

Agreements of UNEP Regional Civil Society Forum from Latin America and the Caribbean on the participation of Major Groups

We request UNEP appoint a person that is specifically in charge, regionally, of being a liaison with the nine major groups, who will provide support to participation in the policies' definition cycle and who guarantees that joint work opportunities are increased between the civil society and the different ROLAC divisions.

The Guidelines for the Participation of Major Groups and Stakeholders in the Design of UNEP Policies state in different opportunities the importance of achieving a regional balance in the GMGSF and the MGFC. However, of the 230 representatives present during the past Global Civil Society Forum, only 7 came from Latin America and the Caribbean. In this regard, we trust that UNEP will adopt clear measures so that this trend is reverted in future Global Forums. Similarly, Guidelines specially emphasize the importance of the geographic balance in the composition of the MGFC. In this regard, representation is noticeably low, which we hope is modified.

The Guidelines establish that the two representatives of each region are observers within the MGFC. In this regard, we believe that it is necessary to highlight that this status is not knowledgeable of the fact that the representatives have been democratically elected by the regions to guarantee that their interests are adequately preserved, and this requires voting and speaking privileges.

Similarly, the civil society of Latin America and the Caribbean wishes to express that we understand that our representatives have a legitimate mandate because of the fact of having been elected in the Framework of the UNEP's decision cycle. We trust that said legitimacy prevails over the requirement mentioned in paragraph 26, item d of the Guidelines.

In Latin America and the Caribbean there is a wide gap between the practice and the statements of paragraph 40 on MGFC and regional cooperation. In this regard, we request MGSB to articulate greater efforts so there is a better link between the MGFC, the major groups in the region and UNEP regional offices. Similarly, we believe that there are significant potential benefits in greater articulation and synergy between the civil society organizations involved in the different regions.

As stated in paragraph 41, the preparation of Policy Statements is one of the main responsibilities of the MGFC. National, sub-regional and regional concerns often constitute a key element of these policy statements and, therefore, they must be taken to the GC or GMEF. In this regard we wish to state that the results coming from the Regional Consultation Meetings constitute agreed positions and must, therefore be incorporated into the MGFC Policy Statements.

In this regard, we understand that for the regions to provide informed positions on GC/GMEF issues, all relevant documents must be available in the official United Nation languages and sufficiently in advance, prior to Regional Consultation Meetings.

Regarding the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Virtual Platform, we believe that it is fundamental that we increase knowledge on its existence, features and participation criteria.

We suggest to UNEP that the regional offices coordinate the accreditation process of the organizations that represent the Major Groups in their respective regions.

Finally, understanding that the Guidelines for the Participation of Major Groups and Stakeholders in the Design of UNEP Policies shall undergo a new review period in two years, we request that Regional Consultation Meetings be truly and actively involved in their discussion.