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SPEAKING POINTS FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)
IPCC WGIII APPROVAL SESSION
CLIMATE CHANGE 2014: MITIGATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE
BERLIN, GERMANY, 7-14 APRIL 2014

Statement delivered by Jacqueline McGlade, UNEP Chief Scientist

Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to address the 39th session of the IPCC Plenary and the Working Group III Session on Climate Change Mitigation, contributing to the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report. As one of the parent organizations of IPCC, UNEP continues to support and bring to the world's attention the critical findings of the IPCC.

The latest science cited by the IPCC provides conclusive scientific evidence that human activities are causing unprecedented changes in the Earth's climate. As many have stated, is time to take immediate and robust action to mitigate the impacts of climate change against the risks of a greater than 2 degrees C temperature rise. For those who want to focus on the scientific question marks, that is their right to do so, but today, we need to focus on the fundamentals and on actions.

The Fifth Assessment Report will be considered by negotiators responsible for concluding a new agreement under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. As greenhouse gas emissions continue to increase, inducing changes in the oceans, ice caps, glaciers, the biosphere and other components of the climate system that are very likely to be unprecedented over decades to thousands of years, it is clear that such a universal UN climate agreement by 2015 will be vital

Any agreement will need to be backed by supportive voluntary initiatives such as those bringing down short lived climate pollutants. And as work on the inclusive Green Economy and the transition to a low carbon economy continues to show, there are multiple benefits of such immediate policy action including improved public health, food security and job generation.

Of course there can be different pathways to reach the 2 degree C target, and the stepping stones to future emissions targets will need to be clearly articulated and contextualized for each country. But as UNEP's own work has shown, should the global community not immediately embark on wide-ranging actions to narrow the greenhouse gas emissions gap, the chance of remaining on the least-cost path to

keeping global temperature rise below 2 degrees C this century will swiftly diminish and open the door to insurmountable challenges. Not narrowing the emissions gap will mean greater lock-in of carbon intense infrastructure, greater dependence on often unproven technologies in the medium term, greater costs of mitigation and greater risks to many people.

The stepping stone of the 2020 target can still be achieved by strengthening current pledges and by further action, including scaling up international cooperation initiatives in areas such as energy efficiency, fossil fuel subsidy reform and renewable energy.

Last week, UNEP, the International Resource Panel and UN REDD launched a new outlining how integrating REDD+ programmes into a Green Economy approach can help mitigate climate change, while conserving and even boosting the economic and social benefits forests provide to human society.

Agriculture is also critical, as direct emissions from this sector are currently responsible for 11 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions – even more if its indirect emissions are taken into account. The recent report by UNEP's International Resource Panel which assesses global land use and scientific options for sustainable land management shows that change in land use and land cover due to expansion of global cropland is accelerating climate change through release of carbon dioxide, methane and other greenhouse gases including nitrous oxide. However, this trend can be reversed through sustainable consumption and production actions such as adopting best management practices in agricultural production and implementation of policy instruments that addresses excessive consumption habits.

In November last year, the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) opened to serve UNFCCC parties. This network represents another building block in a low-carbon future. This facility will make a substantive contribution to accelerating the use of existing and new technologies that can improve the lives and livelihoods of millions of people in developing countries who are dealing with the impacts of climate change on a daily basis.

And the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (CCAC) celebrated its second anniversary this year. It has led the first global effort to treat short-lived climate pollutants as an urgent and collective challenge. It started with 7 partners in 2012 and today it has 80. With its rapid growth, this global effort to reduce emissions of black carbon, methane and many hydrofluorocarbons has already touched numerous sectors of society in the effort to slow the rate of global warming and protect human health, agriculture and the environment.

At the heart of all our activities lies the need for assessments that are credible, transparent, relevant and based on up-to-date knowledge. In its drive to strengthen the science-policy interface, UNEP is embarking on a wide-ranging shift towards working with all countries to help make their own information and scientific knowledge more accessible and up-to-date, through UNEP Live, the UN system-wide knowledge management platform. Our focus over the next year will be on supporting the Small Island Developing States and the Regional Environmental Information Networks. And already we have linked many developing countries to global services on air quality, sea level rise and temperature and ecosystems. UNEP Live will enable the research and policy communities and data providers in

developing countries provide inputs to the work of the panels, not only IPCC, but also IPBES and the International Resource Panel through better access to their own knowledge repositories.

Ladies and gentlemen,

UNEP is proud of what the IPCC stands for and what it has delivered. More than 25 years following the establishment of the Panel, we continue to support the work of this pioneering UN initiative.

As we develop ideas about the future work of the IPCC, UNEP stands ready to support its activities and ensure it has the needed capacity to respond and lead on climate change science and policy guidance.

I wish you all the success and we look forward to the important contributions of the Working Group III to the Fifth Assessment Report.

Thank you.