**Responses of the Russian Federation to the questionnaire**

**“Human Rights, Transformative Actions and the UN Sustainable Development Goals”**

**1. What transformative actions would be required, given the national context of your State, to achieve SDGs directly linked to environmental sustainability (SDGs 2, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)? Transformative actions can be understood as “bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path”.**

Most of the Sustainable Developments Goals (SDGs) and targets had already been integrated, in a varying degree, in the basic strategic and policy documents of the Russian Federation. In recent years our country has demonstrated positive results in each SDG, most successful of them being SDG 1 “No poverty”, SDG 4 “Quality education”, SDG 8 “Decent work and economic growth”. However, the achievement of some targets still requires activization of joint efforts of the government, private sector and society.

**2. What steps has your State taken to accelerate progress towards fulfilling the eight SDGs that have the most direct environmental linkages (SDGs 2, 6, 7, 11,12, 13,14,15)?**

SDG 2. A special Governmental Decree has been adopted to promote food security, aimed at providing the population with safe, quality and affordable agricultural products, as well as raw materials and food in volumes, ensuring balanced consumption rates. Russia’s capacity development in respect of achieving SDG 2 is promoted by such factors as the development of rural infrastructure, elimination of trade restrictions and implementation of comprehensive sectoral strategic programmes.

SDG 6. Fort the year 2018 90.3% of households had centralized water supply (+3.6% against 2014), about 77.4% had access to centralized or individual sewerage system (+4.4% against 2014). In particular, the achievement of SDG 6 is one of the goals of «Environment» National Project aimed at increasing the share of population supplied with quality drinking water from centralized water supply systems by 2024 to 90.8% and the share of the relevant urban population – to 99%.

SDG 7. To ensure universal access to sustainable and modern energy sources, Russia has been implementing the package of national policy measures, including the Energy Security Doctrine of the Russian Federation and the State Programme “Energy Development”. The energy saving and energy efficiency management system continues to be improved through inclusion of relevant targets in industry strategic planning documents at all levels.

SDG 11. Russia has been making regular efforts to facilitate the improvement of quality of life and housing conditions. E.g. in 2014-2018 the average rates of urban pollution have decreased, with the solid waste emission from stationary sources in 2015-2018 decreasing by 16.7%, and average annual concentration of suspended solids increasing by 8.3%). In 2018-2024, the Russian Federation is set to implement “Housing and Urban Environment” National Project, which aims, inter alia: to reduce average mortgage rate to 7.9% and increase the share of people-friendly cities to 60%. National Project is also aimed at housing construction, creating a mechanism of people’s direct participation in the organization of comfortable urban environment and steady reduction of uninhabitable housing. Environmental improvements in Russian cities and populated localities are one of the targets of the “Environment” National Project.

SDG 12. In 2015-2018, the amount of acutely hazardous waste generated in Russia was reduced by 4 times – from 80,000 to 20,000 tons. 82% of Russian cities with more than 100,000 population have separate waste sorting facilities in place; completely separate waste collection has been introduced in 26 Russian cities, the two-container (for mixed wasted and for plastic, paper, glass, etc.) separate waste sorting system is used in 45 cities. As a result, in 2019 18,5% of population had access to separate waste sorting station, or about 2.5 times more than in 2018.

SDG 13. In accordance with the Paris Agreement Russia has endorsed the new Strategy of Social and Economic Development with a low level of greenhouse gas emissions until 2050. Russia has announced its intentions to achieve carbon neutrality till 2060. Our low-carbon energy is actively developing (wind, solar, hydro and nuclear power), there are plans on launching large-scale project on the absorption capacity of forests.

In 2018 Russia became a country issuing green bonds, which promoted the strengthening of financial base for the implementation of projects in public utilites, energy, transportation and real estate sectors.

SDG 14. In 2015-2018, the area of specially protected natural areas of federal significance within Russia increased by 73%. In 2018 fish biodiversity in coastal marine waters has also considerably increased: from 400 species in 2015 to 1,500 species.

The Strategy for the Development of Marine Activities of the Russian Federation 2030 includes, inter alia, the development and preservation of the World Ocean resources, promotion of ecological safety of marine environment and restoration of marine ecosystems, environmental monitoring and comprehensive measures to prevent and mitigate the consequences of the marine pollution.

SDG 15. In 2015-2018 the area of federal, regional and local SPNA (excluding offshore zones) increased by 11% to 218.2 min hectares. In 2019, the balance between reforestation zones and logged-off/wasted forest areas has improved by 30% compared to 2015 data and reached 80.6%.

Forest preservation is one of the targets of the State Programme “Development of Forestry”, as well as of Strategy for Development of the Forest Sector of the Russian Federation 2030. The promotion of Russia’s environmental safety is one of the goals of “Environmental” National Project (designed until 2024), which, inter alia, provides for the restoration of 23,500 hectares of water source, expansion of specially protected natural reservations area by 5 mln hectares and the achievement of 100% ratio of reforestation.

Russia has been actively participating in the elaboration of the Glasgow Leaders’ Declaration on Forests and Land Use adopted at UN Climate Change Conference in November 2021.

SDG 16 targets are addressed by strategic documents of respective state agencies. Thus, one of the targets of Development Strategy of the Accounts

Chamber of the Russian Federation 2018-2024 is the “strengthening of the culture of openness and transparency of state decision-making, and the development of accountability of government authorities and personal responsibility of executive managers of agencies and organizations before society for the achievement of stated goals and objectives”. SDG 16 targets achievement will also be supported by the activities provided for my national projects, such as “Digital Economy” National Project.

**3. What specific actions is your State taking to fulfill the commitments to “leave no one behind” and to prioritize actions “to reach the furthest behind first” in terms of achieving SDGs 2, 6, 7,10,12,13,14,15?**

One of the key objectives is to mitigate and eliminate gaps in the level of socio-economic development, quality of the urban environment, and, to a lesser extent, the level of human capital development in Russian cities. Among the tasks the following are noteworthy: the elimination of infrastructure gap and modernization of urban infrastructure, improvement of its adaptation to individual social and age groups of citizens, introduction of digital services in the urban infrastructure of small- and medium-sized cities, involvement of the population in solving common city problems.

The above-mentioned tasks are supported, among others, by the Strategy of Spatial Development of the Russian Federation 2025 and “Housing and Urban Environment” National Project. At the same time, separate projects aimed at solving these tasks (for example, projects to involve population in urban management) are also being implemented in cities.

The elimination of gaps in the distribution of income among the Russian population in regional terms remains one of Russia’s key tasks in the area of social and economic equality. Differences in household income between regions can reach up to 33.3 times. Strategy of Spatial Development of the Russian Federation 2025, approved in February 2019, is designated to solve this issue. According to the Strategy, the goal of the spatial development of the Russian Federation is to ensure sustainable and balanced spatial development of the Russian Federation, aimed at reducing interregional differences in living standards and quality of life.

**4. Are there any good practices that you would like to highlight?**

An example of successful multilateral cooperation in the field of statistical capacity development for SDG monitoring is the implementation of a joint programme of Russia and the World Bank to support statistical capacity building in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, which is aimed at improving expertise, systems of official statistics, data processing and distribution, and the creation of a system of professional training and professional development.

The Russian Federation is also actively cooperating with the “UN Volunteers” programme. The cooperation resulted in a project of sending Russian expert volunteers to developing countries to assist national development and improve living standards. The joint project with UN Volunteers started in 2018, when 19 Russian citizens went to 16 countries of the CIS, Asia, Africa and the Middle East as UN Volunteers. In November 2019, the Government of the Russian Federation allocated USD 3 mln for prolonging the project for another three years.

The Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation is actively involved in the development of international cooperation to facilitate the implementation of the SDGs. As the Chair of the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) for the period from 2019 to 2021, the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation is deeply engaged in defining the main directions of the activities of INTOSAI, including the development of approaches to the audit of SDG.

**5. How much budget has your State invested, since 2015, on actions to fulfill the eight SDGs that have the most direct environmental linkages?**

Russia is an active and responsible member of the international donor community. The Concept of Russian Federation’s State Policy in the Area of International Development Assistance, adopted in 2014, defines the main priorities and forms of Russia’s assistance to partner countries.

Most of SDGs and targets of 2030 Agenda have been integrated, in a varying degree, in the basic strategic and policy documents of the Russian Federation as well as other documents as doctrines, concepts, state programmes. The integration of measures aimed at sustainable development in the strategic and policy documents of the Russian Federation is followed by the allocation of the according budget resources.

Currently Russia has 12 National Projects and the Comprehensive Plan for the Modernization and Expansion of Main Infrastructure, which are implemented to achieve the national development goals and strategic objectives of the Russian Federation up to 2024 and actually aimed at SDG achievement. National Projects were launched in such areas as demography, healthcare, education, housing and urban environment, environment, safe and quality roads, workforce productivity and employment support, science, digital economy, culture, small- and medium-sized enterprise and support for individual entrepreneurial initiative, international cooperation and export. National Projects and the Comprehensive Plan for the Modernization and Expansion of main Infrastructure cover, directly or indirectly, 107 of 169 SDG targets.

Russia is an active and responsible member of the international donor community. The Concept of Russian Federation’s State Policy in the Area of International Development Assistance, adopted in 2014, defines the main priorities and forms of Russia's assistance to partner countries. Since 2014, assistance to partner countries has amounted to more than USD 5.5 bln.

Russia remains an important source of support for neighboring historically close CIS countries, which receive financial and technological support for infrastructure projects as well as advice on a wide range of issues.

**6. What are the main barriers to progress towards achieving the relevant SDGs?**

One of the tasks within the framework of the implementation of SDG 17 is to maintain and develop international cooperation for sustainable development under the current unilateral restrictions imposed by the USA and EU countries. Their affect Russia’s achievement of SDG 17 by limiting access of Russian companies to foreign markets.

**7. How can steps taken by your State to implement the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment (recognized in A/HRC/RES/48/13) serve as a catalyst for making more rapid progress towards SDGs 2, 6, 7, 11, 12,13,14,15?**

The issues of adaptation to climate change and vulnerability reduction are highly relevant for the Russian Federation, as the country deeply feels the consequences of that process. Development and implementation of prompt and long-term appropriate measures are one of the main tasks of the Russian Federation’s state climate policy.

**8. How could increasing gender equality contribute to more rapid progress towards SDGs 2, 6, 7,11,12,13,14,15?**

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Constitution of the Russian Federation: “Man and woman shall have equal rights and liberties and equal opportunities for their pursuit” (Article 19). All forms of gender-based discrimination are regarded as the violation of fundamental human rights and freedoms, which are the supreme value. The Labor Code of the Russian Federation guarantees the equality of the labor rights and opportunities, and no constraint of labor rights and freedoms (Article 3). The employer shall ensure equal payment for labor of equal value (Article 22 of the Labor Code). Any discrimination in establishing wage conditions is prohibited (Article 132). Every employee’s wages depend on his or her qualification, complexity of work performed, and the amount and quality of labor input. Working women are entitled to special state protection. The specificity of regulation of women's labor in connection with pregnancy and motherhood generally relates to such labor law institutions as employment agreement, working time, rest time and work safety.

In March 2017 National Action Strategy for Women 2017-2022 was approved. The Strategy determined the principal directions of the state policy in respect of women and is aimed at ensuring full and equal participation of women in all social life areas. The plan of action to implement the Strategy in 2019-2022 approved in December 2019 provides for: creation of conditions for preservation of health of women of all ages; improvement of women’s economic position and their well-being; prevention of women’s social ill-being and violence against women; broader women’s participation in social and political life improvement of government statistics related to women's social position.

Despite all the progress on the matter, there is still room for effective work on increasing gender equality, which will contribute to the achievement of SDGs.

**9. How can businesses contribute to transformative actions and accelerating progress to achieve SDGs 2, 6, 7,11, 12,13,14,15?**

Russia’s business community is taking an active part in various SDG initiatives. Business projects that promote all sustainable development components – economic, social, and environmental – are implemented either directly by commercial organizations or by business unions and associations.

Active Russian companies have already efficiently integrated SDGs in their strategies. Russian business’ awareness of the importance of sustainable development was underlined by 2019 PwC survey, according to which 66 % of respondents – board members of Russian companies – believe that the corporate policies should be brought into line with SDGs.

The UN Global Compact Russia (UNGC) unites more than 50 Russian companies and institutions operating almost in all Russian regions, including major global actors, such as Rosneft Oil.

The Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (RSPP) developed the toolkit for practical application of responsible business conduct principles, improvement of business transparency, introduction of business culture best practices (including provision of jobs, decent working conditions, improved performance, etc.).

The Social Charter of the Russian Business, the national document adopted by the business community, contains a code of responsible business practice principles based on the UN Global Compact.