

## Statement on behalf of Science and Technology Major Group, APFSD 2021

### S&T Statement at APFSD 2021

In 2015 the world's governments agreed to Agenda 2030 as our global social contract with hope and aspiration. Looking back, we now see that performance on the SDGs has not lived up to these expectations. ESCAP's Regional SDG progress report shows us that the majority of countries in the Asia-Pacific are making insufficient progress on most SDGs. Some models demonstrate that at the current rate the global community may achieve the goals by 2073, 43 years later than envisioned originally. But we do not have that much time!

The IMF estimates that countries spend between 4 to 6 trillion dollars a year on subsidies that destroy the environment. Our carbon-based economy has us on a trajectory for 3 degrees of global warming this century. We have seen that even though global GHG emissions reduced during the widespread COVID lockdowns, the reduction constitutes only 7-8 percent. Meeting the 1.5 degree target set forth in the Paris Agreement will require **annual** GHG reductions of the same extent. It is clear that business-as-usual is impossible, and that serious changes are necessary.

UNEP has coined the triple crisis - the interlinked climate, biodiversity and pollution crises. The burden falls mostly on women, who represent 80 per cent of those displaced by climate disruption. On the environment, more than 1 million of the Earth's around 8 million plant and animal species are at risk of extinction. Air pollution causes some 6.5 million premature deaths every year, and polluted water kills a further 1.8 million, predominantly children. Meanwhile, inequality is greater than it has ever been: 1.3 billion people remain poor and some 700 million are hungry.

These existential crises require urgent action from the whole of society; thus we emphasize:

- Covid recovery must build back differently with prime attention to social justice and environmental sustainability as core requirements for a resilient society.
- Governments need to now finally deliver on the decade old commitment to abolish fossil fuel subsidies;
- We need updated and ambitious NDCs ahead of COP26 to stay in track for 1,5 degree target;
- Vaccine hoarding will just prolong the pandemic;
- International organisations need to stop uncritically advocating for market oriented 'solutions' and engage with a transformation that integrates social and environmental concerns.
- Individuals need to be ready to forego conspicuous consumption and support local economies.
- We all need to shoulder the burden of change, be the change.

Thank you.

<END>