Major Groups and Stakeholders Engagement at UNEP

Second Global Meeting of Montevideo National Focal Points

Wednesday 05 June 2024

Civil Society Unit | Governance Affairs Office | UNEP

Why civil society engagement?

- Rule 70 of UNEA Rules of Procedure
- UN practice as also outlined in “The Future We Want” and Governing Council Decision 27/2
- Civil Society and stakeholder expertise enriches the inter-governmental decision-making process without questioning the intergovernmental nature of UNEP
- Adds transparency and legitimacy to the work of UNEP
- Gives an opportunity for those who might be affected by decisions to raise their concerns but also make constructive suggestions.

The 9 Major Groups

- Women
- Children and Youth
- Indigenous Peoples and their communities
- Non-Governmental Organizations
- Local Authorities
- Workers and Trade Unions
- Business and Industry
- Scientific and Technological Community
- Farmers

How does civil society engage?

- Nine Major Groups and Stakeholders
- Formal accreditation as a condition for participation
- In UNEA and CPR as observer with opportunity to provide oral and written statements
- Access to CPR portal including to un-edited working documents and submission of written inputs
- Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF) prior to the UN Environment Assembly as well as Youth Environmental Assembly (YEA)
- Regional Consultative Meetings (RCMs) – often back-to-back to regional Ministerial Forum
- Major Groups Facilitating Committee and Regional Facilitators (MGFC)

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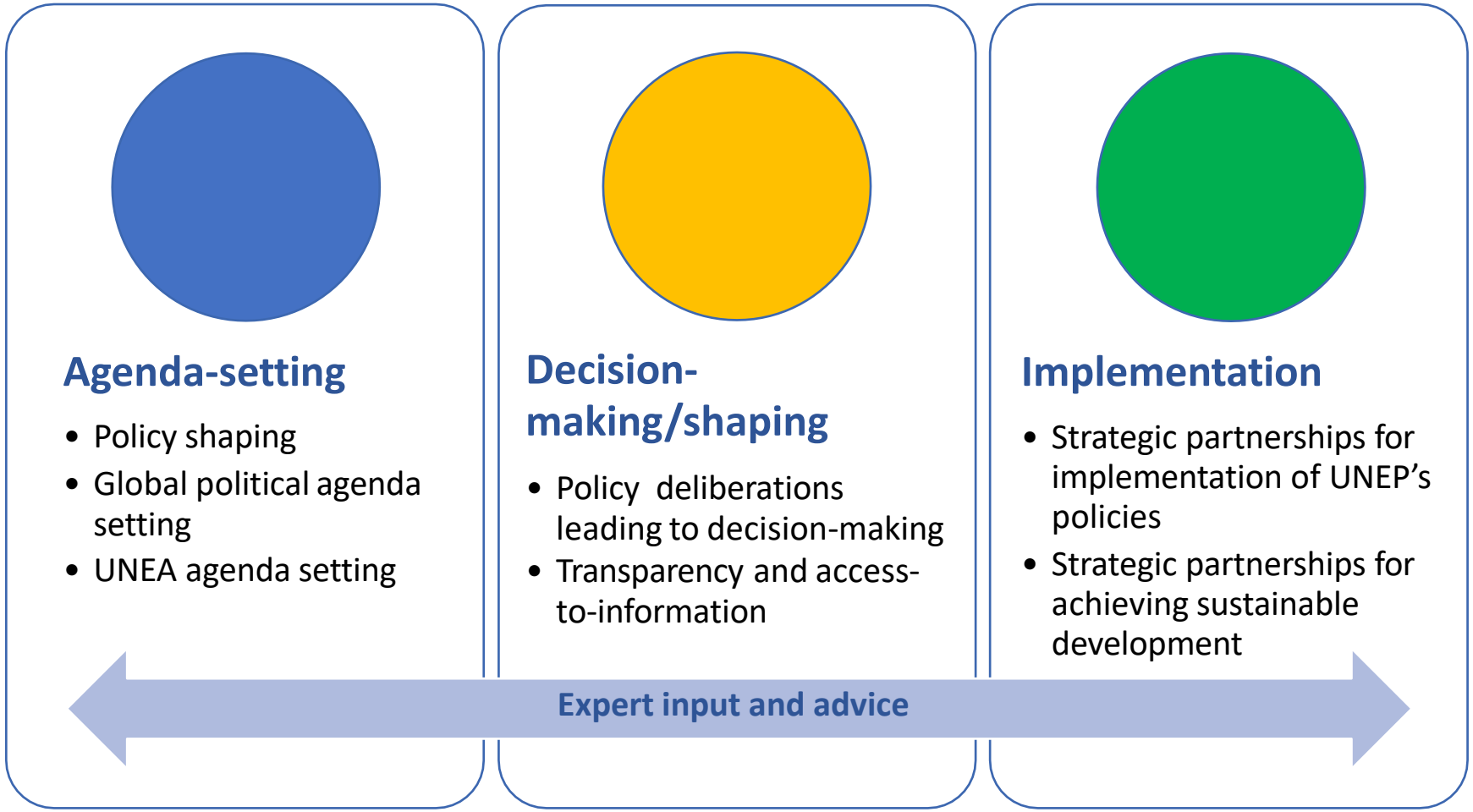
Three levels of engagement



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Civil Society at meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

- Accredited organizations may participate and make statements at all CPR meetings, including sub-committees
- Reserved seats for the nine Major Groups
- Online participation possible
- Opportunity to provide written and oral comments
- Accredited organizations have access to all relevant documentation and access to portals

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UNEP Accreditation

- To be UNEP-accredited, the organization must:
  - Have been registered with the Government for at least 2 years.
  - Be non-governmental.
  - Be non-profit-making.
  - Have a major focus on the environment.
  - Have environmental activities nationally, and internationally.

- Applications are sent through the Accrediation Portal and are processed within 4 months of submission

Role of the Civil Society Unit in the Governance Affairs Office

- Administers accreditation of non-governmental observers to UNEA/CPR
- Runs the UNEP Civil Society Engagement Website
- Facilitates and organizes meetings, consultations, training, outreach
- Maintains the Stakeholder Engagement Handbook as a guiding tool
- Assists the Major Groups Facilitation Committee
- Facilitates Global Major Groups and Stakeholders and Regional Consultative Meetings and the UNEA Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue
- Supports MGS engagement across UNEP, such as in the process to establish a Science-policy panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution Prevention
- Administers the dissemination of the "Perspectives" publication, with inputs from civil society

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Upcoming Meetings

- 300 stakeholders registered to participate in **OEWG 3**: Science-Policy Panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution **17 – 23 June** in Geneva, Switzerland
    - **16th of June:**
        - Global Youth Consultations
        - International Major Groups and Stakeholders Preparatory Meeting
- 1125 stakeholders participated in INC 4. Similar interest is expected for **INC 5** scheduled to take place **25 Nov – 1 Dec** in Busan, South Korea
- 10th special session of AMCEN, **2-6 September** in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire focusing on Desertification and Land Degradation
- Arab Forum for Environment (AFEN), **3-4 June** in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, under the theme "Restore Land to Build Resilience"

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Main stakeholder events ahead of a UNEA-7

Major Groups and Stakeholders global consultations

Regional Consultative Meetings covering all UNEP regions

Global Major Groups and Stakeholder Forum: 2 day meeting prior to UNEA incl. exchange with ED

Children and Youth MG planning ahead of UNEA 7 with regional meetings and Youth Environment Assembly (3)

Resolution coordination

UNEA including OECPR: ensuring MGS participation

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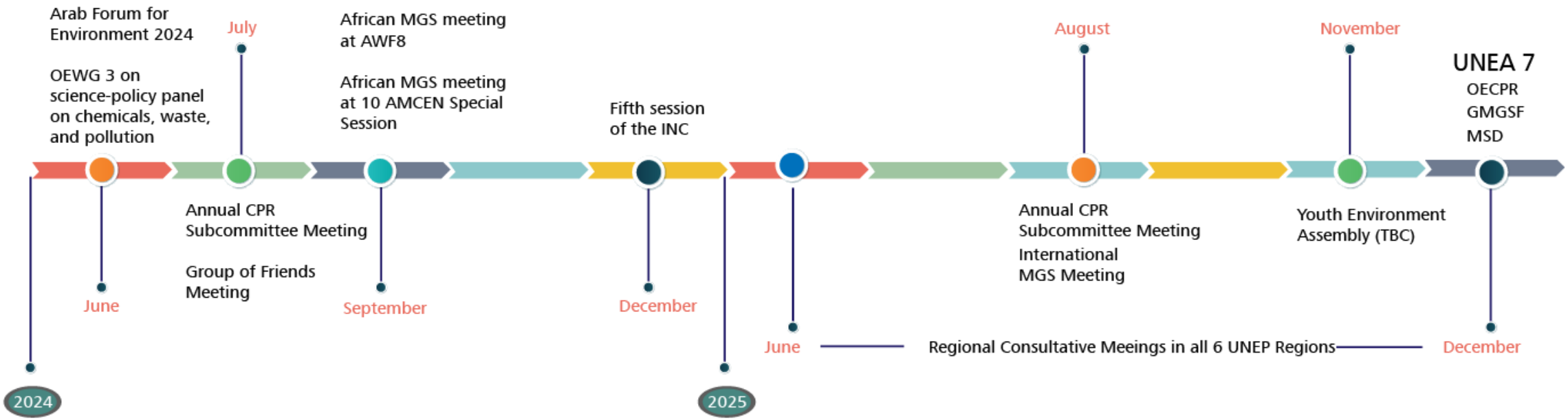
Timeline for key events leading up to UNEA-7



RCM: Region Consultative Meetings
OECPR: Open ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
GMGSF: Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum
MSD: Multi Stakeholders Dialogue
AWF: African Animal Welfare Conference
INC: Ad hoc open-ended working group to prepare for the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution

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Examples of Major Group Engagement

- *Global Environment Outlook 7*
  - GEO 7 is incorporating Indigenous knowledge as an integral part of the report.
  - Indigenous Peoples Major Group and Indigenous Peoples networks are participating in dialogues and chapter-writing.
  - Civil Society Unit = liaison for UNEP contact with different stakeholders

- *Youth Environment Assembly*
  - Self-organized Youth Environment Assembly 2
  - Outcome of the assembly: Youth declaration on the environment
  - Declaration presented at UNEA-6
  - Youth Environment Assembly 3 ahead of UNEA-7

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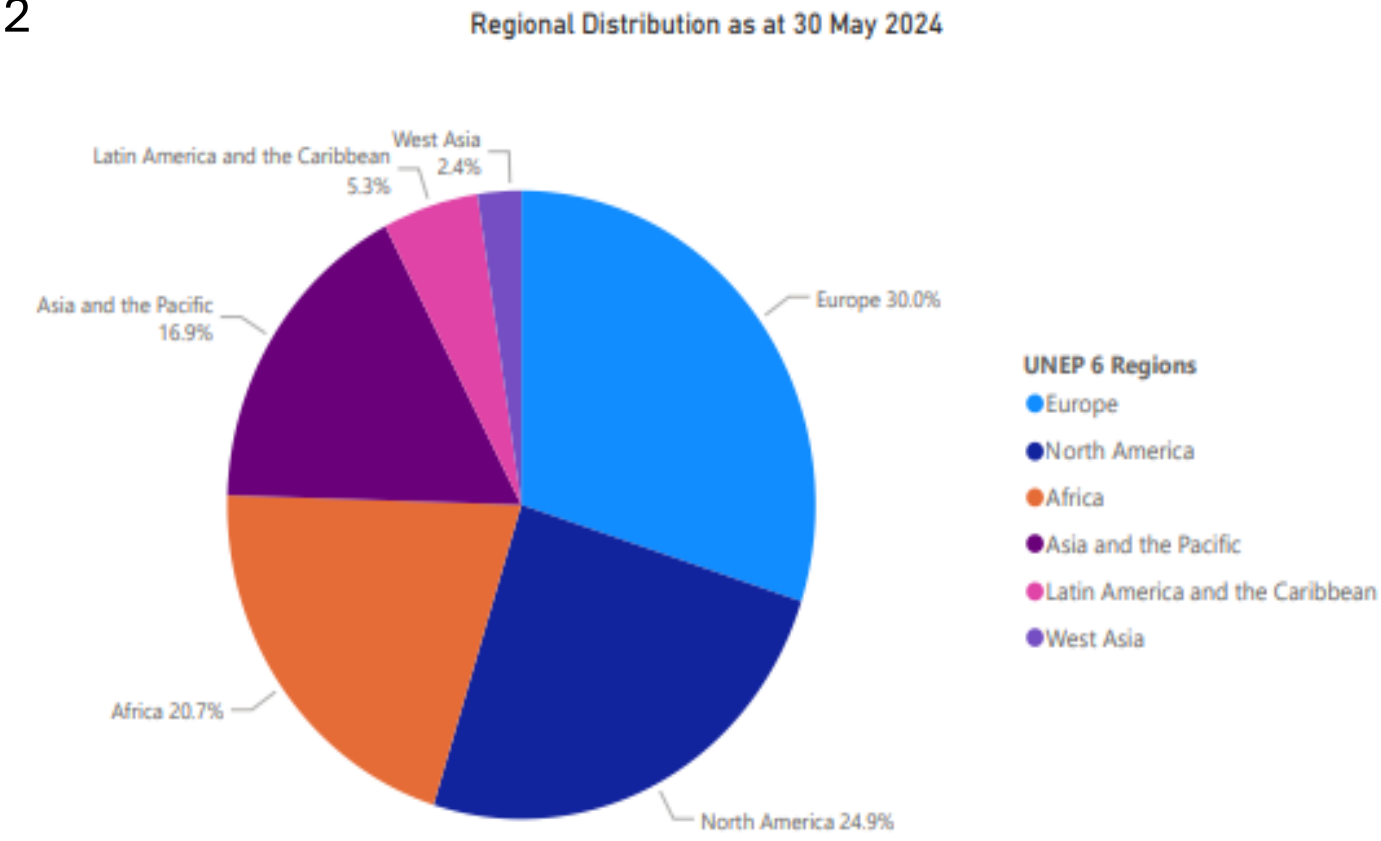
Accreditation

- **Accreditation criteria:**
  - Registered with a Government for at least 2 years
  - Non-governmental, non-profit
  - Focus on environment
  - With environmental work locally and internationally

- **Number of accredited organizations:**
  - 1150 as of 30 May 2024. List can be found here

- **Regional distribution as of 30 May 2024:**
  - Africa: 20.7%
  - Asia and the Pacific: 16.9%
  - Europe: 30%
  - Latin America and the Caribbeans: 5.3%
  - North America: 24.9%
  - West Asia: 2.4%

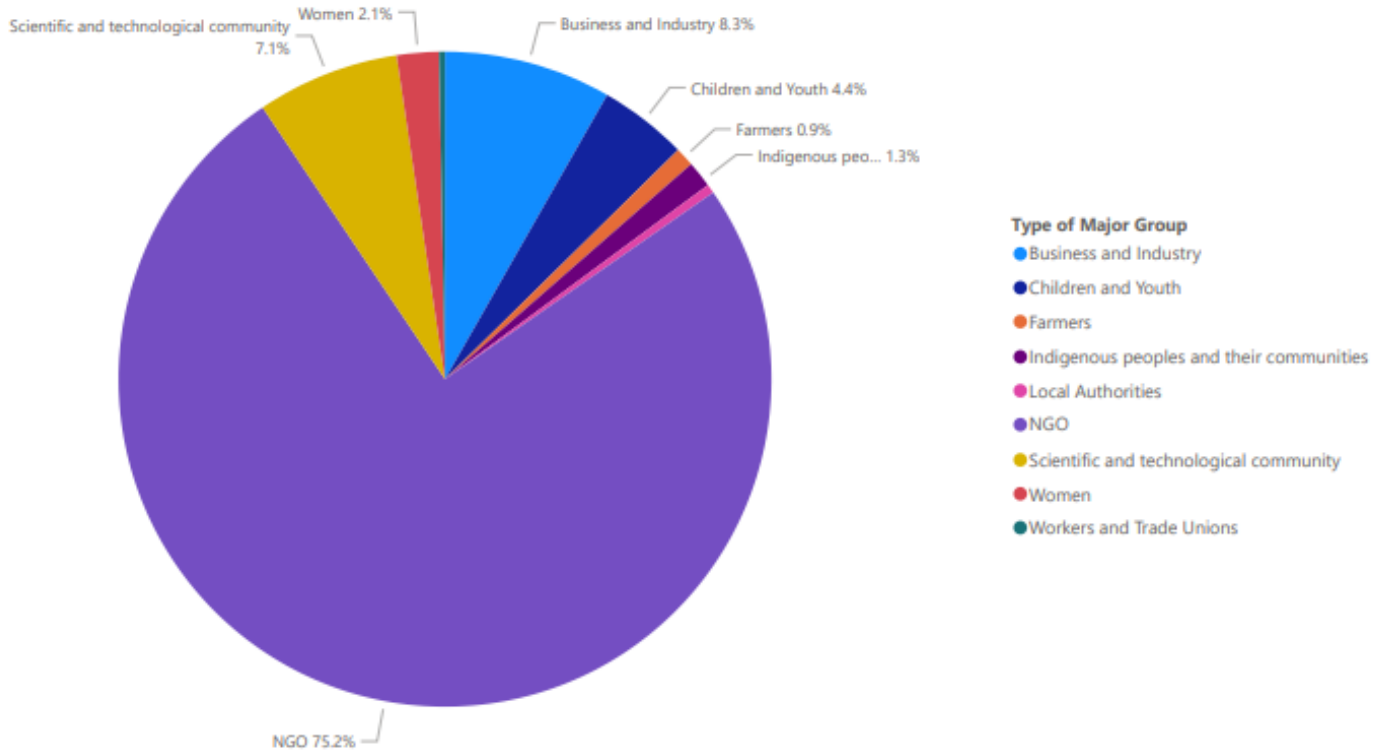


Accreditation

Major Group Distribution as per 30. May 2024

- **Distribution by Major Groups as of 30 May 202**

- Business and Industry: 8.3%
- Children and Youth: 4.4%
- Farmers: 0.9%
- Indigenous Peoples: 1.3%
- Local Authorities: 0.5%
- NGO: 75.2%
- Scientific and Technological communities: 7.1%
- Women: 2.1%
- Workers and Trade Unions: 0.5%



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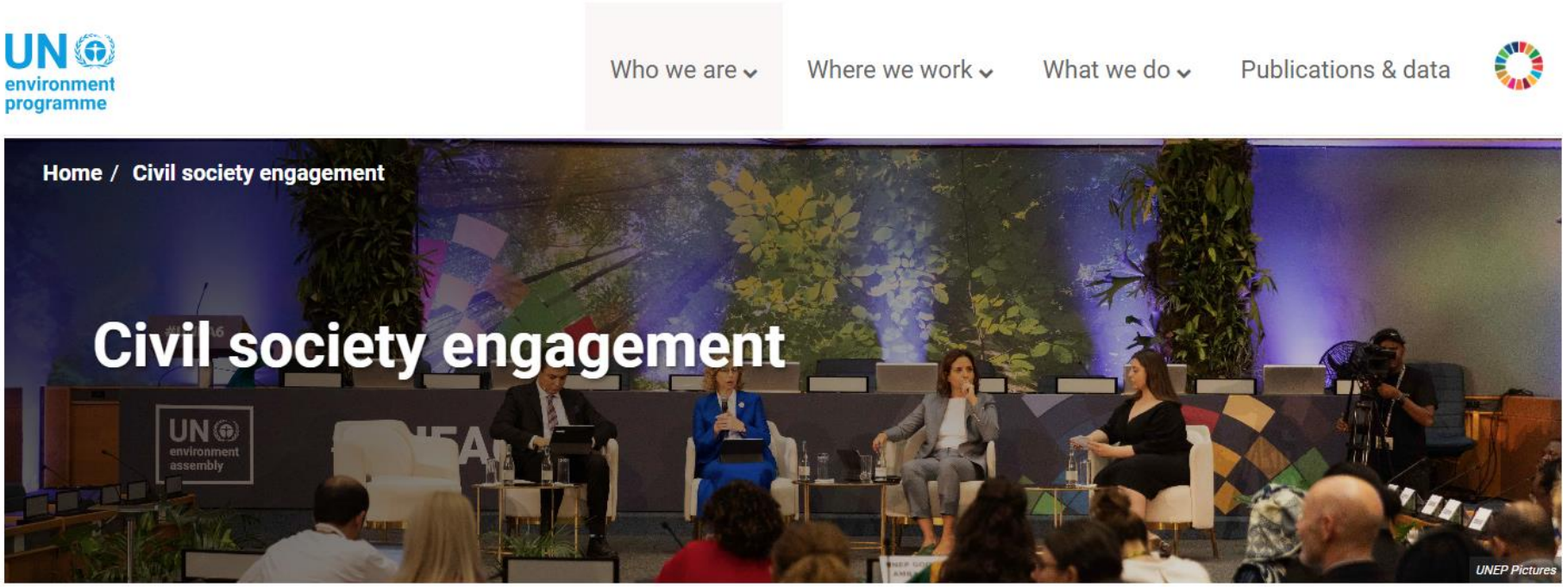
Resources

https://www.unep.org/civil-society-engagement



Civil Society Engagement

UN Environment Programme (UNEP) recognizes the importance of engaging Major Groups and other Stakeholders as partners and appreciates the perspectives they bring to the table, valuable research and advocacy functions they perform and their role in helping foster long-term, broad-based support for UNEP's mission.

Intergovernmental decisions will have stronger and broader recognition and support by the public if governments take Major Groups and other Stakeholders views into account as early as possible in

- ▶ Overview
- Why civil society matters
- Major Groups Modalities
- Accreditation
- Participation and engagement
- Policies

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Thank you

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