First International Environment Forum for Basin Organizations
Towards Sustainable Freshwater Governance
UNEP, Nairobi, Kenya, 26-28 November 2014

Scenario Note
(English Only)

The present note facilitated by UNEP sets out the plans and general expectations for the 1st International Environment Forum for Basin Organizations. It shall assist participants in preparing for a successful Forum.

I. Objectives of the Forum

1. The primary objective of the First International Environment Forum for Basin Organizations is to strengthen Basin Organizations as key building blocks for environmental governance.
2. Basin Organizations are crucial in supporting the implementation of internationally agreed environmental goals and objectives embedded in many Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) as well as in national and basin-wide water management schemes. The Forum will provide the opportunity for basin organizations from around the globe to share experiences on strengthening their governance structures as well as incentives and tools for enhancing their operations particularly for the implementation of different environmental obligations and international agreed goals in support of sustainable development.

II. Date and Duration

3. The Forum will be held on Wednesday, 26 November 2014, Thursday, 27 November 2014 and Friday, 28 November 2014, at the United Nations Offices at Nairobi, in Conference Room 1.
4. Days 1 and 2 of the Forum (26 and 27 November) are dedicated to a Technical Segment. The technical segment will discuss the four main themes of the Forum: 1. Water Quality and Ecosystem Health; 2. Water-Energy-Food Nexus and Adaptation to Climate Change; 3. Environmental Laws and Regulations; and 4. Institutional Challenges. The Technical Segment is comprised of moderated panel sessions, each with invited speakers honing in on the most critical aspects of the four themes of the Forum by giving an overview of these aspects from their personal, national, regional and stakeholder perspective; each segment of speakers is to be followed by interactive discussions among the panelists and the participants.
5. After the Opening of the Technical Segment there will be a morning and an afternoon session of speakers each divided into two segments of speakers followed by an open floor discussion. At the end of the Technical Segment key findings will be presented in a wrap-up and closing session for the Technical Segment.
6. The Opening will start at 10.00 on 26 November 2014. The first panel session will start at 10.30. and concludes at 13.00, which is followed by a Lunch break. The second panel session shall take place from 15.00 to 18.00. On 27 November 2014, the first panel session will start at 10.00. and concludes at 13.00, which is followed by a Lunch break. The second panel session shall take place from 15.00 to 17.30. This is followed by the conclusion of the Technical Segment from 17:30 to 18:00.
7. Day 3 of the Forum (28 November) is dedicated to a High-Level Segment.
III. High-Level Segment

8. The High-level Segment of the Forum will discuss the way forward for sustainable governance and management of freshwater basins based on the outcomes of the Technical Segment. It will take resolutions on how basin organizations and the Forum can contribute to overarching policy agendas, such as the formulation of, as well as the implementation of, environmental and developmental goals.

9. The segment will be composed of Ministers, heads of Basin Organizations and other invited high-level participants. The outcomes of this segment are intended to influence relevant international processes and to stimulate further policy dialogue at relevant fora.

10. The Segment will be open for attendance by all participants who wish to follow the discussions.

IV. Organization of Work

11. The Forum will be structured into a Technical Segment and a High-Level Segment. The Technical Segment will have four substantive panel sessions covering the themes of the Forum: 1. Water Quality and Ecosystem Health; 2. Water-Energy-Food Nexus and Adaptation to Climate Change; 3. Environmental Laws and Regulations; and 4. Institutional Challenges. Each session will start with an initial moderation in which the high level speakers will be introduced to the audience. This will be followed by the first segment of speakers which will have the floor consecutively. Then the floor will be open for discussion with the audience. This will be moderated again by the moderator of the respective panel session. The same procedure will apply for the second segment of speakers. The session will conclude with brief remarks by the Moderator.

12. The open floor discussions will focus primarily on: 1) how to manage basins in order to improve water quality; 2) the status of ecosystem health and how to improve it - for Panel/Theme 1; 3) how to address the water-energy-nexus issues from a basin management perspective; 4) ecosystem based approaches for adaptation to climate change in basin management – for Panel/Theme 2; 5) effective and adaptive legal and institutional frameworks to address the ever increasing challenges and complexities associated with managing water resources; 6) how basin organizations can positively contribute to the implementation of international water law, multilateral environmental agreements and internationally accepted environmental principles – for Panel/Theme 3; 7) adequate policy, financial and institutional mechanisms to deal with the multiple economic, social and environmental challenges in the governance of the world’s freshwater resources; and 8) how basin organizations can better meet their institutional challenges in responding to environmental pressures and promote sustainable freshwater governance within their respective basins and environmental governance overall – for Panel/Theme 4.

13. The High-level Segment of the Forum will discuss the way forward for sustainable governance and management of freshwater basins based on the outcomes of the Technical Segment.

V. Summary and Conclusion

14. A summary document highlighting the central messages emanating from the Discussions will be produced following the High-Level Segment.

15. The Forum is characterized by the absence of official negotiations. Instead the collected central messages and a summary will be rendered by the Secretariat. The aim is a reflection of the broad perspectives and thinking of the participants that does not
VI. Outcome

16. The outcomes of the Forum are intended to influence relevant international processes and to stimulate further policy dialogue at relevant fora, including the post 2015 development agenda, the United Nations Environment Assembly, the Stockholm World Water Week, the World Water Forum, INBO and others.

17. It is hoped that the outcome of the Forum will generally contribute to the promotion and development of sustainable freshwater governance and the strengthening of Basin Organizations worldwide.