

DRAFT/25.1.2022  
Leadership Dialogue: Strengthening Action for Nature to Achieve the  
Sustainable Development Goals

Wednesday, 2 March 2022, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm (EAT)  
Hybrid, Nairobi

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**I. Introduction**

Introduction

In line with the approved [draft structure](#) of the resumed session of the Fifth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2) to be held from 28 February to 2 March 2022, a 90-minute Leadership Dialogue will take place on the UNEA-5 theme of ‘Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals’, in a hybrid setting on Wednesday, 2 March 2022 from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm EAT.

This Leadership Dialogue intends to bring together stakeholders from across governments, the scientific community, civil society, private sector, the UN system and other international organizations for an engaging discussion on how we can strengthen action for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of nature, in line with the [UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#). To this end, the dialogue aims to both touch upon the preconditions for the success of such actions and to showcase examples of concrete initiatives that people, governments and organizations around the world are taking to heal our broken relationship with nature, whilst contributing to the achievement of several SDGs.

Scope of the dialogue

In her report to UNEA-5, the Executive Director of UNEP, Inger Andersen, identified four key topics that form part of our global response to the intertwined planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution:

1. **Nature for Health** - marine plastic litter/plastic pollution; zoonotic diseases
2. **Nature for jobs, poverty eradication and economic prosperity** - Building back better from the pandemic by investing directly in nature
3. **Nature for climate** - Action to match commitments regarding ecosystems-based solutions and biodiversity

#### 4. Nature for sustainable food systems - Reducing agriculture's impact on nature: nourished people on a thriving planet.

UNEP's synthesis report on *Making peace with nature*<sup>[1]</sup> further highlighted the role of "Ambitious and coordinated action by governments businesses and people around the world" to prevent and reverse the worst impacts of environmental decline. Similarly, the post-2020 global biodiversity framework currently being negotiated under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) aims to provide a blueprint for urgent broad-based action across government and society worldwide "to bring about a transformation in society's relationship with biodiversity". The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration's flagship report "[Becoming #GenerationRestoration](#)" found that countries have already committed to restoring 1 billion hectares. However, less is known about the progress towards commitments, or the quality of restoration. To live in harmony with nature we will need to transform social and economic systems, recognize and understand nature's intrinsic value, and put that value at the heart of our decision-making. To achieve such transformative change at an appropriate scale, whole of society approaches are needed and in particular embedding nature in decisions of non-environmental actors. Stakeholders across government and society could and are starting to play "individual, complementary and nested roles" to bring about cross-sectoral and economy-wide transformative change with immediate and long-term impact to conserve and sustainably use nature, the very foundation of sustainable development.

"Transformation involves a fundamental change in the technological, economic and social organization of society, including worldviews, norms, values and governance."

<sup>[1]</sup> The first UNEP synthesis report entitled: "*Making peace with nature: A scientific blueprint to tackle the climate, biodiversity and pollution emergencies*" (2021).

The Leadership Dialogue aims to expand the conversation beyond environmental actors, inviting participants to highlight the opportunities for strengthening action for nature to achieve the SDGs. Panelists and participants are invited to reflect on the role of **behavioral change, shifting social, economic and financial paradigms**, as important enablers for strengthening action for nature. Moreover, participants will be invited to showcase specific actions and initiatives they are taking, as a government, community, financial institution, business, international organization. These will include examples related, amongst others, to the four topics identified by the Executive Director of UNEP in her report to UNEA as potential areas of action.

## II. Format and approach

The leadership dialogues will be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022, in Conference Room 1 and online, from 11:30 to 13:00 Nairobi time with a total duration of 90 minutes.

The leadership dialogues will be held in hybrid format and interpretation will be provided in all six official UN languages, using the platform "Interactio". Participants or their aides will be required to ensure connection to the platform prior to the Leadership Dialogue and to familiarize themselves with

the platform in advance (by participating in one of the dedicated training sessions offered by the Secretariat).

The proposed conference room arrangements for those attending in person are illustrated in the image below:

**Proposed approach**

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**Proposed layout in Conference Room 1 for the High-Level Leadership Dialogues.**

The first hemicycle will be occupied by the pre-registered Contributing Ministers (or HoD). In the front will be the Invited Guests and the Moderator.

### III. Participation

The session is open to the participation of representatives of Member States, members of specialized agencies, United Nations entities and other intergovernmental organizations and regional economic integration organizations, as well as to representatives of accredited major groups and stakeholders' organizations.

The Leadership Dialogue will involve the participation of pre-registered Contributing Ministers, invited guests, moderator, and rapporteur.

- a) **Pre-registered Contributing Ministers.** Ministers wishing to participate in the dialogues have been invited to express that interest to the Secretariat of Governing Bodies indicating so, at their earliest convenience, but not later than 10 February 2022. Considering the duration of the dialogue (90 minutes), it is envisaged the participation of up to 5 – 10 Contributing Ministers in the discussion session. Contributing Ministers will be selected from those registered, according to the first come, first served principle, and taking into consideration a balanced gender and

geographical representation. Although in-person participation is recommended, contributing Ministers might join and participate virtually.

- b) **Moderators.** The dialogue will be facilitated by an experienced facilitator with knowledge on the specific topic of the dialogue. The Moderator will play a key role in facilitating a dynamic and engaging exchange of views among participants.
- c) **Rapporteurs.** The dialogue will have a representative from Member States serving as rapporteur for the dialogue. Rapporteurs will capture key messages from the interventions, exchange of views, and conclusions, that will serve as inputs for the summary of the special session on UNEA-5 that will be prepared by the Chair.

#### **IV. Dialogue Topics**

##### **Guiding questions**

- What do you see as important barriers for strengthening action for nature to achieve the SDGs, and how might they be overcome?
- How can we achieve the behavioural changes required among producers, consumers, and citizens in general to ensure sustainable patterns of consumption and production?
- What kind of support, policies or instruments are needed to urgently transform the social, economic and legal paradigms that are harmful to nature and jeopardize achieving the SDGs?
- What specific actions are you/is your organization taking for nature to address plastic pollution/ combat climate change/ reduce poverty / make agriculture sustainable, etc?

##### **Intended outcome of Leadership Dialogue**

The Leadership Dialogue will contribute directly to the objectives of UNEA, and in doing so is intended to challenge and inspire governments, companies, communities and individuals to take ambitious and transformative action for nature. The event will contribute to enhancing a broader understanding among policy makers and other stakeholders about the importance of actions across social, economic and legal paradigms in catalyzing, driving and sustaining transformative change. Moreover, given the broad range of interventions from diverse stakeholders, it is anticipated that the dialogue will signal to participants worldwide that they are part of the solution, and empower them to take bold action to fix our broken relationship with nature.