

GOVERNANCE GUIDELINES FOR THE GLOBAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (GBA4E)

Statement of Purpose

“The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.

UNEP’s work encompasses:

- *Assessing global, regional and national environmental conditions and trends*
- *Developing international and national environmental instruments*
- *Strengthening institutions for the wise management of the environment”*

Source: [UNEP website](#)

UNEP’s self-stated mission is "...to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations."

The Global Business Alliance for the Environment (GBA4E) presents a separate and unique track for business participation in UNEP and UNEA, encouraged by the successful and effective use of similar structures in other UN system fora, such as the FfD, Sendai, and the CFS processes. GBA4E’s objective is to offer the constructive and direct input of business representatives, whose unique and practical contributions will support delivery of UNEA outcomes and UNEP’s work.

Such a distinct, enhanced role for business with a unique voice is important to facilitate greater business engagement to advance and amplify the work of UNEP and UNEA. It will complement the major group system while reflecting the many different types of business across size, sector and nationality.

The private sector in all its forms – farms, small and medium enterprises, family-owned companies, national firms, and multinationals - can make a major



contribution to UNEP's mission and foster environmental stewardship around the world. Important examples of businesses' ability to assist UNEP include broader involvement of SMEs and business communities from developing countries, better engagement of business leaders to advance UNEP's agenda, statistical programmes, partnerships, revised business practices, and new innovative environmentally-friendly business approaches.

Business is central to all our daily lives, providing livelihoods, and many necessities and essential services, whether we live in the world's richest economies or in the poorest developing countries. Business is already the biggest engine of poverty reduction and economic growth in the developing world. On average, business provides 60% of GDP, 80% of capital flows and 90% of jobs in developing countries. It is a major source of the US\$1 trillion a year needed to finance sustainable development.

The UNEA, the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, as well as other follow-up processes after Rio+20 including the Paris Agreement, highlight the critical role of business as a source of investors, employers, producers, innovators, marketers, customers, taxpayers and neighbour. Business also plays an important role as good citizen, leading, promoting, and reporting responsible and sustainable practices, working with local communities, international agencies, governments, civil society and the scientific community.

Governments alone cannot achieve the ambitious targets we have set for ourselves, and it is clear that national governments want and expect to interact directly with business in taking on these global challenges. Governments will benefit from the direct and unfiltered input of business on technical matters, economic and environmental aspects and on the enabling frameworks that best support business's contribution to sustainability.

Clearly, increased transparency and inclusivity, in both policy deliberations and implementation of the 2030 agenda, is now a fundamental imperative to advance sustainability. To reflect the growing emphasis on business engagement, GBA4E looks to UNEP to work with business to pursue institutional innovation that ensures opportunities for business to inform deliberations and provide a resource to governments and the secretariat.

Accordingly, the primary purpose of the GBA4E is to define and deliver the business sectors' commitment to addressing global environmental issues. Five key principles have been defined by the GBA4E as the framework of this commitment:

1. Assist with the achievement of the SDGs.
2. Augment the contribution of business to policy development and implementation on environmental issues.
3. Support entrepreneurship and private enterprise, and their involvement in the UN environmental process.



4. Provide comprehensive and inclusive engagement of business in UN Environment events.
5. Capture the power of partnerships.

Guidelines

1. The Global Business Alliance for the Environment (GBA4E) is a network rather than an association that monitors and provides input into multilateral processes in the context of the UNEP and UNEA. It is not incorporated and operates on a virtual basis with no office premises.
2. The GBA4E is a network of the willing.
3. Membership is open to all national, regional and international business organisations, enterprises, cooperatives, and trade associations linked to or concerned with environmental issues and the SDGs.
4. The GBA4E will undertake such activities as agreed by the members throughout the year. Such activities may include, amongst others:
 - a. Information sharing on multi-lateral processes
 - b. Identification of emerging issues
 - c. Work sharing to manage multilateral processes in the context of the UNEP and UNEA
 - d. Development of position papers
 - e. Networking and advocacy
5. Decisions on policy and practical matters are taken through the maximum consensus possible. Silence is counted as agreement. If the chairperson deems that consensus cannot be reached on a practical matter (such as speaking slots at events), then such a decision may be made by a simple majority vote of members. On policy issues, if consensus cannot be reached, the policy position will not be a 'GBA4E' position but simply reflect the views of the organisations that agreed to it. No GBA4E member shall be precluded from taking any policy position that may differ from the BC position, regardless of whether that member attended the meeting.
6. GBA4E facilitates participation of all business actors at UNEP and UNEA who wish to participate.
7. Information sharing, collaboration, sponsorships and voluntary financial contributions are all invited and welcomed to support these efforts. All contributions will be administered by the Co-chairs.



8. Members who pay dues will have a voice in setting levies, allocating budgets, and determining expenditures.
9. It is possible to become a member of the GBA4E by sending a request to the co-Chairs/focal points or Secretariat (see website for current contacts), and said request is subject to review by other members, taking into account the guidelines used by UNEP for its admission of business entities. If approved, the new member's association will be listed on the GBA4E website.
10. Any member wishing to leave the Alliance, can do so through notification of the chairpersons/focal points or Secretariat by e-mail or letter. In extraordinary circumstances, members may also opt to remove a member from the register.
11. Two co-Chairs/focal points are selected for the Alliance every two years, on a staggered basis, so that their terms overlap for one year, as a means of providing a modicum of continuity and institutional memory. Each co-chair shall individually serve no more than two terms. (The Job Description for co-Chairs/focal points is at the Annex.)
12. Funding Members shall convene at the call of the co-Chairs to discuss and settle matters related to:
 - a. Programme priorities
 - b. Secretariat services
 - c. Budget
 - d. Expenditures
 - e. Assessing and allocating work load among members
 - f. Dues-setting and levies
13. A committee system of willing volunteers will be established, aligned to the work streams of UNEP and UNEA. Different members of the Alliance will be designated based on the content, and space should be made to represent the widest possible range of actors. The committee system will be key to ensuring the correct expertise and interest-level to achieve the work of review and response.
14. There shall be a minimum of one in-person meeting of the Alliance each year. Those present form a quorum. Other communications and consultations shall be primarily via e-mail. The co-Chairs/focal points may convene conference calls and additional in-person meetings at their discretion.