

EU/MS position regarding the choice of the UNEA-3 theme

Introduction:

- The theme for UNEA-3 should be tangible and specific to ensure UNEA-3 will result in concrete, actionable outcomes as well as clear political messages that are both communicable to the broader public and relevant for policy-makers. The theme should focus on outcomes and solutions, for the challenges and goals are already set in global strategies with the 2030 agenda, the Paris agreement and others.
- The narrative for the theme should be formulated in a forward-looking manner that demonstrates in a positive way how it contributes to achieving the SDGs. The UNEA-3 should resonate with the HLPF theme for 2018 and with the SDGs which are under review at that session. This will help UNEA President to communicate UNEA outcomes in the HLPF as well as enhancing UNEA's visibility in the UN system and to citizens at large. Further, the theme should enable UNEA to **demonstrate its added value** vis a vis other fora/individual environmental conventions.
- **The EU/MS support the proposed theme 1.**

Theme 1:

- Theme 1, which the EU/MS favours, is tangible and has a high global relevance. There are many opportunities here for Environment Ministers to demonstrate their leadership. It is also easily communicable to the broader public, e.g. through the links with health, sustainable transport, the New Urban Agenda etc.
- Discussion must not become a repetition of UNEA-2 but can build on the relevant outcomes of the UNEA 2 and go beyond human health
- The suggested outcome under this theme should be ambitious. The outcome could be made more tangible and actionable by focusing on addressing specific groups of pollutants. A selection of pollution types could be addressed as chapters in a prioritized and precisely targeted "Global Action Plan on Pollution" to be progressively developed by UNEA. Addressing important components of pollution in a holistic manner could result in institutional and programmatic efficiency in dealing with these challenges. Otherwise, the risk is that these issues will, eventually, be addressed in isolation resulting in proliferation of initiatives. We also need to be realistic what can be achieved within less than a year before UNEA-3 regarding preparations of an ambitious action plan agreeable by all and adding value to what already exists.

- If theme 1 would be selected, the title could be reformulated so that it is shorter, simpler, more positive and solution oriented. Given the importance of having an agreement on December 5th, EU/MS are ready to show flexibility on the exact formulation of the title for theme 1.

Theme 2:

- EU/MS consider theme 2 could be acceptable provided it would be substantially revised.
 - Overall, the way in which the theme is currently framed builds too much on negative threat scenarios, and we would welcome a more positive framing as a chance to make societies stronger.
 - This theme would require additional focus to avoid the risk of too dispersed discussions and to secure a tangible and communicable outcome.
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