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Programme of work and budget and other administrative and budgetary issues

Solutions for a healthy, prosperous and resilient people and planet: the United Nations Environment Programme medium-term strategy for 2026–2029

1. In decision 6/7, the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) requested the Executive Director of UNEP, through inclusive and regular consultation with Member States and, as appropriate, relevant stakeholders, to prepare a draft programme of work and budget for the period 2026–2027 and a draft medium-term strategy for the period 2026–2029, fully taking into account the views of Member States and making every effort to reflect consensual views, for consideration and approval by the Environment Assembly at its seventh session, following the established processes outlined in paragraph 11 of Governing Council decision 27/2.

2. The UNEP vision for the medium-term strategy is a healthy, prosperous and resilient people and planet. The vision builds on the three strategic objectives of the medium-term strategy for 2022–2025: climate stability by reducing emissions and enhancing adaptation and resilience; living in harmony with Nature: land, ocean and freshwater; and achieving land degradation neutrality, with actions to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, to address desertification, land degradation and drought, and to conserve and restore terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems and a pollution-free planet, by reducing pollution and enhancing environmental quality and health for people and the planet. Achieving these strategic objectives will require, among other things, the strengthening of global economies and a move towards more sustainable and equitable growth and development.

3. The medium-term strategy highlights the mission of UNEP as the leading global environmental authority, which supports countries as they implement country-level solutions to the global environmental challenges and crises** impacting people and the planet. UNEP prioritizes solutions that are transdisciplinary and deliver multiple benefits for countries. The medium-term strategy is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and supports countries in achieving long-term sustainability, drawing on science, technology and capacity-building, while enhancing synergies with multilateral environmental agreements, including those administered by UNEP.

* UNEP/EA.7/1.

** These challenges and crises are to be understood as the global environmental challenges and crises, including climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, as well as desertification, land and soil degradation, drought and deforestation, acknowledged in the ministerial declaration of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its sixth session (UNEP/EA.6/HLS.1).

4. The medium-term strategy is focused on key action pathways: enhancing sustainable consumption and production patterns by incorporating circularity and increasing the use of science and data to inform country-led solutions; promoting strengthened environmental governance, institutional capacity and accountability to meet international commitments at all levels; advancing the development and implementation of environmental law and scaling up efforts to ensure a clean, healthy and sustainable environment for all, informed by General Assembly resolution 76/300; encouraging the use of sectoral and integrated solutions that are country-relevant, country-led and sensitive to national contexts; upon request, advising countries on ways to leverage and redirect finance towards long-term sustainable development; and promoting strengthened use of digital solutions to environmental challenges and improving capacity for inclusive, anticipatory and impactful use of artificial intelligence for sustainable growth. All these pathways are focused on inclusive actions that incorporate the views and knowledge of Governments and of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, people of African descent, children and youth, women and girls, the private sector and other major groups.

5. The medium-term strategy for 2026–2029 strengthens and builds on the strategy for 2022–2025, with the aim of accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda through actions that support the environmental dimension of sustainable development. UNEP implementation of the medium-term strategy will leverage the United Nations development system, aligned with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (General Assembly resolution 79/226), the repositioning of the United Nations development system (General Assembly resolution 72/279) and United Nations 2.0 and informed by the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1) and its annexes and the UN80 Initiative. This is expected to result in more coordinated solutions for a healthy, prosperous and resilient people and planet.

6. The programme of work and budget (UNEP/EA.7/4) sets out the results framework for the biennium 2026–2027 across seven subprogrammes.

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I. Background: the environmental leadership role of the United Nations Environment Programme

1. **UNEP is the leading global environmental authority and sets the global environmental agenda.** Built on the edifice of science- and data-driven policy, UNEP has, since 1972, built a reputation as a trusted organization that produces guidance for understanding and responding to environmental challenges. Accordingly, UNEP is widely recognized as playing a key role in alerting the world to environmental challenges, while working with countries to support policies and actions that mitigate these challenges. UNEP supports normative processes, frameworks and tools[1] and regional and country actions that demonstrate and promote coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development.[2] The General Assembly, in its resolution 66/288, entitled "The future we want", emphasized the leading role of UNEP:

> We are committed to strengthening the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.[3]

2. **Science and environmental governance are the foundations of the work of UNEP.** Solutions and decision-making processes supported by UNEP rely on science underpinned by quality data. UNEP will continue to provide science and policy advice to inform decision-making as the world approaches the deadline for the 2030 Agenda. Given the urgent timeline, UNEP will accelerate collaboration with partners, engaging financial and economic actors and leveraging digital technologies.

3. **UNEP supports countries to meet their environmental commitments.** UNEP is committed to delivering promises made to Member States in 2012 at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and in its outcome document, "The future we want".[4] The medium-term strategy reinforces the role of UNEP in supporting countries, upon request, to deliver on sustainability through their environmental goals and commitments, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, land degradation neutrality commitments, the Global Framework on Chemicals – for a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

4. **UNEP will leverage the collective United Nations system to deliver environmental and sustainable development goals in the decade of action for sustainable development.** The medium-term strategy positions UNEP to strengthen the collective United Nations and country responses to environmental degradation and climate change, through support for the implementation of relevant national plans upon request. UNEP will accelerate and implement country-relevant solutions while harnessing system-wide approaches. The medium-term strategy reinforces UNEP commitment, efficiency and accountability, with a recognition that staff are the organization's greatest asset.

5. **Multi-stakeholder consultations informed the preparation of the medium-term strategy for 2026–2029 and the programme of work and budget for 2026–2027**. Critical to informing these documents were sessions at the 167th to 170th meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme, the twelfth annual subcommittee meeting of the Committee, informal dialogues with Member States, engagement with multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, major groups and stakeholders, UNEP internal workshops, and additional consultations with strategic partners, including other United Nations entities.

[1] United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), nineteenth session of the Governing Council, resolution 19/1, Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme; General Assembly resolutions 2997 (XXVII), establishing the United Nations Environment Programme, and 66/288, entitled "The future we want".

[2] General Assembly resolution 66/288.

[3] Ibid., annex, para. 88.

[4] Ibid., annex.

II. Situation analysis

A. Challenges

6. **The environment continues to deteriorate.** Greenhouse gas emissions and associated climate instability, biodiversity loss, desertification, land degradation, drought, ocean degradation, pollution and waste are impacting planetary, human and economic health. The drivers of these crises are interrelated and reinforcing, disproportionately affecting people in vulnerable situations amid widening inequality. These environmental crises and challenges come against a backdrop of rapid social and technological change, migration and conflict – exacerbated by geopolitical instability, misinformation and decreasing trust in institutions. Conflicts damage the environment and weaken environmental governance, increasing pressure on ecosystems and natural resources in conflict-affected areas. However, with the right ambition and action, the world can overcome these crises.

7. **The climate is becoming increasingly unstable.** In 2023, concentrations of methane, CO_2 and N_2O reached their highest levels in 800,000 years.[5] Global net anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions were estimated to be 59 ± 6.6 $GtCO_2$-eq in 2019.[6] The past 10 years have seen records broken, with an average of 1.34°C to 1.41°C above preindustrial temperatures.[7] As the climate warms, cooling demand is soaring, exacerbating greenhouse gas emissions. Glaciers are in retreat, sea ice is melting faster, and ocean acidification continues.[8] The frequency and intensity of extreme weather are increasing, claiming lives, damaging property and causing forced migration.[9] The estimated adaptation costs for developing countries range from $215 billion to $387 billion[10] per year, but finance has been slow to materialize.[11]

8. **The economic cost of desertification, land degradation, drought, sand and dust storms and declines in nature and ecosystem services, including freshwater, biodiversity, coral reefs and forests, is on the rise.** Up to 40 per cent of the planet's land is degraded.[12] Together with the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services, this is threatening roughly half of global gross domestic product (GDP) ($44 trillion).[13] An estimated four football fields of productive lands are lost every second. Desertification, land degradation and drought cost the global economy $878 billion every year,[14] affecting an estimated 213 million people, mostly in developing countries.[15]

9. **Terrestrial and ocean biodiversity is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history.** More than 1 million out of almost 8 million species face extinction. Freshwater species are being lost faster than those on land, while 70–90 per cent of coral reefs are expected to die, with 1.5°C of temperature rise.[16] Changes in land and sea use – such as deforestation, wetland conversion and urban sprawl – are significant threats, as they fragment and destroy natural habitats. Biomass harvesting in agriculture and forestry accounts for 90 per cent of land-based biodiversity loss.[17] Pollution from industrial, agricultural and domestic sources introduces hazardous substances into ecosystems, while invasive alien species, often introduced by global trade and travel, outcompete

[5] World Meteorological Organization (WMO), *State of the Global Climate 2024* (Geneva, 2025).

[6] Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report, Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (Geneva, 2023).

[7] WMO, *State of the Global Climate 2024*.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability – Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, Hans-Otto Pörtner and others, eds. (Cambridge, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 2022).

[10] All references to "$" are to United States dollars.

[11] UNEP, *Adaptation Gap Report: Underfinanced. Underprepared. Inadequate Investment and Planning on Climate Adaptation Leaves World Exposed* (Nairobi, 2023).

[12] United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, *Global Call for Land's Sustainable Future* (2024).

[13] United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, *Global Land Outlook*, 2nd ed. (Bonn, Germany, 2022).

[14] United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, *Investing in Land's Future: Financial Needs Assessment for UNCCD* (Bonn, 2024).

[15] A. L. Burrell, J. P. Evans and M. G. De Kauwe, "Anthropogenic climate change has driven over 5 million km^2 of drylands towards desertification", *Nature Communications*, vol. 11, no. 3853 (2020).

[16] World Wildlife Fund, *Living Planet Report 2024: A System in Peril* (Gland, Switzerland, 2024).

[17] UNEP, *Global Resources Outlook 2024: Bend the Trend – Pathways to a Liveable Planet as Resource Use Spikes* (Nairobi, 2024).

native organisms. In addition, climate change intensifies these pressures by altering temperature and precipitation patterns, disrupting ecosystems and accelerating species extinction. Together, these drivers form a complex web of pressures that erode Earth's rich biological diversity.

10. **An estimated 9 million people die each year from pollution, predominantly air pollution**.[18] Nearly 90 per cent of people living in urban areas are exposed to air pollution that exceeds global guidelines.[19] Air pollution is one of the main environmental risk factors of noncommunicable diseases;[20] related healthcare expenses and lost productivity cost trillions of dollars each year.[21] Volumes of municipal solid waste, mainly food waste, are projected to rise from 2.1 billion tons in 2023 to 3.8 billion tons in 2050,[22] underscoring the urgent need for waste prevention and circularity. Electronic waste is growing five times faster than recycling efforts.[23] Poor waste management carries severe health risks, especially in informal settings, costs an estimated $361 billion annually and contributes to environmental releases of toxic chemical pollution, including lead and persistent organic pollutants.[24] Antimicrobial resistance is mounting because of inappropriate use and disposal of antimicrobials – from agriculture, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, healthcare and municipal wastewater – to the environment.[25]

11. **Increasing indebtedness is imperilling developing countries' ability to take environmental action.** As fiscal resources are increasingly constrained by debt, banks and markets will need to demonstrate greater willingness to take on investment risk in those developing countries most affected by climate instability, land and water degradation, biodiversity loss and pollution.[26] Debts and the cost of debt servicing have been putting pressure on countries. In 2023, 54 developing countries allocated at least 10 per cent of government revenue to interest payments.[27] These challenges compound the inequity within and among countries and can reduce countries' ability to focus on environmental action.

12. **Technological advances and the resultant growing demand for energy and resources, from increased electrification, energy transitions, digitalization and the use of frontier technologies, is straining the environment**. The computing power required for artificial intelligence is projected to increase more than 1 million times over the next few years.[28] As minerals and metals are critical to this transformation and to clean energy transitions, demand for rare earth elements is expected to grow fourfold by 2040.[29]

B. Cause for optimism

13. **Multilateral solutions are leading to positive environmental outcomes.** The operationalization of the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Sustainable Development Goal target 15.3[30] and the Global Framework on Chemicals, among others, provides momentum for addressing the global environmental challenges and crises. The goals of the Paris Agreement provide the framework for country ambition on emissions reductions and strengthening adaptation, while the indicators for measuring progress under the global goal on adaptation framework will further spur country ambition on adaptation. Under the Global Methane

[18] "Our environment, our health", *The Lancet Public Health*, vol. 9, no. 7 (July 2024).

[19] World Health Organization (WHO), "Urban health" (2025).

[20] WHO, Noncommunicable Diseases, Rehabilitation and Disability (2025).

[21] World Bank, The Global Health Cost of $PM_{2.5}$ Air Pollution: A Case for Action beyond 2021 (2022).

[22] UNEP, *Global Waste Management Outlook: Beyond an Age of Waste – Turning Rubbish into a Resource* (Nairobi, 2024).

[23] Cornelis P. Baldé and others, *The Global e-waste Monitor 2024* (United Nations Institute for Training and Research, International Telecommunication Union and Fondation Carmignac, Geneva/Bonn, 2024).

[24] UNEP, *Global Waste Management Outlook* (2024).

[25] UNEP, *Bracing for Superbugs: Strengthening Environmental Action in the One Health Response to Antimicrobial Resistance* (Geneva, 2023).

[26] UNEP, *Global Resources Outlook 2024*.

[27] United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), *A World of Debt Report 2024: A Growing Burden to Global Prosperity* (2024).

[28] S. Zhu and others, "Intelligent computing: the latest advances, challenges, and future", *Intelligent Computing,* vol. 2, art. 0006 (2023).

[29] International Energy Agency, *World Energy Outlook 2024* (2024).

[30] By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world (Sustainable Development Goal target 15.3).

Pledge, more than 150 countries are backing the ambition to reduce methane emissions by 30 per cent by 2030 from 2020 levels. General Assembly resolution 76/300 on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment has motivated countries to address environmental challenges. The phase-out of 99 per cent of ozone-depleting substances under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer has allowed the ozone layer to slowly heal. Since the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants took effect, concentrations of key persistent organic pollutants have declined in the environment and in people. Member State initiatives for United Nations-coordinated-processes such as the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the United Nations Ocean Conferences to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 and the United Nations Water Conferences are increasing. Negotiations on an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution are ongoing.

14. **In the framework of the mandate of promoting the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system,[31] UNEP will continue to leverage greater coherence, coordination and efficiency across the United Nations system**. Accordingly, UNEP builds on established models for inter-agency coordination, working through the resident coordinator system at the country level and the United Nations Environment Management Group at the system-wide level. Combining normative with vertical and implementation-oriented approaches, UNEP will promote a more coherent implementation of United Nations environmental action from the global to the local level.

15. **United Nations inter-agency efforts, including through the One Health approach, have advanced**. There is growing recognition of the environmental dimensions of global health threats, including the emergence of zoonoses and antimicrobial resistance and exposure to hazardous chemicals, heavy metals and highly hazardous pesticides. There is also broader recognition of air and water pollution, climate change as a health burden, the reliance of human health on healthy ecosystems and biodiversity and the criticality of equitable benefit-sharing from natural resources and ecosystem services. Recent developments include the political declaration of the 2024 high-level meeting high-level meeting on antimicrobial resistance, which highlighted the imperative of tackling this challenge from the perspective of health, agriculture and the environment.

16. **Investments in low-emission economies and natural systems that sustain humanity are growing but need to accelerate.** Investment in the low-emission energy transition worldwide grew 11 per cent to a record $2.1 trillion in 2024.[32] Climate finance grew 30 per cent from 2021 to $115.9 billion in 2022, with 60 per cent of the total allocated to mitigation. Total adaptation finance rose to $32.4 billion from $10.1 billion in 2016.[33] While they were still inadequate, 2023 saw an increase in these flows.[34] In addition, the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, established in 2022 and operationalized in 2023, marked an important milestone. However, investments in nature are lagging. More than half of global GDP depends on nature, with some estimates valuing ecosystem services at approximately $125–$140 trillion per year.[35] However, investments in nature-based solutions are only approximately $200 billion per year, while financing for activities that harm nature is approximately $7 trillion.[36] To address this imbalance and meet global targets on climate, nature and land, flows to nature-based solutions must reach $542 billion per year by 2030 and $737 billion by 2050.[37]

17. **Increased interest and focus on sustainable consumption and production, including circular approaches.** Resource use has tripled over the past 50 years in developed countries, driven by infrastructure development and the shift of resource-intensive industries. It is intensifying in others.[38] Circular approaches built on sustainable consumption and production have been shown to build prosperous and healthy economies while generating jobs. These approaches promote continual reduction of unnecessary single-use and short-lived products and the reuse, refurbishment and recycling of products and materials. This conserves resources, reduces waste and biodiversity loss and

[31] General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex, para. 88.

[32] BloombergNEF, *Energy Transition Investment Trends 2025* (2025).

[33] United Nations, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report* (United Nations, 2024).

[34] Climate Policy Initiative, *Global Landscape of Climate Finance 2024: Insights for COP29* (2024).

[35] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Biodiversity: Finance and the Economic and Business Case for Action* (Paris, 2019).

[36] UNEP, *State of Finance for Nature: The Big Nature Turnaround – Repurposing $7 Trillion to Combat Nature Loss* (Nairobi, 2023).

[37] Ibid.

[38] UNEP, *Global Resources Outlook 2024*.

lowers greenhouse gas emissions. More than 70 countries have implemented circular economy policies, with tens of millions of associated new jobs predicted by 2030.[39]

18. **Technological advances are providing solutions.** Actions to enhance electrification, energy transitions, digitalization and frontier technologies are transforming economies and societies while creating jobs. Best practices that prevent further environmental degradation and support communities are emerging, such as renewable energy and low-emission energy solutions, smart grid systems, precision agriculture, innovative product design, bioeconomy solutions, advanced waste management and digital solutions for resource efficiency.[40] Other solutions include emissions abatement and removal technologies, for example: carbon capture and storage; carbon capture, utilization and storage; and direct air capture.

19. **The challenges and solutions are clear.** Responding to multiple challenges requires integrated solutions. Political will and financial resources must be in sync to match these solutions and to customize them for country circumstances, while being system-wide, transdisciplinary and focused on impact, equity, efficiency and accountability.

III. Lessons learned – a continuous learning journey

20. **UNEP supports direct country action through its portfolio of $2.8 billion (as at 7 July 2025).**[41] The core mission of UNEP translates science-based advice, capacity-building and technology transfer into country-level support. UNEP policy and operational portfolios provide important lessons for the medium-term strategy. Internal learning and evaluations show the need for adaptive governance, flexible implementation, timely delivery, better alignment between core and extrabudgetary programmes, and strategic and stronger partnerships. Evaluations have also shown the need for stronger results frameworks, an integrated implementation architecture, and responsive country operations through strengthened and sustainable engagement with resident coordinators and United Nations country teams.[42]

21. **The medium-term strategy is informed by these lessons**. While many recommendations are predicated on sufficient and stable financial resources, UNEP continues to become more effective, agile and operationally relevant, while delivering on its global environmental mandate and providing guidance to countries upon request. During this period, UNEP will specifically enhance its work through the following:

(a) **Strengthened accountability and operational efficiency, while ensuring financial sustainability**. The UNEP delivery model is focused on establishing clearer responsibilities between UNEP regional offices and divisions, thus enhancing accountability and performance. UNEP is committed to advancing this model to effectively respond to countries' evolving needs. UNEP is committed to realizing strong and client-responsive operational efficiency that ensures cost savings, without compromising impact or fiduciary oversight requirements. In this context, in response to the UN80 Initiative, the Executive Director of UNEP has led a functional review to streamline UNEP procedures and structures, including merging the Division of Early Warning and Assessment with the Office of the Chief Scientist to focus on data, applied science and analytics. UNEP will also continue to focus on staff well-being and learning and on streamlining internal structures and processes.

(b) **Prioritizing impact and efficiency globally and nationally**. UNEP will continue to be selective in programmes and projects, focusing on areas where it has a clear mandate and comparative advantage to deliver the greatest impact and as requested by Member States. UNEP will continue to address critical environmental challenges while contributing to sustainable economic

[39] Information from the websites of the UNEP Finance Initiative, UNCTAD and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); United Nations Economist Network, "New economics for sustainable development: circular economy", policy brief (circular_economy_14_march.pdf).

[40] UNEP, *Making Peace with Nature: A Scientific Blueprint to Tackle the Climate, Biodiversity and Pollution Emergencies* (Nairobi, 2021); International Energy Agency, *Electricity Grids and Secure Energy Transitions: Enhancing the Foundations of Resilient, Sustainable and Affordable Power Systems* (Paris, 2023); Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *The State of Food and Agriculture: Leveraging Food Systems for Inclusive Rural Transformations* (Rome, 2017); UNEP and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), *Global Environmental Outlook (GEO) for Cities: Towards Green and Just Cities* (Nairobi, 2021).

[41] The distribution is as follows: global initiatives: 34.8 per cent; Africa: 24.9 per cent; Asia and the Pacific: 17.3 per cent; Latin America and the Caribbean: 16.1 per cent; West Asia: 2.9 per cent; Europe and Central Asia: 3.9 per cent (April 2025). Figures have been rounded up.

[42] References are to internal and publicly available documents.

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growth and reducing poverty,[43] fighting inequality,[44] including gender inequality, and including persons with disabilities – building on the findings of the evaluation of the UNEP gender policy and strategy,[45] and supporting progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. UNEP will scale up meaningful youth engagement by supporting green job creation and actively promoting youth participation, as appropriate, in environmental decision-making processes.

(c) **Deeper collaboration and coordination across the United Nations as demand for UNEP advice and services rises**. UNEP will endeavour to reinforce its role within the United Nations system to promote system-wide coherence and effectiveness, including through the Environment Management Group, working closely with United Nations entities, to scale up environmental outcomes in support of national priorities by bringing the latest data and policy advice. UNEP will focus on: (i) strengthening United Nations-wide coordinated action at the global, regional and national level; and (ii) as part of the United Nations country teams, and in collaboration with the United Nations resident coordinators system, strengthening UNEP efforts to mainstream environmental outcomes into United Nations country-level planning and programming and galvanising joint United Nations country-level action in support of countries' efforts to deliver environmental results. UNEP will demonstrate leadership in implementing the United Nations common approach to biodiversity[46] and pollution[47] and the Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations system 2020–2030. UNEP will further promote cross-agency cooperation – through partnerships such as the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD) and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-lived Climate Pollutants – and ensure joint delivery. UNEP will continue to support multilateral environmental agreement implementation so that decisions taken at the conferences and meetings of parties are supported and integrated into policies, programmes and processes at all levels, including regional environmental forums and the high-level political forum.

(d) **Ensuring that UNEP is agile and future-fit**. UNEP is rapidly strengthening the organization's strategic foresight capabilities to seek greater agility across subprogrammes. By institutionalizing advanced foresight, including horizon scanning, scenario planning and early warning systems, UNEP is building a robust, organization-wide approach to anticipate, assess and proactively address emerging environmental risks and opportunities. UNEP will support partners in better anticipating and preparing for future environmental challenges. UNEP will incorporate scientific research and technological innovations such as artificial intelligence and digitalization into planning and advisory work.

IV. Vision for 2026–2029 and beyond

22. **The UNEP vision is to ensure a healthy, prosperous and resilient people and planet.** The UNEP mission is to realize this vision by supporting solutions to achieve the three strategic objectives of the medium-term strategy: climate stability; living in harmony with Nature: land, ocean and freshwater; and achieving land degradation neutrality; and a pollution-free planet. UNEP will support delivery through capacity-building, partnerships, technology and finance to address the unsustainable consumption and production that frequently underpin environmental crises and challenges.

23. **Key to the UNEP mandate is keeping the environment under review and supporting national and international environmental policy**.[48] By leveraging science, strengthening environmental governance and encouraging global cooperation, UNEP aims to tackle emerging environmental challenges and support coordinated, impactful action. Its three thematic subprogrammes will drive the medium-term strategy vision, while the two foundational and two enabling subprogrammes will, respectively, deliver the vision – through science, environmental

[43] UNEP Evaluation Office, "Independent review of UNEP's contributions to poverty reduction, on behalf of Sida – synthesis report" (2021). Available at https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/35901.

[44] UNEP Evaluation Office, *Evaluation Synthesis Report 2022–2023* (Nairobi, 2024).

[45] UNEP Evaluation Office, "Independent evaluation of UNEP policy and strategy for gender equality and the environment, 2015–2020" (2022). Available at https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/40571.

[46] United Nations System, Chief Executives Board for Coordination, "Common approach to integrating biodiversity and nature-based solutions for sustainable development into United Nations policy and programme planning and delivery" (2021) (CEB/2021/1/Add.1).

[47] United Nations Environment Management Group, *The United Nations System Common Approach towards a Pollution-Free Planet* (2023).

[48] General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII).

governance, finance and economic instruments and digital tools and platforms – to enhance international cooperation, strengthen capacity-building and share good practices.

V. Strategic objectives for delivering solutions

24. **UNEP will pursue the vision by developing responses and deploying solutions through the following three interconnected strategic objectives:**

(a) **Climate stability** by reducing emissions and enhancing adaptation and resilience;

(b) **Living in harmony with Nature: land, ocean and freshwater; and achieving land degradation neutrality** with actions to halt and reverse biodiversity loss; to combat desertification, land degradation and drought; and to conserve and restore terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems;

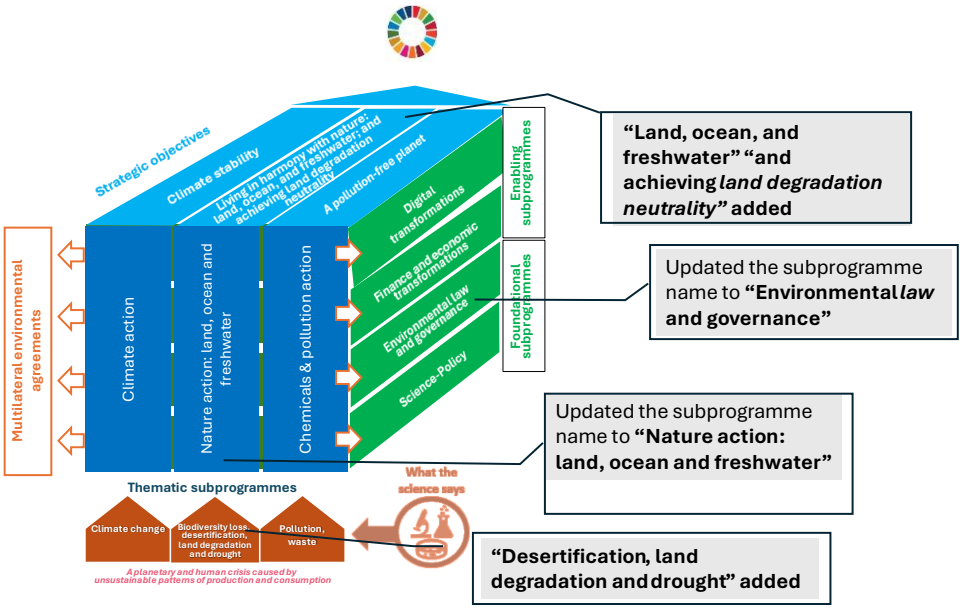
(c) **A pollution-free planet** by reducing pollution and enhancing environmental quality and health for people and the planet.

25. **These strategic objectives will guide UNEP subprogrammes and project portfolios, shape partnerships, direct resource mobilization and inform financial and human resources allocations, reporting and results.** Special attention will be placed on how the strategic objectives reinforce one another. Examples include bioeconomy, ecosystem-based adaptation, reduction of methane emissions, integrated environment and health policies and sustainable consumption and production, as well as circular economy approaches.

26. **Innovative solutions will be identified through working strategically with Governments and with Indigenous Peoples, local communities, people of African descent, children and youth, women and girls, the private sector and other major groups**. UNEP partnerships with other United Nations agencies and relevant multilateral environmental agreement secretariats will remain intentional and targeted.

27. **UNEP resource mobilization efforts and allocation of financial and human resources will be aligned to its subprogrammes by linking them to expected results**. Financial flows into UNEP and the ensuing results will be closely monitored, with updates provided to Member States to ensure transparency. In this context, as UNEP reaches to recruit the best talent to its staff cadres, UNEP will continue to work towards achieving geographical representation in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations**.**

A healthy, prosperous and resilient people and planet



Strategic objective 1: Climate stability

28. **An accelerated global response for climate stability aligned with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement and the recommendations contained in the Global Stocktake[49] and other relevant decisions can prompt resilience and sustainable development opportunities for all**. Paying particular attention to high-emission sectors, developing countries, countries affected by disasters and conflicts,[50] the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States will be key.

29. **Under this strategic objective, UNEP seeks to: (a) reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and (b) enhance resilience and adaptation to climate impacts.** This will be achieved through partnerships and integrated approaches on science, governance, finance and sectoral solutions that close the mitigation and adaptation gaps. Implementation also calls for strengthening collaboration, while minimizing redundancies, with entities such as the Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund, the UNEP-hosted Climate Technology Centre and Network, multilateral environmental agreement secretariats and United Nations country teams, linking climate action to development. Upon request, UNEP will support countries in implementing policies and measures aligned with their nationally determined contributions, including capacity-building for transparency under the Paris Agreement.

Strategic objective 2: Living in harmony with Nature: land, ocean and freshwater; and achieving land degradation neutrality

30. **This strategic objective is to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, address desertification, land degradation and drought and conserve and restore terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems**. UNEP will strengthen the capacity of countries to integrate sustainable management of nature in development planning and other cross-sectoral decision-making frameworks. UNEP will also promote a people-oriented approach to nature conservation, restoration and sustainable use, recognizing the importance of policies that support poverty eradication and the needs and livelihoods of biodiversity-dependent communities.

31. **The impact of this objective is enhanced ecosystems stability**. This impact will be achieved by strengthening coherence across policy, legal and regulatory frameworks, scaling up ecosystem-based approaches and/or nature-based solutions and addressing desertification, land degradation, drought, sand and dust storms and deforestation. Particular attention will be given to areas such as marine and coastal zones, low-lying islands, areas prone to sand and dust storms and water stress, wildfires, forests and areas affected by or at risk of disaster. These efforts will include facilitating access to financial resources and building capacity to strengthen transparency, accountability and governance – all to deliver on biodiversity-, land-, ocean- and water-related multilateral commitments. Indigenous Peoples, who are the stewards of biodiversity, will be critical partners to control and guide activities in their territories.

Strategic objective 3: A pollution-free planet

32. **This strategic objective is to reduce pollution in air, soil and water and enhance environmental quality and health for people and the planet**. Recognizing the need for capacity-building efforts at the local government level, countries will be assisted in identifying and addressing major polluting sectors and sources that contribute to pollution and its impacts. Efforts will be made to inform and engage all sectors of society.

33. **The medium-term impact of this strategic objective is reduced the exposure of people and the planet to hazardous chemicals, waste and pollution**. Key activities will include the following: strengthening legal, policy and regulatory frameworks; improving access to science and pollution data; promoting sustainable consumption and production; and backing technologies and solutions that reduce risk and increase preparedness to address and manage pollution, including in disaster and conflict situations. Coordinated action across the United Nations and scientific bodies will include a sound science-policy basis, capacity-building, technology transfer and market incentives for cleaner, circular and low-pollution solutions, while strengthening capacity for the sound management of chemicals and waste and pollution prevention and control and supporting the implementation and scaling-up of effective national actions.

[49] United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, "First global stocktake" (2025). Available at cma2023_L17E.pdf.

[50] According to information about approved UNEP projects in the United Nations Secretariat's Integrated Planning, Management and Reporting Solution for the first quarter of 2025, just over 10 per cent of UNEP project expenditure focuses on conflict-affected or fragile settings.

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A. Achieving impact through complementarities and synergies: United Nations Environment Programme thematic subprogrammes

34. **The three UNEP thematic subprogrammes will drive the medium-term strategy vision through responses and solutions to achieve the interlinked strategic objectives**. The two foundational and two enabling subprogrammes will deliver the vision through science, environmental governance, finance and economic instruments upon request, as well as digital tools and platforms.

35. **All seven subprogrammes will work in an integrated, transdisciplinary fashion to deliver results**. Key principles will be to reduce poverty and inequality, to conserve and sustainably use natural resources, to support countries in their requests concerning the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, informed by General Assembly resolution 76/300, and to deliver benefits for all. Scientific data analysed and used by these subprogrammes will be gender-disaggregated to the extent that that is relevant and possible. Emphasis will be given to solutions that deliver multiple benefits across the global environmental challenges and crises while generating economic and social benefits.

1. Thematic subprogramme: Climate action

36. **Low-emission and resource-efficient activities for emissions reduction.** UNEP will support countries in taking advantage of opportunities in low-emission, resource-efficient economic activities. UNEP will focus on high-impact sectors, identified by the latest science, and promote solutions ranging from technologies to ecosystem-based adaptation to reducing material use. Emphasis will be placed on supporting countries in integrating proven and innovative technologies into sectoral, national and subnational policies and decisions. In addition, UNEP will support countries in addressing growing cooling needs and reducing short-lived climate pollutants, such as methane and other non-CO_2 emissions. This includes the phasedown of hydrofluorocarbons through the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, coupled with the promotion of energy efficiency and passive cooling solutions in buildings. Furthermore, UNEP will advise countries, upon request, on scalable solutions for meeting their nationally determined contributions and other commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, fostering synergies with action on the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. UNEP will create a conducive environment for these transitions by raising awareness and fostering societal uptake and behaviour change for low-emission solutions across sectors and different levels of governance, including the local level, which can generate new business opportunities, skills and jobs.

37. **Access to technology and financial resources for improved mitigation and adaptation.** UNEP will support countries' access to technology and support the leveraging of finance, including through vertical funds. Upon request, UNEP will also support countries in their endeavour to phase out and reform incentives, including subsidies, informed by decisions of the twenty-sixth, twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth Conferences of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, thus ensuring targeted support for people in vulnerable situations in just transitions. UNEP will also assist in the adoption of technologies and business models that support mitigation and adaptation in public and private investments and long-term planning across sectors. Leveraging the organization's diverse partnerships and multi-stakeholder platforms, UNEP will, upon request, accelerate its advisory efforts on public policies, fiscal incentives and consumer and product information tools that underpin the macroeconomic case for climate action.

38. **Ecosystem-based adaptation and other innovative technologies to promote resilience.** With climate impacts intensifying, UNEP work on adaptation and resilience will be aimed at: (a) future proofing development choices and investments, in particular in urban settings and for critically vulnerable socioeconomic sectors and countries; (b) upscaling the deployment of ecosystem-based adaptation in a way that is financially viable; and (c) enabling access to finance, supporting the deployment of financial instruments and mechanisms and engaging with financial institutions to safeguard socioeconomic fabrics and ecosystem functions in the long run. Adaptation solutions to extreme heat, sea-level rise, glacier melt, floods and droughts will be tested, deployed and scaled up.

39. **A range of instruments will be deployed to enable decisions and policies that entail trade-offs and win-win solutions.** Initiatives that combine knowledge and scientific products and advisory and policy expertise for joint mitigation, adaptation, nature and pollution outcomes will be taken forward. Key areas of focus will include sustainable cooling, improved waste management and ecosystem restoration. Local, regional, transboundary and multi-country initiatives will join with the private sector to safeguard the supply chains of climate vulnerable commodities. Partnerships, multilevel governance, multi-stakeholder platforms and financial instruments will be deployed upon

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request to address the multifaceted challenges and sectors required for meaningful adaptation outcomes and capacities.

40. **Supporting measuring progress towards mitigation and adaptation and strengthening climate transparency.** Supported by the Science-policy, Environmental law and governance and Digital transformations subprogrammes, UNEP will provide science and policy practices to guide countries and non-governmental actors in assessing progress and evaluating the need for enhanced financial, technical and capacity-building support. Providing reliable, accessible, state-of-the-art information that reduces uncertainty and risk in decision-making will remain the UNEP core offer. Through the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the International Resource Panel, UNEP flagship reports (such as the *Emissions and Adaptation Gap Report*) and the portfolios on transparency and early warning, UNEP will deploy the latest climate change metrics and sectoral knowledge. Remote sensing and artificial intelligence will increasingly provide data insight into better decision-making. UNEP will also continue to support countries in their work to enhance transparency capacity in the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Synergies will be pursued with global and regional multilateral environmental agreements to facilitate digitalization, coordination and complementarity across transparency and reporting obligations.

2. Thematic subprogramme: Nature action: land, ocean and freshwater

41. **Enhancing the stability and resilience of ecosystems.** UNEP will focus on addressing the drivers of biodiversity loss by strengthening the management and restoration of natural and managed ecosystems in pursuit of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. UNEP will also focus on achieving land degradation neutrality through measures to reduce desertification, land degradation and drought and enhance land restoration. This includes supporting Indigenous Peoples and people of African descent in managing their lands and natural resources, working with local communities, promoting ecosystem-based approaches and/or nature-based solutions for disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation, and broad engagement at all levels. UNEP will further strengthen cooperation at all levels to improve conservation, sustainable use and restoration actions and policies, including through its role as an implementing agency of the Global Environment Facility. These efforts will support the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention to Combat Desertification, the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, the regional seas conventions and action plans, the 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, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and its instruments and other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements.

42. **Integration of sustainable management of biodiversity, land, freshwater and ocean in cross-sectoral decision-making frameworks**. UNEP will address interrelated nature conservation and development challenges through systemic approaches across sectors and systems. This includes: the adoption of policies that halt and reverse biodiversity loss; legislation and strategies across sectors; supporting the valuation of ecosystem services and natural capital, emphasizing their return on investment and the costs of inaction; assisting countries in reflecting the full economic value of natural resource use and to eliminate, phase-out and reform of subsidies harmful to biodiversity in accordance with target 18 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, ensuring informed decision-making across society; and promoting integrated, cross-sectoral solutions and behaviour change initiatives that deliver multiple benefits for food security, health, economies, ecosystems and people, while minimizing potential trade-offs. In addition, emphasis will be placed on strengthening regional and subregional cooperation frameworks, especially in areas of shared ecological importance.

43. **Aligning public and private-sector finance flows with the goals of multilateral environmental agreements and national and regional strategies**. This work will include engaging the financial sector and policymakers in improving financial decision-making, assessing nature-related risks and promoting transparency. By supporting catalytic finance mechanisms at the global, national and subnational level, business incubation and nature-aligned practices, UNEP will help create an enabling environment for sustainable investment.

44. **Strengthening transparency, accountability and governance to deliver biodiversity-, land-, ocean- and freshwater-related commitments**. This includes enhancing the monitoring and reporting capacity of countries and strengthening coherence to support progress towards the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the Strategic Framework 2018–2030 of the Convention to Combat Desertification and aspiration towards land degradation neutrality, Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2026–2029 and the Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction, subject to entry into force; and supporting the rights

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and benefits of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, people of African descent, children and youth, and women and girls.

3. Thematic subprogramme: Chemicals and pollution action

45. **Scaling up circular, zero-waste and pollution-free sectors and value chains.** UNEP will work with Governments, the private sector and stakeholders to support key sectors in developing circular value chains to reduce pollution. Countries will be enabled to develop policy and regulatory frameworks and tailored and innovative solutions to address key sources of pollution and move towards circularity and sustainable consumption and production approaches that minimize waste generation – reducing pollutants in air, soil and water, including plastic pollution, and reducing exposures to hazardous chemicals throughout the life cycle. These efforts will demonstrate that industry and Governments can be competitive while reducing in-country and transboundary pollution and adverse impacts on climate, land and nature.

46. **Reducing pollution and promoting sustainable consumption and production and zero waste in the manufacturing sector.** UNEP will support the reduction of air, water, marine and soil pollution and other environmental footprints of products, through sustainable consumption and production, circular approaches, green and sustainable chemistry and safer and innovative alternatives at every stage of the life cycle – with emphasis on the plastics, textiles, building materials and electronics value chains. This work will demonstrate the link between pollution reduction and circularity while acting to reverse and halt biodiversity loss and create jobs and add business value.

47. **Promoting environmentally sound management across minerals and metals value chains**. Working with Governments, industry and stakeholders, including from civil society, UNEP will focus on minerals and metals to reduce pollution and environmental impacts across their life cycle, while contributing to the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals. UNEP will support horizon scanning and policy development, provide technical guidance and foster partnerships to improve sustainability across value chains. UNEP will tailor support to national contexts, targeted to different economies and their challenges. This will promote more responsible[51] and environmentally sound material sourcing while driving resource efficiency, circular approaches, job creation and investment.

48. **Reducing pollution from the agrifood, transport, waste, energy and building and construction sectors.** UNEP will focus on solutions to pesticides, excess nitrogen and phosphorus, methane, nitrogen oxides, black carbon, plastic pollution and pollution contributing to antimicrobial resistance, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies and organizations, through the One Health approach and engagement in the United Nations Food Systems Coordination Hub. By supporting waste reduction efforts, in particular for organic waste, and wastewater management, UNEP will also address the mitigation potential that this sector represents.

49. **Strengthening access to science and data on pollution and its sources and effective management and control frameworks.** To promote effective pollution prevention and control and chemical and waste management, UNEP will support access to credible science and data. The new Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution – for which UNEP provides the interim secretariat – will be key to this end. This in turn will inform strong policy, legal and regulatory frameworks and effective technologies and solutions.

50. **Supporting the UNEP-hosted Global Framework on Chemicals, multilateral environmental agreements and other frameworks.** UNEP will support the implementation of the Global Framework on Chemicals to enhance the sound management of chemicals and waste, and will contribute to commitments under the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and the Minamata Convention. UNEP will also contribute to other relevant multilateral environmental agreements, panels and platforms – including negotiations on the legally binding instrument on plastic pollution.

51. **Promoting the uptake of solutions to improve air quality and reduce source-to-sea pollution.** UNEP will strengthen capacities and support Governments in their efforts to improve air quality. To this end, UNEP will leverage intergovernmental cooperation networks and inter-agency

[51] In this context, "responsible" refers to material sourcing that delivers economic and social benefits while including effective safeguards that reduce social and environmental impacts and conserving biodiversity and ecosystems. This approach is aligned with General Assembly resolution 66/288, specifically: (a) "Mining activities should maximize social and economic benefits, as well as effectively address negative environmental and social impacts" (para. 227); and (b) "We recognize ... the importance of strong and effective legal and regulatory frameworks, policies and practices for the mining sector that deliver economic and social benefits and include effective safeguards that reduce social and environmental impacts, as well as conserve biodiversity and ecosystems, including during post-mining closure" (para. 228).

and multi-stakeholder and multisectoral alliances and partnerships, including the UNEP-convened Climate and Clean Air Coalition, with its Global Methane Pledge. UNEP will promote awareness of the economic importance of investing in air quality, in view of the health, climate and economic benefits of clean air. UNEP will also support efforts to prevent and reduce soil, water and marine pollution through a source-to-sea approach, across sectors and systems. UNEP will help create enabling environments and market incentives to attract investment in low-pollution products and services, while building public awareness and consumer demand.

52. **Promoting integrated action.** Working with key partners, UNEP will promote and support integrated action to achieve environmental and health benefits, including through a One Health approach to address risks at the environment-plant-animal-human interface. UNEP will also strengthen preparedness and response capacities to prevent and manage pollution risks as part of environmental assistance and recovery in areas affected by armed conflict and disasters, in collaboration with other United Nations entities and relevant stakeholders.

B. Supporting and informing impacts: United Nations Environment Programme foundational subprogrammes

1. Foundational subprogramme: Science-policy

53. **Key to the UNEP mandate is keeping the environment under review and supporting national and international environmental policy.** The UNEP science-policy subprogramme provides a strong foundation by keeping the environment under review and identifying emerging issues, integrating across issues and addressing solutions. The programme unites flagship panels and assessments – including the *Global Environment Outlook*, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the International Resource Panel, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution and relevant gap reports. This integrated approach, facilitated by the ad hoc global assessment dialogue, fosters cooperation and coherence across panels, multilateral environmental agreements and UNEP, enhancing the UNEP mandate to keep the environment under review and support science-based policy.

54. **Collecting, analysing and communicating scientific data and evidence.** In fulfilling the mandate to "keep the world environmental situation under review", UNEP will strengthen activities to collect, analyse, synthesize and communicate scientific data and insights to Member States with a renewed focus on solutions. UNEP will support Member States' capacity in the collection and use of scientific evidence from multiple disciplines towards the development of policies, decision-making and management actions to protect the environment. Tools such as horizon scanning, strategic foresight and policy-tracking will guide the implementation of the medium-term strategy.

55. **Deepening collaboration with Indigenous Peoples on environmental knowledge.** Building on lessons from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and the International Resource Panel, UNEP will enhance collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and local knowledge holders and citizen science to make data and knowledge widely available to all. The Science-Policy subprogramme serves as a supporting framework for scientific data and its interpretation in relation to sectors, ecosystems and integrated solutions.

56. **Development and accessibility of reliable, coherent and harmonized information and knowledge to support interdisciplinary assessment for policymaking.** UNEP will work to enhance communication and engagement on environmental science across diverse audiences to foster greater understanding and encourage policy and management actions. UNEP will integrate new approaches in how science is generated, analysed, shared and communicated, ensuring that it plays a proactive role in shaping action. By building robust knowledge architecture, UNEP aims to position science not only as a diagnostic tool but as a driver of policy coherence, innovation and transformative change across the global environmental agenda. Science-policy and digital services will collaborate in developing interactive digital products and contributing to the implementation of the Global Environmental Data Strategy and the enhancement of the World Environment Situation Room.

2. Foundational subprogramme: Environmental law and governance

57. **Effective environmental governance provides the policy, legal and institutional framework needed to realize global environmental goals and commitments**. This subprogramme supports Member States in developing and implementing effective laws and policies at all levels to achieve internationally agreed environmental commitments and goals, including those under

multilateral environmental agreements, in a coherent manner. These include the integration of relevant obligations under multilateral environmental agreements in national biodiversity strategies and action plans, national action plans under the Convention to Combat Desertification and the nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement, as well as other national plans under other conventions. Similarly, through the Environment Management Group and the Sustainable United Nations initiative, UNEP coordinates and guides the United Nations system in the integration of environmental considerations at the policy, strategic and programmatic levels, as well as guiding internal environmental sustainability commitments and reporting.

58. **Fifth Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law.** Using the Montevideo Programme as a guide, UNEP will contribute to advancing environmental law. UNEP will provide technical legal assistance, guidance materials and normative and innovative tools to support Member States as they strengthen institutions and develop and enforce effective environmental policies and laws, in meeting their obligations under multilateral environmental agreements.

59. **Recalling General Assembly resolution 76/300, UNEP will promote a clean, healthy and sustainable environment for all** by providing awareness, advocacy, tools and technical support, in partnership with relevant stakeholders and rights holders.

60. **Strengthening support to governing bodies and collaboration with multilateral environmental agreement secretariats**. UNEP hosts the secretariats of 15 multilateral environmental agreements, many regional intergovernmental partnerships and science-policy bodies such as the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and the interim secretariat for the new Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution. While recognizing their independence, UNEP is well positioned to promote effectiveness, coherence and synergies in the implementation of the recommendations of these various bodies. UNEP will provide legal advice and guidance on questions of international environmental law, procedure and United Nations regulatory frameworks and will support the implementation of the latter.

61. **Horizon scanning for emerging issues in environmental law and governance**. Within the scope of the established mandate, UNEP will develop knowledge products to support Member States in understanding, navigating and engaging with evolving issues, catalysing experts and creating networks to provide cutting-edge legal perspectives on scientific advancements and developments in environmental law.

C. Strengthening and scaling impact: United Nations Environment Programme enabling subprogrammes

1. Enabling subprogramme: Finance and economic transformations

62. **Scaling up enabling policies and action for just transitions to circular and resilient economies and societies**. Enabling the three strategic objectives of the medium-term strategy requires injecting sustainability into the heart of economic, finance, legal and regulatory frameworks. On the basis of national and regional priorities and circumstances, UNEP will scale up efforts to support Member States, upon their request, with science-based knowledge, capacity development and technical expertise, to support the unlocking of public and private finance to drive investment into high-impact sectors, as set out below.

63. **Accelerating sustainable consumption and production and circularity policies and initiatives**. UNEP will support policies and initiatives that contribute to reducing greenhouse gas and pollutant emissions and restoring ecosystem functions and services. UNEP, through the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, will support the reorientation of demand-side drivers through backing sustainable public procurement, consumer information, digital product information systems, new sustainable business models and sustainable lifestyles, all informed by life-cycle approaches.

64. **Catalysing private investments for sustainable consumption and production and circularity in high-impact sectors.** The private sector is increasingly investing and lending in new and emerging areas that have a sustainability dimension and are aligned to the Member States' economic and social priorities, including support for small and medium-sized enterprises. Private sector actors, especially the banking and insurance sectors, are working with UNEP to take advantage of these opportunities, thus enabling market signals for transformation towards more sustainable practices. UNEP will collaborate with the broader United Nations system and support solutions

through unlocking capital to achieve net-zero,[52] nature-positive,[53] pollution-free[54] and circular economy approaches.[55]

65. **Unleashing the power of the public budget and fiscal policies to leverage private sector financing and investment**. Upon request, and in collaboration with United Nations partners, UNEP will advise Member States on using their public budgets and expenditures to leverage private sector investments for long-term sustainability. Public finance is an essential enabler for a resilient and sustainable economy, and fiscal policies and reforms can help to realign incentives in support of environmental goals. This includes eliminating, phasing out and reforming incentives, including subsidies harmful to the environment. This can help to direct and catalyse greater investments in innovative solutions. Such advice is provided in accordance with Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework target 9 and relevant climate decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

66. **Establishing metrics to track both stocks and flows of natural and other forms of capital.** UNEP will support these new metrics to inform environmental, economic and financial decisions and guide policymaking. UNEP work on metrics, through the International Resource Panel, will help to assess resource use, availability and potential value-add to promote growth in jobs and income and inform countries about the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, desertification, land degradation and drought and exposure to chemicals and pollution on human well-being and labour productivity.

2. Enabling subprogramme: Digital transformations

67. **Harnessing digital innovation, data ecosystems and emerging technologies to accelerate the delivery of climate stability, living in harmony with nature, land and water, and a pollution-free planet**. The ambition of this subprogramme is to support Member States to make data and digital data a backbone of environmental policy, decision-making and action.

68. **The World Environment Situation Room is an interoperable, user-centric platform for accessing and analysing environmental data**. By embedding analytics that link environmental change to economic, health and social outcomes, the Situation Room will support decision-making across all seven subprogrammes, from tracking pollution hotspots to mapping land degradation and modelling consumer information pathways. To underpin this, UNEP and partners will help to implement the Global Environmental Data Strategy to ensure data quality, interoperability and affordability. This will unlock better monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals, enhance alignment with multilateral environmental agreements and inform interventions across subprogrammes. This will also ensure that the UNEP science-policy work is data-rich, that finance flows are informed by verifiable indicators and that Member States can use established frameworks to help them monitor environmental compliance and impacts in near real time.

69. **Strengthening digital capacity within the secretariat and in developing countries.** UNEP will expand the Digital Accelerator Lab as a hub for co-developing artificial intelligence-powered tools and frontier tech applications that are context-appropriate, inclusive and sustainable. These innovations will support scenario planning, impact calculation and circular economy approaches. This includes co-creating digital tools with Governments as well as multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, people of African descent, children and youth, women and girls, the private sector and other major groups, ensuring that innovations are accessible, locally relevant and impactful, contributions to climate action, ecosystem-based approaches and/or nature-based solutions and pollution tracking. UNEP will also seek to deliver targeted digital capacity-building to Member States, with a focus on the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. This includes advancing digital literacy for environmental officials, supporting the integration of digital tools into national development plans and supporting regional capabilities for cross-border environmental action.

70. **Strengthening the use of artificial intelligence tools used for the environment**. Recognizing the growing role and risks of emerging technologies, UNEP will strengthen capacity to

[52] UNEP, *Net-Zero and Nature-Positive Finance: Accelerating Sustainable Land Use Investments* (2023).

[53] UNDP, secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, *Creating a Nature-Positive Future: The Contribution of Protected Areas and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures* (2021).

[54] UNEP, Pollution-free, Nature-positive, net-zero fashion: a UNEP dialogue event (2023).

[55] UNEP, *Financing Circularity: Demystifying Finance for Circular Economies* (2020). Available at https://www.unepfi.org/publications/financing-circularity/.

assess and use artificial intelligence for environment, while continuing to monitor other emerging technologies such as blockchain, 6G, quantum computing and extended reality as appropriate. Working through multi-stakeholder platforms such as the Coalition for Digital Environmental Sustainability, UNEP will develop sustainability principles and best practices for the responsible deployment of these technologies, so as to enable solutions without exacerbating environmental economic or social harm.

VI. Accelerating transformative change for a healthy, prosperous and resilient people and planet

71. **A clear, cohesive path to achieving the 2030 Agenda**. The last UNEP strategy before the 2030 deadline outlines a solutions pathway to achieve the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and paragraph 88 of "The future we want", guided by a long-term vision of planetary sustainability for people, prosperity and peace. Drawing on lessons learned from the previous strategy and programme implementation, UNEP will serve as a catalyst and convener of action, while localizing environmental Sustainable Development Goals and contributing to a United Nations post-2030 framework for sustainable development. UNEP will promote safeguards to ensure that digital transformation supports environmental goals.

72. **Support and ambition from Member States is key to UNEP impact and influence**. Political will and full contributions to the Environment Fund are key to keeping pace with today's challenges. In 2024, a total of 102 Member States contributed to the Environment Fund, the foundation of the work of UNEP. In addition, the three UNEP Planetary Funds, focused on climate, nature and pollution, are delivering tangible impacts on the ground, demonstrating the power of strategic investments. Additional earmarked funds and partnerships are crucial for expanding UNEP impact and influence and for countries to deliver on their environmental commitments.

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