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## **United Nations Environment Programme Asia and the Pacific Office**

Fourth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific  
5-7 October 2021, Suwon City, Republic of Korea

Discussion Document for Agenda Item 7  
**Multistakeholder's Dialogue on the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP@50 celebration)**

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***Discussion Document -- Not for quotation or citation.*** The purpose of this document is to facilitate discussions during the Fourth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific, 5-7 October 2021, Suwon City, Republic of Korea. Comments are welcome and should be sent to [uneproap@un.org](mailto:uneproap@un.org).

## **1.0 Background**

The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden was the first UN conference focusing specifically on the environment, held in June 1972. The creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was one of the important outcomes of this conference. UNEP was created to be the voice of environmental of the UN and the world. Since 1972, UNEP have been the leading global environmental entity in the UN, acting as a catalyst, advocate, and educator to promote the environmental dimension of sustainable development for people and planet.

2022 marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of UNEP. The online session of the fifth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.1), held on 22 – 23 February 2021, decided to convene a special session of the Assembly to mark the 50th anniversary of UNEP (UNEP@50). This event will be held on 3 and 4 March 2022 in Nairobi, Kenya, in conjunction with the second session of the fifth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2), scheduled for 28 February – 2 March 2022.

The UNEP@50 celebration is an opportunity to strengthen and position the United Nations Environment Programme as the lead UN organization for the environment. Member States and stakeholders are expected to engage in discussions on the role of UNEP in the context of a reinvigorated system for environmental multilateralism which addresses the three planetary crises of climate change, ecosystem degradation and pollution, in alignment with the UNEP mandate from the Stockholm Conference in 1972 and as reinforced at Rio+20.

At UNEA-5.1, Member States also approved the UNEP Mid-term Strategy for 2022-2025 and Programme of Work for 2022-23, which provides a basis for a more impactful and effective UNEP. The Strategy outlines how UNEP will strengthen the implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda during the period 2022–2025, including by supporting countries to deliver on their environmental commitments under international agreements. The Strategy also aims to give priority to addressing climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, ensuring that science remains at the centre of decision-making processes, that environmental rule of law continues to underpin global environmental governance. The Strategy also highlights that UNEP will strengthen efforts to use digital technologies for inclusive, transparent, and innovative outcomes.

Subject to further guidance by Member States, the incoming Bureau of UNEA-6, and the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, UNEP@50 is expected to focus on the strengthening of UNEP, building on its core mandates, in particular its strong science-policy interface and international environmental governance. The commemoration is also expected to celebrate achievements in addressing environmental challenges and catalysing impact, set the environmental stage and ambition for the next 50 years and strengthen environmental multilateralism and the global environmental agenda more broadly.

## **2.0 The role of the Fourth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific**

The 4th Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific presents a unique opportunity for Asia Pacific Member States and relevant stakeholders to reflect on accomplishments made in the region and discuss the priorities for the future in the context of UNEP@50, applying a long-term perspective. The Multistakeholder Dialogue on UNEP@50 at the Forum will present an opportunity to develop a regional perspective on the commemoration, and the outcomes of the dialogue are expected to result in an impactful message form the region to the Special Session on UNEP@50 in March 2022.

The special session on UNEP@50 will inspire a debate focus on how to strengthen UNEP to reaffirm its position as the lead organization for the environment by:

- Strengthening UNEP's work to promote the environmental science-policy interface
- Strengthening UNEP's role as a catalyst for implementation
- Strengthening UNEP's role as the global environmental authority within the UN system
- Strengthening UNEP's financial capacity to fulfil its mandate