



SUMMARY OF THE SECOND UN ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY OF THE UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME: 23-27 MAY 2016

The second United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEA-2) met from 23-27 May 2016 in Nairobi, Kenya. Over 2,500 delegates, including 123 ministerial-level participants from 174 countries, attended the meeting, with other registered participants including 230 representatives of business and 400 from accredited Major Groups & Stakeholders. A Sustainable Innovation Expo ran alongside the meeting, drawing around 500 participants who took part in a series of panel discussions.

During the week-long meeting, delegates negotiated resolutions in the Committee of the Whole (COW), which were adopted by UNEA-2 at its closing plenary.

A High-Level Segment took place from 26-27 May. Ministers endorsed the draft Global Thematic Report on “Healthy Environment, Healthy People” and took part in several roundtables and a multi-stakeholder dialogue.

The COW approved a number of policy matters including the UNEP Medium-Term Strategy 2018-19, Programme of Work (PoW) and budget, and changes to the UNEA cycle. Negotiations in three drafting groups resulted in the adoption of 24 resolutions during the final plenary, which ran until almost 4:00 am on Saturday, due to disagreement on a draft resolution calling for an environmental assessment of the Gaza Strip.

Informal discussions took place on the sidelines on the UNEA stakeholder engagement policy and a ministerial outcome document, neither of which was resolved to be adopted at the end of the meeting.

In their statements, many regional groups and countries expressed warm appreciation for the work of outgoing UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner and praised his legacy of leadership on important environmental challenges.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF UNEP

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 was responsible for electing the 58 members of the GC, taking into account the principle of equitable regional representation. 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 GC and the GMEF met annually in regular or special sessions beginning in 2000. Some of the highlights from 2000-2012 include: 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); creation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management; the 2005 Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building; establishment of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working

IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of UNEP	1
UNEA-2 Report	2
Committee of the Whole	3
Symposia and Events	15
High-Level Segment	15
Stakeholder Engagement Policy	17
Closing Plenary	17
A Brief Analysis of UNEA-2	19
Upcoming Meetings	20
Glossary	22

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Group to Review and Assess Measures to Address the Global Issue of Mercury; and 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; sustainable consumption and production (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 UNEP’s 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 “United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme.” 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 the Programme of Work (PoW) for the biennium 2014-2015.

OECPR-1: The first meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR) to UNEP 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: 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 plastic debris and microplastics. A Ministerial Outcome Document was adopted, although several Member States noted reservations with this document.

OECPR-2: The second meeting of the OECPR took place from 15-19 February 2016 at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, in preparation for UNEA-2. Delegates discussed an initial set of 24 draft resolutions, working in five clusters on: environmental governance and education; chemicals, waste and SCP; oceans and water-related issues; natural resources, conflict and the environment; and biodiversity, administrative and organizational matters. Many new proposals were presented during the meeting, and delegates agreed to continue discussing the proposed resolutions during the intersessional period.

Delegates also were presented with a concept note from the UNEP Executive Director on “Delivering on the Environmental Dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” and the draft Global Thematic Report on “Healthy Environment, Healthy People.”

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 2018-2019, PoW and budget; and changes to the UNEA cycle. On the sidelines, informal discussions took place on a stakeholder engagement policy.

UNEA-2 REPORT

UNEA-2 opened on Monday, 23 May. In his opening statement, UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner described UNEA-2 as an expression of hope and a clarion call for the world, noting that “we truly have a UN Environment Assembly,” with well over 2000 participants, 170 nations, and hundreds of stakeholders represented.

The plenary elected Edgar Gutiérrez Espeleta (Costa Rica) as the president of UNEA-2. Amina Mohamed (Nigeria), Emmanuel Isoze Ngondet (Gabon), Jassim Humadi (Iraq), Ramon Paje (the Philippines), Vladislav Smrž (Czech Republic), Nebojša Kaluđerović (Montenegro), Dennis Lowe (Barbados) and John Matuszak (US) were elected Vice-Presidents. Roxane de Bilderling (Belgium) was elected Rapporteur.

Delegates adopted the provisional agenda (UNEP/EA.2/Add.1/Rev.1) and established a “Friends of the President” group to review the High-Level Segment outcome document.

In his policy statement, Steiner said the real impact of UNEA will depend on how it sees its leadership role in the implementation of recent international agreements. Noting that the cost of inaction now will be huge for future generations, he urged Member States to allow for differences in priorities and objectives, and to try to find common ground.

A full account of the opening statements is available at <http://www.iisd.ca/vol16/enb16131e.html>

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The Committee of the Whole (COW) began its deliberations on Monday, chaired by Idunn Eidheim (Norway). Delegates endorsed Husham Al-Fityan (Iraq) as the COW Rapporteur. Eidheim noted the COW’s substantial workload in addressing agenda items on international environmental policy and governance issues, the Medium-Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (PoW) and budget and other administrative and budgetary issues and the provisional agenda, date and venue for UNEA-3. She outlined a proposed work schedule for the COW for 23-25 May (UNEP/EA2/CRP.2). She also proposed a clustering of resolutions and Chairs for five drafting groups.

Delegates called for regional and political balance in the selection of Chairs, and expressed concern about the constraints faced by small delegations in attending parallel sessions. Some proposed that drafting groups be co-chaired to ensure regional balance.

On Tuesday, Eidheim introduced the Bureau’s proposal for a revised provisional structure of drafting groups. The revised structure proposed establishing three drafting groups, and gave a suggested allocation of resolutions. Eidheim explained this approach would help to avoid thematic overlaps in different groups, ensure an even workload and disperse politically difficult resolutions.

Delegates agreed to the proposal. Several Member States reiterated the need for transparency in the nomination of drafting group Chairs, and requested fair treatment in allotting time to different resolutions. Brazil encouraged delegates not to reopen paragraphs that had been agreed at OECPR-2. Switzerland responded that some delegations had not participated in the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), and that therefore, it should be possible to reopen language at UNEA.

The COW established three drafting groups: Drafting Group 1 co-chaired by Tita Korvenoja (Finland) and Hesiquio Benítez Díaz (Mexico); Drafting Group 2 co-chaired by John Moreti (Botswana) and Pedro Escosteguy Cardoso (Brazil); and Drafting Group 3 co-chaired by Mohammed Khashashneh (Jordan) and Corinna Enders (Germany). The groups met through to Friday afternoon to finalize the resolutions to be forwarded to the UNEA-2 plenary, working into the early hours every night.

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES: The COW considered a series of reports of the Executive Director (ED) and introduced the associated resolutions in plenary, before forwarding them to the drafting groups for further negotiation. Some draft resolutions

previously introduced at OECPR-2 were taken up directly by the drafting groups without an initial reading by the COW.

Role and functions of the Regional Forums of Ministers of Environment and environment authorities: Pakistan introduced this resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.3), originally titled “Role, functions and follow up to the Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific” and sponsored by the Asia-Pacific Group, on Monday. Delegates forwarded it to Drafting Group 1 without further discussion.

Addressing the resolution on Tuesday, delegates introduced new language broadening its scope to include other regional environmental forums, noting that text that had been introduced at OECPR-2 already reflected a broader regional scope.

The group agreed on preambular language referencing UNEP’s support to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the work of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean. They also agreed to remove language calling on UNEP to propose the agenda of regional forums and invite regional stakeholders to provide support for the resolution’s implementation. Drafting Group 1 Co-Chair Korvenoja requested countries to continue informal discussions on whether to request UNEP to provide support to all regional forums.

In a report-back on Wednesday, Co-Chair Korvenoja noted all preambular paragraphs, and a large part of the operative text of the resolution had been agreed. In a second reading of this resolution, Co-Chair Korvenoja proposed compromise text developed through informal consultations. Delegates debated whether to request the ED to facilitate convening and strengthening of regional forums “upon request of the countries” and “without formal objection.”

Delegates eventually agreed to divide the paragraph into two parts to reflect regions’ different circumstances, with the first section addressing existing regional processes without specifying how they are to be convened; and the second addressing other, less established processes and specifying they could be convened “upon request of regions through the intergovernmental process with all countries in the respective regions.” The latter paragraph remained bracketed pending agreement on how to refer to these other regional processes.

Delegates also agreed to change the resolution’s title to “Role and functions of the regional forums of ministers of environment and environment authorities,” to reflect that it had become a general, rather than region-specific, resolution.

Final Outcome: The final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.3/Rev.1) notes the request of the First Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia-Pacific to the ED to hold regular sessions; expresses appreciation for the support provided by UNEP to AMCEN through its Regional Office for Africa; and acknowledges the ongoing work of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean. It requests UNEP, within its mandate, to:

- in accordance with the PoW and budget, support and facilitate convening and/or strengthening the existing regional forums of ministers of environment and environment authorities; and
- support and facilitate convening new regional forums of ministers of environment and environment authorities upon the request of the regions, through the intergovernmental

process, with all countries in the respective regions, and subject to the availability of financial resources.

Oceans and seas: This issue was introduced in the COW on Tuesday, and considered in Drafting Group 2 on Wednesday and Thursday. Delegates considered the draft resolution on oceans and seas (UNEP/EA.2/L.11) sponsored by Australia, the European Union (EU) and the US, with Venezuela noting that his country is not party to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The EU introduced the draft, and with the US and Fiji, called on UNEA to adopt it. The EU pointed to UNEP's work already underway including on capacity building, the Regional Seas Programme, and marine protected areas (MPAs). Noting the multitude of organizations and processes dealing with oceans, he called for the clarification and consolidation of UNEP's role on this issue, including on implementing SDG 14 on oceans, seas and marine resources.

In the Drafting Group, one country suggested including "biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction" in text recalling a previous decision urging countries to implement relevant commitments to maintain biodiversity. Opposing this, many others stressed that it fell outside the mandate of UNEA, and pointed to ongoing negotiations under the UN General Assembly (UNGA). Some questioned whether UNEP has the relevant capacity to enhance cooperation and coordination among international organizations dealing with marine issues. After extensive deliberations during night sessions, delegates agreed to forward a clean text to the COW for approval.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution ((UNEP/EA.2/L.11/Rev.1), UNEA, *inter alia*:

- invites Member States and regional seas conventions and action plans, in cooperation with others, such as regional fisheries management organizations, to work towards the implementation of, and reporting on, the different ocean-related SDGs and targets, and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi targets;
- encourages Member States to designate and actively manage MPAs and take other effective area-based conservation measures, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information to achieve the related global targets;
- encourages UNEP to continue to participate in the process initiated by the UNGA on the negotiations on the development of an international legally binding instrument under UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- encourages the contracting parties to existing regional seas conventions to consider the possibility of increasing the regional coverage of those instruments in accordance with international law; and
- requests UNEP to step up its work, including through its Regional Seas Programme, on assisting countries and regions in the application of the ecosystem approach to managing the marine and coastal environment, including through enabling inter-sectoral cooperation in integrated coastal zone management and marine spatial planning.

Sustainable consumption and production (SCP): The EU introduced the draft resolution on SCP (UNEP/EA.2/L.9) in the COW on Tuesday, and the text was negotiated in Drafting Group

2 on Wednesday evening and Thursday. The EU, supported by Nigeria, Switzerland, Uganda, Japan and Indonesia, called for strengthening the 10YFP and multi-stakeholder partnerships for implementation. Nigeria called for strengthening UNEP's Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, and for UN agencies to support Member States to implement country-level activities on SCP. Switzerland said that the International Resource Panel and the Green Growth Knowledge Platform have been important for SCP, and affirmed UNEP's work on SCP.

The US expressed concern that some of the text did not represent "actionable guidance" under UNEP's programme. Major Groups and Stakeholders noted the draft could be strengthened to give consumers the right to information about purchased goods, including ingredients, method of production and social circumstances surrounding production.

In Drafting Group 2, delegates were unable to agree on compromise text, and an informal group was mandated to work on the outstanding issues. A revised draft was then used as a basis for discussions in the Drafting Group on Friday morning. Delegates agreed to delete references to specific SDG targets as well as references to the Paris Agreement, and debated the inclusion of language on developed countries "taking the lead" in moving towards SCP practices.

Final Outcome: In the resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.9/Rev.1), UNEA, *inter alia*:

- encourages Member States to take the necessary steps to achieve SDG 12 and related targets in other SDGs, taking into account national capabilities and priorities, in accordance with the 10YFP, with developed countries taking the lead;
- requests the ED to ensure UNEP continues and strengthens its work to facilitate coordinated efforts in all regions to ensure SCP and implementation of the SCP-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda; and
- invites the International Resource Panel and other relevant scientific and expert groups to make available relevant reports, including on the state, trends, and outlook of SCP, to a future meeting of UNEA but not later than 2019.

Illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the ED's report (UNEP/EA.2/2) in the COW. The African Group addressed the associated draft resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.15) proposed by Kenya, Botswana, and Zimbabwe, calling for UNEP to continue to mobilize resources, with Nigeria calling for greater awareness raising on the impacts of this trade. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) called for remedying the issue through "exorbitant taxes" in transit and recipient countries. Gabon suggested strengthening the effective monitoring of trade. Norway, supported by Switzerland, Nigeria and the EU, suggested harnessing synergies from other organs addressing transnational environmental crime, with Switzerland and Nigeria highlighting work under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The Central African Republic called for establishing traceability protocols to address illegal wildlife trade. Mexico and Indonesia noted the regional specificity of the draft, and called for broadening its focus to include similar issues in other regions.

In Drafting Group 2, delegates debated the use of the term wildlife "trade" as opposed to "trafficking," and agreed to

reference both. Delegates also discussed the role of sustainable use of wildlife and its products in addressing illegal trade, with some stressing that the inclusion of language on the sustainable use of wildlife products could be a means to allow selective trade, which would undermine the spirit of the resolution.

Final Outcome: The final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.15/Rev.1) contains preambular language, *inter alia*, recognizing the important role that the conservation and sustainable use of wildlife can play in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and in addressing illegal trade and trafficking in wildlife through the development of sustainable and alternative livelihoods for affected communities. The preamble also notes with concern that illegal trade and trafficking in wildlife and its products and other forms of environmental crime are increasingly committed by transnational organized criminal groups.

UNEA, *inter alia*,

- urges Member States to cooperate with the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) and others to prevent, combat and eradicate the supply, transit and demand related to the illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products, including by: stepping up anti-corruption and anti-money-laundering efforts as they relate to the illegal trade and trafficking in wildlife and wildlife products; providing support to ICWC and the African Elephant Fund; and supporting the development of sustainable and alternative livelihoods for affected communities;
- calls upon Member States to make illicit trafficking in protected species of wild fauna and flora involving organized criminal groups a serious crime; and
- requests UNEP to continue to collaborate with CITES, ICWC and relevant UN entities to support Member States in implementing their commitments, including by, *inter alia*, cooperating with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) to analyze best practices in local community involvement in wildlife management as an approach to address unsustainable use and illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products.

Mainstreaming biodiversity for well-being: This issue was introduced in the COW on Tuesday, and initially sent to Drafting Group 2. Due to many outstanding issues to be resolved in Drafting Group 2, Drafting Group 3 took up consideration of the draft resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.18) on Thursday. During discussions, delegates noted the impact of production sectors on biodiversity, the link with illegal wildlife trade including biopiracy, and its relevance to synergies with the biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

Final Outcome: The final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.18/Rev.1), which was adopted with a general reservation by Bolivia, notes both the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the 2030 Agenda. It calls on Member States and Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to align plans, programmes and commitments adopted in the framework of those international instruments with the principles and approaches set out in the 2030 Agenda to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in various sectors, including agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism, among others, which are interconnected, *inter alia*, with food security, economic growth, human health, the improvement of living conditions and the enjoyment of a healthy environment.

Science-policy interface: The Secretariat introduced the ED report (UNEP/EA.2/3) and other relevant documents (UNEP/EA.2/3INF.17 and UNEP/EA.2/3INF.24) on Wednesday, noting growing use of UNEPLive to underpin scientific assessments.

The African Group said the regional assessments of the 6th Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6) had helped identify critical policy issues, and delegates expressed interest in data collection for monitoring of commitments, and partnerships with centers of excellence. The EU reiterated its call for a strategic plan to ensure UNEPLive's continued value.

The UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea outlined various intergovernmental activities following the conclusion of the first global integrated marine assessment.

There was no associated resolution on this issue.

Chemicals and waste: The Secretariat introduced the ED's report (UNEP/EA.2/4) in the COW on Tuesday, with the EU introducing the associated draft resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.8). The African Group encouraged UNEP to continue its efforts to support national action, and highlighted the need for effective implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions. Some delegates stressed the need for regional approaches. Switzerland, supported by Japan and Thailand, emphasized the need for harmonized reporting across these conventions. Nigeria stated that electronic waste (e-waste) is an important emerging issue. Burkina Faso, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, and Senegal stressed the importance of recycling lead-containing batteries and e-waste.

Drafting Group 2 carried out a first reading of the draft resolution sponsored by Japan, Mongolia, the EU and Burkina Faso, as well as a submission by Switzerland (UNEP/EA.2/CRP.3) for inclusion in the draft. Delegates agreed to "highlight" rather than "note" the role of the Basel Convention in the environmentally sound management of hazardous and other wastes. They debated a paragraph referencing cooperation and coordination of the conventions within the chemicals and waste cluster, with one suggesting a specific mention of the BRS, while others preferred to keep the reference more general, noting that the Minamata Convention is also under this cluster. On the role of regional centers of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions in assisting regions to implement these conventions, many countries, opposed by one developed country, noted that these centers also carry out other relevant country-level activities in the chemicals and waste cluster in the countries.

In discussions on the work of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead in Paint on raising awareness about the dangers of lead in paint, delegates were unable to agree on whether to "note" this work or "welcome" it; and were also unable to agree on the inclusion of language referencing the Alliance developing laws for other instruments to eliminate lead in paint. After extensive discussions, the Drafting Group agreed to delete all references to lead in paint. They also agreed to delete an invitation to parties to the Basel Convention to ratify its Ban Amendment.

Final Outcome: The resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.8/Rev.1) contains four sections on: achieving the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) 2020 goal; wastes; chemicals; and a final section on further action.

On achieving the 2020 goal and beyond, UNEA, *inter alia*:

- calls on Member States that have not yet done so to reflect the sound management of chemicals and waste as a priority within their national sustainable development planning processes;
- requests UNEP, as a participating organization in the Inter-Organizational Programme for Sound Management of Chemicals, to proactively participate in and support the intersessional process agreed at the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management to prepare recommendations on the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 to foster the active involvement of relevant industry stakeholders; and to: support countries, particularly developing countries, in the implementation of the integrated approach to financing for the sound management of chemicals and waste; and to continue work on lead and cadmium; and
- calls upon the private sector, in accordance with the integrated approach, to play a significant role in financing, as well as to build capacity of small- and medium-sized enterprises, for the sound management of chemicals and waste.

On wastes, UNEA, *inter alia*, requests the ED to:

- ensure full integration of environmentally-sound management of waste, including the prevention of waste generation, in UNEP's programme-wide strategies and policies; and
- issue an update of the Global Waste Management Outlook by the end of 2019, reflecting, *inter alia*: the interlinkages between chemicals and waste; options for implementation of actions towards relevant SDGs; and strategies for increasing waste prevention, reduction, reuse, recycling and other recovery, including energy recovery leading to overall reduction of final disposal.

On chemicals, UNEA, *inter alia*:

- invites countries, international organizations and other interested stakeholders with relevant experience, including the private sector, to submit to the Secretariat, by 30 June 2017, best practices, indicating how these may enhance the sound management of chemicals, *inter alia*, through the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; and
- requests UNEP to: submit an update of the Global Chemicals Outlook (GCO) by the end of 2018, including work carried out in relation to data needed to assess progress towards the 2020 goal; and to solicit feedback from countries and other stakeholders on the proposed plan for updating the GCO.

An additional section, *inter alia*, invites governments and other stakeholders to provide appropriate forms of assistance, within their capabilities, for the resolution's implementation.

Marine plastic litter and microplastics: This draft resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.12), which was accompanied by a report of the ED (UNEP/EA.2/5), was introduced in the COW on Tuesday, and discussed in Drafting Group 2. Many Member States voiced their support for the resolution, noting that it goes beyond national jurisdiction, and needed global, regional, inter-agency and multi-stakeholder solutions. The African Group and the NGO Major Group called for measures to address land-based sources of pollution, noting the links between these and marine plastic debris, with Nigeria and the Central African Republic suggesting enforcing the "extended producer responsibility" principle. The US expressed concern about the scope of the

proposed effectiveness assessment of relevant instruments on marine plastic debris and microplastics, suggesting instead an assessment of best practices at national and regional levels. The NGO Major Group called attention to potential environmental degradation due to practices at treatment centers for plastics.

Drafting Group 2 considered the text on Wednesday and Thursday. Concerns were raised about the scope of the proposed effectiveness assessment of relevant instruments on marine plastic debris and microplastics, proposing instead an assessment of best practices at national and regional levels. A decision was also taken to refer to "marine plastic litter" rather than "marine plastic debris." They also agreed that plastics in the marine environment "degrade extremely slowly" rather than "can persist up to a hundred years."

Final Outcome: The final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.12/Rev.1) notes the increased knowledge regarding the levels, sources, negative effects of, and possible measures to reduce marine plastic litter and microplastics in the marine environment, and recognizes the importance of cooperation between UNEP and the relevant conventions and international instruments.

The resolution calls on governments at all levels to further develop partnerships with industry and civil society and the establishment of public-private partnerships, and to organize and participate in annual campaigns for awareness-raising, prevention and environmentally sound clean-up of marine litter.

It further calls on product manufacturers and others to consider the lifecycle environmental impacts of products containing microbeads and compostable polymers, and on UNEP to assess the effectiveness of relevant international, regional and sub-regional governance strategies and approaches to combat marine plastic litter and microplastics.

Air quality: Following a presentation of the ED's report on strengthening the role of UNEP in promoting air quality (UNEP/EA.2/6) on Wednesday, the African Group referred to World Health Organization (WHO) data highlighting seven million deaths annually from air pollution. He called for dissemination of clean technologies, awareness raising and capacity development to reduce indoor and outdoor air pollution in Africa. The US highlighted the role of government regulation in the "dramatic" reduction of emissions of hazardous air pollutants in his country, noting it is possible to decouple pollution from economic development. Nigeria mentioned efforts to establish emission testing centers in his country.

There was no stand-alone resolution on this issue, which was included under the PoW. Although a separate resolution on sand and dust storms was adopted at UNEA-2, various delegates repeatedly stressed the link between these two areas of work.

Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA): The Secretariat introduced this agenda sub-item in the COW on Tuesday, noting the ED report (UNEP/EA.2/7) and the corresponding resolution on the sustainable and optimal management of natural capital for sustainable development and poverty eradication (UNEP/EA.2/L.14). The African Group called on Member States to take ecosystems into account in development planning, and requested additional funding to implement the draft resolution. The US registered concern about the draft, noting that it conflates the different issues relating to natural capital accounting, EbA, and sustainable resource management. The Russian Federation called

for UNEP's work on EbA to be guided by CBD principles, also noting similar work under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). There was no associated resolution on this issue.

Sustainable management of natural capital for sustainable development and poverty eradication:

Consideration of this resolution (UNEA/EA.2/L.14), which was sponsored by Botswana, the DRC, Kenya and Zimbabwe, began in Drafting Group 1 on Monday evening, with delegates from one region stating there was no agreed definition of "natural capital" and expressing concern about putting a value to nature, as well as the term "optimal management" in the original title of the resolution. Sponsoring countries underscored the importance of this issue for Africa, noting it aims to go beyond the concept of natural capital accounting to focus on adding value to their natural assets, highlighting that Africa currently loses about US\$196 billion a year of its environmental value.

On Wednesday evening, the group began consideration of a new draft of the resolution that was prepared in informal consultations. Delegates were unable to reach agreement on a paragraph containing compromise language to reflect the need to balance the concept of nature as an economic asset with the principles of the intrinsic value of nature, and national sovereignty. In the evening, following further consultations, an informal group reported that they had developed four alternative texts and were awaiting guidance from capitals on a possible compromise.

On Friday, the Drafting Group resumed discussion on a new preambular paragraph based on the four alternative texts. One country opposed mentioning national sovereignty, noting it sends the message that countries can ignore international obligations, and called for adding "subject to international obligations." Delegates agreed to incorporate a footnote explaining that "natural capital assets have different intrinsic values and are subject to national jurisdiction and sovereignty," within the paragraph.

During the closing plenary on Friday, Bolivia, speaking as an observer because they had not presented credentials, placed a reservation on the entire resolution and expressed suspicion about UNEA's green economy approach, which, she said, prioritizes short-term interests and promotes "a new colonialism" and alienation of indigenous peoples. Venezuela supported Bolivia's reservation, noting the lack of a clear definition of natural capital and stressing that the resolution seeks to commercialize nature, ignoring its intrinsic value and ecosystem functions. President Gutiérrez noted the reservation and said it would be included in the record of the meeting.

Final Outcome: The resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.14/Rev.2), *inter alia*:

- recalls GC Decision 27/8 and UNEA Resolution 1/10, which acknowledge that there are different approaches, visions, models and tools developed by UN Member States in order to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication;
- acknowledges that natural capital is a concept whose meaning is still under discussion;
- notes that natural capital and natural resource valuation and accounting mechanisms can help countries to assess and

appreciate the worth and full value of their natural capital and to monitor environmental degradation;

- takes note of relevant outcomes related to natural capital discussions, including the 15th session of AMCEN, the International Conference on Valuation and Accounting of Natural Capital for a Green Economy in Africa and the regional workshop for Europe and Central Asia on natural capital accounting, among others; and
- stresses that research and development, innovative technology, finance mobilization, capacity building and knowledge sharing among countries are important for the sustainable management of their natural capital.

The resolution invites Member States to:

- take measures to promote sustainable management of natural capital including protection of ecosystem services and their functions as part of the contribution to implementing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs; and
- incorporate information and knowledge on natural capital analyses into national accounts, development planning and decision making, especially through implementing the UN System of Environmental Economic Accounting.

The resolution requests UNEP to:

- continue to strengthen UNEP-led efforts, in partnership with Member States, including the Poverty-Environment Initiative, the Green Economy Advisory Services, and the Partnership for Action on Green Economy;
- in partnership with UN agencies and others, promote, *inter alia*: awareness of natural capital and respect for nature; public and private partnerships to promote sustainable management of natural capital, value addition and accounting, and reverse environmental degradation and biodiversity losses; and research and development and technological innovations, as well as the technical capacity to sustainably manage national natural capital; and
- report on progress of implementation, no later than 2019.

Global Environment Monitoring System/Water Programme (GEMS/Water):

The Secretariat introduced the ED report (UNEP/EA.2/8) in the COW plenary on Wednesday, noting that it contains a revised 2016-17 PoW, budget and progress report. The African Group welcomed GEMS/Water's contribution to SDG 6 on water and sanitation, and stressed the importance of ownership at the national and regional levels. There was no associated decision on this issue.

Roles of UNEP and UNEA in delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the ED's report (UNEP/EA.2/9) in the COW on "Different visions, approaches, models and tools to achieve environmental sustainability in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication," under the agenda sub-item, "Multiple pathways to sustainable development," noting that eight countries and the EU had submitted inputs. Egypt, for the African Group, highlighted related decisions of the 6th special session of AMCEN. Switzerland stressed that the UNEA outcome should focus on the role of UNEP in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda. Bolivia expressed concern about the focus on green economy approaches. The Workers and Trade Unions Major Group called for a just transition and for policy coherence to achieve the SDGs.

The Secretariat also introduced the report's associated draft resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.6), which was sponsored by the EU and initially titled "Roles of UNEP and UNEA in delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda."

Delegates undertook a first reading of the resolution in Drafting Group 1 on Monday, followed by informal consultations on Tuesday morning. Reporting back on these consultations, the EU noted delegates had discussed the structure and content of the resolution's preamble, and had begun identifying key issues for reflection in the operative section. Informal discussions resumed in the evening on the basis of an informal discussion paper prepared by the EU.

Delegates began a second reading of the resolution on Wednesday afternoon and agreed to conduct their discussions on the resolution's preambular paragraphs on the basis of a second informal document developed by the EU following the previous day's informal consultations. They reached agreement on eight of 14 proposed new preambular paragraphs, with text on involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the 2030 Agenda's implementation; the importance of human and indigenous rights, and gender equality; and the importance of creating synergies between the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement remaining bracketed.

New text introduced by an emerging economy on financial resources, capacity building and technology transfer also remained bracketed. Delegates agreed to have the set of new preambular paragraphs, including those that remained outstanding, replace the resolution's existing preamble.

On Thursday, delegates reached agreement on a paragraph emphasizing UNEP's important role "within its mandate" in follow up and review on the progress in implementing the environmental dimension of sustainable development, including the provision of policy-relevant information, through assessment processes, "which should support the follow up and review by the High-Level Political Forum [on Sustainable Development] (HLPF) of the 2030 Agenda." Following additional consultations, delegates agreed on compromise text on UNEP's role in the preparation and follow-up of the Habitat III Conference in October 2016 after omitting reference to the conference's outcome, as it was yet to be determined. They also agreed on paragraphs on: promoting synergies between MEAs, "recognizing their institutional independence"; and reflecting that the GEO process "covers the internationally agreed environmental goals." The Drafting Group resumed in the evening, agreeing to change the resolution's title, upon request of some developing countries, from "Roles of UNEP and UNEA in delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda" to "Delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" to reflect the integrated nature of sustainable development. They also reached agreement on all outstanding operative paragraphs and continued to discuss the resolution's preambular paragraphs.

Delegates discussed the resolution's final outstanding paragraphs on Friday. On recognizing the role of means of implementation, four different alternatives, tabled by various countries were considered. Unable to reach agreement on any of the proposals after additional consultations, delegates eventually agreed to insert paragraphs 40 and 41 of Agenda 2030, on

means of implementation, into the resolution's preamble, with some developed country delegates expressing stronger support for paragraph 40, while several developing countries supported reflecting the contents of paragraph 41.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.6/Rev.1), the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- recalls paragraphs 40 and 41 of the 2030 Agenda, which recognize, among other things, that the means of implementation targets under SDG 17 and under each SDG are key to realizing the 2030 Agenda and are of equal importance with the other Goals and targets; that the Agenda can be met within the framework of a revitalized global partnership for sustainable development, supported by the concrete policies and actions outlined in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA); that each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development; and the role of the private sector, civil society organizations and philanthropic organizations in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
- stresses the importance of respecting, protecting and promoting human rights and gender equality and recognizing the role of indigenous peoples and local communities in delivering the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda;
- calls upon UNEP to continue to play an active role in the preparation of the Habitat III Conference and its follow up;
- commits to contributing to the effective implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda in an integrated manner; and to convey the main messages of its sessions to the HLPF to support the Forum's follow up and review function;
- requests the ED of UNEP, "the leading global environmental authority," to enhance UNEP's activities, in cooperation with other UN entities, in support of the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda, taking into account the recommendations of the HLPF; and
- emphasizes that UNEP, within its mandate, has an important role in the follow up and review of the progress in implementing the environmental dimension of sustainable development, including the provision of policy relevant information, through assessment processes, all of which should support the overall follow up and review by the HLPF of the 2030 Agenda.

The resolution also, *inter alia*:

- encourages the ED to continue UNEP's work on indicators to support monitoring the delivery of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda; and to ensure that the GEO process takes into account the 2030 Agenda;
- invites MEAs to take into account relevant targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda in their reporting obligations under those agreements; and
- requests the ED prepare a report for consideration for UNEA-3 on UNEP's contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with a view to forwarding the report to the HLPF for its consideration.

Coordination across the UN system on environmental issues: The Secretariat introduced the ED's report (UNEP/EA.2/10) on Wednesday, noting the work of the Environmental

Management Group (EMG) toward UN-system coordination in the field of environment in relation to the 2030 Agenda.

The EU welcomed the launch of the UN Secretary-General's report on the UN System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment, adding that UNEA's role as the global environmental authority could have been reflected more prominently. The US applauded the EMG's soft approach to cooperation with UN agencies' governing bodies.

The UN Forum on Forests highlighted its participation in the EMG and its work on forest-related indicators in the SDGs.

There is no associated resolution on this issue.

Relationship between UNEP and the MEAs for which it provides the secretariat: This draft resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.20), proposed by the EU and previously discussed at the OECPR-2 in February, was taken up in plenary on Wednesday, with reference to the ED's report (UNEP/EA.2/11) and a Secretariat note (UNEP/EA.2/11/Add.1).

The EU sought to allay concerns of the African Group, the US, and Brazil that some of the proposed follow up actions could detract from the legal autonomy of the MEAs. Supported by Switzerland, the EU said the resolution is meant to facilitate cooperation between UNEP and the Conferences of the Parties (COPs), by providing clear arrangements. UNEP highlighted its ongoing project with the relevant COP Secretariats to review financial guidelines and introduce common financial standards that are based on International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

Delegates considered the text in a drafting group on Wednesday, then continued informal discussions to address concerns that the language was too prescriptive.

Final Outcome: The final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.20/Rev.1) notes, in the preambular section, that it is beneficial for individual governments to ensure that their national implementation of relevant UNEA resolutions and MEA decisions are mutually supportive.

The operative paragraphs are set out in four sections on institutional framework and accountability, administrative and financial framework, mutual supportiveness of PoWs, and future steps.

On institutional framework, UNEA requests UNEP to develop a draft template of options for the provision of secretariat services, for example, in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), for consideration by the MEA COPs. The resolution encourages UNEP to maintain the flexibility required on a case-by-case basis.

UNEA invites the governing bodies of MEAs to bring to UNEP's attention any administrative or financial challenges faced in implementing the MOUs, and to share good practices in budget and human resource management among themselves. UNEA requests UNEP to waive Programme Support Costs on voluntary contributions for participation costs when participation is arranged by administrative staff financed by the Programme Support Costs on the operating budget. The resolution also requests UNEP to prepare information for the governing bodies of the MEAs on the implications of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards on their operational budgets.

UNEA also requests UNEP to make available scientific information relevant to the work of the MEAs, in the framework of the 2030 Agenda, and to report on progress.

Synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions: This resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.19), which was accompanied by a report of the ED (UNEP/EA.2/12), was introduced to the COW on Tuesday, and sent to Drafting Group 3. The Secretariat also highlighted an options paper (UNEP/EA.2/12/Add.1) that provided details on actions that could be undertaken at the global, regional and national levels in relation to UNEP's cooperation with the governing bodies of MEAs. It was noted by delegates that efficiency could be improved at the national level if Member States would organize the biodiversity processes in a similar way to the chemicals and waste processes. Language concerning the transmission of results from the UNEP-led project on this subject to the COPs of biodiversity-related conventions proved to require the most discussion. Concern was also raised about the lack of clarity on the HLPF's role in follow-up and review at the global level in the final text.

Final Outcome: The final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.19/Rev.1) recognizes the opportunities for promoting synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions in the context of implementation of the 2030 Agenda and calls for the ED to, *inter alia*:

- strive to align the programme of work of UNEP with decisions and resolutions of the relevant COPs;
- cooperate with the Secretariats of the biodiversity-related MEAs and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) to facilitate the interoperability of data, information, knowledge and tools and enhance sharing of information; and
- facilitate collaboration among the biodiversity-related conventions and other relevant UN bodies to contribute to the follow-up and review process of the biodiversity-related SDGs.

Environmental law: This resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.21) on the "Mid-term review of the Montevideo Programme IV on Environmental Law," which was accompanied by a report of the ED (UNEP/EA.2/13), was introduced to the COW on Tuesday, and sent to Drafting Group 3. Member States highlighted the role of UNEP in supporting regional capacity building and training.

Final Outcome: The final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.21/Rev.1) emphasizes the need for activities in the field of environmental law to contribute to achieving the SDGs, and calls for, *inter alia*:

- Member States to designate national focal points for exchanging information and building capacities in order to collaborate with and guide UNEP; and
- the ED to produce guidance to Member States for effective legislative, implementation and enforcement frameworks, and to prepare an assessment of the implementation, effectiveness and impact of the fourth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law.

EMERGING AND OTHER RELEVANT ISSUES:
UNEP's implementation of the SAMOA Pathway: Samoa introduced their draft resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.5) in the COW on Monday, and it was forwarded to Drafting Group 1. Delegates

engaged in a first reading of the resolution on Monday evening and agreed on the vast majority of its paragraphs.

The resolution was considered again on Wednesday, with Drafting Group Co-Chair Korvenoja explaining that a small group had conducted informal discussions on the small number of paragraphs that remained open. Delegates agreed to replace one preambular paragraph on the UNEA-1 Ministerial Outcome Document, which recalled several of the document's different elements, with a paragraph focusing only on the document's outcome on UNEP's institutional strengthening. They also agreed to reformulate a paragraph on strengthening UNEP's regional presence to be in line with GC Decision 27/2. With deliberations on the UNEA cycle still ongoing, delegates agreed to include a general request to the ED to report to UNEA on progress in the resolution's implementation, without specifying at which session.

Delegates agreed to forward the resolution for adoption, and Samoa expressed its gratitude to the many Member States who had supported its resolution.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.5/Rev.1), the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- encourages Member States to support the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, particularly through partnerships on financing, trade, technology transfer, capacity building and institutional support;
- requests the ED to: incorporate actions that assist small island developing states (SIDS) in the implementation of the Pathway into UNEP's MTS and ongoing PoW; enhance the provision of support in areas covered by the Pathway's environmental dimension; facilitate learning, exchange of information and cooperation between SIDS, regions and other developing countries; and build national and subregional capacity for reporting against the Pathway and the SDGs;
- requests the ED to support SIDS in actions to implement the Pathway that will also contribute to achieving the SDGs; and
- recognizes that UNEA and its subsidiary bodies can serve as an important forum for facilitating, and sharing information on, the implementation of the Pathway's environmental dimension.

Investing in human capacity for sustainable development, through environmental education and training: On Monday, delegates agreed without further discussion to forward this draft resolution sponsored by Mongolia and Georgia (UNEP/EA.2/L.4) to Drafting Group 2. Introducing the resolution on Tuesday, Co-Chair Korvenoja noted it had been close to agreement at OECPR-2. Delegates reached quick agreement on preambular language and most of the operative paragraphs, and adopted new text referring to "access to" environmental education, training and capacity-building opportunities through continued UNEP support. They also agreed to state that such support include capacity building for integrating the environmental dimension in countries' curricula.

Delegates briefly returned to this resolution on Thursday and agreed to request the ED to report to UNEA on its implementation, without specifying at which UNEA session.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.4/Rev.2), the UNEA, *inter alia*, requests the ED to:

- continue to provide technical assistance and capacity building through access to environmental education, training

and capacity-building opportunities, including increased capacity development to help Member States to integrate the environmental dimension into their relevant curricula;

- promote cooperation and interaction between UNEP and the higher education community in mainstreaming environment and sustainability across education and training; and
- enhance cooperation with all relevant UN bodies and other international institutions for better implementation of the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development.

Supporting the Paris Agreement: This issue was introduced in the COW on Monday, under the title, "Promoting the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change," and discussed in Drafting Group 2 and informal consultations throughout the week. Addressing the draft resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.7), Nicaragua stated that the Paris Agreement is not legally in existence and thus cannot be implemented. Saudi Arabia stressed that UNEA should not upset the balance struck in Paris. Cuba, with Iran, Pakistan and Brazil, cautioned UNEA not to go beyond its remit by seeking to "cherry pick" from the agreement. Syria proposed referring to, *inter alia*, building national capacities, providing technical and financial assistance, and supporting countries to submit proposals to the Green Climate Fund. Uganda called for capitalizing on the momentum gained at the signing of the Paris Agreement to begin implementation. Switzerland proposed that the resolution should focus on UNEA's role in implementing the Agreement, including awareness-raising activities and work on SCP. As the proponent of the draft, the EU proposed to alter the title of the draft to "Support for the Paris Agreement."

In the drafting group, delegates established an informal group to discuss this, which presented agreed language to the Group on Friday. Delegates forwarded the draft to the COW for approval.

Final Outcome: The final resolution, titled "Supporting the Paris Agreement" (UNEP/EA.2/L.7/Rev.1), contains preambular language, *inter alia*, welcoming the adoption of the Paris Agreement, welcoming the adoption the 2030 Agenda, and welcoming also the adoption of the AAAA and taking note of the Sendai Framework for Disaster and Risk Reduction, and acknowledging that the UNFCCC is the main international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change and that the global nature of climate change calls for international cooperation while avoiding duplication of work. UNEA requests the UNEP ED to contribute to the implementation of pre-2020 global efforts to address climate change by, *inter alia*: strengthening efforts in education, training, public awareness, public participation, public access to information and cooperation; reinforcing and stepping-up UNEP's participation in partnership programmes and initiatives; and strengthening collaboration between UNEP and other relevant stakeholders on work on adaptation, mitigation and the transition to a sustainable future in a manner that reinforces synergies, avoids duplication, and maximizes efficiency and effectiveness.

Combating desertification, land degradation and sustainable management of rangelands: This resolution, which was introduced in the COW on Monday, was a merger of two initial draft texts: "Combating desertification and land

degradation and ensuring the sustainable management of rangelands” (UNEP/EA.2/L.24), proposed by Namibia and Sudan; and “Transformation of pastoralism towards sustainable development” (UNEP/EA.2/L.25), submitted by Ethiopia. Sudan and Namibia highlighted the importance of combating desertification to African countries, while Ethiopia, supported by the Indigenous Peoples and their Communities Major Group, called for more resources to be devoted to pastoralism issues and for the UN to designate an international year of pastoralists.

When the merged text (UNEP/EA.2/CRP.5) was introduced in Drafting Group 1 on Monday, with additional changes being introduced verbally by the sponsors, several delegates requested more time to review the text. The group worked late into the night on Tuesday and completed a first reading of the resolution on Wednesday, with some delegates noting they would need time to consult on unfamiliar concepts, such as “sustainable development of pastoralism.” While delegates broadly welcomed paragraphs highlighting the vulnerability of pastoralist and dryland communities and threats to traditional livelihoods and resilience, they deemed many proposed actions to be beyond UNEP’s remit, including: undertaking environmental and socio-economic assessments of soil erosion, land degradation, and land tenure security and water security in rangelands; and strengthening of the science-policy interface for sustainable pastoralism. Calls to the UNGA to designate an “International Year of Pastoralists and Rangelands” with an international day of pastoralism to be celebrated on 25 January were not retained.

Following agreement on most of the bracketed text on Wednesday evening, the group turned to the remaining three paragraphs on Thursday. The discussion focused on a paragraph calling for synergies with other relevant bodies, “including the ongoing assessment work of IPBES,” which was amended to explicitly refer to the ongoing IPBES assessment on land degradation. A paragraph requesting UNEP to consider hosting the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) regional office for Africa was also retained, with the proviso “subject to funding from the UNCCD.”

Final Outcome: The final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.28) welcomes the adoption of relevant international agreements, including: the 2030 Agenda and SDG 15 (terrestrial ecosystems); the UNCCD, and its land degradation neutrality target, and various African regional strategic frameworks and programmes. The resolution recognizes that healthy grassland and rangeland ecosystems are vital for contributing to economic growth, resilient livelihoods and the sustainable development of pastoralism, and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and that the benefits of taking action against land degradation by implementing sustainable land management activities are much higher than the costs of preventing land degradation.

Among its recommendations, the resolution calls on UNEP and its international partners to:

- contribute to strengthening existing global partnerships that promote a shared vision of resilient landscapes for resilient people and strengthen coordination in the fight against desertification and land degradation;
- support the UNCCD to facilitate the sharing of best practices for the development and implementation of strategic frameworks and early warning systems for enhanced disaster

risk management, sustainable land management, land restoration and resilience to drought;

- explore whether there are gaps in the current provision of technical support and environmental and socio-economic assessments of grasslands, rangelands, soil erosion, land degradation, land tenure security and water security in drylands, including the ongoing IPBES assessments; and
- contribute to the strengthening of the science-policy interface on sustainable pastoralism and rangelands.

The resolution also encourages Member States to, *inter alia*:

- invest in disaster risk management, early warning systems and safety-net programmes, as appropriate;
- build the capacity of and continue or increase investment in the pastoral livestock sector; and
- continue supporting the implementation of national, regional and global initiatives to combat desertification and land degradation and promote sustainable pastoralism, such as the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative in Africa, the New York Declaration on Forests, and the Bonn Challenge.

Sand and dust storms: This item (UNEP/EA.2/L.23) was introduced in the COW on Tuesday. Brazil requested clarification on the rationale for a stand-alone resolution, noting a CPR decision to include it under the PoW, also in light of a similar resolution in the UNGA. Supporting the resolution, Iran, with Syria, Iraq and Pakistan, stressed that existing programmes do not adequately address the multidimensional and transboundary nature of this growing environmental challenge. Noting that this issue is closely linked to UNEP’s work on air quality, the US, supported by the EU, favored retaining this resolution under the PoW. While supporting a broad programme on air quality, Nigeria stressed that such a programme should ensure adequate support for developing countries and address both indoor and outdoor sources of pollution.

During initial consideration of the resolution in Drafting Group 1 on Tuesday, several delegates said they had not anticipated the reintroduction of the resolution, recalling that it was withdrawn at OECPR-2. Delegations in favor of considering the text stressed the limited scope of relevant programmes in the PoW in light of the transboundary and interdisciplinary nature of the challenge faced by affected countries. The group agreed to carry out a first reading of the text to register their views, with some delegates calling for deletion of all paragraphs, or placing a reserve on the entire text. Following informal consultations on Wednesday and Thursday, the group managed to reach agreement on the remaining bracketed text on Friday, by rephrasing language calling on UNEP to “engage with all UN entities to support a UN system-wide approach to combatting sand and dust storms globally,” and agreeing not to specify that UNEP should report on progress “no later than 2019.”

Final Outcome: The resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.23/Rev.1) begins by recalling various global and regional agreements on this issue, and, *inter alia*:

- requests the ED, within the PoW and available resources, to address the challenges of sand and dust storms through identification of relevant data and information gaps, policy measures and actions, building on UNGA resolution 70/195 and UNEA 1/7;

- requests the ED to engage with all relevant UN entities to promote a coordinated approach to combatting sand and dust storms globally;
- invites Member States to intensify monitoring, data collection, and knowledge sharing on all relevant aspects of sand and dust; and
- invites Member States, regional development banks and others in a position to do so to contribute financial resources towards regional initiatives and projects to address the challenge of sand and dust storms.

Prevention, reduction and reuse of food waste: This resolution, which was sponsored by the US and initially titled “Wasted food reduction, rescue and diversion” (UNEP/EA2/L.10), was introduced in the COW on Tuesday and forwarded to Drafting Group 2. The US highlighted its links to SDG target 12.3. Egypt noted the need to avoid duplication with activities by other UN agencies and Nigeria suggested this resolution could be considered as a subset of the SCP resolution.

In Drafting Group 2, delegates considered the title of the draft, and agreed to rename it “Prevention, reduction and reuse of food waste.” In text recognizing that in developing countries, food waste and loss occur in the early stages of the food value chain, delegates debated language noting that this can be traced back to financial, managerial and technical constraints, and that these are mainly a concern of “agricultural actors most concerned with food and nutrition.” Some delegations, opposed by one, preferred to delete language that stressed nothing in the draft would be construed as creating technical trade barriers outside the scope of relevant World Trade Organization agreements. Delegates also debated whether to call on governments to participate in existing international efforts to better measure food loss and waste, and avoid greenhouse gas emissions. Many developing countries preferred to delete references to emissions, saying that there are no international agreements linking food waste to climate change, while some developed countries referred to the work of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) that links these two elements.

After informal consultations the Drafting Group agreed on a package to delete references to language emphasizing that “nothing in this resolution shall be construed as to create technical barriers outside the scope of relevant agreements” as well as references to the recognition of negative impacts of food loss including “the estimated 4.4 gigatonnes of CO₂ equivalent released annually as lost or wasted food decomposes.”

Final Outcome: The final resolution (UNEP/EA2/L.10/Rev.1) contains preambular text, *inter alia*, recognizing: that in developing countries food waste and losses occur mainly, but not exclusively, at early stages of the food value chain; and the key role that market-based incentives may play in reducing food loss and waste, taking into account differing national circumstances. In the resolution, UNEA, *inter alia*, invites governments, taking into account differing national circumstances to, among others, implement programmes including market-based incentives that reduce food lost and wasted at all stages of the food value chain; participate in existing international efforts regarding improved methodologies to better measure food loss, and waste generation; and engage in international cooperation with the objective of reducing and/or eradicating food loss resulting

from contamination at the production stage by sharing technical knowledge and good practices.

Sustainable coral reefs management: This resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.13) was introduced in the COW on Tuesday, and sent to Drafting Group 2. On Wednesday, delegates considered the importance of the resolution for, *inter alia*, the SDGs, and the effective conservation of marine and coastal zones was recognized, as well as the fact that there are numerous other global and regional processes and initiatives attempting to address this issue.

Final Outcome: The final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.13/Rev.1) noted existing recognition of the importance of coral reefs, and calls for, *inter alia*:

- governments to further develop partnerships with industry, including fisheries, aquaculture and tourism, and civil society, and the establishment of public-private partnerships;
- governments to prioritize coral reefs conservation and sustainable management, including through the establishment and active management of marine protected areas, as well as through other spatial and relevant sectoral approaches;
- UNEP to strengthen capacity building, knowledge transfer and the development of relevant planning tools to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change and human-based threats on coral reefs and related ecosystems; and
- UNEP to support the further development of coral reef indicators, regional coral reef assessments as well as the preparation of a global report on coral reef status and trends through the International Coral Reef Initiative Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network.

Protection of the environment in areas affected by armed conflict: This resolution, initially proposed by Ukraine (UNEP/EA.2/L.16), was introduced in the COW on Tuesday and forwarded to Drafting Group 3.

On Wednesday, during an initial reading of the draft resolution, delegates agreed on preambular text expressing deep concern about environmental damage inflicted by certain means and methods of warfare, but differed on including references to human displacement throughout the text. Delegates also differed on the extent to which text should explicitly outline UNEP’s potential activities in relation to protecting the environment in areas affected by armed conflict.

Following informal discussions to resolve outstanding issues, delegates revisited the draft text on Thursday, discussing whether proposed text on protecting the environment in times of armed conflict, “including from the impacts of human displacement resulting from armed conflict” could be interpreted as closing borders to refugees. They finally agreed to qualify this as “including from the unintended collateral impacts of human displacement.” On a call to Member States to “consider expressing consent to be bound by relevant international agreements they are not yet party to,” they agreed to refer instead to international “obligations.”

In plenary on Friday, Ukraine welcomed the constructive negotiations, and called for the record to note that Canada, EU, DRC, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and South Sudan had become co-sponsors of the resolution.

Final Outcome: The resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.16/Rev.1), *inter alia*:

- recognizes the role of healthy ecosystems and sustainably-managed resources in reducing the risk of armed conflicts;
- expresses deep concern about environmental damage inflicted by certain means and methods of warfare, in particular during armed conflict;
- recalls UNGA resolution 47/37, which urges Member States to take all measures to ensure compliance with the existing international law applicable to the protection of the environment in times of armed conflict;
- recognizes the significance of the work on environmental protection carried out in the framework of the UN system and within other international bodies, including the work of UNEP on providing assistance in monitoring, reducing and mitigating the impacts of environmental degradation from armed conflicts, and on post-conflict assessments, as well as its activities in response to crisis situations throughout the world;
- recognizes the need to mitigate and minimize the specific negative effects of environmental degradation, as well as to ensure the protection of the environment, in situations of armed conflicts and post-conflict situations on people in vulnerable situations;
- further recognizes the specific negative effects of environmental degradation on women and the need to apply a gender perspective with respect to the environment and armed conflicts; and
- emphasizes the need for raising greater international awareness of the issue of environmental damage during armed conflicts and the need to protect adequately the environment when affected by armed conflict.

The resolution also calls on UNEP, within available resources and in conformity with its mandate, and in collaboration with other stakeholders to:

- continue providing enhanced assistance to countries affected by armed conflict and countries in post-conflict situations, including those affected by the unintended collateral impacts of related human displacement, at their request, for post-crisis environmental assessment and recovery;
- continue providing enhanced assistance to countries within whose territory natural World Heritage Sites affected by armed conflict are located, including those affected by the environmental impacts of the illegal exploitation of natural resources, at those states' request; and
- continue to interact with the International Law Commission, *inter alia*, by providing relevant information to the Commission at its request in support of its work pertaining to the protection of the environment in relation to armed conflict.

Field-based environmental assessment of the Gaza Strip

Strip: On Tuesday, Morocco introduced the draft resolution "Field-based environmental assessment of the effects after the November 2012 and July and August 2014 wars on the Gaza Strip" (UNEP/EA.2/L.17) on behalf of the Arab States, noting its intention to request UNEP to deploy environmental experts to the Gaza Strip, update its desk study on this topic, and submit a report on implementation of its recommendations. Many countries, including Venezuela, Egypt, Nicaragua, South Africa,

Djibouti, Lebanon, Oman and Algeria, supported the resolution. Egypt stated that it is within UNEP's mandate to conduct environmental assessment missions in such areas where deemed necessary by the country under consideration. The resolution was forwarded to Drafting Group 3.

With several countries expressing reservations over the entire text and little progress made in informal negotiations, Morocco withdrew the resolution and the drafting group began consideration of an alternative resolution (UNEP/EA.2/CRP.6), sponsored by the Group of 77 and China (G-77/China). Two developed countries reserved the text in its entirety, while a third delegate suggested amendments to reduce the text to a minimum, to increase the likelihood of its adoption.

On Friday, Drafting Group 3 Co-Chair Khashashneh informed the drafting group that informal consultations on the new draft resolution had failed to make progress, and proposed forwarding the draft to the COW, as originally submitted by the G-77/China.

Reporting back to the COW, Khashashneh noted that despite all-night negotiations on Thursday as well as on Friday morning, the group was unable to reach agreement on the revised text proposed by G-77/China. Stating that no draft resolution had been agreed, COW Chair Eidheim called for delegates to restrict their comments to the Drafting Group Co-Chair's report.

Israel said there was no scientific basis for singling out Gaza, and stressed there is no room for a political resolution in UNEP and UNEA. He asserted that the Member States responsible for drafting the resolution "will have the shame of driving UNEA to a vote, and for turning UNEA into the 'Gaza Summit'."

Various delegations, including Morocco, Bolivia, Turkey, Algeria, Jordan, Oman, Bahrain, Egypt, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Djibouti, Kuwait, Malaysia, Iraq, United Arab Emirates and Syria expressed their support for the draft resolution. Cuba called for the COW report to note that his country was also co-sponsoring the resolution.

In response to a question from Syria on the final format of the COW report and whether it would be open to editorial corrections, the Secretariat informed delegates that in line with normal procedure, the report of the closing COW session would be reviewed by the Rapporteur, following which it would be available to Member States for comment.

Final Outcome: The draft resolution was not adopted, due to lack of consensus. An account of discussions that followed in the UNEA-2 plenary can be found in the Closing Plenary section of this report (see page 17).

Application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in the Latin America and Caribbean Region: This resolution, (UNEP/EA.2/L.29) on access to information, public participation and access to justice was proposed by Chile and Costa Rica in plenary on Wednesday, and was addressed in Drafting Group 3 on Wednesday and Thursday nights. Delegates discussed whether to include language on the right to a clean environment, and the right to access to information. They also debated whether this should be a global or a regionally-specific resolution.

Final Outcome: The resolution (UNEP/EA.2/CRP.4) incorporates "in the Latin America and Caribbean Region" in the title. The preambular text emphasizes that broad public participation and access to information and judicial

and administrative proceedings are essential for sustainable development. The document references the UNEP GC's February 2010 voluntary Guidelines for the Development of National Legislation on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Bali Guidelines), and commitments contained in the Rio+20 outcome document and the 2030 Agenda. The resolution also notes national and regional-level achievements, as well as ongoing challenges with regard to the implementation of those rights and the specific circumstances of each country,

UNEA encourages countries to continue their efforts in support of implementing Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, and strengthening environmental rule of law at the international, regional and national levels. The resolution also notes the progress made in the Latin American and Caribbean region to advance the development of a regional agreement on access to information, public participation, and access to justice in environmental matters.

MTS, POW AND BUDGET: This issue was considered in the COW on Tuesday, and in Drafting Group 3 for the remainder of the week. In the COW, the Secretariat introduced the background documents (UNEP/EA.2/14 and 15, and INF/10 and INF/11). The Secretariat noted that the draft decision on the 2018-19 PoW and budget, reflected in UNEP/EA.2/L.22, continues UNEP's transition to a resource-based budgeting approach. The Secretariat highlighted that revisions to the PoW and budget for the biennium 2016-17 followed UNGA's approval in December 2015 of a regular UN appropriation, which was lower than the estimated budget amount. Japan welcomed the resource-based budgeting approach. The African Group, supported by Switzerland, urged Member States to increase support, in light of UNEP's new commitments under the SDGs. The EU, supported by Switzerland, noted that UNEP needs secure, stable and adequate financial resources, especially in the Environment Fund, to achieve its objectives, and supported the nominal growth budget proposed.

In drafting group discussions, delegates focused on whether references to the voluntary indicative contributions (VICs) should be retained, with some developed country delegates arguing that transparently referencing the VICs in this resolution was crucial to obtaining funding from governments suffering from budgetary constraints, while other developed countries advocated more general reference to UNEP needing to adopt innovative fundraising methods. Developing countries also differed in their support for deleting or retaining reference to VICs. Delegates further considered this and other issues in informal consultations, after which the group agreed to forward the draft to the COW for approval, noting bracketed text in a request to the Secretariat to submit a prioritized, results-oriented and streamlined PoW for the period 2020–2021 to UNEA “at its next session,” pending agreement on the decision on the UNEA cycle.

In the COW on Friday, delegates approved the decision, and UNEA adopted it, deleting brackets around text concerning the need for the Secretariat to submit a streamlined PoW for the period 2020-2021 at its next session.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.22/Rev.1), the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- approves the 2018-2021 MTS and the PoW and budget for the biennium 2018-2019;
- also approves appropriations for the Environment Fund in the amount of US\$271 million, of which a maximum of US\$122 million is allocated to defraying staffing costs for the biennium for activities related to climate change, resilience to disasters and conflicts, healthy and productive ecosystems, environmental governance, chemicals, waste and air quality, resource efficiency, and environment under review;
- emphasizes the need for comprehensive information, and full justification, regarding proposed expenditures and contributions from all sources of funding, including staffing information, to be provided to the CPR well in advance of its consideration of the PoW and budget;
- stresses the need for the PoW and budget to be based on results-based management;
- encouraged by its universal membership, urges Member States and others in a position to do so to increase their voluntary contributions to UNEP, notably the Environment Fund; and
- notes the positive effect of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions to broaden the base of contributions to, and to enhance predictability in the voluntary financing of, the Environment Fund, and requests the ED to continue adapting the voluntary indicative scale of contributions.

Management of trust funds and earmarked contributions: This issue was addressed in the COW on Tuesday, and considered in Drafting Group 3. The Secretariat introduced the ED's report (UNEP/EA.2/17) and the corresponding resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.27). The African Group noted that the Secretariat had not previously provided the document to Member States, as required, and urged that this procedural irregularity be avoided in future. In the drafting group, the Secretariat introduced the draft, dated 23 May, noting its procedural nature, in conformity with UN regulations, and saying that while it had not been presented to the CPR, it had been shared online. Some delegations said the fact that the resolution is procedural does not preclude delegates from discussing and amending it. During further discussions, the Secretariat presented a non-paper containing, among others, a proposal to amend the draft to include reference to the importance of the principle of cost recovery in relation to administrative costs when UNEP carries out the functions of the secretariat of an MEA or process.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.27/Rev.1), UNEA notes that, in line with UN Financial Regulations and Rules, the administrative costs of agreements for which UNEP carries out the functions of the secretariat must be based on the principle of cost recovery; and requests the ED to prepare a report highlighting the challenges of managing multiple trust funds and to propose steps that could be taken to reduce the administrative burden of maintaining these trust funds.

UNEA then approved the extension of a number of trust funds in support of UNEP's PoW; and noted and approved trust funds on regional seas programmes, conventions, protocols and special funds.

Review of cycle of the UNEA of UNEP: The Secretariat introduced the draft resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.26) on Tuesday in the COW. The African Group, supported by the EU, expressed strong support for bringing forward the next UNEA to the second

half of 2017, noting that the timing of UNEA meetings does not align with broader UN budgeting processes, which has meant that previous PoWs had suffered from funding lapses. The US, supported by Switzerland, indicated concerns over cost, and whether there would be enough substance for a full UNEA if held in 2017. Switzerland proposed holding a shortened, focused UNEA-3 in 2018, with a full UNEA-4 in 2019. The resolution was forwarded to Drafting Group 3, which first considered the resolution on Monday evening.

In a report-back to the COW on Wednesday, Drafting Group 3 Co-Chair Khashashneh said that, after intense discussions, the group had agreed to amend the procedures for electing Bureau members, to enable the election to take place at the end of each UNEA session. He said the group had yet to resolve the question of whether to hold the next UNEA session in 2017 or 2018.

UNEA-2 Chair Gutiérrez reconvened the plenary on Wednesday evening to establish a working party to amend the Rules of Procedure to permit a change in the timing of Bureau members' election and commencement of service. He invited all regional groups to nominate two representatives to the working party, co-chaired by Konrad Paulsen Rivas (Chile) and Jolyon Thompson (UK).

The Drafting Group considered the resolution again Thursday morning. They were advised that the UNEA Bureau favored 2018 as the timing for the next Assembly. Delegates differed on whether it would be preferable to hold the Assembly in 2017 or 2018, with some proponents of 2018 noting this would allow sufficient time to finalize GEO-6 before the next Assembly. An informal group was established for further deliberation, and the drafting group took up the issue again in the evening.

On Friday, an emerging economy delegation noted their preference to hold UNEA-3 in 2019 in order to allow time for: Member States to implement, and UNEP to review progress on, UNEA-2's resolutions; and the incoming ED to determine UNEP's new direction. Another delegation stressed the importance of environmental multilateralism, and opposed postponing UNEA-3 to 2019.

Drafting Group Co-Chair Enders noted that UNEA's Rules of Procedure hold that each UNEA has to decide when the next UNEA is held, and urged delegates to reach agreement.

Resuming the discussions after additional consultations, the EU announced the European Commission's contribution of US\$500,000 to a "lean and mean" UNEA-3, consisting of 3-4 days, in 2017. While welcoming this offer, some delegations noted it did not address all their concerns. Different delegates stressed it would be undesirable to have to put the issue to a plenary vote if the drafting group was unable to agree.

Following additional internal consultations, a developed country said its delegation could agree to a 2017 UNEA-3 on condition that the resolution recognizes that the costs of a 2017 UNEA and OECPR session have not been reflected in UNEP's 2016-2017 budget and invites Member States to contribute to the meeting's budgetary shortfall. Delegates agreed on the resolution.

During the closing COW, the US said it would not stand in the way of consensus, but highlighted "significant problems" in holding UNEA-3 in 2017, and anticipated not being able to contribute to the budget needed for the conference. The

EU underlined the technical budgetary and policy need to change the UNEA cycle to odd years and reiterated its pledge of US\$500,000 for a "lean and mean" UNEA-3, subject to its normal legislative procedures. Switzerland supported the resolution with the understanding that it did not entail that the GEO-6 report would have to be adopted in 2017.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution (UNEP/EA.2/L.26), the UNEA, *inter alia*:

- decides to hold its regular sessions in odd numbered years commencing with its third session in 2017; and that this cycle shall also apply to the OECPR;
- further decides that, on an exceptional basis, OECPR-3 and UNEA-3 shall each consist of a three-day meeting and will be convened back-to-back in order to minimize financial costs;
- recognizes that the cost of the 2017 UNEA session and the 2017 OECPR have not been reflected in UNEP's 2016-2017 PoW and budget, and encourages Member States and others in a position to do so to contribute funds for the convening of these meetings; and
- requests the ED to present to UNEA-3, where applicable, updates on the implementation of the UNEA-2 resolutions; and decides to defer the formal consideration of the reports by the ED to UNEA-4.

SYMPOSIA AND EVENTS

Two symposia took place on Wednesday on "Mobilizing Investment for Sustainable Development" and "Environment and Displacement: Root Causes and Implications." A full account of the "Environment and Displacement" symposium is available at <http://www.iisd.ca/vol16/enb16133e.html>

A Sustainable Innovation Expo took place in parallel with the COW, bringing together business leaders to discuss resource-efficient and cleaner solutions and technologies, and to engage with governments. The Expo comprised nine panel discussions on the topics of: South-South cooperation; big data and innovation; air quality; sustainable energy and technology; women entrepreneurs; waste management; investing in the global commons; urban world 2030; and oceans and the blue economy. A Business Dialogue for Environmental Sustainability also took place on Wednesday.

Conclusions from the symposium on "Mobilizing Investment for Sustainable Development" and the business dialogue that also took place on Wednesday were further discussed at the ministerial luncheon on Thursday. An account of that discussion is available at <http://www.iisd.ca/vol16/enb16134e.html>

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

The two-day High-Level Segment opened on Thursday. Proceedings of the first day included the opening plenary, ministerial luncheon and all-day dialogues. A full report is available at <http://www.iisd.ca/vol16/enb16134e.html>

On Friday, a policy review session introduced the findings of the "Healthy Environment, Healthy People" report. Ministers and high-level delegates then took part in parallel roundtable sessions on the theme.

A draft ministerial outcome statement was discussed informally during the week, and in a small informal group as the Friday evening closing plenary stretched on into the early hours of Saturday. The document was not brought to plenary.

MINISTERIAL POLICY REVIEW SESSION: UNEA-2 President Gutiérrez opened the session on Friday, highlighting that although progress has been made in improving health care worldwide, health risks due to environmental factors like air pollution and climate change are on the rise. He called for coordination in the work of the BRS Conventions, the Minamata Convention, and in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as a means of addressing some of these challenges.

In his opening address, UNEP ED Steiner pointed to the “Healthy Environment, Healthy People” report (UNEP/EA.2/INF/5), and noted that it was a joint effort between UNEP, WHO, CBD and other organizations, illustrating the dynamic nature of the 2030 Agenda. He called for a shift from clinical methods of addressing zoonotic diseases to more holistic approaches, stressing the need to include impacts to the environment in policy making on health.

Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and the UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy on El Niño and Climate, welcomed UNEA’s focus on the cross-cutting issues of environment, health and development, underlining the insidious nature of climate change to all sectors of development. She described the Paris Agreement as a treaty for climate, human rights, economics and good governance. She called for: greater linkages at the international level to mainstream climate action, recognition of the links between climate, health and development; creating spaces to listen to the voices of those at the frontlines of climate change at the local level; and getting into a “1.5°C mindset” by ensuring that fossil fuels stay in the ground.

In a video message, Margaret Chan, Director-General, WHO, lamented the increase in preventable diseases caused by air pollution and exposure to hazardous chemicals, drawing attention to the 12.6 million deaths per year due to environmental degradation, and stressed the need to engage with the energy, transport and environment sectors to effectively address the health-environment nexus.

Petteri Taalas, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), called for increased partnerships to ensure access to meteorological services for developing countries to assist in planning for extreme events that contribute to human and economic losses; highlighted the need to invest in greenhouse gas monitoring systems at the national level; and underlined the importance of addressing global warming in order to better manage human health, ensure food security, and limit climate refugees.

In a keynote address, Andy Haines, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, drew attention to the environmental challenges that pose a risk to global health, including loss of pollinator species, forest loss, water shortages, ocean acidification, temperature changes, and zoonotic diseases. He welcomed the calls in UNEP’s Global Thematic Report to: decarbonize to reduce climate change risks; decouple economic growth from environmental degradation; detoxify economies; and enhance ecosystem resilience. He also highlighted: the development of healthy and sustainable cities; the need to take into account the economic benefits of addressing environmental challenges; mitigating short-lived climate pollutants; and reducing food waste and promoting healthy diets. He described

the SDGs as a framework to tackle health and environment challenges, and underscored the need for inter-ministerial cooperation to address health challenges, noting that decisions taken at UNEA will affect global health for generations to come.

MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE 1: Co-Chair Massoumeh Ebtekar, Vice President and Head of the Environment Department, Iran, opened the first Ministerial Roundtable on the theme of “Healthy Environment, Healthy People.” She noted that more work is needed on the connection between environmental and human health, and called for continued collaboration between UNEA and WHO on the scientific connection between these two issues. Co-Chair Daniel Ortega Pacheco, Minister of Environment, Ecuador, spoke on the well-established link between climate change and human health, especially in child mortality. He gave examples from Ecuador’s constitution, which recognizes the rights of nature and multi-dimensional approaches to reducing poverty.

Omar Abdi, Deputy Director-General, UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), stated that children are more affected by environmental pollution, including indoor and outdoor air pollution, and unsafe water and sanitation. He also noted that children have less access to effective healthcare, and awareness raising on this issue is needed as countries implement the Paris Agreement.

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary, CBD, said that, despite good intentions over the past 50 years, many environmental health issues remain around the world. He noted the synergistic impacts of environmental degradation on human health, such as the spread of diseases and their vectors. He also called for society to re-establish connections with microorganisms through effective environmental stewardship that would allow for greater exposure to healthy environments such as green spaces, and reduce the dependence on antibiotic and disinfectant use.

Leonardo Trasande, Associate Professor, New York University School of Medicine, noted that “prevention works,” stating that the removal of lead from gasoline equated to a US\$2 trillion stimulus to the global economy in the form of healthier labor forces. He said that the next challenge is in removing lead from paint, and stated that children are the “sustainable resource for future economic development.”

Statements were then made by the US, Switzerland, Turkey, Fiji, Colombia, Brazil, Spain, Venezuela, Bangladesh, Sweden and France. Many recognized the link between human health and, *inter alia*, air and water quality, heavy metals, climate change and marine plastic debris, and reported on national activities. Calls were also made for stronger collaboration between UNEP and WHO, with a number noting that UNEA and the World Health Assembly were being held concurrently, which does not help dialogue between the two bodies.

MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE 2: This session was co-chaired by Jochen Flasbarth, State Secretary, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, Germany, and Edna Molewa, Minister of Environmental Affairs, South Africa.

Yannick Glemarec, Deputy Executive Director, UN Women, highlighted the disproportionate impact of indoor air pollution on women and children, stressing the world cannot afford to wait

until the middle of the 22nd century to achieve universal access to clean cooking energy. Highlighting opportunities to leapfrog this problem by supporting female entrepreneurs to roll out “smart” mini-grids, especially in rural areas, he said FAO data shows that reducing the gender gap in agriculture could enhance the productivity of women small-scale farmers in sub-Saharan Africa by almost 25%, with clear benefits in food security, health and energy access. He further noted that the types of activities needed to address the gender gap “are exactly the same as those needed for climate-smart agriculture.”

Tina Birmpili, Executive Secretary, Ozone Secretariat, discussed the contribution of the ozone treaties to solving problems across diverse sectors, describing how the phase out of ozone-depleting substances has spurred green technologies, as well as “more than 2.2 trillion dollars in savings” due to avoided damage to health, fisheries, agriculture and other sectors. She concluded that such systemic approaches are highly relevant to the 2030 Agenda as they demonstrate that working on SDG 3 on health and wellbeing also contributes to the overall living environment.

Jane Nishida, Chairperson, Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint, referred to WHO estimates that 140,000 people die annually due to exposure to lead paint, noting that this problem could be solved by 2020 if all stakeholders adopt the same approach used in the successful UNEP campaign to eliminate lead in fuels. She highlighted two new policy tools developed by the voluntary partnership: a UNEP report on the status of lead regulation; and an interactive online map providing data on the costs of childhood lead exposure around the world.

Presenting their country statements, various ministers highlighted country-level efforts, including measures to align national programmes and legislation to global mechanisms such as the Minamata Convention or UNEP’s e-mobility initiative, and using public procurement policies to promote SCP. Among efforts at regional level, they highlighted examples of relevant initiatives, including: the BRICS Green Technology Platform that serves Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa; the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution; and the UN Economic Commission for Europe’s Protocol on Water and Health. Several African countries called for renewed attention to the Bamako Convention on hazardous waste, which entered into force in 1998.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE: This dialogue on “Restoring and Sustaining Healthy Ecosystems for People and Planet: Partnerships to Jointly Deliver on the Environmental Dimension of Agenda 2030” was moderated by Sharon Dijkema, State Secretary, Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, Netherlands, and Andrew Steer, CEO, World Resources Institute, who invited the high level participants and audience members to give their views on ways in which partnerships can advance the 2030 Agenda.

Inger Anderson, Director General, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) called for enlarging the circle of stakeholders to bring along the broader community. Jochen Flasbarth, State Secretary, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety of Germany, noted the German government benefited enormously from

stakeholder engagement and highlighted a technique it had introduced to access a broader range of views, namely the inclusion of “random citizens” in their stakeholder engagement sessions. Joan Carling, Secretary-General, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, highlighted the need for clear political commitment to create an enabling environment for civil society.

Karmenu Vella, European Commissioner, Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, said that the EU engages with partnerships during both policy-making and implementation phases. Julius Arinaitwe, Regional Director for Africa, BirdLife International, noted that effective partnerships started at the local level. John Scanlon, Secretary-General, CITES, noted that illegal trade in wildlife has recently been on a transnational, industrial scale, leading to a devastating impact on animals and plants but also on local communities. He said CITES recognized that they could not tackle the issue alone and had leveraged action by developing a very effective partnership with Interpol, the World Customs Organization, the World Bank, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Mark Halle, Director, Trade and Investment, International Institute for Sustainable Development, noted that the UN needs to broaden its stakeholder engagement beyond the usual channels and called for UNEA to be a forum for brokering partnerships, which would then report back on a regular basis. In the discussion, the World Farmers Organization called on stakeholder groups to be vocal in drawing links between environment, food and development.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT POLICY

This issue continued to be discussed informally at UNEA-2, based on intersessional work facilitated by UNEA-1 President Oyun Sanjaasuren (Mongolia), and CPR Chair Julia Pataki (Romania). In their opening statement on Monday, Major Groups and Stakeholders, alluding to the remaining issue of contention, said they would reject the Stakeholder Engagement Policy if it includes the proposed “no-objection rule,” which, they said, would amount to a silent veto. Several delegations, including the EU and Mexico, expressed their support for a strong policy and called for a resolution of this long-standing issue.

On Wednesday, in response to a question from the African Group, COW Chair Idunn Eidheim informed delegates that the Stakeholder Engagement Policy would be considered during the closing plenary on Friday afternoon. This issue remains unresolved.

CLOSING PLENARY

UNEA-2 President Gutiérrez reconvened the plenary at 4:20 pm on Friday afternoon and approved the credentials report from the Bureau serving as the Credentials Committee. The Bureau had accepted the credentials of 149 Member States and determined that the representatives of 13 Member States participating without formal credentials should be admitted as observers, without being entitled to vote.

COW PLENARY: COW Chair Eidheim then convened the COW plenary. The COW heard interventions from countries, including a statement from Israel protesting the resolution on “Field-based environment assessment of the Gaza strip.” Bolivia and Venezuela raised concerns about the resolution on “Sustainable management of natural capital for sustainable

development and poverty eradication.” The COW approved the draft resolutions, with the exception of the Gaza Strip resolution, which was forwarded to the UNEA-2 plenary.

The resolutions included an agreement to change the UNEA cycle so that future meetings will take place in odd, not even years, with the next meeting to take place in late 2017. Delegates forwarded the resolutions to the UNEA-2 plenary for adoption.

Delegates adopted the Report of the COW (UNEP/EA.2/CW/L.1). Noting the difficult issues entrusted to the COW, Eidheim thanked all delegates for their support and constructive spirit, which had enabled the work of the COW to be completed. She gavelled the COW plenary to a close at 8:42 pm.

UNEA-2 PLENARY: Gutiérrez then convened the UNEA-2 plenary. He gavelled through agreement on 24 resolutions and two decisions on the provisional agenda, date and venue of UNEA-3 (UNEP/EA.2/CRP.8), and on the Rules of Procedure (UNEP/EA.2/CRP.7). The Gaza Strip resolution (UNEP/EA.2/CRP.6) remained outstanding.

Delegates then heard reports from the two parallel ministerial roundtables on “Healthy Environment, Healthy People.”

Following the reports, delegates addressed the draft resolution on “Field-based environment assessment of the Gaza Strip.” Israel called for a vote, and the US called for withdrawal of the resolution. Syria asked for clarification of the consequences, if delegates were to move a motion of “no action.” Towards midnight, plenary was suspended to allow the parties concerned to consult among themselves. The G-77/China announced they would not withdraw the resolution. The US then called for a procedural vote on whether or not to proceed to a substantive vote on the Gaza resolution.

After some clarification of procedure, delegates voted on whether they wished to proceed to a substantive vote on the Gaza resolution, by holding up pink cards distributed by the Secretariat. Many countries abstained from the vote. At 1:00 am on Saturday, UNEP ED Steiner announced the results of the procedural vote: 36 in favor, four against, and 35 abstentions. He explained that UNEA’s Rules of Procedure require a quorum of 97 for the result to be valid, and the quorum has not been reached in this case. Egypt questioned the interpretation of the quorum rule, with Pakistan suggesting the number required for a quorum equates to one-third of members. Jorge Laguna-Celis, Secretary of UNEP Governing Bodies, apologized for the error, saying there were sufficient numbers to proceed. The US disagreed, stating that 97 votes were required, and moved to suspend the session in the absence of a quorum.

The plenary came to a halt as delegates discussed on the sidelines whether or not the meeting had formal status. Approaching 2:00 am, President Gutiérrez called for a Bureau meeting. At 2:30 am, the Bureau returned and Gutiérrez announced that the Secretariat would conduct a roll call to ascertain if a quorum was present.

The Secretariat proceeded to conduct the roll call, and reported the tally of those present as 78. Laguna-Celis explained that for voting to take place, at least half of the 193 UNEA Member States must be present. He noted that only a third of UNEA’s membership is required to open a session, and stated that the current session was thus legal, according to UNEA’s Rules of Procedure.

UNEA-2 President Gutiérrez then proposed adjourning the meeting, given the late hour, and reconvening at 11:00 am. Egypt said that this would go against the UNEA-1 resolution setting UNEA-2’s date and venue.

Colombia, supported by Argentina, Egypt and Syria, assured Gutiérrez of his country’s support throughout his UNEA presidency, noting the “poor advice” from the Secretariat in the final hours, and calling on him to “turn UNEA around.”

Pakistan, with Egypt and Syria, said that all the resolutions passed had no legal basis and are null and void as no head count was previously taken. They questioned the credentials of the Israeli delegate who had called for the vote.

The EU expressed appreciation to the UNEA-2 President, noted that the 24 resolutions passed are valid as there was no question of there being a lack of quorum at the time of their adoption. He praised ED Steiner for his leadership and vision over the last ten years, and reiterated the EU’s commitment to UNEP and UNEA. Many delegates welcomed the adopted resolutions and expressed the appreciation for the work of UNEP and ED Steiner’s contributions.

Cuba said the Secretariat’s interpretation of the Rules of Procedure had compromised transparency, and stressed the need to strengthen UNEP and capitalize on the good decisions reached during UNEA-2. Pakistan paid tribute to ED Steiner and UNEA President Gutiérrez Espeleta and, noting this humanitarian issue remains very important, proposed the discussion on Gaza be reflected in the conference proceedings.

Egypt thanked Steiner for his efforts and cooperation and said that the report of UNEA-2 should reflect precisely what had taken place. South Sudan commended the adoption of over 20 resolutions and Steiner’s excellent stewardship, including on the issue of post-conflict environmental assessment from which his country has benefited. Norway said the adoption of so many resolutions was a testament to what can be achieved together, and demonstrated the need for a strong UNEP and effective UNEA.

Switzerland stressed his country’s continued commitment to UNEA as an anchor of environmental governance and expressed confidence in the strengthening of UNEA and UNEP. Emphasizing that the meeting’s results were very satisfactory, Mexico expressed support for Gutiérrez Espeleta’s presidency, and recalled how far UNEP had come under Steiner’s leadership. Morocco, for the Arab League, called on delegates to unite to push UNEA forward in this difficult moment.

Steiner thanked delegates for “an extraordinary week.” He said he wished the outcome on the Gaza resolution could have been a different one, and stressed UNEP’s mandate to assist all the world’s people. Observing that delegates were “taking care of UNEA,” he expressed confidence that the Assembly would continue to grow. He thanked delegates for their kind words over the course of the meeting, and said he was leaving UNEP “with pride.”

Gutiérrez noted delegates’ support to close the meeting. UNEA-2 Rapporteur Roxane de Bilderling (Belgium) presented the report of the meeting (UNEP/EA.2/L.1), which delegates adopted, with a reservation from Egypt until the document had been considered by his delegation.

Gutiérrez gavelled the meeting to a close at 3:56 am.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF UNEA-2

From the outset, UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner described UNEA as the “world’s parliament” on the environment and urged UNEA delegates to “speak in unity with very clear voices.” Yet despite best intentions, as is the case in many national parliaments, consensus proved to be a rare commodity for much of the week. The final UNEA plenary session, where delegates argued over a resolution and related procedural issues until 4:00 am, underscored that parliaments also provide a venue for divisive debate, often about issues tangential to core objectives. This brief analysis looks beyond the sound and fury of the final session to consider whether UNEA-2 achieved its key objectives: advancing delivery of the environmental dimension of Agenda 2030; promoting partnerships; and getting its future work programmes and funding in place.

ADVANCING THE ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION OF THE 2030 AGENDA

The most significant issue of substance at UNEA-2 was how large a role UNEP should play in advancing the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. The overarching theme for the UNEA’s High-Level Segment, spanning two days of discussions and engagement by ministers, was “delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” At OECPR-2 in February, delegates had felt that the relationship between UNEA and the HLPF was not clearly articulated and that UNEA needed to engage on that issue.

Opinion was divided on just how big a role UNEA could play. A number of countries were pushing for UNEA to step up considerably from the previous UNEP Governing Council’s somewhat programme-focused role and to actively seek to influence other UN agencies’ environmental actions. US and Latin American delegates had a more modest vision and wished to see an organization that coordinated environmental information and perspectives for the HLPF to feed into its deliberations. They rejected any UNEA role that would direct other UN agencies, such as the FAO, on how they should engage with environmental issues. This concern also manifested itself in discussions about synergies with other MEAs, where the US frequently pushed back on EU- and Swiss-sponsored resolutions that they regarded as too prescriptive.

As a result, while the resolution succeeded in setting out more clearly UNEA’s expected working relationship with the HLPF and other UN agencies, UNEA and UNEP’s roles are clearly constrained, with significant emphasis on information provision. The resolution notes the importance of the science-policy interface and Global Environment Outlook as a contribution to the annual Sustainable Development Report, “(to) support the overall follow up and review by the HLPF of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” The resolution also affirms an important role for the UNEP-chaired Environmental Management Group, through its coordination of the “System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment for the United Nations system,” which was launched at UNEA-2. Most delegates considered, however, that it was difficult to be precise at this point about how UNEA would contribute to the HLPF’s monitoring and review of the SDGs, given the fact that the HLPF has yet to articulate in detail its own approach.

Despite such constraints—and in contrast to the formal “output” of resolution text—UNEA-2 successfully promoted discussion of the environmental dimension in areas of work not traditionally associated with UNEP. The symposium on “Environment and Displacement,” which drew many high-level participants, pointed to environmental degradation and natural resource scarcity as important reasons behind conflict and migration, and the resulting surge of prejudice and xenophobia in areas under pressure. In particular, delegates noted that long-running crises have resulted in a burden of environmental pressure in camps and border areas, where water sources, fuel wood and other resources have been tapped to the limit. As the UN grapples with the current humanitarian crises in the Middle East and Africa, the scale of which outstrip any since World War II, this discussion was timely and relevant, and could lead to UNEP’s truly working across the whole sustainable development agenda. For example, delegates noted that UNEP could bring its expertise to specific areas of work: planning for the human mobility element in climate adaptation strategies, and promoting a long-term perspective in site selection and servicing of refugee camps.

SHOW, SUBSTANCE AND FUNDING

At the close of OECPR-2 in February, Executive Director Steiner encouraged participants to view UNEA-2 as an opportunity to engage a wider range of stakeholders, including the science, business and academic communities. Certainly UNEA-2 delivered on that aim. Over 600 stakeholder representatives, including the business community, attended, and many also participated in the 16th Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum held immediately prior to UNEA-2. UNEP organized 26 side events and a series of roundtables and networking functions, many of them part of a Sustainable Innovation Expo, which ran in parallel to the first three days of UNEA-2. The musical entertainment provided at these events provided an incongruous backdrop to the COW’s drafting groups that met long into the night.

On balance, UNEA-2 clearly charted a course toward broadening its range of stakeholder engagement. The Sustainable Innovation Expo was highly praised by delegates for the interest and breadth of its events and its contribution to building stronger links with the private sector, thus laying the foundation for innovation that may be financed by non-traditional donors. While Major Groups and Stakeholders deplored the failure of UNEA-2 to reach a conclusion on the Stakeholder Engagement Policy, some NGOs noted the value of going back to first principles, suggesting that the Major Groups system may have outlived its usefulness, and could ultimately be revised for greater, not less, inclusivity. Given the concerns about maintenance of the “silent veto” in the draft stakeholder engagement policy, deferring the issue to UNEA-3, some said, could be the most pragmatic option, as it allows defaulting to the current inclusive arrangements set in place by the Secretariat. UNEA-3 could yet be “the partnerships UNEA,” as is the stated wish of some of those involved closely in future arrangements.

There is another powerful reason for UNEP to be engaging with a broad range of stakeholders at this time. While the Secretariat’s proposed Medium-Term Strategy (2018-21) and Programme of Work and Budget for 2018-19 remained relatively

intact in the adopted resolution, the US repeatedly described the budget as aspirational and additional pressure to secure funding was a big part of their opposition to UNEA's bringing forward its next meeting to 2017. Also, in discussions on synergies with MEAs there were suggestions that language highlighting the importance of Member States' voluntary contributions could be replaced by broader language on the value in a more creative approach to funding. The Secretariat has recognized that EU Member States' contributions have had to be cut back in recent years due to ongoing budgetary pressures, exacerbated recently by the displacement of people due to armed conflicts. Some delegates felt that expanding partnerships with business and other sectors in the coming years could support enhanced programme delivery, with less UNEP core funding required. A number of delegates were critical, however, of the amount of effort and funds that had gone into organizing so many side events and suggested that the Secretariat could have focused more on avoiding organizational problems, which reduced the time available for finalizing resolutions.

PROCEDURE VS SUBSTANCE

The confusion of the final plenary session arose in the context of Israel/Palestine politics spilling into the Assembly's environmental agenda. Although the issue of the environmental situation in Gaza has been raised in previous UNEP Governing Council meetings, the Secretariat appeared ill-prepared for the eight-hour procedural battle that ensued after Israel requested a vote on a resolution on a field-based environment assessment in Gaza, especially since UNEA and the UNEP Governing Council have been bodies where decisions are adopted almost entirely by consensus. Nevertheless, the damage from the confusion over the Rules of Procedure and what constitutes a quorum was not as serious as it could have been. Despite a point in the wee hours of the morning where there seemed a risk that the entirety of the Assembly's work would be declared null and void, the Secretariat was able, eventually, to clarify that there were sufficient members present to adopt the resolutions and thereby legitimize the Assembly. Ultimately, almost all of the completed work of the meeting was gavelled through on Friday night.

Unfortunately, as a result of this procedural debacle, UNEA-2 was unable to produce a ministerial outcome document to generate political momentum and guidance for UNEP's follow-up work, despite extensive preparatory work on the document. A complete draft had been circulated early in the week, and a revised, "softer" version went around on the last day. In the closing hours of plenary, as the procedural battle wore on, ministers in a separate room scrambled to bridge remaining differences on the text of the ministerial outcome document. "We were close," said a disappointed minister, emerging in the early hours as consensus broke down in plenary. Reportedly, the final text would have involved balancing mention of means of implementation with common but differentiated responsibilities. Once the whole status of the UNEA-2 plenary was called into question over the quorum issue, however, any possibility of a last-minute deal was dead in the water. Failure to produce a ministerial outcome is a lost opportunity to provide a high-level statement to the HLPF, which meets in July 2016.

Many reflected that on balance, nevertheless, UNEA-2 was a productive meeting: after commencing the week with only one draft resolution agreed, delegates ultimately adopted 24 resolutions, albeit with some questioning of the level of ambition in the final texts. In addition to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda the final resolutions included some hotly contested ones such as the role of environmental management in conflict-affected areas, natural capital, chemicals and waste, sand and dust storms, and the Paris Agreement.

There is the question of whether UNEP will suffer reputational damage from difficulties they experienced in managing tensions of the closing hours. At the end of the meeting, though, many praised both Executive Director Steiner and the Secretariat for all of their efforts to ensure a smooth meeting.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Despite the rancor of the final session there was mainly praise and goodwill on display throughout the week as many delegates thanked departing Executive Director Steiner effusively for his huge contribution over ten years at the helm of an ever stronger, more visible UNEP and driving UNEP's major contribution to the substantive policy agenda. On advancing delivery of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda, UNEA-2 clearly demonstrated that UNEP has successfully rolled out a broad and expansive agenda. Some say this is a testament to Steiner's legacy in promoting "big ideas" and systems thinking, pointing to his work on the green economy and sustainable consumption and production as examples.

UNEA-2 also successfully adopted its programme of work and budget. In difficult times, this is not inconsequential. The introduction of many emerging issues to the conference agenda also highlighted that Member States are taking UNEA seriously as a policy venue—even though this results, in the words of some, in "some organizational headaches."

Nevertheless some Member States have sought to constrain UNEP's role somewhat to a technical level, expressing concern that UNEP's rhetoric may be overreaching its mandate. In this context, delegates considered how the new Executive Director will likely adopt a slightly different approach from his predecessor, involving an enhanced focus on programme implementation and strengthening multi-stakeholder mechanisms.

UNEA-2 in many ways was a fitting send-off for Achim Steiner as his tenure at UNEP's helm comes to a close. The broad agenda UNEA has endorsed is a lasting legacy and will endure far longer than the impact of a difficult final session.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Tenth Meeting of Open-ended Working Group of Basel Convention (OEWG 10): The meeting will consider issues in advance of the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 13), including: strategic issues; scientific and technical matters; legal, governance and enforcement matters; international cooperation and coordination; and the programme of work and budget. OEWG 10 is to consider revision of the technical guidelines on e-waste adopted by COP 12 on an interim basis. **dates:** 30 May - 2 June 2016 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya

contact: BRS Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8218 **fax:** +41-22-917-8098 **email:** brs@brsmeas.org **www:** <http://www.basel.int>

Eighth Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity: The conference will focus on “Food systems for a sustainable future: Interlinkages between biodiversity and agriculture,” with a view to identifying approaches for the achievement of mutually beneficial and sustainable outcomes, in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will be hosted by the Government of Norway in collaboration with UNEP, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank. **dates:** 31 May - 3 June 2016 **location:** Trondheim, Norway **contact:** Norwegian Environment Agency **phone:** +47-73580500 **email:** trondheimconference@miljodir.no **www:** <http://www.trondheimconference.org/>

50th Meeting of the GEF Council: The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council meets twice a year to approve new projects with global environmental benefits in the GEF’s focal areas of biodiversity, climate change mitigation, chemicals and waste, international waters, land degradation, and sustainable forest management; and in the GEF’s integrated approach programs on sustainable cities, taking deforestation out of commodity chains, and sustainability and resilience for food security in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Council also provides guidance to the GEF Secretariat and Agencies. The GEF Council meeting will be preceded on 6 June by a consultation with civil society organizations at the same location. On 9 June the Council will convene as the 20th meeting of the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), also at the same location. **dates:** 6-9 June 2016 **location:** Washington D.C., US **contact:** GEF Secretariat **phone:** +1-202-473-0508 **fax:** +1-202-522-3240 **email:** secretariat@thegef.org **www:** <http://www.thegef.org/>

17th Meeting of the UN Open-ended Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea: The Consultative Process is intended to facilitate the annual review by the General Assembly of developments in ocean affairs and the law of the sea. This year’s meeting will convene under the theme “Marine debris, plastics and micro-plastics.” **dates:** 13-17 June 2016 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea **phone:** +1-212-963-5915 **fax:** +1-212-963-5847 **email:** doalos@un.org **www:** http://www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process.htm

High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development: The 2016 meeting of the HLPF is the first since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The session will include voluntary reviews of 22 countries and thematic reviews of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, including cross-cutting issues, supported by reviews by the ECOSOC functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies and forums. A three-day ministerial meeting of the Forum will take place on 18-20 July 2016. **dates:** 11-20 July 2016 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division

for Sustainable Development **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2016>

Resumed OEWG 37, OEWG 38 and ExMOP 3 to the Montreal Protocol: The resumed 37th Meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG 37) of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer will be held from 15-16 July 2016, followed by OEWG 38 from 18-21 July 2016 and the Third Extraordinary Meeting of the Parties (ExMOP 3) from 22-23 July. These meetings are expected to focus on efforts to conclude a hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) Amendment to the Protocol in 2016. **dates:** 15-23 July 2016 **location:** Vienna, Austria **contact:** Ozone Secretariat **phone:** +254-20-762-3851 **fax:** +254-20-762-0335 **email:** ozone.info@unep.org **www:** <http://ozone.unep.org/en/meetings>

BBNJ PrepCom 2: The second meeting of the Preparatory Committee for an international legally binding instrument on marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) will address marine genetic resources, area-based management tools, environmental impact assessments, capacity building, transfer of marine technology and crosscutting issues. **dates:** 26 August - 9 September 2016 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea Secretariat **phone:** +1-212-963-3962 **fax:** +1-212-963-5847 **email:** doalos@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/depts/los/biodiversity/prepcom.htm>

2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress: The Congress will focus on the theme “Planet at the Crossroads.” Among other objectives, the World Congress will launch the Hawai’i commitments: globally transformative and innovative conservation initiatives to meet the critical challenges and opportunities of our time, including the imperative to scale up action on biodiversity and the Sustainable Development Goals. A Members’ Assembly will deliberate on IUCN resolutions and recommendations regarding key conservation issues. **dates:** 1-10 September 2016 **location:** Honolulu, Hawai’i, US **contact:** IUCN Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-999-0368 **fax:** +41-22-999-0002 **email:** congress@iucn.org **www:** <http://www.iucnworldconservationcongress.org/>

CITES CoP17: The Conference of the Parties to the Convention in Trade in Endangered Flora and Fauna will convene for its seventeenth session. **dates:** 24 September – 5 October 2016 **location:** Johannesburg, South Africa **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-81-39/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-34-17 **email:** info@cites.org **www:** <https://cites.org/cop17>

28th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol: The 28th Meeting of the Parties (MOP 28) will consider, *inter alia*, negotiations on a hydrofluorocarbons (HFC) amendment, nominations for critical-use and essential-use exemptions, and other draft decisions. **dates:** 10-14 October 2016 **location:** Kigali, Rwanda **contact:** Ozone Secretariat **phone:** +254-20-762-3851 **fax:** +254-20-762-0335 **email:** ozone.info@unep.org **www:** <http://ozone.unep.org/en/meetings>

Habitat III: The UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) aims to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable urban development, assess progress and accomplishments to date, address poverty, and identify and address new and emerging challenges. The conference is expected to result in an action-oriented

outcome document and the establishment of a “New Urban Agenda.” **dates:** 17-20 October 2016 **location:** Quito, Ecuador **contact:** UN-HABITAT **phone:** +1-917-367-4355 **email:** Habitat3Secretariat@un.org **www:** <http://www.unhabitat.org/habitat-iii>

UNFCCC COP 22: During COP 22, parties will meet to, *inter alia*, begin preparations for entry into force of the Paris Agreement. **dates:** 7-18 November 2016 **location:** Marrakesh, Morocco **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228 815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **email:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** <http://unfccc.int/>

CBD COP 13, COP-MOP 8 to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and COP-MOP 2 to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: The thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 13), the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP/MOP 8), and the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing (COP/MOP 2) will be held concurrently. **dates:** 4-17 December 2016 **location:** Cancun, Mexico **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/>

First Meeting of the SAICM Intersessional Process: The fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM4) held in September 2015 decided to initiate an intersessional process to prepare recommendations regarding the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 for consideration by ICCM5 in 2020. The first intersessional meeting is expected to focus in part on a discussion of an independent evaluation of SAICM for 2006-2015. **dates:** 7-9 February 2017 **location:** TBA **contact:** SAICM Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8532 **fax:** +41-22-797-3460 **email:** saicm.chemicals@unep.org **www:** http://www.saicm.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=569&Itemid=779

Thirteenth Meeting of the COP to the Basel Convention, the eighth meeting of the COP to the Rotterdam Convention and the eighth meeting of the COP to the Stockholm Convention: These meetings are scheduled to convene back-to-back in 2017. **dates:** 23 April - 5 May 2017 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** BRS Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8729 **fax:** +41-22-917-8098 **email:** brs@unep.org **www:** <http://www.basel.int>, <http://www.pic.int>, <http://www.pops.int>

First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury (COP1): COP1 of the Minamata Convention will be held within one year of entry into force of the Convention, and is thus expected to take place in 2017. Dates will be confirmed by the interim secretariat. **dates:** September 2017 (TBC) **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention **phone:** +41-22-917-8511 **fax:** +41-22-797-3460 **email:** mercury.chemicals@unep.org **www:** <http://www.mercuryconvention.org>

CMS COP 12: The 12th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP12) to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) will take place in 2017. **dates:** 22-28 October 2017 **location:** Manila, the Philippines **contact:** CMS Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2401 **fax:** +49-228-815-2449 **email:** cms.secretariat@cms.int **www:** <http://www.cms.int/cop12>

UNFCCC COP 23: The 23rd session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 23) to the UN Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will meet in Asia at a location to be determined. **dates:** 6-17 November 2017 **location:** TBA **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228 815-1000 **fax:** +49-228 815-1999 **email:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** http://unfccc.int/meetings/unfccc_calendar/items/2655.php?year=2017

Third Meeting of the UN Environment Assembly: The third meeting of UNEA will be held, on an exceptional basis, from 4-6 December 2017, with the high-level segment taking place on 5-6 December, and with its Open Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives meeting from 29 November to 1 December. **dates:** 4-6 December 2017 **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/>

GLOSSARY

10YFP	Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production
AAAA	Addis Ababa Action Agenda
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
BRS	Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
COP	Conference of the Parties
COW	Committee of the Whole
CPR	Committee of Permanent Representatives
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ED	Executive Director
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
GC	Governing Council
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
MEA	Multilateral environmental agreement
MTS	Mid-Term Strategy
OECP	Open-ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
PoW	Programme of Work
SCP	Sustainable consumption and production
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNEA	UN Environment Assembly
UNEP	UN Environment Programme