

Draft political declaration for a United Nations high-level meeting, in the context of the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme

*We the (Insert titles according to the expected level of participation) and high-level representatives, having gathered, together with scientific, civil society and private sector leaders, at the ... in the context of the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme,*

*Believing that everyone should have the right to a healthy and sustainable environment,*

*Recalling the Stockholm Declaration and Action Plan for Human Environment, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Rio+20 outcome document “The Future we want”, General Assembly resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 entitled “Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development”, as well as the outcomes of all the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and environmental fields,*

*Reaffirming General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and recalling General Assembly Resolution 72/277 of 10 May 2018, entitled “Towards a Global Pact for the Environment”, and General Assembly Resolution 73/333 of 30 August 2019, entitled “Follow-up to the report of the ad hoc open-ended working group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/277”,*

*Reaffirming all the principles of the Rio Declaration,*

*Reaffirming the role of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment,*

*Recognizing the urgent need and our shared duty to reinforce the protection, restoration and sustainable use of the environment for present and future generations, as it is crucial to break the current trends of environmental decline, which are impeding progress towards sustainable development,*

*Recognizing existing obligations and commitments under international environmental law and the importance of their effective implementation in ensuring an environmentally sustainable future for our planet and addressing urgent social, economic and environmental challenges, especially against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and its disproportionate impact on developing countries,*

*Recognizing the essential role of the rule of law and effective governance to ensure compliance with environmental law, and to avoid undermining the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.*

1. Commit to enhancing international environmental governance to promote a balanced integration of the environmental, economic and social dimensions of sustainable development, as well as enhancing coordination within the United Nations system on the environment, and commit to mainstreaming the environmental dimension of sustainable development into sectoral policies and programmes at all levels, and to building capacity of relevant authorities, in order to ensure a coherent and integrated approach in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development,
2. Endorse the role of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) as the leading decision-making body on the environment with universal membership, for enhancing the progress of the comprehensive implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda and setting the overarching guidance for strengthening international environmental governance and for implementation of the global environmental agenda,
3. Renew our support for strengthening the collaboration and cooperation between multilateral environmental agreements and UNEA, while respecting their respective mandates. To that end we invite the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) to collaborate with subsidiary bodies of the multilateral environmental agreements with a view to the CPR making universal overarching environmental policy recommendations to UNEA,
4. Support the strengthening of Nairobi as the Headquarters of UNEP and call upon all Member States and Members of Specialized Agencies who have not yet done so, to become accredited to the Committee of the Permanent Representatives of UNEP. Further recommend that the Secretariats of future Multilateral and Regional Environment Agreements be based in Nairobi where the secretariat functions are performed by the Executive Director of UNEP,
5. Request the Executive Director of UNEP to continue the ongoing efforts to achieve equitable geographical distribution in the UNEP Secretariat,
6. Commit to supporting UNEP through more stable and predictable core contributions to the Environment Fund, based on the voluntary indicative scale of contributions determined for all member states, and we support the considerations to increase financial resources from the regular budget of the United Nations, to fulfill its mandate. We call upon UNEP to strengthen its efforts to engage with other United Nations entities through the Environment Management Group,
7. Support UNEP's key role in promoting and strengthening the science-policy interface, in order to support policy decisions to underpin international environmental law and governance, and commit to investing further in environmental research and strategic foresight, and to make greater use of assessments from the scientific community,
8. Recognize the right to access to information, access to public participation and access to justice in environmental matters, and we invite Member States and Members of Specialized Agencies to disseminate and share evidence-based environmental information and raise public awareness on critical, persistent and emerging environmental issues, and we continue to support UNEP in developing the global environmental data strategy,
9. Commit to developing and implementing effective international and national environmental legal frameworks, and we invite Member States and Members of Specialized Agencies to increase their support to the Fifth Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme V), for supporting the development of

model laws and member states' capacity in developing and implementing environmental rule of law,

10. Invite Member States and Members of Specialized Agencies, that have not yet done so, to ratify relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements and to effectively implement them. We call upon Member States and Members of Specialized Agencies to recognize and incorporate principles of international environmental law into their national legal systems and highlight the support that can be provided through the Montevideo Programme V, and we commit to cooperate to build and support the capacity of courts and tribunals at all levels to give full effect to principles of international environmental law for fostering environmental rule of law,

11. Call upon Member States and Members of the Specialized Agencies to enhance the provision and mobilization of all types and sources of means of implementation and their efficient use, especially for countries most affected by environmental degradation, consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, as well as existing commitments under the various multilateral environmental agreements,

12. Commit to exploiting the potential for domestic resources through policy reviews such as sustainable fiscal reforms, and enhance environmental domestic financial resources to advance the implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development and reflect the global environmental ambition, and explore further innovative financing sources, including through enhanced collaboration with the private sector,

13. Invite UNEP to develop a United Nations periodic environmental performance review mechanism, to assess the progress of Member States in implementing its environmental objectives, with a view to support through recommendations the implementation of international environmental law and the environmental dimension of Agenda 2030 at the national level, while ensuring complementarity with the work of treaty bodies. We request the Executive Director of UNEP to present modalities of such mechanism for the consideration at UNEA-6,

14. Call upon Member States and Members of the Specialized Agencies to make optimal use of existing financial mechanisms and funds for purposes of implementing international environmental law and improving the status of the global environment, especially in ensuring sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. We invite the United Nations to enhance existing financial instruments in order to support Member States capacity building needs, including guidance from the UN periodic environmental performance review mechanism, to enable the implementation of existing and future environmental commitments,

15. We encourage the active and meaningful engagement of all relevant stakeholders at all levels, and we support strengthening the presence of major groups and other stakeholders in UNEP headquarters in Nairobi by establishing additional liaison offices, which shall be subject to voluntary funding.