



Summary statement

International Consultation for Major Groups and Stakeholders in preparation of UNEA 5.2

held online 7-9 September 2021

to be delivered during the 155th meeting of the CPR, 28 September 2021

Thank you chair for giving us the floor to share a brief summary from the recent international consultation for Major Groups and Stakeholders. For our online meeting on 7-9 September, we had more than 550 registrations from all nine Major Groups and world regions, including nearly one third of under 30-year-olds, which shows the immense interest of stakeholders in ensuring that UNEA 5.2 will deliver tangible outcomes.

Let me share some of our key points.

Our call for a new international treaty to combat plastic pollution

Plastic pollution is harmful to the planet and human health, and it is vulnerable groups who are disproportionately affected. It is obvious that we need a global approach. During our consultation, the major groups present voiced their support for the draft resolution tabled by the governments of Rwanda and Peru. We call on all member states to agree at UNEA 5.2 to pave the way for negotiations for a global treaty. The new instrument must effectively address the whole life cycle of plastic. It must ensure the rights and needs of workers in the sector and their families as well as those communities affected by extraction, production and waste.

Our call to strengthen environmental governance and law

The outcome document of Res73/333 is crucial for future actions of UNEP. The outcome document could certainly serve as the negotiated ministerial outcome of UNEP@50. This would avoid duplication and confusion as UNEP@50 deals with the future priorities of the organisation, mainly related to environmental governance and law. The process following Res73/333 cannot end with UNEP@50, but the outcome document should entail a clear political commitment from member states to develop a global framework to strengthen and coordinate environmental law and governance over the coming years. The global framework should set clear goals and targets based on existing agreements and put in place an effective monitoring process for international environmental law (which could be similar to the Universal Periodical Review (UPR) in the Human Rights Council). Moreover, building on previous work as well as on regional instruments, the Aarhus Convention and the Escazu Agreement, we need stronger tools to protect human rights defenders.

Our call to UNEA 5.2 to guide stronger global chemical management

UNEA 5.2 needs to send a clear message to address the global chemical pollution crisis. Several MEAs regulate chemicals at global level; however, the existing conventions have significant loopholes. Highly hazardous pesticides are a severe example. Some parties to the Basel/Stockholm/Rotterdam Conventions apply double standards for pesticides that are banned in the Global North but continue trading them to the Global South. It is estimated that 385 million

people every year suffer from acute pesticide poisoning (UAPP). We call on Member States to agree at UNEA 5.2 to phase out highly hazardous pesticides and end their production by 2030.

We support the idea of an intergovernmental scientific panel on chemical pollution to strengthen independent science on chemical and waste pollution and we call on you to support the resolution in support of the panel.

Our call to fix our broken food systems

UNEA must promote agroecological approaches to food production in full support of the right to food and food sovereignty, protecting rights of small farmers at the core of healthy food systems. Corporate actors have too much influence on food systems, regularly undermine the rights of the farmers and animals, promote unhealthy dietary practices and adversely affect climate change and planetary health. This is also seen in the corporate influence on last week's Food Summit, which many CSOs criticised. We need corporate responsibility and accountability in food systems. UNEP should play a key role in ensuring policy coherence on food across all UN agencies and processes and in giving space to diverse knowledge systems including from Indigenous Peoples, small farmers and women.

Our call to restore the relationship between nature and health

Healthy ecosystems are key for human health; there is an urgent need to restore the relationship between nature and health. The unsustainable economic model of constant growth and consumption is one of the primary drivers of nature destruction, and there is a lack of political will to address these drivers. We need system thinking and UNEA should advance the ecosystem approach, including the One Health approach, and focus phasing out subsidies for those sectors that drive the destruction of the climate, the environment and human health.

Our call to live up to the legacy of Stockholm 1972

With the modalities resolution passed for the international meeting to commemorate Stockholm+50, we call on member states to build on the Stockholm legacy. The 1972 Conference was the first time when civil society was allowed to address the plenary at an international high-level meeting. It is this legacy that governments around the world should uphold. Stockholm+50 is a key opportunity – halfway between 2015 and 2030 – for a robust review of progress made towards the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs with a focus on the environmental dimension and the interlinkages between the dimensions. We call on member states to understand the meeting as a key moment to present their ambitious commitments.

In the previous agenda item on the preparation of **UNEP@50**, our colleagues have already shared our main points regarding the Special Session and Major Groups and Stakeholders' contributions to the commemoration.

We thank you for your attention and hope you will take the time to review the full report from our international consultation with our more detailed positions (which we are also sharing now via the chat box).