

**Statement on behalf of United Religions Initiative
on behalf of the NGO Committee on Financing for Development at
Panel VI: Building the economy of the future that is climate-resilient and aligned with the
SDGs
Martha Gallahue, Representative to the United Nations**

My name is Martha Gallahue, representing United Religions Initiative, a movement of over one million members located in 108 countries. I serve at the UN on the NGO Committee Finance for Development, especially with the Climate Finance Working Group.

We agree with an earlier speaker who stated not all Climate Finance includes nature-based solutions and we urge scaling up nature-based solutions in hopes of securing well-being of both nature and people.

In preparations for this FfD Forum, our committee conducted a survey in over 8 countries which included over 1000 respondents from the field. One of the findings was that Climate Finance Funds are being diverted as a result of the pandemic. We see this as reducing funding for the better program into funding for the urgent one.

We do not have to “rob Peter in order to pay Paul”. Therefore, we make two recommendations.

We call upon countries to develop policy based in the inherent intersectionality between government, ecosystems and people. Such an approach will reduce governmental competition within its own departments and maximize funding and promote cost effectiveness.

The second recommendation is to improve coordination between local actors and policy makers as the government of Jamaica is doing with its fisher folk. Such coordination will result in better allocation of funds that will reduce poverty and create jobs; it will promote relevant education programs on all levels including children, and shift minds from exploiting the environment into integrating human well-being with Mother Nature’s well-being.

I thank you for this time allotted to us and the group with whom I work.