

## **New Zealand's Input on the draft building blocks of a political declaration under UNGA Resolution 73/333**

New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to provide input on the draft building blocks of a political declaration under UNGA Resolution 73/333. We thank the distinguished co-facilitators for their efforts to date. New Zealand's initial views on these draft building blocks are general in nature; focusing on the role of indigenous peoples and traditional knowledge. We look forward to engaging on substantive text-based discussions at the next informal consultative session.

We suggest incorporating references on the role and importance of indigenous peoples and traditional knowledge in addressing the three global environmental crises: climate change, biodiversity, and pollution. This should be mainstreamed throughout the draft building blocks where relevant.

The preamble is suitably pitched – recalling the various important outcomes and resolutions which underpin the global effort to addressing environmental challenges. However, we suggest a reference to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples that acknowledges its relevance and importance to the domestic implementation of sustainable development strategies, as affirmed in paragraph 49 of the Rio+20 outcome document “The Future We Want”. This would underline the importance of indigenous peoples and traditional knowledge in achieving a more sustainable future.

Strengthening international environmental governance in the context of sustainable development requires a deliberate and continual effort to ensure all parts of society have an opportunity to participate. We suggest an acknowledgement of the convening power of UNEA as a multi-stakeholder platform and emphasising the contribution that indigenous peoples and traditional knowledge can make to the decision-making process.

Accelerating and facilitating action and implementation at all levels is particularly important in light of the ongoing challenges presented by the COVID-19 crisis. A collective effort to build back better to ensure a green recovery should incorporate the perspectives and interests of indigenous peoples and the unique insights of traditional knowledge.