

## THE EU AND ITS MEMBER STATES' VIEWS AND COMMENTS ON THE SECOND DRAFT OF THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION FOR UNEA 6

**Reference: Invitation from the President of UNEA-6 for the Member States to review the first full draft UNEA-6 Ministerial Declaration and provide written inputs and comments on the draft, by the prolonged deadline of 29 September 2023**

**Sent to Moroccan Presidency on 18 December, after the comments were presented at the recent informal consultations on 7 November and 7 December 2023**

The European Union and its Member States would like to thank the Presidency of the Sixth United Nations Environment Assembly for the opportunity to review and provide suggestions on the second version of the draft Ministerial Declaration of the UNEA-6.

Having reviewed the draft, we propose certain points and small qualifications for some of the paragraphs. In addition, we propose three new paragraphs for Presidency's consideration. These paragraphs address the issues of water, oceans and forest and land degradation, which the European Union and its Member States considered were not reflected in the text deeply enough.

Below are the views and comments of the European Union and its 27 Member States:

- Paragraphs 1 and 3: The EU+MS support the use of the term “planetary” because it is broader than “environmental”. Term “planetary has been widely used by the UN system. We are unsure about the addition of the world "environmental", because it may give the impression that effects of the triple crisis are limited to the environment, whereas they also have economic and social impacts. The suggestion is therefore to use the term **“the triple planetary crisis”**
- Paragraph 4: We suggest quoting the title of the UN General Assembly resolution 76/300. In addition, the EU+MS suggest referring to the need to implement the UN General Assembly resolution 76/185 on environmental crime. The last part of the paragraph should read as:  
promote global solidarity and advance **in the realization-implementation** of the UN General Assembly's resolution 76/300 **~~on the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment~~: "The human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment" and the UN General Assembly resolution 76/185. "Preventing and combating crimes that affect the environment"**.
- Paragraph 5: we propose to keep this paragraph in line with COP27 language. The EU+MS also suggest to refer to the need “to act on pollution” to clarify ICCM5 scope of work. the last part of the paragraph should read:  
**“...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, to act on pollution.**
- After paragraph 5 we propose to add a new paragraph to recognise the momentum created by the UN Water Conference 2023. The paragraph should highlight the cross-cutting role of water management in addressing the planetary crises, and the need to strengthen global cooperation on water:

**We welcome the results of the UN Water Conference 2023, namely the Water Action Agenda, as well as the adoption by the General Assembly of Resolution A/77/L.106 of 28 August 2023 convening the next United Nations Water Conference in 2026 “to Accelerate the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6”, guaranteeing a continuity on the high level multilateral reflexion on water, and we highlight the crucial role of UNEP in ensuring an integrated approach on water by the UN, including through the implementation**

of a UN system-wide strategy on water and sanitation. We recognize the need to strengthen global cooperation on water, at all levels including transboundary levels, notably on transformative water policy based on a better understanding and valuing of water, cross-sectoral cooperation, and management (the WEF nexus), the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), integration and prioritization of water into national economic policies, and on improving knowledge and science-policy interface.

- We also propose a new paragraph on oceans to welcome the latest developments on ocean protection, such as the adoption of BBNJ, and UNOC-2, to reaffirm the role of the Regional Seas Conventions, and welcome the organisation of UNOC-3. In addition, the UNEA 6 is likely to adopt a resolution on oceans, which we would like to reference in the Ministerial Declaration:

**We commit to conserving, protecting, restoring and sustainably using the ocean, marine ecosystems, welcome the recent outcome of the 2022 UN Ocean Conference, and look forward to the 2025 UN Ocean Conference that will take place in Nice, France. We welcome the adoption of the new international legally binding instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine Biological diversity of areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) and call on all countries for its early entry into force and implementation. We acknowledge the critical role played by Regional Seas, whether administered by UNEP or not, in the multilateral governance of the Ocean. We recognize their importance in implementing global targets, such as the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework. We will support the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the launch of the regional sea program.**

- Paragraph 6: we propose to remove this paragraph, and to add the last part of the paragraph **“to Accelerate the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6” and the high-level meeting on the mid-term Review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.**” To the EU proposed para on water.
- Paragraph 7: the EU+MS find it important to maintain consistency with the language of the IPCC report and of COP27 decisions. Drafting proposals are made in the text, to deliver that consistency:

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 **limiting** global warming to 1.5°C, global greenhouse gas emissions must be rapidly and progressively reduced by 43% by 2030, ~~below 2019 levels~~ and ~~by to~~ 60% by 2035, **each relative to the 2019 level, before ultimately** and reaching net zero by 2050. ~~Yet, b~~By the current trajectory, it is likely that warming will exceed the 1.5°C target during the 21st century, ~~therefore recalling~~ **[recalling the CMA4 Decision taken at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheik,] reemphasizing the urgent need which calls for significant-immediate, deep, rapid and sustained emissions reductions in global GHG emissions across all applicable sectors.**

- Paragraph 8: we propose to maintain consistency by referring to **the triple planetary crisis**, as suggested in paras 1 and 3. Further, the EU+MS believe that it is important to focus on more effective and efficient use of available resources, therefore we suggest amending language on means of implementation. When referring to other crises, please also add **“deforestation”** before “desertification”. The last part of the sentence should read:

...we urgently need to reinforce global inclusiveness and solidarity and to **jointly** provide ~~new, additional, and~~ adequate means of implementation **in order to make the necessary transformational change.**

- Paragraph 9: The EU+MS suggest to add a stronger reference to women and girls, emphasizing their full, meaningful and equal participation and leadership in decision-making processes. After words “gender responsive” we ask to add reference to “**gender responsive**”. After words “being left behind” add “**and to ensure the full, meaningful and equal participation and leadership of women and girls in decision-making**”.
- Paragraph 10.b: the EU+MS suggest modifying the paragraph to align it with the Kunming Montreal GBF wording and mentioning the 30% restoration targets for terrestrial and marine areas. EU+MS would suggest adding a reference to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, suitable in this context. We also suggest highlighting the need for an increased implementation of NBS as well as the potential to address both the climate and biodiversity crises and contribute to achieving further SDGs simultaneously, as outlined in the UNEA resolution 5/5. The last part of the paragraph could read as follows:

We will promote **the implementation of nature-based solutions, as of UNEA resolution 5/5**, and ecosystem-based approaches **that can create synergies by addressing the climate and biodiversity crises simultaneously**, support the sustainable use of biodiversity while ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising **from out-of** the utilization of genetic resources, including **associated** traditional knowledge.

- After para 10b, we propose to add a new paragraph to address forest and land degradation issues, which are very important for many countries beyond the EU:

**Scale up efforts to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and halt deforestation, desertification, land degradation and drought, as well as restoring degraded land to achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030 in line with the Glasgow Declaration and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Promote the transition to sustainable agricultural production and sustainable forest ecosystem management, in line with the target 10 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, as well as the development of transparent, deforestation-free and sustainable related supply chains.**

- Paragraph 10c: the EU+MS welcome the reference to just and sustainable energy transition, but believe it is important to highlight the need to achieve energy transition without negative impact on environment. We also find it adequate to add a reference to the Sharm el Cheikh implementation plan and the Paris agreement objectives. We propose a placeholder for a reference to phasing out of fossil fuels, which should be reviewed, depending on COP28 negotiations.
- Paragraph 10e: In this paragraph, the EU+MS suggest to replace the word “ecosystems” with the word “**biodiversity**”, as it is a broader term entailing species and ecosystems.
- Paragraph 10f: the EU+MS supports the **integrated approach to financing**, which we would like to see reflected in the para, added after the words “allocating adequate resources”. We also suggest adding reference to UNEA resolution 4/8: “**We remain committed to the full implementation of UNEA Resolution 4/8**” towards the end of the paragraph.
- Paragraph 10 g: we suggest maintaining the reference to the One Health Approach.
- Paragraph 11h: the EU+MS suggests maintaining the original version of the first part of the paragraph, as provided in the zero draft. We would also suggest mentioning the **promotion of gender mainstreaming** in the paragraph.

- Paragraph 11: the EU+MS support the digital transformations and the benefits they can deliver for monitoring. We suggest amending the paragraph to add words “**and monitoring**” after “environmental sustainability”.
- Paragraph 12: The EU+MS welcome the reference to SDG 12 and the connection to a necessary just transition in this paragraph. We would suggest enhancing the linkage between circular economy and biodiversity conservation by adding a reference to ensuring the protection of forest and other natural ecosystems. We also suggest adding a reference to the findings of Global Resources Outlook that will be presented at UNEA-6. The para could read as follows:

We commit to continue to advocate for a whole-of-society approach 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, ensuring **the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of forest ecosystems and other natural ecosystems**, and move towards the implementation of circular economy models **in the whole life-cycle of products and** along value chains and sustainable lifestyles, in line with the 10 YFP Global Strategy for Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) 2023-2030 **to bring the global environmental footprint within planetary boundaries. In this context, we welcome ongoing work towards a Global SCP dialogue and actions to achieve SCP.**

- Paragraph 13: the EU+MS suggest that this paragraph could refer to **philanthropic foundations and funds**, (wording could be added after private foundations), rather than in paragraph 9, and to highlight the need of enabling framework for resource mobilization and scaling the means of implementation. In addition, we consider that GBF Fund can be an important way to leverage private finance and finance from International Financial Institutions, and suggest adding at the very end the words “**and welcoming the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund**”.
- Paragraph 15: the EU+MS suggest that this paragraph refers to the need to mainstreaming environment into programming and operations. We also see a need to call for a broader donor base for UNEP, therefore we propose suggestions for the text. The para could read as follows:

We note the increasing necessity and catalytic role of UNEP and its Regional Offices in strengthening **efficient and effective** regional cooperation, including through the Regional Ministerial fora, to tackle context-specific environmental challenges. We also recognize the increasing demand for **synergetic** environmental support at the country level and UNEP’s engagement with Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams to support **mainstreaming of environmental issues into planning, programming and operations, and highlighting** 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, **including outreach efforts in order to broaden UNEP’s donor base by inviting stakeholders from all sectors, private and public, national and international, to support this role by voluntary contributions. with an increase in resources, including from the Regular Budget.**

- Paragraph 17. For the effective implementation of commitments included in this Declaration, we believe that UNEP should also cooperate with **international organisations**. We suggest adding this wording after “multilateral environmental agreements”.

The European Union and its Member States want to highlight our full availability to continue working on the subsequent versions of the Ministerial Declaration of the UNEA-6, and we thank again the Presidency of UNEA-6 for the coordination of the process.