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## United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme

United Nations Environment Assembly of the  
United Nations Environment Programme

First session

Nairobi, 23–27 June 2014

Item 5 of the provisional agenda\*

Policy issues

### Statements and recommendations by major groups and stakeholders to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its first session

Note by the secretariat

#### I. Background

1. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) regional consultation meetings with major groups and stakeholders are held every year 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, forwarded to member States six weeks before the session of the governing body as an information document.
2. The regional consultation meetings held in 2013 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 first session, to be held in June 2014.
3. The outcome of the regional consultation meetings will feed into the fifteenth session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

#### II. Topics for discussion

4. The regional consultation meetings addressed the following key issues:
  - (a) United Nations Environment Assembly;
  - (b) Sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda, the role of UNEP in the post-2015 development agenda and integrating environmental sustainability into that agenda;
  - (c) Stakeholder engagement and access to information: new mechanisms for the engagement of major groups and stakeholders in UNEP, including the Environment Assembly, strengthening the participation of civil society organizations and stakeholders by adopting a

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\* UNEP/EA.1/1.

stakeholder engagement policy, and the application of the Guidelines for the Development of National Legislation on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Bali Guidelines);

(d) The 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns; and

(e) Regional priorities.

5. 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	12–15 October 2013, Gaborone
Europe	4 and 5 November 2013, Istanbul, Turkey
Western Asia	26 and 27 November 2013, Amman
Asia and the Pacific	17 and 18 September 2013, Phnom Penh
Latin America and Caribbean	18 and 19 November 2013, Panama City
North America	3 and 4 December 2013, Washington, D.C.

6. A total of 273 participants attended the regional consultation meetings. 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 53.8 per cent of the total number of participants followed by the “Other” category with 13.2 per cent of the total number.

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>Western Asia</i>	<i>Asia and the Pacific</i>	<i>Latin America and the Caribbean</i>	<i>North America</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	Business and industry	0	0	1	0	2	6	9	3.29
2	Children and youth	5	2	3	6	2	3	21	7.69
3	Indigenous people	2	1	0	5	1	1	10	3.66
4	Local authorities	0	0	0	1	2	0	3	1.09
5	Non-governmental organizations	33	13	18	51	3	29	147	53.8
6	Science and technology (including research and academia)	2	3	3	4	3	8	23	8.42
7	Women	2	11	1	3	2	0	19	6.95
8	Farmers	0	1	0	1	1	0	3	1.09
9	Workers and trade unions	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	1.09
10	Other <sup>a</sup>	24	2	1	5	0	4	36	13.18
	<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>a</sup> Includes stakeholders such as faith-based groups, the media, foundations, organizations whose mandates cut across several sectors, as well as intergovernmental bodies such as the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

### III. Statements and recommendations

7. The annex to the present note contains statements and recommendations from major groups and stakeholders prepared during the regional consultation meetings. The key messages contained in the statements and recommendations reflect areas in which general consensus was reached at the meetings; however, the various groups represented did not necessarily endorse every conclusion. The annex has not been formally edited.

## Annex

### Outcomes of the regional consultation meetings with major groups and stakeholders<sup>a</sup>

#### AFRICA ANNUAL REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS MEETING WITH MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN PREPARATION FOR THE 15TH UNEP GLOBAL MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS FORUM (GMGSF-15) AND FIRST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY OF UNEP (UNEA-1), 12-15 OCTOBER 2013 (GABORONE, BOTSWANA)

#### CIVIL SOCIETY COMMUNIQUE TO THE FIFTH AMCEN SPECIAL SESSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE UNEA

We, the representatives of African Civil Society Organizations and Networks under the auspices of Pan African Climate Justice Alliance met in Gaborone, Botswana, on October 12-14, 2013 for the Pre-AMCEN African Civil Society Consultative Workshop, ahead of the 5th Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN). The Workshop also served as the UNEP Regional Consultative Meeting with Major Groups and Stakeholders in the Africa Region (MGSF) in preparation for the Global Ministerial Environment Forum and 15th Session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum scheduled to take place in 2014.

Aware that the IPCC-WG I released in Stockholm, Sweden in September 2013 raised red flag on the rapidly heating earth and the certainty of man's contribution to the growing concentration of greenhouse gas into the atmosphere;

**Further aware** that the adverse effects of climate change manifested by prolonged droughts, shifting seasons, rising sea water levels, tropical cyclones, land slides, newly emerging environmental refugees, and diseases have compromised Africa's right to development and attainment of national sustainable development and poverty reduction aspirations;

**Concerned** that the last two decades have been characterised by unfulfilled promises and commitments by developed countries to Africa in particular hence breeding an atmosphere of ever-diminishing trust and confidence in international negotiations processes;

Further concerned of the cruel irony that a people who have lived for so long in harmony with Mother Earth, imprinting the lightest of footprints, now suffer a crisis they contributed the least towards it cause;

**Inspired** by the need to strengthen our voices as civil society and community groups to contribute to our Governments' Positions on various global standpoints.

**Acknowledging** the efforts by Africa to speak with one voice during the UNFCCC-COP 19 in Warsaw, Poland

Acknowledging the fact that non-state actors contribution to the UNFCCC process and its outcome is essential for informed policy formulation and monitoring of its implementation at all levels.

**Desirous** that the One Voice should be that of and be informed by realities of the local communities in the affirmation of the authority of the Civil Society and communities as the expression of the sovereign will of the people;

**Appreciating**, as a positive step, the COP18 outcome on decision made on promoting gender balance and improving the participation of women in UNFCCC negotiations and related processes;

**Recognizing** the progress made so far by the Africa Group, African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and African Union through CAHOSOCC to harmonise African climate change response efforts;

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<sup>a</sup> Issued without formal editing.

**Declares as follows;****1. Keep Africa safe:**

We support the acceptance of “loss and damage” as a key area of discussion for the new climate agreement. Africa should also continue calling for the blanket of greenhouse gas in the atmosphere to be returned to well below 300ppm CO<sub>2</sub>eq and warming to be limited to well below 1 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels, with the objective of returning to pre-industrial levels in the longer term.

Based on the accounts we have heard from the local communities, women, youth, indigenous groups of the intolerable conditions caused by climate change including a case of a pastoralist who took his life after losing all his cattle to a prolonged drought, and based on the report of IPCC Working Group I 5<sup>th</sup> assessment, even warming of this level globally risks warming of more than 1.5 degrees Celsius in Africa, dangerous interference with our climate, and loss and damage requiring compensation. A goal of “less than 2 degrees Celsius” is no longer ambitious as accepting it would be condemning Africa to incineration and to no modern development.

**2. Ensure poverty eradication and food Security:**

Climate change poses grave risk to Africa’s food security, and to the lives and livelihoods of smallholder farmers and rural poor communities. African leaders should thus ensure the decisions they support at global level leads to atmospheric concentrations stabilized in a time frame that safeguards food production and ecological systems to adapt naturally, and safeguards jobs and economic development. Agriculture remains one of the crucial sectors affected by climate change and which supports food and livelihoods security of millions around the world especially in developing countries. African governments should therefore put pressure to Parties and SBSTA to conclude the agriculture negotiations under UNFCCC with focus on adaptation and expand the remit to cover sustainable livestock production systems as part of solution to climate change.

**3. Share the atmosphere fairly:**

African people have the inalienable right to achieve sustainable development by making use of a fair share of the Earth’s global commons and resources. The carbon budget required to return to well below 300ppm CO<sub>2</sub>eq should be shared fairly with Africa taking into account the accumulative historical use of these resources by developed countries and the finance and technology transfers made available to developing countries.

**4. Industrialized countries to cut excessive consumption and pollution:**

Comprehensive action to address climate change should constitute drastic emissions cut by industrialized countries at domestic level. The withdrawal of Canada, New Zealand, Russia and Japan from the KP2 and the continued refusal of United States to ratify the Kyoto Protocol are not good signals to the rest of the global community. These countries should accept their historical responsibilities, reconsider their position and recommit without further delay and conditions.

Though science points to the current emissions of some emerging economies exceeding the industrialized countries, we should recognize that current atmospheric concentrations are principally the result of historical emissions of greenhouse gases, the largest share of which originated in developed country Parties. There is an urgent need for emission cuts by having specific target for all Annex I parties to reduce emissions by at least 45% below 1990 levels by 2020 and 100% by 2050 below 1990 levels.

**5. Protect and compensate affected communities:**

African leaders should not compromise on their demand that ensures that industrialised countries compensate affected communities and countries for the full costs of avoiding harms, actual harms and damage, and lost opportunities for development resulting from climate change. Any effort to establish adaptation as an obligation and not a right, or to use adaptation as a means to divide or differentiate between developing countries should be resisted. An international mechanism for compensation on the loss and damage caused by extreme weather events related to climate change should thus be established. Though the Green Climate Fund has been established, many observers fear that it may follow the direction of other Climate Funds before it, which remain empty shells after they were shunned by industrialized countries, that favor undemocratic multilateral institutions the can control.

**6. Polluter not poor pays:**

Developed countries have prospered through “cheap carbon” growth while externalizing their costs to the atmosphere and to developing countries through what has been christened “offsetting”. The costs are now born by Africa, as we mitigate and adapt to a crisis we played little role in causing. To avert a

climate catastrophe and enable mitigation, adaptation and technology transfer to developing countries, developed countries must make available financing of more than 1.5% of their GDP. Efforts to shift the burden of financing away from developed countries and towards developing countries or the markets that have not worked should be avoided. Creation of “unsupported” or “market” NAMAs (actions) are inconsistent with the Convention and thus experiments that are not worth investing.

**7. Transfer the tools to adapt and develop.**

A “Marshall Plan for Africa and for the Earth” is an emergency that should awaken all stakeholders. Curbing global emissions within a decade requires technology transfers on a scale never before considered. African leaders should compel developed countries to remove intellectual property rights, pay full incremental costs of technology transfer to protect developing countries and contribute for peaking and declining of global emissions. Efforts to sell rather than transfer appropriate technologies, or to strengthen rather than relax intellectual property rights should not be allowed. Developed and developing countries should support the adoption and development of indigenous and locally innovated technology as well as ensuring efficiency in technology transfer and deployment.

**8. Fair not false solutions:**

Industrialized countries must not shift burdens to address climate change to developing countries, or seek to “divide and rule” the countries of the South, or to penalize developing countries through trade or other measures. Creation of global carbon markets or sectoral trading mechanisms, by which the developed countries will take more of Africa’s rightful share of atmospheric space should be discouraged.

**9. Systems change not climate change:**

We should acknowledge the structural causes of the present crisis, and that the climate crisis will not be solved with the same level of thinking that created it. A new system that restores harmony with nature and among human beings should be the only sustainable way to comprehensively deal with climate change impacts. To balance with nature, there must first be equity among human beings. There is need for fundamental change to the current system of social and economic organization. A new order building on the wisdom of our civilizations to live well and to live in harmony with Mother Earth should be the common clarion call for our leaders.

**10. Keep to the commitments made:**

More pressure from African leaders to ensure developed countries honour and deliver on their commitment of providing US\$100 Billion by the year 2020 should be exerted. Industrialised countries must scale up their Commitments to fulfil their obligation to provide adequate, new and additional funds as this amount is far from all estimates of climate finance needed by developing countries. In COP19, Africa should ask Parties to the Convention to establish a clear and transparent mechanism for monitoring, verification, and evaluation of delivery of climate funds.

Our leaders should call for immediate establishment of an independent process to conduct transparent and consultative verification on developed countries’ claim that they have successfully delivered all FSF of over USD 30 billion to developing countries during 2010-2012 in accordance with controversial Copenhagen Accord, which metamorphosed into Cancun Agreement.

In light of the past failures and lessons learned from past and existing climate funds, the Green Climate Fund must ensure transparency, openness, local communities’ easy access, country ownership and respond primarily to the needs of vulnerable communities. The Fund must respect such principles as sovereignty, self-determination the fulfilment of State obligations; “Do no harm”, Financial integrity and anti-corruption, Public consultations, “Equity, non-discrimination and inclusion”, “Compliance with International Law and Upward Harmonization with the Highest National and International Standards”.

GCF must recognize that human and environmental rights obligations have primacy over financial obligations

**11. Gender equity and enhanced stakeholder participation:**

Though COP18 made some progress in recognizing gender in negotiating text, still much need to be done. Participation of women, youth, indigenous people and marginalized groups in UNFCCC negotiations and representation of Parties in bodies should be balanced between North and South, taking into account the respective differences.

**12. Defend democracy:**

The Since the UNFCCC constitutes the fundamental legal framework on climate change African leaders should demand for establishment of effective and accountable institutions under the Conference of Parties. Any response to the climate crisis that is of the people, by the people and for the people should be the guiding principle of future efforts.

Governments across the world should end years of delay and meet their moral, historical and legal obligations. Movements, people's organizations, civil society groups and citizens from all walks of life are gradually coming together in a global campaign on climate and environmental justice. African civil society's desire is to stand in solidarity with the leaders of any nation who seek a solution to climate change that is founded on justice, builds on the best available science, and ensures the well-being of Africans and other peoples and countries.

**13. Effective participation in Post 2015 and SDG process**

Africa should promote a Single framework with poverty alleviation at the centre and the three dimensions of sustainable development (environment, economic and social). A comprehensive mechanism to deal with the environment should be developed at the level of African Union Commission and the relevant institutional framework for sustainable development should be strengthened and the collaboration and sharing of information between the African missions in New York and the Capitals should be enhanced.

**14. United Nations Environmental Assembly (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, the Committee of Permanent Representatives allow full participation of Major Groups. Major Groups already accredited under UN ECOSOC should be recognized by UNEA, while elected MGSF Regional Representatives should be accorded speaking rights at the Committee of Permanent Representatives and UNEA. Broader partnerships between UNEP and other organizations in efforts to fulfil its mandate should always be promoted, with UNEP not limiting itself policy formulation but also implementation

**EUROPE ANNUAL REGIONAL CONSULTATION MEETING (RCM) WITH MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN PREPARATION FOR THE 15TH UNEP GLOBAL MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS FORUM (GMGSF-15) AND FIRST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY OF UNEP (UNEA-1), 4-5 NOVEMBER, 2013 (ISTANBUL, TURKEY)**

**KEY MESSAGES**

The 2013 UNEP European Regional Consultation (RCM) with Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) was held from 4 -5 November 2013 in Istanbul, Turkey, and prior to the UN Regional Consultation on the Post-2015 Development Agenda for Europe and Central Asia held from 6-8 November 2013.

The RCM attracted UNEP accredited Major groups and stakeholders in Europe, ROE MGS partners involved in the Environment for Europe (EfE) process, the Caspian Convention, the Carpathian Convention, the Poverty and Environment Initiative, Environment and Security Initiative, the Black Sea, the Pan-European Biodiversity Platform and the European Environment and Health processes (EEHP).

The themes for the consultation included the new mechanisms for the engagement of MGS in UNEP (including UNEA), the 10 Years Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP), UNEP's role in the Post-2015 development agenda and SDGs and the implementation of UNEP PoW in the European region.

The following messages were put forward by the participants:

***On the new mechanisms for the engagement of MGS in UNEP:***

Welcomed the proposed new mechanisms for stakeholder engagement at UNEP in line with the spirit of paragraph 88h of the Rio Outcome Document;

Stakeholder contributions to UNEP should be based on local, national and regional experiences, practices and knowledge;

We support the principle of participation, meaningful engagement and access to intergovernmental processes for the afore mentioned stakeholders, as expressed in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), resolution 67/290 of July 9, 2013 establishing the High Level Political Forum, the HLPF, and further expressed in the Human Rights Covenants, the Aarhus Convention and in similar documents of equal formal standing;

We further support the construct of the major groups by the UN at UNCED in 1992 through Agenda 21 and as recognised and further resolved by the Rio 2012 Summit. Also, criteria for stakeholder engagement must be developed, using the criteria enumerated in the 1996 ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 on Consultative Relationship between the United Nations and Non-Governmental Organizations;

Within the current 'nine major groups' configuration, environmental NGOs function today as a sub-set of the NGO major group despite their specific environmental profile and expertise. In the future work of UNEP, UNEP should recognize environmental NGOs as an additional and distinct major group with a guaranteed seat and voice in UNEP processes;

In view of the 'new UNEP' as expressed in the Rio Outcome Document, the mandate for regional representatives, their modalities, functions and roles need to be further adjusted and elaborated, and relevant modalities should be developed with the assistance of UNEP to function as conveners of regional environmental networks and their activities with the representatives of major groups.

In line with practise developed at the first UN Summit in 1992, the 2002 Johannesburg Summit and some of the best practise employed by other UN relevant conferences, accreditation should be given to all interested stakeholder organisation that can prove they comply with basic standards and criteria for organisations developed and utilised by UNEP;

Major groups and other stakeholders should always be given access to the UNEA of UNEP and its subsidiary bodies including the Open Ended CPR (Committee of Permanent Representatives) as well as other CPR meetings as appropriate and when needed; and

The proposed new mechanisms for stakeholder engagement will not succeed without adequate funding. Therefore, adequate funding should be made available to ensure quality input from major groups and other stakeholders, in terms of process as well as thematic work, and to promote continued and credible engagement in UNEP-related issues.

***On the 10 Years Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP):***

Fully support UNEP's continued role and work to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns in both developed and developing countries;

The 10YFP will only succeed if the international context is appropriate for its implementation. Therefore, we think that the SCP agenda cannot be isolated from other global trade and market policies. As indicated in paragraph 225 of the Rio+20 outcome document harmful and inefficient consumption and production policies and incentives have adverse impacts on the environment and communities at large, and undermine efforts to make sustainable choices and achieve sustainable development;

Therefore, we strongly recommend an accelerated phase out of the unsustainable and harmful subsidies and investments in the energy, agriculture and other sectors;

We strongly recommend that the 10YFP focus on changing and transforming the unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, and going beyond promoting green consumption and production.

We would underline the importance of clearly identifying and directly addressing some of the fundamental obstacles to achieving SCP. These include a debt-based economy, which leads to GDP growth obsession and overconsumption of resources; financial, monetary and economic systems that are not appropriate to implementing SCP; and the existing "consumer blindness", leading to unrealistic consumption growth, without awareness and realization of its environmental and social consequences;

We therefore stress that technical and market based solutions will never be enough to tackle the environmental and social challenges posed by unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. We need to focus on fundamental changes in lifestyles, as well as transformation of corporate value from maximizing profit to meeting social and environmental standards and responsibilities as a fundamental and legal objective;

We also caution that the SCP agenda is not only about the environment, but also about social improvements such as labour conditions and health and gender equality;

We recognize the highly energy and resource-intensive production patterns in many sectors contributing to the continued deterioration of the environment through emissions of waste, toxic materials, pollutants, and depletion of scarce resources. 10YFP should be effectively used to promote policies, incentives and actions to create sustainable production and energy patterns;

We are in favour of national and local strategies on SCP, including active stakeholder involvement, to guarantee implementation in the field. An international framework is nevertheless important, to harmonise the policies and regulations and create a level playing field. Capacity building work is also vital, especially for countries that are not very familiar with SCP policies;

We would like to see education and raising awareness on SCP mainstreamed in all programmes (including in school curricula); and

The discussion on sustainable consumption and production should be at the center of the post-2015

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