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From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

Subject: Outcome of a High-level Environment Conference "Earth Innovation Forum" (Tallinn, 5 September 2018) and 2nd Joint Preparatory Retreat of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (Tallinn, 6-7 September 2018)
- Information from the Estonian delegation

Delegations will find in the Annex an information note from the Estonian delegation on the above subject, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Environment) meeting on 9 October 2018.

**Outcome of a High-level Environment Conference "Earth Innovation Forum"
(Tallinn, 5 September 2018)
and 2nd Joint Preparatory Retreat of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and of
the Committee of Permanent Representatives
(Tallinn, 6-7 September 2018)**

- Information from the Estonian delegation

The Estonian delegation would like to inform the Environment Council about its activities as the Presidency of the Fourth Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-4), to be held on 11-15 March 2019 in Nairobi (Kenya) under the theme "Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges and Sustainable Consumption and Production".

The Conference "Earth Innovation Forum", held in Tallinn on 5 September, was the first High-level milestone in the preparatory process towards UNEA-4. The Conference brought together High-level representatives from Member States Ministries, UN Environment Programme, European Commission, private sector, academia and start-ups to showcase innovative solutions for environmentally sustainable societies.

An official meeting for the UNEA-4 preparations, the 2nd Joint Preparatory Retreat of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and of the UNEP Committee of Permanent Representatives followed on 6-7 September 2018 in Tallinn.

The Conference focused on the opportunities from digital technologies to support economic growth, but stated that no growth should come at the expense of the environment. The role of sustainable consumption and production in addressing environmental challenges was highlighted by showcasing practical examples of such proven solutions. In this context, the need for additional fresh and bright ideas was also emphasized, which would support the international environmental agenda.

It was highlighted that the goals of environmental policies today will not be sufficient to stop environmental degradation. Moreover, the focus of environmental policy should shift from problems to innovative solutions, engaging also small organizations at local level. Innovation should guide the policies at every stage of implementation, with a passing concept of sustainability.

Videos of all the sessions of the Conference can be downloaded at

<https://vimeo.com/album/5438684> .

The Decisions adopted during the 2nd Joint Retreat addressed the concept and background report of UNEA-4, the communication strategy, the outline document for the Ministerial Outcome Document, the guidance for preparing resolutions and the development of a vision for a long-term global environment agenda in relation to the upcoming 50th anniversary of the UN Environment Programme in 2022.

Member States are invited to indicate an intention to present draft resolutions in view of UNEA-4 by 15 November 2018.

UN Environment Programme is expected to prepare by mid-October an attractive communication strategy, which should include simpler language to communicate the theme "Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable production and consumption".

The UNEA and CPR Bureaux also exchanged views about the long-term vision for a global environment agenda in the context of the 50th anniversary of UN Environment Programme in 2022. The UNEP Secretariat was requested to prepare a vision and a SWOT ¹ analysis of the state of play to support further discussions.

The UNEA-4 President also received valuable reflections to the outline of the Ministerial Outcome Document. A "Zero Draft" of the Ministerial Outcome Document will be shared by mid-October for thorough consultations with Member States. The UNEA-4 President invites the Member States to participate actively in this process.

Information about the progress made towards the preparations for UNEA-4 and the decisions adopted during the 2nd Joint Retreat are expected to provide valuable knowledge to the EU and its Member States for the development of their priorities and inputs in view of UNEA-4.

¹ SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats.

The Chair's summary of the 2nd Joint Retreat meeting, including specific details, can be found at the following web-link:

<http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/25178/corrigenda.Chair%27s%20Summary%20-%20Joint%20Bureaux%20Preparatory%20Retreat%2c%206-7%20Sept%202018%20.pdf?sequence=46&isAllowed=y>.
