

# Key achievements

SCIENCE DIVISION



# 2020

11 Global Environment Fund projects managed

Support to **15 African UNCTs** in **Common Country Analyses**

**14 Green Climate Fund (GCF) readiness projects**

**Innovation Facility** to promote and provide technical support for innovative environmental solutions

Enhancing discoverability and access to UNEP research outputs and knowledge products

## WESR - Common Country Analysis

Developing countries provided access to the latest peer-reviewed environmental research



## Enhanced collaboration in HLCF Informal Strategic Foresight Network

Data for 17 indicators reported to the UN SDG Global Database



Launch of the first **GEO-6 Technical Summary \$49.9 million Programme approved for GCF integrated climate and ocean information services and multi-hazard early warning systems in five Pacific island countries**

WESR platform interoperability with other data providers platforms & integration of existing UNEP information

**21 Foresight Briefs published on emerging environmental issues**



## Concept Framework developed for Global Environmental Data Strategy

## Launched **Frontiers Report 'Preventing the next pandemic - Zoonotic diseases and how to break the chain of transmission'**

Global real-time display of air pollution highlighting Air Quality as a main risk for human and environmental health



Launch of the first series of technical papers generated by the **World Adaptation Science Partnership**

Contributed to the SG progress report on SDGs for consideration by the HLPF

Completed preparation of first **Environment Outlook for the Arab Gulf Countries**



**World Water Quality Alliance - links between the SARS COV2 Pandemic and wastewater to improve environmental monitoring**

## Launched **Emission Gap Report 2020**

**WESR demonstration projects (Pollution, Ozone, SDG Country Score Cards, integration of Knowledge Repository, Global Environmental Monitoring)**

Over 1,950 UNEP document captured in the knowledge repository



Launch of the revamped **UN Science Policy Business Forum** website

Co-organization of the **UN Library and Information Network for Knowledge Sharing**



WESR projects - near real time monitoring

## Launch of the **GEO-6 for Youth**

**MIKE Programme elephant population dynamics model development**



Launch of the report on the impact of **Sand and Dust Storms on Oceans**



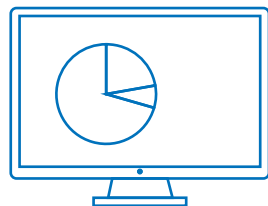
## Launch of the **GEO-6 in China**

All 25 SDG UNEP custodian indicators reclassified

Asia Pacific Webinar on **Preventing the next pandemic**

Data for 17 indicators reported to the UN SDG Global Database

8 GCF Climate Information/Early Warning Systems project proposals or concepts developed



Regional LAC countries engagement to identify roadmap for enhancing environmental data and information

Key UNSCEAR scientific positions agreed setting safety standards for protection around the world

WESR Yale Centre for Ecosystems Architecture development of **Intelligent Dashboards**

Extended collaboration with **IBM** on the creation of a **Digital Platform on Marine Litter**



# Future impacts

SCIENCE DIVISION

# 2021

Production of a State of Environment Report for Botswana

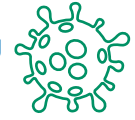
**Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals**

Theme of UNEA 5

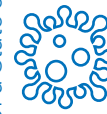
SDG indicators online training courses to assist countries on closing the data gap on indicators



Publication of 2nd edition of the Measuring Progress of SDGs



Launch Technical report "Nature strikes back: COVID-19 and the risk of future pandemics in Asia Pacific"



**WESR several demonstration projects showcased at UNEA-5**



**Synthesis Report of Global Environment Assessments (February)**

Production of a State of Environment Report for Botswana

Launch in West Asia Impact Assessment of COVID-19 on the Environment; GEO- for-Youth; and Regional Consultation on Digital Transformation

Innovation Facility projects presented in Science Policy Business Forum during UNEA-5

12 Foresight Briefs published informing public of emerging environmental issues

Evolving World Water Quality Assessment including scenarios and mitigation options



**The Global Environmental Data Strategy extending the 'One Global Partnership' Worldwide contributing to UN Reform**

Fully operational WESR platform by 2023 with inclusion of all Divisions, Regions and MEAs



North America partnership in Canada on pathways to circularity for economies based heavily on primary material production and natural resource extraction

**'Future of GEO' options paper considered by UNEA-5**



Collaboration with countries in LAC region on the preparation of GCF Climate Information System project proposal

Launch of the GEO for Cities in partnership with UN-Habitat and major global City Alliances

**Launch of Adaptation Gap Report (January)**

Launch of first Asia Pacific Science-Business Policy-Business Forum on Environment

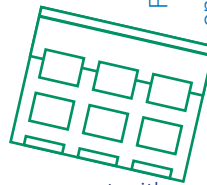


Jordan case study on best practices for developing Gender-environment indicators, information and statistics

Foresight projects on relevant post COVID recovery

**WESR new design and content management system**

Engagement with IAEA and European Commission to lead to framework agreements with UNSCEAR



Establishment of comprehensive regional Data and Information Framework for endorsement at LAC Forum of Ministers meeting

**Science Policy Business Forum special sessions in support of MTS and UNEA 5.1 on Integrated Solutions for Nature**

Provision of authentication and electronic online access management system for remote working

**Upgraded knowledge repository**

Launch of Environment Outlook for the Arab the Arab and Gulf Countries

**Launch of the first GEO for Business Brief**

**From:** Jian Liu  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 20, 2020 6:35 AM  
**To:** UNEP-Science-AllStaff  
**Cc:** UNEP-Executive-SM  
**Subject:** UNEP Science Summary 2020, and greetings to 2021  
**Attachments:** Science Division Annual Summary 2020\_21.pdf

**Importance:** High

Dear Colleagues,

As we reach the end of this demanding year, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to each and everyone of you, for your resilience as well as dedication in continuing to make important and relevant impacts on policy from UNEP science. We have all, in different ways, felt the direct impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on our lives, yet we have nevertheless adapted to the new situation, and collectively managed to achieve remarkable results in a relatively short period of time.

Under the strong and wise leadership of Inger and Joyce, and with strong support from my SMT peers and their respective teams, what we have achieved has been truly remarkable. **I can only highlight some of these results and progresses below** with a bit detailed attachment of summary in UNCONVENTIONAL format.

- First of all, all our efforts from the forefront of UNEP Science, have made their ways to the SG's landmark speech "Making Peace with Nature." This is unprecedented in the 75 years of UN history, though its policy impact is still being monitored and to be assessed.
- Both the reports "*Preventing the next pandemic - Zoonotic diseases and how to break the chain of transmission*," and "*the Emissions Gap Report 2020*" have been widely accessed and used in response to the COVID-19 crisis and climate crisis respectively.
- The Green Climate Fund (GCF) Board approved a \$49.9 million Programme to establish integrated climate and ocean information services and multi-hazard early warning systems in five Pacific island countries.
- The 'Future of GEO' committee of 36 Member States developed and openly shared and validated an options paper that will be considered at the UNEA-5. One of the main findings was that the GEO should continue, and that it should be more aligned with UNEP's MTS and PoW cycle so that findings from the report can help guide UNEP's work planning going forward.
- The World Environment Situation Room (WESR) continues to evolve and grow. The WESR-CCA continued to build on support to the Common Country Analysis, including connectivity to SDG and MEAs indicators, etc.
- The very first Synthesis Report of global environment assessments has been prepared for launch at UNEA5.1. The report, once is launched, will help member countries on transformation towards a carbon-neutral and nature positive society.
- Data for 17 indicators were reported to the UN SDG Global Database and UNEP contributed to the SG progress report 2020 on SDGs for consideration by the HLPF.

Other important progress and milestones have also been made, including but not limited to, development of Global Data Strategy, the Science, Policy and Business Forum, World Water Quality Alliance, World Adaptation Science Programme, the UN Geospatial Network, Environment Innovation Facility, the monthly Foresight Briefing, Knowledge Repository, Air Quality monitoring and reporting, to mention, but a few.

**Meanwhile, our REGIONAL SCIENCE TEAMS, additional to support the above work, have all done their best to meet the needs of member countries in their respective regions highlighted below :**

- The Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean engaged with all countries in the region and with key stakeholders to agree on establishment of a comprehensive regional Data and Information Platform.
- African Regional Office supported more than fifteen UN Country Teams (UNCT) to reflect environmental dimensions in their respective Common Country Analyses (CCAs) in the year 2020.
- The European Office provided technical support to Kyrgyzstan to improve environmental data sharing while supporting the State Agency for Environmental Protection (SAEPF).
- In the West Asia Office, the first ever Environment Outlook for the Arab Gulf Countries (GCC Environment Outlook) was initiated and will be launched in 2021.
- The Asia Pacific Office organized a webinar on Preventing the next pandemic with the results feeding into the regional report entitled, “Nature strikes back: COVID-19 and the risk of future pandemics in Asia Pacific”.
- The North America Office helped advance the discourse on circularity and sustainable consumption and production through an Action Agenda to accelerate the transition to a resilient low-carbon economy.

**Amidst the COVID-19, we were able to support and ensure the smooth operation and programs of the four respective independent intergovernmental science bodies, the IPCC, IPBES, UNSCEAR and STAP.**

While we are happy these key achievements, I also want to pay my special tribute to our administration and funds management colleagues this past year in enabling our core outputs and services to be delivered, and our new foresight team who helped improve our communication greatly. I am very excited to welcome Dr. Kelly West as our new Deputy Director in 2021 who will also help us raise the UNEP Science to the next level.

Dear colleagues, we are at the dawn of 2021, please get some good rest and get refreshed to prepare for the BIG MOVE to the implementation of our new MTS/POW.

I wish you all a happy and safe holiday season and look forward to us all working together in 2021!

Jian

Dr. Jian Liu

Director of Science Division,

UNEP