



# General Assembly

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**Seventy-eighth session**

Agenda items 13 and 117

**Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields**

**Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit**

## **Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 1 August 2024**

[without reference to a Main Committee ([A/78/L.100](#))]

**78/319. Scope, modalities, format and organization of the high-level plenary meeting on addressing the existential threats posed by sea level rise**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its decision 78/544 of 16 January 2024, in which it decided to hold a high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on addressing the existential threats posed by sea level rise, in New York on 25 September 2024, during the high-level week of the seventy-ninth session of the Assembly,

*Recalling also* the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled “The future we want”,<sup>1</sup>

*Reaffirming* its resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, and its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030,

*Recalling* its resolution [78/153](#) of 19 December 2023 on the protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind,

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution [66/288](#), annex.



*Recalling also its resolution 78/69 of 5 December 2023 on oceans and the law of the sea,*

*Recalling further its resolution 78/155 of 19 December 2023 on the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its contribution to sustainable development,*

*Acknowledging the ongoing work of the open-ended Study Group of the International Law Commission on the topic “Sea-level rise in relation to international law”,<sup>2</sup> and encouraging States to share their views on the various aspects of this topic with that Commission,*

*Taking note with concern of the findings contained in the recent reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, including the synthesis report of the Sixth Assessment Report and the special reports entitled *Global Warming of 1.5°C, Climate Change and Land, and The Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate*, and also noting, among other things, that increasing warming amplifies the exposure of small islands, low-lying coastal areas and deltas to the risks associated with sea level rise and extreme sea level events,*

*Taking note of the recent global and regional reports of the World Meteorological Organization on the state of the climate, that find, among other things, that global mean sea level reached a record high, including the finding that the rate of sea level rise in the past 10 years (2014–2023) has more than doubled since the first decade of the satellite record (1993–2002),*

*Recognizing the importance of improving understanding of the impacts of climate change on oceans and seas, and recalling that, in “The future we want”, States noted that sea level rise and coastal erosion are serious threats for many coastal regions and islands, particularly in developing countries, and in this regard called upon the international community to enhance its efforts to address these challenges, and noting the attention paid to the themes of “The effects of climate change on oceans” and “Sea level rise and its impacts” at the eighteenth and twenty-first meetings, respectively, of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, in 2017 and 2021, which, inter alia, highlighted the urgency of sea level rise for small island developing States and coastal States, including low-lying coastal areas,*

*Recalling the endorsement of the Pacific Islands Forum leaders on 6 August 2021 at the fifty-first Pacific Islands Forum of a declaration on preserving maritime zones in the face of climate change-related sea level rise, and of the Heads of State and Government of the Alliance of Small Island States on 22 September 2021 of the Leaders’ Declaration addressing, inter alia, the relationship between climate change-related sea level rise and Forum and Alliance members’ maritime zones in response to long-standing concerns in the face of climate change-related sea level rise,*

*Recalling also the endorsement of the Pacific Islands Forum leaders on 9 November 2023 at the fifty-second Pacific Islands Forum of a declaration on the continuity of statehood and the protection of persons in the face of climate change-related sea level rise addressing, inter alia, the relationship between climate change-related sea level rise and Forum members’ statehood, sovereignty and protection of persons,*

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<sup>2</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-fourth Session, Supplement No. 10 (A/74/10)*; *ibid.*, *Seventy-sixth Session, Supplement No. 10 (A/76/10)*; *ibid.*, *Seventy-seventh Session, Supplement No. 10 (A/77/10)*; and *ibid.*, *Seventy-eighth Session, Supplement No. 10 (A/78/10)*.

*Taking note* of the ocean and climate change dialogue, first established at the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

*Acknowledging* the important role of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) in supporting the efforts and commitments necessary for delivering the science we need, for the ocean we want,

*Recognizing* the importance of enhanced international cooperation and collective action to address sea level rise, and determined to strengthen the global response and support to developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and coastal communities, to build resilience and adapt to its consequences,

1. *Decides* that the overall theme of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to be held on 25 September 2024 will be “Addressing the threats posed by sea level rise”;

2. *Also decides* that the high-level meeting will focus on building common understanding, mobilizing political leadership and promoting multisectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration and international cooperation towards the objective of addressing the threats posed by sea level rise;

3. *Further decides* that the organizational arrangements for the high-level meeting should be as follows;

(a) The high-level meeting will comprise an opening segment, a plenary segment, four multi-stakeholder thematic panel discussions and a brief closing segment;

(b) The opening segment, to be held from 10 to 10.20 a.m., will feature statements by the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session, the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session and a representative of a Member State affected by the adverse effects of sea level rise;

(c) The plenary segment, to be held from 10.20 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 to 5.40 p.m., will comprise statements by Member States and observers of the General Assembly and members of the United Nations specialized agencies; a list of speakers will be established in accordance with the rules of procedure and established practices of the Assembly and the time limits for these statements will be three minutes for individual delegations and five minutes for statements made on behalf of a group of States;

(d) The closing segment, to be held from 5.40 to 6 p.m., will comprise summaries of the multi-stakeholder thematic panel discussions presented by the Co-Chairs of the panels and concluding remarks by the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session;

4. *Decides* that the organizational arrangements for the four multi-stakeholder thematic panel discussions will be as follows:

(a) Two multi-stakeholder panels will be held consecutively from 10.30 to 11.45 a.m. and from 11.45 a.m. to 1 p.m. and two multi-stakeholder panels will be held consecutively from 3 to 4.15 p.m. and from 4.15 to 5.30 p.m., in parallel with the plenary meeting;

(b) Each of the four multi-stakeholder panel discussions will be co-chaired by two representatives, one from a developing country and one from a developed country, to be appointed by the President of the General Assembly from among the

representatives attending the high-level meeting, in consultation with Member States, taking into account gender balance and geographical representation;

(c) The discussions in and summaries of the Co-Chairs of the four multi-stakeholder panels will be without prejudice to existing processes and the panels will be entitled:

- (i) “Knowledge, data and science to inform sea level rise risk assessments and decision-making”;
- (ii) “Adaptation, finance and resilience in relation to sea level rise”;
- (iii) “Livelihoods, socioeconomic challenges and culture and heritage in relation to sea level rise”;
- (iv) “Sea level rise and its legal dimensions”;

(d) The President of the General Assembly should consider inviting the heads or senior representatives of Member States, parliamentarians or local governments of Member States, relevant United Nations entities, development partners, civil society, regional and subregional organizations, non-governmental organizations, representatives of Indigenous Peoples, representatives of local communities, the private sector, philanthropic organizations, academia, the science community, youth-led organizations and community organizations to serve as speakers in the panel discussions, taking into account their relevant expertise, as well as gender balance, level of development and geographical representation;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare a concise summary of the high-level meeting;

6. *Encourages* all Member States and observers of the General Assembly and members of the United Nations specialized agencies to be represented at the level of Head of State or Government or at the highest possible level;

7. *Invites* the United Nations system, including funds, programmes, specialized agencies and regional commissions, to participate in the high-level meeting and to support the meeting, including its preparations, particularly with regard to sharing evidence and good practices, challenges and lessons learned, and to demonstrate ambition to accelerate action on the overall theme of the meeting;

8. *Invites* representatives of non-governmental organizations that are in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to participate in the high-level meeting in accordance with relevant rules and procedures of the General Assembly;

9. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly to draw up a list of representatives of other relevant non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions and the private sector who may participate in the high-level meeting, including its panel discussions, taking into account the principles of transparency and equitable geographical representation, with due regard for gender parity, to submit the proposed list to Member States for their consideration on a non-objection basis<sup>3</sup> and to bring the list to the attention of the Assembly for a final decision by the Assembly on participation in the high-level meeting;

10. *Invites* representatives mentioned in paragraphs 6, 7, 8 and 9 above to participate in the multi-stakeholder thematic panel discussions;

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<sup>3</sup> The list will include proposed as well as final names. The general basis of any objections, if requested by one or more States Members of the United Nations or States members of the specialized agencies, will be made known to the Office of the President of the General Assembly and the requester.

11. *Encourages* all Member States and observers of the General Assembly and members of the United Nations specialized agencies to facilitate the participation of youth in the high-level meeting;
12. *Encourages* all representatives invited in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 above to facilitate the participation of youth, of Indigenous Peoples and of local communities in the high-level meeting;
13. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General to provide adequate support to the organization and preparation of the high-level meeting;
14. *Recalls* rule 52 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, reaffirms multilingualism as a core and fundamental value of the Organization, re-emphasizes the paramount importance of the equality of the six official languages of the United Nations, and requests the Secretary-General to provide interpretation into the six official languages of the United Nations for the high-level meeting;
15. *Encourages* States and international donors, as well as the private sector, financial institutions, foundations and other donors, to support the participation of representatives of developing countries in the high-level meeting;
16. *Decides* that the proceedings of the high-level meeting will be webcast, and encourages the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General to give the highest visibility to the high-level meeting, including its preparations, through all relevant media platforms and information and communications technologies.

*102nd plenary meeting  
1 August 2024*