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**United Nations
Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment Programme**

**United Nations Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment Programme
Second session**

Nairobi, 23–27 May 2016

Item 4 (i) of the provisional agenda*

International environmental policy and governance
issues: **emerging and other relevant issues**

**Compilation of statements and recommendations by major
groups and stakeholders for consideration by the United
Nations Environment Assembly at its second session**

Note by the Executive Director

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) regional consultation meetings with major groups and stakeholders are held in preparation for the annual sessions of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP. The outcome of the regional consultation meetings usually takes the form of a statement or key messages and recommendations to the governing body of UNEP.

The regional consultation meetings held in 2015 and early 2016 served as a platform for engaging major groups and stakeholders from the regions in addressing the main areas and topics for discussion by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its second session, to be held in Nairobi from 23 to 27 May 2016.

The outcomes of the regional consultation meetings are meant to feed into the sixteenth session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

A. Topics for discussion

1. The regional consultation meetings addressed the following key issues:
 - (a) The role of UNEP in delivering the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals;
 - (b) The “healthy environment, healthy people” issue;
 - (c) Resolutions discussed at the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
 - (d) Stakeholder engagement policy and access to information policy: principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development of 1992;

* UNEP/EA.2/1.

- (e) The 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns;
- (f) Regional priorities.
2. The dates and venues of the regional consultation meetings are set out in table 1.

Table 1
Dates and venues of the regional consultation meetings

<i>Region</i>	<i>Meeting dates and venues</i>
Africa	28 February–1 March 2015, Cairo
Latin America and the Caribbean	4–7 May 2015, Panama City
Europe	12 and 13 November 2015, Brussels
West Asia	16 and 17 November 2015, Beirut
Asia and the Pacific	17 and 18 May 2015, Bangkok
North America	17 March 2016, Washington, D.C. 23 March 2016, Ottawa

3. A total of 458 participants attended the regional consultation meetings, and 51.7 per cent of participants were women. Table 2 provides an overview of the distribution of participants by major group and by region. Non-governmental organizations were the most represented of the major groups and stakeholders, with 59.4 per cent of the total number of participants, followed by the “Others” category, with 20.4 per cent.

Table 2
Representation of major groups and stakeholders at the regional consultation meetings

	<i>Type of major group</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Europe</i>	<i>West Asia</i>	<i>Latin America/ Caribbean</i>	<i>Asia - Pacific</i>	<i>North America</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
1	Business and industry	0	9	0	2	0	1	12	2.6
2	Children and youth	1	0	0	3	6	0	10	2.2
3	Indigenous peoples	2	0	0	3	2	0	7	1.5
4	Local authorities	0	7	0	3	1	0	11	2.4
5	NGOs	41	146	17	7	21	40	272	59.4
6	Science and technology (including research and academia)	3	8	0	2	3	2	18	3.9
7	Women	2	5	1	2	8	0	18	3.9
8	Farmers	0	2	0	2	6	0	10	2.2
9	Workers and trade unions	1	3	0	1	2	0	7	1.5
10	Others ¹	15	45	0	0	17	16	93	20.4
	Total/region	65	225	18	25	66	59	458	100

B. Statements and recommendations

4. The annex to the present note, whose content has not been edited or amended in any form by UNEP, contains statements and recommendations from major groups and stakeholders prepared during the regional consultation meetings.

5. Government and non-governmental entities took part in the multi-stakeholder dialogues held in the United States of America and Canada in preparation for the United Nations Environment Assembly. Their respective summaries reflect key messages that came across in the discussions and do not represent a consensus on the issues discussed or an endorsement by the participants as a whole. They are therefore different in nature from the other statements by regional major groups set out in the present document.

¹ “Others” includes stakeholders such as government representatives, faith-based groups, the media, foundations, organizations whose mandates cut across several sectors, and intergovernmental bodies.

Annex

Outcomes of the regional consultation meetings with major groups and stakeholders¹

A. Africa annual regional consultations meeting with major groups and stakeholders in preparation for the 16th UNEP Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF-16 and the Second Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP (UNEA-2), 28 February – 1 March 2015 (Cairo, Egypt)

AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY AND MAJOR GROUPS STATEMENT AND KEY MESSAGES AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 15TH SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO UNEA

Your Excellency Hon. Dr. Binilith S. Mahenge, Minister of State Environment of the United Republic of Tanzania and AMCEN President;

Your Excellency Dr. Khaled Mohamed Fahmy Abdel Ael, Minister, Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs, Arab Republic of Egypt;

Mr. Achim Steiner, UN Under Secretary General and Executive Director, UNEP; The Director & Regional Representative, UNEP- ROA, Mr. Mounkaila Goumandakoye;

Excellencies, Ministers of Environment from various countries across the African continent;

Representatives of Regional Economic Integration Bodies;

Ladies and Gentlemen, all protocols observed;

It is indeed a great honour and privilege to stand before you, on behalf of African civil society, to articulate our perspectives on the agenda of this 15th Session of AMCEN, which we have no doubt will provide direction for the African continent as we head towards the new Sustainable Development Goal in New York and the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris all taking place this year.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, inspired by the consultative spirit of AMCEN, the African Civil Society under the auspices of Pan African Climate Justice Alliance, bringing together diverse groups from the youth, Indigenous Peoples, farmers, faiths, NGOs and networks, met and came up with a collective key message which we are already sharing with delegates. We hope that our views will be considered when making final decisions for this session.

We sincerely appreciate the space you have accorded civil society in this important process, and particularly thank UNEP Regional Office for Africa, the African Union, COMESA and the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt for hosting, participating and sharing with us during the pre-AMCEN Consultative Workshop and Major Groups Forum held on 1st of March 2015.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, we meet here again, an exercise which has become a routine, to review the progress on international climate change and Post-2015 SDGs dialogue processes and Africa's involvement, our gains and losses.

During our workshop, we wondered whether it is worth participating any longer in the UNFCCC processes which have come and gone without delivering any concrete outcomes as the growing impacts of climate change continue to stand in the way of our development aspirations. The last two decades have been characterized by unfulfilled promises and commitments by developed countries but still we feel that the multilateral process under UNFCCC is the only sure way to deliver fairness and justice for poor countries and communities.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen; in the Copenhagen, Cancun, Durban, Doha, Warsaw and Lima climate conferences, the rallying call for Africa has been that the outcome of the negotiations must be, at a minimum, to keep Africa safe, ensure food security and agree a fair sharing of the atmospheric space between North and South.

¹ Issued without formal editing.

We should not hold back from putting pressure on rich countries to change excessive production and consumption systems while protecting and compensating communities affected by their historical actions. Discussions around the new climate change agreement should be preceded by the rich countries honoring the promise they have already made as a signal of good faith. This may not be the case as the Lima Climate Talk has demonstrated the shifting of goal post by the developed countries on many fronts. Despite the establishment of the Green Climate Fund, we are worried that it may not be properly financed as the experience with other funds such as Adaptation Fund shows.

1. On the Road to Paris: The new climate agreement: The African civil society calls upon African governments/ministers to urge developed countries to communicate emission reduction targets as iNDCs that commensurate to keeping global average temperature well below 1.5°C and against principles of equity -historical responsibility, capacity, the right to sustainable development. African should also ensure the transfer of finance and technology via strengthened institutions like the GCF, the Adaptation Fund, and the Adaptation Committee is part of its demands in Paris UNFCCC-COP21.

We call on DCPs to mobilize at least USD 1 trillion and monetize/materialize pledges to the financial entities of the financial mechanism of the Convention so as to meaningfully implement adaptation intervention and low carbon development strategies.

We further call for full operationalizing the Warsaw Mechanism on Loss and Damage and its full inclusion in the 2015 agreement. Also focusing on provisions to address the rights and needs of climate displaced people and for managing risk.

2. On the Post 2015-SDGs and processes that will conclude in New York, we call on AMCEN to engage and proactively create spaces, for the participation of environment and climate change experts and African Civil Society from the Environment sector. It is critical for AMCEN to emphasize that success will depend on the efforts of millions of citizen volunteers working towards the realisation of a broadly shared vision. There is a need to mobilise and focus citizen participation on a scale without precedent.

3. On the Management of Africa's Natural Capital: Africa is dependent on its natural capital. We therefore urge Government to ensure that the utilization of natural capital is by Africans for Africa, in a sustainable and equitable manner. Threats and key drivers of degradation such as extractive industry activities and land grab should be managed and addressed. Environmental governance should be strengthened and should involve communities and civil society in determining how the natural capital is used so as to create jobs and benefits for current and future generations. Public institutions should be strengthened in order to avoid pilferage and corruption.

4. On Illegal Trade in Wildlife: We commend the decision EX.CL/Dec.832 (XXV) of the 23rd African Union Summit in Malabo to develop the African Common Strategy on Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade in Wild Flora and Fauna. We urge AMCEN to fast track the development of this strategy, in an open and inclusive process that involves Member States, African Union Commission, UNEP, UNECA, AfDB, CSOs and Private Sector.

5. On Principle 10: Sustainable development can only be guaranteed if citizens have access to information, participate effectively in the decision making and have access to justice when such rights are denied or tempered. We call on AMCEN to start and accelerate to adoption of an African Regional Convention on Principle 10. AMCEN should sensitize their populations on Principle 10. This could be done by assessing the application of rights to information, public participation and access to justice at national level, and produce implementation mechanisms and safeguard good governance of Principle 10 to emphasize environmental justice through special environmental codes systems.

6. On broad participation in UNEA: As the strengthened and upgraded UNEP is poised to play an effective role as a follow-up to Rio+20 in integrating three dimensions of sustainable development, we recommend that the Committee of Permanent Representatives allows full participation of Major Groups. Major Groups already accredited under UN ECOSSOCC should be recognized by UNEA, while elected MG Regional Representatives should be accorded speaking rights at the Committee of Permanent Representatives and UNEA. Broader partnerships between UNEP and other organizations as a means to fulfill its mandate should always be promoted, with UNEP not limiting itself to policy formulation but also implementation.

7. Inclusive participation in regional processes: Gender: 80% of small scale food producers in Africa are women who depend on natural resources therefore, women should be involved in the agriculture and environment policy formulation, programs and projects design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation at all levels with measurable indicators. African government through its

relevant organs like AUC, AfDB, ACPC, RECs and other agencies like UNEP, UNECA, and NEPAD etc should support and strengthened the work of African Working Group on Gender and Climate Change.

In furtherance to the Assembly/AU/Dec.538(XXIII) on climate change, particularly on developing a CAHOSCC Women and Gender Programme on Climate Change (CWGPCC) to engage women and gender in climate change related actions, we request AMCEN to work with Member States and other partners to put in place relevant mechanisms to implement the decision ahead of the twenty-first Conference of the Parties (COP21) to be held in Paris, France at the end of the year.

8. Youth: In line with the Lima ministerial declaration on education and awareness raising, we urge African government to support youth innovation, entrepreneurship and green jobs through formal integration of environmental and climate education in school curriculum and while showing our appreciation for the just-released new book 'Accelerating Youth Action towards Africa's greener future' we urge AMCEN to institutionalize and provide financial support to relevant youth organizations and initiatives in Africa.

I thank you all.

Mithika Mwenda

PACJA Secretary General, on behalf of the African Civil Society and Major Groups

B. Latin America and the Caribbean annual regional consultative meeting of the major groups and stakeholders to the Second United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP (UNEA-2) and the 16th session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (MGGSF-16), 7 May, 2015 (Panama city, Panama)

RECOMMENDATIONS

We, the representatives of the Major Groups and Stakeholders of Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered at the UNEP Regional Consultative Meeting held on 7th May 2015 in Panama City, Panama, agreed to make the following recommendations:

On the UNEP Stakeholder Engagement Policy:

We call upon Governments to ensure that the negotiations linked to the Rules of Procedure, the Stakeholder Engagement Policy and the Access-to-Information Policy will decidedly draw on the principle of non-regression, in particular concerning agreements and practices for full and effective participation in the UNEA and its subsidiary bodies, accreditation of observer organisations and access to negotiating drafts.

We request that Rule of Procedure 70 allows all organizations with an interest in the environment and sustainable development -including those at the international, national and local level - to be fully integrated into the different participation mechanisms of the Major Groups and Stakeholders.

With regard to the Major Groups Facilitation Committee (MGFC), we request that Governments strengthen the role of Regional Representatives, guaranteeing equal status to those representing the Major Groups at the global level, given that this is an indispensable requirement for each region's views to be taken into account in the policymaking process of UNEP.

On the post-2015 Development Agenda:

We call upon Governments to reassign available economic resources at the global, national and local level such that, given the comprehensive nature of the Sustainable Development Goals, contradictions could be minimized and synergies generated among the different sectorial policies in each dimension of international governance for sustainable development.

Concerned by the privatization of public goods and services through public-private partnerships, we call on all institutions, in particular government and United Nations System agencies, to be transparent and accountable regarding all private sector contributions to their programmes and activities.

We insist on the urgent need to apply a human and natural rights approach in all decision-making and implementation processes, recognizing, in particular, the diverse levels and forms of governance of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and their right to take part in decision-making at all levels, including the High Level Political Forum.

Regarding implementation measures, we emphasize that technology transfer should abide by the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, so as to avoid creating dependency, conditionality or indebtedness for those receiving the technology. We also stress the urgency of revaluing, and respecting the implementation of, technologies based on the traditional knowledge of local communities and Indigenous Peoples, which are more appropriate for the place where those technologies originated.

In line with the objective of leaving no one behind and Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, indicators must be disaggregated to allow for the monitoring of progress of all groups, including local communities and Indigenous Peoples.

On the recommendations ahead of COP21:

We consider climate change one of the current major challenges to sustainable development. We therefore urge Governments to adopt, ratify and implement current and future agreements of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and to allocate the resources needed to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and increase the adaptive capacity of the small states, most vulnerable communities and sectors, with particular emphasis placed on the health sector.

We recognize that adaptation and mitigation measures vis-à-vis climate change phenomena are essential for the future of the planet in general and for our region in particular. In light of the foregoing, we urge Governments to engage and involve civil society in searching for policy options to enhance resilience to climate change phenomena.

Recognizing current urban growth trends in Latin America and the Caribbean, we call on Governments to strengthen green economy, sustainable development and resilience strategies in the framework of Multilateral Environmental Agreements and Programmes such as the 10YFP and the Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. In addition, they should encourage private investment with economic incentives and promote legitimate, transparent and equitable participation, based on consensus and respect for the rights of populations and the environment.

We further request that the States prioritize the creation of protected natural areas in each country to preserve biodiversity, and that their urban planning policies be designed and executed within a framework of respect for biodiversity and the integrity of ecosystems.

On Sustainable Consumption and Production:

Given that the region has developed a declaration in the framework of the 10YFP, in which the representatives of Major Groups and Stakeholders reached a common point of agreement with the governmental delegates, we call on the governments of the region to facilitate and enhance the active participation of the nine Major Groups in the promotion of SCP practices and the implementation of programmes under the Ten-Year Framework at the regional, national and local levels.

C. Europe annual regional consultative meeting of the major groups and stakeholders to the Second United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP (UNEA-2) and the 16th session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF-16), 12-13 November, 2015 (Brussels, Belgium)

OUTCOME JOINT POSITION STATEMENT

Healthy environment - Healthy people

Environmental Health and the SDGs The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are all interlinked, based on the evidence that only a balanced development with sustainable consumption, production and lifestyle patterns, and protecting people's health and the health of natural eco-systems, can ensure long term well-being and survival of humanity.

When the environment is polluted and destroyed, the people dependent on the environment also suffer. A number of multilateral agreements and conventions already exist to phase out hazardous substances which cannot be safely used, such as mercury and asbestos, and for which safe alternatives exist.

These agreements protect people and the environment, but much more needs to be done to apply the precautionary principle and to avoid future environmental damage with irreversible health impacts on humans, animals and nature. For example, currently many daily-use products contain potential 'endocrine disrupting chemicals' which create life-long health damage, as well as many pesticides which are increasingly suspected of doing harm to human health, including birth defects and development of cancer.

UNEP plays an important role in developing guidelines for environmental health and coordinating the conventions addressing the substitution of hazardous substances, but as the SDGs have stated, much more needs to be done to ensure a healthy planet for healthy people.

The Major Groups and Stakeholders from Europe have identified the following key recommendations for action on Environment and Health:

Mercury

- UNEA to call on countries who have not yet ratified to immediately ratify the Minamata Convention on Mercury
- UNEA to call on all countries to implement mercury reduction activities following the requirements of the Minamata Convention. Countries should make funding possibilities available, to support the ratification efforts; this could include work on preparing a mercury inventory, a legal gap analysis, and awareness raising activities, capacity building and promotion of good practices.
- Support should also be available for the development of a National Action Plan on Artisanal Small Scale Gold Mining, for the relevant countries to seek for.

SDGs and environmental health

- UNEA to call on all countries to prepare assessments of the impact of existing programs, policies, subsidies, incentives etc., including identifying those conflicting with the SDGs, i.e. do an integrated assessment of environment, sustainability and health and how this approach can be taken in development planning processes.
- Encourage UNEP to approach SDG integrally, by building on its ‘integrated approach to environmental sustainability in development planning’ initiatives at the national level.
- UNEA can take the lead to develop further accountability and compliance and implementation mechanisms (linking to the finance part of UNEA agenda).

Healthy ecosystem

- UNEA to agree on a global program to integrate biodiversity and ecosystem protection into national health, economic, agriculture policies and investments, and to reduce the total environmental pressure on land use, including action plans to specifically:
 - Create a dietary shift towards low meat, locally and ecologically produced food, to reduce land and water use pressure as well as non-communicable diseases (NCDs)
 - Move to only organic local agriculture.
 - Work towards a transition of agricultural systems, including supporting farmers actively with subsidies for integrated pest management, producing organic products, animal welfare, and phase out all subsidies for industrial farming which will imply huge savings for the budget too.
 - Social support for low-income population to access safe ecologically clean food, water and air. UNEP can play a major role here in addressing SDG 10 on reducing the growing inequalities we are confronted with in Europe

Armed conflict impact remediation and prevention

- Stress the role of UNEA regarding negative environmental impacts of armed conflict –building off from on its work on poaching and illegal logging (charcoal trade) – also coal mafia, oil mafia etc.
- Address the role of UNEA in facilitating preventive measures to reduce conflict when these are linked to land degradation, climate change, pollution, etc.
- Migration and refugees: address the role of UNEA in ensuring access to safe water, sanitation, safe natural resource management, for migrants, refugees and internal displaced peoples. Share knowledge and expertise in the field of migrant’s vulnerability to climate change, and build capacity for resilience and early warning and response.

Waste

- UNEA to develop guidelines and an action plan to reduce waste, working towards eliminating waste landfilling and incineration globally – in order to reduce water and air pollution, in particular eliminating very hazardous as well as medical waste discharge to sewerage system as waste water treatment plants are unable to manage such pollutant in an environmentally sound manner.
- UNEA to develop recommendations for a binding international tax on chemical and pharmaceutical sales for clean-up and health protection (this is an existing proposal SAICM – like Tobin tax, a 0,001% tax on total turnover achieving 4 billion Euro or so annually).
- UNEA to agree as part of the financing of the SDGs to strict application of polluter pays principle, including obligatory insurance of all economic activities that have a negative impact on environment and health.
- Recognise responsibility of Member States and corporations also to pay for future clean up as well as cleanup of old liabilities in particular the toxic chemicals such as PCBs and old pesticides, mercury from small scale gold mining and other extractive industry pollution. Equitable and coherent policies to protect environmental health.
- Add specific sex- and age-disaggregated indicators to be added to the basic global SDG indicators so that specific vulnerability of women, children, (e.g. early life exposure to Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals in daily products and pesticides) and elderly people are addressed.
- Link UNEP’s Gender GEO and the GEO6 Chapter on “Healthy Planet, Healthy People” to the global monitoring of SDGs effort to ensure greatest coherence and engagement of all sectors.
- UNEP to be given the mandate and resources to ensure that at country level civil society is meaningfully participating in environmental and SDG policy development, investment planning and implementation.
- UNEP to increase its engagement with major groups of civil society, and in particular continue its involvement with environmental NGOs, women, youth and indigenous peoples groups not only because they are more vulnerable but also as agents of change and leaders in transformation. Research and pro-active awareness raising and advocacy
- UNEP to support Civil Society Organisations and Environmental NGOs with strong ‘advertising’ campaigns which warn – just as with anti-smoking messages – about the hazards of burning coal in chimneys, mercury in fish, of EDCs in plastic, food, toys and cosmetics etc. and that contained in the link it is made very clearly to people that they are responsible for their own health, (e.g. your risk of heart attack).
- Make the co-benefits of environment and health very clear: longer and healthier lives thanks to clean environment, more resilient communities against climate and other natural disasters, value of nature for mental and emotional health, etc.
- UNEP to further integrate the values of environmental education and education for sustainable development in the implementation of environmental dimensions of the SDGs and in its programme of work in order to creating social, economic and environmental capital.

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