

CYMG Interventions at the CPR Subcommittee Meeting on 2nd May 2024

> On agenda Item 2. Briefing on Human Rights and the Environment

Delivered In-person by Clive Donnley (Kenya)

On behalf of the major group, and as a demographic unjustly and disproportionately facing the effects of the triple planetary crisis, we strongly support the collaboration between UNEP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in advancing the increasingly **inextricable linkage between human rights and the environment**.

We believe that this avenue targets the discrimination faced by the most vulnerable communities and this could be enriched by borrowing from many sources including but not limited to the **jurisprudential developments** that have continued to enhance implementation and enforcement of environmental laws at both international and national levels. Having said so, we request for the medium term strategy to also take into consideration the **principle of intergenerational equity**, and include the knowledge and skills that we as children and youth have to offer.

We also request for UNEP to strongly champion for the **effective implementation of the [UNGA Resolution 76/300](#)**: the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, through all of its administered processes, including but not limited to UNEA and Montevideo Environmental Law Programme, and always purpose to pursue **rights-based approaches to environmental protection**.

> On Agenda Item 5. Briefing on the Preparations for the Third Session of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on a Science Policy Panel (OEWG-3)

Delivered In-person by Clive Donnley (Kenya)

We extend our gratitude to the Secretariat for their diligent efforts in providing timely meeting **working documents** for the upcoming third session of the OEWG. We commend the Secretariat for their commitment and efficiency, which greatly facilitates our preparations for the forthcoming discussions. Additionally, we eagerly anticipate receiving the **information documents** for further review.

We wish to express our active engagement in the intersessional period through **online consultations**¹ within our constituency. These consultations aim to comprehensively review the provided documents, enabling us to articulate our collective views and respond to the calls for submissions from the Secretariat. Furthermore, we appreciate the initiative to conduct **online webinars and regional meetings**. We urge the Bureau, Member States, and the Secretariat to continue fostering youth engagement in these critical discussions and webinars, recognizing the invaluable perspective that young voices bring to the table. Furthermore, We kindly encourage Member States to consider **including youth and early career professionals in their delegations to the third session**. Such inclusion fosters meaningful youth engagement, as demonstrated in other forums.

¹ Find more about youth engagement in OEWG SPP process: www.cymgenv.net/youth-owwg-spp

In light of the pressing need for enhanced global action on chemical and waste management to mitigate pollution, **we emphasise the importance of establishing a dedicated science-policy panel**. Such a panel would significantly contribute to the development of robust strategies for the sound management of chemicals and waste. As advocates for sustainable development and environmental stewardship, we stand ready to actively participate in the third session of the OEWG and future panel work programmes, reaffirming our commitment to collective efforts towards a healthier planet for present and future generations.

> On Agenda Item 6. Briefing on World Environment Day

Delivered In-person by Clive Donnley (Kenya)

We extend our warmest congratulations to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting this World Environment Day. As one of the biggest days for celebrating the environment worldwide, it provides a platform for us to come together, inspire action, and foster hope in combating one of the most pressing environmental challenges of our time which is desertification.

As a constituency, we welcome the briefing of the world environment day and we reiterate our support for initiatives aimed at tackling desertification. We recognize the critical importance of having a spotlight on and addressing this issue, given **its far-reaching impacts on ecosystems, livelihoods, and communities worldwide**. With changing rainfall patterns, increased frequency of droughts and floods, and rising temperatures, the effects of desertification are being exacerbated, particularly in vulnerable regions, projecting mounted vulnerability to pre-existing fragilities like poverty while affecting vulnerable groups, including **millions of children and youth**.

However, to achieve meaningful progress, and to reverse the decline of drylands, we call for the need for coherent, cohesive, and integrated policy approaches that bridge the gap between research and policy-making within various countries. We also call for more **national efforts to combat desertification**. National efforts to combat desertification often face barriers such as insufficient resources, ineffective policy integration, and poor implementation at the local level. One of the key challenges is the lack of concrete data about the rates and extent of desertification. Therefore, there is a need to prioritise **monitoring and assessment efforts** to inform evidence-based decision-making and policy formulation.

Additionally, mainstreaming combating desertification into larger social and economic development policies is essential for long-term success. This requires societal solutions, greater transparency, accountability, and the participation of multiple actors. For long-term success, we must harness investments in sustainable land management, explore payment for environmental services, and empower local communities through capacity building and education.

As a constituency, we encourage renewed commitments and urgency to tackle degraded lands not just as a matter of policy, but a matter of moral imperative and demonstrated stewardship for our planet. We look forward to meaningful youth engagement during both the World Environment Day celebrations² and the upcoming UNCCD COP 16 in Riyadh, this December.

² Youth commemoration activities for World Environment Day 2024 will be made available at: www.cymgenv.net/wed2024

> On Agenda Item 7. Briefing on the New UNEP Youth and Education Programme

Delivered In-person by Sharon Mutende (Kenya)

We welcome the introduction of the new Youth and Education Programme. This comes at a crucial time after presenting the [Global Youth Declaration on Environment 2024](#), presenting a timely opportunity for meaningful youth engagement and empowerment, particularly in tackling the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss.

We reiterate the critical need for **collaboration with member states, academia and different UN agencies** in implementing this program, especially in vulnerable regions where access to resources, like technology, may be limited. We particularly encourage collaboration with UNICEF to enhance efforts to ensure equitable access to education and youth engagement opportunities, particularly in marginalised areas.

We support an alliance with academia to promote youth action, especially in integrating emerging trends in climate adaptation and mitigation into school curricula. In addition, we recommend the inclusion of advisory services and specific advisory groups in universities to support youth initiatives in Greening Education systems under Goal 1 of the programme. We also invite the incorporation of **legal education in environmental matters** to further empower youth in advocating for environmental justice.

We also call for **diverse forms of the use of technology** in education beyond video games, emphasizing the importance of mainstream media to educate children about environmental issues in addition to social media. We stress the importance of capacity-building and advocacy efforts, including social media campaigns and post-campaign workshops, to empower youth with skills and information under all the three goals.

We enthusiastically welcome Goal 3, particularly the initiative to showcase youth leadership through programs like the Young Champions of The Earth, launched during UNEA6. This signifies a significant step forward in highlighting youth-driven efforts to address the triple planetary crisis.

The Green Jobs for Youth Pact is a commendable initiative aimed at equipping young people with the necessary skills for embracing green employment opportunities. This initiative promises significant environmental, economic, and social benefits, and needs full commitment from all stakeholders. We extend our congratulations to Kenya for hosting a national consultation tomorrow under this initiative, an event that holds promise for fostering the development of youth skills tailored for green job opportunities.

Chair, esteemed delegates, youth engagement in MEA processes has improved in leaps over the past decade and we welcome the plan for continuous **collaboration between The Children and Youth Major Group to UNEP and The UN Youth Office** to streamline youth engagement across the broader UN System.

Finally, we urge member states to join hands with youth in their nations to advance and scale-up the various initiatives under this programme. We encourage regional and national partnerships across various ministries to maximise the effectiveness of initiatives aligned with each goal.

Submitted on behalf of the youth constituency by:

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