Executive Director's Update to the Committee of Permanent Representatives

137th Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, 16th January 2017

Special Highlights

Executive Director's Official Mission to India
- The World Sustainable Development Summit took place in Delhi from 5 to 8 October 2016. The Executive Director addressed the audience at its high-level events on 5 and 6 October.
- Prior to his visit to Delhi, the Executive Director participated in a one-year anniversary event of the Versova Beach Clean-up in Mumbai organized by the Versova Resident Volunteers.

The Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol: Another Global Commitment to stop Climate Change
On 15 October 2016 at the 28th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer held in Kigali, Rwanda, following seven years of continuous consultations, Parties to the Montreal Protocol struck a landmark legally binding deal to reduce the emissions of powerful greenhouse gases in a move that could prevent up to 0.5 degrees Celsius of global warming by the end of this century, while continuing to protect the ozone layer.

The United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), Quito, Ecuador
- Habitat III took place from 17 to 20 October in Quito Ecuador.
- The Executive Director participated in the High-Level Roundtable discussion on Ecological, Climate Change, Resilient and Disaster Responsive Cities.
- During the Conference, the Breathe Life SOS Campaign was launched by the Climate Clean Air Coalition and the World Health Organization.

Executive Director's Official Mission to Colombia and Argentina
- On 20 October, the Executive Director visited Bogota, Colombia to meet with President Juan Manuel Santos and to offer support to Colombia's efforts to address environmental issues during the peace building process.
- He also visited Tumaco and Choco, accompanied by Mr. Luis Gilberto Murillo, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, as well as by Mr. Rafael Pardo, Senior Advisor for Post-Conflict, Human Rights and Security, to meet with local private sector community and discuss sustainable production of local businesses.
- On 23 October, the Executive Director visited Buenos Aires, to meet with the Argentinian Authorities to discuss how UN Environment can support the sustainable development efforts in Argentina.

Ban Lead in Paint Campaign
- UN Environment launched the #BanLeadPaint campaign during the International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action, from 23 to 30 October 2016, with an informative video showing progress so far and urging people to take action to #BanLeadPaint.
- #BanLeadPaint reached over 1,200,000 users on social media. 5,789 tweets were posted on twitter with #BanLeadPaint or #LPPW2016. The videos prepared for the campaign were viewed over 50,000 times.

Emissions Gap Report 2016
- The Emissions Gap Report 2016 was launched in London on 3 November 2016, a day before the Paris Agreement entered into force.
- Over 200 participants attended the launch, representing top entities from the business and finance sectors, think tanks, Government and the media, including the City of London, The World Economic Forum, Credit Suisse, The Sustainability Project, Chatham House, the UK Department of International Development and the Stakeholder Forum [i].

22nd Conference of the Parties (COP 22) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Marrakech
- The 22nd Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change took place in Marrakech, Morocco from 7 to 18 November 2016. Both the Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director attended.
- The Executive Director attended the High-Level Segment and other key events that included the Sustainable Innovation Forum, the High-Level Event on Environment and Health and the National Development and Reform Commission event on 'Climate Finance', among other events.
- The Deputy Executive Director also took part in key events such as the High-Level Forum of the South-South Cooperation on climate change where he delivered opening remarks, the High-Level event of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition as a panelist.

Hanoi Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade

The 2016 Hanoi Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade took place on 17 and 18 November 2016 and attracted high level delegates from around the world. It was the third convening of this conference which was originally launched by Prince Charles in London in 2014 with a second conference hosted by Botswana in 2015. The Wild for Life campaign is acknowledged in the Hanoi Statement and was a featured exhibition.

UN Environment welcomes Private Sector Partnerships in Asia Pacific

- On 22 and 23 November 2016, the Executive Director attended two high level events in Asia Pacific focused on green and sustainable business.
- As a high level and eminent speaker at the Asian Development Bank's first Green Business Forum for Asia held in Manila, Philippines and at the Responsible Business Forum on Sustainable Development hosted by the United Nations Development Programme and Global Initiatives in Singapore, the Executive Director stressed to a combined 1,000 participants comprising private sector, government, media and civil society, the importance of harnessing the financial power and innovative capacity of the private sector as a means to achieve sustainable development.

United Nations Conference on Biodiversity, the 13th Meeting of the Conference of Parties, Cancun, Mexico

- The United Nations Conference on Biodiversity and the 13th Meeting of the Conference of Parties took place in Cancun, Mexico from 2 to 17 December 2016.
- The Executive Director addressed the participants at the Opening Session where the appointment of the new Executive Secretary to the Secretariat to the Convention of Biological Diversity was announced.
- At the side-lines of the High-Level Segment, an awards ceremony of UN Environment's Champions of the Earth 2016 took place, where he together with the Deputy Executive Director awarded the 6 nominees.

2016 China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development, Beijing

- The annual China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development meeting took place in Beijing, China from 7 to 9 December 2016 under the theme "Ecological Civilization: China and the World" and was attended by the Executive Director and China Vice Premier H.E. Zhang Gaoli.
- The meeting adopted policy recommendations for the Chinese Government. UN Environment, as a partner agency has been supporting China Council on various policy analysis and recommendations. This year, China Council timely considered its policy contributions to uplifting the Oceans agenda, taking notice of the importance of ocean system as basis for civilization.

Cooperation with the European Union and its Member States on the 2030 Agenda

- The Executive Director visited Brussels from 19 to 20 December for a series of high-level events with the European Union Environment Council and the European Commission.
- The discussions with the European Union Environment Ministers and several European Commissioners was based on a recent European Commission Communication regarding the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to which UN Environment provided extensive inputs. Common priorities and future collaboration, including ocean governance and Green Economy were also discussed.
- The Executive Director also participated in a high-level panel at a major stakeholder conference organized by the European Commission entitled *"Delivering on the UN Sustainability Agenda: Next steps for Europe".*

UN Environment in the Regions

UN Environment to Increase Assistance for Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in the Pacific
The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme Officials met on 19 to 21 September 2016 in Alofi, Niue followed by a meeting of Ministers on 22 September 2016 where the new Strategic Priorities for UN Environment in the Pacific was approved. The events identified the following issues:
- Addressing climate resilience;
- Decoupling economic growth from resource use and pollution;
- Maintaining biodiversity;
- Managing chemicals and waste; and
- Strengthening governance for the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Two new Pacific regional capacity building projects and multilateral agreements were also approved by the Global Environment Facility to be implemented by UN Environment in partnership with the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme. The partnership will focus on protecting the oceans, as a central theme for the new initiatives.

Strengthening UN Environment's Agenda and Values in West Africa
UN Environment and the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States took concrete steps to strengthen their partnership in advancing environmental sustainability in the West Africa region. After discussions held in Abuja, Nigeria from 26 to 28 September, they agreed to a formal cooperation framework that will guide their work in support of Member States' efforts to implement the environmental dimension of Vision 2020; the African Union Agenda 2063; and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A stronger cooperation and a more strategic engagement between the two parties will create synergies, coherence and concerted actions towards a transformative environmental agenda in the sub region. The collaboration will be deployed in 4 main areas:
  i. Enhanced policy dialogue among the Member States in follow-up of key regional and the United Nations Environment Assembly decisions relating to the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda;
 ii. Policy influence and assistance to the Member States in the implementation of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements;
iii. Strengthening regional environmental governance through harmonization of legislation and regular environment assessments; and
 iv. The development of joint regional programmes and projects on air quality monitoring, electronic waste and sustainable ecosystem management.

Drafting Workshop of the new interim United Nations Development Assistance Framework Guidance Document, New York, 18-21 October
Further to the adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda by Member States of the United Nations, a new interim United Nations Development Assistance Framework Guidance Document was initiated in May 2016, suggesting new mechanisms and new programme implementation arrangements that could make it possible for the United Nations to assist countries to successfully implement the Sustainable Development Goals. In order to deliver the final guidance document, the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office organized a drafting workshop to facilitate this supported by UN Environment.

Caspian Sea Convention Prepares for 6th Conference of the Parties
On 7 to 10 November, littoral countries to the Caspian Sea met in Geneva to prepare for the Tehran Convention's 6th Conference of the Parties to take place in 2017. Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan made progress in agreeing on institutional arrangements for the Convention's permanent Secretariat, which is planned to be established in the region on a 4-year rotational basis.

National representatives and experts also reviewed steps for ensuring that the Convention's Aktau Protocol, which entered into force in July this year, can become a reality on the ground.

Ministers in the Asia-Pacific Region Endorse Manila Declaration at the Fourth Regional Forum on Environment and Health in Southeast and East Asian Countries
UN Environment co-organized the Fourth Regional Forum on Environment and Health with the World Health Organization, hosted by the Philippine Government in Manila, Philippines from 6 to 8 October 2016.
On 8 October 2016, High-Level Ministers and Officials from 14 countries in Southeast and Northeast Asia signed the Manila Declaration on Health and Environment.

Integrating Sustainable Consumption and Production in South Asia
South Asia Member States, namely, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka met in Sri Lanka on 20 to 22 October 2016 to establish the South Asia Forum on Sustainable Consumption and Production. Hosted by the South Asian Co-operative Environment Programme with support from UN Environment under the European Union-funded SWITCH-Asia Programme, the inaugural forum included round-table discussions, identification of priority sectors, sharing of good practices and the creation of a summary statement which will be presented to the South Asian Co-operative Environment Programme's Governing Council. The forum will serve as a sub-regional platform to further strengthen the implementation of sustainable consumption and production-related activities in South Asia.

9th Global Conference on Health Promotion was held on 21-24 November 2016 in Shanghai, China
Jointly organized by the National Health and Family Planning Commission of China and the World Health Organization and hosted by the Municipal Government of Shanghai, the 9th Global Conference on Health Promotion was held on 21-24 November 2016 in Shanghai, China. The Executive Director was one of the speakers of the Conference's opening plenary. In his speech, he singled out pollution as both a health and an environment issue and proposed to work closely with the World Health Organization in delivering a package of proposals to support governments and in creating partnerships to drastically reduce air pollution as fast and as urgently as possible.

UN System-Wide Cooperation and Coherence

Resolutions negotiated at the 71st Session of the Second Committee of the General Assembly
Throughout the course of its 71st Session the Second Committee of the General Assembly, informal negotiations on a number of resolutions of relevance to UN Environment were conducted, of which in particular two are noteworthy. For both resolutions UN Environment provided substantive secretariat services:

- o **Resolution on the Report of the UN Environment Assembly (A/C.2/71/L.45):**
  In addition to welcoming the holding of the 2nd Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly , the most relevant element of the resolution is its focus on the consolidation of the linkages between the work of the United Nations Environment Assembly and the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level. In this regard, Member States decided to encourage the participation of the President of the United Nations Environment Assembly in the sessions of the High Level Political Forum.

- o **Resolution on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (A/C.2/71/L.53):**
  In the follow-up to the preceding year's resolution the Secretary-General had circulated the global assessment on sand and dust storms prepared by UN Environment in collaboration with the World Meterological Organization and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, to the General Assembly. The three main outcomes of the resolution are:
  - i. The organization of a high-level interactive dialogue of the General Assembly during its 72nd Session, to discuss the issue;
  - ii. The organization of an international conference hosted by Iran, with t potential contribution by UN Environment, the United Nations Development Programme, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other relevant entities; and
  - iii. Request for a Secretary-General report on the implementation of the resolution. The resolution was adopted by the Second Committee on 30 November 2016.

UN Collaboration on Freshwater
UN Environment holds the Vice-Chairmanship of UN-Water and is actively engaged in integrated monitoring and reporting of the Sustainable Development Goal 6 (www.unwater.org/gemi). UN Environment took the lead on producing a UN-Water Analytical Brief on a World Water Quality Assessment which was launched at the Budapest Water Summit on 30 November. UN Environment is also taking a lead role in the World Water Development Report 2017 on the topic of "wastewater," and for both the 2018 World Water Day and the 2018 World Water Development Report, which will be on the topic of "Nature-based solutions for water."

Joint UN Programme on Gender, Natural Resources and Peacebuilding
The joint UN Programme on Gender, Natural Resources and Peacebuilding, collaboration between UN Environment, UN Women, United Nations Development Programme and the UN's Peacebuilding Support Office is now starting. The programme looks at promoting gender-responsive approaches to natural resource management for peacebuilding. The programme's initial pilot project is taking place in North Kordofan in Sudan. The multi-agency team that will be implementing the project is now in place.

UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
During the Secretary-General's last session as Chair of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination from 9 to 10 November 2016, Executive Heads reflected on major accomplishments and lessons learned over the past 10 years in UN system-wide coordination and coherence, which have delivered lasting results for people and planet; identified new frontiers and emerging challenges for collaboration and joint action over the coming decade, and considered the role of leadership to guide the UN System towards these new horizons. The Secretary-General will relay these key observations and

recommendations, particularly those that relate to UN inter-agency coordination and system-wide coherence, to his successor.

The Chief Executives Board also addressed steps the UN system can take to affect the transformational changes required for reaching the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda objectives, in unison. Furthermore, the Board endorsed the reports and recommendations of its three sub-committees: the High-Level Committee on Programmes, the High-Level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group.

These results include: a 'Shared UN Framework for Action on Combatting Inequalities and Discrimination'; a UNDG Business Operations Strategy Guidance, and the UNDG 2015 Results Report. The new UN Development Assistance Frameworks Guidance for UN Country Teams is being finalized for adoption by the United Nations Development Group. The new guidance, which was developed by the United Nations Development Group's Programme Working Group, co-chaired by UN Environment, captures the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Devlopment's core context and content, and facilitates integrated analysis, planning and results monitoring across its development, humanitarian, peacebuilding, and human rights dimensions. The environment dimension of sustainable development is strongly reflected and integrated throughout the guidance, especially through the core programming principle of 'sustainability and resilience'.

Strengthening Partnerships and Collaboration between the UN Environment and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
Aiming to improve the condition of wetlands of international importance the Memorandum of Understanding between the UN Environment and Ramsar Convention on Wetlands was signed on 2 December 2016 in Cancun during the High-Level Segment of the UN Conference on Biodiversity. The Memorandum of Understanding strengthens the work of the UN Environment and the Ramsar Convention in facilitating collaboration and synergies among biodiversity-related conventions and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and relevant Sustainable Development Goals.

Memorandum of Understanding between UN Environment and the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China
On 9 December, the Executive Director signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China whereby it was agreed that both entities will work together to enhance international cooperation in greening the "Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road" initiative, also known as the "Belt and Road" initiative.

Memorandum of Understanding between UN Environment and the Center for International Forestry Research
In Jakarta, the Executive Director also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Center for International Forestry Research that will foster joint action on preserving tropical landscapes. This supports UN Environment's support to the establishment of the Tropical Landscapes Finance Facility, which is a purely private financing mechanism to support small holders shift to sustainable livelihood income that does not destroy important forest ecosystems

Corporate Management and Management Reform

Global Environment Facility
The Work Program approved by the Global Environment Facility Council at its 51st Meeting from 25 to 27 October 2016 included two new program concepts for UN Environment Programme, namely:
▪ The Mediterranean Sea Program, co-implemented with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, valued at US $46.1 million, with US $ 33.6 million in project grant to UN Environment; and
▪ The Global Opportunities for Long-Term Development of the Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining Sector, co-implemented by Conservation International, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Development Program and UN Environment, valued at US $ 49.3 million, with US $ 15.8 million in project grant for UN Environment activities.

In addition, the Council for the Least Developed Countries Fund approved three UN Environment project concepts to work on ecosystem-based adaptation in Lesotho, Mozambique and Rwanda valued at US $17 million.

The Executive Director of UN Environment and the Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility met on 8 November 2016 to discuss UN Environment's programming ideas for the 7th replenishment cycle. While UN Environment intends to continue many of the same kinds of initiatives that they are already delivering through the Global Environment Facility portfolios, it has been now agreed to propose initiatives in the areas of Green Finance and Environmental Security.

Green Climate Fund
UN Environment's work under the Green Climate Fund has strengthened considerably this quarter. To-date, a total of 6 proposals approved by the Green Climate Fund Secretariat under the readiness window have been received, including approval of the first of the Green Climate Fund's grants in support of processes to develop National Adaptation Plans for Nepal.

The Board has also approved a project in Gambia for large scale Ecosystem based Adaptation.
In addition, 58 countries have requested support for Readiness work. Of those, 18 proposals are under development and 40 proposals are under discussion. Under the full sized project window, 18 countries have asked to work with UN Environment and the proposals are in various stages of development; a further 24 proposals are at very initial stages of discussion.

Financing of the Third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly
UN Environment continues its resource mobilization effort for the financing of the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. To date, in addition to the European Commission confirmed contribution of US $500,000, the Nordic Council has pledged US $120,000. It is expected that Member States and others in a position to do so will contribute funds to convene of the meetings of the 2017 Assembly's session and the 2017 Open-Ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives. In accordance with Article 4 of Resolution 2/22 on the review of the cycle of the United Nations Environment Assembly adopted by the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, the Secretariat will be requesting each Member State to help.

Budget Status
▪ The 2016 annual projection for the Environment Fund stood at US $68.44 million as at end October which is a US $1.3 million, or 2%, net decrease from the 1 January 2016 estimate.
▪ US $62.88 million of pledges has been received, therefore, 92% of the projected total for 2016. US $48.65 million was paid by end October.
▪ 66 member states, or 53%, of the projected total of 126 Member States, have pledged for 2016. 51 member states had paid their pledges by end of October. The funds availability (opening balance +

revenue comprising all pledges paid and unpaid) stands at US $74 million, or 55% of the approved annual budget of US $135 million.

- Letters from the Executive Director to Member States that have not yet contributed to the Environment Fund in 2016 were sent out in October inviting them to pledge before the end of the year. This communications, together with follow up from Regional Offices and United Nations Headquarters, are expected to generate contributions from 60 countries with total value of US $ 5.6 million as per the remaining estimate.
- The total of US $266 million is the estimated revenue for 2016 from other extra-budgetary funding sources, including the Global Environment Facility, of which US $190 million has been received from the donors by end of October.

Information and Communications Technology Governance Framework

UN Environment has established an Information and Communications Technology Governance Framework document. The objective of this document is to provide a framework for harmonising organizational governance on the Information and Communications Technology implementation for UN Environment as a whole. It does this by:

- Defining the scope of the Information and Communications Technology governance framework;
- Providing a clear description of the roles and responsibilities among all the different UN Environment entities globally, including the Multilateral Environment Agreement secretariats administered by UN Environment; and
- Describing the operational functions affected by the Information and Communications Technology governance.

Standard Operating Procedure for the Access-to-Information Policy

The objective of the Standard Operating Procedure for the Access-to-Information Policy is to guide UN Environment staff in implementing UN Environment's Access-to-Information Policy. The Standard Operating Procedure will ensure that staff members will uphold the commitment to ensure access to information and implement the Policy in their day to day work.

Progress on Gender

In the spirit of enhancing accountability, UN Environment continues to outperform other UN agencies and the overall UN Secretariat in the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

Bilateral Consultations held with Switzerland and the Nordic Countries

- During the last quarter of 2016, UN Environment held consultative meetings in Nairobi with high-level representatives of Switzerland (10-11 October), and in Copenhagen with representatives from the Ministries of Environment and Foreign Affairs from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden (22-23 November).
- The consultations provided a valuable opportunity to have focused discussions and presentations on