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 reaffirm all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, “The future we want” and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and recall previous UNEA Resolutions as well as the results of the SDG Summit, and acknowledge role of the recommendations of the Secretary General in his report Our CommonAgenda, and the Stockholm+50 International Meeting.

3. 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 the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the UNEA outcomes and UNEPs delivery, notably through the UN Country Teams, through access to scientific information, technologies, technical assistance and financial resources.

4. We acknowledge with great urgency that the interconnected challenges the systemic threat to security and human development posed by the three planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution undermine our collective efforts towards the achievement of sustainable development, in particular in developing countries, and are further aggravated by persistent levels of poverty, including extreme poverty, unemployment and food insecurity, thus requiring enhanced international cooperation to promote the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner, and we emphasize the importance of integrated, science-based approaches, including the traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, that can strengthen resilience to present and future emerging challenges with global solidarity, and we stress the need to provide new, additional, and adequate means of implementation, including financial resources, capacity building, technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer, to support developing countries, while advancing the attainment of the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment for all.

5. We welcome the important outcomes of the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC including the establishment of a Loss and Damage Fund for assisting developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, to support vulnerable countries as well as the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan, the twenty-eighth Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC including XXX , the nineteenth 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.

6. We also welcome with appreciation other important multilateral achievements including the 2023 UN Ocean Conference and the 2023 UN Water Conference, the adoption of the UN Human Rights Council’s 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 (BBNJ).

7. 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 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. We note the growing gap between the needs of developing country Parties, in particular those due to the increasing impacts of climate change and their increased indebtedness, and the support provided and mobilized for their efforts to implement their nationally determined contributions, and urge Urges deve-
"least greenhouse gas emitters" is not agreed language Brazil also opposes singularization of vulnerabilities.

8. 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 urgently need to reinforce global inclusiveness and solidarity and to provide new, additional, and adequate means of implementation, including financial resources, capacity building, technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer, to support developing countries, in line with the principle of Common, But Differentiated Responsibilities.

9. We are strongly committed to urgently address our common and global environmental challenges through effective, inclusive, sustainable, transformative, inter-generational and science- and knowledge-based actions together with all stakeholders including civil society, citizens, Indigenous peoples and local communities, the private sector, and academia; and we therefore decide to take the following actions, taking into account, the special needs and circumstances of vulnerable regions and the specific challenges faced by developing countries, the least greenhouse gas emitters and the most vulnerable, in particular, Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), African States and developing middle-income countries:

a. Deploy sustained global efforts to address climate change in line with the principles of the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement, including by addressing the urgent need for scaled up action for adaptation and resilience as well as loss and damage. We will prioritize equity, climate justice, social justice and inclusion to achieve more sustainable outcomes, co-benefits, reduce trade-offs, support transformative change and advance climate resilient development and 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.

b. To take urgent action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss to put nature on a path to recovery for the benefit of people and planet by conserving and sustainably using biodiversity and by ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources, while providing the necessary means of implementation, further recognizing the importance of sustainable biodiversity-based activities, products and services that enhance biodiversity to provide social, economic and environmental benefits for people, especially those in vulnerable situations and those most dependent on biodiversity, and highlighting the need to implement in a timely manner the multilateral mechanism for benefit-sharing from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources, including a global fund combat biodiversity loss in line with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, by urgently reversing ecosystem decline, promoting and strengthening ecosystem-based approaches and boosting resilience, supporting sustainable food production, promoting One Health and ensuring equitable benefits across economies and societies through robust safeguards and policies for environmental and social protection.

c. End plastic pollution, as resolved in UNEA resolution 5/14, by fostering innovation, global collaboration, and public-private partnerships. We call on Member States to continue to engage constructively in the ongoing negotiations with a sense of urgency, and seek to reach common ground for a fair and ambitious legally binding outcome of the INC by the end of 2024.

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

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 and sustainable management 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, effec-
tive 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 people, including groups that suffer from entrenched racism and other forms of prejudice, 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, 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 change, and to move towards the implementation of circular economy models along value chains, sustainable consumption and production patterns and just transitions that can accelerate progress towards the achievement of climate change, biodiversity and pollution goals and targets, in line with respective mandates and relevant international obligations.

11. We recognize, with deep concern, that the lack of means of implementation has been a persistent challenge for the achievement of environmental goals, in particular in developing countries, and we call upon developed Member States to fulfill their obligations under relevant multilateral environmental agreements to provide new, additional, adequate, easily accessible means of implementation to developing countries, in a manner commensurate with the challenges and urgency of addressing the interconnected environmental challenges. We further highlight the importance of engaging domestic, international, and private sector actors towards a rapid mobilization of means of implementation, in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the 7th 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 low- and middle-income developing countries and poverty in all its forms, to adapt and 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, 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.

13. We call on UNEP, as the leading environmental authority within the United Nations, and echoing the UN50 Ministerial Declaration, to intensify its support and assistance to Member States in the implementation of 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.

14. We look forward to the adoption of a Pact for the Future at the Future Summit 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.

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.

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.