

Comments and inputs by Italy

- What would you, as government, welcome as the most important elements and/or key messages from the ministers in the declaration to address the theme in an impactful manner?
 - Due to the new reschedules, UNEA-5 will not follow, but come before a sequence of international meetings in the global environmental agenda. Hence, the UNEA-5 session may represent an unprecedented opportunity, to deliver a clear message to the international community that all solutions for a healthy planet must be nature based and that they can provide sustainable, cost-effective, multi-purpose and flexible alternatives for various objectives. The message that working with nature, rather than against it, can further pave the way towards a more resource efficient, competitive and greener economy, and towards a healthy planet for all should have adequate resonance within the MD;
 - By February 2011 the world communities would hopefully have entered the post COVID 19 pandemic crisis recovery, and it is essential that UNEA5 outcomes could represent the occasion to pair the current strong authoritative response and shared commitment to manage such recovery to a strengthened environmental governance; to this regard, also building on the Commission (DG ENV) non-paper of 24th April 2020, it would be relevant to recall the role that the European Green Deal, including the European Green Deal Investment Plan and the Joint Transition Mechanism, as well as the Biodiversity Strategy, the Circular Economy and Zero Pollution Action Plans can play in shaping such recovery;
 - It would be relevant to address the incorporation of environmental considerations in fiscal policy and the progressive removal of Environmentally Harmful Subsidies/Fossil Fuel Subsidies (EHSs/FFSs) as key elements of an Environmental Fiscal Reform (EFR). Better alignment of taxes with environmental damages and the removal of EHS would likely improve environmental outcomes and facilitate growth-friendly tax reforms;
 - The current crisis can be perceived as a watershed that calls for an acceleration in accomplishing a different approach to development and environmental protection nexus, while showing all it is certainly possible to act differently and still be effective and efficient in resource use. Consequently, in order to accomplish this goal, UNEA-5 should call for consolidating the role of UNEP as the leading authority for the environmental protection of the planet to deliver the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the new global scenario;
 - The MD text should consider the even greater expectations that rely on the capacity to address climate action consistent with the achievement of Paris Agreement temperature goal (2 or 1,5 degrees), and with the scientific evidence. To raise the ambition relates also to the goal of enhancing capacity to adapt and of aligning the finance flows with climate actions, as in the spirit of the Action Plan on Financing Sustainable Growth, published in March 2018 by the EU Commission, which set out a comprehensive strategy to further connect finance with sustainability (i.e. EU Taxonomy, EU Green Bond standard, EU climate benchmarks) . These goals should be pursued in synergy. The text should express the confidence that the COP26 agenda will bring us technical and political balanced discussions

of all aspects- mitigation, transparency, carbon market rules, adaptation and loss and damage, and finance;

- It is essential to ensure consistency among the outcomes of the several multilateral environmental fora that will take place within the same time span; to this regard it is also essential to ensure continuity of discussion on sustainable production and consumption, energy transition and climate neutrality, adaptation, mitigation, climate action inclusiveness and the linkages of climate change with other topics such as desertification and land degradation, biodiversity and marine ecosystems restoration, food waste, in an integrated manner;
 - Last but not least the MD should contain elements to help keep the momentum alive until the celebrations of Stockholm + 50 and UNEP + 50 take place in 2022, including references to the building blocks of the draft declaration - in reference to UNGA Resolution 73/333 - UNEA5 has been appointed to endorse for the final adoption of such declaration one year later.
- How can the Environment Assembly make a significant contribution to Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals at a global scale? In doing so, you may take into account the preparation for the meeting, its conduct and follow-up, as well as its relationship to other meetings and processes.
- In order to accomplish goals, it would be relevant the sharing of best practices and lessons learned – among the countries, representatives of other multilateral fora and stakeholders;
 - In particular it would seem vital to enhance the efficiency of cooperation between thematic MEAs and UNEP/UNEA; one possible way to engage MEAs would be using UNEA as a platform for bringing these ones together so that they are able to better coordinate their agendas and action plans at a high level; another possible way could be saving and identifying room and roles of the governing bodies of MEAs in the sessions of UNEA, through the involvement of their respective presidents of the COPs and bureaus. This could also help UNEA and MEAs develop coordinated inputs for HLPF.