

Name of Member States / organization	<u>United Cities and Local Governments</u>
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First draft, August 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”**

1. We, the world’s ministers for the environment, have gathered in Nairobi, Kenya, **from 26 February to 1 March 2024**, 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 **the three planetary environmental crises** of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.
2. We reaffirm all the principles of the Rio **Declaration** on Environment and Development, the 2030 **Agenda** for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and we 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 threats posed by the three planetary **environmental** crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution to sustainable development **and their impacts on human and environmental rights, health, well-being and security**.
4. We emphasize the importance of integrated, science-based approaches, **informed by the latest and best available evidence**, as well as the knowledge of Indigenous Peoples, ~~and~~ local and regional governments and their communities, to strengthen resilience to present and future emerging challenges, promote global solidarity and advance **the realization of the UN General Assembly’s resolution 76/300 on the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment**.
5. We welcome the important outcomes of the twenty-seventh **session** of the conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP27), including commitments to establish **new funding arrangements for assisting developing countries which are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change, including with a focus on addressing** Loss and Damage as well as the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan; the twenty eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (**COP 28**) including XXX; the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its adoption of the historic Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, **to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030** and the fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the Abidjan Call to act on drought, desertification and land degradation; **as well as the Fifth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM-5) including the [agreement] on a new chemicals and waste management framework beyond 2020**.
6. We also welcome with appreciation other **recent**, 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 (BBNJ), the outcomes of 2022 UN Ocean Conference and the 2023 UN Water Conference **and the high-level meeting on the mid-term Review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction**.

7. We note with great concern the main findings of the Synthesis Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) [Sixth Assessment Report \(AR6\)](#) and recognise that, **to limit global warming to 1.5°C, global greenhouse gas emissions must be rapidly and progressively reduced by 43% by 2030, below 2019 levels and to 60% by 2035 before ultimately reaching net zero by 2050.** By the current trajectory, it is likely that warming will exceed the 1.5°C target during the 21st century, which calls for significant, rapid and sustained emissions reductions in all sectors, especially **those with large share and growth in gross GHG emissions**, while ensuring that the level of support provided to developing countries, [their local and regional governments](#) and vulnerable regions to mitigate and adapt to climate change **is significantly raised to adequate levels.**
8. We are aware that in order to revitalize the multilateral system and inspire decisive and collective action to tackle the **three planetary environmental crises** of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, **as well as other related crises of desertification, land degradation and drought**, we urgently need to reinforce global inclusiveness and solidarity and **to provide new, additional, and adequate means of multi-level and multi-scalar implementation.**
9. We are strongly committed to urgently address the challenges before us through effective, inclusive sustainable transformative, **intra- and inter-generational** and science- and knowledge-based actions together with all relevant actors and partners including civil society, [local and regional governments](#), academia and **philanthropies** Indigenous Peoples and local communities, the private and public sectors, as well **women and girls, children and youth and those at risk of being left furthest behind**; and we therefore decide to take the following actions, taking into account **the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities, as well as** the special needs and circumstances of vulnerable regions and the specific challenges faced by developing countries, including Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS):
 - a. Deploy sustained global efforts to address climate change, in line with the- goals and **objectives** of the UNFCCC and **the** Paris Agreement, towards achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and keeping a limit of 1.5°C temperature rise within reach, including by addressing the urgent need for scaled up action for mitigation, adaptation and resilience. We will prioritise equity and social justice to achieve more sustainable outcomes and co-benefits and reduce trade-offs while sparing no effort to advance climate resilient development and protect our communities against disasters induced or exacerbated by climate change, such as **drought, heavy rains, heatwaves**, famine, and flooding, which undermine the ability of all countries to achieve sustainable development.
 - b. **Halt and reverse** biodiversity loss **by 2030** in line with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, by urgently reversing ecosystem decline, **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 will do so by accelerating the implementation of strengthened national [and local](#) biodiversity strategies and action plans and the alignment of national targets with the GBF, whilst **driving a transition to nature-positive economies which mainstreams biodiversity in all sectors.** We will promote nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches, support the sustainable use of biodiversity while ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of **the utilization of genetic resources**, including traditional knowledge.
 - c. **Cooperate for a just and sustainable energy transition that seeks to achieve an energy-secure future for all, while respecting national needs and priorities, and define clear actions to address climate change, maximizing on the social and economic opportunities of climate action and promoting effective dialogue and cooperation among all stakeholders.**
 - d. Develop an international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution, as resolved in UNEA resolution 5/14. We call on all 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, effective and ambitious legally binding outcome of the INC by the end of 2024

- e. **[Enhance broader cooperation on air pollution, recognizing that air pollution is the leading environmental risk factor for human health, contributes to negative impacts on ecosystems, does not stop at national borders and can impact regions in different ways and that addressing air pollution results in multiple benefits to the economy, ecosystems, climate and human health.]**
 - f. Deploy greater efforts, including mobilizing and allocating adequate resources, for the sound management of chemicals and waste to reduce negative health and environmental impacts, and the [implementation] [adoption] [progress toward adoption] [other relevant language to be inserted subject to outcome of ICCM5] of [a new chemicals and waste management framework] [name of new framework to be inserted] following the Fifth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM-5) held in September 2023. We also strongly support the process to establish a new Science-Policy Panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution, **as per UNEA Resolution 5/8**, and we call on Member States to engage constructively in its ongoing negotiations towards completion by the end of 2024-.
 - g. Incorporate climate, biodiversity and pollution considerations into national and local disaster risk management policies and actions to mitigate and prevent the adverse impacts of natural and human-made hazards on human health and the environment, strengthen the resilience to global risks **and shocks and promote a sustainable and inclusive recovery to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development...**
 - h. **Promote gender equity** and the empowerment of all women and girls, in line with existing international commitments and obligations, to ensure the full, equal, effective and meaningful participation, representation and leadership of women at all levels of environmental decision-making, and promote the collection and use of gender-disaggregated data and statistics across all policies and actions, in our pursuit of inclusive solutions for the three environmental planetary crises to leave no one behind.
10. We will leverage digital transformations as an enabling tool to support sustainable economies and societies through bridging existing digital divides, improving equal access to environmental information and harnessing emerging technologies for environmental sustainability, while ensuring that digitalization remains inclusive, equitable and sustainable.
 11. We commit to continue to advocate for a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approaches that can effectively empower societies at large, and particularly vulnerable and low-income populations, to accelerate research, innovation, education and behavioural change, **facilitate their just transition to sustainable consumption and production** and move towards the implementation of circular economy models along value chains and sustainable lifestyles, **in line with the 10 YFP Global Strategy for Sustainable Consumption and Production 2023-2030**.
 12. We call upon Member States, **International Financial Institutions, international development banks, private foundations and funds and other actors** to promote further synergies and coherence in financing action to address the three environmental planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, aligning relevant policy and regulatory measures with international goals and targets. We will engage domestic, local and regional, international, and private sector actors towards a rapid mobilization of accessible 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, **including reshaping economic governance models and decision-making to better account for the environment in measuring progress beyond GDP**.
 13. We reiterate our recognition of UNEP's role in strengthening the science-policy interface and to undertake strategic foresight and horizon scanning, in collaboration with existing science-policy platforms to improve the capacities of Member States and stakeholders at all levels to prioritize scientific research and stimulate and encourage decision making and actions that can anticipate trends and risks, and prevent and respond to emerging and future environmental issues-.
 14. We note the **increasing necessity** and catalytic role of UNEP and its Regional Offices in strengthening regional cooperation, including through the Regional Ministerial fora, to tackle context-specific environmental challenges. We also recognize the increasing demand for environmental support at the

country level and UNEP's engagement with Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams to support the environmental dimension of sustainable development in Common Country Analyses and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, and invite the strengthening of UNEP's role within the UN Development System at the regional and country level, with an increase in resources, including from the Regular Budget.

15. 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, including at the country level, in the implementation of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the UNEA outcomes.
16. We look forward to the adoption of a Pact for the Future at the Summit of the Future in September 2024, as an opportunity to further advance our collective environmental commitments, urge all Member States as well as relevant NGOs, Major Groups and stakeholders, UNEP, MEAs and other relevant international organisations to advocate for the implementation of the relevant actions set out in this statement during the consultation process, and to ensure an ambitious outcome that will reinvigorate environmental multilateralism, stimulate the implementation of existing commitments, strengthen synergies between the work and implementation of the MEAs and agree on concrete solutions for a better tomorrow with greater effectiveness, inclusiveness and confidence. **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.**
17. 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.