



United Nations Association in Canada  
Association canadienne pour les Nations Unies

**Statement:**

As UNA-Canada youth delegates, we are united in our vision of a greener, more equitable and inclusive future. We are thrilled to be here at UNEA 5.2 to learn from and contribute to global conversations on the environment. Young people in Canada and around the world are faced with the increasing existential threat of climate change. We see great hope set out by the SDGs; now, continued global collaboration, follow-through and immediate action is needed to achieve these goals by 2030. The decisions we make today will not only have profound impacts on the lives and future of today's youth like us, but also the lives of every generation after us and all life on Earth.

We urge conversations and decisions made this week to prioritize climate change mitigation and adaptation. In particular, we call on nations across the globe to commit to working with nature through harnessing nature-based climate solutions as an important way to combat the changing climate and the biodiversity crisis. The IPCC report released this week details sobering findings and calls for immediate cuts to carbon emissions and the extensive implementation of adaptation measures. Many of Earth's ecosystems such as wetlands, forests, coastal environments and marine areas, naturally sequester large amounts of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>, helping to mitigate climate change. In addition, many natural ecosystems generate ecosystem services that can aid in adaptation as climate change progresses. Importantly, nature-based climate solutions must be implemented at the same time as rapid reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

As Canadians we have access to municipal recycling programs where plastics are often processed overseas. Canadian citizens are shielded from the far-reaching effects of plastic waste processing. Many plastics are often not recyclable, and "recyclable" plastics often produce toxic by-products or end up in landfills for thousands of years. The average Canadian does not witness the aftermath of their plastic consumption. Plastic is entering our oceans at unprecedented rates causing increased concentrations of microplastics, increased impacts on human health and food systems, the degradation of ecosystems and species populations, and the formation of terrifying sights such as The Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Thus, we are in favor of the resolution to implement a legally binding global agreement to end plastic pollution that addresses the full life cycle of plastics through a circular economy. As youth, we are aware that our generation, and the ones that follow, will face the harsh repercussions of plastic pollution; hence, we call on partner nations to help establish a plastic-free future.

Sincerely,

The United Nations Association in Canada's Youth Delegation to UNEA-5.2