

**Ministerial declaration for the sixth session
of the United Nations Environment Assembly**

**“Effective, inclusive, and sustainable multilateral actions
to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution”**

1. We, the world's ministers for the environment, have gathered in Nairobi, Kenya, together with representatives of international organizations, major groups and other stakeholders at the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, with the urgent aim of taking effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral action to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.
2. We recall the Rio+20 Principles, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), , and previous UNEA Resolutions, and welcome the recommendations of the Secretary General in his report [Our Common Agenda](#), and the Stockholm+50 International Meeting.
3. We acknowledge with great urgency the systemic threat to security and human ~~development~~ health and wellbeing posed by the ~~three triple~~ planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, and emphasize the importance of integrated, science-based approaches, including ~~the traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples~~ the knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local knowledge systems, and local communities, that can strengthen resilience to present and future emerging risks with global solidarity, while advancing the attainment of the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment for all.

Canada's rationale for proposed changes in Paragraph 3:

Replace “development” with “health and wellbeing” because this term aligns more closely with language/framing in the SDGs and underscores the risks that the triple crisis poses to human health and wellbeing writ large.

Make changes to References to Indigenous Peoples and local communities:

- Canada has a strong preference for wording to differentiate "Indigenous Peoples and local communities". Indigenous Knowledge is distinct from the knowledge of local communities and should be recognized as such.
- The phrasing "knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local knowledge systems" is preferred by Canada and Indigenous Peoples living in Canada and has been used in UN fora (e.g. documents related to the UNFCCC's Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform). Additionally, the term "traditional" doesn't fully encapsulate all Indigenous Knowledge and the knowledge of local communities.

4. We welcome the important outcomes of the twenty-seventh conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, including the establishment of [new funding arrangements, including a fund, to assist developing countries that are particularly a Loss and Damage Fund to support vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change, in responding to loss and damage, -countries](#) as well as the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan, the twenty eighth Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC including XXX , the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity including its adoption of the historic [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#), and the fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD including the [Abidjan Call](#) to act on drought, desertification and land degradation.

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Canada's rationale for proposed changes in Paragraph 4:

Addition of loss and damage funding arrangements: COP27 decision on loss and damage is broader than a decision on a fund. It includes the establishment of funding arrangements as well as a fund and this should be reflected. The language is consistent with COP27 decisions.

5. We also welcome with appreciation other important multilateral achievements including the [adoption of the agreement under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction](#), the [2022 UN Ocean Conference](#) and the 2023 UN Water Conference [and commitments made in the Water Action Agenda](#), [as well as](#) the adoption of the UN Human Rights Council resolution on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, ~~and the adoption of the agreement under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.~~

Canada's rationale for proposed changes in Paragraph 5:

Move up the new UN treaty on BBNJ: this placement will better profile this significant multilateral accomplishment.

Add Water Action Agenda and its commitments. Canada recommends highlighting this Agenda to bring more attention to these important commitments as well as support the implementation of these actions.

Additional comment: the paragraph could also include a reference to the UNGA resolution on human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. [A/RES/76/300](#)

6. We note with great concern the main findings of the Synthesis Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's sixth assessment report (AR6) approved in March 2023, and recognise that global greenhouse gas emissions will need to be halved by 2030 [alongside substantial reductions in short-lived climate pollutants](#) to limit global warming to 1.5°C. By the current trajectory, as estimated by assessing nationally determined contributions (NDCs) announced by October 2021, it is likely that warming will exceed the 1.5°C target during the 21st century, which calls for significant rapid and sustained reductions in all sectors, while ensuring that the level of support provided to developing countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change remains adequate.

Canada's rationale for comments on paragraph 6:

Add language on short-lived climate pollutants. The IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C indicated that there is no path to limiting warming without action on SLCPs and GHGs together.

[Paragraph 6 bis](#)

[Recognizing that pollution, including from hazardous chemicals and waste, can cause significant adverse effects on human health and the environment, including being a major driver of biodiversity and ecosystem loss, we](#) applaud the continued efforts made at the last Conferences of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention, the Minamata Convention, the Basel Convention and the Rotterdam Convention. We also welcome the progress in [the negotiations of an international legally binding agreement on plastic pollution](#)

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and on the establishment of a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and pollution prevention. We further welcome the new [voluntary multi-stakeholder/multi-sectoral global framework on chemicals and waste][name to be inserted after ICCM5]

Canada's rationale for new paragraph_6 bis:

Add language on pollution to reflect this element of the triple planetary crisis as referenced in this document and welcoming progress in a number of pollution related MEAs, the INC and the SPP process (and not just on climate change, biodiversity and BBNJ as is currently the case).

7. We are aware that in order to revitalize the multilateral system and inspire decisive and collective action to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution we surely need to reinforce global inclusiveness and solidarity.
- 8.—8. We are strongly committed to urgently address our common and global environmental challenges through actions that are effective, inclusive, sustainable, transformative, inter-generational and science- and knowledge-based actions together with all stakeholders- relevant actors and partners including civil society, citizens, Indigenous Peoples, -and local communities, the private sector, youth, and academia; and we therefore decide to take the following actions, taking into account, the special needs and circumstances of the least greenhouse gas emitters and the poorest and most vulnerable, -in particular, Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least

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~~Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), African States, and developing middle-income countries:~~

Canada's rationale for proposed changes in Paragraph 8:

Replace stakeholders with relevant actors and partners.

- Indigenous Peoples are rights holders, therefore it's inappropriate to characterize this list as a list of "stakeholders."
- Youth are an important partner.

Add the word "poorest" to most vulnerable to align with existing language used on special needs and circumstances.

Delete list of grouping of countries because they are already covered under "poorest and most vulnerable".

- Particularly, Canada recommends deleting the reference to middle income countries because they are not the poorest and most vulnerable.

- a. Deploy sustained global efforts to address climate change in line with the principles ~~of~~ the UNFCCC and ~~its~~ the goals of the Paris Agreement, towards achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and keeping a limit of 1.5°C temperature rise within reach, and including by addressing the urgent need for scaled up action for adaptation and resilience as well as loss and damage. We will spare no effort to protect our communities against natural disasters induced or exacerbated by climate change, such as drought, famine, and flooding, recognizing the devastating impacts these phenomena have on societies, economies, and ecosystems.

Canada's rationale for proposed changes in Paragraph 8a:

Add 'goals of the Paris Agreement': Canada recommends this change because the Paris Agreement contains goals; not principles.

Delete "and its" before Paris Agreement: The Paris Agreement is a separate legal entity and is not subservient to the UNFCCC.

Canada would also like to see a reference to net zero and the 1.5C temperature goal of the Paris Agreement.

- b. ~~combat~~ halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 in line with the Kunming-~~Montreal~~ Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework, including through the full, swift and effective implementation of the Framework, and that addresses all five direct drivers of biodiversity loss including land- and sea-use change, overexploitation of species, invasive alien species, pollution, and climate change, and commits the global community to conserving at least 30% of terrestrial and inland water areas and marine coastal areas, and ensuring that at least 30% of the world's degraded ecosystems are under restoration. We are committed to by urgently reversing ecosystem decline, promoting and strengthening ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions, while reducing and reversing the effects of pollution, mitigating and adapting to climate change and boosting resilience, supporting sustainable use, including sustainable consumption and food production, promoting the One Health approach, including awareness of the global public health threat of antimicrobial resistance and human well-being through connection,

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use and access to nature and ensuring equitable benefits across economies and societies through robust safeguards and policies for environmental and social protection.

Canada's rationale for proposed changes in Paragraph 8b:

Canada strongly recommends stronger language on the global commitment to the implementation of the Kunming-Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).

- *Add reference to direct drivers of biodiversity loss addressed in the KMGBF and outlined by IPBES, as well as key targets of the Framework in order to meet the level of ambition as suggested at the outset of Paragraph 8.*
- *Add reference to pollution because it is a driver of biodiversity loss and reflected in KMGBF Target 7.*
- *Add reference to antimicrobial resistance which has been identified as a key global threat.*

- c. Develop an international legally binding instrument to Eend plastic pollution, as resolved set out in UNEA resolution 5/14, by fostering innovation, global collaboration, and public-private partnerships that strengthens global coordination, cooperation and governance to take immediate action towards the long-term elimination of plastic pollution in marine and other environments, based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full lifecycle of plastics. We call on Member States to continue to engage- collaborate constructively in during the ongoing negotiations with a sense of , recognizing the urgency of this issue, and seek to reach common ground for a fair develop -and an ambitious legally binding outcome of the INC instrument by the end of 2024.

Canada's rationale for proposed changes in Paragraph 8c:

Changes to clarify the INC negotiations process on plastics:

- *Add reference to the development of an international legally binding instrument.*
- *Replace "resolved" with "set out" to avoid interpretation that the resolution has already resolved all.*
- *Add additional language: UNEA resolution 5/14 does not simply call to end of plastic pollution, but sets out a decision to establish an intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) with a mandate to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full lifecycle of plastics.*
- *Replace "engage" with "collaborate" to call upon members states to work with their global partners during this process.*

8c bis: Enhance broader cooperation on air pollution, recognizing that air pollution does not stop at national borders and can impact regions in different ways. Air pollution is the leading environmental risk factor for human health and contributes to negative impacts on ecosystems, and addressing air pollution results in multiple benefits to the economy, ecosystems, climate and human health.

Canada's rationale for proposed new paragraph 8c bis:

Canada recommends a new paragraph on air pollution which is often disregarded and yet has significant negative impacts and costs globally.

8c ter: Advance the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm, and Minamata Conventions towards further environmental and human health protection, and increase synergies to help address the illegal traffic and trade of hazardous chemicals and waste

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by improved legislation and global or regional policies, and through strengthened cooperation among stakeholders. We strongly support the process to establish a new science-policy panel as per resolution 5/8, to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution -and engage constructively in the ongoing negotiations with a sense of urgency, and commit to finalize the work by the end of 2024.

Canada's rationale for proposed new paragraph 8c ter:

Canada recommends a new paragraph on committing to advance the implementation of the pollution-related MEAs, fight illegal trade of hazardous chemicals and waste, and finalize the SPP negotiations in due course.

- d. Deploy greater efforts, as well as mobilize and allocate adequate resources towards the chemicals safety and sound -management of chemicals to reduce negative health and environmental impacts, and the ~~[adoption]~~ / [progress toward ~~adoption implementation~~] / [other relevant language to be inserted subject to outcome of ICCM5] of ~~athe~~-new chemicals and waste management framework [name of new framework to be inserted] during the Fifth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM-5) held in September 2023.

Canada's rationale for proposed changes in Paragraph 8d

The terms "sound management of chemicals" rather than "chemical safety" are consistent with discussions at SAICM.

We would like to see a reference to the reduction of negative health and environmental impacts; also the focus should be on implementation of the new framework which would have been agreed at ICCM-5.

- e. Incorporate environmental considerations into disaster risk management to mitigate the adverse impacts of natural disasters, on human health and the environment and recommend using a combination of measures to strengthen the resilience to global risks, and accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including actions on the conservation and restoration of ecosystems, climate change mitigation and adaptation, pollution reduction and management, as well as actions to transform economic and financial systems and to ensure sustainable production and consumption.
- f. Act towards the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by advancing existing international commitments and obligations, ensuring the full, equal, effective and meaningful participation, representation and leadership of women at all levels of relevant climate change, biodiversity and pollution decision-making, promoting gender mainstreaming and integration across policies and actions and the safeguarding of marginalized groups and the most vulnerable, in our pursuit of inclusive solutions for climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution that leave no one behind.
9. We will work towards using the potential of digital transformation as a necessary tool for sustainable economic and social behaviour at the global level, bridging existing digital divides,

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improving equal access to environmental information and harnessing emerging technologies for environmental sustainability.

10. We commit to continue to advocate a whole-of-society approach to a more inclusive and equitable digitalisation that effectively empowers vulnerable and low-income populations, to accelerate research, innovation, education and ~~neighbourhood~~-local change, and to move towards the implementation of circular economy models along value chains and just transitions that can accelerate progress towards the achievement of climate change, biodiversity and pollution goals and targets.

Canada's rationale for proposed changes in Paragraph 10:

Replace "neighbourhood" with local because not all community groups are defined within the boundaries of a neighbourhood.

11. We call upon Member States to engage domestic, international, and private sector actors towards a rapid mobilization of means of implementation, in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, while welcoming ongoing efforts to reform the international financial architecture to provide additional funding, in particular concessional finance to support low- and middle-income countries tackle and adapt to climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.
12. We reiterate our recognition of UNEP's role in strategic foresight and horizon scanning as well as in improving the capacities of Member States at all levels to stimulate and encourage long-term advance environmental decision-making bringing the most pressing emerging environmental issues to the attention of Governments. UNEP should therefore ensure that it continues to anticipate trends and risks, including by working with relevant international organizations and bring them to the attention of the world, particularly with the aim of prioritizing scientific research and promoting collective and multi-stakeholder responses to new challenges.

Canada's rationale for proposed changes in Paragraph 12:

Add language on working with international organizations. Many international organizations are working on trends and risks, building on the One Health approach, and UNEP should be encouraged to continue building tight collaborations.

13. We call on UNEP, as the leading environmental authority within the United Nations, and echoing the UNEP@50 Ministerial Declaration, to intensify its support and assistance to Member States in the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the UNEA outcomes and UNEP' delivery, notably through the UN Country Teams, through access to scientific information, technologies, technical assistance and financial resources.

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Canada's rationale for proposed changes in Paragraph 13:

Insert reference to UNEP's role in supporting the implementation of MEAs: there is a need more than ever to accelerate the implementation of MEAs and UNEP is uniquely positioned to make a difference.

14. We look forward to the ~~adoption of a Pact for the Future at the Future~~ Summit of the Future in New York in September 2024, and urge all Member States as well as relevant NGOs, Major Groups and stakeholders to advocate for ~~the implementation of the relevant actions set out in this statement during the consultation process to ensure~~ an ambitious outcome [that will reinvigorate environmental multilateralism, stimulate the implementation of existing commitments and agree on concrete solutions for a better tomorrow with greater effectiveness, inclusiveness and confidence].

Canada's rationale for proposed changes in Paragraph 14:

Delete references to Pact for the Future and its implementation: it is premature to look forward to the adoption of an undefined outcome of the Summit at this stage and the scope of the Summit is much broader than the environmental sphere.

The text in brackets seems to come from the UNGA modalities resolution for the Summit but with differences in wording. It is unclear if it is useful or needed here and we would recommend deletion.

15. We therefore request the President of the UN Environment Assembly to transmit this statement as the UN Environment Assembly's contribution to the General Assembly for the Summit of the Future.

Canada's comments on Paragraph 15:

This paragraph needs to be discussed in light of MS views on paragraph 14.

16. We invite the governing bodies of multilateral environmental agreements to work with the United Nations Environment Assembly, as appropriate, to promote effective implementation of the commitments contained in this Declaration.