



UNEA -5

SUGGESTED ELEMENTS OF THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

Global Policy and Advocacy, 12 May

Summary

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals is our global commitment to build a sustainable future for everyone. The Agenda raises the ambition for the world we want, a world where dignity, peace and prosperity is a reality for all. We have seen progress in many areas but current trends show that we are not acting fast enough. Since 2015, trends on a number of SDGs are going backwards, notably on the environment related SDG 13, SDG 14 and SDG 15. Biodiversity loss is accelerating with 1 million species at risk of extinction in the coming decades. According to IPBES (2019), the current negative trends in biodiversity and ecosystems will undermine progress towards 80% of assessed SDG targets relating to poverty, hunger, health, water, cities, climate, oceans and land. Nature underpins our societies, our economies and our future; therefore nature loss not only threatens our well-being but exacerbates existing megatrends impacting humanity such as inequality and climate change. At the same time, reversing nature loss and protecting and restoring nature is a major opportunity to accelerate progress on SDGs. For example, coral reefs occupy one tenth of the area of the ocean but support a quarter of all species in the ocean. They also provide food, livelihoods and numerous ecosystem services, such as protection from natural disasters, to hundreds of millions of people. Despite this, half of the world's shallow water coral reefs have already been lost.

The period 2020 – 2030 is our remaining window of opportunity for action to ensure we achieve the SDGs. Transformative actions are needed to accelerate progress on SDGs. WWF therefore strongly welcomes the theme of UNEA-5; **Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals** as good basis for actions to deliver on the environmental dimension and secure the attainment of the SDGs.

We recommend that the Ministerial Declaration of UNEA-5 is action oriented and provide the following element to be considered for the Ministerial Declaration.

A. *What would you, as government/organization/stakeholder, welcome as the most important elements and /or key messages from the ministers in the declaration to address the theme in an impactful manner?*

- Strong acknowledgment of the planetary emergency of interrelated global challenges of the rapid loss of nature loss as well as climate change, health and food crises and the negative impacts of unsustainable production and consumption
- Strong acknowledgement that nature underpins the SDGs and that without urgent action to reverse the loss of biodiversity by 2030, the SDGs will not be achieved; further
- Commitment to implement the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

- Scaling up nature based solutions for climate, people and nature
- Commitment to the long-term objective of eliminating discharge of plastic into the marine environment by 2030, and stress the importance of a binding international framework to achieve that goal.
- Strong message on the need for a whole of government approach and whole of society approach to tackling, requiring action by all economic sectors and by all actors; government, civil society, business and individuals led by strong binding commitments from Heads of State and Government
- Commitment to use Stockholm +50 and UNEP +50 as a key opportunity to anchor and accelerate transformational and systems change and improve global regulatory frameworks
- Strong commitment for a green & blue covid-19 economic recovery, including;
 - o Urgent actions to reduce or eliminate the risk of recurrence of zoonotic pandemics by protection of ecosystems and wild species and sustainable food production.
 - o greening of the economic stimulus programmes implemented to help economies recover from the adverse impacts of COVID-19
 - o Ecosystem restoration

B. 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.

- Adopt decisions and support implementation of strong decisions and advance effective international frameworks to support a whole of government approach and whole of society approach to tackling the planetary emergency, led by strong commitments from Heads of State and Government; requiring action by all economic sectors and by all actors; government, civil society, business and individuals;
 - o Through the science - policy - business forum, Multistakeholder forums and side events, provide an enhanced opportunity for showcase of solutions and exchange of knowledge from key sectors and stakeholders, including finance, agriculture, energy and infrastructure as well as cities
- Identification and promote implementation of key elements to ensure a green/blue economic recovery, including measures to mitigate the risks of future pandemics and addressing drivers of zoonotic disease exposure - land-use change, exploitation of wildlife: markets, trade, and farming, intensification of agriculture, particularly domestic livestock production, climate change and governance.
- Adopt a mandate for negotiations of a new legally binding international agreement to combat marine plastic pollution. The development of a new binding international agreement on marine plastic pollution is the single largest contribution to address the plastic pollution crisis at a global level and would directly address global governance gaps identified by UNEP.