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Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday 10 December 2020
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Online Meeting

Agenda Item 2: Consideration of UNEP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025 and Programme of Work 2022-2023

This note serves as a background document for consideration of agenda item 2, “Consideration of UNEP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025 and Programme of Work 2022-2023.”

Following the latest guidance received during the 152nd meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the written comments submitted by Member States thereafter, and building on previous iterations of the document that incorporated the guidance previously received, the Secretariat has undertaken further work to refine the draft Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025.

Below is presented a summary of the main changes proposed by the Secretariat, with respect to the Medium-Term Strategy, divided per section, which accompanies the draft submitted for consideration of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

On the Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025:

Section 1: Background

- Added more references to the intrinsic linkage between the three environmental crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, social and economic well-being and poverty reduction.

Section 2: Situation analysis

- Added more references to the intrinsic linkage between the three environmental crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, social and economic well-being, including health, and poverty reduction, while recognizing further capacity building and adequate financial and technology support to tackle these crises.
- Lessons learned: included lessons from the online survey on UNEP funding undertaken in 2020.

Section 3: A Medium-term Strategy for the Decade of Action

- Added more references to the intrinsic linkage between the three environmental crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, social and economic well-being, including health.

- Added reference to fostering complementarities between South-South and North-South cooperation, in line with relevant United Nations General Assembly resolutions.

Section 4: UNEP's focus: Thematic, Foundational and Enabling programmes for increased ambition

All subprogrammes

- Explicitly mentioned UNEP's comparative advantage.
- Embedded references to multilaterally agreed norms, as appropriate.
- Introduced further references to UNEP's role in supporting developing countries to meet their international commitments, particularly in the climate and nature subprogrammes.
- Further refined references to the post-2020 frameworks to secure alignment and complementarity, without pre-empting their development.
- Embedded references to gender responsiveness, as appropriate.
- Further aligned terminology to internationally agreed language, where

appropriate. Climate Action

- Included references to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, its financial and technology mechanisms.
- Sharpened outcomes 2 and 3.

Nature Action

- Introduced an explicit mention to the three goals of the Convention of Biological

Diversity. Chemicals and Pollution Action

- Introduced an explicit mention of antimicrobial resistance.
- Sharpened outcomes 1, 2 and 3.

Science-Policy

- Improved text by adding references to a continuous review of global status and trends, inter-and multidisciplinary where appropriate, as well as geographical diversity,
- Revisited language on UNEP's scientific work to further outline its comparative advantage and avoid terminology that might pre-empt future related developments, particularly on the GEO process.

Environmental Governance

- Embedded more references to UNEP's work at the international level.
- Revisited language on UNEP's work on environmental rights in line with UNEP's mandate.

UNEP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025 and Programme of Work and Budget for 2022-2023

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1) Background

“With only 10 years left before the 2030 deadline, there is an urgent need to step up action. And every nation, every community and every person can and must make a contribution.”

- UN Secretary General António Guterres

UNEP was established in 1972, against the backdrop of a series of scientific reports that notified the world that the state of the global environment was in crisis. The Stockholm Conference provided a science-centred platform for world leaders and policymakers to converge and tackle the drivers of that crisis. Among the results, UNEP was tasked with coordinating global responses to environmental challenges and related emerging issues, within and outside the UN, while keeping watch over the state of the world environment and linking science to policymaking.

Today, the world finds itself in a similar situation, but the state of the environment has only worsened. Three interconnected crises - climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution - are putting our economic and social well-being at risk, while undermining opportunities to reduce poverty, and improve lives and livelihoods, as demonstrated by the COVID 19 crisis. Furthermore, they also risk to irreversibly change our relationship with the natural world. These crises are primarily linked to current unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, which were recognized at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 as *“the major cause of the continued deterioration of the global environment.”*¹ While the evidence of the impacts of these drivers has been clear for decades,² the scale and pace of a global response to these three challenges is failing to reverse or even slow this deterioration. Agenda 2030 was put in place to accelerate cooperation and collective urgency, but today we remain off-track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, especially the environment-related ones, that are central to achieve those goals.³

While the importance of linking science to policy and decision-making remains stronger than ever, science alone is not enough. Science underpins solutions and actions that can chart a transformational path in the way we live, work and relate to nature. Yet only when sustained by strong environmental governance and supported by enabling macroeconomic policies can science be the foundation of a catalytic response to the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution; a response required to improve well-being in general, and the lives of the poor and the vulnerable in particular. Science can and must inform and drive financial, economic and behavioural shifts towards sustainable consumption and production patterns to enable a transformation at the pace and scale required. But unless we harness the digital revolution as a strategic asset for more inclusive, transparent and innovative outcomes, we will fall short of the urgent responses we need.

This Strategy sets out a vision for UNEP to meet current and future expectations, while continuing to deliver on the promises made to Member States in 2012 through the Rio+20 Conference and its Outcome Document “The Future We Want.”⁴ The Strategy traces UNEP’s trajectory for the period 2022-2025, with strengthening the environmental dimension of Agenda 2030 as its roadmap and a forward-looking 2050 perspective for planetary sustainability. It speaks to UNEP’s central role in coordinating efforts and supporting countries to build their capacities to deliver on their environmental goals and commitments under international agreements.

Through this strategy, UNEP places the three environmental crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution at the heart of its work. UNEP will tackle them through transformative multi-stakeholder actions that target their root causes and drivers, delivering deeper and broader impact that can underpin positive social and economic outcomes, while reducing vulnerabilities in support of sustainable development. UNEP will ensure that science remains at the centre of all decision-making processes, including on emerging issues, and that environmental rule of law continues to improve global environmental governance, in close cooperation with the multilateral environmental agreements and under the direction set by the 2030 Agenda. UNEP will also collaborate with its many partners, accelerating systemic interventions which engage the financial and economic actors that impact the environment, while leveraging the power of digital technologies, to scale up environmental sustainability.

This four-year Strategy illuminates a path through the first half of the Decade of Action, so that UNEP can strengthen the collective UN response to the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. The UN Development System Reform represents a tremendous opportunity to empower the United Nations to address global environmental and socio-economic crises, and UNEP will leverage this opportunity to enhance its guiding role in responding to these crises, raise ambition, accelerate and scale up progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in the spirit of the Secretary-General's *Decade of Action*.

These are the fundamental tenets that lie at the heart of UNEP's medium-term strategy for the period 2022-2025.

2) Situation Analysis: Unsustainable patterns of consumption and production are overburdening the Earth's resources.

A rapidly deteriorating environment threatens not only our social and economic well-being, but also the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Expanding human activities and the increase of unsustainable patterns of consumption and production over the last 50 years are testing the Earth's environment. In the last 50 years, the global human population has doubled, the extraction of materials has tripled, primary energy production has more than tripled, the economy has grown nearly fivefold and global trade has grown tenfold.⁵ Yet over 820 million people suffer from hunger.⁶ Human consumption is set to increase further as population, urbanization, and per-capita income also increase. Per capita consumption in developed countries generally far exceeds that of developing countries. Land, freshwater bodies and the oceans are being overexploited for food production, infrastructure, industry and human settlements. Up to 400 million tons of heavy metals, solvents, toxic sludge and other industrial wastes are released annually into the world's waters.⁷

The accumulating pollution from chemicals and waste as well as the changing climate, biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation, desertification, land degradation and drought are closely inter-related and are reinforcing each other. Global chemical production capacity almost doubled between 2000 and 2017.⁸ Fertilizers used in agriculture entering coastal ecosystems have produced more than 400 ocean 'dead zones', totalling more than 245,000 km² – a combined area greater than that of the United Kingdom.⁹ Marine plastics pollution has increased 10-fold since 1980.^{10,11} Of 45 megacities monitored, only four attained World Health Organization guidelines for air quality.¹² Climate change, chemicals, waste and pollution, and unsustainable use of land, water and oceans can individually or in combination lead to degradation of ecosystems and their ability to provide services that are crucial for human well-being and nature.^{13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18}

As the environment changes, the risk of crossing thresholds that upset critical socio-ecological systems increases, leading to threats such as new pandemics and sudden changes to food supply.

^{19, 20, 21, 22} Trends and scenarios project clear improvement over time in reducing hunger, increasing access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation, and increasing access to modern energy services, but not enough to meet the related Sustainable Development Goal targets by 2030.^{23, 24, 25} For example, in 2018, damages from climate-related disasters cost an estimated US\$155 billion.²⁶ Global economic losses due to decreased labour productivity, increased health care costs and decreased crop yields could amount to 1 per cent of global gross domestic product by 2060.²⁷ Any further progression of climate change increases risks, specifically those relating to eliminating poverty, hunger, health and well-being, and access to clean freshwater.²⁸ Poor water quality has many associated economic costs, including degradation of ecosystem services, water treatment and health-related costs; impacts on economic activities such as agriculture, fisheries, industrial manufacturing and tourism; reduced property values and lost opportunity costs of further development. Furthermore, current negative trends in biodiversity and ecosystem integrity undermine progress towards Sustainable Development Goal targets related to poverty, hunger, health, water, climate and cities.^{29, 30} For example, animal pollination is critical to more than 75 per cent of food crops, including many fruits and vegetables and some of the most important cash crops of developing countries, such as coffee, cocoa and almonds.³¹ Loss of pollinators threatens an annual global commercial crop output between US\$235-577 billion.³²

The trajectory of global environmental change is out of line with international goals and objectives. The global community is failing to meet internationally agreed environmental goals. The Earth's mean surface temperature has already warmed by about 1°C above pre-industrial levels. At the current rate of greenhouse gas emissions, it will likely reach a warming of 1.5°C in the early 2030s. With current pledges, the world is on a pathway to 3-4°C or even greater warming, but even that is dependent on current pledges being met.³³ A changing climate means stresses on land and freshwater resources, adding to existing risks to livelihoods, biodiversity, human and ecosystem health, infrastructure, and food systems.³⁴ One million of the world's estimated eight million species of plants and animals, including insects, are threatened with extinction.³⁵

Addressing environmental degradation requires an integrated focus on climate, biodiversity, chemicals and waste, natural resources and pollution. It is still technically possible to limit global mean temperature increase to well below 1.5°C, if immediate and more ambitious actions to reduce emissions of all greenhouse gases are taken by all countries. Such ambitious actions will require capacity building and adequate financial and technology support. A sound assessment of potential benefits and risks is fundamental for further political action. The more efficiently we use natural resources, the less greenhouse gases are emitted across the entire economy.^{36,37} Biodiversity can only be conserved and restored by addressing all the underlying drivers of change, including economic factors driving exploitation and destruction of critical habitats. The adverse effects of chemicals and waste pollution on the environment and human health can be substantially reduced through implementing existing international frameworks, strengthening the scientific basis of policy and decision-making and fostering sustainable, resource efficient innovations and capacities, through which harmful chemicals are contained, reduced and phased out.

Negative impacts on human development, increasing inequality and challenges to the multilateral order risk diverting attention from the environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

The global macro-economic outlook has worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic, accelerating inequalities across the world and threatening to wipe out significant progress on sustainable development. In its World Economic Outlook Update (June 2020), the International Monetary Fund projected global growth at -4.9 per cent in 2020 and predicted “a particularly acute negative impact of the pandemic on low-income households worldwide that could significantly raise inequality.” UNDP warned that global human development is set to decline in 2020 for the first time in 20 years.³⁸ ‘Building back better’ requires better measurement and management of assets that underpin human, environmental, institutional and economic progress.

Increasing socio-economic inequality and inequity are not only deepening divisions between the haves and have-nots, but there is greater concern of backsliding on poverty gains made over recent decades. Even prior to COVID-19, it was estimated that inequality had been steadily increasing for more than 70 per cent of the global population,³⁹ exacerbating divisions between and within countries. Megatrends, or global forces such as technological innovation, urbanisation and migration, in addition to climate change, environmental degradation, and resource depletion, reinforce each other to exacerbate such inequality, while undermining prospects for development generally. Current modes of production and consumption, and associated levels of inequality, threaten the achievement of the entire 2030 Agenda.⁴⁰

The poor, women and children face increased vulnerability from environmental stresses that lead to intensifying competition for scarce natural resources and can result in migration, instability and

conflict. Globally, 24 per cent of land is degrading. More than 1.5 billion people directly depend on these lands, with 74 per cent of them living in poverty.⁴¹ By 2050, over 143 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Latin America – comprising 2.8 per cent of the population of these regions – will have become internal migrants. A major cause of that will be a result of various climatic impacts, with people leaving less viable areas with higher water scarcity and lower crop productivity as well as areas affected by rising sea level and storm surges.⁴²

Establishing more sustainable consumption and production patterns at local, national, regional and global levels supported by a framework anchored in the UN is key to reducing inequality, creating jobs and protecting the environment. Resource extraction and processing create more than 50 per cent of global climate change impacts and over 90 per cent of global biodiversity loss.⁴³ Yet Sustainable Development Goal target 12.2 on sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources is on a long-term negative trend.⁴⁴ Indicators of resource consumption established for Sustainable Development Goal targets 12.2 and 8.4 on material footprint and domestic material consumption both continue to rise at the global level.⁴⁵ This indicates that the rate at which materials are being extracted globally is outpacing both population and economic growth.⁴⁶ Reversing this trend requires transforming our economies; how we produce, process and use and manage natural resources in our socio-economic systems, as well as how we design and implement national fiscal and economic policies. On the jobs side, ILO has reported that “A shift to a greener economy could create 24 million new jobs globally by 2030 if the right policies are put in place.”⁴⁷ Prioritizing resource-intensive sectors for a shift to sustainable consumption and production could achieve very significant economic, social and environmental gains, often in short timeframes. For example, agriculture, food and beverage and the building and construction sectors accounted for nearly 70 per cent of the world’s total material footprint in 2015, while being amongst the most intensive greenhouse gas emitting sectors.⁴⁸ Transforming them to reduce those emissions and be more circular will be crucial in the years to come.

Gender equality and a rights-based approach are key to ending all forms of discrimination and ensuring progress towards environmental sustainability.⁴⁹ Climate change and the population crisis are not gender-neutral. A high and uneven burden is carried by women, who comprise 80 per cent of those displaced by climate change.⁵⁰ Women of child-bearing age and children are especially vulnerable. Women are responsible for 60-80 per cent of food production in developing countries.⁵¹ However, women, are often excluded from land ownership and decisions, as prevailing traditional, religious and customary laws and practices in 123 countries limit their freedom to claim and protect land assets.⁵² Women and children are often employed in the informal sector with higher exposure to risky jobs, such as artisanal mining or waste collection. This inequality is further compounded by a low level of political representation, with only 25 per cent of parliamentary seats in governments around the world held by women.⁵³ A stocktaking of the Beijing Declaration, 25 years after its adoption, reveals that “major gaps remain and that obstacles, including structural barriers, discriminatory practices and the feminization of poverty, persist.”⁵⁴ Estimates indicate that it will take on average, another century to achieve gender parity globally. Indigenous peoples constitute another group that, while comprising less than 6 per cent of the world’s population, are known for stewarding 80 per cent of the world’s biodiversity through traditional ecological knowledge.^{55,56} Indigenous peoples can also contribute to climate solutions, through traditional knowledge, legal systems and cultures.⁵⁷

Seventy-five years after the signing of the UN Charter, the importance of environmental multilateralism remains as crucial as ever. Global challenges, such as climate change, high pollution

levels, nature destruction and the COVID-19 pandemic are clear signs of the need to champion environmental stewardship and cooperation. This multilateral cooperation must deliver solutions for sustainable development that integrate health, education, poverty reduction, economic and social well-being. In its economic outlook for 2020, the UN warned of geopolitical risks: “Amid a weakening commitment to multilateralism – whether in the economic or political arena— the capacity of the international community to contain and resolve conflicts has decreased.”⁵⁸ Reinvigorating multilateralism is essential to achieve the 2030 Agenda. An important milestone will be reached in 2025 when the UN turns 80 and this medium-term strategy comes to an end. This opportunity must be seized.

Seizing the opportunity to strengthen the UN Development System Reform through increased access and use of environmental data and ensuring that the digital revolution helps deliver, not hinder, the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda.

UN Development System Reform provides the framework for integrated policy guidance and technical support to countries to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and realize the promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The UN must be ambitious in working with partners to enhance environmental sustainability through sharp analytics and to support Member States in fostering the conditions to meet their requests in Paragraph 88 of *The Future We Want*. Coordinated work across the UN on Common Country Analyses and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks through the UN Country Teams has already demonstrated the importance of integrating the environment in Sustainable Development Goal monitoring and implementation.

High-quality, credible, open and shared, sex-disaggregated environmental data, assessments and expertise are critical to support integration efforts across the UN system. In addition to contributing to the delivery of the Secretary-General’s Data Strategy for 2020-2022,⁵⁹ options for ensuring stronger integration of environmental data and analysis include: 1) engaging in the One UN development and better use of statistics and accounting, including those generated under multilateral environmental agreements, to promote sustainable development; 2) enhancing, through the Environmental Management Group, multilateral environmental agreements and multi-agency collaboration, implementation of the System-wide Strategies on the Environment, environmental indicators and monitoring and scaling-up actions informed by environmental statistics and science, including through integrated analyses across the three pillars of sustainable development; 3) working with multilateral environmental agreement secretariats and other multilateral platforms to support coherent approaches among Sustainable Development Goals and multilateral environmental agreements on indicator methodologies and analysis; 4) bolstering engagement with UN Country Teams to inform Common Country Analysis on which UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks are built; 5) ensuring that UNEP, through the World Environment Situation Room, provides the prime global digital platform that can allow governments and the public at large to visualise the state and pressures on the world environment and feed this analysis into policies for the environment and sustainable development.

Institutions, at every level, need to keep pace with the speed and scale of technological innovation in the digital space. The digitalization of society and economy and advances in artificial intelligence offer a massive opportunity to build greater environmental sustainability, resilience and transparency. Technology is transforming life in both developed and developing countries, and it will require enhanced cooperation across the UN and beyond to ensure that goals, policies and strategies remain relevant to the shifting economic, social and environmental landscape.⁶⁰ It will

simultaneously be important to be cognizant of the global digital divide. Nearly 87 per cent of the population uses the Internet in developed countries compared to 19.1 per cent in Least Developed Countries. In addition, the Internet user gender gap for Least Developed Countries stands at 42.8 per cent in 2019 (compared to 17 per cent globally).⁶¹ Globally, digital technology is moving faster than society's ability to govern it. There is a growing understanding that a societal leap must be made concurrently with the technological revolution. Transparency on the environmental performance and carbon footprints of goods and services must remain a shared goal in line with multilaterally agreed norms and standards. Moreover, access to environmental data and information on environmental changes is paramount for sound environmental governance and to encourage the participation of communities and disadvantaged groups. For decision-making to increase equity, technology must be leveraged for greater inclusion of those at risk of being left behind. At the same time, environmental considerations linked to the use of more digital technologies, from extraction of rare earth to energy use of devices to data centres need to be kept under review.

Lessons Learned: Building on the Past for Higher Performance in the Future

UNEP strives for continuous improvement and follows an adaptive management model that is constantly refreshed through exhaustive monitoring and evaluation of its performance.

The medium-term strategy is built on UNEP's Transformation Process, which is informed by lessons learned from previous medium-term strategies. In 2019, UNEP launched a transformation process to become more effective in delivering its mandate with more operational integration, clarity of focus, and learning from past lessons. This process resulted in a shift in UNEP's organizational capabilities and identity to deliver more impactful results. This strategy thus builds on opportunities and recommendations for improvement from UNEP's transformation process, which is informed by lessons learned from previous medium-term strategies, as well as a blend of internal and external reviews and audits⁶² as defined below:

Investing in staff for a sustainable organizational change.⁶³

Promoting and reinforcing changes in individual attitudes and behaviours and creating channels to communicate feedback across all staff play a prominent role in a successful organizational change management.⁶⁴ UNEP will continue to build a healthy, results and performance-driven organization by tapping into the expertise and knowledge of staff to forge new forms of behaviour, while building collaborative teams at all levels and developing a strategic, more collaborative leadership that targets resources toward agreed priorities. Building on a progressive diagnosis of the cultural and behavioural traits within the organization, UNEP will invest in training staff towards the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes that support a more coherent internal delivery of the organization's aspirations under this Strategy and reviewing acquired capacities. Building stronger supervisory and peer support systems will ensure that learnings translate into long-term capacities and ultimately improve day-to-day work routines, building a foundation for a cultural transformation in the organization that enhances outcomes.

Getting gender right: Increased responsiveness to gender equality and human rights.⁶⁵

Despite appointing gender focal points and introducing responsiveness to human rights and gender equity as standalone project evaluation criteria in 2018, UNEP's performance on the

delivery of gender and human rights outcomes at project level remains weak.⁶⁶ UNEP already takes part in the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and has met or exceeded 8 of its 17 Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women indicators as of 2019.⁶⁷ But this is not enough. UNEP will work to fully implement UNEA/4 Resolution 4/17, “Promoting gender equality and the human rights and empowerment of women and girls in environmental governance.”⁶⁸ UNEP will fully support member states in their implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 5 in the context of the environment, calling for women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of environmental decision-making. UNEP’s focus will be on operationalizing gender and human rights dimensions and non-discrimination issues in programme and project design. UNEP will build upon the widespread use of a gender lens towards ensuring that gender equality and human rights perspectives are fully embedded and integrated through associated principles. Linkages between gender indicators and gender-disaggregated data and policy recommendations will be observed and applied, as will gender informed feedback loops and reinforced monitoring frameworks. UNEP will also collect good practices that can be shared at the wider UN level.

UNEP will invest in enhancing staff abilities, including within the multilateral environmental agreements, to better understand, implement, monitor and analyze gender and human rights, intersectional gender and non-discrimination issues, with the goal of integrating related objectives in UNEP’s analytical and operational work. Moving beyond project design and monitoring, UNEP will provide programme and project implementation support to ensure gender issues are integrated across the programme cycle, not just in design, but throughout project lifecycle, including implementation, project evaluation and feedback loops for continuous improvement.

Securing a stronger organizational design for collective accountability.⁶⁹

Accountability is critical to efficient and transparent operations, including in cooperation and coordination with the multilateral environmental agreements.⁷⁰ UNEP will review its organizational design, including management roles and responsibilities between its Divisions and Regional Offices, to ensure solid alignment with the priorities outlined in this strategy. As part of this process, UNEP will place emphasis on improving task assignment and implementation for senior managers towards more cohesive, inclusive and better performance. In pursuit of the UN Management Reforms, UNEP will also improve internal quality, controls and compliance for higher performance. To that end, UNEP will upgrade and improve its standards for internal controls and management, providing oversight, identifying opportunities for greater efficiency and ensuring compliance with UN Regulations and Rules, including on Enterprise Risk Management.

Increasing focus on management for results.⁷¹

UNEP recognizes that the continuing transition to results-based management is as much a transformation of the institution’s internal culture as it is a management issue. The use of data, monitoring and evaluation is a critical tool for decision-making.⁷² UNEP will enhance its internal capacity to deliver results and develop indicators that are aligned with organizational objectives to reflect true transformational change. UNEP will engage in project cycle reform, invest in human resources and build capacity through customized and in-house training and the establishment of technical networks across the organization that can support programme delivery, while developing “best in class” fiduciary and governance standards that build on enterprise risk management tools.

As indicated in UNEP's programme of work, UNEP will use Sustainable Development Goal indicators or internationally agreed environmental indicators as much as possible in its results framework to increase ambition. Furthermore, UNEP will strive to monitor change over a longer term rather than a single biennium and the four years of this strategy. To that end, UNEP will employ impact metrics with project performance dashboards and cross-project leader boards to gauge effectiveness, applying the concept of "product-market" to assess the level of uptake of its products and services. Projects that cannot demonstrate an impact in key metrics after a prescribed period and a series of iterations will be closed. UNEP will also seek to monitor and report on key digital metrics including social media (e.g., engagement, reach, referral and conversion rates), platform performance (e.g., unique users, new and returning users, session pages and duration, downloads and application programming interface calls) and uptake (e.g., references, use of data, application in policy design and implementation and media coverage).

Mobilizing resources and leveraging partnerships to enhance efficiency.⁷³

Securing contributions to the Environment Fund, and funding that is only softly earmarked, is indispensable for UNEP to be equipped to deliver on the priorities agreed by Member States, while demonstrating tangible results.⁷⁴ Efforts by UNEP and its partners to widen and secure the resource base for the execution of this Strategy, including through an increased understanding of the factors that determine or hinder Member States' financial contributions to UNEP, need to be sustained, as recognized in the online survey on UNEP funding carried out in 2020.⁷⁵ UNEP will continue to dialogue with Member States on these issues, and work to define its comparative advantage and funding needs strategically, for both core and earmarked funding, and to comprehensively look at the landscape for potential funding sources. UNEP must also engage in strategic and innovative approaches to resource mobilization,⁷⁶ including through stronger communication efforts on the value of the Environment Fund and the results achieved through its funding, as well as the effects that insufficient core funding bears on UNEP's implementation. UNEP will update its 2017 Resource Mobilization Strategy to reflect the recent decisions of the UN Environment Assembly and the results of the 2020 online survey, as well as prepare a fully-fledged implementation plan for the strategy, with timelines and related resources. UNEP will also revise its Partnership Strategy to ensure a stronger pursuit of its comparative advantage that matches an increased resource ambition vis-à-vis the delivery of its strategic priorities.

3) A Medium-term Strategy for the Decade of Action

UNEP's Vision for Agenda 2030 – a 2025 strategy with a 2050 outlook

UNEP's situation analysis indicates that the world is facing three major environmental crises: climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. These are all driven largely by human activity and unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. Tackling these crises plays a critical role in improving the health of the environment, as well as social and economic health, as demonstrated by the COVID-19 crisis. A healthy environment, healthy people and healthy economies are the foundation for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.⁷⁷

The United Nations Secretary-General has stressed that as “we enter a Decade of Action on the Sustainable Development Goals, we have to convince people that the United Nations is relevant to all, and that multilateralism offers real solutions to global challenges.”⁷⁸ In line with its mandate, UNEP will seize the opportunity provided by the Decade of Action to demonstrate the value of multilateralism by actively shaping a more balanced, equitable and sustainable future for all, one where the environment is at the centre of political and economic decision-making and where all countries are on track towards meeting their environmental goals and aspirations.

This medium-term strategy charts UNEP's contribution towards the 2030 Agenda and the Decade of Action, delivered against a 2022-2025 timeframe, but with a 2050 outlook on planetary sustainability for people, prosperity and equity.⁷⁹

Central to UNEP's vision for Agenda 2030 and its contribution to the Decade of Action will be the following strategic approaches:

- 1. UNEP will support an integrated and balanced implementation of the 2030 Agenda.** UNEP will continue to build the capacity of Member States and partners to integrate the environment into all aspects of sustainable development, leveraging interactions and co-benefits among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. As custodian of 26 Sustainable Development Goals indicators, UNEP will promote integrated approaches to country planning and implementation that support the incorporation of environmental perspectives into country plans and policies, while connecting to other development objectives, such as human rights, gender equality, economic growth and employment.
- 2. UNEP will strengthen institutional capacity for gender-responsive programme delivery.** Gender equality is a multiplier and crosscutting factor of sustainability and an effective and efficient way to address poverty, health, food security and access to energy. In the period 2022-2025, UNEP will leverage the opportunities provided by the Sustainable Development Goals to strengthen institutional capacity among policy makers, UNEP staff and key partners to develop and implement gender responsive policies and strategies. UNEP will enable accessibility to information by stakeholders and government partners, development and implementation of gender-responsive, environmental policies and strategies and strengthened strategic partnerships with key partners to secure commitments and prompt collective gender transformative actions to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 3. UNEP, working with its many partners, will deliver transformational results.** UNEP will align its planning and action with the 2030 Agenda and other internationally agreed environmental goals,

and aspire to deliver long-term, transformational impacts beyond the four-years covered by this strategy. UNEP will identify the key transformative actions for the environment that address the drivers of the desired systemic changes at the heart of sustainable development. In collaboration with its partners, UNEP will target these drivers through leveraging a “networked multilateralism” that demonstrates impact and scale, bringing together the UN system, regional organisations, international financial institutions and other key players.⁸⁰ To achieve focus, UNEP will develop a typology of projects that meet the following principles:

- Alignment to UNEP’s core mandate areas and focus on the delivery of this Strategy with high expectations of outcomes that lead to transformative change for sustainable development;
 - Delivery on multiple Sustainable Development Goals, spanning the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development, as well as other internationally agreed environmental goals and aspirations, including the United Nations Environment Assembly Resolutions;
 - Demonstration of new and/or innovative concepts that provide opportunities to ‘leapfrog’ past outdated paradigms, while maintaining a clear vision that connects with and capitalizes on the diverse expertise of external partners, enabling joint development, staffing, financing and implementation; and
 - Demonstration of value for money through an optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcomes.
4. **UNEP will provide a clear “line-of-sight” for its delivery of Agenda 2030 from the internationally agreed environmental goals to regional and national action.** UNEP will pursue the global aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals while delivering support in response to national needs and realities and taking account of differing regional integration processes, capacities, and levels of development. Through its regional offices, UNEP will increase its strategic engagement with regional interagency mechanisms, including Regional Commissions and fora on sustainable development, the UN Regional Collaborative Platform⁸¹ and issue-based coalitions. This will ensure increased consensus and better institutional coherence on sustainable development, while increasing the delivery of a common UN approach to regional Sustainable Development Goal priorities.
 5. **UNEP will make full use of the UN Development System reform to extend its reach as the global environmental authority to support all member states in their pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals.** Working with and through its sister UN agencies, UNEP will support UN Country Teams, providing environmental data and analysis such that Common Country Analyses, which have environmental science at their foundation. UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks will then likewise include strong environmental components, providing clear guidance and pathways for the entire UN System to support the environmental dimensions of sustainable development.
 6. **UNEP will pursue collective action on environmental sustainability, resilience and environmental risk across all aspects of the UN charter, including peace and security, human rights and sustainable development within its mandate.** The UN leadership collectively decided to “develop a common approach to integrating biodiversity and ecosystem-based approaches for sustainable development into the UN’s policy and programme planning and delivery.”⁸² UNEP will leverage this collective interagency commitment to support the systemic changes that will enable the UN secretariat, agencies, funds and programmes to make significant progress on

the climate, nature and pollution agendas.

7. **UNEP will strengthen South-South and triangular cooperation⁸³ to enable all Member States to progress towards environmental sustainability, while fostering complementarities with North-South cooperation.** UNEP will promote South-South and triangular cooperation across its policy, programming and partnership activities.⁸⁴ Through continued engagement with the UN Office for South-South Cooperation and other multilateral system entities, government and non-government organizations, UNEP will strengthen regional engagement and inter-agency linkages to more closely monitor and follow up on strategic and political issues related to South-South and triangular cooperation, while promoting North-South cooperation and supporting the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.⁸⁵
8. **UNEP will work to “leave no one behind”, while increasing its focus on the special needs of disaster and conflict-affected states....** UNEP will address the special needs of Least Developed Countries, Land-Locked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, facilitating access to finance, technology and innovative solutions to help them build more resilient and inclusive economies and societies a post-COVID-19 world. In its contribution, UNEP will channel the voices of those most vulnerable to environmental degradation, including women, indigenous peoples and their communities, children and youth.
9. **with special attention to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.** By focusing on the special needs of countries that are vulnerable or affected by disaster and conflicts, UNEP will assist Member States in the full implementation of the Sendai Framework. UNEP will assist UN peacekeeping, peacebuilding, humanitarian and political missions where dedicated responses to environmental dimensions of a crisis are required. To optimize prevention and preparedness, UNEP will support capacities for early warning and early action, including through increasing the understanding of the interlinkages between climate change, natural resource extraction, security and migration. UNEP will also engage in emergency and short- to medium-term post-crisis support, assisting Member States with integrating environmental considerations into oversight, assessment and planning for better response and recovery.

4) UNEP's focus: Thematic, Foundational and Enabling programmes for increased ambition

Three planetary crises – three interconnected strategic objectives. In the four-year period covered by this strategy, UNEP will articulate its vision, including the 2030 Agenda, the Decade of Action and beyond through developing responses and deploying solutions that aspire to achieve three interlinked and mutually reinforcing strategic objectives:

1. “Climate stability”,⁸⁶ where net zero greenhouse gas emissions and resilience towards climate change are achieved;
2. “Living in harmony with nature”,⁸⁷ where humanity prospers in harmony with nature;
3. “Towards a pollution-free planet”,⁸⁸ where pollution is prevented and controlled, while ensuring good environmental quality and improved health and well-being for all.

Three principal areas of action... In response to the findings of the situation analysis, UNEP will tackle three planetary crises through three thematic subprogrammes: Climate Action, Nature Action and Chemicals and Pollution Action (Figure 1). Because these areas are deeply interconnected, UNEP's programme of work (ref. Annex 1) outlines the organization's approach, with the aim of ensuring the delivery of multiple benefits and mutual outcomes that contribute to UNEP's vision for planetary sustainability, human health and wellbeing.

underpinned by two foundational subprogrammes... To mitigate and adapt to climate change, halt the degradation of nature and arrest pollution, UNEP will draw on its core competencies and base all actions on the analysis of prevailing and credible science, while drawing on its expertise in environmental law and governance. Since 1972, when UNEP was created, environmental science and environmental law have been critical and constant pillars at the core of UNEP's work, informing engagements and actions in all other related areas of action. UNEP will step up delivery of these core areas of work, catalyzing actions outlined through two foundational subprogrammes: Science-Policy and Environmental Governance.

and facilitated by two enabling subprogrammes. Science and environmental governance alone will not enable the transformation needed to reach a more sustainable future that is pollution-free and in which nature and climate are stabilized. Engagement with finance and business to deliver more sustainable patterns of consumption and production will be key to reaching agenda 2030. This shift will be at the centre of the Finance and Economic Transformations enabling subprogramme. In parallel, and as the world sees ever increasing connectivity, digitalization will become key to systematize, integrate and democratize environmental data, knowledge and insight for new collaboration opportunities and enhanced impact. This will be the focus of the Digital Transformations enabling subprogramme.

UNEP will employ a three-pronged delivery approach throughout all of its seven subprogrammes:

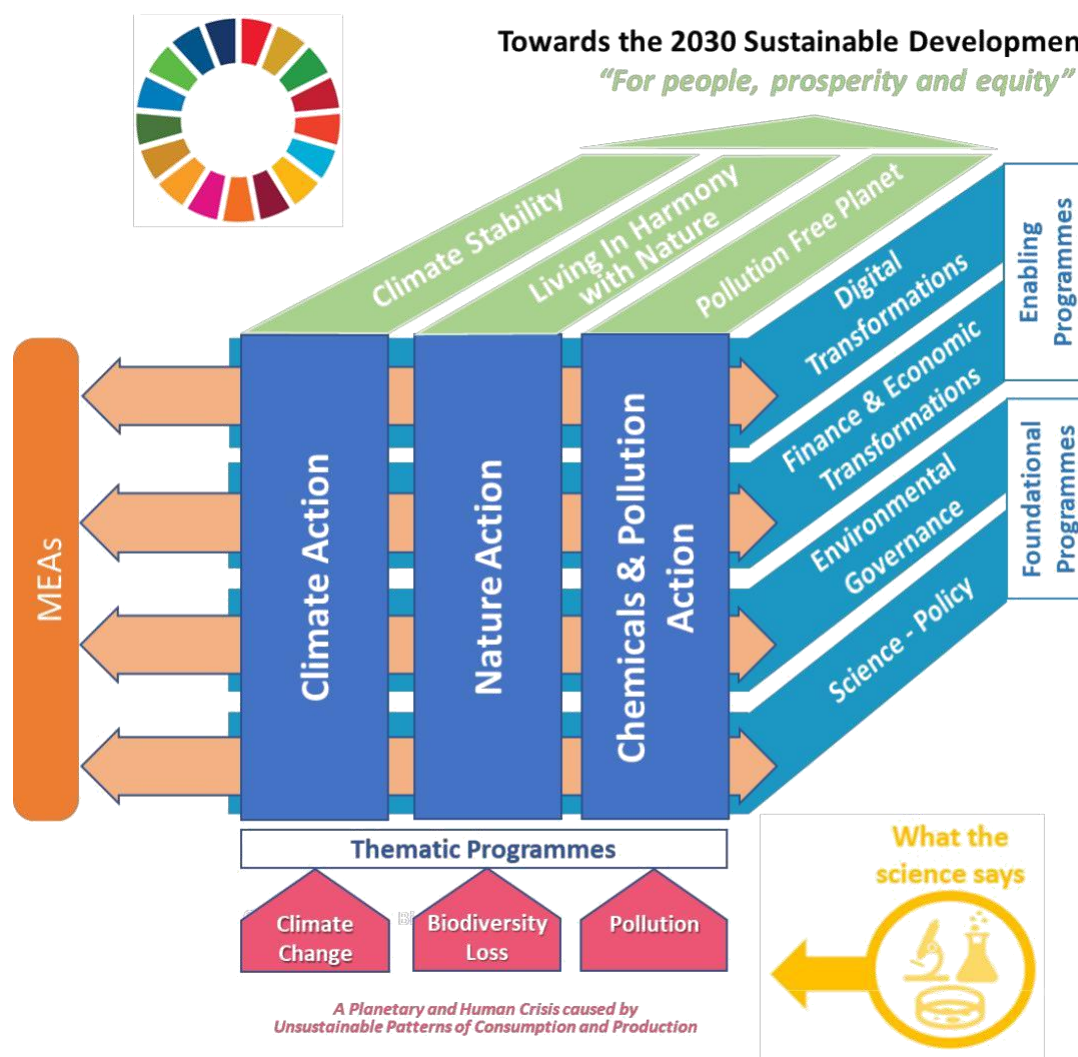
1. Applying cutting edge scientific advances in data collection and display;
2. Working with relevant partners from science, industry, indigenous peoples and local communities, vulnerable groups, the investor community, non-government actors and policymakers, and other UN agencies; and
3. Working across regions, countries, and all subnational levels to strengthen effective environmental governance and rule of law.

UNEP's seven subprogrammes will support, accelerate and scale up a shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns,⁸⁹ to achieve planetary sustainability for people, prosperity, and equity. This will be achieved through:

1. Increased support for just transitions to clean energy, resource efficiency and circularity in use of energy, materials, and other production factors in high greenhouse gas emitting and resource intensive sectors, including agriculture, to enable adoption of net zero or low emission targets.
2. Championing of cleaner production, efficient and circular processes to deliver goods and services which reduce environmental degradation and detoxify land, cities, the ocean, rivers and air.
3. Enhanced support for ecosystem-based policies and restorative and regenerative practices to reduce habitat fragmentation from agriculture and food systems, extractive industries, infrastructure and other resource and nature intensive value chains.
4. Increased advocacy and information sharing on behavioural and educational tools and curricula, and mechanisms to inform and influence consumer choices through increased awareness of the chemical, greenhouse gas, environmental, resource and waste footprint of goods and services.
5. Promoting alignment of private finance (investments, banking, and insurance) with sustainability, responsibility and net zero emissions, to in turn influence investment and production decisions.

Collaboration with the multilateral environmental agreements will be central to all actions across UNEP's subprogrammes to secure stronger synergies and enhance impact. Complementing national legislation and bilateral agreements, multilateral environmental agreements form the overarching international legal basis for global efforts to address environmental issues. Partnership with the multilateral environmental agreements will continue to be a cornerstone of UNEP's support to countries to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

Figure 1: UNEP's Medium-term Strategy 2022-2025 – on the road to 2030



4.1 Thematic Subprogrammes

Climate Action

A clear focus on the Paris Agreement. Achieving long-term climate stability will depend on countries making balanced progress towards their mitigation and adaptation commitments under the Paris Agreement, including “holding the increase in global average temperatures to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C” and “increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development”. A transition towards climate stability, in line with the sustainable development goals, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, recognizes that:

- By 2025, countries and legal entities increasingly adopt decarbonization, dematerialization and resilience pathways.
- By 2025, countries and stakeholders have increased capacity, finance and access to technologies to deliver on the adaptation and mitigation goals of the Paris Agreement.
- By 2025, State and non-state actors have adopted the enhanced transparency framework arrangements under the Paris Agreement.

The expected 2030 outcome of this UNEP subprogramme is that government and non-government development action are compatible with the long-term mitigation and resilience goals of the Paris Agreement.

The Climate Action subprogramme will operate through the following principles:

- 1. Supporting countries and stakeholders' emission cuts and adaptation to climate change to facilitate stronger interactions between science, policy, finance, technology and the economy.** UNEP will support countries to build public support for market and political strategies and decisions that are compatible with the latest scientific information, including social sciences, and promote sustainable consumption and production to achieve the largest impacts on mitigating climate change and increasing resilience. Engagement of the finance industry and working through private sector partnerships will be key to shifting public and private investments towards sustainable choices and business models that are adequately incentivized to support countries to achieve their climate goals and aspirations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 2. Supporting countries and stakeholders to achieve rapid, just and comprehensive decarbonization in line with their climate commitments and aspirations.** UNEP's efforts will follow a value chain and multisectoral approach that demonstrates opportunities for the deployment of timely renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions at all geographic levels; halting deforestation and habitat loss; restoring degraded ecosystems; harnessing the potential of oceans as well as coastal ecosystems; changing the way we produce and consume food; adopting more circular and resource efficient business practices; and redesigning our cities and transport sectors.
- 3. Focusing on those who can contribute to the highest impact, while supporting the most vulnerable.** UNEP will help all countries raise the level of their mitigation ambition, with a focus on countries with the largest emissions. In parallel, UNEP will continue to support adaptation action, while integrating aspects of human health, gender responsiveness, environmental security and poverty eradication, particularly in countries that are most vulnerable and in need, such as disaster- and conflict-affected countries, Least Developed Countries, and Small-island Developing States. This will support the collective aspirations included in the Nationally Determined Contributions and Long-Term Strategies under the Paris Agreement and other strategic instruments.
- 4. Policies and actions for sustainable consumption and production practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.** UNEP will support governments, business and individuals in making informed choices to increase production of and demand for resource efficient and less carbon intensive goods and services, building on the work of relevant International Resource Panel analysis and support to a growing number of countries to identify greenhouse gas emission hotspots in national economies.
- 5. Delivering tangible results through partnerships and integrated approaches.** UNEP will channel and scale up its actions through networks and partnerships, including the financial and technology mechanisms of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (the

Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund, the Climate Technology Centre and Network, and the Technology Executive Committee) - for increased impact. Working across the wider UN system for better synergies, including with UN Country Teams and other UN agencies, UNEP's climate actions will follow an integrated approach that links the environment to the development, humanitarian, peace and security pillars of the work of the United Nations.

The Climate Action subprogramme will focus on UNEP's comparative advantage to achieve three 2025 outcomes.

Outcome 1: Decision makers at all levels adopt decarbonization, dematerialization and resilience pathways.

In collaboration with its networks,⁹⁰ UNEP will support countries to take full advantage of the opportunities presented by decarbonization, dematerialization and resilience and link these to higher climate aspirations. UNEP will focus on sectors with the largest emissions,⁹¹ based on the latest scientifically credible evidence of their share of national emissions and role in ensuring resilience of the socioeconomic fabric. UNEP will design and highlight opportunities for action in these sectors through action-oriented partnerships, including private sector alliances, and supporting the uptake at country level of sustainable solutions ranging from ecosystem-based approaches to sustainable technologies and dematerialization practices, in line with national priorities. Special focus will be placed on an evidence-based introduction and uptake of better technologies, including digital technologies, for their integration into sectoral and national policies and decisions. UNEP will help countries embed these opportunities in their evolving climate aspirations, linking them to adjustments in the policy and regulatory frameworks that inform their Nationally Determined Contributions and Long-Term Strategies, as well as their climate adaptation planning (e.g., early warning systems).

UNEP will support countries to catalyze public support and political will for climate action. UNEP will support advocacy for societal change that brings climate-positive outcomes, while creating jobs and enabling a just transition. Generating science-driven public support for ambitious climate advocacy and supporting sustainable consumer behaviour will be central to UNEP's focus. UNEP will continue to function as a link between policymakers and the public, leveraging, for example, the One Planet Network for communicating the benefits of using sustainable products and adopting sustainable lifestyles, while sharing information that supports making the economic case for such change.⁹² Facilitating public access to environmental information and increasing public awareness through formal and non-formal education, youth-led action and grassroots campaigns will be key levers of change that will shift knowledge and attitudes across society.

Outcome 2: Countries and stakeholders have increased capacity, finance and access to technologies to deliver on the adaptation and mitigation goals of the Paris Agreement.

UNEP will facilitate interinstitutional collection, sharing and validation of climate-related knowledge and capacity at the national and subnational levels. UNEP will contribute to enhanced capacity and promote cooperation amongst the sectoral ministries that hold stake in the implementation of mitigation and adaptation actions, while also securing greater involvement of subnational authorities in knowledge and data sharing and related decision-making, to facilitate synergies and harmonize efforts. UNEP will further assess the potentials, risks and gaps in relation to

measures tackling climate change to increase transparency, accountability and foster knowledge generation.

Connecting countries to climate technology solutions. UNEP will provide technical assistance, capacity building and advice on technology solutions and accelerated access to climate technologies for low-emission and climate resilient development at the request of recipient countries, including through the Climate Technology Centre and Network and other partners. UNEP will also facilitate the development of enabling policy, legal and regulatory frameworks for technology solutions tailored to the needs of individual countries, by harnessing the expertise of global networks of technology companies and institutions.

UNEP will support the accelerated alignment of private and public finance with the goals of the Paris Agreement. UNEP will support the adoption of sustainable business and market models that can facilitate a strategic shift towards low-emission and resilient pathways in private and public sector investments and long-term planning across all sectors. Leveraging its partnerships and multi-stakeholder platforms, UNEP will support accelerated design and implementation of public policies and fiscal incentives to address climate risks and impacts, within the scope of an investment environment that is conducive towards the goals of the Paris Agreement. Providing reliable, accessible, state-of-the-art environmental information, including on public policies and incentives that reduces uncertainty and risk in decision-making will continue to be a central asset to UNEP's intervention.

Outcome 3: State and non-state actors adopt the enhanced transparency framework arrangements under the Paris Agreement.

In collaboration with its networks and partners, including the UNFCCC and the Global Environment Facility, UNEP will help countries meet their transparency and other reporting obligations under the UNFCCC and operationalize the Enhanced Transparency Framework established under the Paris Agreement.⁹³ UNEP will capitalize on its role of data-driven authority to support national institutions in tracking and reporting on climate actions, including through the development of greenhouse gas inventories, mapping progress towards their Nationally Determined Contributions and adaptation actions, and tracking financial support provided and mobilized. The enhancement of existing national arrangements and sharpening of related regulatory frameworks will be central to these actions. Synergies will be pursued with global and regional multilateral environmental agreements, including the work conducted under the UNFCCC to support the transition towards the Enhanced Transparency Framework, the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, to facilitate coordination and complementarity between the respective reporting obligations and contribute to greater coherence in tracking progress on implementing multilateral environmental agreements decisions.

UNEP will assist countries in assessing and better reporting on their climate-related national capabilities and circumstances, including their capacity building and technology needs and areas for improvement, especially for Least Developed Countries and Small-island Developing States, as well as related finance, investment and trade trends.

Through its networks and partners, UNEP will encourage non-government stakeholders, including the private sector and finance community, to increase coherence and transparency in the reporting of their climate actions. This will contribute to increasing global confidence in the

adoption of business models and market decisions towards decarbonization and resilience pathways.

UNEP will help countries measure progress towards decarbonization and resilience for stronger engagement in the global stocktake process.⁹⁴ UNEP will provide the best available scientific information and best practices to guide countries towards effectively assessing progress and evaluating the need for enhanced action and financial support to ratchet up the level of their climate ambition. Through the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the International Resource Panel, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and its flagship reports (e.g., Emissions Gap Report), UNEP will deploy the most up-to-date, state-of-the-art compilation of climate change metrics and sectoral knowledge. This will support country engagement in the global stocktake with the intention of increasing compliance with the Paris Agreement in a more transparent way. To that end, and in partnership with other relevant organizations, UNEP will facilitate dialogue between government actors and non-government stakeholders, including subnational authorities, business and civil society to add value and to increase accuracy, accountability and relevance of the information collected and shared by decision makers. Guided by the need to ensure greater climate ambition in line with the aspirations of the Nationally Determined Contributions, Long-Term Strategies and other strategic instruments. UNEP will also focus on supporting countries to increase their capacities to use climate change information in development planning and investment decisions and monitor climate finance trends as pathways towards increasing ambition.

Nature Action

Nature underpins the functions and health of the planet and thereby the existence and health of humankind. “Living in harmony with nature” means that “biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.”⁹⁵ Dependency on biodiversity and ecosystems, including for food, fibre, materials, water, medicines and human health, climate regulation, and protection from extreme events, has been outlined clearly by Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the Global Environmental Outlook, International Resource Panel and other assessments. The loss of biodiversity and ecosystem degradation undermines the resilience of our economy and many critical product value chains and ultimately will prevent progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and human well-being. To facilitate a transition towards living in harmony with nature, in line with the sustainable development goals and the long-term goals of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, as agreed by Member States, it is expected that:

- By 2025 the implementation of the agreed post-2020 global biodiversity framework is well underway through related national planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting processes.
- By 2025 biodiversity is mainstreamed⁹⁶ for sustainable development and across key themes and sectors (e.g., food and agriculture, sustainable forest management and zero deforestation, health, infrastructure, mining, tourism, trade, energy, cities, finance, governance and justice) to realize multiple benefits and avoid negative impacts on nature.
- By 2025, significant actions are taken to reduce ecosystems degradation and build the resilience of landscapes and seascapes, with ecosystem integrity and conservation being leveraged as assets and tools for disaster risk reduction and greater social resilience.

- By 2025, methodologies and tools to integrate biodiversity and ecosystems into consumer, infrastructure and financial decision-making are developed and made available for governments and financial institutions to align their policies and investment portfolios with global biodiversity targets.

The expected 2030 outcome of this UNEP subprogramme is that “recovery of nature occurs and is contributing positively to human well-being.”

The Nature Action subprogramme will operate through following principles:

- 1. Articulating a pathway to living in harmony with nature.** UNEP will focus on increasing ambitions, building broad-based support and partnerships for transformational change for sustainable development, strengthening policy and regulatory frameworks, and upscaling best practices. These will deliver science-based solutions for nature across sectors and levels of governance to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem integrity, which are key to many economic activities and the provision of goods and services critical for human welfare. Together, these actions will set the world on a pathway to ensuring well-functioning ecosystems and environmental safeguards, poverty eradication, social resilience, green and decent job creation and a resilient economic and trade system based on more sustainable consumption and production patterns that are in line with internationally agreed norms and standards.
- 2. Realizing impact and strength through partnerships.** UNEP will strengthen its strategic partnerships with organizations at the global, regional, national and local levels to support Member States in building their capacities, including through facilitating access to appropriate financial and technology-related means, towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the three goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its protocols, as well as the agreed post-2020 global biodiversity framework and relevant decisions of the governing bodies of other multilateral environmental agreements.⁹⁷ UNEP will contribute data, knowledge and technical expertise to the UN Sustainable Development teams at the global, regional and national levels to address environmental concerns, promote better utilization and management of natural resources, and to integrate biodiversity and ecosystem-based approaches in the planning and delivery of national sustainable development frameworks and Sustainable Development Goal strategies. This will include, close collaboration with the secretariats of key multilateral environmental agreements, UNDP, FAO, UN-Habitat and WHO to deliver direct benefits for people and nature in Member States. Through partnerships and investment in outreach and engagement with key stakeholders such as academia, civil society, consumers, youth, indigenous peoples, technology providers and the private sector UNEP will mobilize civil society support for the nature agenda. Through the equal engagement of men and women, UNEP will ensure that this support is also gender-inclusive. In supporting the humanitarian community and UN Country Teams, UNEP will work through its environmental emergency response partnership with the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. In the field of ocean governance, Regional Seas Programmes will continue to be UNEP’s delivery mechanism working also with other ecosystem-based organizations, such as regional fisheries bodies.

The Nature Action subprogramme will focus on UNEP’s comparative advantage to achieve three 2025 outcomes.

Outcome 1: Economically and socially sustainable pathway to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem integrity established.

UNEP will assist member States in developing integrated strategies to achieve a sustainable balance between human prosperity and the sustainability of the natural resource base underpinning socioeconomic development. This will require deep transformations in our current economic systems, which currently privatize benefits while externalizing environmental costs, and contributing substantially to inequalities. UNEP, in collaboration with its partners, will support these transformations by assisting member states in developing sustainable economic pathways that benefit both people and nature and through mobilizing public support for the nature agenda. A recognition of the true value of Nature, as well as of the costs of its degradation are essential for the transition to a more sustainable and resilient economy. UNEP will tailor tools and guidance for the valuation of natural capital, and the design and implementation of policies and practices supporting the shift to sustainable consumption and production. UNEP will also refine nationally relevant metrics for measuring inclusive wealth and promoting their use in development planning processes, with close reference to Sustainable Development Goal targets and indicators, as well as those agreed under the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. UNEP will also assist countries in developing integrated national infrastructure plans that prioritize ecosystems and ecosystem-based approaches, including natural infrastructure.

UNEP will support countries to develop policies and incentives that address the drivers of biodiversity loss and promote sustainable and inclusive economic activities in line with multilaterally agreed norms and standards. UNEP will assist countries in developing biodiversity-based economies as important components of their national economic development that ensures sustainability, equitable benefit-sharing and which will build social and environmental resilience.

UNEP will support countries in developing the necessary policies, legislation and strategies to make progress towards the SDGs and implement their respective obligations under the multilateral environmental agreements, while strengthening national institutions and mechanisms to monitor and report on related progress.

UNEP will promote social and behavioural change and support sustainable education and youth-led action with outreach campaigns and public engagement as well as by engaging with formal and non-formal education activities that shift knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and norms to address the indirect drivers of biodiversity loss and the degradation of nature. UNEP will also work with standard setting and labelling schemes to promote and improve existing consumer information tools by including criteria on the biodiversity impact of key products, in line with multilaterally agreed norms and standards.

UNEP will assist the UN system entities to lead by example. Doing so ensures that its operations are conducted sustainably, and that they disclose progress against key sustainability measures, including biodiversity performance metrics

Outcome 2: Sustainable management of nature is adopted and implemented in development frameworks.

UNEP will assist member states and support UN Country teams to ensure that nature is mainstreamed effectively into all key sectors, using a well-coordinated, whole-of-government approach that balances the demands of different sectors. The establishment of clear, integrated

and well-funded strategies and development plans, supported by rigorous legislation, can redress biodiversity loss. This generates overall policy coherence and public support towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the objectives of the agreed post-2020 global biodiversity framework. UNEP will play a key role in providing normative and analytical tools which assist UNCTs in mainstreaming policies and actions which reduce biodiversity loss and help implement ecosystem-based approaches to maintain ecosystem integrity.

UNEP will align its actions to the agreed objectives and outcomes of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, without pre-empting their development, working with UN system entities and other partners to support countries in their implementation and mainstreaming in national processes and development frameworks. UNEP's support will capitalize on the organization's experience in enabling the financial and technical capacity of countries to fulfil their biodiversity commitments, including through the support of the Global Environment Facility. This will enable countries, *inter alia*, to apply science-based approaches for the sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services and restoring and protecting the functional capacity and connectivity within and between freshwater, terrestrial and marine ecosystems. UNEP will also promote and reinforce ecosystem-based ocean governance based on the Regional Seas programmes as well as implementing its organisational mandate, as SDG custodian, assisting all member states with protecting and restoring freshwater ecosystems and the wealth of freshwater biodiversity they contain.

UNEP will support policies and actions on sustainable consumption and production to conserve, restore and safely manage biodiversity and ecosystems. UNEP will support member states, cities, business and consumers in the re-use, recycling and more efficient and less polluting use of products and materials which tend to have high impacts on nature, including through a value chain approach and supporting indigenous peoples and local communities.

UNEP will collaborate with UN agencies, funds and programmes to support Member States to strengthen biodiversity and health linkages to manage and reduce risks for both human and ecosystem health and to integrate Nature in national and international public health decision-making through science-based approaches. In a post-pandemic context, this requires addressing nature degradation as a root cause of zoonotic disease and other novel biological introductions. Work on establishing more sustainable food value chains will be central to this effort, given that so many zoonoses are triggered by unsustainable patterns of consumption and production of food. UNEP will also work with partners to strengthen the capacity of countries to implement the One Health approach, focusing on biosecurity measures and support the development and subsequent implementation of the Global Plan of Action on Biodiversity and Health. UNEP will also support efforts to mainstream biodiversity for health and nutrition.

UNEP will develop and promote frameworks and norms for biodiversity-related financing and infrastructure. Leveraging the portfolio of the enabling subprogramme on Finance and Economic Transformations UNEP will support the integration of biodiversity and ecosystems services considerations and related risks into financial and economic decision-making. UNEP will provide guidance to governments and financial institutions to achieve positive outcomes for people and nature, in line with the agreed post-2020 global biodiversity framework and relevant environmental targets of the SDGs, focusing on economic sectors with high impacts and dependencies on nature. UNEP will also support the development of innovative funding mechanisms for conservation which support indigenous peoples and local communities in livelihood opportunities while building sustainability and resilience and strengthening their rights.

UNEP will promote the sustainability and transparency of value chains and production methods. It will be critical to ensure resource extraction and commodity production contribute to healthy ecosystems and socially just outcomes. UNEP will use these opportunities to influence demand side pressure on biodiversity and ecosystems through consumer information on the environmental footprint of products and by encouraging the adoption of sustainable consumption and lifestyles.

Outcome 3: Nature conservation and restoration are enhanced.

UNEP will promote environmentally and socially sustainable approaches to natural resource management. UNEP will promote transformations in planning and managing land and water use and natural resource-based value chains with a lifecycle perspective. Building on its experience and collaborative partnerships with Agencies with specialised expertise, UNEP will assist member states to promote alternative and resilient food systems, agriculture, and fisheries to reverse unsustainable land use, biodiversity loss, habitat conversion, freshwater pollution and abstraction, and depletion of freshwater and ocean resources. Safe, equitably distributed, and environmentally sustainable food systems must be based on the maintenance of healthy freshwater, terrestrial and marine ecosystems. UNEP will continue to assist Member States to strengthen the environmental performance of sustainable and restorative agriculture models through promotion of resource efficient practices for nature, including but not limited to agroecology and regenerative agriculture in collaboration with its partners. UNEP will enhance its contribution to these objectives building on its work on, *inter alia*, sustainable land-use, natural capital accounting, sustainable consumption and production, landscape management and ecosystems restoration. UNEP will continue to support countries in restoring and protecting freshwater ecosystems to secure the provision of freshwater for sustainable development of sectors and society. UNEP will continue to support integrated coastal zone management and marine spatial planning and cooperate with relevant organizations. UNEP will also continue to provide guidance for increased knowledge and institutional capacity to implement equitable access and benefit sharing regimes and catalyse action for the sustainable use of terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystem resources. There will also be a focus on adopting holistic sustainable consumption and production approaches, using indigenous and local knowledge supported by sound science, data, and statistics enabled and scaled up by public and institutional procurement policies and consumer choice.

UNEP will support sustainable habitat management through transformative processes and outcomes, including large scale ecosystem restoration complimented by social and behaviour change, to minimize damage to highly valued ecosystems, including damage from disasters, conflict, and climate change. UNEP will support Member States actions to prevent and mitigate the degradation of ecosystems to restore nature and build back resilience, including through ecosystem-based approaches for Disaster Risk Reduction. For forest ecosystems, UNEP will work with partners and through networks on advancing and strengthening UN-REDD as a platform to halt forest loss and degradation. Together with FAO, UNEP will lead the United Nations System in implementing the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030 in marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems. For all freshwater ecosystems (lakes, rivers, wetlands, groundwater), UNEP will drive forwards responsible, freshwater-inclusive decision making, using state of the art tools and near real-time data to illicit local watershed and transboundary action to protect freshwater biodiversity.

UNEP will provide necessary tools and guidance to develop sustainable blue economies in freshwater, coastal and marine zones; and promote transboundary collaboration for the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of vulnerable ecosystems, such as coastal, mountain, lakes, rivers and wetland ecosystems particularly those vulnerable to the impacts of climate change

and pollution. Further promotion of sustainable tourism through the One Planet Network, the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative will scale up support for policies and practices which generate tourism revenue while maintaining the biodiversity and ecosystems that attract tourists.

Chemicals and Pollution Action

Preventing, controlling and managing pollution is central to improving health, human well-being and prosperity for all. Environmental quality and its positive implications for reducing inequity, ill-health, poverty and vulnerability is a powerful motivation to move towards a pollution-free planet. A pollution-free planet will positively impact biodiversity and enhance the health of ecosystems by preventing further damage while increasing resilience. Addressing air pollution and waste is also linked to climate change mitigation, especially when action is taken against short-lived climate pollutants. Chemicals and waste can also be a resource for job creation through reuse as secondary materials. Accelerated action on chemicals and pollution will result in benefits for both nature and people and will be aligned with the framework for the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, as agreed by Member States. Scaling up action on chemicals and waste also builds on UNEP's experience in the development of large multi-focal area projects funded under the Global Environment Facility. A transition towards a pollution-free planet in line with the Sustainable Development Goals recognizes that:

- By 2025, the actions adopted in the agreed beyond 2020 framework for sound management of chemicals and waste are taken on board in national planning and development.
- By 2025, 30% of the world's population lives in areas where WHO Air Quality Interim Target 3 for outdoor PM_{2.5} (fine particulate matter) is attained.⁹⁸
- By 2025, actions towards modifying economy-wide nitrogen use are in place to halve the losses of anthropogenic reactive nitrogen to the environment.⁹⁹
- By 2025, the capacity of countries is strengthened to achieve Sustainable Development Goal targets 6.3, 14.1, 12.3 and 12.4.¹⁰⁰

The expected 2030 outcome of this UNEP subprogramme is that “significant progress is made towards a pollution-free planet”, particularly through the delivery of the Implementation Plan “Towards a Pollution-Free Planet”.¹⁰¹

The Chemicals and Pollution Action subprogramme will operate through the following principles:

1. **Recognizing that sustainable consumption and production and sound chemicals and waste management are intrinsically linked and mutually interdependent.** The importance of adopting resource efficient and sustainable production practices; avoiding the reintroduction of, or exposure to, toxic materials into the value chain or the environment, better informed consumer choices and more sustainable lifestyles will be recognized. Sustainable consumption and production results in lower throughputs of materials and less waste and the reduction of health risks. UNEP will support the design and implementation of policies and business practices which reduce harmful chemicals in products and processes and enable consumers to make informed choices about products and related waste.
2. **Working through partnerships “Towards a Pollution-Free Planet”.** UNEP will maintain strong focus on addressing various pollution streams and leveraging collaboration with other partners – including the Global Environment Facility Secretariat, the multilateral environmental agreements (the Minamata Convention, the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm

Conventions, and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer). UNEP will work through global, regional and subregional networks and fora, coalitions focused on pollution reduction, such as the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, antimicrobial resistance through the One Health alliance and regional ministerial fora on health and the environment. UNEP will collaborate with other UN agencies including WHO, FAO, UNICEF, UNDP, the World Bank, WTO and OECD, scientific institutions, national agencies, NGOs, foundations and the private sector to assist Members States in the implementation of pollution reduction efforts.

3. **Recognizing that global and regional environmental agreements provide a collaborative framework for governance and time-bound actions.** While multilateral environmental agreements are key to managing chemicals and waste soundly, important implementation challenges remain. These challenges include availability of data, information and knowledge; policy design; adequate legislation; implementation and enforcement capacities and compliance mechanisms; availability of infrastructure and accessible clean technologies; institutional and technical capacity; business and industry leadership; intersectoral collaboration and transboundary cooperation; and true cost pricing. UNEP will support countries in developing the necessary policies, strategies and legislation to implement their respective obligations under the multilateral environmental agreements, while strengthening national institutions and mechanisms to monitor and report on related progress.
4. **Responding to country priorities and needs to reduce and prevent pollution.** UNEP will assist in identifying the types and extent of pollution and remedial and preventive action, highlighting the importance of investing in local and national pollution actions, including through the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. UNEP will promote mutual learning and transfer of effective policies, good practices, experiences, initiatives and green technologies within and across countries and local contexts. UNEP will apply a gender lens to this work, supporting countries to ensure that their responses to reduce and prevent pollution are gender sensitive.
5. **Working to support system-wide changes to address pollution.** UNEP will develop mechanisms to incentivize and redirect public and private finance and investments to cleaner economic activities through internalizing the costs of pollution in financial decisions and adopting public disclosure and pollution release and transfer registries; circularity, and the necessary preconditions, including the absence of toxic chemicals, will be built across value chains. The sound management of chemicals and waste enables circular approaches in high impact sectors ¹⁰² by offering the knowledge and experience of the chemicals and waste communities on the sound management of substances throughout their lifecycle to develop innovative circular solutions and avoid regrettable substitutions. To ensure a system-wide approach, UNEP recognizes the importance of the private sector to develop sustainable alternatives, with a clear understanding of lifecycle impacts. UNEP will also promote end-of-life policies (such as Extended Producer Responsibility) and promote practices and communication to consumers to keep products in the economy longer.

The Chemicals and Pollution Action subprogramme will focus on UNEP's comparative advantage to achieve three 2025 outcomes.

Outcome 1: Human health and environmental outcomes are optimized through enhanced capacity and leadership on the sound management of chemicals and waste.

UNEP will promote sound science, information, and knowledge sharing on chemicals, waste and pollution. UNEP will foster and facilitate access and sharing of up-to-date, credible, and relevant information, data and statistics. This will enable better informed actions to prevent and address pollution and its impacts and promote systemic shifts at all levels of governance and among consumers. UNEP will support countries to undertake analysis and apply tools to identify the most polluting economic sectors and products. UNEP will work with partners to support countries to adopt pollution release and transfer registers and link them to the UNEP World Environment Situation Room.

UNEP will accelerate policy shifts towards the sound management of chemicals and waste. UNEP will support design of science-based, integrated and coherent regulatory frameworks and policies, building upon, *inter alia*, the polluter pays principle, and using lifecycle approaches. This will assist in strengthening implementation and effectiveness - taking advantage of environmental data insights as enabled by digital technologies - and significantly reducing harmful effects caused by chemicals of major public health concern.¹⁰³ UNEP will support efforts to eliminate the production, distribution and trade of such chemicals and promote sound chemicals and waste management in accordance with the objectives of the chemicals and waste multilateral environmental agreements. UNEP will align its actions to the agreed objectives and outcomes of the framework for sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, as these are developed, supporting countries in their implementation and providing technical support on issues of concern, scientific data and information, and indicators, in line with United Nations Environment Assembly resolutions.¹⁰⁴ Sustainable consumption and production policies will be pursued, aligned with the vision of the 10YFP.¹⁰⁵ UNEP will further prevent and mitigate environmental and health threats through use of a One Health¹⁰⁶ approach.

UNEP will build capacity to act and strengthen institutions. UNEP will support member states with technical capacity and institutional strengthening, including implementation of cross-sectoral national chemical management regimes and integrated approaches to financing, through the promotion of knowledge and information sharing, policy support, rapid response support, tools and good practices. Integrated approaches, through multisectoral engagement, especially the health and environment sectors, will be supported at all levels, and in close collaboration with relevant UN agencies, including in the context of UNEP's COVID-19 response and future pandemic preparedness.

UNEP will raise ambition and leadership on sustainable and healthier living through advocacy, champions and UNEP's convening power. Taking into account lessons learned and experiences with the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, UNEP will leverage the UN Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste and engage policymakers, youth, academia, civil society, finance and the private sector to gain support for positive environmental change, reducing and preventing pollution and promoting sustainable, healthier living. UNEP, with partners, can reach millions through robust campaigns such as #BreatheLife, #CleanSeas, #BeatPollution, #TimeforNature, observance of the International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies¹⁰⁷, and the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment.

Outcome 2: Waste management improved including through circular processes, safe recovery of secondary raw materials and progressive reduction of open burning and dump sites.

UNEP will mainstream the 3 Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle) and circular processes across waste flows,¹⁰⁸ while ensuring safe secondary raw materials recovery. This will involve: supporting the reduction of the number of waste dumpsites globally; cooperating with the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and other stakeholders such as companies, research institutions, the waste management sector and civil society groups, to identify innovative solutions to build circularity across resource and chemicals intensive industry sectors and offering alternatives to the current linear economic models; and working with municipalities and development organisations to create local employment opportunities. This also includes mainstreaming pollution-reduction and sound management of chemicals and waste into development and humanitarian action and helping relevant actors address environmental risk factors negatively affecting the health of most vulnerable populations.

UNEP will support countries and stakeholders to reduce the use of materials, energy, water and agricultural inputs through the adoption of resource efficient and circular approaches whenever possible. These can reduce waste streams and improve secondary flows, provided these are free of toxics, while enabling resource access, affordability, availability and sustainability for all, resulting in job creation, improving community health and climate resilience.

UNEP will support efforts to identify and close open dumpsites in partnership with entities such as the International Solid Waste Association and UN-Habitat and encourage national and local efforts for mandatory waste collection and segregation at source.

UNEP will scale ongoing efforts on greening waste and wastewater management infrastructure. UNEP will support governments at all levels to develop, implement and comply with resilient and effective waste and wastewater management systems and sustainable infrastructure, including natural infrastructure.¹⁰⁹ Partners will include multilateral development banks, wastewater and solid waste management associations, and the private sector, adopting ecosystem-based approaches as well as upstream solutions which promote circularity and can be monitored using key environmental, health and climate indicators.

Outcome 3: Reduced releases of pollutants to air, water, soil and the ocean.

UNEP will support the shift away from generation, production and use of harmful chemicals that pose a risk to human health and the environment, while promoting sound management of chemicals and waste in general. UNEP will continue working towards minimizing the adverse effects of such chemicals on human health and the environment, supporting the implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements and the agreed beyond 2020 framework for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management. UNEP, with partners, will aim at ensuring that regulations, standards and policies are in place to facilitate the shift to safer alternatives. UNEP will strive towards the identification, phasing out and sound management of chemicals in products and in processes, in order to reduce risks to human health and the environment, as well as minimize waste and pollution generated. UNEP will increase and disseminate knowledge on chemicals of public health concern¹¹⁰, develop and implement methodologies and tools for tracking and controlling of such chemicals, and support sectors in designing products and processes that are safer and cleaner, including through Green and Sustainable Chemistry. Safe production processes and

safeguards will benefit from fiscal instruments that reflect the polluter pays principle and correct for market failures.

UNEP will influence producer, procurement and investment decisions on chemicals use through more informed consumer choices based on awareness of the environmental footprint of products consumed and used. Sustainable and responsible consumption choices will be aided by increased awareness, accurate and relevant information and fiscal incentives as well as by ensuring the engagement of consumers by providing reliable sustainability information and increasing consumer awareness to guide consumer and behaviour change. UNEP will work with governments and information providers (companies and standard-setting and labeling schemes) to increase the availability of reliable and clear information on chemicals in products, contributing to consumer literacy in line with multilaterally agreed norms and standards.

UNEP will support ongoing efforts to reduce in-country and transboundary air pollution. UNEP will improve air quality monitoring and assessments and support air quality management plans and actions at national and sub-national levels targeting specific sectors, including mobility, industrial operations, energy, waste and agriculture, while assisting countries in identifying related local health priorities and multiple benefits. Through regional monitoring networks and partnerships on air quality, UNEP will address mitigation of short-lived climate pollutants that cause air pollution and climate change, thus promoting and scaling up integrated action on air pollution and climate change towards achieving Paris Agreement targets. UNEP will work with UNHCR and the UN interagency Global Plan of Action¹⁰⁷ to support clean energy access to refugees and people displaced by conflict and environmental stresses, in particular women, to avoid health impacts from cooking practices, lighting and related unsustainable deforestation.

UNEP will scale ongoing efforts to address land-based sources of freshwater and marine pollution, especially nutrients, chemicals and plastic and other forms of marine litter. UNEP will support stakeholders through the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management, the Regional Seas Programmes as well as relevant digital platforms to take an evidence-based approach to identify key sources, pathways and hazards from source-to-sea and across product lifecycles. Action on the most problematic products, sources and sectors will be prioritized through marine litter and nutrient action plans. To address global plastic pollution, UNEP will engage all stakeholders of the plastics value chain to scale up resource efficiency, sustainable materials management and circularity by building political support and leadership for reducing and reusing plastics; supporting countries, cities and businesses in meeting their commitments and voluntary actions to tackle plastics pollution, including through legislative guidance; and raising awareness on innovative solutions, alternatives and new business models.

4.2 Foundational Subprogrammes

Science-Policy

Science is the foundation for policy setting and identifying potential solutions and actions on the environmental challenges we face. UNEP's core mandate is to keep the world environment situation under review and strengthen the interface between science and policymaking across the sustainable development agenda. The subprogramme delivers scientifically credible data, information and knowledge and provides policy-relevant analysis and policy recommendations to catalyse and accelerate solutions and actions for the environment based on a continuous review of global status and trends.

The Science-Policy subprogramme will focus on the following actions and interventions underpinning the achievement of UNEP's thematic subprogrammes:

- 1. Increasing the uptake of science for transformative action.** UNEP will provide expertise on environmental matters, bringing the latest scientific evidence and multidisciplinary analysis on the state and trends of the world environment to the attention of policy and decision makers at all levels, and the public at large. UNEP will build the capacities of government and non-government actors at national and local levels to uptake the latest scientific information to inform policy development and drive transformative and systemic actions on the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, while pre-empting the rise of other environmental challenges. The subprogramme will reach beyond the environmental community and make the case for putting the environment at the centre of economic and social decision making. Through gender-responsive partnerships across all geographic areas, involving governments and non-government organizations, the business and the citizen community, UNEP will aim to be a catalyst of systemic and transformative shifts that can drive progress towards Agenda 2030.
- 2. Providing authoritative science, delivered with greater coherence and integration.** UNEP will continue to be an authoritative voice on the environment in the global scientific community, collecting, analyzing and synthesizing scientific data that speaks to the interconnected challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. UNEP's signature, policy-relevant scientific assessments include its flagship report, the Global Environment Outlook, the Emissions and Adaptation Gap Reports, the Frontiers Report, the World Water Quality Assessment and the Global Resources and Waste Management and Chemicals Outlooks. UNEP will deliver these assessments securing coherence, complementarity and connectivity to existing scientific literature to increase their impact and uptake in the policymaking sphere. To that end, UNEP will continue facilitating the Ad Hoc Global Environment Assessment Dialogue¹¹¹ involving, *inter alia*, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the Global Environmental Outlook, the International Resource Panel and the Global Sustainable Development Report processes. UNEP will add value to these processes by proposing systematic and integrated solutions to the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, based on a systemic and transdisciplinary analysis of their interconnections in relation to socioeconomic and equity issues. Through mutual sharing of data and information, methods and tools, key findings and expertise, this process will suggest policy options to move from business as usual towards sustainability in a cost-effective manner. This process will also contribute to the preparation and delivery of coherent and mutually reinforcing messages that can inform international negotiations and decisions under the multilateral environmental agreements and other internationally agreed frameworks, as well as global environmental platforms, such as the United Nations Environment Assembly.
- 3. Closing the gap on the availability of environmental data is key to assess and review progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and fostering synergies among the multilateral environmental agreements.** UNEP will continue to measure and monitor country progress on the Sustainable Development Goals and other internationally agreed environmental goals, providing timely data analysis and early warnings for policy and decision makers. UNEP will contribute to easing country reporting burdens on progress made by building as much as possible on existing credible data and

reliable baselines and by aligning its reporting requirements with Sustainable Development Goals indicators. UNEP will facilitate open-access, interinstitutional data and information exchanges, including at national, regional and subnational levels. Pursuing greater scientific collaboration with the global and regional multilateral environmental agreements, as well as facilitating coordination and exchanges amongst the multilateral environmental agreements themselves while respecting their mandates, will allow for greater harmonization of country data and methodologies for tracking progress and facilitate better analysis and comparability for decision-making.

- 4. Digitizing scientific knowledge and democratizing availability, while anticipating emerging issues through foresight and horizon-scanning.** Digital tools and technologies can accelerate an integrated environmental analysis with social and economic data, as well as better equip decision makers at all levels in assessing the effectiveness, relevance and impact of global environmental policies. To that end, the World Environment Situation Room will be an asset to UNEP's intervention at the local, regional and international levels. In line with the aspirations of a new Global Environmental Data Strategy,¹¹² UNEP will continue to leverage the World Environment Situation Room as a leading global digital environmental platform that will enable governments, the public at large, as well as the broader UN system and particularly UN Country Teams to visualize the state and performance of the world environment underpinned by economic and social data. The World Environment Situation Room will draw on near real-time maps supported by geospatial technologies and offer a public knowledge platform informed by in-situ satellite and data modelling sources, as well as citizen science. This system will measure the effectiveness of the pace and scale of the required policy transformations for the environment, as well as assessing options for actions. As part of the horizon-scanning and foresight process, the World Environment Situation Room will also contribute to tracking emerging environmental and human health risks, bringing these to the attention of governments for prioritizing research informed by large-scale systematic analysis, and taking political actions, including at the United Nations Environment Assembly and other fora.
- 5. Developing an inclusive science-policy interface that speaks to all.** An effective science-policy interface capable of catalysing transformative policies and decisions must be supported by inclusive environmental and social advocacy. In this respect, UNEP's intervention will focus on building the capacities of national and local decision makers to manage and synthesize scientific knowledge and embed science in their decisions that drive actions on climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. UNEP will pursue broad stakeholder engagement as a critical step to enhance societal understanding, acceptance and uptake of its scientific analysis. Through platforms and networks such as the Science-Policy Business Forum, the International Resource Panel, the World Adaption Science Programme and the One Planet Network, among others, UNEP will serve as a knowledge broker that builds consensus around existing and emerging environmental issues. UNEP will be a facilitator that enables partnerships and joint actions across stakeholders from the scientific and policy communities, with societal endorsement. Communication and advocacy will remain key tools to spur societal engagement. To that end, UNEP will communicate its scientific information in a language that is accessible to all and that can influence and stimulate inclusive decision-making and environmental action at the scale and pace required by science.

Science Policy – as a Foundation

UNEP will contribute to *Climate Stability* by providing scientific information that measures progress towards carbon neutrality and resilience and assesses the potentials and risks associated with the measures applied. It will compile, assess and communicate the latest climate-related scientific data and propose policy options to help public and private sector decision-makers engage in ambitious climate actions in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

UNEP will make *Living in Harmony with Nature* a reality by providing the scientific information and data to secure policies and actions for nature. Science will be the basis to justify the uptake of such systemic policies, actions and solutions across all sectors to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem integrity in line with the targets and goals of the agreed post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

UNEP will take us *Towards a Pollution-free Planet* by facilitating access and sharing of up-to-date, credible and relevant chemicals, waste and pollution scientific information, data and statistics. This will encourage systemic shifts towards less polluting outcomes at all levels of governance and in all relevant segments of society, including consumers, and inform the design and implementation of the necessary regulatory frameworks and policies.

UNEP will put science at the centre of sound *Environmental Governance*. Access to the latest environmental information, horizon scanning and the informed analysis of the interconnections between the three mutually reinforcing crises of climate, nature and pollution will drive coherent and more system-level decision-making towards more effective legal and institutional environmental frameworks at national and regional levels, including the agreed post-2020 frameworks, and stronger environmental rights for all.

UNEP will ensure that sound science supports *Finance and Economic Transformations*. It will triangulate science with the policy and business community to leverage finance and market systems towards sustainable shifts, advocate for the adoption of sustainable consumption and production patterns at all levels and accelerate societal changes towards more circular economic and business models.

UNEP will leverage *Digital Transformations* to digitize scientific knowledge and democratize its availability. It will capitalize on the World Environment Situation Room as the prime global digital platform that can enable governments and the public at large to visualize the state and performance of the world environment, draw the attention to new and emerging environmental issues, and offer an analysis of the effectiveness and impact of existing environmental policies underpinned by economic and social data.

Environmental Governance

Environmental governance is the institutional and legal architecture needed to make environmental goals and commitments a reality. Supporting countries towards achieving environmental policies in an integrated manner and abiding by strong legal and institutional frameworks that effectively implement environmental goals in the context of sustainable development at the global, regional and national levels is part of UNEP's core work. This subprogramme supports coherent decision-making towards more effective legal and institutional

frameworks that underpin the achievement of internationally agreed goals on climate, biodiversity and pollution in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Environmental Governance subprogramme will focus on the following actions and interventions underpinning the achievement of UNEP's thematic subprogrammes:

- 1. Strengthening the transformative role of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) as the highest global environmental decision-making body to deliver on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.** UNEP will continue to work closely with Member States, multilateral environmental agreements secretariats, UN agencies and major groups and stakeholders to ensure that environmental considerations, particularly those identified as emerging challenges by UNEA, are well reflected and integrated into relevant intergovernmental discussions at international level. Through its Regional Offices, UNEP will provide robust support to regional environment ministers meetings and facilitate sharing of inputs and coherent environmental messaging across the regional environment ministers' meetings, the Regional Forums on Sustainable Development, UNEA and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. UNEP will also leverage its role as the secretariat and chair of the Environment Management Group to better mainstream environmental issues into the work of the UN system, while contributing to coordinating their environmental activities for maximum impact and efficiency.
- 2. Amplifying impact across the global environmental agenda through enhanced cooperation with multilateral environmental agreements.** UNEP will enhance programmatic cooperation with the respective secretariats and governing bodies of the 15 multilateral environmental agreements that it administers, as well as other global conventions, such as the UNFCCC and UNCCD, by developing practical tools and working methods to support a coherent and effective implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements, both within and across their thematic clusters, at the international and national levels. In this context, in collaboration with other UN system organizations, UNEP will provide rigorous support to the development and implementation of the agreed post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. UNEP will continue to deliver on its mandate as an implementing agency of the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and work closely with relevant stakeholders, partners and funding mechanisms, such as the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund, to support countries and regions effective implement the multilateral environmental agreements.
- 3. Supporting countries in identifying integrated approaches to the three dimensions of sustainable development, including the incorporation of the environment into sustainable development planning.** In the spirit of paragraph 88 of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development outcome document, "The future we want", UNEP will support countries to build their legal and institutional frameworks and capacities to mainstream the environment into national planning and development processes. Particularly as the custodian agency for SDG indicator 17.14.1, "Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development", UNEP will work closely with countries, upon their request, to promote integrated approaches and policy coherence for sustainable development that addresses economic, environmental and social dimensions in a balanced manner. UNEP will assist countries align their relevant national policies to the international goals and targets of multilateral environmental agreements and the SDGs, while providing

advisory services, awareness raising and support for data collection and environmental knowledge management.

4. **Supporting countries to build relevant capacities in environmental law and contributing to the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the Montevideo Environmental Law Programme.** UNEP's support will include results-oriented, gender-responsive and country-driven strategic activities to promote public participation, access to information and access to justice in environmental matters. Special focus will be placed on disaster and conflict-affected countries, including through actions that target the most vulnerable populations. In coordination with national focal points to the Montevideo Environmental Law Programme, UNEP will provide enhanced and sustainable capacity-building support for key environmental law stakeholders, including judges, prosecutors and enforcement officers. UNEP will also produce guidance products, including national, regional and global analysis and assessments based on robust environmental data. It will track and advance shared understanding and facilitate action on key emerging issues related to environmental law.
5. **Leading the UN system and supporting national governments, upon their request, in the development and implementation of environmental rule of law.** UNEP has a clear mandate to lead the United Nations system in supporting national governments with the development and implementation of environmental rule of law.¹¹³ Under the Montevideo Environmental Law Programme, UNEP will do so through the promotion of information and data exchange, education, capacity-building and technical assistance, with a view to strengthening national environmental governance systems, improving the environmental rule of law, and contributing to the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda at the international and national levels. As part of this support, UNEP will also conduct biennial data-informed global assessments of environmental rule of law, which will track and report on core elements of environmental rule of law, including laws and institutions, civic engagement, rights and justice.
6. **Advancing environmental rights.** A safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment is integral to full enjoyment of a wide range of human rights, including the rights to life, health, food, water and sanitation. It is therefore key to protecting and improving human lives, and particularly those of the poor and marginalized. In partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other actors, UNEP will support countries, upon request, and collaborate with the wider UN system to enhance an effective and inclusive promotion, protection and respect of environmental rights, including through the implementation of relevant Human Rights Council and General Assembly resolutions.¹¹⁴ This will support countries in upholding environmental rights, while making continued progress towards realizing a universal recognition of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

Environmental Governance – as a Foundation

UNEP will contribute to *Climate Stability* by promoting the environmental rule of law to help achieve the aims of the Paris Agreement. National governments will be supported through the

promotion of information and data exchange, education, capacity-building and technical assistance, to strengthen national environmental governance systems and improve the rule of law, with the aim of fully implementing the Paris Agreement.

UNEP will make *Living in Harmony with Nature* a reality by supporting countries in developing legislation that has impact. Countries will receive support in developing the necessary policies, legislation and strategies to implement their respective obligations under the multilateral environmental agreements in a coherent manner, while strengthening national institutions and mechanisms to monitor and report on related progress. In this context, UNEP will provide guidelines and tools for effective implementation.

UNEP will progress *Towards a Pollution-free Planet* by advocating for the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. Countries will receive support in developing the necessary policies, legislation and strategies to implement their respective obligations under the multilateral environmental agreements in a coherent manner. In this context, UNEP will provide guidelines and tools for effective implementation. The Montevideo Environmental Law Programme can accelerate policy shifts towards the sound management of waste, including marine litter, with a focus on the environment and health nexus. Environmental rights will continue to be supported, in particular the right to safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

UNEP will use *Science-policy* to support strong Environmental Governance. National governance frameworks will be strengthened through the promotion of information and data exchange, education, capacity-building and technical assistance, all to strengthen national environmental governance systems and improve the environmental rule of law based on proven scientific evidence.

UNEP will promote integration of the environmental dimension when supporting *Finance and Economic Transformations*. Strengthening the environmental dimension of economic policy decisions will lead to enhanced coherence in approaches leading to sustainable development and its uptake in national planning and policymaking and will assist countries to draw up and implement effective policy, regulatory and enabling frameworks that cut pollution through cleaner economic activities that also reduce biodiversity loss.

UNEP will use *Digital Transformations* for coherent and inclusive environmental governance. Support to the upscaling of knowledge management and data reporting at the national level will be accelerated. This will support countries in coherent implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements and increase the understanding of the data linkages between climate change, biodiversity and pollution in the context of sustainable development, including human health.

4.3 Enabling Subprogrammes

Finance and Economic Transformations

Shifting finance and business practices towards sustainable patterns of consumption and production – and towards reducing climate impacts, biodiversity loss, and pollution – is crucial to realizing Agenda 2030 Important opportunities exist to decarbonize and manage resources more responsibly, while addressing sustainability, poverty, equity, employment, economic growth, security, and health objectives. Three of the six One Planet network programmes are helping to create enabling environments and shift markets and preferences: sustainable public procurement, consumer information, and sustainable lifestyles and education. With digital technologies and

connectivity, new ways to enable natural resources to support sustainable and inclusive rural and urban transformations are being tested and piloted. UNEP will build on, and integrate its decades long normative work on sustainable finance, inclusive green economy, sustainable trade, consumption and production and, through leveraging the UN reform and its partners, will take these initiatives to scale in countries in support of an environmentally, social and economically sustainable post-COVID recovery.

Finance and Economic Transformations subprogramme will focus on the following actions and interventions to facilitate the achievement of UNEP's thematic subprogrammes:

1. **Building on and integrating its initiatives in support of inclusive green economies in countries.** Bringing together its many complementary initiatives, UNEP will assist countries draw up and implement effective and enabling frameworks for sustainable consumption and production, including resource efficiency and circularity, in relevant national plans and policies.¹¹⁵ Practices will be supported that reduce pollution and address drivers of biodiversity loss through more resource efficient and cleaner economic activities which improve climate stability, reduce biodiversity loss and move economies and societies towards a pollution free world. Activities will include support for repurposing subsidies and fiscal/pricing reforms for sustainability and transitions to inclusive green economies and implemented through UNCT and partners.”
2. **Supporting business models and policies for accelerating sustainable consumption and production including through resource efficient and circular approaches.**¹¹⁶ UNEP and its networks, including the One Planet Network, the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE), the Green Growth Knowledge Partnership (GGKP), and Global Opportunities for Sustainable Development Goals (GO4SDGs), will support countries, cities and businesses in accelerating a transition to more circular, clean and resource efficient value chains, among other pathways to accelerate sustainable consumption and production. This ranges from the extraction and use of natural resources to the design of products and the sustainable management and circularity of material flows to creating the right sustainability incentives and enabling policy frameworks for circularity and sustainable materials as well as business ideas for various industry sectors such as buildings, construction or infrastructure. UNEP will use enabling tools like sustainable public procurement, sustainable lifestyles and education or consumer information to inform behaviour and shift consumption, as well as underlying assessment methodologies such as urban metabolism, circular jobs and lifecycle approaches to identify new opportunities. These approaches can be adjusted to target and support small and vulnerable suppliers and markets, considering global, regional, national, and local contexts. The digital ecosystem will be harnessed to maximize sustainability gains from the transformation and monitor its impacts, guided by data analytics utilizing science consumers -based approaches. Digital technologies can also ensure access to better choices through data driven policies addressing sectoral hotspots, nudges and incentives to complement informed choices, and increase information on and efficiency and resilience of value chains, and can help identify and purchase more sustainable, efficient and less polluting goods and services.
3. **Accelerating the alignment of finance with sustainability objectives and policy priorities.** The UNEP Finance Initiative will work through its various normative initiatives¹¹⁷ such as the Principles for Responsible Banking and Positive Impact Finance to align banking, insurance, and investment practice in support of inclusive green economy transformations. UNEP will work with its partners, scale its engagement with industry business and investor communities to shift towards a greater responsibility to people and the environment in high impact sectors such as

extractives, infrastructure, and agriculture. UNEP will seek to promote access to sustainable and digital finance that is gender-responsive, including for micro, small, and medium enterprises.

4. **Supporting cities, infrastructure, buildings and construction in urban and peri-urban areas to become more resource efficient, circular and clean.** i. With the onslaught of COVID-19, cities and urban dwellers were fully exposed to their dependence on nature and sometimes fragile value chains bringing food and critical supplies, the pandemic coming on top of a housing crisis and exacerbating existing inequalities. The findings from the International Resource Panel - such as the *Weight of Cities* report – and the work of the 10YFP will inform a systems approach aimed at transforming finance, governance, business models and key sectors in urban areas to increase their resilience to pandemics and other shocks and scarcities. UNEP will focus on more sustainable and resilient value chains, in the food, buildings, mobility, extractives and energy sectors, and spur integrated approaches to planning and design, particularly in public and private infrastructure, connecting grey, blue and sustainable infrastructure.¹¹⁸ In this, UNEP will work with UN-Habitat in support of subnational governments, given their essential role for creating change and implementing policy decisions, and across levels of government
5. **Catalyzing investment for an inclusive and sustainable rural transformation in support of jobs and ecological resilience and restoration.** In the context of COVID-19 and other socio-economic drivers, with many migrants returning to rural areas, ensuring ecosystem resilience and job opportunities to absorb the returnees will be critical. UNEP will work with other UN agencies and its partners in government and industry in a continued long term support towards a sustainable recovery through using tools that has developed to support restoration of degraded ecosystems and investments in nature for new job opportunities, biodiversity enhancement, and climate mitigation and adaptation; support the transition to sustainable agriculture and food systems; and to enhanced inclusive environmental governance for natural resource management more generally.
6. **Providing Inclusive Wealth¹¹⁹ statistics to better inform the links between natural assets, poverty, and inequality and thereby enhance the capacity of Member States to deliver the 2030 Agenda.** Poverty and inequality are likely to influence the other trends in the post pandemic world as suggested by the latest report from the UN Secretary General. Climate change and biodiversity loss, combined with the impact of the pandemic, will hit the poorest hard, aggravating existing disparities and pushing people below the poverty line. UNEP's work on inclusive wealth, will support National Statistical Offices in their efforts to monitor the environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals; and develop a statistical infrastructure for Inclusive Wealth statistics, which will present an opportunity to explicitly define the recovery from COVID-19 in terms of sustainable development, linking to the aspirations of the Paris Agreement, and the Beyond GDP movement.

Finance and Economic Transformations as an Enabler

UNEP will contribute to *Climate Stability* by promoting business models and markets for decarbonization, adaptation and resilience. It will, engage value chain actors to adopt energy and resource efficient solutions, advocate for financial alignments and disseminate consumer information tools to support sustainable lifestyles.

UNEP will make *Living in Harmony with Nature* a reality by developing and advocating for sustainable finance and economic measures that redress biodiversity loss, promote consumption and production practices that reduce pressure on ecosystems and nature, and value the socio-economic dimension of nature and biodiversity. It will promote the economics of biodiversity, identify its value and link to human health, as well as socially just outcomes of natural resource management.

UNEP will support countries to transition *Towards a Pollution-free Planet* by promoting the internalization of the true costs of pollution in financial and economic decisions by public and private actors, to redirect finance and investments towards cleaner and safer economic activities, more responsible behaviour and healthier people and planet. It will recognize the intrinsic links and mutual interdependence of sustainable consumption and production and sound chemicals and waste management by adopting a system wide and value chain approach to addressing pollution.

UNEP will leverage *Science-policy* by drawing on robust and relevant science and data to enhance the understanding, acceptance and uptake of sustainable choices by actors along the value chain, including economic policy makers and the financial sector, also informing public and private investment.

UNEP will leverage *Environmental Governance* frameworks, in partnership with non-state actors, to address support and strengthen the institutions that guide and shape market behaviour and promote coherent and integrated approaches to address unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. It will aim to mainstream sustainable finance and economic dimensions in sectoral and institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks.

UNEP will enhance its use of *Digitalization* to make sustainable finance more accessible and adapted to public and private users of all sizes, as well as bringing footprint and lifecycle information to consumers, businesses and policymakers. It will also engage partners with the objective of reducing the environmental footprint of the information and communications technology sector. These actions will build on the recognition of the need to secure additional finance for the transition to sustainable consumption and production in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Digital Transformations

Digitalization is sweeping the planet - changing our economy, society, institutions and even our humanity. But this is not always happening in an inclusive, equitable or sustainable manner. As reported by the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation,¹²⁰ the digital transformation has implications for all of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and its 169 targets,¹²¹ while the World Economic Forum estimates that artificial intelligence alone has over 80 different applications for the environment, including through transforming traditional sectors and systems to address climate change, protect biodiversity and bolster human well-being.¹²²

UNEP has the responsibility to contribute to the integration of environmental and sustainability norms and goals in the global digital economy.¹²³ As such, UNEP will take advantage of digital tools to accelerate and amplify impact across its three thematic subprogrammes and bring more transparency to knowledge of the state of our planet. In line with the Secretary-General's Roadmap

for Digital Cooperation, the Secretary-General's Data Strategy and the System-wide Roadmap for Innovating UN Data and Statistics, UNEP will strategically use digital entry points and digital ecosystems to embed relevant environmental data and analytics into the work of the entire UN System. UNEP will also consider how to align the digital transformation subprogramme with the key recommendations of the Secretary General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation.

The Digital Transformations subprogramme will focus on the following actions and interventions to facilitate the achievement of UNEP's thematic subprogrammes:

- 1. Supporting and scaling environmental change through effectively governed and inclusive data architecture and digital ecosystem for the planet.** UNEP will contribute technical expertise to the development and consolidation of an open and inclusive global digital ecosystem for people and planet that is based on digital norms and governance frameworks that integrate datasets and analysis of climate, biodiversity loss and pollution. Datasets from the public and private sectors will be used to produce actionable, real-time and predictive insights that will contribute to an automatic monitoring of global, national and local progress towards key climate, biodiversity and pollution targets in the Sustainable Development Goals and relevant internationally agreed frameworks, including the multilateral environmental agreements. To the extent possible, these datasets will be published as digital public goods. In delivering this work, UNEP will complement and synergize with the work of other UN agencies, providing analysis and guidance to help mitigate the direct environmental impacts from digital technology supply chains, energy requirements and e-waste, as well as addressing risks from misinformation on digital platforms. All these results will be achieved leveraging the Science-Policy subprogramme, especially UNEP's work on statistics and SDG indicator monitoring and the World Environment Situation Room, in line with the aspirations of the Global Environmental Data Strategy and the UN Secretary General's Data Strategy.
- 2. Catalyzing a transformative use of environmental digital public goods to amplify and accelerate progress towards global climate, biodiversity and pollution goals and targets.** UNEP will aim to catalyse and inspire actions, investments and partnerships that use digital public goods and digital technologies to achieve greater efficiency, effectiveness and transparency in advancing internationally agreed climate, nature and pollution goals and targets, as well as innovations in decarbonization, dematerialization and detoxification. This will include partnerships with public and private sector actors to harness data, digital technologies and computational sustainability to amplify and accelerate deeper structural transformations to drive markets, value chains, consumer behaviours and decision-making towards achieving sustainable outcomes.
- 3. Strengthening environmental digital literacy and e-governance capacities of diverse stakeholders to engage in the environmental dimensions of digital transformation, with an emphasis on the Global South.** This investment is a prerequisite for stakeholders to effectively design and deploy digital technologies and related digital transformation policies to solve climate, biodiversity and pollution challenges and support the nexus of environment, digital technology and e-governance. To that end, UNEP will work through partnerships to help enhance the environmental digital literacy and e-governance capacities of diverse stakeholders through inclusive, gender-responsive and human-rights based digital capacity building, facilitating policy dialogue, enhancing education curricula and fostering social, innovative collaboration and the development of new communities of practice that can contribute to closing the digital divide. Upon request, UNEP will undertake assessments of national digital infrastructures needed to produce digital public goods on the environment and to support e-government services. UNEP will also seek to inspire and catalyse citizen science, open innovation

and social collaboration through various digitally oriented challenges, hackathons, conferences, innovation labs, impact hubs, moon-shots and other competitions. Specific focus will be placed on supporting small and medium sized enterprises, social entrepreneurs, women, indigenous peoples, youth and under-represented stakeholders.

4. **Improving institutional efficiency and impact through a digitally enabled UNEP.** UNEP will integrate a range of digital technologies, processes and practices into all areas of the organization, in order to improve how it operates, innovates, delivers value, engages with stakeholders and builds capacity. UNEP will strive to become a digital organization that treats data as a strategic asset that can drive insights, innovations and impact, including through better project design, implementation and impact evaluation.

Digital Transformations as an Enabler

UNEP will contribute to *Climate Stability* by accelerating the adoption of low carbon behaviours and products by consumers and citizens. Digital solutions will drive sustainable lifestyles and the consumption of low carbon goods and services through increased carbon emissions transparency. UNEP will communicate carbon footprint information through certifications, digital apps and e-commerce platforms. UNEP will also scale efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of the information and communications technology sector focusing on data centres, blockchain applications and the gaming sector.

UNEP will make *Living in Harmony with Nature* a reality by increasing the speed and scale of the development and adoption of sustainable technologies to support the conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits of biodiversity. UNEP will convene and accelerate partnerships to take up emerging digital technologies that can help society achieve nature and biodiversity goals. In addition, UNEP will stimulate a digital network on the status of nature and biodiversity, including trends, pressures and human responses as a digital public good to inform public and private decision making. Mitigating the nature impact of value-chains linked to Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) will also be explored.

UNEP will amplify the adoption of clean technologies and digitalized circular approaches *Towards a Pollution-free Planet*. UNEP will explore how digital technologies and circular design can bring significant potential in reductions in waste and pollution. Likewise, the adoption of chemicals and pollution monitoring and data sharing standards throughout the product life cycle can support transparency in materials traceability from raw materials, to production and consumption, to disposal or reuse. Finally, UNEP will support global efforts on the challenge of e-waste, emphasising the need for circular approaches to dealing with electrical and electronic goods.

UNEP will accelerate *Science-policy* through increased influence, uptake and impact of digital public goods produced by scientific analysis on environmental priorities. UNEP will contribute to global environmental data principles, safeguards, standards and norms to underpin an open data infrastructure and digital ecosystem for the planet. UNEP will use digital tools to conduct science-based analysis of environmental trends on climate, nature and pollution and monitor progress in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal targets and the multilateral environmental agreements. Customized environmental data and analysis will be made available to the wider UN system through the World Environment Situation Room.

UNEP will strengthen global and national capacities for digitalizing *Environmental Governance* and collective action. This includes contributing to global principles, standards and norms on open data, inter-operability and licensing, data quality assurance, human-centred design and safeguards for

public-private partnerships. UNEP will support the digital literacy of environmental stakeholders, including digital challenges, moon-shots and hackathons. There will be a specific focus on supporting small and medium sized enterprises, social entrepreneurs, women, indigenous peoples, youth and under-represented stakeholders that are exposed to the digital divide.

UNEP will accelerate *Finance and Economic Transformations* with digital public goods and insights informing sustainable investments. Digital public goods will enable the design of inclusive green economy policies, help assess environmental risks, insights and natural capital accounting to inform investment decisions. UNEP will support the public disclosure of information and tracking of value chain performance using standard environmental-social-governance (ESG) investing criteria. It will also seek to use digital technologies to support sustainable consumption and sustainable lifestyles including through the application of behavioural economics.

5) Four Levers of Change for Better Delivery

To secure enhanced delivery of the transformational, systemic shifts outlined in this medium-term strategy, UNEP will address four key levers of change. These represent a combination of internal and external actions and opportunities that will drive UNEP toward greater effectiveness, while accelerating impact.

Multilateral Environmental Agreements and their ‘multiplier effect’

The multilateral environmental agreements are one of the foundation stones of national policy-making and UNEP’s work, and they play an indispensable role in achieving the 2030 Agenda and delivering the Sustainable Development Goals. Recognizing and respecting the autonomy of the multilateral environmental agreements, UNEP will promote a coherent and synergized cooperation across all the multilateral environmental agreements to ‘multiply’ impact and deliver enhanced results across the 2030 Agenda.¹²⁴ UNEP will continue to support Member States in the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements decisions and in this context facilitate a coherent and integrated approach for achieving the SDGs, brokering cross-institutional cooperation and partnerships, creating the required policy instruments and legislation and developing related capacities.

UNEP’s relationship with the multilateral environmental agreements will continue to be underpinned by regular dialogue and joint messaging and advocacy – and it will be informed by mutual exchanges of science-based data and holistic assessments for increased strategic and programmatic cooperation – towards common goals. Stronger focus will be placed on cross-cutting areas, such as sustainable consumption and production, climate change, biodiversity and pollution, as well as human rights, including rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as issues of intergenerational equity and gender equality.

Post-2020 frameworks for biodiversity, chemicals and waste will provide key guardrails. Central to UNEP’s engagement with the multilateral environmental agreements will be the continued support to the agreed post-2020 global biodiversity framework as well as the Strategic Approach and Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste beyond 2020, while leveraging linkages and integrated approaches with the Paris Agreement.

Raising environmental ambition within the UN System through UN Reform

The United Nations Reform process aims to reposition the United Nations development system with a stronger, better-defined collective identity as a trusted and effective partner to countries in the 2030 Agenda. By reducing systemic fragmentation, duplication and operational inefficiencies, the Reform presents a tremendous opportunity for UNEP to commit to its role as the leading environmental voice in the UN and fulfilling its coordination mandate on the environment within the UN system more effectively through its array of regional policy and operational assets.

UNEP will approach the UN reform through the unified thematic lens of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, while strengthening integrations across all aspects of the UN mission, including on development, peace and security, humanitarian operations and human rights within UNEP’s mandate.

To better leverage the opportunity offered by the Reform, UNEP will review its operational arrangements and processes to ensure they are aligned to the reform guidelines, tools, mechanisms and digital requirements. UNEP will strengthen the staff capacity across the organization to contribute substantively by identifying opportunities and applying adaptive management methods to implement the UN Reform at all levels.

UNEP will foster impact-oriented partnerships with UN sister agencies, drawing on the respective strengths and capabilities to improve UN-wide operational coherence. This will offer unique policy and operational opportunities to leverage the technical and operational expertise of other entities for greater joint impact, while amplifying UNEP's own programme delivery.

UNEP's Regional Offices will be the anchor for delivering UNEP's strategic aspirations and securing stronger engagement at regional and country level. They will serve as conduits of UNEP's alignment with the UN Reform guidelines and processes, securing a better understanding and responsiveness to national and regional contexts and needs, as well as enhanced engagement with UN Resident Coordinators and peace operations, stronger collaboration with UN Country Teams, the regional UN Development Cooperation Office and the Regional Economic Commissions. UNEP will ensure that science informs policy as it contributes to the design and implementation processes of Common Country Analyses and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. Decisions from these joint processes will inform UNEP's own programme planning and implementation at country level and its modalities for engagement in UN Country Teams' work. UNEP will support countries to ensure due consideration of environmental matters in their Voluntary National Reviews in a feedback loop between country-level, regional and global environmental priorities.

UNEP will actively participate in regional platforms and processes such as the Regional Collaboration Platforms and Opportunity/Issue-Based Coalitions, Regional Knowledge Platforms and other joint UN platforms. Stronger engagement in these platforms will be secured while leading environment-related opportunity/issue-based coalitions and providing strategic support and input to the preparation of regional ministerial environmental fora, inter-ministerial committees and fora for joint ministers' meetings. UNEP will draw linkages between the decisions from these fora and its own programme planning and implementation, and it will foster synergies between them and the UNEA, as well as the Regional Forums for Sustainable Development.

UNEP will contribute to key intergovernmental and interagency coordination mechanisms. Through providing evidence-based environmental information and raising public awareness on critical and emerging environmental issues, UNEP will influence global environmental policy-making under the global intergovernmental processes and deliberations of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council and the Security Council (where mandated to do so), among others. At the interagency level, as chair of the Environment Management Group UNEP will enhance the United Nations system-wide coordination related to specific issues in the field of environment, harnessing the Environment Management Group's collective capacity to develop transformational responses for a more sustainable world, including in a post-COVID-19 scenario. UNEP will also support the integration of environmental sustainability in policy, programme and operational guidance within the UN system by engaging in the UN Sustainable Development Group, the Chief Executives Board for Coordination and other ad hoc processes and by supporting the dissemination of their decisions and guidance tools through regional and country mechanisms.

UNEP will advance the UN system corporate environmental performance, supporting the delivery of the UN 2020-2023 Sustainability Strategy and its follow-up process, through upgraded

reporting, coordination, and technical assistance, including through partnerships with sister

agencies.¹²⁵ In the spirit of Delivering as One, UNEP will continue to generate knowledge, advocate for and curate the creation of a support system that will feed into and enhance the UN leadership vision on corporate sustainability, including through improved partnerships with the UN and other international organizations.

Inclusive multilateralism for stronger global environmental governance

UNEP will value and uphold inclusivity to promote transparent and accountable environment governance at all levels. In today's rapidly changing environment, UNEP will strive to maintain high ambition in global environmental multilateralism, focusing not only on current challenges and opportunities, but also on emerging needs, particularly those of future generations and for digital cooperation on global environmental issues.

UNEP will build an inclusive environmental multilateralism to mobilize all those who can influence the changes needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Nearly 30 years after its adoption at the 1992 Earth Summit, Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration – one of the cornerstones of stakeholder engagement in environmental policy and decision-making – remains as relevant as ever.¹²⁶ Powerful young voices within a revamped worldwide environmental movement have shown the power of committed individuals to influence decisions on planetary justice. In commemorating the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Charter, the UN Secretary General stressed the need for “an inclusive multilateralism, drawing on the indispensable contributions of civil society, business, cities, regions and, in particular, with greater weight given to the voices of youth.” UNEP will leverage these newfound societal commitments to engage in strategic partnerships with major groups and stakeholders¹²⁷ and the public at large, benefitting from their effective technical and advocacy functions. As part of this engagement, UNEP will continue to promote faith-based organizations and communities as custodians of far-reaching, value-based perspectives on environmental sustainability that speak to billions of people around the world.

Leveraging the United Nations Environment Assembly – the world's highest-level decision-making body on the environment – as the primary global platform for environmental action. The Assembly will serve as an opportunity for the international community across all sectors, levels of government and walks of life, to come together to discuss and address global environmental issues. Driven by sound science, the UN Environment Assembly will continue to inspire, identify and capture bold transformative actions for the environment, while focusing on solutions that speak to all. UNEP will support the Assembly to enhance its relationship with the multilateral environmental agreements and contribution to implementing the 2030 Agenda, by strengthening convergence and dialogue on common strategic actions and shared experiences, as well as providing increased visibility to the decisions of the governing bodies of the multilateral environmental agreements.

Stronger engagement with the private sector as a key partner to drive systemic shifts to sustainable pathways. Building on its Strategy for Private Sector Engagement,¹²⁸ UNEP will engage the private sector to power ahead with significant shifts that will result in the generation of sound policies and sustainable technologies, including digital technologies, informed by state-of-the-art scientific knowledge. UNEP will interact with the private sector at various levels, including through open networks, policy discussions and multi-stakeholder fora, such as the UN Environment Assembly, as well as on specific applications of digital technologies for the environment. Through partnerships and alliances with the private sector, UNEP will target specific objectives and engage in impactful advocacy actions to promote the necessary policy and cultural shifts that will help

producers and consumers orient towards sustainability. Some of the key sectors where UNEP will strive to achieve such systemic shifts include: energy production and consumption, food systems, infrastructure and the built environment, chemicals and waste management, the extractive sector, sustainable value chains for less resource and pollution intensive products, global financing, market and investment systems.

Innovative communication as a driving force for empowered environmental advocacy

UNEP's communications will help deliver coherence and consistency across the broad spectrum of environmental action. Communication efforts will be informed by the latest available science, including social science, and strive to shape the global narrative around the environment through generating political and social commitments and bring about the societal and policy changes required for tackling the challenges outlined in the situation analysis.

UNEP's approach to its communications will be highly innovative, using a growing foothold in digital spheres and social media spaces to reach and engage with a diverse and expanding range of audiences and stakeholders. UNEP will focus on empowering individuals and groups for environmental action, placing emphasis on the voices from sectors and actors typically outside the environment space. UNEP will amplify the voices of youth, consumers, environmental entrepreneurs, activists, innovation leaders and faith-based actors and organizations, among others.

UNEP will focus on delivering impact stories to enhance the understanding of environmental sustainability and its various benefits and to mobilize societal behavioural change. To that end, UNEP will highlight and share innovative practices of storytelling, including immersive digital technologies and case studies on nexus issues and the linkages between the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development, for their adaptation to local contexts and broad delivery at scale.

6) Looking Forward: Driving change towards the future we want

Achieving climate stability, living in harmony with nature and a pollution-free planet by 2050 will require a recalibration of our economies and societies towards more sustainable and equitable models. Based on the latest science, this strategy provides the focus needed for transformative actions that target the drivers of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. It sets out the actions needed to reshape consumption and production patterns towards sustainability, so that human well-being and the health of the planet's ecosystems are no longer threatened by a deteriorating environment.

This Strategy sets out a focused and cohesive path for UNEP to curate solutions that can contribute to achieving the aspirations of Agenda 2030 and implementing paragraph 88 of “*The future we want*,”¹²⁹ guided by a long-term vision of planetary sustainability for people, prosperity and equity. UNEP will leverage the *Decade of Action* and help Member States deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals by being a catalyst and facilitator of ambitious action on climate change, nature and pollution. UNEP will employ clarity and focus to deliver efficient and effective programmes for tangible and sustainable results.

UNEP will not embark on the journey charted by this Strategy alone. UNEP will leverage the UN Development System Reform to engage the wider UN system in stronger, more coordinated and mutually supportive environmental action, while solidifying its ability to meet individual country needs. UNEP will engage the multilateral environmental agreements to amplify impact and bring about more coherence in how they cooperate and benefit from each other. UNEP will operate on the basis of an inclusive multilateralism that reaches beyond governments and supports systemic shifts with the help and collaboration of the private sector and business community, youth, civil society at large and faith-based organizations.

This is how UNEP will drive the change towards *the future we want*.

End notes

Section 1

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Section 2

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- ²⁶ UNEP, 2019e.
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- ⁶⁵ UNEP, 2019b.
- ⁶⁶ UNEP, 2019b.
- ⁶⁷ UN WOMEN (UNWOMEN) (2019). *United Nations Environment Programme – UN-SWAP 2.0 – Summary, Analysis and Key Insights from 2019*. UN WOMEN.

⁶⁸ UNEP (2019g). *Promoting gender equality and the human rights and empowerment of women and girls in environmental governance*. (EA.4/Res.17). UNEP. Available: <http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/28481/English.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>

⁶⁹ UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (UNOIOS) (2019). *Evaluation of the United Nations Environment Programme - Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, 2019*. Available: <https://oios.un.org/file/7751/download?token=F8yoCEm6>

⁷⁰ UNOIOS, 2019.

⁷¹ UNOIOS, 2019.

⁷² UNOIOS, 2019.

⁷³ UNOIOS, 2019.

⁷⁴ UNOIOS, 2019.

⁷⁵ UNEP (2020). Report on Results of “Online Survey on UNEP Funding”

(UNEP/ASC.7/2/Add.4). Available:

https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/34041/Agenda%20Item%204.Add.4_Report%20on%20Results%20of%20Survey%20on%20UNEP%20Funding%20final.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

⁷⁶ UNOIOS, 2019.

Section 3

⁷⁷ More than half of the SDGs have an environmental focus or address the sustainability of natural resources, and over 86 of the 169 targets concern the environment directly, including at least one in each of the 17 SDGs, as reported in *A contribution to the global follow-up and review in the 2016 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on the work of the United Nations Environment Programme*, 2016, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/10554UNEA%20inputs%20to%20the%20HLPF%202016%20\(Final\).pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/10554UNEA%20inputs%20to%20the%20HLPF%202016%20(Final).pdf)

⁷⁸ Guterres, A. (2019). “Secretary-General’s Opening Remarks, General Assembly, 2019.” Available: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sgsm19746.doc.htm>

⁷⁹ The sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook recognizes that maintaining a forward-looking perspective in the form of a long-term 2050 vision is critical to assess development pathways towards achieving the environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals and making progress towards the Multilateral Environmental Agreements, particularly on the nexus areas of sustainable consumption and production, human-well being (including in relation to pollution) and the natural resource base (including in relation to biodiversity loss and climate change).

⁸⁰ Guterres, A. (2020). “Secretary General’s Opening Remarks to the Press on the Launch of the UN Comprehensive Response to COVID-19.” Available:

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2020-06-25/remarks-press-launch-of-un-comprehensive-response-covid-19>

⁸¹ “UN Regional Collaborative Platform” (RCP will absorb existing, duplicative coordination mechanisms to foster collaboration on sustainable development across UN development system entities operating at the regional level (ECOSOC resolution E/RES/2019/15)

⁸² <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2020-05-14/note-correspondents-the-virtual-meeting-of-the-chief-executives-board>

⁸³ South-South cooperation is “a process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual and/or shared national capacity development objectives through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how, and through regional and interregional collective actions, including partnerships involving Governments, regional organisations, civil society, academia and the private sector, for their [...] mutual benefit within and across regions”. Triangular cooperation “involves Southern-driven partnerships between two or more developing countries supported by a

developed country(ies) or multilateral organisation(s) to implement cooperation programmes and projects” (as defined in the Framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation, 2016).

⁸⁴ UNEP’s Strategy for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, adopted in March 2020, will serve as the guiding framework for all of UNEP’s activities on SSCT during the decade 2020-2030.

⁸⁵ Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (BAPA), adopted by the United Nations Technical Cooperation between Developing Countries, 1978.

Section 4

⁸⁶ Fully supporting a balanced implementation of the mitigation and adaptation commitments under the Paris Agreement.

⁸⁷ Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (2010). *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, COP decision X/2*. Available: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-10/cop-10-dec-02-en.pdf>

⁸⁸ In 2017, member States adopted a ministerial declaration “Towards a pollution free planet” as a key outcome of the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. In the declaration, ministers for the environment requested the Executive Director of UNEP to prepare an implementation plan on the issue of a pollution-free planet for consideration by the Environment Assembly at its fourth session. The Implementation Plan "Towards a Pollution-Free Planet" was adopted at the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (2019) through resolution UNEP/EA.4/21

⁸⁹ The Implementation of these actions will be supported by the policies, tools and methods developed through the enabling and sectoral programmes of the 10YFP/One Planet Network, UNEP Finance Initiative, the Partnerships for Actions to advance the Green Economy and other initiatives that support the transition to inclusive green economies. A continuation of the 10YFP/One Planet Network beyond its end date of 2022 and up to 2030 will enable a continued support to countries towards the achievement of SDG 8 and SDG 12.

⁹⁰ UNEP supports several networks and partnerships across science (e.g., World Adaptation Science Programme), technology (Climate Technology Centre and Network), finance (Net-Zero Asset Owners Alliance), as well as all key sectors e.g., United for Efficiency, Cool Coalition, Sustainable Rice Platform, UN-REDD Programme, Partnership for Clean Fuels, and Global Alliance on Buildings and Constructions. The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, led by UNEP and FAO, will be a key platform for advancing ecosystem-based approaches to climate change. The full range of current and future partnerships will be described in the Programme of Work and in-depth operational strategies.

⁹¹ Including but not limited to energy, industry, agriculture, forestry, transport, buildings and finance.

⁹² The One Planet Network is an open multistakeholder partnership hosted by UNEP that aims to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production in both developed and developing countries and implement SDG 12 under the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP), <https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/>

⁹³ Article 13 of the Paris Agreement established an enhanced transparency framework to guide countries on reporting their greenhouse gas emissions, progress toward their NDCs, climate change impacts and adaptation, support provided and mobilized, and support needed and received. The enhanced transparency framework also includes processes for technical experts to review reported information and a multilateral peer review where countries can ask questions of one another.

⁹⁴ Article 14 of the Paris Agreement established the global stocktake as its key ambition mechanism. Every five years, countries will engage in the process to assess collective progress toward the Agreement’s long-term goals. This stocktaking process is aimed at informing the next round of NDCs in order to increase their level of ambition; it also offers the opportunity to evaluate the need for enhanced action and support.

⁹⁵ CBD, 2010.

⁹⁶ CBD (2018). *Mainstreaming of Biodiversity Within and Across Sectors and Other Strategic Actions to Enhance Implementation*. Available: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/f11a/7fda/2d33287489b726fd5c1150e4/sbi-02-04-en.pdf>

⁹⁷ Including, among others, the Sharm El-Sheikh Declaration on Investing in Biodiversity for People and Planet, CBD/COP/14/12, adopted on 15 November 2018. Available: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/2000/ec3f/0cbb700fcf8f8e170b5f4afb/cop-14-12-en.pdf>

⁹⁸ The WHO Air Quality Guideline for outdoor air quality is set at a level intended to be protective of human health. There are also three Interim Targets (ITs), which are intended as intermediate goals for countries with high air pollution levels <https://www.stateofglobalair.org/air/>. The ambition is that 30% of the world's population live in areas where WHO IT-3 is attained in 2025, compared to 18% in 2017.

⁹⁹ As per the Colombo Declaration on Sustainable Nitrogen Management, which followed the adoption of UNEA resolution 4/14 on Sustainable Nitrogen Management

¹⁰⁰ SDG indicator 6.3.1: Proportion of domestic and industrial wastewater flows safely treated; SDG indicator 14.1.1: (a) Index of coastal eutrophication; and (b) plastic debris density; SDG indicator

12.3.1: (a) Food loss index and (b) food waste; SDG indicator 12.4.1 Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement and Indicator SDG indicator 12.4.2: Hazardous waste generated per capita and proportion of hazardous waste treated, by type of treatment.

¹⁰¹ In 2017 member States adopted a ministerial declaration as a key outcome of the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. In the declaration, ministers for the environment requested the Executive Director of UNEP to prepare an implementation plan on the issue of a pollution-free planet for consideration by the Environment Assembly at its fourth session. The Implementation Plan "Towards a Pollution-Free Planet" was adopted at the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (2019) through resolution UNEP/EA.4/21.

¹⁰² Chemical intensive industry sectors (based on the Global Chemicals Outlook II) e.g. food and agriculture systems, extractives sector, transportation, building and construction, energy, electronics, pharmaceuticals and textiles.

¹⁰³ https://www.who.int/ipcs/assessment/public_health/chemicals_phc/en/

¹⁰⁴ E.g. UNEA resolutions 4/8 and 2/7 on Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste, UNEA resolution 1/5 on Chemicals and waste.

¹⁰⁵ The 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns, adopted at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio de Janeiro, 2012 -- . A/CONF.216/5: www.oneplanetnetwork.org/sites/default/files/10yfp_-a-conf.216-5_english_0.pdf

¹⁰⁶ World Health Organization (WHO) (2017). "One Health." Available: <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/one-health>

¹⁰⁷ UN (2020). "International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies." Available: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/clean-air-day>

¹⁰⁸ The 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns, adopted at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio de Janeiro, 2012 -- . A/CONF.216/5: www.oneplanetnetwork.org/sites/default/files/10yfp_-a-conf.216-5_english_0.pdf

¹⁰⁹ The term "natural infrastructure" refers to strategically planned and managed network[s] of natural lands, such as forests and wetlands, working landscapes, and other open spaces that conserves or enhances ecosystem values and functions and provides associated benefits to human populations.

¹¹⁰ WHO. "Ten Chemicals of Major Public Health Concern." Available: https://www.who.int/ipcs/assessment/public_health/chemicals_phc/en/

¹¹¹ The Global Environment Assessment Dialogue builds from Member States' "request to the Executive Director of UNEP to continue to promote greater coherence and coordination of global

assessments undertaken within the United Nations system and in cooperation with relevant international bodies and the secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements”, as stipulated in UNEA/4 Resolution 4/23 on “Keeping the World Environment under Review: Enhancing United Nations Environment Programme’s Science-Policy Interface and Endorsement of the Global Environment Outlook” (UNEP/EA.4/Res.23),

<http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/28486/K1901170.pdf>

¹¹² Through the UNEA/4 Ministerial Declaration “Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production” (UNEP/EA.4/HLS.1), Member States committed to supporting UNEP in developing a global environmental data strategy by 2025 in cooperation with other United Nations bodies.

<http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/28463/K1901029.pdf>

¹¹³ UNEP Governing Council Decision 27/9. UNEP’s mandate on the rule of law and its means to achieve it were strengthened through the adoption of UNEA resolution 4/20 on the Fifth Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme V).

¹¹⁴ Including Resolution 40/11 of 21 March 2019 adopted at the 40th session of the Human Rights Council in 2019, as recalled by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 74/146 adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 2019.

¹¹⁵ United Nations Environment Assembly Resolution: Innovative Pathways to Achieve Sustainable Consumption and Production. /EA.4/Res.1 Available:

<https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/28517/English.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y> .

¹¹⁶ United Nations Environment Assembly Resolution: Innovative Pathways to Achieve Sustainable Consumption and Production. /EA.4/Res.1 Available:

<https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/28517/English.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y> .

Available: <http://www.saicm.org/Beyond2020/IntersessionalProcess/tabid/5500/Default.aspx>

¹¹⁷ UNEP Finance Initiative Principles for Responsible Banking, Principles for Sustainable Insurance, Net-Zero Asset Owner Alliance and Positive Impact finance.

¹¹⁸ This will build on the GEF-7 Sustainable Cities Programme, with an integrated approach and emphasis given to circularity, ecosystem-based approaches through integrated planning and design, and greening cities to ensure enhanced quality of life.

¹¹⁹ UNEP (2018). *Inclusive Wealth Report 2018*. UNEP. Available:

<https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/27597/IWR2018.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

¹²⁰ UN Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation (2019). *The Age of Digital Interdependence*. Available: <https://www.un.org/en/pdfs/DigitalCooperation-report-for%20web.pdf>

¹²¹ Of the 169 Sustainable Development Goals targets, 103 are directly influenced by a combination of seven digital technologies, including: digital access, fast internet, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, extended reality and blockchain. Digital with Purpose: Delivering SMARTer2030, GeSI and Deloitte, 2019, https://gesi.org/storage/files/DIGITAL%20WITH%20PURPOSE_Summary_A4-WEB_watermark.pdf

¹²² WEF (2018). *Harnessing Artificial Intelligence for the Earth, 2018*. Available: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/Harnessing_Artificial_Intelligence_for_the_Earth_report_2018.pdf

¹²³ Within the context of the United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 4/23 “Keeping the world environment under review: enhancing the United Nations Environment Programmes science-policy interface and endorsement of the Global Environment Outlook” Member States recognized the existence of gaps in our knowledge of the state of the environment resulting from a lack of current data and of information generation and dissemination and requested UNEP, *inter alia*, to: “develop and prioritize a long-term data strategy [...] in support of the identification of comparable methods for data collection and analysis and the promotion of their harmonization [...] and the

improvement of platforms that provide a repository function, to allow open access to up-to-date, quality-assured, credible and relevant data”. Exercising this mandate, as well as the others provided in the context of the resolution, endows UNEP with an institutional responsibility to contribute to the integration of environmental and sustainability values and goals in the global digital economy.

Section 5

¹²⁴ Paragraph 89 of The Future We Want recognizes the need to “enhance synergies [...] promote policy coherence at all relevant levels [...] and enhance coordination and cooperation among the multilateral environmental agreements” in the chemicals and waste cluster, as well as the biodiversity cluster and within the broader United Nations system. This paragraph is also recalled in UNEA Resolution 2/17 on Enhancing the work of the United Nations Environment Programme in facilitating cooperation, collaboration and synergies among biodiversity-related conventions, which mandated UNEP, among other things, with strengthening a coherent system-wide action on capacity-building for facilitating coherent and effective implementation of the biodiversity-related conventions.

¹²⁵ UN (2019). *Strategy for Sustainability Management in the UN System 2020-2030*. United Nations. Available: https://unemg.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/INF_3_Strategy-for-Sustainability-Management-in-the-UN-System.pdf

¹²⁶ “Environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, everyone shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided.”

¹²⁷ Agenda 21 recognized that sustainable development requires the meaningful involvement and active participation of the following nine ‘Major Groups’: Business and industry, Children and youth, Farmers, Indigenous Peoples and their communities, Local Authorities, Non-governmental organizations, The Scientific and technological community, Women, Workers and Trade Unions.

¹²⁸ UNEP (2019h). *Strategy for Private Sector Engagement*. UNEP. Available: <https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/factsheet/strategy-private-sector-engagement>.

Section 6

¹²⁹ UNCSD, 2012.

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Annex I: Programme of Work and Budget for 2022-2023

See separate document