

Argentina Comments on draft version circulated 6th December

DRAFT Ministerial declaration of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its resumed fifth session

“Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”

(changes compared to the zero draft declaration has been indicated in bold)

1. We, the world’s Ministers for the Environment, have gathered **in Nairobi, Kenya, together with international organisations, major groups and stakeholders** at the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, under exceptional circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the aim to strengthen actions for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. We recall the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm, Sweden, in June 1972, **the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992**, and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, and its outcome document “The Future We Want”, and reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of the environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals and General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.

3. We are deeply concerned about the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on human lives and health, economies and societies, further threatening our ability to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals and are aware that we face **heightened risks of future emergence of diseases of zoonotic origin pandemics and other health threats** if we maintain the current patterns of interaction with nature **and do not take a One Health approach moving forwards**.

4. We recognize that a healthy **nature-environment** is required for sustainable development in all its dimensions, and that **the wellbeing of humanity depends on nature, and on ecosystems, and the services it they provides, are fundamental for the wellbeing of humanity, for human well-being, poverty eradication and economic development are necessary to ensure the long-term conservation of ecosystems and the services they provide, resilience, our health, economy and ultimately our existence.**

5. We note **therefore** with profound concern **that nature is facing severe pressures from human activities**, and stress the urgent need to halt the global decline and fragmentation of biodiversity and habitats, which is unprecedented in human history, **its main indirect and direct drivers being changes in land and sea use, direct exploitation of organisms, unsustainable consumption and production patterns, climate change, invasive alien species and pollution of ocean and fresh water, air, and soil.**

6. We note with further grave concern that the 2020 goal for the sound management of chemicals, agreed under the Strategic Approach to international Chemicals Management

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Comentario [NSL1]: The risk of pandemics is not exclusively related to environmental issues, but to complex economic and social patterns that condition the ability of countries to develop early warning systems, create efficient health systems, supply necessary medical supplies, among others. A clear example of this is the emergence of the new omicron variant, which is not related to environmental problems, but to unequal access to vaccines and medical treatments against covid 19 disease. Therefore, linking our interaction with nature exclusively to the cause of the emergence of pandemics ignores the challenges of the developing world in dealing with these phenomena. In this sense, it is suggested to replace "pandemics" with "emergence of diseases of zoonotic origin", which are strictly related to environmental problems.

Comentario [NSL2]: The scientific source of this statement is unknown

Comentario [NSL3]: The proposed wording suggests the dependence of human well-being on the services provided by nature; a formulation that overemphasises a concept that is not multilaterally agreed and on whose centrality for achieving sustainable development there is no consensus. Since the former already recognises that a healthy environment is necessary for sustainable development, it is suggested that the latter be modified to emphasise that economic and social aspects are also necessary for the long-term conservation of ecosystems and their ecosystem services.

Comentario [NSL4]: The drivers cited are direct, not indirect, and it is therefore suggested that the reference be deleted. The treatment of indirect drivers relates to social economic factors, such as international trade or demographic change, which is considered to be outside the scope of UNEP and UNEA.

(SAICM),
has not been **achieved** with pollution and adverse effects of chemicals and waste thus remaining a threat to the environment and our health.

7. We recognize the need of ensuring the provision of sufficient, predictable and adequate means of implementation from developed countries to developing countries to fulfill commitments under relevant MEAs, for transformative and systemic changes and for policies ~~Policies~~ that address several environmental, social and economic ~~and societal~~ challenges simultaneously, rechanneling ~~financial~~ flows through innovative holistic approaches ~~that truly value nature, could complement such efforts.~~

8. We are encouraged by the strength of innovation, knowledge building, and investment in green and sustainable technologies currently taking place which indicate that solutions exist or can be found **that can benefit all countries.**

9. We welcome the outcomes of COP 26, including adoption of the Glasgow Climate Pact, that recognized the critical role of nature in delivering benefits for climate adaptation and mitigation.

10. We welcome outcomes of Kunming Declaration from the High-Level Segment of the UN Biodiversity Conference 2020 (part 1) under the theme “Ecological Civilization: Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth”.

11. We welcome **and express our support for the upcoming Special Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly [PLACEHOLDER under the theme...] to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the creation of UNEP by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, to be held in Nairobi, Kenya on 3-4 March 2022.**

12. We commit to supporting an **inclusive** and sustainable recovery, promoting a sustainable green and just transition, with the goal of revitalizing our economies and livelihoods, contribute to poverty eradication, by mainstreaming environmental, economic and social biodiversity, climate and pollution concerns into all policies and tools; making use of sustainable green economy pathways that emphasize ecosystem and knowledge-based management, and by reducing carbon and non-carbon greenhouse gas emissions while adapting to climate change in line with the UNFCCC and the its Paris Agreement.

13. We commit to working across sectors and levels of government, **and between governments,** to halt the loss, degradation, and fragmentation of ecosystems, focusing on areas of particular importance for biodiversity; sustainable land, **sea** and **water** use, effectively managing **and designating** protected areas, safeguarding especially vulnerable habitats, types of nature and eco-

Comentario [NSL5]: The comments made to the zero draft are reiterated. The main challenge to "achieving more" is not the lack of policies and investments that address several environmental challenges at once, but the implementation of commitments already made. Also, if approaches that address both environmental and social challenges are to be promoted, economic ones should not be excluded. The scope for redirecting financial flows towards holistic approaches is unknown. In any case, they should be oriented towards the implementation of commitments under environmental conventions, as suggested at the beginning of the paragraph.

Comentario [NSL6]: It is preferred to limit the term to "sustainable technologies".

Comentario [NSL7]: It is considered inappropriate to refer to only one of the elements of the document outside the context in which it could have been recognised. The Glasgow Pact recognises the need for enhanced action on mitigation, adaptation and finance to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement and is far from identifying nature as THE critical factor in achieving the objectives of the agreement. The removal of this reference is requested.

Comentario [NSL8]: It is suggested that language be used that better reflects the balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development

Comentario [NSL9]: We would like to know the scope of this sentence, which has already been mentioned in the zero version.

Comentario [NSL10]: It is considered redundant and unnecessary to refer to the types of GHGs; as neither the UNFCCC nor the Paris Agreement makes such a distinction.

Comentario [NSL11]: It is reiterated that it is not known what is meant by "types of nature".

systems, and addressing deforestation, wildlife **trafficking**, illegal mining, illegal, **unreported and unregulated fishing**, and other unsustainable activities, crimes and **conflicts** that have serious impacts on the environment.

14. We commit to promoting conservation and sustainable use and management of ~~nature and its~~ **natural resources**, to advance sustainable consumption and production patterns, ~~including through resource efficiency and circular economy policy approaches~~, and by **applying considering appropriate valuation diverse values of nature biodiversity and the** assessment ~~methods~~ of nature-related risks in policymaking.

15. ~~We commit to promoting and strengthening ecosystem based approaches, including or and~~ **nature-based solutions**, **including** by actively **reducing deforestation and forest degradation**, and by protecting, **actively conserving** sustainably managing, and restoring degraded land and ecosystems, **including those** that provide us with food, water, and energy, are habitats for biodiversity and provide carbon storage and sequestration, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, for example **natural-native** forests, wetlands, **peatlands**, mangroves and coral reefs, **thus** underpinning our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

16. We recognize the importance of the best available science for effective climate action and policymaking and stress the urgency of enhancing ambition and action in relation to mitigation, adaptation and finance in this critical decade.

17. We will promote comprehensive land **and water** use planning backed up by robust national enforcement as an invaluable tool for sustainable development and **encourage international cooperation** to help create a conducive business environment that stimulates investments in sustainable production and value chains.

18. We commit to safeguarding life under water, and **restoring** a clean, healthy, **resilient** and productive ocean capable of providing food, **sustainable** livelihoods, and storing carbon, through strengthening efforts to protect, conserve, and sustainably manage **our ocean**, seas and coastal ecosystems, while acting to prevent pollution, **including nitrogen pollution**, and increase resilience to climate change, and prevent marine temperature rise, **sea level rise** and ocean acidification, by keeping our efforts in line **the Agenda 2030, SDG 14 and, as relevant, with the UNFCCC and the its** Paris agreement **and the Agenda 2030**.

19. We maintain our dedication to act in line with the implementation plan towards a pollution-free planet to protect ~~nature the environment~~ and human health from adverse impacts from chemicals and waste and support an ambitious framework for the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

20. [Placeholder for text with reference to recent developments and outcomes on Marine Litter]

Comentario [NSL12]: The term "natural resources" should be used, and not "nature and its resources". States have sovereignty over resources within their national jurisdiction (Rio Principle 2, preamble and Art. 3 of the CBD). The use of formulations that posit nature as a subject is therefore discouraged.

Comentario [NSL13]: The comment made in the zero version is reiterated. It is preferred not to mention specific strategies or approaches to sustainable production and consumption, an objective that countries should pursue according to each context. The targets and indicators associated with SDG 12 are recalled.

Comentario [NSL14]: Integrating nature valuation into policy cannot be assumed as a commitment, but it could be proposed for consideration.

Comentario [NSL15]: It is recalled that there is no agreed definition of NBS. In this sense, it is considered that if NBS were to be included as a type of EBA, the paragraph could be accepted. Notwithstanding this, the approach of version zero is preferred, where conservation, sustainable use, restoration, etc., was the objective of this paragraph. In this version, it seeks to define ways in which EBAs could be enhanced.

Comentario [NSL16]: Is it necessary to emphasise one type of pollution over others?

21. We commit to ~~pursuing and joining new and innovative partnerships across sectors, and engage engaging with~~ all relevant **stakeholders**, working with youth, women, Indigenous Peoples and **local communities, business, finance and science** sectors to develop actions that ~~are nature positive and~~ reverse the persistently negative long term trend for the environment described by recent scientific reports from the Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the **International Resource Panel (IPR)** and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Comentario [NSL17]: The definition and scope of "nature positive", a term that was not included in the zero draft, is not understood. Caution is suggested in relation to this term, as it could lead to market mechanisms for nature, which are not regulated by any multilateral process to date.

22. We commit to cooperating across sectors and levels of governments, ~~in partnership with other governments and local actors and the private sector~~ to ~~transition to~~ promote sustainable food systems, **in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, ~~and which~~ inspired by the UN Food Systems Summit vision ~~while promoting of~~ sustainable food systems that deliver enhanced food security and resilience while reducing emissions, biodiversity loss and freshwater use, as an essential solution to accelerate actions on all the Sustainable Development Goals, and we **welcome the UNEP's strong engagement** by UNEP in the ~~Summit follow up processes (placeholder to include the results of ongoing discussions regarding whether there will be a follow up process and what it will consist of).~~

Comentario [NSL18]: Concept already included in the preceding paragraph. In any case, it would be suggested to replace "in partnership with" by "engaging with".

23. We reaffirm the continued need to strengthen actions for nature and our commitment towards the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and call for an ~~effective ambitious and transformational~~ post-2020 global biodiversity framework for adoption at the 15th Conference of Parties of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity [that inter alia includes a set of clear and robust goals and targets to address the direct ~~and indirect~~ drivers of biodiversity loss ~~and the provision of new, additional and predictable financial resources for its implementation in developing countries~~], as a key instrument to reach the Sustainable Development Goals, **and the 2050 vision of the Convention of Biological Diversity of living in harmony with nature.**

Comentario [NSL19]: We consider that addressing indirect drivers of biodiversity loss are outside the legal scope of the CBD and therefore cannot be addressed by the GBF.

24. We call for the **urgent**, adequate and coherent implementation of the actions, commitments and resolutions adopted by the fifth United Nations Environment Assembly as well as previous UNEA outcomes **addressing the triple planetary crises—challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution**, and further recognize our role, as Ministers of the Environment, in following up on these commitments within our own governments, contributing to coordinated action across sectors and levels of government and promoting effective implementation.

Comentario [NSL20]: If references to the resources needed to implement the GBF in developing countries are not included, it is suggested to remove the reference to robust goals and targets, as the result would be an unbalanced paragraph. In other words: you cannot call for robust targets without equally robust means of implementation. It is suggested to put the whole sentence (targets and resources) in square brackets, as it is a package to be agreed together.

25. We further recognize that the effective implementation of these actions requires enabling and coherent ~~legal and~~ policy frameworks at all levels, good governance ~~and law enforcement~~, to be supported by effective and urgently mobilized means of implementation, ~~in particular, means of implementation agreed upon under MEAs and~~ from all ~~other~~ sources of finance, including domestic, international, private sector and innovative sources in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda ~~and the principles enshrined in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development~~, as well as from relevant international environmental agreements, and by further

Comentario [NSL21]: It is suggested not to label environmental challenges as "planetary crises" and to keep objective references.

Comentario [NSL22]: Policy frameworks include, as appropriate, the legal provisions that are necessary in each country to meet environmental commitments

Comentario [NSL23]: It is the prerogative of each national jurisdiction to

Comentario [NSL24]: This is a central demand of developing countries; the text is very unbalanced on this point.

capacity-building, environmentally sound technologies, dedicated development partnerships, and a renewed and strong commitment to multilateralism **and international solidarity**.

26. We further welcome and express our support for the upcoming international meeting Stockholm+50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all – our responsibility, our opportunity, to be held in Stockholm, Sweden, on 2-3 June 2022, to further accelerate the transformation to a sustainable future, and regard this UNEA5 declaration as our input to Stockholm +50 [ref UNGA resolution A/RES/75/280].