



Call for proposals for side events for the resumed session of the fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly

Guidance Note by the Secretariat

This is an open call for proposals for official side events that will be organized during the resumed session of the fifth UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2), to be held in Nairobi, Kenya, on 28 February – 2 March 2022. Subject to further guidance by the Bureau of the Assembly, a limited number of side events may also be organized for the special session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme, to be held in Nairobi on 3 and 4 March 2022, in conjunction with UNEA-5.2.

The call is addressed to UN Member States, UN entities, including the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA's), and major groups and stakeholders accredited to the UN Environment Programme. Interested organizer(s) are required to submit detailed applications for a proposed side event online, through the following link: [UNEA 5.2 Side Event Registration](#)

Applicants are recommended to closely follow the guidance set out in this note before submitting their proposals online.

The call for proposals will open on Monday 26 July and close on Thursday 30 September 2021.

Depending on the number and quality of applications received, a second call for proposals may be launched in October 2021. Announcement of the selected side events is expected to be made in December 2021.

UNEA side event applications should be clearly focused on the overall theme of the fifth session of the Environment Assembly – “*Strengthening actions for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.*” Events should be relevant to one or more of the following focus areas of the theme and take into account the need to build back better and more sustainably from COVID-19.

- a) Enhancing ecosystem services for inter alia sustainable food, water and energy systems;
- b) Improving the state of our ocean and freshwater environments, and promoting sustainable management of ocean resources, in support of economic and social development;
- c) Promoting pathways to prevent land degradation and desertification, and achieve sustainable land use;
- d) Taking action to promote sustainable waste management and to detoxify land, ocean and freshwater, to allow ecosystems to perform its services to humanity;
- e) Safeguarding the multi-benefits of marine and aquatic vegetation, such as mangrove, wetland, peat, seagrass and kelp ecosystems;
- f) Considering further measures for the sustainable management, use and conservation of natural resources;
- g) Identifying innovative solutions and enabling mechanisms such as sustainable finance and natural-capital accounting that have multiple environment benefits and so are cost-effective;
- h) Means of implementation for nature-based solutions;
- i) Facilitating the implementation of the post 2020 biodiversity framework;
- j) Promoting energy from renewable resources in a way which is also mutually supportive of the objective of halting biodiversity loss.

A note with more information on the theme of UNEA-5 is available [here](#).

Alternatively, a UNEA side event application can focus on commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme, which is the theme of the special session. Further information on the commemoration is available [here](#).

Subject to further guidance by the Bureau of the Environment Assembly, the format of the UNEA side events could be either as a combination of online and in-person events in Nairobi. The side events will be held back-to-back with the formal sessions of the Assembly, during the lunch break and during the evenings. Some side events with the same time slots are also expected to take place in conjunction the resumed session of the fifth Open-Ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, which will take place during the week that precedes UNEA-5.2 (21-25 February 2022).

It is expected that a maximum of thirty official side events will be selected. Submitted proposals will be screened and reviewed by the UN Environment Programme Secretariat, for final approval by the Executive Director and by the Bureau of the Assembly. The selection process will seek to ensure broad geographical distribution of organizers and be guided by the following selection criteria:

1. **Thematic consideration:** The theme of a side event should relate to the theme of the fifth session of the Environment Assembly, with a specific focus on at least one of the focus areas of the theme as listed above. Alternatively, a side event may focus on the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme.
2. **Compelling speakers and audience engagement:** The side event should, as far as possible, ensure an interactive and engaging dialogue with panel members and/or the audience with a moderator that has a background in hosting such events to ensure a compelling event within the allocated time.
3. **Representation:**
 - a. The design and structure of the side event should facilitate broad stakeholder participation and should, where relevant, include representatives from the civil society, the private sector and the scientific community.
 - b. The choice of lead speakers / contributors / panelists to the event lists should to the extent possible be geographically, generationally and gender balanced and should not exceed a maximum of 6 people – ideally less.
4. **Outreach and communications:** Priority will be given to side events that are co-sponsored by two or more entities/ partners, that have a dynamic and strong communications / media component built into the event that serves to raise the profile of the issue and ergo UNEA 5.2.

Finally, it should be noted that organizers of side events will be fully responsible for the following tasks and responsibilities:

- Organizing and promoting the side event (a final decision on format will be taken at a later stage).
- Inviting panelists and speakers;
- Covering any expenses related to travel and accommodation for panelists and speakers (if and as relevant);
- Advertising and marketing the event beyond the UNEA website so that it secures as broad an audience as possible;
- Preparing a short final report with a summary of the outcomes of the event for the purpose of being published on the UNEA website;
- Arranging for any logistical and registration requirements and, where necessary securing access to the Gigiri Complex; Logistical arrangements relating to approved official side events that take place in person (in full or in part) at the UN Compound In Nairobi, such as room allocation, sound, projectors etc., in close collaboration with representatives from the Secretariat of the UN Environment Programme and from the UN Office in Nairobi;
- Organizing possible catering services related to the side event – paid in advance to caterers approved by the Secretariat;
- Giving due consideration to any media / social-media activities relating to side events, in cooperation with the Secretariat media team.

Please note: A side event should last a maximum of one and a half hours and will be scheduled during the following time slots: 13.15-14.45 or 18.15-19.45 (GMT+3).

Any questions regarding the application process for UNEA side events may be sent to the UNEP secretariat (unep-sgb@un.org and unep-director-ecosystems@un.org)