



Act#ForNature

Strengthening Actions for Nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

A guide for Major Groups and relevant Stakeholders

to help their engagement towards UNEA 5

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“UNEA-5 will position investments in nature and green jobs, sustainable finance, sound chemicals management, and sustainable production and consumption at the forefront of Covid-19 recovery plans.

The Environment Assembly can mobilize leadership and generate new broad political commitments to nature, underpinned by measurable and time bound targets captured in its political ministerial declaration, resolutions and partnerships designed to reverse the negative trends on biodiversity loss,”

From the opening of UNEP’s concept paper to the CPR, April 30, 2020.

Introduction to this paper¹

This paper is a *guide* to help Major Groups Stakeholders navigate through themes and issues that are being discussed *officially* and that will be discussed in relation to the upcoming fifth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 5) planned for February 2021.

The themes that are identified and referred to in this paper, have all their basis in the many official documents that have been developed and published by the UNEA 5 Bureau and the current Committee of Permanent Representatives, the CPR including from the UNEP Secretariat.

This document refers to official issues and themes – “official” meaning they originate from the UNEA 5 Bureau, the Committee of Permanent Representatives, the CPR and the UNEP Secretariat. The document refrains from interpreting but attempts to provide contexts and background.

All themes and references to official documents can be found in the UN Environment Document Repository Home or at the meeting portal for the UNEA Bureau or the CPR:

For direct link to all official papers from the Bureaux, see the official meeting portal: <https://www.unenvironment.org/cpr/meetings> and

¹ *DISCLAIMER: This «Guide» is not an official UNEP document, nor does it represent any official UNEP position. The document is researched and written by Jan-Gustav Strandenaes of Stakeholder Forum, SF, and whereas it is all based on available UNEP documentation, the content, formulation and contextual presentation is solely his responsibility. Any error or misrepresentation found in the document, should such items occur, would also be his responsibility.*

<https://www.unenvironment.org/events/unea-bureau-meetings/meeting-bureau-fifth-session-un-environment-assembly-1>

For all documents, see the UN Environment Documentary Repository Home
<https://wedocs.unep.org/>

There are four time foci to be aware of in the process leading up to UNEA 5

- The “Oslo Consultation” of Major Groups and Stakeholders on June 7, held as a virtual consultation
- The Regional Consultation Meetings for Major Groups and Stakeholders, during 2020
- The Bureau 5 and CPR meeting during the autumn of 2020 dedicated to UNEA 5
- UNEA 5 planned for February 2021

The President of UNEA 5, the Norwegian Minister for Environment and Climate, Mr. Rotevatn, including the Bureau and CPR, have in the official documents expressed the need for and importance of involving the Major Groups and Stakeholders in all these processes leading up to UNEA 5.

In the official agenda for the extended UNEA 5 Bureau and CPR retreat in June, consultation with non-state stakeholders is already on the agenda. This agenda has identified several themes. Stakeholders are expected to come with input to these themes. As long as themes are relevant to the overarching title of UNEA 5, stakeholders also have the opportunity to express their opinion on other themes that are on the table as well as add other themes they find of importance. This is in particular important in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, in which stakeholders might push for stronger and more detailed inclusions of this important topic in UNEA 5. Also, UNEA 5 might well be one of the first conference organised by the UN with a physical presence of participants after the corona pandemic. This positions UNEA 5 and its themes in a particularly strategic position. Themes that are identified may also be a basis for resolutions at UNEA 5.

Be aware of the emphasis repeated time and again by the President including the Bureau and the CPR. Whatever new emerging theme that may be identified, it MUST have relevance to the overarching theme of UNEA 5: “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.”

UNEA 5 is also going to agree to a new three-year Medium-Term Strategy for UNEP. This is also worth keeping in mind when identifying themes and focussing on issues.

Another item which is repeatedly stressed by the UNEA President and the UNEA Bureau, is that themes must result in actions and implementation. The Oslo Consultation in June 2020 for major groups and stakeholders in connection with UNEA 5 is one of the first multi-stakeholder consultation on the thematic process leading to a broader and deeper understanding of the title of the upcoming UNEA. As such, the consultation is not a policy-

deciding or negotiating meeting. The major groups and stakeholders are invited by the two central governing bodies of UNEP, the Bureau of the UNEA and the Committee of Permanent Representatives, the CPR, to engage in and contribute to the understanding of the UNEA theme, and not the least to contribute with ideas that are actionable and relevant to the UNEA 5 theme as well as to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

The latest thematic development (May 2020)

The UNEP Secretariat addressed the CPR on April 30 challenging member states to be “Enhancing the authority, impact and relevance of the Assembly through a limited set of ambitious resolutions and decisions.”

Reflecting the ongoing discussions in the Bureau and CPR, the secretariat listed three major challenges to keep in mind when identifying themes for UNEA. Be also aware of the four action areas under the first challenge:

1 - Limit the number of resolutions under the four proposed action areas:

- Action area 1: Nature for Jobs and Economic Prosperity
- Action area 2: Nature for Health
- Action area 3: Nature for Climate
- Action area 4: Nature for Sustainable Food Systems

2 - Take into account decisions and resolutions previously adopted by the Assembly and the next Medium-Term Strategy

3 - Focus on gaps and value addition in relation to existing commitments and those previously adopted.

UNEP has begun in earnest to prepare for UNEA 5, and a key document to read to get insights into the thematic approach which is now being considered, is a background note of April 23, called “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals” UNEP/CPR/150/3²

In a presentation by Inger Andersen³, the ED of UNEP on April 30, she formulated a challenge to the Bureau and the CPR:

- Supporting the relevance of the Environment Assembly in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic
- How the proposed four action-areas (see above) can help strengthen actions from all sectors of society

² “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”. Note on the preparations for the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of April 23, found in the UN Environment Document Repository as: UNEP/CPR/150/3. Or google UNEP/CPR/150/3, and the document will be found.

³ <https://www.unenvironment.org/people/inger-andersen>

- Examining further how to reach a limited set of resolutions that address the drivers of the decline of nature and biodiversity loss
- Supporting efforts to mobilize the private sector toward targeted investments in support of ecosystem-based approaches, including nature-based solutions
- Providing guidance on the proposed communication strategy
- Provide guidance on how the United Nations Environment Assembly can serve as a platform where the international community discusses the interactions of environmental issues by benefitting from the universal leadership of the Assembly and in this context enhance cooperation among UNEP and the Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

Based on the latest thematic development within the UNEA 5 Bureau, CPR and the UNEP Secretariat, the four subthemes referred to above being discussed at the moment (May 2020), seem to have emerged as key official issues for UNEA 5 (for more details, see pp 13, 14 and 15). It is well worth paying particular attention to these four themes. To repeat:

- Action area 1: Nature for Jobs and Economic Prosperity
- Action area 2: Nature for Health
- Action area 3: Nature for Climate
- Action area 4: Nature for Sustainable Food Systems

Beginning in July 2019, the UNEA 5 Bureau, the CPR and the secretariat of UNEP began to develop and deepen their understanding of the title of UNEA 5. This development can easily be seen by studying the documents available at the UN Environment Documentary Repository Home, especially with a focus on the Bureau and CPR. During this time, several themes have been identified and they are all summarised in ANNEX II. A plausible conclusion might be that several of these themes will be discussed during UNEA 5, and possibly end up as elements of the MTS.

In order not to overload the basic text in this document, detailed overviews of ideas pertaining to the thematic development and understanding of UNEA 5 are collected in the Annexes.

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⁴ The procedural elements of the agenda are not dealt with here, See ANNEX I for the entire agenda

1.0 – Overview of themes proposed by the Bureau and CPR for UNEA 5 expressed on the agenda for the Oslo June Retreat

Below the agenda points and themes are summarised. These are and will be discussed in relation to the upcoming process leading up to the “Oslo Consultations” in June, further to the RCMs and finally to UNEA 5.

The themes that are identified under this point are organised according to two parts –

- 1.1 - a summary of the agenda for the Oslo Consultations in June, (see ANNEX I for the official agenda. Note, please check the latest available version⁵, as adjustments may occur)
- 1.2 – the themes of the Oslo agenda with thematic contexts as gleaned from and summarised from the official UNEA documents (from the Bureau and from CPR).

1.1 – a summary of the themes of the Oslo Bureaux Retreat Agenda⁶

A - UNEA-5 in the era of Covid-19

B - Preparations for UNEA-5

a) Preparation of a UNEA-5 Ministerial Declaration.

b) UNEA-5 communication strategy

c) Consideration of UNEA resolutions

C - Preparations for the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the creation of UNEP

D - Additional agenda items as Annexed

The annexed agenda point is referred to as “Consultation on the follow-up on General Assembly Resolution 73/333.”

E – the final annexed point is a further deliberation on UNEP+50, called: “Vision for UNEP@50 and the UN high level meeting in 2021.

F - The agenda point that has been deleted from the first agenda draft is the one referring to the super year for nature. The original agenda stated: “Interlinkages between UNEA 5 and the 2020 Super Year for Nature.”

G - Dialogue sessions with representatives from the civil society at the Oslo Bureaux retreat

1.2 - The themes of the Oslo Bureaux Retreat Agenda, with thematic contexts and references

The official Oslo agenda agreed to by the Bureau on April 1, is divided into two parts – one where three major action agenda points are identified, and the second part with a set of annexed issues including a reference to the themes that were originally identified to

⁵ Updates available on - <https://www.unenvironment.org/cpr/meetings>

⁶ The procedural elements of the agenda are not dealt with here, See ANNEX I for the entire agenda

constitute the agenda for the Oslo retreat, had the meeting been organised with physical presence (see the text in the official agenda, Annex I and Annex VII).

The agenda items from the first agenda draft proposal are listed in **Annex IX** and it is well worth remembering these points. Even if they may not be discussed at the Oslo consultation, the annexed text of the new agenda concerning earlier issues, states “..may therefore be considered at a future meeting of the joint Bureaux.” (As the plural form is used in Bureaux, the reference is to both the Bureau for UNEA 5 and the CPR).

Each of the official agenda points are furnished with ‘who presents’, and an ‘expected outcome’. The summarised agenda with a focus on themes at the Oslo meetings contains:⁷

- A. UNEA-5 in the era of Covid-19
- B. Preparations for UNEA-5
 - a. Preparation of a UNEA-5 Ministerial Declaration
 - b. UNEA-5 communication strategy
 - c. Consideration of UNEA resolutions
- C. Preparations for the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the creation of UNEP

In more detail the agenda looks like this:

A - UNEA-5 in the era of Covid-19

- **A paper by UNEP ED** will be presented on the theme of: “Strengthening actions for nature to achieve the sustainable development goals”
- **One focus will be:** Other relevant multilateral environmental processes and the era of Covid-19.
- **Expected outcome:** feedback to the Secretariat on the draft concept note in view of developing an Executive Director report to UNEA-5.

B - Preparations for UNEA-5

a) Preparation of a UNEA-5 Ministerial Declaration

- **The UNEA President** will present possible key elements for the UNEA-5 ministerial declaration, followed by an exchange of views with Members of the Bureaux. In the letter the President also asked for comments from major groups and stakeholders.
- **Expected outcome:** guidance to the President on the elaboration of a draft ministerial declaration.

b) UNEA-5 communication strategy

- **The Secretariat** will present a draft communication strategy for UNEA-5, followed by an exchange of views with Members of the Bureau.

⁷ Please note: As the agenda also contains procedural points, the numbering in the official agenda is different – please see the complete agenda in Annex I:

- **Expected outcome:** guidance to the Secretariat in the development of a final communication Strategy for UNEA-5.

c) Consideration of UNEA resolutions

- **The Secretariat** will brief the meeting on the status of implementation of previous UNEA resolutions and decisions and on areas which are expected to require decisions by UNEA-5, followed by an exchange of views by the Members of the Bureaux.
- **Expected outcome:** feedback to member States and the Secretariat on areas which require resolutions and decisions at UNEA-5.

C - Preparations for the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the creation of UNEP

- **The UNEP Secretariat:** a briefing on the preparations of the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP@50)
- **Expected outcome:** guidance to the Secretariat on preparations for the commemoration.

D - Additional agenda items as Annexed to the Oslo Agenda⁸

The Annex to the Oslo agenda lists additional issues “that were originally included in the draft agenda for the joint preparatory retreat” “..and may therefore be considered at a future meeting of the joint Bureaux.”

The agenda points refer to earlier themes that were listed and which may be revisited at a later stage. These were the following points:

The annexed agenda point is referred to as “Consultation on the follow-up on General Assembly Resolution 73/333.”

Expected outcome: Guidance on the scope of the draft political declaration linked to General Assembly resolution 73/333 (see below for further explanation of this point)

Even though the retreat naturally will address the theme of UNEA 5, the approach is now slightly different than envisaged earlier. The annexed point is called: “Structure, format, outreach and visibility for UNEA-5”. As UNEA 5 is among the main points of the agenda, it is highly likely that other issues referred to here will be addressed.

Bureau Members will be invited to provide guidance on the possible structure and format of UNEA-5 and its side events, as well as on events leading up to the Assembly, and consider ways to promote greater outreach and visibility for UNEA 5, including through other international meetings and platforms.

Expected outcomes: Guidance on preferred structure and format of UNEA-5 and related meetings, and on how to promote greater visibility and outreach for the Assembly

⁸ This reference to an Annex means the Annex of the official Oslo agenda and not the Annexes listed in this document

E – the final annexed point is a further deliberation on UNEP+50, called: “Vision for UNEP@50 and the UN high level meeting in 2021”.

Bureau Members will be invited to provide guidance to the Secretariat on modalities for a kick-off event for UNEP@50 at UNEA-5, and on how to provide for successful preparations for the high-level meeting in Stockholm.

Expected outcome: Guidance on the preparations for UNEP@50 and the UN high level meeting in Stockholm in 2022.

F - The agenda point that has been deleted from the first agenda draft is the one referring to the super year for nature. The original agenda stated: “Interlinkages between UNEA 5 and the 2020 Super Year for Nature.”

However, the April 1 Bureau meeting states in the minutes the following (point 9):

“The meeting confirmed that the theme of the Environment Assembly is closely inter linked to the super year for nature, noting that all the meetings and milestones mentioned in the background document will have an important role to play to halt the loss of biodiversity and lead the way to a more sustainable society that protects and restores nature as the foundation for our collective welfare.”

G - Dialogue sessions with representatives from the civil society at the Oslo Bureaux retreat

The agenda point dealing with dialogues with non-state actors, states the following:

Two closed dialogues will be organized between

- interested Bureaux Members
- representatives from Major Groups and Stakeholders
- representatives from the Science and/or business community

Purpose: to provide an opportunity for an informal exchange views with representatives of the civil society.

Both sessions will be held on Tuesday, June 9

- one taking place before the meeting of the joint Bureaux (14.00-16.00)
- and one after the meeting of the joint Bureaux (18.30 – 20:30)
- Exact times to be confirmed.

The Presidency may appoint Vice Chairs from either of the Bureaux to chair these sessions.

Further details on the agenda of the dialogue session will identified at a later stage.

1.3 – A further background to the content of the official agenda points.

UNEA 5 may be the first intergovernmental conference to take place after the effects of the corona pandemic have abated, and the world is again open to physical meetings. If this be the case, several conferences that were to have been organised during 2020 may have been postponed, and that might give UNEA 5 a strategic position in highlighting and advocating several issues and send clear messages to the ensuing conferences.

Because of the many conferences that were expected to have taken place in 2020, the year was initially referred to as the ‘super year for nature’. No matter what postponements the pandemic causes, 2020 also marks the first year of The Decade of Action to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and the first year of the Ecosystem Restoration Decade.

Several background papers for the Bureau and the CPR refer to this and do so by specifically naming a number of conferences that are postponed. These were all referred to in the hope of having a real ‘super year for nature’. It is with this reality in mind that UNEA 5 early in 2021 may be positioned in a very strategic position, and its outcome may send important messages to the postponed conferences when they will be organised. The postponed conferences, some of which now will be organised in 2021, and that are specifically mentioned in UNEP papers and that have references to the title of UNEA 5 are:

- the UN Ocean Conference in Portugal
- the 4th Session of the Intergovernmental Conference on Marine Biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction in New York,
- the Congress of the International Union for Nature Conservation in Marseille,
- the UN Summit on Biodiversity in New York
- the meeting of the Parties of the Biodiversity Convention in China,
- the Climate Adaptation Summit in the Netherlands,
- the meeting of Parties of the Climate Change Convention in the United Kingdom

By decision, some of these conferences have already been postponed and the likelihood that most of them will be postponed exists. The international community is grappling with what to do with meetings and keeping the world on track but no matter what, the urgency to deal with all these issues is not going to be postponed.

Whether UNEA 5 will be organised physically or digitally is of importance. Still the themes to be dealt with at the conference should be identified as early as possible – and a good starting date is the Oslo Consultation.

Should UNEA 5 be the first conference after the pandemic, its strategic importance will be significant in sending string signals to other conferences and decisions dealing with environmental issues.

UNEA-5 in the era of Covid-19

No background paper has yet been developed by UNEP to specifically deal with Covid-19 and UNEA 5, however, several references are made in the document named “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals” UNEP/CP150/3⁹. This issue

⁹ UNEP/CPR/150/3 at UN Environment Document Repository Home, <https://wedocs.unep.org/>

is definitely work in progress. The Bureau at its April 1, 2020 digital meeting has had a first session on this specific issue. Introducing the theme, the ED of UNEP states that she (according to the minutes): "... outlined three priority areas from an environmental context:

- a) The issue of waste management is one that will need to be brought to the forefront of UNEP's agenda on waste as hospitals experience a higher than usual waste streams – highlighting that this will be done through the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and UNEP's work programme on waste management.
- b) The need for a better understanding of where COVID-19 came from and how it has transferred from wildlife to humans.
- c) Ensuring sustainable post-COVID-19 recovery through green economic stimulus packages."

The Covid-19 theme and UNEP are seen in relation to the overarching title of UNEA 5, and this connection was further emphasised during the recent CPR meeting, held 30 April. Reflecting the decade for action, a presentation by the UNEP secretariat highlighted the need for responding forcefully to the pandemic. "Referring to the recent report from the Secretary General of the UN, UNEP reaches out to all stakeholders: "Governments, the private sector and civil society must collaborate towards urgent, transformative and sustained actions that deliberately reshape humanity's interaction with nature.

Reforms and investments over the next 10 years must simultaneously re-build our economies by addressing the systemic threats to nature, such as unsustainable consumption and production, rapid urbanization, as well as weaknesses in governance and accountability, which in turn feed the five direct drivers of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation."

Under the heading "Continued relevance of the theme", the document states:

"Environmental dimensions play a critical role in both understanding the origins of the COVID-19 crisis and successfully rebuilding a post-pandemic world. It also highlights the imperative of maintaining planetary sustainability in order to promote wellbeing while reducing risks to people."¹⁰

The documents also outline a first discussion on the Medium-Term Strategy, MTS, and proposes that the pandemic becomes an integral element of the MTS. (see below, paragraph 1.6, page 17).

Preparations for UNEA-5

Reading through the papers and minutes relating to this theme, we find direct references to the title of UNEA 5. The same can be said of referencing the thematic opportunities presented by the 'super year for nature' thinking. Realizing that the environment needs a particular focus is a recurring theme.

In a background paper (UNEP/EA.5/BUR.1/4) to the latest Bureau meeting, we find the following statement:

"Under the theme "Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals", UNEA 5 will provide a unique opportunity to strategically leverage nature-focused

¹⁰ "Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, UNEP/CPR/150/3 § 3

commitments that will underpin the Decade of Action on the SDGs, the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, and the UN Food Systems Summit in 2021.”

The background paper goes further stating that: *“Humanity’s fundamental dependencies on nature have been recognized in numerous UN and scientific assessments, and in the UN 2030 Agenda. Nature is critical to the achievement of the 14 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Over half of the world’s GDP is moderately/highly dependent on nature, such as through pollination, water quality, and natural materials. This dependency is also increasingly recognized by the business community...”*

Though not officially designated as such, the 2020 is widely referred as a “Super Year” for nature. Urgent, transformative and sustained action is needed over the next 10 years to address the systemic (economic, regulatory and social) threats to nature ..”

In summary, the background paper outlines the following:

- Already four political foci are outlined and emphasised, focus that must be reflected in what we do and write.
 - The Decade of Action on the SDGs
 - The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration
 - The Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development
 - The UN Food Systems Summit in 2020

Four thematic areas are then identified:

- Accounting for Nature: Reworking our economies to ensure that nature is comprehensively integrated in financial and political decision-making.
- Infrastructure for Nature: Improving infrastructure planning and construction to meet development needs while protecting nature and maintaining ecological resilience.
- Food System for Nature: Transforming agriculture and food systems, as the largest driver of biodiversity loss.
- Conservation and Sustainable Use of Nature on Land and in Oceans: (a) Investing in better stewardship of remaining natural areas and services from nature; and (b) Restoring degraded natural areas and productive land and seascapes.

To ensure relevance to all these, a focus on the five systemic drivers of biodiversity loss must also be an integral element of the discussion. The five are:

- changes in land and sea use
- direct exploitation of organisms
- climate change
- pollution
- invasion of alien species

In addition to these elements, UNEP and the Bureau has repeatedly referred to the IPBES report on the status of the global biodiversity as well as GEO6 highlights.

The latest meeting of the UNEP governing body, CPR, met April 30, and the secretariat suggested more themes to be addressed. Under the heading: “Transformative action areas for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”, UNEP states that there are “Opportunities for the multilateral community to identify and agree on bold transformative

actions for Nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.”. The following four themes are identified:

- **Action area 1:** Nature for Jobs and Economic Prosperity
- **Action area 2:** Nature for Health
- **Action area 3:** Nature for Climate
- **Action area 4:** Nature for Sustainable Food Systems

These four themes are identified in a background document by the secretariat of April 23. The document’s name is “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Note on the preparations for the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of April 23, UNEP/CPR/150/3¹¹.”

With all likelihood these themes will come to play a central role in the official deliberations.

Development of the UNEA 5 Ministerial Declaration and resolutions

Reading the exchange of letters and documents between the Bureau and the UN system including member states, there is a general request to identify relevant ideas and themes to be able to produce a challenging Ministerial Declaration. Bearing in mind that we are at the beginning of the Decade of Implementation and that UNEP is charged with the environmental dimension of the SDGs, these may be key elements in such a declaration. The earlier non-state stakeholders begin to advocate for themes, the more likely it is for such themes to be included.

Several of the background papers produced in relation to Bureau meetings and CPR meetings, including minutes from these meetings, refer to the necessity of systemic changes. Green economy and green investment and environmental rights are issues that UNEP has advocated for during several years. Neither of the two have made substantial inroads into the minds of politicians. Such themes and other so-called emerging issues may be among those that civil society can propagate.

The following recommendation has been put forward, and this might also inspire meaningful input to a political declaration: “Forward these recommendations to the United Nations Environment Assembly for its consideration, and to prepare, at its fifth session, in February 2021, a political declaration for a United Nations high-level meeting, subject to voluntary funding, in the context of the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm from 5 to 16 June 1972, with a view to strengthening the implementation of international environmental law and international environmental governance, in line with paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled ‘The future we want.’”¹²

The President of the UNEA 5 Bureau stated in a letter to the Bureau, dated March 4, 2020, that following areas were critical to the 2020 Super-year for nature: biodiversity, climate,

¹¹ See footnote 2, page 4

¹² UNGA A/Res/ 72/ 277, § b of May 14, 2018 and UNEP/CPR/149/2 of December 18, 2019

oceans and ecosystems restoration. He also stated that a focus on biodiversity loss and the need to scale up the protection of nature were significant elements to be dealt with by UNEA 5. And even though the reference was to the so-called ‘super-year’ the same issues have been reiterated in similar documents.

In a letter dated April 1 to the Bureau, the president reiterated these themes while also adding the need to combat pollution and focus on sustainably managed chemicals and waste. In this letter Mr. Rotevatn, the President, asked for input and ideas on these to be discussed at the Oslo meeting in June. He also referred to what members of the Bureau had said, agreeing to having the above-mentioned themes in the Ministerial Declaration including positioning UNEA in the present political context and providing a green recovery after the pandemic a strong narrative.

His personal thematic foci for the Ministerial Declaration were:

- Addressing critical and transformative changes
- Protection of biodiversity and ecosystem services
- Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and sustainably rebuild a resilient post-pandemic world

Follow up on General Assembly resolution 73/333 – “A Global Pact for the Environment”

This may sound as a bureaucratic endeavour, though this particular agenda point may have far reaching consequences, not the least for non-state stakeholders.

The GA resolution sends a strong message to UNEP and UNEA 5 – asking UNEA 5 to finalise a declaration on what has been labelled ‘A Global Pact for the Environment’ Work on this issue began in 2018 and will be concluded at UNEA 5. Content and information to date is found in UNGA resolution A/Res/73/333.¹³

Among key issues are¹⁴:

Recognising the need to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Rio+20 Outcome document¹⁵ with particular reference to paragraph 88 of that document, the resolution details a number of relevant issues, among these are:

“renewed efforts at all levels to enhance the implementation of existing obligations and commitments under international environmental law, stressing the importance of enhanced ambition regarding means of implementation,

“Recognize the role of discussions on principles of international environmental law in enhancing the implementation of international environmental law, also noting the ongoing work in the International Law Commission on general principles of law;

¹³ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/333>

¹⁴ Excerpts from A/Res/73/333

¹⁵ A/RES/66/288 of September 11, 2012

“Invite the scientific community to further its work on interconnected and cross-cutting issues by sharing information among the leading scientific, technical and technological bodies that inform the work of multilateral environmental agreements and environmental processes, and encourage the scientific, technical and technological bodies to strengthen cooperation among themselves;”

The resolution also calls for an active involvement of all stakeholders, and there is a strong recommendation to UN member states to integrate all elements of environmental law into national systems. This last reference may be of importance to member states when and if they will develop a national strategy for sustainable development to implement the 2030 Agenda.

A vision for the commemorations of the 50th anniversary of the creation of UNEP

The UNEP secretariat informed the CPR in a meeting of April 30 about their preliminary ideas on the commemoration of UNEP@50. (Please see ANNEX VIII for a detailed overview.)

The Swedish Minister for Environment and Climate, Ms. Isabella Lövin has stated the following concerning UNEP+50:

“We want UNEP to highlight the 50th anniversary of the 1972 Stockholm Conference – the first ever environmental conference – in a way that moves the environment and climate agenda forward. The world is facing major environmental challenges, and we see this as an opportunity to tackle them together ...

Over the next few years, several crucial decisions regarding the environment will be taken at global level. Sweden wants UNEP to actively promote the adoption of two new, ambitious global frameworks in 2020 – one for biodiversity and one for chemicals and waste. Sweden also wants UNEP to drive progress towards a global agreement on regulations on marine littering, plastics and microplastics.”

Sweden, which will play a central role in the commemoration of UNEP has outlined two global frameworks and a major global agreement on one issue. These are:

Global frameworks:

- Biodiversity
- Chemicals and waste

A global agreement on regulation of:

- Marine littering, plastics and microplastics

The Bureau and CPR have dealt with the opportunities offered by UNEP+50 to emphasise UNEP’s importance as an international multilateral and multi-stakeholder organisation as well as focussing on sound and healthy environment as a key element for the world’s survival. Inger Andersen, ED of UNEP has stated that: “Nature is critical to the achievement of the 14 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).”¹⁶ Professor Rockström¹⁷ has stated that

¹⁶ From the introduction to UNEP/EA.5/BUR.1/4

¹⁷ J. Rockström, professor, University of Stockholm, presentation in Düsseldorf, Germany, December 2018,

the environment related SDGs are the basis for all development and their soundness are non-negotiable.

In a background paper to CPR (UNEP/CPR/SC2019/6 of September 2019) the following is stated:

“The commemoration of the creation of UNEP in 2022 provides a unique opportunity to take stock of progress made to protect the global environment and the human wellbeing, including under the auspices of UNEP, and to consider a forward-looking vision on how to strengthen efforts to effectively integrate environmental sustainability in the context of the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda, and reflect on possible future multilateral action to address areas and approaches where additional efforts are needed to fully achieve the environmental dimension of sustainable development.”

The paper goes on to list a number of issues and themes that could be of significance in such a commemoration. (These are all available in ANNEX VIII.)

1.5 - UNEA 4 Resolutions

The UNEA 5 Bureau has admonished member states to be restrictive in adding new resolutions to the agenda. Emphasising that the present work-streams must be completed and pointing to the fact that themes and items from earlier assemblies must also be reflected in the present UNEA, the Bureau has made repeated references to the thematic resolutions coming out of UNEA 4. Find therefore a thematic listing of all resolutions adopted by UNEA 4 in ANNEX V.

1.6 - The Medium-Term Strategy, MTS, 2022-2025

Work on the next Medium-Term Strategy is expected to begin with member states during May. Developing a better and more defined narrative with possible budget references, and a near complete document on the MTS with a Programme of Works and budget allocations is expected for October/ November 2020.

The above-mentioned document “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”¹⁸ states: “UNEA-5 will be the occasion for Member States to approve UNEP’s Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for the period 2022-2025. The MTS represents a critical opportunity for UNEP to draw a new global vision and reinforced narrative for the organization, based on the latest science and supported by a coherent, transformational focus that can serve as a pathway to ‘shift the needle’ on the environmental crises we face (climate change, nature loss, pollution), while taking into account the need for global recovery in a post-COVID-19 world.”

See also “Draft roadmap for the development of UNEP’s Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025” UNEP/CPR/SC201 of September 12, 2019

¹⁸ Paragraph 7, UNEP/CPR/150/3

2.0 – the Oslo Consultations – modalities, expectations, outcomes and process for Major Groups and Stakeholders

On April 24, 2020, the UNEA 5 Bureau made public the agenda for the Oslo Consultations (see ANNEX I for the complete agenda)

A key outcome from the meeting will be guidance on central issues to be discussed and agreed to at UNEA 5. This means that the events on June 7 - 10 will bring together minds to map out a thematic framework within which will be found the thematic agenda at UNEA 5. However, themes may change between June 2020 and February 2021- in particular given the developments of the CORONA pandemic, some themes will increase their importance, a few new ones may be added. The final agenda will not be finalised until December this year.

Modalities and the agenda for the Major Groups and Stakeholders meeting in Oslo in June are the responsibility of UNEP's Civil Society Unit and the Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development. The Norwegian Forum has distributed information to this effect. A summary of standard modalities and processes by UNEP is made available here in ANNEX IV.

3.0 - A challenge from UNEP to all stakeholders

“The fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly will connect and consolidate environmental actions within the context of sustainable development and give significant impetus to more effective implementation. This fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly in 2021 will mobilize, motivate and energize member States and stakeholders into sharing and implementing successful approaches and nature-based solutions that contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly the eradication of poverty and the promotion of sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

The theme therefore calls for strengthened action to protect and restore nature and the nature-based solutions to achieve the sustainable development goals in its three complementary dimensions ...

Nature is the planet's life support system and upholds human welfare and our economy. Nature provides multiple solutions to challenges we face, like reducing pollution, mitigating and adapting to climate change and food security. While this is broadly recognized, we are losing nature at an alarming pace. The theme therefore calls for strengthened action to protect and restore nature and the nature-based solutions to achieve the sustainable development goals in its three complementary dimensions (social, economic and environmental)” quoted from UNEP/UNEA website¹⁹.

“Despite the COVID-19 crisis, the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change still constitute our best, and only, global road map for the future. However, the prospects for achieving this roadmap is dwindling, because nature's life support system is being unravelled. As mentioned in the Secretary General's report on the

¹⁹ <https://environmentassembly.unenvironment.org/unea5> and <https://environmentassembly.unenvironment.org/theme-2021-un-environment-assembly>

Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19: “Had we been further advanced in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, we could better face this challenge - with stronger health systems, fewer people living in extreme poverty, less gender inequality, a healthier natural environment, and more resilient societies. We must seize the opportunity of this crisis to strengthen our commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. By making progress on our global roadmap for a more inclusive and sustainable future, we can better respond to future crises.”

²⁰

Jan-Gustav Strandenaes

Senior Adviser

Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future

Knapstad, Norway, May, 2020

²⁰ Paragraph 4 “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”. Note on the preparations for the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of April 23, 2020 UNEP/CPR/150/3

About the author

Educated at the Universities of Oslo, Uppsala, St. Olaf College in Minnesota, in modern history, literature, environmental sciences and development issues, Jan-Gustav began working with the UN on environment and governance in the 1970s. The UN brought him to Latin America, afterwards he taught about the UN for 20 years, worked with the UN Commission for Sustainable Development, was a liaison officer at the UN HQ for NGOs, was the global NGO coordinator for NGOs at UNCSD for ten years, was the president for a large Norwegian aid NGO for 20 years, spent nearly six years in Africa for the Norwegian Aid Agency in Botswana and Norway's foreign office in Uganda, has extensive NGO/stakeholder experience through 40 years in all continents, speaks several languages, is a seasoned lecturer, guest lectured all over the world at universities on the UN, governance, the environment, sustainable development and stakeholder engagement, evaluated projects and organisations in Africa, Asia and Latin America, advised governments, chaired UN meetings, facilitated UN processes, translated and authored books and numerous articles on environment and sustainable development and officially assessed the German National Sustainability Strategy for that government in 2018. He now works for Stakeholder Forum and Pure Consulting advising private sector, NGOs and municipalities on implementing the SDGs. He is also an independent researcher, a global traveller – he once crossed the Kalahari Desert in a Land Rover - but when he is not travelling the world, he works from his home outside Oslo, Norway.



Joint Preparatory Retreat of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the
Committee of Permanent Representatives

DRAFT AGENDA

TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2020, 16:00 – 18:00

1. Opening of the Joint Preparatory Retreat

Opening remarks by President of the UN Environment Assembly, the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, and the Executive Director of UNEP.

2. UNEA-5 in the era of Covid-19

The Executive Director of UNEP will present a draft concept note on the preparations for the Fifth Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5), with a specific focus on the UNEA-5 theme - “Strengthening actions for nature to achieve the sustainable development goals” - taking into account other relevant multilateral environmental processes and the era of Covid-19.

- Expected outcome: feedback to the Secretariat on the draft concept note in view of developing an Executive Director report to UNEA-5.

3. Preparations for UNEA-5

- a) Preparation of a UNEA-5 Ministerial Declaration

The UNEA President will present possible key elements for the UNEA-5 ministerial declaration, followed by an exchange of views with Members of the Bureaux.

- Expected outcome: guidance to the President on the elaboration of a draft ministerial declaration.
- b) UNEA-5 communication strategy

The Secretariat will present a draft communication strategy for UNEA-5, followed by an exchange of views with Members of the Bureau.

- Expected outcome: guidance to the Secretariat in the development of a final communication Strategy for UNEA-5.

WEDNESDAY 10 JUNE 2020, 16:00 – 18:00

3. Preparations for UNEA-5 (cont.)

- c) Consideration of UNEA resolutions

The Secretariat will brief the meeting on the status of implementation of previous UNEA resolutions and decisions and on areas which are expected to require decisions by UNEA-5, followed by an exchange of views by the Members of the Bureaux.

- Expected outcome: feedback to member States and the Secretariat on areas which require resolutions and decisions at UNEA-5.

4. Preparations for the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the creation of UNEP

The Secretariat will provide a briefing on the preparations of the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP@50), followed by an exchange of views with Members of the Bureaux.

- Expected outcome: guidance to the Secretariat on preparations for the commemoration.

5. Closing of the Joint Preparatory Retreat

Closing remarks by President of the UN Environment Assembly, the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, and the UNEP Executive Director.

* * * 24.4.2020

ANNEX 1: Dialogue sessions with representatives from the civil society

Two closed dialogues will be organized between interested Bureaux Members and representatives from Major Groups and Stakeholders and from the Science and/or business community will be organized back-to-back to the Joint Preparatory Retreat, to provide an opportunity for an informal exchange views with representatives of the civil society.

Both sessions will be held on Tuesday, with one taking place before (14.00-16.00) and one after (18.30 – 20:30) the meeting of the joint Bureaux. The timing is chosen to allow for bureau members to participate in one or both of the dialogue sessions, taking in to account the difference time zones for various members of the Bureaux.

The Presidency may appoint Vice Chairs from either of the Bureaux to chair these sessions.

Further details on the agenda of the dialogue session will identified at a later stage.

ANNEX 2: possible additional agenda items

This annex lists draft agenda items that were originally included in the draft agenda for the joint preparatory retreat of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives planned to take place in person in Oslo in June 2020, which are not – in part or in full – reflected in the current proposed agenda as presented above, and may therefore be considered at a future meeting of the joint Bureaux. These agenda items were originally proposed by the Secretariat within one of the background documents for the meeting of the UNEA Bureau on 1 April (see meeting portal - agenda item 5).

- Vision for UNEP@50 and the UN high level meeting in 2021

The Secretariat will provide a briefing on the preparations for the commemoration of the creation of UNEP (UNEP@50) and the offer by Sweden to host a UN high level meeting in Stockholm in 2022. Bureau Members will be invited to provide guidance to the Secretariat on modalities for a kick-off event for UNEP@50 at UNEA-5, and on how to provide for successful preparations for the high-level meeting in Stockholm.

Expected outcome: Guidance on the preparations for UNEP@50 and the UN high level meeting in Stockholm in 2022

- Consultation on the follow-up on General Assembly Resolution 73/333

Bureau members will be invited to share their views on the scope of a draft political declaration as mandated by General Assembly resolution 73/333, taking into account guidance provided by the appointed co-facilitators for the consultation process in Nairobi and drawing from possible inputs in writing from member States and stakeholders.

Expected outcome: Guidance on the scope of the draft political declaration linked to General Assembly resolution 73/333

- Structure, format, outreach and visibility for UNEA-5

Bureau Members will be invited to provide guidance on the possible structure and format of UNEA-5 and its side events, as well as on events leading up to the Assembly, and consider ways to promote greater outreach and visibility for UNEA 5, including through other international meetings and platforms.

Expected outcomes: Guidance on preferred structure and format of UNEA-5 and related meetings, and on how to promote greater visibility and outreach for the Assembly

[ANNEX II - A summary of themes, so far identified from the Bureau and CPR documents](#)

Biodiversity and nature/environment:

- Enhancing ecosystem services for inter alia, sustainable food, water and energy systems
- Healthy and productive ecosystems (from the Programme of Works -PoW)
- Preserve biodiversity, fight against loss of biodiversity
- Promoting pathways to prevent land degradation and desertification, and achieve sustainable land use
- Considering further measures for the sustainable management, use and conservation of natural resources
- Means of implementation for nature-based solutions
- Facilitating the implementation of the post 2020 biodiversity framework

Waste Management, Chemicals

- Taking action to promote sustainable waste management and to detoxify land, ocean and freshwater, to allow ecosystems to perform its services to humanity
- Chemicals, waste and air quality (PoW)

Oceans, blue economy, marine litter

- j) Improving the state of our ocean and freshwater environments, and promoting sustainable management of ocean resources, in support of economic and social development
- k) Safeguarding the multi-benefits of marine and aquatic vegetation, such as mangrove, wetland, peat, seagrass and kelp ecosystems

Finance, economy

- l) Identifying innovative solutions and enabling mechanisms such as sustainable finance and natural-capital accounting that have multiple environment benefits and so are cost-effective
- m) Sustainable Production and Consumption, SCP
- n) Resource efficiency (PoW)
- o) Green restoration of economy
- p) Nature for Jobs and Economic Prosperity

Climate – energy - pollution

- q) Promoting energy from renewable resources in a way which is also mutually supportive of the objective of halting biodiversity loss.”
- r) Climate change, (from PoW) (as it relates to the environment)
- s) Promoting energy from renewable resources in a way which is also mutually supportive of the objective of halting biodiversity loss.”

Environmental governance, Multilateral Environmental Agreements, MEA

- t) Follow up on General Assembly resolution 73/333 - A Global Pact for the Environment’
- u) Paragraph 88 of “The Future We Want”, the Ministerial Declaration and the commemoration of UNEP@50 and Stockholm + 50
- v) Environmental governance, (from PoW)
- w) Environment under review (from PoW)
- x) Resilience to disasters and conflicts (from PoW)

The continued relevance of the UNEA-5 theme in the era of Covid-19

- y) Nature and Health
- z) Health and waste management
- aa) Planetary crises and science in relation for Covid.19

A particular focus on UNEP@50

- For details here, see Annex VIII

ANNEX III The Oslo UNEA Bureau and CPR retreat with major groups and stakeholders meeting back to back – a short background.

The Oslo Consultation in June 2020 for major groups and stakeholders in connection with UNEA 5 is a first multi-stakeholder consultation on the thematic process leading to a broader and deeper understanding of the title of the upcoming UNEA. As such, the consultation is not

a policy-deciding or negotiating meeting. The major groups and stakeholders are invited by the two central governing bodies of UNEP, the Bureau of the UNEA and the Committee of Permanent Representatives, the CPR, to engage in and contribute to the understanding of the UNEA theme, and not the least to contribute with ideas that are actionable and relevant to the UNEA 5 theme as well as to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

At a time when civil society is often struggling to be heard, the UNEA 5 Presidency, headed by the Minister of Climate and Environment of Norway, with the support of the Norwegian government wanted to give civil society and relevant stakeholders an early opportunity to engage in the understanding of the UNEA theme.

In a society built on trust and with functioning institutions and where transparency, accountability and access are seen as crucial elements of the governing system, a multistakeholder participation will always enrich understanding and solutions. Norway has always respected international conventions and agreements supporting such ideas, and the 2000 UNEP Malmö Declaration on building a better world based on, inter alia, sustainable environment and good governance, is one of many documents Norway has signed on to.²¹

Taking cognizance from its predecessor, the Estonian Presidency of UNEA 4, the Norwegian UNEA 5 President decided to organise and host a retreat in Norway for the UNEA Bureau and CPR with an opportunity for major groups and stakeholders to consult with the two governing bodies of UNEP. The retreat in Norway, often referred to as the Oslo Consultation, would be inspired by the process and formalities employed by the Estonian Presidency of UNEA 4.

Motivated by decisions taken at UNEA 3, the Estonian environment minister, in the capacity as the President of UNEA 4, organised what was known as the first ever Earth Innovation Forum. Hosted by the Government of Estonia, the forum was held in Tallinn, Estonia on 5 September 2018. The event was also described as a high-level international environment conference and was co-organized by the UN Science-Policy-Business Forum on the Environment.²² During the one-day conference, representatives from across sectors working in five sessions identified strategic solutions to environmental challenges to help prepare for UNEA-4 which was to convene in Nairobi, Kenya from 11-15 March 2019. The overarching theme with relevance to the meeting in Estonia was the title of UNEA 4: “Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges and Sustainable Consumption and Production”. Back to back with the event in Tallinn, the Estonian Minister, acting as President of UNEA, invited the Bureau of UNEA 4 and the Committee of Permanent Representatives, CPR, to a UNEA 4 retreat. Taking advantage of the retreat and Innovation Forum, UNEP Civil Society and Stakeholder unit, organised the pan-European Regional Consultation Meeting for major groups, RCM, resulting in a first meeting between the two governing bodies of UNEP and a representative of the major groups.

These meetings had the character of consultations to deepen the thematic approach to the theme of UNEA 4. The Oslo Consultation on the theme of UNEA 5 in June 2020 was also meant to be a meeting whereby the non-state stakeholders would discuss thematic approaches to the UNEA 5 theme and interact through invitation by the UNEA 5 Bureau and

²¹ https://unep.ch/natcom/assets/milestones/malmo_declaration.PDF

²² <https://un-spbf.org/event/earth-innovation-forum/>

the CPR with these bodies. In consultation with the Norwegian ministry, UNEP's civil society and stakeholder unit decided to have a more global participation than was the case in Tallinn in 2018. Through a generous grant from the Norwegian government, the elected persons from the Major Groups Facilitating Committee, including the regional representatives, were invited to participate in person to this consultation meeting. The official organisers also made it clear that non-state stakeholders with competences within the thematic parameters of UNEA 5 would be able to participate through self-financing. As the case had been in Tallinn, with a larger regional participation, it was also expected that non-state stakeholders from Norway including the Nordic countries would participate in larger numbers, and the organisers were planning for around 150 participants. The process in Tallinn in 2018 allowed for all participants to attend during the Earth Innovation Forum. The RCM was for and by the major groups, and the Bureau and the CPR were naturally closed meetings. However, pursuing the idea to allow for a meeting that would be beneficial to the retreat in Tallinn as well as to the major groups, a representative from the major groups was selected by the major groups present to present and discuss the main issues that the RCM in Tallinn had agreed to with the official retreat.

This was also the original idea with the Oslo Consultation. The process had already evolved beyond the Tallinn meeting by deciding to host a global participation in Oslo. The Norwegian government had also allowed for an exclusive meeting between the major groups and the Minister of Environment and President of the Bureau. UNEP had also made allowances for the major groups to meet with the Executive Director of UNEP. This would also be followed by a meeting between the Bureau/CPR retreat and representatives from the major groups elected by representatives of the major groups present in Oslo. It was hoped that this consultative process would broaden the interest and deepen the understanding of the UNEA 5 themes.

However, because of the corona pandemic, none of this could be carried out, and the meeting will be organised on a digital platform. The purpose and intent of the meeting is however the same – it is a consultation on how to broaden, deepen and add to the understanding of the overarching theme of UNEA 5: “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.” The policy development concerning themes for the major groups and similar stakeholders will take place during the RCMs and negotiations will take place at UNEA 5 in Nairobi.

ANNEX IV - Major Groups and Stakeholders Consultation, June 7 – 8, 2020, modalities outcomes and process

Non-state stakeholders are invited to participate in what was originally called the Oslo Consultations on June 7. Originally planned as a physical meeting with around 150 non-state stakeholders, the consultation will be carried out through a digital platform administrated by Forum for Environment and Development²³ in consultation with UNEP Nairobi and the MGFC.

The meeting is organised through a set of modalities with expected result-based outcomes. These are:

²³ Established in 1987 The Norwegian Forum is the largest Norwegian NGO umbrella organisation with some 60 national NGOs as members and has a contract with UNEP coordinate the Oslo meeting

A - The consultation has the following objectives:

- Increase the relevance of UNEA 5 by facilitating active and meaningful engagement by relevant stakeholders globally in the UNEA 5 preparatory process
- Strengthen the inter-action and information flow between UNEA and CPR Bureaus and Major Groups and Stakeholders
- Enrich the UNEA 5 Bureau and the CPR retreats with input and expertise from non-state actors, represented by the nine Major Groups and other Stakeholders
- Provide a platform for Major Groups and Stakeholders to discuss the UNEA theme, and to develop their input and positions with a view to contribute to the outcome of UNEA 5
- Strengthen the general capacity and knowledge-base of civil society organizations and relevant stakeholders regionally and globally with regard to environmental multilateral processes
- Promote an increased number of civil society organizations and other stakeholders that engage with UNEP, including through formal accreditation
- Raise awareness among MGS about the commemoration of the creation of UNEP and of Stockholm + 50 in 2022 and support meaningful participation in the preparatory process.

B - Expected Outcome

- The consultation is expected to result in:
 - A set of proposals to be included in consolidated positions and statements from Major Groups and Stakeholder worldwide for UNEA 5 to be further developed through the Major Groups' Regional Consultation Meetings, the RCMs
 - Proposals and ideas for inputs from Major Groups and Stakeholders on the UNEA theme
 - Input of MGS to the UNEA/CPR Bureaus' retreat, in form of oral and/or written statements
 - Agreements on thematic clusters (and cluster leaders) along which Major Groups in their preparatory work for UNEA 5,
 - Development of proposals on how to ensure a well-organized and impactful Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum during the UNEA 5 conference

ANNEX V – The thematic resolutions agreed to by UNEA 4

- Innovative Pathways to Achieve Sustainable Consumption and Production
- Promoting sustainable practices and innovative solutions for curbing food loss and waste
- Sustainable Mobility
- Addressing environmental challenges through sustainable business practices
- Sustainable Infrastructure
- Marine Plastic Litter and Microplastics
- Environmentally Sound Management of Waste
- Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste

- Addressing Single-use Plastic Products Pollution
- Innovations on biodiversity and land degradation
- Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities
- Sustainable Management for Global Health of Mangrove
- Sustainable coral reefs management
- Sustainable Nitrogen Management
- Innovations in Sustainable Rangelands and Pastoralism
- Conservation and Sustainable Management of Peatlands
- Promote gender equality, and the human rights and empowerment of women and girls in environmental governance
- Poverty Environment Nexus
- Mineral resource governance
- Fifth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo V) "Delivering for People and the Planet"
- Implementation Plan "Towards a Pollution-free Planet"
- Implementation and follow up of UNEA resolutions and related activities
- Keeping the World Environment under Review: Enhancing United Nations Environment Programme's Science-Policy Interface and Endorsement of the Global Environment Outlook

ANNEX VI – The thematic focus of the present Medium-Term Strategy (2018 – 2021).

Reading the official documents from the UNEA 5 Bureau and the CPR, it would be expected that the themes found in the present MTS will also be carried forward and into the next MTS. However, if that be the case, there will also be a stringer focus on nature-based solutions to promote the key themes of the next MTS which will be adopted by UNEA 5. This is also however and are where the major groups and other stakeholders might show political insight and creativity.

These are the priority areas of the present MTS.

- a) Climate change
- b) Resilience to disasters and conflicts
- c) Healthy and productive ecosystems
- d) Environmental governance
- e) Chemicals, waste and air quality
- f) Resource efficiency
- g) Environment under review

ANNEX VII - The formal agenda of UNEA5 and a few more challenges or options

Lest we should forget, there is an agenda we have to abide by²⁴:

Approves the provisional agenda for the fifth session as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Credentials of representatives.
4. Report of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
5. International environmental policy and governance issues.
6. Programme of work and budget, and other administrative and budgetary issues.
7. Stakeholder engagement.
8. Contributions to the meetings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
9. High-level segment.
10. Provisional agenda, date and venue of the sixth session of the Environment Assembly.
11. Adoption of the resolutions, decisions and outcome document of the session.
12. Election of officers.
13. Other matters.
14. Adoption of the report.
15. Closure of the session.

Agenda point 7 is about Stakeholder Engagement. This is however a ‘standard’ agenda point and refers to Paragraph 88 of the Rio+20 Outcome document. However, one might pay attention to the issue, so no country reopens the debate on stakeholder engagement in UNEP and UNEA without stakeholders’ engagement in the debate²⁵. Besides, the point could also be used for the major groups to report back from their work, globally or regionally.

Agenda point 8 also provides for concrete contributions to the 2030 Agenda – and bearing in mind that the Bureau has expressed a deep interest in safeguarding the environmental dimension in sustainable development, and that this concern is warranted as this issue often seems to be ignored or forgotten at the High Level Political Forum, HLPF, in New York, ideas and themes to strengthen this element is of utmost importance.

In the resolution for the UNEA 5 Agenda, there are two more paragraphs with opportunities for non-state stakeholders to participate and contribute (see the attached document for the entire Resolution). **Paragraph 8** is asking for contributions for the commemoration of

²⁴ UNEP/EA.4/2Decision 4/2. Provisional agenda, date and venue of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly

²⁵ See «the Future we want» - the Rio+20 Outcome document:
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/futurewewant.html>

UNEP+50 in 2022. Paragraphs 9-12 asks for a review process of work modalities and invites stakeholders to contribute.

Finally, **paragraph 14** is of interest to non-state stakeholders. It asks the Executive Director to provide a report on paragraph 88 of the Rio+20 Outcome Document – subparagraphs a to h – and sub-paragraph h of 88 is important (see footnote 14, page 24)

ANNEX VIII - Status of consultations on UNEP@50 - held by the Executive Director, a presentation for the CPR, April 30, 2020

During February 2020, the Executive Director held consultations with regional and political groups on the implementation of UNEA Decision 4/2, specifically paragraph 8. The consultations were supported by Kenya and Sweden's agreed joint points on a UN High-Level political meeting in Stockholm in the spring of 2022.

A - The main conclusions of the first round of consultations were:

- The 50th anniversary of the establishment of UNEP, (UNEP @ 50) should be held at the UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya;
- Use the opportunity to kick start UNEP's establishment commemorations during UNEA 5 in February 2021;
- Launching of the commemorations of UNEP's fiftieth anniversary should not preclude other events reaching out to different stakeholders and drawing from UNEP's family of multilateral environmental agreements;
- A UN High-Level political meeting is distinct from the commemoration of UNEP as mandated in Decision 4/2. To this end it is understood that for the High-Level political meeting to go forward an enabling mandate needs to be provided by the UN General Assembly;
- UNEP (including its CPR and UNEA) are well positioned to support preparations and discussions regarding of the UN High Level political meeting as well as of UNEP @ 50 commemorations to ensure coherence and consistency;

B - Proposal to kick-off the commemoration of UNEP@50 during UNEA-5

Opportunities provided by launching UNEP 50th anniversary during UNEA :

- Reflect on how to promote a more systematic approach to many of the environmental challenges that the world is facing today;
- Provide elements on how to further strengthen UNEP with a long-term vision in the context of the Rio+20 Outcome Document;
- Promote the science policy interface by using science to catalyze action at a global scale;
- Reflect on the importance of international environmental law and international environmental governance through implementation of 73/333;
- Re-examine how global environmental governance can be modernized and move with the times, including through the ongoing process of review of UNEP's policy-making organs.

C - Engagement and outreach after the kick-off of UNEP@50

- It is important to ensure that people and civil society have full ownership of UNEP@50

- In order to increase the ability to engage UNEP is strengthening capacity building and engagement programs to contribute to building up a new generation of environmental leaders (UNEP) and TED-Ed, Earth School as well as www.youthenvironment.org are some examples);
- The commemoration of UNEP@50 could take place drawing on World Environment Day-related campaigns and digital and presential events throughout the year (“A World Environment Year”);
- Specific competitions/challenges will be launched to find and publicize solutions;

Environmental footprint

- UNEP@50 will minimize its environmental footprint, by “gathering few and connecting billions” through the application of the latest information and communication technology and artificial intelligence solutions for meeting;

Multilateral Environmental Agreements and UNEP affiliated institutions will provide a platform for systemic action

- MEA’s are committed to support and be part of UNEP@50. Modalities are being planned in light of COVID-19 calendar disruptions;

D - Update on the Science-Policy input

The Executive Director is preparing a proposal for science-policy inputs on the global environment, in consultation with Member States. These include the following:

State of the Global Environment 2022

- A State of the Global Environment 2022 could provide a collaborative synthesis of the key findings and messages from a series of recent environmental assessments, such as the GEO-6, the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR), IPCC Special Reports, IPBES Reports such as the IPBES Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the Global Resources Outlook 2019 by the International Resources Panel (IRP), UNEP’s Emissions Gap Reports, UNEP’s Frontiers Reports, and UNEP’s Global Chemicals Outlooks, among other thematic assessments United Nations Environment Programme.

Review of Fifty Years of Strengthening the Science-Policy Interface (1972-2022)

- Such a review could provide an overview of progress made over the past half a century at the environmental science-policy interface focusing on milestones and successes.

Global Assessments Dialogue (GAD)

- UNEP could continue to use such a platform which brings together worldwide environmental assessments undertaken by UN agencies and secretariats with support from Member States and hundreds of scientific authors. The GAD aims at increasing coherence and consistency across those major assessments.

E - Way forward

- UNEP recommends to Member States to support the proposal to launch UNEP@50 during UNEA-5;

The Secretariat also proposes to organize a fully dedicated sub-committee meeting as soon as practicable given current constraints to achieve the following objectives:

- Consider the detailed proposal for a Science-Policy input;
- Provide feedback on engagement and outreach initiatives.
- Allow Member States to share ideas/proposals regarding the High-Level Political meeting in Stockholm in 2022 (Stokholm+50) on the basis of a joint proposal for the high-level political meeting to be submitted in advance by proponent member States;

An additional document also provides ideas and thoughts on this issue. A paper from September 2019 details this (UNEP/CPR/SC2019/6):

§ 9 “Subject to further guidance from member States, some of the possible options for the commemoration in 2022 may include one or a combination of the following possible formats:

- A ceremonial commemoration event to celebrate of the creation of UN Environment Programme.
- A UNEA Special Session in Nairobi or elsewhere.
- A UN event or conference at the highest political level in a dedicated host country, with a strong and visionary political impact and outcome prepared and negotiated in Nairobi, comparable with the outcomes from the Stockholm Conference in 1972.
- A UN General Assembly commemoration event in New York, with or without a political outcome.
- Dedicated forums or summits for parliamentarians, youth or other specifically targeted stakeholders’ contribution to the commemoration.
- A “virtual” UN meeting, using the latest information and communication technology and artificial intelligence solutions to maximize impact while minimizing the environmental footprint.
- A series of multistakeholder-led events, activities or meetings, possibly also including voluntary pledges and commitments, to leverage support for the commemoration.”

§ 11 - Possible political outcomes may include:

- A visionary political declaration taking stock of progress made and outlining a long-term vision on how to best address remaining gaps and challenges in the next 50 years (2072), also taking into account the recommendations in General Assembly resolution A/73/233.
- Agreements, including through targeted resolutions and decisions, to take action on specific emerging issues.
- Concrete actions and pledges to strengthen implementation of the existing commitments and instruments.
- Possible launch of new initiatives in areas where progress has been insufficient.
- Agreements on institutional follow-up and/or financial resources in support of implementation of the political outcome.
- A global plan of action to protect the environment and human health in the context of the 2030 Agenda and beyond.
- Voluntary pledges/commitments by key stakeholders, including Member States, private sector, civil society and individuals.
- Partnership agreements in support of implementation of the political outcomes.

It is further noted that key issues should be underpinned by science, input from the many GEO publications, have a strong regional input and: “ including the review of the nationally determined contributions of the Paris Agreement, the adoption of the post-2020 framework on biodiversity, and the future global framework on chemical and waste.”

In the meantime (with reference to the Subcommittee of UNEP@50), the Executive Director will continue to consult in informal settings with Member States

ANNEX IX – the first draft agenda for the Oslo meeting - replaced by the agenda which is listed under ANNEX I

From 8 to 10 June 2020, members of the Bureaux of UN Environment Assembly and Committee of Permanent Representatives will meet jointly for a retreat in Oslo, Norway.

During the preparatory retreat, both Bureaux will deepen their cooperation and collaboration and, according to their roles, provide guidance on various aspects of the preparations for the fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5), taking place in Nairobi, Kenya, on 22-26 February 2021.

The joint preparatory retreat will in particular address the following key issues:

1. Dialogue with stakeholder representatives
2. Interlinkages between UNEA-5 and the 2020 “super year for nature”
3. Development of the UNEA-5 Ministerial Declaration and resolutions
4. Follow-up on General Assembly resolution 73/333
5. A vision for the commemorations of the 50th anniversary of the creation of UNEP
6. Structure, format, outreach and visibility for UNEA-5

Prior to the meeting, Major Groups and Stakeholders will organize consultations on 7 and 8 June in Oslo, which will also provide an opportunity for a dialogue session on 9 June between Bureaux members and civil society representatives on the follow-up of UNEA-4 and preparations for UNEA- 5.

Following the Major Groups and Stakeholder Forum, the joint preparatory retreat will still be preceded by a meeting of the Science Policy Business Forum, to take place on 8 and 9 June. The Forum will bring together participants from academia, private sector, science, policy, civil society, the general public, as well as members of the Bureaux, to build a common understanding and momentum towards a successful UNEA-5 as well as provide a platform for dialogue and discussion between the different actors in society on core sustainable development issues.