Implementation of decision UNEP/EA.4/2 CPR based review

Provisional agenda, date and venue of UNEA-5

Comments from the Emirates Environmental Group, UAE

Given below are our inputs to the implementation of the decision as well as the pertaining questions:

At the outset, EEG would like to congratulate the Secretariat on this document, outlining the overall process that will be undertaken for the next two years. We look forward to participating actively too.

Operative paragraph 10: Decides that the scope of the consideration during the review process will be:

a) The preparation, working arrangements, and scheduling of sessions of the Environment Assembly and the objectives, preparation, working arrangements and the scheduling of meetings of its subsidiary body, namely the meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives and the regular and annual meetings of the subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives;

1. How can UNEA and its working arrangements be leveraged to further enhance its ability to take strategic decisions and provide political guidance?

EEG’s Input: A number of steps can be undertaken to leverage UNEA’s ability to take strategic decisions and provide political guidance:

• Firstly, the Secretariat must ensure that more inputs/recommendations from Member States (especially government and civil society) on decisions and resolutions are included in the decision-making process. Following a ‘ground-up’ action plan will ensure that effective management and planning lead to the leveraging of the UNEA.

• The UNEA can follow other sustainability-focused models i.e. of other UN bodies and international NGOs in finding ways and means to streamline their strategic processes;

• As is known, every year the UNEA focuses on one particular theme. However, this must be utilised and leveraged through the year. In the months leading up to the event, the Secretariat must conduct meetings, webinars, seminars, panel discussion round tables etc. on the same theme and related focus areas. This will facilitate knowledge-sharing and learning, while providing the Secretariat with more information to leverage their position;

2. What steps can be taken to meaningfully enhance stakeholder engagement, including from the scientific community, at UNEA?

EEG’s Input: Being a vital part of UNEA’s working processes, we agree that stakeholder engagement must be enhanced constantly. We recommend the following steps to enhance this important aspect:
Emirates Environmental Group

• The Secretariat must ensure that there is an effective two-way communication with their stakeholders through the year. This will give rise to relationships that lead to reciprocal value and sustainable partnerships.

• The Secretariat must ensure stakeholders are involved in the decision-making process, especially as these affect them directly and indirectly. Thus, it is important they are treated as partners and not just silent participants.

• The Secretariat to research and analyse past consultations to understand the interests of their stakeholders. This will ensure all strategic decisions are taken keeping in mind the position of stakeholders.

• The Secretariat to take into account all factors that affect its stakeholders i.e. geographical access, access to technology etc.

3. Are the designations of the subsidiary intersessional bodies – i.e. OECPR and the annual subcommittee – adequately reflecting their roles and functions?

**EEG’s Input:** Yes, EEG feels that no modifications need to be undertaken.

4. Should the respective roles of the OECPR and the annual subcommittee be further and clarified and reinforced? If so, how?

**EEG’s Input:** We feel the two working groups i.e. the OECPR and annual subcommittee are very strong and effective in their own rights. There is no requirement for any modifications.

5. Are the timing and duration of the meetings of the different UNEP governing bodies optimal, or should they be reconsidered, including with respect to facilitating meaningful stakeholder participation. If so, how?

**EEG’s Input:** EEG is always eager to participate in UNEP’s meetings – be it that of the OECPR or annual subcommittee. However, due to financial constraints we are not able to join physically. Therefore we try our best to attend the online meetings. We feel better arrangements have to be made for stakeholders that attend via webinar.

The microphone seems to be far away from the main system, resulting in the main proceedings being very faint. We request the Secretariat to work on this as a number of times, we cannot hear the attendees (especially those asking questions at the end of presentations).

b) The respective roles and responsibilities of the Bureau of the Environment Assembly and of the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, including those related to interactions with their respective constituencies;
1. Should the respective roles and responsibilities of the CPR and UNEA Bureaux and their Chairs be more distinguished and clarified, including with regard to representation of regional constituencies?

**EEG’s Input:** We feel that most of the regional constituencies are fairly represented at the CPR and UNEA Bureaux. However, it is only the Arab region that seems to be under-represented. If required, we can make recommendations to rectify this.

2. Should the two Bureaus further strengthen their relationship? If so, how?

**EEG’s Input:** We feel the two Bureaus must work independently with their own Chairs and agendas, to be able to cover more of the sustainability agenda can be effectively worked on. We however believe that there should be a biannual platform that brings both the bodies together to liase more closely and avoid duplication of work.

3. How can individual Bureau members contribute to enhancing the visibility of UNEA as the leading global environmental authority in other international regional and national fora?

**EEG’s Input:**

- Bureau members (especially prominent stakeholders from different regional constituencies) must participate directly as participants and keynote speakers at international regional and national fora, pushing forward the UNEA agenda and not necessarily through the regional offices.
- Representatives of Member States can also submit research papers at international events or to international journals, focusing on UNEA themes.