

To: Committee of Permanent Representatives
to the United Nations Environment Programme

Report by the Secretariat on the UN Environment Programme's Private Sector Engagement

The Secretariat has the pleasure to submit the 2020 annual report on the UN Environment Programme's strengthened engagement with the private sector through partnerships and collaboration in areas of common interest for your information.

The Secretariat looks forward to receiving your views or any comments on this report. Please use this email to submit any comments to the Private Sector Unit (UNEP-business@un.org), which is now located in UNEP's Corporate Services Division.

I. Background and Relevant Mandates

1. The United Nations Environment Programme's engagement with the private sector is grounded in Governing Council Decision 22/7 "Engaging business and industry", which was approved during the 22nd Session of the Governing Council in 2003.
2. The UN Environment Programme's approach has evolved to reflect the call to enhance the business engagement for sustainable development and the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals in terms of collaboration with the private sector. The 2030 Agenda, adopted by the General Assembly in 2015¹, recognizes that the scale and ambition of the new Agenda requires a revitalized Global Partnership to ensure its implementation, bringing together governments and the private sector. Member States also acknowledged the role of a diverse private sector with geographic balance, ranging from micro-enterprises to cooperatives to multinationals, all of which can contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
3. The UN Environment Assembly's resolution 2/5 on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted in 2016 sets out the parameters in which the UN Environment Programme is to revitalize its work with the private sector. The Resolution (paragraph 12): "Requests the Executive Director to initiate new multi-stakeholder partnerships, where appropriate, and within available resources, and strengthen existing ones, including with the private sector, civil society and other relevant stakeholders, to promote activities that contribute to delivering the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".
4. The Ministerial Declaration of the 4th UN Environment Assembly calls for "promoting sustainable and innovative financing opportunities and mechanisms to unlock new capital for sustainable investment and upscaling of sustainable business models, with a special focus on small and medium-sized enterprises" and for "seeking out innovative solutions to environmental challenges by strengthening partnerships between the public and private sectors and academia for accelerating the uptake and upscaling of those solutions". The adopted Programme of Work and Budget for the biennium 2020-2021 calls upon the UN Environment Programme "to promote, support and oversee partnerships to contribute to the implementation of the Environment Assembly resolutions and the Programme of Work", while also emphasizing the need of complying with integrity measures.
5. The Assembly also adopted an important resolution titled, "Addressing environmental challenges through sustainable business practices" which "requests the Executive Director of UN Environment Programme, in collaboration with other UN bodies and UN partners, to continue to support the development of skills, especially for micro, small and medium sized enterprises, to promote sustainable production patterns, including cleaner production and industrial symbiosis in order to enhance their profitability, resource efficiency and productivity". The resolution also calls for the UN Environment Programme "to develop and implement programmes that catalyse replication, upscale existing innovative solutions and technologies, and promote the uptake of sustainable business approaches".
6. Against this backdrop, the UN Environment Programme aims to be at the forefront for collaborating with the private sector in constructive and results-oriented partnerships that will bring the needed innovations, technological solutions and financing to tackle our most pressing global environmental challenges. The private sector will also be instrumental in contributing to the

¹ Adopted by General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015 entitled, "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development."

implementation of the relevant resolutions decided upon by 193 member States at the UN Environment Assembly.

7. The purpose of this report is to inform member States on progress made in engaging the private sector through partnership initiatives in support of the implementation of the Programme of Work.

8. Furthermore, the report includes an Annex of the updated list of private sector partnerships concluded by the UN Environment Programme with individual companies as of October 2020.

II. Definition of the Private Sector

9. The private sector, as defined in the UN Sustainable Development Group's Common Approach to Prospect Research and Due Diligence for Business Sector Partnerships and referenced in the UN Environment Programme's Strategy for Private Sector Engagement, is the part of the economy that is run by individuals and companies and is not state controlled². Therefore, it encompasses all for-profit businesses that are not owned or operated by governments, and in some definitions, it may also include privately-owned organizations (e.g. family foundations or associations) or include influential individuals, such as high net worth persons.

10. Following the 2030 Agenda, the UN Environment Programme regards the private sector as ranging from micro-enterprises to cooperatives to multinationals encompassing the entire business sector. It includes for-profit enterprises; companies or businesses regardless of size, ownership or structure; as well as private financial institutions, trade associations and organizations that represent private sector interests. It also includes corporate philanthropic foundations.

III. The UN Environment Programme's response to the COVID-19 crisis in collaboration with the private sector

11. The *Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)*: the response to the COVID-19 crisis in collaboration with the private sector is linked to IPBES' upcoming "assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health" which will assess the connections between health and biodiversity, and the environmental origins of pandemics, with the aim of informing on the development of policies and actions. Any private sector entity willing to finance the IPBES trust fund will contribute to the financing of this assessment report, as well as other assessment reports and capacity-building activities of the Platform.

12. A draft proposal prepared by the UN Environment Programme's engagement with the UN Reform during the COVID-19 lockdown (thematic webinars) was developed and shared with Regional Offices.

13. UN Environment Programme publications, webinars, meetings and workshops addressing the COVID-19 crisis include the following:

- [Waste Management during the COVID-19 Pandemic: From Response to Recovery.](#)
- [First International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies.](#)
- [COVID-19 and Air Quality – How Can We Sustain Air Quality Gains in Asia-Pacific?](#)
- [Improving air quality in African cities: a way for mitigating and preventing Covid-like pandemics.](#)

² Please note that the annex of this report also includes information about state-owned enterprises that have partnered with the UN Environment Programme.

- [Sustainable Lifestyles for Plastics and Packaging Waste Management during a Pandemic \(COVID-19\)](#).

14. UN Environment Programme factsheets and blogs addressing the COVID-19 crisis:

- [COVID-19 Waste management Factsheets](#) available in all UN languages, more information available through this link: <https://bit.ly/3o4VNeI>.
- [Green Fiscal Policies for a Sustainable and Resilient COVID-19 Recovery](#).

15. [Green Fiscal Policy Network](#): COVID-19 has plunged the global economy into crisis. Green fiscal policies (GFP) can play a key role in shaping the recovery. As governments are devising green fiscal stimulus policies, they must look to maximize short-term growth and employment effects, but they have also a lever in hand to steer economies to a green and fair transition. The collapse of the oil price has created a window of opportunity for carbon taxes and fossil fuel subsidy reform to mobilize revenue and drive low-carbon development. Green budgeting can rationalize more efficient expenditures and align spending with sustainability. In developing countries with limited fiscal space, GFP can be part of a sustainable solution. The UN Environment Programme and the Green Fiscal Policy Network will be joining with Oxford University to create a Green Recovery/Fiscal Policy Observatory to track policies and progress in greening recoveries in the world's top 50 economies.

16. *Green Growth Knowledge Partnership (GGKP)*: the GGKP's [Sustainability After COVID-19 series](#) provides space for constructive high-level conversation on the global response to [COVID-19](#), and how to build back better and greener while protecting the most vulnerable people and countries. It challenges the [policy](#), [business](#), and [finance](#) communities to think through and articulate their unique role in this time of crisis and how they can align their response efforts to maximize immediate impacts and optimize long-term outcomes for people and planet. The webinars can be accessed through this link: <https://bit.ly/3kcHnGS>.

17. The *International Resources Panel (IRP)* cooperates with the [One Planet Network](#) in the Sustainable Consumption and Production Task Group. This Group is working to build a systematic process to develop reports that are "actionable" on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP). It will zoom into value chains within three sectors (buildings, food, textiles) and regions/countries. Key messages will be extracted from thematic IRP reports and other sources and will be developed further through a series of consultations. The results of the Task Group will be presented at UNEA-5, including messages and conclusions relevant to a post COVID-19 recovery.

18. The *One Planet Network*: partners of the Network are demonstrating that achieving SDG 12 on sustainable consumption and production is key to a sustainable recovery from the pandemic and citing the targets in this SDG and other Goals that the Network is supporting. More information is available through the following links:

- [COVID-19: a resource list on Food Systems and Nutrition responses](#)
- [Webinar](#): COVID-19 and Sustainable Food Systems - Responses and innovations to tackle vulnerabilities and build back better

19. The *Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE)* has identified ten major steps for building back better in response to the COVID-19 crisis:

- Incorporating the offer to support green stimulus through [PAGE in "A UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19"](#).
- Issued a COVID-19 [Statement by the PAGE Management Board](#).

- Developed an “[observatory of COVID Impacts](#)” and mapping of [Fiscal and Finance Measures](#) in partner countries to inform PAGE programming.
- Established a PAGE COVID-19 Task Team consisting of UN Agencies and Funding Partners.
- Developed a PAGE [COVID-19 Hub](#) to provide latest knowledge and tools to decisionmakers.
- Conducted a [Green Recovery Needs Assessment](#) Survey of 20 PAGE countries and a [Brief Summary](#) was discussed with Funding Partners.
- Created a Green Recovery Challenge Fund to support 20 countries with their national COVID-19 responses; now capitalized at \$6 million thanks to an initial contribution from Germany.
- Initiation of a Rapid Modelling of COVID-19 impacts and establishing a group of experts that can help countries in designing green recovery/stimulus packages.
- Repurposing of PAGE [Tools for Green Recovery Policies](#).
- Developed a joint Policy Paper with 10 other international initiatives: OECD; GGGI; GEC; and others. The paper identifies [Ten Priority Options for a Just, Green & Transformative Recovery](#).

20. *UNEP Finance Initiative (UNEP FI)*: to help support their customers and in turn communities in the most effective ways, UNEP FI’s coalition of over 200 banks from over 60 countries has been working on the following:

- UNEP FI has been sharing practices, solutions and lessons learned as they respond to the COVID-19 crisis and its economic impacts. More information available through this link: <https://bit.ly/3m0Zq3r>.
- UNEP FI has also been working with its members to share information and lessons of how they are responding to keep employees and customers safe during the crisis and to keep financing flowing to businesses and communities. Efforts have now shifted to the role of the finance sector in helping governments and communities build back better. <https://bit.ly/3o2BuOY>.
- UNEP FI published an article on [how responsible banks can advance financial inclusion in the COVID-19 build back](#) (blog).
- UNEP FI’s [Property Working Group](#) (PWG) convened virtually for two discussion forums to share information on how institutions are managing the public health and economic crisis from COVID-19, and thoughts on how institutions need to plan and operate for a post-crisis recovery.

21. *Sustainable Infrastructure Partnership*: investments in sustainable infrastructure will be key for building more [resilient](#) societies after the [COVID-19](#) pandemic while also creating millions of [jobs](#). [These 10 principles](#) provide a framework for decision-making on infrastructure spending for post-COVID-19 recovery and stimulus packages. They cover a range of important considerations, including SDG alignment, systems-level planning, employment creation, social and natural infrastructure integration, biodiversity and human rights impacts, transparency and consultative processes. While investments in economic infrastructure like roads and power plants are important, the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the need to focus also on inclusive social infrastructure. More information is available through these links: <https://bit.ly/346MS4u>; <https://bit.ly/35aENLx>.

22. *Global Tourism Plastic Initiative (GTPI)*: this initiative is keeping its active engagement with tourism stakeholders and supporting their commitment to encourage new signatories. GTPI has also launched in July 2020 key recommendations for the tourism sector to continue taking action on plastic pollution during the COVID-19 recovery in partnership with UNWTO and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation. The recommendations are addressed to tourism stakeholders with the aim of supporting them to continue fighting plastic pollution during the COVID-19 recovery. The document illustrates how reducing the plastic footprint, increasing the engagement of suppliers, working closer with waste service providers, and ensuring transparency on the actions taken, can

significantly contribute to a responsible recovery of the tourism sector. More information is available through this link <https://bit.ly/2IJgahp>.

23. *Cool Coalition*: is one of the sectors with a vital behind-the-scenes role in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. It provides everything from the right temperature conditions to safely transport and store medicines. It also keeps patients and care givers safe and comfortable in both traditional healthcare facilities, as well as emergency hospitals assembled in halls, carparks, and other municipal spaces. The following companies (i.e. Danfoss, ENGIE, Electrolux, Empower and Mabe) are members of UNEP's Cool Coalition, which is a global partnership formed to reduce the climate impact of the cooling industry. These companies are not just on the frontline of this emerging health crisis but are also leading examples of how business representatives can support a more climate resilient recovery and build back better.

24. *District Energy in Cities Initiative*: this initiative and its partners are currently conducting advocacy and awareness raising on the economic, social and environmental benefits of modern district energy systems in a post COVID-19 world. The initiative engages private sector partners, including energy corporations, utilities, energy service companies and technology suppliers, to provide the technical support needed by cities and countries to deliver more high-efficient, resilient and cost-effective heating and cooling through district energy systems.

25. *Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC)*: in the COVID-19 context, the need for adequate housing was highlighted, and buildings have a critical role in addressing health problems from indoor air quality and increasing preparedness for climate induced risks such as heatwaves and floods. The UN Environment Programme has several upcoming virtual events highlighting such opportunities, e.g. with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)/The Agence Française de Développement (AFD) led Programme for Energy in Buildings (PEEB) and the UNFCCC. With its partners, the UN Environment Programme is further narrowing the GlobalABC regional roadmaps down into sub-regional (Middle East, Southeast Asia) and national roadmaps. This will enable further awareness raising and engagement from local private sector stakeholders. With the buildings and construction sector being a major pillar of national economies, the UN Environment Programme will continue encouraging innovation and promoting locally adapted solutions, circularity and sustainably-sourced materials which offer new economic opportunities, create local jobs and skilled workforces.

26. *Eco-innovation & RECPnet*: in partnership with the [Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production Network \(RECPnet\)](#), the UN Environment Programme is supporting the small and medium-sized enterprises in building more resilient value chains by adding sustainability at the core of their business strategy: (1) by working on joint sustainable solutions to common problems, significant shared gains can be achieved with better commercial, environmental and social value; (2) greater material or production efficiency, minimized waste, optimization of distribution channels and reduced lead-time result in lower production costs; (3) good relationships built through a value chain approach have helped to develop proactive communication on emerging challenges and risks to adapt; (4) producers that rely less or not exclusively on import supplies (e.g. by sourcing certain materials locally or through on-site recycling) are less prone to the crisis. Ongoing activities, also in the response to UNEA-4 Resolution 4, includes development of an online training package on eco-innovation and updating the 'business case for eco-innovation' regarding resilience and post-COVID-19 recovery (building back better). These materials will be offered to all countries and specifically applied through projects in Colombia, Georgia, Moldova, Sri Lanka, among other countries.

27. *Transforming Tourism Value Chain project*: a COVID-19 response toolkit has been developed by the project to help tourism stakeholders to address the impact of the crisis. The focus of the

project for 2020-2021 is on the implementation of the national roadmap for low carbon and resource efficient tourism.

28. Implementation of the Fifth Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law, including the international community in the progressive development of environmental law. The activities will include monitoring of legal responses to COVID-19, assessing their impacts on environmental rule of law and establishing a digital platform that will act as a hub for information on COVID-19 and environmental rule of law. It is also developing advocacy and guidance materials on building back better, with an emphasis on waste management and nature-based solutions.

29. The UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat has developed in June 2020 a blueprint on “UNEP/MAP Strategic response to the COVID-19 crisis” which was shared with contracting parties and partners. The participation of the private sector in view of promoting sustainable practices and life-cycle approaches, increasing the offer of sustainable products and services, and supporting green business and entrepreneurship will be crucial. By embracing sustainable and circular models, businesses can decouple economic activity from the consumption of raw materials vulnerable to climate risks and other crises and shocks, and build supply chains that are more diverse, distributed, flexible, and resilient. Furthermore, the blueprint highlights the recent COP-21 Decision on the “Development of a Set of Regional Measures to Support the Development of Green and Circular Businesses and to Strengthen the Demand for more Sustainable Products”, which will be used as a basis in this respect and its implementation will take into consideration the COVID-19 crisis implications.

IV. Highlights of Private Sector Engagement across Sub-programmes

30. Private sector engagement is critical to creating technology and business-based solutions, as well as providing resources to address our global environmental challenges. The UN Environment Programme has been working with private sector representatives and associations in the following areas: renewable and alternative energy, banking, finance, oil and gas, waste, water, food and beverages, agriculture and fisheries, forestry, electric power, heating and cooling, tire and transport, mining and metals, tourism, building and construction, chemicals including plastics and cosmetics, manufacturing including textile and leather, information and communication technology, and retail.

31. The UN Environment Programme has regular engagement with networks of professionals whose work can positively contribute to addressing environmental issues. The scope of work in 2020 with the private sector includes but is not limited to: financing and scaling up ecosystem-based adaptation; promotion of sustainable consumption and production practices; climate advocacy, information dissemination; protection of peatlands,; support of women to use renewable energy; and electric mobility promotion, among others.

32. Most efforts undertaken are through Divisions and Regional Offices where engaging the private sector seeks to cut across all UN Environment Programme Sub-programmes and support various Sustainable Development Goals. This section provides highlights of private sector engagement relevant to the UN Environment Programme’s seven Sub-programmes.

Sub-programme 1: Climate Change

33. *Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC)*: of the over 140 members of GlobalABC, 25 are private sector entities (enterprises and networks). Through sparking national alliances for buildings and construction GlobalABC brings private and public sector actors around

one table to decarbonize the sector through effective policies and action on the ground. To date, the UN Environment Programme has sparked three national alliances, in Mexico, Morocco, and Tunisia. The regional roadmaps for [Africa](#), [Asia](#), and [Latin America](#) inform actors on steps needed for decarbonization. Under the *Market Transformation Work Area*, GlobalABC works with members on science-based targets, aligning private sector emission reduction targets with the Paris Agreement Goals. Under the *Building Measurement, Data, and Information Work Area*, the UN Environment Programme works with members on developing a Buildings Passport, helping developers and owners address whole life carbon of buildings. Through regional roundtables and high-level dialogues, GlobalABC brings together private and public sector actors on finding solutions for decarbonizing the sector along its lifecycle.

- Through the [Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction](#): the UN Environment Programme will work with private sector members to highlight the opportunities of building back better; making use of recovery policy packages emphasizing the type of financial incentives and approaches required (e.g. retrofits and renovations) to make use of this window to decarbonize building practices along the value chain.

34. *Microfinance for Ecosystem-based Adaptation (MEbA) project*: the project builds capacity in Microfinance Institutions so that they may autonomously promote EbA loans. The project currently works with 11 private financial institutions (FIs) in 8 countries. There are 8 FIs in Latin America and the Caribbean and 3 FIs in West Africa. So far, more than 17,000 EbA loans have been financed, equivalent to \$27 million of private investment towards EbA. This is a leverage ratio of 4:1 (Project cost to Germany's Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) is €5 million. 11 EbA demonstration farms have been implemented, and more than 3,000 farmers have been trained on EbA methods. Several publications and communication materials, including a series of videos on EbA and microfinance have been produced. Please access the following links for more information on this project: <https://unepmeba.org/media-resources/>; <https://unepmeba.org/>

35. *The Seed Capital Assistance Facility (SCAF)*: UN Environment Programme and the Frankfurt School have created the UNEP Collaborating Centre for Climate & Sustainable Energy Finance (FS-UNEP Centre) which has been working to advance transformation to resilient low carbon and resource-efficient economies by attracting and supporting new types of financing for climate action. Funded by the Global Environment Facility and the UN Foundation, Phase I of the Seed Capital Assistance Facility started in 2009. Over a seven-year period, the Facility worked with 10 investment partners and provided \$2.4 million of seed financing to 20 renewable energy projects in 14 developing countries in Africa and Asia. Phase II started in 2014 and will run until 2026, supported by contributions from the UK Department for International Development and the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety.

- The Facility seeks eligible partners active in low and lower-middle income countries of Africa and Asia. It provides financial support on a cost-sharing and co-financing basis via private equity funds, venture capital funds and project development. SCAF projects are expected to avoid over 2.8 MtCO_{2e} emissions per annum while serving nearly 40 million end use beneficiaries and creating over 13,500 local jobs.
- More specifically for 2020, the Facility has increased its reach in the South-East Asian market that was previously not as represented as the African market. So far in 2020 two new partners have been onboarded. One partner focuses on onshore wind and solar photovoltaic opportunities in the Philippines and Vietnam while the other focuses energy storage and hydro power in Indonesia and Myanmar.

36. The *District Energy in Cities Initiative*: is a public-private partnership that supports national and local governments to build know-how and implement policies that will accelerate investment in low-carbon and high-efficient district heating and cooling systems. The Initiative is implementing activities in four pilot countries (Chile, China, India and Serbia), and ten replication countries (Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Egypt, Malaysia, Mongolia, Morocco, Russia, the Seychelles and Tunisia). The initiative engages with the private sector at the local, national and international levels to support the development of demonstration projects in selected pilot cities. To date, there has been \$72 million of direct investments mitigating 1.9 M tCO₂eq over 20 years.

- The *Initiative*, with support from its private sector partners is developing feasibility assessments, methodologies and tools, to help cities and countries identify and bring to the market high-efficient and low carbon district heating and cooling projects. During 2020-2021, the Initiative will be implementing activities in Argentina, Chile, China, Colombia, Egypt, India, Malaysia, Morocco, and Tunisia.

37. *Integrated Urban Systems Partnership*: this partnership was launched at UNEA-4 and engages private sector partners including energy utilities, energy service companies, suppliers of smart city solutions and electricity companies to promote innovative integrated solutions for cities that enable connecting key urban infrastructure towards a more efficient use of local resources, a higher integration of renewable energy sources, reduction of climate impact and improvement in urban air quality.

38. The *Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV)*: the PCFV brings together 73 partners drawn from developed and developing countries, the oil and vehicle industries, academia and civil society. Lead-free petrol, low sulphur fuels and advanced vehicle emission technologies were identified as 3 cost effective measures that could be implemented through the PCFV. These 3 measures are key to the UN Environment Programme's pollution and climate agendas, by reducing particulate matter and black carbon emissions. PCFV had grown to a membership of over 120 partners, 73 which reaffirmed their engagement. It was then that ExxonMobil, Total and others seized being independent partners but are represented through the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA) – the global oil and gas industry association. [IPIECA](#), a not-for profit association, was formed in 1974 on the request of the UN Environment Programme to jointly address environmental and social issues related to the sector.

39. The *Climate & Clean Air Coalition (CCAC)*: the CCAC collaborated with the Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) and developed a private sector engagement strategy and a report released in 2016 that demonstrates that to take fast action on climate change, businesses should include measures to reduce short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs).

- In 2014 the CCAC launched its Oil and Gas Methane Partnership (OGMP) at the UN Secretary General's Climate Summit. The OGMP was established to provide a protocol to help companies systematically manage their methane emissions from upstream oil and gas operations, as well as a credible platform to help them demonstrate this systematic approach and actual reductions to stakeholders. Current member companies are BP, Ecopetrol, Eni, Equinor, Neptune Energy International SA, Pemex, PTT, Repsol, Shell and Total. This workstream aims to address a critical lack of global methane measurement data in the oil and gas sector to help prioritize company actions and government policies for addressing this important SLCP emissions source.
- The Oil & Gas Climate Initiative (OGCI) has provided co-finance of \$6 million for the science studies. OGCI recently joined the Global Methane Alliance implemented under the CCAC's *Mineral Methane Initiative*. The Alliance brings together governments, financing institutions,

international organizations, NGOs, and industry to support ambitious methane reduction targets from the oil and gas industry.

- In 2020, a new OGMP Reporting Framework 2.0 that will serve as the “gold standard” of methane reporting for oil and gas companies was agreed upon. Since the start of OGMP operations, participating companies surveyed over 70 assets in 15 countries and reported some 25,000 tonnes of methane emissions avoided and over 1,260 technological changes.
- Two papers of the CCAC Methane Studies have been published during the first half of 2020: “Methane Emissions from Offshore Oil and Gas Platforms in the Gulf of Mexico” and “Airborne Assessment of Methane Emissions from Offshore Platforms in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico”. The UN Environment Programme is working to publish two more by the end of 2020. Going into 2021, further measurement campaigns will be pursued around the world in key regions of interest, including the facilitation of technical support on methane mitigation to governments and National Oil Companies (NOCs). In 2020-2021, the UN Environment Programme and partners will continue to convene regional and national meetings to raise awareness on methane emissions and will offer an online training programme to government and NOC representatives to learn more about methane emissions mitigation. As a result of COVID-19, many companies in the oil and gas sector were in need of government bailout. In some cases, these bailouts were tied to environmental performance.

Sub-programme 2: Resilience to Disasters and Conflicts

40. A partnership was established with the Aga Khan Foundation in May 2019 focusing on: mountain watershed management; ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction; livelihoods; and food security. The Aga Khan Foundation is the rural development agency within Aga Khan Development Network. The Aga Khan Foundation has been working in Afghanistan since 2002, with rural communities in mountainous, remote, and resource poor areas to improve their quality of life. Aga Khan Foundation has been implementing diverse projects with many donors in 19 provinces across Afghanistan including Bamyan, Daikundi and Takhar provinces which are UN Environment Programme’s target provinces to implement interventions. For more information on this partnership please refer to the report’s annex.

Sub-programme 3: Healthy and Productive Ecosystems

41. The “AGRI3 Fund”, a partnership led by the UN Environment Programme and Rabobank, is a \$1 billion sustainable agriculture and forestry initiative which has recently announced a \$40 million investment from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, an amount matched by Rabobank. Together these contributions will mobilize commercial finance, which can be used to finance sustainable agriculture and accelerate forest protection. For more information on this partnership please refer to the report’s annex.

42. The GEF-funded project on “Establishing the National Framework and Operational Capacity for Implementing the Nagoya Protocol in Timor-Leste” (a 4-year project, with \$1.3 million funded by GEF plus \$4 million in co-finance). This project aims to support the development of the national framework and operational capacity for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in Timor-Leste, in order to establish the conditions enabling sustainable access to the genetic resources of the country, delivering fair and equitable benefits to its people while protecting legal and customary ownership and traditional knowledge. In addition, in order to demonstrate the potential benefits of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge for national sustainable development, the project focuses also on stimulating research and business interests by building capacity and starting pre-investments in biodiversity research, bioprospecting and product development. In this regard, the partnership with Nimura Genetic Solutions (based in Japan) is being established, and through

this collaboration, the project aims to build laboratory and research capacity for bioprospecting, which is expected to deliver monetary and non-monetary benefits to the country and, thereby, support the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in Timor-Leste in the long term. The project in Timor-Leste is currently in an inception phase.

43. The UN Environment Programme, in collaboration with HELVETAS Myanmar, Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) and PRIME Agri Limited, has been implementing the Climate Smart Rice project in Myanmar, with funding from NORAD (April 2019 - March 2022). The project aims to support the Government of Myanmar, the agri-business sector and smallholder rice farmers to stimulate transformation of the rice sector towards sustainability by promoting climate smart and resource-efficient best practices, and adoption of SRP Standard. The project collaborates with PRIME Agri Limited as a key private sector partner, engaged in the adoption of rice-based resilient farming systems with improved farmer livelihoods, as well as establishment of certified export and sustainable domestic rice value chains. Through this cooperation, in the first year of implementation, 1,386 farmers were trained on the SRP Standard. More tangible results will be expected in the coming years.³

Sub-programme 4: Environmental Governance

44. *Environmental Rule of Law and Business*: The “Environmental Rule of Law Report”, launched early in 2019, outlines the role of environmental rule of law in creating a fair framework for the sustainable management of businesses and fostering a culture of compliance. The impact on business of weak environmental rule of law, and the role that businesses can play to strengthen it, is weaved through all sections of the report. A partnership is being developed with the International Chamber of Commerce to include the private sector in delivering the Montevideo Environmental Law Programme. The partnership is to be finalized in 2020.

45. *Environmental Rights Initiative*: this Initiative is developing guiding materials on business responsibilities/responsible business conduct and environmental rights in cooperation with Dalhousie University, OECD, UNDP and OHCHR, as well as private sector actors. More will be reported in 2021.

46. *Climate Technology Centre and Network*: The UNEP-DHI Centre is collaborating on an initiative called “Match” an online portal designed to link countries/people who need water-oriented technology solutions with private sector solution providers (i.e. national and international providers from multiple developing and developed countries). Usability testing on a simple prototype has *been* conducted with test users in Argentina, Denmark, India, and Myanmar. Inputs are now guiding the development of a beta version which is tentatively scheduled for release in early 2021.

Sub-programme 5: Chemicals, Waste and Air Quality

47. *Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)*: a multi-stakeholder approach to sound chemicals and waste management. Private sector companies and industry associations play a key role in the strategic approach to foster action at all levels. The work has resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding between the International Council of Chemical Associations and the UN Environment Programme. More information is available in the report’s annex.

48. *UNEP Sustainability Action*: the UN Environment Programme’s International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC) is currently working with Fast Retailing Co., Ltd., Seven & i Holdings and Rakuten Inc., for sustainability. Online seminars and outreach activities are planned to be

³ Please note that this project is also mentioned under the Resource Efficiency Sub-programme where updates on the SRP are listed.

organized in the second half of 2020. A large number of consumers/customers will be influenced through these companies' networks, including their stores.

49. *Global Partnership on Nutrient Management (GPNM)*: engagement with the International Fertilizer Association (IFA) and the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) in the implementation of the GEF-funded project on 'Global foundations for reducing nutrient enrichment and oxygen depletion from land-based pollution, in support of Global Nutrient Cycle'; which focused on the global extent, nature and developing severity of the environmental problems caused by this nutrient excess, including air and ground water pollution, and in the case of coastal waters eutrophication and oxygen depletion and the associated damage to ecosystems, biodiversity and coastal water quality.

50. The *Air Quality and Mobility Unit Global Programme* is set to regulate the trade in used vehicles. This new programme will work with governments and the used vehicles industry to set minimum standards for the trade in used vehicles from developed to developing countries. In 2021, the focus will be on Africa. As a response to COVID-19, the sales of used vehicles have gone up and sped up the switch to zero emissions mobility. This new programme will support the global shift to electric mobility and will cooperate with the private sector, especially the vehicle industry and fleet operators. In 2021, the Unit will support 60 country projects and set up global working groups and regional investment platforms.

Sub-programme 6: Resource Efficiency

51. The *UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion* was officially launched at UNEA-4 on 14 March 2019. Its Steering Committee adopted an interagency work plan at its 2nd meeting on the eve of the Environment Assembly on 9 March 2019. Jointly served by International Trade Centre and the UN Environment Programme, the Alliance supported engagement with the private sector through outreach and collaboration in 2019 through the United Nations Office for Partnerships (UNOP) Conscious Fashion Initiative and UN Secretary General's Act Now! Campaign for Climate Action culminating at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) 2019.

- Further outreach supported the UNFCCC Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action and adoption by leading fashion brands of the *Science-based Targets (SBTi) initiative*, spearheaded by UNOP and World Resource Initiative. The UN Environment Programme undertook a study, "Circularity and Sustainability in the Textile Value Chain" which was launched in a webinar jointly organized with the Green Growth Knowledge Partnership to identify hotspots and opportunities for the sector on 20 October 2020. For 2021, the Alliance will help UNCTAD kick off the 1st UN International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development (15 March) and develop a CEO toolkit on implementing sustainability norms called Fashion ReSET, led by International Trade Centre's (ITC) Ethical Fashion Initiative.

52. UNEP FI supports the global finance sector principles to catalyze integration of sustainability into financial market practice. In 2020, UNEP FI has initiated programme activities to ensure credibility and accountability of the private sector engagements. The Principles for Responsible Banking (PRB) governing body established modalities for delisting signatories who fail to meet commitments and Terms of References for a PRB Civil Society Advisory Body. The focus is on implementation of commitments, with highlights including engagement of more than 230 banks in 11 working groups to support implementation of the PRB, focusing on technical guidance and tools in key areas such as impact analysis and target setting. A group of 38 PRB signatories has established a Collective Commitment to Climate Action which will see them align their overall lending portfolios with the Paris Agreement objectives.

- Several activities are also underway on climate disclosure with UNEP FI joint methodologies developed with leaders from the banking, investment and insurance sectors. UNEP FI is piloting the Financial Stability Board recommendations on Climate-Related Financial Risks and Opportunities with banks and insurers to increase technical understanding and disclosure of the implications of climate change scenarios for the industry, linking science to financial risk assessment.
- UNEP FI expanded the UN-convened Net Zero Asset Owner Alliance to engage 29 institutional investors representing \$5 trillion in assets – roughly the size of Germany’s economy – to secure their commitment to transition investment portfolios to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- The Alliance is preparing to release their 1.5C aligned net zero investment framework with the first milestone target of 2025. It also initiated the development of Insurance Sustainable Development Goals to enable the insurance industry to scale up its contribution to achieving the SDGs; engaged insurers in the development of guidance on integrating sustainability issues into insurance underwriting; engaged more than 40 banks and investors in ecosystems projects including sustainable blue economy financing, aligning portfolios with the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and developing guidance for banks to set targets on biodiversity; supported the launch of an informal working group comprised mainly of financial institutions to work towards the launch of a Task Force on Nature-related Finance Disclosures; and will enhance methodologies and tools to undertake corporate and portfolio impact analysis.
- Other UNEP-FI highlights in 2020 includes the following (i) [the coalition of banking signatories is making progress](#) in aligning businesses with the Paris Agreement and SDGs and further development of a [Portfolio Impact Analysis Tool for Banks](#), a step forward for holistic impact analysis in banking; (ii) [released report](#) in partnership with Acclimatise to advance knowledge in the banking industry of the physical risks and opportunities related to climate change; and (iii) initiated development of guidance to finance a [sustainable blue economy](#).
- UNEP FI hosted its [16th Global Roundtable](#) virtually on 13–14 October 2020, in collaboration with Responsible Investor. UNEP FI’s biennial Global Roundtable (GRT) is a major global agenda-setting event on sustainable finance. Held under the theme of “Financing a Resilient Future”, the GRT brought together decision-makers, experts and thought leaders on a virtual event platform, to help shape approaches to integrating environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues and accelerating sustainable banking, insurance and investment.
- UNEP launched a report titled “[Financing Circularity: Demystifying Finance for the Circular Economy](#)” on 13 October 2020. The report calls on the financial sector to scale up financing to accelerate the shift to circular business models and sets out practical steps that financial institutions can take to manage the transition from a linear to a circular economy. Findings aim to enable the industry to address risks and opportunities in the transition, which will involve changes in a range of sectors, digital /technology innovation and structural change of production and consumption systems. The report also calls on regulators and policymakers to create enabling policy and legislative frameworks to integrate circularity into financial products and services. <https://www.unepfi.org/category/publications/>

53. The [Sustainable Rice Platform](#) (SRP) co-convened by the UN Environment Programme includes 106 institutional members, of which 60% are private sector actors. The SRP is currently in a transition period, as it becomes its own independent body with a transitional period in the first quarter of 2021. The following entries below are updates on the SRP:

- GEF7 Child programmes in Asia now include rice producers and buyers.
- Pakistan based SDC-funded Water Productivity Project has expanded to include new off-takers.

- NORAD/SDC-funded Myanmar Climate-Smart Rice Project worth \$5.9 million is currently working with contract growers, off-takers and buyers to expand sustainable value chains in Myanmar's domestic, regional, and global markets.
- SRP's [Assurance Scheme](#) was launched on 14 August 2020 to support sustainable rice procurement in private sector rice value chains. Mars (Uncle Ben's Rice) and Ebro Food are committed to buying 80,000 metric tonnes per year of SRP-verified rice, with Lidl & Tesco also expected to commit support (€2 million over 3 years) for the SRP Secretariat's capacity building and organizational development through 2020-2022. All activities contribute to upscaling impact; increasing the recognition of the importance of sustainable rice as a mitigation tool for Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs); multilaterals recognizing rice as core to landscape-level approaches; increasing traction on private sector demand due to the availability of the Assurance Scheme and bringing SRP-verified rice to retailer shelves. The SRP has been shortlisted for MacArthur Prize (\$100 million) and nominated for the Food Planet Prize (\$1 million).

54. The UN Environment Programme is partnering with the *Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production Network (RECPnet)* and is engaging its members as national technical intermediaries to provide support to the SMEs on sustainable business practices, including a UNEP eco-innovation approach. Historically established by the UN Environment Programme and UNIDO, the RECPnet is now independent and has recently joined the Green Industry Platform. Ongoing collaboration on eco-innovation with RECPnet members covers Colombia, Peru, Sri Lanka, and future engagement is expected in Africa.

- Through the partnership with RECPnet, the UN Environment Programme has supported SMEs in building more resilient value chains by adding sustainability at the core of their business strategy: (i) by working on joint sustainable solutions to common problems, significant shared gains can be achieved with better commercial, environmental and social value; (ii) greater material or production efficiency, minimized waste, optimization of distribution channels and reduced lead-time result in lower production costs; (iii) good relationships built through a value chain approach help develop proactive communication on emerging challenges and risks to adapt; and (iv) producers that rely less or not exclusively on import supplies (e.g. by sourcing certain materials locally or through on-site recycling) are less prone to crises. Working with RECPnet members as national technical intermediaries to provide support to the SMEs on eco-innovation has proven an effective means to building country ownership and sustaining results. Success stories from such partnerships are available at this link: <http://unep.ecoinnovation.org/success-stories/>

55. The UN Environment Programme is co-chairing the *Partnership for Accelerating Circular Economy (PACE)*, together with the Global Environment Facility and Philips. PACE is a global public-private collaboration, hosted by the World Economic Forum. The focus of PACE on developing projects in the areas of plastic, food and agriculture, and electronics has led to multiple other initiatives and projects. In the case of the UN Environment Programme, this has materialized in the launch in June 2019 of a project funded by the Global Environment Facility targeting circularity in the electronics value chain in Nigeria with funding worth \$2 million. In June 2020 it also led to the approval of the preparatory phase of a UN Environment Programme project aimed at promoting the implementation of circular economy models for plastics in cities in the Latin American region. It also led to the development of guidance on the inclusion of circularity requirements in sustainable procurement processes. The work on the development of metrics to track progress on building circularity is led by the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the Circle Economy, which was initiated in April 2019.

- In July 2019, PACE added textiles and fashion to its thematic priorities. Those workstreams developed their substantive content in 2020. Two affiliate projects rely on a strong engagement of UN Environment Programme Regional Offices: these are the African Circular Economy Alliance, whose official launching took place during the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in November 2019 and the creation of a circular economy coalition for Latin America and the Caribbean, whose development initiated in 2020. Executive Director, Inger Andersen joined the Board of the Platform in March 2020. The Platform operates along key objective for each of the seven focus areas (electronics and capital equipment, plastics, food and agriculture, fashion and textile, metrics, climate and other systems initiatives).

56. The *New Plastics Economy Global Commitment* was launched at the “Our Oceans Conference” in Bali (Indonesia) on 29 October 2018. Led by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation (EMF) in collaboration with UN Environment Programme, the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment presents a unique opportunity for businesses and governments to step forward as global leaders in addressing plastic waste and pollution: signatories will be recognized as front-runners in the shift towards a circular economy for plastics. The Commitment aims to act as a lighthouse, enabling front running businesses and governments to inspire others and lead by example.

- The actions in the Global Commitment were co-designed by the UN Environment Programme and the EMF for each key stakeholder in the plastics value chain. EMF leads the engagement with the private sector while the UN Environment Programme leads the engagement with governments. The progress report in 2020 (to be published in November 2020) is enhancing the efforts in quantitative tracking of commitments; it is also aligning with the Beat Pollution platform for the UN Environment Programme’s Implementation Plan Towards a Pollution-Free Planet. The Global Commitment already joins over 500 signatories from all stakeholders. From the private sector, these represent over 20% of all the plastic packaging produced globally. With the commitments by three major global consumer goods companies, by 2025, 25 million barrels of oil will be kept in the ground annually due to reduced plastic consumption (equivalent to saving eight million tonnes CO₂ per year). Further results available in the [2019 progress report](#).

57. The *Transforming Tourism Value Chains* project aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase resource efficiency in three tourism value chains: food and beverage, accommodation and Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events (MICE). The project is currently working with over 100 tourism businesses from the Dominican Republic, Saint Lucia, Mauritius and the Philippines to analyze value chains, prepare policy recommendations, develop action plans that will help reduce emissions and develop a related monitoring system. The project is also gathering Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and resource efficiency data from hotels. [National roadmaps](#) for a low carbon and resource efficient tourism have been developed for the Dominican Republic, Philippines, Mauritius and Saint Lucia with key targets for 2030. The Dominican Republic has integrated the project and the national roadmap as key actions in their national Sustainable Consumption Production (SCP) plan.

58. The *Global Tourism Plastics Initiative (GTPI)* [launched](#) in January 2020 unites the tourism sector behind a common vision to address the root causes of plastic pollution. It enables businesses, governments, and other tourism stakeholders to take concerted action, leading by example in the shift towards circularity in the use of plastics. GTPI is currently working with 24 leading tourism companies (first announcement of signatories was made on 22 July 2020), suppliers, business associations, NGOs, consultancies and certification schemes which are signatories of the Initiative. GTPI supports their commitments to work by 2025 towards the implementation of the circular economy of plastics and the elimination of unnecessary single-use plastics, transition to reuse models and use of reusable, recyclable, or compostable plastic packaging and items. Commitments

for tourism businesses have been developed in a collaborative and participatory manner, and business working groups established to work on emerging issues such as the COVID-19 response and impacts on plastic pollution.

59. The [Life Cycle Initiative](#) is a public-private, multi-stakeholder partnership launched in 2002, enabling the global use of credible life cycle knowledge by private and public decision makers. The Initiative is at the interface between users and experts of Life Cycle approaches. It provides a global forum to ensure a science-based, consensus-building process to support decisions and policies towards the shared vision of sustainability as a public good. It delivers authoritative opinions on sound tools and approaches by engaging its multi-stakeholder partnership (including governments, businesses, scientific and civil society organizations).

- The Initiative facilitates the application of life cycle knowledge in the global sustainable development agenda in order to achieve global goals faster and more efficiently. In 2020, specific companies have been engaging in projects such as linking the SDGs to business strategy through life cycle impact pathways (Corbion; Novozymes; ArcelorMittal), as well as in the revision of the Social Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) guidelines (Aptar; BMW; Confetti Pelino; Japfa; International Copper Association; Ponzio; Tata Steel), to name a few. Through projects mentioned, the participating companies are further focusing their sustainability strategies on those aspects of the SDGs that are most material for their operations and through their value chains, and/or identifying potential social hotspots and designing innovation strategies beyond legal compliance across their value chains.

Sub-programme 7: Environment Under Review

60. The UN Environment Programme launched its flagship sixth Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6) report in March 2019. A derivative product of GEO-6 is the recently launched [GEO for Business](#) which is a suite of briefs (10-15 pages long) that aims to inform, engage and stimulate action and business transformation on the environmental issues identified in GEO-6. GEO for Business will be produced as a set of six thematic ‘business briefs’ throughout 2020 and 2021.

V. The UN Environment Programme’s Corporate Strategy on Private Sector Engagement

61. To support the effective implementation of its Programme of Work, the UN Environment Programme has developed a [five-year Strategy for Private Sector Engagement](#) to enable the organization to identify and foster effective partnerships with key private sector entities and other stakeholders, while identifying and managing potential associated risks. The Strategy also focuses on the role the UN Environment Programme can play in partnering with the private sector and other stakeholders to scale up and accelerate the momentum for market change, business action and transformation towards the achievement of the Agenda 2030.

62. Furthermore, the Strategy will help promote awareness and guide the development of reaching out to the highest corporate levels, by assisting the UN Environment Programme with a framework of principles, models of collaboration, monitoring and evaluation modalities for effective dialogue and engagement with corporate leaders focusing on minimizing any negative environmental impact. It also aims to expand the donor base and generate support for the UN Environment Programme from non-traditional sources, such as the private sector.

63. The Strategy was approved by the Senior Management Team and was also shared with member States during the 6th Annual Sub-Committee Meeting on 11 October 2019. An Implementation Plan has been developed and is being rolled out to ensure that staff are aware and have the capacity to deliver effectively on the Strategy.

64. As part of the knowledge sharing and capacity building of the Strategy for Private Sector Engagement and its Implementation Plan, a series of webinars on experiences engaging the private sector has been rolled out early 2020. The first three webinars focused on finance and agriculture, and over 120 UN Environment Programme staff members participated to share experience and knowledge; information; challenges and lessons learnt from engaging the private sector. For the remainder of 2020, two more webinars on experiences related to engaging the private sector are planned out, one showcasing the CCAC initiative, and the other will involve a platform linking women, sustainable energy systems and the private sector in Africa.

VI. Private Sector engagement in the work of the UN Environment Programme's Policy-Making Organs

65. It is indicated in the proposal by the UNEA President to adopt a “two-step” approach which will allow the convening of the fifth UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) in February 2021, in a virtual format with a revised and streamlined agenda. This February session will be complemented by a second component in the form of a resumed UNEA-5 to be held in-person in Nairobi in early 2022 in a soon to be defined and agreed upon format.

66. The UN Environment Assembly provides a platform for governments, private sector and civil society to catalyse and build the policies, partnerships and a culture of innovation that will support the solutions and systemic change needed for sustainability to thrive.

VII. Activities and Events during 2020 - 2021 for Private Sector Engagement

67. The Act #ForNature Global Online Forum, which was held from 7 to 10 June 2020, brought together citizens, government and non-governmental organizations, businesses and scientific institutions from around the world to engage in a series of discussions across a diverse range of topics from healthy ecosystems and marine plastics to global food systems, youth and more. The forum included several townhalls, including Townhall 2, which showcased the GEO-for-Business Brief 1 entitled “Adapt to Thrive: What Transformational Change Means for Business and how nature plays a role in the transformation”. The actions that governments could take to aid business transformation was discussed, the Global Environment Outlook for Business process was introduced, and the findings of the sixth Global Environment Outlook were highlighted.

68. On 15-16 June 2020, the UN Global Compact (UNGC) celebrated its 20th Anniversary with a global virtual conference titled the “Leaders Summit” which brought together leaders from the business community, governments, UN agencies and civil society to discuss how to recover better, stronger, and together post COVID-19. As one of the four guardians of the UNGC Ten Principles, the UN Environment Programme had an exclusive booth, which showcased over 10 different projects and initiatives through a series of online sessions and participated in high level roundtable discussions as well during the Summit.

69. Multiple Discovery Sessions to discuss the Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2025 took place in 2020 and included UN Environment Programme staff, representatives from the Committee of Permanent Representatives, Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations, youth and the private sector as part of the strategic pillar of the UN Environment Programme's transformation process. The private sector Discovery Session allowed the UN Environment Programme to share its emerging vision and Medium-Term Strategy with its constituencies and to gather useful insight and feedback regarding environmental challenges and the roles the business community can play to enable the UN Environment Programme to provide global environmental leadership and catalyze necessary action.

70. The UN Environment Programme engaged North America based companies directly in regional consultations in the lead up to UNEA-5. Consultation with approximately 40 Sustainability Directors was held on 14 October and was organized in partnership with MIT Solve and the World Environment Center.

71. The UN Environment Programme will promote and support the roll-out and uptake of science-based innovative environmental solutions. This will allow governments and other stakeholders to use high-quality and open environmental data, analyses and participatory processes that strengthen the science-policy interface to generate evidence-based environmental assessments, identify emerging issues and foster policy action. In partnership with scientific institutions, academia, investors (private and development finance institutions) as well as technology companies and within the framework of a circular and green economy, the following activities will be carried out: (i) horizon scanning and awareness-raising, which will include the production of policy briefs; (ii) studies focusing on social, environmental and financial feasibility; (iii) technical assistance and capacity building for the development of promising and potentially bankable innovative projects, nature-based solutions including natural capital accounting and use of innovative financing; and (iv) provide evidence-based scientific information, including the necessary enabling conditions for the roll-out of investments and the scale up of environment solutions notably through the UN Science-Policy-Business Forum.

72. The UN Environment Programme with the support of the UN-REDD Programme, will launch the *1 Green Gigaton Challenge* at UNEA-5. The short-term goal is to secure the equivalent of a gigaton in private and public sector investments in nature-based solutions (NBS) with forest conservation and restoration as priorities. The long-term goal is to set in motion an accelerating process of private and public investments in NBS akin to that already experienced in renewable energy. The 1 Green Gigaton Challenge will include 20 founding partners from leading private sector companies. By 2025, the aim is to expand the partnership to 60 members and secure the equivalent of 5 gigatons in investments in nature-based solutions with a priority on conserving and restoring forests. The 1 Green Gigaton Challenge is modeled after successful initiatives like the UNEP-FI and the UN-REDD Programme.

VIII. Suggested recommendations to the Committee of Permanent Representatives

73. It is recommended that the Secretariat continues to inform on an annual basis to the Committee of Permanent Representatives on the progress of engagement with the private sector.