

## Preparations for the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly - “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”



## **I. Introduction**

- **The UNEA-5 theme in the context of the response and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic;**
- **UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2025;**
- **Four proposed action areas where the Assembly can contribute to strengthen actions and means of implementation for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);**
- **Guidance on how to enhance the authority, impact and relevance of the Assembly through a limited set of impactful resolutions and decisions;**
- **Advancing an innovative communication approach to help the messages of the Assembly reach citizens and key stakeholders.**

## II. **The UNEA-5 theme in the context of the response and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic**

UNEA-5 is an opportunity to accelerate the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and draw increased attention to environmental action needed to fully achieve the SDGs.

Platform to highlight why the environmental dimension of sustainable development plays a critical role both in better understanding and addressing the COVID-19 crisis and in identifying approaches to ensure that rebuilding a post-pandemic world contributes to overall sustainable development.

Humanity's fundamental dependency on and responsibility for nature has been recognized in Principles 1, 2 and 3 of the 1972 Stockholm Declaration.

Despite the COVID-19 crisis, the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the collective commitments embodied in relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements still constitute our best, and only, global road map for the future.

### **III. UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2025**

- **UNEA-5 will approve a new UNEP Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for the period 2022-2025.**
- **A broad consultative process has guided the initial steps of developing the new MTS.**
- **The MTS represents a critical opportunity for UNEP to create a new global vision for the organization, based on the latest science and supported by a coherent, transformational focus that can 'shift the needle' in the context of sustainable consumption and production, while at the same time contributing to global recovery in a post-COVID-19 world.**
- **Our vision is to design a Strategy that fully enables UNEP to implement the mandate set out in paragraph 88 of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, and advance a narrative where the environment and the natural resource base of economic and social development, underpins prosperity, equity and stability.**

**IV. Action areas where UNEA-5 can contribute to strengthen actions for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals**

**The forthcoming Environment Assembly provides a unique opportunity for the multilateral community to share successful actions, best practices, and nature-based solutions that contribute to the achievement of the SDGs in a post Covid world.**

**The four action areas below have been proposed in view of their central relevance to the environmental dimension of the SDGs.**

**Area 1: Nature for Poverty Eradication, Jobs and Economic Prosperity**

**Area 2: Nature for Human and Ecosystem Health**

**Area 3: Nature for Climate**

**Area 4: Nature for Sustainable Food Systems**

## **Nature for Jobs, Poverty Eradication and Economic Prosperity (Examples of potential actions)**



*Building back better from the pandemic by investing directly in Nature.* The restoration of ecosystems can make a significant contribution to economic recovery and achievement of all SDGs. For example, the restoration of degraded watersheds can increase supplies of fresh water globally, and the restoration of forests and seagrass meadows can capture carbon to mitigate climate change.



*Greening stimulus packages and investments and supporting governments to rebuild the next generation of social, ecological and productive infrastructure – Promoting needs-based, integrated approaches across the infrastructure life cycle.*



## **Nature for Human and Ecosystems Health (Examples of potential actions)**

*Investing in nature can limit the impact and emergence of zoonotic diseases.*

*Identifying a global collective response to address the threat of marine litter including microplastics.*

*Deepen the implementation of the plan “Towards a pollution-free planet” adopted at UNEA-4.*

## **Nature for Climate (Examples of potential actions)**

*Sustain ambition for the UN  
Decade on Ecosystem  
Restoration 2021-2030:*

*Working with investors and  
Ministries of Finance to shift  
investments and subsidies  
towards nature based and  
climate-neutral strategies.*

*Launch a Climate Funders  
Alliance of private  
companies.*

*Promoting innovative  
pathways to achieve  
sustainable consumption and  
production.*



## Nature for Sustainable Food Systems (examples of potential actions):

### Taking

Taking action to transform agriculture and food systems, as a significant driver of biodiversity loss

### Redirecting

Redirecting private capital towards sustainable production of food and commodities.

### Ending

Ending illegal wildlife trade.

**V. Enhancing  
the authority,  
impact and  
relevance of  
the Assembly  
through a  
limited set of  
ambitious  
resolutions  
and decisions**

- **Member States should consider that UNEA-5 has already an important agenda established by resolutions and decisions adopted by its previous sessions.**
- **A limited number of possibly four/five additional strategic and comprehensive resolutions can help enhance the impact and relevance of UNEA.**
- **Action points for such strategic and comprehensive resolutions can be addressed at the next annual subcommittee in October.**

## VII. Way forward

- **Support the relevance of the Environment Assembly and its theme for UNEA-5 in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic;**
- **Share your guidance on how the proposed four action-areas can help strengthen actions for nature from all sectors of society to support the implementation of SDGs;**
- **Advance an agreement on how to reach a limited set of resolutions;**
- **Share your ideas on how the Assembly can serve as a platform where the international community discusses the interactions of environmental issues enhance cooperation among UNEP and the Multilateral Environmental Agreements and bring together all key stakeholders.**

**Thank you**

**Governance Affairs Office**