



European Union

**EU Statement on
Agenda item 11: UNIDO activities in the environment and energy: Outcome of
the consultations on circular economy**

**49th session of the Industrial Development Board
United Nations Industrial Development Organization**

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Madam President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The following countries align themselves with this statement: Turkey[§], the Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia*, Albania*, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Norway+, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Armenia.

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are confronted with challenges ranging from economic recovery and aggravated poverty to the triple crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, exacerbated by unsustainable consumption and production. These challenges call for holistic solutions that can only be achieved through a strong multilateral approach with international cooperation and a rules based system at its core. We consider the whole UN system, including UNIDO, a key player in this regard.

To overcome the economic impact of COVID-19 we need a green recovery and green industrialisation. This does not mean a trade-off between economic growth and the environment. Stepping up urgently the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is crucial to build back better and smarter. The policies we put in place now must set our infrastructure, agriculture, industries and investments flows on the right path.

A good example in this regard is the way we extract, process and transform world's material resources – biomass and food, mineral and metals, and fossil fuels. They are important for our industries and societies as they create added value, jobs and income, but they also generate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions¹, cause biodiversity loss and increase pollution. To avoid further risks for our resource systems and livelihoods, it is important to improve the ways we manage extraction, consumption and disposal of material resources and to start making sustainable lifestyle choices. Adopting circular economy principles and practices on along with sustainable consumption and production patterns on the pathway to inclusive and sustainable industrialization is crucial in this regard, including leaving no one behind.

[§] Candidate Country

* Candidate Countries the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Norway is a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

¹ IRP (2019). [*Global Resources Outlook 2019: Natural Resources for the Future We Want*](#)

With this in mind, the EU launched the ‘Global Alliance on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency’, established with the support of UNEP and UNIDO. Members of the Alliance, which now includes fourteen countries, are joining forces to advocate for the shift to a circular economy and a more efficient use of resources globally.

The EU and its Member States remain committed to the priorities outlined in the UNIDO General Conference Resolution 18/7 on the Environment and Energy. We are willing to partner with all UNIDO Member States towards achieving its goals.

We commend the UNIDO Secretariat for organising the Global consultations on circular economy, co-chaired by Austria and Costa Rica. We welcome the fact that more than 300 participants from 70 Member States, international and regional organizations, businesses and other entities, including the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Coalition for Circular Economy and the African Circular Economy Alliance, took part in the consultations. The best practices and commitments shared during the meetings provide a good basis for further discussions and we look forward to continuing this work.

We encourage UNIDO, within its mandate and resources, to continue scaling up its activities in support of governments and industries to fulfill national commitments under multilateral environmental agreements, while improving the well-being of people, generating green growth and decent work, decarbonizing our economies, halting and reversing biodiversity loss, and reducing pollution of our ecosystems.

Thank you for your attention Madam President.