

NGO intervention Block 3 Wednesday 22 of July 2020

3) Env Rule of Law (Rec: 8-14-17)

Slot 1

Thank you chair and good afternoon delegates

My name is Omoyemen Lucia Odigie-Emmanuel, from the Centre for Human Rights and Climate Change Research, Nigeria. I speak as a representative of the NGO Major Group. Our intervention integrates a summary of our views on strengthening environmental rule of law, and ensuring that environmental laws are proactive, in preventing and taking precautionary measures against harm to the environment and ensuring coherence with the SDGs, while setting the protection of human rights as standard of obligation.

We already asked for an action oriented Political Declaration. In the face of current global reality we emphasize the need to take urgent action to put in place a binding single agreement on the environment which is consistent with the intent, purpose and spirit of the initial call for a global pact on the environment (GPE).

Having an effective environmental rule of law is dependent on promoting access to quality environmental information and data needed for participation in decision making, promoting open government and public participation in environmental decision-making and promoting access to justice founded on supremacy of law, equality before the law and accountability to the law. And it requires that those that engage are not threatened or harmed.

UNEP should support member states in their implementation of international environmental law by putting in place programmes that builds and develops their capacity for transformative leadership in Environmental Governance and the rule of law and promotes production and dissemination of quality environmental information, protection of freedom of expression, information, association and assembly in environmental matters, promoting exchange of data and scientific knowledge about ecosystems and the impact of human activities.

UNEP should take leadership role in assisting Member States and members of Specialized Agencies and governing bodies to develop an Integrated Action Plan for coherent implementation of MEAs which builds coherence among fragmented international environmental laws and other provisions including the recommendations of the international law commission on principles of law, integrates the 13 principles set out in the IUCN World Declaration on the Environmental Rule of Law, the SDGs, the Aarhus Convention and other MEAs while also promoting consistency with the initial draft of the Global Pact.

Recognizing the need for a timely, impartial and accessible dispute resolution mechanism in environmental matters, we request that UN Environment assists member states to explore the possibility of establishing an integrated International

Court of the Environment which operates as a multi door court house for dispute resolution.

We reiterate our wish to be aligned with other UN processes on environmental rights and principles, especially the work that the Special Rapporteurs on Environment and Human Rights already did.

UNEP can support member state in their implementation of international environmental law by engaging other sectors of stakeholders including major groups in promoting environmental human rights education and awareness at the international, regional and national level in order to promote understanding, strengthen political will, prepare younger generations and inspire in everyone a responsible conduct in protecting and improving the environment.

Thank you

SLOT 2:

4) Env Rule of Law (Rec: 8-14-17)

Montevideo Programme V

Thank you Chair and Delegates,

I'm Rob Wheeler, from the Global Ecovillage Network, I am speaking on behalf of a Group of NGOs, in regards to the sustainable development principles and Montevideo Programme, we would like to suggest that UNEP could be asked to draft and distribute a report on best practices in responding to the Principles focusing on the best examples being implemented at all levels of governance. UNEP could also be asked to develop a process to welcome input and determine the ways in which upholding and respecting the Principles of international environmental law are essential for dealing adequately with our rapidly increasing and urgent local to global environmental challenges.

UNEP could also be tasked with developing a report that describes the extent to which each country and region has developed and put sufficient environmental legislation and regulations in place in order to be able to meet each of the Rio Conventions and all of the other MEAs and the SDGs. The results from such a study and report should be posted on the Montevideo website within the Law and Environment Assistance Platform. UNEP should also be tasked with upgrading and updating the Platform and all of the UN Member States should commit to providing current information on the state of their environmental legislation and law.

All countries should be encouraged, and make a commitment, to include current contact information for their country focal points including emails, phone numbers and web links to the departments they are associated with, along with an overview and links to all of their country's primary environmental legislation and regulations. This should include a listing of, and links to, their primary

environmental agencies or departments and to the primary information on their administrative actions on environmental matters. Contact information for these agencies should be included as well, along with that for their primary parliamentary committees that deal with environmental issues and matters as well.

UNEP could be asked to support the focal points to help document best practices regularly so that they can be shared amongst themselves as a tool for information exchange and learning. This will also inform major groups and enable them to participate, track progress and support implementation.

Making such information easily accessible will help the international community to be able to significantly strengthen and implement national and international environmental legislation and law so that we are all able to help meet the many urgent commitments that our governments have made on behalf of all of the world's people.

We urge for a concrete commitment in the Political Declaration to take further actions required and necessary to deliver the legal framework to recognise environmental rights. This will help us to return to and live within all of the planetary boundaries and the natural carrying capacity of the Earth.

Thank you