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Discussion Document for Agenda Item 8 (b)

Draft resolutions of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its third session

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Discussion Document -- Not for quotation or citation. The purpose of this document is to facilitate discussions during the Second Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific, 5 – 8 September 2017, Bangkok. Comments are welcome and should be sent to uneproap@un.org.

Subject Matter to be Considered for Draft Resolutions during the 2017 Environment Assembly

I. Air Pollution

Possible issues to address under air pollution include: data and information/awareness gaps; promote action to improve air quality monitoring and assessment and to develop air quality policies and strategies (at the sub-national, national, or regional level); enhance international cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement including synergies between institutions working on air pollution; promote actions to facilitate the implementation of air quality monitoring networks and capacity to develop air quality management plans; facilitate sharing of best-practices; maximise synergies between policies on air, climate mitigation, SDG's, health, transport, energy and agriculture; provide guidance to UNEP in light of relevant activities and programmes to advance the discussion on a shared global response to air pollution.

II. Freshwater Pollution

A. (Fresh) Water Pollution

Possible issues to address under freshwater pollution may include: data and information gaps, i.e. keeping emerging pollutants, including pesticides, and sources under review; improving water quality monitoring and assessment including through GEMS/GEMI and other initiatives; enhance international water governance, international cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement; promote integrated water resource management; facilitate sharing of best-practices; link to different SDGs; provide guidance to UNEP in light of relevant activities and programmes.

B. Water Quality Monitoring

As UNEP reported in 2016, pollution is affecting water bodies across several continents yet global capacity to collect and analyze data on water quality remains poor. Severe pathogenic pollution is found in around one-third of all rivers and severe organic pollution in about 15 percent of all rivers. Severe and moderate salinity pollution is a growing concern, affecting around one-tenth of all rivers.

III. Marine Pollution

A. Marine Pollution

Possible issues to address under the topic of marine pollution include: marine litter/(micro)plastics; promote a broader approach to marine pollution, including issues such as eutrophication, acidification, hazardous materials; comprehensive approaches for related sources, such as a plastic value chain approach to address marine litter/(micro) plastics; data and information gaps (including on marine litter); the importance of bringing together and scaling up existing actions; identify and promote concrete implementation approaches and partnerships under relevant international initiatives; link to different SDGs; provide guidance to UNEP in light of relevant activities and programmes.

B. Marine Litter and Micro-plastics

Marine litter is one of the largest environmental problems of our time and we are pleased with the increased awareness and action that has taken place since UNEA-1 when the first resolution was adopted. We see scope for further urgent action to be taken by UNEA-3. This Input will build on and add value to the action taken by UNEA-1 and UNEA-2.

IV. Land Pollution

A. Soil Pollution

Possible issues to address under soil pollution include: knowledge gap on soil pollution and related environment, health, social and economic impact of contaminated soils (considering both point source contamination and diffuse pollution, including pesticides and fertilizers); facilitate the sharing of best practices; provide guidance to UNEP in light of relevant activities and programmes; building from existing work at other UN-agencies such as UNCCD, FAO, including Revised World Soil Charter and the Global Soil Partnership; link to different SDGs including land degradation.

V. Sound Management of Chemicals

A. Lead in paint

Despite general agreement that lead in paint causes serious health problems and adverse economic impacts and that there are specific legal solutions that most countries can implement, only 30 percent of countries currently have lead in paint laws.

VI. Cross-Cutting Issues

A. An Environment and Health Nexus

Building on the UNEA2 debates and reports relevant to pollution, the environment and health nexus has gained credence. Possible issues to address include: potential benefits for human health and of protecting and restoring ecosystems; sound management of chemicals and waste, including pesticides and endocrine disruptors; noise pollution; antimicrobial resistance; promote preventive, “One health” approaches, taking into account gender impacts of pollution; provide specific guidance to UNEP’s collaboration with other international organizations, in particular WHO and WMO.

B. Innovative Solution Partnerships Platforms

Innovative solution partnership platforms are needed to promote the sharing of best practices and development of solution oriented innovation to address concrete (cross-cutting) issues of pollution (s.a. plastics, nitrogen, fertilizers, pesticides, e.g. through integrated lifecycle approaches, sustainable consumption and production approaches, value chain approaches, etc) building on proven collaboration platforms and voluntary action on specific issues at the regional and country level.

C. Pollution in areas affected by armed conflict

It is important to table this draft resolution as the subject of environment and security becomes increasingly significant over the past decade, and as a result of the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a number of resolutions in this regard, in addition to assigning the Special Rapporteur appointed by ILC (International Law Commission) for the topic entitled “Protection of the Environment in relation to Armed conflicts”. This subject also attracted attention when the terrorists groups like the so called “The Islamic State in Iraq and Levant” (Da’esh) targeted the environment and caused massive pollution as part of their strategy to disperse terror among innocent people.

Annex 1. Indication of intention to submit draft resolutions: Copies of Source Documents

A. OUTLINE FOR A DRAFT RESOLUTION FROM UNEA-3 ON MARINE LITTER AND MICROPLASTICS TO BE CONSIDERED BY UNEA-3

Proposal by Norway

There is a clear emerging consensus among Member States that UNEA-3 should focus on a limited number of resolutions, that are focused that are action-oriented as well as solution-oriented. The resolutions should be global in nature and clearly linked to the theme of pollution, encouraging all stakeholders to take action and as appropriate outline concrete steps and outcomes.

Such a resolution will build on the momentum from the UN Oceans Conference in New York in June and other recent global efforts, where marine litter and microplastics have been acknowledged as a serious form of marine pollution that must be prioritized. We believe that such a resolution must be concrete, action-oriented, and a solution-oriented contribution from UNEA-3. This issue has captured the attention of a broad audience and a stand-alone resolution on this issue will be an important means of communicating the specific concrete action being taken on this. It would a lost opportunity for UNEA-3 not to capitalise on the broad-based interest on marine litter and microplastics.

We further believe that a draft resolution presents a unique opportunity to act on the recommendations from the study on international regulatory frameworks, agreement and governance strategies, as mandated in the resolution adopted at UNEA-2. The report will identify possibilities for a stronger international commitment to address this issue. Norway has noted the concerns raised by some Member States as to a third resolution on marine litter and microplastics, and fully agree that it is important that this resolution is value-added to the previous resolutions. The draft resolution could include elements such as:

- Consider concrete action on the recommendations from the UNEA-2 study, including on the need for an improved governance framework and appropriate institutional arrangements to secure stronger international commitment to combat marine litter and consider a process for addressing these recommendations.
- Aim to strengthen implementation of SDG 14.1 where we have committed to «By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution», on a national and regional level. This could include the setting of national, sub-regional or regional reduction targets to meet/operationalize the 2025 “considerable reduction” target – this could include both mitigation measures related to legislative interventions (national inventories), addressing most critical point-source pollution sites following identification, and risk-based assessment hotspots.
- Encourage Member States to review their sources with a view to identifying the most effective measures at all levels, given the growing recognition that the sources of marine litter and microplastics are different in different countries and in different regions.
- Initiate a specific process led by the UN Environment Programme in collaboration with experts from inter alia the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission UNESCO, the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection GESAMP and others would be beneficial. Both the UNEA-1 and UNEA-2 resolutions

acknowledged that an important component of demonstrating real progress and action on addressing marine pollution and marine litter as a significant type of marine pollution requires a robust measurement system. Such a system must include international guidelines, harmonized definitions and standards for mapping and monitoring of marine litter and microplastics inter alia.

- Call for the development of incentives to phase-out micro plastics from key sources identified. There is also a recognition that primary microplastics, that is microplastics in cosmetics, paint and other products, is likely to require a different set of measures apart from strengthening waste management and waste prevention.
- Give political support to new initiatives, decisions and commitments from other fora can benefit from a global acknowledgement at UNEA-3 and could therefore be included, such as the Ocean conference in NY, G20/G7 Action, 4th Intergovernmental Review of Global Programme of Action for the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities, where its coordinating unit lies within UN Environment, Global Partnership on Marine Litter, the recent decision under the Basel-convention and others.
- The resolution could consider how best UNEA-3 can bring these efforts together. This resolution will underline UNEA's leadership role in addressing the issue globally, as we believe that UN Environment is well placed in addressing this issue in partnership with others, at the interplay of land-based activities, freshwater, coastal zones and the ocean, and to bring about cost-effective and environmentally sound solutions.
- Underline the need to further strengthen our knowledge on the connections between human health, marine litter and microplastics and in particular the possible effects of nano-sized plastic particles. These are minuscule plastic particles which are capable of crossing cell walls, and warrant more attention as identified in the UNEA-2 report "Marine plastic debris and microplastics – global lessons to inspire action and guide policy change".

We welcome the cooperation and input from all delegations as we move forward with the preparations of the draft resolution.

B. ELIMINATING EXPOSURE TO LEAD PAINT

Draft Resolution submitted by the United States of America

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

Recognizing that exposure to lead paint can cause serious lifelong damage, especially in children, such as loss of IQ and behavioral problems.

Welcoming the work of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (Lead Paint Alliance),

Highlighting the World Bank Report on Lead, which focuses on lead paint, outlines best practices for industry, and underscores the need for lead paint laws by national governments to eliminate lead paint,

Welcoming the publication earlier this year of a Guidance and Model Law for Regulating Lead Paint,

Emphasizing that no level of exposure to lead is considered safe,

Recognizing the progress made in all regions toward establishing national lead paint laws,

1. *Invites* Member States and stakeholders to join the Lead Paint Alliance
2. *Encourages* Member States to establish and enforce national laws to eliminate lead paint in order to remove the risks such paints pose, especially to infants and children;
3. *Requests* the Executive Director, within available resources, to:
 - a) Promote and prioritize for action the use of the Lead Paint Alliance Regulatory Toolkit and Model Law;
 - b) Assist countries to limit the use of lead paint;
 - c) Continue to develop and host regional workshops to promote national laws to eliminate lead paint and share information regarding the dangers posed by lead paint;
 - d) Work with the World Health Organization to continue to function as the secretariat for the Lead Paint Alliance; and
 - e) Assist the Alliance to meet the goal of phasing out lead paint globally.

C. IMPROVE AIR QUALITY IN CITIES

Draft Resolution on substantially improve air quality in cities to within healthy levels for human consumption proposed by the Republic of Sudan

The United Nations Environment Assembly

Preamble

Noting the World Health Organization estimate, from the report adopted by its Executive Board in May 2014, that air pollution contributes to 7 million premature deaths each year globally, a burden of disease that may now exceed the burdens of malaria, tuberculosis and AIDS combined,

Recalling the mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme as outlined in Governing Council decision 27/2, paragraph 2,

Recognizing that poor air quality is a growing challenge in the context of sustainable development, in particular related to health in cities and urban areas, and that efforts across sectors to improve air quality are needed,

Recognizing also that air pollution is an impediment to national sustainable development, impacting, among many other issues, the economy, worker productivity, health-care costs and tourism.

Aware that promoting air quality is a priority to protect public health and provide co-benefits for the climate, ecosystem services, biodiversity and food security,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 66/288 of 27 July 2012, by which the Assembly endorsed the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", in which all States Members of the United Nations committed to promoting sustainable development policies that support healthy air quality in the context of sustainable cities and human settlements and recognized that reducing air pollution leads to positive effects on health

THE OPERATIVE PART:

1. Calls upon the Establishment of a framework for the public health, air environment information tool, in Collaboration with relevant stakeholders.
2. Invites those member states affected, in collaboration with the United Nations Convention to climate change agreements, to develop and implement national action programmes
3. UN and other organizations shall provide Tools to support research and analysis developed/enhance, e.g. to assess health and environment impacts of air pollution, identify health risks and benefits of sector Policies (e.g. health impact assessment), conduct cost-benefit analyses, etc., In population groups like children and women, and at the sub national level (in cities and in homes).
4. Requests the Executive Director, in partnership with member states, United Nations agencies and relevant programmes to develop and share best practices for the development and implementation of strategic frameworks for enhanced air environment and early warning systems to enhance the public health.

5. Requests the UNEP Executive Director to provide technical support to member states on air pollution by establishing air quality monitoring network and region air quality experts
6. Communications strategies to raise awareness and simulate demand for policies to tackle air pollution, prevent diseases and improve well-being are developed at global, country and local levels are led by the WHO and UNEP.
7. Requests the UNEP Executive Director Provide Training materials and technical support to build an environmental sector capacity for communications, e.g. with the public, on addressing the health effects of air pollution.
8. Requests the UNEP Executive Director to Strengthen the technical support, as relevant, from global and regional networks; institutional capacity to develop air pollution and health action plans is enhanced particularly within the health sector, including at the national and sub national (e.g. city) levels or for specific issues, such as household air pollution.
9. Developing work in the field of technology assessment through many tools such as a methodology for sustainability assessment of technologies to enable decision makers to select the most appropriate technologies for achieving the air quality and public health
10. UNEP and other UN agencies shall provide the financial resources to improve air environment projects

D. ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

Proposal for a Resolution on Environment and Health by the European Union and its Member States

PROVISIONAL Note to UNEP

The EU and its Member States have the honour to announce their intention to propose a draft resolution on the subject of “Environment and Health” for UNEA-3. This note aims at explaining the rationale, background, approach and content of our proposal. We will submit at a later stage the text of the draft proposed resolution. We invite other Parties to co-sponsor it or to contribute to it.

1. Rationale for a resolution on Environment and Health

The EU and its Member States recognize that pollution, health and environment are inextricably linked and that advancing the environmental agenda means addressing the health agenda, as well as the wider sustainable development agenda. WHO data show that 12.6 million deaths globally, representing 23% of all deaths, were attributable to the environment in 2012. In children under five, up to 26% of all deaths could be prevented, if environmental risks were removed. We emphasize the urgent need for coherent and comprehensive action towards reducing the adverse impacts of pollution on health and the environment.

Preventing pollution and cleaning the environment in smart and innovative ways, using a range of approaches, technologies and methods from various fields, can help not only to reduce pollution but also to be a driver of economic productivity and creation of new jobs.

2. Background

We would like to recall UNEP’s work on the health-environment nexus, including the Ministerial discussions on the health and environment nexus, based on UNEP’s dedicated report “Healthy environment, healthy people “, which included recommendations and a list of proposed interventions.

Given that no text was agreed and no actions were taken at UNEA-2, other than those included in sector-specific resolutions, we believe that UNEA-3 could be a good opportunity to follow-up on this issue, closely linked to the theme of pollution. The resolution would urge UNEP to continue to work in close cooperation with WHO and other relevant actors, while avoiding duplication. It would provide an appropriate response to all relevant resolutions related to health and the environment adopted by the World Health Assembly, and also other documents such as the regional Declaration of the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Ostrava Conference), and make sure that the environmental sector also provides its expertise.

Further work on these matters is ongoing in various fora and organisations, and this should also feed in the discussions at UNEA3, including on this resolution.

3. Approach

We think there is need of a cross-cutting approach and preventive approach to health and the environment issues to contribute synergistically to the 2030 Agenda and its goals and targets. We see the nexus of Environment and Health as a strategic topic with links to many pollution sub-

topics and some of suggested resolutions, complementing but not duplicating existing resolutions (e.g. air pollution; chemicals and waste; sustainable consumption and production, etc.) and instruments (e.g. relevant MEAs, SAICM, partnerships, etc.).

Furthermore, many initiatives are taken in different business sectors, which should be supported, built upon and mainstreamed to promote a green economy.

4. Content

In addition to subject-specific resolutions (e.g. air, marine and soil pollution), a crosscutting resolution on health and the environment would cover matters in a concise and focused manner and would:

- Stress the importance of cross-cutting and preventive approach to health and well-being issues and the health benefits of addressing environmental issues such as climate change, environmental pollution and degradation;
- Underline that sustainable consumption and production, circular economy, green economy, sustainable finance, and similar approaches provide key cross-cutting and preventive solutions to tackle pollution and thereby improve synergistically health and the environment;
- Recognize that climate change is a major health risk multiplier, including by aggravating environmental challenges;
- Tackle specific issues such as chemicals and waste, the environmental drivers and management options to deal with antimicrobial resistance; sound (noise) pollution; the potential and benefits for health and well-being of protecting and restoring ecosystems; and identify clear actions and steps of implementation;
- Reinforce and provide guidance on UNEP's mandate on the health-environment nexus, with a particular focus on UNEP's added value and environmental expertise, and urge UNEP to work in close cooperation with WHO and other relevant actors, while avoiding unnecessary duplication and creating synergies;
- Reaffirm the precautionary principle when scientific evidence is inconclusive and there is a substantial environmental risk to human and ecosystem health.