

Comments and Feedback by the Kingdom of Bahrain on the Revised First Draft of the UNEA-7 Ministerial Declaration

At the outset, the Kingdom would like to express confidence in the able leadership of H.E. Abdullah Bin Ali Al-Amri, Chairman of the Environment Authority of the Sultanate of Oman, to guide us towards consensual text.

The Kingdom also extends its sincerest appreciation for the opportunity to communicate the following general comments on the Revised First Draft of the UNEA-7 Ministerial Declaration:

- It is crucial that the Declaration maintains explicit recognition of the principles of Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Similarly, and its Sustainable Development Goal.
- The Declaration must recognize national circumstances, priorities and capacities and allow Member States to pursue different pathways and approaches in addressing environmental challenges.
- While multilateralism and collective action to address environmental challenges is crucial, it is crucial to recognize that countries are of varying levels of capacities and capabilities and face diverse circumstances. The operative paragraphs of the Declaration do not clearly differentiate between developed and developing countries. This language must be strengthened.
- Text relating to various Multilateral Environmental Agreements should not contradict agreed principles and approaches. The UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement is based on a bottom-up nationally determined approach that differentiates between developed and developing countries, without prescribing sector-specific approaches. The financial obligations on developed countries under Article 9 of the Paris Agreement should not be diluted but instead firmly reaffirmed.
- The Declaration must recognize the role of trade in advancing sustainable development and acknowledge the need to ensure that trade measures, including unilateral measures, are consistent with international law and principles, and do not create unnecessary barriers to trade or adversely impact developing countries.
- Language that has presented challenges in multilateral negotiations, owing to differing interpretations among Member States, should be avoided (e.g. “full life cycle” – Action 1C, referring to aligning/making “financial flows” consistent – Action 3S).
- The Declaration should avoid introducing new language that singles out specific regional groups to ensure equal and balanced representation (e.g. Action 3T, Action 3S).