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United Nations Economic and Social Council

TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE LIVES

**Opening Statement by H.E. Ms. Mona Juul, President of ECOSOC
Joint Meeting of the Economic and Social Council and the Second
Committee of the General Assembly**

‘Ecosystem Approaches for shifting the world onto a sustainable pathway’

15 October 2019

Mr. Chair of the Second Committee, Cheikh Niang
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you all to this joint meeting of the Economic and Social Council and the Second Committee of the General Assembly in its seventy-fourth session.

The focus of our meeting today will be on how ecosystem approaches grounded in nature-based solutions can shift our world onto a sustainable path.



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DEVELOPMENT GOALS**
17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

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Our world today is characterized by climate change and species loss that are accelerating at an unprecedented and alarming rate, as well as natural disasters that are becoming more frequent and significant in scale.

Ecosystems are collapsing and agricultural land is being lost to desert. Millions of people face food or water shortages and are fleeing their homelands as conflict over natural resources intensifies.

Business as usual will not help us deliver the world we want. We must identify and implement solutions with transformative effects on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Today we will therefore focus on new innovative approaches. We have to utilize new technologies. We also need to rethink and incorporate practices of the past and indigenous knowledge.

Nature-based solutions to climate change, if grounded in sound biodiversity science, can be low cost and low risk whilst also protecting the ecosystems on which we depend.

As nature-based solutions is a relatively new concept, and still in the process of being framed, I warmly welcome hearing from experts in this field to advance our thinking and discussions.



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Distinguished delegates,

To achieve the maximum benefit possible, it is essential to deepen our understanding of nature-based solutions.

Today's meeting provides us with this opportunity. I have no doubt that the discussions to follow will give us not only food for thought, but also concrete ideas and recommendations on how to act fast and effectively to achieve our goals.

I look forward to hearing your views and insights.

Thank you.