

Sponsored by the Africa Group
Draft Resolution on Enhancing circular economy
UNEA 5.2

The world has the opportunity to use circular economy solutions as part of the efforts to achieve the sustainable development goals.

The draft Resolution from the Africa group on "Enhancing circular economy" is to highlight the importance of ensuring that the world continues to develop practical solutions regarding circularity of the economy as one of the sustainable development pathways, address the full life cycle of materials from design, production to waste prevention and management and ensure coherence and coordination of activities at national, regional and international levels.

The resolution also gives due consideration to the centrality of means of implementation - including finance, technology transfer and capacity building.

The resolution encourages member states to integrate the circular economy into national and regional development plans, supporting access to affordable green financing and sustainable markets, with a particular focus on micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. It is well recognised that Micro Small and Medium-sized Enterprises which represent about 90% of businesses and more than 50% of employment worldwide¹ and therefore the need to provide them with the necessary policy support.

The resolution calls upon UNEP, the international community and partners to promote best practices and innovations for a global transition to the circular economy.

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¹ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/sme/finance>: Improving SMEs' access to finance and finding innovative solutions to unlock sources of capital

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Draft resolution
Enhancing circular economy

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

- PP 1. *Recalling* the Resolution 4/1 of the Assembly on *Innovative pathways to achieve sustainable consumption and production*², which acknowledges that a more circular economy in which products and materials are designed in such a way that they can be reused, remanufactured recycled or recovered and thus maintained in the economy for as long as possible, along with the resources of which they are made, and the generation of waste, especially hazardous waste, is avoided or minimized, and greenhouse gas emissions are prevented or reduced, can contribute significantly to sustainable consumption and production,
- PP 2. *Acknowledging* that embedding circular principles and goals across industries and governments' priorities will be crucial to reaching global net zero pledges and that changing the way we make and use products can contribute to addressing 45% of global greenhouse gas emissions, making a critical contribution to mitigating the impending climate crisis,
- PP 3. *Stressing* the findings by the Platform for Accelerating the Circular Economy (PACE) presented in *The Circularity Gap Report: 2020*³ that the global circularity gap is widening, which is compounded by trends embedded within the tradition of the linear economy characterized by high rates of extraction, ongoing stock build-up, plus low levels of end-of-use processing and cycling,
- PP 4. *Welcoming* the analysis by the International Resource Panel in its report *Global Resources Outlook 2019: Natural Resources for the Future We Want*⁴, that policy considerations for the circular economy include establishing an effective infrastructure for waste management and recycling, incentivizing extended product life cycles and intelligent product design, and ensuring that current regulations create no barriers to the development or adoption of value-retention processes,

² <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/28517/English.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>

³ <https://pacecircular.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/Circularity%20Gap%20Report%202020.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.resourcepanel.org/reports/global-resources-outlook>

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- PP 5. *Recognizing* that international exchanges, shared experiences, capacity development and cooperation can help Member States navigate common obstacles, and cooperation can help compensate for unequal burdens, responsibilities, and capabilities,
- PP 6. *Further recognizing* that there exist technologies to improve natural resources management across sectors and countries, business models and best practices that embrace the circular economy and leapfrogging technologies that generate enormous resource and economic savings while still driving development,
- PP 7. *Stressing* that substantial financial resources are needed to support the transition to circular economy by inducing structural change in production and consumption alongside technology change to enhance economic efficiency and optimize use of financial capital, and
- PP 8. Recognizing the work undertaken under relevant international agreements and conventions related to management and control of waste and chemicals.
- PP 9. *Recognising* that the circular economy provides an opportunity for the world to move to more resource-efficient, less resource-intensive consumption and production practices, better-informed, and environmentally sound technologies and infrastructure, while at the same time meeting the basic needs of the ever-increasing population.
- OP 1. *Invites* member States, to take measures to develop national and regional circular economy strategies and action plans and integrate circular economy in the national development plans to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- OP 2. *Underlines* the need to develop and strengthen partnerships between Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, the scientific community, intergovernmental organizations and other relevant parties to promote and enhance investments in circular economy solutions.
- OP 3. *Invites* member states to strengthen local, national and regional institutional and coordinating mechanisms to support the circular economy transition, including strong policies, legal and regulatory frameworks.
- OP 4. *Encourages* the international community and partners to promote innovative solutions for a circular economy by facilitating and enhancing, inter alia, education, research and development, capacity development, private and public partnerships.

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- OP 5. *Encourages* member states to enhance knowledge management on circular economy, develop strong communication mechanisms, awareness creation platforms, and strengthen information sharing within and across countries and regions.
- OP 6. *Further encourages* member states to support access to adequate, predictable and sustainable resources including green finance from private and public sources, technology development, dissemination, and transfer for uptake of circular economy especially by Micro Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, in particular to African countries.
- OP 7. *Urges* Member States to transform markets for the uptake of circular economy including products that promote direct reuse, repair, refurbishment and remanufacturing and promote sustainable consumption and production for example through sustainable public procurement.
- OP 8. *Requests* the United Nations Environment Programme in collaboration with other United Nations entities, development partners and the international community, to facilitate the collaboration among member states in the research, capacity building, knowledge management and sharing of best practices for the promotion of innovative solutions for a global transition to a circular economy.
- OP 9. *Also requests* the Executive Director to report to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its sixth session on the implementation of this resolution.