

Summer  
2017

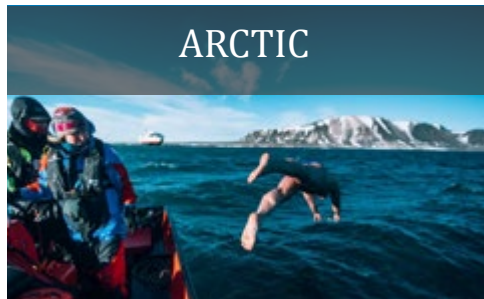
# NEWSLETTER NORTH AMERICA

ENGAGE

CALENDAR

CONTACT

◀ HOME



World Environment Day

Air Quality

Arctic

Environment Assembly

Oceans

Sustainable Development

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# WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

1 of 4 Stories

ENGAGE

CALENDAR

CONTACT

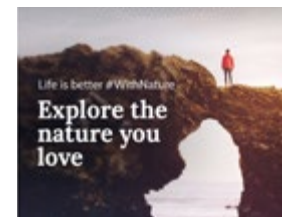
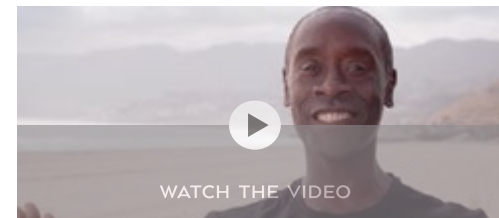
◀ HOME

## Canada Hosts World Environment Day

For [World Environment Day](#) 2017, the global host country Canada demonstrated its commitment to environmental action on the occasion of its 150th anniversary of confederation. The theme adopted by the Canadian government, "Connecting People to Nature," resonated around the world as thousands of people spent time outdoors, while governments and organizations announced bold new initiatives to safeguard our planet.

On June 5, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Environment Minister Catherine McKenna joined UN Environment Chief Erik Solheim to connect with nature by paddling kayaks on the Niagara River close to the famous Falls. The Prime Minister called on Canadians to follow through with the day's theme "to get outside and appreciate the healthy ecosystems that contribute to our well-being, and to do our part to protect the planet we share."

Page 1 of 2



With Nature



Canada



World Environment Day

Air Quality

Arctic

Environment Assembly

Oceans

Sustainable Development

North America Office



Summer  
2017

ENGAGE

CALENDAR

CONTACT

# WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

1 of 4 Stories

◀ HOME

A Parks Canada BioBlitz nearby attracted groups of school children who were paired up with celebrities including reggae star [Rocky Dawuni](#), Disney actor [Matthew Isen](#) and [The Water Brothers](#). A global BioBlitz was organized with [iNaturalist](#) which saw nearly 10,000 people submitting over 130,000 observations to assist experts to identify species at risk.



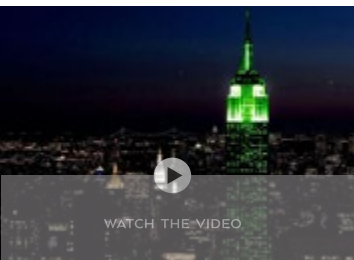
Around the world, people engaged in a wide variety of activities to mark the day including tree planting and clean-ups on mountains and beaches. The legacy of World Environment Day this year saw countries announcing major commitments such as the opening of a new national park in Finland; the designation of an area of the Red Sea as a natural reserve in Jordan; two new marine parks established in Chile; and Bosnia and Herzegovina pledging to double the size of their protected areas.

From Niagara Falls to the Great Pyramids of Giza in Egypt, iconic buildings and landmarks across the globe [turned green](#) to commemorate World Environment Day as part of a 24-hour cycle of celebrations and activities.

*“World Environment Day reminds us that we have a global responsibility to safeguard our environment – and that each of us has a role to play to preserve and protect it. More than ever, Canada is committed to provide international leadership to fight climate change and support clean economic growth.”*

- Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

Page 2 of 2



WATCH THE VIDEO



World Environment Day

Air Quality

Arctic

Environment Assembly

Oceans

Sustainable Development

North America Office

Summer  
2017

# WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

2 of 4 Stories

ENGAGE

CALENDAR

CONTACT

◀ HOME



## Future Leaders Inspired Aboard the Canadian C3 Icebreaker

Following the official program with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in Niagara, World Environment Day festivities continued in Canada's original capital of Kingston, Ontario aboard the [Canada C3](#) icebreaker. Environment Minister Catherine McKenna and UN Environment Chief Erik Solheim moderated a dynamic youth panel discussion on civic engagement related to environmental stewardship. Students in classrooms from across the country were able to actively participate through Facebook Live.



The program also featured the unveiling of [six new stamps](#) issued by the UN Postal Administration in honor of World Environment Day, showcasing the beauty of Canada's landscapes and species. The events concluded on a high note with musical performances by renowned Canadian artists including Rob Baker, Gord Sinclair of the Tragically Hip.



Canada C3 Education Lead Diz Glithero, Canada C3 Founder Geoff Green, UN Environment Acting Regional Director Fatou Ndoye, Singer Rocky Dawuni, and Youth Ambassador Kim Mathieu

Canada C3 is a signature project for the country's 150th anniversary that is making an epic 150-day sailing journey from Toronto to Victoria via the Northwest Passage to connect Canadians. The journey is meant to lead to a greater awareness and deeper understanding of the country and the importance of protecting its natural environment and cultural heritage.



World Environment Day

Air Quality

Arctic

Environment Assembly

Oceans

Sustainable Development

North America Office



## Jack Johnson Kicks Off World Environment Day Celebrations

On the eve of World Environment Day, singer and UN Environment Goodwill Ambassador, [Jack Johnson](#) and actor [Adrian Grenier](#) kicked off [celebrations](#) at a special concert in Toronto, Ontario. Following remarks by Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada Catherine McKenna and UN Environment Chief Erik Solheim, Johnson played an acoustic set in front of an electrified audience of fans. He was joined onstage by international music star and humanitarian activist, [Rocky Dawuni](#).

The message from the stage was one of encouragement for people to connect with nature and to recommit ourselves to build a cleaner, more sustainable world and healthier planet for generations to come.

The celebrities and Minister met with local nonprofit organizations who shared environmental initiatives at the show's Village Green prior to Jack Johnson sold out concert as part of his 2017 summer tour.



# WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

4 of 4 Stories

## Summit Inspires a Deeper Connection with Nature



As the flagship event for [World Environment Day](#) in the United States, the [Nature Summit](#) brought together artists, innovators and storytellers to explore creative messaging and mediums to inspire a deeper engagement with nature.

From new media storytelling techniques to virtual reality, the Summit showcased the vast opportunities for creating positive narratives to inspire the human connection to nature and the ultimate shared responsibility to protect our natural world.

Dynamic discussions were moderated by adventurer and environmentalist, David de Rothschild, and featured: Material Alchemist [Lauren Bowker](#); Music Producer [Sol Guy](#); [Jungles in Paris](#) Co-founder, Darrell Hartman; UN Champion of the Earth [Leyla Acargolu](#); Conservation Storyteller [Sean Southey](#); Elisabeth Lacoursiere from [Parks Canada](#); and [Xin Liu](#) from the MIT Media Lab.

The event was held at the Embassy of Canada in partnership with [Voice for Nature](#), the [Global Environment Facility](#) and the [#NatureForAll](#) initiative with virtual reality experiences provided by [Conservation International](#). H.E. David MacNaughton, Canada's Ambassador to the United States, remarked on the importance of the day for Canada and highlighted the country's leadership role in ensuring a more sustainable future.





## Teaming up with Formula E in the Race to Improve Air Quality

The Fia Formula E Racing Championship has [joined forces](#) with UN Environment to fight inner-city air quality and boost the profile of alternative energy sources and electric vehicles. The partnership focuses on raising awareness of the benefits of electric cars among younger generations and motorsport fans globally by educating future consumers and challenging major cities and governments to take action to tackle air pollution.

The partnership will leverage the popularity of the FIA Formula E Championship which brings electrifying motorsport to some of the world's leading cities including Paris, New York and Montreal.

Racing has always been a laboratory for the development of technology in the motor industry and Formula E aims to play a role in helping more people buy and drive electric cars. They are collaborating with Enel, the power partner of the FIA Formula E Championship, to promote the advancement of clean energy infrastructure. Enel also works with smart grid metering and allows the fans to interact with their energy systems in real time during races. The switch to cleaner technology, such as electric cars, will have an enormous impact on air quality as this market represents one quarter of the energy related greenhouse gas emissions globally.



FIA President Jean Todt, Head of UN Environment Erik Solheim, Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker, and Founder & CEO of Formula E, Alejandro Agag

## D.C. Mayor Bowser Celebrates Bike to School Day on Capitol Hill

Members of the Washington, D.C. community, including school children, parents, and teachers, gathered on May 10 for [Bike to School Day](#) during [UN Global Road Safety Week](#). Students from a dozen different schools met to celebrate the occasion and to hear the benefits of biking to school. Among those present were D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser, Secretary of Transportation, Elaine Chao, and Director of the National Center for Safe Routes to School, Nancy Pullen-Seufert.

Mayor Bowser highlighted the health benefits of biking as well as the environmental impact of having fewer cars on the road. Her comments reflected past commitments to increasing traffic safety, particularly for children.

The Mayor recently signed up as one of the [Climate Mayors](#), a group of over 330 cities in the United States that commit to honor and uphold the Paris Agreement on climate change, which demonstrates the high value that the City of D.C. places on the reduction of pollution. The City is consistently working to reduce air pollution by emphasizing more efficient mass transit, better land use practices, and improved vehicle and fuel emissions standards.



(R to L) Washington, D.C. Mayor Bowser, FIA Foundation North American Manager Natalie Draisin and National Center for Safe Routes to School Director Nancy Pullen-Seufert.





## Facing Climate Change in the Arctic with Lewis Pugh

A decade after endurance swimmer Lewis Pugh first completed his first swim in -1.7 degrees Celsius (29 degrees Fahrenheit) temperature, he has [returned to the Arctic](#) to raise awareness about the disappearing glaciers that once covered the North Pole. His route will take him from Norway to Canada and Russia, to swim in waters where there had previously been only solid ice.

Since completing his first swim in frigid Arctic, Pugh, [UN patron of the Oceans](#), has conquered every ocean on earth, including 15 long-distance swims in some of the world's coldest places. He swims in order to bring attention to the greatest threats facing our ocean including climate change, plastic debris, over fishing and ocean acidification.

*"Ten years on, this swim returned us to the High Arctic to show the world the speed at which things are changing, and remind our leaders that what happens here affects all of us"*  
- Lewis Pugh, UN Patron of the Oceans.

Over the last three decades, ocean temperatures have been consistently rising and almost all of the heat produced by greenhouse gas emissions is being absorbed by the seas. This has led to the melting of miles of sheets of ice that will contribute to a rise in sea levels.

As the [pioneer](#) of more swims around famous landmarks than any other person in history, Pugh is on the frontline of the battle to protect our waters. Follow him on his [#ArcticDecade](#) journey on Twitter [@LewisPugh](#).



© Kelvin Trautman

## UN Environment Assembly - Towards a Pollution-Free Planet

The third session of the [UN Environment Assembly](#) will take place in Nairobi, Kenya from December 4 to 6, 2017. As the highest-level United Nations body to address global concerns on the environment, the Environment Assembly will deliberate on the impact of pollution on humans and biodiversity under the theme "[Towards a Pollution-Free Planet](#)."

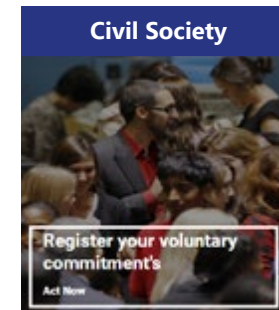
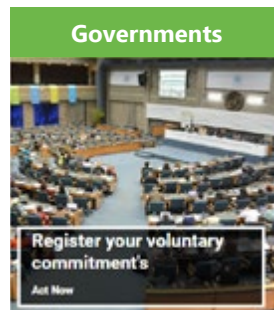
pollution and environmental degradation annually, while economic losses from pollution add up to an estimated \$5 trillion each year. Pollution can also act as a trigger for conflicts in a world where competition for limited resources is growing. The pollution burden is preventable, and that is why citizens around the world are calling for action.

The objective of the Assembly is to deliver tangible commitments to accelerate the global transition to eliminate pollution of air, land, waterways, oceans, and from chemicals and waste. It will also showcase solutions and best practices to address these issues, while making the case for transformative actions.

In the lead up to the Environment Assembly, UN Environment is inviting [voluntary commitments](#) to reduce pollution from governments, business, and the public. The North America Office will also host a regional consultation on October 26 in Toronto, Ontario to collect civil society inputs and commitments for the Assembly. The event will highlight the actions being taken to combat pollution at the national and local levels and the impact of pollution on human health and the environment.

Pollution damages human health and impairs natural ecosystems. Around the world, over 12.6 million deaths are attributable to

### Take the [Clean Planet Pledge](#) to #BeatPollution





## Adrian Grenier Designated as UN Environment Goodwill Ambassador

Hollywood actor and social advocate [Adrian Grenier](#), best known for his lead role in the hit HBO show "Entourage," received his designation as UN Environment Goodwill Ambassador in a ceremony hosted at the Empire State Building in New York on World Environment Day, June 5.

As the founder of the [Lonely Whale Foundation](#), Grenier has demonstrated his passion for protecting our oceans by launching the #StopSucking campaign. In his new role, Grenier will advocate for drastically reducing single-use plastic and for the protection of marine species, while urging his fans to make more conscious decisions to help reduce their environmental footprint.

"Together we must usher in a new era of compassion and carefulness through forward thinking environmental programs to drive measurable change," said Grenier. "I am personally committed to creating ways in which the global community can come together to help solve our most critical climate crises through routine, collective action."



Following his designation, Grenier appeared at the [UN Ocean Conference](#) in New York. He participated in high level events and launched the Clean Seas Dome, featuring the virtual reality film "Cry Out: The Lonely Whale Experience" alongside Erik Solheim, Executive Director of UN Environment.



Permanent Representative of Canada to UN Marc-André Blanchard, UN Environment Goodwill Ambassador Adrian Grenier, and Assistant Secretary-General and Head of UN Environment New York Office Elliott Harris

Summer  
2017

OCEANS  
2 of 3 Stories

ENGAGE

CALENDAR

CONTACT

HOME

## Wyland World Water Pledge Inspires at UN Ocean Conference

Internationally renowned marine life artist, Wyland, created two iconic paintings live at the [UN Ocean Conference](#) to commemorate a new partnership between UN Environment and the Wyland Foundation to protect the global marine environment through the [Wyland World Water Pledge](#). The 10-year outreach program will inspire and engage people around the world about the sustainable use of the planet's ocean, lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands.

Wyland is best known for his [Whaling Walls](#), a series of 100 life-size marine murals around the world. The Wyland World Water Pledge ties directly to the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources. Wyland will work closely with UN Environment's Global Program of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities ([GPA](#)), the only global initiative directly addressing the connectivity between terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems.

The inaugural UN Ocean Conference was launched on World Environment Day at the UN Headquarters in New York to mobilize coordinated global action between all stakeholders to improve the health of oceans by focusing on achieving targets under [Sustainable Development Goal 14](#) and related targets.



## Popular Ocean Video Series Now Available in Multiple Languages

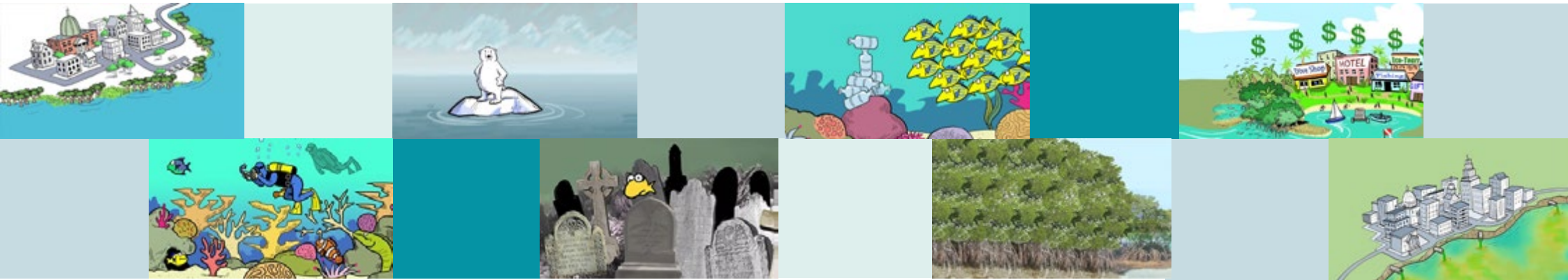
UN Environment has been partnering with internationally acclaimed cartoonist, Jim Toomey – of Sherman’s Lagoon fame – to produce a series of two-minute videos to raise awareness on the major threats facing our oceans. The videos use animation and humor to explain in clear and simple language the role oceans play in our lives and our very survival.



The series of eight “[Two Minutes on Oceans with Jim Toomey](#)” videos are now available in multiple of the official UN languages including Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, on [Youtube](#) which means that they can be appreciated by a larger audience from around the world. The videos address a wide variety of issues including: blue carbon, marine litter, climate change, valuing oceans, nutrient runoff, as well as sea level rise.

The videos have received critical acclaim, including an award from the [Blue Ocean Film Festival](#) for the piece on Nutrient Runoff. They are currently running on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) [Ocean Today Kiosks](#) located in 35 aquariums, museums, and learning centers across the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Have two minutes to spare? [Watch](#) a video or two!





# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1 of 2 Stories

## IMAX Focuses on Young Filmmakers

IMAX Corporation marked [World Environment Day](#) with the release of five documentary films featuring wildlife protection, ecological threats and air and water pollution. The eight-minute documentaries are part of [IMAX's In Focus](#) program, which mentors young filmmakers and provides them with an opportunity to use the power of film to entertain, educate and inspire actions to improve and protect the planet.

IMAX selected five exemplary student film programs from schools across the U.S. to create original content that directly addressed the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals: 13 (Climate Action), 14 (Life Below Water) and 15 (Life on Land). Each program received a \$5,000 grant in order to continue to educate, develop and inspire youth to pursue careers in filmmaking and the entertainment industry.

Launched in October 2016 as part of an IMAX-UN Environment partnership, In Focus is a component of [IMAX Big Picture](#), a corporate social responsibility effort to drive awareness of environmental and societal issues.





Summer  
2017

ENGAGE

CALENDAR

CONTACT

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

2 of 2 Stories

◀ HOME

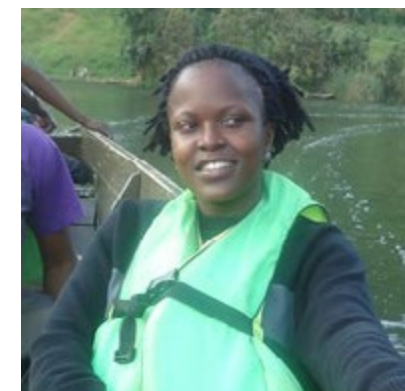
### Experts Selected for Prestigious Law Fellowship

The recipients of the 2017 [Global Environment & Sustainability Law Fellowship](#) come from different corners of the world - Jeanie Namugga hails from Uganda and Andrea Jacobs is from Antigua and Barbuda. The two were chosen from over 100 candidates and were awarded the Fellowships based on their achievements and experience as environmental lawyers working in the public sector.

Launched in partnership between the UN Environment and the Georgetown University Law Center on World Environment Day 5 June, 2016, the Global Environment & Sustainability Law Fellowship aims to strengthen the environmental capacity of lawyers globally. It provides the opportunity for environmental lawyers working in ministries or the judiciary to earn an Environmental and Energy Masters of Law Degree (LL.M.).

Ms. Namugga will focus her studies on the link between land use issues and the emerging oil and gas exploration market in Uganda, which is causing a multi-media pollution crisis for water and air. Ms. Jacobs will delve into the intersection between development and climate change mitigation and adaptation in the Caribbean.

Based at Georgetown Law's campus in Washington, D.C., the two will engage in research and gain practical experience in the practice of environmental law. Following the completion of their degree, they will have the opportunity to work with UN Environment Law Division anywhere in the world.



Jeanie Namugga, Uganda



Andrea Jacobs, Antigua and Barbuda

Summer  
2017

# Clean Seas Marine Plastic Innovation Challenge

ENGAGE

CALENDAR

CONTACT

## ENGAGE WITH UN ENVIRONMENT

◀ HOME

1 of 2 Opportunities

**Each year, at least 8 million tonnes of plastic ends up in the ocean. Marine litter directly impacts over 600 marine species.**

### ARE YOU UP FOR A CHALLENGE?

UN Environment in collaboration with Think Beyond Plastic™ invites university students from all over the globe to take part in the 2017 [Marine Plastic Innovation Challenge](#). The challenge, which is the first of its kind, seeks to highlight solution-oriented engineering, research and communication efforts that can help solve the global marine litter problem.

Deadline for submissions is October 6, 2017. The winners will be invited to the [Sixth International Marine Debris Conference](#) to be held in San Diego, California in March 2018.

This effort is part of UN Environment [#CleanSeas](#) campaign, which aims to engage governments, the public, and the private sector to ban single-use plastics and microbeads within five years.

Join the movement to turn the tide on plastic!



Summer  
2017

ENGAGE

CALENDAR

CONTACT

# ENGAGE WITH UN ENVIRONMENT

2 of 2 Opportunities

HOME

## #BreatheLife Into Your City

©Luca Zanon

Air pollution outdoors and inside our homes claims around 6.5 million lives each year. Many sources of air pollution are also heavy emitters of carbon dioxide, contributing to a vicious cycle that threatens our health and climate.

Over 80% of cities around the world exceed the World Health Organization limits for safe air. Now, cities around the world are joining forces to combat air pollution by joining [#BreatheLife](#). The campaign is mobilizing local and national governments to determine air quality targets and develop action plans to reduce air pollution.

The campaign aims to cut annual deaths from air pollution in half by 2030 and contribute towards achieving the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), particularly Goal 3 on health and well-being.

See what your [city's](#) level is!



World Environment Day

Air Quality

Arctic

Environment Assembly

Oceans

Sustainable Development

North America Office

Summer  
2017

# REPORTS THAT MATTER

ENGAGE

CALENDAR

CONTACT

◀ HOME



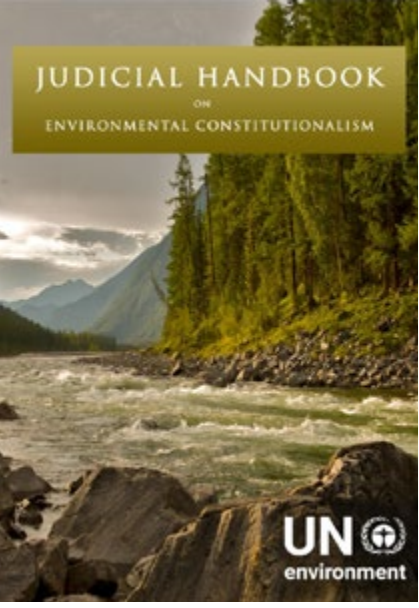
New renewable sources of energy accounted for 55.3% of all the gigawatts of power generation added worldwide last year.



First assessment on deploying low-carbon electricity supply alongside energy efficient technologies.



The global energy transition is well underway, with record new additions of installed renewable energy capacity.



This Handbook provides jurists with an overview of environmental constitutionalism.



Government leaders, experts and campaigners explore the benefits of connecting people to nature.



World Environment Day

Air Quality

Arctic

Environment Assembly

Oceans

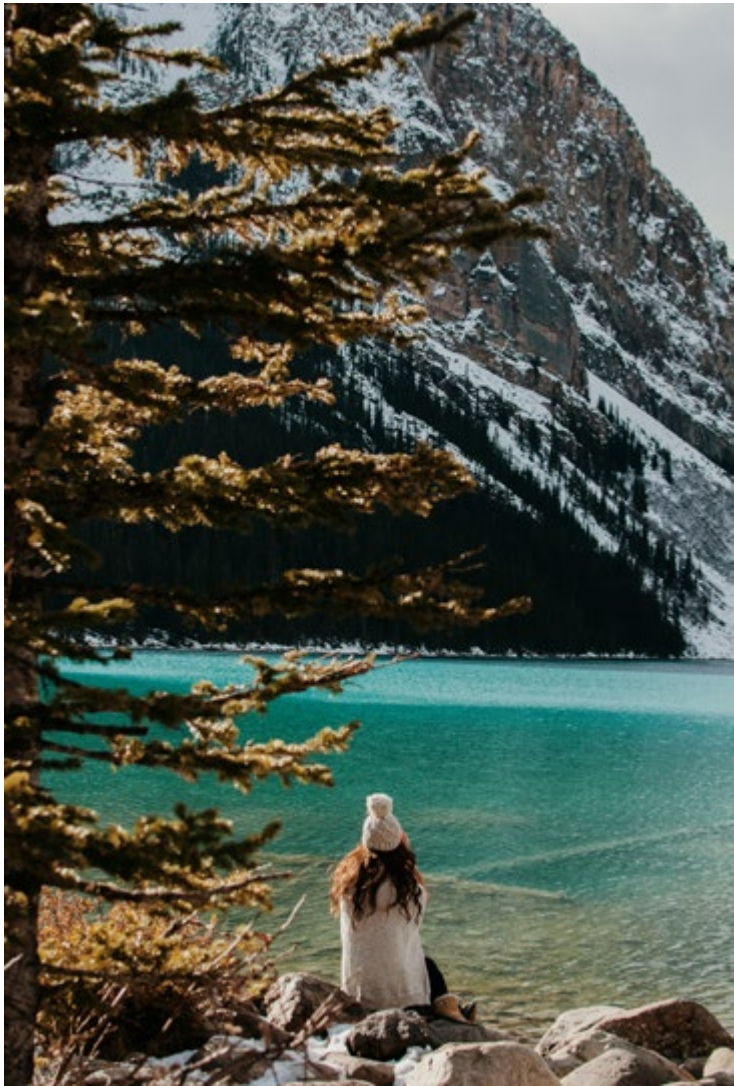
Sustainable Development

North America Office



Summer  
2017

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS



**12 August**  
**International Youth Day**

**16 September**  
**International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer**

**18-24 September**  
**Climate Week**  
New York, NY

**24 – 29 September**  
**1st Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Minamata Convention**  
Geneva, Switzerland

**27 September**  
**World Tourism Day**

**22 - 28 October**  
**International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action**

**26 October**  
**North American Regional Consultation for UN Environment Assembly**  
Toronto, Ontario

**6-17 November**  
**COP 23 to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change**  
Bonn, Germany

**4-6 December**  
**UN Environment Assembly**  
Nairobi, Kenya



ENGAGE

CALENDAR

CONTACT

◀ HOME



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The mission of the UN Environment's North America Office is to promote effective responses to global environmental challenges and to foster cooperation between the governments of the United States and Canada to address environmental issues, strategically and effectively.