

Draft Ministerial Declaration of the 2019 United Nations Environment Assembly

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

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 moving towards sustainable, prosperous and inclusive societies with sustainable consumption and production patterns that prevent and address environmental challenges with innovative solutions.
2. We *reaffirm* that poverty eradication, changing unsustainable and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production, including the circular economy, 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 creative approaches and innovative solutions can 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 latest global environmental assessments which indicate, that our Planet is increasingly polluted, rapidly warming and quickly losing its biodiversity, and about the widespread unsustainable use of our natural resources.ⁱ
4. We *are determined* to ambitiously scale-up our efforts to overcome common environmental and health challenges through fostering sustainable and efficient resource management; ensuring the access and use of environmental data; engaging civil society, citizens, private sector and academia; and therefore agree to take the following actions:
 - (a) We *will improve* national resource management strategies with an integrated life-cycle approach to protect human health and the environment from harmful effects of chemicals and waste, and achieve a resource-efficient and circular economy;
 - (b) We *will foster* opportunities for the innovative substitution of hazardous substances in material cycles with the aim of achieving safe and non-toxic material flows;
 - (c) We *will promote* sustainable food systems by implementing sustainable agricultural practices, improving value generation and addressing food security, environmental health and human well-being in an integrated manner;
 - (d) We *will implement* sustainable land and soil management measures, including afforestation, wetland and landscape restoration, to combat desertification, deforestation, soil pollution, biodiversity loss and to improve climate change mitigation and adaptation;
 - (e) We *will share* knowledge on policies, practices, and the best available techniques for the sustainable management of metal and mineral resources and we *will enhance* national policies;
 - (f) 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;
 - (g) We *will improve* environmental monitoring systems, including air and water quality, deforestation, marine litter, and environmental security, and we *support* 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 work towards ensuring transparency of and open access to environmental data;

- (h) We *will work* towards defining appropriate and ambitious national targets for reducing waste generation, increasing the reuse of products, and recycling of waste by 2025;
- (i) 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 as early as 2025, and we *encourage* the private sector to find affordable and eco-friendly alternatives;
- (j) We *will support* the efforts to develop global products sustainability and circularity criteria by 2025 and we *agree* to set ambitious national targets on the use of sustainable public procurements to stimulate demand for environmentally sound products, processes and services;
- (k) We *encourage* the disclosure of product information to consumers and communities and we *will promote* the development of solutions, with special emphasis on digital solutions, to increase transparency in product chains;
- (l) We *will invest* in environmental education in the framework of sustainable development with a strong gender focus and promote a wider use of innovative approaches, such as inclusive citizen science and social innovation programmes;
- (m) We *will promote and incentivize* new eco-innovative business models and we *will advocate* the wider application of indigenous traditional knowledge about environmentally friendly practices for more sustainable economies and resilient societies;
- (n) We *will accelerate* sustainable and innovative financing opportunities and solutions, and we *will build* innovative partnerships to unlock new capital for sustainable investments;
- (o) We *will improve* good practices of engagement to ensure the meaningful involvement of civil society, citizens, private sector and academia in the policy making process;

5. We *agree* that the effective implementation of these actions requires enabling policy frameworks at the global, regional, national, subnational and local levels, and effective means of implementation including finance, capacity-building, mutually beneficial partnerships and the development, as mutually agreed in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda

6. We *underscore* the crucial role of overarching policy frameworks and the importance of coherent and robust approach to follow-up processes and we *commit* to develop ambitious post-2020 global frameworks for biodiversity, in this regard we *welcome* the outcomes of the UN Biodiversity Conference in Sharm El-Sheikh in 2018, and for the sound management of chemicals and waste with a corresponding approach to be considered at the fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly;

7. We *invite* the Executive Director to provide a progress report through the regular United Nations environmental assessment processes, including the Global Environment Outlook, the Global Chemicals Outlook and the Global Resource Outlook, to track the implementation of this Declaration, at the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

ⁱ United Nations Environment Programme (2019) Global Environmental Outlook 6; Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (2018) Summaries for Policy Makers of the Assessment Reports for Asia and the Pacific, the Americas, Africa, Europe and Central Asia and thematic Assessment on Land degradation and restoration <https://www.ipbes.net/event/ipbes-6-plenary>; United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (2017) Global Land Outlook <https://www.unccd.int/actions/global-land-outlook-glo>; Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2019) Special Report on Global warming of 1.5°C <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sr15/> ; International Energy Agency (2018) World Energy Outlook 2018 <https://webstore.iea.org/world-energy-outlook-2018> ; Food and Agriculture Organization (2018) The State of Food and Agriculture 2018 <http://www.fao.org/publications/highlights-detail/en/c/1157519/>; IRP (2017) Assessing global resource use: A systems approach to resource efficiency and pollution reduction <http://resourcepanel.org/reports/assessing-global-resource-use> ; United Nations Environment Programme (2017) Towards a Pollution Free Planet <http://web.unep.org/environmentassembly/node/41653> [These citations will be removed in the final document unless otherwise agreed].