



**Special Session to Commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the  
Creation of UNEP (UNEP@50)**

**“Strengthening UNEP for the implementation of the environmental  
dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”**

**National Statement delivered by the Hon. Minister for Agriculture,  
Waterways and Environment – Fiji**

**March 3, 2022 (3pm – 6pm (Kenya Time)/12 – 3am (Fiji Time))**

**His Excellency, the President of the United Nations  
Environment Assembly**

**Under Secretary General of the United Nations and the  
Executive Director of the United Nations Environment  
Programme**

**Distinguished Heads of Delegations**

**Colleagues**

1. Fiji joins the global community in recognizing this historic moment commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the United Nation Environment Program (UNEP). In congratulating the UNEP for this milestone achievement, Fiji conveys its gratitude to the President and the hard working staff of UNEP for successfully organizing and hosting the United Nations Environment Assembly during a challenging time as this.
2. Fiji observes with gratitude some of the transformative initiatives implemented by the UNEP in the Pacific region strengthening the Pacific Islands' response to climate change through improved early warning systems and the establishment of climate and oceans information systems. Fiji has actively collaborated with the UNEP directly on at least three key global environmental issues - **climate change, marine pollution and Ozone Depleting Substances.**

3. The latest Intergovernmental Panel on the Climate Change (IPCC) report, has been labelled as “nothing less than a red code for humanity” by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres. Fiji will continue to call for a collective and urgent action to confront climate change as echoed in the recent United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP 26).
  
4. Fiji notes with great concern, the findings of the 2019 report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) that approximately 1 million species of plants and animals are now threatened with extinction globally. Ahead of the Convention on the Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of the Parties (COP 15), Fiji urges Parties to call for higher ambition that is proportionate to what is needed to reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 and restore all degraded ecosystems.

5. Fiji is fortunate to have a strong partner in UNEP, in that Fiji continues to thrive through focusing on strengthening its Actions for Nature – imbibing the same into its programs. Fiji has successfully collaborated with the UN in tackling biodiversity loss through innovating Nature based Solutions and green recovery through programs that build back better (through the pandemic and beyond). As Fiji progresses its pathway towards reversing the Biodiversity losses, it cannot stress enough on the need for an ongoing partnership with the UNEP.
  
6. Fiji reaffirms the relevance of UNEP’s environmental mandate and multilateral agenda through demonstrated expertise in science and innovation. Fiji calls for UNEP to continue to work with renewed partnership and strengthen collaboration during the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration in addressing the root causes of the planetary crisis that includes mitigating climate change, halting biodiversity loss and building a pollution free planet.

7. We look forward to a renewed partnership with UNEP on this 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and we wish UNEP every success in the future.

**Thank you Mr President**