UNEA

United Nations Environment Assembly
of the United Nations Environment Programme

Delivering on the 2030 Agenda

Outcomes of Geneva Multistakeholders Dialogue on the preparations of the Second Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly

Monday 4 April 2016

UNEP

GENEVA ENVIRONMENT NETWORK

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Background on the United Nations Environment Assembly

The second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-2) will take place at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, under the overarching theme of Delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, from 23-27 May 2016. The Assembly, which represents the world's highest-level decision-making body on the environment, will culminate in resolutions and a global call to action to address the critical environmental challenges facing the world today.

The UN Environment Assembly was established after the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in June 2012 (Rio+20) when it was resolved that UNEP should be strengthened and upgraded and have a new governing body. The Assembly enjoys the greatest participation of such a forum worldwide, with universal membership of all of the 193 UN Member States.

UNEA-2, the second meeting of the governing body, provides the opportunity to build on UNEA-1's success in advancing the global environmental agenda, which produced 17 resolutions, 1 decision, 6 publications and 2 symposia, with the help of its 1,200 participants.

The wide participation of all stakeholders in UNEA-2 is an utmost priority for UNEP and the success of UNEA-2. It is crucial for effective agenda-setting to include the voices of the world's environmental and sustainable development advocates on the ground in high-level decision-making.

UNEA-2 briefing and multi-stakeholder dialogue in Geneva

UNEA-2 will feature a number of high-level events on areas of expertise of International Geneva. A briefing and multi-stakeholder dialogue on preparations for UNEA-2 for Geneva-based Permanent Missions, Inter-governmental organizations and civil society was organized by the Geneva Environment Network, UNEP Regional Office for Europe and the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS). The event took place on Monday 4 April 2016, at the International Environment House II.

The meeting was opened by a general introduction to the preparations of UNEA-2, and an exchange on how Geneva-based government missions and civil society can engage in this event and beyond. It was followed by a series of panel discussions on the main themes of UNEA-2, linking to areas of expertise of Internatonal Geneva, namely:

- Delivering on the Environmental Dimension of the 2030 Agenda (the overarching theme of UNEA-2)
- Healthy Environment, Healthy People
- Mobilizing Resources for Sustainable Investments
- Environment and Displacement: Root Causes and Implications

Welcome and Introduction to UNEA-2

Jan Dusik, Director and Regional Representative for Europe, presented the state of play with the preparations for the second session of UNEA, and important topics that will be discussed in Nairobi. He directed the participants to a number of activities, events and documents that would help representatives of governments, civil society and the private sector planning to attend. The documents include those linked to the high-level ministerial segment:

- Delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda;
- Healthy Environment, Healthy People thematic report; and
- the five Clusters of resolutions.

In terms of meeting and events, Jan Dusik presented in details:

- the Science-Policy Forum (SPF) taking place from 19-20 May 2016;
- the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF) on 21-22 May 2016;
- celebration of the International Day of Biodiversity on 22 May 2016;
- the Sustainable Innovations Expo 2016 (SIE 2016) that will focus on 9 topics Air quality, Blue economy, Energy, Gender, Information, Building coalitions of Global Commons, South-South Cooperation, Urbanization;
- Symposiums on Mobilizing Resources for Sustainable Investments, and Displacement and the Environment: Root causes and implications;
- the several side events with high-level participants and experts; and
- green room events planned to enrich the debate at UNEA-2.

The Green room events are primarily for civil society, with a view to sharing experiences and increasing opportunities for informal dialogue among the participants of UNEA-2. Slots for Green Room side events are 23-26 May, all day starting at 10am, in parallel to UNEA sessions.

Participants were invited to reflect on the presentation, and a few highlights from the interaction with the participants include:

- The importance of a ministerial declaration for the SDGs' implementation that would serve as reference point for governments, civil society, private sector and other stakeholders for the implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda.
- The need for UNEP to find better ways of engaging governments and other stakeholders who are not physically present in Nairobi, for example, at the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) which is now open to all Member States and accredited stakeholders. This situation must be improved to give greater access to member states who do not have representation in Nairobi and other stakeholders who have a role to play in the implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development. An idea to further develop is the establishment of The Group of Friends of UNEA in Geneva.
- With regards to the participation of Ministers at UNEA, many member states flagged the importance of active engagement of Ministers at UNEA. This included a suggestion to increase the number of ministerial roundtables, beyond the two already scheduled.
- Stressed the need to link the different discussions at UNEA with the proposed resolutions. Member states were interested to receive the list of speakers to coordinate with colleagues who will be attending UNEA.

Delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda

UNEA-2 is taking place under the overarching theme, "Delivering on the Environmental Dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." At the high-level plenary meeting to provide direction on the implementation of the **environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda**, environment ministers and other high-level representatives will outline how the environmental community will work to achieve the SDGs. They will also define the role that UNEP will play in supporting nations and peoples to achieve these goals.

Mark Halle, IISD's European Representative, reminded the participants that Rio+20 enabled the upgrading of UNEP and also the creation of UNEA as a governing body deciding on UNEP's programme of work as well as a universal assembly with the highest authority on environmental issues. It begs the question of how do we deal with something that has a dual purpose? UNEA has to be an open forum for global challenges.

Just like Rio+20 in 2012, the second half of 2015 represents a significant watershed for sustainable development with the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the COP21 Paris Agreement. These interconnected agendas represent a major game-changer for the environment. For decades we have been saying to people and institutions dealing with social and economic issues to integrate the environment. The great news is when looking at the SDGs, the environment is fully integrated throughout the agenda and we need to face the new reality and complexity of its implementation – and rise up to that challenge.

Therefore, we are dealing with an agenda that is integrated and indivisible, a universal agenda that requires commitment and action of all countries. As we prepare ourselves for UNEA-2, the question we need to ask is: how can an institution like UNEP with universal membership and a mandate that covers both developed and developing countries will use this forum and dedicated platform for the environment to deliver on the 2030 Agenda? In that context, a few issues were underlined by Mr. Halle:

1. The 2030 Agenda cannot and will not be implemented without the full participation of all stakeholders. We need to go beyond governments, and for that matter beyond the UN. It has to be inclusive and involve more partners such as the private sector, civil society and municipalities.
2. The UNEA has to be a major milestone in tracking and assessing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda from the environmental angle to see how this indivisible and integrated agenda works.
3. We also need to figure out, how to use and configure UNEA as stepping stone to accountability – a forum with accountability functions on environment.
4. We also need to address how we are prepared to pay for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the costs of which are estimated in trillions. It is unrealistic to expect governments to pay for all of it at a time when economies are declining, along with official development assistance. Therefore, we need to find better ways of aligning the interest of the private sector with sustainable goals.
5. UNEA has to be a forum for ideas, innovation, best practices and a market place for partnerships. This needs to crystalized within UNEP.

Healthy Environment, Healthy People

The **Healthy Environment, Healthy People** report, to be launched at the Assembly, will address the nexus between environmental health and public health in light of the 2030 Agenda. A Ministerial Policy-Review Session will gather at UNEA under the overarching theme **Healthy Environment, Healthy People**. At this session, ministers and other high-level officials will identify concrete partnerships, policies and tools that can help to achieve the SDGs in critical areas such as air quality, healthy ecosystems, chemicals and waste.

Pierre Quiblier, Programme Officer at the UNEP's Chemicals and Waste Branch, presented the report "Healthy Environment, Healthy People" which will be submitted to Member States and discussed with high-level panelists during UNEA-2.

Since the SDG 3 is at the heart of UNEA, the scientific evidence of linkages between healthy environment healthy people highlighted in the report should be a start to propose new options and collaborative solutions. It is an opportunity offered by the SDGs to act on the social, environment and economic determinants of good health in a cohesive way.

The main environmental and health risks and their impact, as indicated in the report and presented by M. Quiblier, are: air pollution, lack of access to clean water and sanitation, chemical pollution, poorly managed hazardous and other waste, natural disasters (which affect 42 million people). These findings have to be communicated and presented to governments, policy-makers and to a wide spectrum of stakeholders so that policy options are proposed for improved health and well-being.

Annette Prüss-Ustün, from WHO's Public Health and the Environment Department, mentioned the publication of a new review by WHO with comprehensive information and solutions -as per their own findings- related to the links between environment and health. This linkage explains 25% of the diseases even though they are still preventable. Through one environmental strategy, we often address an array of diseases at the same time.

In 10 years, since the last review, much of the burden has shifted from infectious diseases to non-communicable diseases, due to the aging of the population, which creates its own complications (especially heart disease and strokes). Air pollution remains the main cause due to all the toxic substances that affect the whole body.

Some population groups are more affected, such as the South East Asian and African regions. Children under 5 years old are especially vulnerable, but all socioeconomic groups are affected in different ways.

Health should be systematically addressed in all of the policies:

» In terms of the health sector itself, too little funds are used for prevention, roughly 2-3% of expenditure, the rest being used on treatment. The need for treatment can be significantly reduced if there is more effort put in prevention.

» In terms of cost estimates, a look should be taken into the real cost of certain goods. For example, how much does the use of oil really cost when you factor in the externalities of health?

» Transport policies, relying less on individualized transport could mitigate climate change, increase walking and address air pollution. It is a win-win situation.

Pierre Quiblier pointed out in addition to what Ms. Prüss-Ustün said that we are dealing with the consequences without shaping the appropriate policies, including for prevention, and that UNEA can help on that by using scientific evidence to raise awareness.

Bettina Borisch, Head of the World Federation of Public Health Associations' Geneva Office, mentioned the publication of their own report, the Global Charter for the Public Health which is almost the same as the Healthy Environment Healthy People report.

Both reports also share the same set of recommendations: cross-sectorial partnerships, systematic communication and multi-sectorial dialogue for example.

Speaking of the sense of integration into practical policies, Ms. Borisch highlighted the role of civil society: advocacy based on grounded experience, policy monitoring, policy dialogue and campaigns for policy change.

UNEP and the WHO have worked for years to bring health and environment together. A lot of energy and human resources have been dedicated by the two UN organizations to bring this awareness. How much more needs to be done to bring all the relevant actors together? She also outlined the gaps in global development, notably the jurisdictional constraints of problems that cut across sovereign borders and what she described as the "human mindset", which needs to evolve towards greater health and environmental consciousness.

Mobilizing Ressources for Sustainable Investments

UNEP has completed in October 2015 a comprehensive, two-year Inquiry into the Design of a Sustainable Financial System. The actors in this space – many of them in Geneva – are numerous and each holds an essential piece of the puzzle. A Symposium for **Mobilizing Resources for Sustainable Investments** at UNEA-2 will include an overview of the main findings of the Inquiry report. Perhaps the single greatest challenge in the necessary transition to sustainable development lies in harnessing the financial system to the needs of a productive, inclusive and environmentally-responsible economy. This will require reforms of the policies, rules and practices that govern financial and capital markets.

Hamish Jenkins, head of the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service in Geneva, moderated the session. He noted that despite some efforts to re-regulate finance after the global financial crisis of 2008-9, we are still faced with extremely dangerous systemic risks. The financial system is still prone to instability and crisis and it is still divorced from the real economy and the need to provide long-term affordable credit in an inclusive manner needed to align the financial system with sustainable

development. These issues have been addressed in two recent major UN reports. Firstly the report of UNEP's Inquiry: Design of Sustainable Finance Systems, which will be the basis for a high level symposium during UNEA-2. Secondly, the UNCTAD Trade and Development Report 2015, focusing on reform of the international financial architecture for development, which he said complements the findings of the UNEP report.

Iain Henderson, G20 Green Finance Study Group Project Manager at UNEP Inquiry, presented an overview of the UNEP report on helping to align financial systems with sustainable development, by assessing climate risks and its impact, setting green financial goals and promoting financial inclusion.

Three key findings of the report were outlined, before mentioning that the mandate of the inquiry has been extended for a couple of years:

1. Financial corporate markets can be aligned with sustainable development: how to use public funds smartly?
2. A "quiet revolution" is under way to integrate sustainable development into the fabric of the financial system through policy measures targeting the main asset pools and actors in a large number of countries;
3. This is a window in time - these changes come primarily from emerging economies.
4. M. Henderson also mentioned that the recently created G20 green finance study group is co-chaired by China and the United Kingdom and that many actors were starting to engage (its report is to be out in September 2016).

One important question remains: how financial technology can impact the financial system of tomorrow? There is a need for measurements of financial performance.

Stephanie Blankenburg, Head at UNCTAD's Debt and Development Finance Branch, noted that her remarks would be informed by the findings of UNCTAD's annual Trade and Development Report.

She welcomed the fact that the UNEP inquiry recognizes the need to reform of the financial system but thought that it is perhaps too optimistic as to scale of the changes implied in the "quiet revolution" outlined in the report.

From her macroeconomist point of view, her reservations regarding this report concern its strong reliance in successfully leveraging private finance: "Too much confidence, too little criticism".

Systemic problems characterize the core feature of the international finance system:

a- private capital funds are extremely volatile;

b- the system left to itself is prone to regular financial crisis.

Sustainability is not only about turning 1US$ of public finance into 2US$ of private investment, as M. Henderson suggested, but also how long that 2US$ is going to stay. Finance is highly "procyclical" - meaning that it tends to flow to economies that are doing well, and leave the country in harder times, when it is most needed.

Ms. Blankenburg added that historically, long-term investments for the public good were undertaken through public investments required to crowd in private investments. In a highly deregulated environment

as we still have today, it is highly improbable that private finance can substitute that role. Public Private Partnerships (PPP) should not leave the burden of risk to the public sector.

She also reminded the audience that the global crisis was a private sector crisis, due to the incapability to manage risk, which emphasizes the absence of liability: it is highly improbable that private finance can be successfully leveraged on significant scale without systemic reforms.

She mentioned a number of reforms that would be needed beyond those featured in the UNEP report, notably the need for a separation between commercial banking and investment banking, the need to regulate "shadow banking" (operating outside any form of regulation), as well as the need for a fair and durable solution to the prevention and resolution of sovereign debt crises.

She described the issue technological innovations in financial markets as a potential double-edged sword that needs to be monitored and regulated adequately. The introduction of unregulated innovative financial instruments such as credit-default swaps were one of the main causes of the global financial crisis.

M. Jenkins noted that multi-stakeholder debates in the build-up to the Addis Ababa Financing for Development Conference revealed that while efforts should be made to mobilize private finance, the need to raise much needed public revenue for long-term public investments remained – and thus the importance of stepping up international tax cooperation to recover the astronomical sums of public revenue lost through tax avoidance and evasion. Different dimensions of the financial challenge will be address in various UN forums to come, including the Financing for Development Forum, the high level symposium on this topic at UNEA-2 and UNCTAD XIV.

Katharina Serafimova, head of the financial sector engagement at the WWF International, described the "quiet revolution" mentioned by M. Henderson as "a bit too quiet" if we look at the size of the problem. She pointed out that new business models are emerging and financial markets are not prepared for this transition.

On the decarbonization issue, the financial market is going in the opposite direction and business as usual will lead to a 4-6°C warming, not the < 2°C targeted.

She continued by asking if that all the good and best practices outlined in the UNEP report are enough to trigger the shift on the scale that is needed without significantly changing the rules of the game.

M. Jenkins ended this session by emphasizing that another piece of the puzzle is the need to address the incompatibility of current international investment agreements (or investment chapters of international trade agreements) with the imperatives of sustainable development. These agreements enable foreign investors to sue national governments in opaque international courts for introducing new policies and regulations (including environmental regulations), which they claim would result in losses in projected profits tantamount to "expropriation". He encouraged all to read the UNEP and UNCTAD reports, noting that the UNEP Inquiry also includes a series of very enlightening working papers, such as the one on the relationship between human rights and sustainable finance. He concluded by saying the symposia that will be held in the morning of 25 May 2016 and the Ministerial Luncheon on 25 May 2016 will shed light and further guide us all on ways and means to Mobilizing Resources for Sustainable Investments in the context of the implementation of the 2030 agenda and beyond.

Environment and displacement: Roots causes and implications

The Symposium **Displacement and the environment: Root causes and implications**, at UNEA-2, will address one of the major humanitarian issues of our time: the unprecedented numbers of refugees and forced migrants around the world currently. The symposium will seek to understand how environmental degradation is driving human displacement and forced migration, and what climate change and growing resource scarcity might mean for such flows in future. It will also look at the environmental implications of massive displacement in terms of rapid urbanization and poorly managed refugee camps and the necessary coordinated humanitarian response.

Henrik Slotte, head of UNEP's Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch, introduced the topic of discussion and the two panel speakers of the session. Henrik explained that Minister Nahida Sobhan, from the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh and could not be present at the discussion. Bangladesh is the 2016 Chair for the Global Forum on Migration and Development GFMD.

Henrik introduced the symposium on Displacement and the Environment: Root causes and implications that will take place at the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) on the afternoon of Wednesday 25 May 2016 in Nairobi. He spoke of the many different angles from which displacement is discussed in Geneva, recently in the form of debates around the Syrian refugee crisis. He underlined that UNEP will take a broad approach to the issues during the symposium, looking at global issues and the environmental angle of human mobility issues. Panelists Michelle Yonetani and Dina Ionesco then gave presentations highlighting the key issues relating to displacement and the environment.

Michelle Yonetani, Senior Strategic Advisor from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), which is part of the Norwegian Refugee Council, presented some of the work of the IDMC since 2009. Ms. Yonetani noted that while the work of IDMC was initially focused on conflict-related displacement, the organization has now broadened its work to look at disasters (such as events triggered by earthquakes or flooding, for example but which are also linked to many other underlying drivers).

Ms Yonetani presented evidence of the large-scale, widespread and increasing phenomenon that is internal displacement. It was previously considered an acute humanitarian problem, however it is now acknowledged as being a chronic development problem. She noted some of the ways in which environmental degradation is contributing to displacement as an underlying driver, such as its impact on resource-based livelihoods. In presenting the data, she underlined that behind each of the numbers is an individual person and what a huge disruption displacement represents. Overall, she showed that displacements related to disasters worldwide is a rising trend, as well as noting that the risk of disaster is also increasing.

Another issue Ms Yonetani brought to the table was the impact that displacement can have as an erosion of resilience and that certain parts of the world are repeatedly affected. Acute and chronic patterns can be observed. She noted that a major blind-spot in our understanding of displacement is duration of displacement and what happens following displacement, i.e. people do not necessarily return rapidly and people may find themselves 'living in limbo' for many years. Complex patterns can result from movements related to cycles of repeated displacement.

Ms Yonetani highlighted the increasing recognition that conflicts and disasters cannot always be well disaggregated, and that often these are very proximate. It is often a mix of underlying root causes that are driving people's vulnerability. Finally, she underlined that identifying these causes is challenging in itself. For example, Internally Displaced People (IDPs) may say that they are moving because of hunger or violence

because of human clashes over scarce resources. In such cases environmental drivers are present and may be identifiable from the context (e.g. drought) but they are not immediately cited.

Dina Ionesco, Head of the Migration, Environment and Climate Change (MECC) division at IOM, followed with a presentation that dealt with some of the issues with terminology related to displacement and human mobility in the context of environmental or climatic drivers. Ms. Ionesco's presentation also looked ahead to UNEA and discussed how issues related to environment and migration are being seen or framed through very different policy lenses – those of migration and climate change.

Ms. Ionesco started by noting the major change in paradigm in dealing with these issues. She highlighted that since the Copenhagen climate summit in 2008 we are now in a different time and the environment/ migration nexus is firmly on the international agenda.

Ms. Ionesco underlined the multi-causality of migration and that there is never just one push or pull factor in this regard. Environmental factors are one of a whole host of drivers, such as politics, demography or personal aspirations. Precisely which factor is acting in any given situation is very difficult to measure. Furthermore, related to environmental drivers, it is important to look at both sudden-onset and slow-onset events, but that the latter can be even more difficult to measure and isolate from other drivers.

Ms. Ionesco spoke of the terminology challenge related to environment and migration, given that there is currently no legal definition, although IOM has been using a working definition of environmental migrants since 2007. Definitions are still highly contested and controversial, with many of them being more metaphoric than practical in nature. She noted a growing consensus around the use of 'human mobility' however, which is less restricted as a term than migration and speaks to the positive and negative elements of the issue.

Ms. Ionesco went on to briefly discuss how issues of environment and migration are being viewed through different policy lenses. She first looked at the 'Climate policy lens' whereby migration has been brought into the UNFCCC process. She underlined however, the dangers of migration being considered only under 'loss and damage' and the importance of seeing migration holistically and as a potential adaptation measure. She went on to talk about the 'migration policy lens' whereby environmental issues need to be brought into the main frame for consideration.

Ms. Ionesco underlined the importance of looking into all relevant policy areas: development (through engagement with the SDG agenda), humanitarian, security, human rights, and urban. She presented a number of recommendations: (1) to take stock of available policy, practices and knowledge, (2) use partnerships to enhance action, (3) link up operational activities and policy, (4) fund research and projections, (5) consider migration as a vulnerability and resilience barometer, (6) consider migration in its positive and negative dimensions. She concluded with the notion that migration has the potential to be a resilience building strategy and a way of building a better life for people.

Henrik Slotte closed the discussion by summarizing some of the key points made by the speakers, including the fact that environmental degradation is one driver among many. He noted that a key reason for why the topic is on the UNEA agenda is to better understand the issues, in acknowledgement of their complexity. During the symposium, UNEP will reach out to experts from international organizations and government representatives. At a later stage, a decision will be taken as to whether this will be more firmly anchored on UNEP's future agenda.

Closing remarks

Felix Wertli, Head of the Global Affairs Section at the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, provided a quick wrap-up of all of the sessions and pointed out that UNEA-2 can also serve as a place to showcase the different entry points for delivering the environmental dimension of the SDGs and the interlinkages and interconnectedness of the SDGs. He emphasized the importance of having different opportunities to engage Ministers at UNEA through different roundtables.

He also mentioned that Switzerland has adopted a sustainable development strategy 2016-2019 The strategy includes visions for sustainable development in Switzerland with specific targets to be achieved by 2030 and the means to reach them. He also mentioned Switzerland is also one of the first group of countries that will submit the first national reviews on the implementation of the 2030 agenda to the HLPF this July.

M. Wertli pointed out that the UN Statistical Commission has published 230 indicators, from which we can identify the environmental ones. He also suggested and encouraged to explore the possibilities of holding a similar GEN event focusing on the environmental indicators.

He has also taken note of the concerns of member states who are not able to attend Nairobi-based preparatory meetings linked to UNEA, and interested to be engaged in any effort aimed improved access to member states who do not have representation in Nairobi, in particular, the idea to form The Group of Friends of UNEA in Geneva.

He concluded the session by emphasizing once again the importance of a ministerial declaration, which could be used as a very important tool to advance implementation of the environmental dimension of the SDGs.

Aknowledgements

We received support of representatives from various organizations and colleagues for the organization of this multistakeholders dialogue. Many thanks to Eya Turki, from UN-NGLS, and to Sophie Brown and Tapiwa Nxele, from UNEP, for taking notes during the event, and to Anna Coopman, from the Stakeholder Forum, for promoting the event.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON UNEA-2

Side events

There will be 26 official side events taking place from 23 to 26 May. These 90-minute events will provide space for inspiring discussions and concerted action on the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. There will also be 28 Green Room side events, mainly offered by Major Groups and Stakeholders. For more information on these events, kindly visit www.unep.org/UNEA

Sustainable Development Expo

In parallel to the Assembly, a three-day Sustainable Innovation Expo (SIE2016) will take place from 23 to 25 May, bringing together all stakeholders committed to contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals. The Expo will include moderated panel discussions, symposia and a business dialogue during the High-level Segment designed to link the private sector with policymakers.

Science Policy Forum (SP-Forum)

UNEA-2 will be preceded by the Science Policy Forum (SP-Forum) on 19-20 May 2016, a platform which will bring together sciece and policy stakeholders to address challenges and new opportunities, with the aim of enhancing a collective understanding, strengthen the science policy dialogue and recommend concrete measures for collective action in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

16th Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF)

The 16th Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF) will be held on 21-22 May 2016 to facilitate the preparations of Major groups and stakeholders (MGS) for UNEA 2 as well as engage with CPR members and UNEP staff.

Registration

A registration page has been designed to accommodate your registration request to UNEA-2 as well as complementary meetings: registration.unon.org/unea/

Pursuant to Governing Council Decision 27/2 and UNEA Resolution 1/15, UNEP may provide support within available resources, to one minister each from developing countries, in particular, the least developed countries and Small Island Developing States with special vulnerabilities, and upon their request. Any requests for funding support has to be communicated by completing the fund support form and returned to the following address at the secretariat: unep.sgb@unep.org by 6 April 2016.

For participation in the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, please register here not later than 15 April 2016.

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The **Geneva Environment Network (GEN)** is a cooperative partnership of over 75 environment and sustainable development organizations based at the International Environment House and elsewhere in the Geneva area, including United Nations offices and programmes, non-governmental organizations, local authorities and academic institutions.
Set up in 1999, the GEN secretariat, led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and supported by the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, actively promotes increased cooperation and networking between its members.

www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org

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UNEP

UNEP **Regional Office for Europe (ROE)** is the voice of UNEP in the European region. It provides guidance to governments, implements projects, and develops tools to tackle environmental challenges in Europe. These challenges include: cross-border management of the Caspian Sea, resource efficiency in cities, and climate adaptation in the Carpathian Mountains. UNEP ROE promotes and facilitates switching to more sustainable agriculture such as in Eastern and Central Europe; and assist in developing sound management of transboundary resources, for example river basins irrigating several countries. Our role entails scanning the horizon to alert authorities of emerging environmental threats, thus keeping the environment under review.

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Non-Governmental Liaison Service

The UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS) is an inter-agency programme of the United Nations mandated to develop constructive relations between the UN and civil society organizations. Core activities of UN-NGLS include: information and communication outreach to the international community and to global civil society; supporting the UN system in developing productive relationships and partnerships with NGOs and civil society; and supporting the work of NGOs/civil society that seek to constructively engage with the UN system.

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