

Initial Inputs by Egypt

For the UNEA 5 Draft Ministerial Declaration

1. The fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 5) will convene in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, in the midst of its economic, social, and political impacts. It is therefore important that the declaration recognize these impacts, especially on developing countries.
2. Ministers should reaffirm their commitment to working to protect the environment despite the impacts of COVID-19: addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, land degradation, desertification, pollution, chemicals, and waste management, among other environmental challenges.
3. Recognizing the impacts of COVID-19, especially on developing countries, the declaration should stress the importance of avoiding backtracking on any previous commitments on means of implementation from developed to developing countries, especially with regards to finance, technology, and capacity building.
4. The declaration should also emphasize that support provided to developing countries in relation to addressing environmental challenges should not be compromised in favor of any potential support related to recovery from COVID-19, and shall remain independent of any such support.
5. COVID-19 national economic recovery plans should aim to be environmentally friendly, promoting green growth and sustainability. Nevertheless, COVID-19 impacts vary from one country to another, with its most drastic impacts affecting developing countries. This necessitates tailor-made recovery plans, taking into consideration national ownership, development priorities and differing capabilities of countries.
6. Ministers should reaffirm the basic principles governing development and the environment, including the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR).

7. The declaration should recognize the 50th anniversary of the establishment of UNEP, provide political support and directives to the Executive Director and the Secretariat, especially with regards to addressing its mandate and headquarters functions, including on issues that are becoming increasingly relevant such as the health-environment nexus and biodiversity and wildlife loss and their impact on human health.

8. The declaration should also recognize the status of other intergovernmental environmental processes, namely climate change and the implementation of the Paris Agreement, biodiversity and the process on the post-2020 biodiversity framework as well as chemicals and wastes.