

**OUTCOME
DOCUMENT
17th GLOBAL MAJOR
GROUPS AND
STAKEHOLDERS FORUM**

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OUTCOMES OF THE 17th GLOBAL MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS FORUM

Overarching Message

We acknowledge the efforts of the UN Environment to provide a space for civil society to raise our issues and concerns about the environment and the crisis it faces. Major Groups and Stakeholders welcome the focus on pollution as the theme of the Third Session of the UN Environment Assembly ‘Towards a Pollution Free Planet’. Pollution is indeed one of the most alarming threats to our future. It encompasses all sectors, and adversely impacts communities and the economy.

We are committed to effectively participate in the UN Environment and United Nations Environment Assembly processes and look forward to working with other stakeholders and member states towards a pollution free world.

We applaud the introduction of an online Resolutions Platform by the United Nations Environment Assembly Secretariat, and the facilitation of Major Groups access to the resolutions negotiations process, enabling us to provide inputs as they are being developed. However, it is regrettable that the Stakeholder Engagement Policy – a key issue to ensure effective stakeholder participation – is not on the agenda for United Nations Environment Assembly -3. It was a Rio mandate to increase Major Groups and Stakeholder participation, which United Nations Environment Assembly is still struggling with. Stakeholders are crucial for the implementation on the ground. It is important to have transparent, progressive and proactive policies for stakeholder engagement in national decision making processes, particularly for grassroots communities and marginalized groups.

Another point that we would like to raise that caused a lot of disappointment is that the budget allocated for stakeholder engagement in United Nations Environment Assembly 3 was only half as much as for the last United Nations Environment Assembly. This sends the signal that our participation is not a priority. Member states must take up their responsibility to obtain more funding for United Nations Environment Assembly – it’s the smallest of the United Nations bodies, but faces the highest challenges and ambitions.

Disclaimer

This document is the outcome of a two day information exchange and rich debate on several topics being discussed during United Nations Environment Assembly 3 between approximately 350 participants from all 9 Major Groups and Regional Representatives.

For the Open Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives and the UN Environment Assembly we had about 250 and 612 participants respectively from Major Groups and Stakeholders present.

Not all of the messages are necessarily reflective of the views of all Major Groups and Stakeholders. We thank the UN Environment Civil Society Unit and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS), the Africa Network for Animal Welfare, the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance and the Nordic Council of Ministers for making this happen.

The presented views are entirely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of UN Environment.

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A 'POLLUTION FREE PLANET' AND THE 2030 AGENDA

Pollution has a disproportionate impact on grassroots communities – Women, workers, indigenous peoples, farmers, fisher folk, urban poor, dalits, children and youth – who suffer from the negative effect of pollution on health, ecology, biodiversity and the economy. This is why tackling pollution must be underpinned by a human rights-based and ecosystems-based approach.

Pollution is not an accident. It is a manifestation of a political and economic system that prioritizes economic growth, the socialization of negative impacts, privatization, and profit for the few. A system change based on Development Justice – a model that seeks to deliver redistributive justice, economic justice, social and gender justice, environmental justice and accountability to the peoples – is crucial in addressing the root causes of pollution. We need to transition from a development model predominantly focused on economic growth to one which puts the nature, animals, people, and the planet first.

A 'Pollution Free Planet' and the 2030 Agenda will not be achieved unless we address systemic issues, such as:

- **Unjust trade and investment** reduces barriers to foreign capital investment and undermines labour, environmental, health, safety, and essential service standards. The provision of Investor State Dispute Settlement is mostly used to protect big businesses, while shrinking the policy space for the global south, and adversely affects government capacity to protect the environment.
- **Enormous wealth inequality**, held by corporations and financial institutions, is translated into an almost unchallenged political power that corrodes human rights and democracy.
- **Land grabbing and resource threats**, undermine life, livelihoods and the dignity of communities and indigenous peoples, who are directly dependent on land and natural resources.
- These actions do not respect the principle of free, prior-informed consent and significantly increase threats to community land tenure and territorial rights.
- **Patriarchy and patriarchal authoritarian governance**, disproportionately impacts women through pollution, environmental degradation and destruction. Patriarchy is a system of organizing society through a set of rules that strengthens the status quo, ascribing gender roles, while normalizing the use of power and fear in the relationship between states' and citizens, as well as between countries.
- **Militarism and conflict**, often stems from patriarchal, authoritarian rule, by both state and non-state actors. Militarism is a threat to both international peace and peace within

communities, and the home. Militarism marginalizes local communities, especially those living resource-rich domains, and severely impacts natural ecosystems on which these people depend. The direct impact of military toxic wastes on human and animal health, which is a continuing and alarming threat to communities living near militarized areas, is completely absent in development discourses.

- **Threatening land and human rights defenders** happens across the globe. Land and human rights defenders are on the frontlines, fighting for their communities and Earth. This year, 2017, over 200 defenders have been killed worldwide, and many more have been prosecuted and harassed for leading protests against environmental abuses, such as destructive mining and unsustainable agro-industrial production, including the palm oil industry, among others.

Ecological justice enshrined in the Rio Principles, articulates important tenets – Common but Differentiated Responsibility; the Polluter Pays; the Precautionary Principle, Intergenerational Equity; and Planetary Boundaries – as foundational principles of development. It is important to recognize the historical responsibilities of the Global North and elites, whose consumption and production patterns have led to human rights violations, global warming, and environmental disasters

To achieve a ‘Pollution Free Planet’ and the 2030 Agenda, we must ensure a just and equitable transition for workers and their families, the creation of decent and green jobs, protection of livelihoods and universal social protection for all. Additionally, we need to focus on environmental sustainability, gender equality, and financial mechanisms which are accessible to all stakeholders, particularly marginalized communities – women, children and youth, indigenous peoples, farmers and artisanal fisher folk – as well as workers, their organizations and workplace programs.

We endorse the recommendation from the Lancet Commission stating that prevention of pollution should be a priority.

We believe that training, formal and non-formal education for all should be prioritized with an inherent respect for the language of children and youth, to ensure their engagement as key stakeholders and decision makers.

False solutions and techno-fixes such as carbon markets, and other non-conventional forms of pollution including nuclear power plants, geo-engineering, Genetically Modified Organisms and antibiotic resistance, aggravate the crisis rather than address it. These must be avoided.

It is up to member states to make the 2030 Agenda work as a framework that realizes a pollution free world. The Sustainable Development Goals and United Nations Environment Assembly processes must reinforce each other to make this possible.

To support member states, United Nations Environment Assembly must ensure coherence and interlinkages between the different environmental conventions to ensure the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Sustainable Development Goals set out a broad and system wide framework, that flags the challenges of poverty, equity, governance, population and other broad topics that are major factors in pollution prevention, reduction and management. To this end, UN Environment should consider holding an annual TFP/SDG Roundtable with Major Groups.

We also emphasize the importance of building national capacity and infrastructure to address pollution – enforcing regulation and management, stimulating innovation and seeking pragmatic policy options that take into account possibilities for substitution, where possible.

Tackling pollution, especially at the local level, should be done in close coordination and collaboration with communities, subnational governments and other stakeholders. Exploring local solutions could be the key to many problems.

PLASTIC POLLUTION

Our Key Messages

We seek an immediate halt to the entry of plastic litter into waterways and marine environments and also a cessation of the production and use of plastics – starting with local and national bans on single-use plastics to be committed to at United Nations Environment Assembly -3.

We urge the creation of a global fund from a tax on oil and plastic production in all countries (like Norway), to be used to clean up plastic waste, and to promote non-chemical alternatives to plastics (that do not increase land grabbing and monoculture plantations). This should be enshrined in the United Nations Environment Assembly resolution.

The use of incineration, open burning, or land filling as methods of dealing with plastic waste should be stopped.

Local actions to deal and visualize the marine litter pollution should be supported by governments, to assist these efforts to prevent the introduction of marine litter into the food chain, and to address highly hazardous chemicals such as Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals and Persistent Organic Pollutants, that lead to irreversible harm and diseases such as cancer. We call for a global zero-plastic -vision, and that extended producer responsibility remains in the United Nations Environment Assembly Resolution. All voluntary measures have failed to contain plastic production and litter therefore we ask for support for the proposal for an intergovernmental group to develop a global framework that addresses all aspects of plastics pollution, from the land to the sea.

We demand ambitious anti-plastic policies, like bans on plastic bags (like Kenya) or taxes on single-use plastic materials (like Norway).

Additionally we call for the creation of an open-ended working group, which includes non-governmental organizations, and has a strong mandate to establish an agreement to end plastic pollution, including binding production reduction targets, governmental accountability, and support for community-based and scientific innovations. The global solutions must encompass proactive regulation from governments, industry behavior change, and grassroots people-powered movements.

Polluters must be made accountable, through binding legislation that phases out all unnecessary uses of plastics – such as micro beads in cosmetics, plastic packaging (70 percent of plastic waste) and other consumer products – similar to the Montreal Protocol.

The worldwide initiatives for marine litter should be expanded, especially beach cleaning and the collection of lost fishing gear. Initiatives directed towards the removal of plastic debris should be assessed for their risks to plankton biomass if the plastic skimming method impacts plankton abundance.

Member states and United Nations Environment Assembly must increase support for research for other environment- friendly alternatives and solutions, such as changing the business model, or containing the overproduction and overconsumption of plastics products.

LAND AND SOIL POLLUTION

Context

Pollution of air, water, land and soils by extractive industries such as destructive and unsustainable mining and agro industrial practices, unregulated or uncontrolled disposal and dumping of chemicals and heavy metals, wastes, excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides in agricultural production, and contamination from landfills, all adversely affect the environment, people's health, livelihoods and biodiversity. Over 400,000 workers and farmers die every year from pesticide poisoning with 99 percent of fatalities occurring in developing countries. Many others suffer from cancer, hormonal disruption and other chronic diseases. Nevertheless, fertilizer and pesticide companies report huge profits at the cost of people and planet.

Despite the proliferation of platforms and programmes we need more, concerted and urgent action on the part of the member states to prevent pollution of land and soil.

Our Key Messages

The increase of trade and production caused by multilateral trade agreements is not sustainable and accentuates pollution of air, soil, and water.

An industrial agriculture model has been supported, promoted and facilitated in developing countries through international development aid, promotion of northern agribusinesses and their inputs, and technical assistance. Agri-business drives intensive agriculture and extractive industries, and benefits from subsidies and other government incentives, yet is known for grabbing land and resources and denying indigenous peoples and local communities' access to land and resources.

Small-scale farmers, women and indigenous peoples have been practicing sustainable agriculture for centuries, but with the introduction of new patent regimes such as Intellectual Property Rights, communities' resources particularly seeds are being commodified by Transnational Corporations, making it difficult for small farmers to access these resources.

These issues all need to be looked at from a human rights perspective. Marginalized communities and women bear disproportionate burden of livelihood disruption, dispossession, disease, resource scarcity and conflict due to pollution.

The protection of the soil cannot be separated from the actions of human rights defenders protecting land and environment. Governments must prevent the killing and enforced disappearances of land and environment defenders who are relentlessly fighting to save Mother Earth. They must penalize the perpetrators, and ensure there are effective mechanisms and laws to prevent dispossession of land, territories and resources, livelihood disruption, and conflict. We support the resolution on 'Managing Soil pollution to achieve Sustainable Development' for its acknowledgment that "*preventing, reducing and reversing soil pollution is vital to protecting human and environmental health and improving human well-being*". In line with the principles of the World Soil Charter, governments should look at the practices of local and rural communities, particularly indigenous communities. Women's knowledge and their role in

protecting and maintaining traditional, sustainable practices to protect soil must be acknowledged. The Resolution can be strengthened with calls to hold the private sector accountable for unsustainable practices that cause soil and other forms of pollution, and with an acknowledgement of the role of communities and indigenous peoples in preserving and protecting soil.

Major Groups demand that the member states must ban and phase out Highly Hazardous Pesticides; set up a process to elaborate a comprehensive legally binding document on Highly Hazardous Pesticides; advance agroecology and natural farming that builds on the experience of women and men farmers, and the traditional knowledge of indigenous people, and is supported by science.

Land grabbing by corporations should be stopped, and the use of Genetically Modified Organisms that lead to genetic contamination should be recognized as another pollutant. The Human Rights Council's should be supported in its ongoing discussions to elaborate a legally binding treaty on Transnational Corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights, whilst ensuring that this treaty specifically includes environmental rights, and rejects trade agreements with intellectual property clause.

MARINE POLLUTION

Context

Many forms of marine pollution start with the land. The production of toxic petrochemicals, plastics, agricultural run-off and wastes, and other forms of pollution, form a problem long before they enter the marine environment. Other forms of pollution are generated at sea, such as destructive marine noise pollution, dumping of waste from ships, and abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear.

Marine pollution threatens the health, rights, food security, and safety of the most vulnerable people, as well as marine organisms from mammals to invertebrates who bio-accumulate pollutants or are killed through intense noise.

Our Key Messages

There has been a considerable international agreement developed about what constitutes marine pollution. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea definition should be acknowledged as the preeminent definition and governments should better utilize legal instruments such as the Convention on Migratory Species for regulating marine noise and International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships Annex V to deal with waste generated by ships and the fishing industry, and to regulate and enforce the discarding of fishing nets.

A deeper gendered analysis of the issue of marine pollution and its differential impact including its impact on women's health; and the role currently been played by women in different countries is crucial to address marine litter, and plastic pollution. We call for a new model for global action under the leadership of the United Nations, which factors in a community-driven, gendered response.

Artisanal fisher folk have long held local knowledge of marine ecosystems and have been pioneers of sustainable fishing for their local communities, but they are increasingly marginalized by industrial fishing who establish impenetrable legal relationships with governments and force artisanal fishers to abandon their historical role as marine custodians. Artisanal fishers should have their fishing rights restored and their custodial role recognized. We call for holistic systemic change to enforce binding Resolutions that extends producer responsibility for marine waste, litter and plastic pollution, and adopt polluter pays principle, boosting and supporting community-driven models for global action. We urge the United Nations and government leaders to adopt strong targets for sustainable consumption, including production reduction targets, the improvement of industry practice, and the principles of producer responsibility for products throughout their entire life cycles.

Marine pollution must be seen as trans-boundary pollution and requires both national and international cooperation. Member states must protect coastal barriers and the species that rely on these areas from pollution caused by development, infrastructure as well as run-off and discharges through sound governance systems.

Governments should establish monitoring of the marine environment and fish stocks, and make the data publicly available and accessible for local communities.

Ocean noise must be recognized and tackled as a serious marine pollution issue to be addressed under Sustainable Development Goals 14 and in United Nations Environment Assembly. Noise pollution is generated by the wealthiest and most powerful in the world as the military with navies, big oil and multinational shipping. United Nations Environment Assembly should expressly recognize the harm of this pollution to coastal communities reliant on marine living-resources, including artisanal fisher folk. Governments should strictly regulate all marine noise-generating activities by keeping noise from areas rich in sensitive marine life, using quieting technologies and other mitigation tools, and requiring thorough environmental impact assessments and prior and informed consent of local communities for all marine noise-generating activities before granting approvals near any fisheries, or important marine ecosystems.

AIR POLLUTION

Context

Air pollution including indoor air pollution and smog are public health emergencies and need to be reduced. Addressing Greenhouse Gas emissions, including hydro fluorocarbons and hydrochlorofluorocarbons, household emissions, vehicular pollution, pollution from burning solid fuel, industrial pollution including agro-industrial pollution (which is known to be one of the top 3 contributors to Greenhouse Gases), and promoting a genuinely sustainable consumption and production framework, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 12, are crucial steps to take.

Fatalities from air pollution are mainly concentrated in the major cities and urban areas of the global south. Energy transition must focus on reducing the use of fossil fuel in the north, and supporting developing countries to transition in a manner that ensures equity and justice dimensions.

Our Key Messages

Actions across all sectors are needed to strengthen data collection, monitoring and reporting, health surveillance at regional, national and sub-national levels, through a multi-stakeholder approach. Cities and sub-national governments have a critical role in this context. New urban agenda, Sustainable Development Goals, and the Paris Agreement must be applied in an integrated manner to achieve a pollution free world.

Major industries which contribute significantly to air pollution should improve their practices, adopt best environmental practices, and internalize the cost of air pollution. Renewable energy sources should be promoted in energy, transport and other sectors, and should be made available, accessible and affordable for all.

Local governments in cities must address the issue of pollution from the transport sector. Stronger control and mitigation strategies from all governments for vehicular emissions are needed, as is the promotion of community participation in citizen science that measures and reports air pollution in their cities and villages.

Promoting local populations to adopt cleaner cooking methods (clean stoves), stronger programs and policies to curb open burning of waste, technology solutions (pollution mapping, geotagging, analytics, software's), stronger regulations on mining activities, and local awareness campaigns (grass root levels) is extremely important.

False solutions for waste management, like incinerator and landfills, should be phased out, and mandatory national programs for recycling, reusing, and reducing consumption should be put in place.

Support for High Performance Computing development and deployment that supports research and innovations in academia, as well as empowering data mining activities of rapidly increasing pollution information, are important approaches.

Phasing out fossil fuel and fossil fuel subsidies in a time bound manner is crucial. This includes air pollution reduction targets within the commitments made in government's Nationally-Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement, and the adoption of the World Health Organization air pollution guidelines, as integral approaches to prevent air pollution.

Member States must support ambitious regional programmes like the Clean Air Coalition and the BreatheLife campaign. United Nations Environment Assembly must support countries to adopt clean air legislation with targets to reduce pollution, improve legislative and policy frameworks, and the capacity to monitor and reduce air pollution through variety of means considered in United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda.

FRESHWATER POLLUTION

Context

Pollution of freshwater bodies are primarily caused by destructive industries as mining, coal, industrial agriculture – including monoculture plantations expansion, with runoffs of pesticides and fertilizers, waste effluents from industry and human waste, and lack of sanitation, to name a few.

Freshwater pollution impacts communities and people in urban and rural areas. Rivers and lakes face deterioration including decreasing oxygen levels and increasing harmful algal blooms. In many countries, because of the contamination of freshwater sources, people's health is adversely affected including increase in child mortality and water borne diseases, and sources of food have diminished or even disappeared (i.e. fish and other aquatic life).

Despite experiencing the impacts, communities and civil society groups around the world are organizing themselves and forwarding their demands and legal actions, raising awareness, and using tools such as the feminist participatory action research.

Our Key Messages

In order to ensure access to clean water and its sustainable use, we would like to recommend the member states to:

- Establish mechanisms that gather and share data, improve sex-disaggregated data collection, monitoring, evaluation and reporting, and enhance trans-boundary data cooperation;
- Endorse the adoption of activities to conserve and protect watersheds that take advantage of ecosystem services that help combat freshwater pollution.
- Establish water quality monitoring systems that assess on the biological, physical and chemical water quality, for all water users, including in agriculture, marine and riverine ecosystems, and ensuring adequate sanitation facilities.
- Develop and promote alternatives to polluting substances including pesticides, heavy metals and mercury, while encouraging cleaner agriculture including better animal farming practices that recognize animals as sentient beings, and avoid excessive use of antibiotics, hormones and other pharmaceutical products in animal meat.
- Adopt strong governance systems, including appropriate legislation, financial disincentives, mandatory internalization of costs, and strict enforcement to prevent dumping and inadequate disposal of all waste that pollutes groundwater.
- Enforce stricter regulation on industries and their activities that cause freshwater pollution as well as encouraging communities to participate in monitoring.
- Increase investment in research, training and extension for water-wise and agro-ecological solutions and incentives. We believe that communities and the urban poor need to be involved and empowered, particularly the most vulnerable of the sectors –

women, indigenous peoples, farmers, fisher-folk, workers among others – in decision-making, while enhancing their capacity to assert their right to clean and accessible water. We should aim for at least 50 percent representation of women as agents of change. Experts should be involved in the design, research, and implementation process of finding and developing solutions to eradicate freshwater pollution.

CHEMICALS AND WASTES

Context

Chemicals and wastes are a crosscutting source of pollution that impact humans and the environment. Hundreds of synthetic chemicals are found in human milk, and in the umbilical cords of new-born children.

Production and use of chemicals is shifting to developing and transition countries, which is leading to increased use of pesticides, herbicides, products and processes containing hazardous chemicals, including those that disrupt reproduction, cause birth defects and persist in the environment and human bodies increasing the burden of disease and causing irreversible damage.

Women who work in chemical and extractive industries are the most exposed to occupational hazards putting their lives at greater risk, while struggling in precarious work conditions. Many governments and communities in developing countries struggle with poor waste management and services creating dirty landfills and polluted environments.

Poor national legislation, insufficient information on environmental and health impacts, lack of funding, and poor technological and human resources result in disproportionate impacts on developing and transition countries.

Our Key Messages

Immediate key actions that need to be taken are to:

- Protect human, animal and environmental health by fully applying the precautionary principle to strengthen and better implement international conventions and agreements related to chemicals.
- Fully apply the ‘Polluter Pays Principle’ to ensure polluters take responsibility to internalize costs. It is also important to recognize that this principle has its limits and to safeguard that it is not revered to become a ‘Payer Pollutes Principle’.
- Ensure systems are created to address trans-boundary pollution.
- Use best regulatory practices, and to prioritize establishing, implementing and enforcing regulations on hazardous chemicals, including those that provide meaningful worker protection and the ‘right to know’.
- Establish a new economic paradigm that ensures a just transition to a localized and community led economies that places people over profits.
- Phase out the manufacture, import, sale and use of hazardous pesticides and provide guidance on safer alternatives with priority to non-chemical alternatives and ecosystem approaches to sustainable food and fibre production.

- Ensure that only non-toxic, plastic-free material substitute all consumer products especially toys, menstrual hygiene, and personal care, and provide full and comprehensive information about chemical contents in products, including information on adverse effects.

Address the current ‘use-and-throw’ practices and ‘disposable lifestyles’, that have turned us into mindless consumers. There is a need to push for a compliance of Extended Producers’ Responsibility and strong law enforcement to hold producers responsible and accountable. No false solutions should be introduced to solve the chemicals and waste issues, such as incineration for e-waste, plastics and absorbent hygiene products. Solutions must be contextualized to regional realities and scientific evidence. Communities, especially women, must have access to information that aid in the decision making in implementing solutions that uphold the Precautionary Principle, the right to live in a healthy environment, and planetary boundaries.

Ensure full civil society participation in policy processes on a national, regional and international level as well as encourage collaboration between all stakeholders, including affected communities. The success stories of communities in addressing the problem on the chemicals and wastes must be mainstreamed at the international level.

There is an urgent need to convene a dialogue between all stakeholders from government, civil society groups, consumers and producers, international institutions such as United Nations and World Health Organization to tackle the issue of chemicals and wastes. Various international conventions such as Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm must also be integrated in the regional and local initiatives for effective implementation.

Major groups believe that sharing information, and pursuing integrated accounting, reporting, disclosure and other approaches that reflect externalities is necessary for both accountability and internal risk mitigation.

Academics should be motivated and engaged in the chemical and waste policy discussion and decision making space. Their role should be further acknowledged.

With the mandate of Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management approaching an end at 2020, a new and comprehensive global mechanism on sound chemical and waste management should be established to serve as an umbrella framework to deal with the issues across their whole life cycle. The goal should be to set core principles and criteria to guide further development of chemical and other relevant industries, to avoid late-lessons while directing limited resources into a truly green and sustainable future.

We call for the integration of the chemical and waste cluster into national frameworks for implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, through adoption of achievable national goals and targets and appropriate indicators for measuring progress.

MILITARISM, MARINE, NOISE AND ELECTROMAGNETIC POLLUTION

Context

Militarism is an emerging issue impacting both people and the environment through destruction and contamination of local ecosystems, negative impacts to people's livelihoods and health, and the displacement of communities, while threatening human rights defenders, the environment, many terrestrial and marine species. The United Nations, its member-states, agencies and other conventions, should urgently recognize and act on this.

Pollution is a common thread linking many environmental dimensions of conflicts and military activities. Before conflicts, military production, testing, training and bases can all cause pollution, including marine noise. During conflicts, how and where wars are fought has a huge influence on pollution. Deliberate attacks on industrial facilities and the destruction of environmentally sensitive civilian infrastructure can cause serious pollution hazards. Conflicts can be fuelled by extractive industries, leaving a legacy of contamination, while human displacement can increase pollution in neighbouring countries.

Wars and conflicts affect the most vulnerable of the sectors — women, children, farmers, fisherfolk, indigenous communities and those who depend on their environment for survival. Women face disproportionate impacts of military and armed conflicts. Pollution can also be indirectly caused or worsened by conflicts, as communities resort to unsustainable coping strategies to survive; and the collapse of environmental governance weakens environmental protections for years after the end of conflicts. Affected communities must be fully involved with setting the priorities for environmental assessment and recovery programmes.

The sustainable and equitable management of natural resources is vital for peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery.

Our Key Messages

State and non-state actors that cause serious conflict pollution are rarely held accountable for the harm they cause to ecosystems and communities. A lack of transparency from militaries often complicates post-conflict assessments and assistance programmes. Militaries often enjoy exemptions from legislation on chemical safety, while bilateral power imbalances in basing agreements between states often mean that militaries escape responsibility for the pollution their overseas activities cause. This must be addressed.

There is a need to recognize the role of the military industrial complex in contributing to the world's pollution and to the climate change, especially the governments that fuel it — the United States and other developed countries must take responsibility for this.

At the same time, there is a need to recognize the root causes of conflicts on many levels — resource inequality, power and hegemony.

There is also a need for transparency and accountability on the side of the huge military complex, thus the need to have assessments pre, during and post- conflicts, as well as compensation from environmental and social damages to communities and countries affected by wars of aggression.

Military conflicts and internecine strife besides pollution also lead to rising number of refugees who are most disadvantaged populations in terms of access to justice, human rights and basic services and worst affected by pollution.

Member states must address the issue of human rights violations from military activities and basing in the case of foreign military troops deployed in developing countries.

To address conflict pollution, governments, international organisations and civil society must accelerate global efforts to enhance the legal framework protecting the environment before, during and after armed conflicts. This must include clarifying the obligations of states to address conflict pollution and assist those affected.

UN Environment has a key role to play in this process and its mandate and resources must be strengthened to ensure that it can play its part. We support the Iraqi Resolution on pollution control in areas affected by terrorist operations, occupation and armed conflicts and call for a wider investigation on the impact of conflicts on pollution.

Governments must recognize and control new forms of pollutions like marine noise, which impacts marine species including fish, and is caused by military and other related activities in the oceans, and electromagnetic pollution (also known as invisible pollution) needs to be acknowledged at United Nations Environment Assembly - 3.

POLICY COHERENCE AND SYNCHRONIZATION AMONG PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

There should be a coherence check between the United Nations Environment Assembly decisions and Resolutions and the UN Environment of work and budget, including implementation of the Resolutions of the Environment Assembly, but also between other international processes, conventions and agreements including the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement but also between UN Environment and organizations such as World Trade Organization and World Health Organization.

Our thematic discussion have covered a lot of ground on major issues under the thematic of pollution however, many pollutant issues have been lost. There are also cross cutting areas like policy coherence and synchronization, and few Resolutions which were beyond the scope of the thematic discussions. We intend to convey our concerns on these as follows:

1. Large issues, such as the beating pollution thematic of United Nations Environment Assembly -3, addressing climate change, or mainstreaming biodiversity, cannot be achieved without systemic change. If our economic systems continue to rely on extractivism, with subsidies to fossil fuel companies or other multinational company privileges that allow them to scale up dirty energy and harmful agrarian practices, then limited campaigns like banning single use plastic bags will have very little impact. If we wish to see a just and equitable transition from dirty to clean energy and eco-sufficiency, we need governments to commit — through policy and through investment — to renewables, different product design, sustainable lifestyles and social innovation.
2. Coherence is possible if the mandate of United Nations Environment Assembly and the expertise of UN Environment towards implementing structural change are acknowledged. The priority of coherence should not be about cost-cutting, but should be about consistency and efficiency, so that any inter-governmental agreement — including trade agreements — or process has a human rights-based and a ecosystems-based approach, based on the Sustainable Development Goals commitments.
3. United Nations Environment Assembly should guide and secure the environmental dimension of the High Level Political Forum. UN Environment should work organically together with other UN agencies, regional commissions, country offices, member states, *civil society and stakeholders* to shape the policies needed to achieve all Sustainable Development Goals.
4. It is commendable that the *Analysis related to Mainstreaming Biodiversity for Curbing Pollution* Resolution sought coherence between Convention on Biological Diversity and United Nations Environment Assembly, and the significant overlap on the issues of pollution and biodiversity. The industries identified by the resolution on biodiversity from United Nations Environment Assembly -2 (agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism) need to be substantially reformed to meet both these targets. There must be policy coherence between these and the 2030 Agenda as well. The key difference

between United Nations Environment Assembly -2's Resolution on biodiversity and United Nations Environment Assembly -3's draft Resolution on biodiversity is the removal of the focus on the 2030 Agenda in keeping with the theme, and the addition of some operational paragraphs addressed to member states. It does not add anything new to demonstrate progress since. We also remind all member states that the Convention on Biological Diversity has highlighted the vital role women play in conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, and that their full participation at all levels of policy-making should be ensured. We need a shift from industrial forms of energy and food production to small-scale, local, and sustainable practices that protect forests, land, and water, in keeping with the Convention on Biological Diversity's recognition of "*the use of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices relevant to the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components.*"