Global Commitments for Nature: Opportunities for Greater Impact

A background document prepared for the Office of the Presidency of the UN General Assembly
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About this Document

The Office of the President of the United Nations General Assembly (OPGA) will convene an event entitled '**A Moment for Nature' on 19 July 2022** in New York. This event aims to support efforts that can increase cohesion among global environmental work streams. The OPGA would like to focus on the interlinkages and synergies between the different strands of environmental action, identify and promote solutions to common bottlenecks, break down siloes, and accelerate implementation.

The outcome of the event will be a summary from the OPGA that may inform the General Assembly and relevant policies and action from Member States. The event will also promote the expansion of high-impact initiatives and partnerships and encourage new multistakeholder partnerships to address gaps.

The OPGA requested UNEP to prepare a document to inform preparations for the above-mentioned event, focusing on multilateral environmental meetings happening in the 2021-2022 General Assembly cycle.

This document provides a **non-exhaustive overview** of issues addressed in the commitments and outcome documents of the following meetings[1]:

- **The 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP26)**
- **The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP15, part 1)**
- **The 15th session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD, COP15)**
- **The 2022 UN Ocean Conference**
- **The resumed Fifth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA5.2)**
- **The special session of UNEA to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of UNEP (UNEP@50)**
- **The Stockholm +50 International Meeting**
- **The UN Food Systems Summit**

- Section I provides an overview of the context of current global environmental commitments.
- Section II presents an overview of key messages, outcomes, and commitments from the above-listed meetings.
- Section III outlines common challenges identified by Member States across the above-mentioned meetings.
- Section IV refers to a sample of cross-cutting UN initiatives and partnerships for nature.

I. Global Commitments for Nature: How far have we come?[2]

Over the past 50 years, the world has experienced significant economic and social progress. Hundreds of millions of people were lifted from poverty, and access to education and health was improved, increasing the well-being and capabilities of many generations. Our natural world and human ingenuity created the basis for prosperity and human development, but as a result, our life-support systems on land, freshwater and marine ecosystems are under severe and growing pressure due to the unsustainable relationship between humans and our natural environment.

The annual global extraction of natural resources (biomass, fossil fuels, metals and non-metallic minerals, water, and land) grew from 27 billion tons to 92 billion tons in the last 50 years and the extraction and processing of these resources make up about 50% of total global greenhouse gas

1These outcome documents are of a diverse legal nature. Some outcomes are negotiated and agreed by member states (e.g. UNEA resolutions). Others are consensus-based texts proposed by host countries (e.g. Kunming Declaration).

[2]This section was drafted based on input and references from the Stockholm+50 Thought Piece entitled "Stochholm+50: A Healthy Planet for the Prosperity of All – Our Responsibility, Our Opportunity"(https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/38911/Stockholm50_CN.pdf).https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/36939/STKLM50_HP.pdf.); The Stockholm+50 Concept Note (https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/38911/Stockholm50_CN.pdf); and the UNEP report 'Making Peace with Nature' (https://www.unep.org/resources/making-peace-nature).

emissions. The benefits and impacts from the use of these natural resources are unevenly distributed across countries[3].

Three interconnected crises – climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution – are putting the health of our planet, our economies, and our social well-being at risk. Science has warned us about increasing environmental challenges and their devastating impacts on human development[4].

Countries first acknowledged the linkages between human development, poverty and the environment in the Stockholm Declaration, adopted on 16 June 1972 at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. Since its adoption, environmental laws and institutions have increased dramatically across the globe. All countries have at least one legislation or regulation on the environment. Most countries have established and, to varying degrees, empowered environmental agencies. A subsequent number of global commitments on the environment followed over the years, with the adoption of over 500 Multilateral Environmental Agreements (hereinafter MEAs). Some key legally binding instruments, like the Conventions on Climate Change, Biological Diversity, and Desertification, the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention and the Minamata Convention, as well as political commitments like the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, have supported countries in developing laws and institutions to slow or reverse environmental degradation. However, in most cases, **the objectives of MEAs have not been met.** As assessed by scientific bodies like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), and the International Resource Panel (IRP), the international community is also **not on the right trajectory to achieve them**. There is growing recognition that more holistic approaches are needed to address the considerable implementation gap of global environmental commitments in both developed and developing countries.

Science has also noted the urgent need to transform current socio-economic systems. Many solutions are already known but not broadly implemented.

I. Overview of key messages, outcomes, and commitments

Annex 1 of this document provides a non-exhaustive overview of some key messages, outcomes, and commitments from the meetings listed under the section 'About this Document'.

II. Cross-cutting Challenges and Opportunities for Greater Impact

A set of cross-cutting challenges have been highlighted in the commitments and outcome documents of the meetings listed in the section 'About this Document'. These cross-cutting challenges are outlined in a non-exhaustive overview below.

[3] According to the International Resource Panel in 2017, the per capita material footprint of high-income countries was 60% higher than the upper-middle income group and more than 13 times the level of the low-income group. See details in International Resource Panel (2019): Global Resources Outlook 2019: Natural Resources for the Future We Want, https://www.resourcepanel.org/reports/global-resources-outlook.

[4] See for example Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2018): Summary for Policymakers, Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report. https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/05/SR15_SPM_version_report_LR.pdf; Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (2019): Summary for policymakers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. SR15_SPM_version_report_LR.pdf (ipcc.ch); UNEP (2019): Global Environment Outlook – GEO-6: Healthy Planet, Healthy People, https://www.unep.org/resources/global-environment-outlook-6; International Resource Panel (2019): Global Resources Outlook 2019: Natural Resources for the Future We Want, https://www.resourcepanel.org/reports/global-resources-outlook; UNEP (2019): Global Chemicals Outlook II: From Legacies to Innovative Solutions, https://www.unep.org/resources/report/global-chemicals outlook-ii-legacies-innovative-solutions.

(1) Focusing on urgent and large-scale action[5]

Member states have expressed deep concerns about insufficient progress on the implementation of agreed commitments.

Member states recognized slow progress in the implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity targets (where none of the 20 targets have been fully met at the global level, despite some progress at the national level) in the **Kunming Declaration**. **The Glasgow Climate Pact** stresses the urgency of enhancing ambition and action in this critical decade to address the gap between current efforts and the pathways towards the goals agreed. The **UN Ocean Conference Political Declaration** regrets the collective failure to achieve the four targets under Sustainable Development Goal 14 that should have been reached by 2020, recognizing that action is not advancing at the speed or scale required. **UNEA-5.2** noted with grave concern that the 2020 goal on sound management of chemicals, agreed under the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, has not been achieved. Also, at **UNEA-5.2,** Ministers stressed the urgent need to halt the unprecedented global decline of biodiversity and fragmentation of habitats; the direct exploitation of organisms; unsustainable consumption and production patterns; climate change; invasive alien species; and pollution. The challenge is hence not necessarily the lack of global ambition, but the lack of implementation of these commitments.

(2) Adopting system-wide responses to tackle interlinked challenges of the triple planetary crises[6]

It is broadly recognized that the challenges addressed in legal instruments and other commitments are highly interlinked and thus require holistic responses.

The lack of holistic thinking can often lead to unintended consequences, exacerbating the challenges we are facing. For instance, land restoration efforts with monocultures or non-native species, may threaten local biodiversity and ecosystem services. This is important to consider in policy planning and implementation, at the global, regional, national, and local scale.

The drivers and impacts of biodiversity loss, climate change, land degradation and desertification, ocean degradation, and pollution are interlinked. This implies that the successful achievement of global commitments in one area depends on the successful achievement of commitments in other areas. **The Glasgow Climate Pact** recognized these interlinkages by noting the importance of protecting, conserving, and restoring nature and ecosystems to achieve climate goals. The **UN Ocean Conference Political Declaration** emphasizes the particular importance of implementing the Paris Agreement for the health and resilience of the ocean and thus our future, as well as the need to adapt to the unavoidable effects of climate change. In the **Kunming Declaration** ministers committed to increase the application of ecosystem-based approaches to inter alia mitigate and adapt to climate change. It is further highlighted that urgent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions are needed. **UNEA-5.2** recognized, in its resolution on Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste, that the achievement of the SDGs is threatened by an array of escalating and mutually reinforcing environmental risks, and that given the linkages between climate change, biodiversity loss, land degradation, and pollution, it is essential to address these in an integrated manner. The **Kunming declaration** acknowledged with grave concern that these interlinked crises pose an existential threat to our prosperity and our planet.

[5] This challenge was noted in the following meeting outcomes: CBD COP15 Kunming declaration, UNFCCC COP26, Glasgow Climate Pact, UNOC Political Declaration, UNEA 5.2 Ministerial Declaration and UNEA 5.2 Resolution on Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste (UNEP/EA5/L13/REV.1)

[6] This challenge is mentioned in the following meeting outcomes: CBD COP15 Kunming Declaration, UNFCCC COP26 Glasgow Climate Pact, UNCCD COP15 Decisions, UNOC Political Declaration, UNEA 5.2 Ministerial Declaration, Political declaration of the special session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/EA.5/L.26), UNEA 5.2 Resolution in End plastic pollution: towards an internationally legally binding instrument (UNEP/EA5/L23/REV.1), UNEA 5.2 Resolution on Sustainable Lake Management (UNEP/EA5/L8/REV.1), UNEA 5.2 Resolution on Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure (UNEP/EA5/L15/REV.1), and UNEA 5.2 Resolution on Environmental aspects of minerals and metals management (UNEP/EA5/L18/REV.1) and Resolution on Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste (UNEP/EA5/L13/REV.1)

UNCCD COP15 Decisions invites parties to strive for more effective partnerships, financing, and cooperation at all levels, among the Rio conventions and other relevant mechanisms and processes, including exploring ways to catalyse more synergies at the national level between the individual action plans of the Rio conventions.

It is critical to find pathways that address joint drivers, maximize synergies (e.g. protecting nature to mitigate and adapt to climate change) and consider these interlinkages to avoid doing harm. At **UNEA 5.2,** Member States acknowledged the importance of sustainable management of metals and minerals in the production of technologies to combat climate change. At **UNEA-5.2**, Member states also acknowledged the importance of implementing solutions that tackle interconnected drivers and impacts. For example, circular economy approaches can lead to sustainable consumption and production and help address climate change, biodiversity loss, land degradation, water stress impacts, pollution, and human health impacts.

To overcome fragmentation, member states recognized the need to mainstream environmental objectives at the global, national, and local level (including in multilateral environmental agreements and global scientific reports).

Holistic land and sea use planning and regulation is key to improve the effectiveness of environmental protection, understand and manage the cumulative impact of the drivers of change and the rights of multiple actors involved. The **UN Ocean Conference Political Declaration** stresses that science-based actions, international cooperation and partnerships can inform integrated ocean management, planning and decision-making, through improving understanding of cumulative human impact. Ministers at **UNEA-5.2** committed to mainstreaming biodiversity, climate change and pollution concerns into all policies and tools, and the **Kunming Declaration** includes a commitment to promote the integration of biodiversity commitments and strengthen cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms on biodiversity.

(3) Transforming the economy and aligning investment with global commitments for nature[7]

Countries have noted the need to transform current economic systems (including through sustainable production and consumption) and re-direct finance flows and investment to support sustainable development.

The Kunming Declaration called for transformative change, across all sectors of the economy, and all parts of society, through enhanced policy coherence at all government levels and synergetic action at the national level, and across conventions and multilateral organizations. At **Stockholm+50,** countries recommended system-wide change in our current economic systems for a healthy planet, through the adoption of new measures of progress and human wellbeing that account for the value of the environment; investment in infrastructure; and by promoting the phase out of fossil fuels while providing targeted support to the poorest and most vulnerable. It was also recommended to accelerate these transformations in high-impact sectors like food, energy, water, buildings and construction, manufacturing, and mobility. Through the adoption of policies that promote circularity, resource efficiency, regenerative production approaches and nature-based solutions; and by adopting frameworks that enhance and reinforce transparency and accountability by business also promoting just transitions. It was also recommended to transform food systems by promoting regenerative farming and fisheries approaches that provide healthy diets and minimize food waste.

[7] This challenge was noted in the following meeting outcomes: CBD COP15 Kunming Declaration, the UNEA 5.2 Ministerial Declaration, the Political declaration of the special session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/EA.5/L.26), UNCCD COP15 Decisions, UNEA 5.2 Resolution 'End plastic pollution: towards an internationally legally binding instrument' (UNEP/EA5/L23/REV.1), UNFCCC COP26, Glasgow Climate Pact, UNEA 5.2 Resolution on Environmental aspects of minerals and metals management (UNEP/EA5/L18/REV.1), UNEA 5.2 Resolution 'Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure' (UNEP/EA5/L15/REV.1, UNEA 5.2 Resolution 'Enhancing Circular Economy as a contribution to achieving sustainable consumption and production' (UNEP/EA5/L17/REV.1), and the UNOC Political Declaration, Stockholm+50 'Key recommendations for accelerating action towards a healthy planet for the prosperity of all'.

The UN Food Systems Summit also emphasized the urgent need to transform food systems from drivers of environmental degradation, loss of genetic diversity, climate change and pollution to drivers of solutions for healthy people and planet. The meeting set out 5 action tracks to make this happen. Action will focus on, among others, promoting sustainable and healthy consumption patterns, and boosting nature-positive food production at scale. At **UNEA-5.2**, Ministers agreed to cooperate across sectors and across levels of government, in partnership with other governments and local actors and the private sector, to transition to sustainable food systems and deliver enhanced food security and resilience, and foster innovation while reducing emissions, biodiversity loss and freshwater use.

Re-orienting financial flows and investments and offering innovative financing solutions for increasing coherence are key to support the transformation. **Stockholm+50** recommended to align public and private financial flows with environmental, climate and sustainable development commitments. In **the Kunming Declaration**, Ministers committed to work with Ministries of Finance and Economy to reform incentive structures, eliminate, phase out or reform subsidies that are harmful to biodiversity, mobilize additional resources and align all financial flows with the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. In the **Glasgow Climate Pact,** Parties noted the need to ensure just transitions by making financial flows consistent with a low-emission pathway and climate-resilient development. Furthermore, at **UNEA-5.2**, investment in climate resilient, resource efficient, and socially and economically sustainable infrastructure was agreed as a key area of action to prevent ecosystem fragmentation and transform production and consumption systems. In the **UN Ocean Conference Political Declaration**, member states committed to explore, develop, and promote innovative financing solutions to drive the transformation to sustainable ocean-based economies, scaling up of nature-based solutions, ecosystem-based approaches to support the resilience, restoration and conservation of coastal ecosystems. Mainstreaming the values of marine natural capital into decision-making is also raised in this context.

The **UNEA-5.2 ministerial declaration** also includes a commitment to apply appropriate methods of valuation of nature and assessment of nature-related risks in policymaking to promote the conservation, sustainable use and management of natural resources, and to advance sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Also, at **UNEA-5.2**, Member States highlighted sustainable consumption and production and the protection and management of natural resources as core requirements for sustainable development[8]. They also noted the critical need to adopt a full lifecycle approach to effectively address the impacts from plastic pollution in the historic resolution 'End plastic pollution: towards an internationally legally binding instrument'. At the same meeting, Member States highlighted the need to mobilize means of implementation in an effective and rapid manner. These means should come from all sources of finance including domestic, international, and the private sector. North-South, South-South, and triangular cooperation are needed to support developing countries in the implementation of national environmental policies. In line with the latter, in the **Glasgow Climate Pact**, Parties reiterated the urgent need to scale up action and financial support from public and private sources, to reduce vulnerability to climate change impacts, and address loss and damage, particularly in developing countries. Parties called for a continued increase in the scale and effectiveness of climate finance from all sources.

[8]See resolution UNEP/EA5/L17/REV.1 'Enhancing Circular Economy as a contribution to achieving sustainable consumption and production'

(4) Providing the knowledge, tools, technologies, and financial support for effective implementation[9]

In addition to increasing and re-orienting financial flows, at all levels, and scaling-up investments to support implementation of commitments raised above, countries have also recognized a need to enhance the capacity and support the enabling conditions to facilitate developing countries in delivering on their commitments. In **Stockholm+50,** countries recommended rebuilding relationships of trust by recognizing the importance of developed country leadership in promoting sustainability transitions; supporting capacity building and technology transfer for national efforts by developing countries to implement internationally agreed environmental agreements, and honouring the commitment to mobilize USD100 billion every year for climate finance for developing countries. The political declaration from **UNEP@50** further calls upon Member States and members of specialized agencies to enhance the provision and mobilization of all types and sources of means of implementation, including capacity-building, technology, and financial support to promote global partnerships and North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation. This is to support developing countries in the implementation of national environmental policies. **The Glasgow Climate Pact** urges developed country Parties to provide enhanced support, including through financial resources, technology transfer and capacity-building with respect to both mitigation and adaptation. It also recognized the need to continue supporting developing countries in identifying and addressing both current and emerging capacity-building gaps and needs. In the **Kunming Declaration,** Member States commit to increase the provision of financial, technological, and capacity building support to developing countries necessary to implement the post 2020 global biodiversity framework and the Convention. The **UN Ocean Conference Political Declaration** includes commitments to several science-based and innovative actions to address capacity challenges in developing countries, in particular small island developing States and the least developed countries, like strengthening systematic observation and data collection efforts, knowledge-sharing and exchange of best practices and access to technology. This is further related to science-based decision making and quality education raised below. **The Glasgow Climate Pact** notes the specific concerns raised with regard to eligibility and ability to access concessional forms of climate finance, and re-emphasizes the importance of the provision of scaled-up financial resources, taking into account the needs of developing country Parties that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

(5) Aligning COVID recovery efforts with global commitments for nature[10]

Member states have committed to align COVID-19 recovery efforts with global commitments for nature.

The Glasgow Climate Pact acknowledged the importance of ensuring a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive global recovery. In the **Kunming Declaration,** Member States committed to ensure that post-pandemic recovery plans contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity**.** At **UNEA 5.2**, Member States committed to promoting an inclusive and sustainable recovery, a green and just transition while mainstreaming biodiversity, climate change and pollution concerns into policies. It was also recognized that infrastructure investments, which are central to many COVID-19 economic

[9] This challenge was noted in the following meeting outcomes: CBD COP15 Kunming declaration, UNOC Political Declaration, UNEA 5.2 Ministerial Declaration, UNEA 5.2, Political declaration of the special session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/EA.5/L.26), UNFCCC COP26, Glasgow Climate Pact, UNCCD COP15 Decisions, and the Stockholm+50 'Key recommendations for accelerating action towards a healthy planet for the prosperity of all'.

[10] This challenge mentioned in the following meeting outcomes: CBD COP15 Kunming declaration, UNOC Political Declaration, UNEA 5.2 Resolution on the environmental dimension of a sustainable, resilient and inclusive post COVID-19 recovery (UNEP/EA5/L16/REV.1), UNEA 5.2 Ministerial Declaration, UNEA 5.2, Political declaration of the special session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/EA.5/L.26), UNFCCC COP26, Glasgow Climate Pact, UNEA 5.2 Resolution on Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure (UNEP/EA5/L15/REV.1.).

recovery plans, should seek to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to ecosystems and livelihoods. The **UN Ocean Conference Political Declaration** highlights the increasing personal protective equipment waste and how it has exacerbated the problem of marine plastic litter and microplastics. It affirms that the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean and the advancement of nature-based solutions, ecosystem-based approaches play a critical role in ensuring a sustainable, inclusive and environmentally resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

(6) Involving and empowering all relevant stakeholders[11]

A broad range of stakeholders at the local, national, and regional levels, including indigenous peoples, youth, women, and local communities should be actively involved in efforts to achieve global commitments for nature.

Member states have called for active involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities in the design and implementation of multilateral, national and local decision-making processes as well as the meaningful participation of youth. **The Glasgow Climate Pact** encourages enhanced action for the full, meaningful, and equal participation of women, ensuring gender-responsive implementation and means of implementation. In the **Kunming Declaration** Member States committed to enable the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth, civil society, local governments and authorities, academia, the business and financial sectors. The **UN Ocean Political Conference Declaration includes a commitment to** empower, especially **children and youth,** through quality education and lifelong learning to provide relevant knowledge and skills. **Stockholm+50** recognized intergenerational responsibility as a cornerstone of sound policymaking. Its recommendations highlighted the important need of building the capacity of young people to engage with financial institutions, recognizing the critical role of young people in environmental action. Countries also suggested drawing on insights and expertise from indigenous and traditional knowledge to promoting evidence-based policy making that can help strengthen national implementation of existing commitments on nature.

[11] This challenge is mentioned in the following meeting outcomes: UNFCCC COP26, Glasgow Climate Pact, Political declaration of the special session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/EA.5/L.26), CBD COP15 Kunming declaration, UNEA 5.2 Ministerial Declaration, and UNOC Political Declaration, Stockholm+50 'Key recommendations for accelerating action towards a healthy planet for the prosperity of all'.

(7) Enhancing and enforcing environmental governance and legal frameworks[12]

Development, effective implementation, and enforcement of legislation are key in achieving global commitments for nature.

In the political declaration from **UNEP@50,** Member States noted the importance of having effective domestic legal frameworks and governance structures to promote compliance with obligations under international environmental law. In the **Kunming Declaration** and the **UNEA-5.2** resolution to end plastic pollution, Member States committed to strengthen environmental laws, policies, and regulatory frameworks at the global, national, and local levels. Capacity must be strengthened across all sectors (including the administrative and judicial ones) for the effective implementation of international environmental law. Addressing this challenge requires participatory processes involving all stakeholders, ensuring access to information and access to justice. The landmark UN Human Rights Council resolution, which recognized the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment for the first time by the UN body, is also worth noting in this context[13]. **Stockholm+50** recommended to recognize and implement the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, fulfilling the vision articulated in principle 1 of the 1972 Stockholm Declaration.

Stockholm+50 also recommended to strengthen implementation of existing commitments, by enhancing national environmental legislation, budget, planning processes and institutional frameworks.

(8) Strengthening evidence-based policy making[14]

Member States have recognized the value of science-based decision making to effectively tackle the complexity of existing and emerging environmental crises.

Stockholm+50 recommended promoting evidence-based policymaking, including by enhanced collaboration between academic disciplines and thematic scientific panels; and scaling up capacity support and development, access to and financing for environmentally sound technologies. UNEA5.2 encouraged enhanced collaboration among scientific panels and also recognized the contribution of indigenous peoples' expertise and knowledge. At **UNEA-5.2**, Members States agreed to create a new scientific panel to contribute to the sound management of chemicals and waste and prevent pollution. They also encouraged enhanced collaboration between scientific bodies.

Member States have noted that need for stronger science-policy interfaces to better understand inter alia the impacts of human activities on the ocean (including the impacts of plastic pollution). The **UN Ocean Conference Political Declaration** includes a commitment to establish effective partnerships, including multi-stakeholder, public-private, cross-sectoral, interdisciplinary, and scientific partnerships. It also commits to strengthen scientific observation and data collection efforts; improve timely sharing of knowledge through open-access databases; invest in national statistical systems; standardize data, ensure compatibility of data; synthesize knowledge for policy makers; and build capacity in developing countries. At **UNEA-5.2**, Member States reiterated the need to facilitate access to capacity building, technology, scientific and technical cooperation.

[12] This challenge is mentioned in the following meeting outcomes: UNEA 5.2 Ministerial Declaration, UNOC Political Declaration, UNEA 5.2 Resolution in End plastic pollution: towards an internationally legally binding instrument (UNEP/EA5/L23/REV.1),Kunming declaration, UNEA 5.2, Political declaration of the special session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/EA.5/L.26), UNEA 5.2 Resolution on Enhancing Circular Economy as a contribution to achieving sustainable consumption and production (UNEP/EA5/L17/REV.1), Stockholm+50 key recommendations.

[13] A/HRC/RES/48/13

[14] This challenge is mentioned in the following meeting outcomes: the Political declaration of the special session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/EA.5/L.26), UNEA 5.2 Ministerial Declaration, UNOC Political Declaration UNEA 5.2 Resolution 'The environmental dimension of a sustainable, resilient and inclusive post COVID-19 recovery' (UNEP/EA5/L16/REV.1), UNEA 5.2 Resolution 'End plastic pollution: towards an internationally legally binding instrument' (UNEP/EA5/L23/REV.1), Stockholm+50 'Key recommendations for accelerating action towards a healthy planet for the prosperity of all'.

(9) Incentivizing behavioral shifts that align with global commitments for nature[15]

There have been repeated calls by Member States to increase public awareness of environmental challenges and the actions that could effectively mitigate their impacts.

At **UNEA-5.2,** Member States asked to enhance knowledge management and develop strong advocacy, communication, outreach, awareness raising mechanisms, platforms and campaigns. They emphasized the importance of education and to strengthen information sharing within and across countries and regions on sustainable consumption and production approaches, including on circular economy. The **Kunming Declaration** includes a commitment to further develop communication, education, and public awareness tools on biodiversity to support behavioral changes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. **UNCCD's COP15** invites parties and others to share success stories to foster understanding and awareness.

The recommendations from **Stockholm+50** include restoring our relationship with nature by integrating ethical values and adopting a fundamental change in attitudes, habits, and behaviors, to support our common prosperity.

IV. Partnerships and Initiatives

Annex 2 includes an illustrative list of UN initiatives and partnerships addressing different global commitments for nature. These initiatives bring together several UN agencies to address one or more of the global commitments in a holistic manner, and, therefore, could have greater cross-cutting impact. Other UN initiatives have been identified by the United Nations Environmental Management Group in the following publications: 'Synthesis Report on UN System-wide Contributions to the Implementation of the Environmental Dimension in the Sustainable Development Goals'; Addressing marine litter and microplastics: UN system-wide contributions; and the UN EMG Stocktaking Report on Green Economy Knowledge Products by UN Agencies and Partners. Some governments are also taking action to accelerate implementation through intergovernmental coalitions like the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, and the Global Ocean Alliance.

[15] This challenge is mentioned in the following meeting outcomes: CBD COP15 Kunming Declaration, UNCCD COP15Decisions, in UNEA 5.2 Resolution 'Enhancing Circular Economy as a contribution to achieving sustainable consumption and production' (UNEP/EA5/L17/REV.1, Stockholm+50 'Key recommendations for accelerating action towards a healthy planet for the prosperity of all'.