

## Intervention at the Cluster-1 Governance of *First informal substantive consultation meeting on United Nations General Assembly resolution 73/333*

**21st July, 2020**

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Co-chairs, distinguished delegates,

For children and youth, climate change and environmental degradation is a matter of justice, and inter-generational equity. Those that have often contributed least to the problem, among which children, continue to bear the maximum impacts. Young people, especially girl children, young migrants, children, Indigenous youth groups, continue to be on the frontline of impacts.

Specifically in the context of 73/333 we want to draw attention on some key issues -

The first aspect is: how do we increase the relevance of the UNEP system as a whole. From being an institution that laid foundations for SDG goal 12, mainstreamed the green economy, the success in chemicals and waste agenda, to being an institution that, in our perspective, continues to find “a place” for itself in the evolving environmental context, we have a lot to reflect. Reflect on successes, on milestones, and on what can be done better. UNEP needs to be strengthened as an institution that promotes policy coherence across environmental instruments at all relevant levels, identifies and addresses implementation challenges.

How UNEP engages itself with the stakeholders. Engagement cannot be ad hoc and preferential, it needs to be rights-based, designated, and not contingent on capacity or resources of the stakeholders being engagement: a farmers group from developing country must have same positioning as a resourceful think tank. Major Groups modality provides this space within the UNEP system, it is important to mainstream this within the broader environmental agenda.

Operationally this means -

- Stepping up contributions from member states to support MGOS engagement
- Engaging MGOS in the implementation of the UNEA resolutions and reporting those - as a part of the reporting portal being built
- Providing a designated space and resources for self organised groups

- Structurally including them in the implementation of nature conservation through capacity building and strengthening of local and regional actors through transnational cooperation and the provision of resources.

Children and Youth movements are continuing to search for a voice within the system. While over the last 2 years we have seen young people taking to streets, calling for climate justice, the spaces for their political participation continue to shrink. One could say that is true for broader civil society participation as well.

Therefore, as we move to Stockholm+50, we need to shift the narrative of young people and children to being changemakers and leaders of today. And they are already taking action, from community organising, to scientific research, from running for the office to being young entrepreneurs, and starting their own initiatives - they are generating ripples globally.

Thank you co chairs.

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