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Synopsis

National statements delivered during the high-level segment of the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly held from 8 to 12 December 2025, Nairobi Kenya

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PREFACE

The Governance Affairs Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is proud to present the first concise overview of the national statements delivered during the high-level segment of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) held from 8 to 12 December 2025 in Nairobi, Kenya indicating trends in terms of the number of mentions of select topics during the national statements.¹

The plenary meetings of UNEA devoted to national statements provide delegations with the opportunity to present their views on the global environmental agenda.

For a complete record of UNEA-7 national statements visit the dedicated webpage accessible at [High-level segment and National Statements](https://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/unea7/high-level-segment-national-statements) (<https://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/unea7/high-level-segment-national-statements>).

¹ This report was created with the assistance of AI tools for research and drafting.

INTRODUCTION

National statements during the high-level segment

Statements were delivered by representatives of Member States speaking, on behalf of a group of States, or speaking in their national capacity, and time permitting, in accordance with [rules 68, 69 and 70 of the rules of procedure of the Environment Assembly](#), by members of the specialized agencies, the specialized agencies, the United Nations bodies, accredited intergovernmental organizations and the regional economic integration organizations as well as accredited non-governmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders through the major groups and stakeholders.²

Statements during the high-level segment were delivered as follows:

- Thursday, 11 December 2025, 10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.; 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.; and 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. GMT+3; and
- Friday, 12 December 2025, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. GMT+3

The plenary meetings devoted to national statements were live streamed through the United Nations Web TV website (webtv.un.org) in all six UN official languages.

UNEA-7 was held fully in-person, therefore, all statements were delivered in person.

The plenary meetings devoted to national statements were held in parallel to three leadership dialogues and a multistakeholder dialogue, each dialogue focused on different transformative, multi-stakeholder and multi-level actions and solutions to advance sustainable solutions for a resilient planet.

The high-level segment was preceded by a dedicated Multilateral Environmental Agreements Day (MEAs Day) convened under the agenda item “Cooperation with multilateral environmental agreements” on Wednesday, 10 December 2025. The day featured an opening plenary meeting, followed by two consecutive high-level dialogues and a moderated discussion on the conclusions of the day’s discussion. These engagements provided a platform to highlight cooperation between UNEP and MEAs as well as among MEAs, celebrating success stories, championing integrated solutions and inspiring greater collective environmental action.

Order of speakers

The list of speakers was established on a first-come first-served basis, with the customary protocol that ensures that Heads of State or Government speak first. Accordingly, the Heads of States were accorded priority, followed by Vice Presidents, Heads of Government,

Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers and Vice Ministers followed by Heads of Delegation.

Member States, Observer States and the European Union were invited to inscribe on the list of speakers in advance of the Assembly using the e-Speaker module.

Time limits

In accordance with rule 38 of the rules of procedure of UNEA and to allow maximum participation of delegations, the Bureaux of UNEA and the Committee of Permanent Representatives at a joint Bureaux meeting held on 28 May 2025 agreed that the time limit for all statements would be three (3) minutes (around 300 and 360 words) per individual delegation and five (5) minutes (approximately 500 to 600 words) for statements made on behalf of a group of States, on the understanding that this would not preclude the distribution of more extensive texts.

Major groups and stakeholders were given a time limit of three (3) minutes (around 300 and 360 words), unless the statement represented all nine major groups, in which case the time limit was five (5) minutes (approximately 500 to 600 words). The time limit of three (3) minutes (around 300 and 360 words) was also applied to other categories of participants.

A countdown timer was displayed in the conference room to guide the speakers. When a representative exceeded her or his allotted time, the President of the Environment Assembly or the presiding officer called the speaker to order without delay, which was done by means of automatic microphone cut-off.

Statistical overview

The national statements included 137 statements, 122 by Member States featuring 1 Head of State and 1 Vice President, 1 Deputy Prime Minister, 45 Ministers, 20 Vice-Ministers and 55 Permanent Representatives or Heads of Delegations. The State of Palestine and the European Union participated in their capacity as observers.

See the final list of speakers here: <https://e-speakers.e-delegate.un.org/692818f47012f042406fdb3427112025/index.html>

UNEA-7 was attended by over 6000 participants.

Furthermore, in the margins of the official meetings of UNEA-7, a total of 19 official side events, 13 MEAs organized events, 32 associated events, and 64 events organized by the accredited non-governmental organizations were held.

² For the present synopsis report, only member states statements have been considered.

MAIN ISSUES REFLECTED IN UNEA-7 NATIONAL STATEMENTS

Overview of key themes

The national statements overwhelmingly reflected concern over the three planetary environmental crises of climate change, nature, land and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste—alongside strong emphasis on finance, technology transfer, multilateral cooperation, plastic pollution, and sustainable economic transformation.³

Delegations consistently framed these challenges as interconnected and mutually reinforcing, requiring integrated, science-based, and cooperative responses at national, regional, and global levels. There was broad agreement that environmental sustainability is inseparable from economic stability, public health, and long-term development, and that urgent and coordinated action is necessary to secure a resilient planet for present and future generations.

Topic 1. Climate Change, adaptation, and resilience

Climate change emerged as one of the most prominent and urgent issues across national statements, with countries highlighting both its immediate impacts and long-term implications. Delegations described it as a global threat already affecting food security, livelihoods, and economic stability, particularly in vulnerable regions such as least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries. Many countries reported severe and ongoing climate-related impacts, including prolonged droughts, floods, extreme weather events, land degradation, and sea-level rise.

Delegations emphasised the need to strengthen national adaptation plans, enhance climate resilience, and accelerate mitigation efforts through renewable energy expansion, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and broader transitions toward low-carbon development pathways. At the same time, concerns were raised that the global response remains below expectations, particularly due to gaps in climate finance, limited technology transfer and uneven capacities. They also underscored the importance of integrating climate considerations into national development strategies and called for coordinated international action to address what was repeatedly described as a systemic and urgent global crisis requiring a unified response.

Climate-vulnerable countries underscored the existential nature of the crisis and urged the international community to act with greater urgency, equity and international

cooperation to address the worsening impacts of climate change.

Topic 2. Biodiversity protection, nature conservation, and ecosystem restoration

Biodiversity conservation and ecosystem protection were widely recognised as essential pillars of environmental sustainability and climate resilience. Many countries expressed concern about the accelerating loss of biodiversity and the degradation of forests, wetlands, marine ecosystems, and wildlife habitats—challenges that threaten ecological balance, economic stability, and vital ecosystem services.

Delegations reaffirmed their commitment to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and highlighted national efforts to restore degraded lands and ecosystems, expand protected areas, safeguard biodiversity hotspots, and advancing, where possible, nature-based solutions. They underscored that biodiversity loss undermines food security, water availability, and climate adaptation, particularly in countries heavily dependent on natural resources.

Countries also emphasised the importance of integrating biodiversity conservation into national planning and development strategies, while calling for strengthened global cooperation to safeguard ecosystems and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources for future generations.

Topic 3. Pollution and Waste Management (including Chemicals)

Pollution was widely identified as a major global threat affecting human health, ecosystems, and sustainable development. Countries highlighted the harmful impacts of chemical pollution, industrial waste, air contamination, and water pollution on public health and environmental integrity. Delegations stressed the urgent need to strengthen waste management systems, improve regulatory frameworks, and ensure the environmentally sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste.

Many countries also emphasized reducing pollution through cleaner industrial practices, enhanced environmental monitoring, and stronger national implementation measures. There was broad recognition that pollution crosses national borders and therefore requires coordinated global action, improved governance, and a transition toward cleaner production processes and

³ Based on transcript of national statements.

sustainable consumption patterns to protect ecosystems and reduce environmental degradation.

Topic 4. Plastic pollution and global plastics treaty

Plastic pollution was highlighted as one of the most visible and urgent environmental challenges, with many countries expressing strong support for developing a legally binding global treaty addressing plastic pollution across its full lifecycle. Delegations underscored the widespread presence of plastic waste in oceans, rivers, soils, and food systems, noting its harmful effects on marine biodiversity, ecosystems, and human health.

Countries outlined national efforts to reduce single-use plastics, improve recycling systems, and advance circular plastic economies aimed at minimising waste. There was broad consensus that international cooperation and legally binding commitments are essential to effectively tackle plastic pollution and ensure sustainable waste management at the global scale.

Topic 5. Climate finance, technology transfer, and capacity building

Access to climate finance, technology transfer, and capacity building emerged as a critical priority, particularly for developing countries and climate vulnerable states. Delegations stressed that while countries are committed to advancing environmental protection and climate action, their ability to implement necessary measures depends heavily on predictable, adequate, and accessible financial resources, as well as equitable access to environmentally sound technologies and sufficient institutional capacity.

Many countries highlighted the importance of strengthened partnerships, technical support, and international cooperation to enable effective implementation of climate and environmental commitments. They underscored that inclusive and equitable global environmental governance requires robust financial support, enhanced technology transfer, and sustained capacity building efforts to ensure all countries—especially those most vulnerable—can meet their obligations and adapt to escalating climate impacts.

Topic 6. Multilateralism and global environmental cooperation

Multilateral cooperation and strengthened global environmental governance emerged as the most frequently emphasised theme across national statements. Countries highlighted the essential role of UNEA as the central multilateral platform for enhancing international environmental action and guiding collective responses to global environmental challenges. Delegations stressed that no country can address environmental crises and challenges alone, underscoring the need for collective action, shared responsibility, and enhanced international cooperation.

Many countries emphasised the importance of science based policymaking, inclusive governance, and effective

institutional frameworks to support global environmental protection. There was broad recognition that multilateralism remains the cornerstone of effective environmental governance and a critical mechanism for achieving sustainable development, strengthening institutions, and building environmental resilience.

Topic 7. Circular economy and sustainable economic transition

Many countries highlighted the importance of transitioning toward circular economy models and sustainable economic systems that reduce waste, promote resource efficiency, and minimise environmental impacts. Delegations stressed the need to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation by advancing sustainable industrial practices, green innovation, and clean technologies.

Countries described national initiatives focused on improving recycling systems, reducing resource consumption, and promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns. There was broad agreement that sustainable economic transformation is essential for long term environmental sustainability and for ensuring that economic development aligns with environmental protection.

Topic 8. Environmental governance, law, and institutional strengthening

Strengthening environmental governance, legal frameworks, and institutional capacity was identified as a key priority by many countries. Delegations emphasised the importance of strong national environmental policies, effective regulatory systems, and robust international institutions to support environmental protection. Many countries highlighted efforts to strengthen national legislation, improve environmental monitoring systems, and enhance institutional coordination. There was also strong support for reinforcing UNEP's leadership role and ensuring that global environmental governance systems remain effective, inclusive, and responsive to emerging environmental challenges.

Strengthening environmental governance frameworks and institutional capacity was identified as a key priority.

Many countries highlighted efforts to strengthen environmental legislation, improve regulatory systems, and enhance national environmental institutions. Delegations also emphasised the importance of strengthening UNEP's leadership role and ensuring effective global environmental governance.

Cross-cutting themes

Several cross-cutting themes emerged consistently across national statements, including:

1. The urgency of addressing the three planetary environmental crises.
2. The importance of international cooperation and multilateralism.
3. The need for increased climate finance and technology transfer.
4. The importance of science based policymaking.
5. The need for sustainable economic transformation.

Summary Table



CONCLUSION

The national statements delivered during UNEA-7 demonstrated a strong and broad global recognition of the urgency, scale, and interconnected nature of today's environmental challenges. Delegations consistently referred to the three planetary environmental crises of climate change, nature, land and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste, identifying these as the most pressing environmental threats to ecosystems, economic stability, public health, food security, and sustainable development.

Member States emphasized the need for strengthened multilateral cooperation, robust global environmental governance, increased climate finance, technology transfer, and a transition toward circular and sustainable economic systems. Developing countries highlighted the importance of equitable access to financial and technological resources, as well as the need for enhanced capacity building. Developed countries underscored the role of governance frameworks, innovation, and effective implementation of international environmental agreements.

Overall, the statements reflected strong political commitment and broad consensus on the importance of accelerating environmental action, enhancing international cooperation, and advancing sustainable solutions to address the three planetary environmental crises.