



**RESPONSE OF THE CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH TO ZERO DRAFT OF THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION FOR THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY**

**Zero draft, May 2023**

**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”**

**GENERAL INPUT**

The Centre for Human Rights and Climate Change Research commends global environmental leaders for the opportunity given to observers and other stakeholders to contribute to the Ministerial declaration for the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly as we together pool together ideas and strategies in order to identify effective, inclusive, and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

We commend the acknowledgement of the great urgency needed to address the systemic threat to security and human development posed by the three planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and the recognition of the relevance of the findings of the IPCC sixth assessment report (AR6), the outcomes of the 27<sup>th</sup> conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, the establishment of a Loss and Damage Fund to support vulnerable countries, the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan.

We also commend your reference and recognition of the relevance of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the Abidjan Call to act on drought, desertification and land degradation, the 2022 UN Ocean Conference, the 2023 UN Water Conference, the adoption of the UN Human Rights Council resolution on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, 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 and other important multilateral achievements.

We welcome your strong commitment to a multi stakeholder and multidisciplinary approach in addressing the triple planetary crisis in a manner that is 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.

We welcome the actions you have agreed to take subject to inclusion of our changes which are visible using track change and call for the following additional action:

## **DIRECT EDITS/LANGUAGE INCLUSION**

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 posed by the three 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 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.

4. 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 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 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.

5. We also welcome with appreciation other important multilateral achievements including the 2022 UN Ocean Conference and the 2023 UN Water Conference, 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.

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 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.

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. 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 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 . Recognizing the devastating impacts these phenomena have on societies, economies, and ecosystems, we will spare no effort to protect our communities against natural disasters induced or exacerbated by climate change, such as drought, famine, and flooding by effective action including channeling adequate resources and providing support for the development of needed capacity (policy and legislative capacity, institutional capacity, monitoring and reporting, human resource and leadership capacity, financing capacity and information, knowledge and technological capacity) needed to address the planetary crisis.

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b. combat biodiversity loss in line with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, by developing an action plan that can support and drive the effective implementation of the its key commitments including urgently reversing ecosystem decline, promoting and strengthening ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions, while mitigating and adapting to climate change 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 which delivers on bridging existing identified gaps in the implementation of international environmental laws particularly those related to liability transboundary movement of plastic waste and avoiding gaps and fragmentation in laws related to Plastic regulation.

d. Deploy greater efforts, as well as mobilize and allocate adequate resources towards chemicals safety and management and the [adoption] / [progress toward adoption] / [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 human rights particularly the right to life, health and food which are linked. We 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 [a rights based approach](#) 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, 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 and just transitions that can accelerate progress towards the achievement of climate change, biodiversity and pollution goals and targets.

11. We call upon Member States to engage [multiple income streams including the private sector at domestic and, international and at all, and private sectors 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, 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 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 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.

### **CALL FOR FURTHER ACCELERATED ACTION**

- Adopt an integrated framework with targets that will enhance opportunities to improve the lives of 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 many of whom depend on biodiversity and ecosystem services for their survival.
- Integrate an action plan and budget that addressed how strategic cross-cutting issues such as zoonotic diseases, engagement with indigenous peoples and local communities as well as pathways to maximize the benefits these communities derive from legal and sustainable trade in wild species for their livelihoods can be addressed. .
- Ensure alignment, synergies and comprehensiveness in financing, developing and implementing of identified multilateral mechanisms mentioned and identify priority actions from previous UNEA that requires follow-up from Member States and potential gaps and problems in implementation that need to be addressed or strengthened, by financial resources, political will and strong national legislature and policymaking.
- Promote multilateralism and collaboration ensuring that the Ministerial Declaration provides consensual solutions to current and projected global challenges including the triple planetary crisis, guaranteeing global stability and sustainable development.
- Address the issues of climate related displacements including internal displacements.
- Commit to and Explore new development strategies and plans that address effective, inclusive, and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution in line with the Agenda 2030.
- Strengthen the global architecture for peace, security and sustainable financing of the integration of goal 16 into environmental policy and plan of action.
- Align plan of action for implementing of commitments with the sustainable development goals and international Human Rights obligations and Objective.
- National Reports including NDCs should reflect national priorities and targets for sustainable development and their relation to Human Rights obligations.
- Methodology for review of progress for implementation of Resolutions and Decisions should be founded on human rights impact assessment and major human rights principle including transparency, participation and accountability.
- Institutional mechanisms for implementation must include the role of National Human rights institutions, human rights NGOs and all existing environmental institutions and mechanisms.
- Means of implementation including plans for financing, data collection should align with objectives of promoting human rights as the world charts a new sustainable path to achieve financing of combat/ reversing biodiversity loss, urgently reversing ecosystem decline, promoting and strengthening ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions, mitigating and adapting to climate change, boosting resilience, supporting

sustainable food production, promoting One Health and ensuring equitable benefits across economies and societies through robust safeguards and policies for environmental protection.