

**Submission of the Russian Federation to the Co-Chairs
of the Ad-Hoc Open-Ended Working Group established
by the General Assembly Resolution 72/277
on the draft outcome elements of the work of the Group**

The Russian Federation would like to underline that in line with the mandate of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 72/277, the main objective of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) is to analyze the current status of the international environmental law and identify possible areas for its improvement. According to the UNGA Resolution, the results of the work of the OEWG should not automatically lead to the launch of the process of institutionalization of a new international environmental regime. Decisions within the Group and its recommendations for consideration by the UN General Assembly should be made solely on the basis of consensus.

A large number of international legal instruments in the field of environment, which vary in their thematic and geographic scope and legal status, represent the result of a compromise among member states that was carefully negotiated over many years. Functional specialization of the international environmental law is an objective necessity for an effective approach to the solution of specific environmental problems. It is quite natural that not all environment treaties are universal, the level of participation being dependent on political will and technical capacity of individual States.

The key task for the international community and national authorities is to ensure timely and most effective achievement of the goals set out in the already existing documents. It could be beneficial to focus on the scientifically based identification of the problem areas that remain uncovered within the existing legal framework of the multilateral environmental cooperation. Another area of work could be an establishment of a genuine synergy between relevant multilateral environmental processes, regulatory agreements and conventions with full respect for the autonomy and prerogatives of the relevant MEAs.

UNEP must play a leading role in developing priorities for international environmental cooperation within the UN in full compliance with its mandate.

UNEP's normative work and its science-policy interface are to be further strengthened, building on the existing mechanisms, including the "Montevideo process". The establishment of any parallel structures that claim supremacy in addressing global environmental challenges will weaken the role of UNEP as the key body of the UN system in the development of an internationally agreed environmental agenda.

The potential of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP (UNEA) as the supreme universal decision making body in the field of the multilateral environmental cooperation must be fully utilized. Any further initiatives pertaining to the multilateral environment governance must be submitted uniquely through UNEA.

Forced codification of the principles of the environmental law, which are still in the process of evolution, is premature, unjustified and unproductive. Conditions for the development of any global legally binding document on international environmental law and its universal principles are not yet in place. Moreover, the development of such a document could cause damage to the existing environmental legal framework.

The principle of the sovereignty of the States over their natural resources should be strictly observed in the process of further development of the international environmental law. Politicization and "green protectionism" that promote economic interests of certain countries and corporations represent the main gaps in the international environmental cooperation. The main financial mechanism for the implementation of the most environmental conventions and agreements is currently the Global Environment Fund. The increasing number of developing countries are unable to access funding for their environmental projects within its framework because they have been included in the dubious sanctions lists of certain countries which is unacceptable.