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General Assembly High-Level Thematic Debate:

Moment for Nature

19 July 2022, UNHQ New York

President of the General Assembly's Summary

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Introduction

The President of the General Assembly (the PGA) H.E. Mr. Abdulla SHAHID convened the High-level Thematic Debate entitled “**Moment for Nature**” in the General Assembly Hall, United Nations Headquarters on Tuesday, 19 July 2022. The Debate was convened pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 72/313 of 17 September 2018, entitled “Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly”.¹ The Debate aimed to support achieving the level of cohesion needed among the global environmental work streams to keep the 1.5 degrees target alive, and rapidly accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (the SDGs) and resilient COVID-19 recoveries. To do so, the Debate presented solutions to common bottlenecks affecting the entire environmental agenda; highlighted best practices and transformative partnerships that break the siloes and build the required cross-cutting technical, skilling and financial capacities that could accelerate implementation on all fronts to the level needed; and reinforced the views of a range of stakeholders, particularly young people.

The PGA issued a Concept Note on key framing issues and objectives of the high-level meeting,² informed both by broad consultations with the UN system and a background document the PGA’s office requested UNEP to prepare **focusing on multilateral environmental meetings held during the 76th session of the General Assembly**, providing a **non-exhaustive overview** of issues addressed in the commitments and outcome documents of the following meetings:

1. The 26th Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP26)
2. The 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP15, part 1)
3. The 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD, COP15)
4. The 2022 UN Ocean Conference
5. The UN Food Systems Summit
6. The Sustainable Transportation Conference
7. The High-level Dialogue on Energy
8. The resumed Fifth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA5.2)
9. The special session of UNEA to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of UNEP (UNEP@50)
10. The Stockholm +50 International Meeting

The background documents are attached as an annex to this summary.

Two side events were held to support the Moment for Nature’s goals; ‘The Hope Forum’, convened by ART 2030 during the 59th Venice Biennale on 22 April 2022, to facilitate greater partnerships with the art and culture sectors for urgent environmental action,³ and the launch of the New Zero

¹ The resolution “recognizes the value of holding interactive inclusive thematic debates on current issues of critical importance to the international community, and calls upon the President of the General Assembly to organize such debates in close consultation with the General Committee and Member States”.

² The concept note and all related documents are available on the thematic debate’s official webpage:

<https://www.un.org/pga/76/high-level-thematic-debate-of-the-general-assembly-moment-for-nature/>

³ <http://www.art2030.org/projects/the-hope-forum>

World Campaign in UN Headquarters on 19 July 2022, aimed to shift the narrative on climate change by elevating future-focused solutions for the benefit of society and the planet.⁴

Structure

The Debate's programme consisted of:

- Opening Remarks by high-level speakers from the UN System;
- Segment 1 entitled "Including Young People for Intergenerational Coalitions";
- Segment 2 entitled "Cultivating Coherent System-wide Responses to Tackle Interlinked Planetary Crises", with two panels on *Coordinating Multilateral Approaches* and *Integrated Approaches at National and Subnational Levels*;
- Segment 3 entitled "Facilitating Urgent, Large-Scale Action to Bridge the Gap Between Commitments and Results", with two panels on *Bridging the Biggest Gaps* and *Innovation to Create Opportunities for All*; and
- Segment 4, entitled "Engaging and Empowering All Relevant Stakeholders: Simplifying Messages for Greater Partnerships".⁵

In order to integrate youth voices and concerns, a number of youth civil society representatives were invited to share questions and reflections throughout the discussions.

Key Messages

The Debate's key messages are informed by the statements of all speakers grouped under the following thematic areas:⁶

Leveraging Convening Power to Meet Targets

- The collapse of our planetary systems remains the most alarming and rapidly escalating crisis humanity is facing. Irreversible and cascading tipping points in the Earth's ability to self-regulate might be passed within a decade. We have just 89 months to halve global emissions and avoid catastrophic climate change, including drastic impacts on global food and water security, by limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degrees. To do so, we need commitments that will deliver a reduction of emissions by 45% by 2030, so we can reach net zero emissions by mid-century. Current national commitments point to an increase of almost 14% this decade. We must urgently change course.
- Despite these challenges, our species has the capacity to reach all the financing, skilling and technological capabilities needed to avert catastrophe and realize the future we dream of. By convening the best of humanity's ingenuity and determination, the General Assembly can

⁴ <https://thezeroworld.org/>

⁵ The Debate's full programme is available on <https://www.un.org/pga/76/2022/07/18/letter-from-the-president-of-the-general-assembly-moment-for-nature-final-programme/>

⁶ Recordings of thematic debate are available on <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k10/k10u5fq98e> and <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k11/k11lm3je8k>. Member State remarks submitted to e-statements are available on <https://journal.un.org/classic/viewdetails/en/officials/d3f86fe5-c7ad-468d-142a-08da19f20252/statements> and <https://journal.un.org/classic/viewdetails/en/officials/9b5c2057-9e2d-400c-1428-08da19f20252/statements>

spotlight best practices and facilitate partnerships among the broader global community at the scale and breadth of ambition needed, and can link this to the many other challenges we face. The Assembly has a vital role in raising awareness, fostering political consensus, giving strategic direction to the UN system, and galvanizing momentum across all stakeholders.

- Human rights have a proven track record as a catalyst for transformative change, used by abolitionists, women and girls, and anti-apartheid and civil rights movements to achieve great progress towards equality. The General Assembly's recognition of the human right to a healthy environment comes with a toolkit of procedural rights including access to information and public participation in decision-making and access to justice, which empowers all people - including Indigenous peoples, and other local communities - to realize their rights while protecting nature.

Sustainable Consumption and Production

- Over 65% of Greenhouse Gas emissions are generated from the materials necessary to bring products and services to the point of consumption, while less than a third are associated with energy consumption at end-use. Implementing circular economy under an ambitious scenario in just 5 key areas (cement, aluminium, steel, plastics, and food) can eliminate almost half of the emissions from the production of goods – 9.3 billion tonnes of CO₂e by 2050 – equivalent to cutting all transport emissions to zero.
- According to the International Resources Panel, sustainable consumption and production, supported by circular economy approaches and other sustainable policy models, can, among others, increase incomes by an average of 8% and 13% in low- and medium-income countries respectively by 2060, and by 4% in high-income countries. It can also help mitigate climate change by reducing GHG emissions by up to 90% by 2060 and have positive impacts on biodiversity, health and pollution. The 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production will support Member States in the implementation of policies towards sustainability.
- We need to close the biodiversity finance gap of approximately \$700 billion dollars a year by 2030. And we must eliminate the annual \$500 billion dollars of harmful subsidies and redirect them towards incentivizing biodiversity-positive activities. The World Trade Organization agreement on harmful fishery subsidies is an example of the kind of transformative action possible

Engaging Youth: Intergenerational Coalitions

- Environmental action must not be framed as an intergenerational conflict; the only solution is working intergenerationally, as our shared responsibility towards future generations.
- Youth are a driving force for urgent action on our interlinked planetary crises through activism and mobilizing, but they must take part in decision making at all levels, not only as representatives of their age group, but to empower them as qualified professionals. Member States are therefore urged to include youth in their national delegations.

- Youth demands can be adapted to the legal contexts they are navigating in the UN and policy making deliberations processes at different levels.
- Violence against indigenous land defenders threatens and ends lives and must be addressed, because these activists have worked for decades to protect indigenous lands for the benefit of the world. Contradictions in action on the SDGs exist, as evidenced by the extraction of resources like lithium, planned for in energy transitions, from indigenous lands when indigenous peoples fear such mining will destroy ecosystems. New approaches are necessary to find paths forward.

Coordination At All Levels

- There is need for much greater cooperation and collaboration between the three Rio Conventions on Climate, Biodiversity and Land, including for their decisions and actions to refer to each other, to lead to political mandates for more coherent approaches.
- It is time to explore merging national environmental action plans, particularly Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs),⁷ Land Degradation Neutrality Plans (LDNs),⁸ and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs),⁹ into single unified strategies and implementation plans at country levels, which will also reduce national reporting burdens. Mapping overlapping challenges can enable achieving economies of scale for transformative investments, and align programs and policies at national, regional, and global scales to meet the Conventions' objectives. Bringing together the Convention's national focal points, as well as all associated stakeholder networks to share lessons learned, and enhancing negotiators' capacities, are all key to do so.
- The Climate and Ocean agendas are becoming more integrated; in recognition that ocean action can lead to 21% of climate mitigation needed
- Agro-food systems are some of the most promising areas for integrated action on climate, biodiversity and land use. The World Bank estimates that negative impacts associated with the way the current food system operates are at least \$6 trillion. We need a transformative financial architecture to achieve food systems that support environmental action and the SDGs, and are profitable, equitable, resilient, and healthy.
- The UN is a Member State-led organisation, therefore coordination across environmental work strands also depends on Member State action. One-Country Responses are needed, whereby governments at various levels and UN entities all work together as one. This is difficult to put into practice but is the only way to achieve the needed results. Furthermore, the convening role of UN Resident Coordinators must be fully leveraged to accelerate multi-stakeholder partnership formation and implementation efforts.

⁷ <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/nationally-determined-contributions-ndcs/nationally-determined-contributions-ndcs>

⁸ <https://www.unccd.int/land-and-life/land-degradation-neutrality/projects-programmes/ldn-target-setting>

⁹ <https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/>

- It is important that no group within society feels that they are being disadvantaged or unfairly targeted by climate policies, otherwise there won't be public support for just green transitions. Empowering people by providing them with the means of production, so they benefit materially and feel they are part of the solutions, is a positive approach that more effectively creates opportunities rather than just relying only on bans or taxation.

Bridging Capacity Gaps

- *Financing*: applying the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities is vital to successful multilateral efforts. Solidarity is needed now more than ever to rapidly expand all countries' capacities to address our interlinked planetary crises. Commitments made, including for 100 billion dollars in annual climate support, must be fulfilled.
- The UN's convening power must be fully leveraged to bring expertise to best support Member states, banks, investors, and SMEs leading on sustainability in areas such as carbon markets; risk-financing strategies with a focus on inclusive insurance; SDG investor maps to identify investment priorities through local insights; and technical advice to facilitate the adoption of the best available technology and practices.
- Taxonomies defining what qualifies as sustainable finance and "green", created in consultation with all stakeholders, are needed for sustainable investment eco-systems.
- *Skilling*. The past 5 years have seen significant annual increases in demand for green skills, but the lack of relevant education and training abilities has led to a lack of adequate supply, leading to a structural labour market mismatch that must be urgently addressed.
- There is a gulf between countries, with green skills highly concentrated in developed countries, with three times the occurrence. Making actionable data on green skills widely accessible is necessary. The Development Data Partnership focuses on this area.
- *Science & Technology*. Many effective and scalable technological solutions to the interlinked challenges already exist. It is important to focus on high-impact areas through strategically synergistic approaches to achieve positive ripple affects across all the environmental work streams and the SDGs.
- Building on the numerous related UN summits and conferences, it is necessary to achieve progress on advancing science cooperation and communicating solutions and best practices on ecosystem conservation on land and sea and sustainable, global early warning systems for adaptation and disaster risk reduction, and sustainable transportation. Multi-stakeholder coalitions, and technology transfer and knowledge sharing are key.
- The existential engineering challenges facing us—regarding energy production and storage, heating, cooling, and ventilation, moving through water and air with most efficiency, and creating strong, lightweight, biodegradable materials—have all been solved by the plants, animals, and microbes all around us. With the biodiversity crisis continuing unabated, we are

in danger, not only of disrupting ecosystem services that support all life on Earth, but of losing Nature's sustainable engineering solutions.

- We must learn from all the suffering, the millions of lives lost from HIV-AIDS, and Covid-19 and the trillions of dollars lost to address the main drivers of zoonoses transmission.

Simplifying Messages for Greater Partnerships

- We are simultaneously in the worst nightmare possible, and at a time of the greatest hope possible, and the choice is for us to make. Per the UN Charter, The United Nations and General Assembly's purposes are "To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations" in the attainment of common ends.
- Rapid shifts in technology and the consumption and distribution of news and information over the past 15 years led to adaptations in how narratives are formed and shared, and audiences are engaged. This 'Attention Economy' is focused on 'buying' attention. As people have become exhausted due to more demands on their attention and requests for their engagement abounded, broadly speaking message purveyors have transitioned to appealing to fear rather than hope.
- The international language of Climate Change does not resonate with the average people, who get turned off by the jargon, and doom and gloom approach. Focusing on problems does not generate action and is overwhelming and demoralizing.
- Key principles to most effectively communicate include avoiding generalized messages which are ineffective and developing personalized and customized messages for different target audiences and delivering them where audiences are. Centering audiences as the main actors in narratives, through community-driven messaging that allows them to see themselves and their values reflected, better incentivizes action. Relatedly, centering the stories of people in the field who are making a difference on the ground is the best means to inspire popular action.
- Surveys demonstrate that globally, youth trust the United Nations but don't understand its work, or how to engage or partner with it; they must be better engaged and activated. Research also indicates that documentary films are the most powerful tools for climate advocacy; our efforts and coalitions must adapt accordingly. Unlocking hearts and minds out of trauma and fear requires hopeful, interactive, educational, and entertaining approaches.
- We must acknowledge perceptions that the UN is not doing enough, by changing that narrative and communicating our successes better. This is important to inspire greater stakeholder engagement with multilateral efforts on urgent environmental action.
- Art and culture are essential to reach the Global Goals because they allow ideas to transcend differences, borders, and convictions. They challenge and move audiences to revisit their conceptions and to reconsider their choices. Artists are capable of transforming very complex content into something we can relate to and perceive through all our senses.

- The creative and communications industries must also address wasteful consumption and production matters by aligning their practices with global environmental commitments. Initiatives in the arts and culture and tv and film industries are growing and need greater multi-stakeholder engagement and support. Multi-stakeholder coalitions are needed, and platforms like music and film festivals can be leveraged as convening moments where commitments are made, updates are shared, and specific pro-nature actions are incentivized or amplified.

Looking Forward

- COP27, (“the African COP”), to be held in Egypt this November, offers a vital opportunity to focus on the specific challenges facing the continent as well as the massive opportunities for transformation. Despite contributing less than 4% of global GhG emissions, Africa is the region most affected by climate change and environmental degradation. Per the African Development Bank (the ADB), the continent loses between 5% and 15% of its GDP to climate change. The GDP exposure in African nations vulnerable to extreme climate patterns is projected to grow from \$895 billion in 2018 to about \$1.4 trillion in 2023—nearly half of the continent’s GDP
- CBD COP15 part 2 will conclude the Global Biodiversity Framework, which must include an ambitious package of goals and targets that moves action for nature beyond the environmental ‘bubble’, and involve every sector, company and investor that impacts or depends on nature to address the key drivers of nature loss. Recent meetings have made progress, but high-level political engagement is needed to reach compromises
- We must ensure that every single meeting is leveraged to drive further action, cooperation, and implementation. We must ask ourselves what action the General Assembly and all the relevant international bodies can take to capture this momentum and successfully implement meaningful change. This moment must be turned into a movement.

Opening Remarks

H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid, President of the United Nations General Assembly.¹⁰ Convening this debate was a pledge made during my campaign for this office, to spotlight the synergies between the various environmental work streams that were discussed throughout the General Assembly’s 76th session. Despite the dire situation and well-known consequences of inaction, hope stems from a conviction that our species truly does have the capabilities to change our world, including through technologies that were considered inconceivable in decades and centuries past. Renewable energy was belittled as too ineffectual or expensive, but now it powers vehicles and homes the world over and will soon run entire cities and countries. The initiatives and partnerships highlighted in this meeting are concrete proposals to overcome the various capacity gaps standing between us and the world we dream of for our children and all future generations. The Sustainable Development Goals – the common thread that binds all our efforts – are the blueprint for recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. We have just 89 months to halve global emissions and avoid catastrophic climate change by limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degrees. The UN General Assembly has a vital role in

¹⁰ <https://www.un.org/pga/76/2022/07/19/opening-remarks-at-moment-for-nature-high-level-thematic-debate/>

raising awareness, fostering political consensus, galvanizing momentum, and giving strategic direction to the UN system. By convening the best of humanity's ingenuity and determination, this Assembly can facilitate partnerships among the broader global community at the scale and breadth of ambition needed and can link this to the many other challenges we face. As technology gives humanity greater insight into our universe and the stars, we must channel our ingenuity and resources to not only survive but to thrive; to ensure that our children's children continue to reach further than we can only dream, not out of necessity, but out of curiosity.

H.E. Mr. António Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations.¹¹ A healthy planet is the foundation for human well-being, sustainable development, and long-term prosperity. But we face a triple crisis of climate disruption, biodiversity loss and pollution. One million species of plants and animals are at risk with extinction, threatening the livelihood of millions. The global food system is a primary driver of this loss. Three-quarters of the land and two-thirds of the ocean are adversely impacted by human activity. Some 3.2 billion people are affected by land degradation. Our ways of life – based on producing, consuming, discarding, and polluting – have brought us to this dire state of affairs. Since human activities are at the root of this planetary emergency, that means we also hold the key to the solutions. At the COP 27 climate conference in Egypt, we need commitments that will deliver a reduction of emissions by 45% by 2030 so we can reach net zero emissions by mid-century. Current national commitments point to an increase of almost 14% this decade; that spells catastrophe. At the COP 15 biodiversity conference in Montreal, we need a bold, global agreement that tackles the key drivers of biodiversity loss. We need to close the biodiversity finance gap of approximately \$700 billion dollars a year by 2030. And we must eliminate the annual \$500 billion dollars of harmful subsidies and redirect them towards incentivizing biodiversity-positive activities. I welcome the recent [Declaration from the Lisbon 2022 Ocean Conference](#),¹² and countries' commitment to forging [an international, legally binding agreement on plastic pollution by 2024](#).¹³ We must match commitments with credible, verifiable actions and finance. Let's seize this Moment for Nature for that.

H.E. Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile, President of the Economic and Social Council. All regions of the world are plagued by disaster after another, including heat waves, wildfires and floods leading to losses of lives and property. The COVID-19 pandemic is a demonstration of the devastating impact of zoonotic diseases and proof of our unbalanced relationship with nature. [The 2022 UN High-level Political Forum](#) discussed SDGs 14 and 15 on life on land and under the sea respectively in depth,¹⁴ highlighting scientific analysis and action taken by governments, multi-lateral partnerships and multi-stakeholder engagement and local communities to safeguard the oceans. There was deep disappointment that many global targets were not met by 2020, and the oceans continue to struggle against increased acidification, eutrophication and plastic pollution which are endangering the world's largest ecosystem, and life on this planet. The same assessments were given in relation to global biodiversity, deforestation, and land degradation. These trends threaten our subsistence needs and employment opportunities, particularly for the most vulnerable.

¹¹ <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2022-07-19/secretary-generals-video-message-moment-for-nature-high-level-thematic-debate-of-the-general-assembly>

¹² <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/ocean2022/political-declaration>

¹³ <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/historic-day-campaign-beat-plastic-pollution-nations-commit-develop>

¹⁴ <https://hlpf.un.org/2022>

Transformative change is needed towards sustainable consumption and production and nature-sensitive economic choices. We can either transition or continue until we destroy humankind.

Ms. Amina J. Mohamed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations.¹⁵ We need holistic approaches toward addressing the drivers of our cross-cutting environmental degradation that considers the impacts on nature in how we address food and energy systems. Nature's contributions to human health and wellbeing must be acknowledged in our metrics and investment decisions through whole-of-society approaches. Strengthening nature's capacity to protect us from hazards and extreme events requires accelerating implementation of national restoration policies, programs and plans for marine and terrestrial ecosystems while creating new jobs, tackling poverty and improving sustainable development. Harmful subsidies must be eliminated, phased out or reformed, including by repurposing and redirecting them towards nature-positive activities. [The World Trade Organization agreement on harmful fishery subsidies](#) is an example of what we can achieve.¹⁶

Ms. Ingrid Andersen, Executive Director, UNEP.¹⁷ Through [the Glasgow Declaration](#), adopted at UNFCCC COP26,¹⁸ world leaders committed more than USD 19 billion to help protect and restore forests globally – including more than USD 1 billion to help indigenous peoples and local communities, the best stewards of nature, get more involved. Businesses and financial institutions, meanwhile, stepped up with commitments to protect forests by adjusting their business models and portfolios. At the [Fifth UN Environment Assembly](#) earlier this year, a package of resolutions gave impetus to the movement for nature. An agreed multilateral definition of nature-based solutions provided us with a real basis to start building such solutions. We also saw the establishment of a new panel, the triplet to the IPCC on climate and to IPBES on biodiversity, that will focus on pollution from chemicals and waste that are poisoning our planet. We also saw resolutions ranging from sustainable lakes management to animal welfare and biodiversity and health. [Stockholm+50](#), in June, showed us that the world is ready to commit to transform our economies so that they contribute to a healthy planet, and so to human well-being, peace and prosperity. The recently concluded [Fourth Open-ended Working Group on the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#) in Nairobi brought some progress. A lot of work remains to be concluded during the next intersessional period. From December 5-17, the world will gather for [CBD COP15](#), in Montreal, the seat of the Biodiversity Convention Secretariat, under the Presidency of the Government of China, to conclude the Global Biodiversity Framework. The framework must come with an ambitious package of goals and targets that moves action for nature beyond the environmental bubble. It is only by involving every sector, company and investor that impacts or depends on nature that we will address the key drivers of nature loss. We need to know that commitments are being delivered, and we need to know where additional support is needed to make progress. Member States are deliberating in New York on the adoption at the General Assembly, of the universal human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment, which sustains humanity and the other rights we enjoy.¹⁹

¹⁵ <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/dsg/statement/2022-07-19/deputy-secretary-generals-remarks-the-high-level-thematic-debate-of-the-general-assembly-moment-for-nature-prepared-for-delivery>

¹⁶ https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/rulesneg_e/fish_e/fish_e.htm

¹⁷ <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/speech/finding-common-ground-nature>

¹⁸ <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-glasgow-climate-pact-key-outcomes-from-cop26>

¹⁹ This resolution was adopted by the General Assembly on 28 July 2022 - <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/07/1123482>

Segment 1: Including Young People for Intergenerational Coalitions

This segment featured leading regional networks working to empower youth and reflect their priorities, to share their experiences on urgently accelerating integrated approaches to secure humanity's future, and to make calls for urgent action, solidarity and partnership.

Moderator: Ms. Angelique Pouponneau, Deputy AOSIS Fellowship Director & Policy Advisor to AOSIS, Environmental Lawyer. Building the capacities of early-career professionals is key, as is not treating youth as separate from main multilateral meetings but rather including them in national delegations. Youth are community-builders, innovators, peacebuilders, experts; and it is only through intergenerational coalitions that leverage their powers will we achieve the future we want. How are each of you empowering young people? How would you propose that we break down the siloes and start building a coordinated, integrated, intergenerational approach?

Ms. Xiye Batista, Organizer for Fridays For Future, Co-founder, Re-Earth Initiative. A priority for youth activists is to change the narrative, including that youth have only been striking and mobilizing; youth must take part in decision making at all levels. To be most successful, youth's language and demands from protests must be tailored to the legal contexts they are navigating in the UN and policy making deliberations at national levels. At Stockholm +50, youth activists shared demands for specific actions:²⁰ Governments should (1) immediately establish a [fossil-fuel non proliferation treaty](#)²¹ to phase out fossil fuels, while offering just transition to communities that depend on them; (2) introduce large-scale environmental destruction, Ecocide, as a crime in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court; (3) developed countries must fulfil the 100 billion pledge in annual climate financing. Climate change is youth's highest priority and our shared responsibility towards future generations.

Ms. Elizabeth Gulugulu, Global South YounGO Focal Point. Breaking down the siloes will require more intergenerational dialogues to fill information gaps, so all actors are aware of who is doing what and act accordingly. Relatedly, it is important to document youth-led initiatives on the ground, which YounGO is working on, to support their efforts to expansion, capacity building and resourcing, particularly for reforestation and carbon-sink projects. Young people also need safe spaces for innovation, training, and upskilling. They also play a role in ensuring that their governments and the UN are held accountable and fulfill their pledges. Indigenous knowledge systems and methods must be preserved through dialogue with indigenous peoples on how they successfully protected their ecosystems.

Ms. Helena Gualinga, Indigenous Leader, Amazonia. Our highest priority is working on human rights and indigenous rights, because without indigenous peoples there are no protected areas, and without protected areas there will be even greater threats to global climate action. Indigenous mindsets prioritize balance and coexistence with nature, rather than living apart from nature. Violence against indigenous land defenders threatens and ends lives. The international community and international organisations have failed to protect indigenous peoples in their territories, yet these activists have continued to put their lives at risk for decades for the benefit of the world. Extractive industries, as well as some industries that are considered climate solutions are

²⁰ <https://www.stockholm50.global/events/towards-sustainable-youth-inclusive-future-presenting-demands-stockholm50-youth-policy-paper>

²¹ <https://fossilfuel treaty.org/>

endangering indigenous peoples, and this must be addressed. The concept of ‘Kawsak Sacha’ (the living forest) is fundamental to indigenous beliefs, and on this basis, we have put forth proposals to recognize indigenous territories as living territories to preserve and protect them.

Mr. Máximo Mazzocco, Founder, Eco House Global, UN Development Programme Youth Global Ambassador. Our normality and ‘business as usual’ kill species and people. This is not just an environmental crisis, but also a social, economic, ethical, emotional, and existential crisis that is exacerbating poverty. Solutions cannot be standardized and must be localized. Contradictions in SDGs implementation exist, as evidenced by the extraction of resources like lithium, planned for in energy transitions, from indigenous lands when indigenous peoples fear such mining will destroy ecosystems. New approaches are necessary to find paths forward. Environmental action must not be framed as an intergenerational conflict, the only solution is working intergenerationally.

Segment 2: Cultivating Coherent System-wide Responses to Tackle Interlinked Planetary Crises

This segment’s panels explored how to support integrated environmental action at various levels and offered reflections on lessons learned regarding how the work streams can further support each other in order to inform future action.

Stage Setting Remarks

Mr. David Boyd, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, and the Environment. Human rights have a proven track record as a catalyst for transformative change. In 2010, the General Assembly recognized the rights to water and sanitation for the first time, sparking changes that have improved the lives of millions of people.²² As a result, many countries added this right to their constitutions, and others changed laws and policies. And most importantly, States took action to respect, protect and fulfil this right, prioritizing the most vulnerable and marginalized populations. A rights-based approach to conserving and sustainably using biodiversity would empower indigenous peoples, peasants and other local communities to realize their rights while protecting nature and could prevent millions of premature deaths from pollution every year. The right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment includes clean air, safe and sufficient water, healthy and sustainably produced food, healthy biodiversity and ecosystems, non-toxic environments where people can live, work, learn and play and of course a safe climate. It also comes with a toolkit of procedural rights including access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice. And like all human rights, it is guided by fundamental principles including prevention, non-discrimination, and non-regression. The right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment will be a catalyst for switching to renewable energy, creating a circular economy and detoxifying society.

H.E. Ms. Leila Benali, Minister of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development, Morocco and President of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA). The burden of environmental decline is felt by everyone, but disproportionately by the poor and vulnerable and looms even larger over today’s youth and future generations. The core driver of the triple planetary crisis is unsustainable

²² <https://www.unwater.org/water-facts/human-rights/>

consumption and production. Over 65% of GHG emissions are generated from the materials necessary to bring products and services to the point of consumption, while less than a third are associated with energy consumption at end-use.²³ Implementing circular economy under an ambitious scenario in just 5 key areas (cement, aluminium, steel, plastics, and food) can eliminate almost half of the emissions from the production of goods – 9.3 billion tonnes of CO₂ by 2050 – equivalent to cutting all transport emissions to zero.²⁴ Implementing solutions that tackle interconnected drivers and impacts requires strengthening the science-policy interface, environmental governance and foster rule of law; promoting and strengthening ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions; mainstreaming and coordinating conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity into sectoral policies and programmes; promoting transformative and systemic changes and policies that address several environmental, economic and social challenges simultaneously, and; transforming our current economic systems and re-directing finance flows and investment to support sustainable development. According to the International Resources Panel, sustainable consumption, and production, supported by circular economy approaches and other sustainable policy models, can, among others, increase incomes by an average of 8% and 13% in low- and medium-income countries respectively by 2060, and by 4% in high-income countries. It can also reduce GHG emissions by up to 90% by 2060. The [10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production](#)²⁵ will support Member States in the implementation of policies towards sustainability.

Panel 1, Coordinating Multilateral Approaches

Moderator: Ms. Sara Farley, Vice President, Global, Food Initiative, The Rockefeller Foundation. In 2022, 342 million people across 82 countries slid into acute food insecurity, on the brink of famine. Though these many distinct challenges relating to the triple planetary crisis' consequences manifest differently across countries, cumulatively they place the global economy and health of people and planet at risk. The shocks we are experiencing are becoming the new normal. Over thousands of years, humankind evolved wisdom and indigenous knowledge that can set us on a new course of survival. We must reconnect to a deeper sense of kinship with life and land, which predates the creation of money, multilateralism, and missiles.

Ms. Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary of the UN Convention on Biodiversity. Biodiversity continues to decline at devastating rates, undermining the SDGs. We must let our hopes, not our fears, shape our futures. We need to finalize the Global Biodiversity Framework, negotiated over the past 3 years, with an integrated approach that places nature at the centre of all our decisions. At their most recent meeting, progress was made, but high-level political engagement is needed to reach compromises. Negotiators are striving for a framework that will scale up efforts to restore biodiversity at all levels, including major increases in well-connected protected areas; address drivers; alien species, pollution, climate change, and sustainable

²³ UNDP Circular economy strategies for Lao PDR, 2017 - https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/publications/undp-lecb-circular-economy-strategies-for-laos-pdr-20170911_0.pdf

²⁴ EMF, 2021 - <https://emf.thirdlight.com/link/w750u7vysuy1-5a5i6n/@/preview/1?o>

²⁵ <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/one-planet-network/10yfp-10-year-framework-programmes>

consumption and production particularly in food systems among others. The conservation and restoration of ecosystems is critical for both climate mitigation and adaptation.

Ms. Andrea Meza Murillo, Deputy Executive Secretary of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification. Land is the operative link between biodiversity loss, ecosystem restoration and climate change. Land policies address limiting climate change and the frequency and intensity of disasters. Every decision we make regarding land management will be critical to keeping the 1.5 degrees target alive. 80% of all pollution comes from land, with immediate bearing on ocean health. According to the 2022 UNCCD Global Land Outlook, [40% of the planet is degraded, affecting half of humanity and global GDP.](#)²⁶ [A ‘business-as-usual’ scenario would lead to the additional degradation of an area almost the size of South America.](#) Urgent land restoration is therefore needed. It is time to explore merging national plans, particularly Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs),²⁷ Land Degradation Neutrality Plans (LDNs),²⁸ and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs),²⁹ into single unified strategies with implementation plans at country levels, which will also reduce countries’ reporting burdens. Mapping overlapping challenges can enable achieving economies of scale for transformative investments, and align programs and policies at national, regional, and global scales to meet the three Rio Conventions’ objectives. Bringing together the Convention’s national focal points, as well as all their associated stakeholder networks to share lessons learned, and enhancing negotiators’ capacities, are all key to do so. Drought measures are also important for both adaptation and mitigation.

Mr. Ovais Sarmad, Deputy Executive Secretary of the UN Framing Convention on Climate Change. Of all our global challenges, climate change remains the most alarming and rapidly escalating crisis facing humanity. Every fraction of degree of temperature rise compounds the collective danger for us all. We have less than 7-8 years till 2030 to achieve milestones set by the global community. Submissions of more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans are necessary to achieve the Paris Agreement. It is imperative to adopt holistic approaches and encourage system-wide synergies for global responses to our planetary emergencies. Humankind has divided up environmental workstreams to make them comprehensible, but nature is one and does not create nor recognize categories; each source of stress on nature compounds and reinforces the other. Cross cutting dialogues across ministries and between ministries and people are key. [UNFCCC Regional Climate Weeks](#),³⁰ [UNFCCC Resilient Frontiers Initiatives](#)³¹ and [the Global Climate Change Innovation Hub](#)³² are important platforms to do so. Inclusive multilateralism, whereby all voices are heard, and no one is left behind, particularly through multi-stakeholder partnerships are also imperative. We need much greater cooperation and collaboration between the 3 Rio Conventions, including for the 3 Conventions’ decisions and actions to refer to each other leading to political mandates for more coherent

²⁶ <https://www.unccd.int/resources/global-land-outlook/overview>

²⁷ <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/nationally-determined-contributions-ndcs/nationally-determined-contributions-ndcs>

²⁸ <https://www.unccd.int/land-and-life/land-degradation-neutrality/projects-programmes/ldn-target-setting>

²⁹ <https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/>

³⁰ <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/regional-climate-weeks>

³¹ <https://resiliencefrontiers.org/about/>

³² [https://unfccc.int/topics/un-climate-change-global-innovation-](https://unfccc.int/topics/un-climate-change-global-innovation-hub#:~:text=The%20Global%20Innovation%20Hub%2C%20launched,emission%20and%20climate%2Dresilient%20future.)

[hub#:~:text=The%20Global%20Innovation%20Hub%2C%20launched,emission%20and%20climate%2Dresilient%20future.](https://unfccc.int/topics/un-climate-change-global-innovation-hub#:~:text=The%20Global%20Innovation%20Hub%2C%20launched,emission%20and%20climate%2Dresilient%20future.)

approaches. In response to a question from Mr. Mohamed Eissa, Liaison for Public Health Issues for the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations³³ about following up on the Moment for Nature to ensure the meaningful participation of all stakeholders, particularly youth, for a healthy environment, healthy planet and healthy humanity, Mr. Sarmad noted that the Action for Climate Empowerment Platform³⁴ conducts stakeholder outreach to empower all members of society to engage in climate action, including through education and climate literacy.

Ambassador Peter Thomson, UNSG's Special Envoy for the Ocean: “Prochlorococcus” is the smallest photosynthetic organism on the planet living in the ocean, which produces 20% of the oxygen in the biosphere; this organism’s health is intimately connected to that of humanity. Rising sea levels, ocean acidification, eutrophication, and coral death are all connected. The Climate and Ocean agendas are becoming more closely integrated; since COP26 there has been the 2022 Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue³⁵, whose results will be taken forward to UNFCCC COP27 in Sharm Al Sheikh in November 2022, in recognition that ocean action can lead to 21% of climate mitigation needed. The UN is a Member State-led organization, it is up to Member States to include youth in their delegations. Relatedly, coordination across environmental work strands also depends on Member State action, with many positive results including on the aforementioned agreements on fisheries and plastic pollution. Negotiations on “The Treaty of the High Seas” (BBNJ)³⁶ must be concluded and operationalized.

Mr. Stefanos Fotiou, Director, Office of Sustainable Development Goals, FAO; Director, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub. The World Bank estimates that negative impacts associated with the way the current food system operates are at least \$6 trillion.³⁷ We need a transformative financial architecture to achieve food systems that support sustainable development and are profitable, equitable, resilient, healthy, and supportive of environmental action. Innovative investments that might have short-term risks would be perceived as very affordable if we consider the implications of long-term risks and impacts. Transformative governance is also needed to invest in system-wide approaches to maintain our global commons. The Food Systems Coordination Hub, launched as an outcome of the UN Food Systems Summit,³⁸ aims to support capacity building for governments and stakeholders in this regard and operationalize their pathways for food systems transformations,³⁹ which are now more urgently needed in light of the global food crisis. Agro-food systems are some of the most promising areas for action on climate, biodiversity and land, and for this reason we are developing the Food Systems Solutions Portfolio in order to bring all stakeholders together and invite them to share initiatives and best practices.⁴⁰ FAO is also working to establish food systems finance windows within existing funds and financing institutions.

³³ <https://ifmsa.org/>

³⁴ <https://unfccc.int/topics/education-youth/the-big-picture/what-is-action-for-climate-empowerment#:~:text=The%20Action%20for%20Climate%20Empowerment,across%20all%20sectors%20of%20society>

³⁵ <https://unfccc.int/event/ocean-and-climate-change-dialogue-2022>

³⁶ <https://www.un.org/bbnj/>

³⁷ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/do-costs-global-food-system-outweigh-its-monetary-value>

³⁸ <https://www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit>

³⁹ <https://www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/news/more-100-countries-sign-develop-national-strategies-transforming-food-systems>

⁴⁰ <https://www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/action-tracks> - Action Track 3

Member State interventions

Greece. In addition to numerous policies to expand protected areas and limit plastic pollution on land and at sea, Greece became the first country in Europe to apply a special protection status for significant mountain ranges, banning the construction of roads and any technical surface in them, and deploying a set of stringent protection measures to prevent habitat fragmentation. In order not to deviate from fulfilling commitments made, in 2019 Greece established, at Central Government, a comprehensive monitoring, review and evaluation mechanism for measuring progress in the implementation of public policies. Greece's National Recovery and Resilience Plan is also key strategic implementation framework to enable sustainable long term growth.

Costa Rica, of behalf of 58 states. We are in a state of planetary emergency; irreversible and cascading tipping points in the Earth's ability to self-regulate might be passed within decade. This emergency is causing irreversible harm to our life support systems and aggravating poverty and inequalities, hunger, and malnutrition, and increasing the risks of zoonotic diseases, future pandemics and security crises. Unless halted and reversed, it will cause significant damage to global economic, social, and political resilience and stability, disproportionately and first affecting the world's populations and regions most driven towards vulnerability. 58 countries from all regions, including members of at least one of the three coalitions – the “[Leaders Pledge for Nature](#)”⁴¹, the “[High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People](#)”⁴² and the “[Global Ocean Alliance](#)”⁴³, and supported by organizations, civil society and the private sector – are combining efforts to send a united message to step up global ambition. The Global Biodiversity Framework's mission should be, by 2030, to halt and reverse biodiversity loss for the benefit of planet and people and to put nature on a path to recovery, with goals for 2050 and targets for 2030, which are specific, measurable, ambitious, relevant, and time-bound, to track progress at national and global levels and deliver on the 3 Rio Conventions' goals.

Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan adopted a National Environmental Concept for the period 2019-2030 involving all stakeholders, including youth, in the system-wide work of nature protection. Young people are currently actively participating in establishing a zone of ecological innovations and technologies in the Aral Sea region, considered one of the most serious environmental challenges of our time. Last August Uzbekistan launched the “Green Nation” programme, aimed at planting 1 billion trees and shrubs across the country in the next five years to increase the green spaces in the cities from the current 8% to 30%. It will significantly contribute to Uzbekistan's Paris Agreement commitments to reduce GhG emissions by 35% per unit of GDP within the next decade, by enhancing air and soil quality and boosting climate resilience. Over 213 million trees and shrubs have been planted thus far.

Panel 2, Integrated Approaches at National and Subnational Levels

Moderator Ms. Liesel Van Ast, Regional Coordination and Membership Managed, UNEP-Finance Initiative opened the discussion by outlining that it will explore three examples of multi-level

⁴¹ <https://www.leaderspledgefornature.org/>

⁴² <https://www.hacfornatureandpeople.org/home>

⁴³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/global-ocean-alliance-30by30-initiative>

cooperation in Tajikistan, Pakistan and Thailand between governments, the UN system and stakeholders on urgently integrating and localizing action.

Mr. Sheralizoda Bahodur Ahmadjon, Chairman, Committee for Environmental Protection, the Republic of Tajikistan. As a mountainous landlocked country, Tajikistan provides about 60% of the water resources of Central Asia, as the main location of the regions' glaciers where the bulk of the region's water resources are formed, therefore pivotal to the sustainable development of the entire region. We over the recent years observed rapid melting of glaciers, dramatic reduction of water resources, increase of mudflows and floods, droughts and other natural disasters induced by climate change, significantly damaging our economy and sustainable development. Tajikistan appeals to the international community to establish an International Fund for Glaciers Preservation, to mobilize efforts and resources for practical steps to preserve not just glaciers, the most important source of fresh water, but tackle the triple planetary crisis.

Mr. Julien Harneis, UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan: There are internal problems within the UN whereby, up until now, our work on Climate Change and Pollution has been a mixed bag of disconnected and dispersed initiatives with no overall approach and narrative. The external problem is that the international language of Climate Change does not resonate with the average people, who get turned off by the jargon, and doom and gloom approach. The UN Living Indus Initiative in Pakistan addresses both challenges.

Mr. Adil Najam, Dean of the Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University. Usually development actors take 'band-aid', siloed approaches, whereby ministries and UN agencies focus strictly on their mandates. This yields a patchwork of activities and turfs that do not add up to a solution. A One-Country Response is needed, whereby the government at various levels and UN entities all work together as one. This is difficult to put into practice but is the only way to achieve the needed results. Populations in the Indus Basin have been sustained by the river for 5000-8000 years, but the question now is whether we can now sustain the Indus for another 100 years. Today, the answer is not clear. [The Living Indus](#)⁴⁴ is a menu of plans and investment to improve the health of the basin, with about 30 different initiatives, each costed out and linked to different SDGs. These include, for example, the creation of 100,000 community ponds; ten zero plastic waste cities; the healthy Indus digital platform; performance bonds; sustainable tourism; and urban forests.

Ms. Gita Sabharwal, UN Resident Coordinator in Thailand. Worldwide, the private and finance sectors have moved forward in their thinking on sustainability and environmental, social and governance principles, which are no longer viewed just as Corporate Social Responsibility factors, but as good business practices essential to the bottom line. The UN's convening power must be leveraged to bring expertise to best support Member states, banks and investors leading on sustainability in areas such as carbon markets, risk-financing strategies with a focus on inclusive insurance, and [SDG investor maps](#)⁴⁵ to identify investment priorities through local insights. In Thailand this is being led by agencies such as UNEP, UNDP, and UNIDO. At the Sustainable Thailand Forum co-hosted by the UN and Government, 43 financial institutions with total assets

⁴⁴ <https://pakistan.un.org/en/196036-living-indus>

⁴⁵ <https://sdginvestorplatform.undp.org/news/thailand-sdg-investor-map-identifies-sdg-enabling-sectors-businesses-and-investors>

of \$1.2 trillion committed to action on the SDGs and climate action. The Bank of Thailand is working on a taxonomy defining what qualifies as sustainable finance and what do we mean by “green”, in consultation with all stakeholders, to create sustainable investment eco-systems. Business is demonstrating leadership, in particular the UN Global Compact Thailand, providing a platform to engage with the domestic private sector, including supporting Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) which face major challenges in the sustainability transformation, through technical advice to facilitate the adoption of best available technology for reducing emissions. Thai banks report that ESG lending has enabled them to weather the pandemic better with net returns more sustainable and shareholders more confident. The Deputy Secretary-General recently met with the private sector and investors, advancing UN Thailand’s proposal for an SDG Pooled Funding Mechanism to unify our work and create the structural support for climate action.

Ms. Yuki Yasui, Managing Director, Glasgow Finance Alliance for Net Zero (GFANZ), Asia-Pacific Network. [UNEP FI](#)⁴⁶ is one of the oldest global initiatives and UN partnerships with the private sector, started in 1992 that manages various alliances relating to sustainability for private sector financial institutions. For example, it managed the [UN Principles for Responsible Banking](#),⁴⁷ launched by the UN Secretary General in 2019, which to date 290 banks from 72 countries have signed up to. These banks combined represent nearly 45% of total assets of the world’s banking industry. With that said, there generally remains an under-representation of banks from the global South, who are urged to join. We hope to outreach to the insurance sector through [UN Principles for Sustainable Insurance](#).⁴⁸

Member State interventions

China. We are creating the largest clean energy system in the world. In the last 10 years, China’s forest coverage grew by 70 million hectares, the largest increase in the world. We intend to reach carbon peaking by 2030, and carbon neutrality by 2060. Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and South-South Cooperation are key principles. The Belt and Road initiative supports green low-carbon development in developing countries. We will not build new coal-fired power plants abroad. A people-centered approach can address climate change, biodiversity loss and the SDGs so balanced progress can be achieved while eradicating poverty and creating jobs. In June 2022, China convened the [High-level Dialogue on Global Development](#)⁴⁹ with outcomes including practical measures on green energy and blue partnerships, and invited more countries to participate. Last October, China presided over CBD COP15 part 1, where [the Kunming Declaration](#)⁵⁰ was adopted, and the Kunming Biodiversity Fund announced.⁵¹ China remains committed to an ambitious, pragmatic and balanced post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

India. The Prime Minister of India launched the concept of LIFE, Lifestyle for Environment,⁵² at World Environment Day 2022, to promote mindful consumption, reduction of waste and promotion of resource efficiency and circular economy. Our commitment to reach 40% of installed

⁴⁶ <https://www.unepfi.org/>

⁴⁷ <https://www.unepfi.org/banking/bankingprinciples/>

⁴⁸ <https://www.unepfi.org/psi/the-principles/>

⁴⁹ https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjdt_665385/2649_665393/202206/t20220624_10709812.html

⁵⁰ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/df35/4b94/5e86e1ee09bc8c7d4b35aaf0/kunmingdeclaration-en.pdf>

⁵¹ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/press/2021/pr-2021-10-13-cop15-hls-en.pdf>

⁵² <https://www.niti.gov.in/life>

electric capacity from non-fossil-fuel based sources has been achieved, 9 years ahead of schedule. About 370 million LED bulbs have been distributed in the last few years, contributing to energy saving of about 50 billion units of electricity per year; and a reduction of almost 40 million tonnes of Carbon dioxide per year. We have achieved 10% ethanol blending in petrol, 5 months ahead of the November 2022 target, enhancing energy security and reducing Carbon Dioxide emissions by 2.7 million tonnes. Spearheading of the UN General Assembly Resolution for declaring Year 2023 as the “International Year of Millets” was aimed at addressing food security challenges, particularly in regions that are drought prone or threatened by climate change.⁵³ India has worked with partners for significant global initiatives that include the [International Solar Alliance](#),⁵⁴ the focus on [One Sun, One World, One Grid](#),⁵⁵ [Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure](#)⁵⁶ and [Leadership Group for Industry Transition](#).⁵⁷

Thailand. Thailand’s [the Bio-Circular Green Economic Model](#)⁵⁸ pursues balanced economic growth and environmental conservation, working closely with the UN Resident Coordinator and UN Country Team to shift to low-carbon development. As host of [the 2022 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting \(APEC\)](#),⁵⁹ initiatives include forests management, oceans, and transition to renewable and clean energy. Thailand’s integrated nature-based solutions include conserving mangrove forests to address multiple challenges such as supporting biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and providing sea walls to limit coastal erosion and disaster risk. Thailand hopes that that meeting and others like it will support breaking down silos, forge closer partnerships and support further system-wide coherence to combat the triple planetary crisis and achieve the SDGs.

Segment 3: Facilitating Urgent, Large-Scale Action to Bridge the Gap between Commitments and Results

This segment’s panels addressed urgent solidarity for sustainable recovery pathways; highlighted innovations that can create opportunities for all, and efforts to strengthen the science-policy-action approach on data, digital solutions including addressing capacity gaps, and early warning for adaptation and risk mitigation.

Stage Setting Remarks

H.E. Ms. Steffi Lemke, Minister for the Environment, Germany, on behalf of the Group of 7 Presidency. This year’s German G7 presidency reflects the interdependencies between the environmental workstreams, through the [joint declaration of the G7 environment, climate and energy ministers](#)⁶⁰ and the [G7 heads of state and government in Elmau](#).⁶¹ In this regard, this year

⁵³ <https://www.fao.org/new-york/news/detail/en/c/1479999/#:~:text=With%20this%20as%20a%20backdrop,supported%20by%20over%2070%20countries.>

⁵⁴ <https://isolaralliance.org/about/background>

⁵⁵ <https://ukcop26.org/one-sun-declaration-green-grids-initiative-one-sun-one-world-one-grid/>

⁵⁶ <https://www.cdri.world/>

⁵⁷ <https://www.industrytransition.org/who-we-are/#:~:text=The%20Leadership%20Group%20for%20Industry,by%20the%20World%20Economic%20Forum.>

⁵⁸ <https://thaiembdc.org/bio-circular-green-bcg/>

⁵⁹ <https://www.apec2022.go.th/>

⁶⁰ <https://www.env.go.jp/content/000039438.pdf>

⁶¹ https://www.governo.it/sites/governo.it/files/2022-06-28-abschlusserklaerung-eng-web-data_0.pdf

the G7 reached a number of agreements, including a strong commitment to an ambitious post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which the group has pledged to implement quickly and to significantly increase their national and international funding for nature by 2025. We supported the resolution on Nature-based Solutions (NbS) adopted at this year's UN Environment Assembly. G7 leaders also committed to strengthening synergies between climate and biodiversity finance, and to scaling up and improving integrated Nature-based Solutions. This also applies to financing. In the [G7 Ocean Deal](#),⁶² we agreed to make concerted efforts to strengthen international and national marine protection and conservation. We will also take this position in the upcoming international negotiations on "The Treaty for the High Seas" (BBNJ), protecting 30% of the world's oceans by 2030, and the plastics convention. The G7 considers circular economy and resource efficiency to be key. In this area, we have agreed on concrete measures for the next three years under [the G7 Berlin Roadmap](#).⁶³ Additionally, in Elmau the G7 heads of state and government committed to sustainable supply chains..

H.E. Mr. Dian Triansyah Djani, Co-Sherpa of the Group of 20 Indonesian Presidency. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported that climate change is projected to negatively impact the availability, access, utilisation, and stability of food security. The foundation of our food systems is also under severe threat due to biodiversity loss. Recognizing these interlinkages, our Presidency convened joint sessions of Environment Deputies and Climate Sustainability Working Group (the EDM-CSWG) to discuss means of halting and reversing biodiversity loss, particularly spotlighting the vital role of wetlands and oceans as sources of biodiversity. G20 members account for 80% of global greenhouse gas emissions, and thus must play its leadership for climate action. We need to ensure access to means of implementation for developing countries; the US\$ 100 billion pledge for climate finance must be fulfilled.

Ms. Michelle Bachelet, the High Commissioner on Human Rights. A human rights-based approach to environmental crises can close the gap between environmental commitments and the often-unrealized action needed to meet them. It also emphasises the underpinning of legal obligations to act, rather than simply of discretionary policy. In the context of environmental action, a rights-based approach requires cooperation and mobilization of resources. It also emphasises the need to guarantee meaningful and informed participation; and to ensure all people benefit from science and its applications. It helps to overcome entrenched interests that place profit before people and planet, and to strengthen still inadequate accountability frameworks. Under human rights law, States must respect, protect, and fulfil human rights for all recognizing and respecting the worldviews, values and traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities and the institutions that support their rights, territories or interests. Businesses also have a responsibility to respect human rights. And when human rights harms do occur, those affected must have access to justice and effective remedies.

Panel 1, Bridging the Biggest Gaps

Moderator: Ms. Toni-Shae Freckleton, Chief, New York Liaison Office, UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. We need concrete and scalable solutions that can close the biggest gaps and

⁶² https://www.bmuv.de/fileadmin/Daten_BMU/Download_PDF/Europa_International/g7_ocean_deal_bf.pdf

⁶³ https://www.bmuv.de/fileadmin/Daten_BMU/Download_PDF/Europa_International/g7_berlin_roadmap_bf.pdf

safeguard our development. Disaster risk reduction and the protection of nature are two sides of the same coin. The degradation of natural systems is creating vulnerability and exposure to disasters. On the other side, nature-based solutions are protecting communities from disaster impacts and building their resilience in times of crisis. Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction is therefore the insurance policy for the SDGs. In May 2022, [Foreign Ministers of the G7 committed to scaling-up the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#),⁶⁴ in their statement on strengthening anticipatory action in humanitarian assistance. In that same month, the Government of Indonesia and UNDRR organized the seventh session of the Global Platform for DRR in Bali. The Platform's outcome document, the "[Bali Agenda for Resilience](#)",⁶⁵ provides valuable input to Indonesia's G20 Presidency. The General Assembly High-Level Meeting on [the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework](#),⁶⁶ mandated to be held in the 77th session on 18 and 19 May 2023 in the General Assembly, will be a critical opportunity to assess the extent to which policy and investment decisions taken today are creating or reduction risk for future generations. It will provide invaluable recommendations for the SDG Summit, the Summit of the Future, and the Paris Stock take.

Mr. Ossian Smyth, Minister of State, Ireland. The Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance (BOGA)⁶⁷ was created to manage difficulties around collaboration and to help manage tensions between short term self-interest and long-term global interests. BOGA brings together nations and cities with power over fossil fuel policy to phase out fossil fuels' extraction and use as soon as possible. Ireland has banned future exploration of gas and oil, recently banned coal exploration and extraction, and appealed to all countries to work with BOGA. Multilateral and regional cooperation is essential for solutions, as evidenced for example by the EU policy on sustainable airline fuel,⁶⁸ emission trading schemes for airlines and shipping,⁶⁹ and regulations regarding car filters. Such progress is important to demonstrate to populations that climate policies are fair and require action on both personal and industrial levels. It is important that no group within society feels that they are being disadvantaged or unfairly targeted by climate policies, otherwise there won't be public support for just green transitions. Empowering people by providing them with the means of production, eg rooftop solar panels, so they benefit materially and feel they are part of the solutions is a positive approach that more effectively creates opportunities rather than relying only on bans and taxation. Ireland has regulations on air pollution to address public health. Efforts to increase public buy-in included widely installing air pollution monitors to increase awareness of air quality on streets and near schools.

Ms. Laura Paterson, World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Representative and Coordinator to the United Nations. WMO facilitates the daily exchange of data between all countries regarding weather activity, which is then inputted into 10 global modelling centres around the world, with

⁶⁴ <https://www.preventionweb.net/news/statement-strengthening-anticipatory-action-humanitarian-assistance-g7-foreign-ministers-may>

⁶⁵ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/05/1119202>

⁶⁶ <https://sendaiframework-mtr.undrr.org/#:~:text=2023%20marks%20the%20midpoint%20in,and%20provide%20input%20through%202022>.

⁶⁷ <https://beyondoilandgasalliance.com/>

⁶⁸ <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20220701IPR34357/fit-for-55-parliament-pushes-for-greener-aviation-fuels>

⁶⁹ <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20220610STO32720/cutting-emissions-from-planes-and-ships-eu-actions-explained>

outputs of forecasts that are sent to every WMO member so all countries can predict their weather, climate and water situations. Without this system, it would be impossible to predict hurricanes or cyclones more than two days in advance, and all commercial airline flights would either use too much or too little fuel, leading to large inefficiencies. Although these technologies may be taken for granted in some countries, and despite delivering greater than 10 times the return on investment, less than half of WMO members report having in place early warning systems to protect lives and livelihoods from extreme weather events and disasters. For this reason, in March 2022 [the UN Secretary General called for new global action to fill these early warning gaps and ensure global coverage in the next 5 years](#).⁷⁰ Challenges to be overcome include improving data collection gaps, particularly across SIDS and LDCs. Such knowledge gaps do not only impact the regions in question, but they also lower the efficacy of disaster risk reduction policies globally given global weather's interconnectedness. Capacity gaps at national levels also impact disaster risk management agencies' ability to cooperate with water, energy, transport and other ministries to co-develop early action plans. Significant gaps in regional structures persist; many parts of the Middle East and North Africa are not covered at all with large gaps elsewhere. Efforts to bridge global gaps from early warning to early action include the aforementioned G7 statement on strengthening anticipatory action in humanitarian assistance, movements towards disaster risk financing and agile social protection measures. WMO is delivering a global architecture for the 5 year plan, which can be built on the existing globally agreed guidance on the [WMO Global Multi-hazard Early Warning System](#),⁷¹ with numerous entry points for all stakeholders and drawing on new and existing financial mechanisms, such as [the Climate Risk Early Warnings Systems \(CREWS\) initiative](#),⁷² [the Systematic Observations Financing Facility](#),⁷³ and other scaled up accelerated programmes with the help of the Green Climate Fund and other multilateral banks. We hope to see recognition of the 5 year plan in UNFCCC COP27 decisions, and it will be reflected in the build-up to the 77th General Assembly session's UN Water Conference, Sendai Midterm Review, the SDG Summit, the Summit of the Future, and the preparedness component of 'Our Common Agenda'.

Mr. Yannick Glemarec, Executive Director, the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The average global temperature in 2021 was about 1.1 °C above pre-industrial levels. The probability of one of the next five years surpassing the 1.5C limit is now 50%.⁷⁴ When the Paris Agreement was signed in 2015, there was zero chance of this happening in the following five years. Innovations in policy, culture, institutions, science, technology, management, and finance are all needed. But turning innovation into action will require significantly increased amounts of investment. The IPCC estimates that USD 1.6 to 3.8 trillion in new climate investments are needed annually through 2050 to limit global warming below 1.5°C, and an additional USD 140 to 300 billion is needed annually to adapt to the impacts of climate change. With its partners, GCF aims to drive transformative climate solutions through four workstreams; (1) Nurturing enabling environments by promoting transformational strategies and policymaking, including supporting developing countries to craft green COVID-19 recoveries and in accessing long-term affordable finance to implement them

⁷⁰ <https://public.wmo.int/en/media/press-release/%E2%80%8Bearly-warning-systems-must-protect-everyone-within-five-years>

⁷¹ <https://community.wmo.int/activity-areas/drr/qmas>

⁷² <https://public.wmo.int/en/climate-risk-and-early-warning-systems-crews>

⁷³ <https://public.wmo.int/en/resources/library/soff-establishing-systematic-observations-financing-facility>

⁷⁴ [https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/press-office/news/weather-and-climate/2022/decadal-forecast-2022#:~:text=A%20new%20study%2C%20led%20by,50%3A50%20\(48%25\).](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/press-office/news/weather-and-climate/2022/decadal-forecast-2022#:~:text=A%20new%20study%2C%20led%20by,50%3A50%20(48%25).)

without increasing their debt burden. (2) Accelerating innovation through investments in new and innovative technologies, business models, financial instruments, and practices. For example, our USD 279 million investment in the [Amazon Bioeconomy Fund](#)⁷⁵ supports new bio-businesses across six Latin American countries to protect the environment, reduce emissions, and create sustainable livelihoods for local communities. (3) Exploring new de-risking structures to make blended finance better work for adaptation, ecosystem-based approaches and the most vulnerable. For example, our anchor investment of USD 125 million in the USD 500 million [Global Fund for Coral Reefs](#)⁷⁶ will unlock a multiple of this amount through providing essential growth equity to entrepreneurs to help save coral reefs and the livelihoods of millions across 17 countries, to demonstrate the financial soundness of this new asset class to mobilize finance from institutional investors and individual savers at scale. (4) Helping domestic financial institutions mainstream climate risks and opportunities into investment decision-making and access capital markets to finance the widespread adoption of commercially proven new climate solutions. For example, we are working with Jamaica to establish the first Caribbean exchange for green bonds to finance green and blue infrastructure in the Caribbean region.

Mr. Paul Ko, Head of Policy Research & Insight, LinkedIn. LinkedIn is a platform centred on human capital allowing individuals and employers to list their skills and needs respectively, thereby offering rich insights regarding supply and demand in the labour market for the platform's over 830 million users. LinkedIn has analyzed data from all public profiles to create a taxonomy of over 3500 skills which also identified hundreds of green skills, as outlined in [LinkedIn's 2022 Global Green Skills Report](#).⁷⁷ We found that transitioning into the green economy isn't relegated to a series of strictly green roles (eg, wind/solar installers, which are nevertheless growing rapidly), but that green skills need to be pervasive, just like digital skills have become, and incorporated into all jobs. For example there has been an increase in green skills for facilities managers. The past 5 years have seen annually an 8% increase in demand for green skills, but the growth of supply is only 6%, suggesting there could be a big structural labour market mismatch in coming years. For example, skills relating to sustainable fashion grew at 90% year over year in the past 5 years, one of the fastest observed on the platform. In the United States, oil and energy jobs grew over the same period by 19%, but renewables and environmental jobs grew by 237%. Cross-cutting skills applicable to many roles are required, and many categories of jobs for green transitions may not yet exist. Regarding inequities, there is a gulf between countries whereby we see higher concentrations of green skills in developed countries, with three times the occurrence of green skills. Making data accessible is vital to best understand skill trends for the benefit of those who can use this information. [The Development Data Partnership](#),⁷⁸ of which the World Bank and LinkedIn are members among others is one platform focusing on this issue.

Ms. Analí Bustos, Co-chair of the #GenerationRestoration⁷⁹ Youth Hub. Convened by [the Global Landscapes Forum](#),⁸⁰ [the Youth in Landscapes Initiative](#),⁸¹ and [the Trillion Trees Platform of the](#)

⁷⁵ <https://www.greenclimate.fund/project/fp173>

⁷⁶ <https://globalfundcoralreefs.org/>

⁷⁷ <https://economicgraph.linkedin.com/research/global-green-skills-report>

⁷⁸ <https://datapartnership.org/>

⁷⁹ <https://www.unep.org/interactive/ecosystem-restoration-people-nature-climate/en/index.php>

⁸⁰ <https://www.globallandscapesforum.org/>

⁸¹ <https://youth.globallandscapesforum.org/>

[World Economic Forum](#),⁸² she stressed that the Hub works to ensure that all generations must now be the tipping point between the reality we have and the reality we need, and urged to end the exclusion of youth from decision-making spaces, and to leverage their expertise.

Member State interventions

Eritrea, on behalf of the African Group. Growth in Africa over the past two decades was mainly driven by economic sectors sensitive to climate change, including agriculture, tourism, and transportation. Despite contributing less than 4% of global GhG emissions, per the African Development Bank (the ADB), the continent loses between 5% and 15% of its GDP to climate change. GDP exposure in African nations vulnerable to extreme climate patterns is projected to grow from \$895 billion in 2018 to about \$1.4 trillion in 2023—nearly half of the continent’s GDP.⁸³ The continent had the highest net annual loss of forests between 2010-2020, while desertification affects approximately 45% of Africa’s total land area. Discussions at UNCCD COP 15 in May 2022 highlighted that current global restoration commitments cover around one billion hectares, requiring investments of between \$300 billion and \$1.7 trillion over the next 10 years. A large portion of lands that need restoration are in Africa but the costs for restoration are prohibitively expensive for many African countries. Even before COVID-19, Africa’s ability to access financing for development was always been constrained due to structural issues as well as real and perceived risks in financing projects. African countries currently spend between 2% and 9% of their gross domestic product in climate adaptation measures and in recovering from adverse climate impacts.⁸⁴ UNFCCC COP 27, the African COP, to be held in Egypt this November, offers a vital opportunity to focus on the specific challenges facing the continent as well as the massive opportunities for transformation that serve the continent growth aspirations, particularly reducing poverty and creating jobs for the burgeoning youth population. The ADB estimates that African countries need to invest more than \$3 trillion in mitigation and adaptation by 2030 to implement their NDCs. According to [the African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan \(2022-2032\)](#),⁸⁵ the total financial commitments from bilateral and multilateral funders for adaptation between 2014 and 2018 remained well below US\$5.5 billion per year, falling short of the needed investment. Furthermore, much of this finance (57%) was provided as loans while grants accounted for about 42%. African countries need support to assess carbon market opportunities and build capacities to measure, account for and verify them per the agreement on Article 6 rules at COP 26.

Maldives. Small Island Developing State (SIDS) survival and viability are especially threatened by climate change, including the loss of our territories. [The Climate Emergency Act](#)⁸⁶ was ratified in 2021, with the aim to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. The Maldives will protect a minimum of 20% of our Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ). The Maldives has banned the import,

⁸² <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/05/two-years-of-trillion-trees/>

⁸³ Brookings Institution, Foresight Africa 2020: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/africa-can-play-a-leading-role-in-the-fight-against-climate-change/>

⁸⁴ WMO, State of the Climate in Africa Report (2020) - <https://www.uneca.org/stories/state-of-climate-in-africa-report-2020#:~:text=The%20State%20of%20Climate%20in%20Africa%20Report%202020%20anticipates%20longer.rate%20than%20the%20global%20average.>

⁸⁵ <https://au.int/en/documents/20220628/african-union-climate-change-and-resilient-development-strategy-and-action-plan>

⁸⁶ <https://presidency.gov.mv/Press/Article/24678>

production and sale of 13 different kind of single-use plastics, and aim to phase them out entirely by 2023. SIDS collectively receive only 2% of bilateral and 10% of multilateral finance. Significant proportion of loans have to be repaid. A third of the Maldives' donor support is for adaptation, and a similar portion comprised of loans we have to repay. Almost half of our national budget is now spent on adaptation. The [2021 UNEP Adaptation Gap Report](#)⁸⁷ notes an urgent need to step up adaptation financing, and that adaptation financing costs for developing countries are five-to-ten times larger than their current international public adaptation flows, and the adaptation financing gap is widening. These systemic issues need urgent action. Countries are approving trillions in stimulus packages in face of COVID or Ukraine war responses, so finance and technology are available; what is lacking is the political will to make this reality.

Slovenia, on behalf of Costa Rica, Maldives, Morocco, Switzerland and Slovenia. As co-presenters of the GA resolutions on the right to healthy clean and sustainable environment. We echo the UN High Commissioner for human rights, when she warns us that “the world has never seen a human rights threat of this scope”. This is true for every country, developing or developed, but it is particularly true for every individual and for the poorest, the most vulnerable and the most marginalized. A clean, healthy and sustainable environment is therefore essential for the full enjoyment of all human rights.

Panel 2, Innovation to Create Opportunities for All

Moderator: Dr. Sheila Ochugboju, Executive Director, Alliance for Science.⁸⁸ We have 89 months to scale up solutions that will avert climate catastrophe; international alliances on science are therefore indispensable. The Alliance for Science works to amplify innovations and communicate science solutions for development. Our panel's speakers across disciplines are invited to share scalable innovations to address seemingly insurmountable global challenges.

Mr. Gabriel Silva, Co-founder of Mombak. Mombak was founded in 2021, dedicated to addressing one of the biggest climate action bottlenecks, namely the supply of high-quality carbon credits to meet rising demand. Innovations such as carbon calculators and monitoring technologies are important, but there are not enough large-scale projects to make meaningful impacts. Reforestation is the world's largest opportunity for carbon removal from the atmosphere, and Brazil is the world's largest opportunity for reforestation. Mombak focuses on native biodiversity reforestation of degraded cattle pastures in the Amazon, which is its unique contribution. Mombak uses 60 native trees, of which 9 are endangered, and intensified the pasture in neighbouring regions to our projects to minimize project leakage and any impacts on local food supplies, helping to preserve hydro-acids, rivers, streams, and local rainfall. For every project, Mombak engages local stakeholders and communities as partners. As a science-led organization, it developed proprietary algorithms to best identify and select areas with the maximum carbon storage potential. Mombak leverages natural regeneration for maximum scalability, to avoid having to fully plant all the land in our projects to accelerate scaling up. To finance all this, it created the Amazon Reforestation Fund, created to invest in its projects.

⁸⁷ <https://www.unep.org/resources/adaptation-gap-report-2021>

⁸⁸ <https://allianceforscience.cornell.edu/about/mission/>

Mr. Albin Wilson, Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer, ROAM.⁸⁹ The Swedish-Kenyan start up, founded in 2017, focuses on electrifying mass transit vehicles used every day across the continent. ROAM released the first electric motorcycle in Africa with engineers from the continent. It focuses on electric buses that work on pre-determined routes to vastly simplify charging infrastructure, and electric motorcycles used for transporting cargo and passengers which can be charged from any outlet anywhere. Focusing on these two vehicle segments allows for easily scaling up across the continent to maximize carbon reduction and achieve social change by for bus and motorcycle operators' daily incomes by lowering their operating costs by 76%. Our aim is to prove that this technology is ready and is best suited for Africa more than anywhere in the world. Africa accounts for minimal global carbon emissions, but the speed of its urban and population growth requires urgent sustainable transportation solutions. This approach also can address fuel shortages and price increases which bring economies to stand-stills. We are raising funds from governments and private stakeholders to make the future of Africa electric.

Mr. João Ribeiro-Bidaoui, Head of Global Affairs, the Ocean Cleanup. Our Global strategy is to close the tap and clean up plastic already in the Ocean. The Ocean Cleanup focuses on rivers, given that 1% of global rivers are responsible of 80% of plastics in the ocean, by developing localized technologies to intercept plastics at those points. It has 9 river interceptors deployed globally with support of governments and local authorities. Our software and artificial intelligence are improving efforts to identify hot spots. We reached proof of concept with our System 2 removal system, at a length of 850 meters, to collect trash from the Pacific Ocean, where we are close to have removed nearly 100,000 kilos of plastic. System 3, in development, will cover 2.5 kilometers with much a larger retention zones and higher efficiencies, which our models show could allow us to clean the large Pacific Plastic Patch. We invite member states to join our efforts.

Prof. Eric Chivian, Director of the Program for Preserving the Natural World, Inc., Associate, Department of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology, Harvard University, Founder and Former Director, Center for Health and the Global Environment Harvard Medical School.⁹⁰ It is human nature to strongly resist change, therefore the challenge for those of us working to protect the natural world is to provide clear arguments, in language that does leave people hopeless, that we have no choice but to change. As outlined in our booklet "[How Sustainable Engineering Solutions Depend on Biodiversity](#),"⁹¹ the existential engineering challenges facing us—regarding energy production and storage, heating, cooling and ventilation, moving through water and air with most efficiency, and creating strong, lightweight, biodegradable materials—have all been solved by the plants, animals, and microbes all around us. Three examples demonstrate this: (1) Analyzing dragonfly flight led to the development of micro-wind turbines that turned and generated electricity at wind speeds of 2mph, when most wind turbines perform poorly if at all below 6mph, therefore requiring expensive towers to take advantage of higher wind speeds. These dragonfly-inspired micro-wind turbines can be mounted on rooftops in off-the-grid locations, to provide lighting and to recharge cell phones and computers. Yet some 15% of dragonflies and their close cousins damselflies are at risk of extinction, perhaps taking with them blueprints for the most energy-

⁸⁹ <https://www.roammotors.com/about> - https://www.roammotors.com/post/opibus-makes-times-100-most-influentia-companies?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=organic_socials&utm_campaign=Time100&utm_term=Time100_April-2022

⁹⁰ https://www.naturestoolkit.com/files/ugd/69fcc6_6976abb313664290b7dfeff1f326d74c.pdf

⁹¹ <https://www.naturestoolkit.com/>

efficient micro-wind turbines. (2) Studies of bird flight led to the design of plane “winglets” that revolutionized modern aviation. A study in 2018 found that the “winglets” present on only a fraction of commercial and business jet planes worldwide saved more than 10 billion gallons of fuel, the equivalent of taking more than 20 million U.S. cars off the road for one year, and reduced CO2 emissions by 105 million tons, a reduction that would require the planting of 40 million acres of trees. (3) Applying lessons from research on Humpback whales’ flippers led to the production of commercial wind turbine blades and fans that may be among the most energy efficient of them all. Had Humpbacks gone extinct, as they almost had some years ago, this unique design, found in no other organism, would never have been discovered. With the biodiversity crisis continuing unabated, we are in danger, not only of disrupting ecosystem services that support all life on Earth, but of losing Nature’s sustainable engineering solutions. Additionally, my updated booklet “[Sustaining life: How Human Life is Sustained by Biodiversity](#)”⁹² highlights the link between biodiversity and zoonoses. There is overwhelming evidence that the virus causing HIV-AIDS was initially transmitted to people in West-Central Africa by exposure to the body fluids of infected chimpanzees, most likely during butchering of their meat. Since 1981, HIV-AIDS has infected more than 79 million people worldwide and killed more than 35 million. There is a substantial body of evidence that Covid-19 was also, in fact, a spill over from wildlife, a zoonosis. Zoonoses are driven by the vast wildlife trade for food and exotic pets, our exponential increase in tropical deforestation, by climate change, and by agricultural intensification, especially by our introducing domestic animals deep into the forest. All these push wild animals out of their normal habitats into greater contact with people, and push people into previously inaccessible areas where wildlife live. A new study has concluded that there are some 10,000 viral species in wildlife capable of infecting people, but that most of them are still circulating only in wildlife, not yet in people. We must learn from all the suffering, the millions of lives lost from HIV-AIDS, and Covid-19 and the trillions of dollars lost to stop cutting down and burning of tropical forests.

Ms. Ashley Yong, speaking on behalf of the UN Department of Global Communications, Civil Society Youth Representatives Programme,⁹³ representing young people affiliated with the 1,600 NGOs accredited to the Department, mentioned that the programme provides platforms for youth in Civil Society to share the best practices and voices to address various issues surrounding sustainability, including mobilizing thousands of youth to participate in UN summits. Ms. Charlene, founder of MyH2O and UNEP Young Champion of the Earth,⁹⁴ asked what are some best models for cross-sector collaboration that can maximize innovation and impact? Prof. Chivian responded that engaging engineers and professors from institutions around the world is critical, in partnership with UNDP and UNCBD to popularize research on solutions from the natural world for inclusion in engineering and biology curriculums. He also highlighted the importance of positive framings for these messages so that people do not tune them out and proposed that we reflect on lessons learned from the successful multilateral effort to protect the stratospheric ozone layer.

⁹² https://www.naturestoolkit.com/files/ugd/69fcc6_a11a5b6be7014c66be69d749ccd21ba4.pdf

⁹³ <https://www.un.org/en/civil-society/page/civil-society-youth-representatives-steering-committee>

⁹⁴ <https://www.unep.org/youngchampions/>

Member State interventions

Kenya. The resumed UNEA 5.2 adopted 14 resolutions which have a strong bearing on today's discussions and must be built upon. Kenya enacted the Sustainable Waste Management Act 2022 to transition waste management from linear to circular economy with a target to recover 95% of waste, reserving only 5% for land fills, to help achieve its NDC target on waste. Kenya has been implementing a ban on single use plastics and polythene bags since 2017. In 2018, the Government imposed a moratorium on logging and pursued a rigorous national tree planting campaign. Since then, Kenya's tree cover has increased to 12%, above the constitutional target of 10%. Making peace with nature is the defining task of the 21st century, and we must act more broadly, more holistically, across many fronts. This should include strengthening UNEP as the leading global environmental authority to make it fit-for-purpose.

Guatemala. We are a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and mega-diverse country with rich heritage of indigenous knowledge, and one of the most vulnerable to climate change. It is crucial to create synergies between climate action and the 2030 Agenda. Accessible financial mechanisms, technology transfer and debt channels are vital. The PGA's recent visit to Guatemala showcased community initiatives for agroforestry products as good practice for increase resilience and food security for present and future generations.

Saudi Arabia. Environmental action requires balancing adaptation and mitigation, while taking into account the circumstances of Least Developed Countries and supporting their efforts to adapt to climate change without impeding sustainable development and respecting the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and the need for just and comprehensive solutions. This entails a gradual and responsible shift towards sustainable energy. Saudi Arabia has announced more than 60 environmental initiatives, including generating 30% of domestic energy from renewables by 2030, achieving carbon neutrality by 2060, increasing energy efficiencies in industry and transport, investing in solar energy, launching a clean cooking energy initiative in support of 750 million people, establishing a fund to support the Circular Carbon Economy (CCE), and launching [the Saudi Green Initiative and Middle East Green Initiative](https://www.saudigreeninitiative.org/).⁹⁵ Saudi Arabia intends to take a leading role in the production and export of clean hydrogen, and notes the need for greater investments in renewable energy and technologies while mindful of energy security which is a vital component of economic prosperity.

Segment 4: Engaging and Empowering All Relevant Stakeholders: Simplifying Messages for Greater Partnerships

Accelerating the expansion and creation of multi-stakeholder partnerships to overcome cross-cutting capacity gaps will be critical to keeping the 1.5 degrees target alive. Achieving this will require further simplifying and disseminating key messages on integrated approaches at unprecedented scales, through engaging various forms of traditional and new media. This segment explored approaches to generate narratives that can spur whole-of-society responses and energize disengaged sectors

⁹⁵ <https://www.saudigreeninitiative.org/>

Stage Setting Remarks

Mr. Nikola Ivezaj, Vice President – Deputy Chief Policy and Government Affairs, [Global Citizen](#).⁹⁶ [The Global Citizen festivals](#)⁹⁷ embody our principles, and are used to leverage the power of music as a platform to showcase our partnerships by bringing various stakeholders together to champion climate action and work to end global poverty. The festivals are zero waste, zero emissions and zero environmental cost as possible. Last year we organized Global Citizen Live, the biggest concert since Live Aid, entirely powered by renewable diesel; we also offset the carbon produced from our festivals over the past three years. Global Citizen is a movement by changemakers, powered by citizens to push governments, businesses, and philanthropies to do better in terms of environmental action. Our model combines pop music with policy and simplified messages and has proved very successful. We are very uniquely positioned to educate youth on climate action. Tickets to our festivals cannot be bought via sales but can be earned through a points system by undertaking specific actions relating to advocacy with government (signing petitions, or tweeting at leaders) or personal behaviour change, like going plastic-free for a week. Artists participating in the festival are asked to commit to carbon-zero tours, and governments and companies participating are asked to announce pledges. Last year, 22 commitments were made on our stages, 13 of them relating to sustainability – including planting to plant hundreds of millions of trees and for hundreds of millions of dollars. On 24 September 2022 our next festival will push governments to fulfill the 100-billion-dollar pledge, balance adaptation and mitigation, and address food security concerns. We urge you to advocate with your leaders to participate and make pledges.

Ms. Natalia Vega-Berry, Co-founder, the New Zero World Campaign. Since the SDGs' launch, we noticed that there were many untapped industries such as communications, advertising, marketing, entertainment, and others. It was important for us to engage the creative industries who have felt isolated from UN work and message on climate action, which is the goal of the New Zero World Campaign, to shift the narrative from “climate change” to “everything change” to catalyse action and re-imagine our futures through climate psychology, which is needed to reach mainstream audiences. The narrative aims to spotlight climate justice as a priority. [New Zero World's pillars of activation](#)⁹⁸ are storytelling; education tools and frameworks; providing the creative industries a seat at UN tables; a “People’s House” where youth and the unrepresented can have a voice, host conversations and dialogues; and leveraging WEB3 to ensure it serves society and the planet. We welcome collaborations and partnerships.

Panel Discussion

Moderator: Mr. Ramu Damodaran, Honorary Adviser to the University for Peace, first Chief of [the United Nations Academic Impact](#) (2010-21).⁹⁹ We are simultaneously in the worst nightmare possible, and at a time of the greatest hope possible, and the choice is for us to make. Per the UN Charter, The United Nations and General Assembly’s purposes are “To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations” in the attainment of common ends.

⁹⁶ <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/>

⁹⁷ <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/festival/>

⁹⁸ <https://thezeroworld.org/>

⁹⁹ <https://www.un.org/en/academicimpact>

Ms. Emily Joffrion, Brand Communications Strategist. Over the past 15 years shifts in social media, news consumption and information sharing have led to adaptations in how we tell stories and engage our audiences. This new ‘Attention Economy’ is a marketplace organized around ‘buying’ attention. People have become exhausted as demands on their attention and engagement abounded. To add urgency to their demands on our attention, message purveyors have transitioned to appealing to fear rather than hope. We must move away from messages of doom, gloom and fear which are paralyzing to audiences. We must bring audiences along with us and inspire them. Three key principles are to know our audiences; (1) Generalized messages are ineffective, but must be personalized and customized towards targeted audiences, and delivered where audiences are. (2) Audiences must be invited along and be made to feel that they are the main actors or heroes in the story; people must see themselves and their values in narratives. The success of AirBnB was in creating community-driven messaging. (3) Giving people a ‘gift’, something that allows them to see value in what they are sharing. [Edelman surveys on attitudes towards the UN](#) demonstrate that youth trust the organization, but they have to be better engaged and activated.¹⁰⁰ [The Reuters Future of Journalistic Work Report](#) informs that documentary films are the most powerful tools for climate advocacy; our efforts and coalitions must adapt accordingly.¹⁰¹ Unlocking hearts and minds out of trauma and fear requires hopeful, interactive, educational and entertaining approaches, as exemplified by [the Games for Change](#) festival.¹⁰²

Ms. Laura Quinones, UN News Climate Content Producer. [The UN Global Communications Strategy](#) reiterates that “We are not just the messengers of disaster but conveners of hope”.¹⁰³ Focusing on problems does not generate action and is overwhelming. Meeting people in the field who are making a difference, and centering efforts on telling their stories, is the best means to inspire others. Our memories are hard-wired to positive feelings and that must guide our storytelling strategies when trying to convey science and facts. We must acknowledge perceptions that the UN is not doing enough, by changing that narrative and communicating our successes better, which was a message also relayed by journalists during an informal discussion the PGA hosted with media ahead of the Moment for Nature to get their inputs. Solutions to our interlinked challenges depend on activists, scientists, and member states, and also on communicators to find light and simple messages that cut through bureaucracy. [The South-South Galaxy](#) is a compendium of impactful solutions which can provide hope and inspiration for more action at community levels.¹⁰⁴

Ms. Luise Faurschou, Founder and Director, ART 2030. Art and culture are essential to reach the Global Goals because the ideas and emotions they evoke transcend differences, borders and convictions, and challenge and move audiences to revisit their preconceptions and change course. Artists are capable of taking very complex content into something we can relate to and perceive through all our senses. The PGA’s decision to engage the art and culture decisions for the Moment for Nature could not be more timely; we are standing on the brink of a planetary breakdown. In order to inspire hope in the face of these challenges and to support the Moment for Nature, ART 2030 launched [“The Hope Forum” during the Venice Biennale 2022](#) whereby change makers in

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.edelman.com/news-awards/new-survey-reveals-strong-support-of-united-nations-from-millennials>

¹⁰¹ <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/our-research/future-journalistic-work>

¹⁰² <https://www.gamesforchange.org/>

¹⁰³ <https://i.unu.edu/media/unu.edu/page/24924/UNU-Global-Communications-Strategy-%E2%80%93-2020-2024.pdf>

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.southsouth-galaxy.org/about/>

the sector were convened and artists discussed how to envision a hopeful and attractive vision for the future which encourage action. The UN's acknowledgement of the art and culture sectors' roles, and asking for their feedback and commitment, was very powerful and strengthened their resolve to support global efforts. Policy makers giving more space and prioritizing partnerships with these sectors will lead to greater impacts. Art and Culture in turn can help bridge messaging about the policies made in rooms like the General Assembly Hall with the vision of creative sectors' with concrete measurable actions for truly impactful action.

Ms. Emellie O'Brian, Founder and CEO, [Earth Angel](https://www.earthangelsets.com/),¹⁰⁵ on behalf of the Entertainment Net-Zero Accord (ENZA). As a film maker, I was inspired to dedicate my career to environmental action through films that addressed popular efforts to end pollution and protect communities, which proves the power of storytelling for action. That led me to create socially and environmentally conscious narratives. Yet despite these messages being associated with the Tv and film industries, the production of such content is very polluting and wasteful. Earth Angel is therefore dedicated to reduce the environmental footprint of film and tv productions. In time this led to the formation of ENZA, in partnership with UNFCCC and UNESCO, as a global multi-stakeholder initiative that aims to unify and activate the Tv and Film industries for climate action, which we hope to launch at UNFCCC COP27. Multi-sectoral partnerships are needed to bridge fragmented ecosystems, film festivals can be platforms to do so.

Member State interventions

United Kingdom. The UK has recently recorded the highest temperatures in its history. To tackle the interlinked planetary crises requires action, including adopting an ambitious Global Biodiversity Framework at CBD COP15, and to deliver on UNFCCC COP26's Climate Pact commitments. Through the "Global Ocean Alliance" and the "High-Ambition Coalition for Nature and People", the UK has been co-leading over 100 countries championing the 30 by 30 target to protect at least 30% of global oceans and land by 2030. To make true on our commitments, we've taken action to deliver on SDGs 14 and 15; [at the UN Conference on Ocean we announced an 150 million Pound investment in a new global programme, known as COAST](#), to protect and restore valuable coastal and marine habitats such as corals, mangroves and seagrasses, improve the sustainability and productivity of small-scale fisheries, and help developing countries unlock aquaculture's potential. We also announced 100 million Pounds of funding for "Blue Planet" for enforcement of Marine Protected Areas.¹⁰⁶ The 2022 Environment Act includes new legally binding target to halt global decline of species.¹⁰⁷

Fiji. Our economy depends on a healthy ocean. We have committed to 100% sustainable management of our EEZ with 30 percent declared as marine protected areas by 2030. We have banned deep-seabed mining in Fijian waters because we refuse to destroy what we do not understand. Climate change represents the single most important threat to our society and to our peoples. It has uprooted communities and disrupted our economy countless times. A few weeks

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.earthangelsets.com/>

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-escalates-support-for-global-marine-environment-at-un-ocean-conference>

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/delivering-on-the-environment-act-new-targets-announced-and-ambitious-plans-for-nature-recovery>

ago, our Pacific Leaders met in Suva, Fiji and endorsed [the Pacific Islands Forum's 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent](#).¹⁰⁸ By 2030, Fiji will achieve total real-time surveillance of its waters; be single-use plastic free; ocean literacy will be mandatory within our education system; we'll lower carbon emissions in our shipping sector by 40%. By 2050, Fiji will be a net-zero society. Our fisherfolk will have universal access to electric outboard motors, the Pacific will be home to a green shipping fleet and all fishing nets in Fijian waters will be biodegradable.

The Netherlands. Climate change and biodiversity loss have to be tackled together, yet our work is not organized that way. We ask UN organisations to mainstream these crises throughout their work, just as Member States can do more to do the same. We call for an ambitious and transformative post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. The Netherlands with Tajikistan will co-host the 2023 UN Water Conference and invites all stakeholders to join the Water Action agenda to bridge gaps between ambition and actions.¹⁰⁹

Closing remarks

H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid, President of the United Nations General Assembly. Without urgent action, every part of our lives and livelihoods will continue to get threatened. Our food and water security – already so strained – will only grow even more threatened. We must be ambitious and aim to redress every single industry and sector that has an impact on the climate. This includes engaging youth – not only as representatives of their age group - but to ensure their empowerment as qualified young people who need to be involved in decision-making processes. We must urgently integrate all environmental action plans at the national levels, particularly the 3 Rio conventions, to build unified strategies and implementation plans which map out the challenges we face, and simultaneously identify the most transformative investments we need to cover all work streams. And this needs to happen at every level – from national to regional to global. Together, we can reduce the burden placed on developing countries, which are the most at risk of suffering from climate change's negative impacts, but which can also reap the most benefits from these large-scale changes. We must ensure that every single meeting is leveraged to drive further action, cooperation, and implementation. We must ask ourselves what action the GA and all the relevant international bodies can take to capture this momentum and successfully implement meaningful change. This moment must be turned into a movement.

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.forumsec.org/2050strategy/>

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.water-climate-coalition.org/road-to-new-york-un-2023-water-conference/>