



Inputs from the Women's Major Group to the First draft Ministerial Declaration of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its seventh session

Submitted in response to the letter dated 29 May 2025 from the President of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 7) and Chair of the Environment Authority of Oman, His Excellency Abdullah Bin Ali Al-Amri.

On behalf of the Women's Major Group, we are pleased to share our key priorities and contributions to the UNEA-7 Ministerial Declaration. Our inputs reflect the voices and experiences of women around the world, particularly from the Global South and respond directly to the UNEA-7 theme and the guiding questions provided by the UNEA Presidency.

1. Strengthening Gender-Responsive Environmental Governance

Women are central to achieving sustainable and resilient environmental solutions. In rural and indigenous communities across regions such as West Asia, Africa, and Latin America, women act as custodians of biodiversity, land, and water. Yet, they remain systematically underrepresented in environmental decision-making at all levels.

To address this critical gap, we call for:

- Increased investment in women's leadership and education in climate adaptation, agroecology, and renewable energy;
- The collection and use of gender-disaggregated data to guide evidence-based, inclusive policies;
- Stronger gender-responsive language in the Ministerial Declaration and all outcome documents of UNEA-7.

2. Advancing Gender Equality in Science-Policy Processes



We urge UNEP and Member States to embed gender equality in the design and operation of science-policy interfaces, particularly the future Science-Policy Panel on chemicals, waste, and pollution. Women's knowledge, including from Indigenous Peoples and local communities, must be formally recognized and integrated.

This will ensure that environmental policies are not only scientifically sound, but also socially just.

3. Gender and Chemicals: Prioritizing Health and Safety

Women and girls are uniquely vulnerable to harmful chemical exposure due to biological, occupational, and social factors. This includes exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals, pesticides, and persistent organic pollutants.

We call on Member States to:

- Ensure gender-responsive risk assessments in the implementation of the BRS Conventions;
- Promote public participation and access to information, especially for women in frontline communities;
- Ban the export of toxic waste to developing countries and ensure safe management of chemicals throughout their life cycle.

4. Ensuring Gender-Inclusive Action in Plastic Pollution and Biodiversity

Women are both disproportionately impacted by pollution and biodiversity loss and are leading powerful grassroots solutions. We emphasize the importance of:

- Integrating gender dimensions into the INC process on plastic pollution, including representation in negotiations and financing for women-led solutions;
- Supporting women's participation in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;



- Recognizing the links between gender, biodiversity, health, and environmental justice.

5. Addressing Climate Change Through a Gender Lens

Climate change amplifies existing inequalities. Women face higher risks from climate-related disasters, yet are key actors in building community resilience and innovation. We call for:

- A gender-responsive approach in climate financing, adaptation, and mitigation strategies;
- Recognition of women's traditional ecological knowledge as a critical asset in building climate resilience.

6. Strengthening Stakeholder Engagement and Inclusive Multilateralism

The Women's Major Group urges Member States to recognize the critical importance of meaningful stakeholder engagement at all stages of environmental governance from agenda-setting and negotiations to implementation and follow-up. This is essential to ensure legitimacy, effectiveness, and accountability in UNEA processes and beyond.

Women's rights organizations and feminist movements have long played a key role in shaping transformative environmental policies, yet their participation is often limited to consultation without real influence. We call for:

- Full stakeholder inclusion in monitoring and follow-up to UNEA resolutions;
- Continued support for inclusive platforms, such as the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, to ensure diverse expertise and community-driven knowledge inform UNEA decisions.

As UNEA-7 approaches, we call on Member States to ensure that gender equality is not treated as a standalone issue, but as a cross-cutting enabler of just, inclusive, and



effective environmental action. The Women's Major Group stands ready to collaborate in shaping a Ministerial Declaration that reflects the needs and rights of all people and paves the way for truly transformative multilateralism.