



SECOND MEETING OF THE UNEP OPEN-ENDED COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES: 15-19 FEBRUARY 2016

The 2nd meeting of the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR) to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) opens today at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) and will continue until 19 February 2016.

The Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) is composed of all accredited Permanent Representatives to UNEP. At the first universal session of the UNEP Governing Council (GC) held in February 2013, the CPR became the subsidiary intersessional organ of UNEP's governing body, with the mandate to perform various functions including preparation of the agenda for the UN Environment Assembly of the UNEP (UNEA) and providing advice on policy matters. In addition to the Nairobi-based Permanent Representatives of UN Member States, the OECPR also includes representatives from capitals. The OECPR previously met in March 2014, in preparation for UNEA-1 in May of that year.

During this meeting, the OECPR will consider the draft resolutions to be presented to UNEA-2. The draft resolutions address, *inter alia*: the roles of UNEP and UNEA in delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; promoting effective implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement; sound management of chemicals and waste; marine plastic debris and microplastics; improving the environmental performance of the extractive sector; illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products; and the Medium-Term Strategy (2018-21) and the biennial programme of work (PoW) and budget for 2018-19.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF UNEP GC/GMEF

As a result of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, the UN General Assembly, 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 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 the 58 members of the GC, taking into account the principle of equitable regional representation. Through resolution 67/213 (2012), the General Assembly established universal

membership in the GC, and determined that the 2013 meeting of the Council would be its first "universal" session. 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.

The Governing Council and the GMEF met annually in regular or special sessions beginning in 2000. Some of the highlights from 2000-2012 include: the adoption of the Malmö Ministerial Declaration in 2000, which agreed that the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) should review the requirements for a greatly strengthened institutional structure for international environmental governance (IEG); the creation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM); the 2005 Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building; the establishment of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group to Review and Assess Measures to Address the Global Issue of Mercury; the UNEP Medium-term Strategy 2010-2013; and the establishment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

GCSS12/GMEF: Convening from 20-22 February 2012, in Nairobi, Kenya, the twelfth GC Special Session (GCSS-12) marked the 40th anniversary of the establishment of UNEP. Eight decisions were adopted, including on: "UNEP at 40;" IEG; the world environment situation; sustainable consumption and production (SCP); and the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and waste.

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 UN General Assembly to take decisions on, *inter alia*: designating a body to operationalize the 10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP), and strengthening and upgrading UNEP, including through: 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 GC, which allows for full participation of all 193 UN member states. 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.

GC27/GMEF: Convening from 19-22 February 2013, this meeting was the first Universal Session of the GC. The GC adopted a decision on institutional arrangements, inviting the UN General Assembly to rename UNEP's governing body the "UN Environment Assembly of the UNEP" (UNEA). Other decisions were adopted on, *inter alia*: 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 PoW for the biennium 2014-2015.

OECPR-1: The first meeting of the OECPR took place at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, from 24-28 March 2014. The OECPR considered: the half-yearly review of the implementation of the PoW and budget for 2012-2013; policy matters, including its advice to UNEA; and the draft PoW and budget for 2016-2017 and other administrative matters. The meeting provided an opportunity to: prepare for the UNEA sessions in 2014 and 2016; debate the role of UNEA in the UN system; and prepare draft decisions for adoption by UNEA. Delegates did not approve any decisions during the session.

UNEA-1: This meeting took place at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, from 23-27 June 2014, on the theme, "Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, including sustainable consumption and production." The Assembly included a High-Level Segment on "A Life of Dignity for All," which addressed: sustainable development goals (SDGs), including: SCP; and illegal trade in wildlife, focusing on the escalation in poaching and the surge in related environmental crime. UNEA-1 also convened two symposia addressing 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. A UNEA-1 Ministerial Outcome Document was adopted; several Member States noted their reservations with the document.

INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The 2015 meeting of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) took place from 26 June - 8 July 2015 at UN Headquarters in New York, on the theme of "Strengthening integration, implementation and review – the HLPF after 2015." Moderated dialogues took place followed by a ministerial segment from 6-8 July, which included the launch of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) report and ministerial-level dialogues.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA: The UN General Assembly created the Open Working Group (OWG) to elaborate a set of sustainable development goals, as called for by Rio+20. The OWG met 13 times in New York and developed the full set SDGs and targets, completing its work in July 2014. Following completion of the work of the OWG, the UN General Assembly

held a series of eight sessions to prepare the outcome document for the UN Summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda, which took place between January and August 2015 in New York. The final session adopted a package, titled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," which contained a preamble, declaration, 17 SDGs and 169 targets, a section on means of implementation and the Global Partnership, and a framework for follow-up and review of implementation.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT: The Summit, which took place from 25-27 September 2015 at UN Headquarters in New York, adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Delegates took part in six interactive dialogues on the topics of: ending poverty and hunger; tackling inequalities, empowering women and girls and leaving no one behind; fostering sustainable economic growth, transformation and promoting SCP; delivering on a revitalized Global Partnership; building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions to achieve sustainable development; and protecting our planet and combating climate change. Many leaders announced national commitments to implement the SDGs.

ANNUAL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CPR TO UNEP: The third meeting of the sub-committee took place from 26-30 October 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya. The sub-committee, *inter alia*: prepared draft resolutions for consideration at OECPR-2 and UNEA-2; and held an interactive discussion on prioritizing the promotion of air quality, where they agreed to maintain this as a priority in the work of UNEP and UNEA. On preparation of the draft Medium-Term Strategy, they welcomed new sections on monitoring and evaluation, and on the "2030 Vision", and considered improving alignment of indicators in the PoW with the SDG indicators.

GLOBAL MAJOR GROUPS & STAKEHOLDERS PREPARATORY MEETING: Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) met on Sunday, 14 February 2016 in Nairobi, Kenya and discussed, *inter alia*: the need for input from UNEA-2 to the Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III); the environmental impact of the refugee crisis; and the role of the MGS in the OECPR and UNEA processes. The MGS also engaged in joint and working group talks on the OECPR agenda, and agreed on messages to Member States on the draft resolutions to be negotiated and forwarded to UNEA-2. They considered topics including: the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda; the Paris Climate Agreement; mobilizing finances for investment in sustainable development; the Global Thematic Report on the theme of "Healthy Environment – Healthy People"; and the sixth Global Environmental Outlook (GEO-6) process. CPR Chair Julia Pataki assured MGS of the committee's commitment to openness and transparency. Ibrahim Thiaw, UNEP Deputy Executive Director, noted that as implementation of the SDGs begins, the world's attention has been taken up by humanitarian crises. He drew attention to the need for tackling the root causes of displacement and conflict, and urged MGS to highlight critical challenges such as integrating the climate and biodiversity agendas, "decarbonizing and detoxifying" economic growth, and moving beyond "private sector philanthropy" towards new sustainable business models.

With representatives of Member States and Jorge Laguna Celis, UNEP Secretariat of Governing Bodies, MGS discussed issues including improving opportunities for stakeholder engagement through creative and less costly means of interaction, and implementing a genuinely inclusive green economy agenda. Member States endorsed the role of stakeholders in the preparations toward UNEA-2.