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**AUG 24 2020**

**Mr. Jorge Laguna-Celis**  
Secretary of Governing Bodies  
UN Environment Programme  
Nairobi, Kenya  
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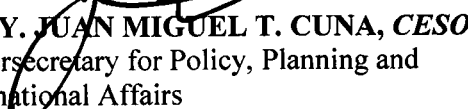
**Dear Mr. Laguna-Celis:**

This has reference to the request of Minister Sveinung Rotevatn, President of the UN Environment Assembly, for initial ideas and inputs from the Member States for the Ministerial Declaration of the 5<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5).

In this regard, may we respectfully submit to you the attached proposed inputs by the Philippines to the Ministerial Declaration as guided by the questions provided by the UNEA President.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
**ATTY. JUAN MIGUEL T. CUNA, CESO I**  
Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and  
International Affairs

cc: United Nations and International Organizations (UNIO), Department of Foreign Affairs  
DFA Home Office, 2330 Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City



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**Minister Sveinung Rotevatn**  
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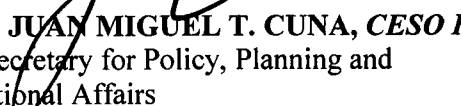
**Dear Minister Rotevatn:**

This has reference to the request of the President of the UN Environment Assembly for initial ideas and inputs from the Member States for the Ministerial Declaration of the 5<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5).

In this regard, may we respectfully submit to you the attached proposed inputs by the Philippines to the Ministerial Declaration as guided by the questions provided by the UNEA President.

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**Philippine Contribution to the Ministerial Declaration  
Preparatory to the Fifth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5)**

In response to the request for inputs by H.E. Sveinung Rotevatn, President of the UN Environment Assembly, from the Member States and in support of the theme on *Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals* of the Fifth UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5), the following are the Philippines' proposed texts for consideration in the initial outline of the Ministerial Declaration:

**A. Most Important Elements and/or Key Messages from Ministers to Address Theme in an Impactful Manner**

1. The Ministerial Declaration should articulate on the premise that **Nature is to be respected** as detrimental actions to it induced by humans always come back damaging to humankind in unpredictable and often uncontrollable ways.
2. The Ministerial Declaration should recognize that the **restoration and protection of nature is an essential component** of the response and recovery from the current global pandemic and is necessary to ensure human health and prosperous societies, to prevent further global health crises and to build resilience.
3. The Ministerial Declaration should undertake **post-pandemic measures to build back better with a focus on a just and green transition towards an economic model that values nature as the foundation** for a healthy society and a thriving economy:
  - through bold political actions from governments;
  - through collaboration and partnerships with industries and businesses; and
  - and the active participation of civil society, academia, and other stakeholders
  - with a special concern for the most vulnerable groups – the poor, indigenous peoples, children and women, and refugees, addressing poverty, water risks, food security, hygiene risks, and other environmental risks.
4. The Ministerial Declaration should reaffirm its commitment to the **strict implementation and enforcement of the provisions and amendments of the Basel Convention**, particularly pertaining to the sound post-pandemic management of **biomedical wastes**, in order to protect human health and the environment against the hazardous effects of these wastes, especially protecting vulnerable countries.
5. The Ministerial Declaration should welcome a **negotiation mandate for a global treaty on plastic pollution**, including marine plastic pollution to comprehensively address this global crisis, taking into account the whole-of-life-cycle approach for plastics towards a circular economy, in order to accelerate the realization of the SDG Goal 14.1.

6. The Ministerial Declaration should reaffirm its commitment to eliminating illegal wildlife trade and urge stringent measures to **regulate or eliminate the trade and consumption of high-risk wildlife including immediate closure of high-risk markets**, while also recognizing the distinction and needs of subsistence consumption required for communities from the Arctic first nations to the forest-dependent indigenous communities around the world, in order to prevent future and even more catastrophic pandemics.

This should take into account the manner the drivers of wildlife trade and wild meat consumption, land-use change, intensification of agriculture and livestock production and their interactions amplify and accelerate the risk for an emerging infectious disease event.

7. The Ministerial Declaration should reaffirm its commitment to **accelerate and strengthen efforts to achieve sustainable development goals by 2030** to eradicate poverty, protecting the environment, and promoting inclusive social and economic development in harmony with nature.
8. The Ministerial Declaration should affirm the **post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework** that may be agreed upon at the 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, or in the absence of such outcome, urging the development of the ambitious framework, that that will reverse the loss of nature and significantly strengthen the CBD, with an intensifying accountability mechanism for implementation.
9. The Ministerial Declaration should emphasize **nature-based solutions** to climate change to ensure a significant contribution to reversing nature loss and cutting greenhouse gas emissions, as the Member States build back better.

**B. Ways for UNEA to Significantly Contribute to Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals at a Global Scale**

1. The UNEA should go beyond rhetoric and contribute to operational actions that would catalyze meaningful reforms in the status quo or business as usual situation. Specifically, as the UN's main expert and focal on environment matters, UNEP should be able to do the following:
  - a. Provide advice on evidence-based, systematic, and integrated action that would address the intricacies of synergies between and among biodiversity loss, climate change, and pollution, which are brought about by irresponsible human action.
  - b. Should be able to strongly advocate and facilitate the flow of the Means of Implementation, namely Finance, Technology & Capacity Building, to enable the integrated action advocated in 1.) above
2. The UNEA, in terms of timing and process, should ensure that the formal release of its recommendations is strategically timed with the 5th UN Assembly and the Conferences of Parties of environment-related Conventions, including the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement. The theme should be consistent: the link between and among nature-based solutions,

climate change, and pollution, set against the recent backdrop of COVID-19 as anthropogenic actions create the backlash from nature but they can also be a key to a more synergistic and harmonized co-existence between humans and nature.

3. The UNEA should lead a **whole-of-UN-System approach** towards a green post-pandemic recovery that values nature as the foundation for a healthy society and a thriving economy, and thereby addressing biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution, including their intricate links among each other and their inter-related cumulative impacts, prioritizing the well-being of both people and nature.

Building back better for a green and just recovery should include increased investments and scale-up of renewable energy, green jobs, and infrastructure, and linked nationally determined contributions (NDCs) with recovery plans of Member States.

4. The UNEA should urge Member States to take a **strong political decision for nature** to address biodiversity loss, climate change, and pollution, complemented by strong private sector commitments, supported by a strong finance sector, with at least 3 billion people engaged on nature to achieve the sustainable development goals by 2030.
5. The UNEA should take on **ambitious targets that will reverse the loss of nature, by 2030**, by ensuring zero loss of natural spaces, halving of the negative ecological impacts of production and consumption, and zero extinction of species.
6. The UNEA should **support the development of a legally binding global treaty that will comprehensively address plastic pollution**, including marine plastic pollution, taking into account the whole-of-life-cycle approach on plastics towards a circular economy, in order to expedite the realization of the SDG Goal 14.1.
7. The UNEA should urge the **adoption of an Oceans Treaty** that establishes effective oversight for the high seas, reduces impacts on the high seas from the Exclusive Economic Zones of countries, and enables cross-sectoral and cross-jurisdictional regional management of our oceans for the benefit of the people and the planet.
8. The UNEA should take into consideration the importance of **integrating air quality, health, and climate policies and actions** as part of post-pandemic recovery programs and economic stimulus packages in order to achieve SDGs and sustainably build back better the post-pandemic world. To achieve this, there is a need for strong and high-level leadership and political will towards fast action on both greenhouse gases and air pollutants including short-lived climate forcers.
9. The UNEA should urge the Member States to influence **behavior change** for environmental improvement towards sustainable consumption and production. #####