

*Ingrid Rostad (ForUM Norway, and NGO major group/MGFC in UNEP)*

Thank you for giving me the floor. Dear excellencies and colleagues. My name is Ingrid Rostad and I am from the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment, and co-facilitator of the NGO major group and co-chair of the major groups facilitating committee in UNEP.

This year we celebrate 50 years since the Stockholm conference and 50 years of the UN Environment Programme and what better way to honour that legacy than to put the environment at the center stage

This requires a shift in what we consider prosperity into the understanding of human well-being, within the planetary boundaries. However, since that seems to be a more time-consuming project, we have some concrete recommendations to follow up on in the meantime:

We ask that you support, including funding, civil society organizations and other non-state actors to participate actively in implementing international goals and agreements at the national levels. Making use of our experience in working on the ground and unique ability to reach those furthest left behind.

We ask that you Contribute to strengthening capacities especially in the Global South to gather and use environmental data, and to effectively develop and implement environmental policies and laws, including relevant criminal laws. Reducing the gap in practical ability and facilitating the realisation of political will. We ask that you Establish monitoring and accountability schemes to measure progress in enforcing environmental law and governance at all levels, to enforce environmental law.

We ask that you recognise the key role played by Indigenous Peoples in the day-to-day protection and sustainable management of ecosystems. We ask that you implement the policy on greater Protection for Environmental Defenders especially for Indigenous Peoples who are risking their lives everyday to protect the nature and environment we all depend on.

After doing all of this, I hope you all will be ready to join us in changing the definition of prosperity and ensure that development happens within the planetary boundaries.