

Outcome Statement of the Fourth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of
Asia Pacific,

at the 8th Annual Subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent
Representatives, held on 25 - 29 October 2021, Nairobi

Excellency Chair, Executive Director of UNEP, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I have the honor to briefly deliver the outcome of the recently concluded high-level segment of the Fourth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific (4th AP Forum) took place in hybrid platform in Suwon City, Republic of Korea, on 6-7 October 2021. It was organized jointly by the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The AP Forum was preceded by the Asia Pacific Regional Youth Environment Forum on 2-3 October, the Asia Pacific Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum on the Environment on 4 October and the Asia Pacific Science Policy Business Forum on the Environment on 5 October.

The Forum brought together over 340 representatives, both virtually and onsite, of governments, intergovernmental and international organizations, UN organizations, and Major Groups and Stakeholders, including 26 Ministers and Vice-Ministers of Environment, and two Heads of States. Speakers at the opening session included President Moon Jae-in, Prime Minister Fiame Naomi Mata'afa of Samoa, Ms. Joyce Msuya, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Executive Secretary of ESCAP, and Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Chair, Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI).

The 4th AP Forum elected H.E. Ms. H.E. Han Jeoung-ae, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea as Chair of the Ministerial Segment; H.E. Mr. Demetrio do Amaral de Carvalho, Secretary of State for the Environment, Timor Leste and H.E. Mr. Mahinda Amaraweera, Minister, Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka were elected as Vice Chairs. At the Senior Officials Meeting on 6 October, the AP Forum elected Dr. Anil Jasinghe, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka, as Chair of the Senior Officials Meeting. Ms. Eunhae Jeong, Director General, National Institute of Environmental Research, Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea, and Mr. Vann Momyneath, General Secretariat of the National Council for Sustainable Development, Ministry of Environment, Cambodia, were elected as Vice Chairs.

We would like to express our deepest appreciation to all the Bureau Members, including Fifth UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) Vice President, Ms. Laksmi Dhewanthi, Director General, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia and UNEP's Committee of Permanent Representatives, Ms. Saqlain Syedah, High Commissioner of Pakistan in Nairobi and all the delegations for attending the Fourth at this difficult time of covid-19

pandemic and their active participation and contribution that added great value to the Forum as well as to the preparations for the upcoming 2nd Session of the Fifth UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2) to be held in Nairobi, Kenya in February 2022.

The Forum was an important venue for the region's Environment Ministers and authorities to define their priorities, share innovative solutions and collective actions for the region's pathway to sustainability. The Forum identified progress in Asia and the Pacific in implementing UN Environment Assembly resolutions as well as discussed draft concept resolutions and the draft ministerial outcome of the upcoming UN Environment Assembly. The Forum provided space for delegates to provide perspectives and best practices on 'Strengthening Actions for Nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals', which was the theme of the Forum and the upcoming UN Environment Assembly.

A number of issues and priorities from the region were identified for consideration at the 2nd Session of the 5th UN Environment Assembly under the resolutions. These included the following:

- Strong support for an intergovernmental negotiating committee to discuss a new global instrument on marine plastic litter needed the wide participation of countries at the upcoming resumed fifth session of UNEA in February 2022.
- The need for a global approach that is informed by circular economy principles and the waste management hierarchy. This approach will also complement existing instruments and initiatives.
- It was suggested that the global framework to address global plastic pollution based on a precautionary approach and common but differentiated responsibility and not duplicating existing mechanisms and that addresses any related gaps.
- It was also suggested to providing space for countries to engage on a science-based basis, and to consider a wide range of solutions and approaches that are most practical and feasible, and which recognizes that plastics continue to play a functional role in modern society.
- Lakes contain 90% of fresh water and they are therefore important for water security, health, cultural services and energy, therefor, important to consider a resolution on sustainable lake management.
- Support to extend the 10 year-framework of programmes on SCP until 2030 and requested to initiate a process to do this.
- Possible new resolution on nitrogen management given impact of nitrogen on water and air pollution particularly from agriculture where large populations face a health risk.

At the Multi-stakeholder's Dialogue on the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP@50), Delegations from governments, major groups and stakeholders and eminent persons from the region expressed strong support for UNEP's

role to strengthen the international environmental governance at global, regional and local levels. These included:

- Indonesia strongly supported UNEP's role to lead the environmental agenda to reaffirm the multilateral agenda and manage global crises. Though this collaboration, the Government of Indonesia can mobilize awareness, assess policy options, and enable implementation for the green economy.
- Philippines noted that UNEP's leadership on the environment is necessary, as the environment is multifaceted and requires specialized knowledge. Philippines believes that UNEP can play its role to bring countries together to address environmental issues.
- Republic of Korea stated that the pandemic is a clear warning sign, and that UNEP is at the Centre of actions as the champion of environmental value and coordinator of different stakeholder perspectives.
- Fiji stated that the relevance of UNEP's environmental mandate is reaffirmed, and Fiji calls for continued work in partnership for the Global Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and for strengthened presence of UNEP in the sub-region.
- Lao PDR noted that UNEP is in a position to play a leading role in international governance, as it is mandated to address environmental issues at global and regional levels, supporting transformative changes and paving the way to fulfil environmental commitments towards the SDGs.
- The Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (APRCM) noted that UNEP required political will and teeth to enforce MEAs, adequate and stable resources to support countries to adopt and enforce environmental regulations that serve the interest of people and the planet. There was a call for UNEP to support capacities to evaluate the potential impacts of new and emerging technologies on the environment and human health and to ensure multilateralism that respects every country, big or small, rich or poor, in the same way, and guarantees seats on the table for civil society, grassroots movements, the voiceless and marginalized.

Finally, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, the Secretariat of the Governing Bodies has shared the Chair's summary of the Forum with the 8th Annual Subcommittee Meeting. We are hopeful that the regional inputs would be given due consideration in the deliberations of the Annual Subcommittee Meeting and subsequent processes in preparations of the UNEA-5.2 and UNEA@50. We would like to thank Chair once again for the opportunity to briefly share the outcome of the Fourth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific.