote the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies. **date:** 23 July 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&nr=702&type=13&menu=1822>

Fifth Session of Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing: The fifth session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing is scheduled in August 2014. **dates:** 4-8 August 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1688>

Third UN Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS): The Third UN Conference on SIDS will focus on the theme "Sustainable Development of SIDS through Genuine and Durable Partnerships." **dates:** 1-4 September 2014 **location:** Apia, Samoa **www:** <http://www.sids2014.org/>

UNGA Stock-Taking Exercise on the Post-2015

Development Agenda: The President of the UN General Assembly, John Ashe, will convene this stock-taking exercise to pull together events on the post-2015 development agenda. **dates:** 8-9 September 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office of the President of the UNGA **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/68/settingthestage/>

Special Session of the General Assembly on the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the ICPD: An 8-hour Special Session to Follow Up on the Programme of Action from the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) is being organized to coincide with the high-level segment of the general debate at the UN General Assembly. **date:** 22 September 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Mandy Kibel, UNFPA **phone:** +1-212-297-5293 **email:** kibel@unfpa.org **www:** <http://icpdbeyond2014.org/>

UN Climate Summit: UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will convene the Summit with the aim of mobilizing political will for a universal and legally-binding comprehensive climate agreement in 2015. **date:** 23 September 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **www:** <http://www.un.org/climatechange/summit2014/>

CBD COP 12: The twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 12) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will engage in a mid-term review of the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the Aichi targets. The theme of the meeting will be "Biodiversity for Sustainable Development." The Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP MOP 7) will take place immediately before COP 12. **dates:** 6-17 October 2014 **location:** Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=COP-12>

IPCC-40: This IPCC meeting will be held to adopt the AR5 Synthesis Report and approve its Summary for Policymakers. **dates:** 27-31 October 2014 **location:** Copenhagen, Denmark **contact:** IPCC Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-730-8208 **fax:** +41-22-730-8025 **email:** IPCC-Sec@wmo.int **www:** <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

Fifth ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment: This meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) will address the theme of "Environmental Impacts of Disasters" and will include the participation of national disaster-related agencies. ECO represents 10 Central Asian countries. **dates:** October 2014 (tbc) **location:** Istanbul, Turkey **contact:** Reza Samieifard, ECO Secretariat **phone:** +98-21-2283-1733/4 **fax:** +98-21-2283-1732 **email:** Prg-EnvEnr@ECOsecretariat.org **www:** www.ECOsecretariat.org

Sixth Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Mercury: As mandated in the resolution on arrangements in the interim period adopted by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on mercury will meet during the period between the date on which the Convention is opened for signature and the date of the opening of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention

to facilitate the rapid entry into force of the Convention and its effective implementation upon its entry into force. **dates:** 3-7 November 2014 **location:** Bangkok, Thailand **contact:** Interim Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8511 **fax:** +41-22-797-3460 **email:** mercury.chemicals@unep.org **www:** <http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Negotiations/INC6/tabid/3563/Default.aspx>

CMS COP 11: Ecuador will host the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 11) to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) in November 2014, marking the first time that a CMS COP is held in Latin America. **dates:** 4-9 November 2014 **location:** Quito, Ecuador **contact:** Veronika Lenarz, CMS Secretariat **email:** vlenarz@cms.int **www:** <http://www.cms.int/>

IUCN World Parks Congress 2014: The sixth International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Parks Congress will serve as a vital link to achieving IUCN's overall vision of a "just world that values and conserves nature" and deliver the IUCN Programme 2013-2106. **dates:** 12-19 November 2014 **location:** Sydney, Australia **contact:** Trevor Sandwith **email:** trevor.sandwith@iucn.org **www:** <http://worldparkscongress.org/>

Joint 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the 26th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol: MOP 26 is scheduled to consider a several issues, including nominations for critical- and essential-use exemptions and other draft decisions forwarded from the OEWG. **dates:** 17-21 November 2014 **location:** Paris, France **contact:** Ozone Secretariat **phone:** +254- 20-762-3851/3611 **fax:** +254-20-762-0335 **email:** ozoneinfo@unep.org **www:** http://ozone.unep.org/new_site/en/historical_meetings.php

UNFCCC COP 20 and CMP 10: The 20th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 20) to the UNFCCC and the 10th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties (CMP) to the Kyoto Protocol will take place in Lima, Peru. **dates:** 1-12 December 2014 **location:** Lima, Peru **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **email:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** <http://unfccc.int>

Second Meeting of the SAICM OEWG: The Second Meeting of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) Open-Ended Working Group is expected to: review and prioritize proposals for emerging policy issues in preparation for the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM4); consider proposals for the inclusion of new activities in the Global Plan of Action; consider the outcomes of regional meetings; and identify priority issues for consideration at ICCM4. **dates:** 15-17 December 2014 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** SAICM Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8532 **fax:** +41-22-797-3460 **email:** saicm@unep.org **www:** <http://www.saicm.org/>

Ninth Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to Study Issues Relating to the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine BBNJ: This meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction (BBNJ) is the third of three

meetings (April 2014, June 2014 and January 2015) that the UN General Assembly (UNGA) requested be convened. The meetings aim to make recommendations to the UNGA on the scope, parameters and feasibility of an international instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). These three meetings are expected to result in a summary of discussions that will be submitted to the President of the UNGA, and are anticipated to contribute to a decision to be taken at the 69th Session of the UNGA on the development of a new international instrument under UNCLOS. **dates:** 20-23 January 2015 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs **email:** doalos@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/Depts/los/biodiversityworkinggroup/biodiversityworkinggroup.htm>

UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference: The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) 3rd Scientific will address the theme “Combating desertification, land degradation and drought for poverty reduction and sustainable development – the contribution of science, technology, traditional knowledge and practices.” It will be held during the fourth special session of the UNCCD Committee on Science and Technology. The Scientific Conference aims harness a wide range of scientific, local and traditional knowledge to achieve poverty reduction and sustainable development in areas susceptible to desertification, land degradation and drought. The Conference is being organized by the UNCCD Secretariat and the Scientific and Traditional Knowledge for Sustainable Development (STK4SD) Consortium. **dates:** 9-12 March 2015 **location:** Mexico **contact:** STK4SD Consortium **email:** 3sc.unccd@agropolis.fr **www:** <http://3sc.unccd.int/>

Basel COP 12, Rotterdam COP 7 and Stockholm COP 7: The 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Basel Convention, seventh meeting of the COP to the Rotterdam Convention, and seventh meeting of the COP to the Stockholm Convention are expected to convene back-to-back in May 2015. **dates:** 3-14 May 2015 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-87-29 **fax:** +41-22-917-80-98 **email:** brs@brsmeas.org **www:** <http://synergies.pops.int/>

Third International Conference on Financing for Development: The third International Conference on Financing for Development will be held in 2015. **dates:** 13-16 July 2015 **location:** Addis Ababa, Ethiopia **contact:** UN Financing for Development Office **phone:** +1-212-963-8379 **fax:** +1-212-963-0443 **email:** ffdoffice@un.org **www:** www.un.org/esa/ffd

Expo 2015: Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life: Expo 2015 will be held on the theme, “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life”. Recognizing the role of food and nutrition in achieving sustainable development, the event will focus on a variety of related themes, including improving food quality and security, ensuring healthy and high-quality nutrition for humans, and promoting innovation in research, technology, and business practices. **date:** 1 May 2015 - 31 October 2015 **location:** Milan, Italy **contact:** Expo 2015 Planning Office **phone:** +39-2- 89459400/499 **www:** <http://en.expo2015.org/>

UN Environmental Assembly of UNEP: The second meeting of the UN Environmental Assembly (UNEA) of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) is scheduled for 2016. **dates:** 23-27 May 2016 **location:** UNEP headquarters, Nairobi, Kenya **contact:** Jiří Hlaváček, Secretary of Governing Bodies, UNEP **phone:** +254-20-7623431 **email:** unep.sgb@unep.org **www:** <http://www.unep.org/unea/>

GLOSSARY

BRS	Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions
CBDR	Common but differentiated responsibilities
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
COP	Conference of the Parties
CPR	Committee of Permanent Representatives
COW	Committee of the Whole
EBA	Ecosystem-based Adaptation
EMG	Environment Management Group
GC	Governing Council
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEMS	Global Environment Monitoring System
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
HLS	High-level Segment
LDCs	Least developed countries
MEAs	Multilateral environmental agreements
OECP	Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives
OWG	Open Working Group
POW	Programme of Work
SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
SCP	Sustainable consumption and production
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small island developing states
SPI	Science-policy interface
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEA	United Nations Environment Assembly
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
WHO	World Health Organization