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MINISTERS & ENVIRONMENT  
AUTHORITIES OF ASIA PACIFIC



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**United Nations Environment Programme Asia and the Pacific Office**

Fourth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific  
Suwon City, Republic of Korea, 5-7 October 2021

Discussion Document for Agenda Item 4:

**Endorsement of the report of the Senior Officials Meeting of the Fourth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific**

**Chair's Summary of the Senior Officials Meeting of the Fourth United Nations Environment Programme Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific**

**Discussion Document -- Not for quotation or citation.** The purpose of this document is to facilitate discussions during the Fourth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific, Suwon City, Republic of Korea, 5-7 October 2021 (hybrid). Comments are welcome and should be sent to [uneproap@un.org](mailto:uneproap@un.org). NB: To be numbered as (UNEP/APEnvForum (4)/6) if adopted by Senior Officials.

\*The geographical coverage of the UN Environment Programme's Asia-Pacific office includes 41 Member States: Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kiribati, Korea (Democratic People's Republic of), Korea (the Republic of), Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Niue, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Viet Nam.

## I. Overview

1. The Republic of Korea's Ministry of Environment and the United Nations Environment Programme jointly organized the fourth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific from 5-7 October 2021, in Suwon City, Republic of Korea. The Forum focused on the theme of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly 'Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals'. The Forum was attended by the following countries served by the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific: Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Korea (the Republic of), Lao PDR, Marshall Islands, Malaysia, Maldives, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Niue, Pakistan, Palau, Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Viet Nam. Participants included High-Level Representatives of Governments, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations organizations, and representatives of civil society groups.

2. The fourth session of United Nations Environment Programme's Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific comprised of a Senior Officials Segment on 6 October and a Ministerial segment on 7 October. The Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and the Asia Pacific Science Policy Business Forum on the Environment was held on 5 October. The Asia Pacific Regional Youth Environment Forum was held on 2-3 October.

3. The objectives of the Forum were to discuss:

- Progress in the region in implementing resolutions and decisions of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme; and identification of regional priorities for the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.
- 'Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals', from an Asia and the Pacific perspective.

## II. Opening of the senior official's segment of the fourth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific (\*Member States primarily served by the United Nations Environment Programme's Asia and the Pacific Office)

4. Under agenda item 1 (a) opening addresses, H.E. Hong Jeong Kee, Vice Minister, Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea, H.E. Yeom Tae-young, Mayor, Suwon City, Republic of Korea, and Ms. Dechen Tsering, Regional Director and Representative for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Environment Programme, made welcome remarks. The opening session was presided over by Mr. Naresh Pal Gangwar, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India and Senior Officials Bureau, Third Forum of ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific.

5. The inaugural address was delivered by Ms. Laksmi Dhewanthi, Vice President of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly Bureau, and Director General, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia.

6. Under agenda item 1 (b) on Election of Officers, the Senior Officials elected the following Bureau members:

- a. Chair: Dr. Anil Jasinghe, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka
- b. Vice-Chair: Ms. Jeong Eunhae, Director General, Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea
- c. Vice-Chair: H.E. Dr. Vann Momyneath, Secretary General, National Council for Sustainable Development, Ministry of Environment, Cambodia

7. Under agenda item 1 (c) Adoption of the agenda, the Senior Officials adopted the following agenda:

- Opening of the Forum:
  - a. Opening addresses;
  - b. Election of officers;
  - c. Adoption of the agenda.
- Review of implementation in of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly in Asia and the Pacific.
- Regional input to outcomes of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (2019) including: (a) United Nations Environment Assembly theme: 'Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals'; (b) Draft resolutions of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fifth session; (c) Draft Ministerial Declaration of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fifth session.
- Adoption of the report of the senior officials of the fourth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific (member States primarily served by the United Nations Environment Programme Asia and the Pacific Office).

### **III. Review of implementation of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly in Asia and the Pacific.**

8. Under agenda item 2, the Secretariat presented progress in the region on the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly and on key flagship programmes and events (UNEP/APEnvForum (4)/1).

9. The session reviewed progress on the implementation of the resolutions and decisions of the United Nations Environment Assembly in the region. A number of regional priorities and issues for the United Nations Environment Programme were discussed and highlighted. They included the following:

- Member States thanked the secretariat and noted the importance of the Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific in contributing regional perspectives towards discussions at UNEA 5.2
- It was noted that while managing and recovering from COVID 19, it is necessary to focus on environmental challenges and implement UNEA resolutions in order to have sustainable and resilient ecosystems.
- It was recommended that UNEP continue to consult Member States widely on reports prepared to ensure the highest standards of accuracy.  
The Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) meeting in Kunming, China from 11 to 15 October 2021 provides an opportunity to strengthen work on nature conservation.

#### *Resolution 2/6 Supporting the Paris Agreement*

- Member States noted the submission of enhance Nationally Determined Contributions and strong commitment to supporting the achievement of the Paris Agreement including at the upcoming COP26 in Glasgow.
- The Republic of Korea has announced 2050 carbon neutrality declared in 2020 and noted that it is the 14th country to pass a law on carbon neutrality.
- Member States continue to support developing countries implementation of Paris Agreement to build capacity for climate adaptation and monitoring.
- Republic of Korea supports developing countries for the transition to green economy through international organizations including the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI)

- Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) will open a liaison office in Songdo, Republic of Korea to support action in the region.
- Thailand is attempting to synergize the actions to tackle the domestic air pollution with climate actions through strong collaboration with Climate and Clean Air Coalition in order to move towards the goals of the Paris Agreement.

#### *Resolution 4/11 Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities*

- Brunei noted that it has initiated a marine debris cleanup campaign in line with the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Region.
- It was noted that there is an ongoing need for concrete collaborations and strong measures to protect coastal and marine environments.
- The Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN region provides an opportunity to scale up action.
- The Regional Capacity Centre for Clean Seas (RC3S) has been established in Bali, Indonesia and has supported building of partnerships for action.

#### *Resolution 4/9 Addressing Single-use Plastic Products Pollution*

- Many Countries have been making voluntary efforts through policy and regulatory instruments augmenting waste management infrastructure to address plastic waste pollution.
- Brunei has introduced a no plastic bag day' initiative to reduce usage and has set a recycling target of 30% by 2030.
- India has recently notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment (PWM) Rules, 2021, prohibiting identified single use plastic items, which have low utility and high littering potential, by 2022.
- Noted that India has provided specific support to state governments to strengthen plastic waste management.
- Malaysia has adopted a Roadmap towards Zero Single-use Plastics.
- Thailand intends to address the impacts of plastic wastes by adopting "The 20-Year Roadmap for Plastic Waste Management (2018-2037)", to accelerate the management of plastic waste at source.

#### *Resolution 4/12 Sustainable Management for Global Health of Mangrove*

- Indonesia is accelerating mangrove restoration and has supported the restoration of degraded mangrove areas.

#### *Resolution 4/13 Sustainable coral reefs management; Resolution 2/12 Sustainable coral reefs management*

- Brunei noted the establishment of Coral Cay Conservation programme annual work plan.
- The coral triangle initiative of coral reefs, fisheries and food security has played a key role in strengthening partnerships and protection through Marine Protected Areas.

#### *Resolution 4/14 Sustainable Nitrogen Management*

- India has launched neem-coated urea policy to reduce nitrogen pollution from the agriculture sector.
- Was welcomed that in 2019 member states endorsed a proposed roadmap for action on nitrogen challenges called the Colombo Declaration on Sustainable Nitrogen Management, countries were encouraged to join the initiative.
- Sri Lanka has set an ambitious target to halve nitrogen waste by 2030.
- SACEP and Sri Lanka would organize a high-level event on 'Nitrogen for Climate' at COP-26.

#### *Resolution 4/16 Conservation and Sustainable Management of Peatlands*

- Indonesia has enacted a Ministerial Decree on peatland on national long-term planning for protection and management of peat lands 2020 – 2049 and introduced monitoring stations.

#### *Resolution 4/19 Mineral Resource Governance*

- Singapore placed on record its disappointment that a report referenced in the resolution did not represent Singapore in a fair and balanced manner. Singapore stressed that reports must reflect robust and objective information, to allow correct policy formulation and prevent mischaracterisation. Singapore noted that it has taken steps to reduce reliance on sand while promoting alternate construction methods and materials.

#### *Resolution 4/6 Marine Plastic Litter and Microplastics; Resolution 3/7 Marine litter and microplastics; Resolution 2/11 Marine plastic litter and micro-plastics; Resolution 1/6 Marine plastic debris and microplastics*

- Japan has supported technical training and capacity building on addressing marine plastic litter and since 2016 36 participants have completed training.
- Japan is working with Indonesia and Vietnam to develop national guidelines on marine plastic litter.
- Japan chaired the 4th meeting of Adhoc open ended working group on marine litter. Outcomes will be reported at UNEA 5.2 to support discussions of a new instrument.
- Malaysia has prepared a National marine litter policy and action plan 2021 – 2030.

#### *Resolution 3/8 Preventing and reducing air pollution to improve air quality globally; 1/7 Strengthening the role of the United Nations Environment Programme in promoting air quality*

- Brunei noted that it has upgraded standards for ambient air quality monitoring.
- India is implementing National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) for reducing levels of air pollution in non-attainment cities (NACs). The programme is focusing on implementation of comprehensive clean air action plans and strategies at National, State and City level for 20 to 30% reduction in Particulate Matter (PM) concentrations.
- The 'International Day for Clean Air for blue skies' was initiated by the Republic of Korea and many other countries, and held on September 7, was welcomed as a means to increased awareness of air pollution for sustainable development.

#### *Resolution 4/1 Innovative Pathways to Achieve Sustainable Consumption and Production; 2/8 Sustainable consumption and production*

- Indonesia has adopted a national framework of action for Sustainable Consumption and Production that includes an online community of practice on SCP for multi stakeholders collaboration. Plus, national guidelines for action on SCP provide clear guidance for all stakeholders on action needed.
- It was noted that there is ongoing development of an ASEAN Sustainable Consumption and Production Framework.
- Malaysia has introduced a roadmap 2021-2030 towards sustainable consumption and production to move towards circular economy.
- Thailand has implemented green public procurement and eco-labeling schemes and awareness raising and education among local government and city officials.

#### *Resolution 4/5 Sustainable infrastructure*

- It was noted that UNEA Resolution on Sustainable Infrastructure is important for enhancing the cross sectoral benefits of sustainable infrastructure.
- Mongolia is promoting sustainable infrastructure and transiting to sustainable pathways including through its enhanced NDC and transport sectors.

#### *Resolution 2/21 Sand and dust storms*

- Iran noted strong commitment to combatting sand and dust storms including allocation of funds for monitoring air quality and establishment of national standards for combatting sand and dust storms.
- It was noted that Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM) has supported action on sand and dust storms.
- It was recommended to establish a regional fund or financial mechanism for strengthening global partnership to combat sand and dust storm.

The secretariat further shared that the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is supporting the following UNEA resolutions:

- Resolution 4/3 Sustainable mobility
- Resolution 4/23 Keeping the World Environment under Review: Enhancing UNEP's Science-Policy Interface and Endorsement of the Global Environment Outlook
- Resolution 1/4 Science-policy interface
- Resolution 3/4 Environment and Health
- Resolution 1/8 Ecosystem-based adaptation
- Resolution 4/10 Innovations on biodiversity and land degradation
- Resolution 2/16 Mainstreaming of biodiversity for well-being
- Resolution 2/4 Role, functions and modalities for UNEP implementation of the SAMOA Pathway as a means of facilitating achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals
- Resolution 2/10 Oceans and seas
- Resolution 2/17 Enhancing the work of UNEP in facilitating cooperation, collaboration, and synergies among biodiversity-related conventions
- Resolution 2/23 Sustainable management of natural capital for sustainable development and poverty eradication
- Resolution 4/17 Promote gender equality, and the human rights and empowerment of women and girls in environmental governance
- Resolution 4/18 Poverty Environment Nexus
- Resolution 4/20 Fifth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo V); Resolution 2/19 Midterm review of the Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme)
- Resolution 2/14 Illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products; Resolution 1/3 Illegal trade in wildlife
- Resolution 4/2 Promoting sustainable practices and innovative solutions for curbing food loss and waste; Resolution 2/9 Prevention, reduction, and reuse of food waste
- Resolution 4/7 Environmentally Sound Management of Waste
- Resolution 4/8 Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste; Resolution 2/7 Sound management of chemicals and waste; 1/5 Chemicals and waste
- Resolution 3/9 Eliminating exposure to lead paint and promoting environmentally sound management of waste lead-acid batteries

#### Secretarial Functions for Regional Forums and Flagship Events

10. The United Nations Environment Programme Asia and the Pacific Office provides secretariat functions to: the Asia Pacific Regional Forum on Health and Environment; the Acid

Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia; the Asia Pacific Clean Air Partnership; the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia; the Northwest Pacific Action Plan; and the Asia Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Network. A number of regional priorities and issues related to the secretariat functions of the United Nations Environment Programme Asia and the Pacific Office were discussed and highlighted. They included the following:

- Transboundary environmental issues require cooperation including through such initiatives as: APCAP support to air quality regulations and policies and regional seas agreements such as COBSEA that was noted to support countries ability to address marine litter.

Processes and mechanisms for promoting Asia Pacific priorities in the resumed fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2)

11. The secretariat shared a timeline of events leading up to the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly:

- 25-29 October 2021: 8th Annual Subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
- February 2022: Civil society will host the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, which facilitates the participation of civil society in the Environment Assembly and associated meetings.
- February 2022: The Science Policy Business Forum will engage policymakers, scientists, researchers, and civil society stakeholders in a discussion on the science required to deliver on the environmental dimensions of sustainable development.
- 21-25 February 2022: The resumed fifth meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives will serve as the main preparatory meeting for the Environment Assembly.
- 28 February-2 March 2022: The resumed fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly under the theme 'Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals'
- 3 - 4 March 2022: a special session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to mark the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP@50).

**IV. Regional input into the second session of the fifth United Nations Environment Assembly (28 February-2 March 2022) outcome, including:**

12. Under agenda item 3 (a) on the theme 'Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals'. The Secretariat introduced the discussion document 'Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals' (UNEP/APEnvForum (4)/2). A number of issues and priorities were identified for consideration at United Nations Environment Assembly on this theme and by the United Nations Environment Programme. They included the following:

- Pakistan's clean green movement to support behavioral change at community and city levels and the ten billion tree tsunami project have helped to conserve local environments, address deforestation, and generate green stimulus. A post covid national wash programme also increase access to sanitation. Single use plastic bags were banned in 2019 in Islamabad. Pakistan's NDCs will be revised to include gender and inclusivity.
- Need for nature-based solutions in the long term as part of covid recovery plans. Nature action needed includes climate change including green energy and jobs. Republic of Korea's Green New Deal responds to climate change and creates growth in nature-based manner and is completed by other strategies including a nature-based greenhouse reduction plan and climate change adaptation strategy. Need to share knowledge on nature-based solutions and support and it was noted that Republic of Korea had increased its green ODA.
- China's ecological protection work includes public information campaigns to support blue skies and clean soil and China has also set pollution reduction targets and has measured

success in anti-pollution work. A National Strategy on adaptation and mitigation for green development and has strengthened action under China's NDC for example in 2020 it was noted that the countries carbon emission dropped 18.8 % compared to 2015. In 2016 marine micro plastics were included in national environmental monitoring systems.

- Vietnam has integrated SDGs in its national development strategies and has implemented many initiatives aimed at sustainable development at various levels and different scales. Vietnam is likely to achieve 5/17 SDGs goals by 2030 but is facing many challenges to achieve the remaining goals. A number of plans has been initiated including sustainable development and green growth strategies and action plans to shift towards responsible production and consumption. Vietnam has promulgated the Law on Marine and Island Resources and Environment; Law on Environmental Protection; National Strategy for Environmental Protection; National Action Plan on Plastic Debris, National Strategy on biodiversity conservation and now developing the National Marine Spatial Planning and Master Plan on Sustainable Exploitation and Use of sea and islands resources and environment. Vietnam commits continuing to support international and regional efforts and promoting the implementation of sustainable development goals in Vietnam through sharing experiences and cooperating with countries and partners.
- It was noted that Asia Pacific is facing transboundary challenges which need subregional regional and global cooperation including combating marine litter and that developing countries require support to transition to a post covid sustainable development pathway.
- Cambodia's policy documents, such as our updated NDC, Industrial Development Policy and the Climate Change Strategy, have emphasized on green recovery, resilience, and resource efficiency as part of a long-term strategy to attain carbon neutrality. Many other sustainability projects have been implemented too, including collaborations on sustainable mobility, sustainable management of mangrove and coral reefs, and marine plastic litter. Cambodia is further developing mechanisms to support the national implementation of international instruments, including the Paris Climate Agreement, Convention on Biodiversity, and the UNEP strategy for 2022-2025.
- Thailand reiterated the need to support developing countries in the region in moving towards the new normal solutions

13. A statement from the Asia Pacific Science-Policy-Business Forum on Environment, held prior to the high-level segment was delivered. 500 people participated. Was noted that the Forum encourages technology, partnerships, and integrated solutions for nature. It emphasized the importance of science to address interconnected issues to biodiversity and climate change including energy, water, and food nexus. The Forum addressed, big data and technology; green economy strategies; plastic pollution. Need to enable citizen science and to reduce gender gap in tech. Data transparency is critical for accountability. Industry can take action through recycling and generating less plastic and waste. Need to use inclusive wealth as a better measure for sustainable economic growth than GDP. Sustainable public procurement is key given its significance in all countries. Need increase nature-based investment and sustainable private sector investments. Multi-sectoral cooperation is needed to address sustainable development.

14. A statement from Asia Pacific Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, held prior to the high-level segment, was delivered. In terms of nature for climate, there is need to come out of coal dependence and halt fossil fuel subsidies and substantially strengthen Nationally Determined contributions. On nature for food, the importance of agroecological approaches and food sovereignty embedded with a right to food was emphasized and for governments to recognize the rights, knowledge, innovation and wisdom of indigenous peoples, small farmers and women providing sustainable solutions for environment, climate change, biodiversity and food. On nature for jobs, there was a call for enhanced work force participation of women, respect labour laws and trade unions and end discrimination against migrant workers and for governments to promote production systems that put the people and environmental sustainability at the centre of development rather than extractive systems. On nature for health, there was a call for reversing neo-liberal policies that lead to erosion of public investment in health and to address the glaring lack of



global vaccine solidarity and hoarding, and profiteering taking over public good. It was noted that the environment and climate cycle cannot be restored without taking into account and addressing systemic issues upfront. Recommendations for UN environment Assembly 5.2 included: strong and binding commitments to address marine plastic pollution and litter by 2030; an end to ecocide and genocide by bringing an internationally binding agreement to end production, use, export and import of highly hazardous pesticides by 2030; increased UNEA action on air pollution; UNEA to ask UNEP to prepare a report on how nature action and science policy coherence across all UN agencies and processes can be ensured and present it in the UNEA 6.

15. Under agenda item 3 (b) on the 'Draft resolutions of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fifth session', UNEP's Committee of Permanent Representatives bureau member, Ms. Saqlain Syedah, High Commissioner of Pakistan in Nairobi, delivered introductory remarks and introduced the discussion document 'Regional input to the second session of the fifth United Nations Environment Assembly outcome' (UNEP/APEnvForum (4)/3). Member States were invited to submit or announce draft resolutions to the secretariat of the Governing Bodies of the United Nations Environment Programme in time for the 8th meeting of the annual subcommittee (25-29 October) if possible and no later than 20 December 2021. Final negotiations of draft resolutions will take place at the resumed 5th meeting of the Open-Ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-5), 21-25 February 2022. With regard to consideration and negotiation of draft resolutions, the CPR recommended, at its extraordinary meeting on 23 June 2021, that the Vice-Chair of the Committee *"representing the Latin American and Caribbean States be tasked with the coordination of the negotiating processes of draft decisions and draft resolutions to be submitted for the consideration of the Environment Assembly at its resumed fifth session, including during the resumed fifth session of the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives, and that the Bureau of the United Nations Environment Assembly consider designating a representative of the Latin American and Caribbean States to chair a sessional committee of the whole, if established, at the fifth session of the Environment Assembly."*

16. A number of issues and priorities from the region were identified for consideration at United Nations Environment Assembly at its fifth session under these resolutions. They included the following:

- Indonesia noted that lakes contain 90% of fresh water and they are therefore important for water security, health, cultural services, and energy. Lakes are threatened from increased human populations, climate change and pollution. Indonesia proposed a resolution on sustainable lake management covering 1) protection of water quality and fisheries 3) integration of lake management plans into national planning 3) capacity development for communities for lake management 4) involvement of all stakeholders 5) scientific guidance and science-policy linkages 6) development of international networking on lake management. UNEP was requested to support mainstreaming of lake management and sharing knowledge and best practices and support a World Lakes Day. Member states were encouraged to support the resolution. Indonesia recommended extending 10-year framework of programmes on SCP until 2030 and request UNEP to initiate a process to do this.
- Sri Lanka noted that they will propose a new resolution on nitrogen management given impact of nitrogen on water and air pollution particularly from agriculture where large populations face a health risk. Was noted that eutrophication is also risk for coastal populations. The resolution would call on member states to take more comprehensive actions on addressing nitrogen pollution. Sri Lanka supported Japan's resolution on plastic marine litter.
- Japan noted that they will propose a new resolution on marine plastic pollution. It was noted that an intergovernmental negotiating committee to discuss a new global instrument on marine plastic litter needed the wide participation of countries. There is also a need to understand each countries circumstances. The draft resolution would cover a general structure that countries could agree on without prejudging a global instrument. A life cycle

approach would be encouraged to reduce marine plastic pollution on country by country basis with calls upon each country to further strengthen action on marine plastic litter. Japan requested countries to consider cosponsoring this resolution and noted a draft would be shared by UNEP soon after the Forum

- Republic of Korea noted that they had introduced policy measures, institutional arrangements and is developing a more comprehensive action plan on circular economy this year. This included laying foundations for urban waste to biogas production. Republic of Korea joined the Global Alliance on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency in 2021. Republic of Korea welcomed the proposed resolution on plastics and supports a global and legally binding instrument on plastic pollution. The ministerial declaration for UNEA's focus on circular economy was welcomed as was the need to include plastic issues in the declaration.
- Singapore supported in-principle Indonesia's proposed resolution on sustainable lake management and the extension of the 10FYP on SCP and looked forward to reviewing the draft resolutions when ready. Singapore noted Japan's intention to table a resolution on plastics and similarly looked forward to reviewing the draft when ready. Singapore noted it was necessary to build on work already done, identify how best to catalyse global action to deliver real progress on the ground, and pin-point accurately the fundamental drivers of plastic pollution, giving recognition that marine litter and plastic pollution are primarily caused by inadequate and environmentally unsound management of waste from land-based sources. Singapore suggested providing space for countries to engage on a science-based basis, and to consider a wide range of solutions and approaches that are most practical and feasible, and which recognises that plastics continue to play a functional role in modern society
- Thailand noted need for global framework to address global plastic pollution based on a precautionary approach and common but differentiated responsibility and not duplicating existing mechanisms and that addresses any related gaps. In this regard, Thailand stands ready to support UNEA actions on plastic.
- It was noted that in the Ministerial Conference on Marine Litter and Plastic Pollution in September, Australia endorsed the Ministerial Statement, joining others in calling for improved global action on marine plastic pollution through a new global agreement. Australia sees the need for a global approach that is informed by circular economy principles and the waste management hierarchy. This approach will also complement existing instruments and initiatives. Australia therefore urges others to join us in supporting the establishment of an international negotiating committee to negotiate a new global agreement at the upcoming resumed fifth session of UNEA in February 2022.

### **Draft declaration of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fifth session.**

17. Under agenda item 3 (c) on the 'Draft declaration of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fourth session' UNEA-5 Vice President, Ms. Laksmi Dhewanthi, Director General, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia introduced the draft declaration of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fifth session (UNEP/APEnvForum (4)/INF/3c). Moving forward, member states were encouraged to provide written inputs on the Declaration to the United Nations Environment Programme. The draft declaration emphasizes actions required to enhance nature and that transformative actions are key to achieving the SDGs and has received two rounds of written inputs from member states to date. A number of issues and priorities from the region were identified for consideration at United Nations Environment Assembly under this Declaration. The timeline for finalizing the Declaration was noted as:

- An updated zero draft ministerial declaration, based on guidance from the Bureau at its meeting on 5th October 2021, will be circulated at very soon to all Member States, Major Groups and Stakeholders for their feedback.

- On 26 October, there will be an informal briefing on the consultation process convened by the UNEA Presidency during the 8th Annual Sub-committee meeting, with support from the Secretariat.
- Late November will be the deadline for submission of inputs to the zero draft of the ministerial declaration, from which a revised draft ministerial declaration will be prepared and circulated in December and will be followed by a Virtual open-ended informal consultation meeting convened by the UNEA Presidency.
- On January next year, the presidency plans to convene an Open-ended informal consultation in Nairobi with support from the Secretariat and CPR. A final draft of the ministerial declaration shall be circulated as a result from the consultation.
- If required, on February 2022 another Open-ended consultations would be held, at the margins of the OECPR. It is a plan to have the Ministerial declaration adopted by consensus at the resumed session of UNEA 5 on March 2022.

18. Under this agenda item 3, civil society organisations and stakeholders noted the following:

- It was noted that APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) has a number of initiatives to support sustainable and inclusive economic growth including: Roadmaps on marine debris and illegal fishing; a green, sustainable and innovative MSMEs initiative; and public private partnerships around reducing food waste.
- International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) noted the importance of supporting ecosystem-based services and recognising the Hindu Kush Malal as a globally important ecosystem for support. ICIMOD also called for more coordinated action on sustainable mountain-based development.
- South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) shared that member countries include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. SACEP noted its work on sustainable nitrogen management South Asian Nitrogen Hub that will study different forms of pollution to develop policy recommendations. SACEP also supports a global campaign on sustainable nitrogen management launched with UN. SACEP is managing a plastic waste project to facilitate the regions transition to circular plastic economy through public private cooperation.
- Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP) marine litter plastics pollution requires scaled up action. Was noted that the ANZPAC Plastics Pact is a collaborative solution that brings together key players behind a shared vision of a circular economy for plastic includes governments and other organizations in the region. Support was expressed by SPREP for an intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop a legally binding agreement on marine plastic litter. Regional declaration on plastic emphasised need for free prior informed consent must be part of the solution plastic crisis.
- Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) noted critical importance of education to sustainable development. Climate change, food energy, water, technology, and infrastructure are core areas of AITs work and called for increased collaboration around the SDGs.
- Institute for Global Environment Strategies (IGES) noted the need for technological and social innovation for SCP. Paragraph 88 in Rio +20 provides an opportunity to strengthen UNEP and noted that environment should be mainstreamed across development banks. IGEs noted that the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision voluntarily commits G20 countries to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050 through a comprehensive life-cycle approach, thereby ensuring that by 2050, the net volume of plastic entering the ocean is zero. Marine plastic waste needs a global agreement to address upstream waste generation and needs ambitious targets and requirements for national and local action plans.

- International Labour Organisation (ILO) noted that 1.2 billion jobs are dependent on healthy ecosystems. The right policies could generate 24 million new jobs in nature-based solutions by 2030. ILO Guidelines for a just transition to environmentally and sustainable societies for all provide guidance for greening recovery packages. Coal phase work out and just energy transition is being done by the UN at regional level through issue-based coalition on mitigation.
- Food and Agriculture Organization of UN (FAO) noted importance of mainstreaming biodiversity across agriculture sectors, and restoring degraded soils for productivity, food, livelihoods, and carbon sequestration. FAO is organising the 15<sup>th</sup> World Forest conference in May 2022 with the Republic of Korea focused on building green future with forests. FAO noted it is co-leading UN Decade of Action on ecosystems Restoration 2021 to 2030 with UNEP.
- UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) noted the importance of DRR for achieving the SDGs given 25 targets are linked to the issue and that conservation and management of ecosystems supports DRR. Ecosystems based DRR and adaptation plays an important role and requires increased investment of up to 50% of total climate finance.
- UN Women noted gender plays a role in supporting the environmental SDGs. Women often face heightened levels of risk stemming from environmental degradation due to their position in societies. There is increasing evidence to show that women should have increased engagement in decision making. Climate change and sustainability are important levers for women's empowerment and these issues are now integrated into UN women's work. Empowering Women for Climate Resilient Societies is good example of joint project between UNEP and UN Women that addresses gender and environment.
- UN Resident Coordinator for Mongolia noted that coordinated UN action at country level with government is needed to address climate change. At COP26, the President of Mongolia is presenting and will draw on a pre-COP event organised in the country.
- Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan, noted its focus on the protection of environment and sustainable development. Integrated efforts are needed to achieve SDG 15. UNEP@50 provides an opportunity for governments to acknowledge the contributions of UNEP including, for example, the protection of the ozone layer, greening of the UN system and regional cooperation. Need to strengthen environmental multilateralism.
- A representative from the Asia Pacific Regional Youth Environment Forum held on 2-3 October welcomed the Ministerial Declaration but noted that children and youth as agents of change be recognised and should be included in multilateral environmental forums. UNEP Regional Office was requested to support funding participation at UNEA for youth participants. The resolutions proposed were welcomed and it was requested to include language on children and youth in the texts as well as for member states to propose a resolution on youth.

**V. Endorsement of the report of the senior officials of the fourth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific** (\*Member States primarily served by the United Nations Environment Programme's Asia and the Pacific Office)

19. Under agenda item 4, the Senior Officials endorsed the present report of the senior officials of the third United Nations Environment Programme Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific.

20. Forum members thanked the Government of the Republic of Korea for their hospitably.

