

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES

140<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017

### SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

#### World Environment Day

##### Highlights:

- Over 1,800 registered events took place around the world. United Nations Environment Programme offices across the world ran dozens of events with respective Heads of State, Ministers, and celebrities.
- The toolkits for Governments and Cities, Schools and Universities, Citizens and Organizations were downloaded 25,000 times.
- Ten countries around the world opened their national parks for free.
- In the host country, Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Justin Trudeau and Environment Minister H.E. Catherine McKenna joined the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to connect with nature by paddling kayaks close to Niagara Falls.
- More than 70 iconic landmarks and buildings around the world were lit green on World Environment Day.
- 62,000 people shared the place that mattered to them using #WorldEnvironmentDay and #WithNature hashtags in UN languages. #WorldEnvironmentDay was a globally trending topic on social media on 5 June in 35 countries and in hundreds of cities.

#### The United Nations Oceans Conference, 5-9 June 2017, New York, USA

- The [UN Oceans Conference](#) addressed the prevailing issue of combatting marine litter and the importance of regional governance of the seas were seen as top priority issues not only by the Member States but also by representatives of the private sector.
- The United Nations Environment Programme, together with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development launched a new voluntary commitment to provide joint policy advice and technical support to countries and to facilitate global dialogue and concerted action on the [prohibition of harmful fisheries subsidies](#). It will support countries to better position themselves within relevant trade negotiations and to undertake internal policy and regulatory reform aligned with the targets of [Sustainable Development Goal 14](#).

#### Clean Seas Campaign

- The [Clean Seas Campaign](#) featured prominently at the [United Nations Ocean Conference](#), where a virtual reality experience dome was unveiled on 6 June by Erik Solheim at the UN Visitors' Plaza, featuring a film created by the Lonely Planet Foundation, "[Cry Out: The Lonely Whale Experience.](#)"
- The campaign sealed a partnership with the [Volvo Ocean Race](#) and [11<sup>th</sup> Hour Racing](#) to raise awareness about marine plastic litter among the sailing community and beyond.
- In August, Canada and Madagascar joined the CleanSeas campaign, bringing the total number to 28 countries having signed up and committed to specific actions to tackle marine litter.
- The United Nations Environment Programme has provided support to the Government of Kenya and the private sector on the implementation of the ban on single-use of plastic bags as part of this campaign.

#### The G20 Conference on Marine Litter, 30 May-1 June 2017, Bremen, Germany

The Conference took place under the auspices of the German presidency. In attendance were high level participants from G20 countries which are responsible for approximately 80% of the world's gross product and about three quarters of global trade. The meeting resulted in the adoption of an [action plan](#) on Marine Litter.

#### Minamata Convention on Mercury entered into force

- The [Minamata Convention on Mercury](#) entered into force on 16 August 2017 and the first meeting of the [Conference of Parties](#) took place in September 2017. Ratification and implementation activities have continued to be supported through the Interim Secretariat of the Convention and the Global Mercury Partnership in more than a hundred countries.
- The Executive Director visiting Minamata, Japan on 1 July 2017 to mark this historic moment, and undertook various related field visits hosted by the Ministry of Environment, Japan.

#### Inter-Agency and Public-Private cooperation to accelerate Sustainable Development Goals, High Level Political Forum, New York, USA

The [Partnership for Action on Green Economy](#) hosted a side-event at the High-Level Political Forum in July, entitled "[Recalibrating Market Forces: How Greener and More Inclusive Economies and Finance are Delivering on](#)

<p><b><u>New United Nations Environment Programme Goodwill Ambassador</u></b> Actor, filmmaker and social good activist Adrian Grenier accepted his appointment as Goodwill Ambassador on 5 June on the rooftop of the Empire State building. He will help the United Nations Environment Programme in its efforts to end marine litter and the illegal trade in wildlife</p> <p><b><u>Young Champions of the Earth</u></b> 30 Regional Finalists for the <a href="#">Young Champions of the Earth</a> Prize have been presented for an online public vote. Informed by the results of the public vote, Regional Juries selected 12 World Finalists to be considered by a Global Jury in early September.</p> <p><b><u>World Circular Economy Forum, 6-12 June 2017, Helsinki, Finland</u></b> The Deputy Executive Director participated in a panel discussion at the grand opening of the <a href="#">World Circular Economy Forum</a> where he emphasized on the importance of resource efficiency, proper resource extraction and the effects of food waste and plastics. He also had bilaterals with various government officials during his visit on their continued support and engagement with the United Nations Environment Programme.</p> <p><b><u>G7 Environment Ministerial Meeting, 11-12 June, Bologna, Italy</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Environment ministers from the seven most industrialised countries met in Bologna on 11-12 June to discuss priorities for the coming years. Topics discussed included environmental tax reform, environmentally harmful subsidies, the role of multilateral development banks, green and sustainable finance, marine litter and resource efficiency. The ministers launched a 5-year 'Bologna roadmap' on resource efficiency, which includes a pledge to fully participate in the <a href="#">10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production</a>, where the United Nations Environment Programme carries out several actions to promote best practices among governments and the private sector. A joint <a href="#">Communiqué</a> issued following the meeting also lauded the United Nations Environment Programme's work towards a sustainable financial system. A continued engagement of the United Nations Environment Programme is envisaged with both G7 and G20 formations in their environment-related agendas in the future.</li></ul>	<p><a href="#">the Sustainable Development Goals</a>". The side-event gathered policymakers, international institutions, representatives from the private sector and civil society to discuss pathways and options for radically altering the way policy and the private sector can work together to deliver sustainable and equitable economies.</p> <p><b><u>High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, 17-19 July 2017, New York, USA</u></b> The Deputy Executive Director participated in the High Level Segment of the <a href="#">High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development</a>. He also participated in the following side events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Poverty reduction through sustaining environmental and natural resources: Integrating the poverty-environment nexus into development for poverty elimination, whose aim is to discuss the environmental dimensions of the <a href="#">Sustainable Development Goals</a> from a nexus perspective.</li><li>Accelerating National Implementation of the <a href="#">2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</a> by integrating environmental, social and economic dimensions of Sustainable Development.</li></ul> <p><b><u>10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns to the High Level Political Forum</u></b> The <a href="#">Annual Report</a> of the <a href="#">10Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns</a> was submitted for consideration at the <a href="#">High Level Political Forum</a>. In addition to the formal report submitted in the UN format, a communication-oriented version was also made available at the Forum. The aim of this version was to help raise the profile of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns during this year's Forum, which precedes the one in 2018 that will focus on the <a href="#">Sustainable Development Goal on Sustainable Consumption and Production</a>.</p> <p><b><u>World Water Week, 26-31 August 2017, Stockholm, Sweden</u></b> The United Nations Environment Programme organized and participated in several significant events and sessions on water and waste water; as well as meeting with partners, donors and the private sector to discuss the role of the organization in leading and supporting water issues globally.</p>
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## UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME IN THE REGIONS

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### AFRICA

#### **Integrating Environmental Law into Judicial Education, June 2017, South Africa**

In June 2017, the [United Nations Environment Programme and the South African Judicial Education Institute](#) convened a train the trainers' workshop on environmental law for judicial educators in Africa. The workshop sought to equip participants with skills for delivering training on environmental law through different methods and approaches and to improve their competencies on developing environmental law training curricula for judicial officers. Going forward, the United Nations Environment Programme will select countries to be supported to integrate environmental law in their judicial education programmes in terms of the action points set out in the workshop outcome.

#### **16<sup>th</sup> Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, 12-16 June 2017, Libreville, Gabon**

The Executive Director attended the [16<sup>th</sup> Session of the African Ministerial conference on the Environment](#) under the theme of "Investing in Innovative Environmental Solutions to accelerate implementation of Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa."

In his remarks, the Executive Director hailed Gabon's environmental services and recent commitments to the world. He urged African Countries to go for green and solar energies, and encouraged African leaders to do their utmost to protect the environment, fight the pollution and ensure good health conditions for their communities. Among other things, he called for the ratification of the Kigali Amendment to be able to reduce the emissions of powerful greenhouse gases in a move that could prevent up to 0.5 degrees Celsius of global warming by the end of this century, while continuing to protect the ozone layer. The Executive Director reiterated the United Nations Environment Programme's readiness to accompany and advise African countries in the implementation of their national programs on forest protection, the fight against deforestation and forest degradation, the establishment of marine protected areas, and other programs which will contribute to making this planet great again.

The main outcome of this meeting is the [Libreville declaration](#), which called for the decisive commitment to take appropriate measures to promote and invest in innovative interventions to sustain and improve the productivity of the natural capital of African countries in order to accelerate implementation of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and [Africa's Agenda 2063](#); and to promote the allocation of an adequate percentage of national or sub-national revenues accruing from natural capital assets in re-investing in environmental innovative solutions. It calls for the promotion of circular economy, green economy, blue economy and industrial symbiosis strategies in their countries, and to upscale and replicate the circular economy and green business development policies and programmes to enable the growth of sustainable entrepreneurship as a key driver of Africa's economic transformation agenda.

#### **9<sup>th</sup> African Carbon Forum, 29-30 June 2017, Cotonou, Benin**

African policymakers and practitioners discussed the latest developments relating to climate change policy, carbon markets and finance, shared knowledge on innovative solutions in the context of nationally determined contributions and other strategies and explored possibilities for collaboration on regional and global change initiatives during the [9<sup>th</sup> African Carbon Forum](#) held in Cotonou, Benin on 29 and 30 June 2017. As a result of those discussions, the United Nations Environment Programme, together with the Government of Rwanda and the Regional Authority of Polokwane in South Africa, will work together to assess the regulatory regime around waste management with a view to developing proposals for waste to energy projects.

### **Executive Director's Mission to Botswana, 9-11 October 2017**

At the invitation of the Government, the Executive Director visited Botswana from 9-11 October. The primary objective of the visit was to express the United Nations Environment Programme's support to Botswana's efforts to conserve and protect nature and wildlife; attend the fifth anniversary meeting of the [Gaborone Declaration of Sustainability in Africa](#); and discuss issues of common interest, including the Environment Assembly.

The national authorities requested support to address the trans-boundary water issue with regards to Okavango river basin. The Executive Director committed to revive the cooperation between Angola, Botswana and Namibia and try to overcome these issues. He congratulated the authorities for the progress made in using resources to conserve nature and wildlife, and the decision to go for renewable energy in most of the conservation projects under implementation. During his remarks at the opening Ceremony of the Gaborone Declaration for Sustainability in Africa, the Executive Director confirmed readiness to establish a partnership with Botswana to support and promote their national tourism and conservation program and reiterated the great potential of the tourism industry for job creation and the youth in Africa. He encouraged all countries on the continent to protect their unique and rich wildlife, ecosystem and biodiversity, thereby contributing also to secure income for communities.

## **ASIA AND PACIFIC**

### **The Mountain Outlook report for Central Asia launched during the Central Asian International Environment Forum, 5 June 2017, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan**

Climate change is indeed threatening access to water and farming in the Central Asian region. In this regard, a new United Nations Environment Programme Mountain Outlook report detailing the prevailing situation was launched during the [Central Asian Environmental Forum](#) in Ashgabat, which took place from 5 to 7 June 2017.

### **Public-Private-Partnership, Kubuqi Desert**

Public-Private-Partnership is a living example as the Executive Director also paid a visit to Kubuqi Desert in June, witnessing the focused efforts in the past three decades by Elion Resources Group in converting the desert into an economic opportunity, expanding industries, providing jobs for local community while greening 53 % of the Kubuqi desert, a longstanding cause of sand and dust storms for the Northern China.

### **BRICS Environment Ministers Meeting, 23 June, Tianjin, China**

The Executive Director attended the [BRICS](#) Environment Ministers Meeting in Tianjin of China focusing on the Urban Agenda, its outcome statement reiterated BRICS countries' commitment in the pollution prevention, in particular air pollution which is in line with the 2017 United Nations Environment Assembly's theme "Towards a Pollution-Free Planet".

### **Executive Director Mission to Vietnam**

The Executive Director visited **Vietnam** and offered the United Nations Environment Programme's further support in Green Finance and preserving Vietnam's natural forests via the successful [UN REDD+](#) National Programme. A role model country in agriculture and education, Vietnam embraces huge potential to also pioneer in environmental protection. During a field mission to Vietnam's Cuc Phuong National Park and its centers on Endangered Primate Rescue, Turtle Conservation and Pangolin Education, wildlife trafficking, poaching and illicit trade of marine and terrestrial animals were highlighted.

### **Executive Director Mission to Korea**

President Moon Jae- unveiled his complete policy agenda/100-point Plan for South Korea's next five years. The country visit to Korea featured bilateral dialogue with the new government including with the Foreign Ministers and Environment Ministers, with a focus on climate change, sustainable development and transboundary pollution. In Seoul, Executive Director signed the Letter of Intent with the Jeju International Training Center aiming to strengthen environment education.

### **Asia-Pacific Ministerial Summit on the Environment, 5-8 September, Bangkok, Thailand**

Representatives of more than 35 from the region convened in Bangkok, with delegations at Ministerial Level, to participate in the first [Asia-Pacific Ministerial Summit on the Environment of the Asia and the Pacific Region](#), jointly convened by the United Nations Environment Programme and the [Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific](#). About 300 people, including countries' delegations, private sector and civil society participated. The Summit, under the theme 'Towards a resource efficient and pollution free Asia-Pacific', unfolded along a Senior Official Meeting and a Ministerial segment, preceded by a Civil Society Organizations Forum on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September. The outcomes will feed into the discussions of the [Third Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly](#) in December 2017 in Nairobi. Participants actively engaged in actions to green the meeting by being climate neutral, paperless and reducing waste, and making sustainable food choices.

Important environmental issues such as plastic marine litter, air quality and environmental enforcement were highlighted and discussed during dedicated events and exhibits.

### **Africa-Asia Pacific Symposium on Strengthening Legal Frameworks to Combat Wildlife Crime, 4-5 July, Bangkok, Thailand**

The symposium was convened by the [United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Illicit Trade in Wildlife and Forest Products](#) in partnership with the [World Bank](#), [Global Environment Facility](#)-financed [Global Wildlife Program](#), and [USAID](#), sponsored by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other partners. 90 participants from 22 countries from Asia and the Pacific and Africa met to identify actions to combat illegal wildlife trade participated in the Symposium which resulted in:

- i. Concrete recommendations on minimum elements that should be included in national legal frameworks (e.g. minimum penalties, inter-regional mechanisms etc.);
- ii. Strengthened inter-regional cooperation; and
- iii. Identification of next steps and priorities to support countries. Among these, to organize a similar initiative for francophone countries in Africa and support on various national initiatives in Asia and the Pacific starting with Solomon Islands.

### **World Health Organization South East Asia Regional Workshop on health sector implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, 2-4 July 2017, Bangkok, Thailand**

Country representatives from South East Asia met to share progress on medical waste containing mercury and artisanal and small-scale gold mining as major issues for the health practitioners in the region. Success was highlighted in phasing out thermometers and other medical products in different health-care settings and in starting to address the use of mercury in dental care. Countries highlighted the need for guidance and facilities for appropriate storage and disposal of mercury-containing waste from these health care operations. United Nations Environment provided technical inputs.

### **Sustainable India Finance Facility**

A third facility, the Sustainable India Finance Facility is being set up in India, where United Nations Environment is working with the Government of the State of Odisha to support State goals of improving livelihoods in sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forest conservation through community based cooperative institutions.

### **Highlights of the Executive Director's Mission to China, September 2017**

- The Executive Director's visit to China was important in reconfirming the Government of China's continued commitment to global efforts as a major responsible developing country. The Ministry of Environmental Protection reaffirmed the official cooperation of the United Nations Environment Programme and also welcomed its extended outreach in China, by reiterating their support in working with institutions, Ministries and private companies.
- The Executive Director was also able to expand resource mobilization, now including the China Trust Fund phase II and Ministry of Commerce.
- Positive progress in measures to strengthen environmental law through the inauguration of the Environmental Law Academy of the UN Environment-China University of Political Science and Law and the meeting with Mr. Zhou Qiang, Chief Justice of the People's Republic of China.

- The Executive Director's participation in the [Commemoration Meeting of the 30th Anniversary of the Montreal Protocol in China](#) was significant. Minister Li Ganjie delivered a message from Premier Li Keqiang stating that the Government attaches importance and serious action to phase out Ozone Depleting Substances. Minister Li conveyed that the Government was working to accelerate ratification of Kigali Amendment while recognizing the need for increased compliance capacity.
- The Executive Director addressed the 11<sup>th</sup> United Nations Environment Programme-China Annual Consultation, a regular strategic dialogue mechanism between the United Nations Environment Programme and the Government of China (about 10 ministries and governmental agencies) organized on yearly basis. Minister Li commented on the cooperation as, "the best moment and record high of UN Environment and China in history".

## **LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

### **Successful Waste Management Conference, July 2017, Kingston, Jamaica**

Regional, international and local experts attended the United Nations Environment Programme Caribbean Sub-Regional Office's first [Caribbean Waste Management Conference](#) at the Jamaica Conference Centre, in Kingston, Jamaica in July under the theme, "*Small Island Developing States approaches to Waste Management and the Circular economy*". It was hosted in collaboration with the Government of Jamaica and the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The conference shared successful waste management strategies and technologies as well as lessons learnt.

The conference unveiled a plastic waste management project to be undertaken by the Government of Jamaica, with support from the Government of Japan and the [International Environmental Technology Centre](#), in Japan.

Participants also contributed to a "Guide to Best Practices for the Caribbean" a waste management strategy document and call to action which will serve as a way forward for Caribbean islands. Follow up activities will see the convening of a High Level Forum of Caribbean Ministers with responsibility for waste management, who will discuss the action plan for the Caribbean, in October 2017.

## **EUROPE**

### **Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, 13 - 15 June 2017, Ostrava, Czech Republic**

Organized by [World Health Organisation](#) in partnership with the [Economic Commission for Europe](#) and United Nations Environment, hosted by the Government of the Czech Republic, the event brought together over 450 representatives from the 53 European countries. Ostrava's [Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health](#) is the sixth to take place in a process initiated almost 30 years ago to eliminate the most significant environmental threats to human health.

### **R20 Austrian World Summit, 20 June 2017, Vienna Austria**

The [R20 Austrian World Summit](#) is the new initiative of Arnold Schwarzenegger's organisation [R20 Regions of Climate Action](#). The initiative is the premier annual meeting place for sustainable development "action heroes" to showcase success factors and to facilitate more sustainable and climate protection projects. The Summit brings together leading politicians, businesses, civil society, start-ups, representatives of regions and cities as well as experts in order to increase partnerships and exchange both experiences and ideas. The R20 Austrian World Summit supports the implementation of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and the [Paris Agreement](#) on Climate Change.

### **International Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Forum, 25 August 2017, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan**

Twelve countries as well as NGO's and researchers gathered at the [International Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Forum](#), the biggest ever international meeting for the endangered cats. Describing snow leopards as "sacred," the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, H.E. Mr. Almazbek Atambayev shared his intention for a multi-country project to be established for snow leopards and their ecosystems and expressed hope that the future generations would be able to enjoy the species. Kyrgyzstan has created

new protected areas for [snow leopard](#) conservation and plans to survey their populations intensively. Mongolia has meanwhile established a habitat protection area five times greater in size than the city of London, while Uzbekistan has new plans for cross-sectoral cooperation to protect snow leopards.

**United Nations Environment Programme Executive Director attended the launch of an awareness campaign against marine pollution, 27 July 2017, Monaco**

This initiative, supported by dozens of aquariums worldwide, is an EU contribution to the #CleanSeas Campaign launched by the United Nations Environment Programme. Being one of the first aquariums which joined the movement, the [Oceanographic Museum of Monaco](#) welcomed H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco, European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Mr. Karmenu Vella, United Nations Environment Programme Executive Director Erik Solheim and many more personalities on Thursday 27 July for the official launch of the European campaign '[World aquariums against marine litter](#)'. By working with artist Philippe Pasqua in order to create a one-of-a-kind piece of art, the Oceanographic Museum of Monaco has chosen art as a vector for raising awareness about marine litter.

**National Clean Air Day and the BreatheLife Campaign in the United Kingdom**

United Nations Environment supported the first ever United Kingdom [National Clean Air Day](#). On 15 June 2017, between 200 and 300 events took place around the country. The campaign was the United Kingdom's number one trending subject for seven hours. The [#BreatheLife](#) campaign, in partnership with the [UK Global Action Plan](#), supported the day with a photo competition to encourage citizens to take a pledge and inspire others on ways to reduce pollution.

## **WEST ASIA**

**International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, 3-5 July 2017, Tehran, Iran**

[The International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms](#) was hosted by the Department of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, with the cooperation of the [Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat](#), The United Nations Environment Programme and the [United Nations Development Programme](#), among others. A [Ministerial Declaration](#) was released indicating commitment to cooperation on combating sand and dust storms by sharing information, strengthening legal and institutional frameworks on data and monitoring, including of early warning, and developing a strategy for resilience and disaster risk reduction related to sand and dust storms.

**Support to Lebanon's Ministry of Environment for Mainstreaming the Environment into the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan**

At the request of the Ministry of Environment in Lebanon, a mission was fielded to Beirut to consult how most effectively to include "environmental considerations as an integral part of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan". The mission was undertaken as a scoping mission to identify how the United Nations Environment Programme can support the Ministry of Environment towards this goal, with a focus in the short-term on confirming the relevance of indicators identified as part of the Inter-Sector Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to demonstrate the impact on the environment of work under the [Lebanon Crisis Response Plan](#). The impact identified by the Ministry of Environment for this purpose is: "Mitigated environmental impact of the Syrian crisis, to avoid further degradation of the natural eco-system and ensure its long-term sustainability".

The United Nations Environment Programme's mission sought to aid the Ministry of Environment in identifying how key sectors of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan may be strengthened through enhanced environmental mainstreaming.

**The Eighth Arab Ministerial Water Council Session-League of Arab States July 2-6, 2017**

The 15th Meeting of the Technical and the Scientific Advisory Committee was convened by the Secretariat of the Arab League from 2-4 July 2017, followed by the Eight Session of the Arab Ministerial Water Council which was held on 7 July 2017 to approve draft decisions. The meeting was attended by 18 countries represented by water experts and permanent missions' officials in addition to the regional

organizations working on water resources sectors. The United Nations Environment Programme was represented at the Ministerial Session and demonstrated its mandate in strengthening the environmental dimension of water through its new "Freshwater Strategy 2017-2021" and its key role in providing capacity building to the Arab States especially in monitoring Sustainable Development Goals related to water ([Sustainable Development Goal 6](#)) supported by the Global Environmental Monitoring Initiative. [Global Environmental Monitoring Initiative](#)

#### **United Nations Environment Programme Executive Director's visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 21-22 August 2017**

The Executive Director visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 21-22 August 2017, meeting with a range of partners and stakeholders during his visit. He signed a partnership agreement with the [Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf](#) to address pressing environmental issues facing the Council's Member States. The agreement will support the implementation of four key priority projects agreed upon by the Ministers of Environment of the Council's Member States and endorsed by its Ministerial Council. It is intended that a unified system is developed for the sound management of chemicals, guidelines to safeguard coastal ecosystems from dredging activities, standards for collection and analysis of air quality data and assessment of the state of the environment and future outlook in the region. Member States of this Council will contribute US \$1.34 million towards this work over a 4 year period.

An agreement was also signed with the Riyadh Chamber of Commerce, launching a proactive initiative to reinforce the role of the private sector in achieving the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and to support Saudi Arabia in developing its strategic vision to put Riyadh on the sustainable development path and encourage the collection, analysis and dissemination of relevant information.

#### **Supporting Sustainable Waste Management in the West Asia Region**

The United Nations Environment Programme West Asia Office has capitalized on the funding provided by the [International Environmental Technology Centre](#) to enhance the level of engagement with countries, especially Lebanon and Bahrain, that are experiencing waste management crises and have the highest potential for being part of the [Green Climate Fund](#) projects in the region.

In Lebanon, the roadmap for the development of the National Integrated Waste Management Strategy has been agreed with the Ministry of Environment. In parallel a Green Climate Fund proposal has been developed addressing the potential for waste to energy in Lebanon, which is significant when holistic, sound and integrated waste management is adopted. Three strategies are proposed in the Green Climate Fund project:

- i) Capturing and using Methane from closed and active old dumps and landfill sites;
- ii) Improving, maximizing and scaling up Methane recovery by improving the design and rehabilitation of existing and future landfills; and
- iii) Avoidance of methane emission through prevention measures to minimize waste generation and put in place a system for recycling, composting, among other measures.

In Bahrain, the Supreme Council of Environment requested the assistance of the United Nations Environment Programme in developing an integrated waste management strategy. The first phase of the strategy development was concluded with the submission to the Supreme Council of a comprehensive gap analysis report. This has led to the agreement of the Supreme Council and the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works to join hands in developing an integrated national strategy. A Joint Technical Committee has been established to oversee the development of the strategy, with the United Nations Environment Programme providing ongoing technical support.

The Waste Management Outlook for West Asia is being developed in line with the [Global Waste Management Outlook](#) published in 2015 and with close coordination and technical oversight of the International Environmental Technology Centre and the [International Solid Waste Association](#). The regional partner chosen to support the outlook process is the [Centre for Environment and Development \(CEDARE\)](#). It will provide a positive and progressive assessment of the West Asia region as a sustainable investment opportunity and examine the key waste management challenges across the life-cycle from material production to waste generation, collection, sorting, treatment and disposal.



## UN SYSTEM-WIDE COOPERATION AND COHERENCE

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### **Sustainable United Nations and UN Climate Neutral Strategy Progress**

[Sustainable United Nations](#) launched, between June and August, the 2016 environmental inventory that will report on Environmental Management System implementation and climate neutrality for over 60 UN entities and their offices worldwide. Sustainable United Nations also calculated the greenhouse gas emissions of the G7 meeting of Environmental Ministers that took place in Bologna on 12 June 2017. The team is involved in further improving the greening of the Third Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, which will be a climate neutral event with funds from the [United Nations Federal Credit Union](#).

### **THE ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP UPDATE**

#### **UN System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment**

In response to [Resolution 2/5](#) of the United Nations Environment Assembly, in implementing the [System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment](#), 31 Environment Management Group members have provided input to the preparation of the first Synthesis Report on UN agencies' contribution to the implementation of the environmental dimensions of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

The Synthesis Report which is currently being finalized, offers examples of how individual agencies are aligning their organizational strategies with the environmental dimension of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#); examples of how the United Nations and stakeholders are collaborating on the environmental areas of the Sustainable Development Goals; and areas where there are opportunities for scaling up and/or strengthening coordination in existing or new environmental areas of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The report shows that most Environment Management Group Members have recently launched or are in the process of launching new strategic plans, and report the integration of environmental sustainability as an integral part to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals framework. Nexus issues and partnerships are recognized as being at the core of successfully addressing the environmental dimension of sustainable development while the challenge of properly tracking progress towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is highlighted by many Agencies.

The Synthesis Report was submitted to the Senior Officials of the Environment Management Group in September 2017. An update on this process will be submitted to the Third Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in December 2017. Agencies have called for this Consultative Process to continue to foster discussion and information exchange among Environment Management Group Members. The Synthesis Report will be a regular output under the Framework, with the second Report expected in September 2018.

#### **Policy Dialogues on Nexus Issues of the Sustainable Development Goals with focus on the Environment**

The Environment Management Group [Nexus Dialogue Series](#) provides an opportunity for UN agencies and other stakeholders to identify areas of mutual interest in the area of environment and to better understand the transmission channels through which an action in one sector may impact the outcomes of another. With its integrated approach and indivisible nature, the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) challenges agencies of the UN system to ensure that their specialized policy decision making and response systems are well suited effectively support the integrated [Sustainable Development Goals](#), including the environmental dimension of the goals and targets.

Following the launching Dialogue held in Geneva in April this year, [the second Nexus Dialogue](#) was held in New York on 13-14 July 2017, followed by a high level side event held on 19 July within the frames of the [High Level Political Forum](#). The Dialogue focused on the Poverty-Environment nexus, arranged in close collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Environment Programme [Poverty-Environment Initiative](#). The Dialogue deliberated on ways to better integrate poverty

and the environment simultaneously into policy making, legislation, investments and budgetary processes, while addressing poverty-environment nexus challenges and opportunities for enhancing partnerships and issues requiring strategic planning by the UN system, including through the work of the Environment Management Group.

The third Nexus Dialogue will be held on 19 October 2017 in Geneva, focusing on the humanitarian-environment nexus. The fourth Dialogue will be held in December 2017 in the margins of the Third Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, with a focus on the urban pollution, health and sustainable development nexus.

#### **Environmentally Sound Management of Electrical and Electronic Waste**

[The Inter-Agency Group on Tackling E-waste](#) has prepared a report which maps over 150 prior, existing and potential e-waste initiatives across the activities of more than 20 agencies in the United Nations system. The key findings of this report include:

- The need for recognition by UN agencies of the full life-cycle of electrical and electronic equipment, when carrying out projects and programmes to tackle e-waste; and
- The need to focus on e-waste generation at its source in advanced economies was also addressed, along with the necessity to collaborate with the private sector, especially by strengthening the cooperation between UN agencies and manufacturers of e-products in areas such as production and design, and extended producer responsibility.

In order to increase collaboration and coordination on tackling e-waste, the recommendations propose undertaking a gap analysis to identify the programmatic strengths and weaknesses of UN agencies, concerning their mandates on e-waste. A joint work plan on e-waste has been proposed for the long-term, steered by a lead agency or agencies for further collaboration and coordination. It has also been proposed that a platform or hub be developed for knowledge sharing around UN e-waste projects and country data and statistics, or a similar existing domain be adopted for these purposes.

#### **Enhancing Effectiveness of the Environment Management Group in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

The updated Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure for the Environment Management Group **was/were** considered by the Senior Officials in September 2017. The revision has been carried out with the view to allow the Environment Management Group to steer its work towards implantation of the 2030 Agenda in a more efficient and effective manner.

#### **Environmental Peer Reviews**

Three new [Environmental Management Peer Reviews Reports](#) were prepared for the field offices of the World Food Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in Amman, Jordan. This is the first time that the peer review process has involved field offices.

#### **Enhancing Sustainability of the Internal UN Operations and Facilities**

The Inter-Agency work on enhancing corporate environmental and social sustainability in the work of United Nations Agencies continues. A comparative analysis of programme/project level safeguard policies, procedures and accountability mechanisms of volunteer agencies has been prepared with the view to prepare a final report outlining recommendations for a common normative framework for social and environmental standards. A common approach to standards would demonstrate ensuring the normative principles of the UN are consistently operationalized through country level programming in particular. Guidance and examples on ways to implement the Sustainability Framework is being compiled to be made available on the Environment Management Group website.

#### **Sharing Updates on UN Agencies' Contribution to the Environmental Agenda**

[The second Environment Management Group Newsletter](#) was released in July 2017 to keep UN agencies and Member States and other stakeholders informed on progress and achievements made within the UN system in responding to the environmental dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Through the newsletter the Secretariat of the Environment Management Group provides updates on

environmental initiatives which UN entities are engaged in, based on inputs received from the Environment Management Group Members.

## **UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM REFORMS**

**[The Secretary-General's report on the repositioning of the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)**, presented to Member States on 30 June, offers an ambitious set of reform proposals, set within the context of his overall UN reform agenda, with prevention as a cross-pillar priority. The review of the United Nations development system is a fundamental component of a set of mutually-reinforcing reform efforts to ensure that the United Nations responds to changing global needs. These include a review of the peace and security architecture and internal management, as well as strategies and action plans to achieve gender parity, end sexual exploitation and abuse, and strengthen counter-terrorism structures. These reform efforts constitute fundamental inputs and reference points for the internal reforms of the United Nations Environment Programme.

The proposals that the Secretary-General has put forward draw on consultations and analytical work done over the last year through the United Nations Development Group, including its Assistant Secretaries Generals' Advisory Group. In addition to contributing extensively through these inter-agency consultations, the United Nations Environment Programme has provided data, input and clarifications to the accompanying '[System-wide outline of the functions and capacities of the UN development system](#)', which was prepared by external consultants.

Over the coming months, the Deputy Secretary-General is expected to hold consultations with Member States, and the UN system will be unpacking the reform proposals in order to inform the Secretary-General's second report on repositioning the UN development system, due at the end of the year, in line with mandates provided by the [Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review](#) of Operational Activities for Development in [GA/RES/71/243](#).

Priority tasks are: development of a system-wide strategic document for collective United Nations action to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; comprehensive proposals to improve the Resident Coordinator system and to ensure more responsive and tailored [United Nations Country Team](#) configurations; review of regional functions, policy and data-management capacities; strengthening of system-wide governance and oversight; and defining the specific contours of the proposed 'Funding Compact'.

[The United Nations Development Group](#) will have an important role in overseeing these different tracks and making sure that they are coordinated and aligned. Its five 'Results Groups' will also have roles to play in unpacking various proposals. The United Nations Environment Programme will engage closely in these discussions.

### **High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, New York, 10-19 July 2017**

During the [2017 High-Level Political Forum](#) under the theme of "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world", Member States reviewed progress on the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), with a particular in-depth focus on goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17, considered 43 voluntary national reviews by governments and adopted a ministerial declaration as outcome.

The United Nations Environment Programme had contributed to the preparations of the High-Level Political Forum, inter alia with inputs to the Secretary-General's Progress Report, through the Regional Sustainable Development Forums organized by respective UN Regional Commissions and through support to preparatory segments of the [UN Economic and Social Council](#) such as the [Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals](#), the [UN Economic and Social Council Youth Forum](#), the [Integration Segment and the Financing for Development Forum](#). At the High-Level Political Forum, the United Nations Environment Programme played an active and visible role in the discussions, organised several high-level side events with a wide range of partners on key issues of the United Nations Environment Programme's programme of work such as green economy, poverty and environment, oceans as well as the nexus dialogues in the context of the Environment Management Group, while participating in many more engagements and events.

## CORPORATE MANAGEMENT AND MANAGEMENT REFORM

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### **The United Nations Environment Programme's Global Environment Facility Report**

The fiscal year for the [Global Environment Facility](#) concludes on 30 June. By 30 June 2017, the United Nations Environment Programme team that supports countries to access finance from the Global Environment Facility had mobilized more than US \$201 million in project funding, their best year to date. This funding will support projects across the globe in addressing climate change (both adaptation and mitigation), biodiversity loss, capacity development, chemicals & waste management, land degradation and international waters. To date, the United Nations Environment Programme has mobilized more than US \$490 million on behalf of countries during the current replenishment cycle of the Facility.

### **The United Nations Environment Programme's Green Climate Fund Report**

#### **Current status of the portfolio**

The United Nations Environment Programme has submitted four Project Preparation Facility Applications<sup>1</sup> in July and early August to the [Green Climate Fund](#) Secretariat; as well as one Concept Note for a proposal in Ghana titled "*Climate-resilient landscapes for sustainable livelihoods in northern Ghana*", which are all under consideration by the Fund secretariat.

One Full Funding Proposal has also been submitted to the Fund Secretariat in July 2017, entitled "*Securing vulnerable coastal and marine livelihoods in Mozambique against climate-change hazards*". The United Nations Environment Programme has received comments from the Fund secretariat on this proposal, and intends to resubmit that proposal, together with a multi-country<sup>2</sup> proposal titled "*Increased Agricultural and Ecosystem Resilience through Agroforestry Ecosystem-Based Adaptation*" for consideration by the Green Climate Fund Board in February 2018.

In addition, 12 readiness proposals<sup>3</sup> have also been submitted to the Fund secretariat in July and August this year, including 7 proposals for [National Adaptation Planning](#), 1 from the [Climate Technology Centre and Network](#), and a proposal to mobilize developing country financial institutions to access the Green Climate Fund. Readiness proposals for Maldives, Myanmar and Jordan were approved in July 2017, bringing the total number of approved Readiness proposals to 12<sup>4</sup>.

#### **Implementation of Green Climate Fund Projects**

The first United Nations Environment Programme's project, titled "*Large-scale Ecosystem-based Adaptation in The Gambia*", was approved by the Fund's Board in June 2016 for the amount of USD 20,546,756. The Funded Activity Agreement for this proposal, which sets out the agreed terms for the implementation of the approved Project, was signed on 8th June 2017. The United Nations Environment Programme will soon begin implementation of this Project, after requesting the first tranche of funding from the Fund.

The United Nations Environment Programme has received USD 1,729,361 for implementation of approved Readiness Proposals in Montenegro, Albania, Nepal, Ghana, Tonga, Egypt, Maldives, and Jordan.

#### **Engagement with the Fund Secretariat**

On 7 August 2017, the United Nations Environment Programme Executive Director met with the Executive Director and key staff from the Green Climate Fund Secretariat at the Fund's headquarters in Songdo, Korea. The teams discussed the United Nations Environment Programme's vision for its engagement with the Fund, such as redirecting unsustainable financial flows, ecosystem based mitigation and adaptation, energy efficiency and transport. The Executive Director also invited the Fund secretariat and the Co-

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<sup>1</sup> Proposals submitted were for Jamaica (REDD+ to Reef Landscape Project); 11 Pacific Island countries: Cook Islands, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu (Promotion of energy efficient appliances, lighting and equipment in Pacific Island Countries); Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda (Electric Mobility – Introduction of Electric Motorcycles); and Chile (Accelerating Adoption of Electric Mobility in Santiago de Chile's Public Transit System).

<sup>2</sup> Burundi, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

<sup>3</sup> Readiness proposals submitted: Myanmar, Honduras, Palestine (Climate Technology Centre & Network), Sri Lanka.

National Adaptation Plan Proposals submitted for: Costa Rica, Honduras, Myanmar, Malawi, Mauritania, Zimbabwe, Swaziland. Global proposal to mobilize developing country financial institutions to access the Green Climate Fund

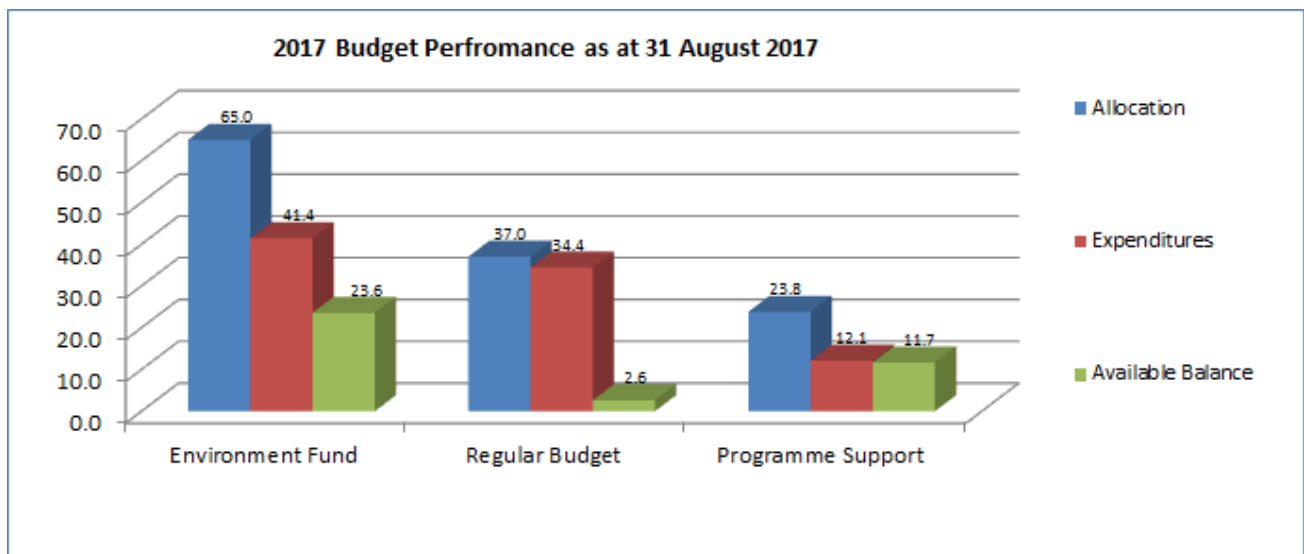
<sup>4</sup> Readiness proposals have been approved by Green Climate Fund Secretariat for Albania, Benin, Comoros, Egypt, Ghana, Montenegro, Maldives, Tonga, Jordan, and Myanmar. The fund has also approved a grant in support of processes to develop National Adaptation Plans for Nepal.

chairs of the Board of the Green Climate Fund to attend the Third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

**United Nations Environment Programme Budget Performance, as at 31 August 2017**

The United Nations Environment Programme 2017 core budget allotments were subject to adjustments during the period of June to August 2017. The Regular Budget allotment associated with staff costs is not enough to cover the staff salaries and entitlements up to 31 December 2017. The projected deficit of US \$5.54 million is a result of the actual average vacancy rate being lower than the budgeted i.e. as of June 2017, for staff in the professional category the actual average vacancy rate was 5.7% compared with the budgeted 10.1%, and for the general service and related category the actual average was 1.7% compared with the budgeted 7.1%. Accordingly, the United Nations Environment Programme requested an additional allotment of US \$5.54 million from the Programme Planning and Budget Division in the United Nations Headquarters. The Environment Fund initial 2017 allocation was US \$60 million; however, in line with the revised projected contributions and pledges, the allotment was increased by US \$5 million to bring the total to US \$65 million. The table below provides an overview of the core funding sources (including the Overhead Trust Account) status of allotment as at 31 August 2017.

2017 Budget Performance as at 31 August 2017 (millions of United States dollars)			
Funding Sources	Allocation	Expenditures	Available Balance
Environment Fund	65.0	41.4	23.6
Regular Budget	37.0	34.4	2.6
Programme Support	23.8	12.1	11.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>125.8</b>	<b>87.9</b>	<b>37.9</b>



## ANNEX: LIST OF PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

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### CLIMATE CHANGE

#### **UN Climate Resilience Initiative (Anticipate, Absorb, Reshape)**

The [UN Climate Resilience Initiative](#) was launched by former UN Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon in Paris in November 2015. The United Nations Environment Programme and the [Food and Agriculture Organisation](#) provide the secretariat for the initiative. The United Nations Environment Programme is a member of an inter-agency working group for implementation of the El Nino Blueprint for Action, with role of the UN Climate Resilience Initiative in supporting implementation recognized. The United Nations Environment Programme is also participating in the 'Climate Core Group' working on supporting the Deputy Secretary-General in the development of a vision/framework for Resilience.

#### **The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN REDD) Update**

Launch Of Next Phase By The Programme's Executive Board

[The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries](#) has launched its next phase following an approval of the workplan (2018-2020) by the Programme's Executive Board. UN-REDD will focus on knowledge sharing, including South-South Cooperation for its 64 partner countries, and in-depth technical assistance for REDD+ implementation in nine priority countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Colombia, Indonesia, Mexico, Myanmar, Peru, Republic of Congo, Viet Nam, and Zambia. In addition, the Programme will continue to support a number of countries for national REDD+ readiness programmes, including through a stronger collaboration with the Green Climate Fund.

#### **Sri Lanka**

[The National REDD+ Investment Framework and Action Plan](#) was endorsed by the Government of Sri Lanka in May 2017 and the country has completed all 4 pillars of the [Warsaw Framework](#) in record time. It is gearing towards implementation, with public ([Green Climate Fund](#)) and private ([Tropical Landscapes Finance Facility](#)) financing. [The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries](#) (UN REDD) has been supporting the development of the action plan over the last four years, and has strategically aligned REDD + in Sri Lanka to the government's environmental agenda. Moreover, the Government of Sri Lanka now considers this to be a central part of its national response to the threat of climate change.

#### **Collaboration With The International Civil Aviation Organization**

The United Nations Environment Programme has opened a dialogue with the [International Civil Aviation Organization](#) on their proposed [Carbon Offset and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation](#). This could develop into a significant source of funding for REDD+ results-based payments.

#### **Climate and Clean Air Coalition Update**

- The Democratic Republic of Congo and Belgium joined the [Climate and Clean Air Coalition](#) expanding the Coalition to 116 Partners including 54 countries.  
<http://ccacoalition.org/en/news/democratic-republic-congo-joins-climate-clean-air-coalition>  
<http://ccacoalition.org/en/news/belgium-newest-coalition-partner>
- On waste, the Coalition organised a workshop and debate with the [European Investment Bank](#) on '[Financing city waste management for urban economic development and climate mitigation](#)' in June 2017. The session brought together high level representatives from the European Commission, European Investment Bank, Kenya Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Climate and Clean Air Coalition Secretariat and [C40 Cities and Climate Leadership Group](#), and focused on the challenges and support needed to implement city waste management plans.

- In the oil and gas initiative, two new companies joined the [Climate and Clean Air Coalition Oil and Gas Methane Partnership](#), bringing the total of global oil and gas production covered by the Oil and Gas Methane Partnership companies to 12.5 %. They committed to systematically surveying and reporting their participating operations for the most important potential methane emission sources. Under the heavy duty diesel initiative, 20 cities worldwide are now engaged in the transition to soot-free urban bus fleets. The cities of Istanbul, Mexico City, and Santiago and national governments of Australia, Brazil, Chile and Indonesia have committed to soot-free bus fleets. Three major bus and engine manufacturers ([Build Your Dreams](#), [Scania](#), [Volvo](#)) committed to making soot-free engines available in all twenty target cities. The move to low sulfur diesel is also advancing. For example the Government of Nigeria agreed to import low sulphur diesel fuels from 1 July 2017. Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe switched to low sulphur diesel fuels from June 2017.

#### **20<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 6 July 2017, Rome**

On agriculture, a high-level side event took place at the 20th Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome on 6 July 2017. The side event on "[Partnering to scale up climate action by countries in the agricultural sectors](#)" brought together high-level speakers and attendees from the Food and Agriculture Organization, partner organizations and countries, to launch the new Food and Agriculture Organization Strategy on Climate Change.

#### **Lake Victoria Regional Project - Adaptation Fund**

The [Adaptation Fund](#) Board approved the Lake Victoria Regional Project for US \$5 million for 3 years, during its inter-sessional process between the 29th and 30th Adaptation Fund Board meetings. The project will build the resilience of communities in the five countries surrounding the Lake Victoria Basin. It will be implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme with Lake Victoria Basin Commission as the executing entity.

## **DISASTERS AND CONFLICTS**

#### **Ogoniland Remediation Project**

A meeting to discuss the status of implementation of the Ogoniland Remediation Project took place in Geneva on 13-14 July 2017. Among others, representatives from the Federal Government of Nigeria and Coordinator of the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project and the Shell Petroleum Development Corporation of Nigeria attended the technical meeting which was facilitated by the United Nations Environment Programme. It was agreed that the Government of Nigeria will formally request the United Nations to develop a proposal on how the UN System can support delivery and implementation of the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project.

#### **Support for mediation and peacebuilding in Africa**

The United Nations Environment Programme held a series of meetings with African Union colleagues in Addis Ababa at the end of August to see how the United Nations Environment Programme can best support mediation and peace processes where they have a natural resource or an environmental dimension. This is in response to Article 17 of the 2016 [Sharm El Sheikh Declaration](#) from the African Union "Silencing the guns -mediation practices and contemporary wars" which requested the Africa Union to "work closely with the United Nations Environment Programme to provide capacity building forum on integrating and mainstreaming natural resources dimensions into mediation processes and peace building".

## ECOSYSTEMS MANAGEMENT

### **Workshop for Caribbean Countries on National Biodiversity Actions Plans, 5-7 July, Freeport, Bahamas**

The capacity of Caribbean countries to develop [National Biodiversity Action Plans](#) was strengthened with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme. In addition to strengthening the legal preparedness of countries to implement their National Biodiversity Action Plans, it also promoted linkages with the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and identified financing options and means of implementation to deliver them, as well as synergies and cooperation among the biodiversity-related conventions. The United Nations Environment Programme supported countries by ensuring integration of the environmental dimension in sustainable development and building country capacity to track progress. To this end, the United Nations Environment Programme has joined forces with the [European Commission](#), the Secretariat of the [African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States](#), the [Caribbean Community CARICOM Secretariat](#) and other partners to enhance the capacity of African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries in their implementation of Multilateral Environment Agreements.

### **Project Portfolio for 2018-2021 Progress**

The preparation for the new 2018-2021 project portfolio has progressed as planned with one out of 8 projects approved by United Nations Environment Programme [Project Review Committee](#) and the remaining 7 are in various development stages by the respective teams. These 8 core projects will receive all core resources, such as Regular Budget and the Environment Fund, allocated under the sub-programme on Healthy and Productive [Ecosystems](#). As more than 90% of the available resources under the sub-programme are ear-marked an increasing proportion of core resources are invested into communication, fund raising and ensuring that earmarked resources align with the Programme of Work.

### **World Conservation and Monitoring Centre - Corporate Engagement on Pollination.**

The United Nations Environment Programme's [World Conservation and Monitoring Centre](#) is building a business case for corporate engagement on pollination. Nearly 30 stakeholders from business, academia and conservation organisations gathered in Cambridge to discuss how best to strengthen the management of company supply chains for pollinator conservation and to increase food security.

### **Formation of a new Coral Restoration Consortium**

The formation of a new [Coral Restoration Consortium](#) serves as a milestone in coral restoration efforts in the Caribbean. The consortium's mission is to foster collaboration, information sharing and capacity building among members.

### **17th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development, 4-6 July 2017, Athens, Greece**

This meeting was organized by United Nations Environment Programme [Mediterranean Action Plan Coordinating Unit](#). The issues discussed during the meeting included the progress in relation to sustainable development, implementation of the flagship initiatives and regional and national actions towards the delivery of the [Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development](#).

### **Executive Committee Meeting of the Great Apes Survival Partnership**

[The Great Apes Survival Partnership](#) has completed a successful meeting of its [Executive Committee](#) where elements of a strategy for the future of the programme were developed. A number of funding proposals for the partnership have also been positively received. The Government of Luxemburg confirmed funding for the project "Climate resilient mountain ecosystems for resilient livelihoods and mountain flagships species".



## ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

### **#WildforLife Update**

- In June, a [#WildforLife](#) exhibition was launched at the Václav Havel International Airport in Prague. The exhibition will run for 6 months.
- As part of the [Kenya Airways-United Nations Environment Programme Partnership](#), their in-flight magazine "Msafari" published the article called 'Game Changers', featuring several of the campaign's Goodwill Ambassadors and the advocacy work they are doing to help end illegal trade in wildlife in their respective countries. Kenya Airways also showed the WildforLife video in their airplanes.
- On 8 July, The United Nations Environment Programme celebrated international [#SavetheVaquita](#) day by adding it as a new species to the campaign. A video calling for people to go [#WildforLife](#) and help [#SavetheVaquita](#) was viewed more than 42,000 times on Facebook. J.K. Rowling's Fantastic Beasts starlette Alison Sudol championed the newest species added to the campaign and called on her viewer base of over 1,800,000 followers to help save the vaquita.
- The United Nations Environment Programme and UN Publications launched a plush turtle to raise awareness against the illegal trade in wildlife. The turtle is the first plush toy from a new collection linked to the [#WildforLife](#) campaign. The fabric and stuffing of these cute wildlife ambassadors is made of 100% polyester from recycled plastic bottles. The toys are currently sold at the UN Gift Centre at UN Headquarters in New York.

### **The Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards, 7 September 2017, Bangkok, Thailand**

The [Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards](#) publicly recognize and celebrate excellence in enforcement efforts by public institutions and individuals to fight environmental crime in Asia. The Awards are given annually by the United Nations Environment Programme, with the support of the [Swedish International Development Agency](#), through the [Regional Enforcement Network for Chemicals and Waste project](#). This year's award ceremony was held on 7 September 2017 in Bangkok where 8 individuals and institutions from the Asia Pacific region received special certificates from the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme in recognition of their efforts to reduce pollution crime.

### **Judges Commit To Advancing Environmental Constitutionalism**

The United Nations Environment Programme engaged over 60 judges and scholars representing 20 countries, different jurisdictions, courts and tribunals across the Latin America and the Caribbean region, Africa, Asia, and the US on judicial issues and opportunities related to environmental constitutionalism. The Regional Judicial Colloquium on "[Constitutions, Environment and Human Rights: Practice and Implementation](#)," was convened by the United Nations Environment Programme at the Federal Senate of Brazil from 22-23 May 2017. The Colloquium is part of the United Nations Environment Programme's global process to enhance judicial capacity in environmental constitutionalism, identify gaps and opportunities, and support judges worldwide.

Furthermore, to enhance the capacity of judges in respect to environmental rights, the United Nations Environment Programme launched a training handbook for judges on the implementation of constitutional environmental rights. The [Judicial Handbook on Global Environmental Constitutionalism](#) was prepared jointly with Widener University Delaware Law School. The handbook explores how environmental rights are being used to protect human interests as well as environmental interests.

### **Draft Global Pact for the Environment launched with support from the United Nations Environment Programme, 24 June 2017, Paris, France**

A [draft Pact for the Environment](#) was launched at the Sorbonne University in Paris on 24 June 2017. The pact is envisaged as a global, foundational treaty on the environment, complementing the existing two human rights covenants. It seeks to serve as a binding, universal "umbrella text" synthesizing the principles outlined in the [Rio Declaration](#), the [Earth Charter](#), the [World Charter for Nature](#), and other instruments shaping environmental governance.

### **Strategy for Coordination between the United Nations Environment Programme and the National Focal Points, in line with United Nations Environment Assembly Resolution 2/19 on the Midterm review of Montevideo Programme IV**

- Pursuant to [Resolution 2/19](#), 84 Member States have so far nominated national focal points for exchanging information and building capacities in order to collaborate with and guide the United Nations Environment Programme in strengthening the application of the [Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law](#) and to monitor and evaluate its implementation. The United Nations Environment Programme has already recently involved the national focal points in its work under the Montevideo Programme and [Governing Council decision 27/9](#) on environmental rule of law, including in the context of an upcoming global report on environmental rule of law and the experts' process on crimes that have serious impacts on the environment detailed above, and two environmental law knowledge tools (InforMEA and ECOLEX).
- In July 2017, a strategy was sent to all national focal points aimed at guiding the collaboration between the focal points and the United Nations Environment Programme going forward and within the framework of Resolution 2/19. The strategy outlines United Nations Environment Programme's aim to further formalize and institutionalize the collaboration including through a face-to-face meeting of all national focal points in the first quarter of 2018, at which period the initiation and launch of activities required for the final assessment of the fourth Programme and the development of a new environmental law programme for 2020 and beyond is envisaged.
- To further harmonize the work of the United Nations Environment Programme on the Montevideo Programme and integrate the collaboration with the national focal points a dedicated project is envisioned under the 2018-2019 Programme of Work.

#### **An Experts' Process on Crimes that have Serious Impacts on the Environment is launched**

The United Nations Environment Programme and the [United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute](#) rolled out an experts' process in June 2017 to examine institutional models and approaches for combating crimes that have serious impacts on the environment. Following contributions from national focal points designated by Member States under [Resolution 2/19](#) on the "Midterm review of the fourth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo IV)" (Montevideo focal points), the draft report on crimes that have a serious impact on the environment was the subject of discussions with experts in a meeting scheduled on 13 to 15 September 2017 in Rome, Italy.

#### **International Resource Panel's Report on Mineral Resource Governance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Preparation of guidance on the governance of mineral resources for sustainable development is well underway. The [International Resource Panel's](#) Report on 'Mineral Resource Governance in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century' will document the shortcomings of the existing governance structure for mineral resources and outline the underlying principles, policy options and best practices that form the basis of a new framework referred to as the 'sustainable development license to operate.'

#### **InforMEA**

19 global Secretariats to Multilateral Environmental Agreements dealing with Climate, Ozone, Chemicals and Wastes, and Biodiversity issues came together again this June under the umbrella of the [InforMEA](#) initiative committed to knowledge sharing and harnessing technological advances. The four UN agencies involved in the initiative, funded by the European Union, include the [Food and Agricultural Organization](#), the [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization](#), the [United Nations Institute for Training and Research](#) and the [United Nations Economic Commission for Europe](#) were joined for the first time by the [United Nations Development Programme](#) this year.

This impressively large group of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, supported by their partners and interested donors committed to:

- Expand the joint and free [InforMEA learning](#) section catering for soon 6000 registered learners from virtually all countries of the world
- Pilot UN-wide document standards recently developed under the processes of the High level Committee on Management of the [UN Chief Executives Board for Coordination](#).
- Work on the collective contribution by Multilateral Environmental Agreements to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals <https://www.informe.org/en/goal/151>
- To continue to link up and meaningfully connect dispersed and independent information and knowledge sources and to test auto-indexing tools to bring information quicker and easier to the fingertips of environmentalists.

## CHEMICALS AND WASTE

### **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Working Group of the Asia Pacific Clean Air Partnership, 25 July 2017, Yokohama, Japan**

Partners of the [Asia Pacific Clean Air Partnership](#), which supports 16 countries from the region, convened at the 4<sup>th</sup> Working Group Meeting on July 25<sup>th</sup> in Yokohama to focus on mobilizing action through partnerships to support implementation of “actionable actions” on air quality identified in the Air Quality Asia Pacific Solutions Report to be finalized in early 2018.

### **Sulfur dioxide situation improves in East Asia**

Levels of harmful sulfur dioxide emissions have dropped, according to the Third Periodic Report on the State of Acid Deposition in East Asia (2017), prepared by the [Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia](#) as a summary of its regular monitoring activities. The report states that levels have dropped significantly in East and Southeast Asian cities over the last decade, owing to successful air pollution law and policy implementation and enforcement. The United Nations Environment Programme as a provider of Secretariat support to the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia, will continue to facilitate support to member countries to further improve air quality initiatives.

### **Efforts Contributing to the Sound Management of Chemical and Waste**

Waste-to-resource approach and waste prevention have been integrated in the Project Portfolio for 2018–2021. Based on the project portfolio, detailed project documents are being developed for the implementation.

The [International Environmental Technology Centre](#) provided knowledge and technical support for development of national- and municipal-level waste policies, strategies and action plans. In partnership with [Global Partnership on Waste Management](#), the Centre completed three assessments in 2017: (i) Global Mercury Waste assessment; (ii) Waste management in the [Association of Southeast Asian Nations](#) Countries; and (iii) Regional study on mercury waste management in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations countries.

### **Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia develops a Long-Term Strategy for Waste Management**

In July, Ulaanbaatar City, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, developed the [Waste Management Improvement Strategy and Action Plan \(2017–2030\)](#) to provide a clear vision and guide Ulaanbaatar in dealing with sustainable waste management using an integrated approach. The strategy and action plan, developed with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme, will contribute to the implementation of the Waste Law (2017) passed and ratified by the Mongolian Parliament in May 2017.

### **Sound Recycling of Lead Acid Batteries, Burkina Faso**

Representatives of 10 African countries gathered in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 19 to 21 July to discuss the environmental, health and socio-economic impacts of used lead-acid battery recycling in the Africa region at a regional workshop organized by the United Nations Environment Programme in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment of Burkina Faso. The workshop aimed at supporting African countries in their efforts to strengthen and enhance national, sub-regional and regional implementation of environmentally sound management of waste lead-acid batteries. Possible solution discussed at the workshop includes countries coming together to develop adequate recycling plants that can receive batteries from other countries and recycle them in a safe environment.

## RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

### **Workshop on Unlocking South-South Trade in Environmental Goods and Services, 5 June 2017, Jiangsu, China**

The [workshop](#) was held in Nanjing, as part of the [Green Trade Project](#) under the framework of the [Partnership for Action on Green Economy](#). The workshop convened around 50 participants from local governments, business associations, environmental companies, international organizations, and environmental NGOs. Key issues discussed included global and national trends in trade in Environmental Goods and Services, Jiangsu's experience in trade in renewable energy and environmental technologies, implications of rising global value chains of Environmental Goods and Services, as well as opportunities and challenges of expanding green trade with developing countries.

### **Launch of China National Platform on Voluntary Sustainability Standards**

The Government of China, with the support of UN Forum on Sustainability Standards, comprised of the United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, [United Nations Industrial Development Organization](#), the [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development](#), and the [International Trade Centre](#), launched its National Multi-Stakeholder Platform on Voluntary Sustainability Standards. The platform aims to facilitate dialogue on Voluntary Sustainability Standards, carry out research, provide services, and promote activities on Voluntary Sustainability Standards at the national-level.

### **Expert Workshop for Green Industry and Trade Assessments Global Study, 28 August 2017**

As part of the Green Industry and Trade work under the framework of the Partnership for Action on Green Economy, the United Nations Environment Programme hosted an [expert workshop](#) to gather feedback and ideas for the draft Green Industry and Trade Methodology toolkit. The workshop gathered experts from various organizations, including international agencies such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative, Non-Governmental Organizations, and Missions to the World Trade Organization among others. Subsequently, all feedback from the workshop was integrated, in addition to comments received in written form, ahead of the toolkit's second review process.

## ENVIRONMENT UNDER REVIEW

### **Eco-Wealth Restoration: Kubuqi Desert**

In partnership with the [Elion Foundation](#) and the University of Peking, the United Nations Environment Programme produced a synthesis of lessons learned on best business practices using public-private-community-international organization partnership models for building desert green economies. This report was officially launched in a business forum at the upcoming Conference of the Parties of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification in Ordos, China the 11<sup>th</sup> of September.

### **2017 Frontiers Report**

The Frontiers 2017 issue will be launched at the Third Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. Advance copies may become available even earlier and if so, these can be circulated to interested member countries for their preliminary internal review. If you are interested in advance copies of Frontiers 2017, please contact: [maarten.kappelle@unep.org](mailto:maarten.kappelle@unep.org)

### **Global Environment Outlook**

As requested by Member States in the United Nations Environment Assembly [Resolution 1/4](#), the preparation of the [Global Environment Outlook](#) continues with the completion of the third global authors meeting last October. The preparation of the Sixth Global Environment Outlook is now mid-stream, with the review of the first 9 chapters, by experts and governments, completed and the preparation of the Policy Effectiveness and Outlooks chapter proceeding well. A progress report on the Global Environment Outlook, accompanied by reflections of the [High-level Intergovernmental and Stakeholder Advisory Group](#)

(one of the main advisory bodies for the process) will be made available to Member States at the Third Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. Through this progress report, Member States are encouraged to provide their advice and feedback to the Secretariat and the High-level Group on the future steps in the Global Environment Outlook process.

### **Emissions Gap Report**

The [Emissions Gap Report](#) 2017 is also on track to be finalized by the end of October, in time for a launch prior to the [Conference of the Parties of the UN Convention to Combat Climate Change](#).

### **Environmental Data, Statistics and Indicators**

- The United Nations Environment Programme reported official [Sustainable Development Goals](#) statistics for 8 indicators to the Sustainable Development Goals Secretary General's Global database and report and is making solid progress on the methodologies for the other 18 indicators for which we serve as custodian in the UN system.
- The United Nations Environment Programme has also finalised submissions for the water, oceans, biodiversity and sustainable consumption and production chapter of the [Secretary General's Sustainable Development Goals Progress Report](#).
- United Nations Environment Programme Statistics, in partnership with national statistics offices and relevant ministries, is continuing with capacity development and deployment of indicator and data collection. There has been a steady increase in the number of countries that have put in place mechanisms and processes to strengthen collection of environmental data and information.

### **Gap analysis to strengthen the Science-Policy-Governance Interface**

As requested by Member States through [Governing Council Decision 27/2](#) and reiterated in United Nations Environment Assembly [Resolution 1/4](#), the report "Delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a Gap analysis to strengthen the science-policy-governance interface" is now available for consultation. The report assesses data and information gaps as well as gaps in assessment processes that could be filled to strengthen the science-policy-governance interface at the level of Member States and within the United Nations Environment Programme. The report also assesses where there may be policy gaps that could be filled to strengthen the interface. It provides important information and recommendations to both Member States and International Organizations on how to strengthen the science-policy-governance interface and promote evidence-based decision making on the environmental dimension of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). The report has undergone extensive internal and external review.