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#### NOTE

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Ratification of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) - an updated call for urgent action
	- Information from the Commission

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Delegations will find in the Annex an information note from the Commission on the above subject, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Environment) meeting on 25 March 2024.

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## **Ratification of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) - an updated call for urgent action**

### **- Information from the Commission -**

The Commission raised the issue of outstanding ratifications of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) at the Environment Councils of December 2020 and March 2022<sup>1</sup>, recalling the importance of resolving them as a matter of urgency. Since then, there has been some progress in this regard, notably in relation to the Air Convention Protocols and that now all Member States are party to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

The Commission encourages Member States to keep up this progress in the light of a busy year for multilateral environmental agreements. Special attention is necessary in relation to instruments on biodiversity and pollution, two core priorities of the European Green Deal that calls for a global leadership role for the Union. For example, the Convention on Biological Diversity's Nagoya Protocol has only been ratified by 21 Member States and the UNECE Air Convention's Gothenburg Protocol has only been ratified by 22 Member States. This is detrimental to the EU's credibility and negotiating leverage vis-à-vis other countries, in particular during Conferences of the Parties.

To support and encourage Member States' efforts, the Commission has shared overviews of outstanding ratifications on a country-by-country basis.

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<sup>1</sup> Outcome of the meeting of the Environment Council on 17 December 2020 (14114/20); Information from the Commission (13669/20). Main results of the Environment Council on 17 March 2022 (<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/env/2022/03/17/>); Information from the Commission (doc. 7157/22).

Member States' support and prompt action in this regard would be in line with the Council conclusions of June 2019 on EU action to strengthen rules-based multilateralism<sup>2</sup> and with the renewed stimulus under the European Green Deal.

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<sup>2</sup> Conclusions adopted at the meeting of the Foreign Affairs Council on 17 June 2019 (doc. 10341/19)