



Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

Brussels, 15 January 2026

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WK 578/2026 INIT

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MEETING DOCUMENT

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Working Party on International Environment Issues (Global)

Subject: WPIEI (Global) on 21 January 2026: Agenda item 3.1 - Background document

With a view to the Working Party on International Environment Issues (Global) on 21 January 2026, delegations will find attached an Assessment of UNEA-7, prepared by the Presidency, as background document relating to agenda item 3.1.

Assessment of UNEA-7:

Introduction:

This document is to inform delegates about the outcomes of the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) that took place in Nairobi, Kenya from 8 to 12 December 2025, under the theme "*Advancing sustainable solutions for a resilient planet*". UNEA-7 was preceded by the seventh session of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-7) held from 1 to 5 December 2025, where negotiations on draft resolutions, decisions and the Ministerial Declaration already started. UNEA-7 had just under 6,000 participants from over 170 Member States, including 79 Ministers. The EU and its Member States were strongly represented, with approximately 200 delegates in total. At the outset of UNEA-7, nearly 20 resolutions and decisions had been proposed. Ultimately, the Assembly adopted a Ministerial Declaration, 11 resolutions and 3 decisions.

This document, however, not only tries to take stock of the outcomes, but simultaneously attempts to serve as a background paper for the discussions of the first WPIEI Global meeting under the Cyprus Presidency, scheduled for the 21st of January 2026. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

1) Resolutions

[REDACTED]

- [Resolution on environmental sustainability of artificial intelligence systems](#) - tabled by Kenya and co-sponsored by Armenia and the EU and its Member States

In alignment with the relevant Sub-LEG one-pager, the final text encompasses both the environmental impacts of artificial intelligence (AI) and the potential to improve protection of the environment through artificial intelligence. The EU and its Member States have managed to secure some important references in the Preambular Paragraphs (PPs) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] However, the finally adopted version became less ambitious than what we had hoped for [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Nevertheless, the resolution still speaks of an important emerging issue and provides UNEP with a clear mandate in this domain from an environmental perspective. The EU by co-sponsoring this resolution has shown that it is a positive force when it comes to AI and the environment.

- [Resolution on sound management of chemicals and waste](#) - tabled by Switzerland and co-sponsored by Australia, Chile, Congo, Norway, Peru, Ukraine and Uruguay and the EU and its Member States

The resolution encourages Member States to take further action with regards to lead, cadmium, arsenic and organotins, building on UNEP’s findings. It also welcomes the establishment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution (ISP-CWP) and supports cooperation with other relevant bodies. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Language in some [REDACTED] key paragraphs were [REDACTED] weakened (both OP2 and OP4 only “Invites”).

[REDACTED]

Nevertheless, we have achieved some important successes: the welcoming and the effective operationalization of the ISP-CWP was retained (PP3, OP4), GFC reference was kept (OP3), the

word “instruments” was inserted into OP6, [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] Perhaps most importantly, our newly proposed paragraph (OP10) on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) as a global standard contributing to the sound management of chemicals passed through without any substantial modification. [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

- [Resolution on strengthening international cooperation on the environmentally sound management of minerals and metals](#) - tabled by Colombia and Oman and co-sponsored by Armenia, Congo, Senegal and Zambia

The topic of sound management of minerals and metals is on the agenda of UNEA since 2019 (UNEA-4). UNEA-7 was the first time however, that a related resolution was not tabled by Switzerland, but by Colombia - coupled with Oman, the Presidency of UNEA-7, through merger with the topic of mine-tailings. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] not only the initial idea of the proponent - to launch an INC process for the sound management of mineral and metals - failed (as was expected), but even the idea of establishing a related Working Group which then would make preparatory steps towards a future INC process. Numerous Member States [REDACTED] strongly opposed any steps that even resembled leading to an INC process in this subject. The resolution therefore was watered down considerably, specifically stating that it will not establish a new negotiation track, and merely requesting UNEP to convene Member States – including national focal points appointed pursuant to resolution 5/12 – and stakeholders for dialogues on enhancing international cooperation on sustainable management of minerals and metals, mine tailings, best practices, and strengthening capabilities. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] organising dialogues with the national focal points will allow exploring venues for future global work. [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

- [Resolution on enhancing the meaningful participation of youth in environmental processes and in environmental education](#) - tabled by Sri Lanka and co-sponsored by Bhutan, Burkina Faso and Thailand

[REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]. During the negotiations, the text was considerably weakened – as OP2 of the final text clearly demonstrates (“Encourages... to consider integrating... in line with their national circumstances and priorities”).

Unfortunately, we were [REDACTED] unable to insert references to UNGA resolution 78/179, UNEA resolution 2/3 and to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Nevertheless, the EU and its Member States stood firm and managed to incorporate or defend important elements [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] we were also able to incorporate a reference to green skills (“competencies needed for sustainable development, including those needed for the workforce”) and mandated UNEP to cooperate with relevant entities in the subject, thereby taking the first steps of practically linking environmental education to the Green Transition in the UNEA context, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The EU and its Member States eventually refrained from co-sponsoring this resolution.

■ [Resolution on accelerating global actions to promote the climate resilience of coral reefs](#) - tabled by Fiji and co-sponsored by Australia, Barbados, Colombia, Kenya, Monaco, New Zealand and Palau

The resolution - based on previous UNEA (2/12; 4/13) and UNGA (65/150) resolutions - encourages Member States to integrate the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of coral reefs into their relevant national strategies and plans, to contribute data, data syntheses and expertise to coral reef monitoring systems, and to enhance coordination and knowledge-sharing in this regard, while requests UNEP to develop guidance in support of the integration of the conservation, monitoring, restoration and sustainable use of coral reefs into relevant national policies and plans. Due to strong resistance of several countries, the resolution has lost most references to climate change, and its key original ask to UNEP to develop guidance to support the integration of the conservation, monitoring, restoration and sustainable use of coral reefs into the NDCs, delivering complementarity to already existing guidance on coral reefs in the NBSAPs. [REDACTED] fresh-water related linkages and water-protection are not specifically addressed. [REDACTED]

■ [Resolution on promoting sustainable solutions through sport for a resilient planet](#) - tabled by Kenya and co-sponsored by Monaco

The resolution encourages Member States to consider integrating sustainable development into sports-related national strategies, physical education curricula and community-based sporting programmes, to consider ways to promote sustainability through sports, and to adopt policies and

implement measures that help to promote sustainable solutions through sport. It also requests UNEP to provide assistance to interested Member States, in order to support capacity-building for organizations and authorities, as well as the development of informational materials and public awareness campaigns, to promote partnerships in the field, and to update its long-term strategy for sport and environment. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The EU [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] supported elements of sustainable event and waste-management (in OP2). Important to note that while the subject is partially addressed through existing UNEP mandates and activities, this is the first dedicated UNEA resolution specifically focusing on the linkages between sports and the environment.

- [Resolution on strengthening the global response to the massive influx of sargassum seaweed blooms](#) - tabled by the Dominican Republic and co-sponsored by Barbados and Mexico

The resolution primarily recognizes the massive influx of sargassum seaweed blooms as a severe escalating socioeconomic and environmental issue in the wider Caribbean region and West Africa. It also encourages Member States to enhance cooperation for sustainable monitoring, management and use of sargassum seaweed. Finally, it requests the ED of UNEP to assist affected developing countries in developing and implementing national or regional plans, to encourage cooperation for better early warning, monitoring, prevention, collection, safe removal and management, to prepare a report on existing actions and resources, and to initiate a high-level meeting on the subject. Acknowledging the gravity of the issue, and the enhancement of related cooperation were both supported elements by the EU and its Member States. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Nevertheless, the resolution does not address the root-causes (urban waste-water management, action against deforestation and climate change) and we had to be more flexible during the negotiations than what we had imagined initially [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] a high-level discussion was included in the final text instead of an Open-Ended Working Group or workshop, the resolution applies a rational and cost-efficient approach with all substantial asks being dependent on the “availability of resources”, and the resolution is fitting with UNEP’s mandate and building on existing initiatives.

- [Resolution on promoting synergies, cooperation or collaboration for national implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and other relevant environmental instruments](#) - tabled by Japan and Panama and co-sponsored by Armenia

The resolution encourages Member States to continue implementing UNEA resolution 6/4 and enhancing synergies, cooperation or collaboration in the implementation of MEAs, with a specific focus on the national and local levels. It also invites regional and subregional cooperation bodies to facilitate multilateral and multi-stakeholder cooperation to promote synergies, cooperation or collaboration. It finally requests the ED of UNEP to support interested Member States, including through improved tools to assist them in efficiently preparing national reports to relevant MEAs, to enhance the value of the MEAs Day, and to continue providing support to the Bern process. The EU proposed a paragraph, requesting the ED of UNEP to keep the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) informed about the ongoing process of the UN80 initiative and its impact on UNEP's work, within the confines of this resolution. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Similarly, reference to the United Nations Environment Management Group was also dropped, and the whole resolution was streamlined substantially (landing only one PP for instance, instead of the original five).

■ [Resolution on strengthening the global management of wildfires](#) - tabled by India and co-sponsored by Armenia, Canada, Mexico, Sri Lanka

The resolution calls on Member States to adopt sustainable forest management and ecosystem-based approaches, to use the best available science-based evidence and tools, and to strengthen national and regional strategies. The resolution stresses the importance of building on what exists, in particular the Global Fire Management Hub hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and co-chaired by the United Nations Environment Programme, taking into account the Integrated Fire Management Voluntary Guidelines. It also encourages Member States to consider promoting and enhancing cooperation for integrated fire management and wildfire resilience, to incorporate integrated fire management into relevant national strategies, plans, programmes and policies, and to continue and enhance the mobilization of resources in this regard. Finally, it requests the ED of UNEP to collaborate with relevant partners to reinforce existing activities and to support Member States in strengthening their adaptation to wildfires and in accessing finance from international mechanisms. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] reference to the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs (in PP1), to sustainable forest management (in OP1), and to the impact of wildfires on climate change and biodiversity loss (in PP4), [REDACTED] are all mentioned in the final text. However, there are no specific references to the role of climate change in driving an increase in the frequency, intensity and severity of wildfires, to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework or to the Paris Agreement.

■ [Resolution on the preservation of glaciers and the broader cryosphere, in particular in mountain regions](#) - tabled by Tajikistan and Peru and co-sponsored by Bhutan

The resolution encourages Member States to take urgent action to preserve glaciers and the cryosphere and address their loss, through national legislation and implementation of relevant

principles, provisions, and objectives, to enhance international cooperation and to mobilize adequate and predictable means of implementation in this regard. It also calls upon Member States to further implement policies that take into account the particular needs of Indigenous Peoples, local communities and relevant stakeholders and to promote their meaningful participation in related actions. Finally, it requests the ED of UNEP to reflect related aspects in relevant studies and assessments, to promote the exchange of knowledge and good practices related to nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches, to develop a related gaps and needs report, and to organize a related side-event at UNEA-8. Though [REDACTED] the related report of the ED [REDACTED] would have liked to address the global hydrological cycle in general, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the scope of the resolution was eventually narrowed down to the preservation and protection of the cryosphere and glaciers. [REDACTED]

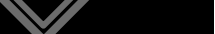
[REDACTED] main requests are all dependent on the “availability of resources”.

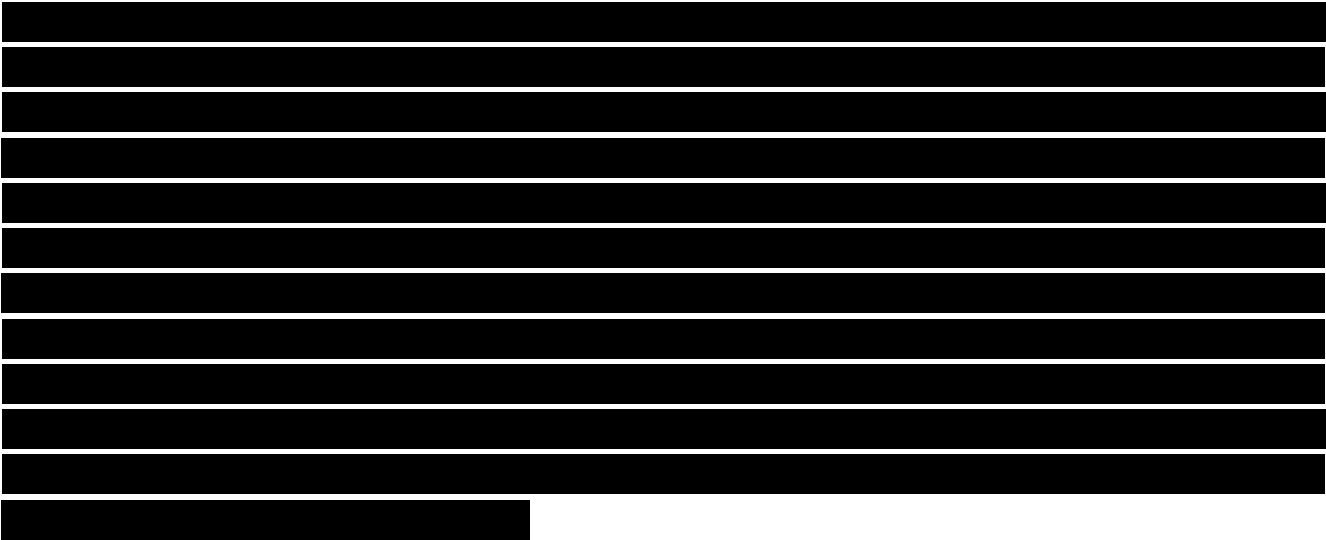
Resolution on environmental dimensions of antimicrobial resistance - tabled by Kenya and co-sponsored by the United Kingdom

The resolution encourages Member States to take action to address antimicrobial resistance, to strengthen the environmental dimensions of their National Action Plans on antimicrobial resistance and to raise awareness of the environmental dimensions of antimicrobial resistance. It also requests the ED of UNEP to contribute to science and risk-based environmental surveillance to support global efforts to analyse antimicrobial residues and resistance, to take actions to prevent, address and reduce the discharge of antimicrobials into the environment, and to facilitate research and the sharing of knowledge and best practices. [REDACTED]


[REDACTED] the resolution’s focus on the environmental dimensions of AMR (PP1), the recalling of UNEA resolution 3/4 (PP2), the acknowledgement of UNEP’s role in addressing the environmental dimensions of antimicrobial resistance in the Quadripartite (PP3), and the reference to the relevant political declaration of UNGA and the Jeddah Commitments (PP4). [REDACTED] environmental surveillance and monitoring is appropriately covered (in OP1) [REDACTED]


■ **WITHDRAWN** - Draft resolution on enhancing international response to address **crimes that affect the environment** - *tabled by Peru and Kenya*

The draft-resolution wished to call upon Member States to strengthen their efforts to fight crimes that affect the environment through stronger legislation, enforcement, and cooperation mechanisms, reinforce UNEP's role in addressing crimes that affect the environment, in complementarity with UNODC, and mandate UNEP to provide support to Member States through technical assistance and facilitation of international cooperation. Progress of this draft-resolution however was extremely limited from the very beginning of the negotiations. 



ii) **WITHDRAWN** - Draft resolution on **strengthening the United Nations Environment Programme** - *tabled by Mexico*

This draft-resolution proposed to strengthen the role of Nairobi as host of environmental conferences, fora and secretariat of future MEAs. 



■ WITHDRAWN – Draft resolution on active protection of **deep-sea ecosystems** - *tabled by Vanuatu*

The draft-resolution aimed at protecting deep-sea ecosystems, highlighting their beneficial functions, addressing the need of their comprehensive scientific understanding and the multiple stressors (including deep-sea mining), they are already under. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

■ WITHDRAWN - Draft resolution on establishing a sectoral needs-assessment framework for the transition to a **circular economy** - *tabled by the Republic of Korea*

This draft-resolution wished to encourage Member States to cooperate with stakeholders to diagnose national circular economy circumstances and to prepare measures to promote a transition to a circular economy suited to national contexts and capacities. It also planned to request the ED of UNEP to develop a policy and technology needs-assessment framework that sets out criteria for Member States to assess their needs for a circular economy transition and to prepare action plans, to establish an expert group to design this framework, and to develop modalities to disseminate and promote the policy and technology needs-assessment framework among Member States and stakeholders. This draft-resolution was withdrawn already in mid-November, even prior to OECPR-7, after just two intersessional reading sessions. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

2) Decisions

Decision on the management of trust funds and earmarked contributions

This decision on the management of trust funds and earmarked contributions aims to strengthen transparency, accountability and strategic alignment of UNEP's finances. It provides guidance on the establishment, use and closure of trust funds to ensure resources are used effectively and support UNEP's approved programme of work.

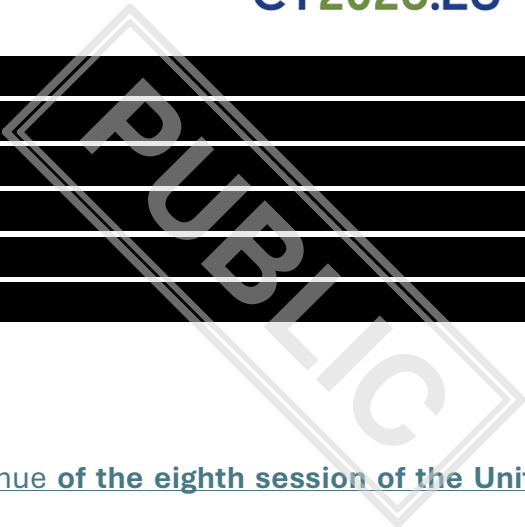
Decision on the medium-term strategy for the period 2026–2029 and the programme of work and budget for the biennium 2026–2027

Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for 2026-2029

Programme of Work (PoW) and budget for 2026-2027

[Redacted content]

[REDACTED]



■ Decision on the provisional agenda, dates and venue of the eighth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly

After long negotiations, it was decided that UNEA-8 would take place between the 6th and 10th of December 2027, OECPR-8 between the 29th of November and the 3rd of December 2027, and that UNEA-8 would not have a theme. The decision text also urged Member States to submit draft resolutions at least 10 weeks in advance of UNEA-8, taking into account the limited time and resources available for negotiations. It was also decided, that UNEA-9 as well as future regular sessions of the Assembly would commence on the last Mondays of February in odd-numbered years. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] However, UNEA-9 as an exception will only consist of a three-day meeting - as well as OECPR-9 which will be convened back-to-back with the Assembly – due to the fact that it takes place less than two years after UNEA-8. This comes along with a strong encouragement towards Member States to limit the number of draft resolutions submitted to UNEA-9. The decision also recognized the need to limit evening negotiating sessions to reasonable hours, recommending that preferably no session should be scheduled beyond 13 hours from the start of the first open-ended (regional coordination) meeting of each day. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Ministerial Declaration

[REDACTED]

Conclusion:

In conclusion and based on the above – basically technical – analysis, we can now proceed to a general evaluation of what we have achieved during UNEA-7, what we were unable to achieve and the degree to which we are content with the Assembly itself, in conjunction with our participation and expectations. It is the duty of WPIEI Global to discuss and analyse the notes and the common experiences from UNEA-7, with the aim of arriving at a final assessment that will determine further steps and inform preparations for UNEA-8 in this regard.