



SUMMARY OF THE SECOND UNEP OPEN-ENDED COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES (OECPR-2): 15-19 FEBRUARY 2016

A BRIEF HISTORY OF UNEP

The second meeting of the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-2) to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) met from 15-19 February 2016 at UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. Approximately 350 delegates, including ministers and vice-ministers for environment, attended the meeting in preparation for the second meeting of the UN Environment Assembly of the UNEP (UNEA-2), scheduled for 23-27 May 2016.

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 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

During the week-long meeting, delegates discussed an initial set of 24 draft resolutions and decisions, working in five clusters pertaining to: environmental governance and education; chemicals, waste and sustainable consumption and production (SCP); oceans and water-related issues; natural resources, conflict and the environment; and biodiversity, administrative and organizational matters. Many new text proposals were presented, and delegates discussed merging some of the resolutions to reduce the volume of text in the final package. At the closing plenary on Friday, the five cluster Chairs reported back on progress, noting that resolutions would be further discussed during the intersessional period.

In plenary sessions, UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner presented a concept note on "Delivering on the Environmental Dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," and the draft Global Thematic Report on "Healthy Environment, Healthy People." He briefed delegates on the preparations for UNEA-2. Delegates provided their views on a possible outcome document from the UNEA-2 High-Level Segment, and considered policy matters, the UNEP programme performance review, the UNEP Medium-Term Strategy 2018-19, Programme of Work (PoW) and budget, and changes to the UNEA cycle. On the sidelines, informal discussions took place on stakeholder engagement policy.

At the closing plenary, regional groups and Member States expressed appreciation for the constructive discussions, and agreed to continue negotiating the draft resolutions during the intersessional period, with the intention of forwarding the package to UNEA-2 for further discussion and adoption.

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first “universal” session. The Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF) was constituted by the GC as envisaged by General Assembly resolution 53/242 (1998). The purpose of the GMEF was to institute, at a high political level, a process for reviewing important and emerging policy issues in the field of the environment.

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

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

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

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY: On 21 December 2012, the 67th session of the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 67/213 on strengthening and upgrading UNEP and establishing universal membership of its GC, which allows for full participation of all 193 UN Member States. The resolution also calls for UNEP to receive secure, stable and increased financial resources from the UN regular budget and urges other UNEP donors to increase their voluntary funding.

GC27/GMEF: Convening from 19-22 February 2013, this meeting was the first Universal Session of the GC. The GC adopted a decision on institutional arrangements, inviting the UN General Assembly to rename UNEP’s governing body the “UN Environment Assembly of the UNEP.” Other decisions were adopted on, *inter alia*: state of the environment; justice,

governance and law for environmental sustainability; Climate Technology Centre and Network; UNEP’s follow-up and implementation of UN Summit outcomes; and budget and PoW for the biennium 2014-2015.

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

UNEA-1: This meeting took place at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, from 23-27 June 2014, on the theme, “Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, including sustainable consumption and production.” The Assembly included a High-Level Segment on “A Life of Dignity for All,” which addressed: the sustainable development goals (SDGs), including: SCP; and illegal trade in wildlife, focusing on the escalation in poaching and the surge in related environmental crime. UNEA-1 also convened two symposia addressing key aspects of environmental sustainability: the environmental rule of law and financing a green economy.

Delegates adopted one decision and 17 resolutions on, *inter alia*: strengthening UNEP’s role in promoting air quality; the science-policy interface; ecosystem-based adaptation; implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development; illegal trade in wildlife; chemicals and waste; and marine debris and microplastics. A UNEA-1 Ministerial Outcome Document was adopted although several Member States noted their reservations with this document.

INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

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

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA: The UN General Assembly created the Open Working Group (OWG) to elaborate a set of sustainable development goals, as called for by Rio+20. The OWG met 13 times in New York and developed the full set SDGs and targets, completing its work in July 2014. Following completion of the work of the OWG, the UN General Assembly held a series of eight sessions to prepare the outcome document for the UN Summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda, which took place between January and August 2015 in New

York. The final session adopted a package, titled “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” which contained a preamble, declaration, 17 SDGs and 169 targets, a section on means of implementation and the Global Partnership, and a framework for follow-up and review of implementation.

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

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

GLOBAL MAJOR GROUPS & STAKEHOLDERS

PREPARATORY MEETING: Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) met on Sunday, 14 February 2016, in Nairobi, Kenya, engaging in joint and working group talks on the OECPR agenda, and agreeing on messages to Member States on the draft resolutions to be negotiated and forwarded to UNEA-2. In a dialogue session with representatives of Member States and Jorge Laguna Celis, UNEP Secretariat of Governing Bodies, the MGS discussed issues including improving opportunities for stakeholder engagement through creative and less costly means of interaction, and implementing a genuinely inclusive green economy agenda. Member States welcomed the role of stakeholders in the preparations toward UNEA-2.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

Welcoming delegates on Monday morning, CPR Chair Julia Pataki noted a successful OECPR-2 will define clear messages that would come from UNEA-2. Delegates approved the nomination of Pakistan as the new CPR Vice-Chair for the Asia-Pacific region, and adopted the provisional OECPR-2 agenda (UNEP/OECPR.2/1/Rev.1).

In a video message, UN General Assembly President Mogens Lykketoft described UNEA-2 as a key intergovernmental checkpoint on the road to 2030, and highlighted its role in integrating the environmental dimension across all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner noted Member States’ interest, expectation and confidence with regard to UNEA’s role in the global sustainable development architecture. He urged delegates not to view UNEP as an institution to be further “cut and shrunk,” stressing it has demonstrated efficiency and effectiveness.

The Group of 77 and China (G-77/China), the European Union (EU), and the African Group all highlighted the important agreements finalized in 2015 and noted the emphasis in 2016 on commencing implementation. They stressed UNEP’s critical role in advancing implementation of the environmental aspects of these agreements, with the EU stressing the need to address fragmented handling of the environment. The G-77/China highlighted the importance of OECPR-2 in addressing the environmental impacts of conflict, while the African Group noted, among other issues, African countries’ progress in responding to the UNEA-1 resolution on illegal trade in wildlife.

The Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC) said the SDGs must form the “guiding light” of UNEP’s work and expressed a preference for a smaller set of resolutions to allow for their overall consideration. The Arab League underlined the need to step up international and regional efforts to combat terrorism.

In their statements, Member States drew attention to the need for system-wide strategies and harmonization of UNEP’s programme with existing multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Paris Agreement on climate change. Several countries prioritized discussion of: air quality; oceans and seas, including marine litter and microplastics; reduction of food waste; combatting illegal trade in wild fauna and flora; and issues related to conflict and the environment.

On stakeholder engagement, the EU, US and G-77/China urged the OECPR to make progress on achieving a consensus agreement before UNEA-2. China emphasized the “no objection” practice. Several countries affirmed the importance of arrangements for stakeholder participation. The Russian Federation cautioned against politicization of UNEP.

Major Groups and Stakeholders called for UNEA to deliver “a political input” into the implementation of the environmental aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and underscored the importance of a “non-regression” approach to the stakeholder engagement policy.

Adoption of previous CPR meeting minutes: Pataki proposed and delegates agreed to defer this item to the next meeting of the CPR.

Organization of work: Delegates adopted the organization of work (UNEP/CPR/133/8), including the constitution of the Working Groups and endorsement of cluster Chairs: Marcela Nicodemus (later replaced by Pedro Escosteguy Cardoso), Brazil, for Cluster 1; John Moreti, Botswana, for Cluster 2; Corinna Enders, Germany, for Cluster 3; John Moreti, Botswana, also for Cluster 4; and Raza Bashir Tarar, Pakistan, for Cluster 5.

DELIVERING ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE GLOBAL THEMATIC REPORT ON HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT, HEALTHY PEOPLE

On Wednesday, Executive Director Steiner presented a concept note on “Delivering on the Environmental Dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” He highlighted UNEP’s 2018-2021 Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) as a stepping stone for facilitating SDG delivery, and stressed UNEA’s key role in facilitating synergies across the UN system, saying that the UN should develop a less “New York-centered” institutional focus. Regarding the Global Thematic Report on “Healthy Environment, Healthy People,” Steiner highlighted areas of health-environment synergy that could be scaled up in UNEP’s Programme of Work (PoW), including marine debris, chemicals and sustainable consumption and production.

Ministerial Panel Presentations: Judi Wakhungu, Kenya, highlighted her government’s reorganization following adoption of the Libreville Declaration on Health and Environment in Africa to bring about closer cooperation on these two issues. Samuel Manetoali, Solomon Islands, noted the pronounced interplay between environment and health on small islands and described his country’s efforts to review and reform legislation to ensure sustainability is central to its development aspirations. Kare Chawicha Debessa, Ethiopia, underscored health challenges arising from: a changing climate; lack of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation; indoor and outdoor air pollution; and handling of obsolete chemicals. Herman Sips, the Netherlands, emphasized that integration underpins the 2030 Agenda, and highlighted his country’s engagement with local authorities on de-carbonization, as well as partnerships on waste management with countries and partners in the Caribbean region. In closing remarks, ministers also highlighted: localizing the SDGs, including through development planning; the need to explore security elements in the health-environment nexus; and the “UN reality” that requires aligning to global reporting requirements while working across the health and environment sectors at the national level.

Plenary Discussions: On institutional arrangements of UNEP and UNEA, New Zealand commended the concept note on UNEP’s role in the 2030 Agenda as an important tool for policymakers. The EU, Norway and others stressed the need for UNEA to contribute to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), with the EU calling for the report to clearly articulate the role of UNEA. Belgium noted UNEP’s role in setting norms and standards for global environment issues, as well as its convening role in galvanizing partnerships for implementation of the 2030 Agenda. On health-environment linkages, many delegates welcomed the draft of the Global Thematic Report. Norway suggested the report also focus on security elements. Sudan proposed the report outline UNEP’s role in addressing the environmental impact of intra-national conflicts. Brazil proposed that health-environment linkages be considered either in a paragraph in a relevant resolution, or as part of the UNEA-2 outcome document.

CONSIDERATION OF POLICY MATTERS

On Monday, Executive Director Steiner presented 12 reports on work that UNEP has undertaken in response to various decisions and resolutions of the previous sessions of the Governing Council and the UNEA, addressing: illegal trade in wildlife; science-policy interface; chemicals and waste; marine plastic debris and microplastics; strengthening the role of UNEP in promoting air quality; ecosystem-based adaptation; Global Environment Monitoring System/Water Programme; different approaches, visions, models and tools to achieve environmental sustainability in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication (UNEP/EA.2/6/Add.1-8); coordination across the UN system in the field of the environment, including the Environment Management Group; midterm review of the Montevideo IV Programme on Environmental Law; the relationship between UNEP and the MEAs; and enhancing synergies among the biodiversity-related MEAs (UNEP/EA.2/7/Add.1-4).

Norway called for enhanced synergies to combat environmental crimes and noted high expectations for the forthcoming sixth Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6) and expert report on marine plastic debris and microplastics. Japan welcomed UNEP’s support for air quality issues in the Asia-Pacific region and stressed the need for ensuring budget and programmatic coherence across the UN system. The EU highlighted, *inter alia*, the need to: broaden the selection of GEO-6 authors and ensure the report’s completion by 2018; develop a long-term plan to ensure the success of UNEP-Live as a tool for policy makers; and ensure that UNEA-2 adopts a substantive decision on the relationship between UNEP and MEAs. Nepal requested increased capacity building and financing for developing countries. Business and Industry called for “all-economy approaches” and focusing partnerships on areas that would benefit most from UNEA’s convening power. Local Authorities encouraged closer linkages between UNEA and the forthcoming Habitat III conference.

PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The Secretariat introduced this agenda item on Monday, summarizing UNEP’s performance across each of its seven sub-programmes in 2014-2015, and noting that UNEP has met 70% of all expected outcomes. On the draft Evaluation Synthesis Report 2014-15, he recommended further attention to, *inter alia*, preparation and readiness for implementation, and project monitoring.

The US requested information on how UNEP can overcome its low score on the indicator for “likelihood of impact.” The EU called for: addressing the differences between the various sub-programmes in performance results; further addressing the dwindling contributions to the Environment Fund; adopting a longer-term vision in the 2018-2021 Medium-Term Strategy (MTS); reducing the time it takes to fill vacancies; and ensuring gender balance in senior posts. Japan underscored the importance of taking measures to standardize the state of implementation within the sub-programmes. Norway stressed that predictable and stable funding is crucial to strengthening UNEP.

MTS 2018-2021, POW AND BUDGET 2018-2019, AND OTHER MATTERS

This issue was discussed in plenary on Monday, with further discussions on the text of the decision on the MTS for 2018-2021 and the biennial PoW and budget for 2018-2019 also being considered under Cluster 5 discussions.

CPR Chair Pataki introduced this item, noting that four draft reports had been distributed to Member States covering: the proposed biennial PoW and budget for 2018-19; development of the MTS for 2018-21; and management of trust funds and earmarked contributions.

UNEP Deputy Executive Director Ibrahim Thiaw said the MTS and PoW aim to deliver UNEP's strengthened role in supporting the SDG implementation agenda. He noted UNGA decisions had strengthened the regular budget, but that challenges remain, including the requirement to prepare budgets three years in advance. The Secretariat also gave detailed presentations on the MTS, PoW and budget, noting these aimed for total funds for 2018-19 of US\$793.2 million, highlighting that achieving this would require considerable resource mobilization efforts in 2016.

In the ensuing discussion, the US characterized the budget for the Environment Fund as "aspirational." The African Group cautioned against treating air quality as a stand-alone issue, while Singapore welcomed the prioritization of air quality. Norway expressed support for the Environment Fund and, with New Zealand and others, welcomed the increased orientation of the MTS to the 2030 Agenda. Japan welcomed the results-based budgeting approach and encouraged continued efforts to bridge the financing gap. Singapore supported the MTS focus on resource efficiency and SCP, and welcomed the prioritization of air quality. Noting the MTS is "close to completion," the EU called on providers of earmarked funds to contribute to the Environment Fund, and favored zero nominal growth for the regular budget. Mexico, and others, requested UNEP to provide budget estimates for each of the resolutions under consideration at OECPR-2. The Scientific and Technical Community called for enhanced support for UNEP's core functions, notably linking formal science with local knowledge.

Responding to concerns, Thiaw said UNEP would be able to provide the CPR with cost estimates after OECPR-2. Discussions on the draft resolution on this issue are summarized under Cluster 5.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT POLICY

This issue was not taken up on the formal agenda of OECPR-2. During the week, UNEA President Oyun Sanjaasuren (Mongolia) held informal consultations on this issue with Member States, reporting back to the closing plenary on Friday. In her report, Sanjaasuren noted that the CPR had recommended that the UNEA President engage in informal open-ended consultations, and said that these consultations focused on, *inter alia*, the definition of a stakeholder, accreditation of stakeholders, and stakeholder participation in meetings of the UNEA Bureau. She stated that through these consultations, progress had been made on a compromise proposal that will be forwarded to UNEA-2. She noted that this concluded the informal consultations on the stakeholder engagement policy.

UNEA CYCLE

During the opening plenary on Monday, CPR Vice-Chair Raza Bashir Tarar (Pakistan) responded to delegates' requests for clarification on the budgetary and political implications of the proposal to shift the cycle of UNEA meetings to an odd-year cycle, with UNEA-3 taking place in 2017. He explained that Governing Council Resolution 27/2 stipulated that the governing body of UNEP would convene its sessions on a biennial basis, starting in 2014, necessitating UNEA to adopt UNEP's PoW and budget long before their execution. He said that in addition to addressing this gap, the proposed changes would ensure greater harmony with the UN Secretariat's budget cycle and the calendars of critical bodies of the UN General Assembly. Cluster 5 Chair Tarar requested that the Secretariat prepare text addressing the concerns of Member States, and delegates agreed to continue discussion intersessionally.

OUTCOME AND STRUCTURE OF THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

On Thursday afternoon, Chair Pataki briefed delegates on the CPR's preparations for the High-Level Segment of UNEA-2, noting the Working Group focusing on this issue has also drawn on key messages submitted by Member States. During discussions, most delegates expressed support for a concise outcome document. On the format, some delegates emphasized the need to provide a strong political signal from UNEA in a ministerial statement that could be understood by the wider public. Others were opposed to opening up potentially lengthy negotiations on this matter. A group of countries favored having a Chair's summary, while another group of countries preferred a negotiated outcome document. The G-77/China said the document's form should not be prejudged.

On key themes to be addressed, many countries raised the role of UNEP in delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda, and the relationship between UNEA and the HLPF. Several countries highlighted the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and means of implementation for sustainable development.

Other themes prioritized by delegates included: biodiversity and chemicals; air quality; climate change; SCP; the environmental dimension of humanitarian crises; oceans and marine litter; and effective partnerships on health and environment.

Reporting back to plenary on Friday, Pataki said the Bureau would draft a "concise, appealing and punchy" outcome document from the High-Level Segment.

PREPARATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS/DECISIONS FOR TRANSMISSION TO UNEA-2

Delegates met in five clusters throughout the week to consider an initial set of 23 draft resolutions and one draft decision (on MTS, PoW and budget) contained in the document UNEP/OECPR.2/6. Each cluster was assigned a set of four to six draft texts, some of which were subsequently merged during the discussions. A number of Member States also proposed additional resolutions for consideration.

CLUSTER 1: The cluster considered six resolutions, two of which were merged, resulting in a total of five. The group met daily, from Tuesday to Friday, and held an extra session on Thursday evening.

Opening discussions on Tuesday, Chair Pedro Escosteguy Cardoso highlighted some areas of emerging consensus, noting that some paragraphs had been agreed to by the CPR. He explained that all text agreed at OECPR-2 would be marked accordingly and relayed to UNEA-2.

Delegates completed a reading of all but one of the five resolutions, pertaining to: regional forums; investing in human capacity for sustainable development; implementation of the SIDS (small island developing states) Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway; and roles of UNEP and UNEA in delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda. They carried out a partial reading of the resolution on the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Role, Functions and Follow-Up to the Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia-Pacific: Iran introduced this draft resolution on Wednesday morning, indicating that the proposal had been developed after the First Forum of Asia-Pacific Environment Ministers and Authorities in Bangkok, Thailand, in May 2015, where participants had concluded that such meetings should be held regularly to enable effective follow-up to UNEA meetings. He noted that UNEP already provides support, in various forms, for existing regional environmental processes. A number of developing country delegates expressed support for a resolution of this nature, and some proposed that it could be broadened to apply to other UNEP regions. Developed country delegates welcomed the draft but suggested it raised institutional and budgetary issues, which Cluster 5 could consider in the context of the resolution on the PoW and budget. The Chair invited delegates to engage in further informal consultations on this resolution.

On Friday morning, the group considered three new preambular paragraphs, developed during informal consultations facilitated by Iran that, *inter alia*, incorporated relevant decisions of the GC that provided a mandate to UNEP to facilitate regular meetings of regional ministerial forums. One middle income country underscored that such forums should: fully consult with all Member States of the region; consider availability of financial resources; refrain from increasing the burden of Member States; and avoid duplication of work with other regional platforms.

A developed country reiterated concern about the budgetary and institutional implications of including a call to UNEP to “serve as the Secretariat,” and emphasized the need to accurately reflect the language and intent of past GC resolutions. Noting that the outcome of the First Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific was a Chair’s summary, not a negotiated outcome, the delegate said more clarity was needed on the request to the UNEP Executive Director to support this process, and stressed the need for further internal consultations before revisiting the text.

Following interventions from other regions saying they would propose similar language recalling their respective regional processes, one delegate called for further consideration of a proposal to broaden the title of the resolution to “UNEP’s role in supporting regional forums for Ministers of the Environment.”

After brief consultations, the Asia-Pacific group noted that while there are a number of similar sub-regional forums within the region, not all countries are represented in those forums. They therefore proposed replacing the resolution’s three operative paragraphs with a request to the UNEP Executive Director to “facilitate holding a forum of ministers and environment authorities of Asia-Pacific region in full consultation with the countries of the region subject to availability of financial resources.”

Outcome: In his final report on this resolution, Chair Escosteguy Cardoso highlighted that the revised version presented by Iran formed a good basis for moving forward.

Investing in human capacity for sustainable development, through environmental education and training: During a first reading of this text on Tuesday, delegates agreed to merge this resolution, proposed by Mongolia and other countries, with one on strengthening education for sustainable development proposed by Georgia, through inclusion of an additional preambular paragraph. Countries differed on whether UNEP’s Executive Director should “provide” or “promote” assistance in capacity building for developing countries, eventually arriving on “provide and promote” as a compromise.

Different countries requested specific mentions of African countries, SIDS and middle-income countries. Some developing countries proposed referring to the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building, while some developed countries said the Bali Plan is general in nature, and should not be highlighted in relation to the specific issue of environmental education. A large developed country said it would study the technology transfer implications of including this reference.

Outcome: The majority of this resolution was agreed at OECPR-2, while the operational paragraph requesting UNEP’s Executive Director to provide and promote assistance in capacity building remains outstanding. A paragraph requesting the Executive Director report on progress in the implementation of the resolution at UNEA-3 also remains outstanding, pending discussions on the UNEA cycle.

Role, functions and modalities for UNEP’s implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the SDGs: Introducing this draft resolution proposed by Samoa on Wednesday morning, Chair Escosteguy Cardoso noted that it had enjoyed wide support during the intersessional period, when many paragraphs were agreed *ad referendum*. In the ensuing discussion, delegates proposed various new paragraphs, while several previously agreed paragraphs were reopened.

After extended discussion, delegates agreed to favor a general formulation, rather than a detailed list, of ways in which UNEP could enhance and support SAMOA Pathway implementation. A developed country delegate opposed developing countries’ proposals to include references to UNEP resource allocation for specific actions, and also opposed language on strengthening

the UNEP Caribbean and Pacific sub-regional offices, saying it would be more appropriate to address this in the resolution on PoW and budget. Countries differed strongly on whether to include a specific reference to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Many different views were also expressed on a paragraph about UNEP contributing to the HLPF, which stated the HLPF “shall” devote adequate time to discussing sustainable development challenges facing developing countries, including SIDS. Some stressed the importance of UNEA speaking to the HLPF, while others said the language was too prescriptive.

Returning to a number of outstanding paragraphs in this resolution on Friday, the group said there had been constructive informal discussions facilitated by Samoa. A developed country group requested bracketing the entire resolution, if the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities was mentioned. It was agreed to delete this phrase, with the understanding that the issue can be revisited at UNEA-2.

Following an exchange of views on text calling for Member States to “actively and effectively” support the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, delegates agreed to retain language specifying that the cooperation should address, among other issues, financing, trade, technology transfer, capacity building and institutional support. They also agreed on language calling on UNEP to incorporate relevant actions in the MTS and PoW to assist SIDS in the Pathway’s implementation. Delegates further agreed to: recognize that UNEA and its subsidiary bodies can serve as an important forum to facilitate and share information on the implementation of the Pathway’s environmental dimension; and direct attention and resources to areas that contribute to the HLPF.

Outcome: In his report to plenary on Friday, Chair Escosteguy Cardoso said that this resolution had made the most progress of all Cluster 1 resolutions, with delegates reaching agreement on 90% of the text.

Roles of UNEP and UNEA in Delivering on the Environmental Dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Discussions on this item began on Tuesday, with several countries expressing support for this resolution, proposed by the EU and its Member States. Others cautioned against overstepping UNEA’s mandate, and said the resolution should reflect a better balance of the three dimensions of sustainable development. Delegates agreed to delete a paragraph referring to the UN General Assembly resolution that created UNEA (resolution 67/784), on the basis that the paragraph describes UNEA as being open to all UN Member States, Observer States and other stakeholders to participate on issues that affect the state of the environment and global sustainability, whereas the General Assembly resolution does not refer to stakeholder participation. Delegates did not agree on whether to single out SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, with some cautioning against creating a hierarchy of SDGs.

Delegates resumed their consideration of this resolution on Thursday evening. On a paragraph recognizing UNEP’s role in the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the UN system, a middle-income country proposed an addition that UNEP’s role is “under the

political guidance and in conformity with the recommendations of the HLPF.” Many opposed this proposal, stating that it could set an undesirable precedent.

Delegates could not agree on language regarding the links between UNEP’s work programme and the human rights-based approach underpinning the 2030 Agenda. Several delegates called for recrafting language related to UN-system partnerships. They also discussed reporting arrangements for the Environmental Management Group’s effectiveness report and the development of the System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment for the UN system.

Discussions on the draft continued until midnight. Delegates agreed to delete a sub-section on the role of environmental law, given that a separate resolution on the Montevideo Programme IV on Environmental Law was included in Cluster 5. They differed on whether to “encourage” or “request” the UNEP Executive Director to ensure capacity-building support for developing countries towards effectively implementing the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda, with some favoring a special emphasis on least developed countries and SIDS. Views diverged on: whether to call on UNEP to contribute to the Habitat III conference and to implement its outcomes; referencing “the internationally agreed environmental goals” in addition to the SDGs; and UNEP’s mandate for promoting and increasing synergies in the implementation of MEAs.

A developing-country insertion requesting the Executive Director to promote the strengthening of international cooperation mechanisms to facilitate developing countries’ access to technologies for environmental monitoring, assessment and review also remained bracketed.

Outcome: While delegates at OECPR-2 agreed on a number of the 39 paragraphs in this draft resolution, including on multi-stakeholder partnerships and strengthening the science-policy interface, the resolution remained heavily bracketed. Characterizing the text on 2030 Agenda as “long and difficult,” Chair Escosteguy Cardoso expressed appreciation to delegates for having completed a reading of the text and identifying issues for further consideration.

Promoting the Effective Implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement: Taking up this EU-proposed draft resolution on Thursday, a number of developing countries said it would be inappropriate for UNEA to undertake such a resolution at this time, noting that: the Paris Agreement has not yet been ratified and implementation modalities continue to be discussed; selectively addressing particular topics from the Agreement would disturb the delicate balance already achieved; and UNEP’s engagement with climate change should be guided by its MTS and PoW. Others highlighted UNEP’s role as a key partner in the Paris Agreement. A developing country stressed its strong desire to see human rights language from the Paris Agreement’s preamble included in the resolution. The Chair invited the EU to engage informally with interested delegations to identify an appropriate way forward.

Revisiting this item on Friday, delegates debated at length whether to engage in a line-by-line reading of the draft. The EU supported addressing it at OECPR-2 so as to understand other delegates’ concerns, and others preferred only addressing

it during the intersessional period. Delegates eventually began a reading of the operative section of the draft. One delegate bracketed the entire text.

On a paragraph urging all countries to sign and ratify the Paris Agreement as soon as possible, some developing countries questioned the mandate of UNEP to do so. Several developing country delegates also favored deletion of a paragraph addressing the “Dubai Pathway” for controlling climate-change-inducing hydrofluorocarbons decision of the Montreal Protocol, citing sensitivities and ongoing negotiations, while others expressed support for its general tenor. On a paragraph on stepping up partnerships, delegates differed on whether to highlight specific thematic partnerships.

Outcome: Countries completed a reading of the first six operative paragraphs of this resolution, out of 34 paragraphs in total. In his report back, Chair Escosteguy Cardoso highlighted that despite a divergence of views on how to approach it, delegates had demonstrated a willingness to engage with this draft.

CLUSTER 2: This cluster met on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, chaired by John Moreti (Botswana), and was tasked with considering five draft resolutions on: Environmentally Sound Technologies (EST) in relation to waste management; sound management of chemicals and waste; SCP; wasted food reduction, rescue and diversion; and promoting environmentally-sound lead battery recycling. Delegates discussed the first four resolutions.

On Tuesday morning, Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary, Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions, gave a special briefing on chemicals and waste in the context of the 2030 Agenda, stressing that their sound management is an integral part of SDG implementation. In the ensuing open discussion, delegates called for UNEP to contribute to the process of developing SDG indicators in collaboration with the secretariats of the chemicals and waste agreements, including the Minamata Convention on Mercury, and to promote good communication among national and international data collection and environmental agencies.

Environmentally Sound Technologies in relation to waste management: Delegates conducted a first reading of this draft, submitted by Japan and Mongolia, on Tuesday morning. Delegates considered language on, *inter alia*, the provision of assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their efforts to strengthen and enhance regional, sub-regional, and national implementation of environmentally sound waste management technologies and calls for the support of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism of the 2030 Agenda; cooperation with UNEP to address waste management from a global perspective, enhance climate, health and oceans co-benefits, and implement the necessary policies, incentives and procedures to effectively monitor, and manage waste with a view to substantially reduce waste generation; and support for the UNEP Global Partnership on Waste Management. Some suggested consolidating this draft with the EU proposal on sound management of chemicals and waste. Some developing countries called for deleting a reference to G-7 activities on environmentally sound technologies (EST). Developing country

delegates did not support insertion of references to “existing” or “available” resources anywhere in the text, citing constraints on potential action.

Outcome: Delegates agreed to merge this draft resolution with two others on: sound management of chemicals and waste; and promoting environmentally-sound lead battery recycling. They agreed to consider the text further during the intersessional period.

Sound management of chemicals and waste: Delegates undertook a first reading of this draft resolution submitted by the EU on Tuesday. They considered language on, *inter alia*: including the sound management of chemicals and waste as a priority within national development planning processes and poverty eradication strategies and relevant sector policies; supporting countries to implement the integrated approach to financing for the sound management of chemicals and waste; potentially establishing a single joint voluntary trust fund for the BRS Conventions; ensuring the full integration of environmentally sound management of waste and the prevention of waste generation at source in UNEP’s programme-wide strategies and policies, including in particular on green economy; and submitting best-practice cases, tools and business models on sustainable chemistry that can contribute to implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

One developed country, opposed by some, requested the deletion of text dealing specifically with any of the chemicals and waste conventions. Some delegations favored the deletion of language requesting the BRS Executive Secretary to explore the possibility of establishing a single joint voluntary trust fund for these conventions, and it was explained that this had been a request from the Conferences of the Parties to the BRS Conventions.

Outcome: Delegates agreed to merge this draft resolution with two others on: EST in relation to waste management; and promoting environmentally-sound lead battery recycling. They agreed to consider the text further during the intersessional period.

Promoting environmentally-sound lead battery recycling: This draft, submitted by Burkina Faso, was not discussed by the cluster, but will be included in a merged draft proposal on chemicals and waste to be considered during the intersessional period.

Outcome: Delegates agreed to merge this draft resolution with two others on: EST in relation to waste management; and sound management of chemicals and waste. They agreed to consider the text further during the intersessional period.

SCP: A draft resolution on this issue, submitted by the EU, was considered on Thursday and Friday. It contained 14 preambular paragraphs, and operative language under several themes including: resource efficiency and SCP; the 10-year framework of programmes on SCP patterns (10YFP); partnerships; sustainable land use; resource extraction; nutrient management; science-policy interface; and support.

Many countries supported its general thrust, with a few describing the text as too broad and overstepping UNEP’s mandate. In text referencing the role of SCP in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, several delegates

preferred the deletion of the phrase “circular economy,” with one proposing instead “sustainable development,” and another suggesting “material-cycle economy.” In further discussions, some developing countries called for deletion of language referring, *inter alia*, to: sustainable supply chains; environmental and social impacts of investments; and extended producer responsibility, from product design to waste management. In response to calls by some developing countries to remove a reference to sustainable procurement, proponents stressed the proposal offers an important economic instrument to leverage governments’ sustainable purchasing power.

In their discussions on sustainable land management, several countries registered their preference to exclude this section, underlining the need to address SCP within the 10YFP framework and not under the SDG target on land management. Others drew attention to the fact that SCP is addressed by a number of SDGs. Discussions on resource extraction were also contentious, with some countries proposing language to further define guidelines to promote sustainable resource extraction, while others supported the deletion of all language on this issue. Delegates further debated the value of inviting independent organizations, such as the International Resource Panel, to consider contributing information and knowledge, drawing on their previous synthesis reports, to provide new insights for SCP policy-making.

On potential financial and technical support, some developed countries accepted a reference to countries “in a position to do so” providing such support but a developed country opposed reference to support, in any form. Delegates agreed to continue informal consultations during the intersessional period.

Outcome: Most of the preambular and operative paragraphs remain heavily bracketed, and negotiations will continue during the intersessional period.

Wasted Food Reduction, Rescue and Diversion: This draft resolution submitted by the US was considered on Friday. Delegates considered language on topics including: support for UNEP’s “Think. Eat. Save” initiative, and the recent launch of the Sustainable Food Systems Programme under the 10YFP; SDG target 12.3 on halving per capita global food waste by 2030; cooperative action between governments, the private sector, NGOs and others to develop programmes to reduce wasted food and promote the collection and environmentally-sound recovery of food waste; and the development of a Community of Practice focused on source reduction, food rescue, and diversion of food waste.

Many countries supported the spirit of the draft, with some noting its relation to SCP. A number of countries noted the need for stronger collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and other organizations working on this issue. Others stressed the need to ensure that UNEP does not infringe upon the work of other organizations, including the FAO. A delegate called for the draft to refrain from committing ministers to actions they will not be able to perform, while another called for the draft to address land issues related to food waste. One, supported by several others, invited Member States

to cooperate in sharing technical knowledge to decrease point-of-production losses. Another drew attention to the social impacts of food waste.

A developed country bloc proposed the resolution be titled “Prevention, Reduction, and Reuse of Food Waste and Losses” to be consistent with 2030 Agenda language.

Several delegates then provided additional language, addressing, *inter alia*: the environmental impacts of food waste; the scope and legal implications of the draft as it relates to international trade; the role of governments and their partners in contributing to solving the food loss and waste problems; the promotion of international cooperation with the objective of reducing and/or eradicating food loss due to contamination at the production stage; and engaging with the FAO in order to promote the coordination of initiatives, activities and projects on food losses and waste reduction among relevant UN agencies.

Outcome: Delegates agreed to continue discussions on this issue during the intersessional period.

CLUSTER 3: This cluster, chaired by Corinna Enders (Germany), met on Tuesday and Thursday to conduct the first reading of four draft resolutions on: oceans and seas; marine plastic debris and microplastics; international environment forum for basin organizations; and sustainable coral reefs management.

Oceans and Seas: Delegates considered this draft resolution, proposed by the EU and supported by the US, on Tuesday. A developing country suggested that this resolution could be merged with Norway’s proposed resolution on marine plastic debris and microplastics. Chair Enders invited the group to first read through each draft separately. Member States agreed on a number of changes to the draft, including extending the scope of the proposal to include wetlands, and to introduce more precise language on the mixed progress toward achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Delegates also agreed to merge text containing references to SDG 14 on oceans, seas and marine resources. With regard to text welcoming the Paris Agreement on climate change as a crucial step towards limiting climate change-related impacts on oceans and seas, a delegate requested a footnote to highlight that they do not subscribe to the Paris Agreement. Delegates were also divided on a call for UNEP to play a role in contributing to the implementation of the environmental aspects of the 2030 Agenda, with some noting that this was too broad a request, and others stressing the importance of highlighting SDG 14. In response to a concern from a developing country about a reference to consistent implementation of regional oceans targets, the proponents of the resolution explained that the reference aims for consistency between the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and regional targets on oceans.

Outcome: Chair Enders noted that delegates had made many comments on the draft, and she suggested delegations resolve differences bilaterally during the intersessional period.

Marine Plastic Debris and Microplastics: Delegates addressed this draft resolution, proposed by Norway, on Tuesday and Thursday. During initial consideration of the text, a developed country proposed that the resolution refer to marine “litter” rather than “debris.” Delegates agreed to a developed country proposal to recognize that much marine pollution

results from material transported through freshwater channels. Delegates agreed to acknowledge the work of existing regional action plans on marine litter, and supported mentioning measures against littering of freshwater courses. They differed on language regarding terrestrial waste reduction and prevention, and capacity building.

On international cleanup actions, delegates disagreed with a proposal to delete mention of the “polluter pays principle.” Delegates discussed proposals addressing prevention and reduction of waste from ships, such as including waste disposal costs in the harbor fee, but without agreement. Some reserved their position on a paragraph about the possible phasing out of microplastic particles in products, until a UNEA study on its sources and prevention becomes available. On the revision of standards for product content labeling, a number of countries cautioned that biodegradable plastic is not a solution to marine pollution.

Delegates agreed on harmonizing cost-effective monitoring approaches and also on urging governments at all levels to augment research. They differed on the scope and timing of a proposed UNEP assessment of the effectiveness of other relevant international regulatory frameworks and instruments. On a paragraph proposing a UN Marine Litter Day, several countries suggested that World Oceans Day and various beach clean-up days around the world adequately highlight the issue.

Outcome: Reporting to the closing plenary on Friday, Chair Enders noted that while the group did not resolve all the issues, it was close to agreement, pending advice on specific issues from technical experts in capitals.

International Environment Forum for Basin

Organizations: Delegates considered this draft resolution on Thursday. Introducing the resolution, Egypt explained that the first forum had been convened by UNEP, and that his government is offering to host the second forum. Several countries expressed concern about duplication, and recommended using existing structures, in particular the UN Economic Commission for Europe Water Convention. They clarified that the Convention is open for global signature and that many countries have participated in its activities. Some countries expressed concern about increasing expectations for UNEP to act as the secretariat for a number of conferences and regional bodies, and queried the financial implications. Countries disagreed on whether to mention the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation.

Outcome: Noting the large number of comments received, the Chair suggested delegations resolve differences bilaterally during the intersessional period.

Sustainable Coral Reefs Management: Delegates addressed this draft resolution on Friday. Several developed and developing countries expressed support for the draft, noting coral reefs support both communities and biodiversity. Delegates agreed to several proposals on sustainable reef management, including on: integrated, ecosystem-based and comprehensive approaches; establishment of marine protected areas; and awareness raising, including through the GEO assessment processes. Delegates disagreed on including references to additional financial support.

Outcome: Chair Enders noted in her report back to the closing plenary that the group was close to agreement, pending advice on specific issues from technical experts in capitals.

CLUSTER 4: This group was chaired by John Moreti (Botswana) and met on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday to consider five draft resolutions, agreeing to merge two, and completing a first reading of four draft texts on the first two days. On Thursday, the group conducted a second reading of the resolution on natural capital. They also considered a merged text of the draft resolution on protection of the environment in conflict-affected areas and one addressing the situation in Syria.

The group deferred discussion of a fifth draft resolution, which called for a fact-finding mission to investigate the environmental situation in Palestine, that had been proposed by Morocco and Arab States, as some countries deemed it to be too “politicized.” During the closing plenary on Friday, Chair Moreti reported that sponsors of the resolution would undertake more work through an informal process, with a view to bringing back a new text that can be negotiated at UNEA-2.

Sustainable and Optimal Management of Natural Capital for Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication:

Delegates began consideration of this draft text, submitted Botswana and several African countries, on Tuesday afternoon. While welcoming the resolution, several countries favored replacing the term “natural capital” with “natural resources,” noting it has no universally-agreed definition, is narrower in scope, and could imply prioritizing the economic value of nature. Some also called for removing the reference to “optimal” management, noting its meaning is unclear. Other issues raised included, *inter alia*, the need to: recognize countries’ sovereign right to utilize their natural resources; promote fair, equitable and sustainable sharing of benefits of natural resources; and provide technology transfer and capacity building. Several countries supported a new paragraph acknowledging the need for support for developing countries and economies in transition in valuing their national capital and wealth, to which others made reservations. Some developing countries preferred language on “harnessing” rather than “using” natural resources, with one explaining that the term refers to countries’ control as well as use of their natural resources. A group of developed countries proposed inserting references to “good governance,” with some developing countries requesting clarification of the term, and a middle-income country suggesting, instead, “responsible and inclusive institutions.” Objections were also raised to the terms “resource endowments” and “industrialization.”

On the operative paragraphs, delegates bracketed most of the text referring to, *inter alia*: measures to combat illegal trade in natural resources and restitution of such resources; illicit financial flows from developing to developed countries and vice versa; transfer of clean technologies; and natural capital valuation and utilization.

On Thursday, the group considered revisions to the text, but despite a clarification from the Secretariat on the definitions of “natural capital” and “natural resources,” delegates could not agree on which concept to adopt in the title and throughout the text. They did not make progress on various other contentious issues identified during the first reading, with countries

introducing alternative texts for several paragraphs or reserving comment. Out of the 11 preambular paragraphs, the group reached consensus on two, which take note of the agreement by the UN Statistical Commission on the System of Environmental Economic Accounts as a statistical standard; and various outcomes related to natural capital including the outcomes of the Fifteenth Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN 15); the International Conference on Valuation and Accounting of Natural Capital for Green Economy in Africa; and the regional workshop for Europe and Central Asia on natural capital accounting.

Of the 10 operative paragraphs, the group finalized only one, inviting the UNEP Executive Director “to develop or strengthen partnerships with relevant organizations and governments to raise awareness, improve appreciation of natural capital approaches, and the contribution of natural capital to the sustainable development of the countries and well-being of their populations.”

Outcome: In plenary on Friday, Chair Moreti regretted that this resolution became bogged down on issues of definition. He urged delegates to work intersessionally to resolve the outstanding paragraphs.

Illegal Trade in Wildlife and Wildlife Products: The group concluded a first reading of this draft resolution, submitted by Kenya and several other African countries, on Wednesday evening. Emphasizing that the resolution follows up on language adopted at UNEA-1, as well as related UN General Assembly resolutions on this issue, one developed country favored a short preambular section referencing existing international agreements, and to focus the text on emerging issues or specific actions required to kick start implementation. Contentious issues that emerged during the discussions included language calling for, among others: recognizing “sustainable utilization” of wildlife; and requesting UNEP to develop an annual synthesis report on the state of knowledge on developments and trends in the illegal trade in wildlife and its products.

Several countries introduced new language calling on the UNEP Executive Director to, *inter alia*: compile information on criminal activities associated with the environment; and provide assistance to Member States to develop and implement legislation to make illegal trade in wildlife and forests a serious crime in accordance with Article 2(b) of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Outcome: Delegates did not arrive at consensus on any of the bracketed preambular and operative paragraphs. Chair Moreti invited delegates to continue with informal discussions on the text, on the basis of additional text submitted by Norway.

Environmental Protection in Conflict-Affected Areas: On Wednesday, delegates began consideration of three related draft texts on this topic, agreeing to combine the draft resolution submitted by Ukraine and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with relevant and “non-political” elements of a Jordan-sponsored text highlighting the impact of the Syrian crises on the natural environment in neighboring host countries. However, following an initial exchange of views, the group agreed not to include a third resolution, submitted by Morocco and Arab States, titled “Field based environmental assessment of the

effects after the November 2012 and July and August 2014 Wars on Gaza Strip.” Many countries noted it would be difficult to arrive at consensus on this issue.

During a first reading of the draft texts, delegates engaged in a lengthy debate on whether to encourage countries to “enforce” applicable international law, with one delegate arguing that this could open a Pandora’s box. Others said it would be unrealistic to expect countries to protect the environment during war if they cannot even safeguard human life. Some suggested clarifying that the resolution is focused on post-conflict rehabilitation. Several delegations also opposed referring to language from the Human Rights Council on the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment. With regard to the Syria and Palestine resolutions, several speakers suggested extracting any general elements with a view to possibly combining them with the other draft resolutions on armed conflict, and stressed the need to focus on the “technical” aspects of UNEP’s mandate. However, other delegations preferred considering the text as circulated, stressing that it is derived from a UNEP GC resolution. Noting that it was not feasible to begin a line-by-line review, Chair Moreti invited proponents of the resolution to convene informal consultations with other interested parties to explore the best way forward.

During a lengthy session on Thursday evening, the group embarked on a second reading of the merged text. The group reached agreement on most of the preambular paragraphs, including on the need to, *inter alia*: safeguard the natural environment in times of armed conflicts; recognize the role of healthy ecosystems and sustainably-managed resources in reducing the risk of armed conflicts; take note of the International Committee of the Red Cross 1994 guidelines, and the 2015 report of the International Law Commission on the protection of the environment in relation to armed conflicts; and acknowledge the need for mitigating the environmental impact of activities of transnational organized criminal groups.

Outcome: During the closing plenary on Friday, Chair Moreti reported that delegates had cleaned up most of the remaining bracketed text, and would further consider the draft during the intersessional period.

CLUSTER 5: Chair Raza Bashir Tarar (Pakistan) facilitated this cluster on Tuesday and Thursday. The group was mandated to consider six draft resolutions on: integration of biodiversity for wellbeing; enhancing the work of UNEP in facilitating cooperation, collaboration and synergies among biodiversity-related MEAs; the MTS 2018-2021 and biennial PoW and budget for 2018-2019; the review of the UNEA cycle; the midterm review of the Montevideo Programme IV on Environmental Law; and sand and dust storms. During the week, the group considered four of these, and proposed further deliberations on the remaining two.

Integration of Biodiversity for Wellbeing: Delegates undertook a first reading of this draft resolution proposed by Mexico on Tuesday. Delegates considered language on, *inter alia*: adopting and implementing policies and guidelines for the integration of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in all economic sectors for the fulfillment of the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the

Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as well as the 2030 Agenda; and CBD COP13 representing an opportunity to align the plans, programmes and commitments adopted in the framework of these international instruments with the principles and approaches set in the 2030 Agenda.

In their discussions, one developed country proposed deletion of language referencing the fulfillment of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, noting that not all countries are party to the Convention. Delegates did not agree on the title of the draft, which remained bracketed. On a suggestion to replace a reference to “natural wealth” with “natural capital,” Chair Tarar noted that these terms are under consideration in other clusters, and proposed that the terms remain bracketed until this is resolved.

Delegates engaged in informal deliberations on outstanding issues during the week, and managed to agree on listing the sectors most relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. On Thursday, Mexico announced that discussions on the title were still in progress.

Outcome: Having completed the first reading of the draft, delegates agreed to consult each other on outstanding issues during the intersessional period.

Enhancing the Work of UNEP in Facilitating Cooperation, Collaboration and Synergies Among Biodiversity-Related MEAs: Delegates considered this draft resolution proposed by Switzerland on Tuesday and Thursday, addressing, *inter alia*: the opportunities for promoting synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions in the context of implementation of the 2030 Agenda; the UNEP-led project on improving the effectiveness of and cooperation among biodiversity-related conventions and exploring opportunities for further synergies; the Secretariat working with the secretariats of the biodiversity-related MEAs and the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services to provide interoperable data, information, knowledge and tools in order to allow for synergies among the biodiversity-related MEAs; and the Secretariat strengthening coherent system-wide action on capacity building for facilitating coherent and effective implementation of such MEAs, through cooperation within the UN Environment Management Group.

Several delegates welcomed the draft, while a number expressed concern it was premature, citing a need to await outcomes of the biodiversity-related processes, including the first meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Implementation in May 2016. Delegates then debated various issues contained in the draft, including how to reflect the nature of the support needed from UNEP to the biodiversity-related MEAs; and whether to welcome the results of the UNEP-led project “improving the effectiveness of and cooperation among biodiversity-related conventions and exploring opportunities for further synergies,” as these are still under evaluation. They also differed on a proposal to delete text requesting the Secretariat to provide interoperable data, information, knowledge and tools to allow for synergies among the biodiversity-related MEAs, with the Secretariat clarifying that platforms, including InforMEA and UNEP-Live, exist to perform this task.

Outcome: Delegates agreed to undertake intersessional consultations on outstanding bracketed text.

MTS 2018-2021 and Biennial PoW and Budget 2018-2019: Delegates considered this draft decision proposed by the Secretariat on Thursday. The draft contains text on, *inter alia*: approving the MTS for 2018-2021 and the PoW for 2018-2019; approving appropriations for the Environment Fund, including post costs for its sub-programmes; urging Member States and others in a position to do so to increase voluntary funding to UNEP, specifically to the Environment Fund; and requesting the Executive Director to continue efforts to broaden the donor base and mobilize resources from appropriate sources. In their discussions, delegates differed on: the titles of UNEP’s sub-programmes; requests to Member States to increase their voluntary contributions “specifically” to the Environment Fund; and the need for these funds to come from all “appropriate” sources. They also debated whether to include references to the voluntary indicative scale of contributions.

Outcome: Chair Tarar proposed, and delegates agreed, to continue consultations on contentious language during the intersessional period, and to finalize the resolution at UNEA-2, including the budgetary allocations for actions agreed at the Assembly.

Sand and Dust Storms: This draft resolution, submitted by Iran, was not discussed but delegates agreed to include a request to integrate a strategic plan on this issue into the resolution on the MTS, PoW and budget.

UNEA Cycle: Chair Tarar announced that the Secretariat would circulate text to be considered during the intersessional period.

Midterm Review of the Montevideo Programme IV on Environmental Law: Delegates considered this draft resolution proposed by Uruguay on Thursday. The draft contains language on, *inter alia*: recalling GC resolution 27/9 on advancing justice, governance and law for environmental sustainability; recognizing that the further implementation of the Montevideo Programme should be undertaken against the backdrop of recent developments advancing sustainable development; requesting the Executive Director to take action, during the remaining period of the Programme, on the areas of priority as contained in the recommendations of the meeting of senior government officials and experts in environmental law on the midterm review of the Programme; and requesting Member States to establish a network of national focal points for information exchange and capacity building, and a regionally-balanced mechanism to strengthen the Programme.

Some delegates expressed concern that many of the recommendations made by the Montevideo meeting of senior government officials and experts in environmental law could not be implemented in the remaining time of the Programme.

Outcome: Following another proposal to substantially revise the entire resolution text and incorporate it within the resolution on the 2030 Agenda, Chair Tarar requested interested delegates to consult informally to explore a possible compromise.

CLOSING PLENARY

The closing plenary convened on Friday afternoon. UNEA President Oyun Sanjaasuren (Mongolia) presented the results of informal consultations on the stakeholder engagement policy, and

the five cluster Chairs reported on progress. The Chairs noted that delegates had not finalized draft resolutions to be forwarded to UNEA-2, and had agreed to engage in discussions during the intersessional period on 20 draft resolutions.

OECPR Chair Julia Pataki commented on the high level of discussion at the meeting, and noted that the High-Level Segment outcome document would also be drafted during the intersessional period.

OTHER MATTERS: Executive Director Steiner said that “the table is set for May” and looked forward to UNEA-2, where, he said, “the ministers have some real business to transact.” He briefed delegates on the preparations, noting that the Secretariat had received around 120 proposals for side events. He announced that 26 official side events will take place during the week of UNEA-2, as well as two symposia on: mobilizing resources for sustainable investments; and environmental and root causes of displacement. He also announced a Sustainable Innovation Expo that will take place in parallel to UNEA-2. Steiner encouraged delegates to think of UNEA as a way of attracting participation and interest from the broader UN family, Major Groups, business and the scientific community.

Chair Pataki invited regional groups to make early nominations for the incoming UNEA Bureau members, noting that the Presidency of UNEA will go to GRULAC, and that positions are open for a rapporteur from the Western Europe and Others Group, and for two Vice-Chairs per region. She announced that a brief Chair’s summary of the meeting and a compilation of resolutions would be circulated on Monday, 22 February.

CLOSING STATEMENTS: Argentina, for the G-77/China, welcomed the concept note on “Delivering on the Environmental Dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” She highlighted the positive engagement of G-77/China delegations in the discussions, and emphasized that every Member State’s input should be respected. She noted that the stakeholder engagement policy would be submitted for the consideration of Member States. She also noted that the entire package of resolutions would be decided at UNEA-2, and urged everyone to negotiate “in good faith.”

Continuing on behalf of GRULAC, Argentina expressed satisfaction with the vigorous debate at OECPR-2, and reiterated the need for all meeting documents and translations to be made available in a timely manner. She highlighted the forthcoming UNEP Regional Meeting of Latin American and Caribbean countries in Colombia, in the lead-up to UNEA-2, and she looked forward to open and participatory deliberations during the intersessional period.

Pakistan, for the Asia-Pacific Group, highlighted its two nominations for Vice-Chair positions on the UNEA Bureau.

Zimbabwe, for the African Group, commended Chair Pataki’s leadership and the progress made. On the outcome of the High-Level Segment, he said that contributions to the draft would be submitted after the AMCEN meeting in April. He recommended organizing multi-stakeholder dialogues to enable stakeholder contributions to UNEA-2. He supported changing the UNEA cycle from even to odd years, with UNEA-3 scheduled for 2017.

Finally, he thanked UNEA President Sanjaasuren for her work on the stakeholder engagement policy, and commended the important role played by stakeholders in the 2030 Agenda.

The EU, with Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine, emphasized the importance of stakeholders in delivering on UNEP’s mandate, and its commitment to work on a tangible set of resolutions in the intersessional period.

The Arab Group welcomed the positive spirit of OECPR-2. Kenya noted a need to expedite the consolidation of headquarters functions. Egypt highlighted the AMCEN Special Session taking place in April 2016, which will speak to UNEA-2.

China, supported by Pakistan, said stakeholder engagement should proceed on the basis of “no objection” from Member States, and expressed his willingness to engage on the basis of UNEA President Sanjaasuren’s text.

Syria noted the need for non-Nairobi-based delegations to have access to CPR documents, and for principal documents to be translated. The US said finalizing a progressive stakeholder engagement policy was a priority.

Norway stressed that UNEA is the global environmental platform and should provide a political statement from its next meeting, and called for greater work to ensure enhanced stakeholder engagement and participation. Singapore underlined that as UNEA has universal membership, documents should be circulated in a timely manner to facilitate effective participation, and highlighted that drafts will only be finalized by ministers at UNEA-2 and not during the intersessional period. Madagascar pledged his country’s full cooperation in preparations for UNEA-2, and urged delegates to display flexibility in finalizing the resolutions. He noted his country’s extensive legislation on environmental conservation, including combatting illegal trade in wildlife.

Japan thanked delegates for support for Japan’s and Mongolia’s resolution on waste management, and expressed confidence that UNEP would be firmly established as the leading agency on environment as it engaged on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda.

Switzerland noted the meeting had been useful in strengthening the role of UNEP in delivering the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda, and looked forward to seeing the document to be developed on the stakeholder engagement policy. Burundi stated that discussions at OECPR-2 had been fruitful and that Member States would benefit from a positive outcome document being prepared for UNEA-2.

The Children and Youth Major Group, on behalf of all the Major Groups and Other Stakeholders, said Member States have yet to deliver on their commitment, made at Rio+20, to engage meaningfully with all stakeholders. He said the stakeholder engagement policy being developed should not regress from existing practices, and that stakeholders should be consulted in its continued development.

In closing, Executive Director Steiner appealed to Member States to consider contributing to UNEP’s Environment Fund. Chair Pataki highlighted that OECPR-2 had reached “a new maturity,” having displayed professionalism, dedication and goodwill. She declared the meeting closed at 4:52 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF OECPR-2

The evolution of the UNEP Governing Council into the UN Environment Assembly has been characterized by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, as “a coming of age of environmental governance.” Certainly the Rio+ 20 decision to strengthen and upgrade UNEP’s role offers great opportunities for it to deliver on the environmental dimension of sustainable development, consistent with its transition to “maturity” as an organization representing all UN Member States. Along these lines, the second meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives was both a milestone marking the maturing of institutional arrangements for UNEP’s governance, and a signpost indicating the challenges ahead.

This brief analysis explores some of the key issues that UNEP and UNEA now face as the governance process develops, as demonstrated in the OECPR agenda, institutional processes, and the network of relationships.

A MATURING AGENDA

In September 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda), including its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. The three dimensions of sustainable development—economic, social and environmental—are thoroughly interconnected within the 2030 Agenda, although some goals and targets embody one dimension more than the others. At the global level, the High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF), created by the Rio+20 conference in 2012, is the central UN platform for follow-up and review of this new Agenda.

UNEA has the potential to make critical inputs to the work of the HLPF on the integration of environment into sustainable development, and to act as a forum where issues are viewed through the lens of environment. For example, OECPR-2 delegates put forward resolutions on the environmental impacts of conflict and, conversely, environmental degradation as a root cause of conflict. Also, UNEP is engaging with complex emerging environmental issues, such as the health-environment nexus: this chosen theme for the high-level segment at UNEA-2 was well received, showing that Member States welcome UNEP’s engagement with emerging and crosscutting issues, as delegates at OECPR-2 called for UNEA to be “the global voice for the environment” in UN system-wide coordination for SDG implementation.

Underpinning this role, UNEP, among others, has effectively been tasked to take on a significantly enhanced scope of work across the full range of SDGs. At OECPR-2, delegates considered Executive Director Steiner’s report on how, given limited resources, UNEP could work effectively with UN institutional policy-setting bodies to deliver on this expanded scope of work, in part through leveraging greater focus on environmental issues across the UN system. Although the resolution setting out how UNEP could deliver on this mandate was not agreed, countries engaged constructively on the proposal for UNEP to work more closely with the HLPF. This will entail

sending a strong message to the July 2016 meeting of the HLPF that UNEP is ready and willing to play a major role in delivery of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda.

For UNEA to effectively meet these expectations, two issues will need to be addressed.

First is the question of UNEP’s full engagement in the global process of delivery, follow-up and review. Observers noted that, as the only major UN body headquartered in a developing country, there is a tendency for UNEP to be concerned about its marginalization from UN processes, especially since the process of negotiating the 2030 Agenda and SDGs has been a largely New York-centered process. At OECPR-2, UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner made the case for UNEP and UNEA to have stronger links to the HLPF. Although UNEA had high-level representation to the HLPF when it met in 2015, through UNEA President Oyun Sanjaasuren, the working arrangements whereby UNEP can have input into the work of the HLPF remain to be developed.

The second issue, therefore, is what form the inter-agency collaboration will take. The HLPF is not fully operational and has not yet met since the 2030 Agenda was adopted in September 2015. It has only met three times—once under the General Assembly and twice under the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)—and its working relationships with other bodies in the UN system are still in the process of being defined. “Naturally, there are questions,” said a Member State, with reference to delegates’ calls for information about the exact nature of UNEP’s engagement with the HLPF, also noting that these will be slowly answered as the working arrangements underpinning the HLPF take shape.

MATURING OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESS

Many delegates noted the OECPR engaged in more serious negotiations than at the Committee’s first meeting in 2014, where the process was, by necessity, more Secretariat-led. This time around, the fledgling OECPR began to spread its wings: one Member State observed that, “This is evolving into a real Prepcom.”

The OECPR divided up the negotiations on 24 draft resolutions into five working groups, called “clusters.” Negotiations in the five clusters ran overtime on several occasions but long nights of negotiation were nevertheless viewed by many as signs of the Member States’ increased engagement and investment in the process. Although no resolutions were fully endorsed by delegates at OECPR-2, some delegates noted the discussions had helped to clarify Member States’ differing positions. “There has been good articulation of the arguments this week,” observed one delegate, anticipating that the insights gained by Committee members and the Secretariat would help delegations find a way forward when UNEA-2 meets in May.

On the sidelines, several delegations noted that expectations for what could be accomplished within five days had perhaps been over-optimistic. As Member States engaged actively in the negotiations, new text poured in, including entirely new

proposals. Delegates worked hard to keep up with the demand to fully consider and address all proposals, while Secretariat staff dealt with calls for translation, copies and meeting rooms.

OECPR-2 leads now to a busy intersessional period for all those engaged in the process, and it falls to the CPR to undertake much of this work. A challenge for the CPR during the intersessional period will be to ensure that all Member States with a stake in UNEA decisions are involved in the preparatory work, including necessary coordination with capitals.

At the start of OECPR-2, some delegates expressed concern about the process of agreement of draft resolutions, with the phrase “agreed *ad ref.*,” interpreted as some as the presentation of a *fait accompli* of sorts by Nairobi-based CPR members, in the absence of Member States without permanent missions in Nairobi. Discussions on the sidelines of OECPR-2 indicated that, with the upgrading of UNEP to universal status, the hierarchy of the CPR and the OECPR could be better defined. These growing pains will likely be alleviated as Member States carry out their intention to cooperate through the Nairobi-based delegations and on-line during the intersessional period, reflecting a growing maturity as well as acceptance of the limitations of Secretariat resources.

MATURING OF RELATIONSHIPS

Not only has the international sustainable development agenda brought increased demand for national-level coordination, it has also underscored the need for a broad range of stakeholders to be involved in finding and implementing solutions.

Agenda 21, the outcome of the first UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, recognized the nine Major Groups of stakeholders as having a role to play in implementation of sustainable development. In the late 1990s, the configuration of Major Groups began to be applied in arrangements for civil society participation in UN processes. Given that the practice of including Major Groups in UN meetings as observers is well established, many were disappointed that OECPR-2 failed to endorse a stakeholder engagement policy for UNEA, continuing the debate that began at OECPR-1 two years ago.

At the heart of the disagreement is the wish of a small group of countries to apply a “no objection” practice, whereby countries will be able to review the list of civil society participants, and be able to veto the attendance of any of them. Stakeholders object to this practice, saying that it has only rarely been applied in UN venues, and that it is unfair as it allows Member States to block the participation of civil society actors without needing to provide their reasons.

While a representative of municipal authorities questioned earlier in the week whether it will be “no objection, or no regression” from current levels of participation, by the end of the week the choice appeared less stark. With the mediation of UNEA President Oyun Sanjaasuren, informal discussions with Member States had taken place on the sidelines of the meeting. Several Member States and Major Groups expressed disappointment that the discussions with the UNEA President had remained informal, although stakeholder engagement policy had initially been scheduled for formal consideration

and open debate during OECPR-2. They nevertheless welcomed the proposal that UNEP play the role of “umpire” in any issues of accreditation arising in future meetings, thus checking any “heavy-handedness” from Member States wishing to control participation.

By the close of the meeting, many appeared satisfied with the input they had been able to provide to the compromise proposal that UNEA President Sanjaasuren will forward to UNEA-2 in May. The text dealing with the unresolved issues from UNEA-1 includes proposals on: guiding principles that address the importance of regional balance; the definition of a stakeholder, which contains options for UNEA-2 to discuss regarding criteria for stakeholders; options on the accreditation process and criteria, including crucially, the role of the UNEP Secretariat in this process; and access to pre-session and in-session documents.

Moreover, with 26 side events on the agenda, UNEA-2 preparations are envisaging participation far beyond the circle of Member States present at OECPR-2 to encompass civil society in all its forms, including the science, business and academic communities. During the closing plenary, Executive Director Steiner encouraged all to think of UNEA-2 as a way of attracting participation and interest from the broader UN family, the science and business communities and civil society, as a basis for networking and evolving partnerships.

Such relationships are evolving independently of written policy, and stakeholder participation has long been a part of previous arrangements at UNEP Governing Council meetings. The challenge for OECPR, as it evolves in its role as the preparatory process for UNEA, will be to bring the potentially rich contributions from this broad range of stakeholders to inform and amplify the voice of UNEA.

COMING TO FRUITION AT UNEA-2

OECPR-2 took place in the aftermath of the major accomplishments of 2015, when the international community adopted the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development, in addition to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. “The sense of urgency that the 2015 deadlines imposed must now transition to steady progress and implementation,” said one observer. “Clear leadership will be needed to drive that process.”

The open question now is about what that leadership entails. OECPR-2 took place in the context of the impending departure of UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner after ten years at the helm. Many delegates on the sidelines expressed appreciation for his strong leadership and contribution toward promoting the environmental agenda in an international galaxy of competing priorities. Yet, those competing priorities remain: UNEA-2 will take place the same week as the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, and climate talks in Bonn under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. As the world’s foremost environmental policy-making body, several delegates highlighted the need for UNEA-2 to communicate simple, powerful and political messages on the world stage.

UNEP and UNEA have now to respond to the challenges of the global sustainability agenda, which will require more than youthful ambition. OECPR-2 demonstrated considerable development in thinking about the institutional approaches and the network that will support UNEP to contribute fully to delivering positive outcomes for the environment as an integral part of SDG implementation.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment (OAS) 2016:

The 2016 session of the ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment is expected to consider a review of progress and lessons learned from the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) and the implications of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for the UN development system. **dates:** 22-24 February 2016 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination **phone:** +1-212-963-8415 **email:** ecosocinfo@un.org **www:** <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/2016-operational-activities-development-segment>

Fourth Session of the IPBES Plenary (IPBES-4): The fourth session of the plenary of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES-4) will review progress on its work programme and consider assessment reports of on pollination and pollinators associated with food production. **dates:** 22-28 February 2016 **location:** Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia **contact:** IPBES Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-0570 **email:** secretariat@ipbes.net **www:** <http://www.ipbes.net/>

First Meeting of IATT 10-Member Technology Group:

The Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) is organizing the first face-to-face meeting of the ten-member group to support the UN Inter-Agency Task Team on science, technology and innovation (STI) for the SDGs (IATT). The IATT is one of three elements of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism mandated by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The other two elements are an online platform aimed at matching the technology demand and supply, and a multi-stakeholder forum on STI. **dates:** 3-4 March 2016 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** IATT Coordinator Wei Liu, UN Division for Sustainable Development **email:** liuw@un.org **www:** <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/technology/facilitationmechanism>

47th Session of UN Statistical Commission: The 47th Session of the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) is expected to agree on the indicator framework and set of indicators for the post-2015 development agenda, among other agenda items. **dates:** 8-11 March 2016 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UNSC **email:** statcom@un.org **www:** <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/47th-session>

Habitat III Thematic Meeting: Financing Urban Development: In advance of the Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), thematic high-level meetings will convene to discuss

priorities for a New Urban Agenda and to develop policy recommendations. The thematic meetings are expected to result in recommendations that will be considered an official input to Habitat III. This thematic meeting focuses on financing the New Urban Agenda. **dates:** 9-11 March 2016 **location:** Mexico City, Mexico **contact:** UN-HABITAT **email:** infohabitat@unhabitat.org **www:** <https://www.habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/rt-meetings> or <https://www.habitat3.org/mexicodf>

20th Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean: This meeting will address environmental issues of common concern to the region. **dates:** 28-31 March 2016 **location:** Cartagena, Colombia **contact:** Maria Amparo Lasso, UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean **phone:** +507-305-3133 **fax:** +507-305-3105 **www:** www.pnuma.org

Minamata Convention on Mercury INC7: The seventh meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC7) for the Minamata Convention on Mercury is scheduled to convene in Jordan. Regional consultations will take place on 9 March 2016. **dates:** 10-15 March 2016 **location:** Dead Sea, Jordan **contact:** Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8511 **fax:** +41-22-797-3460 **email:** mercury.chemicals@unep.org **www:** <http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Negotiations/INC7/tabid/4506/Default.aspx>

Preparatory Committee on BBNJ: Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/292 the Preparatory Committee will make substantive recommendations to the General Assembly on the elements of a draft text of an international legally binding instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction (BBNJ) under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). **dates:** 28 March - 8 April 2016 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea (DOALOS) **phone:** +1 212-963-3962 **email:** doalos@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/Depts/los/biodiversity/prepcom.htm>

Third Meeting of IAEG-SDGs: The third meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) will take place in Mexico City, Mexico. The meeting is one of two meetings the IAEG-SDGs plans to hold in 2016 to continue its work on the development and establishment of a global indicator framework. **dates:** 30 March - 1 April 2016 **location:** Mexico City, Mexico **contact:** UN Statistics Division **phone:** +1-212-963-9851 **email:** statistics@un.org **www:** <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/meetings/iaeg-sdgs-meeting-03/>

Sixth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN): The special session will provide a platform for Ministers and other delegates to assess the implications for Africa of the Paris Agreement on climate change, and especially the way forward for a swift implementation of the two African initiatives on Renewable Energy and Adaptation. The special session will, in addition, provide an opportunity for African countries to deliberate on how to move forward with regard to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Africa. The meeting will also deliberate on Africa's common approach for

engagement in UNEA-2 in May 2016. **dates:** 16-19 April 2016 **location:** Cairo, Egypt **contact:** AMCEN **email:** amcensec@unep.org **www:** http://www.unep.org/roa/Amcen/About_AMCEN/default.asp

International workshop on the integrated national implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the international chemicals and waste agreements:

The overall goal of the workshop is to advance analysis, common understanding, commitment and action to integrate SMCW effectively into national implementation of SDGs and development planning and, through this, minimize the adverse effects of hazardous chemicals and waste on human health and the environment. **dates:** 11-13 April 2016 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** UNITAR **email:** cwm@unitar.org **www:** http://www.unitar.org/cwm/sites/unitar.org.cwm/files/uploads/workshop_on_sdgs_and_smcw_concept_note_jan_2016.pdf

First Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council:

The first meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) Scientific Council will meet in Bonn, Germany. **dates:** 18-21 April 2016 **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** CMS Secretariat **email:** marco.barbieri@cms.int **www:** <http://www.cms.int/en/news/2015031-dates-and-venue-1st-meeting-sessional-committee-cms-scientific-council>

ECOSOC Financing for Development (FfD) Forum - Inaugural Session:

The inaugural session of the Forum on Financing for Development follow-up (FfD Forum), organized by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), will discuss issues pertaining to the follow-up to the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, and the implementation of its outcome, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The intergovernmentally-agreed conclusions and recommendations of the Forum will feed into the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). The deliberations of ECOSOC's Development Cooperation Forum will also be taken into account. **dates:** 18-22 April 2016 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Financing for Development Office **phone:** +1-212-963-4598 **email:** ffdoffice@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/events/ecosoc-forum-on-financing-for-development/>

UNGA High-level Thematic Debate: Implementing Commitments on Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Financing:

UN General Assembly President Mogens Lykketoft, will convene a high-level thematic debate on sustainable development, climate change and financing. This event is one of three high-level events the President will convene during UNGA 70. **date:** 21 April 2016 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office of the President of the UNGA **www:** <http://www.un.org/pga/70/events/sdgs/>

CBD 20th Meeting of SBSTTA and First Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation:

The 20th meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and the first meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on

Implementation will be held back to back. **dates:** 25 April – 7 May 2016 **location:** Montreal, Quebec, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.org **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=SBSTTA-20> and <https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=SBI-01>

44th Sessions of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies:

The forty-fourth sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI 44) and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 44) as well as the first session of the Ad-hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA 1) will all convene for the time since the Paris Climate Change Conference. **dates:** 16-26 May 2016 **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **email:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** http://unfccc.int/meetings/bonn_may_2016/meeting/9413.php

Second Meeting of the UN Environment Assembly:

The UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) will convene for the second time in 2016. The UNEA of the UNEP represents the highest level of governance of international environmental affairs in the UN system. **dates:** 23-27 May 2016 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **contact:** Jorge Laguna-Celis, Secretary of Governing Bodies **phone:** +254-20-7623431 **email:** unep.sgb@unep.org **www:** <http://www.unep.org/about/sgb/>

For additional meetings, see <http://sd.iisd.org/>

GLOSSARY

10YFP	10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CPR	Committee of Permanent Representatives
EST	Environmentally Sound Technologies
GC	Governing Council
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
GRULAC	Group of Latin America and Caribbean Countries
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
MEAs	Multilateral environmental agreements
MTS	Medium-Term Strategy
OECPR	Open-Ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
PoW	Programme of Work
SAMOA Pathway	Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway
SIDS	Small island developing states
SCP	Sustainable consumption and production
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNEA	United Nations Environment Assembly of the UN Environment Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme