**

***Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation***

***Inter-ministerial Committee for Human Rights***

***Contribution following the request of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee***

***Questionnaire on the impact of new technologies for climate protection on the enjoyment of human rights***

***April 2022***

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Following the request from the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, Italian authorities are pleased to provide the following contribution.

**Core questions (for all stakeholders)**

1. Which new technologies for climate protection (NTCP) are of particular importance when it comes to impact on human rights? List three most relevant and explain your choice.
2. What kind of NTCP may contribute to human rights promotion and protection? Please, explain how.
3. What are the key human rights challenges and risks arising from NTCP and from which in particular? Do NTCP create unique and unprecedented challenges or risks, or are there earlier precedents that help us understand the issue area?
4. What specific human rights may be affected by the use of NTCP? Please, explain how. Who are the rights-holders that potentially would be the most affected by the use of NTCP? Are they also the most affected by climate change? How could they and the society at large be engaged in the decision-making process?
5. Is the existing international and your national human rights framework adequate to safeguarding human rights of those affected by the use of NTCP? Why or why not? If not, what principles may be identified in order to address the gaps? List them according to priority.
6. Given that NTCP may present potential risks for the enjoyment of human rights, to what extent do human rights legal obligations require the States to pursue other climate protection policies presenting less risks of harm, including mitigation and adaptation measures?
7. As opposed to focusing on selected few technologies, do you think a holistic and inclusive approach will help reduce any gaps in the existing system for addressing human rights challenges from NTCP?
8. What should be the responsibilities of key stakeholders (UN agencies, states, NHRIs, civil society, technical community and academia, private sector) in mitigating the risks of NTCP to human rights and/or fostering its protection?

All human rights are concerned with reference to the introduction and use of new technologies for climate protection.

The national legislative and political framework takes into account the contribution for an improved promotion and protection of human rights, with special reference to those ones more interrelated with the environment and climate change challenges from both public and private actors. Along these terms, different categories of rights-holders at the individual and collective level need to be considered to this scope as well as properly involved in decision-making processes affecting them, especially at the local level.

This complex commitment has been provided in the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights 2021-2026, formally approved on December 10th 2021.

In relation to its sections about environmental and climate issues, it’s reported that Italy, with regard to the Initiative undertaken in December 2019 by the new EU Commission for a Green Deal that aims by 2050 to a climate-neutral Europe, has established a fund for public investment (€ 4.24 billion for years from 2020 to 2023). It is intended to support innovative investment projects and programmes with a high level of environmental sustainability, which will be used to support investments in relation to circular economy, as well as in de-carbonisation, urban regeneration, sustainable tourism, adaptation and mitigation of risks from climate change.

In this perspective, the redefinition of the 'Industry 4.0 Plan' is also fundamental, with greater attention to environmental sustainability for encouraging green investments by companies in circular economy.

In the same perspective, according to an holistic and comprehensive approach, fiscal measures have been foreseen, including incentives for packaging reuse and recycling , purchase of products, through efficiency of production processes and greater awareness, responsibility and collaboration by consumers both in purchase, use and conservation of products.

**Specific questions for States**

1. In your country, what are the main human rights challenges arising from the implementation of climate change national plans and policies? List and describe them briefly.
2. Is your country involved in or supports in any way the development, implementation or use of NTCP?
3. What measures, if any, (legislative, administrative, institutional, or other) have been put in place to regulate the use of NTCP? Have the human rights challenges arising from such activity been taken into account in their adoption?
4. In your country, which government agency has the initiative in the decision-making related to NTCP policies? If so, to what extent does the agency take the human rights issues into account in its agenda and decisions?

As for the above reported questions, and also in relation with replies to general questions, the key Administration in charge over this topic is the Italian Ministry for Ecological Transition, whose key policies are defined according to an whole-of approach dimension, i.e. taking into consideration economic, social and environmental criteria and parameters.

Two key initiatives have been concluded in 2021: the triennial review process of the SNSvS and the compilation of the National Action Plan on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD). Both these initiatives entail large participation of civil society, scientific institutions and local actors. In this context, collaboration agreements have been signed with Regions, the Autonomous Province of Trento and 14 metropolitan cities for the definition and implementation of Regional and Provincial Strategies and Metropolitan Agendas for Sustainable Development. These are conceived as tools for coordinating the implementation of the SDSvS and the 2030 Agenda at the local level.

As far as technical actions, the following two ones are worth of mentioning.

Since 2018 the regulation for the promotion of products with high environmental qualification certified by the "Made Green in Italy" (MGI) logo is in force: it is aimed at promoting sustainable models of production and consumption, according to the EU PEF (Product Environmental Footprint) methodology for the determination of environmental footprint of products as defined in EU Commission Recommendation 2013/179/EU. The purpose of the MGI scheme is to direct the initiatives of the Italian production system towards use of environmental footprint as a lever for the improvement and enhancement of Made in Italy products with good environmental performance (guaranteed by a scientifically reliable system). It aims to facilitate the identification of products by consumers so as to encourage more conscious choices.

Another relevant policy is the Environmental Footprint Assessment Programme, launched by the Ministry for Ecological Transition in 2010 to measure and improve environmental performance of private and public sectors. It provides for products (goods and services) and organizational certification, and in its experimental phase, among environmental indicators, it has favoured the analysis of the carbon footprint. Indeed it is an environmental driver, closely linked to climate change, and has an added value for the competitiveness of Italian businesses on international markets.

Of course an important accelerating factor for the strengthening and implementation of domestic measures related to the issue under reference is the new National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), which gives the ecological transition a driving role in the relaunch of the country's system. It assigns an important share of resources also for investments in sustainable mobility, renewable sources and energy efficiency, with a proper reference in mission n. 2 of the PNRR - "Green revolution and ecological transition".