



**First informal substantive consultation meeting on UNGA Resolution 73/333
21-23 July 2020**

**EU & MS Statement on “Environmental Rule of Law”
(Recommendations 8, 14 and 17)**

Dear Co-Facilitators,
Distinguished delegates and colleagues,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the EU and its Member States regarding the cluster environmental rule of law and on the responses to recommendations 8, 14 and 17. Serbia and Ukraine align themselves to this statement.

In this cluster, we would like to focus on ways to ameliorate the effective implementation of international environmental law.

- Relevant measures could be approaches to strengthen environment departments of government, enhancing coordination with relevant other government departments, as well as involving stakeholders, such as the national scientific community, the judiciary and the private sector in the context of implementation.
- Existing and agreed principles of international environmental law are an important building block for environmental governance and they contribute to the overall objective of environmental protection. A common understanding as to how principles could be interpreted within a specific context may be beneficial.
- The European Union and its Member States aim to identify approaches to increase the knowledge about principles, their application in the respective contexts and their role in implementing environmental law at the national level. In our written input, we have made a number of specific recommendations as to how States and members of Specialized Agencies could make more intensive use of principles of international environmental law.
- We would like to stress that it is not our intention that the negotiations on the political declaration should lead to a legally binding pact on this issue.

- We would like to recall that one significant aspect is the full recognition and incorporation of environmental principles into the national legal systems.
- The European Union and its Member States would also like to see a focus on the potential contribution of the Montevideo Programme to furthering the environmental rule of law. In our written submission, we have identified several instances in which the Montevideo Programme could help in that regard: Strengthening institutional capacity-building, facilitating education and training in the field of environmental law and offering technical assistance can be considered as some of the successes of the Montevideo Programme and we would like to see these activities strengthened and built upon.
- The Montevideo Programme could also host discussions on principles of international environmental law, their interpretation and implementation. We see merit in a specific focus on training for legal professionals such as judges, prosecutors and other enforcement officials as well as national stakeholders. This could translate into approaches furthering the ambitious development and implementation of environmental law, adding to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and into strengthening country-level capacity.