

Thank you, Madame Co-facilitator.

I'd like to join other delegations in thanking the Cofacilitators for sharing the updated draft of the UNGA Resolution 73/333 political declaration. We believe this represents a significant step towards converging on an agreed text for promoting the implementation of international environmental law and governance in line with the Resolution.

We welcome the concise nature of this draft, and would encourage efforts taken to maintain this succinct structure as we continue to develop the outcome text.

Throughout the process of implementing UNGA Resolution 73/333, Australia has called for the preparation of a focussed political declaration, with a scope clearly defined by the five objectives and thirteen recommendations in the Resolution Annex, to be delivered in a streamlined process wherever possible.

As our delegation, and many others, raised at the recent Annual Subcommittee meeting, UNEP is facing a significant workload and restricted timeframes ahead of UNEA-5.2 and UNEP@50. Both events will be critical junctures for environmental multilateralism coming out of the pandemic, and as such, need to be supported by numerous preparatory workstreams. We therefore need to make the most effective use of our limited time and ensure that this week's consultations and any further meetings, regardless of their format and status, can make demonstrable progress towards the negotiation of the political declaration.

We wish to reiterate that Australia can only support an outcome document that clearly and appropriately reflects the mandate provided by the Resolution text. We note this is the product of a carefully negotiated process that concluded in 2019 and cannot be reopened.

As others have raised, further to the adoption of the Resolution itself, we've also allocated ample time to holding additional consultations on the scope of the political declaration. These consultations have only served to confirm that any proposals which exceed the mandate of Resolution 73/333 have slim prospects for yielding consensus. This could in fact jeopardise elements of the process for implementing the Resolution previously agreed to by Member States.

In this respect, and noting the limited time we have at our disposal, we would welcome your leadership over this week in guiding the room towards concrete progress and convergence on an agreed text - in a way that builds upon, rather than reopens, the discussions of the last two and a half years. Australia stands ready to engage actively and constructively towards this outcome.

We again express our appreciation to the Co-Facilitators for their continued leadership of this process, and look forward the timely and effective finalisation of a consensus-based political declaration.