

DRAFT

UNEA Contribution to the 2026 High-Level Political Forum

Assessment of achievements and/or impediments in implementing SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11 and 17.

SDG 6. Despite some improvements, progress in water and sanitation remains insufficient. At the current speed, in 2030, 2 billion people will still live without safely managed drinking water, 3 billion without safely managed sanitation and 1.4 billion without basic hygiene services ([The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024](#)). Water resources are under increasing pressure due to deforestation, urbanisation, land degradation, pollution, climate change, nature loss and poor resource management. Countries are taking positive steps to address these issues, but efforts need to be scaled up by strengthening international cooperation on water, data-to-policy integration, directing water sector investments toward nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches, among others. A source-to-sea approach is essential to ensure integrated management of water resources across entire basins, from headwaters to coastal zones, addressing pollution, ecosystem health and resilience holistically. Following the 2023 UN Water Conference, countries and partners have secured over 800 commitments on water. UNEA resolution 6/13 on Water aims to accelerate the achievement of SDG 6.

SDG 7. Increasing access to energy is pivotal to fulfilling humanity's basic needs and enabling sustainable development. According to the [2025 Tracking SDG 7: The Energy Progress Report](#), approximately 666 million people still lack access to electricity in 2023, while 2.1 billion rely on polluting fuels for cooking. The global share of renewables in total final energy consumption increased modestly from 16.7 % in 2015 to 17.9 % in 2022, and energy efficiency gains have slowed to 0.8 % annually, highlighting that current progress is insufficient to meet 2030 targets. However, there are also positive signals. In 2023, global installed renewable power capacity reached approximately 478W per capita, with a 13% annual growth rate, and, although below estimated needs, international public financial flows for clean energy rose to approximately USD 21.6 billion. Transitioning to clean energy in a just and equitable manner is essential to achieving SDG 7 by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including in industrial processes, the digital transformation of energy systems, improving air quality and mitigating the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and waste. Global primary energy intensity improved from 4.9 megajoules per dollar (2017 purchasing power parity) in 2015 to 4.6 in 2021. To meet the Goal 7 energy efficiency target by 2030, annual improvements must now average around 4 per cent. ([The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024](#))

SDG 9. Notable progress has been made since 2015 in expanding infrastructure, fostering industrial growth and boosting innovation. Sustainable industry, innovation and infrastructure are critical to living in harmony with nature and to improving health and wellbeing outcomes worldwide. Extraction and processing of material resources (fossil fuels, minerals, non-metallic minerals and biomass) account for over 55 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and 40 per cent of particulate matter health-related impacts ([IRP, 2024](#)). The types of pollutants released are vast and their impact far-reaching. While technological advancements have led to cleaner production methods in some sectors, many industries continue to use practices that release harmful substances and energy into the air, water, and land, disrupting ecosystems and impacting human health.

SDG 11. Today, more than 4.5 billion people live in cities, and urban populations continue to grow rapidly. Cities consume 80% of global energy, are responsible for 75% of greenhouse gas emissions, generate huge amounts of waste and pollution, and are rapidly encroaching on natural habitats, making cities highly vulnerable to climate change, and threatening the biodiversity of the surrounding cities. This expansion creates significant environmental, socio-economic, and spatial challenges, and increased exposure to environmental risks. Rapid urbanization and lock-in to inefficient infrastructure also impede progress towards the related SDGs 7 and 9. However, it also represents opportunities for innovative approaches and transformative urban action. Urgent systemic changes in urban infrastructure and planning are needed to shift towards compact, low-carbon, resilient, and inclusive cities and secure and provide health, environmental and social benefits for the billions of urban dwellers globally.

Key areas where innovative, inclusive and transformative solutions are being advanced to achieve the Goals under review, ensuring no one is left behind.

To advance SDG 6 on water, innovative solutions are being promoted and implemented, including:

- Enhancement of the collection and monitoring of reliable, up-to-date water-related data to support policy-making.
- Integrated water resources management (IWRM) at all levels, and adoption of coherent responses to water-related challenges and risks across sectors, regions and actors, considering, where applicable, the interlinkages of water, ecosystems, energy, food security and nutrition, along with their social, economic and environmental impact. Engagement of private sector through the promotion of integrated water resources management (IWRM) in and between large water-consuming industry sectors and adaptation of water reuse strategies, circularity in water and wastewater management: Reduce, reuse, recycle, recover, regenerate, and restore water.
- Protection and restoration of freshwater ecosystems to preserve biodiversity and ensure the well-being of both nature and humanity.
- Capacity development to fill the existing data gaps and promote standardized approaches to data generation on all aspects of monitoring, assessment and quality assurance.

To advance SDG 7 on energy, innovative solutions being promoted and implemented include:

- Facilitation of access to clean energy research and the sustainable deployment of clean technologies by promoting knowledge sharing on good practices relevant to the sustainable management of environmental aspects of minerals and metals, as well as sustainable infrastructure.
- Integration of low-carbon and circular economy approaches in industrial practices.
- Collection of information and conducting analysis to support the uptake of clean fuels.
- Support to Member States in efforts to develop and share best practices regarding integrated, energy-efficient and safe cold-chain solutions to bring value to farmers and producers.
- Promotion of the exchange of knowledge, good practices and opportunities associated with sustainable mobility, with a view to improving energy efficiency.

- Promotion of sustainable energy solutions, including integrated energy and environmental policies, on-grid and off-grid investments and sustainable biomass use, with a view to supporting poverty eradication and enabling access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy.
- Support international and intergovernmental efforts to promote the transition to clean and efficient energy, including through support for technological innovation and country-level capacity-building.

To advance SDG 9 on Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, transformative solutions are being promoted and implemented, including:

- Integration of sustainability into the earliest stages of infrastructure planning, considering the three pillars of sustainability throughout the entire infrastructure life cycle.
- Investment in climate-resilient infrastructure and in natural infrastructure and nature-based solutions for delivering essential services and improving ecosystem services.
- Integration and implementation of the 10 “international good practice principles for sustainable infrastructure” into national policies, taking into account national contexts.
- Promotion of circularity to minimise the negative environmental impact of infrastructure, for example, through increased efficiency in the use of resources, including material resources.
- Scaling up sustainable practices along value chains and taking measures, in cooperation with the private sector, to enhance the design of products, taking into account life-cycle assessments, to favour product lifetime extension, repair, re-use and easier recycling in the context of a circular economy, to contribute to resource efficiency.

To advance SDG 11 on cities, transformative solutions are being promoted and implemented, including:

- Provision of a platform for national and subnational actors to collaborate on the implementation of the environmentally related SDGs and Multilateral Environmental Agreement (through the UNEA Cities and Regions Summit).
- Reducing air pollution in urban and rural areas by encouraging cities and local governments to participate in targeted campaigns.
- Promotion of access to green spaces by supporting sustainable investment in nature-based solutions.
- Promoting a comprehensive sustainable cities approach with regard to sustainable mobility, as a strategy for the improvement of air quality and human health,
- Support urban, peri-urban and rural areas by considering “options for facilitating improved coordination of policies across the global nitrogen cycle at the national, regional and global levels.

Follow-up actions and measures are being undertaken by UNEA to support the implementation of the *Pact of the Future*, the *Sevilla Commitment*, and the outcome of the *Second World Summit for Social Development*, as well as to accelerate the implementation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

The UN Environment Assembly outcomes aim to advance solutions to tackle climate change, nature, land and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste, contributing to the implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and advancement of the Pact for the Future, including strengthening actions to accelerate efforts to restore, protect, conserve and sustainably use the environment and to address climate change.

The Sevilla outcome provides a renewed commitment to integrating climate, nature, and pollution-related risks as well as sustainable development opportunities such as clean energy, nature-positive investments, and critical infrastructure into the overall development finance architecture. The UNEA-7 ministerial declaration recognises the interconnected nature of global environmental challenges and crises that require collective responses from the international community (para. 6). Persistent challenges, including constrained fiscal space, fragmented investment flows, and limited alignment between financial systems and long-term sustainability objectives, underscore the need to embed environmental considerations in financial and development decision-making.

Member States in the UNEA-7 ministerial declaration also committed to the continued reform of the international financial architecture to enhance its resilience, coherence and effectiveness in responding to present and future challenges and crises, and called for making financial flows consistent with the 2030 Agenda..

Recommendations on concrete key messages to be considered for inclusion in the Ministerial Declaration of the 2026 ECOSOC High-level Segment and HLPF.

On SDG 6:

- Reaffirm commitment to promoting effective and inclusive solutions for strengthening water policies to achieve sustainable development. Recognize the need to strengthen international cooperation on water, and call on Member States to engage actively in the preparatory process for the 2026 United Nations Water Conference. (UNEA 7 MD, Action 1, (f))
- Mainstream sustainable water management and the protection, conservation, restoration and sustainable management of aquatic ecosystems into national and local development strategies and relevant policies, with consideration of the One Health approach. (UNEA resolution 6/13)
- Ensure the protection, management and restoration of freshwater ecosystems, including lakes, peatlands, among others, at a sufficient scale to ensure they function at the capacity needed to provide freshwater ecosystem services. (UNEA resolution 6/13)
- Take urgent action to preserve glacier and cryosphere in particular in mountain regions and address their loss, including through national legislation as well as the implementation of the principles, provisions, and objectives of relevant multilateral environmental agreements, which Member States are Party to, and enhance international cooperation, to address glacier and cryosphere loss, as well as its causes and impacts in their mountain regions. (UNEA resolution 7/10)
- Implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation, as appropriate, and adopt coherent responses to water-related challenges and risks across sectors, regions and actors. (UNEA resolution 6/13, par 1 (a))

- Promote integrated water resources management in and between large water-consuming industry sectors to reduce water stress risks and pollution and adapt water reuse strategies. (UNEA resolution 6/13)
- Foster cross-sector collaboration among stakeholders to address water-related challenges from source to sea, through coherent responses that account for the interlinkages between water, ecosystems, energy, food security, and nutrition, as well as their social, economic, and environmental impacts.
- Enhance the collection and monitoring of reliable, up-to-date water-related data, including on water quality and quantity, in accordance with national laws and policies; increase their use for evidence-based decision-making across sectors, noting the water cycle; and implement sustainable, integrated, disaster-risk-informed water resources management. (UNEA resolution 6/13)
- Promote integrated water resources management in agriculture to address water stress, and adapt agricultural systems, inter alia, to promote overall water efficiency and resilience to water stress, as well as to transition to sustainable food systems, and taking into account Indigenous and traditional knowledge and approaches, including those associated with tank cascade systems, as well as agroecological and other innovative approaches. (UNEA resolution 6/13)
- Encourage investment in sustainable, climate-resilient water and sanitation infrastructure and nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches, including to close the investment gap in water and sanitation. (UNEA resolution 6/13)
- To protect, conserve, restore and ensure the sustainable use of lakes, including aspects such as water quality, erosion, sedimentation and aquatic biodiversity, through integrated management at all levels, addressing the water body and the entire lake basin and integrate lakes into national and regional development plans, including in climate adaptation, water resource management and conservation of biodiversity, and of climate resilience and biodiversity conservation; (UNEA resolution 5/4)

On SDG 7 on Energy:

- Strengthen cooperation to achieve an energy-secure future for all, while respecting local, national, regional and global needs and priorities, in a just, orderly and nationally determined manner, while considering equitable access to clean energy, securing the resilient development of sustainable energy infrastructure, and promoting a just transition based on effective social dialogue among all stakeholders. (UNEA-6 MD)
- Cooperate and advocate for widespread development, transfer on mutually agreed terms and accessibility of sustainable solutions, including renewable, low-emission and efficient energy solutions. (UNEA-7 MD)
- Deploy efforts to enhance the environmentally sustainable management of minerals and metals, including for a just and sustainable energy transition. (UNEA-6 MD)
- Promote coherent policy and regulatory frameworks which mobilize and align public and private business and finance with the transition to sustainable, climate-resilient economies. (UNEA-7 MD)
- Strengthen international cooperation among governments, international organizations, the scientific community, civil society, and the private sector to advance sustainable, equitable,

integrated solutions, including for the facilitation of just transition pathways towards sustainable economies and societies, leaving no one behind. (UNEA-7 MD)

On SDG 9 on Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

- Commit to advancing sustainable consumption and production through circular economy and other approaches, the promotion of sustainable lifestyles and policy responses that promote resource efficiency, waste minimization, including local and national zero-waste initiatives, the prevention and minimization of exposure to hazardous chemicals and the reduction of air, soil, land and water pollution and contribute to enhancing the design of products, taking into account life cycle assessments. (UNEA-7 MD)
- Advance innovation and systemic shifts in high-impact sectors, in line with national circumstances and priorities, to reduce environmental impact for a resilient planet, including through the work under the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns and other international, regional and national initiatives. (UNEA-7 MD)
- Invite Member States to take measures, in cooperation with the private sector, to enhance the design of products, taking into account life-cycle assessments, to favour product lifetime extension, repair, re-use and easier recycling in the context of a circular economy, to contribute to resource efficiency; (UNEA resolution 5/11)
- Consider integrating and implementing the 10 “international good practice principles for sustainable infrastructure” into national policies, including through the use and development of sustainable infrastructure tools, taking into account national contexts; (UNEA resolution 5/9)
- Promote investment in infrastructure that is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable, climate resilient, resource efficient, that prevents ecosystem fragmentation and contributes to sustainable production and consumption patterns, thus contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of relevant multilateral environmental agreements. (UNEA resolution 5/9)
- Encourage Member States and all the relevant stakeholders to promote and cooperate towards the sustainability of artificial intelligence by harnessing the opportunities and benefits of artificial intelligence systems in support of the environment and by minimizing its environmental impacts (UNEA resolution 7/9).
- Commit to “advance towards the implementation of the Global Framework on Chemicals by promoting the sound management of chemicals and waste across all relevant sectors, in order to contribute directly to the Sustainable Development Goals, including through an integrated financing approach based on enhanced mainstreaming, greater industry involvement, and strengthened dedicated external financing, to prevent or, where prevention is not feasible, minimize adverse health and environmental impacts”. (UNEA-7 MD)

On SDG 11 on cities

- Continue enhancing synergies, cooperation or collaboration in the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, including by exploring additional approaches for implementing synergies at the national and local levels, including through cooperation with relevant stakeholders and partners. (UNEA resolution 7/5)
- Encourage Member States to accelerate efforts to take action across sectors to reduce all forms of air pollution, including by developing national air quality programmes and setting

national ambient air quality standards, bearing in mind the air quality guidelines of the World Health Organization, as appropriate to their national circumstances; (UNEA 6/10)

On SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals

- Call for enhanced efforts to ensure adequate, predictable and timely means of implementation for developing countries to tackle the global environmental challenges and crises we face, while pursuing their sustainable development pathways to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, through financing, capacity-building and the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms. (UNEA 7 MD)
- Commit to the continued reform of the international financial architecture to enhance its resilience, coherence and effectiveness in responding to present and future challenges and crises and call for making financial flows consistent with the 2030 Agenda, in line with efforts to address the financing gap faced by developing countries. Recognize the need to promote coherent policy and regulatory frameworks to mobilize and align public and private business and finance with the transition to sustainable, climate-resilient economies, and invite cooperation and policy responses from all Member States and observer States of the United Nations, relevant stakeholders, international financial institutions, global funds and financial mechanisms, multilateral development banks and private foundations. (UNEA-7 MD)