

## THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKIYE'S INPUT FOR THE ZERO DRAFT OF THE UNEA-7 MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

### **Q1. What would the Ministers for the Environment propose as the most important elements and or key messages that would enable the ministerial declaration to take forward the UNEA theme in the most impactful manner?**

The adverse effects of climate change are increasingly evident worldwide and in our region. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has confirmed that 2024 was, on average, 1.55°C warmer compared to the pre-industrial period (1850-1900), making it the hottest year on record.

Additionally, 2024 became the first year in which the global average temperature exceeded the pre-industrial level by 1.5°C.

Moreover, the period from 2015 to 2024 has been recorded as the warmest decade ever. This situation confirms that a comprehensive fight against climate change is essential. In this context, providing solution proposals for enhancing climate change adaptation and resilience will contribute to shaping the UNEA-7 declaration.

In this regard, it would be beneficial to address solutions related to:

- Combatting Deforestation and Land Degradation
- Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security,
- Nature-based solutions,
- Digital Transformation for Environmental Governance:
- Inclusive and Collective Responsibility:

**Combatting Deforestation and Land Degradation:** Türkiye emphasizes that deforestation and land degradation are among the primary causes of global environmental crises. Therefore, it calls for the establishment of a strong policy framework to halt and reverse deforestation globally. Türkiye stresses the importance of global cooperation to increase financing for forest conservation, restoration, and sustainable land management. Additionally, it highlights that the protection of forests is critical for preserving biodiversity and plays a key role in combating climate change as carbon sinks. Türkiye advocates for the sharing of best practices in forest and land management and the support for **capacity-building** projects.

**Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security:** The agricultural sector is of critical importance for food security and combating climate change. Türkiye emphasizes the need to support sustainable agricultural practices and ensure food security. It particularly calls for the adoption of **Climate Smart Agriculture** (CSA) approaches, which can increase agricultural productivity while simultaneously reducing environmental impacts and strengthening climate resilience in food production.

Moreover, Türkiye encourages the application of techniques such as **conservation agriculture** that protect soil health and biodiversity. As an agricultural country, Türkiye proposes the widespread use of digitalization and innovative technologies in agriculture, believing that digital agriculture solutions will make production processes more sustainable.

**Nature-Based Solutions (NbS):** Nature-based solutions (NbS) play a significant role in combating climate change and preserving biodiversity. Türkiye advocates for the wider adoption of NbS as strategies for both adaptation and mitigation, and for reducing carbon emissions through the protection of natural ecosystems. Türkiye emphasizes the importance of scaling up NbS practices such as the protection of natural habitats, restoration of forest ecosystems, improvement of wetlands, and green infrastructure projects for cities.

**Digital Transformation for Environmental Governance:** Digitalization is a critical tool for enhancing environmental governance and addressing climate change. Türkiye proposes increasing the use of digital technologies in collecting, monitoring, and analysing environmental data. Furthermore, it is believed that digitalization will be an important step toward environmental transparency and accountability. Strengthening environmental monitoring systems and supporting global data sharing is seen as essential.

**Inclusive and Collective Responsibility:** The responsibility to protect the environment is not only the duty of governments or a specific group of actors; everyone must fulfill their responsibilities. Türkiye advocates for all stakeholders—governments, the private sector, local communities, and civil society—to work together on environmentally friendly solutions. Türkiye calls for adopting a collective approach, encouraging all sectors and societies to take joint responsibility for environmental sustainability. It stresses the need to strengthen global cooperation and interaction, particularly for developing countries.

## **Q2. What key messages or conclusions from recent scientific reports would the Ministers for the Environment recommend for consideration in the ministerial declaration?**

The 2024 Report of the World Meteorological Organization includes significant findings that highlight the impacts of climate change.

According to the 2024 report of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), climate change is progressing at an alarming rate. The key messages highlighted in the report are as follows:

**Global Temperature Increase:** In 2024, the global average temperature was 1.54°C higher than the pre-industrial period, making it the hottest year on record.

**Ocean Warming and Sea Level Rise:** Heat accumulation in the oceans has continued to increase, leading to rising sea levels and causing more frequent and severe coastal flooding.

**Glacier Melting and Sea Ice Reduction:** Antarctic sea ice has reached its second-lowest recorded level, and glacier mass loss has accelerated.

**Extreme Weather Events:** In 2024, extreme weather and climate events have caused significant economic losses and loss of life worldwide.

**Urgency of Action on Climate Change:** The IPCC and IPBES reports indicate that global warming is progressing far beyond expectations, and this is particularly evident in regions most affected by climate change, such as the Mediterranean basin. Türkiye, located in the Mediterranean region, argues that urgent and bold steps must be taken to prevent climate change based on this scientific data. In this context, Türkiye emphasizes the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR), which recognizes that while all countries share the responsibility to address climate change, their obligations differ based on their historical contributions to greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, Türkiye stresses the urgent need for developing comprehensive climate mitigation and adaptation strategies to minimize the economic and social impacts of climate change. Türkiye advocates for strengthening regional cooperation to address these challenges effectively. This collaboration should include joint initiatives in research, technology transfer, and the development of region-specific solutions, which can enhance resilience and accelerate climate action.

**The Importance of Biodiversity:** In recent years, the loss of biodiversity has accelerated, threatening ecosystem services. Türkiye emphasizes that the conservation of biodiversity is not only essential for preserving natural wealth but also critical for human health, agriculture, water supply, and combating climate change. Türkiye calls for increased commitment to biodiversity conservation and stresses the need to accelerate ecosystem restoration efforts globally.

**Ecosystem-based Adaptation:** Scientific reports indicate that ecosystem-based adaptation strategies are particularly effective in ensuring adaptation, especially in water management and agriculture. Türkiye argues that the adoption and support of these strategies are vital for achieving sustainable development goals.

Additionally, the IPCC's AR6 Report will also contribute to delivering important messages in this context.

The following key messages from the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) could also be beneficial within the scope of the declaration.

The IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) delivers key messages on climate change, emphasizing the urgency of action:

- Climate change is undeniably caused by human activities, primarily through greenhouse gas emissions.
- Rising global temperatures have led to extreme weather events, sea level rise, biodiversity loss, and ecosystem degradation.
- The world is rapidly approaching or even exceeding the 1.5°C warming limit set by the Paris Agreement.
- **Adaptation is Essential but Limited:** While adaptation efforts can reduce risks, some limits are already being reached, especially in vulnerable regions.
- **Climate Action is Economically and Socially Beneficial:** Investments in renewable energy, sustainable infrastructure, and nature-based solutions can drive economic growth and social well-being.
- **Every Action Matters:** All sectors and stakeholders must act now to secure a liveable and sustainable future.

**Q3. What proposed collective actions and policy solutions should the Ministers for the Environment adopt to advance the UNEA theme and promote effective and inclusive environmental governance?**

- **Integrated Climate and Biodiversity Policies:** Türkiye proposes addressing environmental policies in an integrated manner with climate change and biodiversity goals. This includes promoting nature-friendly agricultural and forestry practices, increasing the value of ecosystem services, and implementing energy and transportation policies that protect biodiversity.
- **Promotion of Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) and Conservation Agriculture:** Türkiye highlights the importance of sustainable farming techniques, especially Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) and conservation agriculture practices, in reducing environmental impacts while ensuring food security. It suggests offering training programs and financial incentives to encourage farmers to adopt these techniques.
- **Inclusive Policy-making and Stakeholder Engagement:** Türkiye emphasizes the need for environmental policies to be developed not only at the government level but also with an approach that includes all stakeholders. This means implementing decision-making processes in strong collaboration with local communities, the private sector, civil society organizations, scientists, and vulnerable groups (such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities). Türkiye believes that considering the needs and perspectives of these groups is essential for making environmental policies more effective and sustainable.

**Q4. Any other message(s) would the for the Environment wish to be considered or included in the ministerial declaration?**

- **Global Equity in Environmental Action:** Türkiye advocates for the implementation of all environmental actions in an equitable manner. Developing countries must have access to the financial and technological support necessary to ensure environmental sustainability. In this context, it is believed that global environmental justice must be

achieved. Türkiye advocates for the implementation of all environmental actions in an equitable manner, in line with the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR). Türkiye believes that global environmental justice must be achieved, with a strong emphasis on accelerated emission reductions, to meet the 1.5-degree Celsius target.

- **Financing for Sustainability:** Türkiye stresses the need to increase financing for environmentally friendly investments and sustainable development projects. This includes accelerating investments in eco-friendly technologies and infrastructure, particularly in developing countries. Financial tools should be developed to encourage investors to support projects based on sustainability principles. Additionally, it is emphasized that technology dissemination strategies should be adopted to spread eco-friendly technologies and transfer them to developing countries. The sharing of technological innovations and best practices holds great potential in achieving sustainable development goals.
- **Zero Waste:** International efforts within the scope of resolution (77/161) by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly to promote a zero-waste approach within the scope of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development aims to promote local and national zero-waste initiatives through the sharing of best practices and success stories on zero waste. March 30, Zero Waste Day, declared by the decision, brings together stakeholders from all sectors to raise awareness about zero waste at the national, regional, and local levels and to encourage zero waste initiatives that contribute to sustainable development.

In this context, it is thought that the statement "General Assembly resolution 77/161 of 14 December 2022 on promoting zero-waste initiatives to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" should be added to the road map to be prepared within the scope of the UNEA.

- **Blue Economy:** The oceans, covering more than 70% of the Earth's surface and generating over 50% of the world's oxygen, play a crucial role in global sustainability. To ensure their conservation, we are strongly committed to Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG 14): Life Below Water, which includes the objective of designating 30% of the Earth's land and ocean areas as protected zones by 2030. To achieve our collective goals for ocean preservation, the blue economy framework seeks to foster economic growth, promote social inclusion, and enhance or sustain livelihoods while maintaining the health of marine ecosystems.

To support activities to promote the Blue Economy in the world, we urge all stakeholders to fully support promoting and implementing the blue economy in their regions.