

Joint Statement from the Regional Representatives

Monday, December 4, 2017

Thank you, Chair.

Complementing the vital work that Major Groups do to bring civil society's priorities and perspectives to UNEA, Regional Representatives are elected by regional constituencies to connect civil society groups in our region with the UNEA process. We represent the six regions—Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and West Asia.

Through the outcomes of inclusive and meaningful regional consultation meetings, which follow each of our regions' respective processes, we have identified several common and cross-cutting issues across the regions that seriously destabilize and inhibit the advancement of a pollution free planet and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In complementary with the Global Major Groups, we bring voices of the grassroots communities that are affected by environmental destruction and pollution across the globe to the UNEA process. Thus, we urge the UN Environment and its regional offices to support civil society engagement through regional mechanisms and platforms in all regions such as the example of the Asia Pacific Regional Civil Society Engagement Mechanism, which is a proven process for advancing strategic issues through bottom-up organization by civil society, built on principles of transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness.

In closing, we underline clear calls on specific actions, which has come out of the regional consultations.

- We urge for a human rights-based approach to ending pollution, taking swift action to end extrajudicial killings and forced displacements of communities, and call for a global agreement to combat air pollution.
- [We urge] for state and corporate accountability, upholding the Polluter Pays Principle and respecting of environmental limits, providing strict regulation of extractive industries, whose activities often has devastating impacts on communities and livelihoods when regulatory protections do not exist and/or enforced.
- [We urge] for a just and equitable transition framework that would lead to the shift from dirty to sustainable and community-driven economies that will lead to the creation of decent and green jobs, protection of livelihoods and universal social protection for all, as well as environmental sustainability and gender equality.
- [We urge] for UNEA to assess environmental impacts of current liberalized model of trade and investment agreements and support green and socially just trade, for example, rules to limit e-waste being sent from high income countries to low-income countries.

- [We urge] for UNEA to hold accountable and pressure complicit states to immediately halt military activities impacting the environment and for the UN Environment to support investigative missions on the environmental infringements in war-torn areas in the world, in particular responding to the Syrian crisis, which is placing extreme stress on the natural resources and ecosystems in the region.
- Lastly, the UNEA process should uphold principles of inclusive participation and take measures to reduce lobbying from polluting industries by including ethical rules for partnerships between UN Environment and the private sector.

Muchas Gracias, Chair.