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## 27TH SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL/GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM: 18-22 FEBRUARY 2013

The twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC27/GMEF) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) opens today at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) and will continue until 22 February 2013.

The meeting will be the first Universal Session of the GC following the decision of the United Nations General Assembly to strengthen and upgrade UNEP. Ministerial level consultations will address “Rio+20: from outcome to implementation,” in the context of strengthening and upgrading UNEP as set out in the the Rio+20 outcome document, “The Future We Want.” The meeting will also consider “implementing a green economy as an important tool for achieving sustainable development.” Other issues to be addressed include: sustainable consumption and production patterns and the post-2015 Development Agenda; financing options for chemicals and wastes; and system-wide coordination on Rio+20 follow-up.

Various side events, as well as the 14th Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF-14) are also taking place.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 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 include 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 reports to the UN General Assembly, which also elects the GC’s 58 members for four-year terms, taking into account the principle of equitable regional representation. The GMEF is constituted by the GC as envisaged in GA resolution 53/242. The purpose of the GMEF is to institute, at a high political level, a process for reviewing important and emerging policy issues in the field of the environment.

**GCSS-6/GMEF:** The sixth Special Session of the GC/GMEF (GCSS-6/GMEF) took place from 29-31 May 2000, in Malmö, Sweden. Ministers adopted the Malmö Ministerial Declaration, 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).

**GC-21/GMEF:** This meeting took place from 5-9 February 2001, in Nairobi, Kenya. Delegates established the Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or their Representatives (IGM) to undertake a comprehensive policy-oriented assessment of existing institutional weaknesses, as well as future needs and options for strengthening IEG. They also adopted decision 21/7, which requests the UNEP Executive Director to examine the need for a strategic approach to international chemicals management (SAICM).

**GCSS-7/GMEF:** This meeting was held from 13-15 February 2002, in Cartagena, Colombia. In its decision SS.VII/1, the GC/GMEF adopted the IGM report, which contains recommendations aimed at strengthening IEG, including 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*, SAICM at the global level.

**WSSD:** The WSSD was held from 26 August-4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) sets out a framework for action to implement the commitments originally agreed at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. The JPOI, among other things, emphasized that the international community should fully implement the outcomes of decision SS.VII/1 on IEG.

**GC-22/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.

**GCSS-8/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; waste management; and water resource management; regional annexes; and the implementation of decision SS.VII/1 on IEG.

**GC-23/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;

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poverty and the environment; and strengthening environmental emergency response and developing disaster prevention, preparedness, mitigation and early warning systems.

**GCSS-9/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 GC universal membership did not produce an agreed outcome, and delegates decided that the report of the meeting should reflect the divergence of views expressed.

**GC-24/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 in environmental management and protection.

**GCSS-10/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.

**GC-25/GMEF:** GC-25/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. The decision requested the group to present a set of options for improving IEG to GCSS-11/GMEF with a view to providing input to the UN General Assembly.

**GCSS-11/GMEF:** GCSS-11/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.

**GC-26/GMEF:** This meeting took place from 21-24 February 2011 at the UN Office 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.

**GCSS-12/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 environmental situation; sustainable consumption and production; and the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes.

### INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

**RIO+20:** The third and final meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20), Pre-Conference Informal Consultations Facilitated by the Host Country, and the UNCSD convened back-to-back in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 13-22 June 2012.

During their ten days in Rio, government delegations concluded negotiations on the Rio outcome document, titled "The Future We Want."

The agreement adopted in Rio called for the UN General Assembly at its next session, to take decisions on, *inter alia*: designating a body to operationalize the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production; determining the modalities for the third international conference on small island developing states in 2014; identifying the format and organizational aspects of the high-level forum, which is to replace the Commission on Sustainable Development; strengthening UNEP; constituting a working group to develop global sustainable development goals (SDGs) to be agreed by the UN General Assembly; establishing an intergovernmental process under the UN General Assembly to prepare a report proposing options on an effective sustainable development financing strategy; and considering a set of recommendations from the Secretary-General for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally-sound technologies.

In addition, the UN General Assembly is called on to take a decision in two years on the development of an international instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) regarding marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

**ICCM-3:** The third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM-3) met from 17-21 September 2012, in Nairobi, Kenya. A High-Level Dialogue on strengthening the SAICM for more effective implementation was also convened. The Conference adopted nine resolutions, including on the budget of the Secretariat and emerging policy issues such as chemicals in products, lead in paint, and endocrine disrupting chemicals. A resolution on highly hazardous pesticides was proposed in plenary, but was not adopted.

**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, which allows for full participation of all 193 UN member states at the UNEP Governing Council. The resolution also recalls the decision 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.

**MERCURY NEGOTIATIONS:** The fourth and fifth sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to Prepare a Global Legally Binding Instrument on Mercury (INC5) convened from 27 June - 2 July 2012 in Punta del Este, Uruguay, and 13-19 January, in Geneva, Switzerland, respectively. Delegates successfully completed the negotiation of a new global treaty on mercury, the "Minamata Convention on Mercury." The Convention's major highlights include: a ban on new mercury mines, the phase-out of existing ones, control measures on air emissions, and the international regulation of the informal sector of artisanal and small-scale gold mining.

**IPBES:** After seven years of discussions, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) was formally established in Panama in April 2012. The first session of the IPBES met from 21-26 January 2013, in Bonn, Germany. Although some issues remained unresolved, including rules of procedure on the admission of observers, achievements accomplished included the election of the IPBES Chair, Bureau and Multidisciplinary Expert Panel the adoption of an initial budget, and agreement on steps toward the development of an initial IPBES work programme.



## UNEP GC27/GMEF HIGHLIGHTS: MONDAY, 18 FEBRUARY 2013

Delegates at the 27th session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC-27/GMEF) convened in the morning for the opening ceremony of the first Universal Session of the GC, followed by consideration of organizational matters, and a policy statement by UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner. In the afternoon, delegates convened for ministerial consultations on emerging policy issues (implementation of paragraph 88 of the Rio+20 outcome document, entitled the "The Future we Want," and General Assembly resolution 67/213). The Committee of the Whole (COW) also met in the afternoon.

### OPENING CEREMONY

Opening the first universal session of the GC, Federico Ramos de Armas, Spain, outgoing GC President, called for urgent action to change unsustainable consumption and production patterns and to move beyond Gross Domestic Product as a measure of prosperity.

Reading a message from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Sahle-Work Zewde, Director General, UNON, *inter alia*: underscored investment in the environment and in the green economy as a "sound insurance policy" for the future we want; and highlighted UN General Assembly discussions on financial resources for UNEP from the regular UN budget.

Achim Steiner, Executive Director, UNEP, noted that delegates have the task of promptly implementing the Rio+20 outcome aspects regarding the functioning of UNEP and the design of the international agenda for cooperation on the environment pillar of sustainable development.

Describing the first universal session of the GC as "historic," Mwai Kibaki, President of Kenya, noted that the Rio+20 outcome had reaffirmed UNEP as the leading global environmental authority by adopting several decisions to strengthen and upgrade UNEP.

**ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS:** The plenary elected Hassan Abdel Hilal, Minister of Environment, Forests and Physical Development, Sudan, as GC-27/GMEF President. Ryutaro Yatsu (Japan), Antonio Otávio Sá Ricarte (Brazil) and Idunn Eidheim (Norway), were elected Bureau Vice-Presidents; and Beata Jaczewska (Poland) was elected Rapporteur.

GC-27/GMEF President Hilal highlighted the need to agree on the future participation of ministers and the institutional arrangements and capacity within UNEP; and to discuss UNEP's contribution to the post-2015 development agenda.

GC President Hilal informed delegates that the first universal session will follow the GC applicable rules of procedure and the applicable rules and practice of the General Assembly. The provisional agenda (UNEP/GC.27/1) was adopted. On the organization of work (UNEP/GC.27/1/Add.1), GC President

Hilal outlined the Executive Director's recommendations, including the establishment of a COW, a drafting group, and a working group on institutional arrangements and rules of procedure. A COW was established with Idunn Eidheim (Norway) as Chair. Luis Campuzano (Mexico) and Farrukh Iqbal Khan (Pakistan) were appointed co-chairs of the working group on institutional arrangements and rules of procedure. Delegates agreed on the GC-27/GMEF's organization of work.

### POLICY STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE

**DIRECTOR:** UNEP Executive Director Steiner highlighted the need to articulate an environmental agenda that addresses issues such as energy, employment and poverty. Steiner said the Rio+20 outcome moved that agenda forward, and noted that delegates have a clear mandate from the UN General Assembly to implement the outcome's paragraph 88 provisions and decide how the newly mandated governing body of UNEP will function. He outlined UNEP's contributions over the years, including the Rio+20 discussions on green economy, its work on black carbon as a complement to climate action, the finalization of a mercury treaty, and improved synergies in the chemicals and wastes cluster. He emphasized UNEP's increased efficiency and improved value proposition, noting the programme of work entails a modest budget increase.

### STATEMENT BY THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES:

H.E. Geert Aagaard Andersen (Denmark), Chair of the UNEP Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), submitted 12 CPR draft decisions for consideration, noting bracketed text remained, including on the decision on the Consultative Process on Financing Options for Chemicals and Wastes, which is bracketed in its entirety. He said the draft decision on the green economy was bracketed because of insufficient time for its consideration.

Reiterating support for a stronger more effective UNEP, the US stressed the need to resolve structural governance issues pertaining to universal membership. She called for, *inter alia*: a review of UNEP's Strategic Framework; a clear and more defined role for the CPR; a mechanism for enhancing stakeholder participation; and addressing the frequency and effectiveness of meetings to avoid overloading UNEP's agenda. With CANADA, the US also expressed concern regarding the President of the session, noting that Sudan is currently subject to UN Security Council sanctions and therefore is not an "appropriate choice for leadership." MALAYSIA introduced a draft decision on the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Secretariat.

### MINISTERIAL CONSULTATIONS

Delegates convened for a panel discussion and a plenary dialogue. Princess Lalla Hasna, Morocco, highlighted the work of the Mohammed VI Foundation for the Protection of the Environment in promoting young people's environmental education and activities.



Francisco Gaetani, Deputy Minister of Environment, Brazil, called on the GC to prioritize a cost-effective framework and participatory decision-making, and avoid “new layers” of decision-making. On the post-2015 agenda, he said MDGs should focus on eradication of absolute poverty by 2030, and SDGs, supported by diverse funding, should help countries focus on sustainable development policies.

Wu Hongbo, UN Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, highlighted the role of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) as a custodian of the sustainable development agenda; the need for its close cooperation with UNEP, international financial institutions and the WTO; and its convening powers, and its potential role in monitoring progress towards SDGs.

Terezya Huvisa, Minister of State, Tanzania, highlighted the African Union’s efforts to develop regional flagship programmes for implementation of Rio+20 outcomes, and ongoing continent-wide consultations to articulate a common vision for Africa.

Rebeca Grynspan, UN Under-Secretary-General, UNDP, noted that the success of the MDGs had been achieved through mobilization of stakeholders, and the internalization of indicators and goals through planning and budgeting.

Amina J. Mohammed, UN Assistant Secretary-General, Special Advisor on Post-2015 Development Planning, remarked that the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the post-2015 development agenda would help chart the trajectory to one set of integrated goals.

Naoko Ishii, CEO and Chair, Global Environment Facility (GEF), called for breaking down silos between: different environmental issues; environment, economic and social development issues; and international boundaries in governance of ecosystems.

Xinsheng Zhang, IUCN President, said the green economy concept should be oriented towards improving social equity, while taking into account planetary boundaries. He called on countries to be results-oriented, and for the SDGs framework to incorporate nature-based solutions.

John Knox, Independent Expert on Human Rights and the Environment, UN Human Rights Council, discussed the role of human rights when promoting environmental sustainability in the context of Rio+20. He observed that human rights law can help to inform the SDGs and fundamental rights to environmental protection.

**MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE:** On the green economy, the EU called for further steps to adopt green economy policies at all levels and for a convergence of work on the MDGs and SDGs aimed at eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development.

On implementing the Rio+20 outcome, MEXICO called for providing UNEP with the necessary tools to coordinate the environment activities of the UN system and, with IRAN, to strengthen the science-policy interface. ARGENTINA cautioned against creating a new and costly supranational body, preferring to improve on what already exists.

GERMANY asked for the creation of an ombudsperson for future generations and supported a “UN Environment Assembly.”

COLOMBIA highlighted the need to have SDGs of a universal nature and proposed the following five areas for the goals: energy, sustainable cities, water, food security and oceans. KENYA noted that the legitimacy of the reformed GC must be reflected in its designation; an enhanced role for the CPR; and annual meetings of the universal body.

#### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Amina Mohamed, on behalf of Executive Director Achim Steiner, said the COW had before it fourteen draft decisions that sought to implement the Rio+20 outcome. COLOMBIA

introduced a draft decision on oceans (UNEP/GC.27/CRP.3), stressing that it sought to give greater visibility to the need for the integrated management of oceans. Tanzania, for the AFRICAN GROUP, urged delegates to consider, *inter alia*: strengthening existing bodies rather than creating new ones; a clear roadmap for moving UNEP headquarter functions and offices to Nairobi; and establishing sub-regional offices in Africa.

**Rio+20 Implementation:** The Secretariat introduced information documents on the work of the CPR (UNEP/GC.27/INF/4), and on resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly of relevance to UNEP (UNEP/GC.27/INF/3 and INF/3/Add.1). INDIA, with the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, the US, INDONESIA and others, favored strengthening the CPR.

On stakeholder involvement, MAJOR GROUPS said they would table comprehensive principles for stakeholder participation. Ireland, for the EU and CROATIA, with AUSTRALIA, the US, CANADA, NORWAY and others stressed the importance of stakeholder involvement. On strengthening and upgrading UNEP, ARGENTINA expressed support for strengthening UNEP, but said upgrading the Programme was beyond the GC’s mandate.

BRAZIL, with INDONESIA, called for a thorough consideration of the rules of procedure, including the need to address gaps on matters like the mechanism for NGO participation.

NEW ZEALAND, with the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, SIERRA LEONE, IRAN, EGYPT and INDONESIA, called for a stronger UNEP regional presence.

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION underlined that structural changes should neither increase bureaucracy nor place a greater financial burden on member states.

COW Chair Eidheim forwarded the discussion to the working group on institutional arrangements and rules of procedure.

**Budget and Programme of Work:** The Secretariat introduced documents on the budget and programme of work for the biennium 2014–2015 and the Environment Fund and other budgetary matters (UNEP/GC.27/9/Add.1; UNEP/GC.27/10/Add.1 and Add.2; UNEP/CG.27/11/Rev.1; UNEP/GC.27/14/Rev.1; UNEP/GC.27/INF/6 and Add 1; UNEP/GC.27/INF/7; and UNEP/GC.27/L.1).

BOLIVIA said the proposed programme of work is based on the green economy and does not accurately reflect the balanced Rio+20 outcome. NORWAY said the overall 2.7% budget increase is modest. Ireland, for the EU and CROATIA, called on UNEP’s Executive Director to seek a broader donor base for UNEP. Delegates established a working group on the budget and programme of work, to be chaired by Konrad Paulsen (Chile).

#### IN THE BREEZEWAYS

The first “universal session” of the UNEP GC opened on a very high note, with widespread enthusiasm for the new membership status of the Council and the recent boost given to UNEP as the leading voice of the environment at the global level. Some delegates reflected on how a reformed UNEP marks a coming of age for the programme, and the advancement of the sustainability agenda at large. With the sense of urgency to rapidly advance the environmental pillar of sustainable development, delegates were excited at the prospect of having the institutional tools to make their mark. Others felt the need to reflect on what this meeting means for the post-2015 development agenda.

Stakeholders, who had met over the weekend, were eager to see how governments would react to their proposal of principles for stakeholder participation. The question of how to integrate stakeholders into the reformed UNEP, among other things, will be something they will be keeping a watchful eye on.



## UNEP GC27/GMEF HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 19 FEBRUARY 2013

On Tuesday morning, GC-27/GMEF delegates convened in ministerial consultations, three parallel roundtable ministerial discussions and the COW. In the afternoon, deliberations continued in the COW and in three parallel ministerial roundtable discussions. Two working groups, on the budget and on institutional arrangements and rules of procedure, also met throughout the day. A contact group on chemicals management also met.

### MINISTERIAL CONSULTATIONS

**MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE:** Ministerial consultations on implementing paragraph 88 of the Rio+20 outcome document and UN General Assembly resolution 67/213 continued on Tuesday morning.

PAKISTAN said it looked forward to a strengthened UNEP that includes an institutionalized role for the CPR, and a more prominent role for the GMEF.

UGANDA sought UNEP's expertise to sustainably develop its oil industry and, with TANZANIA, highlighted the need to focus on poverty eradication. FRANCE said paragraph 88 of the Rio+20 outcome was a statement on the need to strengthen the role of Africa in the international arena.

FIJI noted that the Melanesian states had endorsed the document "Green Growth in the Blue Economy," which will add value to national policy frameworks.

INDONESIA cautioned against immediately establishing a science-policy permanent body at UNEP, saying this could burden UNEP in the short term and result in a duplication of functions with other entities.

BOLIVIA expressed concern that the green economy may not consider biodiversity appropriately. CHILDREN AND YOUTH MAJOR GROUP called for civil society participation to be ensured at the national level, and for Major Groups to be represented on the CPR.

**ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS: Session One:** Three parallel, morning ministerial roundtable discussions addressed: responsiveness to country needs; science-policy interface; secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resources to fulfill UNEPs' mandate; stakeholder participation; and future ministerial engagement and institutional arrangements.

On responsiveness to country needs, there were many calls to strengthen UNEP's regional and sub-regional presence. Others agreed that a more visible UNEP at the regional level would allow the organization to be more responsive. Some ministers suggested integrating UNEP staff into UNDP country offices as a potential way forward. Other ministers suggested involving UNEP in the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) work in order to increase responsiveness to country needs.

There was willingness to strengthen the science-policy interface. Some however, cautioned against duplicating the work of existing science-policy platforms through the creation of new institutions, preferring to consider existing bodies such as IPBES and IPCC. Others noted that lack of synergies between these bodies had created a need for UNEP to bring these assessments together and to identify gaps. Some ministers expressed support for creating a subsidiary body for this purpose. Using UNEP's Global Environmental Outlook (GEO) as the center for the science-policy interface was also proposed.

On future ministerial engagement, ministers agreed that their active role in the new UNEP would be needed. Many favored renaming UNEP's Governing Council the "Global Environment Assembly" to reflect its universal nature, and to hold a global conference on the state of the planet, which they anticipated would ensure greater visibility and political attention.

On civil society engagement, there was strong support to include stakeholders in the work of UNEP. Major Groups called for stakeholder involvement in agenda setting and policy making. A Major Group proposed establishing a working group to consider best practice in institutional arrangements for civil society participation. Ministers gave examples of participatory models adopted by other UN agencies where stakeholders are involved in deliberating draft decisions. One minister said member states are at the core of decision-making, although input from civil society is vital. There were also proposals for a public disclosure policy.

On increased financial resources, there was general agreement on the need to increase UNEP's donor base, improve transparency, and move away from earmarked funding, with some noting that this would not only make funding more predictable but also strengthen UNEP. Some proposed to equip UNEP with the ability to raise funds on its own. A Major Group proposed investigating how a financial transactions tax could be utilized.

**Session Two:** Afternoon parallel ministerial roundtable discussions addressed: environmental challenges within sustainable development and UNEP's contribution to SDGs; and promoting sustainable consumption and production.

On SDGs, many favored convergence with the MDGs, and emphasized the importance of ownership from countries and Major Groups in the process. Delegates discussed tools to enable sustainable development enabling conditions, including the rule of law, respect for human rights, and stable economic policies that create predictability for the business sector.

Sharing national experiences, ministers highlighted efforts on, *inter alia*, green labeling and green procurement, increasing consumer information, instituting sustainable building codes, and reducing waste, including food waste.

On UNEP's contribution, participants welcomed its role in providing reliable scientific data to inform the SDG process, particularly in developing measurable goals. They cautioned that



“one size does not fit all”, and that national standards, capacities and levels of development must be taken into account. Several Major Groups delivered statements.

On SCP, some speakers highlighted a need to go beyond the resource efficiency agenda, expressing concerns about mining and farming practices, and noting the responsibility of the public sector and business actors in these areas. Ministers noted that national sustainable development councils that bring together a wide variety of stakeholders have provided a necessary forum to discuss SCP-related issues, with some noting a key challenge was to have similar arrangements at the provincial and local levels.

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**Sustainable consumption and production:** The Secretariat introduced three documents on sustainable consumption and production (SCP) (UNEP/GC.27/5; and UNEP/GC.27/INF/13). The EU and CROATIA pointed to sufficient expertise, knowledge and initiatives for achieving SCP and called for a bottom-up approach in the implementation of the 10-year framework of programme on SCP patterns (10YFP). INDIA said countries should implement the 10YFP incorporating national circumstances, and stressed the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. BRAZIL emphasized the need to build on lessons learnt and on the Marrakech Process to support regional and national initiatives.

INDONESIA stressed that as SCP is a “prerequisite for sustainable development,” and that it should be embedded in the post-2015 development agenda. The US urged delegates not to renegotiate the balanced outcomes agreed on during CSD meetings and in Rio de Janeiro.

JAPAN underscored the importance of environmental awareness targeting consumers and producers and the promotion of the “reduce, reuse, recycle” campaign to reduce waste. BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY MAJOR GROUP called on governments to foster innovation in industry, noting that intra-industry efforts in SCP already exist. FARMERS MAJOR GROUP expressed disappointment with the exclusion of sustainable food and agricultural systems in the proposed programmes, and encouraged the GC to, *inter alia*, include these in the programmes, and enhance synergies between SCP, green economy and chemicals and wastes efforts. Delegates then went through a first reading of the draft decision.

**Chemicals and wastes management:** The Secretariat introduced the relevant documents (UNEP/GC.27/4, 7 and 8; and UNEP/GC.27/INF/14). CANADA, with the US, expressed support for all three elements of the proposed approach, namely mainstreaming of sound chemicals and waste management into development planning; industry involvement; and dedicated external financing. BRAZIL, INDONESIA, CHINA and ARGENTINA called for a stronger emphasis on dedicated external financing, with BRAZIL supporting a financial mechanism similar to the Montreal Protocol’s Multilateral Fund. SWITZERLAND called for broadening and strengthening the role of the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

On mercury, SWITZERLAND presented a draft decision on the integration of the Minamata Convention into the chemicals and waste cluster (UNEP/GC.27/CRP.1), with provisions for future secretariat support. NORWAY supported Switzerland’s proposal. Many countries underscored that the GC should not pre-empt the outcome of the Diplomatic Conference that will adopt the Minamata Convention.

Introducing a draft decision on chemicals and waste management (UNEP/GC.27/CRP.2), the US noted that it incorporated and streamlined the proposed decisions on chemicals management. SWITZERLAND, NORWAY, CANADA, NEW ZEALAND, JAPAN and AUSTRALIA supported using this text as a basis for discussion. KENYA, BRAZIL, INDONESIA, ECUADOR, ARGENTINA, SOUTH AFRICA and others opposed, stating that key elements of the original decisions were not reflected in the US draft.

KENYA, with TANZANIA, noted that there had not been much success in dealing with cadmium. A contact group on chemicals and wastes, chaired by Alf Wills (South Africa), was established.

**World Environment Situation:** The Secretariat introduced the documents (UNEP/GC.27/3, UNEP/GC.27/12, UNEP/GC.27/15, UNEP/GC.27/INF/2, UNEP/GC.27/INF/10, UNEP/GC.27/INF/11, and UNEP/GC.27/INF/12 and Add.1).

Renate Christ, Secretary, IPCC, updated delegates on developments within the IPCC.

After a general discussion, delegates began a first reading of a draft decision on international water quality guidelines for ecosystems. Discussions on draft decisions under this agenda item will continue in a contact group.

### WORKING GROUP

The working group on institutional arrangements met throughout the day to consider: a new designation for the GC to reflect its universal character; frequency of meetings and the role of ministers; intersessional arrangements; bureaus; and role of stakeholders. On the GC’s name, there was widespread agreement that the term “Council” conveys a limited membership and needs to be changed. Many supported “UN Environment Assembly,” while others said a reference to UNEP is needed. “Environment Assembly” was also proposed. Regarding frequency of meetings, many supported holding annual meetings of the new entity, with ministerial segments held at those sessions every two years. One delegate called for less frequent meetings to increase their impact. Many supported ministerial consultations with stakeholders to set the international environmental agenda. On intersessional work, one delegate proposed expanding the CPR’s authority so that it develops the strategic framework, programme of work and budget intersessionally, and creating a technical subsidiary body to examine finance and implementation reports. The need to ensure stakeholder participation in the new universal body was widely recognized, but one delegate cautioned against proposals to enable stakeholders to comment on decisions, submit decisions, or participate in Bureau meetings. The group will reconvene on Wednesday to continue discussion on stakeholder participation.

### IN THE BREEZEWAYS

The Executive Director expressed excitement and surprise at the widespread attendance at his “lunch time dialogue on green economy,” where many governments shared their experiences on advancing a national green economy, and thanked UNEP and the other Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) partners for their support.

Although some had predicted “green economy discussion fatigue” only a few months after the Rio+20 Summit, there was substantial interest in the side event and numerous country experiences were shared. The event also suggested that, regardless of how the concept is defined, many countries are using the green economy as a tool to develop in ways that respect the limits of natural systems, reduce low-carbon emissions, contribute to human well being and poverty reduction, and address pressing issues such as access to clean, and affordable energy. Given the complexity of the challenge, the involvement of UNEP and the other UN agencies involved in PAGE will become increasingly important in the transition to a green, socially-inclusive economy in developing countries.

The concept still has its detractors, however. A developing country delegate drew scattered applause in plenary when he revived a position fought strongly at Rio+20: referring to the Green Economy as an instrument “of commercial nature,” and favored instead the rights of Mother Earth as a more holistic approach to caring for both people and the planet.



## UNEP GC27/GMEF HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 2013

On Wednesday morning, GC27/GMEF delegates convened for regional ministerial consultations on environmental challenges and UNEP regional presence and responsiveness. The Executive Director then conducted consultations on aspirations for the GC. In the afternoon, ministerial consultations took place in plenary. The COW met throughout the day and into the night. The working group on institutional arrangements and rules of procedure met throughout the day. The groups on budget and on chemicals management also convened in the morning and afternoon respectively.

### MINISTERIAL CONSULTATIONS

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CONSULTATIONS:** In his opening remarks, Achim Steiner, Executive Director, UNEP, urged ministers to view the new UNEP GC with universal membership as the principal body for articulating the environmental dimension of sustainable development.

The EU, NORWAY and PERU called on ministers to play an active role in priority setting and decision making in the newly reformed GC. PERU, FRANCE and GERMANY supported a name that would reflect the importance of the new body, such as “world” or “global” assembly. The US supported a “UNEP Assembly,” with meetings every two years. She also noted that UNEP should serve as a “repository” for scientific assessments, rather than conducting these assessments. JAPAN emphasized the usefulness of a high-level segment to provide guidance to the new body.

FRANCE, NORWAY, GERMANY and NIGERIA emphasized the importance of stakeholder participation in a strengthened UNEP. NGOs called for an open-ended, time-limited working group to discuss the issue.

The MALDIVES, FIJI and CHILDREN AND YOUTH requested building UNEP’s regional capacity. The GAMBIA proposed creating regional programme frameworks for improved coherence and delivery.

NIGERIA requested UNEP to collaborate with the UN Statistics Division in order to strengthen the relationship between science and policy. PAKISTAN proposed two initiatives: establishing a global level environmental technology incubation and dissemination center; and establishing UNEP resident offices in One UN reform programme pilot countries.

In response, Steiner highlighted the return on investment from countries’ contributions to UNEP, noting that contributions even at the minimum level give a signal of political support for the Programme. On regional strengthening, he said that regional structures should correspond to the volume of activities and financing available. He expressed hope that the strengthened UNEP would be a place for countries to prepare input and share

approaches, principles and ideas on the SDGs, pledging that UNEP would be ready to bring together expert groups to support this.

**PLENARY CONSULTATIONS:** On Wednesday afternoon, the co-chairs of the six ministerial roundtables reported on Tuesday’s discussions.

GC President Hilal introduced the President’s summary of GMEF discussions (UNEP/GC.27/L.4). SWITZERLAND expressed concern with the summary having been prepared in a “closed” Friends of the President Group. BRAZIL, SWITZERLAND, PAKISTAN and the US said that the document was a non-consensus summary prepared by the President, which did not need to be adopted.

Summarizing the ministerial consultations, Executive Director Steiner highlighted, *inter alia*: a clear signal from ministers of their desire to be involved in decision-making at meetings of a strengthened UNEP; calls for UNEP to strengthen its regional presence and respond to regional and national needs; and the need to support environment ministers in providing input to the SDGs process. He thanked ministers for their participation, and expressed hope that by the time of their next meeting, “a re-engineered UNEP will be in full swing.” President Hilal declared the GMEF closed at 5.35 pm.

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**POLICY ISSUES: World Environment Situation:** The COW continued discussion of the draft decision on international water quality guidelines for ecosystems, with some delegates emphasizing their voluntary nature. Delegates also considered whether the guidelines should deal specifically with water quality guidelines for ecosystems, or if they should be more general.

BOLIVIA presented two proposed decisions on climate change and reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (UNEP/GC.27/CW/CRP.5), and on different approaches, visions, models and tools to achieve sustainable development (UNEP/GC.27/CW/CRP.6). On the former, he noted that the term “REDD+” was “unofficial” UN language and should not be used in formal documents or in UNEP programmes or projects. On the latter, he called for a greater focus on initiatives other than the green economy. The US, noting prior and ongoing discussions on both of these issues at other fora, opposed discussing the proposed decisions. CHILE said that the acronym “REDD” is more commonly accepted. Delegates decided to continue discussions on the draft decisions informally.

Delegates then considered a draft decision on the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), with discussion dwelling on: language authorizing the UNEP Executive Director to make arrangements for the operation of the Centre at UNEP headquarters; an invitation to the GEF to fund the CTCN; and a call to member states to provide voluntary financial and other contributions.



**Progress Report by the Executive Director:** The Secretariat introduced a progress report by the Executive Director regarding emergency response and preparedness, South-South cooperation, engagement of youth, UNEP International Ecosystem Management Partnership, and IPBES (UNEP/GC.27/13, 15, and UNEP/GC.27/INF/8, 15, 16 and Add.1). The REPUBLIC OF KOREA registered his support for the UNEP International Ecosystem Management Partnership. CHILDREN AND YOUTH called for the development of a new strategic programme for the Tunza programme for 2015-2020.

Delegates then considered Malaysia's draft decision on IPBES (UNEP/GC.27/L.2). The EU, opposed by the US, suggested referencing an IPBES decision (I/4) on entering into a collaborative partnership arrangement with UNDP, FAO and UNESCO. INDONESIA, supported by MALAYSIA, proposed alternative text, referencing language used in the IPBES decision on partnerships. Delegates were unable to reach consensus on this issue.

**International Environmental Governance (IEG):** The Secretariat introduced documents on IEG (UNEP/GC.27/6, 15 and Add.1, and UNEP/GC.27/INF/20).

**Coordination across the UN System, including the Environment Management Group (EMG):**

The Secretariat introduced a document on coordination across the UN System, including through the EMG (UNEP/GC.27/15/Add.1). The US lauded the work of the EMG, while MAJOR GROUPS called to be included in the EMG as "sources of information and expertise." SWITZERLAND called for a report on the allocation of funds within the EMG. The UNCCD stressed that the EMG should provide greater support to the development of drylands.

Delegates discussed the draft decision on this issue late into the night.

**Coordination and Cooperation within the UN System on Environmental Matters:** The Secretariat introduced the relevant document (UNEP/GC.27/15/Add.1).

**Corporate Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) between UNEP and other bodies:** The Secretariat introduced a table of corporate MoUs between the UNEP and other bodies (UNEP/GC.27/15/INF/9) and a note on concluded progress in UNEP collaboration with the UN Human Settlements Programme (UNEP/GC.27/15/INF/18).

**Coordination and Cooperation with Major Groups:** The Secretariat introduced the document on coordination and cooperation with Major Groups (UNEP/GC.27/INF/5).

**Environment and Development: Justice, Governance and Law:** The Secretariat introduced the relevant documents (UNEP/GC.27/13; UNEP/GC.27/INF/8; UNEP/GC.27/CW/CRP.2; and UNEP/GC.27/CW/CRP.6). The US, supported by CANADA, introduced its revised draft decision on advancing justice, governance and law (UNEP/GC.27/CW/CRP.6). The EU and CROATIA, NORWAY, BRAZIL and SWITZERLAND expressed preference for the Secretariat's draft, which delegates agreed to use as the basis for their work.

ARGENTINA, with BRAZIL and EGYPT, opposed by the US and NORWAY, emphasized that the Rio+20 Declaration on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability, adopted at the World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability, is not a negotiated outcome and should not be referenced.

The US suggested, and the EU and CROATIA and NORWAY opposed, deletion of text on exploring the potential value of borrowing provisions from the Aarhus Convention on access to information and participation in the implementation of principle 10 (participation). The text remained bracketed. CHILE suggested, and delegates agreed, to refer to the GRULAC regional process to promote public access to information, participation and environmental justice.

Delegates debated the suggestion by the EU and CROATIA for the establishment of an international network composed of judiciary and other stakeholders in the legal enforcement chain.

The US cautioned against duplication of efforts with similar networks. Delegates agreed that UNEP would "explore the possible establishment" of such a network.

The EU and CROATIA proposed referencing "environmental crimes" in the document with regard to sanctions for non-compliance. ARGENTINA and BRAZIL opposed this, saying such wording is not agreed under any intergovernmental process, and proposed "criminal activities regarding the environment." Both references remained bracketed.

**WORKING GROUP**

**Working group on institutional arrangements and rules of procedure:** Discussion on Wednesday addressed: stakeholder participation; enhancing UNEP's voice in the UN system; promoting a strong science-policy interface; and consolidation of UNEP headquarter functions in Nairobi. On stakeholder participation, delegates considered a series of principles proposed by Major Groups, including: full stakeholder participation in all UNEP activities, including agenda setting and decision making; full access to all meetings; and a right to submit documents for consideration.

Support was expressed for stakeholder involvement in agenda and policy setting, but many delegates said decision making is a prerogative of governments. A few delegates said they welcomed stakeholder input into decision making. The need to amend UNEP's rules of procedure to enable enhanced participation was also discussed, including through a mechanism of accreditation for non-international NGOs and other stakeholders to participate in UNEP meetings.

On enhancing UNEP's voice, there was widespread support for a strengthened Environment Management Group (EMG), and one delegate suggested that the Executive Director represent the EMG in the UN Development Group to raise environmental issues during those discussions.

On consolidation of headquarter functions in Nairobi, one delegate proposed requesting the Executive Director to immediately start the process of consolidation and conclude it by 2016. Others said the terms "headquarter functions" and "consolidation" needed to be clarified first, and highlighted the Rio+20 outcome also requires stronger UNEP regional presence. They proposed that the Executive Director could provide guidance on these issues.

The group agreed to reconvene on Thursday morning to consider a draft decision prepared by the Co-Chairs on the issues discussed.

**IN THE BREEZEWAYS**

The Rio+20 mandate given to UNEP to "progressively consolidate headquarters functions in Nairobi" proved contentious in the discussions on institutional arrangements. According to some delegates, the provision clearly requests UNEP to start moving its outpost departments and sub-programmes back to Nairobi. "This session should set that process in motion without delay," asserted a delegate. Others disagreed, cautioning against rearranging UNEP's facilities without a clear understanding of what "headquarter function" means. Some predicted the issue will not be resolved at this meeting and will likely remain contentious, given that UNEP has a strong presence in cities like Geneva, where important efficiencies and synergies have been achieved in the chemicals and wastes cluster and other areas.

By mid-afternoon, discussions in the working group were suspended, amid buzz that stakeholder participation were also proving to be a knotty issue, particularly the question of how or whether stakeholders could be involved in decision making at a strengthened UNEP. Major Groups were busy lobbying delegates, using a set of principles discussed and agreed to at the previous weekend's Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum. Light-hearted lobbying spilled over into the evening reception, lit dimly by solar lamps – a metaphor for the way forward at this point, suggested one participant.



## UNEP GC27/GMEF HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2013

The COW met throughout the day and into the night to continue its consideration and adoption of draft decisions. The working group on institutional arrangements and rules of procedure met throughout the day. The working groups on budget and on chemicals management also convened in the morning, afternoon and into the night.

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

On Thursday morning, delegates heard reports from the working groups. Konrad Paulsen (Chile) noted that the budget working group had made substantial progress and that a Friends of the Chair Group was meeting to agree on outstanding text. Alf Wills (South Africa) reported that the chemicals management working group had met until 4:00am on Thursday morning to address the draft decision on chemicals and wastes, and that the discussion had centered on lead and cadmium. He also noted the group's progress on the draft decision on mercury, and said the group would consider the draft decision on the consultative process for financing chemicals and wastes.

**Oceans:** The Secretariat introduced the revised draft decision on Oceans submitted by Colombia (UNEP/GC.27/CRP.3). NGOs called on delegates to include preambular text emphasizing the need to improve implementation, compliance and enforcement.

The US said the GC should be requested to "support" rather than "revitalize" the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) at the regional level. The US also proposed, and delegates agreed, not to include details of specific support required. SOUTH AFRICA called for text on providing and developing necessary capacity on implementation of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, which the COW agreed to. The draft decision was eventually approved during the evening COW session.

**Sustainable consumption and production:** Delegates agreed to delete "global" in relation to changing patterns of consumption and production. The EU and CROATIA, with SWITZERLAND, supported a US proposal to reflect the "initial" and "non-exhaustive" nature of the list of possible areas of the 10YFP. This was opposed by SOUTH AFRICA. ARMENIA, opposed by the EU and CROATIA and the US, asked to add "environmental mentality" to this indicative list. The US agreed to text on mobilizing voluntary contributions from multiple sources, in relation to the Trust Fund. The draft decision was eventually approved during the evening COW session.

### Justice, governance and law for environmental

**sustainability:** COW Chair Eidheim reported outstanding issues on public participation. The US introduced revised text that was supported by NORWAY, the EU, CHILE and ARGENTINA. CUBA indicated its reservation on including language on stakeholder participation, stressing that the issue was being discussed in other groups. On the draft decision to mandate the Executive Director to improve coherence and coordination, particularly through the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group, BAHRAIN opposed reference to national courts.

The EU, opposed by CUBA and SOUTH AFRICA, proposed retaining a reference to strengthening capacity for combating environmental crimes. ARGENTINA objected to the term "environmental crimes," saying the term "environmental protection" is more suitable. SOUTH AFRICA, KENYA and ANGOLA objected to text stating that environmental crimes are "facilitated" by weak governance structures, KENYA adding that factors beyond state jurisdiction, such as trade, are also responsible. The EU asserted that "weak governance structures" should be mentioned, and NORWAY proposed adding "*inter alia*" to that phrase. SOUTH AFRICA proposed an alternative paragraph, "recognizing that the violation of environmental laws has the potential to undermine sustainable development," also proposing further actions such as information exchange and experience sharing to reinforce international cooperation. THE GAMBIA expressed support for the text, approving of the element of capacity building. The EU, supported by the US, welcomed the South African proposal, and suggested this be retained along with earlier text about the absence of law and increasing violations of environmental law. SOUTH AFRICA preferred to retain only the new paragraph.

ECUADOR sought to introduce recognition of "the rights of nature" in the context of promoting sustainable development. The Chair requested delegates to resolve the outstanding issues by the next morning.

### International water quality guidelines for ecosystems:

SWITZERLAND reported that a group of countries including the US, the EU and CROATIA and SWITZERLAND had met to resolve language in the preamble. She reported that the delegates had agreed to use language from paragraph 119 of the Rio+20 Outcome document, "The Future we Want," which recognizes that water is at the core of sustainable development. They also agreed on additional preambular text recognizing the need for international water quality guidelines which may be voluntarily used by governments to maintain and improve the status of ecosystems to sustain the services they provide as a possible basis for managing water pollution and water quality. The draft decision was approved as amended.



**Coordination across the United Nations system, including the EMG:** On the EMG, SWITZERLAND proposed discussing text on the UNEP Executive Director's role in strengthening the EMG Secretariat and allocating resources, then providing the agreed text to the budget group. The US preferred that the discussion take place in the budget group. Chair Eidheim proposed that the discussion take place after the budget report is delivered. The EU and CROATIA, with the US, continued to discuss wording urging the EMG to give due consideration to and follow up on UN General Assembly resolution on the Quadriennial Comprehensive Policy Review (A/Res/67/226), including an integrated approach at the country level in line with "Delivering as One," and, in the case of UNEP, to ensure effective and efficient mainstreaming of environmental issues at the country level. The EU and CROATIA requested that the decision be discussed after the working group on institutional arrangements had finished consideration of the issue.

**Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication:** In the afternoon, CHINA explained it had consulted with interested delegations, including the US and the EU on its draft decision. BOLIVIA said it was prepared to work with the Chinese proposal, and withdrew its draft decision on different approaches to achieve sustainable development. BRAZIL and others supported adding "in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication" after "green economy" throughout the draft decision. BRAZIL also proposed a new paragraph inviting countries to implement green economy policies. NORWAY proposed a new paragraph on the significant potential contribution of 10YFP to the concept of green economy. The US said it could not agree to continue reviewing the text, and requested the Chair to "cease and desist" from moving forward. CHINA, BOLIVIA and ARGENTINA said the draft decision had been submitted to the CPR prior to the current session, and urged consideration of the text. Discussions on this item will resume on Friday.

#### **Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN):**

The US warned against selectively quoting past agreements, and delegates agreed to reference the Bali Strategic Plan for technology support and capacity, without mentioning specific paragraphs. BRAZIL proposed further consultations on several textual additions, including inviting the GEF to support the CTCN, and calling on governments and others to do so as well, on a voluntary basis.

**IPBES:** INDONESIA submitted text requesting the Executive Director to enter into collaborative partnership with UNESCO, FAO and UNDP in order to establish an institutional link with the IPBES platform and its Secretariat. The US said the text suggested that the collaboration would occur through UNEP, implying a hierarchy among organizations, and delegates agreed to consult further. The US presented a revised version with an additional paragraph that requests the Executive Director to submit input and suggestions to inform the work of the platform. The EU asked for time to conduct internal consultations on this issue.

**Climate change: reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation:** BOLIVIA presented a draft decision on this issue (UNEP/GC.27/CRP.5) noting it sought to change the designation of REDD+, which is not an official UN acronym. GUATEMALA, COLOMBIA, the EU, JAPAN, NEW ZEALAND, the US and others said they could not support the proposal, stressing that while the term REDD+ is not an official UN name, it is widely used in the UN system. Bolivia said it would not withdraw its proposal, and agreed to consult informally with interested delegations to revise and seek support for the draft decision.

## **WORKING GROUP**

### **Working group on institutional arrangements and rules**

**of procedure:** The working group on institutional arrangements convened throughout the day to discuss the draft decision prepared by the group's co-chairs. Delegates welcomed the brevity of the draft decision, but proposed textual changes and additions to multiple sections of the document. Several delegates welcomed the reference to holding biennial meetings of the governing body, while leaving open the option of convening special ministerial sessions to address "important and pressing environmental challenges." One delegate said the reference on special sessions could lead to annual meetings, and proposed deleting the text. Another urged the continuation of annual meetings to enable the governing body to continue to make decisions on an annual basis.

Some delegates expressed concern over a provision stipulating that an open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) will be the intersessional committee of the governing body, given that many countries are not represented in the CPR and may not be able to fully participate in its proceedings.

Several delegates called for a separate section on stakeholder participation at all UNEP proceedings, noting that the draft decision provided for such participation only in ministerial segments of meetings of UNEP's governing body. A few called for a revised text indicating that stakeholder participation did not extend to decision making. Another said Major Groups fully supported the intergovernmental nature of UNEP, and were simply seeking to participate in the deliberations that could lead to decisions adopted by governments.

### **IN THE BREEZEWAYS**

On Thursday morning, sleep-deprived but happy delegates continued their discussion in the chemicals management contact group, which had kept them in the UN Gigiri Complex until 4:00am. Commenting on the overnight discussions, one seasoned negotiator said he was satisfied with the compromise reached on the Swiss proposal to facilitate prompt integration of the new Minamata Convention on Mercury into the chemicals and wastes cluster. He said the agreed text informs the plenipotentiaries conference that the interim secretariat support for the Mercury Treaty could be provided by the Joint Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. He stressed that this means "other options exist" beyond requesting UNEP Chemicals to offer support. A few delegates emphasized that the decision on secretariat arrangements for the Mercury Treaty, including its future location, "should be left open," and cautioned against pre-empting the outcome of the plenipotentiaries conference that will adopt the treaty. Others emphasized the importance of enabling plenipotentiaries to make an "informed decision" on interim arrangements, based on the consideration of all available options and the advantages that would result from making use of the synergies and efficiencies achieved in the chemicals-wastes cluster.

While the COW and various working groups negotiated late into the evening once more, some guests proved reluctant to leave the evening reception. As one straggler said, the event, hosted by the three governments associated with the successful conclusion of the Minamata Convention just weeks before, was as good a reason as any to celebrate the new UNEP.

**ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:** The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of the UNEP Governing Council/GMEF will be available on Monday, 25 February 2013 online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/unepgc/27unepgc/>



## SUMMARY OF THE 27TH SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL/GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM: 18-22 FEBRUARY 2013

The 27th session of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC27/GMEF) took place from 18-22 February 2013, at the UN Office at Nairobi, Kenya. Over 1300 participants from 147 countries, including 80 ministers, representatives of UN agencies, international organizations, academia, NGOs, business and industry, and women and youth organizations attended the first Universal Session of the GC following the decision of the United Nations General Assembly to strengthen and upgrade UNEP, as called for in the Rio+20 outcome document.

During the week, delegates convened in plenary sessions, a Committee of the Whole, and several working and contact groups to consider draft decisions. From Monday to Wednesday, ministerial consultations addressed “Rio+20: from Outcome to Implementation.” Delegates adopted 13 decisions, on *inter alia*: the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES); coordination across the UN system, including the Environment Management Group (EMG); oceans; sustainable consumption and production; the green economy in the context of sustainable development; advancing justice, governance and law; state of the environment; and chemicals and wastes.

The GC adopted a decision on institutional arrangements that, *inter alia*, invites the UN General Assembly to rename UNEP’s governing body “UN Environment Assembly,” and provides that the body “will ensure” the active participation of all relevant stakeholders and explore new mechanisms to promote transparency and effective engagement of civil society in its work and that of its subsidiary bodies, *inter alia*, by: developing by 2014 a process for stakeholder accreditation and participation that builds on the existing rules of procedure and takes into account the inclusive modalities of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and other relevant UN bodies.

Many delegates expressed satisfaction with this historic session of the GC and its outcome, particularly on institutional arrangements and the compromise achieved regarding the integrated approach to financing chemicals and wastes. However, there were calls for UNEP to use this opportunity not

only to become more robust, but to become more effective at advancing the environment agenda and to contribute towards the implementation of a post-2015 development agenda.

### 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 include 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 reports 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 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.

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**GCSS6/GMEF:** The sixth Special Session of the GC/GMEF (GCSS6/GMEF) took place from 29-31 May 2000, in Malmö, Sweden. Ministers adopted the Malmö Ministerial Declaration, 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).

**GC21/GMEF:** This meeting took place from 5-9 February 2001, in Nairobi, Kenya. Delegates established the Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or their Representatives (IGM) to undertake a comprehensive policy-oriented assessment of existing institutional weaknesses, as well as future needs and options for strengthening IEG. They also adopted decision 21/7, which requests the UNEP Executive Director to examine the need for a strategic approach to international chemicals management (SAICM).

**GCSS7/GMEF:** This meeting was held from 13-15 February 2002, in Cartagena, Colombia. In its decision SS.VII/1, the GC/GMEF adopted the IGM report, which contains recommendations aimed at strengthening IEG, including 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*, SAICM at the global level.

**WSSD:** The WSSD was held from 26 August-4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) sets out a framework for action to implement the commitments originally agreed at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. The JPOI, among other things, emphasized that the international community should fully implement the outcomes of decision SS.VII/1 on IEG.

**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; 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 GC universal membership 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 in 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. The decision requested the group to present a set of options for improving IEG to GCSS11/GMEF with a view to providing input to the UN General Assembly.

**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 at the UN Office at 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; sustainable consumption and production; and the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes.

## REPORT OF THE MEETING

Opening the first universal session of the Governing Council, Federico Ramos de Armas, Spain, outgoing GC President, called for urgent action to change unsustainable consumption and production patterns, and move beyond gross domestic product as a measure of prosperity.

Reading a message from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Sahle-Work Zewde, Director-General, UN Office at Nairobi, *inter alia*, underscored investment in the environment and in the green economy as a “sound insurance policy” for the future we want, and highlighted UN General Assembly discussions on financial resources for UNEP from the regular UN budget.

UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner noted that delegates have the task of promptly implementing the Rio+20 outcome regarding the functioning of UNEP and the design of the international agenda for cooperation on the environment pillar of sustainable development.

Describing the first universal session of the GC as “historic,” Mwai Kibaki, President of Kenya, noted that the Rio+20 outcome had reaffirmed UNEP as the leading global environmental authority by adopting several decisions to strengthen and upgrade UNEP.

The plenary elected Hassan Abdel Hilal, Minister of Environment, Forests and Physical Development, Sudan, as GC27/GMEF President. Ryutaro Yatsu (Japan), Antonio Otávio Sá Ricarte (Brazil) and Idunn Eidheim (Norway) were elected Vice-Presidents, and Beata Jaczewska (Poland) was elected Rapporteur.

GC27/GMEF President Hilal highlighted the need to agree on the future participation of ministers, and on the institutional arrangements and capacity within UNEP, and to discuss UNEP’s contribution to the post-2015 development agenda.

GC President Hilal informed delegates that the first universal session will follow the GC applicable rules of procedure and the applicable rules and practice of the General Assembly. The provisional agenda (UNEP/GC.27/1) was adopted. On the organization of work (UNEP/GC.27/1/Add.1), GC President Hilal outlined the Executive Director’s recommendations, including the establishment of a Committee of the Whole (COW), a drafting group, and a working group on institutional arrangements and rules of procedure. A COW was established with Idunn Eidheim (Norway) as Chair. Luis Campuzano (Mexico) and Farrukh Iqbal Khan (Pakistan) were appointed Co-Chairs of the working group on institutional arrangements and rules of procedure. Delegates then adopted the GC27/GMEF’s organization of work.

#### **POLICY STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE**

**DIRECTOR:** UNEP Executive Director Steiner highlighted the need to articulate an environmental agenda that addresses issues such as energy, employment and poverty. Stressing that the Rio+20 outcome had moved that agenda forward, he noted that delegates had a clear mandate from the UN General Assembly to implement the outcome’s paragraph 88 provisions on strengthening and upgrading UNEP and decide how the newly mandated governing body of UNEP will function. He outlined UNEP’s contributions over the years, including the Rio+20 discussions on green economy, its work on black carbon as a complement to climate action, the finalization of a mercury treaty, and improved synergies in the chemicals and wastes cluster. He emphasized UNEP’s increased efficiency and improved “value proposition,” noting the programme of work entails a modest budget increase.

**STATEMENT BY THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES:** H.E. Geert Aagaard Andersen (Denmark), Chair of the UNEP Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), submitted 12 CPR draft

decisions for consideration, noting that bracketed text remained, including on the Consultative Process on Financing Options for Chemicals and Wastes, which is bracketed in its entirety. He said the draft decision on the green economy was bracketed because of insufficient time for its consideration.

Reiterating its support for a stronger more effective UNEP, the US stressed the need to resolve structural governance issues pertaining to universal membership. She called for, *inter alia*: a review of UNEP’s Strategic Framework; a clear and more defined role for the CPR; a mechanism for enhancing stakeholder participation; and addressing the frequency and effectiveness of meetings to avoid overloading UNEP’s agenda. With Canada, the US also expressed concern regarding the president of the session, noting that Sudan is currently subject to UN Security Council sanctions and therefore is not an “appropriate choice for leadership.”

Malaysia introduced a draft decision (UNEP/GC.27/L.2) on the IPBES Secretariat.

#### **GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM**

From Monday to Wednesday, under the chairmanship of GC27/GMEF President Hilal, ministers and heads of delegation held consultations, panel discussions and a dialogue. On Tuesday morning three parallel roundtable discussions addressed: responsiveness to country needs; promoting a strong science-policy interface; providing secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resource to fulfill UNEP’s mandate; stakeholder participation; and future ministerial engagement and institutional arrangements. Tuesday afternoon parallel ministerial roundtable discussions addressed: environmental challenges within sustainable development and UNEP’s potential contribution to developing sustainable development goals (SDGs); and promoting sustainable consumption and production (SCP). For detailed coverage of the consultations see: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol16/enb16106e.html>; <http://www.iisd.ca/vol16/enb16107e.html>; and <http://www.iisd.ca/vol16/enb16108e.html>

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CONSULTATIONS:** On Wednesday morning, Executive Director Steiner conducted consultations on aspirations for the GC. In his opening remarks, he urged ministers to view the new UNEP GC with universal membership as the principal body for articulating the environmental dimension of sustainable development.

The European Union (EU), Norway and Peru called on ministers to play an active role in priority setting and decision making in the newly reformed GC. Peru, France and Germany supported a name that would reflect the international importance of the new body, such as “world” or “global” assembly. The US supported a “UNEP Assembly,” with meetings every two years. She also noted that UNEP should serve as a “repository” for scientific assessments, rather than conduct these assessments. Japan emphasized the usefulness of a high-level segment to provide guidance to the new body.

France, Norway, Germany and Nigeria emphasized the importance of stakeholder participation in a strengthened UNEP. NGOs called for an open-ended, time-limited working group to discuss the issue.

The Maldives, Fiji, and Children and Youth requested building UNEP’s regional capacity. The Gambia proposed creating regional programme frameworks for improved coherence and delivery. Nigeria requested UNEP to collaborate with the UN Statistics Division in order to strengthen the relationship

between science and policy. Pakistan proposed two initiatives: establishing a global level environmental technology incubation and dissemination center; and establishing UNEP resident offices in One UN reform programme pilot countries.

In response, Steiner highlighted the return on investment from countries' contributions to UNEP, noting that contributions even at the minimum level give a signal of political support for the Programme. On regional strengthening, he said that regional structures should correspond to the volume of activities and financing available. He expressed hope that the strengthened UNEP would be a place for countries to prepare input and share approaches, principles and ideas on the SDGs, pledging that UNEP is ready to bring together expert groups to support this.

**PLENARY CONSULTATIONS:** On Wednesday afternoon, GC President Hilal introduced his summary of the GMEF discussions (UNEP/GC.27/L.4). Switzerland expressed concern that the summary had been prepared in a "closed" Friends of the President Group and, with Brazil, Pakistan and the US, said that since it was a non-consensus summary prepared by the President, it did not need to be adopted.

Summarizing the ministerial consultations, Executive Director Steiner highlighted, *inter alia*: a clear signal from ministers of their desire to be involved in decision-making at meetings of a strengthened UNEP; calls for UNEP to strengthen its regional presence and respond to regional and national needs; and the need to support environment ministers in providing input to the SDG process. He thanked ministers for their participation, and expressed hope that by the time of their next meeting, "a re-engineered UNEP will be in full swing." President Hilal declared the GMEF closed at 5:35 pm.

**President's Summary:** The President's summary of the GMEF (UNEP/GC.27/L.4) brings together key messages from the ministerial consultations.

On Rio+20 From Outcome to Implementation, and the implementation of paragraph 88 of "The Future We Want," ministers recognized the need to advance towards a participatory and effective UNEP focused on implementation. Ministers stressed the importance of focusing on deepening impact and ensuring better processes and systems. Ministers called for:

- ensuring secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resources for the implementation of paragraph 88 of the Rio+20 outcome, General Assembly resolutions 66/288, 67/203 and 67/213, and the UNEP programme of work;
- strengthening the science-policy interface, in part, by coordination of existing scientific institutional arrangements and dissemination of information;
- increasing the participation of ministers of environment, potentially through a high-level segment in the sessions of the governing body;
- strengthening UNEP's regional, sub-regional and national presence to enhance its responsiveness to country needs and demands;
- better integrating the environmental dimension of sustainable development and to enhance the contribution of UNEP to the UN development agenda;
- providing more focus on capacity building and technology transfer for the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Transfer and Capacity-building, and in support of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and internationally agreed goals; and

- engaging with stakeholders in the decision-making process on environmental matters and sustainable development.

On green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, ministers urged overcoming the mentality that economic growth can only come at the expense of the environment, and vice versa. In achieving a green economy, ministers noted the need to, among other things:

- involve all government ministries to drive the transformation towards a green economy;
- place an emphasis on the ability of the green economy to deliver jobs;
- address barriers such as lack of skills and knowledge gaps about possible policy instruments, technological barriers, perceptions of higher costs of clean technology and inadequate financing;
- reform perverse subsidies that distort price signals and efficient resource allocation; and
- view the green economy as providing new investment and business opportunities.

On environmental challenges within sustainable development and UNEP's contribution to the SDG process and promoting SCP, ministers recognized the opportunity to integrate the post-2015 development agenda with the yet to be developed SDGs. In particular, ministers underscored the need for:

- UNEP to play an important role in promoting environmental sustainability into SDGs and in the post-2015 development agenda;
- SDGs to promote economic transformation in developed and emerging economies and in encouraging innovative approaches for poverty eradication;
- complementing SDGs with high, medium and low time-bound goals and targets at the regional and national levels;
- SDGs and the 10-year Framework of Programmes (10YFP) on SCP to build on existing work and international agreements; and
- the 10YFP to address public and private consumption through mainstreaming and up-scaling sustainable public procurement, and improved consumer information.

On implementation of paragraph 88 of "The Future We Want," ministers called for strengthening the regional presence of UNEP and expressed strong support for reinforcing the role of UNEP in science-policy linkages, particularly through the role played by the Global Environment Outlook (GEO).

#### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The COW convened from Monday to Friday to consider agenda items on: policy issues; international environmental governance (IEG); coordination and cooperation within the UN system on environmental matters; coordination and cooperation with major groups; environment and development; follow-up to and implementation of outcomes of the UN summits and major intergovernmental meetings, including the GC decisions; budget and programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015; provisional agenda, date and venue of future GC/GMEF sessions; and other matters. The COW considered draft decisions prepared by the CPR, as well as draft decisions proposed during the session. The COW approved 13 decisions, which were forwarded to the plenary for adoption.

**Climate change and reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation:** Bolivia introduced a draft decision on climate change and reduction of emissions

from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) (UNEP/GC.27/CW/CRP.5) on Wednesday. He noted that the term “reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, and forest conservation, sustainable forest management and enhancement of forest carbon stocks” (REDD+) was “unofficial” UN language and should not be used in formal documents or in UNEP programmes. He proposed using UN Programme on Forests and Climate as an alternative. The US, noting prior and ongoing discussions on this issue in other fora, opposed discussing the draft decision. Chile said that the acronym “REDD” is more commonly accepted. Guatemala, Colombia, the EU and Croatia, Japan, New Zealand, the US and others said they could not support the proposal, stressing that while the term REDD+ is not an official UN name, it is widely used in the UN system. Bolivia said it would not withdraw its proposal, and agreed to consult informally with interested delegations to revise and seek support for the draft decision.

During the final meeting of the COW on Friday, Bolivia sought to present a revised version of the draft decision on climate change and forests. Norway, Japan, the EU and Croatia, Colombia, South Africa, the US and others noted that due to the late introduction of the draft decision and the revised version to the COW they would not be in a position to discuss the document at the meeting. Norway underscored their difficulty in changing a name that has been used for five years since the establishment of the UN-REDD programme.

Noting concerns, COW Chair Eidheim ruled that the decision would not be discussed during the current GC session. Bolivia said UNEP recognizes REDD+ in its work programme on climate change, even though it is not an official name; its own proposal needs to be accorded equal attention. He noted that the Papersmart process of the GC was to blame for delays in updating the revised decision, adding that they would, in the spirit of flexibility, defer the revised decision to the next session.

**Corporate Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) between UNEP and other Bodies:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced a document on corporate MoUs (UNEP/GC.27/15/INF/9) between UNEP and other bodies and a note on concluded progress in UNEP collaboration with the UN Human Settlements Programme (UNEP/GC.27/15/INF/18). There was no further discussion on this item.

**COORDINATION AND COOPERATION WITH MAJOR GROUPS:** The Secretariat introduced the document on coordination and cooperation with Major Groups (UNEP/GC.27/INF/5) on Wednesday in the COW. There was no further discussion this item.

**IEG:** The Secretariat introduced documents on IEG (UNEP/GC.27/6, 15 and Add.1, and UNEP/GC.27/INF/20) on Wednesday. There was no further discussion on this item.

### GC27/GMEF DECISIONS

Draft GC27/GMEF decisions, submitted by the CPR and directly by governments at the GC27/GMEF, were considered from Monday to Friday in the COW and several working and contract groups. Unless otherwise noted, all decisions were adopted in plenary on Friday evening.

**State of the Environment:** This item was introduced on Wednesday, and forwarded to a contact group. The group met on Wednesday and Thursday and forwarded a draft decision (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.3) to the COW on Friday.

**Final Decision:** The final decision on state of the environment and contribution of UNEP to meeting substantive environmental challenges (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.3) contains sections on assessments, GEO, strengthening sustainable development, UNEP-Live, the Programme of Research on Climate Change Vulnerability, Impacts and Adaptation (PROVIA), the Global Environment Monitoring System/Water Programme, climate change, and biodiversity and ecosystem services.

In the decision, the GC, *inter alia*, recognizing knowledge gaps in the state of the environment and the urgent need for governments to take action to bridge such gaps through capacity building, strengthening existing mechanisms for environmental assessments and monitoring:

- requests the Executive Director to review best practices and develop a set of transparent procedures based on knowledge and experience of nationally recognized experts and current best assessment practices, to ensure that they are of the highest quality and have maximum impact, noting those procedures relevant to the GEO-6 assessment should be prioritized;
- invites governments to use the findings of GEO-5 (“Environment for the Future We Want”) and its summary for policy makers to facilitate informed policy decision making;
- requests the Executive Director to strengthen the policy relevance of GEO reports by measuring progress towards the achievement of the internationally agreed goals and targets and to inform relevant global processes and meetings where progress towards these agreed goals and targets will be discussed;
- requests the Executive Director to implement the next phase of UNEP-Live during the 2014-2015 biennium as an open platform in continued alignment with relevant environmental information systems designed for global, regional, and national environmental assessment and data sharing;
- invites member states, major groups and other stakeholders and UN agencies, funds and programmes to engage in the development of UNEP-Live;
- invites the donor community, other sources, and governments in a position to do so to provide funding and other means of support as appropriate for PROVIA so that the initiative can move from the design and development phase to the operational phase;
- invites member states, the international scientific community and centers of excellence to participate in GEMS/Water to improve the global coverage and consistency of water quality data;
- requests the Executive Director to continue to provide support for the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and to explore ways to further strengthen the cooperation in line with the role of UNEP in assessing the world environment situation, as reiterated in the Rio+20 outcome document; and
- takes note of the efforts of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to review and, as appropriate, update and revise national biodiversity strategies and action plans in line with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 towards attainment of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets at the national level.

**Sustainable consumption and production (SCP):** Delegates considered this agenda item in plenary on Tuesday, and in a contact group from Tuesday to Thursday afternoon. On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced documents on SCP (UNEP/GC.27/5 and INF/13), and delegates made general comments on the 10-year Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP) referenced in the documents. The EU and Croatia pointed to sufficient expertise, knowledge and initiatives for achieving SCP and called for a bottom-up approach in the implementation of the 10YFP. India said countries should implement the 10YFP taking into account their national circumstances, and stressed the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Brazil emphasized the need to build on lessons learned from the Marrakech Process, and to support regional and national initiatives.

Indonesia stressed that as SCP is a “prerequisite for sustainable development,” it should be embedded in the post-2015 development agenda. The US urged delegates not to renegotiate the balanced outcomes agreed on during CSD meetings and at Rio+20.

Japan underscored the importance of environmental awareness targeting consumers and producers and the promotion of “reduce, reuse, recycle” campaigns to reduce waste. Major Groups called on governments to foster innovation in industry, noting that intra-industry efforts in SCP already exist, and encouraged the GC to, *inter alia*, include sustainable food and agricultural systems in the programmes under the 10YFP and enhance synergies between SCP, green economy and chemicals and wastes efforts.

Addressing the work of the working group, delegates agreed to delete “global” in relation to changing patterns of consumption and production. Opposed by South Africa, the EU and Croatia, and Switzerland supported a US proposal to reflect the “initial” and “non-exhaustive” nature of the list of possible areas of the 10YFP. Armenia, opposed by the EU and Croatia and the US, asked to add “environmental mentality” to this indicative list. The US agreed to text on mobilizing voluntary contributions from multiple sources in relation to the Trust Fund.

**Final Decision:** The final decision on SCP (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.2/Add.2) recalls that the framework includes an indicative, initial and non-exhaustive list of possible areas of the 10YFP programme development that builds on previous experience, including, *inter alia*, consumer information, sustainable lifestyles and education, sustainable public procurement, sustainable buildings and construction, and sustainable tourism, including ecotourism. The GC, *inter alia*:

- requests the Executive Director to take the necessary action to enable UNEP to serve as the secretariat of the 10YFP;
- recognizes the functions and nomination process of the small board established, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 67/203, and authorizes the Executive Director to take actions requested by the board;
- recognizes the function of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to act as the *ad interim* body to which the 10YFP secretariat and the small board will report on a biennial and annual basis, respectively, and authorizes the Executive Director to report on progress to ECOSOC;
- invites governments, development agencies and the private sector to provide voluntary contributions for the implementation and operationalization of the framework, and to its trust fund;

- encourages the national focal points and other stakeholder focal points to participate in, and contribute actively to, the development and implementation of the framework; and
- encourages governments, the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders to support the implementation of the framework, enhancing efforts and building cooperation around the 10YFP programmes and technical assistance and capacity-building activities at all levels, to accelerate the shift towards SCP patterns.

**Chemicals and wastes management and enhancing cooperation and coordination within the chemicals and wastes cluster:**

This agenda item was considered by the COW on Tuesday and Friday, and taken up by a contact group on chemicals and wastes chaired by Alf Wills (South Africa). The contact group met from Tuesday through Friday to finalize a draft decision on chemicals management, working through the night on Wednesday and Thursday.

On Tuesday in the COW, the Secretariat introduced documents on: chemicals and wastes management (UNEP/GC.27/4), an integrated approach to chemicals and wastes financing (UNEP/GC.27/7), enhancing cooperation and coordination within the chemicals and wastes cluster (UNEP/GC.27/8); and 2013 Global Assessment Mercury report (UNEP/GC.27/INF/14). A draft decision on chemicals and wastes prepared by the CPR was also introduced (UNEP/GC.27/L.1), with sections on lead and cadmium, mercury, implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), waste management, persistent organic pollutants (POPs), and enhancing cooperation within the chemicals and wastes cluster.

The US introduced a draft decision on chemicals and waste management (UNEP/GC.27/CRP.2), stating that it incorporated and streamlined the proposed decisions on chemicals management. Switzerland, Norway and others supported using the US proposal as a basis for discussion, while Kenya, Brazil and others opposed, stressing that key elements of the original decisions were not reflected in the US draft.

On lead and cadmium, Tanzania stressed the need to address the issue of cadmium by strengthening the legal framework of chemicals management, and called for support for countries in their efforts in this area. With Kenya, Tanzania said that there had not been much success in dealing with cadmium. Switzerland said UNEP should provide support for SAICM-related activities on cadmium and lead.

On mercury, Switzerland introduced a draft decision on the integration of the Minamata Convention on Mercury into the chemicals and wastes cluster (UNEP/GC.27/CRP.1). She said the draft decision seeks to ensure that the diplomatic conference that will adopt the Minamata Convention will be able consider the option of using the joint Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions as its interim secretariat, in order to facilitate a smooth transition of the mercury treaty into the chemicals and wastes cluster. Norway and the EU supported the Swiss proposal, while Canada, South Africa, Turkey and others said the GC should not pre-empt the outcome of the diplomatic conference that will adopt the Minamata Convention.

On the integrated approach to chemicals and wastes financing, Canada and the US said they supported all three elements of the proposed approach, namely: mainstreaming of sound chemicals and wastes management into development planning; industry involvement; and dedicated external financing. Brazil, Indonesia,

China and Argentina called for a stronger emphasis on dedicated external financing, with Brazil supporting a financial mechanism similar to the Montreal Protocol's Multilateral Fund. Switzerland called for broadening and strengthening the role of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in chemicals management financing.

In the contact group, much of the discussion centered on the Swiss proposal on the Minamata Convention and the integrated approach to financing. On the Swiss proposal, the debate focused on whether the draft decision in any way pre-empts the outcome of the diplomatic conference that will adopt the Minamata Convention, with some delegates stressing that the decision on secretariat arrangements for the Convention, including its future location, should be "left open." The proposal's supporters insisted that the objective was not to pre-empt the outcome of the diplomatic conference, but to ensure that they were aware of all available options, and of the advantages of making use of the synergies and efficiencies achieved in the chemicals and wastes cluster.

Regarding the integrated approach, the debate centered on the relative weight of the three elements proposed. While several developing countries insisted external financing was the most important element of the integrated approach, with some reiterating their calls for a dedicated financial mechanism for the chemicals and wastes cluster, other delegates stressed that the three elements proposed were equally important to support chemicals and wastes implementation efforts. In the end, a compromise was reached by recognizing the three-pronged nature of the approach, while also emphasizing the importance of external financing by encouraging all countries, within their capabilities, to "further strengthen" the element of dedicated external financing, and by opening the possibility of establishing a "special programme" to support chemicals and wastes financing through voluntary contributions.

**Final Decision:** The omnibus decision on chemicals and wastes management (UNEP/GC.27/L.4) contains sections on: lead and cadmium, mercury, implementation of SAICM, waste management, POPs, enhancing cooperation and coordination within the chemicals cluster, and the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes. The decision invites all stakeholders to support the sound management of chemicals and wastes as an important contribution to building a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and recognizes the significance of the Global Chemicals Outlook findings.

On lead and cadmium, the GC, among other things:

- acknowledges the efforts made by governments and others to address the risks posed by lead and cadmium, and urges governments to continue participating in and contributing to those initiatives;
- emphasizes that further actions are needed to address the challenges posed by lead and cadmium; and
- requests UNEP's Executive Director, in coordination with governments and other actors, to continue activities on lead and cadmium and to enhance them, "subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources."

On mercury, the GC, *inter alia*:

- welcomes the completion of the negotiation of a global mercury treaty;
- authorizes the Executive Director to provide secretariat support to the Minamata Convention on Mercury and, if

so decided by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, to provide an interim secretariat to the instrument prior to its entry into force;

- requests the Executive Director to inform the diplomatic conference of the Minamata Convention on Mercury about possible options available for the interim secretariat; and
- invites parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to consider, at their next meeting, steps that would facilitate possible future cooperation and coordination with the Minamata Convention on Mercury and to forward any outcome of that consideration to the Minamata Conference of Plenipotentiaries.

On SAICM implementation, the GC, among other things:

- requests the Executive Director to give support to the SAICM Secretariat to develop orientation and guidance to implement the 2020 goal on sound chemicals management;
- welcomes the adoption of resolutions on emerging policy issues and requests the Executive Director to provide leadership, in partnership with others, on endocrine-disrupting chemicals, chemicals in products and perfluorinated chemicals; and
- urges governments, industry and others to make financial and in-kind contributions to SAICM, its Quick Start Programme, its Secretariat and its implementation, including through UNEP's programme of work.

On waste management, the GC, among other things:

- requests the Executive Director to review existing UNEP efforts on waste, to develop a UNEP-wide waste strategy to prioritize its work, and to make recommendations on existing and future areas of UNEP work on wastes; and
- requests the Executive Director to develop a global outlook of challenges, trends and policies in relation to waste prevention, minimization and management, taking into account the materials life cycle, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources.

On POPs, the GC, *inter alia*:

- urges the World Health Organization (WHO) to cooperate with UNEP in the implementation of the workplan of the Global Alliance for the Development of Products, Methods and Strategies as Alternatives to DDT for Disease Vector Control; and
- invites the Executive Director to inform the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on progress made in the work of the Alliance, and the PCB Elimination Network.

On enhancing cooperation and coordination within the chemicals and wastes cluster, the GC requests the Executive Director:

- to continue to support a consultative process on the challenges to and options for further enhancing long-term cooperation and coordination in the chemicals and wastes cluster, and
- to present a report on the outcome of that process to the GC at its twenty-eighth session.

On the consultative process, the GC, among other things:

- welcomes an integrated approach to address the financing of sound management of chemicals and wastes, and underscores the three components of the approach;
- invites governments to implement actions to further mainstream sound management of chemicals and wastes in national development plans, domestic budgets and relevant sector policies;

- invites governments to implement actions to further encourage industry involvement in the integrated approach, including the development of legislation on the responsibilities of industry and the promotion of measures by industry to internalize costs as per the polluter pays principle;
- invites all countries, within their capabilities, to further strengthen dedicated external financing through the provision of adequate, predictable and timely financial resources;
- invites the GEF, in the context of its 6th replenishment, to revise its focal area structure and strategy in order to address the chemicals and wastes agenda;
- invites governments to consider establishing, through an existing institution, a special programme, funded by voluntary contributions, to support national institutional strengthening for implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the future Minamata Convention and SAICM; and
- requests the Executive Director to submit to the GC within three years a report on the implementation of the approach.

**Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES):** On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced Malaysia's draft decision on IPBES (UNEP/GC.27/L.2), noting it builds on the outcomes of the first plenary session of IPBES, in particular, its request to UNEP to provide the Platform's secretariat services. Indonesia modified the draft decision and proposed for the Executive Director to establish an institutional link with the Platform in collaboration with the executive heads of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The US opposed, saying the language implied a hierarchy among organizations. This was resolved by asking the Executive Director to enter into a collaborative partnership with the organizations mentioned, for consideration by the Platform.

**Final Decision:** In the final decision (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.2/Add.1), the GC authorizes the Executive Director to provide secretariat and administrative arrangements in response to the request by the IPBES plenary, including the secondment of a professional officer to the Platform secretariat. The decision also allows the Executive Director to finalize a host country agreement with the Government of Germany for the presence of IPBES Secretariat in Bonn and asks the Executive Director to make arrangements for a functioning secretariat by the end of the second session of the plenary.

**Oceans:** On Thursday, Colombia introduced a revised draft decision on oceans (UNEP/GC.27/CRP.3), noting that it sought to give greater visibility to the need for integrated management of oceans. NGOs called on delegates to include preambular text emphasizing the need to improve implementation, compliance and enforcement.

The US said the GC should be requested to "support" rather than "revitalize" the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) at the regional level. The US also proposed, and delegates agreed, not to include details of specific support required. South Africa called for text on providing and developing necessary capacity on implementation of regional seas conventions and action plans, which the COW agreed to.

**Final Decision:** In its final decision on oceans (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.2/Add.1), the GC, *inter alia*, acknowledges the need for the development and strengthening of regional seas conventions and action plans, and its decision to promote and facilitate the GPA at regional level; and welcomes sections on the oceans in the Rio+20 outcome.

The GC urges countries to take the necessary steps to implement relevant commitments, including those made at Rio+20 to protect and restore the health, productivity and resilience of oceans and marine ecosystems; and invites member states of regional seas conventions and action plans to:

- take a more proactive role in implementation of the programme of work of their respective regional seas conventions and action plans;
- utilize these conventions and action plans as platforms for regional implementation of MEAs;
- strengthen the capacity necessary for implementation; and
- foster cross-sectoral governmental participation through the involvement of all relevant national ministries.

The GC requests the Executive Director to further encourage and promote UNEP's work on oceans and incorporate the work of regional seas conventions and action plans into the mid-term strategy 2014-2017; and to coordinate work as contained in the regional seas strategic directions 2013-2016 and bring this work to the attention of member states through relevant forums.

**International Water Quality Guidelines for Ecosystems:** This item (UNEP/GC.27/L.1) was first considered on Monday and informally during the week. Some delegates emphasized the voluntary nature of the guidelines, debating on whether the guidelines should deal specifically with water quality guidelines for ecosystems, or if they should be more general.

On the preamble, delegates were able to agree to use language from paragraph 119 of the Rio+20 outcome document, which recognizes that water is at the core of sustainable development. They also agreed on additional preambular text recognizing the need for international water quality guidelines, which may be voluntarily used by governments to maintain and improve the status of ecosystems to sustain the services they provide as a possible basis for managing water pollution and water quality.

**Final Decision:** In the final decision (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.2) the GC: recognizes that water is at the core of sustainable development and is closely linked to a number of global challenges and is essential for human life, the environment and the economy; and notes the availability of international guidelines for drinking water quality, for agriculture and drainage, for wastewater reuse and other similar matters and the absence of international water quality guidelines for ecosystems.

The GC requests the Executive Director to develop international water quality guidelines for ecosystems that may be voluntarily used to support the development of national standards, policies and frameworks with financial and technical support from governments; and to report to GC28 on the implementation of this decision.

**Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty reduction:** This item was discussed on Wednesday in plenary, and in informal consultations thereafter. On Wednesday Bolivia presented a draft resolution on different approaches, visions, models and tools to achieve sustainable development (UNEP/GC.27/CW/CRP.6). He called for a greater focus on sustainable development initiatives other than the green

economy. The US opposed discussing the draft, noting prior and ongoing discussions on the green economy. After informal consultations, Bolivia withdrew its proposal “in the spirit of multilateralism,” preferring to work on a non-paper tabled by China.

Brazil and others supported China’s draft, and proposed adding “in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication” after “green economy” throughout the draft decision. Brazil also proposed a new paragraph inviting countries to implement green economy policies. Norway proposed a new paragraph on the significant potential contribution of the 10YFP to the concept of green economy. Delegates then discussed the suitability of the draft and, after informal consultations, a consensus text was presented to the COW as a package.

**Final Decision:** In the decision on green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.2/Add.3), the GC, *inter alia*:

- takes note with appreciation of those countries that have endeavored to promote the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication based on their countries’ own circumstances and priorities, such as the idea of ecological civilization, natural capital accounting, payment for ecosystem services, low-carbon economy and resource efficiency;
- acknowledges that there are different approaches, visions, models and tools member states can use in order to achieve sustainable development, and takes note of the approach of living-well in balance and harmony with Mother Earth;
- requests UNEP’s Executive Director, within the programme’s existing mandate and available resources, to collect such initiatives, endeavors, practices and experiences on different approaches, visions, models and tools, including green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and to disseminate them and facilitate information sharing among countries so as to support their sustainable development and poverty eradication efforts; and
- invites states to implement green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication taking into account section 3 of “The Future We Want” (green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication).

**Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN):**

Delegates first considered a draft decision (UNEP/GC.27/12) on Wednesday, with discussion focusing on: language authorizing the UNEP Executive Director to make arrangements for the operation of the Centre at UNEP headquarters; an invitation to the GEF to fund the CTCN; and a call to member states to provide voluntary financial and other contributions.

Reporting back to the plenary on discussions, Kenya noted that it has agreed to delete brackets around language regarding the hosting of the CTCN on the understanding that the decision by UNEP will be based on technological capacity of the host.

**Final Decision:** In its decision (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.2/Add.4), the GC acknowledges UNEP’s mandate set out in the General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) to promote the contribution of relevant scientific and other professional experts for data acquisition, assessments and information exchange and the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building; and recalls the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change’s (UNFCCC) decision on establishing a technology

mechanism in the form of a CTCN to enhance technology cooperation and transfer to developing countries. The GC welcomes the decision of the UNFCCC COP to select UNEP as the leader of the consortium of partners of the CTCN; authorizes the UNEP Executive Director to sign the MoU with the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC; and requests him to make necessary arrangements for the first meeting of the CTCN.

**ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT: Justice, Governance and Law for Environment Sustainability:** This agenda item was first discussed on Wednesday in the COW. The Secretariat introduced the relevant documents (UNEP/GC.27/13 and UNEP/GC.27/INF/8). The US, supported by Canada, introduced its revised draft decision on advancing justice, governance and law (UNEP/GC.27/CW/CRP.6). The EU and Croatia, Norway, Brazil and Switzerland expressed preference for the Secretariat’s draft, which delegates agreed to use as the basis for negotiations. Delegates discussed strengthening judicial and related processes to address violations of environmental law, the role of public participation in sound environmental governance, and the term “environmental crimes” in relation to sanctions for non-compliance.

Argentina, with Brazil and Egypt, opposed by the US and Norway, emphasized that the Rio+20 Declaration on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability, adopted at the World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability, is not a negotiated outcome and should not be referenced.

The US suggested, and the EU and Croatia and Norway opposed, deletion of text on exploring the potential value of borrowing provisions from the Aarhus Convention on access to information and participation in the implementation of principle 10 of the Rio Declaration (participation). The text remained bracketed. Chile suggested, and delegates agreed, to refer to the Latin American and Caribbean regional process to promote public access to information, participation and environmental justice.

Delegates debated a suggestion by the EU and Croatia for the establishment of an international network composed of judiciary and other stakeholders in the legal enforcement chain. The US cautioned against duplication of efforts with similar networks. Delegates agreed that UNEP would “explore the possible establishment” of such a network.

South Africa, Kenya and Angola objected to text stating that environmental crimes are “facilitated” by weak governance structures. The EU asserted that “weak governance structures” should be mentioned. South Africa proposed an alternative paragraph, “recognizing that the violation of environmental laws has the potential to undermine sustainable development,” also proposing further actions such as information exchange and experience sharing to reinforce international cooperation.

The EU and Croatia proposed referencing “environmental crimes” in the document on sanctions for non-compliance. Argentina and Brazil opposed, saying such wording is not agreed under any intergovernmental process, and proposed “criminal activities regarding the environment.” Both references remained bracketed. After consultations, Argentina proposed replacing “environmental crime” with modified phrases throughout the text. Indonesia proposed adding, “while respecting national jurisdictions” on international cooperation to combat environmental offenses. Delegates supported both changes.

The EU and Croatia, supported by Colombia, South Africa and Angola, proposed compromise text that recognizes the rule of law and effective governance on reducing violations of environmental law.

Mali asked for new text reflecting environmental damage in conflict areas and supported the subsequent language proposed by Argentina as reflecting this sentiment.

**Final Decision:** In the preamble (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.2/Add.3), the GC recalls, *inter alia*, principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on participation and notes: that democracy, good governance and the rule of law are essential for sustainable development; that offenses against the environment are increasingly committed by organized criminal groups; and takes note of the Rio+20 outcome and Executive Director's report on the outcome of the World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability.

The GC further:

- notes that an independent judiciary and judicial process are vital for the implementation, development and enforcement of environmental law;
- emphasizes that environmental sustainability auditing is important for accountability, transparency, access to information and efficient use of public finances;
- emphasizes that justice should be seen as an intrinsic element of environmental sustainability;
- invites governments to cooperate to build and support the capacity of courts, tribunals and other enforcement officials in environmental matters; and
- requests the Executive Director to: support governments in implementation of environmental laws; coordinate with UN and other entities to promote improved environmental governance at the national level; promote quality information and data exchange among legal and auditing communities; explore the possible establishment of an international institutional network of legal practitioners and enforcement communities; and present a progress report on implementation as part of the mid-term review of the Fourth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law.

**COORDINATION AND COOPERATION WITHIN THE**

**UN SYSTEM ON ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS:** On Wednesday the Secretariat introduced the relevant document (UNEP/GC.27/15/Add.1). Discussions focused on the mandate to develop UN system-wide strategies. The EU preferred to invite the Secretary-General and the Chief Executives Board, while Switzerland preferred asking the Environment Management Group (EMG), through the Executive Director. A compromise was found to actively involve the Secretary-General and the Chief Executives Board. The Swiss proposal to strengthen the EMG Secretariat by an adequate allocation of resources was deferred to the budget group. Asking for greater support for the development of drylands, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) observed that “since half of the world’s livestock and 44% of agriculture systems are located in drylands, those lands hold the key for future food security.”

**Final Decision:** In the decision (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.2/Add.1), the GC supports the EMG’s efforts to mainstream environmental considerations at various levels within the UN system and urges the group to strengthen collaboration between the resident coordinator and non-resident agencies in the follow-

up of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review in line with “Delivering as One.”

The decision asks the EMG to support the drylands agenda by, *inter alia*, the preparation of a UN system-wide action plan on drylands for the period of 2012-2018, as requested by the UNCCD. The GC mandates the Executive Director to, *inter alia*: develop system-wide strategies on the environment with active involvement of the UN Secretary-General and the Chief Executives Board for broad ownership; and report to the GC on the EMG’s work at its 13th special session.

**FOLLOW-UP AND IMPLEMENTATION OF UN SUMMIT OUTCOMES:** This issue was considered in the COW on Monday and Friday, and taken up by the working group on institutional arrangements and rules of procedure, which was chaired by Luis Campuzano (Mexico) and Farrukh Iqbal Khan (Pakistan), from Tuesday to Friday.

On Monday, the Secretariat introduced information documents on the work of the CPR (UNEP/GC.27/INF/4), and on resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly of relevance to UNEP (UNEP/GC.27/INF/3 and Add.1), noting particular attention had been paid to those resolutions that contain provisions for strengthening and upgrading UNEP.

In the subsequent discussion, Tanzania, for the African Group, urged delegates to consider, *inter alia*: strengthening existing bodies rather than creating new ones; a clear roadmap for moving UNEP headquarters functions and offices to Nairobi, as called for in the Rio+20 outcome; and establishing sub-regional offices in Africa. India, the Russian Federation, the US and Indonesia favored strengthening the CPR.

On stakeholder involvement, Major Groups said they would table comprehensive principles for stakeholder participation, including the right to participate at all sessions, and to submit proposals. Ireland, for the EU and Croatia, Australia, the US, Canada, Norway and others stressed the importance of enhancing stakeholder involvement in UNEP’s work.

On strengthening and upgrading UNEP, Argentina expressed support for strengthening UNEP, but said upgrading the Programme was beyond the GC’s mandate. Brazil and others called for a thorough consideration of the rules of procedure, including the need to address gaps on issues such as the mechanism for NGO participation at GC meetings. New Zealand, the Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, Iran, Egypt and Indonesia called for a stronger UNEP regional presence. The Russian Federation added that structural changes should neither increase bureaucracy nor place a greater financial burden on member states.

In the contact group, discussions focused on: a new designation for the GC to reflect its universal character; frequency of meetings and the role of ministers; intersessional arrangements; bureau; enhanced participation of stakeholders; enhancing UNEP’s voice in the UN system; promoting a strong science-policy interface; and consolidation of UNEP headquarters functions in Nairobi.

On the new designation of UNEP’s governing body, delegates said that the term “Council” conveyed a limited membership and therefore needed to be changed. Many supported “UN Environment Assembly,” while others said a reference to UNEP was needed. “Environment Assembly” was also proposed.

Regarding frequency of meetings, many delegates supported holding annual meetings of the new governing body, with

ministerial segments held at those sessions every two years. Several supported ministerial consultations with stakeholders to set the international environmental agenda. Based on the views expressed, the Co-Chairs drafted text proposing that the governing body hold biennial meetings, while leaving open the option of convening special ministerial sessions to address “important and pressing environmental challenges.” One delegate urged deleting the reference to special sessions, which she said could lead to annual meetings. Many delegates insisted on holding annual meetings to enable UNEP’s governing body to continue to make decisions on an annual basis. Others said they could support biennial meetings, provided intersessional work was robust.

On intersessional work, one delegate proposed expanding the authority of the CPR to develop the strategic framework, programme of work and budget intersessionally, as well as establishing a technical subsidiary body to carefully examine finance and implementation reports. Text was proposed to establish the “open-ended” CPR as the intersessional committee of UNEP’s governing body. While this proposal received considerable support, some delegates expressed concern that, since many countries have no CPR representatives in Nairobi, it could be “very difficult” for them to participate effectively in UNEP’s intersessional work. In response to those concerns, it was suggested the CPR could convene a special open-ended five-day meeting with non-resident representatives and other stakeholders from capitals to address key issues such as preparing the agenda of meetings, and drafting decisions for consideration by UNEP’s governing body. One delegate said the proposal could lead to proliferation of special meetings, and stressed this should be avoided.

On enhancing stakeholder participation, delegates considered a series of principles proposed by Major Groups, including: full stakeholder participation in all UNEP activities, including agenda setting and decision making; full access to all meetings; and a right to submit documents. The need to ensure stakeholder participation in the new universal body was widely recognized, and many delegates supported stakeholder participation at all UNEP proceedings. However, a few delegates cautioned against proposals to enable stakeholders to comment on or submit decisions, or participate in Bureau meetings. In particular, some delegates insisted that decision making was a prerogative of governments. Others said they welcomed stakeholder input into decision making, and Major Groups clarified that they were simply seeking to participate in the deliberations that could lead to decisions adopted by governments. The need to amend UNEP’s rules of procedure to enable enhanced participation was also discussed, including through a mechanism of accreditation for non-international NGOs and other stakeholders to participate in UNEP meetings.

On enhancing UNEP’s voice, there was widespread support for a strengthened EMG, and one delegate suggested that the Executive Director represent the EMG in the UN Development Group to raise environmental issues during those discussions.

On promoting a strong science-policy interface, it was proposed that UNEP’s governing body act as a “high-level science-policy platform” and promote a strong science-policy interface by reviewing the state of the environment and building on existing assessments and networks to identify gaps and make recommendations to the governing body. A few delegates did not

support referring to a platform, stressing this would duplicate existing work. Many delegates emphasized the need for a gap analysis to determine whether new bodies are necessary to improve the science-policy interface.

On consolidation of headquarters functions in Nairobi, Kenya proposed requesting the Executive Director to immediately start the process of consolidation and conclude it by 2016. Others said the terms “headquarters functions” and “consolidation” needed to be clarified first, and highlighted that the Rio+20 outcome also requires stronger UNEP regional presence. They proposed that the Executive Director could provide guidance on these issues.

The working group eventually agreed to a compromise text on all issues.

**Final Decision:** In the decision on institutional arrangements (UNEP/GC.27/L.6), the GC welcomes the Rio+20 outcome and reaffirms the need to strengthen international environmental governance and coordination within the UN system and, *inter alia*, decides:

- to recommend to the UN General Assembly that the GC be renamed “United Nations Environment Assembly” of UNEP;
- that UNEP’s governing body will convene its sessions in Nairobi on a biennial basis, starting in 2014;
- to discontinue the GMEF;
- that each session of UNEP’s governing body will conclude with a two-day high-level segment that will take strategic decisions and perform several key functions, including: setting the global environmental agenda; providing policy guidance and defining policy responses to address emerging issues; guiding the future direction of UNEP; and organizing a multi-stakeholder dialogue;
- that the governing body “will ensure” active stakeholder participation and explore new mechanisms to promote effective civil society engagement in its work and that of its subsidiary bodies, *inter alia* by: developing by 2014 a process for stakeholder accreditation and participation that builds on the rules of procedure and considers the inclusive modalities of the CSD and other relevant UN bodies; and enhancing by 2014 “working methods and processes” for informed discussions and contributions by all relevant stakeholders towards the intergovernmental decision-making process;
- that the governing body will promote a “strong science-policy interface” by reviewing the state of the environment and building on existing international instruments, assessments, panels and information networks, and requests the Executive Director to “identify critical gaps and present a report, with recommendations, to the governing body”;
- that an open-ended CPR will be the subsidiary intersessional body of UNEP’s governing body and, in addition to its mandate, will, *inter alia*: contribute to preparation of the agenda of the governing body; prepare decisions for adoption by its governing body and oversee their implementation; and promote “effective ways and means” to facilitate participation of the non-resident members of the CPR, “particularly from developing countries;”
- to establish a sub-committee of the CPR to hold five-day meetings every year to review the medium-term strategy and programme of work and budget and to oversee their implementation and accountability by the Secretariat;
- to commit to “progressively consolidate its headquarters functions in Nairobi” and requests the Executive Director to

present a report and make recommendations on this issue to the governing body at its next session; and

- to strengthen UNEP's regional presence in order to assist countries in the implementation of their national environmental programmes, policies and plans and requests the Executive Director to increase UNEP's participation in UN Country Teams.

**Rules of Procedure:** On Friday in plenary, the President introduced a note setting out his proposed draft new rules of procedure of the GC (UNEP/GC.27/L.5), which contained a few amendments to the GC's rules of procedure. The rules were adopted in the closing plenary without amendment.

**BUDGET AND PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE BIENNIUM 2014-2015:** This item was considered briefly in the COW on Monday and taken up by a contact group that met throughout the week chaired by Konrad Paulsen (Chile). The Secretariat introduced documents on budget and programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015 and the Environment Fund and other budgetary matters (UNEP/GC.27/9/Add.1; UNEP/GC.27/10/Add.1 and/Add.2; UNEP/GC.27/11/Rev.1; UNEP/GC.27/14/Rev.1; UNEP/GC.27/INF/6 and/Add 1; UNEP/GC. 27/INF/7; and UNEP/GC.27/L.1).

Bolivia said the proposed programme of work is based on green economy and did not accurately reflect the balanced Rio+20 outcome. Norway said the overall 2.7% budget increase was modest. The EU and Croatia called on UNEP's Executive Director to seek a broader donor base for UNEP.

**Final Decision:** The final decision (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.5) contains sections on: the medium-term strategy for the period 2014-2017 and biennial programme of work and budget for 2014-2015, and management of trust funds and earmarked contributions.

Regarding the medium-term strategy, the GC, *inter alia*:

- approves the medium-term strategy for the period 2014-2017 and the programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015, as well as, approves appropriations for UNEP in the amount of US\$245 million, of which US\$110 million is allocated to 2014, and a maximum of US\$122 million is allocated to defraying post costs for the biennium for executive direction and management, programmes of work, the Fund programme reserve, and programme support;
- emphasizes the need for comprehensive information regarding proposed expenditures and contributions from all sources of funding;
- authorizes the Executive Director, with a view to ensuring better conformity with the practices of other UN bodies, to reallocate resources between sub-programme budget lines up to a maximum of 10%;
- authorizes the Executive Director, if necessary, to reallocate funds in excess of 10% and up to 20% of the budget in consultation with the CPR;
- requests the Executive Director to continue to organize regular briefings for the CPR on the programme and budget performance of each sub-programme to facilitate the CPR's monitoring functions;
- requests the Executive Director to ensure that UNEP's trust funds and earmarked contributions are used to fund activities that are in line with the programme of work, apart from those funds that are governed by other intergovernmental bodies and for which UNEP provides secretariat functions;

- recalls the Rio+20 outcome stating that UNEP should have secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resources from the regular budget of the UN, and voluntary contributions to fulfill its mandate, and calls for an allocation from the regular budget of the UN to UNEP that takes into account UNEP's programme of work;
- requests the Executive Director to ensure that the delivery of the programme of work supports and brings together regional and national programmes and activities in the medium-term strategy for the period 2014-2017 and the biennial programme of, and budget for, 2014-2015;
- urges donors to increase voluntary funding to UNEP, including its Environment Fund;
- requests the Executive Director, in his efforts to mobilize resources, to take actions so as to better reflect governments' capacity to contribute to the Environment Fund;
- takes note of document UNEP/GC.27/INF/20 on the relationship between UNEP and the MEAs for which UNEP provides the secretariat, and the undertaking to provide a full report on this issue by 30 June 2013, and requests the Executive Director to deepen consultations with those MEAs and other appropriate bodies and to submit the final report to GC28 and to the governing bodies of the MEAs;
- notes the positive effect of the Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contributions (VISC) to broaden the base of contributions to, and to enhance predictability in the voluntary financing of, the Environment Fund, and requests the Executive Director to adapt the VISC in light of UNEP's universal membership; and
- requests the Executive Director in his efforts to mobilize resources for the Programme to take action to strengthen and broaden the donor base of the Environment Fund.

In the section on the management of trust funds and earmarked contributions, the GC notes and approves the establishment of a number of trust funds, including those in support of the UNEP programme of work, and the regional seas programmes, conventions, protocols and special funds.

**Provisional agenda, date and venue of the next session of the GC of the UNEP:** On Friday in plenary, the President introduced a decision on this agenda item (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.2/Add.4), which was adopted without amendment.

**Final Decision:** In the decision (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.2/Add.4), the GC decides to hold its twenty-eighth session/second universal session at its headquarters in Nairobi.

### CLOSING PLENARY

GC/GMEF President Hilal convened the closing plenary on Friday evening. Delegates approved the verbal report on credentials. On other matters, he informed delegates that GC27/GMEF Vice-President Antonio Otávio Ricarte's (Brazil) tenure had come to an end and Manuel Pulgar-Vidal (Peru) had been nominated as his replacement.

COW Chair Idunn Eidheim (Norway) presented the report of the COW (UNEP/GC.27/CW/L.1 Adds.1-3) approved by the COW and forwarded to plenary for adoption. She noted that common ground had been found on a number of issues, and UNEP's implementation of the Rio+20 outcome had been enriched by such debate. Delegates adopted the draft report. The US expressed appreciation to Chair Eidheim for her hard work.

Delegates then adopted the draft proceedings of the GC/GMEF at its first Universal Session (UNEP/GC.27/L.3).

Acknowledging “challenging discussions,” Ireland, for the EU and Croatia, described the first Universal Session of the GC as a “landmark event,” which had discussed key issues such as institutional reform, green economy and UNEP’s contribution to the SDGs. He said these collective and cooperative efforts would position UNEP to act as a “global voice within the environment system.”

Describing Nairobi as the “environmental capital of the world,” Kenya said that all could take pride in the new governance and institutional arrangements agreed to at the meeting.

Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary, UNFCCC, observed that “strengthening UNEP is not an end in itself but a means to an end.” She called for enhancing UNEP’s ability to support governments and people on the path towards sustainability and welcomed the UNFCCC decision on the Climate Technology Centre to entrust it to an international consortium led by UNEP, which she said will accelerate understanding of, and access to, clean technology to help address global technology challenges.

NGOs called for an inclusive process in coming months to adopt modalities to ensure that stakeholders can make a contribution to implementation of paragraph 88 of the Rio+20 outcome. Noting that the process of rejuvenating UNEP was underway, Brazil expressed satisfaction with the outcome of meeting, observing that it had lived up to the expectations of the UN General Assembly mandate and the Rio+20 outcome.

GC President Hilal emphasized the need to take full advantage of the opportunities arising from universal membership of the GC, especially for a more effective and participatory UNEP focused on implementation and impact.

UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner said delegates had delivered on something that would go down in history. He expressed thanks to the Secretariat, the Government of Kenya and others for their support and hard work.

GC/GMEF President Hilal gavelled the meeting to a close at 9:24 pm. Executive Director Achim Steiner then invited delegates to witness the “historic” signing ceremony of the MoU between UNEP and the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC on the hosting of the Climate Technology Centre.

### A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF GC27/GMEF

*“Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin.”*

– Mother Teresa, cited by Children and Youth representative Khekshash Basu, during the closing plenary

The First Universal Session of its Governing Council marked a “watershed moment” for UNEP. Delegates arrived in Nairobi with muted excitement and high expectations. With the dust from Rio+20 now settled, the time for implementation had now begun. While not everyone was pleased with the results in Rio in June 2012, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development did agree to potentially far-reaching actions to strengthen the environmental agenda, among them a commitment to strengthen UNEP as the leading global environmental authority. This year’s Governing Council meeting marked the first test of the international community’s resolve to follow through on this commitment. Appropriately, the meeting was organized around the theme: “Rio+20: From Outcome to Implementation.”

This analysis examines three themes that are crucial to the future of UNEP: decision making and implementation; financing; and collaboration and public participation. It concludes with a discussion of UNEP in relation to the process of framing the post-2015 development agenda.

### DECISION MAKING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Rio+20 outcome, “The Future We Want,” agreed that it was time to strengthen UNEP, specifying: universal membership of the GC; stable, adequate and increased financial resources; enhancement of UNEP’s coordination role in the UN system; a strong science-policy interface; and active participation of all relevant stakeholders. The UN General Assembly endorsed this and now it was time to make it happen.

Universal membership, say GC veterans, codifies what has already been common practice, as many country representatives other than the 58 member states participate each year. The decision to restyle the GC as the “UN Environment Assembly of UNEP,” formalizes the process and reflects the intent of delegates to enhance UNEP’s status. Similarly, the decision to discontinue the Global Ministerial Environment Forum and, instead, convene a high-level segment at the end of each assembly reflects a desire to confer higher status upon GC decisions. “What we have now is simply a ministerial talk-shop in parallel to where the substantial decisions are taken,” said one delegate. Another commented, “It doesn’t make sense for our ministers to leave the meeting, as they do now, before all the major decisions are taken.”

The conference also discussed an EU proposal for UNEP to host a high-level scientific conference every few years, tentatively called a “State of the Planet” conference. Some ministers warmly welcomed the idea and viewed it as a way to give a higher profile to the kind of issues UNEP has profiled in its GEO reports. Others suggested including such an even as part of the Environment Assembly. In the end, however, the proposal was quietly dropped from the text. “Some countries may be nervous about being seen to endorse scientific findings,” said an observer. “That’s especially the case if those findings require certain actions that have a political cost to them in the domestic arena.”

Skeptics, meanwhile, pointed out that higher status cannot be acquired solely through a name change and a new meeting, noting that even the supposedly high-level Rio+20 conference lacked the participation of certain world leaders (including the Heads of State of the US, UK and Germany) despite the urgency of advancing the sustainable development agenda. So whether UNEP’s makeover will garner increased support from the international community remains to be seen.

While UNEP’s mandate remains the same, expectations have increased. Observers noted that UNEP has evolved from having a normative to an implementation role, with higher demand for on-the-ground programmes, reflected in many countries’ calls for UNEP to have a greater regional and sub-regional presence. Discussions on the sidelines indicated that the question of UNEP’s proper role is far from settled: some delegates emphasized that UNEP should limit itself to a coordinating role, and leave implementation to governments. At the same time, while UNEP’s GEO reports and other technical or scientific assessments have been well received, some argued that UNEP should serve as “a repository” of research rather than engaging in its own research.

One of the tests of UNEP's ability to balance these competing demands will be the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP) agreed in Rio and endorsed by the GC at this meeting. This framework is intended as a way for UNEP to support implementation of policies and actions at national and regional levels. It will test UNEP's ability to balance the competing demands of advisory and implementation roles in the first five programmes, which will be on consumer information, sustainable lifestyles, sustainable public procurement, sustainable buildings and construction, and sustainable tourism.

### **FINANCING**

Many of the high expectations for UNEP are dependent on whether funding will be available to implement desired activities. UNEP traditionally has depended heavily on voluntary contributions to its Environment Fund, rather than funds from the UN system known as the "regular budget." The UNEP Secretariat's share of the UN's regular budget stands at just 0.6% excluding funding for the secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements administered by UNEP.

According to the Rio+20 mandate and the GC's decision on this matter, UNEP will now request a larger share of funds from the UN regular budget. Many anticipate this will allow a shift in the resourcing of some staff and activities from the Environment Fund to the regular budget, which, in theory, will free up Environment Fund contributions to support more programme activities.

For this expectation to be met, however, UNEP's larger membership and donors will need to maintain or increase their level of contributions to the Environment Fund, particularly as non-earmarked funds that would give UNEP greater leeway to allocate them to programming priorities. Insiders, however, do not anticipate a huge increase in available funds. "It is not so much an increase in the current value of contributions, but rather a shift towards much more predictable financing, and the political message this will send," said one.

Meanwhile, some are hinting at a shift in the make-up of contributions to UNEP. Many developed countries are in economic crisis and budgets are under pressure. This raises the question of whether emerging economies will begin to play a larger role in financing of UNEP, as seen already with China contributing to interim implementation activities of the new mercury convention. Some are questioning if there are implications for the kind of work that will be supported in the future. "There was a lot of interest at this meeting in decisions on green economy and the 10YFP, but I don't see access and transparency issues getting the same kind of widespread support," grumbled a Major Group representative.

### **COLLABORATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

While Major Groups warmly welcomed the commitment of Rio+20's paragraph 88(h) to "explore new mechanisms" to promote UNEP's transparency and effective engagement of civil society, some developing countries expressed concern about the modalities for achieving this, and the implications for the intergovernmental character of its governing body. Participation in decision making, especially, was seen as the prerogative of states, including, for some, the ability to make written submissions on pending GC decisions.

Major Groups expressed disappointment with what they saw as a conservative GC decision. Some lamented that the decision drew on only generalities from the eleven principles of stakeholder participation that the Major Groups had agreed on at the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum that took place prior to the GC. However, the decision establishes a process, by 2014, for stakeholder accreditation and participation and processes for enhancing stakeholder contribution in the workings of the Governing Council. The exercise will also consider participation models practiced at other UN entities, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization and the Commission on Sustainable Development, where stakeholders, while also organized by Major Groups, play a larger role in submitting draft decisions and deliberations during decision making. Others, however, appreciate the willingness of UNEP, as secretariat to the GC, to engage in regular consultations and other participation methods that have been inclusive but need codification.

The change to universal membership of the GC also spurred discussions among the Major Groups regarding their organization and internal governance structures. Some Major Group representatives feel that the current structure has outlived its usefulness. However, they suggest that this is a dialogue that can continue; more importantly, they are of the view that the GC should formalize stakeholder participation, access to information, and engagement in decision making.

### **UNEP'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

The "watershed moment" of the first universal session of the GC was characterized by a mood of jubilation. Daytime plenaries and evening receptions together invoked UNEP's real achievements. UNEP, in its 41st year, is able to point to some real accomplishments in bringing the international community together: the first meeting of the IPBES, a new science-policy platform; the successful conclusion of mercury negotiations; and agreement on financing options for the chemicals and wastes cluster. Despite these successes, there is clear recognition that the challenges ahead are daunting. These are twofold: the emerging landscape of sustainable development governance that UNEP must navigate; and the changes in its own institutional arrangements.

This GC session took place in the midst of the creation of new institutional arrangements for sustainable development. Rio+20 agreed to establish an Open Working Group to elaborate sustainable development goals, and a High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), eventually replacing the CSD, to follow up on sustainable development commitments made since the first Rio conference. Both of these processes are contributing to broad UN consultations towards framing the post-2015 development agenda.

In this new landscape of sustainable development governance, some believe the sustainable development agenda should remain under the purview of the newly established HLPF, while others feel that UNEP should play a more prominent role. The question is whether UNEP, in stepping up its contribution to sustainable development, would be in danger of reinterpreting its mandate. This tension was reflected in the negotiations on institutional arrangements, where some delegations opposed any reference to sustainable development

A long-time GC observer also raised the question of whether the post-2015 structures will divert scarce donor funds that will be needed to truly strengthen UNEP. "There is a danger, unless we are careful, that we will see a repetition of the situation in which the establishment of the CSD, after the first Rio summit, weakened UNEP at a crucial time, and did not do much to advance the cause of sustainable development," he commented, suggesting that the Rio+20 agreement to establish the HLPF could result in a similar situation.

UNEP and its backers, however, have so far proved savvy in promoting the environmental dimension of sustainable development by building up a strong interdisciplinary programme base geared towards practical outcomes. A testament to UNEP's role as the environmental authority was the announcement of a UNEP-led consortium that will host and coordinate the Climate Technology Centre and Network that will be the implementing arm of the Technology Mechanism of the UNFCCC.

UNEP may be able to bring greater coherence to environmental sustainability discussions within the sustainable development agenda; it may, on the other hand, be more constrained by the need to coordinate with many actors in the processes towards the post-2015 development agenda. There is also a risk that it is over-burdened by contradictory demands from its own governance and stakeholder base, becoming unable to take the kind of bold and decisive actions that are needed for a global transformation, and distracting from its ability to deliver on programmes.

Realization of the commitments made at Rio+20 may indeed result in a UNEP that is strengthened – but also constrained.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**CITES COP 16:** The 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) will meet in Bangkok. **dates:** 3-14 March 2013 **location:** Bangkok, Thailand **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-81-39/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-3417 **email:** info@cites.org **www:** <http://www.cites.org/eng/cop/index.php>

**Conference on Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: Follow-up to the development agenda beyond 2015 and Rio+20 and the Caribbean Forum: Shaping a Sustainable Development Agenda to address the Caribbean Reality in the 21st Century:** These back-to-back meetings will focus on development goals, global and regional governance and the discussion, from a regional perspective, of agreements adopted in order to inform the ongoing global processes. **dates:** 5-9 March 2013 **location:** Bogotá, Colombia **contact:** UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean **email:** rio20@cepal.org **www:** <http://www.eclac.cl/rio20/>

**Open Working Group on SDGs:** The President of the General Assembly is expected to set the dates for the first meeting of the Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), established on 22 January 2013 at the end of February. **dates:** mid-March 2013 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1549>

**Second Open-Ended Informal Meeting on Establishing HLPF:** An open-ended informal meeting on establishing the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) to follow up on the implementation of sustainable development is expected to be scheduled in March, following small group consultations to develop a negotiating text. **date:** to be confirmed **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1556>

**High-Level Consultation on Environmental Sustainability:** As part of the Post-2015 Development Agenda Global Thematic Consultations, this High-Level Leadership Meeting will discuss and define agenda recommendations on environmental sustainability for the Post-2015 Development Framework in March. **dates:** 18-29 March 2013 **location:** San José, Costa Rica **www:** <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/sustainability2015>

**Fourth Meeting of the High-Level Panel on Post-2015 Development Agenda:** The fourth meeting of the UN High-Level Panel of the Post-2015 Development Agenda (HLP), hosted by the Government of Indonesia will focus on "Global Partnerships." **dates:** 25-27 March 2013 **location:** Bali, Indonesia **contact:** HLP Secretariat **www:** <http://www.post2015hlp.org/>

**UNFF10:** The tenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF10) will assess progress on the implementation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests and achievement of its four Global Objectives on Forests. **dates:** 8-19 April 2013 **location:** Istanbul, Turkey **contact:** UNFF Secretariat **phone:** +1-212-963-3401 **fax:** +1-917-367-3186 **email:** unff@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/session.html>

**UNCCD CST and CRIC:** The third Special Session of the Committee of Science and Technology (CST S3), the second International Scientific Conference and the eleventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC11) of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification will be held back-to-back in April. **dates:** 9-19 April 2013 **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** UNCCD Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2800 **fax:** +49-228-815-2898 **email:** secretariat@unccd.int **www:** [www.unccd.int](http://www.unccd.int)

**Economic Commission for Europe 65th Meeting:** As part of this meeting, there will be discussions on the development of sustainable development goals and follow-up to Rio+20. **dates:** 9-11 April 2013 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** ECE Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-4444 **fax:** +41-22-917-0505 **email:** info.ece@unece.org **www:** [http://www.unece.org/commission/2013/65th\\_index.html](http://www.unece.org/commission/2013/65th_index.html)

**Economic and Social Commission for West Asia Regional Implementation Meeting:** This meeting will be convened to inform the development of sustainable development goals and follow-up to Rio+20. **dates:** 16-17 April 2013 (tentative) **location:** Tunis, Tunisia (tentative) **contact:** ESCWA Secretariat **www:** <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/meetings.asp>

**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Regional Implementation Meeting:** This meeting will be convened to inform the development of sustainable development goals and follow-up to Rio+20. **dates:** 22-24 April

2013 (tentative) **location:** Bangkok, Thailand **contact:** ESCAP Secretariat **email:** [escap-esdd-oc@un.org](mailto:escap-esdd-oc@un.org) **www:** <http://www.unescap.org/esd/calendar/>

**Ordinary and Extraordinary Meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions:**

The ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties (COPs) to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions will convene back-to-back. A high-level segment is scheduled from 9-10 May on the theme of synergies and national implementation of the three conventions. **dates:** 28 April – 10 May 2013 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8729 **fax:** +41-22-917-8098 **email:** [synergies@unep.org](mailto:synergies@unep.org) **www:** <http://synergies.pops.int/>

**20th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development:**

The 20th and final session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD 20) is tentatively scheduled to take place in May. **dates:** 6-10 May 2013 (to be confirmed) **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **email:** [dsd@un.org](mailto:dsd@un.org) **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1211>

**GEF 44th Council Meeting:** The GEF Council meets twice per year to approve new projects with global environmental benefits in the GEF's focal areas, and provide guidance to the GEF Secretariat and Agencies. **dates:** 18-20 June 2013 **location:** Washington, DC, USA **contact:** GEF Secretariat **phone:** +1-202-473-0508 **fax:** +1-202-522-3240 **email:** [secretariat@thegef.org](mailto:secretariat@thegef.org) **www:** <http://www.thegef.org/gef/events/gef-44th-council-meeting>

**OEWG33:** The 33rd Meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol will take place in late June. **dates:** 24-28 June 2013 **location:** Bangkok, Thailand **contact:** Ozone Secretariat **phone:** +254-20-762-3851 **fax:** +254-20-762-0335 **email:** [ozoneinfo@unep.org](mailto:ozoneinfo@unep.org) **www:** [http://ozone.unep.org/new\\_site/en/committee\\_documents.php?committee\\_id=3](http://ozone.unep.org/new_site/en/committee_documents.php?committee_id=3)

**IPCC WG1 Session and IPCC-36:** The 12th session of Working Group 1 for endorsement of the fifth assessment report (AR5) will be held in September. The 36th session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change will convene to consider the WG1 contribution to AR5. **dates:** 23-26 September 2013 **location:** Stockholm, Sweden **contact:** IPCC Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-730-8208 **fax:** +41-22-730-8025 **email:** [ipcc-sec@wmo.int](mailto:ipcc-sec@wmo.int) **www:** <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

**CBD Working Group on Article 8(J):** The eighth meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity will convene in October. **dates:** 7-11 October 2013 **location:** Montreal, Quebec, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** [secretariat@cbd.int](mailto:secretariat@cbd.int) **www:** <http://www.cbd.int/meetings/>

**Diplomatic Plenipotentiary Conference on the Global Legally Binding Instrument on Mercury:** The Conference will adopt the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the final act that addresses, among other things, arrangements for the interim period between the signing of the instrument and its entry into force. **dates:** 7-11 October 2013 **location:** Kunamoto/Minamata, Japan **contact:** Jacob Duer, UNEP **phone:** +254-2076-24011 **fax:** +254-2076-24300 **email:** [Jacob.Duer@unep.org](mailto:Jacob.Duer@unep.org) **www:** <http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Mercury/Negotiations/tabid/3320/Default>

**CBD SBSTTA 17:** At its 17th meeting, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the Convention on Biological Diversity will address marine and coastal biodiversity, biodiversity and climate change, and collaboration with IPBES. **dates:** 14-18 October 2013 **location:** Montreal, Quebec, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** [secretariat@cbd.int](mailto:secretariat@cbd.int) **www:** <http://www.cbd.int/meetings/>

**IPCC37:** The 37th Session of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change will be meeting for adoption and acceptance of two Methodology Reports. **dates:** 14-18 October 2013 **location:** Georgia (to be confirmed) **contact:** IPCC Secretariat **phone:** +41 22 730 8208 **fax:** +41 22 730 8025 **email:** [ipcc-sec@wmo.int](mailto:ipcc-sec@wmo.int) **www:** <http://www.ipcc.ch>

**POPRC9:** The ninth meeting of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee will review chlorinated naphthalene's, hexachlorobutadiene, hexabromocyclododecane, and pentachlorophenol and its salts and esters. **dates:** 14-18 October 2013 **location:** Rome, Italy **contact:** Stockholm Convention Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8098 **email:** [ssc@pops.int](mailto:ssc@pops.int) **www:** <http://pops.int>

**19th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC):** UNFCCC COP 19 and CMP 9 and the subsidiary bodies will convene in Warsaw, Poland. **dates:** 11-22 November 2013 **location:** Warsaw, Poland **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **email:** [secretariat@unfccc.int](mailto:secretariat@unfccc.int) **www:** <http://www.unfccc.int>

**IPBES-2:** IPBES-2 will take place in late 2013 or early 2014, with the dates and venue to be determined. **contact:** UNEP Secretariat **email:** [ipbes.unep@unep.org](mailto:ipbes.unep@unep.org) **www:** <http://www.ipbes.net>

**UNEP GC:** The second universal session of the UNEP governing body will convene in 2014. **dates:** to be determined **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **contact:** Secretary, Governing Bodies, UNEP **phone:** +254-20-7623431 **fax:** +254-20-7623929 **email:** [sgc.sgb@unep.org](mailto:sgc.sgb@unep.org) **www:** <http://www.unep.org/ecalendar/>

**GLOSSARY**

COW	Committee of the Whole
CPR	Committee of Permanent Representatives
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
EMG	Environment Management Group
GC	Governing Council
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
GMEF	Global Ministerial Environment Forum
IEG	International environmental governance
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
MEAs	Multilateral environmental agreements
SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
SCP	Sustainable consumption and production
SDGs	Sustainable development goals
10YFP	10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change