

**OHCHR textual proposals to the Ministerial declaration of the United Nations
Environment Assembly at its seventh session**

Please see proposed changes in bold

Textual proposal on paragraph 4.	Commentary
(c) Recognizing the interconnectedness of biodiversity loss, desertification, pollution and the impacts of climate change, and their negative impact on human rights, in particular by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations, we emphasize the need for integrated, holistic and coordinated approaches to address these challenges. Pollution and biodiversity loss accelerates land degradation and desertification, while climate change exacerbates these processes through rising temperatures, shifting precipitation patterns, and extreme weather events.	We propose adding a reference to pollution as one of the pressing environmental crises interconnected with the other ones mentioned. See, e.g., GEO6, page 109: <i>‘The impacts of human activity on the atmosphere are often framed in terms of four separate challenges: air pollution; climate change; stratospheric ozone depletion; and persistent, bioaccumulative, toxic substances (PBT) (Abelkop, Graham and Royer 2017). The causes of these four challenges, their effects on atmospheric composition and meteorological processes, and their impacts on humans and ecosystems are closely intertwined’.</i> We also suggest highlighting that the measures to address the environmental crises should be grounded in human rights – in line with, e.g., the preamble of the Paris Agreement, paragraph 7(g) of Section C of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the Global Framework on Chemicals.
(e) Foster synergies, cooperation and collaboration to advance the effective and inclusive implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and other internationally agreed treaties and 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.	Multilateral Environmental Agreements share the objective of protecting human health and the environment and, therefore, their implementation is interrelated, interconnected and synergistic with other international treaties and commitments, including human rights treaties.
(g) Advance circular economy principles by encouraging industries to adopt sustainable production and consumption models that emphasize resource efficiency, waste minimization, toxic chemicals avoidance and the rethinking of product life cycles, through policy incentives and innovation, drive a systemic shift towards sustainability, reducing	A chemically safe circular economy begins with the design of products that reduces material input, avoids the use of toxic chemicals and enables reuse, recovery and recycling. Otherwise, circularity can become a buzz word to promote recycling without the assurances that it does not further harm human health and the environment and

environmental impact and strengthening long-term planetary resilience.	further perpetuates injustice and inequality.
(h) 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, as well as building the capacity and increasing resilience for potentially affected communities.	We propose incorporating language on capacity-building and resilience for at-risk communities, to ensure an understanding of the disaster risk (Priority 1 of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction) and the strengthening of disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk (Priority 2) also at the local/community level. See paras 24(g) and (h) and 27 (a) of the Sendai Framework.
(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 particularly for those in vulnerable situations.	
(i) Call for the strengthening disaster risk governance to manage natural and manmade hazards by integrating disaster risk reduction 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.	The Declaration should also note that disaster risk governance should be in line with human rights standards and relevant global and regional frameworks and strategies on climate action, sustainable development, peace and security, humanitarian assistance and protection.
4. (...) (k) Champion a just transition towards a clean energy future environmentally sustainable economies and societies, including by advocating for the widespread accessibility and adoption of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, and the advancement of environmental rule of law, environmental justice, decent work, and poverty eradication. Ensure that the	Just transitions are not limited to the energy sector. Please see ILC 2023 resolution: ‘a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all’ , which e.g., points out that ‘ <i>Urgent action to advance just transition is an imperative to <u>achieving social justice, decent work and poverty eradication, and to tackling environmental and climate change. The future of economies, societies, jobs and livelihoods is at stake as they depend on</u></i>

shift to a low-carbon economy is inclusive and equitable, by reducing emissions across industrial, transportation, and residential sectors, this transition contributes to climate resilience while fostering sustainable economic growth development.	<i>the planet's ecosystems and natural environments.</i>’ It also notes that <i>‘The costs of inaction will be many times greater than the investments urgently needed towards <u>achieving resilient, inclusive and environmentally sustainable economies and societies.</u>’</i> Regarding environmental justice, decent work, and poverty eradication, please see: Human Rights Council resolution 56/8, OP11, which in its OP11 <i>‘Urges States to develop and effectively implement policies that facilitate just transitions, in accordance with nationally defined development priorities, ensuring that the transition pathways from high-carbon to low-carbon economies are fair, equitable, inclusive and sustainable, leaving no one behind, <u>creating decent work and quality jobs</u>, enhancing social security, addressing joblessness, <u>reducing inequalities and poverty</u> and in the Preamble affirms <i>‘that prioritizing equity, climate justice, social justice, inclusion and just transition processes can enable adaptation and ambitious mitigation actions and climate resilient development.’</i> See also CMA decision FCCC/PA/CMA/2023/L.14 JTWP and ILC 2023 resolution: ‘a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all’.</i> On sustainable development, the resolution provides, inter alia: <i>“A just transition is central to delivering sustainable development in its economic, social, and environmental dimensions and to addressing the linkages between them.”</i>
(l) Call for enhance the efforts for an effective implementation of sustainable development goals which requires strong support for technology and knowledge transfer, as well as capacity building. This includes fostering partnerships that enable access to new technologies, expertise, and resources, while strengthening local skills and institutions. By enhancing the capabilities of Indigenous	Indigenous Peoples are absent from this para. The PFII, EMRIP and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples urged refraining from conflating, associating, combining, or equating Indigenous Peoples with non-Indigenous entities, such as minorities, vulnerable groups, or “local communities”. We propose adding ‘Indigenous Peoples’, as

Peoples, local communities and industries, developing countries can better drive their own growth and development.	it is necessary to involve Indigenous Peoples in the implementation of the SDGs. See, e.g., UN General Assembly resolution 76/148, para 22, which <i>‘encourages States to engage with indigenous peoples at the local, national and regional levels in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals and to promote indigenous peoples’ leadership in their achievement.’</i>
(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 ensuring a safe, secure and high-quality data infrastructure.	<i>‘Full access to data’</i> risks being contrary to privacy provisions. We propose an alternative formulation <i>‘ensuring a safe, secure and high-quality data infrastructure’</i> based on Human Rights Council resolution 54/21. Right to privacy in the digital age. See below a relevant excerpt from the resolution: <i>“Acknowledges that risks to the right to privacy and other human rights can and should be minimized by adopting adequate regulations or other appropriate mechanisms, in accordance with applicable obligations under international human rights law, in the conception, design, use, acquisition, transfer, sale, deployment and further development of new and emerging digital technologies, such as artificial intelligence, by <u>ensuring a safe, secure and high-quality data infrastructure</u>, by exercising due diligence to assess, prevent and mitigate adverse human rights impacts, and by establishing human oversight, as well as redress mechanisms;”</i>
(o) Stress the need for a comprehensive assessment of the potential negative environmental impacts of artificial intelligence, including energy consumption and carbon emissions associated with digital infrastructure. This should be accompanied by strengthened regulatory frameworks and standards to ensure its development and use align with environmental sustainability principles and ecosystem protection, while promoting international cooperation and the exchange of best practices for responsible and ethical and human rights-compliant AI deployment.	See, e.g., Human Rights Council resolution 57/5, OP12, which <i>‘Encourages States and, where applicable, other stakeholders to promote, following a risk-based approach, the safe, secure and trustworthy design, development, deployment and decommissioning of artificial intelligence systems in an inclusive and equitable manner, and for the benefit of all, and foster an enabling environment for such systems <u>to protect the exercise of and mitigate the potential adverse impacts on the full and effective</u></i>

	<i>enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms’.</i>
(r) Call for ecosystem protection by strengthening nature-based solutions, ensuring sustainable water management, minimizing deforestation and forest degradation, and safeguarding, conserving, and restoring degraded land, soil, and ecosystems, while ensuring social and environmental safeguards, including for Indigenous Peoples, and local communities. These ecosystems support food, water, 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	Language proposed based on the preamble of UNEA resolution 5/5. The language seeks to ensure that measures relying upon nature-based solutions do not infringe upon human rights, including the rights of Indigenous Peoples and of those who most closely depend on nature. See also CBD Voluntary guidelines for the design and effective implementation of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and supplementary information , section 2.2.2. on Safeguards.
(s) Invite member states to enhance the role of women, children , youth, and civil society, and Indigenous Peoples in the protection of the environment and to ensure their safe , inclusive and meaningful participation in decision-making processes, as well as access to justice and access to information on environmental matters , protecting, fulfilling and respecting the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.	Proposals made to reflect the language of Target 22 and Section C (para 7g) of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted by CBD COP decision 15/4 , as well as the UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention), the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement) and Rio Principle 10. We also propose capitalising the term ‘Indigenous Peoples’ in line with UN General Assembly resolution 77/460 , Rights of Indigenous Peoples , and Human Rights Council resolution 57/15 , Human rights of Indigenous Peoples .
(t) Commit to cooperate to transition to sustainable food systems in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recognizing the right to food as a fundamental human right, and emphasizing with great urgency that a human rights-based, equitable , multisectoral and integrated approach to food systems 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.	See generally: A/HRC/55/37 On right to food as a fundamental right and human rights-based approach, see: Adverse impact of climate change on the full realization of the right to food Report of the Secretary-General, A/HRC/53/47 .

