

## **Input to the Zero Draft Ministerial Declaration of the 7th United Nations Environment Assembly**

**Presented by stakeholders in the European Region**  
following a stakeholder consultation on 8 April 2025

Major Groups and Stakeholders in the European region convened on 8 April 2025 to discuss and provide input to the Zero Draft Ministerial Declaration of UNEA7. The following points have been discussed by a variety of stakeholders across the region, and this submission is shared on behalf of stakeholder in the region (except for the Business & Industry Major Group).

Major Groups and Stakeholders in the European region welcome the Zero Draft which already contains many important elements. We also appreciate governments' openness to engage with Major Groups and stakeholders and remain at your disposal throughout the consultation process for the Ministerial Declaration.

Please find below our suggestion on how to develop the draft reflecting key concerns and demands of stakeholders in our region.

### **1) Additional elements**

Stakeholders in the region believe that the following elements and concerns should be reflected or strengthened in the Ministerial Declaration. Stakeholders would appreciate efforts to:

- **Strengthen language on the urgency to tackle the triple planetary crisis**, for instance, referring to the IPCC AR6 statement that our current trajectory is leading us away from sustainability.
- add a clear reference not only to prevent further environmental degradation and pollution, but a strong commitment to **nature restoration** to undo harm done and in support water resilience, flood protection and other measures of climate change adaptation, sustainable food systems and soil health, and the biodiversity targets;
- commit explicitly to the **zero pollution objective** building on earlier efforts at UNEA to beat pollution.
- have a reflection of the **significant health impacts** of environmental degradation and pollution and related costs to health and social systems, and how resources channeled to environmental protection and anti-pollution prevent harm, save lives and costs; refer to the One Health approach, that recognises the interconnectedness of human health, animal health or the environment;
- to refer to the need to **hold polluters into account**, including through a prosecution of environmental crimes, and the criminalisation of ecocide;
- to build on the UNEA 6 Ministerial Declaration (paras. 6 and 12) and to recognise the increasingly **critical importance of water and wetlands** in meeting sustainable development, climate and biodiversity goals, to connect to the UNFCCC Baku Dialogue process for water hosted by UNEP, the Convention on Wetlands COP15 in July and the forthcoming 2026 UN Water Conference (please see several concrete suggestions added to the Zero Draft below).

- acknowledge the **importance of oceans** as cross boundary areas and the need for global governance of currently unregulated experiments;
- add language reflecting on the need for governments to **commit to non-use of Solar Radiation Modification (SRM)**. Stakeholders are concerned about SRM experimentation and technology development, paving the way for possible deployment of Solar Radiation Modification (SRM). Hundreds of leading scientists from multi-disciplinary backgrounds and civil society organisations from around the world are in agreement on the need for states to commit to non-use of SRM. Along with other forms of geoengineering, SRM has been under a *de facto* moratorium through the Convention on Biological Diversity since 2010, reaffirmed at COP16 in Cali in response to concerns about the recent proliferation in outdoor experiments. Beyond this, Member States should act decisively to prevent development and deployment of these dangerous, unnecessary technologies, by committing to non-use of SRM and Geoengineering, and urgently prioritise real solutions to the climate crisis. At UNEA6, we applauded the leadership of African Environment Ministers in calling for an international mechanism for Non-Use of SRM. Meaningful stakeholder engagement on all aspect relating to SMR and other c
- to **expand the scope of the need for a Just Transition** beyond energy generation and energy-intensive sectors, and to recognise that a whole of economy approach targeted all sectors is needed centring workers and those communities most affected by the transition;
- to add language on the need to **integrate the mining sector**, a crucial transition sector, into Just Transition frameworks in alignment with the recommendation of the Secretary-General panel recommendations on CETMs, ensuring environmental justice, protection of human and labour rights, Indigenous Peoples' rights and environmental safeguards for affected communities given that 54% of energy transition minerals are on or near Indigenous Peoples. Parties should commit to reduce material extraction by applying sufficiency-first approaches, prioritising circularity and setting binding resource reduction targets in line with planetary boundaries as suggested by the International Resource Panel, and agree that metals and minerals governance reflect the full environmental and social life cycle impacts of extraction minerals and it's alternatives and ensure that mineral demand for the energy transition does not replicate extractive injustices. Parties should collaborate to ensure rigorous, independent environmental and human rights impact assessments, community-led consent processes, and full transparency across the supply chain and the critical ecosystems and sensitive Indigenous territories should be designated as no-go zones for mining.
- to strengthen the aspect of **conflict and environment**: the mention of armed conflicts' effects in the context of transboundary pollution is welcomed but remains too narrow and there are several opportunities by (1) adding armed conflicts to points on manmade hazards, (2) expanding on the need for environmental recovery eventually through adding a specific paragraph on environmental recovery, (3) mentioning manmade disasters as exacerbating factors to the problem of biodiversity loss and pollution, and (4) mentioning conflict-affected countries under the category of "countries facing specific challenges". More specifically, parties should agree to substantially increase the level and quality of **assistance to the states and territories**, which have already been suffering the most from the **adverse environmental impacts of the armed**

**conflicts** including, the full implementation of res 6/12, as well as an enabling international legal and policy framework for responding to environmental loss and damage resulting from wide-scale armed conflicts. Armed conflict also **impacts food security**, where food production or trade is hampered. We urge all parties to support the immediate peaceful resolution of conflicts through political dialogue, negotiations, mediation and other peaceful means in accordance with international law.

- to strengthen language around the need for the **transition to sustainable food systems** (as highlighted below).
- to recall the upcoming 40th anniversary of the 1986 Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant accident, to urge Member States, observer States of the United Nations, relevant international organizations and financial institutions to **apply the precautionary approach to the nuclear power sector**, further strengthen policies and measures to eliminate risks and minimize adverse impacts of nuclear and radiological accidents while stressing the need to enhance coordination, coherence, and integration between early warning systems and disaster risk management systems.
- to uphold the **central role of research and science** for continuing the successes of evidence-based policymaking at a time when science is under attack.

## 2) Concrete suggestions for the Zero Draft

Please find below concrete suggestions from stakeholders in the region to develop the Zero Draft.

### ZERO DRAFT – 28th March 2025

#### Ministerial declaration of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its seventh session

##### *Advancing sustainable solutions for a resilient planet*

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 seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, with the urgent aim of advancing sustainable solutions for a resilient planet.
2. We welcome the Global Youth Environment Assembly held in Nairobi in December 2025 and its role in fostering active participation by young people in multilateral environmental governance. We recognize the importance of intergenerational equity and youth leadership in driving transformative environmental solutions.
3. We welcome the Global Environmental Outlook 2025 and its findings.
- 3-4. We also emphasise the necessity of strengthening and using multilateral institutions, of which the UN Environment Programme, UNEP and the UN Environment Assembly, UNEA are the paramount global institutions to initiate, develop and implement environmental policies to safeguard people and the planet.

5. We decide, recognizing the importance of ensuring human sustainable development is ecologically and environmentally sustainable and compatible with human rights, Indigenous Peoples' rights, as well as climate, biodiversity and depollution goals, as a priority, to take the following actions:

- (a) Strengthen international cooperation to address and solve the triple planetary crises and to mitigate transboundary pollution issues, prioritize the development of advanced monitoring systems to effectively track and manage these issues across borders, ensuring a science-driven approach to pollution control and environmental resilience, emphasizing on the effects of armed conflicts over shared environmental resources and call for their environmental evaluation and rehabilitation.

We commit to the inclusion of stakeholders' recognised in the Major Groups as well as local and rural communities, groups and individuals in vulnerable situations, and affected populations in the design, implementation, and oversight of these monitoring systems, with full and effective participation and consent of Indigenous Peoples in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), particularly where assessments impacts their territory or rights. We recognise the need for independent reporting channels, protection of environmental human rights defenders and journalists in conflict zones, and the integration of environmental justice in peacebuilding processes.

- (b) Stress the urgency of the implementation of unprecedented emission reductions: Member States must commit to cutting at least 42% per cent off annual greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, rapid phase out fossil fuels, and drastically scale up nature-positive renewable energy. Stronger international cooperation and support, including through enhanced climate finance, will be essential to deliver on the Paris Agreement. Support for and collaboration with stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples, other rights holders and affected communities as well as works in the affected sectors and gender-responsive climate finance to accompany emission cuts, ensuring their full participation in the design and implementation of mitigation and adaptation strategies with direct access to climate finance mechanisms.

~~(b)~~(c) Recognizing the interconnectedness of biodiversity and geodiversity loss, desertification and land degradation, and the impacts of climate change, exacerbated by man-made disasters including unsustainable use of resources and armed conflicts, we emphasize the need for integrated and coordinated approaches including the One-Health Approach to address these challenges. Biodiversity loss accelerates land degradation and desertification, while climate change exacerbates these processes through rising temperatures, shifting precipitation patterns, and extreme weather events.

~~(c)~~(d) Encourage Member States to engage and mobilize the international community to enhance financial support to facilitate the implementation of agreed outcomes of the 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) held from 11 to 24 November 2024 in Baku, Azerbaijan as well as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018 – 2030.

~~(d)~~(e) Foster synergies, good governance, rights based approaches, cooperation and collaboration to advance the effective and inclusive implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and other internationally agreed global commitments, inviting the governing bodies of MEAs, whilst respecting their independence and respective mandates, to collaborate with the United Nations Environment Assembly to promote integrated approaches and policy coherence, and ensure meaningful stakeholder participation and public

accountability in MEA implementation and reporting, with mechanisms for funding and capacity building in particular for Indigenous Peoples representative organisation to enable their effective participation-

(e)(f) Call on regional forums of ministers of the environment and environmental authorities to engage in multilateral cooperation for a more effective international environmental governance that advances synergies and integrated solutions across climate change, biodiversity and geodiversity, water and land degradation, pollution and waste action following rights-based approaches-

(f)(g) Advance circular economy principles by encouraging industries to adopt sustainable production and consumption models that emphasize resource efficiency, waste minimization, regenerative approaches and the rethinking of product life cycles, through policy incentives and innovation, drive a systemic shift towards sustainability, preventing and reducing environmental impact and strengthening long-term planetary resilience, and to ensure equitable use of resources in an interconnected global economy-

(g)(h) Encourage sustainable, inclusive, and science-based environmental solutions and policies, leveraging citizen science, traditional knowledge, and the outcomes of the Global Digital Compact to enhance monitoring, early warning, and resilience-building systems. Encouraging sustainable solutions and environmental policies that is based on scientific research and innovations in monitoring, early warning and assessment systems in various fields to support the capacity of vital sectors. stressing the need to enhance coordination, coherence, and integration between early warning systems and disaster risk management systems.

(h)(i) Call for the strengthening disaster risk governance to manage natural and manmade hazards by integrating disaster risk reduction and resilience into policies, programmes, and investments at all levels, and calling for enhanced support for Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), Small Islands Developing States (SIDS), and countries facing specific challenges including conflict-affected countries. Disaster risk action should be culturally appropriate, prioritizing community-defined resilience strategies.

(i)(j) Stress the need to enhance coordination, coherence and integration between early warning systems and disaster risk management systems to advance climate-resilient development and enhance response and recovery against manmade and natural disasters induced or exacerbated by climate change, such as droughts, heavy rains, wildfires, heat waves, famines and flooding, leaving no one behind.

(j)(k) Champion a just transition towards a clean energy future by advocating for the widespread accessibility and adoption of nature-positive renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies in respect of environmental rights, and the advancement of environmental rule of law. Ensure that the shift to a low-carbon economy is inclusive and equitable, by reducing emissions across all sectors, including the informal and care economies, industrial, transportation, and residential sectors, this transition contributes to climate resilience while fostering sustainable economic growth. A just transition must prioritise the human rights, Indigenous Peoples' rights, livelihoods, health and social protections of workers and communities most affected by the transition, particularly women, youth, farmers, Indigenous Peoples, and those in the informal sector. Support community-owned renewable energy production, skills development and public investment in social infrastructure to ensure that no one is left behind.

~~(t+)(l)~~ ~~Call for e~~Enhance the efforts for an effective implementation of sustainable development goals which requires strong support for technology and knowledge transfer, including through the recognition and support for Indigenous Peoples and traditional knowledge, as well as capacity building. This includes fostering partnerships that enable access to new technologies, expertise, and resources, applying the precautionary approach, while strengthening local skills and institutions. By enhancing the capabilities of local communities and industries, developing countries can better drive their own growth and development. Prioritising community-led, gender-responsive approaches in technology transfer and capacity building are key.

~~(t+)(m)~~ Emphasizing the importance of cooperation and exchange of expertise between governments and international organizations as well as the relevant stakeholders and rightsholders, including Indigenous Peoples, and collective action to combat different environmental issues such as climate change, pollution, ~~and~~ biodiversity loss and water resilience, building capacity at national scale.

~~(m+)(n)~~ Advancing sustainable solutions for a resilient planet and to encourage develop & incorporate digital solutions and AI in national plans as innovative solutions that contribute to accelerate achieving SDG plan towards sustainability and encouraging the full access to data.

~~(n+)(o)~~ Stress the need for a comprehensive assessment of the potential negative environmental impacts of artificial intelligence, including energy and water consumption, ~~and~~ carbon emissions and water use and impact on freshwater ecosystems associated with digital infrastructure. This should be accompanied by strengthened regulatory frameworks, assessments of potential impacts and standards to ensure its development and use align with environmental sustainability principles and ecosystem protection, transparency, accountability and principles of Human Rights as expressed in the two UN Covenants, while promoting international cooperation and the exchange of best practices for responsible and ethical AI deployment. Assess potential risks of AI surveillance technologies including data sovereignty concerns.

~~(o+)(p)~~ [Placeholder on the outcome of the second part of the fifth session of the Intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.]

~~(p+)(q)~~ [Placeholder on the outcome of the resumed third session of the ad hoc open-ended working group on a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution.]

(add para) [Placeholder on the outcome of the Convention on Wetlands COP15 taking place in July.]

~~(q+)(r)~~ ~~Call~~ Protect and safeguard the global environment and nature, call for ecosystem protection by identifying, strengthening and employing for ecosystem protection by strengthening nature-based solutions, ensuring sustainable water management and the protection of wetlands, safeguarding geodiversity, minimizing deforestation and forest degradation, and safeguarding, conserving, and restoring degraded land, soil, and ecosystems including the complex array of species they sustain. These ecosystems support climate, food, water, health and energy security, serve as habitats for biodiversity, and contribute to carbon storage and sequestration. Their preservation delivers numerous economic, social, and environmental co-benefits, reinforcing efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Ensure that ecosystem protection strategies are rights-based, inclusive, and co-designed with Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, local communities and small-scale farmers who are often

primary stewards of geodiversity and biodiversity. Recognising their traditional knowledge, expertise and governance systems are vital for long-term resilience.

~~(+)(s)~~ ~~Invite~~ ~~Commit to ensure the inclusion of all relevant and impacted stakeholders and rights holders, such as role of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, local and rural communities, and groups and individuals in vulnerable situations, in the protection of the environment, and to ensure their inclusive participation in decision-making and implementation processes, and to protect, respect, promote and fulfil protecting and ensuring respecting the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. Effective environmental and participatory governance and action requires access to information, public participation in decision-making, access to justice, and accountability building on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, the Aarhus Convention and the Escazú Agreement.~~ ~~member states to enhance the role of women, youth and civil society, indigenous people in the protection of the environment and to ensure their inclusive participation in decision-making processes, protecting and respecting the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.~~

~~(s)(t)~~ ~~Commit to cooperate to~~ Cooperate to ensure the transition to sustainable food systems in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, emphasizing with great urgency that a multisectoral and integrated approach to food systems covering the whole supply chain, including the redesign of the food products and -portfolios, sustainable consumption and production, transport and storage, recycling of bioproducts and food waste is critical to achieving global food security, ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition, while accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and relevant multilateral environmental agreements including the need to protect and restore biodiversity and nature, protect freshwater resources and ensure farmers' and communities' water resilience and to reduce pollution and to save soil. Commit to support the revitalisation of traditional food systems and Indigenous Peoples' food sovereignty as critical to biodiversity protection and community resilience. Recognise the importance of working animals on building resilience and the need to ensure their health and welfare in line with UNGA resolution 79/205, as well as addressing livestock health and welfare, in line with the One Health approach.

~~(+)(u)~~ Urge Member States, international financial institutions, private foundations, funds and other actors to cooperate to align the global financial architecture with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and strengthen national policy and regulatory frameworks to enhance the transparency, availability and predictability of financial support to implement the goals and targets of the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Global Framework on Chemicals.