



CHILDREN AND YOUTH
MAJOR GROUP TO UNEP

Children and Youth Major Group's Statement for OEWG 1.2: Science-Policy Panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution

Children and Youth Major Group to United Nations Environment Programme [hereinafter CYMG] is the mandated official, formal and self-organized space for children and youth to contribute to and engage in intergovernmental and allied policy processes at the UNEP and relevant environmental governance and conservation processes in the broader UN system. CYMG has the role of the official youth engagement mechanism to UNEP.

The current situation of the risk, hazard, exposure, and impact of Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution are directly proportional to the youth and children due to the time and quantity of doses exposed to them. The one who is exposed and can solve it is us. We have basic information regarding what is happening, how it is happening, and how we are impacted by it. However, we need to be noticed when legislating the intrinsic policy processes. The youth experts could acquire the best of the process by bridging community, science, and policy-based stakeholders, identifying the aspect of risk and hazard at the local and global levels, and taking the policy to the implementation level. This can be seen as an accomplishment if rights holders and vulnerable stakeholders are involved, such as children and youth, women, indigenous communities, farmers, and more.

First of all, We appreciate that the ad hoc open-ended working group has been established as a subsidiary organ of the United Nations Environment Assembly and that the rules of procedure of UNEA are applied to the group's work which supports the mandate of Major Groups and Stakeholders accredited to UNEP to fully engage in OEWG process.

We support the integrative approach to establishing the broad scope of the panel with equal attention to three working streams (chemicals, waste, and pollution), including pollution of air, water, soils, and oceans. The panel's objective must address environmental human rights in coherence with UNGA resolution 76/300, which recognizes the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right. We support Africa Group's call for a re-orientation of focus on preventing pollution before it happens while also tackling future pollution.

We demand capacity building as one of the core functions of the future science-policy panel. This function should also include enhancing the knowledge and skills of youth and future generations so that they can contribute substantially to the panel's work. In the intersessional period, we request the OEWG secretariat to convene a webinar to facilitate the exchange of ideas and concepts from youth with member states and other stakeholders. We also request further to organize another special capacity development session for early career scientists, youth advocates, and researchers.

As another intersessional work, the secretariat should call for submissions from major groups and stakeholders more amalgamating ideas and concepts on principle functions and rules of procedures of the science-policy panel.



**CHILDREN AND YOUTH
MAJOR GROUP TO UNEP**

Understanding the technical nature of the ongoing discussions under OEWG and further requirements of developing the capacity for youth to engage meaningfully in the negotiation process, the Children and Youth Major Group proposes and seeks support from member states and different stakeholders to convene a Multidisciplinary Youth Expert Group. Key objectives of the proposed YEG may include (but are not limited to): serving as a mechanism for information exchange among OEWG and Children and Youth Major Group (CYMG) on activities and expertise related to chemicals, waste and pollution, developing the capacity of young people from the diverse background on ongoing process and prepare them to provide inputs substantially towards the proposals for the science-policy panel, and conduct research and suggest the best avenues of ensuring meaningful youth engagement in the ongoing OEWG, it's intersessional works and future panel.

We believe that the Science Policy Panel should mirror the major groups and stakeholder engagement modality of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) Seven process established by UNEA resolution 5/3.

Finally, to mitigate the gap of knowledge, scientific and social data, youth can play a vital role in it and associate with different stakeholders for successful interpretation and value addition throughout the process.

Submitted on behalf of the Children and Youth Major Group by:

Gyubin Hwang & Zuhair Ahmed Kowshik

Global Focal Points

zakowshik@gmail.com, gyubin.hwang@youthenvironment.org