

Q1-What would the Ministers for the Environment propose as the most important elements and or key messages that would enable the ministerial declaration to take forward the UNEA theme in the most impactful manner ?

Ministers for the Environment, in shaping a **Ministerial Declaration** that aligns with the **United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) theme**, would prioritize key messages that reflect **ambition, urgency, inclusivity, and action-oriented commitments**. Here are the most impactful elements that they would likely propose:

- 1. Ending Environmental Crimes from War:**
 - Urge global authorities to compensate for environmental destruction from wars.
 - Establish a fund to address pollution and environmental damage caused by conflicts.
 - Strengthen political support for environmental stability in conflict zones.
- 2. Multilateral Environmental Action:**
 - Reinforce UNEA as the primary platform for global environmental governance.
 - Strengthen international cooperation and adherence to key agreements like the Paris Agreement.
- 3. Accelerating UNEA Resolutions & Global Agreements:**
 - Urge the implementation of UNEA resolutions with clear monitoring and follow-up.
 - Advocate for national action plans aligned with global commitments and ensure financing for developing countries.
- 4. Just Transitions & Equity:**
 - Prioritize equity and protection of vulnerable communities (Indigenous, youth, local).
 - Ensure inclusive financing for climate adaptation and resilience-building.
- 5. Climate Finance & Sustainable Investments:**
 - Fulfill climate finance commitments, including the \$100 billion per year pledge.
 - Strengthen loss and damage financing and promote nature-positive investments.
- 6. Climate, Biodiversity, and Pollution Integration:**
 - Promote a "One Health" approach linking climate, nature, and human well-being.
 - Advocate for nature-based solutions and circular economy models.
- 7. Environmental Governance & Accountability:**
 - Improve environmental laws, regulations, and enforcement.
 - Enhance transparency through data sharing and reporting frameworks.
- 8. Empowering Youth & Civil Society:**
 - Recognize and support youth-led initiatives and grassroots movements.
 - Promote stakeholder engagement and sustainable consumption campaigns.
- 9. Technology & Innovation for Sustainability:**
 - Invest in green technologies, renewable energy, and carbon-free solutions.
 - Support open access to climate data and strengthen technology transfer to the Global South.

10. Strengthening Resilience & Adaptation:

- Focus on climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and climate-smart infrastructure.
- Support water, food security, and sustainable land management in vulnerable regions.

11. Urgent and Transformative Action:

- Issue a clear, time-bound call for action from governments, businesses, and civil society.
- Reaffirm UNEA's role in ensuring accountability and progress tracking.

Q2-What key messages or conclusions from recent scientific reports would the Ministers for the Environment adopt to advance the UNEA the Environment recommend for consideration in the ministerial declaration ?

Key Messages for UNEA Ministerial Declaration Based on Recent Scientific Reports:

1. **Escalating Climate Change Impacts:** Fossil fuel emissions are at an all-time high, pushing global temperatures toward a potential 2.7°C rise by 2100, exceeding Paris Agreement targets. Urgent mitigation efforts are needed.
2. **Accelerated Land Degradation:** Land degradation is expanding by 1 million square kilometers annually, threatening climate stability, biodiversity, and food security. Sustainable land management practices are critical.
3. **Surge in Methane Emissions:** Increased methane emissions from tropical wetlands due to warmer temperatures and rainfall pose additional climate mitigation challenges.
4. **Human Exposure to Hazardous Chemicals:** Over 3,600 harmful chemicals, including carcinogens and toxins, are found in the human body, underscoring the need for stronger regulations and safer alternatives.

Q3-What proposed collective actions and policy solutions should the ministers for the environment adopt to advance the UNEA theme and promote effective and inclusive environmental governance ?

Proposed Collective Actions and Policy Solutions for Advancing UNEA Theme and Environmental Governance

1. **Strengthening Environmental Governance & Rule of Law**
 - Implement legally binding environmental agreements and ensure accountability.
 - Enhance environmental justice and access to legal remedies for marginalized communities.
 - Strengthen anti-corruption measures in resource management.
2. **Mainstreaming Environmental Considerations in Economic Policies**
 - Promote nature-positive economies and integrate environmental concerns into economic planning.

- Adopt sustainable procurement policies and implement polluter-pays principles.
- 3. Enhancing Climate Finance & Resource Mobilization**
 - Fulfill climate finance commitments, including the \$100 billion target.
 - Establish direct access to climate and environmental funds for Global South nations.
 - Support debt-for-nature and climate swaps.
- 4. Promoting Inclusive & Equitable Participation**
 - Strengthen the role of civil society, Indigenous groups, and youth in decision-making.
 - Ensure gender-responsive policies in climate adaptation and governance.
 - Uphold free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) in development projects.
- 5. Advancing Science-Based & Data-Driven Decision-Making**
 - Invest in environmental data collection and monitoring systems.
 - Support the role of IPBES and similar bodies in informing policy.
 - Enhance technology transfer for equitable access to climate solutions.
- 6. Addressing Climate-Induced Displacement & Environmental Migration**
 - Integrate climate mobility into global migration frameworks.
 - Protect displaced populations through regional and global mechanisms.
 - Support community-led adaptation strategies in vulnerable regions.
- 7. Strengthening Multilateral Cooperation for Environmental Action**
 - Support the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and Paris Agreement.
 - Enhance South-South cooperation in environmental governance.
 - Advocate for a legally binding international treaty on plastic pollution.

Q 4- Any other messages would the Ministers for the Environment wish to be considered or included in the ministerial declaration

**1- Addressing the Environmental and Humanitarian Crises in the West Asia Region:
A Call for Action at UNEA-7**

The West Asia region faces a complex set of challenges that threaten both its environment and its people. Climate change, water scarcity, desertification, and biodiversity degradation are compounded by the devastating effects of ongoing conflicts. The impacts of these wars on natural resources are severe, further weakening the region's capacity to mitigate, adapt to, and combat climate change, while also hindering progress toward the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Recent conflicts in Gaza, Syria, and Lebanon have already caused substantial environmental damage, which must be urgently addressed in the upcoming Ministerial Declaration at UNEA-7.

Environmental Destruction from Conflict

The destruction of infrastructure, agricultural lands, and natural habitats during armed conflicts has resulted in severe pollution of soil, water, and air. In Gaza, the most recent conflict caused unprecedented environmental harm, including the collapse of sewage and waste management

systems, and the creation of vast amounts of debris. These environmental impacts are not only catastrophic in the short term but pose significant long-term health and ecological risks. For example, the destruction of essential infrastructure contributes to systemic health issues and undermines the stability of ecosystems, deepening the challenges for regional recovery.

Such widespread destruction in Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria has far-reaching consequences, contributing to instability and exacerbating existing vulnerabilities in the region. The aftermath of these conflicts has weakened our ability to foster resilience and achieve environmental sustainability in these already fragile regions.

The Region's Commitment to Sustainability Amidst Crisis

Despite these challenges, the region has shown a strong commitment to environmental and economic resilience. Countries such as Lebanon, Yemen, and Palestine have made significant strides in renewable energy investments, demonstrating local communities' determination to safeguard their environmental future. However, this hard-won progress is systematically erased by ongoing military aggression. Recent destruction in Lebanon and Palestine has wiped out years of efforts and savings by private citizens, making it crucial that accountability is established for these actions. Without proper accountability, this cycle of destruction will continue, undermining both regional stability and global climate and sustainability goals.

Urgent Action Needed: Key Points for the Ministerial Declaration

In light of these intersecting crises, we respectfully urge that the following points be considered and included in the Ministerial Declaration at UNEA-7:

1. Integrating Accountability for War-Related Environmental Destruction

The activities of the military-industrial complex—from weapons production to their deployment in conflicts—result in significant environmental harm. These impacts must be integrated into global climate and sustainability frameworks. Accountability should not be limited to direct aggressors but extended to supporting governments and the military industry. This approach will ensure a more comprehensive and just response to environmental destruction caused by conflicts.

2. The Use of White Phosphorus and Its Environmental Impact

The use of white phosphorus in Lebanon and Palestine has violated international law and created severe environmental contamination. The pollution of soil and water, particularly in the Mediterranean Sea, has inter-generational consequences, affecting ecosystems far beyond the borders of the targeted countries. The harm caused by this chemical contamination requires immediate accountability and compensation, based on the "polluter pays" principle, as outlined in previous UN resolutions, such as General Assembly Resolution 61/194, which addressed the oil slick on Lebanese shores after Israel's 2006 bombing of the coastal power plant.

3. Urgent Need for Compensation and Reconstruction in Gaza

The destruction in Gaza, particularly to vital infrastructure like healthcare and essential services, requires immediate attention. A clear mechanism for compensation and the reconstruction of Gaza must be established. Additionally, the ongoing threat of forced displacement and ethnic cleansing targeting indigenous communities in the region must be addressed, as these actions violate international law and further destabilize the region.

4. Protection of Indigenous Communities and Their Role in Environmental Conservation

Indigenous populations in the West Asia region are not only victims of conflict but also the primary custodians of their lands. Protecting these communities is crucial for the success of any environmental conservation and restoration efforts. Without clear commitment to safeguarding indigenous communities from forced displacement and genocidal actions, future conservation initiatives will be undermined. The protection of indigenous communities should be prioritized as a fundamental aspect of environmental sustainability.

5. Increase Humanitarian Aid and Provide Essential Support for Recovery

We urge the immediate increase in humanitarian aid to support recovery efforts, including the provision of heavy machinery for the retrieval of bodies and fuel for rescue operations. This support is essential to rebuild communities and restore vital infrastructure in the region, which is critical to humanitarian relief and long-term recovery efforts.

Enhancing Representation and Support for the Region's Sustainable Future

The needs of the region are growing, and this requires adequate representation and dedicated funding to support key environmental priorities, including multiplying conservation efforts, combating pollution, and shifting from fossil fuels to renewables in a just and equitable manner. The region is blessed with abundant renewable resources like wind and solar power, which can serve as a blueprint for the rest of the world in transitioning to a fossil-free, renewable energy future.

However, the region remains glaringly underrepresented in global sustainable development and environmental initiatives. It is essential that the region's voices are amplified in key international organizations to bring these urgent priorities to the global stage. Additionally, we need to see more women leading and participating in global environmental initiatives. Women play a crucial role in environmental stewardship, and their leadership is vital for shaping inclusive and effective policies that can ensure a sustainable future for all. Increasing women's participation in decision-making will help ensure that policies are more equitable and have a lasting impact on the ground.

By incorporating these points into the Ministerial Declaration, we can highlight the urgency of addressing the environmental and humanitarian crises in the West Asia region, focusing on war-related destruction, accountability, and the protection of vulnerable communities. This will be a critical step toward ensuring that the region can move toward a more sustainable, resilient, and peaceful future.

2- The Role of Women in Environmental Stewardship in West Asia:

In West Asia, deeply impacted by climate change, conflict, and environmental degradation, women—particularly in rural and indigenous communities—are key custodians of natural resources, managing land, water, and food systems. Their knowledge of local ecosystems and sustainable practices makes them vital to conservation efforts, though their contributions are often overlooked in formal decision-making.

Empowering Women through Education and Leadership: Investing in women's education and empowerment is essential for fostering long-term environmental sustainability. Educated women are more likely to engage in sustainable practices and contribute to climate adaptation, renewable energy, and farming techniques. Prioritizing women's education ensures they have the skills to lead in the green transition.

Addressing Gender-Specific Environmental Challenges: Women in vulnerable communities disproportionately bear the effects of environmental degradation, such as water scarcity, climate change, and pollution. Policies must address gender-specific needs and include women in leadership roles in environmental governance to enhance resilience and climate adaptation.

Promoting Gender Equality in Environmental Leadership: Although women make up a significant portion of the environmental workforce, they remain underrepresented in leadership positions. Increasing women's representation in decision-making—locally and globally—will ensure more inclusive and effective environmental policies.

Integrating Gender into Environmental Policies: Gender-responsive environmental policies should incorporate women's voices in decision-making and tackle barriers preventing their full participation. Collecting gender-disaggregated data and fostering equal opportunities for leadership will support better environmental governance and contribute to sustainable solutions.

Conclusion: Empowering women, especially in marginalized communities, is critical to achieving sustainable environmental solutions. By integrating these strategies into UNEA-7's Ministerial Declaration, we can build more resilient communities, advance the SDGs, and ensure a more sustainable and equitable future for the region.

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