FORUM: Environmental Sub-Commission 2
QUESTION OF: Measures to reduce the danger of rising water levels on cities
SUBMITTED BY: Romania
CO-SUBMITTERS: Nicaragua, Venezuela, Egypt, Pakistan, Ghana, Chile, Turkey, Uganda, Suriname, South Sudan, Ecuador, North Korea, Montenegro, Moldova, Lithuania, Brunei Darussalam, Benin, Ukraine, Spain, Australia

THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION,

Disturbed by the global nature of rising sea levels,

Expecting that by 2050, over 570 cities globally will face a rise in sea level of over 45 centimeters, putting at least 800 million people at risk of significant flooding and extreme storm surges,

Noting with concern the direct relationship between climate change, warming oceans, shrinking ice caps, and rising sea levels,

Taking into consideration t he proximity of many major cities and urban areas to coastal regions prone to dangerous floods and the vast hectares of fertile and arable land at risk of soil erosion,

Having considered the alarming economic implications of mass relocation and adjustment of major populations to accommodate for the loss of coastal land, including the economic penalty of infrastructure loss and poor coastal planning,

Fully alarmed by the inadequacy of sea defenses in the majority of coastal cities,

Affirming the purposeful aims of Resolution 6/2018, including the duty of the state to protect affected persons, the duty to protect the human rights of affected persons, and the duty to take positive action,

Affirming also the detailed research on the issue led by the Committee on International Law and Sea Level Rise (CILSLR) in agreement with the UN Environment Programme,

Having examined treaties and agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, which seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere, and taking into account how many countries disregard the policies established by these treaties and continue to emit detrimental amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere,

Recognising that our oceans are threatened by the effects of climate change, such as salinisation, saltwater intrusion into freshwater reserves, ocean acidification, and degradation of ecosystems, resulting in only 13% of the world's ecosystems remaining intact,

Concerned about the state of our oceans in the future, conscious of the vitalness of phytoplankton and mangrove swamps, producing between 50 and 85% of the world's oxygen and absorbing carbon dioxide as well as protecting coastlines from floods and storms,

Highlighting the danger that the rise of sea levels represent for economic growth through exploitation of national marine resources, as countries are allowed 200 nautical meters of marine territory,

Bearing in mind the many economic difficulties that may arise during the process of unification of the international community in order to deal with these urgent matters,

1. Encourages the CILSLR to build off of the 2018 Sydney Conference Sea Level Rise Report, including annual research reports to:
    a) Outline global and regional ocean level trends

b) Project future trends
c) Identify which metropolitan centers and urban areas are at the most risk of rising tides
d) Identify agrarian communities, states, and regions at risk of dramatic changes in food production due to the risk of sea level rise;

2. Requests the creation of a second committee, The Sea Level Rise Confrontation and Reaction Committee (SLRCRC), to:
    a) Use CILSLR annual reports to inform future decisions
    b) Take a more active stance than the CILSLR's informational and analytical aims, inspiring readiness and feasible adaptation programs for nations at the most risk of destructive sea level rise
    c) Educate the global community concerning rapid sea level rise on scenarios including but not limited to, managing floods at home, at school, in public and working environments
    d) Advise the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) regarding the status of internally displaced persons due to destructive sea level rise;

3. Further requests member nations to use sustainable, natural methods to protect cities from the inexorable increase in water level predicted by scientists using the following possible sustainable systems:
    a) The use of CILSLR data to inform the effective coastal planning of residential areas, infrastructure, and port cities
    b) Construction of sea defenses at coastal cities and major ports in order to protect civilians and infrastructure from rising tides by:
        i. Installing gravity sea walls in heavily populated regions where other methods would prove ineffective
        ii. Installing adequate draining and plumbing systems to prevent floods and storm surges
        iii. Supporting initiatives such as the Sponge City Initiative and the Australian Water Sensitive Urban Design Program
        iv. Rehabilitation and development of coral reefs in accordance with the International Coral Reef Initiative and UN Environment Commission, to develop sustainable coral reefs constructed along feasible coastal regions
        v. Using the UNESCO World Heritage Fund, install non invasive sea defences on coastal heriage sites or restore them after damage
    c) The reduction of energy usage and fossil fuels as outlined in the Paris Accords to minimize the greenhouse effect of carbon dioxide;

4. Suggests that member states abide by the 2015 Paris Agreement and create additional laws and regulations with the aim of reducing the amount of fossil fuels being emitted into the atmosphere in order to,
    a) Reduce the melting of ice caps and glacier calving
    b) Protect seasonal freeze and thaw patterns in polar regions
    c) Combat the effects of thermal expansion on a global scale;

5. Recommends member states to allocate resources and concentrate UN financial aid and grants to vulnerable agricultural regions to combat the devastating economic implications of drastic sea level rise through:
    a) The protection of inland arable land at or below sea level with mechanisms aforementioned in clause three to prevent food shortage
    b) The development and adoption of strategies to reverse the effect of salinisation on fertile land
    c) The thorough planning for future arable regions with transitionary steps to convert possible land to farmland in order to replace the loss of fertile territory;

6. Calls for the immediate creation of a funding system operated by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, where cities will be granted aid to construct protective solutions under the following guidelines;
    a) Coastal cities may apply for aid through the UNEP if they partially or completely lack the necessary funding
    b) Funding will be granted through loans to be repaid over the span of 10 years with an interest rate decided by the UNEP, and in certain cases through subsidies
    c) The UNEP must approve and review the applications of funding, to ensure the establishment of sea level defense programmes
    d) Additional funding may be voluntarily provided by HICs (High Income Countries) consistent with Article 9, Clause 1 of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement under the guidance of the World Bank.