

Dear Colleagues at the UNEP

Greetings and hope all of you are doing well.

We are writing to you to give feedback on the 5<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Forum (RCM) and the MGS Forum held during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2023 by the UNEP ROAP in collaboration with the Govt of Sri Lanka at Shangri-La Hotel Colombo.

#### The MGS Forum

The MGS Forum was organized on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October by the Environmental Working Group (EWG) of the Asia Pacific Regional CSOs Engagement Mechanism (APRCM) led by the Regional Facilitator/s and the leadership of the APRCEM. The UNEP and Govt of Sri Lanka offered the space to organize the Forum at Shangri-La hotel. The Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) Sri Lanka was the local host for the MGS Forum as well as the 5<sup>th</sup> Forum. Around 80 participants including the fully funded participants by UNEP, self-sponsored and partially self-sponsored and local CSOs participated in the MGS Forum. UNEP fully funded 20 MGS to participate in the Forum and the 5<sup>th</sup> AP Forum. The Forum also witnessed the participation of non-UNEP accredited organizations from the region.

We were extremely pleased to have presence of the CPR Chair, HE Mr. Firas Khouri, Director of the Governance Affairs Office, Ms. Radhika Ochalik, Director ROAP, Dr. Dechen Tsering and the Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Govt of Sri Lanka on the inaugural session. We are thankful to the UNEP and ROAP for their support and coordination and the Govt of Sri Lanka for their warm hospitality. Please find the agenda and the collective statement from the MGS Forum attached.

#### Collaboration with the UNEP ROAP

The MGS Forum was designed in the close collaboration of the ROAP and with Mr. Subrat Sinha and Ms. Young Ran Hur. The call for nominations to participants was managed by the MGS in collaboration with the ROAP. The selection of the fully funded MGS (from amongst more than 100 nominations) was handled by an independent committee in a fair and transparent manner and selected participants was a good mix of experienced and new participants along with the considerations of gender and subregional balance and giving equal opportunity to all the MGs possible within the limitations of resources. The MGS were also invited as panelists on the SPBF, event on Global Biodiversity Framework and the air pollution event organized by the Ministry of Korea. The air pollution event organizers also fully funded three MGS participants. The Regional Facilitator was also invited for the closing session of the Youth Forum on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

#### 5<sup>th</sup> AP Forum

Our overall impression for the AP Forum is that it was well organized and covered important agenda points for regional inputs to the UNEA. It witnessed enthusiastic participation from the Member States in the Environment Authorities Forum as well as the Ministerial Forum. The MGS got opportunity to deliver the Collective Statement and outcome of the MGS Forum (Agenda item 3a), as well as to speak on the Agenda item 3c during the Environment

Authorities Forum and opportunity to speak on the Agenda item 7 in the Ministerial Forum. The MGS representative was also invited as a panelist for the Multistakeholder Dialogue (Agenda item 7) on the Ministerial Forum. We are thankful to the UNEP for that.

However, we have few suggestions for the future RCMs and also with regard to collaboration with the MGS.

1. We would look forward to see more participation from the Ministers in the Ministerial segment.
2. We also expect better chairing of the sessions and better compliance of the time allocated to the Member States so that MGS speakers do not drop off from the list of speakers due to lack of time.
3. We also underline that all MGs should have opportunity to speak in the Forum rather than only having collective statements in future RCMs.
4. We also expect a better coordination and consultation with the MGS during developing the agenda of the Official Forum to ensure optimum utilization of the experience and expertise of the MGS.