

Draft Ministerial Declaration of the 2019 United Nations Environment Assembly

“Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production”

(Draft distributed on 18 February 2019 with comments by the African Group on 23 February 2019)

1. We, the world’s Ministers of the Environment, having gathered at the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in Nairobi, together with the representatives of international organizations and stakeholders, are dedicated to **addressing environmental challenges through innovative solutions, including sustainable consumption and production, advance innovative solutions and to move towards sustainable and resilient societies through sustainable consumption and production patterns;**

2. We reaffirm that poverty eradication, changing **from unsustainable to promoting** sustainable patterns of consumption and production and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are the overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development and we recognize that innovative approaches and solutions **are necessary to ean** move our world closer to the vision set out in “The future we want” and in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

3. We are, however, deeply concerned about the findings of the **relevant latest** global environmental assessments which indicate, that our planet is increasingly polluted, affected by the adverse effects of climate change, quickly losing its biodiversity, and experiencing widespread environmental degradation and unsustainable use of natural resources;

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[We commit ourselves to undertake all necessary measures to invest in integrated, innovative and coherent approaches in policy development and implementation, to support pro-poor environmental sustainability and to spearhead poverty eradication efforts through sustainable environment and natural resources management;] – Previous submission by the African Group

4. We are determined to ambitiously scale-up our efforts to overcome common **environmentally related and health challenges in a balanced and integrated manner** through **identifying, developing and scaling up innovative solutions to environmental challenges;** fostering sustainable **and efficient** resource management; ensuring the access to and use of environmental data and engaging **civil society, citizens, private sector and relevant stakeholders** academia; and therefore agree **that it is relevant** to take the following actions:

- a) We will improve national resource management strategies with an integrated life-cycle approach to achieve resource-efficient and low-carbon economies;
- b) We will advance circular economy and other sustainable economic models and strengthen public-private-academia partnerships that promote new eco-innovative business models;
- c) We will promote innovation in chemical management to achieve safer and less-toxic material flows and to protect human health and the environment from harmful effects of chemicals and waste;
- d) We will promote sustainable food systems by **encouraging the implementation of** climate-smart agricultural practices, improving value generation and significantly reducing waste along the food supply chain to ensure food security;
- e) We will **implement** sustainable ecosystems and landscape management measures to combat biodiversity loss, land degradation, soil erosion and pollution, desertification and sand and dust storms;
- f) We will share knowledge on ~~governance and~~ best ~~practices available techniques~~ for sustainable management of metal and mineral resources;
- g) We commit to harmonise international environmental data standards and we support the development of a global environmental data strategy by 2025, under the auspices of relevant United Nations bodies; ~~(who should lead this process of developing) (we accept if the target is for the UN and not member states) (this is a low level/technical issue that should not be in a political declaration, can be moved to a resolution)~~
- h) We will improve environmental monitoring systems and technologies, including **for land, soil, air, water quality, degradation, biodiversity loss, deforestation, wastes and chemicals,** marine litter and environmental security, and we encourage the development of national environmental data management capacities; we will also promote the use of data analysis models to support evidence-based decision making at all levels and ~~encourage work towards ensuring transparency of and~~ open access to environmental data;
- i) We will work towards developing policies for sound waste management and defining appropriate and ambitious national targets **by 2025** for reducing waste generation, increasing the reuse of products and recycling of waste, respectively;
- j) We will decisively address the damage to our ecosystems caused by the unsustainable use and disposal of single-use plastic products, including by phasing-out most problematic single-

use plastic products ~~by 2025~~, and we will work with the private sector to find affordable and environmentally friendly alternatives;

k) We will support global efforts to develop products sustainability and circularity guidelines by 2025 and we agree to set ambitious national goals on the use of sustainable public procurements to stimulate demand for environmentally sound products, processes and services;

l) We encourage the disclosure of product information to consumers and communities and we will promote the development of solutions to increase transparency in product chains;

m) We will invest in environmental research, education and awareness raising in the framework of sustainable development with a strong women, youth and marginalized groups focus and we promote a wider use of innovative approaches, such as inclusive citizen science and social innovation programmes;

n) We will advocate the wider application of indigenous and local knowledge about environmentally friendly practices;

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We will seek out innovative solutions to environmental challenges and support partnerships to accelerate the uptake and upscaling of those solutions through green businesses;

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o) We will accelerate sustainable and innovative financing opportunities and mechanisms, and we will build innovative partnerships to unlock new capital for sustainable investments and upscaling of green businesses;

p) We ensure the active participation ~~relevant stakeholders of civil society~~, citizens, private sector and academia in achieving sustainable development and we promote new mechanisms for their effective engagement.

[add as para: We will strengthen our engagement with the private sector and medium scale enterprises and increase public-private partnerships in addressing environmental challenges];

5. We agree that the effective implementation of these actions requires enabling and coherent policy frameworks, good governance and law enforcement at the global, regional, national, subnational and local levels, and effective means of implementation, including finance, environmentally friendly technologies, capacity-building, partnerships and development, as agreed in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda;

6. We commit to develop ambitious post-2020 global frameworks for biodiversity, and in this regard we recognise the progress made in the United Nations Biodiversity Conference in Sharm El-Sheikh in 2018;

7. We stress the need for concerted efforts towards the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 with a corresponding approach to be considered at the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;

8. We call the Executive Director to track the implementation of the actions set out in this declaration through the regular United Nations environmental assessment processes, including the Global Environment Outlook, the Global Chemicals Outlook and the Global Resource Outlook, and to provide a progress report at the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;

9. We request the Executive Director to review assist member states ~~We agree~~ to review the implementation of this declaration by presenting national reviews at the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.