



# General Assembly

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Sustainable development

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 13 August 2024

[without reference to a Main Committee ([A/78/L.99](#))]

### 78/321. Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences, 2025–2034

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution [77/158](#) of 14 December 2022, in which it decided to declare 2025 the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation and to proclaim 21 March of each year the World Day for Glaciers, to be observed starting in 2025,

*Recalling also* its resolution [77/326](#) of 25 August 2023 on the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development, 2024–2033,

*Recalling further* its resolution [77/172](#) of 14 December 2022 on sustainable mountain development, in which it proclaimed the period 2023–2027 as Five Years of Action for the Development of Mountain Regions,

*Recalling* its resolution [72/73](#) of 5 December 2017, in which it proclaimed the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development,

*Recognizing* that the need for a worldwide inventory of existing perennial ice and snow masses was first considered during the International Hydrological Decade, declared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization for the period 1965–1974,

*Noting* that glaciers and ice sheets are a critical component of the hydrological cycle and that the current accelerated melting and retreat of glaciers and melting of ice sheets have severe impacts on the climate, global sea level, the environment, the maintenance of human well-being and health and sustainable development,

*Recognizing* the important role of the cryosphere, including glaciers, snow, ice and permafrost, in maintaining ecosystems that provide essential services, which are critical foundations for sustainable development and human well-being, especially for the most vulnerable populations,



*Recognizing also* the importance of initiatives related to the Earth's cryosphere for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals<sup>1</sup> and for the implementation of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–2028,

*Noting with concern* the findings contained in the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and its special reports entitled *Global Warming of 1.5°C* and *The Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate*,

*Noting with concern also* the findings of the 2022 report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Union for Conservation of Nature entitled *World Heritage Glaciers: Sentinels of Climate Change* regarding the accelerated melting of glaciers in world heritage sites, with glaciers in a third of those sites projected to disappear by 2050,

*Noting with concern further* the findings of the report of the World Meteorological Organization entitled *State of the Global Climate 2023* regarding the profound changes seen in the cryosphere, illustrating the global scale of climate change,

*Recalling* that many United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization world heritage sites, biosphere reserves and global geoparks include glaciers, and being aware of the need to assess how these sites designated by the Organization, including local communities, face the loss of glaciers and biodiversity, and how scientific data and local knowledge can contribute to a better understanding of climate change impact on mountain glaciers and ecosystems,

*Acknowledging* the efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Meteorological Organization in facilitating the implementation of the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation and coordinating relevant activities,

*Taking note* of the invitation, expressed in its resolution [77/158](#), to Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, major groups, other relevant stakeholders and donors to voluntarily contribute to the trust fund in support of activities for glaciers' preservation to be coordinated by the Secretary-General, in partnership with relevant agencies of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Meteorological Organization, to support countries in addressing issues related to accelerated melting of glaciers and its consequences,

*Welcoming* the initiative of Tajikistan to convene an international conference dedicated to glaciers' preservation in Tajikistan in 2025 and to assume the costs of the conference, and acknowledging its contribution towards the advancement of the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences,

*Looking forward* to the 2026 United Nations Water Conference to Accelerate the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, to be co-hosted by Senegal and the United Arab Emirates, and the 2028 United Nations Conference on the Final Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–2028, to be hosted by Tajikistan in Dushanbe,

*Recognizing* that the observance of the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences by the international community would contribute significantly to raising awareness on these issues,

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<sup>1</sup> See resolution [70/1](#).

1. *Decides* to proclaim the period from 2025 to 2034 as the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences, within existing structures, available resources and voluntary contributions, to address the challenges associated with melting glaciers and changes to the cryosphere by advancing related scientific research and monitoring, under the overarching goal of advancing global scientific cooperation and sustainable development efforts as articulated in the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development, 2024–2033;

2. *Invites* all States Members of the United Nations, all relevant organizations of the United Nations system, other global, regional and subregional organizations and Indigenous Peoples, as well as other relevant stakeholders, including academia, civil society organizations, the private sector and individuals, to observe the Decade of Action as appropriate, at all levels, by promoting activities aimed at raising awareness of the Decade and the importance of glaciers, snow and ice in the climate system and the hydrological cycle, and the economic, social and environmental impacts of the impending changes in the Earth's cryosphere, and to share best practices and knowledge in this regard, including on building resilience to related risks;

3. *Invites* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to lead the implementation of the Decade of Action, in collaboration with other relevant organizations of the United Nations system as well as other stakeholders, including those involved in the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation, 2025, identifying and developing activities and programmes within their mandates and using voluntary contributions.

*103rd plenary meeting  
13 August 2024*