

2021 Joint Preparatory Retreat of the Bureaus of the UN Environment Assembly and of the
Committee of Permanent Representatives for UNEA-5.2

24 June 2021

DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION FROM UNEA-5

The UNEA President's goal for the Ministerial declaration for the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) is to adopt an ambitious declaration focused on the theme for the Assembly, *Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals*.

As Members will recall, the President of the Assembly submitted a [zero draft](#) for consideration at the Bureau meeting in October 2020. This was based on the rich input from Member States and stakeholders made in two rounds of written submissions. The draft focused on the need for urgent and transformative actions to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services that are fundamental to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and build back better a resilient and sustainable post-pandemic world.

Considering the difficulties of organising in-person consultations and meetings, the Environment Assembly endorsed a non-negotiated [Message from online UNEA-5, Nairobi 22-23 February 2021 – Looking ahead to the resumed UN Environment Assembly in 2022](#). Members of the Assembly agreed that it shall not set a precedent for either its resumed 5th session or any of the Environment Assembly's subsequent sessions. The Message inter alia conveyed the dedication to continuing our environmental efforts and promoting a sustainable and inclusive recovery, reiterating the relevance of UNEP's mandate in this connection.

There are still a lot of uncertainties regarding when fully physical meetings will be possible. Planning consultations already at this point will likely need to be revised. The President remains committed to ensuring a transparent process that includes all Member States and the Major Groups and relevant Stakeholders, built on a better sense of the state of the pandemic and of the global environmental agenda. It is not least important with firmer knowledge of the opportunity of ministers to consult on the draft declaration in the margins of other meetings. The President therefore aims to share a plan for consultations later in the year.

To inform the development of the plan, the President invites the Members of the UNEA and CPR bureaux to share their overarching views on this approach. Members may also want to consider the following:

- How can we promote an impactful declaration at UNEA5.2, when considering the overall effects of the pandemic?
- In what way do you foresee that international meetings scheduled to take place before UNEA-5.2 can help us build a strong Ministerial Declaration from UNEA5.2?
- The newly adopted [GA Resolution 75/280](#) "...invites the United Nations Environment Assembly at its resumed fifth session, in 2022, including through its intersessional subsidiary body, the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme, and other United Nations bodies that are conducting relevant intergovernmental processes, to provide input leading up to Stockholm+50, as appropriate". What role can the UNEA5 Ministerial declaration play in this regard?