

## **Remarks by Inger Andersen, UNEP Executive Director**

*Ms Soipan Tuyu, Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Kenya*

*Mr Hoesung Lee, IPCC Chair*

*Distinguished delegates, partners, friends*

Welcome to Nairobi, the home of UNEP, for the 59th session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, or IPCC-59. This session marks the end of Sixth Assessment cycle and the beginning of the seventh.

My thanks to the Government of Kenya for their hospitality and co-facilitation of this election plenary. Thanks also to the UNON and UNEP teams, in particular the Early Warning and Assessment Division, for the support in organizing this session along with the IPCC Secretariat.

Well, here we are. Not just in this hall to elect the new IPCC bureau, which will continue the work of the most influential body on climate science. But in the world that this body warned would one day come to be.

Temperature records that were not meant to be broken have fallen, one after the other, day by day. The baking shroud of the climate emergency is frazzling people, cities and ecosystems. Powerful storms, lent greater ferocity by the changing climate, are destroying homes and livelihoods across the world. Ocean ecosystems are warming, threatening mass species die off. Agricultural systems are facing massive disruption, with worrying impacts for food security in a world already blighted by hunger.

The IPCC sounded the alarm about these coming impacts in every assessment cycle about anthropogenic climate change – including in the most intense and productive sixth cycle. The IPCC has let policymakers and negotiators know in no uncertain terms that the chances of staying below a 1.5-2 degrees global temperature rise are fading fast. That meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement would require greenhouse gas emissions to be halved by 2030 and net zero emission to be reached by 2050. That they have a responsibility to ensure vulnerable nations have the tools, financing and technology to adapt to the impacts that cannot be avoided.

This is not to say that the IPCC is just a doomsayer. Far from it. The IPCC has influenced public discourse and policy. This august body has helped to spark a global movement that is exerting ever-more pressure on those most-responsible for the climate emergency. And the IPCC has a long and illustrious history of highlighting solutions. Solutions that are feasible, affordable and available now.

The IPCC and UNEP have both shown that a rapid shift from fossil fuels to renewables is possible. That restoring ecosystems to store carbon and buffer climate impacts is possible. That investing in nature-based solutions in cities and productive landscapes is possible, and profitable. That action on climate is also action on nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste – the other two prongs of the triple planetary crisis.

My thanks to everyone, during the sixth cycle and down the years, for working ferociously to drive climate action so high on the global agenda. In particular, my thanks go to the IPCC Chair Hoesung Lee, ExCom, Bureau, authors and Secretariat for their achievements during the sixth assessment cycle. You are the true heroes of the climate battle. Giving your time, your insights, your analysis and your science to ensure the world understands and acts. You have our deep gratitude and thanks.

Now, as you elect new bureau members and kick-start the seventh cycle, I ask you keep excelling. Produce your best assessments based on science. Tell policymakers, businesses and investors what they can do. Keep sounding the alarm, but also sound a message of hope. A message that, yes, we are in trouble, but we can still change. That we must change. Starting today.

Thanks you!