

# UNEA Monitor

UNEA Monitor is a daily newsletter powered by Major Groups during the UN Environment Assembly. The newsletter tracks the most important negotiations and events and delivers the daily news through the lens of civil society.



## Stories from the Green Room

The Green Room is the Civil Society Platform at UNEA-6. The UNEA Monitor is covering some of the Green Room events throughout the week of the Assembly.

For the agenda of the Green Room during the UNEA 6 week, kindly visit this link:

<https://www.unep.org/events/green-room/unea-6-green-room-events>

## **1- Circular Bioeconomy Systems for Concurrently Delivering Solutions to Climate Change, Biodiversity Loss and Food Security**

Date: 28.02.2024

Time: 15.30-16.45 EAT

Agriculture as part of the bioeconomy is indisputably central to global conversations in many facets, and not least in environmental aspects. In fact, most international global efforts towards tackling the triple planetary crisis cannot be achieved without engaging agriculture and agroecological systems in general. This includes the Paris Climate Agreement, the Global Biodiversity

Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals. This emphasizes the pivotal role of farmers in the circular bioeconomy.

The transition to a sustainable circular bioeconomy has many environmental and social benefits, as highlighted by the panelists. A key concept is the optimization of natural resources including reduced use of agricultural inputs such as water, fertilizers and pesticides.



This could involve regenerative agricultural practices with re-use of waste for mulching, conservation agriculture, incorporation of agroforestry activities, nature positive activities such as use of biopesticide plants and insects and many more.

Sustainable circular bioeconomy provides opportunities for improved environmental management and nature positive actions that promote biodiversity conservation, as well as new avenues for innovative technology, new value-added products and green jobs. A local case study from Kenya highlighted benefits gained from implementation of circular principles in small-scale dairy farming.

In this example, local communities have been able to valorize waste from livestock dung to produce biogas for cooking, gaining access to a cleaner energy source as opposed to wood fuel- a win for energy access and climate.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) emphasized the need to scale circular agricultural systems to regional and global levels, this being a strategic priority at the organization. The core facets at this global level cover policy support, building partnerships, capacity development and encouraging knowledge exchange to share best practices.

## 2- Securing our collective rights to land, territories, and resources (LTR) is key to combating planetary crisis

Date: 28.02.2024

Time: 17:00 - 18:30 EAT

The event focused on the critical importance of securing collective rights to land, territories, and resources (LTR) for Indigenous Peoples in combating the planetary crisis. Indigenous Peoples were recognized as custodians of nature, holding invaluable knowledge and practices essential for nature-based solutions. The discussion emphasized the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples to their LTR, which serve as the foundation for their indigenous knowledge and customary practices that address environmental challenges.

Key objectives included raising awareness about the significance of recognizing Indigenous rights to LTR in addressing the triple planetary crisis and other environmental issues. Speakers highlighted the environmental challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples and stressed the need for attention and action from concerned groups and agencies. Furthermore, the event provided a platform to share indigenous knowledge, technologies, innovations, and practices that contribute to mitigating the planetary crisis.

Specific topics addressed included planetary health, indigenous health practices, and environmental health, with examples such as the detrimental effects of uranium mining in Canada on the planet, as presented by a delegate from the Indigenous Peoples affected by the issue.



Organized by the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, the discussion underscored the urgency of legal recognition of Indigenous rights to LTR to enable Indigenous Peoples to continue exercising their traditional practices and contribute significantly to addressing environmental challenges.

### 3- Fair Trade and Green MSMEs: Catalyzing Actions for Environmental Sustainability.

The event focused on the pivotal role that Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play in local and national economies and the need to connect the disconnected (MSMEs) to have a stronger influence in decision making processes to promote an enabling environment for them.

Moderated by Leida Rijnhout, Chief Executive of the World Fair Trade Organization, the distinguished panel included Stuart Worsley from the Green Economy Coalition, Dominic Waughray from the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, Bernard Outah

from the World Fair Trade Organization - Africa & the Middle East, Peter Schelstraete, Co-Founder of Ubuntu, and Jorge Laguna Celis, Director of One Planet Network at the United Nations Environment Programme.

The event's agenda commenced with opening remarks by Leida Rijnhout, highlighting the foundational aspects of green and fair MSMEs and the need for multilateral action. The subsequent panel discussion delved into the challenges and opportunities associated with scaling up initiatives, offering policy recommendations, and searching for adequate investment opportunities.

Relevant discussions covered various aspects, including policy and advocacy, nature-positive business practices, social equity, community engagement, inclusion, multilateral cooperation, and the role of technology and innovation. The session concluded with an interactive Q&A, providing attendees with an opportunity to engage directly with the panelists.

Following the enriching panel discussion, WFTO took the opportunity to present its groundbreaking initiative – the Environmental Solutions Hub.

Developed in collaboration with Ubuntu, this AI-powered platform is designed exclusively for MSMEs, providing them with a comprehensive resource to enhance their environmental performance.

The Environmental Solutions Hub serves as a one-stop destination where MSMEs can source practical solutions and knowledge tailored to their business needs. Covering critical aspects such as energy efficiency, waste reduction, sustainable sourcing, and eco-friendly packaging, the platform aims to empower MSMEs to adopt environmentally sustainable practices.

This platform addresses the challenges faced by MSMEs, providing them with a valuable

tool to overcome barriers such as limited access to information and knowledge of best practices. The AI-powered sustainability consultant, available in multiple languages including English, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, French, German, Hindi, and Mandarin, ensures inclusivity and accessibility for MSMEs worldwide.

The introduction of the Environmental Solutions Hub marked a significant step towards supporting green and fair MSMEs, aligning with the broader goals discussed during the UNEA-6 side event.

A highlight of the Environmental Solutions Hub is its innovative AI-powered sustainability consultant. Accessible at the fingertips of MSMEs, this feature is vetted by entrepreneurial professionals. It offers valuable insights and recommendations to improve environmental performance effectively.

The platform promises to be a catalyst for positive change, fostering environmental sustainability and promoting Fair Trade principles among MSMEs globally.

The event concluded with closing remarks and potential commitments for future collaboration among stakeholders. The discussions emphasized the importance of incorporating green and fair enterprise forms into legislation, tax policies, and global environmental policies, as well as the role of advocacy in advancing the goals of MSMEs.

The event successfully brought together experts and stakeholders to foster dialogue on the crucial intersection of Fair Trade, environmental conservation, and global collaboration, offering a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities for green and fair MSMEs.

#### 4- CITIZEN SCIENCE – A KEY CONTRIBUTION TO MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENT (MEAs).

A high level panel, which included a Keynote Address by former UNEP Chief Scientist Professor Jacqueline McGlade, laid out the principles and actions that funders, organisations and citizen scientists need to adopt to ensure citizen science is a core element of Multi-lateral Agreements at a Green Room Event on Friday morning 28th February.



With key interventions from Astrid Schomaker: Green Diplomacy & Multilateralism, DG Environment, and Dr Mohamed Adbel Raouf: Science and Technology UN Major Group; Gulf Research Centre, the 150+ delegates attending the meeting were left in no doubt about the value of citizen scientists concentrating on supporting delivery of the MEAs. Astrid stressed that citizen science is now expanding well beyond its traditional strength in biodiversity monitoring. Mohamed that it is strongly supported by the Science & Technology Major UN Group.

Practical examples of the sheer scale of current citizen science programmes were provided by Professor Maina Muniafu: Citizen Science Association Africa; Citizen Science Global Partnership, Professor Peter Elias: Citizen Science Association Africa; University of Lagos, and Professor Austin Mast:

Association for Advancing Participatory Science; Florida State University. With citizen science data now exceeding data from traditional sources on biodiversity monitoring it is clear citizen science has the potential to be a key part of MEAs tackling Nature Based Solutions.

Dr Bridie Schultz Australian Citizen Science Association; Sativus Pty Ltd, closed the panel session with examples from Australia that found great empathy with the audience that citizen science is for everyone in society, that it can be scaled and that the proposed Charter on Citizen Science and the MEAs offered a way forward.



QR code to access the draft Charter for citizen science and provide input.

Martin Brocklehurst: Chair Citizen Science Global Partnership (CSGP); and Board Member of the European Citizen Science Association then presented the draft Charter for Citizen Science and the MEAs. He made the point that citizen science is now tackling climate change, air and water pollution and gave an example of an EU project AURORA – Tackling Climate Change <http://aurora-h2020.eu>

Martin invited the audience to support and comment on the Charter as the CSGP seek support for its adoption by the UNEA

Secretariate and the global citizen science community.

### General experience from UNEA6 20<sup>th</sup> GMGSF on 24th - 25th February 2024



The two days summit for UNEA-6 was a great opportunity for me to attend, being the first UNEA attended I was grateful to learnt about the resolutions that were being discussed in different ways/MGos with the stakeholders.

Despite being the first UNEP-UNEA to attend which made me at first to get confused but at least I grasp some of the information which made me to contribute and share about inclusivity of Persons With Disability in these crucial discussions at higher level because we all need inclusivity to bring the change or positive impacts in the society. Not being involved but giving us chance to also share our minds.

Another thing, when talking about Global issues affecting us, let's also think at grassroots level where you find the most vulnerable/indigenous group are coming from and come up with the resolutions as soon as possible.

Thank you

By: JohnKeen Ochieng

Climate Yes, CYMG

## MGos at UNEA 6



MGos at MEA Day Reception 28 Feb.



Moderators and Speakers from the MGos Capacity Building Session 28 Feb.



MGos Daily Morning Coordination Meeting 29 Feb.



MGos Meeting with H E Dennis Francis, President of the United Nations General Assembly on 29 Feb.



Women MG Daily Campaign

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