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

United Nations Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment Programme
Fourth session
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**Resolution adopted by the United Nations Environment
Assembly on 15 March 2019**

4/1. Innovative pathways to achieve sustainable consumption and production

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

Recognizing that achieving sustainable consumption and production is an essential requirement for sustainable development, and that ensuring this change in consumption and production patterns is reflected in a goal of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹

Underlining the importance of advancing sustainable consumption and production patterns, including, but not limited to, through the circular economy and other sustainable economic models and the implementation of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns,²

Recognizing the variety of policies that countries implement to move towards sustainable consumption and production, such as resource efficiency, the circular economy, sustainable materials management and the “three Rs” (reduce, reuse, recycle),

Recognizing also that innovative approaches and solutions are necessary to move the world closer to the vision set out in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”,³ and in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Recognizing further the commitment made under the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development⁴ to continue to support developing countries in strengthening their scientific, technological and innovative capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production, including through implementation of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns,

Recalling that sustainable consumption and production are specifically addressed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through Sustainable Development Goal 12 and the work of the United Nations Environment Programme on sustainable consumption and production, including through the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns,

¹ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

² A/CONF.216/5, annex.

³ General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

⁴ General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.

and Environment Assembly resolution 2/8 on sustainable consumption and production, as well as resolutions 2/6 on supporting the Paris Agreement, 2/7 on sound management of chemicals and waste, 2/9 on prevention, reduction and reuse of food waste, 2/11 on marine plastic litter and microplastics and 3/7 on marine litter and microplastics,

Recalling also the in-depth review of Sustainable Development Goal 12 at the high-level political forum on sustainable development held in 2018 and the call for accelerated action in the ministerial declaration⁵ adopted at the forum, including the recognition of the One Planet network as an implementation mechanism for Sustainable Development Goal 12,

Recalling further that the review of Sustainable Development Goal 11 at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2018 showed the key importance of cities in improving resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy,

Welcoming the analysis by the International Resource Panel in its report *Global Resources Outlook 2019: Natural Resources for the Future We Want*,⁶

Noting current trends in the exploitation of natural resources and its impact on the environment, as documented in *Global Resources Outlook 2019*, which highlights the fact that resource extraction and the processing of materials, fuels and food account for more than 90 per cent of global biodiversity and water stress impacts and approximately half of global greenhouse gas emissions (not including climate impacts related to land use),

Recognizing that these trends affect the potential for future sustainable development, while adding substantial costs to national budgets, thus underlining the importance of considering incentives for stakeholders to act in a manner that supports the shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns, including regulation, education, awareness-raising, sustainable finance, economic tools, technical standards, product design, and provision of systems, services and information as appropriate,

Emphasizing that resource management, climate, biodiversity, water and land use are interlinked, and that resources are at the centre of voluntary initiatives, policies and regulatory frameworks aiming at resource efficiency and the sustainable management and use of natural resources, which are important for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and environmental and climate objectives,

Recognizing the importance of more efficient use of water resources, of waste water management and of sound management of waste, ensuring waste prevention and collection in the efforts to achieve sustainable consumption and production and to minimize environmental degradation resulting from the leakage of waste into the environment,

Acknowledging that a more circular economy, one of the current sustainable economic models, in which products and materials are designed in such a way that they can be reused, remanufactured recycled or recovered and thus maintained in the economy for as long as possible, along with the resources of which they are made, and the generation of waste, especially hazardous waste, is avoided or minimized, and greenhouse gas emissions are prevented or reduced, can contribute significantly to sustainable consumption and production,

Recognizing that, through industrial symbiosis, the waste produced by one company can be valuable raw material to another, resulting in companies that are resource-efficient and competitive, grow, innovate and create more jobs, which may transform the industrial sectors of the Member States and reduce the environmental impacts of industrial activities,

Acknowledging that the use of life-cycle approaches helps to ensure that materials are used more productively throughout their life cycle, thereby reducing the generation of waste and environmental impact, and can contribute significantly to efforts to achieve sustainable consumption and production,

Recognizing the importance of minimizing and preventing, whenever feasible, hazardous substances in material cycles, according to the national capabilities and best available technologies of each Member State, and recognizing that sustainable consumption and production processes necessitate a more efficient use of materials and products already in circulation, while secondary raw materials should perform similarly to virgin materials and the supply of such materials should become more predictable,

⁵ E/HLS/2018/1.

⁶ United Nations Environment Programme, 2019.

Recognizing also that achieving sustainable consumption and production is only possible with the active support and participation of all stakeholders, in particular those who extract and manage raw materials and natural resources; develop new materials; produce, design, manufacture, process and package goods, including food and services; sell products and services; make decisions regarding consumption and the discarding of products; manage waste and material recovery at the end of life; and consumers, in their patterns of consumption and disposal,

Stressing that Member States must take the lead in developing domestic policy measures to empower consumers to make informed choices in their purchasing decisions in favour of sustainable products, goods and services,

Acknowledging in particular the role of Member States at all levels and their ability to transform markets and promote all pathways to sustainable consumption and production through sustainable public procurement,

Welcoming the cross-sectoral work and multi-stakeholder cooperation on resource efficiency and circular economy under the One Planet network and the thematic programmes under the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, based on the new One Plan for One Planet Strategy 2018–2022,

1. *Invites* Member States to consider approaches and policies for achieving sustainable consumption and production, including but not limited to improving resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy, when developing relevant national plans and policies, sustainable development strategies and sector policies or equivalents to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation and primary resource consumption and, in doing so, to take into account the outcomes of the sixth report in the Global Environment Outlook series and the report *Global Resources Outlook 2019: Natural Resources for the Future We Want*;
2. *Underlines* the important role of the business and financial sector in supporting Member States in implementing approaches to achieve sustainable consumption and production in all its forms, including, but not limited to, circular economy and other sustainable economic models, and invites the business and financial sectors to consider using life-cycle assessments for the goods and services which they produce and provide;
3. *Encourages* Member States to use incentives and other market-based instruments to support sustainable consumption and production through, inter alia, the provision of finance within their means that takes into account environmental, social and governance considerations, and end incentives for unsustainable consumption and production, as appropriate;
4. *Encourages* all Member States and relevant stakeholders to promote and support, where appropriate, the development, effectiveness and uptake of innovative sustainable business models consistent with national policies and laws, such as those reducing material consumption through the delivery of services instead of products (for example, lighting rather than light bulbs, cooling rather than refrigerators and mobility rather than cars), as well as new and more sustainable technologies, pricing that takes into account national policy provisions, legislation and circumstances, consumer information about the environmental aspects of products and services, awareness raising and consumer protection;
5. *Further encourages* all Member States, as well as cities and local communities and other relevant stakeholders, including manufacturers and retailers, to enhance their collaboration to enable consumers and public authorities to make informed choices, including through the provision of reliable consumer information with regard to resource efficiency and the wider sustainability of products and services, including, as appropriate, through information on approaches to increase the longevity and re-use of products and the recycling of materials, and through information on effective tools and incentives for making sustainable consumer choices, such as, where appropriate, extended producer responsibility schemes;
6. *Invites* Member States to use, as appropriate, the guidelines for consumer information and other instruments developed under the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns for supporting sustainable and informed consumer choices, and also invites the One Planet network and, where relevant, the Partnership for Action on Green Economy and the Platform for Accelerating the Circular Economy to continue to offer their support, upon request, including the exchange of best practices;
7. *Also invites* Member States to promote the formation of communities of practice, including developing a national sustainable consumption and production resource pool to contribute to and interact with the One Planet network, and, in turn, invites such communities of practice to

contribute to improving the science-policy interface; advance policy reforms, implementation, innovation and investment; and enhance stakeholder collaboration, information-sharing and knowledge platforms for better decision-making on sustainable consumption and production at the national level in cooperation with the national focal points of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns;

8. *Further invites* all Member States, in order to work towards achieving sustainable consumption and production, to develop sustainable public procurement policies and update their public procurement legal frameworks in accordance with their commitment to achieving Sustainable Development Goal target 12.7 (Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities);

9. *Encourages* Member States to promote public, private and public-private initiatives and alliances to stimulate demand for sustainable products;

10. *Invites* all Member States and relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, to design and implement public policies, plans and programmes that support education and raise awareness of the importance of sustainable consumption, sustainable lifestyles and sustainable consumer behaviour, and those that develop related skills for academia and the private sector, including the financial sector;

11. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in close consultation with Member States and in particular the potential future host country, to consider establishing the theme for a future World Environment Day focusing on efforts to achieve sustainable consumption and production, including, but not limited to, circular economy and other sustainable economic models;

12. *Also requests* the Executive Director to establish, within the scope of existing resources and building on work already undertaken, without duplication of effort, a time-limited task group comprising the International Resource Panel and the One Planet network, to provide insight into the management of natural resources and raw materials in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and explore the potential offered by the different pathways towards sustainable consumption and production and, taking into account national circumstances, to identify technical tools, best practice, policy options, sustainable technologies, innovative business models and finance flows in that regard. In addition, it requests that the task group complete its work in time to present the outcome to the Environment Assembly at its fifth session;

13. *Invites* the International Resource Panel to continue to report regularly to the Environment Assembly, including through its Global Resources Outlook reports, on current trends and emerging issues related to the use and management of natural resources, overconsumption and their impact on the environment, the economy, society and people, such reports to include scenarios, examples of good practice and policy options;

14. *Requests* the Executive Director to take into account the outcomes of the analysis provided by the International Resource Panel, the Global Environment Outlook, the Global Chemicals Outlook, the Global Waste Management Outlook, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and other global assessments when carrying out activities under the programme of work and when implementing earlier resolutions related to the broader nexus of production and the efficient use and sustainable management of resources;

15. *Also requests* the Executive Director to submit a report providing an overview of best practices, including their impact on the design of products and services, minimizing harmful environmental impacts, and coherent product policies to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation through sustainable consumption and production, and providing recommendations for consideration by the Environment Assembly at its fifth session;

16. *Further requests* the Executive Director to undertake, subject to the availability of resources, a study based on a life-cycle approach, profiting from the work of the International Resource Panel and the One Planet network, on the potential of current sustainable economic models for achieving sustainable consumption and production in certain sectors, such as the plastics, textiles and construction sectors, including through value retention processes, such as direct reuse, repair, refurbishment and remanufacturing. In addition, it requests the Executive Director to evaluate, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, how to promote the availability of appropriate information in the value chain to favour sound and safe recycling of waste;

17. *Invites* Member States, in keeping with the commitment made under the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, to continue to support developing countries to strengthen their scientific, technological and innovative capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production;

18. *Requests* the Executive Director to catalyse efforts for resource mobilization, including financial support, by Member States, international financial institutions and the private sector for strengthening and scaling up sustainable consumption and production action on the ground, including through the One Planet Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Sustainable Development Goal 12 of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns;

19. *Also requests* the Executive Director to facilitate regional cooperation for sustainable public procurement regimes in the context of the One Planet network;

20. *Further requests* the Executive Director to streamline and improve the efficiency of the subprogrammes, activities, partnerships and initiatives of the United Nations Environment Programme insofar as they relate to sustainable consumption and production.
