

OHCHR's Comments on the First Draft of the Ministerial Declaration for the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly

The Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights welcomes the First Draft of the Ministerial Declaration of UNEA-6 and is pleased to suggest the following edits: additions in bold with yellow highlights, deletions in strikethrough with blue highlights, comments in *Italics*.

1. Para 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 rights, human and environmental health, well-being and security**”

2. Para 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 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.**”

3. Para 9

“We are strongly committed to urgently address the challenges before us through effective, inclusive **rights-based**, sustainable transformative, **intra- and inter-**generational and science- and knowledge-based actions together with all relevant actors and partners including civil society, 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”

4. Para 9(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, **climate justice, rights-based approaches, and inclusivity,** 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.” *Please See [IPCC AR6 Summary for Policy Makers, para C.5.6](#) (about prioritizing equity and social justice).*

5. Para 9(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 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 **rights-based approaches,** 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.” *Please note that adding rights-based approaches is consistent with the KMGBF which calls for rights-based approaches.*

6. Para 9(h)

“**Promote** gender **equality 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 **to for** the three environmental planetary crises **that will to** leave no one behind.”

7. Para 10

“We will leverage digital transformations as an enabling tool to support sustainable economies and societies through bridging existing digital divides, **ensuring improving** equal access to environmental information and harnessing emerging technologies for environmental sustainability, while ensuring that digitalization remains inclusive, equitable and sustainable.”

8. Para 11

“We commit to continue to advocate for a whole-of-society approach that can effectively empower societies at large, and particularly **the people most impacted by the three planetary crises. vulnerable and low-income populations,** **We will** ~~to~~ accelerate research, innovation, education and behavioural change **in order to, facilitate a 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.** *Please note that, as for the suggestion for replacing “vulnerable and low-income populations” with “the people most impacted by the three planetary crises.”, these two ideas should be separated to avoid creating the impression that those most impacted by environmental harm have the primary responsibility for addressing it.*

9. Para 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, **advance the right to a healthy environment for current and future generations,** 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.**”