

Draft Resolution for the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly
Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure

Submitted to the Secretariat by the Government of Mongolia on 21 December 2021

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

PP1 Recalling General Assembly resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which recognized that investing in sustainable and resilient infrastructure including transport, energy, water and sanitation for all was a prerequisite for achieving many goals, and expressed a commitment by countries to facilitate development of sustainable, accessible and resilient quality infrastructure in developing countries through enhanced financial and technical support, **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP2 Recalling also General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and Sustainable Development Goal 9 on building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation, **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP3 Noting that infrastructure is inextricably linked to all 17 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and that UNOPs found that infrastructure directly or indirectly influences 92% of the 169 individual SDG targets¹, including but not limited to those on protection, restoration and sustainable use of ecosystems, biodiversity conservation, combating desertification, resource efficiency, sustainable and inclusive urban] economies, sustainable consumption and production patterns, disaster risk reduction, climate mitigation and adaptation, job creation and poverty reduction. **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP4 Stressing the importance of the ecosystem approach for the integrated management of land, water and living resources and the need to step up efforts to tackle desertification, land degradation, erosion and drought, biodiversity loss and water scarcity, which are seen as major environmental, economic and social challenges for global sustainable development. **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP5 Recalling its resolution 4/5 on sustainable infrastructure, which encourages Member States to take the steps necessary to achieve SDG 9 and related targets in others SDGs, taking into account national capabilities and priorities, and recognizing the objectives of moving towards sustainable consumption and production patterns, develop and strengthen national and regional systems level strategic approaches to infrastructure planning, promote nature-based solutions and encourages the United Nations Environment Programme to support countries in building the technical and institutional capacity to develop sustainable infrastructure, which herein refers to infrastructure which is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable **(agreed ad ref)**

PP6 Stressing the relevance of other resolutions adopted at this meeting of the Assembly for developing sustainable and resilient infrastructure **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP7 Noting that actions to promote more circular economies present opportunities for minimizing the negative environmental impacts of infrastructure, through e.g. increased efficiency in the use of resources, including material resources **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP8 Noting that numerous decisions and resolutions on infrastructure and biodiversity have been adopted by the governing bodies of Multilateral Environment Agreements including the

¹ Thacker, S., Adshead, D., Morgan, G., Crosskey, S., Bajpai, A., Ceppi, P. et al. (2018). Infrastructure: underpinning sustainable development. Copenhagen, Denmark: UNOPS. <https://content.unops>.

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)² and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)³; **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP9 Recalling also General Assembly resolution 75/1 of 21 September 2020, and further recalling General Assembly resolution 75/207, entitled “Promoting investments for sustainable development” which reaffirmed ambition to get back on track to achieve the sustainable development goals by designing and implementing sustainable and inclusive COVID-19 recovery strategies and highlighted the need for public and private investment and financing in quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure. **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP10 Recognizing that infrastructure investments are central to many governments’ COVID-19 economic recovery plans as a means of creating employment, boosting productivity, addressing inequalities and building resilience to future crises, **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP11 Noting that, according to UNEP’s report “Are We Building Back Better? Evidence from 2020 and Pathways for Inclusive Green Recovery Spending” the vast majority of governments’ COVID-19 recovery spending was found to be “minimally green”⁴, **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP12 Noting also the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) and that a new Global Biodiversity Framework is expected to be adopted in 2022 **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP13 Appreciating the theme of the fifth United Nations Environment Assembly on “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”, **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP14 Recalling General Assembly Resolution 75/271 of 16 April 2021, entitled “Nature knows no borders: transboundary cooperation for biodiversity conservation, restoration and sustainable use” which calls on Member States to recognise the importance of international cooperation at all levels, and of environmental impact assessments where appropriate, to maintain ecological connectivity between ecosystems and avoid their further fragmentation so that nature can continue to provide ecosystem services to people **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP15 Acknowledging that natural infrastructure can include strategically planned and managed networks of natural lands, water and soil such as forests and wetlands, working landscapes, and other open spaces that conserve or enhance ecosystem values and functions and provides associated benefits to human populations,⁵ and can provide cost-effective and resilient alternatives or complements to built infrastructure in the context of constrained fiscal capacity and should be promoted to restore and sustain healthy ecosystems and societies as part of an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable COVID recovery **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP16 Taking note of the potential environmental impacts of infrastructure projects on ecosystem integrity and connectivity **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP17 Recognising the importance of cooperation between neighboring countries at all levels for sustainably managing land, water, and biodiversity conservation and restoration **(Agreed ad ref)**

² [CBD Decision 14/3](#)

³ [CMS Decisions 13.130-13.134](#) and [CMS Resolution 7.2 \(Rev.COP12\)](#)

⁴ United Nations Environment Programme. (2021). Are We Building Back Better? Evidence from 2020 and Pathways for Inclusive Green Recovery Spending. <https://www.unep.org/resources/publication/are-we-building-back-better-evidence-2020-and-pathways-inclusive-green>.

⁵ The ‘Sustainable Infrastructure Tool Navigator’ represents a database of tools in support of this effort.

PP18 Recognising that investments in sustainable and resilient infrastructure are important for addressing the interconnected crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution and desertification, for meeting sustainable recovery needs and for safeguarding future delivery of essential services **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP19 Recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of comprehensive health infrastructure, including environmentally sound management of medical waste **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP20 Stressing that addressing the infrastructure investment gap and delivering priority infrastructure can require enormous but targeted investments from the public and private sectors, including the co-financing of individual projects and the deployment of financial instruments for sustainable and resilient infrastructure by Multilateral Development Banks and other public and private institutions **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP21 Acknowledging the need for urgent action to address the challenges faced in planning and developing quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure, in particular by all developing countries **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP22 Highlighting that the implementation of any infrastructure projects, including projects with potential environmental impacts on ecosystem integrity and connectivity, must be in line with relevant laws and seek to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to ecosystems and livelihoods **(Agreed ad ref)**

PP23 Acknowledging the importance of the monitoring framework for the SDGs, including SDG 9, alongside other relevant frameworks for monitoring progress on the sustainability of infrastructure at the aggregate level and that such frameworks may require knowledge sharing, technical assistance and capacity support **(Agreed ad ref)**

1. *Encourages* Member States and other stakeholders to, as appropriate: **(Agreed ad ref)**
 - a) Consider integrating and operationalizing the ten ‘International Good Practice Principles for Sustainable Infrastructure’ into national policies, including through the use and development of available sustainable infrastructure tools,⁶ taking into account national contexts **(Agreed ad ref)**;
 - b) Implement existing tools, such as guidelines and best practices, including those developed under or endorsed by Multilateral Environmental Agreements,⁷ and co-develop further knowledge products and participate in exchange mechanisms to share best practices and lessons learned on sustainable infrastructure **(Agreed ad ref)**;
 - c) Cooperate internationally to strengthen frameworks, including for financing, for sustainable and inclusive infrastructure that maintains and enhances ecological connectivity, avoids further fragmentation, and minimizes other potential impacts on ecosystems and livelihoods **(Agreed ad ref)**;

⁶ The ‘Sustainable Infrastructure Tool Navigator’ represents a database of tools in support of this effort.

⁷ Including those of CMS: <https://www.cms.int/en/species/threats/infrastructure>

- d) Consider the role of digital infrastructure in enabling sustainable consumption and production patterns and improving the sustainability and efficiency of other infrastructure systems as part of integrated approaches **(Agreed ad ref)**.

2. *Encourages* Member States to: **(Agreed ad ref)**

- a) Conduct strategic and environmental impact assessments so that environmental considerations are integrated into decision making, at the appropriate levels and advance integrated, system level approaches to sustainable infrastructure planning and delivery **(Agreed ad ref)**;
- b) Engage as appropriate with sub-national institutions to consider integrating the Principles where relevant, in local recovery-focused infrastructure plans and projects **(Agreed ad ref)**;
- c) Promote investment in natural infrastructure and nature-based solutions for delivering essential services and improving ecosystem services, creating employment and accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable development goals **(Agreed ad ref)**;
- d) Promote investments in environmentally, socially and economically sustainable health infrastructure for improved resilience and resource efficiency, with environmentally sound management of medical waste **(Agreed ad ref)**;
- e) Promoting investments in infrastructure that is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable, climate resilient, resource efficient and that prevent ecosystem fragmentation and contribute to sustainable production and consumption patterns, thus contributing to achieving the sustainable development goals as well as relevant multilateral environmental agreements **(Agreed ad ref)**;
- f) Provide opportunities for the engagement of relevant stakeholders, including local communities, vulnerable people, and Indigenous Peoples, in all stages of the process to identify, design, build and maintain infrastructure **(Agreed ad ref)**.

3. *Requests* the Executive Director to support Member States and Members of specialized agencies, within existing resources by: **(Agreed ad ref)**

- a) Promoting the implementation of existing tools, such as guidelines and best practices which have been developed under or endorsed by Multilateral Environmental Agreements⁸ and developing further knowledge, providing technical assistance and capacity support, within available resources, to plan and deliver sustainable infrastructure investments that will drive an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable recovery, including through assessment of potential impacts on ecosystem integrity and connectivity **(Agreed ad ref)**;
- b) Working with Member States and the UN system through existing platforms, inter alia the 10 Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Production and Consumption Patterns and other international partners, to support sharing of experiences, peer-to-peer learning, and technical assistance, capacity building, and training on sustainable infrastructure in the long-term **(Agreed ad ref)**;

⁸ Including those of CMS: <https://www.cms.int/en/species/threats/infrastructure>

- c) Facilitating private sector engagement in planning and developing, and mobilizing finance for sustainable and resilient infrastructure by engaging businesses, practitioners, investors, and other private sector stakeholders **(Agreed ad ref)**;
- d) Inviting the International Resource Panel to advance efforts for connecting science and policy for sustainable infrastructure, in order to provide expert, policy relevant and science-based options on the topic **(Agreed ad ref)**;
- e) Supporting the implementation of the Principles by translating them, as appropriate upon the request of a member state for application to specific sub-systems of infrastructure and for the private sector and other stakeholder groups; **(Agreed ad ref)**;
- f) Continuing to collect and share best practices, tools, and experiences for improving the sustainability of infrastructure systems, and to submit this information in a report to the Environment Assembly at its sixth session **(Agreed ad ref)**.