

21st Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF)
in preparation the seventh session of
the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7)

***Solidarity Year 2025:
Inclusive and Sustainable Actions for a Resilient Planet***

Date: 6 + 7 December 2025

Venue: UNON Nairobi - Conference Room 1 + online

SUMMARY REPORT

Please see the [Joint Global Statement of Major Groups and Stakeholder for UNEA 7](#) as the key outcome document. Please also refer to the [IISD GMGSF report](#).

Summary Day 1 – Saturday, 6 December 2025

Participants count at 10am: approximately 250 in person, 20 online

09:00 – 09:15 **Getting to know each other**
Facilitated by Women MG

- Poster action started at 8:40. Participants started preparing the posters with key messages for the photo moments later.
- Ice breaker by Sascha and Simone from WECF from the Women MG. Each MG needs to stand up and show up by moving and singing.

09:15 – 09:30 **Welcome & Opening**

- Welcome messages from Dalia Márquez and Frankie Orona, (interim) MGFC co-chairs
- Welcome message from Inger Andersen, Executive Director, UNEP

Opening and Welcome

- Dalia opened the session, welcoming UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen and all participants
 - Highlighted the historical significance of the 1972 Stockholm Conference as a milestone for global environmental governance
- Announced the first Women's Environment Assembly in 2025, emphasizing gender equality as central to environmental justice, Just Transition and peace

Acknowledgement of Indigenous Peoples

- Frankie expressed gratitude to the Indigenous Peoples of the host land
- Emphasized diversity as a source of strength and the importance of creating space for shared understanding, solution-building and constructive, non-toxic dialogue
- Reaffirmed commitment to people- and environment-first approaches

Remarks by UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen

- Welcomed participants and acknowledged Kenya's long-standing role as host of UNEP since 1972
 - Thanked the GMGSF co-chairs for their leadership and reaffirmed that Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) are essential to UNEP's mandate
 - Recognized global frustration with the slow progress of the Plastics Treaty but noted that countries remain engaged and committed to the agreed deadline
 - Expressed condolences for recent environmental disasters and loss of life in South and Southeast Asia
 - Highlighted the value of forests, and the centrality of justice and equity in environmental action
 - Noted that UNEA-7's theme is timely and solutions-oriented, with many solutions outlined in GEO-7 and encouraged MGS to engage with the report
 - Affirmed that MGS advocate for Indigenous Peoples' rights, justice and other core principles, holding a strong moral position
 - Stressed that UNEA is more than resolutions, linking it to the broader UN80 discussions on strengthening multilateralism, improving efficiency and enhancing cooperation across MEAs
 - Reiterated that MGS are vital to a whole-of-society approach and essential for shaping and implementing real-world solutions
- Confirmed UNEP's commitment to protecting and expanding civic space and ensuring it does not shrink

09:30 – 09:40**Organisation of work***Facilitator: Patrizia Heidegger, Regional Facilitator Europe*

- Rules of engagement (offline/online)
- Organisation of work
- Adoption of agenda

Opening and Agenda Adoption

- Patrizia, Regional Facilitator for Europe from the NGO Major Group, welcomed participants and introduced the two-day programme
- Highlighted months of preparation to ensure broad input into the GMGSF, including contributions to the Ministerial Declaration, regional and international consultations, and engagement with UNEP and Member States
- Emphasized solidarity, collaboration, adherence to the UN Code of Conduct and zero tolerance for discrimination

- Reminded participants to respect speaking time and noted that colleagues were also joining online, with chat available for engagement
- Agenda was circulated via email and WhatsApp, presented to the room and formally adopted

Overview of Day 1

- Opening session focused on linking UNEA to other international processes and fora, with short interventions to set the context
 - Coffee break included space for participants to create posters for photo messages
 - Resolutions cluster discussions scheduled, with focal points invited to share reflections and concerns
 - Planned photo moment with UNEP photographer and Sonia, with participants encouraged to bring their own posters
 - Session on civic space featuring testimonies from regions and Major Groups
 - Chemicals, waste and pollution experts (ISP-CWP) invited to share expectations
 - Draft Global Joint Statement circulated as the main outcome document of the GMGSF
- Expression of solidarity with colleagues affected by conflicts, including in Ukraine, Sudan and Gaza

Overview of Day 2

- Day begins at 9 with updates from the Science-Policy segment
 - Session with Business and Industry Major Group
 - David from UNEP to present the UNEA-7 programme and week overview
 - UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights, Marcos Orellana, to join for engagement with those working on chemicals and pollution
 - GEO-7 session with time for Q&A and experience sharing
 - Dialogue with the UNEA President and Inger Andersen, where each region and Major Group may raise one question, followed by a photo moment
 - Informal dialogue with Member States
 - Need to finish on time to allow for the Youth session
- Evening reception with music, refreshments and networking

09:40 – 10:30

Linking UNEA to international fora and processes

Facilitator: David Munene, Regional Facilitator Africa

Short reports of 3 min per speaker:

- UNEP workshops on geo-engineering and Solar Radiation Modification (SRM): Mary Church (NGOs) & Alia Hassan (Science & Technology)
- Global Youth Environment Assembly: Clive Donnley (Children and Youth)
- Women Environment Assembly: Teresia Gitau (Women)
- UNFCCC COP 30: Bert de Wel (Workers & Trade Unions) & Ajay Jah (RF Asia)
- INC 5.2 (Plastics Treaty): Prem Singh Tharu (Indigenous Peoples) & Christopher Chin (NGOs)
- Cities Summit: Carlos Mascarell Vilar (Local Authorities)

Solar Radiation Modification (SRM)

- Mary Church recalled that an SRM resolution at UNEA-6 was withdrawn and that UNEP held a two-day workshop in Geneva in May 2025
- Many Member States raised concerns about mandate, framing and the UN's role in SRM
- Highlighted risks of SRM experiments, including long deployment timelines, lock-in of emissions and potential termination shocks
- Noted limited transparency at the UNEP workshop, including restricted observer participation
- Outdoor SRM experiments are being funded in the UK (ARIA) and by an Israeli-US startup beginning in 2026
- African ministers reiterated their call for a global non-use agreement to keep SRM off the table
- Alia noted the rapid evolution of SRM discussions and the need for a stronger shared knowledge base within MGS
- An internal ad hoc working group has been initiated to deepen understanding
- Emphasised the need for robust science, engagement with external experts and collaboration across MGS
- Warned against both premature dismissal and uninformed acceptance, especially given risks of unilateral action
- Stressed the importance of centring vulnerable communities and regions
- Welcomed continued dialogue on SRM

Youth Assembly

- Clive reported that the pre-OECPR Youth Assembly was the most successful to date, with over 1,000 youth delegates
- Strong engagement from UN secretariats and ministers, demonstrating youth influence on UNEA-7
- Global Youth Declaration on Environment adopted, with thematic groups calling for stronger intergenerational cooperation
- Key issues raised included chemicals and pollution, university collapse, migration and human rights
- Youth called for formal democratisation of the Youth Environment Assembly
- Emphasised the need to amplify voices from coastal, Indigenous and rural communities
- Youth seek meaningful input into the Sri Lankan resolution and broader UNEA processes

Women's Environment Assembly

- First Women's Environment Assembly convened in November 2025 with 80 participants from diverse backgrounds
- Identified urgent need for stronger environmental governance on issues disproportionately affecting women
- Emphasised community-based solutions aligned with UNEA-7 priorities
- Many women's groups lack technical capacity to engage in chemicals, waste and pollution frameworks

- Called for more capacity-sharing sessions and extended time for future assemblies

UNFCCC COP 30

- Ajay highlighted that COP30 focused heavily on ambition, with the world on track for a 2°C rise
 - Science calls for a 43 percent emissions reduction by 2070, but negotiations fell short
 - No agreement on a fossil fuel phase-out roadmap due to resistance from oil-producing countries
 - Fossil fuel lobby presence was significant
 - Adaptation finance remains insufficient, with funding decreasing from 2022 to 2023
 - Tropical Forest Facility proposed as a bank-like mechanism offering returns for forest conservation
 - Indigenous Peoples noted structural shortcomings and called for a Just Transition Work Programme
 - Pride expressed in the strong participation of Indigenous voices
- Bert added that 1,500 fossil fuel lobbyists attended COP30
 - Emissions gap remains unaddressed and the Global Stocktake was unsuccessful
 - Workers face unsafe conditions due to heat stress and poor job quality
 - Two positive outcomes: the Gender Action Plan and the Just Transition mechanism
 - Mechanism includes two annual dialogues and a ministerial conference, with civil society support essential
 - Next steps include Bonn in June and Turkey at year's end

INC 5.3 Plastics Treaty

- Prem summarised the INC process:
 - Binding treaty mandate agreed in Nairobi
 - MGS participation increased from INC1 to INC2, though the MG system is not formally recognised in the INC process
 - INC5.2 in Geneva was difficult, with the draft text released very late and key issues (including IP) removed
 - Civil society was given only two minutes at the end
 - Negotiations ran late into the night
- Chris Chin noted that INC5.2 ended abruptly, with the Chair suspending the meeting after brief interventions
 - The Chair has since resigned; INC5.3 will take place in Geneva as a one-day session following ISP-CWP
 - Registration is open until 16 January; the process will depend heavily on the incoming Chair

Cities Summit

- Carlos reported strong success of the Cities Summit, with an outcome document recognising the triple planetary crisis
 - Local governments highlighted as innovators and key partners, responsible for 40 percent of global public investment

- Emphasised the need for multilevel multilateralism and stronger global partnerships
- Four place-based approaches and five key calls were presented, including:
- Reform of global funding architecture
- Institutionalised multilevel governance and improved national–subnational data
- People-centred just transition with fair social protections
- Citizen participation in global processes
- Summit outcomes will feed into broader UN processes
- Full statement available from Magash and Carlos

10:30 – 11:00

Coffee break + poster creation for photo moment

11:00 – 11:30

Resolution Cluster A

Facilitators: A.G. Kawamura (Farmers) & Rebecca Okello (Workers & Trade Unions)

Interventions from draft resolution contact points

Land-Based Solutions and Citizen Science

- Participants stressed the need to base land-related resolutions on existing studies and evidence
- The concept of Living Well was referenced as a guiding framework
- Citizen science highlighted as highly effective in biodiversity monitoring, especially for invasive species
- Community-generated data from farmers, women, Indigenous Peoples and practitioners forms the majority of biodiversity information
- Small-scale farmers struggle to access markets and fair prices for their products
- Afro-descendant and Black communities face disproportionate chemical exposure and land pollution, with insufficient recognition of their experiences
- Call for more space for frontline communities to share lived realities and co-create solutions

Coral Reefs

- Coral reefs cannot be treated as isolated ecosystems; impacts in one region affect others
- Calls for coral reefs to be protected under national and international law to unify regional approaches
- Plastic pollution plays a major role in coral reef degradation and pathogen spread
- Resolutions should include specific commitments to reduce plastic and microplastic pollution
- Indigenous Knowledge systems are being sidelined in negotiations despite their central role in ocean stewardship
- Pacific Indigenous Peoples emphasised that their homes, cultures and identities are

ocean-based, making their participation essential

Karst Systems

- Karst ecosystems were introduced by civil society and are not widely understood
- Karst systems, like coral reefs, are highly vulnerable to pollution
- Communities are actively managing Karst ecosystems, but scientific attention remains limited
- Indigenous Peoples stressed their long ancestral relationship with Karst landscapes
- Their rights, knowledge and contributions are being diluted or undermined in current drafts
- Strong call for a human-rights-based approach that recognises collective rights and Indigenous stewardship
- UNEP was urged to remind Member States of their commitments and ensure Indigenous Peoples' rights are upheld in resolutions

Deep Sea and Deep-Sea Mining

- Indigenous Peoples view the deep sea as a treasure and a cultural-spiritual space, not merely a resource
- Deep sea ecosystems are biocultural, forming part of Indigenous identity, history and way of life
- The deep sea resolution was welcomed for recognising the ecosystem's value
- Deep-sea mining poses major cultural, ecological and livelihood risks
- Farmers and coastal communities from the Global South warned that deep-sea mining threatens ocean foundations, fisheries and human well-being
- Strong call to prioritise sustainable practices over extractive profit-driven approaches

Glaciers

- Current glacier-related discussions focus narrowly on hydrology
- Indigenous Knowledge and practices from Arctic, Himalayan and mountain communities are overlooked
- Indigenous Peoples emphasised their long-standing role in managing and protecting glacier ecosystems

Wildfires

- References to civil society and stakeholder contributions were removed from the wildfire resolution
- Fire life cycle, technology, innovation and women's participation were discussed
- Traditional knowledge remains included, but citizen science was removed
- NGO Major Group intervened to address these gaps
- Informal session on the wildfire resolution scheduled for 5 PM
- Wildfires are destroying forests and Indigenous plant species, with severe ecological and cultural impacts

11:30 – 12:00

Resolution Cluster B

Facilitators: Carlos Mascarell Vilar

(Local Authorities) & *Patrizia Heidegger (NGOs)*

Interventions from draft resolution contact points

- Patrizia welcomed members and introduced the Cluster B draft resolutions
- Encouraged all participants to share insights and noted that Member States had raised issues related to environmental crimes
- Carlos facilitated the session and congratulated Dalia and Frankie for their leadership
- Members were informed that several resolutions in this cluster are progressing well

Resolution on Sport and the Environment

- Concern raised about plastics exposure, particularly affecting women and girls, highlighting the need for stronger protection measures
- Members expressed concern about the deletion of references to women and youth, noting reduced effectiveness
- Indigenous Peoples raised language barriers and called for greater consideration of Indigenous needs in global events
- NGO representatives emphasised that sport brings people together and encouraged expanding the resolution's scope

Resolution on Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- Indigenous Peoples highlighted language challenges and stressed the need for meaningful inclusion in AI discussions
- Indigenous representatives outlined three priority areas for their engagement
- NGOs called for the inclusion of early warning systems and expanded mapping capacities
- Appreciation expressed to Kenya for bringing forward the AI resolution

Resolution on Environmental Crimes

- Patrizia introduced the resolution and invited contributions
- Members stressed the importance of engaging directly with Member States on this issue
- Reference made to G20 summaries and the need for conscious, informed approaches
- A participant shared personal experience as a victim of environmental crime, noting that African communities are often misrepresented as perpetrators
- Women's representatives highlighted severe water challenges in African communities and called for deeper discussion

Resolution on Children and Youth in Environmental Governance

- Members appreciated the strong participation of Major Groups and Stakeholders
- Concerns raised about the deletion of budget-related language and reporting mechanisms

- OP5 on implementing OP2 was flagged as having implications for all UNEA resolutions
- Participants stressed the urgency of engaging Member States directly
- NGOs called for greater inclusion of children in decision-making and support for marginalised youth, including access to food and shelter
- Youth representatives emphasised the need for open spaces and reaffirmed their commitment to advancing children's rights
- Women's representatives expressed hope for further progress and continued engagement
- Members noted that more discussion is needed on several unresolved elements

Cross-Cutting Concerns

- Participants warned of increasing attacks on the whole-of-society approach, on science and on citizen science
- Strong call for MGS not to remain silent and to actively engage delegates
- Emphasis on defending scientific integrity and inclusive participation

12:00 – 12:30

Resolution Cluster C

*Facilitators: John Lindberg (Business & Industry) &
Anna Odur (NGOs)*

Interventions from draft resolution contact points

Cross-Cluster Comment – Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF)

- Simona noted that across all clusters there is very little language acknowledging Major Groups' engagement
- Civil society is doing substantial work on resolutions, including citizen science, and this contribution must be recognised
- Citizen science is supported in principle, but resolutions must explicitly include demands for funding and support
- Women carry a disproportionate burden of unpaid environmental labour and care work
- Extraction is not only of natural resources but also of women's bodies and labour; this must be reflected in decision-making
- Strong call to include dedicated funding for civil society and women's groups in all relevant resolutions

Resolution on Minerals and Metals

- CYMG emphasised the need to establish efficiency and circularity within minerals and metals systems

- Indigenous Peoples stressed that they are being sidelined in the resolution's content
- Between 50 and 60 percent of global minerals are located on Indigenous lands, creating disproportionate impacts
- Indigenous Peoples are rights holders and must be included through FPIC and protection measures
- Indigenous science and knowledge systems should be explicitly recognised in the resolution
- Members noted that the resolution remains challenging due to structural mechanisms proposed by Member States

Resolution on Antimicrobials

- Resolution is progressing slowly and currently undergoing wordsmithing
- UNEP's role within the broader UN system needs strengthening
- National action plans are referenced but currently convoluted, causing confusion and frustration
- Members stressed the need for continued engagement with Member States to build common ground
- Women are on the frontlines of antimicrobial resistance impacts and must be meaningfully included
- Expertise is needed to address ecological damage occurring in South Asia and other regions
- Policy implementation remains a major challenge; marginalised communities are often ignored
- Civil society participation is essential for effective national-level plans

Resolution on Chemicals and Waste

- Anna Dour (NGO MG) noted that chemicals and waste issues remain insufficiently addressed, with wildlife disproportionately affected
- OP1 and OP2 have undergone initial screening, with alternative paragraphs proposed
- Workshops are proposed to facilitate exchange of views, good practices and knowledge sharing
- OP3 includes text on operationalising management but lacks explicit reference to stakeholders, especially NGOs
- Equitable participation is mentioned but does not translate into direct representation of civil society
- Members stressed the importance of linking this resolution to the plastics treaty
- NGOs emphasised the need to ensure their participation is not limited or excluded
- Circular economy approaches should prioritise health protection and biodiversity hotspots
- Some countries continue to refuse inclusion of citizen science
- Exclusion of Indigenous Peoples, civil society and vulnerable communities undermines democratic decision-making
- Equitable participation is essential; without it, the resolution risks losing legitimacy

12:30 – 12:45

Resolution Cluster D

Facilitators: Frankie Orona (Indigenous Peoples)

Interventions from draft resolution contact points

- Res **MTS**: 5 new paragraphs added on Friday without consultation and sharing (Saudi Arabia), Iran reopened to discuss language. Impasse to streamline the text.
- From Indigenous People: process: impact in our lands and resources. Essential to keep trust in the process and integrity.

12:45 – 14:00

GMGSF photo moment on the flight of stairs outside

Lunch break

14:00 – 14:45

Civic space & action to protect public participation

Facilitator: Manuel Abreu (NGOs)

Martin Brocklehurst, Global Citizen Science Community (S&T MG), shared that citizen science is leading in creating alternative data and if the Member States do not recognize and respect that they will be at the disadvantage. He called on member states to strengthen citizen science within and among the states and to empower UNEP with the citizen science data.

Wali Haider, Roots for Equity, Pakistan speaking on the civic space in Asia and the Pacific, said that civic space is collapsing as governments deploy surveillance, restrictive laws and criminalisation of dissent supported by global power structures and corporate interests. He also linked it with economic governance conditionalities, austerity, trade regimes and mega-infrastructure projects which result in political control, displacing communities and weakening resistance and that conditions in Palestine are the same side of this extreme reality.

Chinkie Pelino-Golle (RF Asia Pacific) shared positive stories of resistance and effective collaboration in advancing MEAs at the National level. Her organisation led civil society efforts in the Philippines has been able to stop illegal hazardous waste imports and defend environmental sovereignty by repatriating over 400 containers of mis-declared toxic waste.

Juressa Lee (Indigenous Peoples Major Group) shared that some member states attempted to merge Indigenous Peoples with local communities, undermining UNDRIP-affirmed rights, including FPIC and land governance and that their group calls for clear

recognition of Indigenous Peoples as distinct rights holders and for their full and effective participation in all processes.

Meritxel Budo, Mayor of La Garriga and the President of the Catalan Association of the Municipalities from. Local Authorities Major Group informed the audience that in Catalonia, municipalities have implemented collaborative programs, tools and training to make citizen participation transparent and accessible and a regular part of decision-making and stressed that Public Participation at local level is the best guarantee of open civic space and participatory governance.

Marie Therese Seif, Regional Facilitator of UNEP West Asia MGS and talked about challenges and opportunities for civic space in the Middle East with special reference to women's participation and that despite challenges, young leaders, women and community groups are actively using digital tools and new government dialogues to monitor and address environmental issues.

Sascha Gabizon, Women MG, emphasized that powerful industries and corporations including oil, chemical, and pesticide sectors, along with certain political actors, are undermining environmental protection, accountability, and even attempting to manipulate or erase scientific climate and environmental data. She underlined that strengthening civic space, protecting human and environmental rights, promoting inclusive democracy, and ensuring science-based decision-making are essential to counter these challenges and address global environmental crises.

Shariar Hossain from the delegation of Bangladesh said that major groups must engage persistently to ensure inclusive, accountable, and transparent processes and they should work together to push governments for clear guidelines, focused action, and outcomes that protect people and ecosystems.

14:45 – 15:30

Engaging with the Intergovernmental Science Policy Panel on chemicals, waste and pollution (ISP-CWP)

Facilitator: Camilla Alexander-White, Science & Technology MG

What is the ISP-CWP?

Tessa Goverse, Head of the Interim Secretariat of the ISP-CWP, UNEP

Discussion around guiding questions:

- What do Major Groups and Stakeholders expect from the ISP-CWP?
- Which thematic issues need to be taken up by the Panel?
- How does the work of the Panel relate to other processes, such as the Plastics Treaty process or the Global Framework on Chemicals?
- How can we ensure strong representation of Major Groups and Stakeholders throughout its work?

Background and Establishment

- UNEA-6 adopted a resolution proposing the establishment of the SPP, culminating in the

panel's formal adoption in Uruguay in June 2025

- This marks a historic milestone after nearly 20 years of advocacy and negotiation
- Tessa Goverse thanked participants for their long-standing engagement and contributions to chemicals, waste and pollution work

Foundational Elements of the Panel

- UNEA resolution 5/8 (March 2022) initiated the process, leading to the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG)
- OEWG developed the proposal for the SPP's establishment
- Foundational document outlines:
 - Scope, objectives and functions
 - Operating principles and approaches
 - Institutional arrangements

Objectives and Functions

- Objective is to strengthen the science-policy interface for sound management of chemicals, waste and pollution
- Functions include horizon scanning, capacity building, knowledge management and supporting policy uptake

Operating Principles

- Scientific independence, credibility and legitimacy
- Impartiality, consensus-building and respect for independence
- Principles guide the panel's work; institutional arrangements guide its operations

Institutional Arrangements

- Countries present in Uruguay are considered founding members
- Over 110 Member States have expressed interest in joining; details to be posted online
- Plenary will be open to observers and stakeholders
- Plenary functions include adopting the work programme
- Bureau will have two members from each UN region
- Interdisciplinary Expert Committee (IEC) will include experts nominated by regions and elected by the plenary

Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) Participation

- MGS can contribute through:
 - Awareness-raising and responding to calls for submissions
 - Participating in plenaries as observers
 - Serving as authors, data contributors or reviewers
 - Translating and disseminating panel outputs
 - Producing research that informs the panel's work
- Opportunities may expand as operational modalities are finalised
- Early-career scientist programmes may be developed

Timeline and Upcoming Events

- First plenary: 2–6 February 2026 in Geneva
- Regional and stakeholder meetings: 1 February
- Provisional agenda includes operational arrangements, host country, financial and budgetary matters

- Upcoming events:
- GEN webinar on 16 December for scientists and experts
- January pre-session briefing
- Associated event on 11 December at Agora to hear from other panels and MEAs

Interventions and Questions from the Floor

Effectiveness and Policy Uptake

- Concern raised that many panels produce excellent outputs but fail to influence policy
- Question on whether a high-level political mechanism will help translate SPP findings for policymakers
- Tessa noted lessons learned from IPCC and IPBES, including:
- Strong conflict-of-interest policies
- Clear processes for preparing deliverables
- Additional functions such as capacity building and knowledge management to strengthen policy relevance

Youth and Major Groups

- CYMG emphasised the need to institutionalise youth expertise and experience
- Asked whether youth and MGS will be able to contribute inputs and engage meaningfully in plenary sessions

Indigenous Peoples

- IP representatives highlighted severe resource constraints limiting participation
- Noted that Indigenous Peoples are heavily affected by chemicals and plastic pollution, including in remote areas
- Current ISP-CWP structure does not formally recognise Indigenous Peoples
- Called for:
- Inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in the IEC
- Establishment of an IP advisory committee
- Stronger guarantees for participation

Civic Space and Participation

- Concerns raised about softening of language on civic participation
- Some policymakers described as dismissive or hostile, raising fears about shrinking civic space
- Questions on how the panel will ensure meaningful civil society involvement

General Reflections

- Members asked how individuals can contribute if nominated or interested
- Recognition that many qualified women scientists are now available to contribute
- Tessa emphasised that robust science and a good process are essential, regardless of funding constraints
- Documentation from previous meetings has been shared; financial arrangements will be discussed at the first plenary

Facilitators: Dalia Márquez and Frankie Orona, (interim) MGFC co-chairs

- Global Statement will be submitted as an outcome of the GMGSF.
- Call on all participation to add anything that is not covered by the statement in the oral statements during the plenaries.
- All facilitators were asked to give input.
- Encouraged not to spend too much time on this Statement, to approve it and move forward.
- After the comments shared, the document is reopened and the co-facilitators from MG can add comments by tomorrow 9am.

16:00 – 16:30

Coffee break

16:30 – 17:00

Solidarity with environmentalists making a difference during armed conflict and occupation

Facilitator: Oksana Volosko-Demkiv (NGO MG/RF Europe)

- Palestine: Gabriella Neubert, Arab Group for the Protection of Nature
- Ukraine: Oksana Volosko-Demkiv, National Ecological Centre of Ukraine
- Sudan: Alaaeldein Yousif, Deriba Center for Environmental Studies

Oksana Volosko-Demkiv (NGO MG/RF Europe) – Environmental Impacts of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine

- The invasion has undermined progress on all SDGs and threatens multiple international commitments and treaties
- Recalled the legacy of Chernobyl and noted that in 2022 the site was occupied, causing radiation levels to rise; four nuclear power plants with 15 reactors remain at risk
- Flooding from the destruction of the Kakhovka dam created toxic runoff into the Black Sea, destroying habitats and contaminating water sources
- One million people lost access to drinking water; 200,000 hectares of fertile land dried out and are now heavily mined
- Around 35% of biodiversity is affected by environmental damage from war
- Oil pollution in the Black Sea and attacks on chemical facilities have created severe chemical waste and contamination
- Grain infrastructure has been destroyed, reducing grain exports by 50 percent and worsening famine conditions for 750,000 people in countries such as Kenya, Somalia, Yemen and Ethiopia
- The war threatens global food security, environmental governance frameworks and SDG implementation

Gabriella Neubert, Arab Group for the Protection of Nature (Palestine)

- Palestine remains at the centre of conflict and prolonged occupation, requiring solutions that address environmental resilience under occupation
- Since 1948, 750,000 Palestinians have been expelled, with villages, fields, parks and green areas destroyed

- The environment is being weaponised to create unlivable conditions, enabling land annexation
- Israeli bombardment, equivalent to 13 Hiroshima bombs, has destroyed 87 percent of cropland, 97 percent of trees and 95 percent of shrubland, collapsing agro-ecosystems
- Water resources have been seized, and agricultural rights systematically targeted
- Palestinians are being killed through both direct and indirect mechanisms of violence, described by academics as cumulative genocide
- Strong need for post-conflict environmental recovery and protection from political or corporate capture
- Welcomed UNEA resolution 6/12 on environmental assistance and recovery in conflict-affected areas
- Called for the use of the term *ecocide* to describe deliberate environmental destruction

Alaaeldein Yousif – Deriba Center for Environmental Studies (Sudan)

- Conflict since 2023 has displaced 9.6 million people, including the speaker himself
- Ten of Sudan's eighteen universities have been destroyed, severely weakening national capacity
- The country faces starvation and widespread environmental devastation
- Forests have been burned or cleared, and water sources contaminated by weapons and conflict-related pollution
- Chemical pollution is widespread and will have long-term impacts on ecosystems and human health
- Despite limited funding, local organisations are providing food assistance to 250,000 people and planning to plant over 3 million trees post-conflict
- Capacity-building initiatives are underway to train communities on climate change and environmental education
- Called for peace, justice and international support for environmental recovery in Sudan

17:00 – 17:30

Looking ahead at the UNEA 7 week

Facilitators: Dalia Márquez and Frankie Orona, MGFC co-chairs

- Presentation of Morning Meeting
- Green Room events
- Clarification of speaking roles for MGs during UNEA week

17:45 – 18:00

Closing of Day 1, outlook Day 2

*Facilitators: Dalia Márquez and
Frankie Orona, MGFC co-chairs*

Summary of Day 2 – Sunday 7 December

09:00 – 09:30

Opening and welcome

Facilitators: Dalia Márquez and Frankie Orona, MGFC co-chairs

Activity to get to know each other

- Short welcome from Dalia Márquez and Frankie Orona, MGFC co-chairs
- Short presentation of the day's agenda: Patrizia Heidegger

09:30 – 09:45

Update on Stakeholder Forum initiatives

Facilitator: Patrizia Heidegger (RF Europe)

Short presentation by Felix Dodds & Louis Meuleman, Stakeholder Forum

- Pocket Guide on Sustainable Development Governance
- Clustering of MEAs

Louis Meuleman, Stakeholder Forum

- The Stakeholder Forum has spent more than 25 years bridging civil society and UNEP, strengthening stakeholder engagement in global environmental governance
- Presented key deliverables prepared for UNEA, including recent capacity-building work conducted earlier in the year
- Currently preparing a discussion paper on the 2027 Agenda Review, focusing on eight environment-related SDGs; the online portal will accept comments until January
- Introduced the Third Edition of the *2100 and Subsequent Pocket Guide to Sustainable Development Governance*, a primer to help stakeholders understand and engage in environmental and sustainable development governance
- The guide is still under development and open for comments until 14 January
- Outlined the broader landscape of international environmental governance, including UNEA, OECPR, UNEA Bureau, regional commissions and regional consultations, science bodies such as IPCC, IPBES and the new ISP-CWP
- Highlighted the importance of UN financial governance for sustainable development
- Invited ideas and suggestions to improve the guide and strengthen stakeholder understanding of governance system

09:45 – 10:15

Driving Sustainable Transformation Across Sectors:

From Voluntary Commitments to Certified and Assured Action

Co-Chair: Faisal Alfadl, Saudi Green Building Forum, Co-Facilitator of Business and Industry Major Group and Stakeholders

Open Questions:

1. How can stakeholders advance from voluntary sustainability commitments to certified and assured action, as encouraged by UNEA resolutions on strengthened implementation and accountability?

3 min interventions:

- Brian Lindsay, Global Dairy Platform
- Ahmed Fathy, YLE Foundation

2. What UNEA-supported mechanisms—such as transparent monitoring systems, quality environmental data, and internationally recognized accreditation—are essential to drive measurable impact across sectors?

3 min interventions:

- Alaaeldein Abdelrahman Yousif, Deriba Center for Environmental Studies
- Chyedza Heri, Stop Ecocide

3. How can digital platforms, AI, and real-time data systems enhance synergy across sectors and accelerate the shift toward assured environmental performance, particularly in developing and fast-growing Economies?

3 min interventions:

- Camilla Alexander-White, Royal Society of Chemistry
- Faith Munyalo, Don Bosco Tech Africa

Faisal Alfadl – Saudi Green Building Forum, Co-Facilitator of Business and Industry MG

- Emphasised that civil society voices must be heard on how to turn commitments into concrete action
- Stressed the need to move from dialogue to practice, shifting from voluntary sustainability pledges to certified and assured implementation
- Highlighted the relevance of UNEA resolutions on strengthened implementation and accountability
- Reaffirmed that there should be no barriers to participation and that confidence must be built that civic space is not shrinking

Brian Lindsay – Global Dairy Platform

- Spoke on behalf of the agrifood sector, focusing on how commitments should translate into measurable delivery
- Raised the question of how science is incorporated into sustainable food production for a rapidly growing global population
- Emphasised the importance of setting targets and reporting progress in practical business terms
- Called for multistakeholder platforms to exchange knowledge and experience

Alaaeldein Abdelrahman Yousif – Deriba Center for Environmental Studies

- Noted that conflict-affected countries face the greatest challenges from climate change and biodiversity loss
- Stressed the importance of reliable information and data as the foundation for sustainable decision-making and trust-building
- Highlighted the need for cooperation between private sector, international financial institutions and scientific bodies

- Mentioned the role of ecolabels, certification and public-private partnerships in scaling sustainability solutions
- Underlined the importance of implementing international commitments
- Pointed to the value of digital platforms, AI and real-time data systems in enhancing cross-sectoral synergy

Camilla Alexander-White – Royal Society of Chemistry

- Announced a Green Room event on 14 December
- Highlighted the potential of satellite observation and imagery, which generate vast amounts of environmental data
- Encouraged businesses to recognise the benefits of digital tools such as Digital Product Passports
- Stressed that consumers must be assured that products meet safety and quality standards
- Emphasised the need for specialised skills, cross-sector cooperation and information exchange
- Called for a global mandate to support digital platforms and data-driven environmental governance

Chyedza Heri – Stop Ecocide

- Stated that consensus between private and public sectors on data exchange strengthens accountability
- Noted that ecocide is a motivating force for youth engagement in environmental decision-making
- Highlighted transparency and accountability as essential elements for effective environmental governance

10:15 – 11:00

Final information regarding UNEA 7 week and MG participation

Facilitation: Musa Mussa (NGOs)

- Presentation by David Ombisi, Governance Affairs Office, UNEP
- Questions from the floor & answers

Negotiations

- Negotiations will continue tomorrow through the Committee of the Whole
- Aim is to finalise draft resolutions and decisions ahead of the high-level segment

Side Events and Thematic Days

- Side events will take place in the Green Room throughout the week
- MEAs Day scheduled for 10 December, featuring two high-level events focused on synergies, solutions and success stories across MEAs
- MEA Pavilion will host additional activities and exchanges

High-Level Leadership Dialogues (Thursday and Friday)

- Three leadership dialogues planned during the high-level segment:

- Thursday: climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, with a focus on improving the health of billions
- Friday (Dialogue 2): circularity and sustainability
- Friday (Dialogue 3): tackling environmental degradation as critical for the financial system
- Concept notes available for more details
- Major Groups are welcome to attend

Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) Focus Areas

- Special Dialogue with Indigenous Peoples scheduled for tomorrow from 15:00 to 18:00 in the Agora Room
- Objective is to recognise Indigenous Peoples' contributions, elevate their voices and foster stronger partnerships
- Multistakeholder Dialogue on Thursday will provide an interactive high-level space for MGS and Member States
- Focus on inclusive partnerships across sectors and catalysing practical solutions to environmental challenges

UNEA-7 Structure and Member State Coordination

- Participants encouraged to consult David's presentation and the UNEA website for full structural details
- Regional meetings for Member States will continue to support negotiation strategy and coordination

Social and Networking Events

- Friday evening reception scheduled from 19:00 onwards

11:00 – 11:15**Coffee break****11:15 – 12:30****Exchange with UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights
Marcos A Orellana***Facilitator: Chinkie Peliño-Golle (RF Asia Pacific)*

- Presentation by the Special Rapporteur on his current priorities
- Open exchange and discussion with Major Groups and Stakeholders

Opening Reflections – Marcos Orellana

- Environmental harm increasingly intersects with human rights, challenging traditional notions of national sovereignty
- Environmental injustices disproportionately affect vulnerable communities, requiring stronger global human rights frameworks
- Rising authoritarianism threatens science, civil society, education and critical thinking
- Attacks on scientists and defenders create fear and ignorance, which undermine democratic environmental governance
- GMGSF plays a crucial role in empowering civil society to confront environmental challenges

Interventions:**PFAS, Pollution and Environmental Crime**

- Belgium faces over 3,000 contaminated sites, including major PFAS pollution linked to 3M

- Civil society exposed the scandal in 2021 and continues to push for national and EU-level PFAS bans
- Testing showed widespread PFAS contamination among volunteers
- PFAS remediation could cost up to 100 billion EUR annually, yet policymakers remain unaware of the scale

Citizen Science

- Those most affected by PFAS often lack awareness of the risks
- Citizen science is essential to document impacts and mobilise public support
- Once data is visible, millions can rally behind the issue

Soil and Health Recovery

- Asked about safe testing methods and recovery timelines
- Reflections highlighted the ethical dilemma: PFAS are used in critical industries, yet clean water is a fundamental human right
- Prevention is far cheaper than remediation
- Transition must not leave workers or communities behind; retraining and new markets are needed

Marcos' Reflections

- Stockholm Convention struggles with PFAS
- Awareness inside expert circles is high, but public awareness remains low
- Citizen science bridges the gap between scientific evidence and political action
- Right to science includes Indigenous and local knowledge
- Military toxics require proper assessment, but Member States often resist UNEP investigations
- Ecocide discussions are advancing, including proposals from Vanuatu to include it in the ICC statute

Environmental Crime, Militarisation and Human Rights

- Marcos highlighted cases such as toxic weapons in Lebanon and zoning practices in Namibia and Louisiana that expose marginalised communities
 - Environmental crime includes hazardous waste trafficking, illegal wildlife trade and toxic pollution
 - Strengthening international criminal law is essential, including recognition of ecocide
- Interventions from Participants

Interventions

Perspective from Fiji:

- Raised concerns about toxic impacts on culturally important species and biocentennials
- Called for UNEA to address the full chemical lifecycle to protect island societies
- Bankruptcy of ecosystems leads to collapse of livelihoods

Perspective from Communities of African descent in the US

- Communities of African descent in the US face PFAS exposure through drinking water and plastics
- Asked how non-member states can still be held accountable in the Human Rights Council

- Highlighted overexposure of marginalised communities and the need for accountability

Perspective from Women's Major Group

- Noted regression in gender language and disrespect toward women in UNEA processes
- Called for proactive protection of women and girls from toxic exposures
- Raised concerns about hazardous pesticides like paraquat, banned domestically but exported abroad
- Small island states face toxic plastic waste imports and burning due to economic constraints
- Delay is not an option for countries suffering the worst impacts

Indigenous Peoples

- Highlighted disproportionate impacts on frontline Indigenous women
- Asked how Special Rapporteur reports translate into concrete action
- Emphasised the need for Indigenous leadership and rights recognition

IPEN

- PFAS found in everyday products including cookware, firefighting foam, textiles and cosmetics
- Circular economy initiatives risk perpetuating PFAS contamination
- Firefighters and volunteers, including Indigenous responders, lack adequate protection
- Urged acceleration of PFAS phase-out and promotion of safer alternatives

Trade Unions

- Workers are among the most affected by toxic exposures
- Labor rights must be recognised as fundamental to chemical safety
- Informal workers lack healthcare and protections
- Politicians often avoid confronting human rights issues in labour and gender

Marcos Orellana – Final Reflections

- Plastic pollution affects every stage of the lifecycle, from extraction to disposal
- Reports are not academic exercises; they identify solutions and strategic entry points for change
- Canada shows openness to Indigenous rights, but must align international positions with domestic commitments
- International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management is evolving to include Indigenous rights
- Mercury Convention shows progress in addressing impacts on Indigenous communities
- PFAS remains a global justice issue: produced in the North, impacts exported to the South
- Basel Convention gaps allow PFAS waste flows to continue
- Every 30 seconds a worker dies from chemical exposure, underscoring the urgency of recognising labour rights
- Civil society engagement is essential to protect human rights and nature despite shrinking civic space

13:30 – 14:20

Global Environmental Outlook 7 - knowledge for a sustainable future

Facilitator: Ndeye Fatou Ndiaye (RF Africa)

5 minute interventions:

What is the Global Environmental Outlook (GEO)?

Nick King, Environmental Futurist, South Africa, Multidisciplinary Expert
Scientific Advisory Group (MESAG) Co-chair

How to ensure a whole-of-society approach to knowledge-based policy-making?

Arthur Eijs, Formerly, Ministry of Infrastructure and Water management,
Kingdom of the Netherlands, Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder
Advisory Group (IMAG) Co-chair

What challenges for knowledge-based decision-making?

Ruth Spencer, Advisory Board Member UN Women's Civil Society
Advisory Group for the Caribbean, Intergovernmental and Multi-
stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG)

How does GEO7 embrace Indigenous Peoples Knowledge?

Yolanda Lopez-Maldonado, Earth Systems Scientist, Founder and CEO
Indigenous Science

What role for Children and Youth and the development of GEO7?

Shaneica Lester, Environmental Geographer, The University of the West
Indies, GEO-7 Fellow

Questions and reflections from the floor & discussion

Overview of GEO-7 – Nick King

- GEO-7 will be launched in two days and represents UNEP's flagship global environmental assessment
 - Report integrates multiple global assessments, including those from INC processes, rather than producing siloed sectoral analyses
 - Over 1,200 pages and contributions from hundreds of experts across 80 countries
 - Mandated by UNEA to maintain regular global environmental review cycles
 - First GEO to meaningfully incorporate eco-social perspectives and Indigenous knowledge systems
 - GEO-7 aims to bring together science, policy and societal insights into one comprehensive assessment
 - Builds on GEO-6 (2018), following UNEA resolution 5/3 on strengthening scientific credibility and review
 - Multidisciplinary expert groups ensured scientific independence and legitimacy
 - Use of green literature and AI tools supported drafting and review

- Online global review platform enabled broad participation, with over 50 review submissions

Key Findings of GEO-7

- Global and local environments continue to degrade, driven by the triple planetary crisis
- Human health is deeply interconnected with climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution
- Population growth, consumption patterns and unsustainable supply chains intensify environmental pressures
- GEO-7 emphasises system transformations across food, energy, finance and other sectors
- Report highlights that solutions exist and must be scaled urgently
- GEO-7 provides a breakdown of approaches to support sustainable development commitments
- Full report is 200–240 pages, with a 50-page summary and a 3-page key messages document

Whole-of-Society Approach – Arthur Eijs and Panel

- Transformative change requires participation beyond the environmental sector
- All stakeholders must be part of the transition, including youth, Indigenous Peoples, civil society, business and local communities
- Science is the driver of change, but implementation requires societal ownership
- Holistic approaches are essential to counter growing attacks on science and evidence

How GEO-7 Ensures This Approach

- Science-policy interface designed to be open, inclusive and responsive
- Advisory groups and IMEG (Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Expert Group) engaged throughout
- Increased engagement with Major Groups from the start of the process
- UNEP committed to helping civil society distill key messages for diverse audiences
- UNEA is expected to endorse and welcome GEO-7 as UNEP's flagship report

Ruth Spencer – Women's Major Group

- GEO process strengthened her capacity to engage in scientific assessments
- Brought local knowledge and multiple voices into the report
- Some Member States resist evidence that challenges their political positions
- Stressed the need for synergies across MEAs and local-level action
- Communities observe biodiversity loss firsthand and inform national focal points
- Whole-of-society approach requires education, awareness and empowerment

Yolanda López Maldonado – Indigenous Knowledge Expert

- First time GEO included a dedicated Indigenous knowledge expert group
- Indigenous Peoples have long observed natural systems and hydrological cycles
- Their water management knowledge influenced Chapter 2
- Integrating Indigenous and scientific knowledge was challenging but rewarding
- Dialogue built a shared community and strengthened the report

Shaneica Lester – GEO Fellow

- One of 45 young experts contributing to GEO-7
- Fellowship strengthened research, communication and visualisation skills
- Youth bring lived experience of climate impacts and innovation
- GEO-7 turned youth passion into action and meaningful contributions
- Youth must be empowered and included to amplify environmental governance outcomes

Questions and Answers

Endorsement and Accessibility

- Concern raised about endorsing a 1,000-page report without reading it fully
- Arthur explained that governments participated in reviews, ensuring ownership
- Executive summary and key messages are available for broader audiences
- Stakeholders encouraged to speak with their governments to emphasise the importance of science-based policy

Policy Uptake and Implementation

- UNEP will provide concise, streamlined publications to support policymakers
- GEO-7 findings should guide national negotiations and implementation
- Synergies across conventions are essential for effective action

Independence and Participation

- Question on how GEO can be both participatory and independent
- Panelists explained that diverse perspectives strengthen legitimacy
- Independence refers to scientific integrity, not exclusion of stakeholders

Youth and Data

- Youth asked how GEO can support youth-led data initiatives
- UNEP encouraged youth to contribute data and engage in GEO frameworks
- Accountability and transparency are essential for implementation

Fake News and National Reporting

- Concern raised about misinformation undermining environmental reporting
- Panelists emphasised the need for science-based communication and public education

Indigenous Science

- Participants reaffirmed that Indigenous knowledge is science and must be recognised
- GEO-7 demonstrates progress but more work is needed

Closing Reflections

- GEO-7 is a collective achievement of scientists, Indigenous experts, youth, civil society and governments
 - Stakeholders urged to read the report once launched and use its findings to support advocacy
 - No simple solutions exist, but GEO-7 provides evidence-based pathways for transformative change
 - Education, empowerment and whole-of-society engagement are essential to drive action

14:20 – 14:30

Short break and final prep for following high-level meeting

14:30 – 15:30

Exchange with UNEA President and UNEP

Executive Director Facilitators: *Dalia Márquez and Frankie Orona, MGFC co-chairs*

Keynote by the UNEA President, His Excellency Abdullah Bin Ali Al-Amri, President of the Environment Authority of Oman

Keynote by Inger Andersen, Executive Director, UNEP

Questions and reflections per Major Group and Region

Participation: 92 people online, approximately 300 participants in the room.

Opening Reflections – UNEA President

- Reflected on more than 20 months of preparation for UNEA-7
- Presidency built on two pillars:
 - Involve everyone in the process and leave no one behind
 - Modernise environmental governance, which is now 30 years old and requires revision
 - Engaged widely with youth, regional groups, the EU and held 80 bilateral meetings with Member States
- Expressed confidence in achieving strong outcomes across declarations, resolutions and decisions
- Emphasised the need for more synergies across issues rather than negotiating each topic in isolation

Keynote Inger Andersen, UNEP Executive Director

- OECPR has concluded, marking the end of the preparatory phase for UNEA
- The week saw progress and challenges across 18 resolutions and decisions
- Expressed deep appreciation for the contributions of Major Groups and Stakeholders
- UNEA has long recognised the need for stronger synergies across MEAs:
 - UNEA-5 MEA Day disrupted by COVID
 - UNEA-6 revived the MEA dialogue
 - UNEA-7 continues this trajectory
- UNEA is a tapestry where environmental issues, conventions and whole-of-society engagement come together
- Highlighted upcoming launch of GEO-7 and UNEP's expanding programme portfolio
- Acknowledged headwinds but also momentum, including:
 - Establishment of the new Science-Policy Panel on chemicals, waste and pollution
 - Ongoing plastics treaty negotiations, with universal recognition that plastic pollution must end

Children and Youth Major Group

- Asked about Nairobi's role as UNEP headquarters
- Inger reaffirmed Nairobi as UNEP's permanent HQ and encouraged youth engagement
- Called for support of the 30x30 biodiversity restoration and protection goals, including on the UN compound

- UNEA President highlighted the importance of youth participation and behavioural change

Indigenous Peoples

- Initial question not answered by the President, but Inger later addressed it
- Affirmed the importance of Indigenous rights and knowledge
- Stressed that Indigenous presence illuminates forgotten perspectives and strengthens UNEP's work

Africa Region

- Asked about the future of the Civil Society Unit following the retirement of Alexander Juras
- Inger explained that the post is funded through the UN regular budget, currently under a freeze
- UNEP must wait for UN budget committees to determine how many posts will be cut

Asia-Pacific Region

- Asked how UNEP and UNEA can ensure access for stakeholders
- Inger explained the shift from older “home-cooked” systems to the UN-wide e-delegate platform, part of broader UN reforms

Women's Major Group

- Asked about access to facilities and funding
- Inger noted UNEP does not have discretionary funds and relies on Member State contributions
- Encouraged women's groups to mobilise resources as youth groups have done
- On SRM non-use:
- Inger emphasised that UNEP cannot decide the outcome
- Member States must hold the conversation
- African Group's position is noted, but open dialogue is essential, as with PFAS and POPs

Local Authorities

- Asked about UNEP's engagement with local and regional governments
- Inger highlighted the strong partnership with UN-Habitat, which has the primary mandate for local authorities

Europe Region

- Asked about UNEP's role in environmental conflict and recovery
- Inger listed three UNEA mandates enabling UNEP to conduct assessments:
- UNEP has conducted assessments in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, the Balkans, Haiti and others
- Emphasised that UNEP models environmental impacts but does not calculate reconstruction costs
- Stressed that peace is essential for resolving environmental devastation

West Asia Region

- Raised environmental crime
- UNEA President noted a resolution is under negotiation
- Inger recalled UNEP's long involvement in combating environmental crime through CITES, Basel, Montreal Protocol

- Clarified that defining “ecocide” falls under the International Court of Justice

NGOs

- Asked about UNEP’s commitment to civic space
- UNEA President affirmed UNEP’s strong performance
- Inger reiterated that civic space must remain open and that stakeholder voices are essential

Trade Unions

- Highlighted insufficient attention to workers’ rights and the backlash workers face from poorly designed environmental policies
- Called for stronger social dialogue
- Inger noted that only the ILO has a formal tripartite structure, but UNEP will continue to support MG engagement and work with industry sectors on chemicals, waste and circular economy

Farmers

- Raised concerns about invasive species, highlighted in GEO-7
- Inger noted that invasives are one of the five key drivers of biodiversity loss under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
- UNEP is “walking the talk” by replacing exotic plants on the UN compound with native species

Closing Reflections

- Stakeholders encouraged to maintain engagement and help track UNEA progress
- Suggestions included hybrid meetings to maintain participation and informal exchanges to build trust
- UNEA President and Inger reaffirmed commitment to inclusive processes, scientific grounding and whole-of-society approaches

[15:20 Photo moment with UNEA President and UNEP ED](#)

15:30 – 15:45

Coffee break

15:45 – 16:40

Informal Dialogue between Member States (MS) and Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) - Group of Friends

Facilitators: Clive Donnley (Children & Youth) and Joost van den Broek, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to UNEP (TBC) - Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends

Reflections on the Group of Friends from UNEA 6 to UNEA7 and ideas for the future

Background and Purpose of the Group of Friends

- Clive recalled that this is not the first Group of Friends; a similar initiative existed in 2012, led by Brazil
- Historically, the Group of Friends exchanged priority areas before CPR meetings and

Regional Consultative Meetings, helping Member States articulate positions

- The Permanent Representative of the Netherlands invited stakeholders to share ideas on how to improve the Group's functioning

Key Proposals and Responses

1. Planning Ahead and Citizen Science

- Stakeholders stressed the need for earlier planning and more structured engagement
- Suggested that the Group of Friends host webinars on citizen science and other thematic areas to build shared understanding before negotiations
- Response: Strong support for the idea; webinars seen as a valuable tool for early dialogue and common ground-building

2. Transparency of Membership

- Stakeholders asked whether the list of participating countries could be disclosed
- Response: The Group is informal and open; around 35 countries are engaged, with 20–25 attending each session
- Meetings are mostly online, enabling participation from missions outside Nairobi
- Secretariat is working to create more space for such exchanges during UNEA week

3. UN Reform, Justice and Ecocide

- Clive noted that voluntary engagement should not prevent addressing key challenges
- Stakeholders emphasised the need for civil society to articulate its own vision for UN reform, including:
 - Justice and environmental rights
 - Recognition of ecocide
 - Future of the Major Groups system
 - Funding constraints limiting inclusive participation
- Response: Open discussion with Member States is encouraged; structural realignment is part of broader UN reform debates

4. Gender Commitments and Accountability

- Stakeholders asked how gender commitments from previous UNEA resolutions can be monitored
 - Clive suggested using the Group of Friends meetings to spotlight such issues for 10–15 minutes each session
 - Encouraged stakeholders to define how they want to use this space and what follow-up actions they expect

5. Format and Inclusivity

- Discussion on hybrid vs fully online formats
- Nairobi-based representatives attend in person; others join online
- A fully online format could level the playing field but raises time-zone challenges
- Group remains open to experimenting with formats to maximise inclusivity
- Stakeholders invited to propose agenda items or request deeper dives into specific topics

6. Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

- Women with disabilities raised concerns about being left out of dialogues and processes
- Called for:
 - Inclusion of organisations of persons with disabilities
 - Disaggregated data at UNEA
 - Dedicated space for disability voices
- Response:

- Currently no Major Group for persons with disabilities, but individuals can join through existing MGs
- Future UN reform could consider new MG categories
- Group of Friends is open to all and welcomes participation from disability organisations

UNEP Civil Society Unit – David Ombisi

- Acknowledged the challenges around shrinking civic space
- Emphasised that the Group of Friends provides valuable time for deeper engagement with Member States
- CSU fully supports the initiative and encourages stakeholders to use it strategically
- Accreditation processing has been delayed due to UNEA-7 preparations, but CSU will continue to process applications as quickly as possible

Closing Reflections

- The Group of Friends is an important informal space to build trust, exchange priorities and strengthen stakeholder–Member State collaboration
- Stakeholders encouraged to join, propose topics and use the platform to advance inclusion, accountability and whole-of-society engagement
- Secretariat committed to maintaining openness and exploring new formats to ensure broad participatio

16:40 – 16:50**Formal Closing of GMGSF***Facilitators: Dalia Márquez & Frankie Orona, MGFC co-chairs***Adoption of the Global Joint Statement**

- The Global Joint Statement was formally adopted, with final comments integrated into the text
- Participants were encouraged to disseminate the Statement widely within their constituencies
- Appreciation expressed to all co-chairs for their leadership and coordination throughout the process

Acknowledgements and Reflections

- Special thanks extended to Ingo for his work on the visual materials; participants were invited to view, photograph and share them
- The co-chairs emphasised that the GMGSF was not merely preparatory work, but the foundation for meaningful engagement during UNEA week

Closing Remarks – Frankie

- Highlighted that the work accomplished reflects a shared purpose: strengthening collective action and solidarity
- Stressed that the contributions of those most affected by environmental harm must remain central
- Encouraged participants to carry forward the spirit of collaboration into UNEA negotiations
- Reaffirmed the importance of science-based advocacy as essential to the integrity and credibility of the UNEA process