Comments by World Animal Net

PART B: INPUTS TO SUBPARAGRAPHS 10 a) - c)

Operative Paragraph 10 of decision 4/2 reads as follows: “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;”

Guiding questions for subparagraph 10 (a):

1. How can UNEA and its working arrangements be leveraged to further enhance its ability to take strategic decisions and provide political guidance?
2. What steps can be taken to meaningfully enhance stakeholder engagement, including from the scientific community, at UNEA?
3. Are the designations of the subsidiary intersessional bodies – i.e. OECPR and the annual subcommittee – adequately reflecting their roles and functions?
4. Should the respective roles of the OECPR and the annual subcommittee be further clarified and reinforced? If so, how?
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?

Provided inputs:

A real process needs to be developed for UNEA – one which builds towards a well-informed and analysed strategy for dealing with the selected issue.

Firstly the theme needs to be “unpacked” and the core elements of the problem identified (root causes and drivers) and the types of approaches needed to address these.

Then science and research could be used to dig further into these – using the appropriate disciplines (e.g. social scientists for behavioural change aspects, environmental lawyers for legislative/regulatory aspects, enforcement specialists for implementation aspects etc. as well as environmental scientists, environmental economists, data specialists etc.).

Then different stakeholders should comment on the basis of these various findings/recommendations. Timings of stakeholder meetings/consultations is important too.
Research/science is needed very early in the process, and stakeholders should also be allowed to participate with their own research/science on salient issues. Reiterative written consultations could be considered before meetings take place, so core issues – with clear priorities – could be unpacked in consultative meetings (rather than just building broad understanding at this stage).

The different pre-meetings should address the same issues/big questions. At the moment some meetings seem disconnected and some do not even build towards final outcomes. Especially regional meetings. And resolutions should be drafted at this stage – based on the core issues identified by the collective, as opposed to each country’s own particular hobby horse (whether of major importance or not). Whenever things are not well-structured, there is a need to later cobble things together, which loses coherence e.g. grouping various resolutions, trying to fit various interest groups into the UNEA theme (even thought not central), and even deciding on the UNEA theme itself. The timings of meetings should be developed to ensure a smooth process, which builds towards a final, strategic outcome. The OECPR should provide general guidance and oversight, and the subcommittee more hands-on management of the process. Roles need to be clarified, and schedule of regular meetings based on process and roles.

In short, the process is key. Everything should be derived from this.

(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;

Guiding questions for subparagraph 10 (b):

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?
2. Should the two Bureaus further strengthen their working relationship? If so, how?
3. How can individual Bureau members contribute to enhancing the visibility of UNEA as the leading global environmental authority in other international fora?

Provided inputs:

Yes, there should be more clarity, with roles clearly delineated, but also close coordination and cooperation.
(c) Criteria, modalities and timing for presenting and negotiating draft resolutions and decisions;

Guiding questions for paragraph 10 (c):

1. What should be the key criteria and focus for draft UNEA resolutions and decisions, and how should they relate to the theme of the Assembly?
2. How to better ensure that informal deadlines for submitting draft resolutions are respected?
3. How to ensure that resolutions and decisions are complementary and not duplicative to the UNEP programme of work and budget?
4. How can the secretariat better support the chairs of the working groups that negotiate resolutions including through possible submission of proposals for suggested action?

Provided inputs:
See above. There should be science/research and strategic analysis of the issue under consideration before any resolutions are drafted. Also stakeholder consultations on the issues and priorities. Resolutions should be formulated on core priority issues only, not just country's particular hobby-horses. Resolutions should be focussed on root causes and drivers, not just "quick-fix" mitigation measures.