

# Policy Recommendations from the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM) to the Norwegian Delegation for UNEA-7

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## Introduction

The Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM), a network of more than 60 Norwegian civil society organizations, appreciates the opportunity to share recommendations on the draft resolutions that will be negotiated at the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7). ForUM is dedicated to promoting coherent, just, and ambitious global environmental and development policies that protect the rights of people and the planet.

## Background

UNEA remains the premier global decision-making body on environmental issues, playing a vital role in ensuring policy coherence and addressing governance gaps across international processes. As the Assembly considers a record number of resolutions, ranging from wildfire and coral reef resilience to artificial intelligence, the circular economy, and environmental crime, there is an urgent need to focus on implementation, equity, and accountability.

The current set of resolutions offers both opportunities and challenges. While they can enhance UNEP's scientific and coordinating functions, there is a risk of overextending its mandate or duplicating existing frameworks. ForUM encourages Norway to act as a constructive intermediary, advocating for resolutions that strengthen existing mechanisms, mobilize predictable financing, and enhance capacity in low- and middle-income countries, all while ensuring social justice, participation, and transparency.

UNEA-7 should shift from reactive crisis management to proactive governance that integrates nature, climate, pollution, and equity agendas, promoting meaningful change through collaboration rather than fragmentation. ForUM has carefully prioritized ten of the eighteen proposed resolutions, with detailed recommendations provided below.

## CLUSTER A

### 1. Strengthening global response on the management of fires (India)

Norway should support India's resolution on enhancing the global approach to wildfire management by prioritizing prevention, resilience, and ecosystem restoration over costly firefighting. This effort should focus on integrating wildfire risk reduction into existing frameworks like [National Adaptation Plans](#), [NDCs](#), [NBSAPs](#), and disaster risk strategies, avoiding the creation of new processes. Norway can advocate for the resolution to reinforce existing mandates, such as the [Global Fire Management Hub](#) and the [Sendai Framework](#), while enhancing UNEP's role in identifying governance gaps and fostering inclusive knowledge platforms that incorporate science and Indigenous wisdom. Additionally, Norway should champion predictable funding and capacity-building support for developing nations, least developed countries, and Small Island Developing States through mechanisms such as the [GEF](#) and [GCF](#). This approach would align with Norway's climate and development policies,

promote coherence across climate, biodiversity, and disaster risk reduction, and show solidarity with communities facing wildfire challenges.

## **2. Active protection of deep-sea ecosystems status (Vanuatu)**

Norway should endorse and support Vanuatu's resolution aimed at the robust protection of deep-sea ecosystems by championing a strong precautionary approach. This approach should, in practice, prohibit the authorization of commercial deep-sea mining until independent scientific assessments and comprehensive global governance frameworks are firmly established. In these negotiations, Norway can effectively argue that UNEP's global scientific assessment should be characterized by independence, transparency, and inclusivity, harnessing the best available science alongside the insights and priorities of Small Island Developing States, Indigenous Peoples, and other affected communities. Furthermore, this assessment should be executed in harmony with existing mandates under [UNCLOS](#), [ISA](#), the [BBNJ Agreement](#), and prior UNEA resolutions to avoid redundancy. Norway should also advocate for language that encourages pathways toward a circular economy and responsible terrestrial sourcing to mitigate demand for deep-sea minerals, while ensuring that any new tasks assigned to UNEP are adequately funded, thus preventing budgetary constraints from undermining environmental ambitions or solidarity with vulnerable states.

## **3. Accelerating global action to promote the climate resilience of coral reefs (Fiji)**

To achieve a balanced and action-oriented outcome on Fiji's coral reef resolution, Norway should encourage negotiators to prioritize strengthening on-the-ground resilience rather than expanding bureaucratic layers. This involves promoting language that supports ecosystem-based management, improves water quality, and reduces land-based pollution, while integrating coral reef protection into national biodiversity and climate commitments, rather than addressing it in isolation. Norway can help shape the resolution by building on existing initiatives, including the [ICRI partnership](#), the [Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network](#), and the [Global Fund for Coral Reefs](#), thereby enhancing coordination and accountability across climate, biodiversity, and ocean frameworks. Strategically, Norway should advocate for predictable and accessible financing for coral reef nations, particularly small island developing states, while explicitly recognizing Indigenous and local knowledge systems in planning and restoration efforts. By adopting this approach, Norway can reinforce its role as a bridge-builder between science, policy, and equity, ensuring the resolution advances real implementation capacity without imposing new bureaucratic demands on UNEP.

## **4. Preservation of glaciers and the broader cryosphere (Tajikistan)**

To advance the resolution on the Preservation of Glaciers and the Broader Cryosphere, Norway should focus on enhancing global governance coherence and science-driven initiatives rather than establishing parallel processes. The resolution should establish a comprehensive cryosphere framework under UNEP that interlinks water security, biodiversity, and disaster risk reduction, aligning with existing UNFCCC, UNCBD, and Sendai Framework mechanisms. Norway can advocate for UNEP to establish a Cryosphere Knowledge and Early Warning Platform, in line with the [Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences](#), to enhance monitoring, ensure open data access, and improve resilience planning in data-scarce mountain areas. It is also essential for Norway to promote equitable financing for cryosphere initiatives, emphasizing nature-based and community-led adaptation to ensure that small mountain and downstream nations benefit from global support, such as the GEF and GCF.

Additionally, Norway should emphasize the importance of integrating Indigenous knowledge into glacier and permafrost monitoring, promoting inclusion, and safeguarding the rights of local researchers and defenders. By adopting this approach, Norway would contribute to an implementation-focused, globally coherent resolution that bridges governance gaps between climate, water, and biodiversity agendas, while maintaining solidarity with vulnerable mountain regions impacted by glacial retreat.

#### **5. Karst ecosystem for global water, biodiversity, climate resilience, and economic development (Indonesia)**

Norway should support the Indonesian resolution for karst ecosystems to address a governance gap and highlight the importance of karst as [critical infrastructure for 20% of the world's drinking water](#). In negotiations, Norway can emphasize implementation over new bureaucracy by promoting land-use planning, regulating tourism, mining, pollution, and infrastructure that is built on awareness of the karst ecosystem and enhancing the mapping and monitoring of karst aquifers, caves, and associated biodiversity, while avoiding overlaps with SDG 6 (access to clean water and sanitation), the [Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#), and existing water and climate initiatives. Additionally, Norway should advocate for targeted capacity-building and partnerships with local and Indigenous communities, as well as the few karst and cave experts, to aid resource-limited countries in protecting water, ecosystems, and livelihoods. Ultimately, Norway should promote fair financing and establish regional centers of excellence to help developing countries access knowledge, technology, and funding in a just and equitable manner.

### **CLUSTER B**

#### **6. Safe, responsible, and sustainable AI for people and planet (Kenya)**

Kenya's resolution on Safe, Responsible, and Sustainable AI presents a vital opportunity to address a governance gap by integrating environmental considerations into global AI governance under the auspices of UNEP, aligning with the [Pact for the Future](#) and the [Global Digital Compact](#). In negotiations, Norway should emphasize UNEP's strengths in mapping and assessing the full lifecycle impacts of AI, covering energy use, emissions, water, critical minerals, and e-waste. This includes developing voluntary guidelines and interoperable environmental data standards in collaboration with the [Independent International Scientific Panel on AI](#) and other UN entities, while avoiding overlapping with current [UNGA AI resolutions](#). Additionally, Norway should advocate for robust commitments to equitable access, capacity-building, and financing to ensure that developing and least developed countries, as well as small island developing States, can leverage AI for sustainable transition without incurring disproportionate environmental and social costs. This approach would position Norway as a key bridge-builder between digital and ecological agendas, advancing a just and sustainable digital transition while maintaining the UNEA's focus on solidarity and policy coherence.

#### **7. Scaling up synergies in the implementation and mainstreaming of Multilateral Environmental Agreements at national and local levels (Japan)**

Japan's resolution on enhancing synergies in the implementation and integration of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) presents a clear opportunity to transition from

discussing "policy coherence" to actual practice. Norway should support this resolution by advocating for stronger, permanent national coordination between MEA focal points and relevant ministries, as well as promoting the use of shared tools, such as [DaRT](#), to streamline reporting and implementation rather than allowing duplication. During negotiations, Norway should emphasize that UNEP's role should focus on assisting countries in incorporating MEA commitments into existing national plans and [UN Cooperation Frameworks](#), rather than establishing new parallel processes. Additionally, technical assistance and capacity-building efforts should be directed toward low- and middle-income countries and local authorities that face the greatest challenges with fragmented reporting and limited personnel resources. This approach would help bridge significant governance and implementation gaps, lessen administrative burdens, and free up resources for tangible environmental action on the ground, while enhancing Norway's reputation as a champion of effective, inclusive, and system-wide multilateralism.

#### **8. Enhancing the international response to address crimes that affect the environment (Peru and Kenya)**

Norway should support the resolution to strengthen the global rule of law for the environment, ensuring it aligns with [UNODC](#) and other UN mandates. During negotiations, Norway should emphasize the importance of an integrated UNEP–UNODC joint program focused on prevention, transparency, and capacity-building, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. The resolution should advance cross-sectoral cooperation among environmental, financial, and judicial authorities, support asset recovery, and promote reinvestment in ecosystem restoration. It must also ensure the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and affected communities in monitoring and remediation efforts. Additionally, Norway can advocate for this work to align with UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy for 2026–2029 and the [Montevideo Environmental Law Programme](#), promoting efficient resource use.

### **CLUSTER C**

#### **9. Environmental dimensions of antimicrobial resistance (Kenya)**

Norway's contribution to Kenya's resolution on the environmental dimensions of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) should highlight that antibiotic pollution is now a critical environmental driver of resistance, with residues in soil, water, and air serving as reservoirs for resistant genes and mobile genetic elements. [Scientific evidence](#) indicates that wastewater discharges, agricultural runoffs, and pharmaceutical effluents are major sources of antimicrobial contamination and hotspots for gene transfer. Norway could advocate for a robust and actionable UNEP mandate within the [Quadripartite One Health framework](#) to effectively address the environmental pathways of AMR. Specifically, Norway should support the creation of a global, science-driven surveillance and reporting system for antimicrobial residues and resistance genes, building on existing initiatives such as [Bracing for Superbugs](#) and the [Independent Panel on Evidence for Action \(IPEA\)](#). This system should integrate the monitoring of water, soil, and air matrices while promoting open data sharing among the Quadripartite agencies. Furthermore, Norway could champion global standards and best practices aimed at reducing antibiotic discharge from pharmaceutical manufacturing, hospital effluents, aquaculture, and livestock sectors, emphasizing the urgent need for preventive measures, including advanced wastewater treatment, antibiotic stewardship

programs, and public awareness campaigns. Support for equitable access to finance, technology, and capacity-building in low- and middle-income countries is essential to translate the One Health approach into actionable global initiatives, aligning environmental integrity with health security and international solidarity.

#### **10. Enhancing international environmental cooperation based on needs assessment for the transition to a circular economy (Republic of Korea)**

In supporting the circular economy resolution led by the Republic of Korea, Norway should endorse the proposal as an effective means of translating high-level commitments into tailored national implementations, while avoiding overlap with existing UNEA decisions on [sustainable consumption and production](#) and [circular economy principles](#). During negotiations, Norway should advocate for a needs-based assessment framework under UNEP that assists countries in identifying their circular economy challenges and formulating specific national action plans. This framework must be co-created with developing nations, involve civil society and workers, and explicitly aim to reduce overall resource consumption rather than merely creating new markets for secondary materials. Norway should emphasize that international collaboration and pilot projects under this resolution prioritize low- and middle-income countries and local authorities with limited capacity, linking them to existing platforms like the [Global Alliance on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency](#), [regional circular economy alliances](#), and the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns ([10YFP](#)), rather than creating yet another reporting silo. By promoting consistent technical and financial support, technology transfer, and participatory governance, Norway can help ensure that the resolution achieves genuine system change and a just transition, thereby avoiding superficial compliance or a short-term project focus.

Med vennlig hilsen

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