



# General Assembly

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## Seventy-seventh session

Agenda item 18 (g)

### **Sustainable development: report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme**

#### **Report of the Second Committee\***

*Rapporteur:* Ms. Francesca Cassar (Malta)

## **I. Introduction**

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 18 (see [A/77/443](#), para. 2). Action on sub-item (g) was taken at the 24th meeting, on 22 November 2022. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary record.<sup>1</sup>

## **II. Consideration of draft resolutions [A/C.2/77/L.30](#) and [A/C.2/77/L.61](#)**

2. At the 21st meeting, on 10 November 2022, the representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme" ([A/C.2/77/L.30](#)).

3. At its 24th meeting, on 22 November, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme" ([A/C.2/77/L.61](#)), submitted by the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Ahmed Magdy (Egypt), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution [A/C.2/77/L.30](#).

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\* The report of the Committee on this item is being issued in 12 parts, under the symbols [A/77/443](#), [A/77/443/Add.1](#), [A/77/443/Add.2](#), [A/77/443/Add.3](#), [A/77/443/Add.4](#), [A/77/443/Add.5](#), [A/77/443/Add.6](#), [A/77/443/Add.7](#), [A/77/443/Add.8](#), [A/77/443/Add.9](#), [A/77/443/Add.10](#) and [A/77/443/Add.11](#).

<sup>1</sup> See [A/C.2/77/SR.24](#).



4. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that draft resolution [A/C.2/77/L.61](#) had no programme budget implications.
5. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.2/77/L.61](#) (see para. 8).
6. Also at the 24th meeting, after the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the representative of the United States of America.
7. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution [A/C.2/77/L.61](#), draft resolution [A/C.2/77/L.30](#) was withdrawn by its sponsors.

### III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

8. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

#### **Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme**

*The General Assembly,*

*Reaffirming* the mandate contained in its resolution [2997 \(XXVII\)](#) of 15 December 1972, by which it established the United Nations Environment Programme, and other relevant resolutions that reinforce its mandate, as well as the 1997 Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme of 7 February 1997,<sup>1</sup> the Malmö Ministerial Declaration of 31 May 2000<sup>2</sup> and the Nusa Dua Declaration of 26 February 2010,<sup>3</sup>

*Reaffirming also* its commitment to strengthening the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment, and supporting continuous strengthening of intergovernmental oversight and the accountability of the secretariat of the United Nations Environment Programme in the implementation of the Programme's mandate, in line with Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme decision 27/2 of 22 February 2013,<sup>4</sup>

*Recalling* the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held from 20 to 22 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, entitled "The future we want",<sup>5</sup> and noting the follow-up on paragraph 88, subparagraphs (a) to (h), of the outcome document, including through General Assembly resolution [67/213](#) of 21 December 2012,

*Recalling also* the establishment of universal membership in the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, as well as other measures to strengthen its governance and its responsiveness and accountability to Member States, the attendant change of its designation to the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme and the evolution in the periodicity of its sessions,

*Recalling further* its resolutions [68/215](#) of 20 December 2013, [69/223](#) of 19 December 2014, [71/231](#) of 21 December 2016, [73/260](#) of 22 December 2018 and [74/222](#) of 19 December 2019 and [76/208](#) of 17 December 2021,

*Reaffirming* the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development<sup>6</sup> and its principles,

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/52/25)*, annex, decision 19/1, annex.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, *Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/55/25)*, annex I, decision SS.VI/1, annex.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, *Sixty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/65/25)*, annex I, decision SS.XI/9.

<sup>4</sup> [UNEP/GC.27/17](#), annex I.

<sup>5</sup> Resolution [66/288](#), annex.

<sup>6</sup> *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

*Taking into account* Agenda 21<sup>7</sup> and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,<sup>8</sup>

*Recalling* the 2005 World Summit Outcome<sup>9</sup> and the outcome document of the special event of the General Assembly to follow up efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals,<sup>10</sup>

*Recalling also* the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building,<sup>11</sup>

*Reaffirming* its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

*Reaffirming also* its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

*Reaffirming further* the Paris Agreement<sup>12</sup> and its early entry into force, and encouraging all its parties to fully implement the Agreement, and parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change<sup>13</sup> that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible,

*Reaffirming* the indispensable role of the United Nations Environment Assembly within the United Nations system as the highest-level intergovernmental decision-making body with universal membership for enhancing progress in the comprehensive implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda, in an integrated and balanced manner within the United Nations system,

*Recognizing* the key role of the United Nations Environment Programme in promoting and strengthening the science-policy interface in order to support intergovernmental debate, negotiations and deliberations and policy decisions relating to international environmental law and governance, and promote the identification and sharing of the best available science to support effective environmental action and policymaking,

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., annex II.

<sup>8</sup> *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

<sup>9</sup> Resolution 60/1.

<sup>10</sup> Resolution 68/6.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Environment Programme, document UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1 and UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1/Corr.1, annex.

<sup>12</sup> Adopted under the UNFCCC in FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21.

<sup>13</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

*Highlighting* the synergies between the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and other relevant major intergovernmental outcomes of United Nations conferences and summits in economic, social and environmental fields,

*Noting with profound concern* the findings of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services *Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*, and stressing the urgent need to halt the global decline of biodiversity, which is unprecedented in human history, including its main indirect and direct drivers, in particular changes in land and sea use, direct exploitation of organisms, climate change, invasive alien species and pollution,

*Welcoming* the holding of the first part of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in Kunming, China, from 11 to 15 October 2021, under the theme proposed by the host, “Ecological civilization: building a shared future for all life on Earth”, and looking forward to the second part of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held from 7 to 19 December 2022, and the adoption of an ambitious, balanced, practical, effective, robust and transformative post-2020 global biodiversity framework that contributes to the 2030 Agenda,

*Welcoming also* the holding of the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, from 6 to 20 November 2022,

*Recalling* the outcomes of the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and of the sessions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, as well as the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, and urging their full implementation,

*Recognizing* the importance of the international meeting entitled “Stockholm+50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all – our responsibility, our opportunity”, held in Stockholm on 2 and 3 June 2022,

*Taking note* of the contribution of the United Nations Environment Assembly to addressing the challenge of, inter alia, climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, within its mandate and in collaboration with other relevant organizations and stakeholders,

*Committed* to strengthening international environmental governance within the context of the institutional framework for sustainable development in order to promote a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development as well as coordination within the United Nations system,

*Recalling* its resolution [76/300](#) of 28 July 2022, entitled “The human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment”,

*Committed* to enhancing the voice of the United Nations Environment Programme and its ability to fulfil its coordination mandate within the United Nations system by strengthening its engagement in key United Nations coordination bodies and empowering it to lead efforts to formulate United Nations system-wide strategies on the environment,

*Recognizing* the important contribution of the United Nations Environment Assembly to the high-level political forum on sustainable development, which met under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council in New York in 2022 and undertook an in-depth review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals,

*Reiterating* the need for secure, stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for the United Nations Environment Programme, and, in accordance with resolution 2997 (XXVII), underlining the need to consider the adequate reflection of all the administrative and management costs of the Programme in the context of the United Nations regular budget, as well as the need to realize efficiency gains,

*Reaffirming* the commitments, as contained in the ministerial outcome document of the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, held in Nairobi from 23 to 27 June 2014,<sup>14</sup> *inter alia*, to ensure the full integration of the environmental dimension, especially throughout the sustainable development agenda, acknowledging that a healthy environment is an essential requirement and key enabler for sustainable development,

*Reiterating* the need to develop and expand partnerships, including between Governments, the private sector, academia, relevant United Nations entities and programmes, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, civil society and individuals,

*Noting with great concern* the severe negative impact on human health, safety and well-being caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, as well as the severe disruption to societies and economies and the devastating impact on lives and livelihoods, and that the poorest and most vulnerable are the hardest hit by the pandemic, reaffirming the ambition to get back on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by designing and implementing sustainable and inclusive recovery strategies to accelerate progress towards the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to help to reduce the risk of and build resilience to future shocks, crises and pandemics, including by strengthening health systems and achieving universal health coverage, and recognizing that equitable and timely access for all to safe, quality, effective and affordable COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics are an essential part of a global response based on unity, solidarity, renewed multilateral cooperation and the principle of leaving no one behind,

*Welcoming* the important role of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, as the permanent African ministerial authority on environment and sustainable development for Africa, in supporting African countries to achieve global environmental goals, particularly in the areas of energy, pollution, biodiversity, climate change, just transitions, and technology transfer and capacity-building,

*Recognizing* the relevant work of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization in areas such as Indigenous health, satellite forest monitoring, water resources management, and conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, through projects in the Amazon Basin that are aimed at addressing the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner, in accordance with the 2030 Agenda,

1. *Welcomes* the holding of the resumed fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi from 28 February to 2 March 2022, and the first special session of the United Nations Environment Assembly for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme, held in Nairobi on 3 and 4 March 2022, also welcomes the report on the resumed session and the resolutions and decisions contained therein,<sup>15</sup> and calls for their full implementation;

<sup>14</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/69/25)*, annex, resolution 1/1.

<sup>15</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-seventh Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/77/25)*.

2. *Looks forward* to the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, to be held in Nairobi from 26 February to 1 March 2024 and to be chaired by Morocco, and recommends the participation of the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council at the sixth session, in line with the spirit of integration and universality of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;<sup>16</sup>

3. *Welcomes* the decision by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its resumed fifth session, in its resolution 5/14 of 2 March 2022,<sup>17</sup> to convene an intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, which could include both binding and voluntary approaches, based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastic, taking into account, among other things, the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, as well as national circumstances and capabilities, underscores the importance of securing an ambitious international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, while acknowledging that some legal obligations arising out of a new instrument will require capacity-building and technical and financial assistance in order to be effectively implemented by developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and welcomes the commitment made by ministers during the 2022 high-level political forum on sustainable development to actively follow up on the decision by engaging in the intergovernmental negotiating committee with the ambition of completing its work by the end of 2024;

4. *Also welcomes* the decision by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its resumed fifth session, in its resolution 5/8 of 2 March 2022,<sup>18</sup> to establish a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution, and further welcomes resolution 5/11 of 2 March 2022 of the United Nations Environment Assembly, entitled “Enhancing circular economy as a contribution to achieving sustainable consumption and production”;<sup>19</sup>

5. *Further welcomes* the adoption of resolution 5/5 of 2 March 2022, entitled “Nature-based solutions for supporting sustainable development”,<sup>20</sup> which provides a multilaterally agreed definition of nature-based solutions as actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services, resilience and biodiversity benefits, and recalls that this concept is cognizant of and in harmony with the concept of ecosystem-based approaches identified under the Convention on Biological Diversity<sup>21</sup> and other management and conservation approaches carried out under existing national policy and legislative frameworks and established under relevant multilateral environmental agreements;

6. *Welcomes* the adoption of resolution 5/12 of 2 March 2022, entitled “Environmental aspects of minerals and metals management”;<sup>22</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Resolution 70/1.

<sup>17</sup> UNEP/EA.5/Res.14.

<sup>18</sup> UNEP/EA.5/Res.8.

<sup>19</sup> UNEP/EA.5/Res.11.

<sup>20</sup> UNEP/EA.5/Res.5.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.

<sup>22</sup> UNEP/EA.5/Res.12.



7. *Also welcomes* the adoption of resolution 5/13 of 2 March 2022, entitled “Due regard to the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations”;<sup>23</sup>

8. *Reiterates* the ministerial declaration entitled “Strengthening actions for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”,<sup>24</sup> adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its resumed fifth session, in which it reaffirms that a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is important for the enjoyment of human rights and for sustainable development in all its dimensions, in an integrated and balanced manner, and that the well-being of humanity depends on nature and hence on our ability to sustainably use, restore and protect the ecosystem functions and services that it provides for poverty eradication, resilience, our health, our economies and ultimately our existence;

9. *Welcomes* the political declaration adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its first special session for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme<sup>25</sup> and pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/333 of 30 August 2019, and acknowledges the 50-year contribution of the Programme in supporting a worldwide effort to overcome the planet’s biggest environmental challenges;

10. *Reaffirms* the importance of enhanced coordination within the United Nations system to promote a balanced integration of the environmental, economic and social dimensions of sustainable development;

11. *Reiterates* the importance for the United Nations Environment Programme, in accordance with its mandate, working with the wider United Nations development system, to adopt and mainstream a more climate- and environment-responsive approach into its programmes and strategic plans, where appropriate, as well as in cooperation frameworks, or equivalent planning frameworks, and its policy advice to programme countries, in accordance with national development policies, plans, priorities and needs, including supporting programme countries that are parties to the Paris Agreement in its implementation;

12. *Calls upon* Member States to mainstream the environmental dimension of sustainable development into national policies, strategies and planning, including but not limited to supporting the capacity-building of relevant authorities, taking into account national circumstances, in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda;

13. *Encourages* Member States and other stakeholders to advance transformative and systemic changes and policies that address several environmental, economic and social challenges simultaneously, rechannelling financial flows to serve the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals through innovative, holistic approaches that truly value nature;

14. *Calls upon* Member States to continue to pursue the ambition to support environmental protection and the means of its implementation, including through global partnerships and by enabling a sustainable future for our planet and addressing urgent social, economic and environmental challenges;

15. *Welcomes* the continued commitment of the United Nations Environment Assembly to contributing to the effective implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda in an integrated manner, as reflected in its resolutions

<sup>23</sup> UNEP/EA.5/Res.13.

<sup>24</sup> UNEP/EA.5/HLS.1.

<sup>25</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-seventh Session, Supplement No. 25, addendum (A/77/25/Add.1), annex.*



2/5 of 27 May 2016<sup>26</sup> and 3/3 of 6 December 2017<sup>27</sup> on the contributions of the United Nations Environment Assembly to the high-level political forum on sustainable development;

16. *Commends* the President and the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council for supporting and facilitating the effective integration of the contributions of the United Nations Environment Assembly into the preparation, work and proceedings of, and the participation of the President of the Environment Assembly in, the high-level political forum on sustainable development under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council;

17. *Encourages* the President of the United Nations Environment Assembly to continue to convey the main messages agreed upon by the Environment Assembly at its sessions during the high-level political forum on sustainable development under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, as appropriate, taking into account the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda, as well as General Assembly resolutions [67/290](#) of 9 July 2013 and [70/299](#) of 29 July 2016;

18. *Welcomes* the contributions of the United Nations Environment Assembly to the lead-up and inputs to, and meetings of, the high-level political forum on sustainable development under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council in 2022, and looks forward to further contributions to the high-level political forum under the auspices of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in 2023;

19. *Reiterates* that capacity-building and technology support for developing countries in environment-related fields are important components of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme, and in this regard calls for the continued and focused implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building adopted by the Programme;

20. *Welcomes* the adoption of resolution 5/3 of 2 March 2022,<sup>28</sup> in which the United Nations Environment Assembly reaffirmed that the objective of the Global Environment Outlook process was to keep the world environmental situation under review in order to periodically inform and support collective and individual action by Member States and by stakeholders, while strengthening the science-policy interface of the United Nations Environment Programme, and requested the Executive Director to undertake the preparation of the seventh edition of the Global Environment Outlook as an intergovernmental expert-led assessment;

21. *Recognizes* the devastating global effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has created new and serious health, socioeconomic and environmental challenges, compounded existing ones, especially in developing countries, and undermined our common efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve the 2030 Agenda, and urges support for a sustainable, resilient and inclusive recovery that protects the planet, stimulates sustainable consumption and production patterns, including through sustainable economic models and the promotion of life cycle approaches, promotes the One Health approach, among other holistic approaches, revitalizes our economies and creates decent and sustainable jobs and makes real progress in eradicating poverty, while enhancing our future resilience to similar challenges;

22. *Underlines* the importance of universal membership in the governing body of the United Nations Environment Programme, and invites all Member States and

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., *Seventy-first Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/71/25)*, annex.

<sup>27</sup> [UNEP/EA.3/Res.3](#).

<sup>28</sup> [UNEP/EA.5/Res.3](#).

members of specialized agencies that have not yet done so to become accredited to the United Nations Environment Programme;

23. *Reaffirms* the need to ensure the sustainability, predictability and stability of the funding of the United Nations Environment Programme governing body, and reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to make proposals, as appropriate, and takes note of the invitation to consider the level of regular-budget funding required to help the United Nations Environment Programme to fulfil its mandate, taking into account the Programme's approved work programme and General Assembly resolution [2997 \(XXVII\)](#);

24. *Recalls* the request by the United Nations Environment Assembly to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to provide options to secure the participation of developing countries in the Environment Assembly;<sup>29</sup>

25. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-ninth session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme".

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<sup>29</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/69/25)*, annex, resolution 1/15.