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## High-level political forum on sustainable development

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**Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)  
while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for  
Sustainable Development**

## **Synthesis of voluntary submissions by functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and other intergovernmental bodies and forums**

### **Note by the Secretariat**

The present document provides a synthesis of the voluntary submissions prepared by functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and other intergovernmental bodies and forums to contribute to the thematic review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Contributions were provided in response to the invitation of the President of the Council contained in his letter dated 16 November 2021 addressed to the Chairs of those bodies, in which he requested that they offer substantive input to the high-level political forum, highlighting their contributions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.<sup>1</sup> The integral texts of the

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<sup>1</sup> The present document has benefited from contributions received from: (a) functional commissions and expert bodies of the Economic and Social Council: Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Commission on Science and Technology for Development, Commission for Social Development, Commission on the Status of Women, Committee for Development Policy, Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters, Committee of Experts on Public Administration, Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, United Nations Forum on Forests, Statistical Commission; (b) regional commissions: Economic Commission for Africa, Economic Commission for Europe, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia; (c) United Nations intergovernmental and related bodies: Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Committee on Agriculture, Committee on Commodity Problems, Committee on Fisheries, Committee on Forestry, Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space,



submissions received for the present synthesis report are available on the forum's website.<sup>2</sup>

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Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Committee on World Food Security, Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Human Rights Council, International Atomic Energy Agency, International Fund for Agricultural Development, International Labour Organization, International Organization for Migration, International Telecommunication Union, International Trade Centre, International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, Peacebuilding Commission, Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Sustainable Development Goal Education 2030 Steering Committee of the United Nations, United Nations Capital Development Fund, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, United Nations Environmental Assembly, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, United Nations Group on the Information Society, United Nations human rights treaty bodies, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations System Staff College, United Nations University, Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, World Food Programme, World Health Organization, World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, World Heritage Centre, World Intellectual Property Organization, World Meteorological Organization, World Summit on the Information Society Forum, World Tourism Organization and World Trade Organization; (d) other intergovernmental bodies: Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, International Renewable Energy Agency and Pacific Islands Forum.

<sup>2</sup> See <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/inputs/>.

## I. Introduction

1. The high-level political forum on sustainable development provides a central platform for follow-up and review at the global level of progress towards the implementation of General Assembly resolution 70/1, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. In line with paragraph 82 of the 2030 Agenda, the forum facilitates the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned. It also provides political leadership, guidance and recommendations for follow-up and promotes the system-wide coherence and coordination of sustainable development policies.

2. In paragraph 85 of the 2030 Agenda, the General Assembly called for thematic reviews of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, including with regard to cross-cutting issues, to take place at the high-level political forum. In accordance with existing mandates, the forum’s review of progress, global achievements and challenges is supported by reviews by the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and other intergovernmental bodies and forums, which should reflect the integrated nature of the Goals and the interlinkages between them.

3. The President of the Council therefore invited the functional commissions and expert bodies of the Council and other intergovernmental bodies and forums, including global platforms and intergovernmental organization-driven mechanisms that contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, to share relevant input and deliberations as to how they address the Goals under review from the perspective of the theme of the 2021 high-level political forum, “Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. The forum will review progress towards Goal 4, on quality education; Goal 5, on gender equality; Goal 14, on life below water; Goal 15, on life on land; and Goal 17, on strengthening partnerships. The review will also serve to consider the integrated, indivisible and interlinked nature of the Goals. The contributions of the intergovernmental bodies do not suggest a formal reporting link to the forum or modify the mandate or governance of any entity.

4. The present document is based on a synthesis of the voluntary submissions received as at 4 April 2022. It provides a brief analysis of how the intergovernmental bodies are responding to the theme of the 2022 high-level political forum and the Goals under review, including key recommendations, based on their work, and a synthesis of their actions to accelerate a sustainable and resilient recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

## II. Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals under review in 2022

5. The COVID-19 pandemic has evolved from a devastating health crisis into a complex emergency with significant long-term humanitarian, socioeconomic, political and security dimensions. It has exposed the vulnerability of interlinked human and natural systems to numerous hazards and exacerbated the pre-existing global crises of environmental distress resulting from climate change, land degradation, biodiversity loss, and pollution from chemical and plastic wastes.

6. Its effects have increased inequalities between and within countries, including levels of inequality in income, wealth and opportunities, and have reinforced pre-existing social inequalities everywhere. It has had a disproportionate impact on women and children, especially girls, including on their access to essential health-care services and education. Lack of universal health care has left billions of people,

including in developed countries, without reliable and affordable access to health services. Inequitable access to vaccines has created a two-track recovery. Growing debt distress has negatively affected low- and middle-income countries, limiting the fiscal space for investments in social protection and essential services.

7. The pandemic has led to the first rise in extreme poverty in a generation, with an estimated additional 97 million people pushed back into extreme poverty in 2020. It has had a compounding effect on pre-existing and ongoing drivers of the food security crisis, mainly through declining economic activity related to COVID-19 restrictive measures that have led to income losses and reduced household purchasing power. The number of chronically undernourished people in 2020 increased to 811 million – 161 million more than in 2019 – as disruptions to food and health systems contributed to an increase in all forms of malnutrition, as well as a reversal in progress on maternal and child health, and contributed to an additional 142 million children living in income-poor households in 2020.

8. The resilience of global systems in most sectors has taken a tremendous hit, leading to dramatic swings in commodity markets and serious supply chain disruptions as well as a sharp contraction in remittances – the largest source of foreign exchange earnings for emerging markets and developing countries – and reverse migration between countries and from urban to rural areas. It has altered human mobility dynamics, which will be subject to further changes in the wake of the unfolding global climate crisis. Although the pandemic slowed the rate of new displacements, in the first half of 2021, more than 84 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence or human rights violations.

9. The pandemic has also had differential effects, both in terms of impacts on the environment and impacts on the implementation and management of relevant policy processes. The economic slowdown provided a reprieve from harmful human impacts on many types of ecosystems; however, these effects may be temporary if recovery entails a return to business as usual. Lockdowns and other measures required changes in the strategies, approaches, monitoring and reporting on implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, as most activities, including capacity-building, training, data collection and meetings were undertaken virtually, and collaboration was shifted to online information-sharing mechanisms. Although a number of important processes were stalled or delayed, the transition to virtual work has also accelerated the digital transformation, initiating new means of inclusive collaboration that could potentially support a more sustainable and resilient recovery.

10. The severity of the COVID-19 pandemic and its socioeconomic consequences underscores the importance of both international cooperation and effective multilateralism as a joint response to global challenges, including future pandemics. However, the need for funding to address the pandemic and contribute to the global health response has shifted funding allocations away from other sectors, which may impede the comprehensive multi-sector approach needed for building back better from COVID-19 and achieving the Goals. It is encouraging to note that in December 2021, Governments agreed to negotiate a new legally binding instrument for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, and to improve the global health architecture through stronger governance, systems, tools and financing to prevent, detect and respond rapidly to epidemics and pandemics.

11. Overall, the pandemic has catalysed efforts to strengthen environmental governance supported by enabling macroeconomic and social policies that build on science, technology and innovation to support the global response required to get back on track to achieve the Goals and improve the lives of the most vulnerable, the well-being of all people and the health of the planet.

12. The sections provide a description of the impacts of the pandemic on the implementation of the Goals under review in 2022 (E/2022/55).

**Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

13. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on education in both developed and developing countries. The disruption of in-person learning resulting from quarantines and lockdowns have had a disproportionately negative impact on women and girls, children and youth in vulnerable situations, persons with disabilities, and those who already faced numerous hardships in the fields of formal and non-formal education, well-being and health, including mental health, in addition to economic dislocations.

14. As a result of school closures, the number of hungry, isolated, abused, anxious children living in poverty has increased, and their access to socialization opportunities and essential services such as health, nutrition and protection from domestic violence and abuse has diminished. Many will suffer the consequences of the pandemic for years to come. It is estimated that school closures due to the pandemic will result in at least 10 to 16 million children never returning to school. Girls are especially at risk of being forced into child labour, early marriage or unwanted pregnancy. Children and youth have also been increasingly exposed to risk factors associated with crime, violence and illicit drug-related activities, victimization through physical and psychological violence, online sexual abuse and exploitation, and trafficking.

15. Only 2.9 per cent of COVID-19 stimulus package funding worldwide went to education, mostly concentrated in high-income countries. Low and middle-income countries allocated less than 1 per cent of their COVID-19 stimulus packages to education. Many States decreased access to child protection services and reporting mechanisms, and courts moved to distance adjudication, which also jeopardized the access to justice of victims of crime and sexual violence.

16. All women and girls have a right to education. Equal access to inclusive, equitable and quality education provides women and girls with opportunities, capacities and understanding that enables their full, equal, effective and meaningful participation, and strengthens their voices, agency and leadership in all sectors and all aspects of life. Education is also a core tool to empower children – especially girls – who are at heightened risk of social and economic exclusion, serving as a catalyst for them to participate as active change-makers and future leaders. Lost education translates directly into potentially long-term disempowerment and marginalization, deepening all forms of social and economic inequality.

17. The pandemic unexpectedly accelerated the transition to digital learning platforms through distance learning, as information and communications technology (ICT) proved to be crucial in mitigating the pandemic's negative impacts on education and in powering a revolution in digital learning that has become one of the world's fastest-growing industries. Mobile devices now allow students to access learning assets anytime, anywhere. Teachers are using mobile devices for everything from literacy and numerical training to interactive tutoring. Mobile learning has the ability to help break down economic barriers, and the potential to bridge rural and urban divides, increase gender equality and empower women.

18. At the same time, the shift to digital learning has exposed the gaps and barriers that have hampered the effectiveness and inclusiveness of educational systems. Demand-side barriers, such as limited digital infrastructure, low levels of digital literacy, prohibitive cultural practices and unfavourable policies, have impeded the use of digital solutions. A majority of students worldwide have been forced to continue their education at home regardless of their ability to do so digitally,

highlighting the urgent need to bridge the digital divide. In addition, while the reliance on distance learning as an alternative to in-person school attendance has helped to keep many children learning, it has also required unplanned support from parents, with a disproportionate reliance on women, exacerbating existing gender inequalities and creating work-life imbalances within families.

19. Changes in learning approaches, tools and platforms will require changes to approaches in teaching, with an increased focus on the use of appropriate pedagogy in digital learning. Supply-side barriers affecting the delivery of education, including inadequate funding, teacher training, learning environments and curricula, must also be addressed more thoroughly to increase the resilience of educational systems to support all students.

#### **Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

20. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing structural gender inequalities and has had a disproportionate impact on women and girls, especially those facing multiple forms of discrimination. It has increased the barriers facing women and girls, including lack of access to quality and inclusive education and employment, health care, public services and economic resources, including land and natural resources.

21. Women have played, and continue to play, a central role in disaster response, including in COVID-19 recovery efforts, represent the vast majority of front-line health and social workers, and are significantly engaged in the delivery of essential and public services. Women make up nearly 70 per cent of the global health workforce yet hold only 25 per cent of leadership positions. Women are underrepresented across many other sectors, including science, technology, telecommunications, renewable energy and sanitation.

22. While women contribute more than 50 per cent of the food produced worldwide, they also account for 70 per cent of the world population that suffers from hunger. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by hunger, food insecurity and poverty, in part as a result of gender inequality and discrimination. In many countries, girls are twice as likely as boys to die from malnutrition and preventable childhood diseases. It is estimated that almost twice as many women as men suffer from malnutrition.

23. Women and girls have faced an increased risk of domestic violence and a heavier burden of household or caretaking chores during the lockdown periods due to increased demands for unpaid care and domestic work. This has resulted in a surge of all forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, as well as harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, which remain serious problems preventing progress toward the realization of the rights of women and girls.

24. As a result, multiple intergovernmental bodies and forums have redoubled their efforts in the past year to collect data and raise awareness to help reduce the prevalence of violence against women, including intimate partner violence, child marriage and female genital mutilation, and numerous countries have stepped up efforts to respond to this “shadow pandemic”.

25. The international health and humanitarian response to the pandemic has included gender-specific guidance for countries and online training for front-line providers; recommendations for maintaining essential health services and training courses for technical areas, such as mental health, that address violence against women; and support for research to assess the impact of the pandemic on violence against women and girls and on access to services.

26. However, the disruption of services deemed to be “non-essential” in favour of the responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, including reproductive health services, along with challenging access to contraceptives and other essential services, have contributed to increased early pregnancy and child marriage, denying the many girls and women affected worldwide the right to control their bodies and their lives. The disruption caused by disasters related to climate change and environmental degradation often keeps girls, adolescent girls and young women out of school, and limits their access to education, including to the skills and knowledge needed to adapt and respond to these challenges.

27. Women have been affected mostly because of the disadvantages they face in the economic, social, financial and regulatory ecosystems in which they are economically operating and which have been exacerbated by the crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic has depleted their finances and government responses to mitigate the impact of the pandemic have not helped. Only 9 per cent of all gender-sensitive measures taken globally to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on women support their economic security.

28. The supply and demand of gender statistics has been challenged by the ongoing pandemic, resulting in innovative measures developed by national statistical offices to respond with efforts to gather nearly real-time data in order to measure and monitor fast-changing circumstances quickly and efficiently. Initiatives include new partnerships within and across organizations, accelerated investments in information technology, further exploration of non-traditional and complementary data sources such as administrative records, adopting different data-collection modes, such as phone interviews and web applications, and increased flexibility in planning.

#### **Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development**

29. The pandemic has significantly affected marine pollution and waste management, including plastic waste, as environmental regulations were loosened in response to the economic crisis, and the health response generated increased hazardous medical waste. A growing number of national and local initiatives, policies and legislation are addressing plastic waste by banning the use of single-use plastic and Styrofoam packaging to address marine pollution and debris.

30. The pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on the fisheries and aquaculture sector, including intensifying data scarcity problems and jeopardizing timely policy responses. At the global level, it has caused major delays in the convening of workshops, meetings and decision-making processes, including on issues critical to fisheries, and marine and coastal biodiversity, and has caused delays in the provision of guidance and advice to Governments and other stakeholders in implementing efforts to achieve Goal 14. A number of major ocean-related processes were set to meet and take important decisions in 2020,<sup>3</sup> but the pandemic caused delays in all these processes, affecting the momentum and political capital on ocean issues, which could have otherwise accelerated progress toward this Goal.

31. Coverage of marine protected areas in the global oceans has increased from 2.4 per cent to 8.01 per cent between 2010 and the end of 2021. The number of marine

<sup>3</sup> Including the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity; the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development; the World Trade Organization negotiations on fisheries subsidies; and the negotiations on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

protected areas increased to 17,721 and the number of marine other effective area-based conservation measures increased to 192. However, there is emerging evidence in many parts of the world that some management and enforcement efforts in marine and coastal areas were negatively impacted, and various projects and initiatives at the national level faced delays due to impacts on financial processes as a result of the pandemic. Habitat loss has continued to be an issue, caused by human impact and unsustainable practices such as unsustainable logging and forest conversion for plantation and agriculture; land-based activities that contribute to marine pollution and other forms of improper waste management; clearance of mangrove areas, foreshore reclamation, coral harvesting, dredging, sand mining and coastal development; poorly managed mining operations; and the impact of natural disasters and extreme events.

32. Women and youth play a crucial role in the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources as well as in climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience. They depend on healthy oceans and sustainable ocean-based economies and are adversely affected by the impacts of pollution, ecosystem destruction and climate change. Nonetheless, women in ocean science continue to be underrepresented, particularly in the highly technical categories. Recognition of young ocean scientists, and the level of support offered to them, differs widely among countries.

33. While there has been clear recent progress in observations, data generation, information flows and knowledge production, current understanding of ocean processes is not adequate and has not kept pace with rapid changes in the state and use of the ocean. Lack of support undermines the ability of ocean science to support the sustainable provision of ocean ecosystem services to humanity. There are gaps in human and institutional capacities, unsustainable or inadequate resources and weak science. A lack of science-policy interface still impedes a large number of countries, especially developing countries, from participating in ocean research or benefiting from existing scientific knowledge. The technical capacity of ocean science remains unequally distributed among countries and regions.

34. Current estimates show that global funding levels fall far short of what is required for coral reef protection. There is a limited pipeline of reef-positive businesses and limited technical capacity locally to design innovative blended finance solutions that can attract private sector investment to the nascent blue economy sector. In addition, the financial ecosystem is lacking experience and appetite to finance coral reef climate resilience and adaptation projects.

35. Overall, funding for ocean science is insufficient to fill existing knowledge gaps and deliver the information required for decisions, tools and solutions leading to a sustainable ocean. On average, only 1.7 per cent of national research budgets are allocated for ocean science.

36. The targets of Goals 14 and 15 are closely linked in relation to biodiversity and ecosystem conservation and restoration, and these linkages are maintained in the first draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Key opportunities for strengthening actions for nature to meet the targets of both Goals 14 and 15 include implementation of existing obligations and commitments under international environmental law, securing access to information, access to public participation in decision-making processes and access to justice in environmental matters, and enhanced mobilization of means of implementation, including resources, capacity-building, technology and partnerships. Sustainable tourism, which is reflected in the targets of both Goals, has the unique ability to spur environmental responsibility and conservation of both marine and terrestrial ecosystems that can contribute to protecting biodiversity while providing livelihoods for local communities, women, youth and indigenous peoples.

**Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss**

37. The COVID-19 pandemic serves as a stark reminder that the sustainable utilization, protection, conservation and restoration of nature are all essential to reducing the risk of infectious and zoonotic diseases. Many of the underlying causes of pandemics are the same global environmental changes that drive biodiversity loss and climate change, including deforestation, land use change, agricultural expansion and intensification, water resources management, pesticide resistance, migration and international travel, unsustainable wildlife trade and consumption, and the accidental or intentional human introduction of pathogens – all of which can affect infectious disease reservoirs and transmission. Increasing numbers of infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Ebola, have made the jump from wildlife to humans. Available evidence suggests that COVID-19 has followed the same route. Once human-to-human transmission of COVID-19 began, national and international surveillance and response systems were not strong or fast enough to contain or halt its spread.

38. There is a lack of data and information on the direct impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on different ecosystems, including forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands. Although lockdown measures, travel restrictions and the slowdown of economic activities stemming from the pandemic have generally been said to have had short-term positive impacts on the environment and biodiversity, these have been relatively short-lived and do not currently reflect a deeper systemic transition towards sustainability.

39. Pandemic-driven health and socioeconomic impacts have adversely affected the implementation of sustainable forest management, leaving the stability and viability of the forest sector in jeopardy in several regions. As more vulnerable people have turned to forest products and forest resources as a coping mechanism to seek food, fuel, shelter and protection, these ecosystems are beginning to show signs of stress. The health response to the pandemic has also increased challenges related to pollution. Prior to the pandemic, pollution, including from plastics and other waste, was already a major driver of biodiversity loss, and the actions taken to minimize waste to date have been largely insufficient.

40. Globally, the proportion of forest area has continued to fall from 31.9 per cent of the world's total land area in 2000 to 31.2 per cent in 2020, a net loss of almost 100 million ha, owing chiefly to large-scale agricultural expansion, especially in the tropics. A number of reports have linked increasing deforestation across the Amazon and the meso-American forest corridor to the pandemic, with attacks on environmental defenders, especially indigenous peoples and Afrodescendent communities reaching alarming levels. However, it is also reported that terrestrial protected areas increased from 13.6 per cent to 16.8 per cent between 2010 and the end of 2021. Currently, there are 251,922 protected areas and 479 terrestrial other effective area-based conservation measures. This represents progress not only in the context of the relevant subtargets of Goal 15.15, but also in that of other Goals.

41. The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected rural livelihoods, making the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, in particular forests, agricultural and other managed land, more urgent. Most of the direct impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic caused by lack of on-site staff include illegal harvesting, mining and poaching in protected areas, and increased cases of wildfires. The land-based sectors have, and will continue to experience, adverse economic consequences as a result of job losses, market declines, food supply disruptions and tenure

insecurity. The effects of the pandemic coupled with climate change are intensifying inequalities in wealth and land ownership, exacerbating a major barrier to restoration.

42. Although it is too soon to analyse the long-term impacts, if any, of the pandemic on the forest sector, in the short term, there have been negative effects on supply and demand for products, trade patterns and supply chains. Overall, there was a 5.1 per cent reduction in forest product exports in 2020 and a 7 per cent drop in imports; trade, however fluctuated over the year, and the steep decline in the second quarter of 2020 was followed by a dramatic recovery. With many Governments loosening environmental standards to allow faster economic recovery, the long-term cost may become apparent as pressures on terrestrial ecosystems resume and continue to grow. Agriculture, particularly the clearing of land to rear livestock, contributes about one fourth of global greenhouse gas emissions, and land use change is the single biggest environmental driver of new disease outbreaks.

43. From the perspective of gender, biodiversity loss and decline in ecosystem functions and services owing to climate change, pollution and other impacts threaten the full enjoyment of human rights of all women and girls, especially rural, indigenous and migrant women and girls. Forests, fisheries, water, soil and biomass provide principal sources of income, livelihood, food security, social protection and employment, in particular for women and girls living in poverty. The unsustainable depletion or deterioration of natural resources can displace communities, especially women, from income-generating activities while greatly adding to unremunerated work. Environmental degradation results in negative effects on the health, well-being and quality of life of the population at large, especially women and girls, in both urban and rural areas. Pressure on ecosystems adds to pandemic-induced economic hardship and increases forced migration and displacement.

44. As a result of the pandemic, international trade in wildlife is under increased scrutiny for its role in disease emergence and spread. The issuance and verification of permits and certificates was affected, as well as inspections and reporting, and had a negative impact on the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora. However, the illegal trade in wildlife for species listed under the Convention was reduced, owing to the restricted movement of people. Highly biodiverse countries with wildlife-based tourism reported being affected by the pandemic, with a decrease in the number of tourists visiting their national parks, for example, which had brought in much-needed foreign currency for the conservation of wildlife species and support for anti-poaching activities.

45. Given the links between biodiversity loss and pandemic risk, as well as the importance of biodiversity for sustainable development more generally, recovery measures are seeking to address the common drivers of biodiversity loss, invest in activities that reduce the risks of future pandemics and build resilience and safeguards to achieve long-term sustainable development. Global strategies on health, environment and climate change for a sustainable recovery are incorporating evidence-based guidance for environmental health and hygiene.

#### **Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development**

46. The most significant impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on progress towards Goal 17 have been reported in important key areas for means of implementation, including trade, debt relief, international cooperation and access to digital technology, as well as the collection of data and statistics. Despite international agreements, initiatives and general declarations, there is a lack of equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines worldwide, especially for developing countries.

47. The pandemic has put massive stress on the world trading system. Lockdowns initially generated a severe reduction in economic activity, leading to a temporary collapse of global trade, followed by a strong rebound and increased demand for consumer durable goods, at the expense of services such as tourism, and putting some supply chains and the global shipping system under stress, generating customs and logistic bottlenecks and increasing uncertainty in trade costs. More recent global developments are adding to supply chain woes and having an impact on global food security, with sharp price increases for grains, oilseeds, and vegetable oils and fertilizers, as well as energy.

48. Services trade continues to lag behind merchandise trade, particularly in sectors related to travel and leisure. These trends have implications for economic recovery, which cannot be as inclusive as it should, given that vulnerable groups, including women, continue to be underrepresented in some booming sectors, such as digitally supplied services, and overrepresented in some struggling sectors, such as tourism.

49. Development of productive capacities, structural transformation, and domestic resource mobilization remain at the forefront of efforts to secure a sustainable recovery for the least developed and other developing countries. The pandemic has spurred partnership efforts at the international level to leverage digital technology for inclusive growth and apply expertise in trade-related digital innovation, by empowering micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises to trade online at the international level, growing digital entrepreneurship, and providing access to e-networks for the development of skills, strategies and online platforms. International cooperation efforts are needed to further pool, formalize and transfer available knowledge for effective science, technology and innovation.

50. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated inequalities among national statistical offices and highlighted significant data gaps, capability gaps and inequalities among them, related to connectivity issues, an inadequate remote processing ability and a general lack of ICT infrastructure. At the same time, greater demand pressures on all national statistical offices for data on health, social protection, gender, education and the economy continues. The lack of quality, timely and disaggregated data thus impedes the issuance of strategic measures and policies to mitigate the effects of the pandemic for vulnerable populations.

51. Simplified access to administrative records during the pandemic provided an opportunity to better understand the nature and availability of information in administrative systems and constitutes a first step toward ensuring improved data integration across various ministries in the post-COVID-19 context. An initial assessment of national practices in the use of non-traditional sources of data for gender analysis, for example, reveals that more and more countries are now exploiting sources of gender data that they did not traditionally use. Depending on national experiences, newer sources may include administrative registers, big data, citizen-generated data or combinations of sources.

52. However, the accuracy of administrative data sources can be affected by limited data capacity among sectoral ministries, a lack of coordination across sectors and institutions, a lack of correspondence and standardization of administrative registers with statistical definitions and coverage, and overall limited access to administrative data files. In addition, data and statistical systems have long been underfunded, while costs and demands have risen. Current donor commitments and support for data and statistics are a fraction of what is needed. A national data strategy in the context of an integrated national financing framework can help to implement an integrated data system to realize the full value of data for achieving national sustainable development strategies.

53. A repository of good practices and resources for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals<sup>4</sup> provides support to Governments for improving data collection and disaggregation, bridging data gaps for indicators. Initiatives are also under way to support countries in their efforts to produce more timely and granular statistics through data integration, gather data that assess the impact of the pandemic on society and households, and take stock of the use of censuses and surveys for adult mortality data.

54. The principles of effective development cooperation, including country ownership, a focus on results, inclusive partnerships, transparency and mutual accountability, remain crucial for addressing the pandemic, the climate emergency and the resulting economic shocks. Effective cooperation can rebuild trust, especially at the country level, and in turn can lead to impactful partnerships and better results in countries.

### **III. Assessment of the situation regarding the principle of leaving no one behind against the background of the COVID-19 pandemic and for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

55. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on the vulnerable or those in vulnerable situations, including those living in conflict and humanitarian settings, in poverty or with chronic diseases. Women, children and young people, older persons, persons with disabilities, people of African descent and indigenous peoples have been hardest hit and continue to struggle with the impacts of the pandemic, which continues to exacerbate existing disparities in many societies.

56. The global response to the crisis has exposed deficiencies in health systems, which have failed to protect the most vulnerable, revealed inequalities within and among countries and derailed recent advances towards extending child-sensitive social protection in many parts of the world. Disruptions to essential health services owing to the COVID-19 pandemic have threatened decades of progress on child health, survival and development, and diverted resources away from efforts to address other concerns, such as malaria, which infected 221 million people in 2020. School closures resulted in millions of children being cut off from receiving life-saving vaccinations and daily meals that were being provided in schools before the pandemic. Routine health-care services were disrupted, leading to delayed or cancelled vaccinations, check-ups and nutritional support programmes.

57. As health system capacities remain stretched, certain health services are being prioritized over others. According to global surveys measuring disruptions to essential health services during the COVID-19 pandemic, despite early evidence of service recovery in the third and fourth quarters of 2021, nearly all countries still reported disruptions to health services, with little improvement across most health areas, including sexual, reproductive, maternal, child and adolescent health, resulting in an increased risk of maternal mortality, unintended pregnancies and other adverse sexual and reproductive health outcomes. It is essential to ensure that activities and programmes targeting the health of women and girls are built into national health and humanitarian plans.

58. Unequal access to remote learning during the pandemic as a result of school closures resulted in at least 463 million students being left behind in their studies because they lived in rural areas or poor households and could not be reached by digital or broadcast remote learning programmes. Learners with disabilities faced

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<sup>4</sup> Available at <https://unstats.un.org/wiki/display/sdgGoodPractices/Home>.

additional barriers to accessing remote content. A lack of adequate infrastructure coupled with the digital divide meant that lower-income countries struggled to shift to remote learning. Inequalities within countries were apparent among households with reduced access to devices and the Internet, fewer digital skills and home environments that had less parental support, limited literacy, differing home and tuition languages, domestic and care obligations, and risks related to child labour and child marriage.

59. Climate change, environmental degradation and disasters have intensified existing social dynamics, such as discrimination, marginalization and inequality, and are themselves determinants of exposure and vulnerability to all types of hazards. Women and girls in vulnerable and marginalized situations and conflict settings are disproportionately affected, as are those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, age, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status. While all women and girls have the same human rights, women and girls in different contexts have particular needs and priorities that must be addressed in order to ensure that no one is left behind.

60. There is alarming evidence showing how violence is affecting young women: a quarter of women aged between 15 and 49 years have been subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner at least once in their lifetime. The highest rate (16 per cent) of intimate partner violence in 2021 occurred among young women aged between 15 and 24 years. More than 50 per cent of all maternal deaths and up to 70 per cent of gender-based violence occurs in humanitarian and fragile settings.

61. Women are more likely to be excluded from economic resources, including financing. Women and girls continue to disproportionately shoulder the burden of care work, particularly unpaid care work, which should be recognized, remunerated and redistributed. Women-owned businesses remain small, and inadequate support and financing for women-owned small and medium-sized enterprises hampers their ability to grow and gain access to bigger markets. Local fiscal policies and systems of governance are often gender blind, and there is a lack of women's leadership in decision-making.

62. The least developed countries and small island developing States have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, as well as the concurrent effects of disasters and climate change. They also have limited fiscal space for emergency response and recovery from the pandemic and the impacts of other disasters, thereby deepening the social and economic consequences they face and prolonging the recovery and reconstruction period. The external debt of several of the least developed countries remains unsustainable, and there is very limited support for a sustainable and inclusive transformation of their economies.

63. Despite the progress of several countries towards graduation from the least developed country category, one third could remain far behind and struggle to achieve graduation. According to the latest monitoring reports concerning graduating and recently graduated countries, while some countries are well placed to recover from the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic in the medium term, others face persistent challenges in terms of macroeconomic stability and debt sustainability, among others. Most of the least developed countries continue to lag far behind all other countries in terms of access to vaccinations and the number of vaccines administered.

64. There are concerns about the adverse impact that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on the conduct of censuses. Of the 110 national censuses for which data were available and that were scheduled to be undertaken in 2020 and 2021, 71 (65 per cent) were either postponed or their status was unknown, and 39 had been conducted or

were planned to be conducted by the end of 2021, with a number of them significantly extending the census enumeration period. Consequently, the capacity to accurately and consistently assess the impact of development policies at both the national and subnational levels, but particularly the latter, may be hampered by the lack of granular and comprehensive statistics generated by population and housing censuses. Census data are essential, for example, for accurate planning for service delivery in terms of locating and building hospitals, schools and transportation infrastructure; the allocation of budgetary resources; the delineation of electoral districts; and the monitoring of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at local levels or among populations, disaggregated by income levels, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and other characteristics.

65. In addition to the postponement of the conduct of censuses in many countries and the increased costs of census operations, the circumstances of the pandemic, including mobility restrictions within the country and between countries, could have a significant influence on population distribution, the level of fertility and mortality, internal and international migration, and employment and unemployment rates. It is expected that the census data collected during the pandemic will show some extraordinary patterns, but it is currently unclear to what extent those patterns are attributable to the pandemic and whether they reflect short-term changes or more permanent ones.

66. Lastly, with nearly half of the human population directly dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods, and many of the most vulnerable people directly dependent on biodiversity to fulfil their daily subsistence needs, “leaving no one behind” has been included as a core principle in the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, which will include mechanisms for the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in its meetings and processes. Other initiatives for the inclusion of indigenous peoples must also ensure that they are not left further behind in the post-pandemic recovery.

#### **IV. Actions and policy recommendations in areas requiring urgent attention in relation to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals under review**

67. The COVID-19 pandemic has given the world a once-in-a-generation opportunity to advocate the transformation necessary to ensure equitable and sustainable development. This can only happen if there is sufficient political will, a change of mindsets, visionary leadership, sound management of public funds and a renewed commitment to advancing the 2030 Agenda through multilateral cooperation. It requires efforts to remove existing structural barriers, negative social norms and gender stereotypes, and to close the gender gap. It calls for the empowerment of youth and the amplification of their voices. It will be imperative to strengthen trust – and if needed, to rebuild trust – in institutions at all levels so that they can become more effective, resilient and credible.

68. Urgent action must be taken by Governments and partners around the world to contain the pandemic and reverse its impacts, which requires moving from ad hoc, temporary and emergency measures to longer-term investment for increased resilience. The pandemic has made it clear: no one is safe until everyone is safe. Equitable access to testing, treatment and vaccines has both individual and population health benefits.

69. Essential health services must be restored and expanded in order to prioritize health promotion and disease prevention. Health systems should be strengthened to

achieve universal health coverage that includes access to affordable, quality essential health services, with a focus on the least served, most vulnerable populations, in particular women, children and adolescents, migrants and refugees. Targeted support is needed to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on refugees and host communities, promote inclusion, address specific vulnerabilities, promote self-reliance and address poverty among refugees.

70. Addressing the global shortfall of health workers will provide for far-reaching benefits across the Sustainable Development Goals, including with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment, health and well-being, education, decent jobs and economic growth. Policymakers must support women in health care and decision-making by promoting equal pay to reduce the gender pay gap, recognizing unpaid work, improving working conditions and increasing the proportion of women in health and care leadership.

71. Safely reopening schools and educational institutions and keeping them open should be the highest priority. This includes the introduction of measures to reduce virus transmission in schools and the recovery of comprehensive essential services, including school meals, hygiene, protection and psychosocial support. The focus should be on providing quality education to the most vulnerable, including girls, children affected by conflict and crisis, children with disabilities, and refugee and displaced children, and on upholding children's right to participate meaningfully in decisions and processes that affect them by enabling children to participate and responding to their concerns. To be able to participate effectively, children require safe spaces, online and offline, and timely, age-appropriate information in a language that they understand.

72. Protecting and prioritizing education is crucial for recovery and resilience. The pivotal role of teachers in the recovery cannot be overemphasized. They must be supported and given the resources necessary to address the impacts of the pandemic on learning. It is both essential and urgent to strengthen teachers' pedagogical skills, including digital skills and socioemotional learning instruction, and ensure their safety, well-being and that they have decent working conditions.

73. As technological development, migration, climate change, conflicts and epidemics are reshaping society and changing the landscape of learning and skills development, it is also urgent to develop strategies to increase domestic resources for education and to use those resources effectively, including by allocating at least 4 to 6 per cent of gross domestic product and/or at least 15 to 20 per cent of total public expenditure to education, as well as to raise revenue to increase education budgets. Young people and adults will need continuous reskilling and upskilling in the light of rapidly changing labour markets with increased digitization and the greening of economies. To support the transition from school to work, Governments need to expand skills development opportunities.

74. Everyone, everywhere has a responsibility to promote and invest in gender-responsive, quality and inclusive education, lifelong learning, reskilling and training, including in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, for women and girls, including pregnant adolescents, young mothers and single mothers, to be able to continue and complete their education and equip themselves with knowledge and skills that can strengthen their resilience and adaptive capacities, so that they can attain high-quality jobs in the sustainable economy. Women's equal, full, effective and meaningful participation in the economy and in decision-making processes at all levels and in all areas is essential for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Strong legal frameworks that protect and advance the human rights of all women and girls, along with the effective implementation of laws, is central to achieving gender equality and eliminating all forms of gender-based violence.

75. The intricate links between biodiversity and the emergence of zoonotic diseases serve to demonstrate that biodiversity is the foundation of life on Earth and underpins the health of all living beings, including human health. With efforts under way to rethink how value in health and well-being is measured, produced and distributed across the economy, new measurement systems can be developed based on values such as planetary health, human health and well-being, diverse social foundations and activities that promote equity. Governments are urged to adopt and mainstream a One Health approach aimed at sustainably balancing and optimizing the health of people, animals and ecosystems through multisectoral coordination, so that they are better prepared to prevent, predict, detect and respond to global health threats and promote sustainable development.

76. Renewed efforts must be made at all levels to ensure the implementation of existing obligations and commitments under international environmental law. Global coordination, cooperation and governance are needed to tackle environmental threats to coastal and marine ecosystems caused by increased nutrients, wastewater, chemicals, marine litter and microplastics, including to eliminate plastic pollution in marine and other environments. Gender-responsive policies, interventions and innovations must ensure women's equal access to agricultural and fisheries technologies, technical assistance, productive resources, land tenure security and access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance and natural resources, as well as access to and participation in local, regional and international markets.

77. The conservation and restoration of ecosystems is central to overcoming the climate and biodiversity crises. Actions to conserve and restore biodiversity must urgently be scaled up using approaches tailored to the local context. Actions to keep climate change well below 2°C and close to the target of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels are needed to prevent climate impacts from negating all other actions in support of biodiversity. Accelerated actions are urgently needed to increase the extent and effectiveness of well-connected protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, implement sustainable forest management practices, restore degraded habitats and improve the condition of nature across farmed and urban landscapes and inland water bodies, coasts and oceans. Effective steps need to be taken to address other pressures driving biodiversity loss, including invasive alien species, pollution and the unsustainable exploitation of biodiversity, especially in marine and inland water ecosystems. More needs to be done to invest in wildlife conservation that is not dependent on tourism.

78. Conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity for food and agriculture, within production systems and other relevant terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, is essential to ensure future food security. Ambitious actions are needed to support the transition to more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems that promote the sustainable use, conservation and restoration of biodiversity for food and agriculture, thereby leaving no farmer, livestock keeper or pastoralist, forest-based producer, fisher or aquaculturalist behind and taking into account the contributions and needs of women, indigenous peoples and local communities.

79. Much remains to be done to identify and eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental degradation and disasters. The global community must urgently mainstream gender-transformative and gender-responsive approaches across COVID-19 recovery and sustainable development policies. Such efforts include promoting gender equality and the human rights and empowerment of women and girls in environmental governance, recognizing the role that women play as managers of natural resources and agents of change in safeguarding the environment, as well as the potential of women's knowledge and collective action to improve resource productivity, enhance ecosystem

conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources, and create more sustainable, low-carbon food, energy, water and health systems. Curricula at all levels of education should be enhanced to create space for young women and girls so that they may participate in shaping the decisions on climate change, environmental degradation and disasters that will affect their future.

80. The pandemic has accelerated the digital transition. If managed in an inclusive, fair and ethical manner, the digital transition is perhaps the biggest transformative variable for enabling a rethink of development choices and pathways. It represents a unique opportunity to leapfrog development, improve government efficiency, transparency and effectiveness in service delivery, and recast State-citizen relations in a more dynamic, responsive and accountable manner. However, to achieve its potential, the digital transition needs to be inclusive, respect individual rights and mitigate the risks of a widening digital divide, keeping in mind that more than 3 billion people globally are not connected to the Internet, including a majority of people in Africa. Digitalization of the public sector requires resources, talent and infrastructure, taking into account the specificities and needs of each country, combined with efforts to enable the meaningful participation of all stakeholders in public policymaking. In addition, while social media platforms are powerful tools for connecting people and promoting the Sustainable Development Goals, the growing role of unregulated social media in undermining democratic institutions requires attention.

81. A range of transformational changes are also required to enable the production and supply of timely, high-quality and open data for the post-pandemic future, including modernizing statistical legislation, broader frameworks for data privacy and protection, increased coordination within the data ecosystem, wider use of administrative data, an open data strategy and new multi-stakeholder partnerships. There is also an urgent need for greater certainty of the timing and levels of budgets, especially with regard to large data-collection exercises such as business and agricultural censuses.

82. Global and regional organizations can help to facilitate the effective monitoring of country responses to the pandemic and drive efforts to develop and adopt international norms and standards on managing fiscal stimulus packages and fiscal policy in times of crisis, in particular to ensure adequate levels of transparency, accountability and participation.

83. Existing international partnerships, including bilateral cooperation, have proven to be crucial in times of crises, with assistance becoming easier and more accessible in terms of technology, availability of vaccines, technical advice and financial aid. Member States and other partners are urged to increase allocations of flexible official development assistance and other public financing or philanthropic capital that can be used as first loss, concessional or de-risking capital to attract resources from the private sector to mechanisms that focus on financing bankable enterprises and projects that support women's economic empowerment, the protection of marine ecosystems, and biodiversity conservation.

84. Industrial policies that integrate targets on quality education, gender equality, the environment, climate change and inequality can be instrumental in facilitating efforts to address simultaneous crises. Providers of private-sector capital, including institutional investors, are called upon to engage proactively with development partners to define sustainable financing vehicles that meet their requirements and strengthen sustainable value chains, and to support the development of quality infrastructure for inclusive and sustainable industrialization, while enhancing preparedness for future crises.

85. Both domestic policy and international support for COVID-19 recovery and rehabilitation should build resilience and reduce disaster risk by addressing the underlying social and economic drivers of exposure and vulnerability to hazards of all kinds. Legal and financial frameworks for sustainable and resilient infrastructure that maintain and enhance ecological connectivity, avoid further fragmentation, minimize other potential impacts on ecosystems and livelihoods, and incorporate natural infrastructure must also be strengthened.

86. Developing countries must diversify their production bases. Governments should facilitate the identification and promotion of potential sectors and strengthen the effectiveness of innovation systems to support diversification by raising awareness of digital technologies among businesses and encouraging academia, researchers and civil society to work with the private sector. They must also identify and invest in suitable science, technology and innovation solutions to alleviate unemployment. Priority should be given to those elements of the Doha Programme of Action that enable the least developed countries to expand productive capacities for sustainable development.

87. Governments, private sector entities, relevant stakeholders and the United Nations system all have a responsibility to increase cooperation in the areas of data- and information-sharing, digitalization, widespread vaccination and testing, and access to medication, education and training. The potential of government-led, multi-stakeholder dialogues and the role of the private sector can be instrumental in facilitating effective approaches to tackling these persistent and urgent challenges and must not be overlooked.

## **V. Policy recommendations, commitments and cooperation measures for promoting a sustainable, resilient and inclusive recovery from the pandemic while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

88. The functional commissions and expert bodies of the Council and other intergovernmental bodies and forums have recommended a wide range of specific targeted actions addressing a multitude of issues. For the purposes of the present synthesis report, a curated summary of overarching recommendations is set out below.

89. The following actions are considered the most relevant and impactful for promoting a sustainable, resilient and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda:

- (a) Increase international cooperation to ensure equitable vaccine distribution;
- (b) Ensure the full participation of women and girls and the inclusion of their expertise in the pandemic response, the post-pandemic recovery and decision-making and leadership structures;
- (c) Address gaps in social protection coverage, including regarding basic income and benefits, especially for those who are in vulnerable situations;
- (d) Support the self-reliance of refugees and host communities, ensure their participation in decision-making processes and promote their inclusion in the labour market;
- (e) Adopt measures to recognize, reduce and redistribute women's and girls' disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work and the feminization of poverty;

- (f) Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and sexuality education;
- (g) Enhance multisectoral policies and national action plans to strengthen the resilience and adaptability of small-scale producers and family farmers;
- (h) Strengthen food systems, including through a holistic food systems approach, so that they become more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable;
- (i) Promote healthy diets to end hunger and improve food security and nutrition;
- (j) Support school systems, teachers and families in ensuring a reliable source of daily nutrition;
- (k) Invest in family-friendly policies in workplaces;
- (l) Support families to allow their children, in particular girls and children in vulnerable situations, to return to school;
- (m) Increase the proportion of official development assistance invested in early childhood care and education, foundational literacy and numeracy, prioritizing the most vulnerable children;
- (n) Provide opportunities to catch up on lost learning;
- (o) Encourage the reframing of national education systems to ensure that digital literacy and digital technologies become a central component of existing and future school curricula at all levels;
- (p) Invest in the development of resilient education systems at all levels and develop comprehensive remote learning systems;
- (q) Increase investment in targeted programmes for girls' education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics;
- (r) Design industrial policies that reflect new realities, challenges and priorities such as digitalization, decarbonization, the post-pandemic restructuring of firms and sectors, and the need to build resilience to shocks and adapt to climate change;
- (s) Embed strategies to develop the green economy, the blue economy and the care economy into industrial policies that place the greening of industry at the core of recovery programmes;
- (t) Include budget allocations for green infrastructure and grey- or green-blended solutions, redirecting subsidies that lead to ecosystem degradation;
- (u) Strengthen early warning systems for natural hazards in order to reduce disaster risk;
- (v) Support the most vulnerable countries in pursuing a green transition towards low-carbon economies;
- (w) Bridge technical and human resource gaps, in particular in the least developed countries and small island developing States;
- (x) Build capacities to better integrate micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises into broader productive networks, inclusive and sustainable value chains, green production and trade;
- (y) Support policies and actions that strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, especially through women-owned enterprises and young entrepreneurs, including by ensuring access to targeted finance;

(z) Promote the participation of women and girls in male-dominated sectors, including science, technology and engineering, alongside greater engagement of men and boys in unpaid care and domestic work;

(aa) Tackle the high levels of youth unemployment through the development of programmes that address illiteracy, enhance employability, facilitate school-to-work transitions and expand guaranteed employment schemes;

(bb) Promote gender-responsive budgeting and the application of gender analysis to risk financing across sectors;

(cc) Promote women's access to formal financial services, including timely and affordable credit, loans, savings, insurance and remittance transfer schemes;

(dd) Provide access to financial products, services and information to women and encourage the use of innovative tools and platforms, including online and mobile banking;

(ee) Increase the climate finance commitments of developed countries to support gender-just transitions in the poorest countries and the diversification of women's livelihoods affected by environmental degradation;

(ff) Implement innovative financing mechanisms, including blended finance, in order to leverage additional and substantial private-sector finance for mechanisms that target and support the least developed countries to build inclusive, green and diversified economies;

(gg) Establish suitable credit-rating approaches for developing countries, including by extending the time horizon of credit ratings, to enable a better assessment of risks and insights for long-term oriented investors;

(hh) Create progressive and fair tax systems, including by abolishing poorly designed tax breaks, allowances and exemptions and ensuring the effective taxation of wealth and income from wealth, in order to fund public care infrastructure and climate solutions;

(ii) Revise intellectual property frameworks to provide developing countries with access to the latest advances in technology;

(jj) Mainstream a gender perspective into crime prevention and criminal justice systems;

(kk) Integrate sports into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies;

(ll) Provide adequate labour protection to all workers, including through measures to prevent and eliminate violence, abuse and sexual harassment;

(mm) Ensure the elimination of child labour in all its forms;

(nn) Protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation, both online and offline;

(oo) Create an enabling environment for multisectoral and multi-stakeholder partnerships at all levels, especially youth-led and women's organizations, to address structural inequalities that threaten their rights, health and well-being;

(pp) Support circular economy approaches through partnerships, business models, innovations and investments that contribute to the sustainable management, use and consumption of natural resources;

(qq) Strengthen links between biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and public health in sectoral policies, and in accordance with the One Health approach, in order to better detect, prevent, prepare for and respond to health risks;

- (rr) Build capacity across all sectors for the effective implementation of international environmental law by ensuring access to information, public participation in decision-making processes and access to justice in environmental matters;
- (ss) Redirect financial flows to serve innovative and holistic approaches that truly value nature;
- (tt) Strengthen the science-policy interface to support effective environmental action and policymaking;
- (uu) Strengthen ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions for biodiversity;
- (vv) Promote innovative forest management practices, ecotourism and forest landscape restoration;
- (ww) Invest in the restoration of degraded land, soil and ecosystems;
- (xx) Ensure fair and equitable access to genetic resources and biotechnologies, and support their effective and efficient use;
- (yy) Support women leaders in local communities who are spearheading innovative approaches to promote sustainable energy transitions and agroecology and protect local ecosystems based on indigenous knowledge;
- (zz) Promote education and training for professionals in ocean data and information management;
- (aaa) Increase funding for ocean science and promote the co-design of solutions for ocean sustainability;
- (bbb) Support multi-stakeholder partnerships to operationalize the transfer of marine technology through broad cross-sectoral cooperation, improve marine research capacities and optimize research infrastructure;
- (ccc) Establish a continuous collection of internationally comparable data on investments in ocean science;
- (ddd) Increase actions to reduce plastic waste and harmful chemical pollution in marine and terrestrial ecosystems;
- (eee) Eliminate or reform subsidies that are harmful to biodiversity, including those that promote monoculture production systems;
- (fff) Increase efforts to implement global treaties on hazardous chemicals and wastes, including the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions;
- (ggg) Implement multisectoral policies on sanitation and waste management, clean fuels and energy technologies;
- (hhh) Intensify development cooperation, including through South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation, to support countries in building their national capacity for science, technology and innovation, and to develop research networks that reach across borders, institutions and disciplines;
- (iii) Increase the share of official development assistance for data and statistics to strengthen national statistical systems of the least developed countries and small island developing States and support the development of national data strategies;
- (jjj) Promote the development of a strong communication strategy and strengthen the skills of national statistical offices in effective and contemporary approaches to disseminating statistics;

(kkk) Establish stewards to help promote issues of data access, interoperability and governance;

(lll) Prioritize domestic resources for data and statistics and convey priorities for external support;

(mmm) Further incorporate non-traditional methods of data collection, including citizen-generated data;

(nnn) Close data gaps, including by advancing gender statistics and measuring the new indicator on development support (Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources) adopted under target 17.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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