



**UNITED
NATIONS**

UNEP/EA.6/HLS.1



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**

Distr.: General

1 March 2024

Original: English

**United Nations Environment Assembly
of the United Nations Environment Programme
Sixth session
High-level segment
Nairobi, 29 February 2024**

Ministerial declaration of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its sixth session

Effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution

1. We, the world's ministers for the environment, have gathered in Nairobi, Kenya, together with representatives of international organizations, major groups and other stakeholders, at the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, with the urgent aim of taking effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle global environmental challenges and crises, including climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, as well as desertification, land and soil degradation, drought and deforestation.
2. We reaffirm all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,¹ as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development² and its Sustainable Development Goals, and we take note of the recommendations of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his report entitled "Our Common Agenda"³ and the international meeting entitled "Stockholm+50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all – our responsibility, our opportunity".
3. We acknowledge with a sense of great urgency the threats posed to sustainable development by global environmental challenges and crises, including climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, as well as desertification, land and soil degradation, drought and deforestation, and their impacts on human health and the environment, which are further aggravated by persistent levels of poverty, inequality and food insecurity.
4. We emphasize the importance of advancing integrated, science-based approaches, informed by the best available science, and the traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities, in order to strengthen resilience to current, emerging and future challenges and promote global solidarity. We recall General Assembly resolution 76/300 of 28 July 2022 on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
5. We welcome the important agreed outcomes of the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, including the decision on funding arrangements for responding to loss and damage associated with the

¹ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

² General Assembly resolution 70/1.

³ A/75/982.

adverse effects of climate change, as well as the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan;⁴ the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, including the agreed outcome of the first global stocktake and the United Arab Emirates Framework for Global Climate Resilience to guide the achievement of the global goal on adaptation; the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, including the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework,⁵ to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030; General Assembly resolution 77/161 of 14 December 2022 on promoting zero-waste initiatives to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, including the Abidjan Call⁶ to address drought, desertification and land degradation; and the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, including the Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste.⁷

6. We also welcome other recent, important multilateral achievements, including the adoption of the international legally binding Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction; General Assembly resolutions 76/296 of 21 July 2022, entitled “Our ocean, our future, our responsibility”, and 77/242 of 20 December 2022, entitled “2025 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”; the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028, which generated significant momentum towards enhancing water-related action and political commitment at all levels; General Assembly resolution 77/334 of 1 September 2023 on follow-up to the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028; the Three Basins Summit on Biodiversity Ecosystems and Tropical Forests, held in October 2023; the high-level meeting on the midterm review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030; and the 2023 meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of the Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Minamata Convention on Mercury. We recognize the need to strengthen international cooperation on water, at all levels, and we highlight the need for an integrated United Nations approach to water in line with the forthcoming United Nations system-wide strategy for water and sanitation. We restate our commitment to accelerating the implementation of the ocean-related targets of the 2030 Agenda and acknowledge the critical role played by the regional seas conventions and action plans in ocean governance.

7. We note with great concern the main findings contained in the synthesis report of the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and we recognize that limiting global warming to 1.5°C, with no or limited overshoot, requires deep, rapid and sustained reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions.

8. We also note with great concern the findings contained in the *Thematic Assessment Report on Invasive Alien Species and Their Control*, adopted by the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services at its tenth session, in which it was recognized that more than 3,500 of the 37,000 alien species introduced by human activity to regions and biomes around the world have become invasive and pose major global threats to nature, the economy, food security and human health. We note that invasive alien species play a key role in 60 per cent of global plant and animal extinctions, and we stress the importance of international cooperation, including international funding to support developing countries, in effectively managing invasive alien species in the context of climate change and biodiversity loss. We emphasize the importance of international cooperation and information exchange in combating illegal wildlife trade, which is often operated by transnational organizations and has deep impacts on biodiversity.

⁴ FCCC/CP/2022/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.27.

⁵ Document CBD/COP/15/L.25.

⁶ Available at <https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2024-04/Abidjan%20call%20ENG.pdf>.

⁷ Resolution V/1 of 29 Sept. 2023, annex II, adopted by the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its fifth session. See document SAICM/ICCM.5/4.

9. We are aware that in order to inspire impactful and collective action to tackle global environmental challenges and crises, including climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, as well as desertification, land and soil degradation, drought and deforestation, we urgently need to reinforce action, global inclusiveness and solidarity and scale up means of implementation to support developing countries.

10. We are committed to urgently addressing the challenges before us through effective, co-sectoral, inclusive and sustainable actions, ensuring that such actions are science- and knowledge-based, taking into account traditional knowledge, and are gender sensitive, with the engagement of all relevant actors and partners, including civil society, academia, Indigenous Peoples, local communities and the private and public sectors, as well as women and girls, children and young people, older persons, persons with disabilities, and other populations affected disproportionately by global environmental challenges and crises, leaving no one behind.

11. We welcome the Global Youth Environment Assembly held in Nairobi in February 2024 and its role in fostering active participation by young people in multilateral environmental governance.

12. We therefore decide, recognizing the importance of sustainable development as a priority, to take the following actions:

(a) Address climate change, in line with the objective and principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the goals of the Paris Agreement, and take action to achieve more sustainable outcomes and co-benefits, while advancing climate-resilient development and protecting our communities against disasters induced or exacerbated by climate change, such as droughts, heavy rains, wildfires, heatwaves, famines and flooding, which undermine the ability of all countries to achieve sustainable development;

(b) Halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, in line with the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, by ensuring swift, inclusive and effective implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, with consideration of the One Health approach, among other holistic approaches, and put nature on a path to recovery for the benefit of people and planet, including by conserving, restoring and sustainably using biodiversity and by ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the utilization of genetic resources, including associated traditional knowledge, with the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities. We will do so by revising or updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans and aligning national targets with the Global Biodiversity Framework, while providing the necessary means of implementation, including under the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund, in recognition of the importance of sustainable biodiversity-based activities; implementing nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches that enhance biodiversity, in order to provide social, economic and environmental benefits for people; and advancing the discussion, in a timely manner, of policy options including the development of a multilateral mechanism for benefit-sharing from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources, including a global fund, in accordance with decision 15/9 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(c) Support the implementation of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification to halt biodiversity loss, combat desertification and land degradation, halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030, improve drought management, and promote sustainable practices, including the transition to sustainable agricultural production and fisheries and sustainable forest management;

(d) Cooperate for a just and sustainable energy transition, within each country, that seeks to achieve an energy-secure future for all, while respecting local, national, regional and global needs and priorities, in a just, orderly and nationally determined manner, while considering equitable access to clean energy, securing the resilient development of sustainable energy infrastructure, and promoting a just transition based on effective social dialogue among all stakeholders;

(e) Deploy efforts to enhance the environmentally sustainable management of minerals and metals, including for a just and sustainable energy transition;

(f) Commit to continuing to engage constructively and actively and with a sense of urgency and solidarity in the ongoing negotiation of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, based on a comprehensive approach, in line with United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/14 of 2 March 2022, entitled “End plastic pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument”, and to seeking to develop a fair, effective, balanced and ambitious international legally binding instrument, through the international negotiating committee, with the ambition of completing its work by the end of 2024;

(g) Enhance efforts and broader cooperation to address pollution, including by reducing atmospheric and water pollution, recognizing that pollution is a leading environmental risk factor for human health and that it has a negative impact on ecosystems and climate change, transcends national borders, and affects regions in different ways;

(h) Promote the outcomes of the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, including the Bonn Declaration for a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste, to achieve the vision, objectives and targets of the Global Framework on Chemicals, and resolve to deploy greater efforts towards the sound management of chemicals and waste, including through an integrated financing approach based on enhanced mainstreaming, greater industry involvement, and strengthened dedicated external financing, in order to prevent or, where prevention is not feasible, minimize adverse health and environmental impacts, and accelerate the implementation of the Global Framework on Chemicals, with due regard for national circumstances. We also strongly support the process for establishing a new intergovernmental science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution, in accordance with United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/8 of 2 March 2022 on the establishment of such a panel, and we call on Member States to engage constructively in the ongoing negotiations with the ambition of completing it by the end of 2024;

(i) Incorporate climate, biodiversity, pollution, deforestation, land degradation, desertification, drought and water considerations into disaster risk management policies and actions in order to mitigate, adapt to and prevent the adverse impacts of natural and human-made hazards on human health and the environment; strengthen resilience to global risks and shocks; and promote a sustainable and inclusive recovery to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda;

(j) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, as well as persons with disabilities, in line with existing international commitments and obligations, to ensure their full, equal, effective and meaningful participation, representation and leadership at all levels of environmental decision-making, and promote the collection and use of data disaggregated by gender and disability, as appropriate, and statistics across all policies and actions in our pursuit of inclusive and equitable solutions to global challenges, including climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, that leave no one behind.

13. We will leverage digital transformation as an enabling tool to support sustainable economies and societies by bridging existing digital divides, improving research, innovation and equal access to environmental information, harnessing emerging technologies, and monitoring how they develop for sustainability, as appropriate, while ensuring that digitalization remains inclusive, equitable and sustainable.

14. We commit to continuing to advocate a whole-of-society approach that can effectively empower societies at large, including women, children and young people and, in particular, those in vulnerable situations; accelerate research, innovation, education and behavioural change; and facilitate a just transition to sustainable consumption and production patterns. We also commit to moving towards the implementation of economic and environmental policies and models, including through increasing resource efficiency along value chains, along with other related approaches, such as sustainable and circular economies and sustainable lifestyles, taking into account the Global Strategy for Sustainable Consumption and Production 2023–2030, and we call on Member States and observer States of the United Nations to develop resource efficiency strategies and circular economy strategies.

15. We urge Member States and observer States of the United Nations, international financial institutions, multilateral development banks, private foundations, philanthropies, funds and other actors to promote further synergies and coherence in financing action to address the global environmental challenges and crises, including climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, and to provide an enabling policy framework for resource mobilization, as called for at the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group, held in Marrakech, Morocco, in 2023. We will engage domestic, international and private sector actors in the rapid mobilization and scaling up of means of implementation, in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,⁸ while welcoming ongoing efforts to improve the international financial architecture and reform development financing.

16. We reiterate our recognition of the role of UNEP in strengthening the science-policy interface and undertaking strategic foresight and horizon scanning, in collaboration with existing science-policy platforms and panels, to improve the capacity of Member States and stakeholders, at all levels, to prioritize scientific research, stimulate and encourage decision-making and actions that can anticipate

⁸ General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.

trends and risks, and prevent and respond to emerging cross-cutting environmental and health issues, with a particular focus on life cycle assessment of the environmental and sustainable development impacts of specific technologies, in order to make informed decisions.

17. We reaffirm the interdependence of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, and the need to address them in a comprehensive and integrated manner, in line with relevant international obligations and different national circumstances. We also reaffirm the role of UNEP and the importance of the recruitment by UNEP of staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible in order to advance equitable geographical distribution and gender parity among its staff. We support the continuous strengthening of intergovernmental oversight and accountability of the UNEP secretariat, as provided for in the political declaration of the special session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of UNEP.⁹

18. We call for the reinforcement of UNEP and its catalytic role, both at its headquarters and at its regional offices, in strengthening regional cooperation, including through regional ministerial forums, and, while excluding politicization of environmental processes, in tackling context-specific environmental challenges. We recognize the growing demand for stronger and more coherent environmental support at the country level, including with regard to UNEP engagement with United Nations resident coordinators and country teams, to support mainstreaming of environmental issues into planning, programming and operations, and inclusion of the environmental dimension of sustainable development in common country analyses and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, and we call for the strengthening of UNEP within the United Nations development system at the regional and country levels.

19. We call on UNEP, as the leading global environmental authority within the United Nations, and echoing the political declaration of the special session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of UNEP, to intensify its support and assistance to Member States, including at the country level and in cooperation with secretariats of relevant multilateral environment agreements, in the implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements and the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, while providing equal attention to and prioritization of the implementation of all Environment Assembly resolutions and outcomes.

20. We look forward to the Summit of the Future, to be held in September 2024, as an opportunity to further advance our collective environmental commitments, and we urge all Member States and observer States of the United Nations, relevant non-governmental organizations, major groups and stakeholders, UNEP, the secretariats of the multilateral environment agreements and other relevant international organizations to advocate for the implementation of the relevant actions set out in the present declaration; ensure an ambitious outcome that will reinvigorate multilateral cooperation for environmental protection; stimulate the implementation of existing commitments; strengthen synergies and complementarities in the work and implementation of the multilateral environment agreements, within their independent and respective mandates; and decide on concrete solutions for a better tomorrow with greater effectiveness, inclusiveness and confidence. We therefore request the President of the United Nations Environment Assembly to transmit the present declaration as the Environment Assembly's contribution to the General Assembly for consideration at the Summit of the Future.

21. In the spirit of reinvigorated multilateral and international cooperation, we invite the governing bodies of multilateral environmental agreements and relevant international organizations to enhance their cooperation with the United Nations Environment Assembly, as appropriate, to promote the present declaration and effectively and inclusively implement the actions and commitments contained therein.

⁹ UNEP/EA.SS.1/4.