

## **Adoption of UNGA Resolution A.74/L.49**

### **Scope, format, modalities and organization of the UN Summit on Biodiversity**

#### **Explanation of Position by the European Union and its Member States**



The European Union and its Member States very much welcome today's adoption of the GA Resolution on the modalities of the UN Summit on Biodiversity. These were long and difficult discussions, considering that the Summit was mandated by UNGA already in 2018 and follows a request from the 14<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Sharm el Sheikh.

We would like to thank the co-facilitators of Costa Rica and Italy for all their efforts to help us reach consensus.

Agreeing on the Summit modalities today is urgent: The Summit is an important milestone on the way to a new ambitious post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. We need the remaining months for an effective preparation of the Summit, in particular under the difficult circumstances of the current Covid 19 crisis.

Biodiversity vanishes globally at a shocking rate with dramatic impact on economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life. Healthy ecosystems are a key component for effectively addressing climate change and a prerequisite for achieving the SDGs. As increasingly shown by scientific research, they also have a considerable impact on public health, as evidenced in the link between biodiversity loss and the increased risk of pandemic diseases.

Halting biodiversity loss and mainstreaming biodiversity into all policies will require a whole-of-government commitment, and ambition at the highest political level. Therefore, we welcome very much that the Summit will take place early in the 2020 high level week. This will allow many Heads of State and Government to participate and to demonstrate their ambition to address the biodiversity crisis.

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) has been clear in identifying the key drivers of the biodiversity loss – land and sea use change, overexploitation, climate change, pollution and invasive alien species. We will need to address the drivers much more effectively than in the past. Otherwise we will just cure symptoms, not the root causes of the biodiversity crisis. We therefore regret that we could not reach consensus on dedicating a specific leaders' dialogue to the topic. Addressing the drivers will nevertheless need to be a focus of the Summit.

The European Union and its Member States would have preferred to see stronger language on the expected outcome of the Summit in the resolution. But the outcome is in our hands. The Summit will provide a unique platform to collect commitments – political and/or financial - from leaders in governments and in the private sector on how they intend to contribute to addressing the biodiversity crisis.

Finally, a word on the importance of civil society: Addressing biodiversity loss needs the entire society. The continued strong engagement of civil society, indigenous peoples and local communities, human rights defenders and youth is crucial for any solutions – they are indispensable drivers of change. The same goes for the private sector. Therefore, their participation in the Summit is of vital importance. We call upon all Delegations to facilitate the effective participation of all relevant stakeholders in the run up to and during the Summit.

The European Union and its Member States remain committed to working with all our partners towards a successful and impactful Summit before the CBD Conference of the Parties that will agree the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Visibility for the Summit in the run up to and during the event is important to ensure an ambitious outcome. We must jointly demonstrate that this UN Summit is more than a one-off event. It should and it can make a long-term contribution to addressing the biodiversity crisis and to launching the transformative changes needed to protect, restore and sustainably use nature in the future.