

Here some points for the opening remarks:

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to discuss amongst ourselves ideas for an effective implementation of UNEA3, and to develop our proposals for the upcoming UNEA4. Also to give us the opportunity to present those messages to you today. There are also inputs from individual organizations, which we would like to share with the CPR, and therefore we invite the Secretariat to convey them to the Bureau members.

The UNEA process is very important for us, as we are dealing here with the health of humankind, nature and the future of the planet as a whole. It is important the governments take their responsibility to take the UNEA home and take actions in their own home countries to implement the decisions made at UNEA. Only with policy changes, better regulation, market and legal instruments and strict enforcement we will be able to change the rules of the game to achieve a pollution free society.

We still see a lot space for improvement to relate the UNEA process to the HLPF process, and are keen to work on that together with you.

The #BeatPollution topic was a well chosen one, encouraging widespread engagement from civil society and stakeholder groups, and building on existing expertise, both on the advocacy level as on the grassroot implementation.

UNEA 3 confirmed the huge potential and good role played by the Major Groups and Stakeholders system. We mobilized many experts and presented high-quality inputs, confirming the important part of the Facilitating Committee.

But we are worried about the global tendency of the shrinking space for civil society in many (and more and more) countries. So it is nice and great we have space at UNEA to give our ideas, but it would be even greater to have such a space also on the national levels. Last year, according to the Global Witness report, 4 environmental defenders were killed per week.

Defending the environment and local ecosystems is still seen as being “anti-development” or being against the vested interests and that should be changed.

Thanks again for the opportunity to share our thoughts with you !