



REPÚBLICA DE COSTA RICA
Ministerio de Ambiente y Energía
Despacho del Ministro



United Nations
Environment Programme

San Jose, 8 May 2017
DM-447-2017

Dear Minister,

Making reference to the letter sent to you on 7 April, regarding the process to develop a Ministerial Declaration, which will be presented during the 2017 United Nations Environment Assembly to be held from 4 to 6 December 2017 in Nairobi, addressing the theme: "Towards a Pollution Free Planet"; I look forward to continuing the process on the drafting of the Declaration.

To this end, I hope to work with each of you in developing this outcome through a transparent and inclusive process of consultations involving member states. These are to be concluded before the beginning of the Open Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives in late November.

As promised, at this stage I would like to open up the process to receive further inputs from all member states and stakeholders. I invite inputs to include positions, priorities, and considerations in relation to the Declaration, and its relevance to the Assembly. For this, I call upon regional Ministerial fora, and political groups to submit their contributions to the Declaration process.

As mentioned previously, it is my aim that this not binding Declaration is simple enough in language and content that an everyday person can read and understand; and yet strong enough, bold enough, and based on scientific evidence, to drive immediate action. It is my expectation that the Declaration supports the resolutions produced by the Assembly, and that these are all interlinked with the Sustainable Development Goals.

In this sense, I am including below a list of initial points that I have thought for possible inclusion in the Ministerial Outcome Document:

- Pollution affects everybody. It is a massive global challenge with consequences far beyond the environment. The increasing pollution of our air, water, land, and seas is a major obstacle towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals set by our leaders in 2015. Pollution is destroying our ecosystems, affecting human health, hampering long-term economic growth and exacerbating social inequalities.
- Pollution is an individual and collective concern the world over, threatening the health and well-being of all of us, whether we live in developed or developing countries. Urgent action is our responsibility.
- Reducing and eliminating pollution means positively transforming our world, leaving no one behind. It will help ensure that we, as humanity, make a generational leap towards a healthier, safer, brighter, more sustainable future. Our success will have multiple benefits:
 - More people will leave poverty behind; safer and cleaner technologies will drive our economies;
 - Peace, security and stability will help us consolidate inclusive societies, which respect human rights and gender empowerment;

- We will protect the health of everyone on this planet, today and in the future.
- The UN Environment Programme, as the leading global environmental authority, and the UN Environment Assembly, our highest-level decision-making body on the environmental dimension of sustainable development, are key institutions in keeping the state of the environment under review and in addressing the vital environmental challenges of global and regional significance, which we are facing today, such as pollution.
- We recognize that both, our UN Environment Assembly and UN Environment Programme, cannot tackle the challenge of pollution alone and in this regard, we urge other United Nations inter-governmental bodies, UN specialized agencies, funds and programmes, and all other stakeholders, including business leaders, to contribute towards our effort.
- As the world's Ministers of Environment, we must be determined, therefore, to take the bold and necessary steps to address pollution at every level – global, regional, national and local – in order to protect the health and lives of all people on this planet, the developmental aspirations of current and future generations, and the immeasurable wealth of the environment and the natural resources upon which we all depend.
- We invite all Governments, businesses, communities and people, and all other stakeholders to make a pollution-free planet a reality by 2030 and to support our call to action by determining their own contributions and commitments to achieve **our vision**:
 - Transform our societies to become sustainable and able to support the needs of present and future generations, including through reduction of waste, increased reuse and recycling of materials, innovation, and improved transfer of and access to clean technologies;
 - Increase global, regional and national awareness and education around pollution sources, impacts, and solutions, in order to transform collective and individual mindsets, values and behaviours;
 - Work with the private sector to identify and implement market based solutions and alternatives to end all forms of pollution;
 - Improve the health of the environment and ecosystems, and the health of people everywhere, including through stronger, integrated and coherent, policies and laws on air, land and water use and quality standards based on scientific evidence and data;
 - Strengthen the implementation and enforcement of environmental laws and policies through capacity building and institutional strengthening, including monitoring systems;
 - Eliminate major sources of marine litter, such as microplastics and the excessive, wasteful usage of single-use plastic by the year 2022;
 - Accelerate efforts to achieve the sound management of chemicals and wastes, including a global ban on lead in paint;
 - Reduce by half the amount of untreated wastewater entering water bodies;
 - Substantially improve air quality in cities to within healthy levels for human consumption;

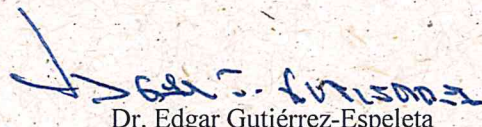
- Work with the local governments of the world towards promoting sustainable models of urban development that address, in an integrated manner, cleaner and liveable cities;
 - Expand the application and distribution of the best available science and technologies available towards combating the threat of pollution in all its forms;
 - Expand existing and create new multi-stakeholder partnerships, bringing together Governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations system and the people of the world in the implementation of this call to action.
- Our goal, collectively, must be a pollution free planet. We welcome the many pledges and commitments being made by Governments, business and civil society. These show that solutions to reduce and eliminate pollution are available and that moving onto a more sustainable path lies in our own hands.

It is my great hope that this serves as inspiration for further inputs from you. In order for this process to be transparent and inclusive, we need to capture the thoughts of all parties, and ensure that all views have been expressed.

Your inputs will guide discussions on the Ministerial Declaration document during the upcoming Second Preparatory Retreat for the UN Environment Assembly, with your regional representatives able to progress your views towards a Zero Document.

I look forward to receiving your inputs, through the UN Environment Programme Secretariat of Governing Bodies (email: unep.sgb@unep.org) by no later than Wednesday 25 May 2017.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Edgar Gutiérrez-Espeleta
Minister of Environment and Energy of Costa Rica
President of the UN Environment Assembly

