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Agenda item 7

Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-ninth session

Draft report

Rapporteur: Mr. Jun Yamada (Japan)

Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for the year 2020

(Item 3 (a))

Programme 11

Environment

1. At its 10th meeting, on 10 June 2019, the Committee considered programme 11, Environment, of the proposed programme plan for 2020 and programme performance information for 2018 ([A/74/6 \(Sect. 14\)](#)). The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretariat on the review of the proposed programme plan by sectoral, functional and regional bodies ([E/AC.51/2019/CRP.1/Rev.2](#)).

2. The Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) introduced the programme and, together with other representatives of the Secretariat, responded to queries raised during the its consideration by the Committee.

Discussion

3. Delegations expressed thanks for the presentation of the programme. One voiced support for the proposed programme budget and for the programme of work of UNEP for the period 2020–2021 and emphasized the importance of three priority areas: marine litter, wastewater and waste management.

4. A delegation noted the importance of the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Santiago in December 2019, and called upon Member States to participate in



the session, at which the Conference of the Parties would seek to establish ambitious and enforceable commitments to tackle global warming. The delegation referred to the event as a “blue” conference, pointing out that oceans would be a priority theme and that it would have a Latin American and Caribbean seal. A question was raised as to what coordination activities were being conducted by United Nations entities preparing for the event.

5. Regarding paragraph 14.9 under “Recent developments”, a delegation asked why there was no reference to the specific deliverables that the programme planned to deliver with regard to the quality of the environment in cities. The same delegation, noting that that issue had been mentioned under programme 12, Human settlements, remarked that, owing to the physical proximity of UNEP to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme in Nairobi, work in that area could be addressed alongside programme 12.

6. With regard to the planned activities under subprogramme 1, Climate change, in supporting countries in their adoption of energy efficiency standards, a delegation expressed concern, asking whether UNEP had the expertise to develop such standards. The delegation further questioned the emphasis placed by subprogramme 1 on the refrigeration and air-conditioning sectors as major energy consumers, saying that it would have been more appropriate to refer to the achievement of climate goals rather than specific climate change mitigation and adaptation targets. It was further noted that temperatures were projected to rise, as referenced in paragraph 14.9, irrespective of the Paris Agreement, and that achieving energy efficiency went beyond reducing greenhouse gas emissions. On the latter point, the view was expressed that the importance of clean air and air quality would be better addressed under subprogramme 5, Chemicals, waste and air quality.

7. A delegation observed that the issue of energy efficiency remained under intense debate in the forum of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and sought further clarification as to how plans relating to energy efficiencies had been organized under subprogramme 1, as an intergovernmental consensus on that issue had not yet been reached.

8. A delegation expressed support for the findings set out in the report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, entitled “Global warming of 1.5°C”, in which a call was made for further reductions in global emissions. Another delegation, referring to paragraph 14.9 of the programme, said that the Committee was not the appropriate forum in which to discuss the report of the Intergovernmental Panel.

9. A question was raised about the alignment of the objectives of the subprogrammes with the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular the alignment of the objective of subprogramme 1 with Goal 5, on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls, which was not included in paragraph 14.20 of the programme. Another delegation agreed, noting that the alignment of the subprogramme objectives with the Goals appeared to be inconsistent.

10. With regard to subprogramme 2, Resilience to disasters and conflicts, a delegation asked whether work would be undertaken to provide assistance in the response to natural disasters, in particular in the aftermath of Cyclone Idai in Mozambique. Information was also sought in relation to the programme’s partnership with other entities, in particular United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, to provide assistance before and after catastrophic events. The delegation asked whether the assistance provided to countries was continuous or whether it was dependent on a Member State making a request. Another delegation echoed similar concerns and called upon UNEP to continue to pursue efforts to tackle the consequences of disasters and provide support to countries that had experienced natural disasters and been affected by climate change.

11. A further question was raised about the assistance, if any, that was provided to countries where a United Nations peacekeeping presence had ended. Noting that such assistance had been provided by the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, a delegation asked whether UNEP would continue to provide assistance on the ground.
 12. With regard to subprogramme 3, Healthy and productive ecosystems, a delegation expressed appreciation for the increased efforts to curb marine litter but also emphasized the need to tackle all sources of marine pollution, not only plastic pollution. The importance of preserving ocean ecology was emphasized, and a question was raised about cooperation with other organizations that undertook similar activities, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
 13. With regard to the highlighted planned result for 2020 under subprogramme 4, Environmental governance, a delegation asked how UNEP would strengthen its institutional capacity and legal frameworks to promote environmental governance.
 14. Another delegation noted with appreciation the efforts to increase institutional capacities in order to establish stronger environmental measures that contributed to the achievement of Goal 17, on strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development, in particular, and sought additional information on the programme's engagement with the Technology Facilitation Mechanism.
 15. With regard to subprogramme 6, Resource efficiency, a delegation noted the focus on sustainable production in achieving Goal 12, on ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns, but also expressed concern that, as the format of the programme plan allowed for only one result to be highlighted, there was no emphasis on sustainable consumption. Similar views were expressed by another delegation, which concurred that equal consideration should be given to sustainable consumption and, in that regard, requested additional details about the work of the programme in that area. Further clarification was also sought as to whether there was a deliverable planned that focused on consumption of fresh water.
 16. A question was raised about the impact on the work of the programme of the reform of the United Nations development system.
 17. It was asked whether UNEP had implemented or planned to implement corrective actions in response to a recommendation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services about accountability gaps between its operations and its strategic plans.
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