



SUMMARY OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES (OECPR) TO UNEP: 24-28 MARCH 2014

The first meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR) to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was held at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, from 24-28 March 2014. This meeting subsumed the 126th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR). Composed of all accredited Permanent Representatives to UNEP, the CPR is the subsidiary intersessional entity of UNEP's new governing body—the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) of UNEP—with the mandate to perform various functions, including preparation of the agenda and providing advice to UNEA on policy matters. Over 300 delegates from 96 countries, including 51 participants from Major Groups and stakeholders, attended the first OECPR.

During the week-long meeting, the OECPR considered: the half-yearly review of the implementation of the programme of work (POW) and budget for 2012-2013; policy matters, including its advice to UNEA; and the draft POW and budget for 2016-2017 and other administrative matters. The meeting provided an opportunity to: prepare for the UNEA sessions in 2014 and 2016; debate the role of UNEA in the UN system; and prepare draft decisions for adoption by UNEA.

Delegates did not approve any decisions during the session but agreed that the Bureau of the CPR, in consultation with the Secretariat, will develop a detailed calendar of CPR Subcommittee meetings between April 2014 and mid-June 2014 before the 127th meeting of the CPR, scheduled for 17 June 2014. They also agreed on the organization for the UNEA ministerial segment in June, themed "Illegal trade in wildlife" and that the outcome would be a Chair's summary.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF UNEP

As a result of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, the UN General Assembly (UNGA), in resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 1972, established UNEP as the central UN node for global environmental cooperation and treaty making. The resolution also established the UNEP Governing Council (GC) to provide a forum for the international community to address major and emerging environmental policy issues. The GC's responsibilities included the promotion of international

environmental cooperation and the recommendation of policies to achieve it, and the provision of policy guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programmes in the UN system. The GC reported to the UN General Assembly, which had been responsible for electing the 58 members of the GC, taking into account the principle of equitable regional representation. Through resolution 67/213 (2012), the General Assembly established universal membership in the GC, and determined that the 2013 meeting of the Council would be its first "universal" session. The Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF) was constituted by the GC as envisaged by General Assembly resolution 53/242 (1998). The purpose of the GMEF was to institute, at a high political level, a process for reviewing important and emerging policy issues in the field of the environment.

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,

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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 requested 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 contained 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.

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 (SIDS); waste management; water resource management; regional annexes; and the implementation of decision SS.VII/1 on IEG.

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

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

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

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.

RIO+20: The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), or Rio+20, convened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 13-22 June 2012. With regard to UNEP, the outcome document, "The Future We Want," called for the UN General Assembly to take decisions on, *inter alia*: designating a body to operationalize the 10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, and strengthening and upgrading UNEP, including: universal membership in the GC; secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resources from the UN regular budget; enhanced ability to fulfill its coordination mandate within the UN system, promoting a strong

science-policy interface, disseminating and sharing evidence-based environmental information and raising public awareness; providing capacity building to countries; consolidating headquarters functions in Nairobi and strengthening its regional presence; and ensuring the active participation of all relevant stakeholders.

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY: On 21 December, 2012, the 67th session of the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 67/213 on strengthening and upgrading UNEP and establishing universal membership of its Governing Council, which allows for full participation of all 193 UN member states. The resolution also calls for UNEP to receive secure, stable and increased financial resources from the UN regular budget and urges other UNEP donors to increase their voluntary funding. On 13 March 2013, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 67/251, which changed the designation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme to the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme.

GC27/GMEF: Convening from 19-22 February 2013, this meeting was the first Universal Session of the Governing Council. The GC adopted a decision on institutional arrangements including, inviting the UN General Assembly to rename UNEP's governing body the "UN Environment Assembly." Other decisions were adopted on, *inter alia*: state of the environment; justice, governance and law for environmental sustainability; climate technology centre and network; UNEP's follow-up and implementation of UN Summit outcomes; and budget and programme for work for the biennium 2014-2015.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

Amb. Julia Pataki (Romania), Acting Chair of the CPR, opened the meeting on Monday, 24 March, welcomed incoming CPR members and thanked the outgoing members. UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner expressed appreciation for stakeholders' interest in contributing to the new UN Environment Assembly of UNEP. Delegates adopted the minutes of the 125th meeting of the CPR (UNEP/CPR/126/2), the provisional agenda (UNEP/CPR/126/1) and the programme of work (UNEP/CPR/126/1/Add.1/Rev.1), with minor amendments. Amb. Sunu Soemarno (Indonesia) was elected by acclamation as CPR Chair, replacing Amb. Chan-Woo Kim (Republic of Korea).

REPORT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Achim Steiner presented highlights from his report (UNEP/CPR/126/3), calling this week's OECPR a "special moment" in the evolution of UNEP, and thanking delegates for their support. He said that UNEP is actively engaged in providing input on targets and indicators for the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Steiner noted improved efficiencies and increased productivity across UNEP despite reduced staff, and said that UNEP is continuing to improve its "value-for-money" proposition. He concluded with the announcement of a number of changes to senior management and noted that four of the five divisions of UNEP are now led by women.

COUNTRY INTERVENTIONS: Delegates congratulated Steiner on his reappointment. Kenya urged member states to contribute resources for: structural economic transformation and

inclusive growth; science, technology and innovation; people-centered development; natural resources management and use; peace and security; and finance and partnerships.

The European Union (EU) said an outcome-oriented high-level segment at the UNEA in June 2014 could provide input to the SDGs process and make progress on addressing the illegal trade in wildlife and timber. He stressed that the current revision of UNEP's stakeholder policy should be non-regressive.

Thailand, for the Group of 77 and China (G-77/China), proposed discussing adoption of new rules of procedure covering participation of non-resident permanent representatives and stakeholders in UNEA.

On the preparation of draft decisions, Switzerland stressed that they should be essential, streamlined, focused and results-oriented with a clear link to the budget. Supported by Norway, he added that decisions should be clustered. With the US, he called for clarity on the forthcoming Global Environment Outlook (GEO 6) process.

Norway called for further dialogue towards a more "streamlined and lean" meeting that will have strategic focus, with shorter documents containing better analyses and budget implications of proposed actions.

Japan called for an end to the "meaningless enlargement of the organization," and with the US, recommended using limited financial resources effectively.

Zimbabwe, for the African Group, welcomed the upcoming global adaptation gap report to be released by UNEP in 2014. On strengthening the regional presence, he noted that only one out of five subregional offices in Africa had been created.

The US expressed "frustration, disappointment and concern" with organizational aspects of the meeting. Looking ahead, she called for better documentation to be prepared for UNEA and enhanced member state involvement.

Colombia, for the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), highlighted priorities including: focusing on the appropriate management of chemicals and wastes; efficient and transparent use of resources by UNEP; and supporting sustainable development in small island developing states (SIDS).

Stressing the importance of involving all stakeholders in achieving agreement on sustainable development, Uruguay called for leadership to ensure that UNEP has the necessary budget to address the challenges ahead.

New Zealand supported UNEP's involvement in the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda discussions to ensure the environmental pillar is embedded in the outcomes, and urged that environmental issues in the Pacific region be prioritized.

Cuba, with Bolivia, underlined the importance of focusing on the commitments agreed at Rio+20, and urged the OECPR to stick to agreed programme and financial commitments.

In closing, Steiner noted, *inter alia*, that many are looking to UNEA for principles and concepts that may be implemented in partnership with others, for example on the green economy and the illegal trade of wildlife.

Switzerland introduced proposed additions to the omnibus decision on chemicals and waste tabled by the US, calling for greater attention to lead and cadmium, mercury, SAICM, and enhanced international cooperation. The US welcomed an integrated approach to financing chemicals and waste

issues, and proposed the adoption of terms of reference for the special programme to support implementation of the chemicals conventions at the national level.

HALF-YEARLY REVIEW OF PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POW, INCLUDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GOVERNING BODY DECISIONS

On Monday, CPR Vice-Chair Bart Ouvry (Belgium) invited the Secretariat to introduce the agenda item on the half-yearly review of the implementation of the POW and budget for 2012-2013 (UNEP/EA.1/INF/5 and UNEP/EA.1/INF/6). Presenting the programme performance report, J. Christophe Bouvier, UNEP, noted 64% of expected accomplishments had been met, while 85% of indicator targets were achieved or surpassed. He highlighted the reduction of core UNEP staff, consolidation of projects, and increased multi-stakeholder partnerships as key achievements. He explained that performance reports are increasingly focusing on providing assessments of change over longer time frames, and highlighted success in phasing out leaded petrol globally between 2002 and 2014 as one example.

Bouvier outlined steps towards: enhancing results-based management; improving the quality of monitoring and reporting; investing in new systems and partnerships; increasing sensitivity towards social and economic safeguards; and sharpening communications and knowledge management strategies, including the use of the UNEP Live knowledge management platform to enhance the science-policy interface (SPI).

Sheila Aggarwal-Khan, UNEP, discussed key achievements under the six UNEP sub-programmes during the past biennium, highlighting, *inter alia*: integration of ecosystem-based adaptation within national planning processes; reports on bridging science and policy on resource efficiency; and mainstreaming environmental management in humanitarian and peacekeeping activities and post-crisis recovery. She reported that global multi-stakeholder partnerships had been established on finance, food and agriculture, buildings, tourism and insurance, which represent US\$8 trillion in assets.

Brazil, supported by Norway, expressed concern about the rate of under-achievement of the POW, and the doubling of earmarked contributions to over US\$300 million, compared with US\$150 million in contributions to the Environment Fund, saying earmarked contributions may not be in line with UNEA priorities. Norway also welcomed the move towards reporting on the longer-term impacts and relevance of UNEP's work, asking to what extent this is reflected in the new results framework.

Greece, for the EU, welcomed UNEP's "value for money" approach and called for further efficiency gains.

Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director, UNEP, noted implementation constraints, including recruitment and procurement delays, late funding, and internal coordination issues in participating countries. He assured delegates that all activities would be completed in the next biennium.

CONSIDERATION OF POLICY MATTERS

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT: UNEP Live Platform:

This item was discussed on Wednesday afternoon in plenary. Jacqueline McGlade, Chief Scientist, UNEP, introduced the draft Secretariat report on the state of the environment (UNEP/EA.1/4), and the related document on support structures and processes for keeping the world environment situation under review, including a progress report on the UNEP Live platform

(UNEP/EA.1/4/Add.1). Discussing the UNEP Live approach of managing information at its source, she noted that the platform could include live data feeds from countries and could facilitate the integration of expert and traditional knowledge, as well as regional perspectives. She said that using UNEP Live to gather input for GEO 6 will make the process more participatory.

Many delegates welcomed UNEP Live, and some requested clarification on how it relates to the GEO 6 process. Several delegates emphasized the need for capacity building to support developing countries, and for information in the main UN languages. Greece, for the EU, encouraged UNEP to underline how countries can benefit from developing the evidence base for UNEP Live.

China, Norway, Switzerland and the US stressed the need to use robust data. Norway requested UNEP to provide guidelines on conducting environmental assessments before launching the GEO 6 process, in line with the previous GC decision.

Argentina said the process should provide useful information for countries and should not set environmental standards. Switzerland proposed that GEO 6 report on progress towards internationally agreed environmental goals.

New Zealand welcomed the announcement of a GEO SIDS report, in addition to other regional reports, saying this will support the Third International Conference on SIDS in Samoa in September 2014. Brazil requested UNEP to have its Emissions Gap Report peer reviewed.

On data collection and quality, McGlade emphasized the importance of "getting it right from the beginning," noting the role of citizen science and the possibility for creating a "Lego kit" to assist countries in sampling their environmental data, adding that air and water quality are priorities. She proposed holding a multi-stakeholder meeting before the first UNEA to discuss global environmental trends for GEO 6, in addition to the regional processes. To avoid duplication, she said GEO 6 would make use of existing regional environmental assessments in North America and Europe.

SCIENCE-POLICY INTERFACE: Discussions on this topic took place on Monday morning. An open-ended contact group chaired by Idunn Eidheim, Norway, met four times between Wednesday evening and Friday afternoon to consider a draft omnibus decision proposed by the EU.

On Monday, Jacqueline McGlade presented document UNEP/EA.1/3/Add.1, which summarizes ongoing as well as proposed actions to help UNEP to strengthen the SPI. She pointed out that the proposals are closely linked to draft decisions on the state of the environment (UNEP/EA.1/4) and the UNEP Live platform (UNEP/EA.1/4/Add.1). Noting that "a week is a long time in science," McGlade stressed the need to fill data gaps, especially with regard to understanding the complexity of actions and their implications and outcomes, and creating a "common language" to facilitate benchmarking and implementation.

Norway, supported by Brazil, the EU, New Zealand, the US, Mexico and Switzerland, called for clustering the three related texts, as well as elements of the draft decision on the IPBES, into one streamlined text. Argentina emphasized reflecting agreed Rio+20 language, calling for the SPI to be based on inclusive and transparent scientific assessments.

Japan asked for clarification on the budgetary implications of proposed interventions, such as the centers of excellence, and urged avoiding duplication of regional and global actions.

The EU called for focusing on strategic actions and avoiding repetition of general principles agreed to in other processes.

The US called for integration of the SPI with UNEP's role in developing assessment capacity at the national and regional levels. Switzerland called for the GEO 6 process to support the proposed global outlook report on sustainable development.

Responding to the issues raised, Thiaw expressed UNEP's willingness to streamline the related decision texts. Clarifying the reference to centers of excellence, he explained that this refers to existing institutions and will help leverage the effectiveness of UNEP's 1400 partnerships. McGlade emphasized that the challenge is ensuring that global data is scalable to the local level, and stressed that capacity building should address scientific as well as policy expertise.

Introducing the draft omnibus decision during the open-ended contact group on Thursday morning, the EU informed members that it merges three documents: UNEP/EA.1/2/Add.1 on SPI; UNEP/EA.1/4 on state of the environment; and UNEP/EA.1/4/Add.1 on UNEP Live.

During discussion of the preambular paragraphs, recalling several UN General Assembly and UNEP GC decisions, a delegate sought clarification on a request to the UNEP Executive Director to "identify critical gaps" in promoting a strong SPI. Others noted that this was an explicit GC request and the intent is to draw attention to this issue since UNEP has not provided the CPR with a report to date. It was proposed to include this request in the operative paragraphs. Several delegates questioned language calling on UNEP to provide "policy-relevant" environmental assessments, noting this is beyond UNEP's remit. Similarly, some felt that the language touching on the reporting requirements of MEAs with their own governing bodies was beyond the UNEA's mandate.

Delegates also proposed a number of new preambular paragraphs, including text welcoming the development of UNEP Live as a mechanism to significantly enhance the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of reviews of the global environmental situation, and contribute to capacity building and technological support for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to improve their data collection, assessment and dissemination efforts. Other proposed language called for making reference to: the Rio+20 outcome document and paragraph 20 of GC Decision 27/2 calling for the enhancement of the operationalization of the Bali Strategic Plan for technology support and capacity building; and the release of the third Africa Environment Outlook on linkages between health and the environment, and the Arab Region Atlas of Our Changing Environment.

With regard to the operative paragraphs on SPI, some developing countries called for explicit reference to capacity building and financial support. One delegate sought clarification on the meaning of "communities of practice" and cautioned that there could be possible legal implications in mandating the SPI to "provide tools for integrated approaches and decision making." Another asked for clarity on whether strengthening the SPI relates only to existing institutional mechanisms, or if further expansion of the SPI is intended.

On "strengthening sustainable development," one delegate called for the text to specify the institutional mechanism that will be used to provide expert input to the post-2015 process.

Introducing the operative paragraphs on assessments, the Secretariat provided an overview of the proposed "staged approach" for GEO 6, contained in Annex I of the draft decision, which highlights the timing and deliverables leading to its possible launch at UNEA in 2016. Some members asked for clarification about the CPR's role in reviewing the assessment, noting that previous GEOs were prepared by UNEP in collaboration with specialized technical institutions. A number of delegations supported new language requiring UNEP to ensure coordination of GEO reports with UNEP Live and calling for the scope and objectives of GEO 6 to be defined by a transparent and scientifically credible, intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder consultation. Other delegates wanted the decision to specifically call on UNEP to contribute to the dissemination and outreach of the findings of relevant intergovernmental bodies, in order to reach the widest possible audience. One delegate proposed language requiring UNEP to consult with all regions regarding their priorities for the GEO report.

Introducing the operative paragraphs on the UNEP Live platform, the Secretariat highlighted the work of the GEO-SIDS Community of Practice, which aims to provide input to the preparatory process for the Third International Conference on SIDS in 2014 by: reviewing SIDS priority challenges and data gaps; developing indicators to help track progress through UNEP Live; identifying how data gaps can be overcome; and providing a peer-review mechanism. Delegates highlighted the need for, *inter alia*: inviting broad multi-stakeholder involvement in the future development of UNEP Live; ensuring that data shared on the platform is credible, quality assured, peer reviewed, environmentally relevant, and widely accessible; and providing technological support, data infrastructure and capacity building so that developing countries can fully participate in, and benefit from, the knowledge platform.

During the closing plenary on Friday, Chair Eidheim provided a brief report of the contact group's progress, noting it would continue its work during the intersessional period.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT POLICY: Delegates discussed the report of the Executive Director on stakeholder engagement (UNEP/EA.1/2) and the annexed draft policy on Tuesday.

CPR Vice-Chair Julia Pataki outlined the main issues for delegates' consideration: defining stakeholder categories; process for accrediting stakeholders; roles of CPR and UNEA in accreditation; accredited stakeholders' access to information; and accredited stakeholders' access to Bureau meetings.

The US and the EU, among others, expressed strong support for the role of stakeholders in strengthening UNEP. Others stressed the need to maintain UNEP's intergovernmental character.

Some delegates wanted to discuss the UNEA rules of procedure before deliberating on the stakeholder engagement policy, while others felt it should be the other way around. China, supported by Senegal and Iran, highlighted that the current process toward the first UNEA is laying down "new rules of the game," and urged delegates to first address UNEA's rules of procedure. Argentina, supported by Egypt, Colombia, Bolivia, the EU and Switzerland, preferred to first discuss the stakeholder engagement policy. Switzerland recommended moving forward based on the existing GC process, saying stakeholder

participation is crucial at the first and subsequent meetings of UNEA, and that stakeholders are “much more than observers.”

Delegates also discussed the accreditation process. Some countries wanted to be involved in accrediting stakeholders, together with the Secretariat. While welcoming stakeholders, they stressed the intergovernmental character of the negotiation process. Others called for clear, pragmatic and understandable accreditation processes. Norway and Brazil recommended avoiding “cumbersome and politicized” procedures. The EU emphasized the principle of non-regression, and recommended that the Secretariat should handle accreditation.

On appropriate models for stakeholder engagement, Major Groups recommended developing a policy in line with UN General Assembly resolution 67/290 establishing the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). Egypt recommended the arrangements set forth in Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution 1996/31. Brazil argued that the ECOSOC approach is outdated, and that the former Commission on Sustainable Development and the HLPF have improved on those mechanisms.

Egypt expressed concern that providing funding for stakeholder engagement should not encroach on supporting the participation of delegations from developing countries. Jordan and Bolivia called for ensuring a regional balance of stakeholders.

On Friday, the OECPR agreed to conduct intersessional work to resolve bracketed text in the draft stakeholder engagement policy before forwarding the text to the 127th CPR during UNEA for further deliberation and approval.

CONTRIBUTIONS BY REGIONAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUMS: Delegates considered this agenda item in plenary on Tuesday morning. Munyaradzi Chenje, UNEP, introduced the report of the Executive Director on contributions by regional ministerial environment forums for which UNEP serves as the Secretariat (UNEP/EA.1/2/Add.2). He said GC decision 27/2 stressed the importance of such forums and invited them to contribute to the work of UNEP’s governing body. He noted that environmental challenges are not confined to national boundaries and require collective action, and underscored that sustainable development at the regional level is explicitly recognized in the Rio+20 outcome document.

Many countries expressed support for regional forums and for UNEP’s role in strengthening them. Discussion revolved around the importance of a regional presence for UNEP to support countries in implementing their national programmes. There were calls for additional financial support for regional forums. Some expressed the need to go beyond South-South and triangular cooperation and emphasized the role of voluntary contributions as well as those from the private sector. Tanzania asked for UNEP to include African regional priorities in its POW. Georgia urged UNEP to formalize the provision of secretariat services for the Pan-European Biodiversity Platform. Greece, for the EU, supported by the US and Switzerland said that no specific decision on the topic was necessary. The US said that the invitation for UNEP to participate more strongly at the regional level was a “blessing and a challenge,” and urged the organization to remain true to its scientific roots and avoid over-ambition.

ACCESS-TO-INFORMATION POLICY: Delegates considered this agenda item in plenary on Tuesday morning.

Masa Nagai, UNEP, introduced the Executive Director’s report on UNEP’s access-to-information policy (UNEP/EA.1/2/Add.4). He said that it is “extremely important” to disseminate information gathered through programmatic work. He noted that the access-to-information policy is connected to enhancing the role of UNEP and stakeholders.

Much of the ensuing discussion focused on the disclosure rules, and under what circumstances exemptions might apply. Brazil asked on what grounds UNEP would disclose classified information. Canada welcomed the efforts taken to establish the policy, and invited the Secretariat to analyze whether the policy was consistent with existing policies within the UN and at other international organizations. Japan requested clarification of how the policy applies to UNEP member states compared with external stakeholders.

There was also discussion on translation of documents, with the EU and Cuba urging that the access-to-information policy explicitly state that all documents be made available not only in English, but in all six UN languages. The US said that the Secretariat should not “let the perfect be the enemy of the good,” and should begin sharing more information more promptly.

Ibrahim Thiaw noted that confidential information on staff would not be released, nor would information affecting their security. He said the Secretariat aimed to have a draft policy ready for the first UNEA. The general policy, he added, is that “relevant information should be available—all of it—but with exceptions relating to information given by a third party that has an expectation of confidentiality.” He said that these exceptions would be spelled out in the final policy.

UN SYSTEM-WIDE STRATEGY ON THE ENVIRONMENT: On Tuesday in plenary, the Secretariat introduced UNEP/EA.1/2/Add.3 on a process to prepare a UN system-wide strategy on the environment.

While welcoming a strengthened and upgraded role for UNEP, the EU requested clarification on the relationship between the UNEP-led process and that of the UN Environment Management Group (EMG). With Argentina, Cuba and Japan, he requested the Secretariat to undertake an analysis of past experiences with system-wide strategies, and lessons learned.

Norway said she was “perturbed and confused,” because the previous UNEP GC had adopted a decision on the EMG, with a similar mandate. With Argentina, Bolivia and the US, she cautioned against duplication of efforts and underscored the need for urgency on this long-standing issue.

Switzerland supported calls for an “omnibus approach” on system-wide strategies.

In his closing remarks, Thiaw urged member states to provide input on the proposed process and assured them that any coordination efforts will involve close collaboration with the relevant UN entities.

CONSOLIDATION OF UNEP HEADQUARTERS FUNCTIONS IN NAIROBI: Delegates considered this agenda item in plenary on Tuesday. Michele Candotti, UNEP, shared the Executive Director’s report on consolidation of UNEP headquarters functions in Nairobi (UNEP/EA.1/2/Add.5). Switzerland said the report was a “surprise,” and requested a broader analysis of effectiveness and efficiency at UNEP duty stations, noting the proposed actions need justification. The US said the report lacks detail on long-term cost implications,

how relocations will strengthen UNEP, and what is meant by “headquarters functions.”

Kenya, with Japan and Brazil, said the decision to consolidate UNEP’s headquarters was taken at a political level. He said that some interventions gave a sense of renegotiating the Rio+20 outcome. He recommended that the Secretariat communicate how consolidation improves efficiency.

Candotti reflected on requests to provide information about costs and benefits of consolidation. He observed that intergovernmental processes determine the location of MEA secretariats and UNEP cannot unilaterally relocate those staff members.

J. Christophe Bouvier, UNEP, reiterated that the intention is to implement the decision taken by member states and that headquarters functions were defined at the CPR Subcommittee meeting in December 2013. He welcomed further input and noted that extra-budgetary funding for UNEP, such as trust funds, is attached to terms of reference that link staff positions to specific programme locations.

INTERNATIONAL WATER QUALITY GUIDELINES FOR ECOSYSTEMS: This item was discussed in plenary on Tuesday. Elizabeth Mrema, Acting Director, Division of Environmental Policy Implementation, UNEP, introduced document UNEP/EA.1/3 on the development of international water quality guidelines for ecosystems. She informed delegates that the draft conceptual framework was developed through a broad consultative process and an advisory group has been established to support the Secretariat in finalizing the draft guidelines for the second UNEA in 2016.

The EU reiterated the importance of guidelines for managing water pollution and quality and to support decision making, but questioned the need for a separate UNEA decision on this issue, saying it could be incorporated in the POW. Zimbabwe, on behalf of the African Group, called for focusing on the impact of declining water quality, while Pakistan said the guidelines should cover surface water as well as groundwater.

Argentina, Brazil, Guatemala and Bolivia stressed the voluntary nature of the guidelines, and called for broad parameters that can be adapted to different local contexts. Noting the need to respect state sovereignty, Bolivia opposed linking water and security. The US said that making data available through the UNEP Live platform is a crucial factor for success. Republic of Korea highlighted his country’s support for the process, including through participation on the advisory group.

IPBES: This item was taken up in plenary on Tuesday. Elizabeth Mrema summarized past GC decisions on IPBES (UNEP/EA.1/3/Add.1) and noted that UNEP is creating a trust fund for the platform.

Norway, with Japan, the US, Brazil, Panama, Republic of Korea, Mexico and China, expressed appreciation for efforts to operationalize IPBES.

IPBES Executive Secretary Anne Larigauderie thanked delegates for their support and noted that the IPBES Secretariat is screening more than 1,000 nominations for its multidisciplinary expert panel, considering 10 offers for technical support units, and moving its work programme forward.

Mrema said the focus was on operationalization, with a few tweaks to be made regarding the trust fund and how to report to UNEA.

EMG: On Wednesday in plenary, the Secretariat introduced document UNEP/EA.1/3/Add.2, highlighting the EMG’s work on, *inter alia*: advancing the sustainability of UN operations; coordinating peer reviews of environmental management within individual UN entities; and responding to emerging environmental issues.

Japan, with the US, EU, Brazil, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland and others, welcomed the work of the EMG in coordinating environmental matters, but reiterated concerns about duplication of UNEP’s POW on system-wide strategies. With Switzerland and Uruguay, he requested clarification on the scope and mandate of the EMG Issue Management Group on chemicals and on the link with the work of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC).

Brazil questioned whether UNEA should decide on detailed thematic questions regarding the EMG’s work, or leave this to the Secretariat. The EU called for a strong role for the EMG in conveying messages to the HLPF and for monitoring MEA implementation at the national level. Kenya called for a focus on concrete achievements in the report and highlighted UNEA’s role in strengthening and giving political support to the work of the EMG.

Children and Youth highlighted growing youth migration linked to environmental degradation and called for greater attention to education, capacity development and social protection for youth in green economy strategies. Highlighting new research on the impact of chemicals on children’s brain development, Women welcomed a UNEP scoping study on women and chemicals.

Responding to the issues raised, Candotti assured delegates that UNEP is committed to finding the most “intelligent and feasible” approaches to ensure environmental management issues are addressed within a complex institutional setting.

With regard to chemicals, Fatoumata Keita-Ouane, UNEP, noted that terms of reference for the EMG Issue Management Group are still under development, but will incorporate waste issues. Noting 2014 is an important year for this cluster, she stressed the need to bring together all available intelligence in order to inform the post-2015 process, adding that the EMG is cooperating closely with the IOMC and other relevant agencies in this regard.

On drylands, the Secretariat reported that the EMG continues to work closely with the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and the UN Development Group in monitoring implementation at the national level

MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE MONTEVIDEO PROGRAMME IV: On Wednesday in plenary, Bakary Kante, Director, Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, UNEP, introduced the report on a process for the mid-term review of the Fourth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme IV), and developments in advancing justice, governance and law for environmental sustainability (UNEP/EA.1/3/Add.3). He said the Montevideo Programme has been a crucial pillar of UNEP’s activities since 1982, and it has ensured that today environmental law is an integral part of the rule of law at the national and international level.

Brazil questioned the future of the Programme, asking how it will contribute to the development of sustainable consumption and production (SCP). Acknowledging the importance of the

mid-term review, the EU, supported by the US, Norway and Switzerland, expressed doubts on the need for a separate UNEA decision on undertaking the review. Canada, supported by Norway and Uruguay, asked for clarification on the process for the mid-term review.

Egypt, supported by Senegal, stressed the need for capacity building in developing countries to support environmental policies and legislation. With Bolivia, he called for clarification of terminology and mandates related to concepts such as environmental crime. Bolivia expressed concern about the approach of linking the environment with human rights and peace and security issues, saying this might lead to discussing the environment in restricted fora to which developing countries lack access.

The US requested UNEP to revise the report to focus solely on an “efficient and effective” process for the mid-term review, instead of including a summary of UNEP activities, which might prejudice the review. She also called for the Secretariat to complete the review without convening open-ended meetings. The Center for International Environmental Law, on behalf of some Major Groups, urged UNEA to make a strong statement regarding the centrality of the right to a healthy environment to implementing a rights-based approach to the environmental rule of law.

Ibrahim Thiaw assured participants that the revised report will be shorter, sharper and include all their recommendations.

CHEMICALS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT: Delegates considered this agenda item in plenary on Wednesday, and in an open-ended contact group that met on Thursday and Friday. On Wednesday, Tim Kasten, UNEP, introduced three draft reports on: implementation of GC decision 27/12 on chemicals and waste management (UNEP/EA.1/5); outcome of the country-led meetings to develop terms of reference (ToR) for the Special Programme to Support Institutional Strengthening at the National Level for Implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm Conventions and the future Minamata Convention and the SAICM (UNEP/EA.1/5/Add.1); and strengthening the sound management of chemicals and waste in the long term (UNEP/EA.1/5/Add.2). Two omnibus draft decisions from the US and Switzerland, combining the three drafts, were also introduced.

Delegates discussed the ToRs on the Special Programme resulting from the country-led meeting held in Bangkok in December 2013 (UNEP/EA.1/5/Add.1), with many countries suggesting that it would be fruitful to concentrate on removing the few remaining brackets in that specific text.

During contact group discussions, in addition to the US and Swiss drafts, a third omnibus draft from the EU was introduced. Subsequently, delegates were presented with a compilation text of all three drafts that also included additional language from parties to the Bamako Convention on the Ban on the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa. The G-77/China introduced additional language focusing on financing for chemicals and waste, and the coordinated use of regional centers. Delegates agreed that the text should not be considered a negotiating text but a compilation draft.

During the closing plenary on Friday, the Russian Federation reported on contact group discussions, noting that participants agreed that it was premature to begin work on a consensus version of the draft decision and that experts from interested

countries would continue working intersessionally in order to finalize the draft decision in June. He referenced comments from many delegations that, given the technical nature of the compilation text, it was not advisable to work through the draft text in the CPR during the intersessional period.

CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POW AND BUDGET 2014-2015 AND 2016-2017

CPR Vice-Chair Bart Ouvry chaired the discussion on Monday afternoon. J. Christophe Bouvier and Sheila Aggarwal-Khan, UNEP, introduced the budget and POW. Bouvier explained that some adjustments to the POW and budgets are needed in view of the Rio+20 decision to strengthen UNEP, whereby the UN General Assembly now allocates more of its regular budget to UNEP. A budget and POW contact group discussed the 2014-15 budget and POW on Tuesday, and the 2016-17 budget and POW on Thursday.

Delegates requested that core activities be financed through the regular budget resources, and the Secretariat assured them that the Environment Under Review sub-programme is a priority. Several developed country delegates cautioned that the budget must be realistic in the context of the shrinking availability of UN funds, and Japan called for a “zero nominal growth” budget. Some developing country delegates said that fundraising should be based on the level of ambition set out in the POW, and that UNEP’s pool of donors should be broadened.

The Secretariat reported a high level of contributions in the first two months of the current biennium, and expressed optimism regarding further contributions from non-traditional donors to the Environment Fund, including the newer members of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development and Latin American countries.

Brazil expressed concern that the amount of earmarked funds received is twice that of the Environment Fund, with the potential to distort priorities set by the GC. The Secretariat indicated that a move towards “soft earmarking” and a transparent system of consultation is needed, noting that the European Commission is managing the largest amount of Trust Fund contributions.

On staffing, the Secretariat reported that there has been a progressive decrease in the proportion of core staff covered under the Environment Fund to free up resources for direct programme implementation. The Secretariat noted the challenge of achieving gender parity at senior management levels as a persistent challenge, noting that on average less than 30% of candidates globally are women. He highlighted initiatives to remedy the situation, including partnerships aimed at enhancing gender mainstreaming.

Delegates welcomed the move toward results-based management and reporting on longer-term impacts. They discussed monitoring of impacts, and the need to determine the extent to which UNEP’s contributions have resulted in achieving broad environmental objectives.

The Secretariat requested specific guidance, noting the challenge of attributing impacts to its actions, as UNEP is engaged in many partnerships to leverage its influence.

On environmental governance, some delegates called for more specific reference to strengthening the EMG, and the Secretariat noted that the UN Joint Inspection Unit’s review of environmental governance is ongoing. During the closing

plenary on Friday, delegates agreed that the CPR will continue to deliberate on this intersessionally, before forwarding the text to the 127th CPR in June for approval.

FACILITATION OF AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE UNEA OF UNEP

This item was taken up in plenary on Thursday in a discussion facilitated by CPR Vice-Chair Julia Pataki. Masa Nagai, UNEP, introduced the report of the Acting Chair of the CPR on facilitation of consideration of possible amendments to the Rules of Procedure (RoP) of the UNEA of UNEP, dated 14 March 2014, and the annexed explanatory note.

Delegates discussed, among several issues: participation of NGOs; timing of UNEA sessions; composition of the Bureau; and participation of states that are not members of UNEA.

The report of the Acting Chair proposes that, with regard to the GC's rule 69 governing observers from international NGOs, discussion be deferred until the completion of the consideration of the draft stakeholder policy. Brazil, Argentina and the Russian Federation emphasized the need to further discuss mechanisms for participation and accreditation of observers. Brazil pointed to "inspiring and up-to-date" examples of stakeholder participation, such as those of the HLPF.

Many delegates stressed that amendments to the RoP should be limited, and called for intersessional work to examine the RoP before UNEA in June. China, supported by Switzerland and Cuba, proposed using the Governing Council RoP as a default where there is no convergence of views for amendments.

On timing of sessions, delegates noted that UNEA reports to the UN General Assembly through ECOSOC, and that adjustments may be needed to ensure an appropriate sequence of meeting organization.

Many delegates supported the draft decision submitted by the African Group on the composition of the UNEA Bureau, which provides for a 10-member Bureau with two members from each region. On the selection of Bureau members, Brazil, with the Russian Federation, said representation should be by country rather than in an individual capacity, with the exception of the Rapporteur. Several delegates stressed the importance of ensuring continuity between UNEA sessions and proposed that the election of Bureau officers should take effect at the end of each UNEA session.

On voting, China, the EU and Bolivia advocated for UNEA decisions to be taken by consensus. Views diverged on options for situations where no consensus is reached. China, supported by Bolivia, said a "reinforced majority" should be required. The EU proposed a three-fourths majority vote of the members present and voting.

Vice-Chair Pataki proposed that members be invited to contribute their views by email to enable the CPR to finalize a draft text in time for UNEA.

During the final plenary on Friday, Ibrahim Thiaw responded to a question on the cycle of UNEA sessions, explaining that current scheduling has several implications for policy processes and the POW. With regard to policy, he noted that the link with the HLPF is important, but that HLPF's schedule was only approved this year. From the POW and budget perspective, he said UNEP is bound by the strict review procedure of the UN Secretariat and UNEP's RoP requiring that ECOSOC receives the report of UNEA in the same year, which makes it difficult to

finalize it following a June Assembly. He added that if UNEA approves the POW in even years, the lessons cannot be used to improve future POWs. He noted that these scheduling issues will be taken up by the CPR during the intersessional period.

Delegates agreed that the CPR will continue to deliberate on these issues during the intersessional period, with a view to preparing draft text for the 127th CPR to submit to UNEA for approval.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE UNEA OF UNEP FOR ITS SESSIONS IN 2014 AND 2016

This item was discussed in plenary on Friday morning and during a consultation of the Chair of the CPR with regional groups on Friday afternoon.

On Friday morning, Chair Soemarno provided an overview of the work undertaken by the Secretariat in preparation for the first and second UNEA sessions and introduced the note by the Secretariat on the proposed provisional agenda. The US, supported by Argentina and Uganda, agreed with the proposed agenda for the first UNEA, but called for restructuring the agenda for 2016 based on experiences from the first UNEA. Responding to the US, Ibrahim Thiaw proposed that the CPR and the Secretariat work on a revised draft for submission at UNEA in June.

Chair Soemarno introduced the information note by the Secretariat on the four options for the title of the UNEA ministerial dialogue on the issue of trafficking/illegal trade in wildlife (and timber).

Colombia, for GRULAC, stressed that the ministerial dialogue should be informal, have no negotiated outcomes, and should not prejudice the SDGs discussion in New York. On the title of the dialogue, he proposed "illegal trade in wildlife," explaining that timber is part of wildlife. The Russian Federation suggested using "activities against wildlife."

Stressing that illegal trade in wildlife products is a global challenge and a threat to human heritage, Kenya called for solidarity with the African continent. He urged member states not to downgrade the discussions to an informal dialogue, but instead to "shed the brightest, most prominent light" on this issue through a "robust dialogue" involving the most senior officials. The Russian Federation, Malawi, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Botswana, Tanzania and Switzerland supported Kenya's statement.

The EU supported the Secretariat's proposal for "illegal trade of wildlife and timber" as the title for the ministerial dialogue, and said he is open to other wording, as long as it is clear that the topic will include consideration of timber-related issues. He welcomed the inclusion of SCP in the ministerial discussion on the post-2015 development agenda, including SDGs, during the UNEA high-level segment. He said the discussions on both themes should produce formal outcomes.

Mexico highlighted the opportunity for UNEA to send out a clear message on how environmental concerns should be included in the post-2015 development agenda. With Bolivia, he supported having a ministerial statement.

Switzerland recalled GC decision 27/2 agreeing that each session of UNEA will conclude with a high-level segment that will take strategic decisions and political guidance, saying this cannot be achieved through an informal dialogue. Kenya, supported by Republic of the Congo, said the UNEA's mandate

is clearly set out and there is no point in negotiating this. He emphasized that UNEA outcomes are not dependent on any other discussion, although there is an obligation to recognize and coordinate with ongoing efforts, highlighting his country's role as Co-Chair of the Open Working Group on SDGs.

During the closing plenary session in the afternoon, Chair Soemarno explained that during a consultation with regional groups it was agreed that the ministerial dialogue would be a formal part of the ministerial segment as originally planned, and would take place in the evening of Thursday, 26 June. He said the ministerial dialogue would consist of a plenary format titled "Illegal trade in wildlife" and the outcome would be a Chair's summary. He further explained that a ministerial plenary session would be held on 26 and 27 June on the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda, including SCP, and that any potential change in the timing of UNEA sessions would be discussed during intersessional meetings.

THEMATIC AND/OR PROGRAMMATIC DEBATES: ROLE OF UNEA IN THE UN SYSTEM

This item was considered in plenary on Thursday. Chair Soemarno invited Achim Steiner to introduce a background note on the role of the UNEA in the UN system (UNEP/CPR/126/4).

Steiner emphasized that Rio+20 bestowed a level of legitimacy upon UNEA far beyond the GC's oversight functions. He encouraged member states to consider how they can make UNEA a meaningful instrument for driving environmental reform, and to engage their ministers in the process before its June meeting.

Greece, for the EU, stressed that UNEP and UNEA should provide input to the post-2015 process, including on the formulation of SDGs, and should relate with the HLPF. She recommended that the EMG should have the same status as other bodies reporting to the UN system's Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

The US called on the meeting to ensure that UNEA is well prepared to address serious environmental challenges, and to hear divergent opinions.

Local and Regional Authorities and several other Major Groups, proposed that UNEA request the inclusion of UNEP in the drafting group for the Secretary-General's synthesis report on SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda, and recommend a prominent role for UNEP in implementing that agenda.

Several delegations called for a strong UNEA ministerial declaration. Brazil preferred to encourage ministers to engage in a frank exchange, saying that a formal declaration is unrealistic. Senegal and Norway stressed that the UNEA high-level segment should have an inclusive debate on the "burning" issues of the day. Germany called for a clear and coherent message from UNEA on the need for integrated approaches to achieve sustainable development and eradicate poverty.

In closing remarks, Steiner called for ideas on how to ensure a dynamic format for the UNEA ministerial segment. He cautioned against making the EMG the sole mechanism for system-wide coordination, noting that despite its achievements, the EMG is a voluntary, inter-agency mechanism and "if you limit yourself to the EMG, you limit your impact." He urged members not to reinforce the perception that the environmental dimension is "subordinate" to development in the SDGs process, stressing that

"UNEA should not have to apologize for a mandate that it has been given clearly at the highest level of decision making."

PREPARATION OF DRAFT DECISIONS

ECOSYSTEM ADAPTATION: This draft decision was introduced by Uganda in plenary on Monday. Noting the vulnerability of developing countries to climate change, he called for support for the development and implementation of adaptation programmes. During the final plenary on Friday, the EU expressed support for the decision but observed that more time was required to consult with experts in capitals.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIO+20 OUTCOME: On Wednesday, Kenya, on behalf of the African Group, tabled a draft decision recalling GC decision 27/2, which provides for a 10-member UNEA Bureau, composed of two representatives from each of the five regions. He said the draft text calls for the GC decision to be adopted prior to electing the Bureau.

PROMOTING AIR QUALITY THROUGH UNEP: On Wednesday in plenary, the US introduced a draft decision on promoting air quality through UNEP. He noted that new science points to poor outdoor air quality as the world's greatest environmental hazard and the cause of death for 3.7 million people in 2012. He stressed UNEP's "critical and unique" role, saying it needs to be "considerably expanded" to allow UNEP to contribute to global solutions.

Many delegates welcomed the draft decision and its further consideration. Mexico, supported by Uruguay, stressed the importance of regional cooperation in reducing atmospheric pollution. The EU asked for clarification on proposed actions, and their implications for UNEP's POW and budget.

On the proposed regional assessments on air quality management capabilities, opportunities for cooperation, and air pollution mitigation opportunities, to be undertaken by 2016, Canada raised questions on their scope and process, asking whether this refers to a "global" regional assessment and if data would be available through UNEP Live.

Noting that solutions to air quality problems are nationally driven, China expressed concern about the invitation to governments to report on their national efforts to improve air quality, saying this is the first time such a request has been made since the establishment of UNEP, and cautioning against creating a precedent.

Uzbekistan outlined transboundary pollution issues and sought clarification on UNEP's role and mandate to set standards, as well as the budgetary implications of modernizing industrial capacities at the national level.

Responding to comments, the US stressed the need to build national capacity with UNEP support, and encouraged inputs from interested delegations towards a revised decision to be considered by UNEA.

On Friday, during the closing plenary, Brazil called for deletion of the reference to the Climate and Clean Air Coalition in the draft decision, noting his country is not part of it. Chair Soemarno requested Brazil to provide comments in writing.

WAY FORWARD: During plenary on Friday, Chair Soemarno indicated that the Bureau had discussed undertaking follow up actions during the intersessional period. He said the following draft decisions had been identified as requiring further work:

- the omnibus decision on SPI;

- the omnibus decision on chemicals and waste;
- proposed revisions to the budget and POW for 2014-15, and for 2016-17;
- the omnibus decision on system-wide strategies and EMG;
- promoting air quality guidelines through UNEP;
- ecosystem-based adaptation; and
- implementation of the Rio+20 outcome.

Other issues included the draft stakeholder engagement policy, amendments to the RoP, and consideration of actions outlined in the Executive Director's report. He said the Bureau would develop a calendar of CPR Subcommittee meetings before the 127th CPR meeting and documents would be circulated to all CPR members and non-resident mission countries would be communicated through their regional coordinators. He then opened the floor for comments.

Mongolia and Switzerland called for ensuring the full participation of all member states, noting that having the CPR finalize draft decisions would not adhere to this principle.

On chemicals and waste, India, with the Russian Federation, noted that resident missions do not have the technical expertise to carry out CPR intersessional work, emphasizing that further work should be done by UNEA.

The US, supported by Switzerland, Canada and the EU, said the CPR should focus on areas where it can add value, such as the POW and budget, RoP and stakeholder engagement. She said the CPR would struggle to make progress on issues such as chemicals and waste, and air pollution, due to limited technical capacity.

Burkina Faso called for finding ways to involve non-resident countries and Japan urged the Secretariat to let all countries know how they can contribute to the intersessional process. He called for facilitating access to documents and communication through regional coordinators. The Holy See called for urgently taking decisions in June for the good of humanity and in the spirit of solidarity.

Brazil called for other non-resident permanent representatives to join the CPR. He said it was not the CPR's responsibility to negotiate the text of draft decisions but rather to propose a compilation of proposals to facilitate the decision-making process by UNEA. He said the main tasks during the intersessional period should be the RoP and stakeholder engagement.

Recalling the mandate of the CPR on preparation of decisions for the governing body, Kenya said there was no justification for the fears expressed concerning work during the intersessional period. He said the CPR could work on issues and pass on outstanding matters to UNEA for consideration. Thailand, for the G-77/China, called for flexibility and cooperative spirit among member states.

Delegates agreed that the CPR will continue to deliberate on these issues during the intersessional period, with a view to preparing draft text to the 127th CPR for approval and transmission to UNEA.

CLOSING PLENARY

Chair Soemarno opened the closing plenary on Friday. Under other matters, Egypt reiterated the intergovernmental nature of UNEP, acknowledging that although civil society plays an important role at the national level, there is need for clear criteria for accrediting stakeholders.

Rapporteur Konrad Paulsen Rivas (Chile) presented the draft report of the meeting (UNEP/CPR/126/5). Delegates agreed to delay the adoption of the report until the 127th meeting of the CPR, after the report's finalization.

Reflecting on the meeting, Achim Steiner said that the closing of the first-ever OECPR "brings us a step closer to realizing a more inclusive UNEA." He paid tribute to Bakary Kante, the outgoing Director of the Division of Environmental Laws and Conventions, UNEP, whom he described as "an outstanding professional, an outstanding African and a true voice for the environment."

Greece, on behalf of the EU, noted that the objective of the first OECPR was not fulfilled, and called for the CPR to reflect on the "organizational shortcomings as well as lessons learned." With regard to preparations for UNEA in June, she stressed the need for timely provision of information and meeting documents, and ensuring that background documents for ministers are short and accessible.

NGOs, on behalf of Major Groups, noted that non-governmental stakeholders have actively participated in MEA negotiations since 1972, and have "great expectations" for the role a strengthened UNEA will play in contributing to sustainable development.

The League of Arab States stressed the need to ensure that all members are fully involved in shaping UNEA's future agenda.

In concluding remarks, Chair Soemarno described the meeting as a "learning process" and thanked members for their constructive engagement. He closed the meeting at 6:42 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING

The delegates streaming into the UN Office at Nairobi on 24 March brought with them a palpable sense of anticipation. The first ever UNEP Open-ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR) represented yet another step towards realizing the mandate of Rio+20 for a strengthened and upgraded UNEP. However, along with excitement, delegates were well aware of the challenges they face in operationalizing UNEP's new governance structure.

The Rio+20 outcome, "The Future We Want," in 2012 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. However, while universal membership—as embodied in the new United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) of UNEP, formalizes the process and reflects the intent of delegates to enhance UNEP's status, it is widely recognized that higher status cannot be acquired solely through a name change. This brief analysis examines the challenges that UNEP still faces in implementing the Rio+20 outcome, as illustrated by the proceedings of the OECPR.

STABLE, ADEQUATE AND INCREASED FINANCIAL RESOURCES

While UNEP now stands on a more stable financial footing, the OECPR recognized that UNEP sets its budget and work programme before the UN General Assembly allocates it any funds. While the "regular budget" from the UN has more than doubled, to US\$34.7 million, this amount is dwarfed by the

size of the other funds that support many UNEP activities. “The reality is that aid funds are shrinking, and UNEP does not have a larger sized programme,” said an observer. “However, the increase in regular budget has an important, symbolic value in providing stable funding to be directed towards UNEP’s core functions.”

Indeed, developed countries were at pains to caution that the promise of increased funding should not be an excuse for governments to support a “meaningless enlargement of the organization,” and that UNEP had to use limited financial resources effectively. Throughout the week, many efficiency-related buzzwords came up, including: consolidation, value-for-money, productivity, and streamlining. Some individuals, however, stressed the need to adopt a visionary approach and undertake increased fundraising efforts. “We call it the audacity of hope,” said one insider, in a light-hearted reference to the budget for the 2016-17 presented for discussion, which at that point was proposing a substantial increase from the previous biennium.

When delegates discussed perhaps the most tangible symbol of this new efficiency—the Executive Director’s report on consolidation of UNEP headquarters functions in Nairobi—many delegates expressed concern, noting the proposed actions need justification, as well as a better analysis on long-term cost implications, how relocations will strengthen UNEP, what is meant by “headquarters functions,” and how consolidation will improve efficiency.

More than one delegate suggested that UNEP would do well to scale back its 2016-2017 programme of work, thus highlighting the need to be strong and lean. They acknowledged that the final version—which the Secretariat noted would be a combination of “both art and science”—must accomplish the tricky task of “strengthening” UNEP’s work, while avoiding over-ambition.

ENHANCEMENT OF UNEP’S COORDINATION ROLE IN THE UN SYSTEM

One task that looms large ahead of June’s UNEA meeting is deciding how to interface with the post-2015 development agenda process and the Open Working Group (OWG) on SDGs. Both the post-2015 process and the enhanced remit for UNEP were born alongside one another during Rio+20, but as was noted, it is up to member states to determine what the vision is and how that linkage will be made in practice. While delegates were reluctant to prejudice the outcome of the OWG on SDGs, UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner received resounding applause for his call to delegates to make UNEA not only UNEP’s governing body, but also the global community’s means of spearheading leadership on the environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

On the sidelines as well as in plenary, delegates noted the potential of the UNEA discussions in Nairobi to deliver a strong message as a valuable—and symbolic—complement to the New York-based discussions on the SDGs. Some also noted that the recent two-year extension of Executive Director Achim Steiner’s term places him in a strong position to shepherd UNEP through to the launch of the new post-2015 development agenda. However, it is the UNEA membership itself that will decide just how to enhance UNEP’s coordination role in the UN System.

A STRONG SCIENCE-POLICY INTERFACE

Delegates, particularly in the open-ended contact group chaired by Norway’s Idunn Eidheim, spent a lot of time discussing proposed actions to help UNEP strengthen the science-policy interface. UNEP’s work on the state of the environment, the preparation of GEO6, and the UNEP Live platform all contribute to fulfilling UNEP’s mandate in this regard.

A number of delegations supported new language requiring UNEP to ensure coordination of GEO reports with UNEP Live and calling for the scope and objectives of GEO6 to be defined by a transparent and scientifically credible, intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder consultation. Other delegates wanted UNEP to contribute to the dissemination and outreach of the findings of relevant intergovernmental bodies, in order to reach the widest possible audience.

Delegates also emphasized operationalizing UNEP Live as an inclusive knowledge platform and strengthening national capacities for data sampling to feed the system; talked about empowering regional forums and building up scientific assessment capacity; and suggested supporting national efforts to improve air quality through UNEP. As some said, this sharp focus on the science-policy interface and national level capacity building was not so much a change, but represented a renewed focus on the practical and achievable aspects of UNEP’s work at the nexus of science and policy.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS.

Part of strengthening and upgrading UNEP means much-expanded participation in decision-making and governance, with the promise of drawing on a broader base of expertise, boosting legitimacy and ownership of programmes, and gaining support for implementation. But at the end of the week it was unclear what progress was made. Along these lines, enhanced stakeholder participation is considered a key area for strengthening UNEP. The Rio+20 outcome made a clear call for more stakeholder participation in UNEP, but based on their interventions, many delegations appeared to differ on what the nature of that participation would be.

On the one hand, delegates welcomed the report that global multi-stakeholder partnerships had been established on finance, food and agriculture, buildings, tourism and insurance, representing US\$8 trillion in assets. On the other hand, when it came to considering the definition of stakeholder categories, the process for accrediting stakeholders, the roles of the CPR and UNEA in accreditation, accredited stakeholders’ access to information, and accredited stakeholders’ access to Bureau meetings, consensus appeared elusive. The US and the EU, among others, expressed strong support for the role of stakeholders in strengthening UNEP. Others, however, stressed the need to maintain UNEP’s intergovernmental character. In a classic chicken-and-egg dilemma, some delegates, including China, wanted to discuss the UNEA rules of procedure before deliberating on the stakeholder engagement policy, while others, including the EU and Switzerland, felt it should be the other way around. On appropriate models for stakeholder engagement, Major Groups recommended developing a policy in line with UN General Assembly resolution 67/290, which established the HLPF. When Egypt recommended the arrangements set forth in

ECOSOC resolution 1996/31, Brazil argued that the ECOSOC approach is outdated. Observers noted that positions on this issue are not yet entrenched and much depends on the work to be carried out during the intersessional period.

LOOKING AHEAD TO JUNE

The atmosphere at the OECPR was collegial and upbeat, but there was also a packed agenda, limited time, and intractable resistance to organizing parallel contact groups to finalize draft decisions. By Wednesday afternoon the agenda had ran off course and on Thursday it was entirely scrapped. Grudgingly, open-ended contact groups were formed, although they were forbidden to run in parallel. Even so, by Friday it was clear to many that delegates had simply run out of time. Thus, the OECPR was unable to adopt a single draft decision and delegates agreed that work would need to continue during the intersessional period. At the end of the chaotic final plenary, one observer said that, "It is clear intersessional work will take place, but unclear how." Despite discussion about how the full CPR membership would be engaged, the question remains how non-Nairobi based delegates would be included. Furthermore, many delegates griped that documents weren't available early enough for review and were poorly organized, signaling, as one developed country delegate said, their "frustration, disappointment and concern" over organizational aspects of the meeting.

Whether or not delegates can reach agreement on financial, scientific, coordination, participatory, and substantive matters—including air pollution, the SDGs, illegal trade in wildlife, among others—when they reconvene three months from now may provide some indication of the degree to which UNEA can function as the global authority on the environment and indeed whether or not UNEP truly has any new muscles to flex in the wider sustainable development policy arena. This may be the true litmus test of how strengthened and upgraded UNEP has become since Rio+20.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

OWG-10: The OWG will continue the consideration of sustainable development goals, targets and indicators. **dates:** 31 March - 4 April 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development phone: +1-212-963-8102 **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1549>

Green Growth Knowledge Platform Regional Practitioners' Workshop: The Green Growth Knowledge Platform's Workshop on Green Growth in Africa, titled "Pathways to Green Growth in Africa," aims to: explore the rationale for green(er) growth in an African context; facilitate policy dialogue and knowledge sharing; and discuss practical implementation issues. The workshop will focus on setting an African green growth vision through thematic sessions and exploring linkages among natural resources management, renewable energy and greening infrastructure. **dates:** 2-3 April 2014 **location:** Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo **contact:** Green Growth Knowledge Platform **www:** <http://www.greengrowthknowledge.org>

UNGA Thematic Debate: Role of partnerships and their contributions to the post-2015 development agenda:

This event is part of a series convened by the President of the UN General Assembly under the theme, "The post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage!" The objective is to generate concrete contributions to the formulation of the SDGs. **dates:** 9-10 April 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office of President of the General Assembly **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/info/meetings/68schedule.shtml>

First Annual Sustainable Development Transition Forum: The UN Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) will host the first annual Sustainable Development Transition Forum (SDTF), which aims to serve as a global platform for sharing best practices in formulating and implementing sustainable development programmes, reviewing evidence of impact, and charting out new and improved pathways for sustainable development implementation. The SDTF will include high-level policy dialogues, training sessions, seminars, side events, and expert panel discussions covering key cross-cutting sustainable development and green economy issues and good practices in strategy-making and policy implementation. **dates:** 9-11 April 2014 **location:** Incheon, Republic of Korea **contact:** UNOSD Secretariat **phone:** +82-32-822-9088 **fax:** +82-32-822-9089 **email:** unosd@un.org **www:** <http://www.unosd.org>

First High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation: The Global Partnership works to complement existing efforts that have an impact on effective development cooperation. These include the UN Development Cooperation Forum, the Development Working Group of the G20, and the UN-led process for a post-2015 development agenda. The Global Partnership builds on a range of international efforts, including those begun in the Monterrey Consensus (2002), the Rome Declaration on Harmonisation (2003), the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008). **dates:** 15-16 April 2014 **location:** Mexico City, Mexico **contact:** Derek Kilner, UNDP **phone:** +1-212-906-5742 **email:** derek.kilner@undp.org **www:** <http://effectivecooperation.org/>

UNGA Thematic Debate: Ensuring Peaceful and Stable Societies: This event is part of a series convened by the President of the UN General Assembly under the theme, "The post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage!" The objective is to generate concrete contributions to the formulation of the SDGs. **dates:** 24-25 April 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office of President of the General Assembly **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/info/meetings/68schedule.shtml>

Expert Meeting on Global Justice, Poverty Eradication and the Post-2015 Development Agenda: The meeting is organized jointly by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Social Sciences Council (ISSC). It aims at producing high-level input to two processes: the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda and the preparation of the Third World Social Science Forum, to be held in Durban, South Africa, in September 2015, along with the next edition of the World Social Science Report, to be published in 2016. **dates:** 28-29 April 2014 **location:** UNESCO headquarters, Paris, France **contact:** John Crowley, UNESCO **phone:** +33-1-45-68-10-00 **email:** j.crowley@unesco.org **www:** <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/events/all-events/>

OWG-11: The OWG will continue the consideration of sustainable development goals, targets and indicators. **dates:** 5-9 May 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **phone:** +1-212-963-8102 **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1549>

Fourth Session of Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing: The fourth session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing is scheduled in May 2014. **dates:** 12-16 May 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1687>

Asia-Pacific Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the HLPF: Organized by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Asia-Pacific regional meeting for the High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) will take place from 7-9 May 2014, in Bangkok, Thailand. It is held in preparation for the first substantive meeting of the HLPF in June-July 2014. **dates:** 19-21 May 2014 **location:** to be announced **www:** <http://www.unescap.org/events/apfsd>

UNGA High-level Event: Contributions of South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation and information and communication technologies for development to the post-2015 development agenda: This event is part of a series convened by the President of the UN General Assembly under the theme, "The post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage!" The objective is to generate concrete contributions to the formulation of the SDGs. **dates:** 21-22 May 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office of President of the General Assembly **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/info/meetings/68schedule.shtml>

Resilient Cities 2014: The 5th Global Forum on Urban Resilience and Adaptation: Also known as "Resilient Cities 2014," this Forum is organized by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and the World Mayors Council on Climate Change, and co-sponsored by UN-HABITAT, the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. The event will focus on: risk data and analysis; adaptation planning and policy; comprehensive adaptation approaches; collaborative and community-based adaptation; resilient infrastructure and city-region support systems; and governance and capacity building. **dates:** 29-31 May 2014 **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** ICLEI World Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-976-299-28 **fax:** +49-228-976-299-0 **email:** resilient.cities@iclei.org **www:** <http://resilient-cities.iclei.org/bonn2014/resilient-cities-2014-home/>

UNGA High-level Event: Human rights and the rule of law in the post-2015 development agenda: This event is part of a series convened by the President of the UN General Assembly under the theme, "The post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage!" The objective is to generate concrete contributions to the formulation of the SDGs. **dates:** 9-10 June 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office of President of the General Assembly **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/info/meetings/68schedule.shtml>

OWG-12: The OWG will continue the consideration of sustainable development goals, targets and indicators. **dates:** 16-20 June 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **phone:** +1-212-963-8102 **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1549>

High-level Political Forum: The second meeting of the High-level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF) will take place in conjunction with 2014 substantive session of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) from 30 June - 3 July, with a three-day ministerial segment from 7-9 July. The theme for the forum for 2014 will be "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals and charting the way for an ambitious post-2015 development agenda, including the sustainable development goals." **dates:** 30 June - 9 July 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **phone:** +1-212-963-8102 **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1556>

UN Environmental Assembly of UNEP: The first meeting of the UN Environmental Assembly (UNEA) of UNEP is expected to include ministerial plenaries on the SDGs and post-2015 development agenda and illegal trade in wildlife. It will be preceded by the 127th meeting of the CPR on 17 June. **dates:** 23-27 June 2014 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **contact:** Jiří Hlaváček, Secretary of Governing Bodies, UNEP **phone:** +254-20-7623431 **email:** unep.sgb@unep.org **www:** <http://www.unep.org/unea/>

GLOSSARY

CPR	Committee of Permanent Representatives
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EMG	Environment Management Group
GC	Governing Council
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
HLPF	High-level Political Forum
IOMC	Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals
IPBES	Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
MEAs	Multilateral environmental agreements
OECP	Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives
POW	Programme of Work
RoP	Rules of Procedure
SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
SCP	Sustainable consumption and production
SDGs	Sustainable development goals
SIDS	Small island developing states
SPI	Science-policy interface
UNEA	United Nations Environment Assembly
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly