



OPEN-ENDED MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME: 24-28 MARCH 2014

The 126th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) opens today at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) and will continue until 28 March 2014.

The CPR is composed of all accredited Permanent Representatives to UNEP. At the first universal session of the Governing Council (GC) held in February 2013, the CPR became the subsidiary intersessional body of UNEP's governing body with the mandate to perform various functions including contributing to the preparation of the agenda and providing advice on policy matters.

During the week-long open-ended meeting, the CPR will consider, *inter alia*: the semi-annual review of the implementation of the programme of work and budget for 2012-2013; policy matters, including its advice to the UN Environment Assembly of UNEP (UNEA); and the draft programme of work and budget for 2016-2017, among other administrative matters. The meeting will also provide an opportunity for: preparation for the UNEA of UNEP's sessions in 2014 and 2016; thematic and/or programmatic debates; and preparation of draft decisions for adoption by the UNEA of UNEP.

The Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum preceded the meeting on Sunday, 23 March.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF UNEP GC/GMEF

As a result of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, the UN General Assembly, in resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 1972, established UNEP as the central UN node for global environmental cooperation and treaty making. The resolution also established the UNEP Governing Council (GC) to provide a forum for the international community to address major and emerging environmental policy issues. The GC's responsibilities included the promotion of international environmental cooperation and the recommendation of policies to achieve it, and the provision of policy guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programmes in the UN system. The GC reported to the UN General Assembly, which had been responsible for electing the 58 members of the GC, taking into account the principle of equitable regional representation. Through resolution 67/213 (2012), the General Assembly established universal membership in the GC, and determined that the 2013 meeting of the Council would be its first "universal" session. The Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF) was constituted by the GC as envisaged by General Assembly resolution 53/242 (1998). The purpose of the

GMEF was to institute, at a high political level, a process for reviewing important and emerging policy issues in the field of the environment.

GCSS6/GMEF: The sixth Special Session of the GC/GMEF (GCSS6/GMEF) took place from 29-31 May 2000, in Malmö, Sweden. Ministers adopted the Malmö Ministerial Declaration, which agreed that the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) should review the requirements for a greatly strengthened institutional structure for international environmental governance (IEG).

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

GCSS7/GMEF: This meeting was held from 13-15 February 2002, in Cartagena, Colombia. In its decision SS.VII/1, the GC/GMEF adopted the IGM report, which contained recommendations aimed at strengthening IEG, including through: improved coherence in international environmental policy-making; strengthening the role and financial situation of UNEP; improved coordination among, and effectiveness of, multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs); and capacity building, technology transfer and country-level coordination. Delegates also adopted decisions related to, *inter alia*, SAICM at the global level.

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

GC22/GMEF: This meeting took place from 3-7 February 2003, in Nairobi, Kenya. Delegates adopted more than 40 decisions on issues relating to IEG, post-conflict environmental assessment, UNEP's water policy and strategy, SAICM, a mercury programme, support to Africa, production and consumption patterns, and the environment and cultural diversity.

GCSS8/GMEF: This meeting took place from 29-31 March 2004, in Jeju, Republic of Korea. At the conclusion of the ministerial consultations, delegates adopted the "Jeju Initiative," containing the Chair's summary of the discussions and decisions on: small island developing states (SIDS); waste management; water resource management; regional annexes; and the implementation of decision SS.VII/1 on IEG.

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

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

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

GCSS10/GMEF: Convening in Monaco from 20-22 February 2008, ministerial consultations addressed the emerging policy issues of mobilizing finance to meet the climate challenge, and IEG and UN reform. The GC/GMEF adopted five decisions on: the UNEP Medium-term Strategy 2010-2013; chemicals management, including mercury and waste management; the Global Environment Outlook; sustainable development of the Arctic region; and the International Decade for Combating Climate Change.

GC25/GMEF: GC25/GMEF convened from 16-20 February 2009 in Nairobi, Kenya. The GC/GMEF adopted 17 decisions on issues relating to, *inter alia*: chemicals management, including mercury; the world environment situation; environmental law; and an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services (IPBES). Decision 25/4 on IEG established a regionally representative, consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives. The decision requested the group to present a set of options for improving IEG to GCSS11/GMEF with a view to providing input to the UNGA.

GCSS11/GMEF: GCSS11/GMEF convened from 24-26 February 2010 in Bali, Indonesia, and adopted eight decisions on: IEG; enhanced coordination across the UN, including the Environment Management Group; a follow-up report on the environmental situation in Gaza; IPBES; strengthening the environmental response in Haiti; oceans; a consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes; and environmental law.

GC26/GMEF: This meeting took place from 21-24 February 2011 at the UN Office at Nairobi, Kenya. Seventeen decisions were adopted on issues relating to, *inter alia*: chemicals and waste management; the world environment situation; IEG; IPBES; South-South cooperation; and strengthening international cooperation for environmental crisis response.

GCSS12/GMEF: Convening from 20-22 February 2012, in Nairobi, Kenya, this meeting marked the 40th anniversary of the establishment of UNEP. Eight decisions were adopted, including on: "UNEP at 40;" IEG; the world environment situation; sustainable consumption and production; and the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes.

RIO+20: The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), or Rio+20, convened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 13-22 June 2012. With regard to UNEP, the outcome document, "The Future We Want," called for the UN General Assembly to take decisions on, *inter alia*: designating a

body to operationalize the 10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, and strengthening and upgrading UNEP, including: universal membership in the GC; secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resources from the UN regular budget; enhanced ability to fulfill its coordination mandate within the UN system, promoting a strong science-policy interface, disseminating and sharing evidence-based environmental information and raising public awareness; providing capacity building to countries; consolidating headquarters functions in Nairobi and strengthening its regional presence; and ensuring the active participation of all relevant stakeholders.

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

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

INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY: On 13 March 2013, the 67th session of the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 67/251, which changed the designation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme to the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme.

HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The inaugural meeting of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) convened under the auspices of the UN General Assembly on 24 September 2013. The meeting followed the closing session of the Forum's predecessor, the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, which took place on 20 September 2013. The theme of the session was "Building the future we want: From Rio+20 to the post-2015 development agenda."

MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY: The Minamata Convention on Mercury was adopted on 10 October 2013 in Kumamoto, Japan. The Convention was signed by 91 countries and the European Union (EU). The Convention aims to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds. It provides for the phase-out of a range of mercury-added products and processes, including medical devices, energy-saving light bulbs, batteries, and chlor-alkali production.

IPBES: The second session of the IPBES Plenary met from 9-14 December 2013 in Antalya, Turkey. Delegates adopted a set of decisions known as "the Antalya Consensus," which include: the work programme for 2014-2018, including fast track, thematic, regional and subregional assessments and activities for building capacities; a conceptual framework that considers different knowledge systems; and rules and procedures for the Platform on, *inter alia*, the nomination of future Multidisciplinary Expert Panel members and procedures for the preparation of the Platform's deliverables. Delegates also agreed to a decision on a collaborative partnership arrangement with four UN agencies. On the final day, Anne Larigauderie was appointed as the first IPBES Executive Secretary.