

Title

BirdLife International is participating in the first universal Governing Council/Global Ministerial Forum (GC/GMEF) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) currently underway in Kenya's capital city Nairobi from 18th to 22nd February 2013. The Governing Council comes after passing of the proposal to upgrade UNEP at the Rio +20 meeting held at Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 and subsequent approval in December 2012 by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). Among the agenda items in Nairobi, are the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP), Green Economy and Sustainable Development Goal and post 2015 agenda.

Serah Munguti, Nature Kenya's (BirdLife in Kenya) Communications and Advocacy Manager, said the global community has an opportunity to ensure that environmental sustainability is mainstreamed across the ongoing processes.

'Development and environment should not continue to be treated as two separate entities. Development must not lead to degradation of the environment. In particular the critical role played by healthy ecosystems and biodiversity in meeting the needs of the poor must be recognized,' she said.

The Nairobi meeting is attended by over 190 UN member states and was preceded by the 14th meeting of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders forum which took place in Nairobi on the 16th and 17th February 2013.



The opening ceremony at the first universal session of the Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum UNEP © Evelyn Runjugi

The implementation of the Millennium Development Goals which expire in 2015 has brought mixed results but more notably has been the low prioritization of environmental issues.

'There is need for the Sustainable Development Goals and post 2015 processes to converge at some point' said Ken Mwathe the Regional Policy and Advocacy Coordinator at BirdLife International Africa Secretariat. 'The current processes must not backtrack on earlier agreements but should rather build and reinforce global agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD),' he added.