



Programme Performance Report 2020





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Suggested citation

United Nations Environment Programme (2021). *Programme Performance Report 2020*. Nairobi.

Production

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

<https://www.unep.org>

Layout: Catherine Kimeu (UNON Publishing Services Section)

Publishing Manager: Pouran Ghaffarpour (UNON)



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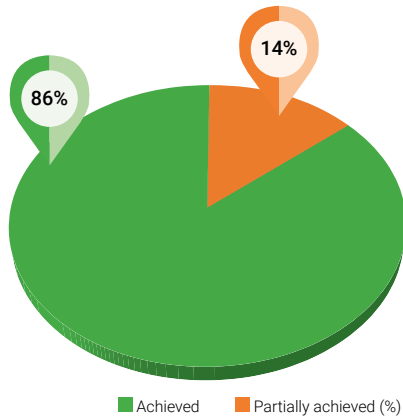
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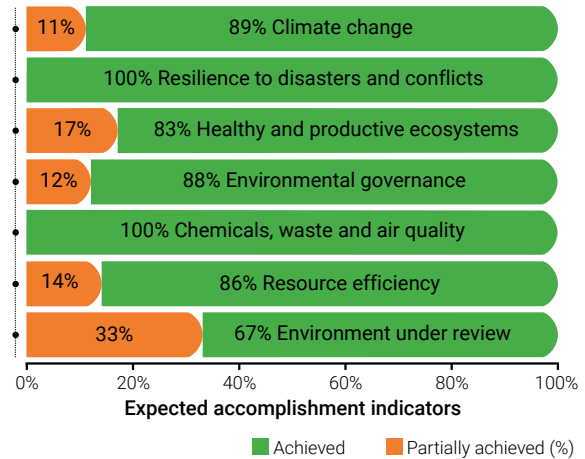


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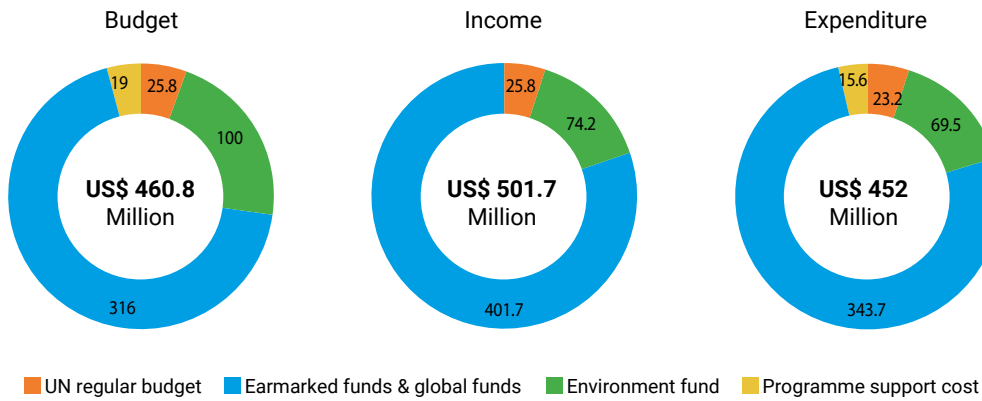
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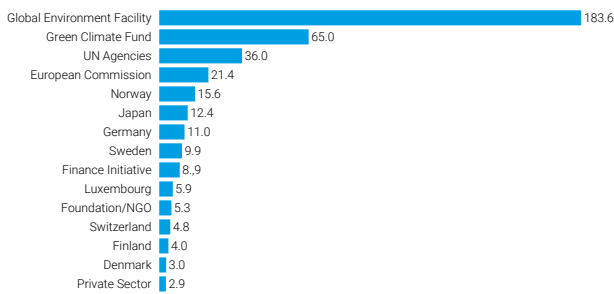
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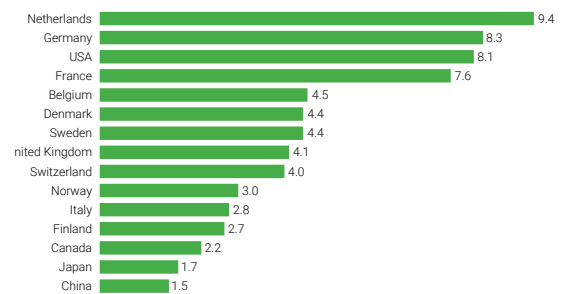
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Top 15 contributors to earmarked funds



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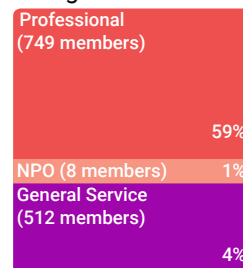
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1269
Committed
UNEP staff

Distribution

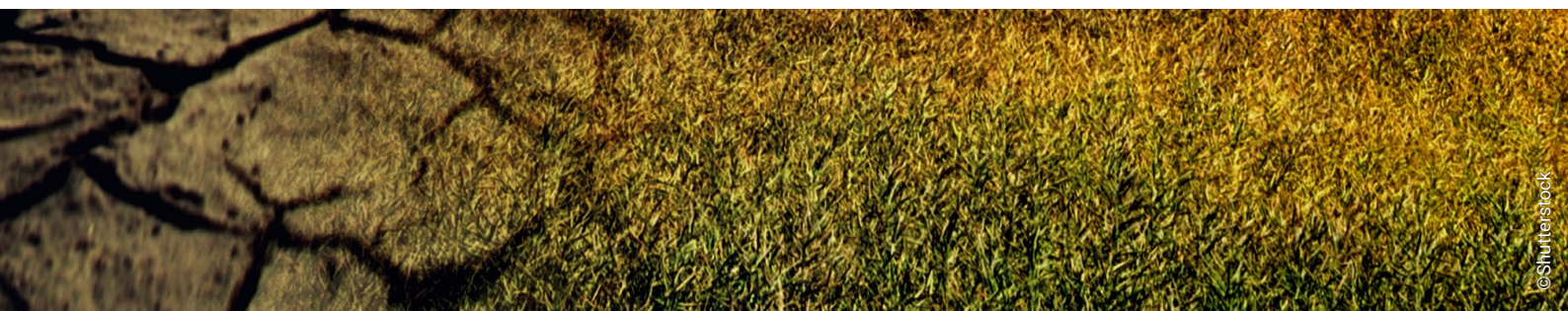


Categories





Delivery in the COVID-19 context





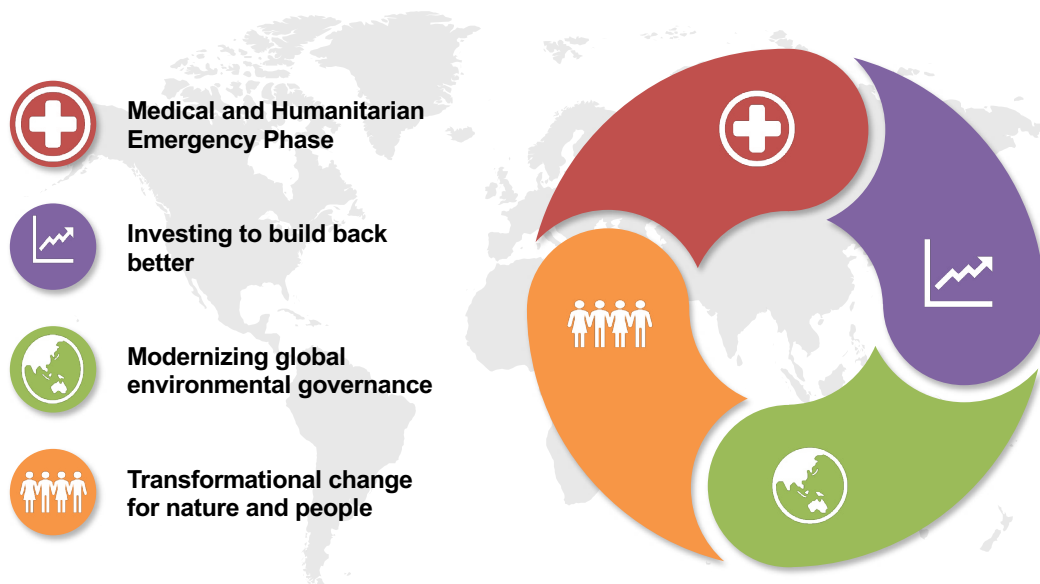
This 2020 Programme Performance Report is a companion to the [2020 UNEP Annual Report](#). In this report, UNEP's achievements during the first year of the 2020–2021 Programme of Work are presented in greater detail, under the seven subprogrammes:

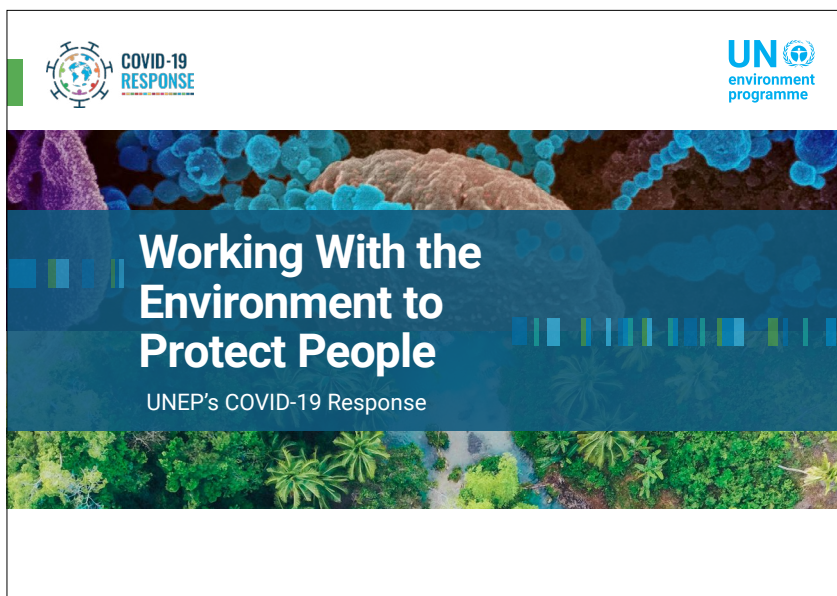
- Climate Change
- Resilience to Disasters and Conflicts
- Healthy and Productive Ecosystems
- Environmental Governance
- Chemicals, Waste and Air Quality
- Resource Efficiency
- Environment Under Review

2020 was a year like no other. The world grappled with the devastating consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, which struck against the backdrop of our ongoing crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, resource overexploitation and other environmental challenges. The year 2020 is on track to be the warmest on record, with wildfires, droughts, storms and glacier melt intensifying. This underscores the relevance and urgency of UNEP's work and clearly reminds us that we must keep adapting to inevitable change. Thus, in response to the Secretary-General's message on building back better, UNEP formulated a COVID-19 response strategy built around four blocks:

- The medical and humanitarian emergency phase
- A transformational change for nature and people
- Investing to build back better
- Modernizing global environmental governance

Figure 1. United Nations Environment Programme COVID-19 Response





UNEP then reviewed and repurposed its existing work and, along with the rest of the UN system through the UN Country Teams, looked at emerging needs that were developing at the national level.

The medical and humanitarian emergency phase

UNEP worked to address the spike in waste from the COVID-19 pandemic and, on 13 August 2020, published a report entitled *Waste Management during the COVID-19 Pandemic: from response to recovery*, with practical information and guidelines on healthcare and municipal solid waste management. This report was shared widely.

UNEP provided technical advice on medical waste management to Afghanistan, Haiti, South Sudan and Sudan, as well as to UN peacekeeping operations. In India, Afghanistan, Haiti, Serbia, South Sudan, Sudan, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, UNEP provided governments with support on COVID-19 related assessments. In South Africa, UNEP also supported a COVID-19 needs assessment to inform a national recovery strategy.

A transformational change for nature and people

On 6 July, UNEP, together with the International Livestock Research Institute and partners, released the report *Preventing the next pandemic - Zoonotic diseases and how to break the chain of transmission*, which identified the root causes of zoonotic diseases such as COVID-19 and highlighted the need to treat human, animal and planetary health as a single issue in policymaking, known as the “One Health” approach. Having released this report, UNEP began collaborating with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United

Nations (FAO), World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organization for Animal Health, working as a team to help prevent zoonotic diseases.

Throughout 2020, and in collaboration with the UNEP-administered Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), UNEP advocated an ambitious and measurable post-2020 biodiversity framework that backs more, larger and better-managed conservation areas, biodiversity-positive agriculture and fisheries, an end to harmful subsidies, and a move away from destructive extractive resource

mining and towards patterns of sustainable consumption and production.

Investing to build back better

UNEP supported Member States to cope with the impacts of COVID-19 and build back better, focusing on greening fiscal stimulus and finance packages to accelerate sustainable consumption and production and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) set up a support mechanism for a green economic recovery in its 20 partner states, leveraging UN reform.

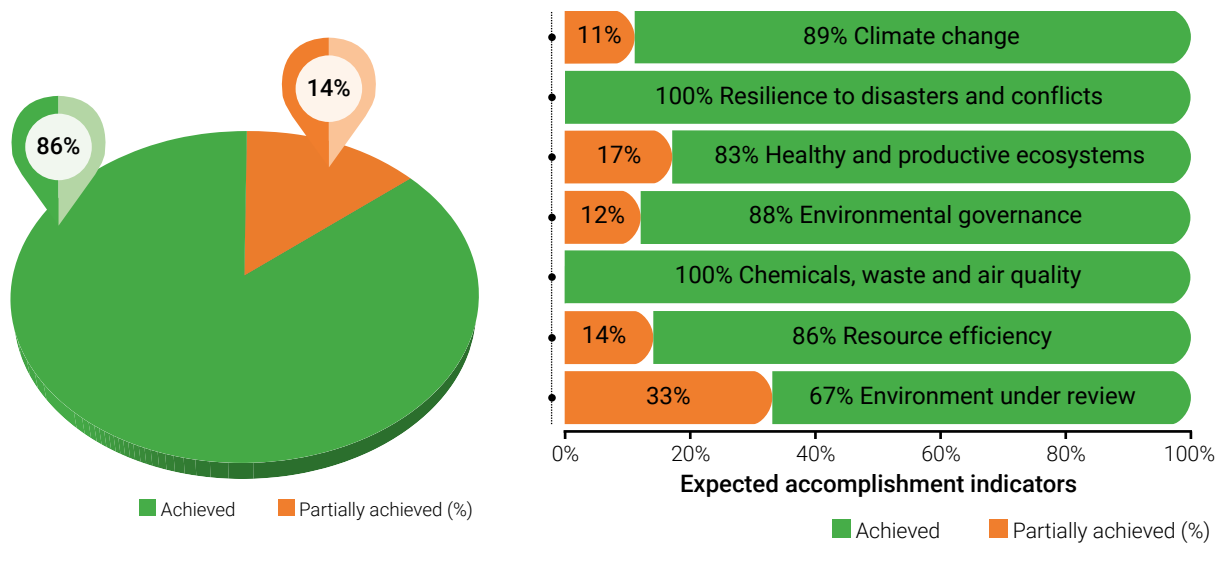
UNEP also worked with investors and ministries of finance to shift investments and subsidies towards nature-based and climate-neutral strategies, including through global platforms such as the Net-Zero Asset Owner Alliance and the Green Fiscal Policy Network.

Modernizing global environmental governance

UNEP supported important meetings, such as the first virtual ministerial meeting on COVID-19 and the environment in West Asia in August 2020. It brought together ministers of the environment from the region and adopted a ministerial statement that highlighted the importance of the UNEP COVID-19 response and green recovery.

In early May 2020, in coordination with UNEP-administered Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), UNEP conducted a study on options, opportunities and barriers to accelerating a transition to multilateralism in a virtual setting, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study provided general

Figure 2: 2020 performance overview and summary



guidance on how interactive intergovernmental meetings can happen online or “virtually” in a manner that respects the legal framework for such meetings. It reviews objections made to virtual meetings and identifies possible reforms.

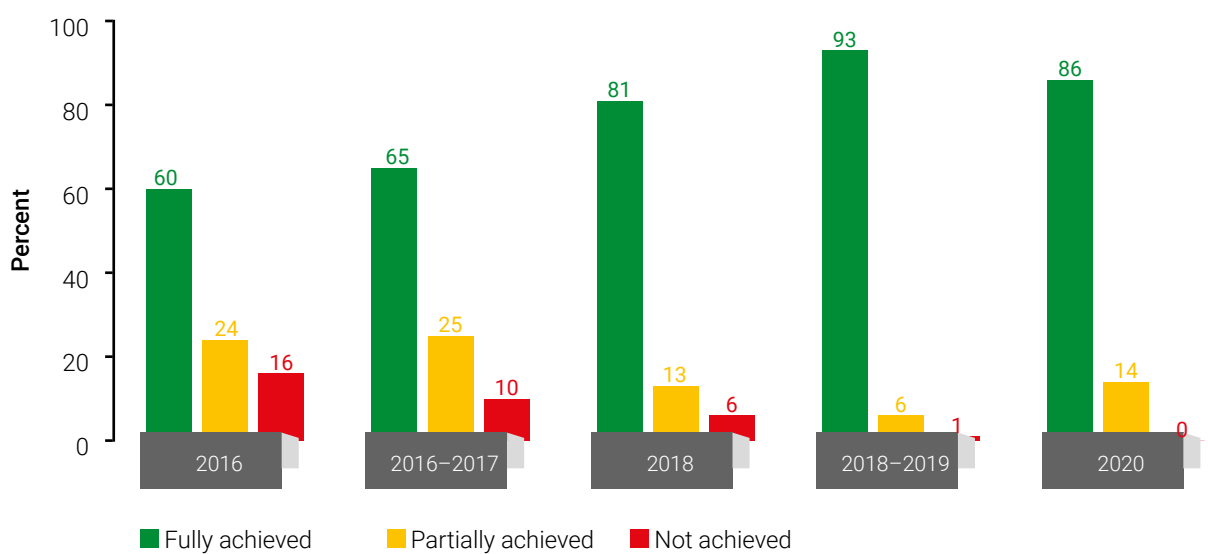
However, despite these initiatives to deal with COVID-19, the pandemic has affected UNEP’s work. Not only did UNEP experience some temporary interruptions in delivery, in particular with partner implementation for “on the ground” projects, but the UNEP staff community was affected, as many staff members and their families struggled personally with the virus.

UNEP programme performance

UNEP performance in 2020 is assessed against the Expected Accomplishments in its Programme of Work for 2020–2021, allowing the organization, its governing bodies and its stakeholders to recognize successes, find room for improvement and provide guidance for future work.

Overall, 86 per cent of the indicator targets for 2020 were met, with 14 per cent partially achieved. Of the programmatic areas, two (resilience to disasters and conflicts; chemicals, waste and air quality) fully met their Expected Accomplishments target. Details on UNEP 2020 subprogrammes indicator performance are available [here](#).

Figure 3. Performance trends - achievement of indicator targets, 2016–2020



First-year performance in 2020 has improved compared to previous biennium. Performance for 2018 stood at 81 per cent fully achieved, 13 per cent partially achieved and 6 per cent not achieved. In 2016, performance stood at 60 per cent fully achieved, 24 per cent partially achieved and 16 per cent not achieved.

For 2020, out of a total of 50 subprogramme indicators, six were partially achieved and the remaining 14 were overachieved by more than 200 per cent. Impediments to fully meeting the targets included inability to organize some activities because of restrictions in response to COVID-19, insufficient funding, and difficulties in advancing national uptake in some areas.

Reasons for overachievement included effective partnerships, the culmination of projects, such as UNEP's work on the SDGs in 2020, unanticipated opportunities at the global level, indicator design and low level of ambition.

This report is an opportunity for UNEP and its stakeholders to reflect upon successes, but also lessons learned, as outlined in each programmatic area. Alongside the programmatic work, the constant drive for improvement at UNEP has led to more streamlined internal structures and processes, as described in the "Fit for Purpose" section. The "Investing in UNEP" section sets out the financial and human resources behind UNEP's achievements. Overall, this report presents a picture of a lean and nimble organization, dedicated to working with diverse partners to promote sustainable development and to address the challenges facing the planet.



Thematic results



Climate change

UNEP's work on climate change focuses on three areas:

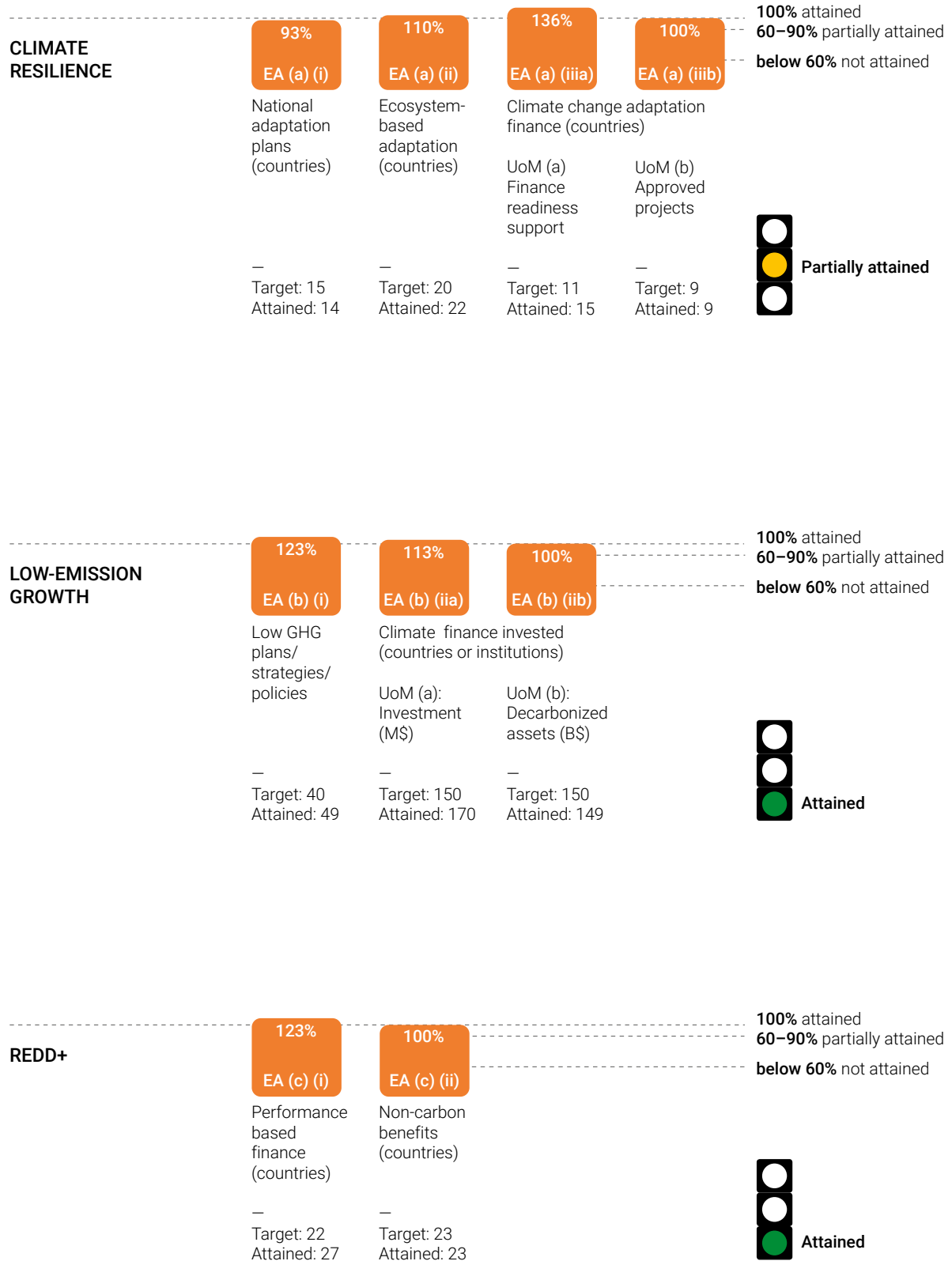
- **Climate resilience:** supporting countries in using ecosystem-based and other approaches to adapt and build resilience to climate change.
- **Low-emission growth:** supporting countries to adopt energy efficiency measures, access clean energy finance, and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants by transitioning to low carbon solutions.
- **Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+):** enabling countries to capitalize on investment opportunities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation with adequate social and environmental safeguards.

By December 2020, the subprogramme had attained eight of its nine indicator targets and had fallen behind on one target. Progress was made on that target, but not to the extent UNEP intended.



Indicators of Achievement Expected Accomplishment

Figure 4. Climate change results



Climate resilience

As global attention shifted towards COVID-19, countries, regions and businesses began leveraging climate strategies, such as national adaptation plans, as blueprints for recovery.

UNEP supports countries to implement policies that build resilience to climate change. It helps build national, technical and institutional capacity to enhance overall resilience, including through the management of ecosystems.

In 2020, UNEP:

- helped four countries create institutional frameworks to coordinate national adaptation plans;¹
- helped 10 countries build technical capacity to enable them to integrate ecosystem-based adaptation and other adaptation approaches;²
- supported five countries to access financial mechanisms and build project pipelines,³ while five more countries received approval for adaptation projects via various funds.⁴

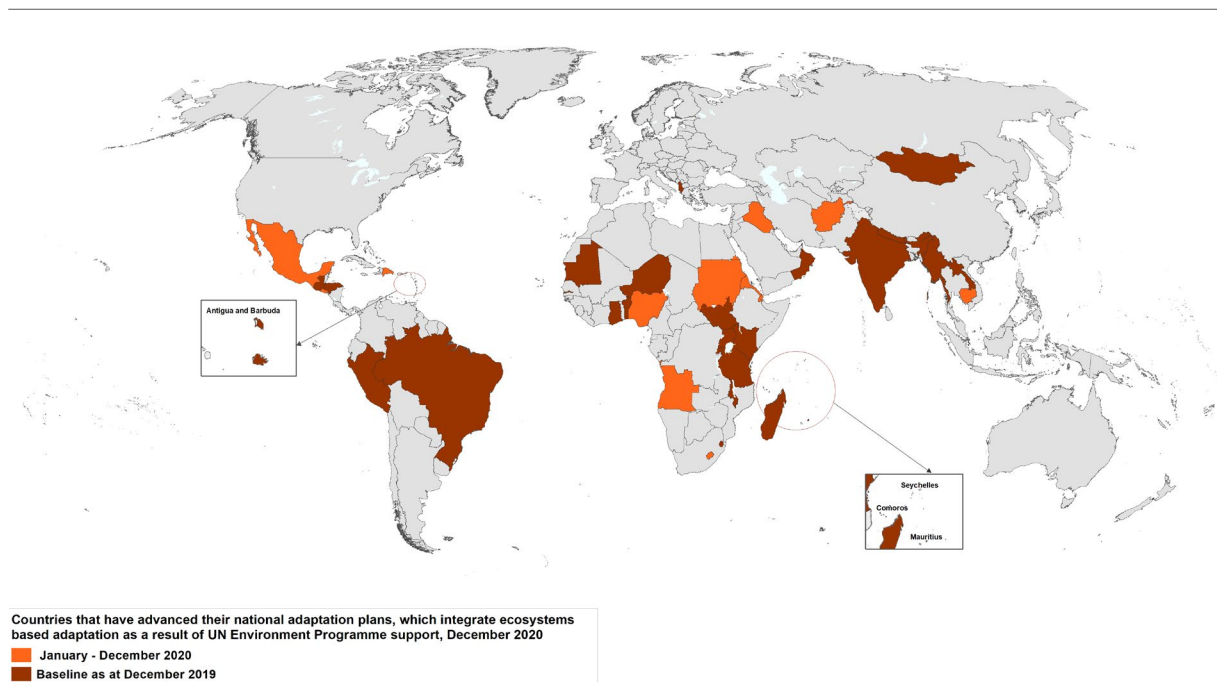
For example, [Ghana launched the process to develop a National Adaptation Plan](#) to build nationwide resilience to climate change. The Government of Ghana aims to use this process to ensure COVID-19 fiscal stimulus initiatives are sustainable and climate-proof.

While nations have advanced in planning, huge gaps remain in finance for developing countries in terms of advancing adaptation projects to the stage where they offer real protection against climate impacts such as droughts, floods and sea-level rise. Some initiatives have been launched to help address the gap. In 2020, the Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator, an initiative supported by the Adaptation Fund and the UNEP hosted Climate Technology Centre and Network, received US\$ 5 million to administrate and aggregate 25 micro-grant projects, while UNEP and the International Union for Conservation of Nature launched the [Global Fund for Ecosystems-based Adaptation](#).

Low-emission growth

UNEP's [Emission Gap Report 2020](#) warns that the climate crisis will continue unless there is a dramatic

Map 1. Climate change - advancement of National Adaptation Plans



Note: Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

1 Angola, Dominican Republic, Maldives and Mongolia
 2 Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cambodia, Djibouti, El Salvador, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mexico, Myanmar, Nepal and Sudan
 3 Eritrea, Iraq, Lesotho, Nigeria and Sao Tome and Principe
 4 Ghana, Honduras, Malawi, Myanmar and South Sudan

and planned shift to low carbon economies. The [Production Gap Report 2020](#) indicates that the world needs to decrease fossil fuel production by about 6 per cent annually between 2020 and 2030 to follow a 1.5°C-consistent pathway.

However, pre-COVID-19 plans and post-COVID-19 stimulus packages point to a continuation of the growing global fossil fuel “production gap” (the gap between Paris Agreement goals and countries’ planned production of coal, oil and gas), risking severe climate disruption. Low carbon COVID-19 recovery offers a great opportunity to cut up to 25 per cent of the greenhouse gas emissions expected in 2030, based on policies in place before the pandemic.

To support emission reductions UNEP works across six sectors which jointly can deliver the needed emission reductions, at a cost of USD100/ton or lower, to maintain the 1.5 degree pathway..

Growth in renewable energy continues to break records. [The Renewables 2020 Global Status Report](#) notes that installed power capacity grew by a record 200 gigawatts (GW) in 2019.

Figure 5. Roadmap to a carbon-free future – the six sector solution

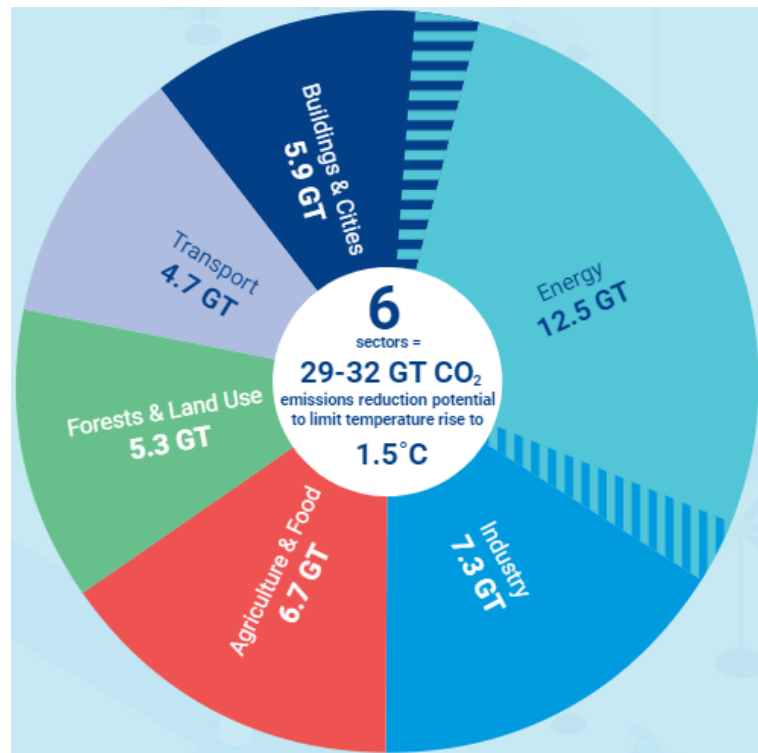
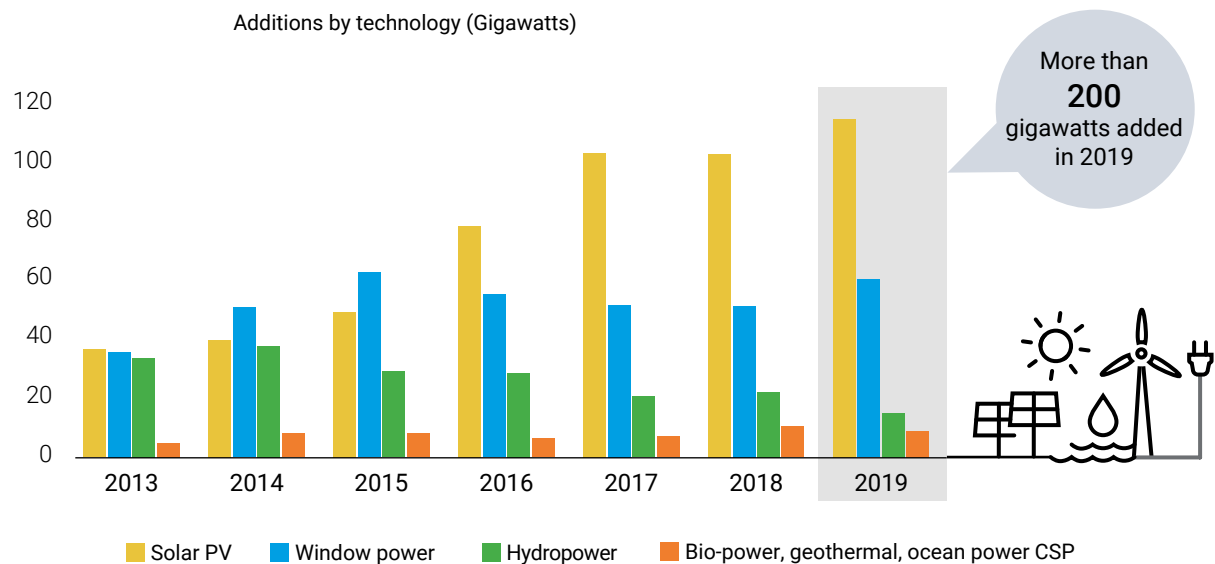


Figure 6. Annual additions of renewable power capacity by technology and total, 2013–2019



Source: REN21 (2020)⁵.

5 Renewables 2020 Global Status Report (Paris: REN21 Secretariat).

Renewable energy still has massive potential as a means for countries to unlock clean energy generation and create jobs.

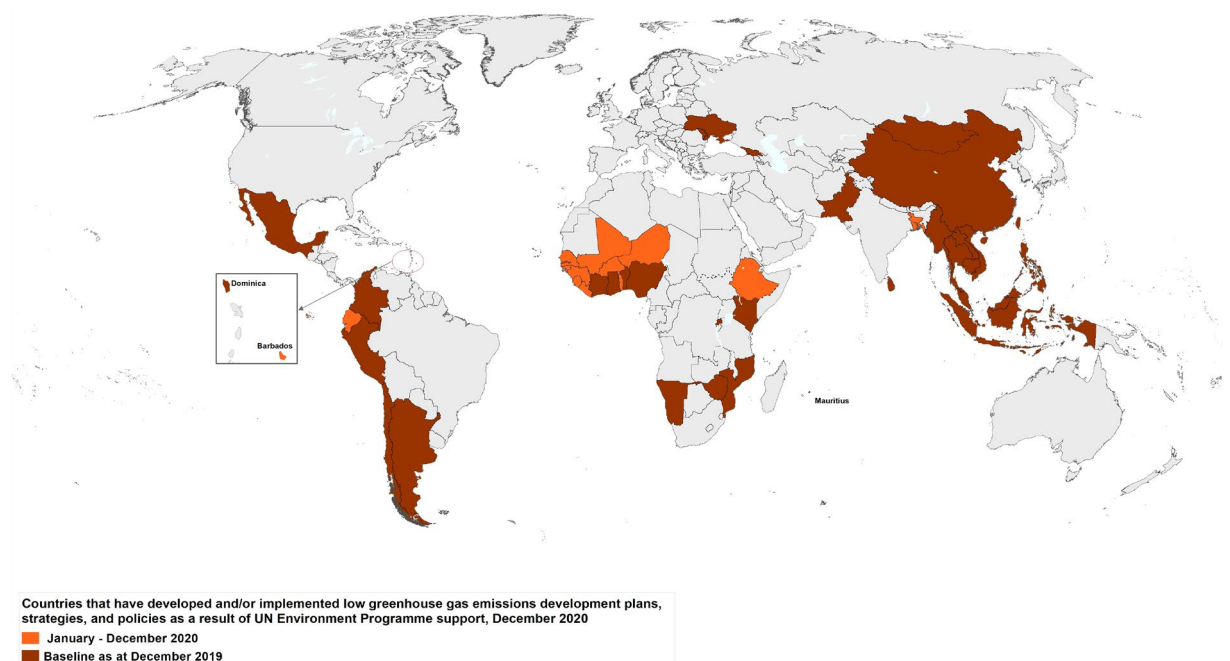
In 2020, with UNEP support:

- thirteen⁶ countries adopted low-emission development plans, strategies and policies on energy efficiency, renewable energy and clean technology;
- countries and institutions invested US\$ 70 million in clean energy and energy efficiency;
- US\$ 48 billion worth of assets were decarbonized.

implemented, the plan would reduce black carbon emissions and methane emissions by 40 per cent and 17 per cent respectively in 2030.

Implementation of Bolivia's [Delivering the Transition to Energy Efficient Lighting](#) project began, with support from UNEP, United for Efficiency (U4E) and the Global Environment Facility. U4E estimates that transition to energy efficient lighting will result in annual direct energy savings of 1.5 TWh, cost savings of over US\$ 160 million and a 1.1 million ton reduction of CO₂ in Bolivia.

Map 2. Climate change - progress towards low greenhouse gas emissions



Note: Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

During 2019–2020, the [Climate and Clean Air Coalition](#), hosted by UNEP, supported 16 countries on national planning and 8 countries to implement their action plans. It also supported 22 countries to develop black carbon inventories (eight of which are finalized) and [strengthened 41 institutions in 30 countries](#).

In 2020, the [Climate and Clean Air Coalition](#) supported [Bangladesh to develop a National Action Plan for Reducing Short-Lived Climate Pollutants](#). When fully



Black carbon measurements taken at a brick kiln in Colombia

6 Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo

Under the UNEP Finance Initiative's Principles for Responsible Banking framework, the Collective Commitment to Climate Action initiative shared expertise on existing approaches and methodologies to harmonize practice and [agree on common standards for setting and reporting on climate alignment targets](#).

In 2020, UNEP has supported:

- five countries to secure finance, including performance-based finance for implementation of REDD+ policies and measures⁷
- two countries to demonstrate quantifiable ability to generate social and environmental non-carbon benefits.⁸

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+)

The Paris Agreement recognizes the role of forests as carbon sinks to limit warming to well below 2°C.

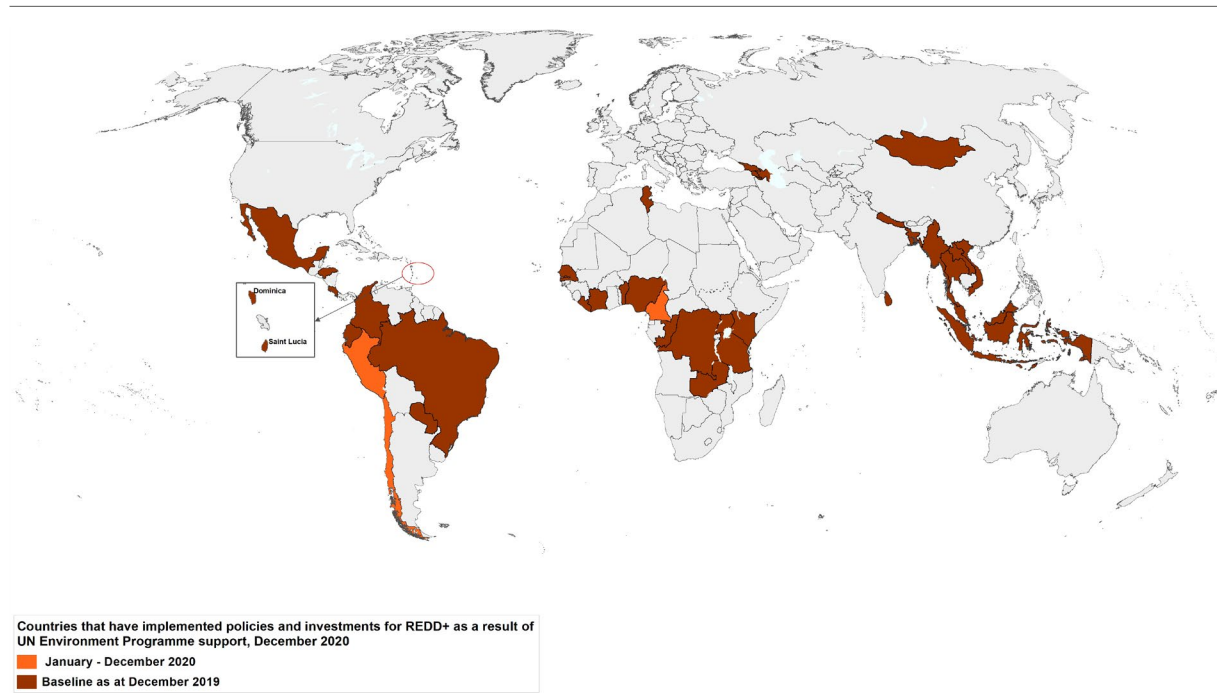
The United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD), jointly implemented by UNEP, FAO and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), supports countries to ensure emission reduction by avoiding deforestation and forest degradation.

Within the UN-REDD programme, UNEP leads on private sector engagement, safeguards, knowledge management and communications.

In 2020, UNEP worked to unlock private finance for sustainable land use. For example, in partnership with the Frankfurt School of Finance and Management, and the governments of Germany and Luxembourg, UNEP launched [the Restoration Seed Capital Facility](#) to promote investment in forest landscape restoration. Additionally, the [Agri3 Fund](#) closed its first two transactions, worth US\$ 15 million, with Rabobank in China and Brazil, with investments focusing on sustainable farm practices, forest protection and improving local rural livelihoods.

Under the UN-REDD programme, in partnership with FAO and UNDP, UNEP is supporting countries to become “REDD+ ready” and qualify for results-based payments,

Map 3. Climate change – adoption and implementation of forest-friendly policies and measures



Note: Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

7 Cameroon, Chile, Costa Rica, Gambia and Paraguay
 8 Paraguay and Peru

as well as to demonstrate the multiple benefits of the programme. For example, [indigenous communities in Peru realized non-carbon benefits, such as the granting of land titles](#) and zoning resulting in forest conservation, through the UN-REDD programme.

Opportunities, challenges and lessons learned

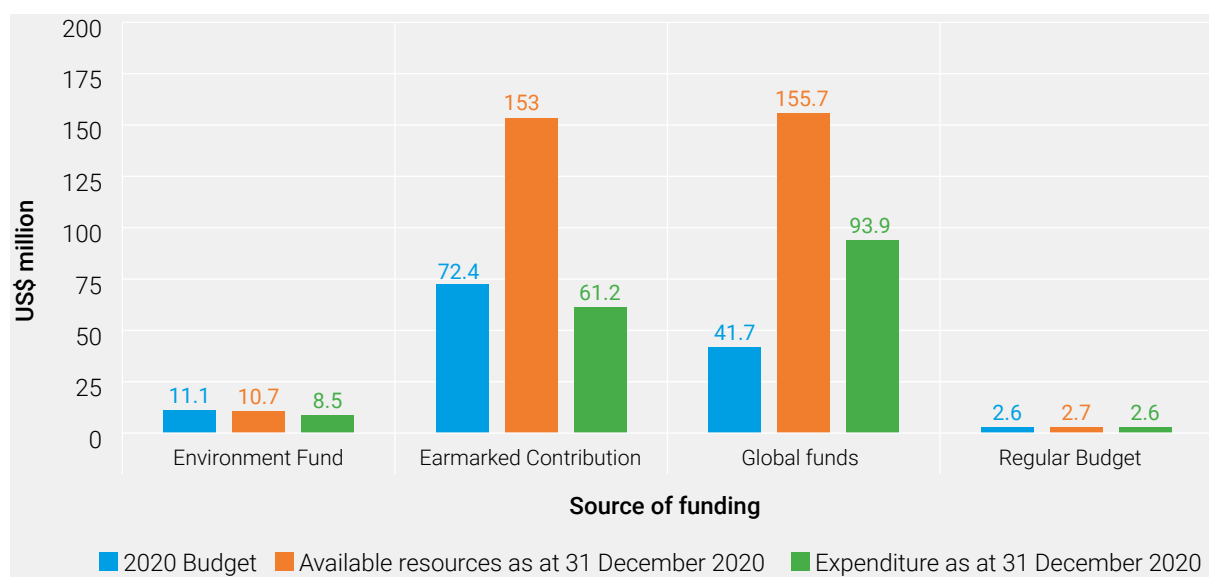
The COVID-19 pandemic created some major challenges for the implementation of subprogramme activities, with containment measures causing some delays.

Although the subprogramme managed to adjust and catch up on most of its activities, some were postponed for implementation in 2021.

UNEP learned that opportunities exist for countries to utilize their climate strategies as blueprints for COVID-19 recovery. Climate strategies offer win-win solutions to stimulate economic recovery while making strides towards attaining climate objectives. As a result, UNEP will strengthen support countries to utilize their climate strategies for COVID-19 recovery. UNEP's work in Ghana is one example of this support.

Figure 7. Financial overview - climate change

| Climate change (2020) | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Fund type | 2020 budget (in million US\$) | Available resources (in million US\$) as at 31 Dec 2020 ⁹ | Expenditure (in million US\$) as at 31 Dec 2020 |
| Environment Fund | 11.1 | 10.7 | 8.5 |
| Earmarked contributions | 72.4 | 153.0 | 61.2 |
| Global funds ¹⁰ | 41.7 | 155.7 | 93.9 |
| Regular Budget | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.6 |
| Total | 127.8 | 322.1 | 166.2 |



⁹ Includes multi-year contributions.

¹⁰ "Global funds" refers to the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund.

- Out of the planned Environment Fund budget for 2020 of US\$ 11 million, US\$ 10.7 million was received. This was part of an overall trend whereby UNEP received a smaller amount of Environment Fund contributions than originally projected.
 - Earmarked funds compensated to some degree for the Environment Fund shortfall. The subprogramme received US\$ 153 million (against a planned budget of US\$ 72.4 million)
- from earmarked funds contributions. However, as some of this amount represents multi-year contributions, only part of it can be counted against 2020.
- The subprogramme received US\$ 155.7 million (against a planned budget of US\$ 41.7 million) from global funds.
 - Overall expenditure for the biennium, therefore, stands at US\$ 166.2 million, which is 130.04 per cent of the target budget of US\$ 127.8 million.

Success Story: Building climate resilience in Iraq

Countries recovering from conflict often face a double burden of recovering damaged infrastructure and shattered institutions while being highly exposed to the impacts of climate change. This is particularly evident in Iraq.

“According to the GEO-6 report issued by UNEP, Iraq is classified as the fifth most vulnerable country in the world to decreased water and food availability and extreme temperatures, which will negatively affect food security, water security, social security and health security,” says Iraq’s Deputy Minister of Health and Environment, Dr Jasim Humadi.

In 2020, UNEP, in partnership with the Government of Iraq, initiated the process to develop a National Adaptation Plan to build the country’s resilience to climate change.

The three-year project, financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) with over US\$ 2.5 million, will support Iraq to formulate and implement its National Adaptation Plan, with a focus on strengthening institutional, technical and financial capacities.

A key aspect of Iraq’s National Adaptation Plan process is to identify, assess and bridge existing gaps in climate knowledge, as these gaps constitute barriers to long-term climate planning across local, regional and national

planning processes. Climate risk assessments will be carried out to identify the livelihoods and sectors most threatened by climate impacts, as well as the most urgent adaptation priorities.

Climate change in Iraq is expected to reduce annual rainfall, which will lead to a surge in dust storms, a reduction in agricultural productivity, and increased water scarcity. These challenges are likely to have serious impacts on the health of the people of Iraq, as well as the agricultural and industry sectors, which contribute significantly to Iraq’s gross domestic product.

“This project will support national efforts that focus on increasing Iraq’s adaptive capacity,” says Dr Humadi, “increasing the resilience of affected sectors, increasing the awareness and preparedness of rural communities, supporting youth and women, and achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.”



Resilience to disasters and conflicts

UNEP's work on disasters and conflicts focuses on three areas:

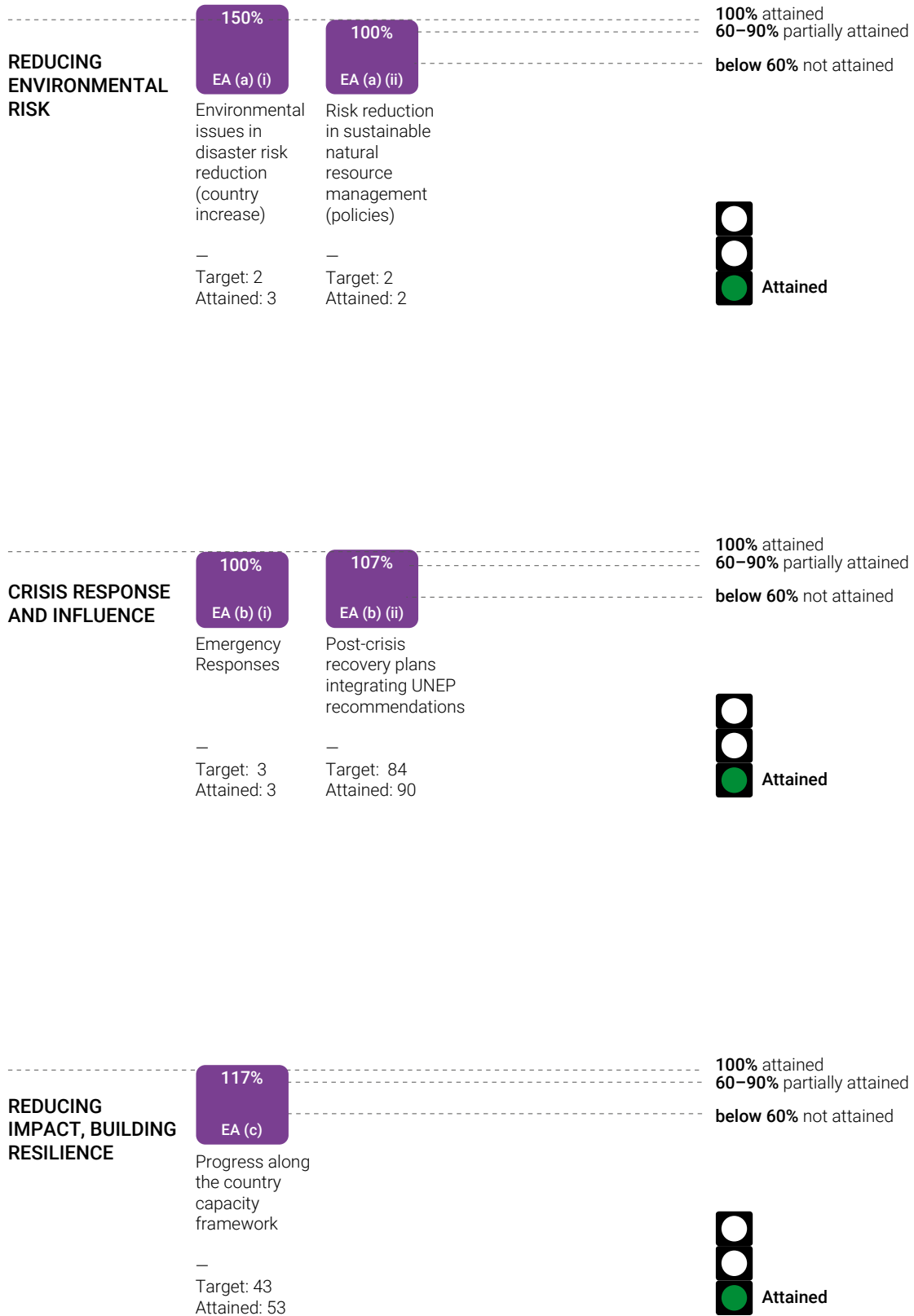
- **Reducing environmental risk:** UNEP encourages best-practice environmental management in ways that reduce the risks and impacts of natural hazards, industrial accidents and armed conflict.
- **Crisis response and influence:** UNEP supports countries and international partners to understand and address urgent environmental priorities in the event of disasters, accidents and conflict.
- **Reducing impact, building resilience:** UNEP assists countries in a process of post-crisis recovery to put in place appropriate environmental policies and institutions.

By December 2020, the subprogramme had met or exceeded its five indicators.



Indicators of Achievement Expected Accomplishment

Figure 8. Resilience to disasters and conflicts - results



Reducing environmental risk

UNEP's support to the disaster risk reduction and environmental agenda was marked by the publication and adoption of the Guidance Note on Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2020). This document supports Resident Coordinator Offices and UN Country Teams in ensuring Cooperation Frameworks are informed by disaster and climate risks, and further enables the identification of country programming actions that support resilience-building.

UNEP also supported the International Committee of the Red Cross in the development and publication of its updated 2020 *Guidelines on the Protection of the Natural Environment in Armed Conflict*, a key global framework for environmental protection.

To address the need for more information and guidance on nature-based solutions for tackling disaster and climate risks, UNEP also developed two milestone learning elements: a new Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on Nature-based Solutions for Disaster and Climate Resilience and, as part of the Words Into Action technical guidance series, a document entitled Nature-based Solutions for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Words Into Action guidelines, developed with the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, will be the starting point for enabling Member States to enhance their national reporting on green infrastructure and Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction solutions under the Sendai Framework. The MOOC is hosted on the [EdX platform](#) through the SDG Academy and currently has nearly 10,000 participants enrolled from 180+ countries.

UNEP has continued to support disaster prevention linked to the oil and gas sector, working in collaboration with the International Maritime Organization and the Norwegian Coastal Administration to provide the Government of Kenya, as well as other countries in East Africa region, with a series of technical trainings linked to oil spill preparedness and response. These trainings have led to the development of new national guidelines.

In Iraq, UNEP has continued to support conflict debris management and recycling, and in Nigeria it has supported the clean-up of oil pollution in Ogoniland.

Crisis response and influence

UNEP supported the UN's response to the August 2020 explosion at the Port of Beirut, Lebanon. A United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination

(UNDAC) team, including a member of the UNEP/Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Joint Environment Unit, was deployed to coordinate the international response in support of national efforts. This support included the rapid identification and assessment of acute environmental risks, providing a crucial and essential knowledge base for subsequent risk reduction and remediation work.

The UNEP/OCHA Joint Environment Unit, in cooperation with the International Maritime Organization, also deployed an oil spill expert to support authorities in Mauritius after the bulk carrier MV Wakashio, which was carrying nearly 4,200 metric tons of fuel, ran aground on the reef of Pointe d'Esny in Mauritius on 25 July 2020.

UNEP supported the Government of Honduras in its response to the damage of hurricane Eta and hurricane Iota in November 2020. An UNDAC team, including two UNEP staff, was deployed to address issues including dam-related water resources management, potential spills of hazardous substances from impacted sites of concerns with related human health and environmental impacts, and overall disaster waste management with associated access constraints.

UNEP's country-based recovery work in Sudan included the delivery of the 2020 State of the Environment and Outlook Report in November. This report followed an earlier issue-based environmental report, the Sudan Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment, which compiled field studies on the environmental impacts of the conflict in Sudan that ended with the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The State of the Environment and Outlook Report assesses the biophysical, social and economic conditions in the country and presents them in an integrated way, ultimately pointing to pathways that will lead the country towards a future based on sustainable development.

In Haiti, UNEP's recovery support included the launch of a national environmental information system that enables policymakers to track land, ocean and coastal health more effectively, as well as other key environmental health indicators.

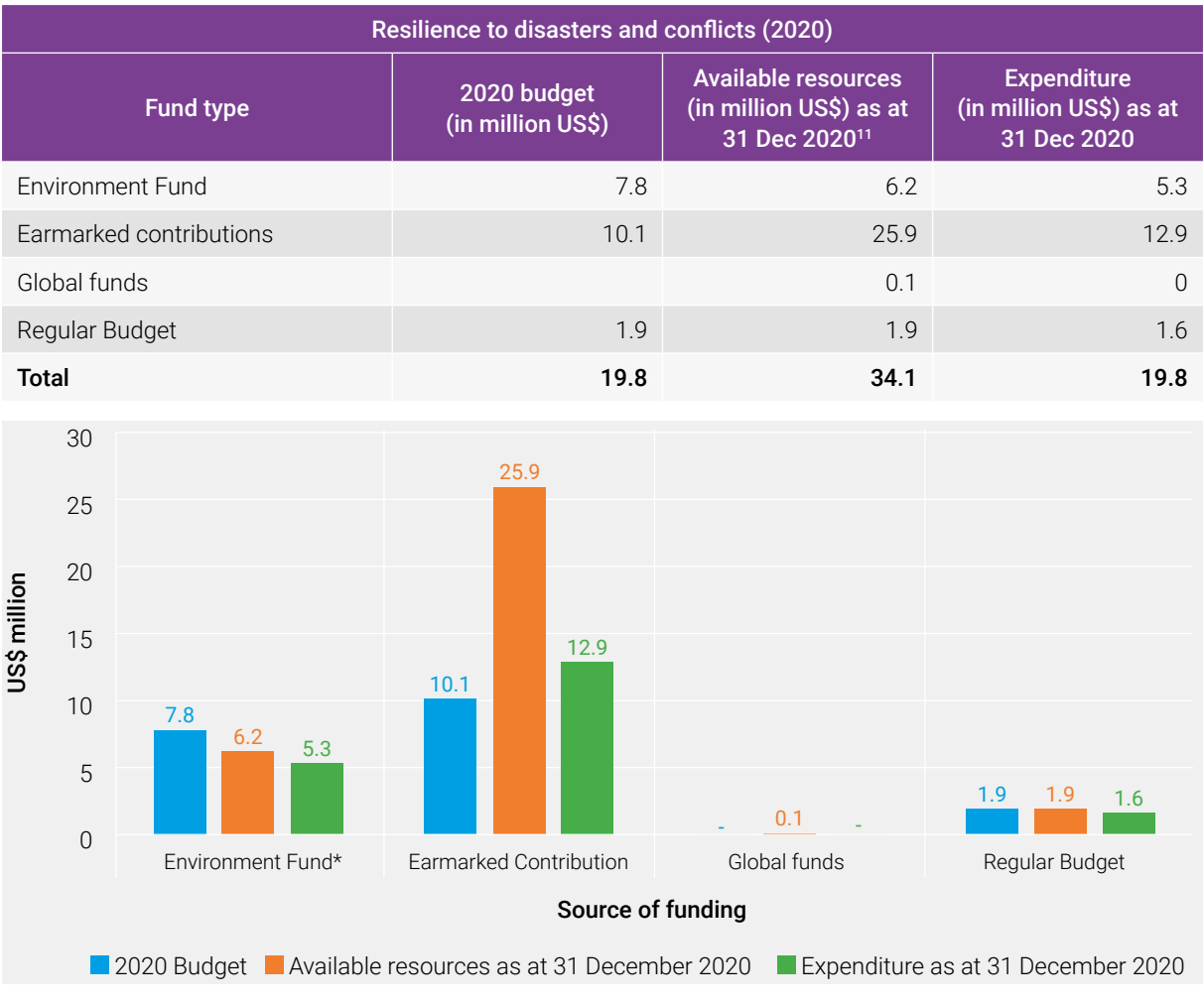
Opportunities, challenges and lessons learned

UNEP conducted an extensive internal and external strategic review of its work on resilience to disasters and conflicts, drawing from it key lessons that will be incorporated into future workstreams, particularly as the subprogramme will be mainstreamed across UNEP's programmatic priorities in the 2022–2025 Medium-Term Strategy, with internal structures also reconfigured.

The focus will be on enhanced delivery under the “Leave No One Behind” mantra, increased internal cooperation and more effective external partnerships, as well as greater normative, knowledge, policy and advisory support to the reformed UN system, Resident Coordinators and Missions, and Member States.

- Earmarked contributions compensated for the Environment Fund shortfall, with the subprogramme receiving US\$ 25.9 million (against a planned budget of US\$ 10.1 million) from earmarked funds contributions. However, as some of this amount represents multi-year

Figure 9. Financial overview – resilience to disasters and conflicts



- Out of the planned Environment Fund budget for 2020 of US\$ 7.8 million, only US\$ 6.2 million was received. This was part of an overall trend where UNEP received a smaller amount of Environment Fund contributions than originally projected.

- contributions, only part of this can be counted against 2020.
- Overall expenditure for 2020, therefore, stands at US\$ 19.8 million, which is 100 per cent of the target budget.

11 Includes multi-year contributions.

Success story: Dealing with COVID-19 waste

As a result of COVID-19, 2020 saw a rise in waste related to masks and other personal protective equipment. There was also a large increase in the amount of single-use plastics being produced. When infected medical waste is not managed soundly, it risks being disposed of via uncontrolled dumping, leading to public health risks, and via open burning or uncontrolled incineration, leading to the release of toxins in the environment and to secondary transmission of diseases to humans. Other wastes may reach water sources and add to riverine and marine pollution.

UNEP worked to address this spike in waste from the pandemic. UNEP provided technical advice on medical waste management to Afghanistan, Haiti, South Sudan, and Sudan, as well as to UN peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, UNEP published guidelines on healthcare and municipal solid waste management, reaching more than 150 countries.

In Afghanistan, Haiti, India, Serbia, South Sudan, Sudan, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, UNEP provided governments with support on COVID-19 related assessments. In South Africa, UNEP also supported a COVID-19 needs assessment to inform a national recovery strategy.

Several webinars were established to build knowledge and capacity among partners in tackling the waste aspects of the pandemic. These included a global webinar on COVID-19 Linked Waste Management, which drew 1,300 participants from 125 countries; an Asia Pacific webinar that drew 450 participants from 46 countries; and a global webinar on COVID-19 and Environmental Emergencies that drew 1,500 participants from 135 countries.

The 2020 publication *Waste Management during the COVID-19 Pandemic: from response to recovery* reviews current practices for managing waste from healthcare facilities, households and quarantine locations accommodating people with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19. Jointly produced by UNEP International Environmental Technology Centre and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, the report considers various approaches, identifies best practices and technologies, and provides recommendations for policymakers and practitioners to improve waste management over the long term.



Healthy and productive ecosystems

UNEP's work on healthy and productive ecosystems focuses on two areas:

- **Cross-sector and transboundary collaboration frameworks:** Helping countries to institutionalize the health and productivity of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems in education, monitoring and cross-sector and transboundary collaboration frameworks.
- **Inclusion of ecosystems in economic decision-making:** Assisting policymakers in the public and private sectors to include ecosystems in economic decision-making.

By December 2020, this subprogramme had exceeded five of its six indicator targets and partially met one.



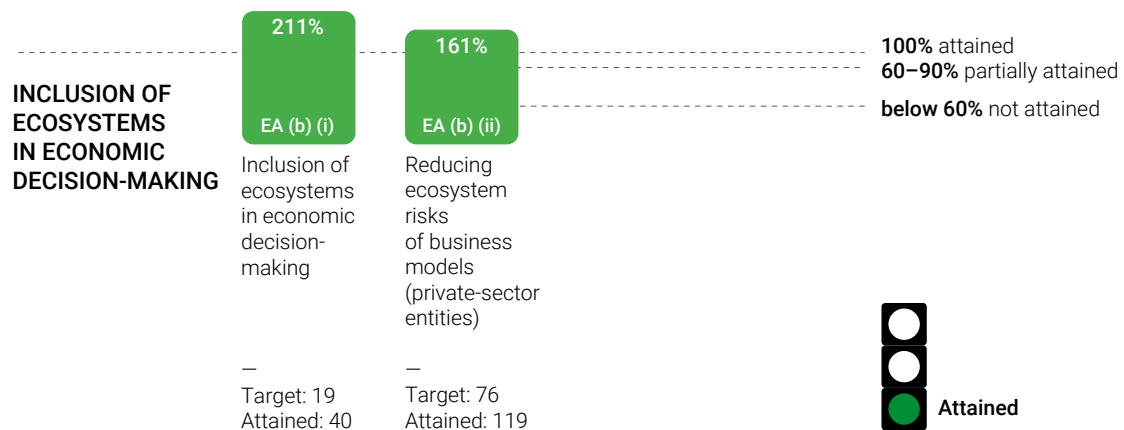
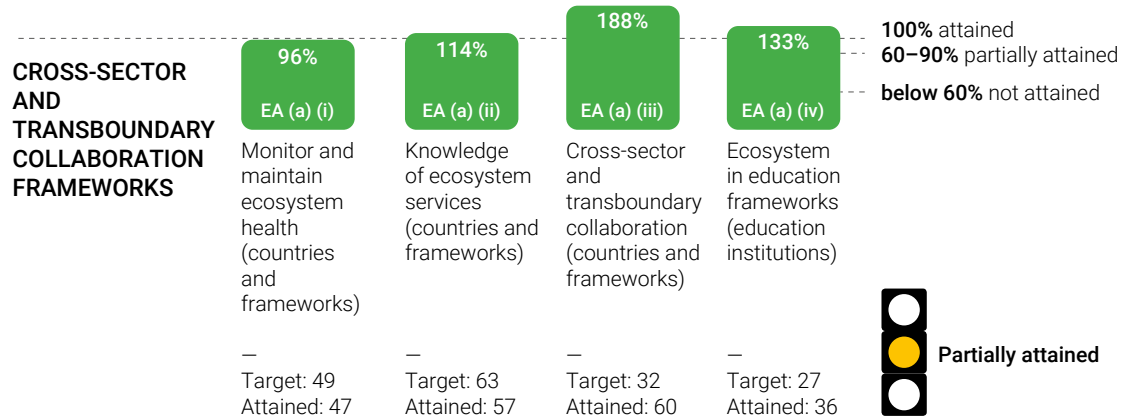
©Ocean Image Bank/Matt Curnoek



| | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| <p>1 NO POVERTY</p> | <p>2 ZERO HUNGER</p> | <p>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> | <p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p> | <p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p> | <p>14 LIFE BELOW WATER</p> | <p>15 LIFE ON LAND</p> | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|

Indicators of Achievement Expected Accomplishment

Figure 10. Healthy and productive ecosystems results



Cross-sector and transboundary collaboration frameworks

Ecosystems and biodiversity play a critical role in achieving sustainable development, but if not managed well they can threaten planetary stability and human well-being. UNEP recognizes the need for a global understanding of the importance of healthy ecosystems and for mainstreaming environmental considerations across sectors and borders.

In 2020, with UNEP support:

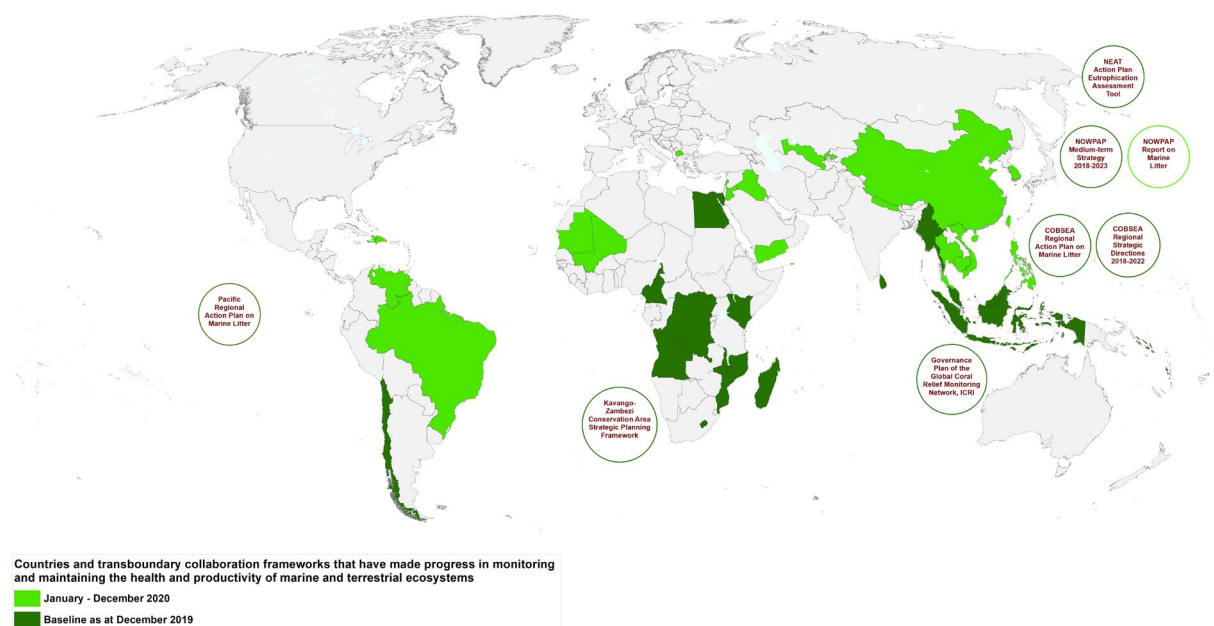
- 21 countries and one transboundary collaboration framework made progress in monitoring and maintaining the health and productivity of marine and terrestrial ecosystems;^{12,13}
- 20 countries and one multi-country initiative demonstrated enhanced knowledge of the value and role of ecosystem services;¹⁴

- 38 countries and six transboundary frameworks demonstrated improvement in the institutional set-up for cross-sector collaboration for terrestrial ecosystem management;¹⁵
- 14 educational institutions and learning platforms integrated the ecosystem approach into their educational frameworks.¹⁶

In 2020, UNEP continued to support entities to improve monitoring and maintain the health and productivity of marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

UNEP also supported countries to mainstream the economics of ecosystem services into national decision-making, through enhanced capacity for ecosystem services valuation and accounting.

Map 4. Healthy and productive ecosystems – health and productivity of marine and terrestrial ecosystems



Note: Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

12 Brazil, Cambodia, China, Comoros, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Mali, Mauritania, Nepal, North Macedonia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen

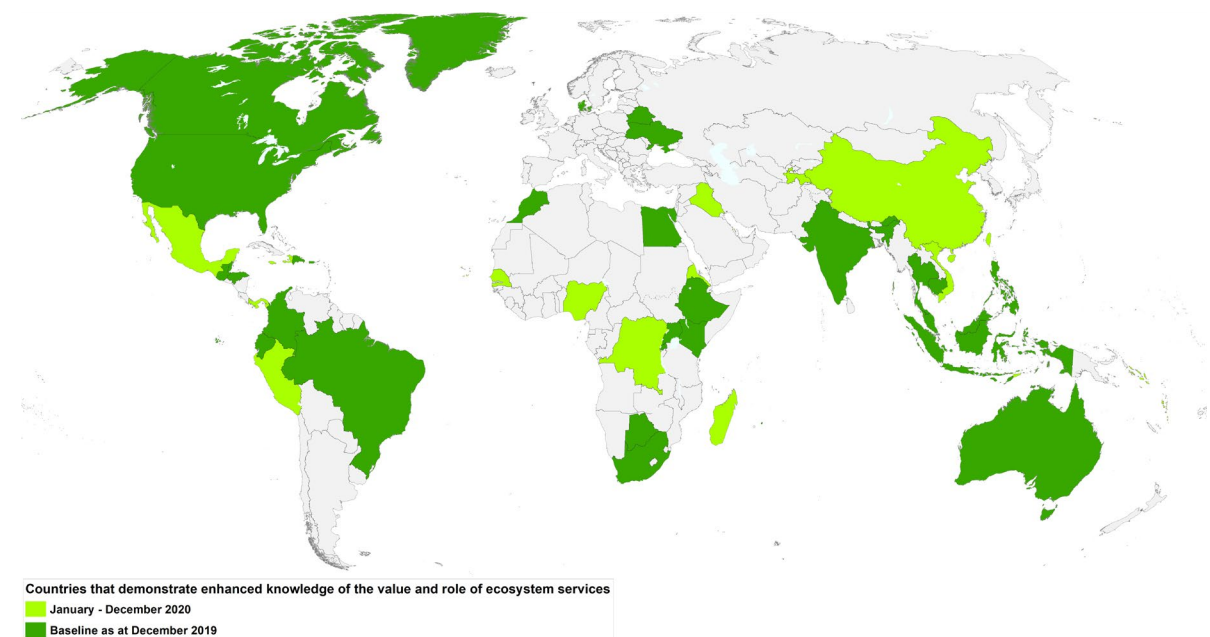
13 NOWPAP (North West Pacific Action Plan) report on marine litter

14 Bahrain, Cape Verde, China, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Haiti, Iraq, Jamaica, Madagascar, Mexico, Nauru, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Senegal, Solomon Islands, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu, Viet Nam; the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre National Ecosystem Assessment Initiative

15 Afghanistan, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Chad, Comoros, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Kenya, Kiribati, Lesotho, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nauru, Niger, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Uganda, United States of America, Venezuela

16 Swinburne University of Technology, Naropa University, Brunel University London, Università degli Studi di Pavia, Buckinghamshire New University, Chiba University of Commerce, oikos International, Eix Comercial Creu Coberta, School of Environment and Sustainability Student Association, Pädagogische Hochschule Luzern, Universal Institute of Professional Management, University of Ruhuna, University of Singapore, Sapienza Università di Roma

Map 5. Healthy and productive ecosystems – enhanced value and role of ecosystem



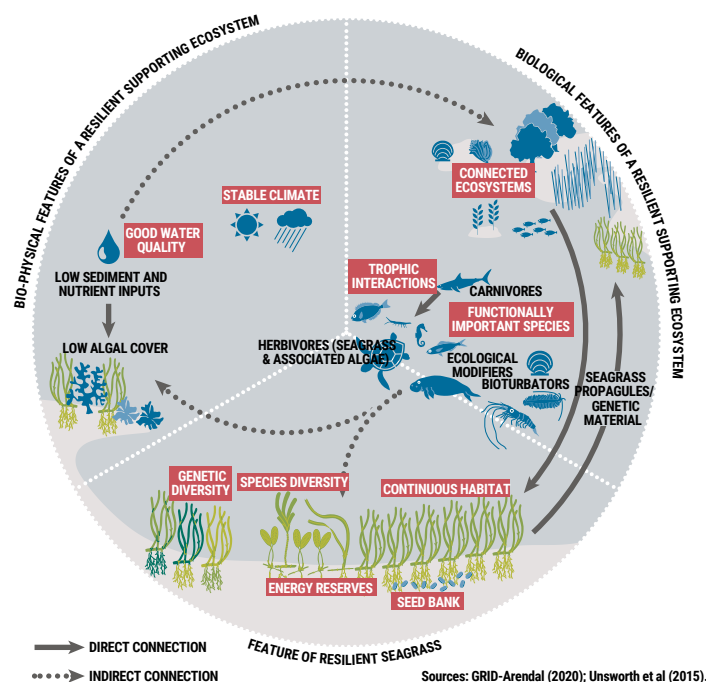
Note: Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

UNEP continued to develop and disseminate science-policy analysis and recommendations. For example, in 2020 UNEP published *Out of the Blue: The Value of Seagrasses to the Environment and to People* and *Protecting Seagrass Through Payments for Ecosystem Services: A Community Guide*. These reports contribute to building understanding and quantifying the value of seagrass ecosystem goods and services, as well as encouraging the respective countries to take into consideration the role of seagrass ecosystem resilience in coastal management strategies and decision-making processes. Moreover, they provided guidance and best-practice advice to the world's first seagrass carbon market project in Kenya.

Supporting the development of an East Asian Seas Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, UNEP launched an [online catalogue](#) of marine litter policy frameworks and a [database on marine litter research](#), thus enhancing knowledge of the key threats, sources and impacts of marine litter.

Another important focus of UNEP work was to assist countries to improve cross-sector and transboundary collaboration frameworks for marine and terrestrial ecosystem management.

Figure 11. Seagrass ecosystem resilience



Source: United Nations Environment Programme (2020)¹⁷

¹⁷ United Nations Environment Programme (2020). *Out of the blue: The Value of Seagrasses to the Environment and to People*.

A team of system dynamics modellers, from universities in Africa, Asia and Europe, facilitated discussions and elicited knowledge from participants to build causal loop diagrams for each sector. Modellers converted these diagrams into sectoral system dynamics models, which were then iteratively refined, parameterized with data obtained from the literature and various databases, and subjected to thorough testing.

The sectoral models were then validated by stakeholders before being combined into an integrated model. A sensitivity analysis and further testing was done on the model prior to final review and validation by all stakeholders. User-friendly graphical interfaces were developed to allow policymakers and other users to interact with the models, ask “what-if?” questions and test different policy options.

In 2021, the interactive model interface will be used to inform high-level inter-sectoral and transboundary policy dialogues to develop coherent sectoral policy agendas that ensure people living with wildlife receive net, tangible and present benefits from coexistence. The model includes a simulation of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on tourism in the region, highlighting the importance of developing diversified, sustainable wildlife economies in important wildlife areas. Apart from the model’s policy relevance and usefulness, the success of the ACL project also resides in the process itself, and particularly in stakeholder ownership of the model, the broadening of perspectives, and the doors it opens for collaboration across otherwise siloed sectors.

In 2020, UNEP continued to assist countries to enhance their knowledge of ecosystem services, make the economic case for biodiversity and promote collaboration across sectors by applying the TEEBAgriFood (the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity for Agriculture and Food programme) framework. The TEEB National Study for the TEEBAgriFood project was launched in Brazil.

UNEP also continued to support actions for integrating the ecosystem approach into education frameworks. In 2020, 11 higher education institutions,¹⁸ representing approximately 116,530 students, signed the Global Climate Letter, thus committing to increase the delivery of environmental and sustainability education across curriculum, campus, and community outreach programmes.

Inclusion of ecosystems in economic decision-making

During 2020, UNEP continued to promote efforts to embed environmental considerations in financial decision-making by public and private sector entities.

¹⁸ Buckinghamshire New University, Brunel University London, Chiba University of Commerce, Eix Comercial Creu Coberta, Naropa University, oikos International, Pädagogische Hochschule Luzern, Sapienza Università di Roma, School of Environment and Sustainability Student Association, Swinburne University of Technology, Università degli Studi di Pavia, Universal Institute of Professional Management, University of Singapore

In 2020, with UNEP support:

- 22 public sector institutions tested incorporating the health and productivity of marine and terrestrial ecosystems into economic decision-making at the national level;¹⁹
- 37 financial institutions adjusted their business models to reduce their ecosystem-related risks.²⁰

Priority was given to partnering with global finance institutions to help create a financial sector that serves people and planet while delivering positive impacts on environment.

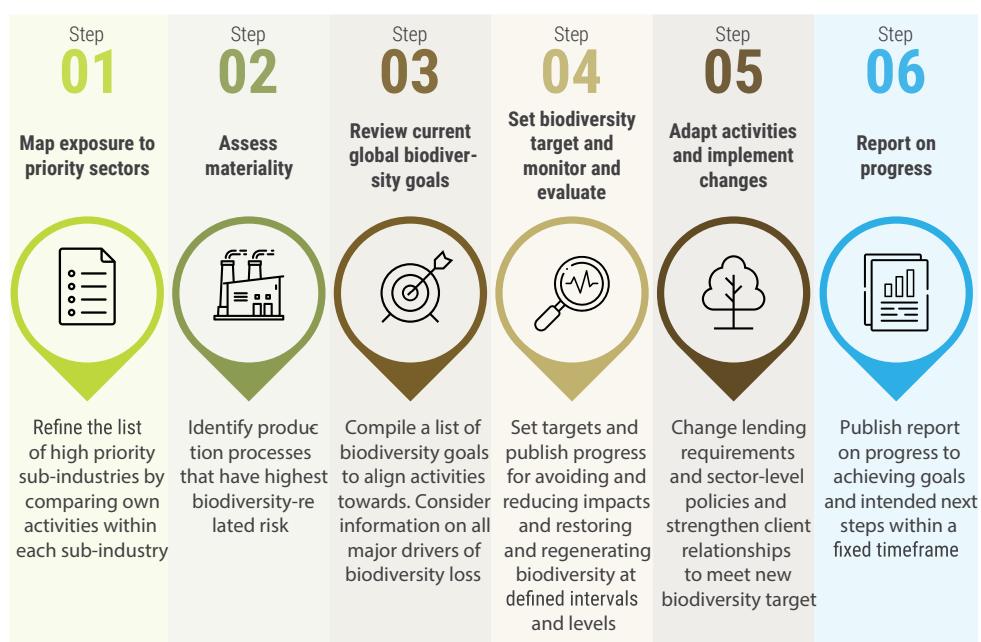
¹⁹ Democratic Republic of the Congo – Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development; Indonesia - Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Ministry of Planning; Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute; Laos – Department of Agriculture, Department of Forestry, Department of Livestock and Fishery, Department of Planning, Department of Tax, Department of Tourism Management, Ministry of Planning and Investment; Malawi – Ministry of Agriculture’s Department of Agricultural Extension Services; Nigeria - Ministry of Budget and Planning; Palau Bureau of Tourism; Rwanda – Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN), Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA); Senegal – Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development; Serbia – Ministry of Environmental Protection; South Africa – National Biodiversity Institute; Thailand – National Economic and Social Development Council, Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy Planning.

²⁰ Access Bank plc; BNC (National Bank of Canada); Banco Bradesco S.A; Banque Socredo; BNDES (Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social); Commonwealth Bank of Australia; Credit Suisse; Danica Pension, Danish pension fund; Denmark’s MP Pension, Development and Investment Bank of Turkey; ERAFP; Exporters Association (ADEX); First Rand Group Ltd; GLS Bank; Future Games of London; Generali; Company COSMOS (Peru); HSBC Holdings plc; ING Bank; J. Safra Sarasin; Jyske Bank; Kasikornbank; KENFO; Land Bank (Land and Agricultural Development Bank of South Africa); MAG Interactive; MUNICH RE; NAB (National Australia Bank Ltd.); The Paul G Allen Family Foundation; The Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation; Rabobank Nederland; RBS (Royal Bank of Scotland); Reinsurer SCOR; Scotiabank (Bank of Nova Scotia); Sudameris Bank S.A.E.C.A.; Tigertron; Wespah

UNEP Finance Initiative, in partnership with UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre and the Science Based Targets Network, established a group of 30+ financial institutions and banks contributing to the Principles for Responsible Banking guidance on biodiversity target setting. In support of this work, a report, entitled *Beyond Business As Usual: Biodiversity Targets and Finance*, was published in 2020 together with UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre and Global Canopy.

Fund have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate on the development of the new [Global Fund for Coral Reefs](#). This Fund aims to invest US\$ 500 million over the next 10 years to improve the health of coral reefs and the related biodiversity, which otherwise may face extinction within 30 years. The Global Fund for Coral Reefs pursues this goal through facilitating the uptake of innovative financing mechanisms, including private market-based investments focused on coral reef

Figure 13. Proposed, non-linear and iterative steps to create a biodiversity target for a financial institution using the list of high priority sub-industries



Source: UNEP (2020)²¹

The UNEP Finance Initiative also expanded the [Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Initiative](#) membership to 50 institutions.

In 2020, with partners, UNEP established the [Restoration Seed Capital Facility](#), which aims to unlock a minimum of US\$ 170 million to invest in forest landscape restoration projects over the next five years. Furthermore, UNEP and the UN Multi-Partner Trust

conservation and restoration.

UNEP also assisted countries to standardize valuation and accounting of ecosystem services and goods and to incorporate natural capital in sustainable development monitoring systems, such as inclusive wealth accounting. In Brazil, as part of the Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services project, progress was made on water accounts, extent and condition accounts and biodiversity accounts. UNEP also supported the development of the Inclusive Wealth Report in Thailand.

In Peru, progress has been made in engaging the private sector through advisory support on the Access and Benefit Sharing regime provided to the Exporters Association (ADEX) and the company Cosmos Agencia Marítima, S.A.C.

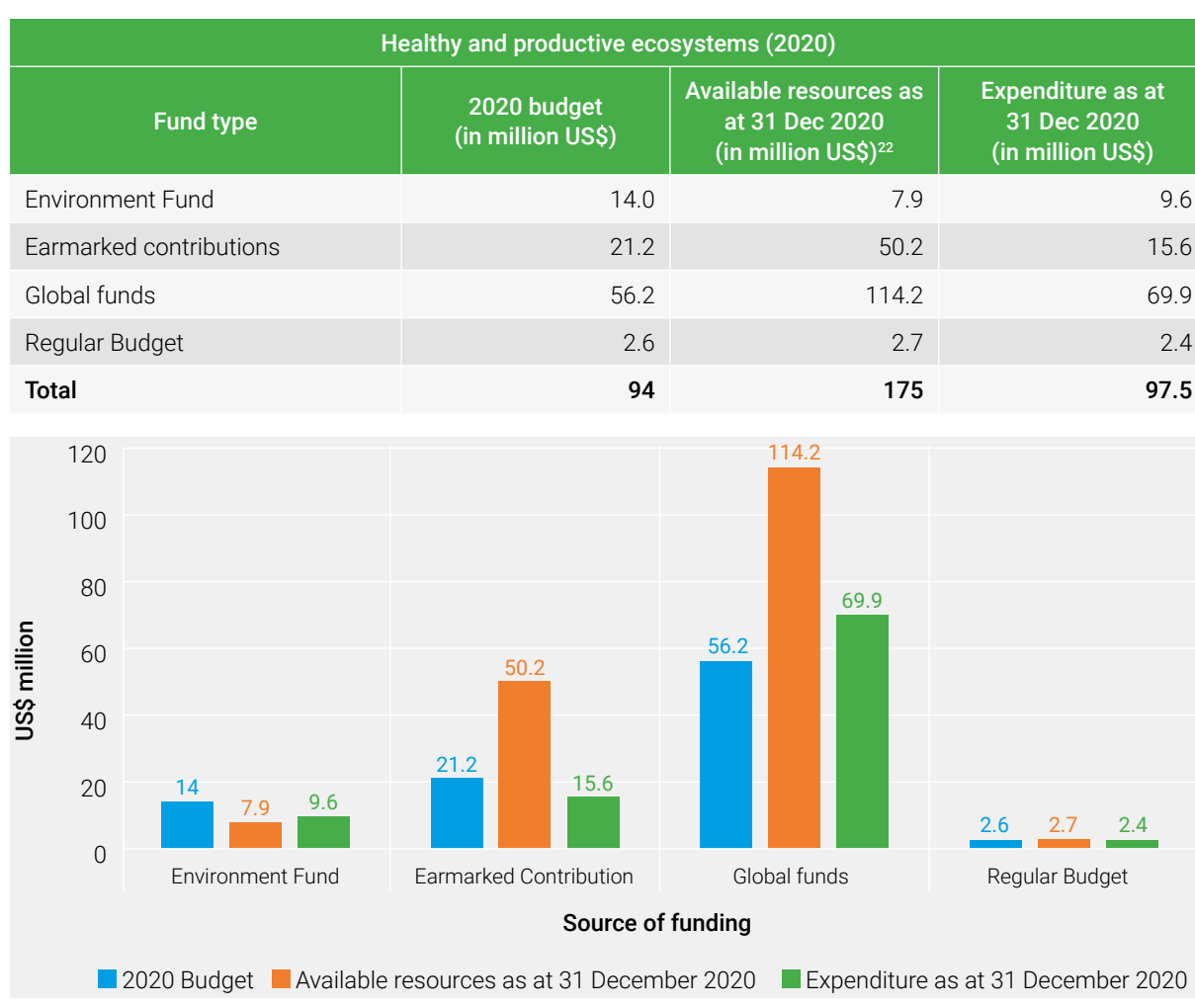
²¹ United Nations Environment Programme (2020). *UNEP Finance Initiative and Global Canopy 2020. Beyond 'Business as Usual': Biodiversity targets and finance. Managing biodiversity risks across business sectors*. Cambridge: UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

Opportunities, challenges and lessons learned

UNEP reacted to the pandemic by adjusting ongoing activities and designing responsive new ones. For example, to help meet information needs on the ecosystem dimensions of COVID-19, UNEP supported countries to develop policy recommendations that enhanced knowledge of the value and role of ecosystem services in mitigating COVID-19 impacts. In addition, UNEP's joint report with the International Livestock Research Institute, *Preventing the next pandemic – Zoonotic diseases and how to break the chain of transmission*, launched in 2020, providing science-based policy recommendations to Member States for reducing the risk of zoonotic spillover.²²

It was predicted that 2020 would be “a super year for the environment” (Inger Andersen, interviewed by Daniela Chiaretti, 3 January 2020) and although COVID-19 delayed some processes, global attention to biodiversity and ecosystems did grow significantly. In 2020, the UNEP-administered CBD Secretariat released the [zero draft of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#). Despite the pandemic, UNEP has been supporting the CBD Secretariat in its continued efforts to lay the foundations for this crucial new agreement, bringing together key experts to update the framework. UNEP also played a key role in supporting CBD Parties and the CBD Secretariat in the post-2020 framework monitoring and accountability frameworks discussions, as well as facilitating the involvement of other MEAs in the process.

Figure 14. Financial overview – healthy and productive ecosystems



²² Includes multi-year contributions.

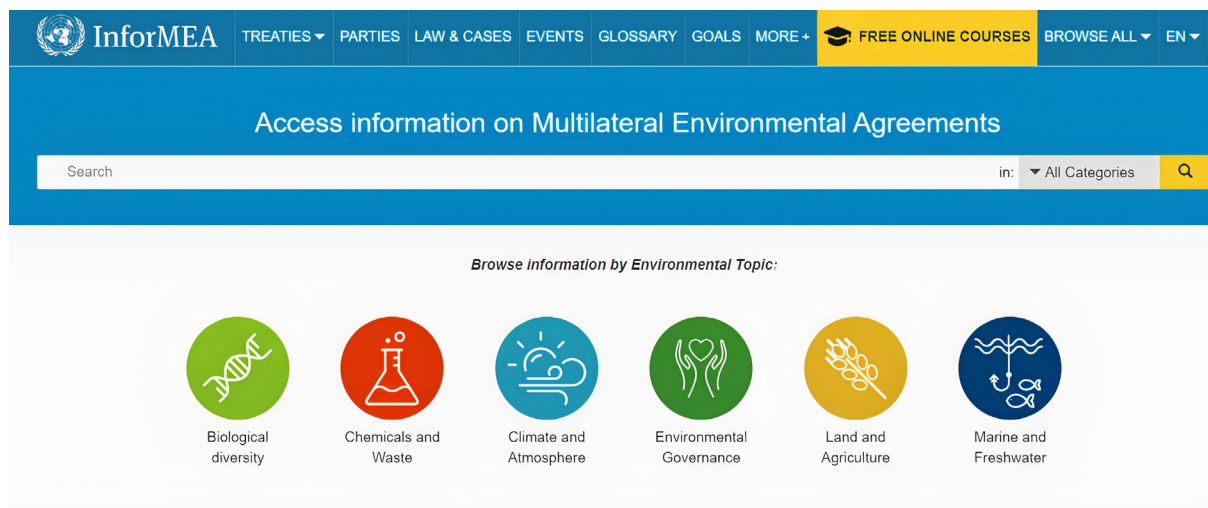
- Out of the planned Environment Fund budget for 2020 of US\$ 14 million, only US\$ 7.9 million was received. This was part of an overall trend whereby UNEP received a smaller amount of Environment Fund contributions than originally projected.
- Earmarked funds compensated to some degree for the Environment Fund shortfall. The subprogramme received US\$ 50.2 million (against a planned budget of US\$ 21.2 million) from earmarked funds contributions. However, as some of this amount represents multi-year contributions, only part of it can be counted against 2020.
- The subprogramme received US\$ 114.2 million (against a planned budget of US\$ 56.2 million) from global funds.
- Overall expenditure for the biennium, therefore, stands at US\$ 97.5 million, which is 103.72 per cent of the target budget of US\$ 94 million.

Environmental governance

UNEP's work on environmental governance focuses on achieving results in two areas:

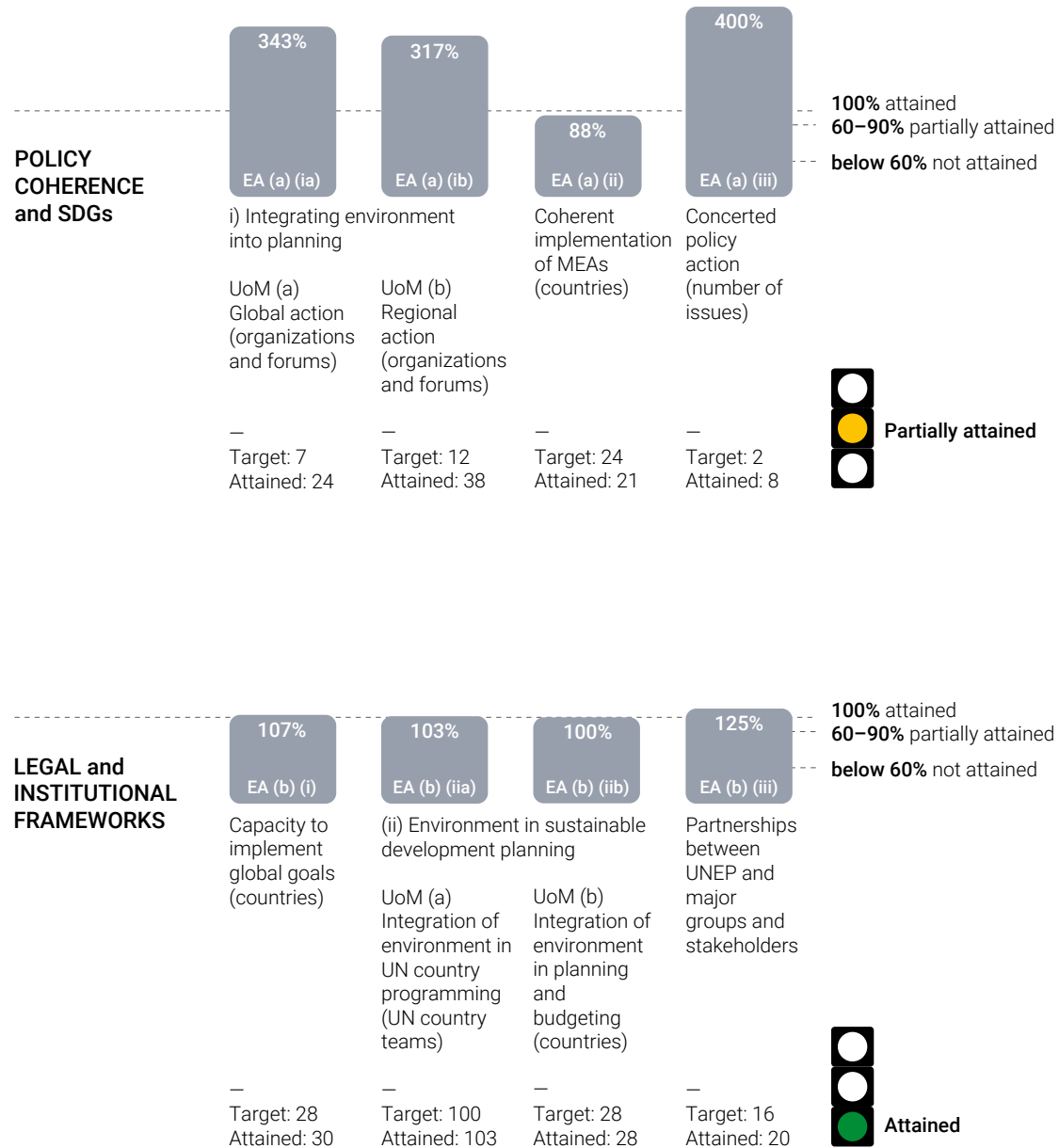
- **Policy coherence and SDGs:** The international community increasingly converges on common and integrated approaches to achieve environmental objectives and implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- **Legal and institutional frameworks:** Institutional capacities and policy and/or legal frameworks are enhanced to achieve internationally agreed environmental goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs.

By December 2020, this subprogramme had attained or exceeded seven of its eight indicator targets and partially met one.



Indicators of Achievement Expected Accomplishment

Figure 15. Environmental governance results



Policy coherence and SDGs

Promoting policy coherence for sustainable development supports effective policies at various levels of government and institutions and ensures that policies in different sectors are mutually beneficial and do not work against each other.

During 2020, UNEP engaged with partners to advocate adoption of environmental sustainability into decisions, plans or policies at the national, regional and global level through activities in support of MEAs, UN inter-agency collaboration and engagement in the regions. As the custodian agency for [SDG indicator 17.14.1](#),

UNEP, in close collaboration with experts and other international organizations, developed and pilot-tested a methodology to measure progress towards this indicator. In February 2020, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDGs [reclassified SDG indicator 17.14.1](#) from Tier 3 to Tier 2.

Support for Multilateral Environmental Agreements, multilateral organizations and processes

UNEP support in this area resulted in greater coherence and support to MEA implementation, as highlighted below.²³

Table 1. Collaboration with multilateral organizations

| | Work area | Result |
|---|----------------------|---|
|  | Migratory species | The thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 13) to the Convention on Migratory Species adopted the Gandhinagar Declaration , welcoming migratory species to the new Global Biodiversity Framework. |
|  | Environmental crime | A resolution on preventing and combatting crimes that affect the environment was adopted by COP 10 to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime? |
|  | Hazardous substances | COP 3 to the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa adopted decisions on prevention of plastic waste pollution and its trade in Africa, among other issues. |
|  | Country action | Burkina Faso: the national MEAs committee and the committee accompanying the decentralization effort were trained on analysis and integration of environmental issues into public policy through the TOP-SECAC tool (for the assessment of climate change adaptation capacity). Rwanda: support was provided to develop and adopt Access and Benefit Sharing regulations on biological diversity and wildlife in support of the Nagoya Protocol. Solomon Islands: support was provided to develop its Wildlife Protection and Management (Amendment) Regulation 2020 under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. |
|  | MEA synergies | The Data Reporting tool for MEAs (DaRT) was officially launched during the first quarter of 2020. The tool promotes effective knowledge management across ministries and administrative units, enhancing synergies across conventions and increasing effectiveness of national efforts to achieve global environmental targets. To date, 13 national working spaces have been established and 298 beneficiaries have participated in DaRT webinars. Also, two COP decisions recognized DaRT (CMS COP Resolution 11.10 and Carpathian COP Decision 6/1). |

²³ These results are also in support of UNEA Resolutions: 1/12 (Relationship between UNEP and multilateral environmental agreements), 2/17 (Enhancing the work of UNEP in facilitating cooperation, collaboration and synergies among biodiversity-related conventions) and 2/18 (Relationship between UNEP and the multilateral environmental agreements for which it provides the secretariat).

UN inter-agency collaboration

During 2020, the [preparations for the Global Biodiversity Framework continued](#). UNEP worked with 13 MEAs to facilitate cooperation among them and the coherent implementation of the conventions. Meanwhile, the United Nations Environment Management Group established a consultative process to prepare a UN system contribution for the framework, resulting in a [compilation of UN system inputs to the CBD post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#) and an update on the work of the consultative [process](#). Additionally, the Sustainable United Nation's²⁴ work on system-

[Strategy for Sustainable Management, Phase I: Environmental Sustainability in the Area of Management](#) was co-developed by the Environment Management Group and the SUN team.

Environmental governance in the regions

UNEP continued to engage in the regions with UN Country Teams, economic commissions, ministerial forums and other regional partners, resulting in the following coordinated engagements.

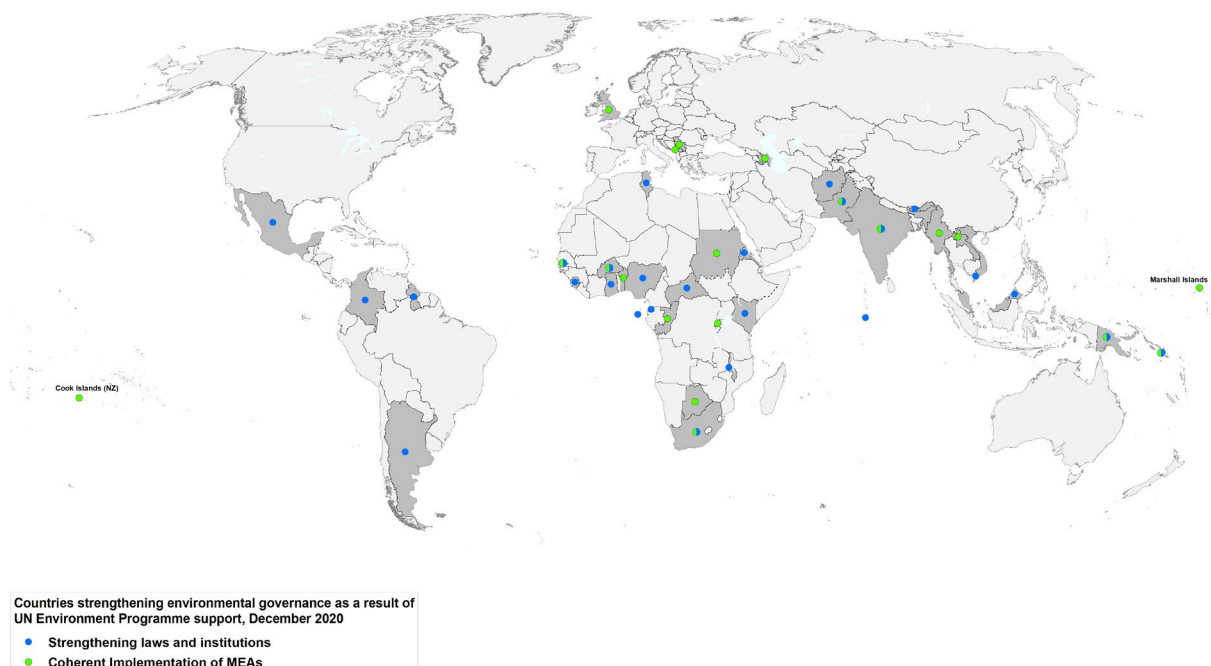
| Region | Result |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Africa | The eighth Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment agreed on a ministerial statement and key messages on the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP 26 and CBD COP 15. It also adopted the African Green COVID-19 Recovery Plan . |
| Asia Pacific | UNEP, along with its partners under the WasteForce project, developed several practical tools to facilitate international cooperation and networking efforts among authorities engaged in the fight against illegal trade and management of waste, including prosecutors and customs administrations. |
| Europe | An Issue-based Coalition on Environment and Climate Change was formed, aimed at providing a regional platform for UN organizations to promote coordinated support to all Member States in Europe and Central Asia in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Coalition also supports UN Country Teams in the Europe and Central Asia region on environmental and climate change issues. |
| Latin America and the Caribbean | UNEP supported the Latin America and Caribbean Parliament to unanimously approve draft model laws on climate change, food security and energy efficiency. |
| West Asia | The first ministerial meeting on COVID-19 and the environment in West Asia highlighted the impact of the pandemic on the region, resulting in a joint Ministerial Statement that recognized the COVID-19 Response Strategy prepared by UNEP and encouraged the countries in West Asia to utilize the Strategy's methodology for guidance in addressing environmental impacts during and after the pandemic. A donor agreement between the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) and UNEP, under the Faith for Earth initiative, aims to develop the content of a joint online training programme on engaging religious leaders, faith-based organizations, local faith actors and civil society organizations to support the implementation of the SDGs. |

wide coordination in environmental management, resulted in five additional UN entities advancing in their implementation of [environmental management systems](#). The UN Business Operations Strategies guidance contained in the UN system 2020–2030

Legal and institutional frameworks

In 2020, UNEP worked with 33 countries to enhance institutional capacities and policy frameworks to achieve internationally agreed environmental goals. UNEP provided technical support for the development of environmental laws, Voluntary National Reviews and for the signing of strategic UN country frameworks, as shown in the map below.

²⁴ For more updates including the 2020 Greening the Blue Report, see <https://www.greeningtheblue.org/>.



Note: Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Opportunities, challenges and lessons learned

Going forward, there is a need to expand UNEP’s resource base to increase its reach, including in relation to efforts to strengthen national legislation and inter-agency collaborations. The Montevideo V Programme²⁵ is a good opportunity to strengthen national legislation. Working with national government focal points and a steering committee for implementation, UNEP will partner with UN organizations, intergovernmental organizations, major groups and stakeholders to provide strategic guidance, cooperation, and development of environmental law.

Furthermore, the Secretary-General’s UN Development System reform process presents opportunities to achieve these objectives. These opportunities include:

- increasing coherence for system-wide mandates, core programming principles and collective results in the context of Agenda 2030, through the development of joint umbrella projects and the consideration of regional country programmes;

- strengthening UNEP’s relationship with Regional Commissions and other regional institutions through intensive collaboration, stronger engagement with the regional coordinators and increased support to the Regional Sustainable Development Forums and UN Country Teams;
- further integrating environmental governance in Country Teams’ ground operations, guided by the UN 2020–2030 sustainability strategy.

COVID-19 response

While the pandemic brought unprecedented challenges to multilateralism, it also stimulated increased collaboration with partners through UNEP corporate and programmatic responses, as detailed below.

- [A factsheet on policy and legislation](#) for dealing with an increase of contaminated waste linked to COVID-19 and pandemics was developed (available in all six official UN languages and Portuguese). It was released in June 2020.
- The Geneva Environment Network held a series of webinars to discuss how COVID-19 has impacted the global environmental agenda.
- Poverty-Environment Action joined partners calling for recovery efforts that recognize the interdependencies between human and environmental health and aim to build resilience

²⁵ In June 2021, national focal points and stakeholders will participate in the Montevideo Environmental Law Programme’s first global meeting to provide guidance to UNEP on relevant institutional and implementation arrangements for the programme, while also identifying needs and priorities in the field of environmental rule of law.

to even more profound risks on the horizon – biodiversity loss, widening inequality and climate change – in a joint statement issued on World Environment Day 2020.

The COVID-19 crisis led UNEP to reassess traditional ways of working and the future of environmental governance. It is important that both UNEP and the Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) that UNEP supports remain active and engaged, and that global environmental governance continues to function during COVID-19 to sustain momentum on environmental priorities. The pandemic has shown that technology and modern tools can help organizations shift traditional ways of working while maintaining efficiency and

reducing the environmental footprint of their operations. These methods, including telecommuting, zero-printing and virtual meetings, should be promoted. To this end, the UNEP developed a study on virtual meetings in consultation with the Secretariats of the MEAs and the Regional Offices (May 2020). Among other issues, this study considered the practices of intergovernmental bodies with regards to virtual/online meetings and how rules of procedure were applied to such meetings. It also identified barriers and reforms for moving forward with intergovernmental meetings on the environment. The study and the shift to virtual meetings promoted policy coherence, integrated approaches and coordination at all levels of the governance system.

Success story: Women greening Kenyan customs

Control of environmentally sensitive commodities is an ongoing function of the customs and border control authorities. For the [Kenya School of Revenue Administration \(KESRA\)](#), the training arm of the Kenya Revenue Administration, the COVID-19 pandemic has been a period of reflection on how to green the Kenyan customs. The pandemic reinforced the need for increased attention on environmental concerns, as the risks of illegal trade in wildlife were revealed and illegal trade in medical and other contaminated waste increased.

Since 2019, UNEP, under the umbrella of the [Green Customs Initiative](#), has been working with KESRA on enhancing the capacity of customs and frontline officers to manage trade in environmentally sensitive commodities. In 2020, a needs assessment survey was administered to officers stationed in major border points. The results demonstrated a lack of awareness on environmentally sensitive commodities. The lack of a comprehensive green customs curriculum emerged as a key contributing factor to this low level of awareness. The findings also highlighted the need to establish a national green customs unit that would provide integral support services to officers on the ground.

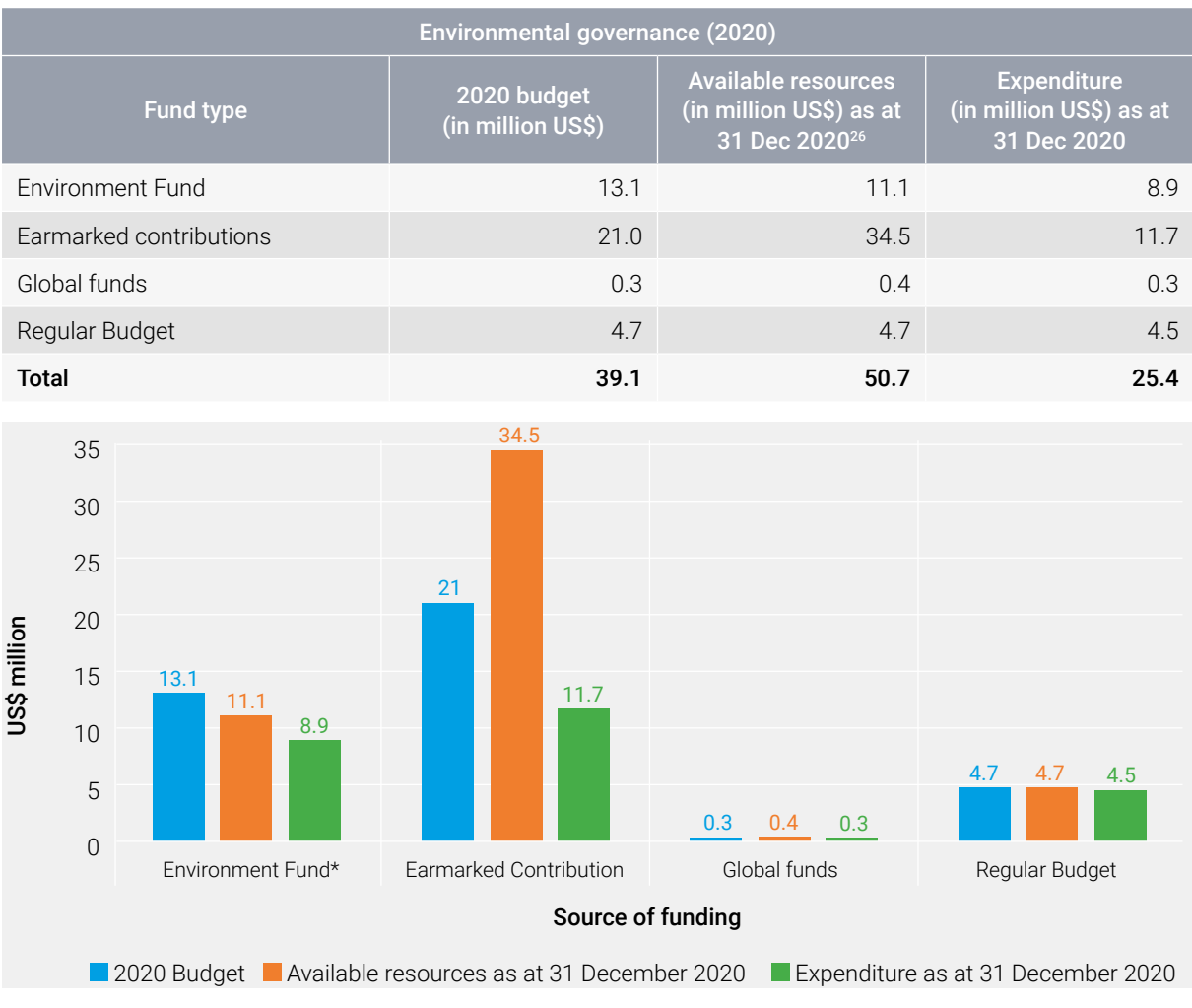
There is a team of dedicated women at the heart of efforts in KESRA to raise environmental awareness within the customs community and to integrate the concept of green customs into the customs training programme. Alice Kananu, Latifa Said and Dr Marion Nekesa led the establishment of a green customs programme within KESRA and the larger institution of the Kenya Revenue Administration by highlighting the importance of including environmental protection in the regular training activities for newly recruited and seasoned customs officers. There are currently 545 women participating in the 2020/2021 customs training programme.

Ms Kananu and her team are working to develop a green customs curriculum to be integrated into the regular customs training programme. New and practising customs officers will regularly receive this training, to enhance their effectiveness in identification, monitoring and interception of illegal shipments, while also facilitating legal trade. With further support from UNEP or other development partners, KESRA also intends to institutionalize a flagship green customs unit within the organizational structure of the Kenya Revenue Administration and to replicate this unique initiative in other national training institutions in East Africa. Given the centrality of women's empowerment in UNEP's and KESRA's activities, it is hoped that training institutions in other jurisdictions will emulate the women's leadership demonstrated at KESRA.



Alice Kananu and Latifa Said of KESRA

Figure 16. Financial overview – environmental governance



- Out of the planned Environment Fund budget for 2020–2021 of US\$ 13.1 million, only US\$ 11.1 million was received. This was part of an overall trend where UNEP received a smaller amount of Environment Fund contributions than originally projected.
- Earmarked funds compensated for the Environment Fund shortfall. The subprogramme received US\$ 34.5 million (against a projected budget of US\$ 21.0 million) from earmarked funds contributions. However, as some of this amount represents multi-year contributions, only part of it can be counted against 2020–2021.
- For 2020–2021, the Environment Fund includes allocations and expenditures of US\$ 0.25 million and US\$ 0.25 million respectively from the fund programme reserve.
- Overall expenditure for the biennium, therefore, stands at US\$ 25.4 million, which is 65 per cent of the target budget of US\$ 39.1 million.²⁶

²⁶ Includes multi-year contributions.

Chemicals, waste and air quality

UNEP's work in this subprogramme focuses on three areas:

- Chemicals: Assisting countries and other stakeholders to implement sound chemicals Management.
- Waste: Assisting countries and other stakeholders to prevent waste and implement sound waste management.
- Air quality: Helping countries to develop strategies and policies to reduce air pollution.

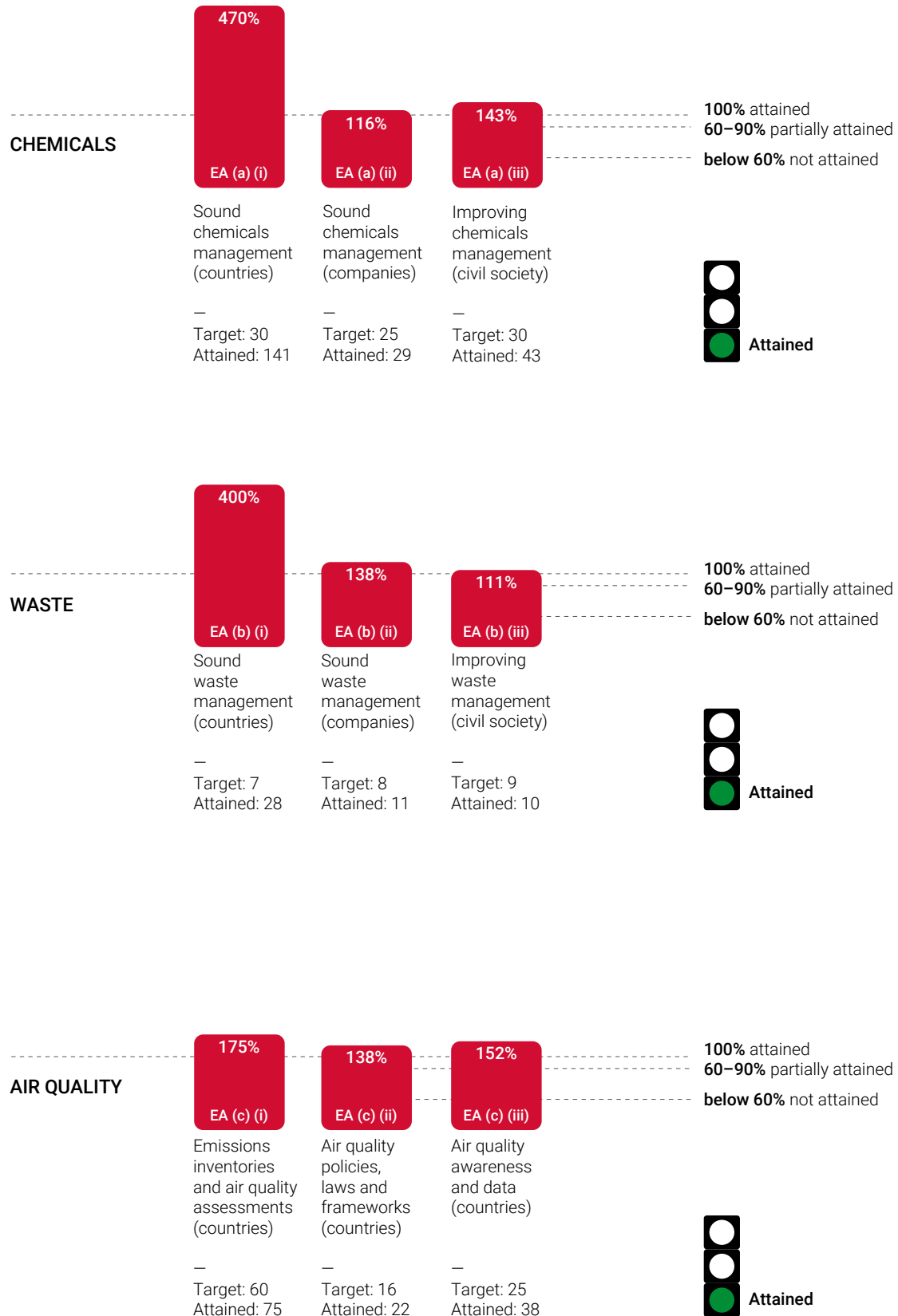
In 2020, UNEP exceeded all nine indicator targets.



| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION | 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY | 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES | 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION | 14 LIFE BELOW WATER | SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|

Indicators of Achievement Expected Accomplishment

Figure 17. Chemicals, waste and air quality results



Chemicals

UNEP works with governments, businesses, industries and civil society to reduce pollution and ensure sound chemicals management, including through implementation of related Multilateral Environmental Agreements.²⁷ In 2020, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management started a series of webinars on gender and published a report on [Women, Chemicals and SDGs](#) to focus attention on creating a gender-just and chemical-safe future.

Within the [Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint](#), UNEP and WHO continued to collaborate with partners²⁸ to prevent exposure to lead by promoting efforts to phase out paints containing lead. In 2020, Colombia adopted a law limiting the use of lead paint in 2020 and China strengthened its standards.

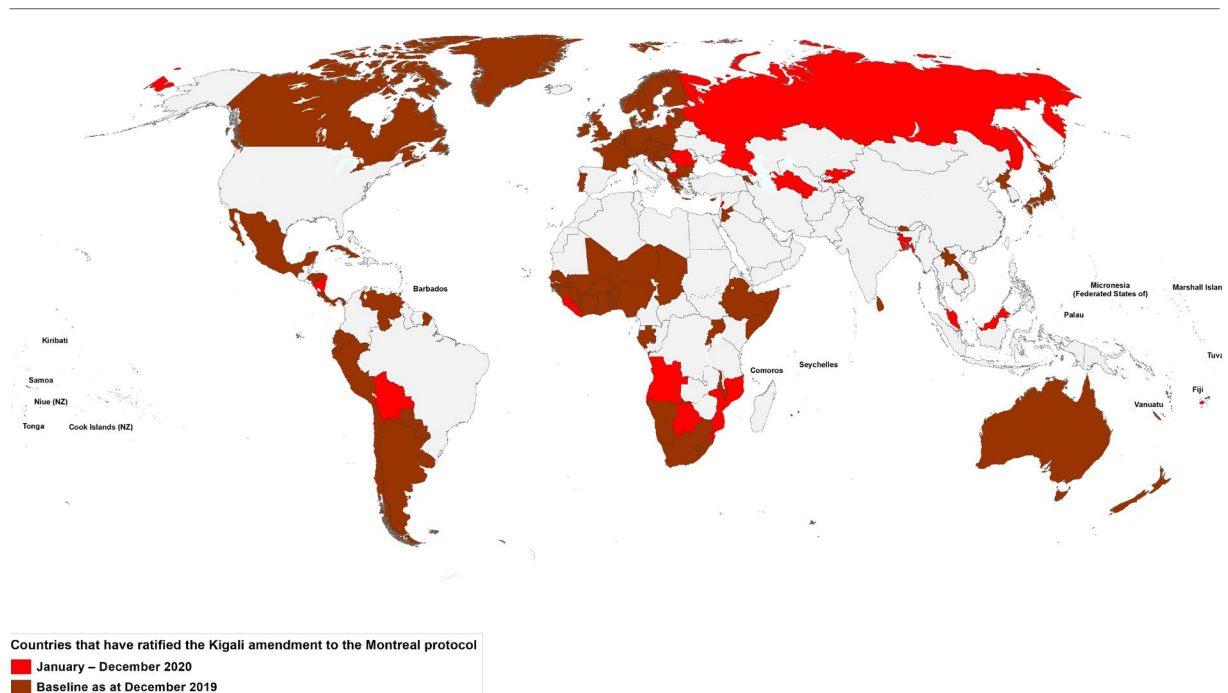
In 2020, 10 countries ratified the Minamata Convention and parties ceased the manufacture, import and export of mercury-containing products. UNEP, United Nations

Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UNDP, governments, the private sector and artisanal and small-scale gold mining communities are collaborating in the [planetGOLD](#) programme to eliminate mercury from the gold supply chain.

Moreover, in 2020, 20 more countries²⁹ accepted, ratified or approved the Kigali amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. UNEP hosts the Ozone Secretariat and provides guidance and capacity support to countries through [OzonAction](#).

[The Special Programme on Institutional Strengthening for the Chemicals Cluster](#) (the “Special Programme” hereafter) supports institutional strengthening at the national level to enhance implementation of the chemicals and waste conventions and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management. As an example, under the Special Programme, Tanzania developed a national strategy for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste for

Map 7. Chemicals, waste and air quality – countries that ratified or approved the Kigali amendment in 2020



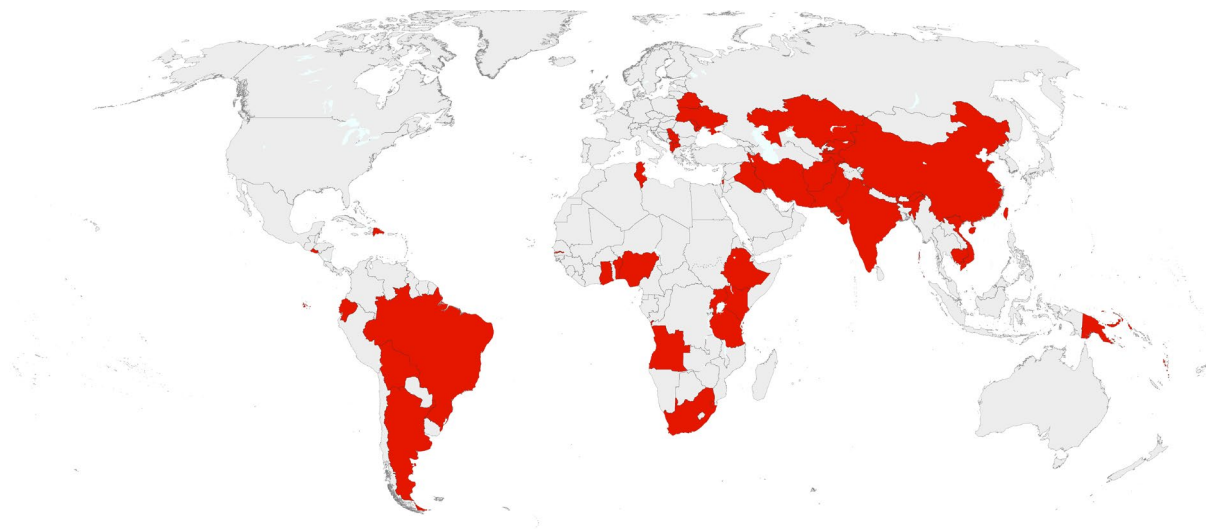
Note: Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

²⁷ These include the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, as well as the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.

²⁸ Including the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

²⁹ Angola, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Botswana, Cabo Verde, Eswatini, Fiji, Holy See, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, North Macedonia, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Turkmenistan

Map 8. Chemicals, waste and air quality – overview of projects that have received funding from the Special Programme



■ Countries that have received support from the Special Programme, December 2020

Note: Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

the period 2020–2025. Furthermore, a strategy and toolkit for monitoring, evaluation and learning have been developed, as well as a Power BI tool for the Special Programme to explore its project database. Voluntary contributions and pledges to the Trust Fund totalled US\$ 27.5 million as at 30 October 2020. The number of projects that received funding rose to 42 in 2020.

Under the Africa ChemObs project, which aims to improve health and the environment through strengthening national and regional institutions and implementing priority chemicals- and waste-related interventions, four countries³⁰ adapted UNEP guidance on chemicals control in their national frameworks in 2020. In addition, under the same project, Ethiopia signed an agreement for the disposal of 1,000 tons of DDT, and South Africa introduced a professional master's degree in chemicals risk management at the University of Cape Town.

UNEP also demonstrated the cost-effectiveness and sustainability of environmentally sound and locally appropriate alternatives to DDT for malaria vector control in Africa. Five countries³¹ finalized their Integrated Vector Management strategies in 2020, strengthening their national capabilities for implementation and scaling-up of evidence-based, innovative, diversified and environmentally sound disease vector control interventions.

³⁰ Kenya, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Senegal

³¹ Republic of Senegal, Eswatini, South Africa, Liberia, Uganda, Botswana

Waste

As part of the COVID-19 response, UNEP produced a series of factsheets and webinars on waste management during the pandemic. Economic impacts of COVID-19 have been most pressing for women working in the informal sector, such as waste pickers. The UNEP report [Waste Management during the COVID-19 Pandemic: from response to recovery](#) includes emergency recovery and response plans, as well as long-term solutions aimed at building back better.

UNEP provides the Secretariat for the Intergovernmental Network on Chemicals and Waste for Latin America and the Caribbean, bringing together and systematizing regional efforts and mechanisms. In this role, UNEP is promoting a voluntary coalition to develop a roadmap for the progressive closure of landfills and an effective transition towards integrated waste management in the region.

In Asia, UNEP supported the exchange of scientific knowledge on plastic pollution in the Ganges, the Mekong and other rivers in Asia, resulting in the Mekong River Commission and its Member States developing a plastic waste management and monitoring plan for the Mekong River basin.

The Ad Hoc Open-Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics, established under UNEA, concluded its mandates at its fourth meeting, held in November 2020. Many attendees voiced the need for a global

agreement on marine litter, which could drive further action and unlock finance to tackle the issue.

In December 2020, UNEP issued [legislative guidance for the regulation of single-use plastic products](#) to offer legislators and policymakers options to reduce harmful impacts of single-use plastic products. Life cycle assessments can usefully inform policy development by showing trade-offs and highlighting hotspots. During the year, eight [analyses were conducted for various single-use plastic product categories and their alternatives](#).

In June 2020, the Waste Management Outlook for West Asia was published. The next UNEP Global Waste Management Outlook will build on key trends identified in this and other regional outlooks. Tracking trends in the design, production, use and release of chemicals and waste helps develop outlooks and thereby identify issues of concern, pollution patterns and good practices.

Air quality

Following a UN General Assembly Resolution³², on 7 September 2020, UNEP facilitated the first International Day of Clean Air for blue skies, with the Climate and

Clean Air Coalition and country partners. With main celebrations hosted by Korea, the day raised awareness of the solutions to air pollution.

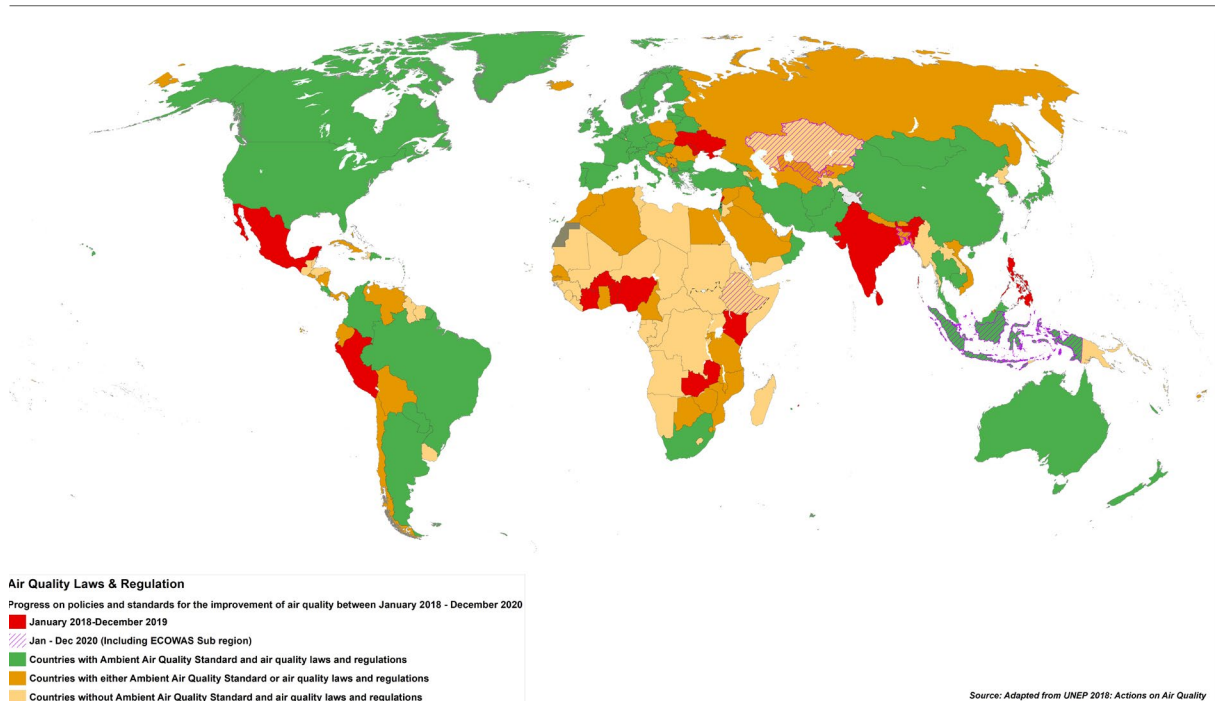
Outdoor air pollution contributes to the premature deaths of three million people each year, mainly in developing countries, and has been linked to increased vulnerability to COVID-19.

In 2020, UNEP delivered policy and technology support on air quality management to six more countries. Almaty, Kazakhstan's biggest city, started using citizen science to feed into its data, and made this available to the public. Eighteen air quality sensors are now in place, with more covering five other cities in the country.

Clean mobility is crucial to air quality. However, millions of old polluting vehicles are shipped to poorer countries, posing serious health and environmental threats. Africa is the ultimate destination for some 40 per cent of used light-duty vehicles.

In 2020, a milestone was reached when 15 African countries announced strict rules for vehicle emissions and fuel efficiency. With UNEP support, the directives issued by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) bar the import of light-duty vehicles

Map 9. Air quality laws and regulations



Note: Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

32 UN General Assembly resolution 74/212

more than 5 years old and aim to double the efficiency of cars by 2030. ECOWAS also agreed to adopt the equivalent of Euro 4 rules (European Union 2005 emissions standards) for imported cars by 2021.

In 2020, UNEP launched a new global electric mobility programme targeting 29 countries. The MOVE platform for the transition to electric vehicles in Latin America and the Caribbean is also helping countries to move away from polluting forms of transport, including by developing national electric mobility strategies.

Opportunities, challenges and lessons learned

The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the adoption of a new global framework for chemicals and waste as the fifth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5), due in 2020, was postponed. Nonetheless, UNEP continues to support the Strategic Approach to

International Chemicals Management, and the sound management of chemicals and waste in general, through its work.

Time and again, UNEP's work has been based on science. However, the science-policy interface for chemicals and pollution needs urgent strengthening at the international level. Sound management of chemicals and waste is critically important for addressing legacy pollution as well as for shaping the future, from the design of environmentally sound innovative products, processes and value chains to sustainable consumption and production systems. With the new Medium-Term Strategy there is an opportunity to strengthen the pollution pillar and address the multiple facets of sound management of chemicals and waste in a comprehensive science-based manner, including their relationship with climate and nature.

- Out of the planned Environment Fund budget for 2020 of US\$ 11.7 million, only US\$ 8.4 million

Success story: Used vehicles get a second life in Africa – but at what cost?

Across Africa, and much of the developing world, used cars, minibuses and vans imported from abroad are changing people's lives. But they come with a high and growing global price tag.

A ground-breaking [UNEP report](#) warns that millions of used light-duty vehicles shipped from Europe, the United States and Japan to Africa and Asia are polluting and unsafe. Often with faulty or missing components, they belch out toxic fumes, increasing air pollution and hindering efforts to fight climate change.

The global fleet of light-duty vehicles will double by 2050. Some 90 per cent of this growth will take place in low- and middle-income countries. Of the 146 countries studied, about two-thirds have "weak" or "very weak" policies regulating the import of used vehicles. Many of the imported vehicles would not be allowed to circulate on the roads of exporting countries.

Vehicle emissions are a prime source of small particulates and nitrogen oxides, which cause urban air pollution. Globally, vehicles are responsible for 25 per cent of energy-related greenhouse gas emissions.

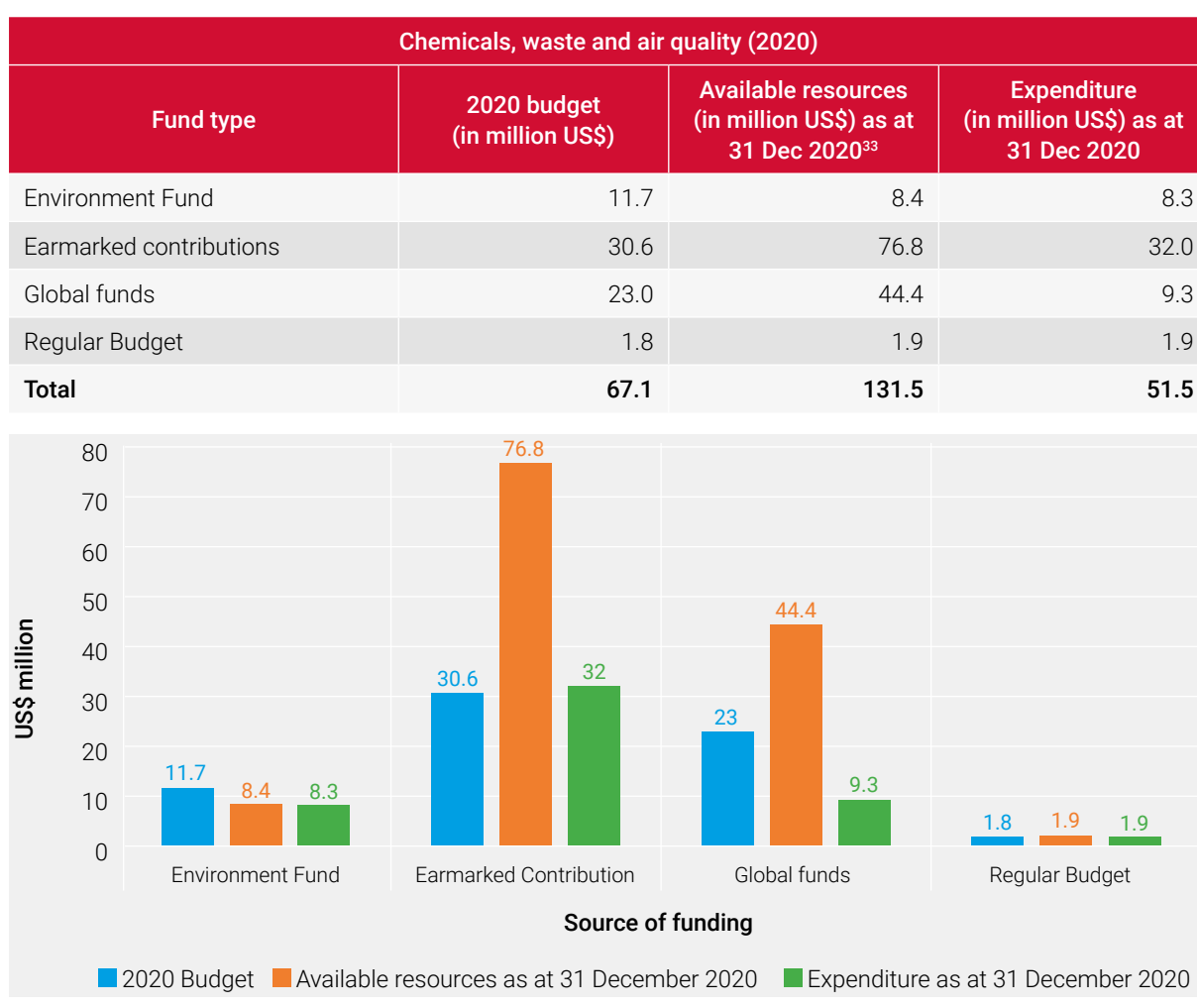
UNEP is calling on both exporting and importing countries to regulate the trade and eliminate a range of abuses. It stresses that regulated trade can have several positive impacts, improving the lives of many people and boosting prosperity.

The issue of faulty vehicles is catching the attention of exporting countries. The Netherlands – one of the largest used vehicle exporters to Africa – studied used European vehicles being exported through their ports and found that many vehicles, mainly destined for West Africa, were between 16 and 20 years old, did not meet European Union emission standards and did not have a valid roadworthiness certificate at the time of export. The Netherlands is developing policies to improve the quality of used vehicles while addressing the issue with other European countries.



Mid-century Peugeot 404 and 504s, some almost 70 years old, are still in use as taxis in the town of Harar, Ethiopia.

Figure 16. Financial overview – environmental governance



was received. This was part of an overall trend where UNEP received a smaller amount of Environment Fund contributions than originally projected.

- Earmarked contributions and global funds compensated for the Environment Fund shortfall, with the subprogramme receiving US\$ 76.8 million (against a planned budget of US\$ 30.6

million) from earmarked funds contributions and US\$ 44.4 million (against a planned budget of US\$ 23 million) from global funds. However, as some of this amount represents multi-year contributions, only part of this can be counted against 2020.

- Overall expenditure for 2020, therefore, stands at US\$ 51.5 million, which is 77 per cent of the target budget of US\$ 67.1 million.

33 Includes multi-year contributions

Resource efficiency

UNEP's work on resource efficiency focuses on three areas:

- **Enabling policy environment:** Collaborating with countries to make the transition to inclusive green economies and adopt sustainable consumption and production action plans.
- **Sustainability in businesses and value chains:** Working with governments, businesses and other stakeholders to make global supply chains more sustainable.
- **Sustainable lifestyles and consumption:** Empowering countries, businesses, civil society and individuals to live and consume responsibly and sustainably.

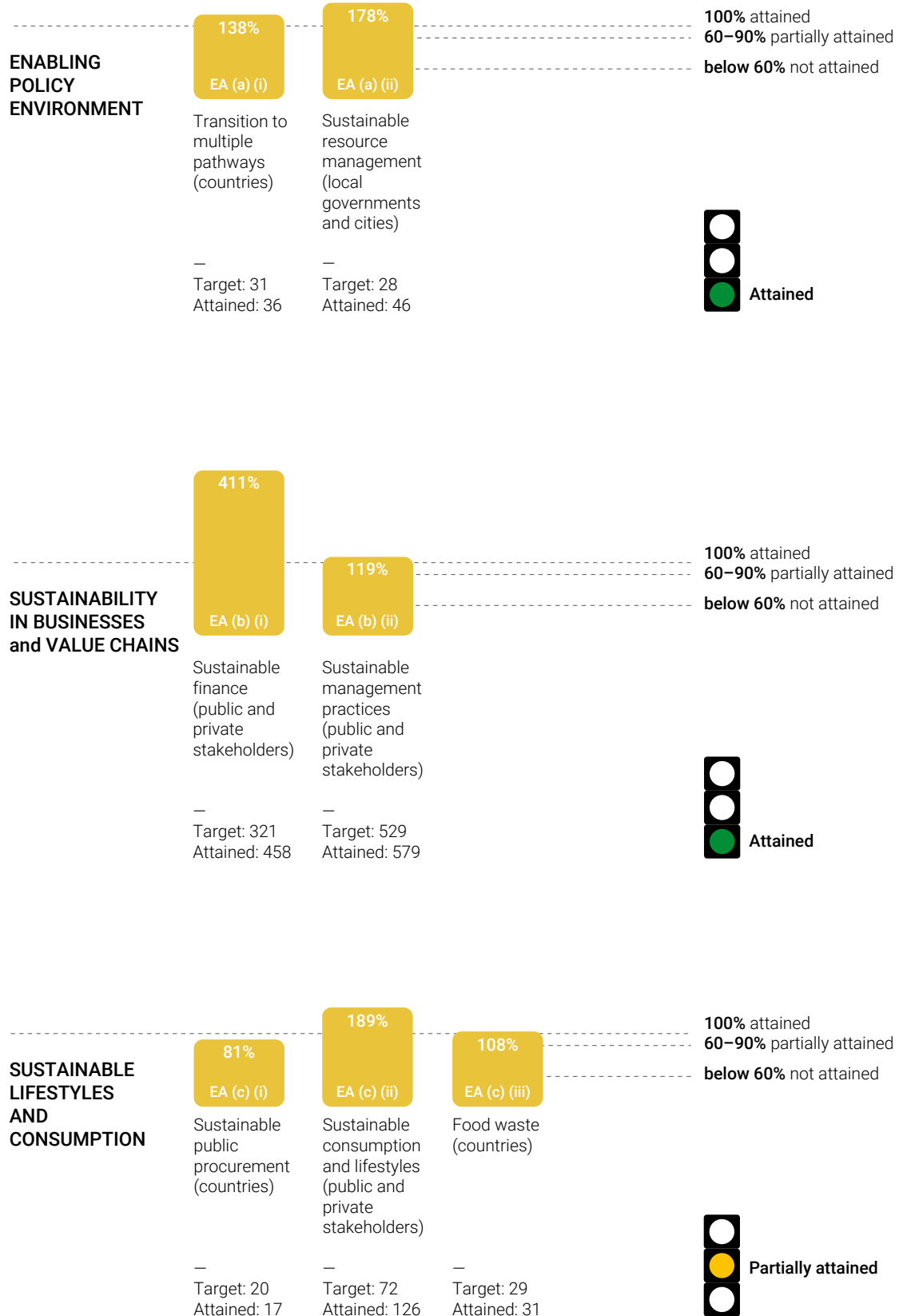
By December 2020, this subprogramme had exceeded six of its seven indicator targets and partially met one.



Indicators of Achievement

Expected Accomplishment

Figure 19. Resource efficiency – results



Enabling policy environment

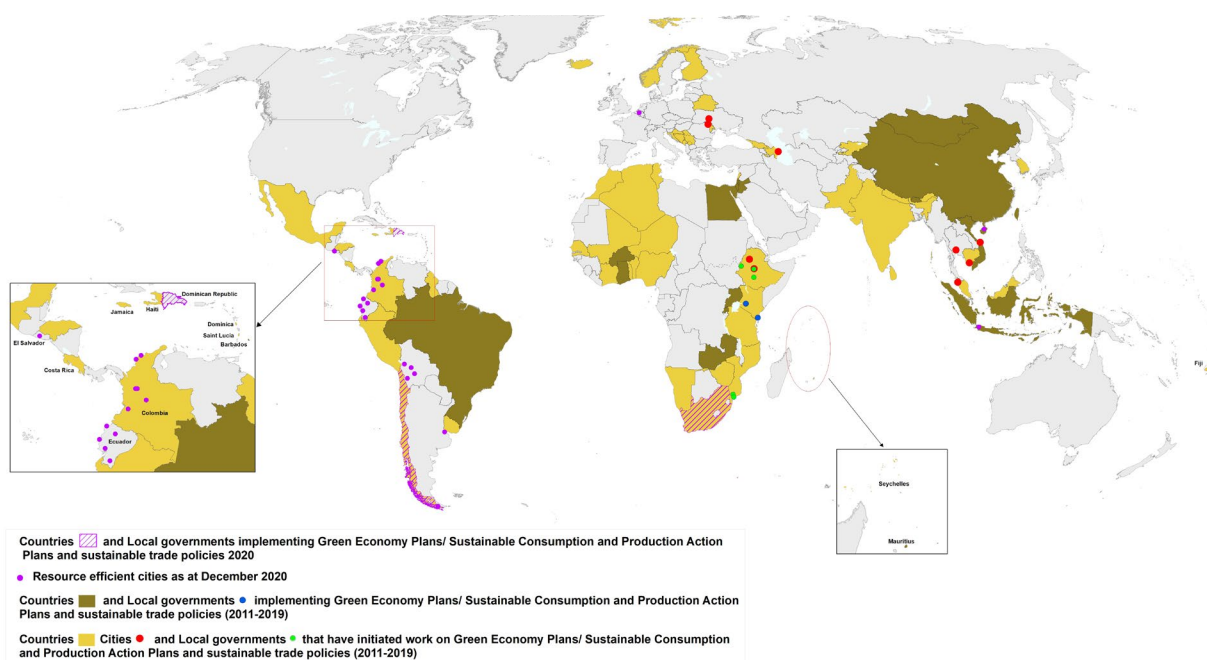
Unsustainable resource extraction, transformation, use and disposal is the primary cause of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. UNEP supports countries and regions in their transition to sustainable development through multiple pathways, using science-based approaches.³⁴

UNEP's support to Member States to cope with the impacts of COVID-19 and build back better focused on greening fiscal stimulus and finance packages to accelerate sustainable consumption and production and achieve the SDGs, under the UNEP COVID-19 response plan. For example, the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) set up a support mechanism for a green economic recovery in its 20 partner countries, leveraging the UN reform. The UN Sustainable Development Group is using PAGE to [green COVID-19 economic stimulus policies](#).

In 2020, with UNEP support, four countries and 20 cities transitioned to sustainable development through multiple pathways:

- South Africa undertook a [green economy review](#) of its industrial policy framework.
- Hainan Province (China) reviewed its [eco-compensation scheme](#).
- Chile's national consumer protection entity, SERNAC, developed "[Mi código verde](#)", a consumer information platform that promotes sustainable products.³⁵
- The Dominican Republic developed a Sustainable Consumption and Production [strategy](#), which was launched in mid-2020.
- Twenty cities started assessing their transition from linear to circular economies in the context of sustainable consumption and production with jobs as a proxy indicator, using a tool co-developed with partner Circle Economy.^{36, 37}

Map 10. Enabling policies – green economy pathways and sustainable trade policies



Note: Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

34 Contributes to the implementation of UNEP/EA.4/Res.1 Innovative Pathways to achieve Sustainable Consumption and Production, and to SDG12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

35 Contributes to SDG3 Good health and well-being.

36 Barranquilla (Colombia), Bogor (Indonesia), Bogota (Colombia), Brussels (Belgium), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Cali (Colombia), Cartagena (Colombia), Cochabamba (Bolivia), Esmeraldas (Ecuador), Guayaquil (Ecuador), La Paz (Bolivia), Loja (Ecuador), Manta (Ecuador), Medellín (Colombia), Potosí (Bolivia), Quito (Ecuador), San Salvador (El Salvador), San Vicente (El Salvador), Sucre (Bolivia), Ushuaia (Argentina)

37 Contributes to SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities

Online platforms, such as the Green Growth Knowledge Platform, have enabled the continued sharing of information and knowledge products. Moreover, policy briefs were developed that looked at various aspects of recovery, such as the *Building Resilient Societies after the COVID-19 Pandemic* report, which provides policy recommendations to drive a resource smart recovery, or *COVID-19 and the world of work: Jump-starting a green recovery with more and better jobs, healthy and resilient societies*.³⁸

Argentina, as chair of the intergovernmental board of the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production (10YFP), launched the 10YFP post-2022 process in September. The *One Planet Network* continues to leverage its network to provide the latest data, knowledge and news on sustainable consumption and production through its database, the SDG 12 Hub, and its Clearinghouse platform.



UNEP continued to develop and disseminate science-policy analysis and recommendations. For example, the *Sustainable Trade in Resource: Global Material Flows, Circularity and Trade* report, developed by the International Resource Panel and UNEP, highlighted that, of the 92 billion tons of material resources extracted globally, one-third was used to produce goods for trade. One policy recommendation was therefore that multilateral trade rules and regional trade agreements could be used proactively to advance a circular economy and minimize the environmental impacts associated with resource extraction.

Sustainability in businesses and value chains

During 2020, UNEP continued to work closely with public and private sector actors to promote the inclusion of sustainability in their policies and practices. The value-chain approach was further elaborated by the Task Group in its report, entitled *Catalysing science-based policy action on sustainable consumption and production: the value-chain approach and its application to food, construction and textiles*.

38 Contributes to SDG 8.

In 2020, with UNEP support, 158 public and private sector actors improved their sustainability practices, including in the following ways:

- 58 actors became members of the UNEP Finance Initiative.³⁹
- 17 new businesses signed up to the *New Plastic Economy Global Commitment* and reported their progress on tackling plastic pollution.^{40,41}
- 13 tourism businesses adopted the UNEP environmental recommendations on post-COVID-19 reopening of tourism facilities.
- 2 travel associations developed COVID-19 recommendations for the sustainable recovery of the tourism sector.⁴²
- 8 building and construction value-chain actors obtained their Concrete Sustainability Council certification.⁴³
- 7 buildings and construction companies committed or set targets to decarbonize their value chains under the Science Based Target initiative (SBTi), using guidance developed by the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction.⁴⁴
- 10 members of the Sustainable Rice Platform reviewed and adapted their certification process to include a business continuity exercise in response to the pandemic.⁴⁵

39 Ageas, Ahil United Bank B.S.C., Aurskog Sparebank, AVLA Seguros de Credito y Garantia S., Axis Capital Holding Limited, Banco BTG Pactual S.A, Banco del Bajío S.A, Banco Regional S.A, Bank of Juijiang Co. Ltd, Bank Pembangunan Malaysia Berhad, Bankinter S.A, Banque Socredo, Belfius Bank & Insurance, CDP Immobiliare S.R.l, DZ Bank AG, FinecoBank S.p.A, Gjensidige Forsikring ASA, Government Savings Bank, Groupe BPCE, Grupo Caja de Ingenieros, Grupo Catalana Occidente S.A, Gulf International Bank (UK) Ltd, Hamburg Commercial Bank AG, Intercam Banco S.A., Institucion De Banca Multiple, Intercam Grupo Financiero, Investec Group, Islandsbanki hf, Kasikornbank Public Company Limited, Korea Asset in Trust Ltd, Kyushu Financial Group Inc, Lancashire Holding Limited, LHV Group, Lillestrom Sparebank, LocalTapiola Group, Monex Grupo Financiero, Namibia National Reinsurance Corporation Ltd, National Bank of Greece S.A, Newmarket Capital, Orix Asset Management Corporation, Ping An Insurance (Group) Company of China Ltd, ProCredit Holding AG & Co. KGaA, Rentes Genevoises, Republic Financial Holding Limited, SBAB Bank AB (Publ), Sberbank of Russia, Shinhan Life Insurance Company Limited, Solunion Seguros, SpareBank 1 BV, Sparebanken Sogn og Fjordane, Sparkasse Bank Makedonija Ad Skopje, Swiss Life AG, Talanx AG, The Co-operative Bank plc, TPL Insurance Limited, Turkiye is Bankasi A.S., UBI Banca SpA, UNIQA Insurance Group AG, VidaCaixa S.A.U. de Seguros y Reaseguros, W and W Gruppe (Wustenrot and Wurttembergische AG)

40 Supported by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and UNEP

41 Contribute to various UNEA resolutions on plastics

42 Travelife ABTA & Reef World

43 HOLCIM Colombia (Planta Puente Aranda), HOLCIM Colombia (Planta de cemento Nobsa), Mixto Listo Planta Sur (Guatemala), Mixto Listo Planta Norte (Guatemala), Mixto Listo Planta Escuintla, Guatemala, Mixto Listo Planta Carretera a El Salvador (Guatemala), Mixto Listo Planta Salcajá (Guatemala) and Hormigón Express (Planta Llano Bonito, Panama)

44 Danfoss, Kingspan Group Plc, LafargeHolcim, Rockwool Group, Skanska AB, Saint Gobain & The Velux Group, and contributes to SDG 7 Energy.

45 Allied Development Cooperation, Ecocert, Foodtech Solutions (Thailand), Kausar Rice & General Mills, KisanKraft, Lidl Stiftung & Co KG, Pakistan Agriculture Research Council, Qbera Capital LLP, Shivrai Technologies Pvt Ltd & UN Women.

- 9 start-ups in Asia Pacific adopted product and business models contributing to low carbon lifestyles, focusing on sectors such as mobility, plastics and energy consumption.⁴⁶
- 2 companies in Peru adopted the eco-innovation approach to reduce mine waste.⁴⁷

In 2020, in a cross-cutting manner with the subprogrammes on climate change, healthy and productive ecosystems, and chemicals, waste and air quality, UNEP also worked with:

- Colombia, on its Sustainable Tourism Policy, adopted in December.
- The Netherlands Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, a new signatory of the Global Commitment, which reported progress on tackling plastic pollution in 2020.

Figure 20. Public and private finance stakeholders adopting finance principles, processes and frameworks

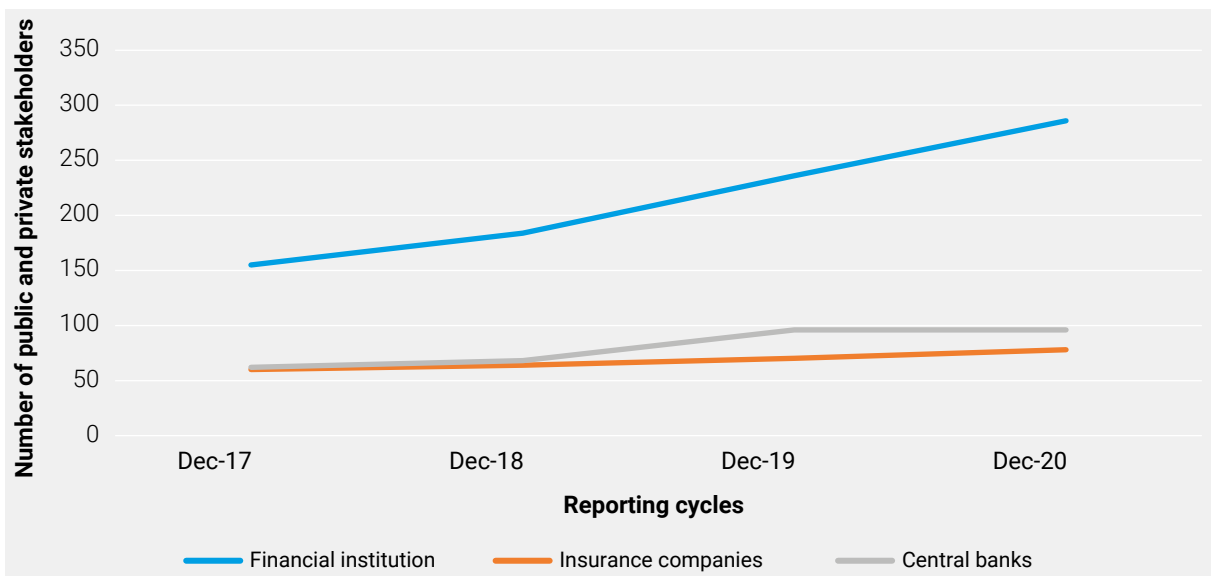
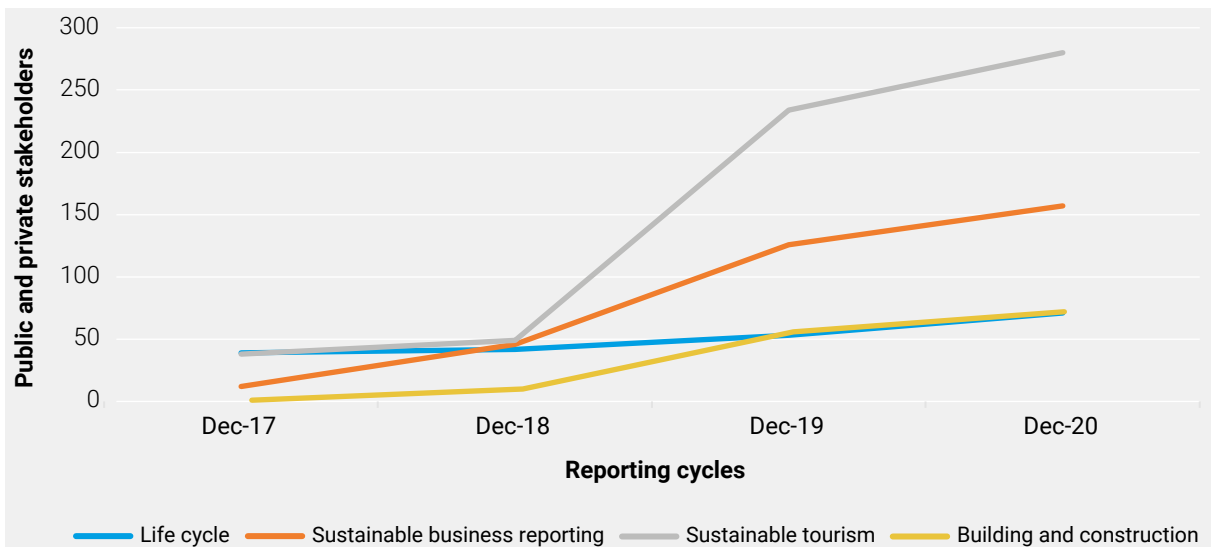


Figure 21. Sectors adopting sustainable management policies



46 Air Watt, Aya Vup (Vietnam), CyFai (Indonesia), Dipole Tech (China), ETRAN, Intellica (Enent Pakistan), NimRay Network, Remake Hub, Rikesh Gurung (Green Road, Buthan)

47 Minera Yanaquihua S.A.C. (MYSAC), Provive Peru S.A.C (PPESAC)

- Cambodia and Viet Nam, which in 2020 submitted their Nationally Determined Contributions for the building and construction sector.
- The city of San Salvador (El Salvador), which developed a nature-based solutions strategy to prevent the risk of flooding.
- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations region, which developed its building sector decarbonization roadmap with the International Energy Agency, following the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC) regional roadmap model.

UNEP's work with real economy actors has been impacted by the consequences of the pandemic on industries and value chains, particularly on small and medium-sized enterprises.

Sustainable lifestyles and consumption

Changing how we consume requires individuals to adjust their lifestyles, businesses to choose sustainable suppliers, products or services, and governments to provide the infrastructure, services and products that allow citizens and businesses to consume less or consume more sustainably.

UNEP has adapted its support and collaboration with public, private and individual consumers to access information in a manner that facilitates informed decision-making on sustainable living and on sustainable consumption and production, responding to concerns and opportunities that have been heightened by the pandemic. UNEP noted an increased interest in how to live in a healthier, better and lighter manner.

In 2020, with UNEP support, 74 public and private sector actors became aware of and supported the adoption of sustainable lifestyles and sustainable consumption patterns:

- 20 countries⁴⁸ and 40 public and private sector stakeholders enhanced their use of consumer information and awareness of sustainable living.⁴⁹

48 Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, France, India, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mexico, Netherlands, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Syria, United Kingdom and United States of America

49 Akatu Institute, Association of Cities and Regions for sustainable resource management, Girl Effect, Dropledge, Earth Company, Ecocity Builders, ESCP Business School (Berlin), European Commission's Joint Research Centre, Fibershed, Bloomberg News, Fundacion Chile, Futerra, Gameduell, Green is the new black, Honor the Earth, Winona's Hemp and Heritage Farm (the Anishinaabe Agricultural Institute), Hot or Cool, Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, Inter IKEA group, Lalitpur Metropolitan City Nepal, League of cities of the Philippines, Ministry of Environment and Forestry (Indonesia), national science and technology development agency (Thailand), Nordic council of ministers, One earth, Planet Podium, Project Drawdown, Reshoring Initiative, SEED, Sustainable fashion consumption network, Swedchha, Tedx, The Edible Schoolyard Project, The International Centre for Responsible Tourism (Australia), Together for Sustainability, Unity, Universidad de los Andes, Urban Morphology Institute, Ustwowgames, WRAP, WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities

- 14 countries measured their national food waste using the Food Waste Index.⁵⁰

Furthermore, 38 other countries have started data collection towards measuring their national food waste.⁵¹

There was an opportunity to leverage the purchasing power of the public sector in favour of the 2030 Agenda, but insufficient progress was made on [sustainable public procurement](#) at the global level and this significant opportunity was lost. In 2020, although advocacy and capacity-building activities were undertaken, no new country started implementing policies on sustainable public procurement.

Efforts continued to advance uptake of the UNEP [Guidelines for Providing Product Sustainability Information](#), launched in 2017: two training sessions on life cycle analysis and eight on ecolabelling were held; two new working groups were established to further strengthen consumer information networks; and 11 companies in Colombia and Costa Rica were trained to implement the guidelines.⁵²

UNEP also organized eight webinar series to promote sustainable lifestyles change. UNEP developed a Lifestyles Calculator to help users understand lifestyle sustainability impacts, ultimately aimed at behaviour change. The Innovation for Sustainable Lifestyles competition was launched in Colombia, Costa Rica and Mexico and resulted in the engagement of over 7,000 youths.^{53,54} Lifestyle decisions and consumption patterns are crucial for the well-being of people and planet.



50 Bangladesh, Belgium, China, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Norway and Sweden

51 UNEP/EA.2/Res.9 and UNEP/EA.4/Res2 Promoting sustainable practices and innovative solutions for curbing food loss and waste

52 Contributes to SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

53 UNEP post: Innovation for Sustainable Lifestyles Contest. View in English or Spanish. It provided youth the space to develop solutions towards economic recovery and restoration of ecosystems through sustainable entrepreneurship.

54 Twitter: https://twitter.com/unep_espanol/status/1283816467872583684?s=20 ; Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unep.es/posts/1823222891135190>; Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/tv/Cctj1PKA7JR/?igshid=16wjnw8gmgnp6> ; YouTube: <https://youtu.be/1r099U0MTpE>

Opportunities, challenges and lessons learned

UNEP adjusted ongoing activities and designed new ones to be responsive to the pandemic, focusing on supporting Member States to identify opportunities to mainstream inclusive green economy and sustainable consumption and production approaches in economic

stimulus packages and recovery plans. Transforming value chains to make them more sustainable is a cornerstone element of this approach. At Colombia University in December 2020, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres gave a speech on the state of the planet, urging a transformation of the world economy. Declaring that it was time to “flick the green switch”, he called for urgent positive transformative action by governments, business, industry and individuals.

Success story: New Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management aims to improve the safety of tailings facilities in the mining industry

The Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management, launched in 2020, establishes the first global standard that can be applied to existing and future tailings facilities, wherever they are and whoever operates them.^{55, 56}

The catastrophic dam (tailings facility) collapse at Brumadinho mine, Brazil, on 25 January 2019, was a human and environmental tragedy that demanded decisive and appropriate action to enhance the safety and strengthen the governance of tailings facilities across the globe.

The Standard was developed through an independent process – the Global Tailings Review – which was co-convened in March 2019 by UNEP, the Principles for Responsible Investment and the International Council on Mining and Metals.

Strengthening current practices in the mining industry by integrating social, environmental, local economic and technical considerations, the Standard covers the entire tailings facility lifecycle – from site selection, design and construction, through management and monitoring, to closure and post-closure.

With an ambition of zero harm to people and the environment, the Standard significantly raises the bar for the industry to achieve strong social, environmental and technical outcomes. It elevates accountability to the highest organizational levels and adds new requirements for independent oversight. The Standard also establishes clear expectations around global transparency and disclosure requirements, helping to improve understanding by interested stakeholders.

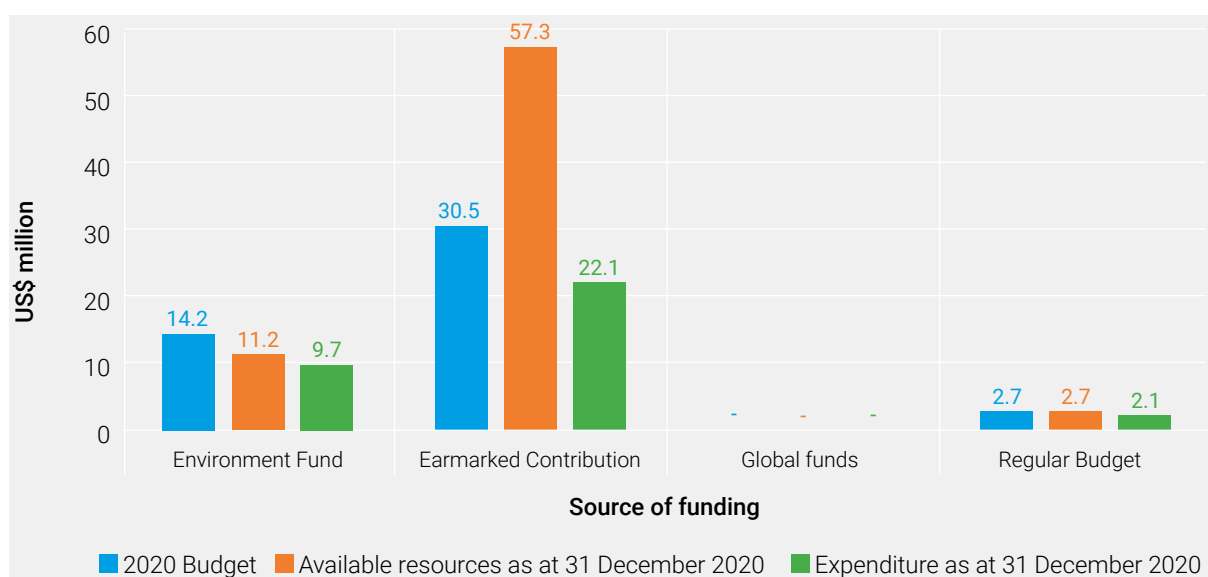
As highlighted in the 2020 report of the International Resource Panel on [Mineral Resource Governance in the 21st century](#), decision-making in the extractive sector is shaped by a complex array of governance frameworks and initiatives operating along highly globalized mineral value chains. There is an urgent need to coordinate and reform this governance landscape to address enduring challenges such as inadequate management of environmental impact.



New Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management aims to improve the safety of tailings facilities in the mining industry

Figure 22. Financial overview – resource efficiency

| Resource efficiency (2020) | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Fund type | 2020 budget (in million US\$) | Available resources as at 31 Dec 2020 (in million US\$) ⁵⁵ | Expenditure as at 31 Dec 2020 (in million US\$) |
| Environment Fund | 14.2 | 11.2 | 9.7 |
| Earmarked contributions | 30.5 | 57.3 | 22.1 |
| Global funds | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Regular Budget | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.1 |
| Total | 47.4 | 71.2 | 33.9 |



- Out of the planned Environment Fund budget for 2020 of US\$ 14.2 million, only US\$ 11.2 million was received. This was part of an overall trend whereby UNEP received a smaller amount of Environment Fund contributions than originally projected.
- Earmarked funds compensated to some degree for the Environment Fund shortfall. The subprogramme received US\$ 57.3 million (against a projected budget of US\$ 30.5 million) from earmarked funds contributions. However, as some of this amount represents multi-year contributions, only part of it can be counted against 2020.⁵⁵
- Overall expenditure for the year, therefore, stands at US\$ 33.9 million, which is 72 per cent of the target budget of US\$ 47.4 million.⁵⁶

55 Includes multi-year contributions.

56 Contributes to the implementation of UNEP/EA.4/19 on Mineral Resources Governance

Environment under review

UNEP's work on Environment under Review focuses on one central area:

Governments and other stakeholders use quality 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.

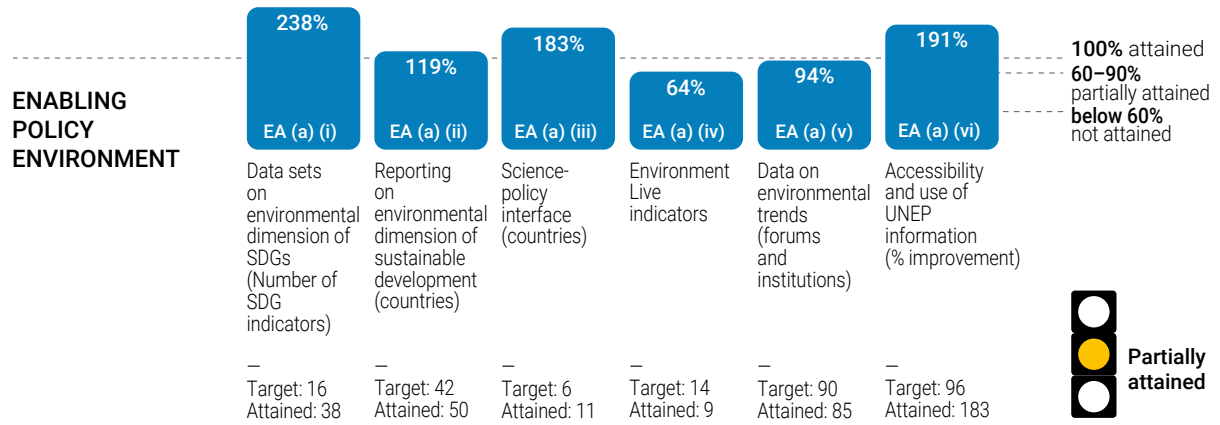
By strengthening the science-policy interface, UNEP bridges the gap between the producers and users of environmental information to enable evidence-based decision-making on the environmental dimension of sustainable development and other internationally agreed environmental goals.

In 2020, the Environment Under Review subprogramme had exceeded four of its six indicator targets and partially met two.



Indicators of Achievement Expected Accomplishment

Figure 23. Environment under review – results



Environmental data for the SDGs



UNEP continues to work with Member States, the United Nations system, donors and major groups and stakeholders, including academia, to compile, verify and submit country data as part of its role as custodian agency for 26 SDG indicators. Additionally, UNEP is responsible for capacity-building, methodology development, analysis and visualization. In 2020 all 26 indicators under UNEP custodianship were classed as Tier II or Tier I, with specifics of updates reported to the [Global SDG indicators database](#) to support the [SDG National Reporting Initiative](#). Indicators are classified in three tiers. Both Tier I and Tier II indicators have agreed methodologies and standards, the only difference being that Tier I indicators have better country data availability, while data for Tier II indicators are not regularly produced by countries. As for Tier III indicators, their methodology or standards are being (or will be) developed and/or tested. The subprogramme indicators on producing data disaggregated by sex and/or geographical area were not met as the relevant workshops were cancelled due to COVID-19.

As part of its role in strengthening national monitoring and reporting capacity, UNEP promotes the use of [shared environmental information systems](#) for open access to data and methodologies for the development of environmental SDG indicators. Such systems include regional SDG gateways, for example in the Latin America and Caribbean region where the gateway for open access to data and on methodologies for the development of environmental SDG indicators serves as a one-stop-shop platform for all activities, programmes, data, statistics and capacity-building conducted in the region in the framework of the 2030 Agenda. In 2020, for example, the region was able to collect [Voluntary National Reviews](#) for nine countries: Argentina, Barbados, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Panama, Peru, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago. For content and regular updates, these platforms will count on the technical support of already existing institutions such as the [statistical coordination group for the 2030 Agenda](#) in Latin America and the Caribbean, under the Statistical Conference of the Americas, and the contribution of all UN organizations, funds and programmes.

Data and assessments to enable the science-policy interface

Responding to the needs of a rapidly evolving knowledge-based society requires UNEP to organize, interpret and communicate emerging environmental information differently, especially credible scientific information, which is essential for informed policy formulation and implementation.

UNEP, working with the national partners, strengthened the science-policy interface and installed air quality monitoring sensors in three locations in Nairobi and two additional ones in Addis Ababa. Awareness workshops were held with the key stakeholders in Nairobi and Cape Town while technical training was completed in the three cities. Installing the additional sensors increased the coverage for air quality monitoring, resulting in the generation of consistent data, the strengthening of institutions and the adoption of policies to regulate traffic and industrial processes to curb pollution.

Map 11. Air quality monitoring sensors



Note: Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

UNEP's science-policy interface is underpinned by the organization's flagship reports. The 2020 launch of two key products, *GEO-6 for Youth* and the first *GEO for Business Brief*, was postponed because of delays caused

by programming interruptions due to COVID-19. However, GEO for Business Brief 1 was launched in January 2021 and GEO-6 for Youth was launched in February 2021.

The Emissions Gap Report 2020 was launched on 9 December 2020, ahead of the fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement. In addition to providing an update on global emissions pathways and progress towards achieving national mitigation pledges and the Paris Agreement goals, thus establishing the current “emissions gap” (the gap between anticipated emissions and levels consistent with the Paris Agreement goals), the 2020 edition looks at the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic to the extent possible and discusses the implications of related recovery responses.

UNEP’s Frontiers 2016 Report: Emerging Issues of Environmental Concern continues to demonstrate value and impact as it describes the nexus of economic development, animal and human well-being, and ecosystem integrity. Furthermore, in 2020 UNEP published an updated report on emerging zoonotic diseases in relation to COVID-19, which highlights sources and drivers of zoonotic disease emergence impacted by ecosystem integrity. The report recommends taking an interdisciplinary *One Health approach* to dealing with food safety and antimicrobial resistance.

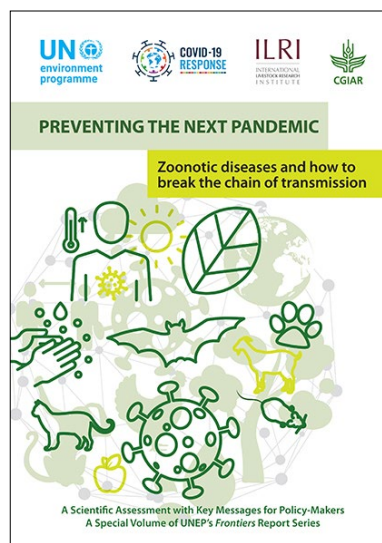
Figure 24. GEO- 6 for Youth and GEO for Business Brief 1



Figure 25. UNEP assessments



Figure 26. Preventing the next pandemic



Facilitating innovative outreach through the World Environment Situation Room

UNEP tracks progress on the SDGs through resources such as the [World Environment Situation Room \(WESR\)](#), a dynamic knowledge platform that implements the Big Data Initiative. The project is global with overarching [environmental policy](#) relevance and impact, as well as a [monitoring](#) aspect. It includes geo-referenced, remote-sensing and earth observation information integrated with statistics and data on the environmental dimension of sustainable development. The themes of this global platform cover complementary dimensions for [Global Green Solutions](#) for the Environment. It targets country policy makers, top environmental policy makers, the environmental scientific community, business and interested citizens. The platform is becoming an essential knowledge instrument to support progress on delivering the environmental dimension of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and includes a [Data Downloader](#) feature.

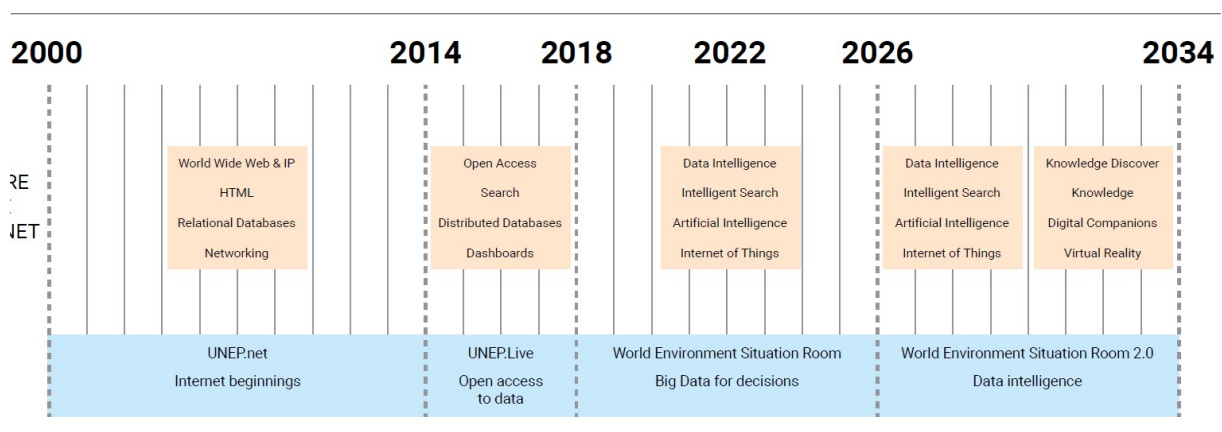
The WESR continues to evolve (see Figure 27), with recent adaptations of a decentralized cloud infrastructure that ensures data can be automatically updated with data partners. This includes sources such as NASA, [Global Forest Watch](#) and FAO. UNEP also used the data compiled in the Situation Room to draft [Sustainable Development Goals Policy Briefs](#), which highlighted global hotspots of environmental change, building on the scientific data and information hosted by the Situation Room. These Briefs are complemented by stories from the six regions. In addition, the [Country Scorecard feature](#) will assist UN Country Teams and national stakeholders in their Common Country Analysis and the SDG Voluntary National Reviews, feeding into the UN Cooperation Framework.

Furthermore, the WESR platform has been integrated within the UNEP.org website, making WESR content easily accessible from the main UNEP website and thus [increasing its usability](#). Its impact is evident on various institutions that use data, accessed through UNEP, on environmental trends for environmental assessment, early warning on emerging issues and/or facilitation of policy action. It is testimony to the pivotal role of WESR that these institutions include the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the European Environment Agency, the Association for Information Systems, the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, the Journal of Integrative Environmental Sciences, and the European Commission, among others.

Figure 27. World data forum



Figure 29. The World Environment Situation Room is building on UNEP's earlier digitalization efforts



Success story: Funding for enhanced climate information and knowledge services

"Pacific Small Island Developing States are highly vulnerable to climate-related hazards and extreme climate events, such as tropical cyclones, flooding and drought," says Kosi Latu, Director General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme. "This Programme will empower island populations to initiate timely and appropriate actions to reduce the impact of hazards and extreme events by using improved climate information, early warning and risk knowledge."



**GREEN
CLIMATE
FUND**

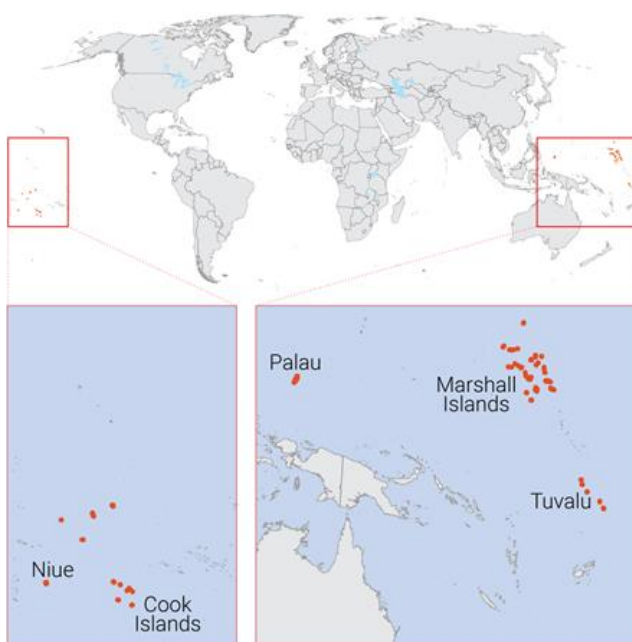
In November 2020, UNEP raised US\$ 47,403,174 to enhancing climate information and knowledge services for resilience in five Small Island Developing States of the Pacific Ocean through the [Green Climate Fund](#), to be implemented over five years.

Through the Green Climate Fund project, UNEP will facilitate the development of integrated and people-centred climate and ocean information services in Cook Islands, Niue, Palau, Republic of Marshall Island and Tuvalu. The programme interventions aim to move away from the current "business as usual" approach, characterized by the poorly coordinated use of insufficient climate data and information, and towards a new paradigm in which accurate, timely and actionable climate information is used in climate-resilient policy and planning and response actions, and in which Forecast-based Financing for early action is implemented to mitigate the impacts of climate-related hazards. This will be achieved through four inter-related components – the "Programme Results" – which will focus on: 1) A strengthened delivery model for climate information services and Multi-Hazard Early Warning Services covering oceans and islands, 2) Strengthened observations, monitoring, modelling and prediction of climate and its impacts on ocean areas and islands, 3) Improved community preparedness, response capabilities and resilience to climate risks, and 4) Enhanced regional knowledge management and cooperation for climate services and Multi-Hazard Early Warning Services.

Inger Andersen, UNEP Executive Director, made the following observation:

"Climate services and early warning systems address an urgent need to provide an evidence base for planning, decision-making and responses that have the potential to save lives and livelihoods. Improved capacity to observe and predict the impacts of a changing climate will contribute to more effective environmental management, disaster risk reduction and food security in Pacific Small Island Developing States. The Green Climate Fund Board's decision to invest in climate information and knowledge services in some of the countries most vulnerable to climate change is an important contribution to adaptation planning and science".

Map 12. Enhancing climate information and knowledge services in Small Island Developing States



Note: Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Opportunities and challenges

Access to consistent environmental knowledge and data is the foundation for linking science to policy opportunities. The quality of the data, in combination with potential known or unknown data gaps, limits UNEP's and Member States' ability to create impactful policies. More consistent and stable data is needed on the SDGs, MEAs and other environmental indicators used for assessments by policymakers.

For the data that exists, UNEP's online hub for open access to environmental data, and tools for distilling knowledge from that data, offers opportunities for compiling and analysing scattered data sets to reveal patterns, provide early warning, spot emerging issues, track progress and correct course. A main challenge is making compatible the various technology-enabled platforms. Another is addressing the lack of proficiency in policy communities at gathering data and using available data effectively, including to forecast future trends.

Furthermore, following requests from Member States, a policymaking gap has been identified and capacity development on policy impacts will therefore be institutionalized in future subprogramme projects.

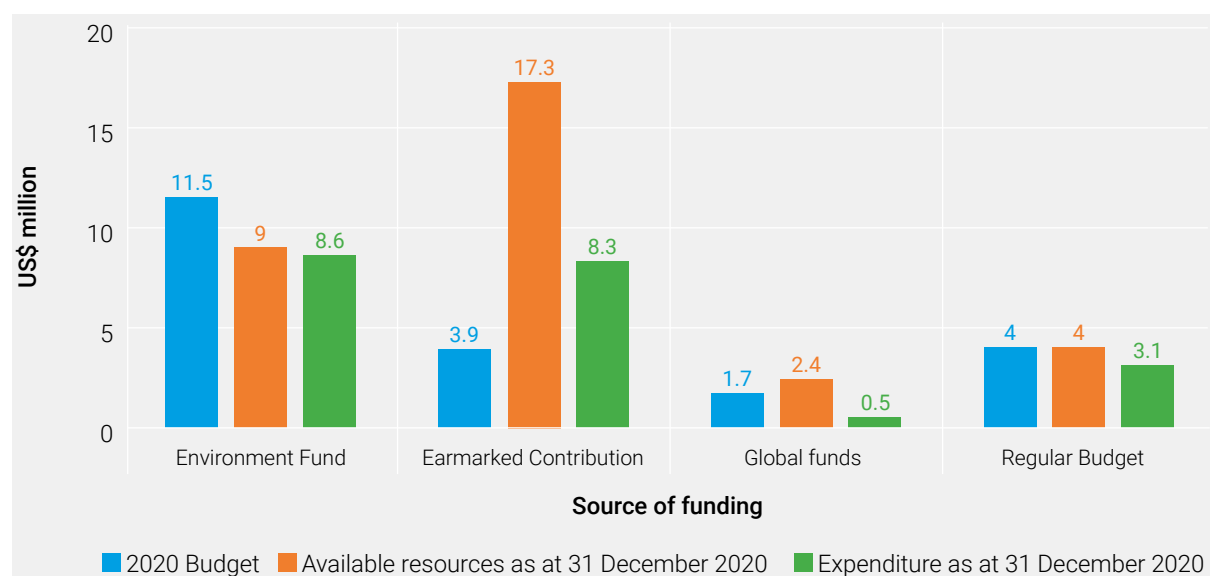
UNEP's capacity-building projects faced implementation challenges due to COVID-19. In response, (i) since Green Climate Fund Readiness Programme projects are approved for short delivery timeframes (1–2 years), UNEP negotiated for GCF approval of six-month automatic extensions for approved projects; and (ii) while some workshops took place virtually, those that required the physical presence of attendees were moved to 2021.⁵⁷

With the physical closure of offices globally in March 2020 and the cancellation of all business-related travel

due to lockdowns, many activities planned for the second half of 2020 were delayed. For example, the planned expert review/validation workshops for the Botswana draft State of the Environment report were delayed, while the South Sudan and Iraq Global Environment Facility projects failed to hold the inception workshops initially planned for the second quarter of 2020. However, UNEP leveraged technological tools and platforms, allowing a transition to be made from the expected physical meetings and consultations in the project countries to entirely online meetings and consultations. Furthermore, face-to-face capacity-building workshops were replaced by online webinars, and travel funds for ongoing capacity development workshops were reallocated to the development of e-learning.

Figure 30. Financial overview – environment under review

| Environment under Review (2020) | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Fund type | 2020 budget (in million US\$) | Available resources (in million US\$) as at 31 Dec 2020 ⁵⁷ | Expenditure (in million US\$) as at 31 Dec 2020 |
| Environment Fund | 11.5 | 9.0 | 8.6 |
| Earmarked contributions | 3.9 | 17.3 | 8.3 |
| Global funds | 1.7 | 2.4 | 0.5 |
| Regular Budget | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.1 |
| Total | 21.1 | 32.7 | 20.5 |

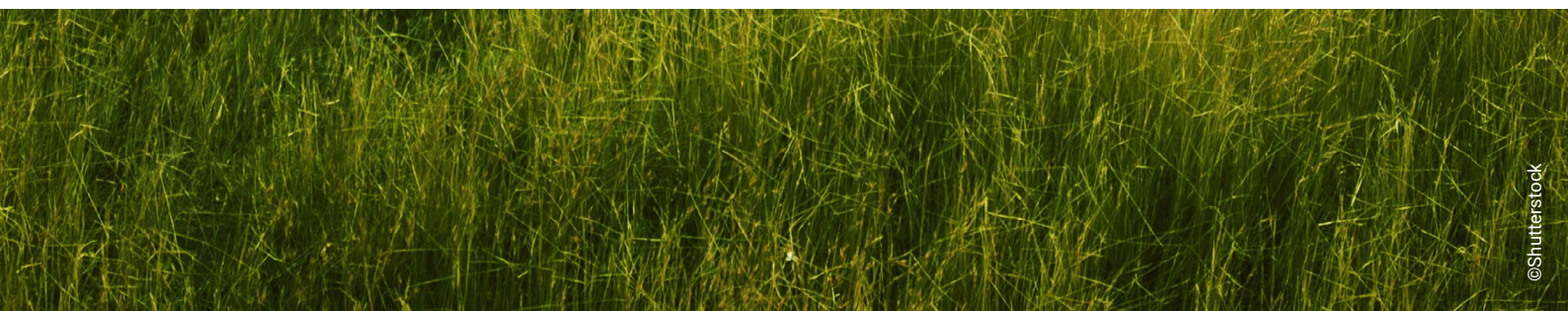


⁵⁷ Includes multi-year contributions

- Out of the planned Environment Fund budget for 2020 of US\$ 11.5 million, only US\$ 9.0 million was received. This was part of an overall trend where UNEP received a smaller amount of Environment Fund contributions than originally projected.
- Earmarked funds compensated to some degree for the Environment Fund shortfall. The subprogramme received US\$ 17.3 million (against a projected budget of US\$ 3.9 million) from earmarked funds contributions. However, as some of this amount represents multi-year contributions, only part of it can be counted against 2021.
- Overall expenditure for 2020, therefore, stands at US\$ 20.5 million, which is 97 per cent of the target budget of US\$ 21.1 million.



Fit for purpose



Policymaking organs and stakeholder engagement

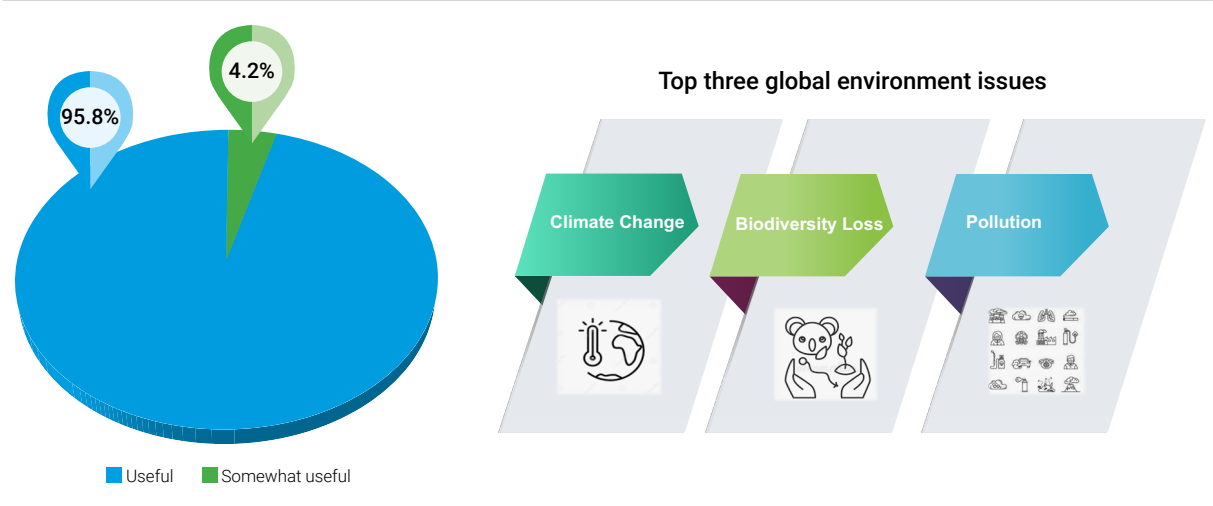
During 2020, UNEP provided clear leadership in setting the global environmental agenda and in coordinating policy across the United Nations system. On 10 December 2020, UNEP released the annual [Greening the Blue Report](#) that provides information on the UN system’s environmental footprint and efforts to reduce it.

In a survey on implementation of the Programme of Work 2020–2021, **95.8 per cent of the Member State respondents indicated that the UNEA was useful in drawing attention to important global environmental issues** that are relevant to their countries. Respondents named climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution as the top three global environmental issues relevant to their countries that needed attention and action.

Proposals on increasing the impact of UNEP’s global engagement included greater:

- support and alignment with existing MEAs to avoid duplicating ongoing initiatives;
 - coordination with regional initiatives as UNEP support and greater involvement in the regions would help address local concerns and contribute to global environmental goals.
- Of the Member State respondents, 91.7 per cent found UNEP programmes and products useful, up from 88 per cent in the last survey.
 - Of the Member State respondents, 86.9 per cent rated UNEP’s presence in their region and its support to countries in addressing environmental needs and priorities as satisfactory, good or excellent.
 - Of the Member State respondents, 82.6 per cent held a similar view on UNEP’s presence in their region and its support to countries in addressing environmental needs and priorities.

Figure 31. Survey results on UNEA’s utility in drawing attention to global environment issues



Executive direction and management

Strengthening transparency and accountability as a results-based organization

In 2020, the following audits were undertaken:

1. The Board of Auditors team (Chinese National Audit Office) from China conducted the Internal Control and Management Audit (2020 Interim Audit) of UNEP Headquarters, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, and the Addis Ababa Liaison Country Office. The final report is yet to be issued.
2. Management of Partnerships at UNEP – received one critical and 12 important recommendations.
3. Grants Management at United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), UNEP and UN-Habitat – received six important recommendations.
4. Management of Data Classification and Data Privacy at UNON, UNEP and UN-Habitat – ongoing.

Significant progress has been made on the implementation of outstanding audit recommendations. As of February 2021, there were only three critical recommendations outstanding. Data from the Office of Internal Oversight Services indicates that UNEP's implementation rate was 100 per cent as at June 2020.

Senior management decisions informed by management and performance information

UNEP continues to strengthen its decision-making through the use of performance monitoring, which has been enhanced with the development of dashboards. These dashboards cover a wide range of management information including budget implementation, travel management, and recruitment data. In 2020, UNEP continued to strengthen this area both to support work on monitoring its COVID-19 responses, which included improved platforms to monitor flexible working requests, and to manage travel and meeting data. It also benefited from enhanced Secretariat-led reporting linked to the Delegation of Authority HR portal.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic at the beginning of 2020 led to the creation of the UNEP Crisis Management Group (CMG). The CMG was tasked with collating information on travel, country restrictions and the reported number of cases per country to monitor and guide offices and travellers making "go/no-go" decisions on travel. To guide senior management decision-making, a new travel dashboard was released and utilized by the CMG, which provided information that defined appropriate response plans and monitored travel patterns in the early stages of the pandemic, up until the point when all travel stopped.

During 2020, UNEP also started working on, and released a beta version of, a comprehensive programmatic monitoring dashboard to be used for quarterly review meetings on programme performance.

The Global Environment Facility dashboard was also released in 2020 to assist in monitoring the status of Global Environment Facility funded projects. It provides an overview of the budget and expenditure situation by project, type of readiness and country, as well as an in-depth view on project proposals with details on the cash availability and expenditure trends by year.

UNEP's emissions record

UNEP aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from UNEP operations and travel by staff. UNEP also requires its offices to implement context-specific environment management systems or concrete environmental management measures. Additionally, UNEP works towards climate neutrality through procurement of certified emission reductions.

The creation of the new Environmental Management System (EMS) has helped to document and put in place concrete plans to ensure UNEP improves its footprint and reaches the target of absolute and per capita reductions of 25 per cent by 2025 and 45 per cent by 2030. Experts from many divisions have already contributed ideas and proposed actions that UNEP can take in this regard, such as reviewing the air travel policy for UNEP, supporting the update of training materials for induction of UN staff (with a view to making it compulsory for UNEP personnel), and evaluating the pros and cons of online events and meetings to assist the consultants in determining best practice for UNEP.

A total of 14,842 Carbon Offsets were procured to address UNEP carbon emissions. These were from two projects in India, one on biomass methane capture and the other a small hydro energy project.

Evaluations

During 2020, all project-level evaluations that had concluded their field-based data collection phases before the COVID-19 pandemic affected operations were completed. From March 2020, all new evaluations were assessed for their feasibility, in terms of being conducted using desk-based and teleconferencing modalities. Some planned evaluations could not credibly proceed without field-based data collection. In these cases, the evaluations were initiated and the desk-based inception work completed.

Selected findings from past strategic evaluations of relevance were distilled and communicated in-house to inform the Medium-Term Strategy 2022–2025 preparation process. One of the issues and lessons

identified was the need to strengthen the Theory of Change of the subprogrammes to better inform strategic thinking and operational planning by:

- making longer-term results levels in the Theory of Change consistent with levels in
- current medium-term strategy outcome mapping
- continuing to establish strong alignment/links in causal pathways with the SDGs
- ensuring causal pathways on the science-policy interface are properly articulated
- incorporating thinking on disruptive innovation approaches
- including communication and capacity-building more explicitly within the subprogramme Theory of Change.

Furthermore, it was established that UNEP could strengthen its clarity of purpose and the shared UNEP-wide understanding of and approach to:

- regional strategic presence, and how each subprogramme works with regional, subregional and country offices
- communications at corporate, programme and project levels
- knowledge management at corporate, programme and project levels
- innovation and attitudes to risk in the UNEP Programme of Work.

Programme management and support

UNEP makes management decisions based on risk information

Building on the Back-to-Basics Model launched in 2019, the Corporate Services Division continued to build on risk mitigation measures through capacity-building initiatives. To ensure ongoing training of staff on their role as gatekeepers and custodians of policies, an online platform of the Corporate Academy was initiated in January 2020. This online learning platform is aligned around and prioritizes topics that are strategic, proprietary and of high value, with a focus on achieving and maintaining organizational norms and standards. The Corporate Academy's learning offerings address capacity-building challenges around policies, processes and compliance. Notably, the online training platform will include a module on enterprise risk management and other topics related to financial management and recognizing fraud. The Corporate Academy initiative is designed to empower participants and to transform knowledge into impactful actions by strengthening accountability, transparency and mastery of organizational policies contributing to improved oversight and management.

UNEP continued to utilize the Peer Review Mechanism launched in 2019. In 2020, to identify potential risks, two Peer Review processes were carried out; these subsequently informed decision-making around risk mitigation and early detection of potential challenges in project implementation.

In 2020, UNEP appointed a Conduct and Discipline focal point to prevent misconduct, to ensure an adequate response when possible misconduct is reported and to provide remedial action for certain forms of misconduct.

A review of Financial Management Officers (FMOs)/ Administrative Officers was also initiated in 2020 with the aim of developing a typology through a comprehensive mapping of workforce levels of FMOs/ Administrative Officers. The objective was to inform and support the consistency of job titles, roles and levels in UNEP, including within MEAs. The exercise also aimed to provide clarity around performance standards and around the skills and knowledge that FMOs are expected to have, as well as allowing for key updates and policy sharing.

Policies and standards for oversight and management

The four Framework Agreements signed with the European Commission between 2011 and 2019 in the field of the global environment represent a portfolio of 129 projects for a value of €134 million. The Framework Agreements are governed by a set of guidelines and standard operating procedures (SOPs) covering all aspects of project implementation, in line with European Commission contractual obligations. The SOPs evolve with the requirements of European Commission cooperation.

UNEP implements investigation recommendations for complaints investigated by UNEP, i.e. non-Office of Internal Oversight Services complaints. For the years 2019 to 2020, UNEP implemented recommendations following one investigation of possible unsatisfactory conduct. Following this investigation, it was recommended that a letter of caution be issued to the staff member in question, and other managerial remedial actions taken. These recommendations were implemented.

Three new SOP manuals were developed by the Human Resources Section in May of 2020 to further systematize HR processes and to keep all stakeholders in alignment in the critical area of recruitment. The SOPs cover regular and temporary recruitment of positions at level P5 and above, P4 and below, and consultants and individual contractors. The goal in developing new procedural documentation is to streamline and clarify UNEP's recruitment processes and to support oversight and management functions by providing a "single

source of truth” (a master version of the organization’s data) that precisely details how recruitments are to be carried out. In codifying and providing explicit direction on key recruitment processes, the HR Section aims to further embed normative standards and promote transparency, while also reducing costly error rates and liabilities in recruitment. In May 2020, to further support the streamlining of recruitment workflows, Corporate Services launched an electronic platform to initiate, track and trace all HR-related requests and queries.

To ensure that UNEP implements key UN system-wide reform strategies pertaining to the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Gender Parity, the HR Section coordinated the organization-wide participation and resulting inputs to a PSEA Action Plan. Corporate Services also provided continuous reporting on the status of gender parity to all UNEP divisions, offices and MEAs. Both the PSEA Action Plan and the Gender Parity Report provide monitoring and accountability mechanisms to benchmark, monitor and drive implementation of these key UN reforms.

In 2020, due to changes in operation, the UNEP implemented a number of financial guidance policies. These included guidance on issuance of Delegation of Authority for Certifying Officers, a new policy on unapplied and unidentified deposits, UNEP Standard Operating Procedure – Operation of Petty Cash Accounts, and clarification of roles of Procurement/ Certifying Official and Approving Office on the F.249 Commercial and Non-Commercial Banking Details Form.

In 2020, specific emphasis was placed on creating strategies and guidance documents for transitioning to a successful remote workplace, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. To help staff transition to remote working, guidance for effective use of virtual meeting tools was released and a dedicated COVID-19 space was created on weCollaborate, UNEP’s principal internal knowledge sharing platform.

For the year 2019–2020, UNEP contributed to the UN-wide implementation of the Unite Workspace (new Microsoft productivity tools) by leading the Communication, Training and Implementation Work Stream, comprising more than 30 different UN entities. Within UNEP, the same tools were implemented, and at the end of 2020 UNEP had the highest number of Microsoft Teams in use across the Secretariat.



Bangladesh: Tailoring renewable energy for local economies.

Gender

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, UNEP continued to integrate gender perspectives throughout its project activities. This included reviewing concept notes, project documents (through Gender Marker, a financial resource tracking mechanism) and publications. Additionally, project managers and officers were trained and developed skills in mainstreaming gender in projects and publications through webinars and consultations.

COVID-19 project responses

EmPower, UNEP’s five-year flagship project, implemented jointly with UN Women, focuses on building women’s resilience to climate change in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Viet Nam and at the Asia Pacific regional level. The project brings together government, private sector and financial partners to support around 1,000 women in these countries to run and benefit from enterprises using renewable energy for climate-resilient development. It also influences climate change policies to be more gender responsive by presenting gender and climate change indicators, and by providing evidence such as the State of Gender Equality Report and Climate Change Assessment Report. One key result is Vietnam’s updated Nationally Determined Contributions, which in 2020 incorporated a separate section on gender equality.

Integrating gender in projects and publications

All 59 project documents presented to the project review committee were reviewed according to the Gender Marker.

- Twenty-two project documents had mainstreamed gender well throughout, and therefore are likely to contribute meaningfully to gender equality. These received a code 2a rating.

- Thirty-seven project documents received a code 1 rating. This means the projects did not fully mainstream gender in all four areas of the review (context, implementation, logframe and budget). After incorporating the recommendations for improvements, the projects were given a code 2 rating.

Forty-one concept notes presented to the concept review committee were also reviewed. As a result of the feedback provided in a gender comments report, project developers have already reached out to the Gender and Safeguards Unit for support.

Publications

UNEP has developed a series of publications showcasing gender success stories emanating from its projects; gender mainstreaming guidelines for government partners; and the gender-differentiated impacts of COVID-19 in UNEP's programmes and projects.

UNEP's Gender and Safeguards Unit developed a Guidance Note on gender and COVID-19 aligned to the UNEP COVID-19 response for use by project staff.

The following 2020 publications also added to new knowledge on gender and environment and impacts of COVID-19:

1. *Gender, climate and security: Sustaining inclusive peace on the frontlines of climate change*, UNEP, UN Women, UNDP and Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs/Peace Building Support Office, 2020 (under the Joint Programme for Women, Natural Resources Climate and Peace (2016–2020)).

2. *From Words to Action: Projects with Innovative Solutions to Promote Nature Conservation, Climate Action and Gender Equality*, UNDP and UN Women, 2020.
3. *Powering Equality: Women's entrepreneurship transforming Asia's energy sector*, UNEP, 2020
4. *Think Piece: Gender and Climate Change in the Context of COVID-19*, Women for Climate-Resilient Societies, UNEP, UN Women, 2020
5. *Gender integration in renewable energy policy: A guideline for renewable energy policy and decision makers*, UNEP, 2020.

UNEP developed gender mainstreaming guidelines for project development and implementation in eight countries in the southern Mediterranean in 2020, assisted by the SwitchMed II programme for switching to sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

Launch of the International Gender Champions Hub, Nairobi

On 26 June 2020, Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP, joined her counterparts Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of UN-Habitat, and Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura, Director General of UNON, to officially launch the International Gender Champions (IGC) hub in Nairobi, Kenya. IGC is a leadership network that brings together female and male decision makers determined to break down gender barriers and make gender equality a working reality in their spheres of influence. The key message from the event was that gender needs to be mainstreamed not only in programmes and projects, but throughout the organization's structures.

United Nations System Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women reporting

In October 2020, UNEP received its 2019 report card for its implementation of the second UN System Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNSWAP2). UNEP met 47 per cent of the performance indicators, an improvement from the previous year, but leaving much room for improvement. In 2019, the number of indicator targets that UNEP met or exceeded was lower than both the average for the UN Secretariat and the overall UN system.

The Senior Management Team reviewed the report card and made recommendations for improvement in 2021. All projects are to have a transformative gender result and show the measures to achieve this result, and all projects should achieve a Gender Marker rating of 2.0. Additionally, all FMOs should receive training on tracking resources spent on gender equality and women's empowerment.



Think piece: Gender and climate change in the context of COVID-19.

UNEP and the Global Environment Facility

UNEP is a founding partner of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), along with UNDP and the World Bank, and has been actively developing and implementing GEF projects for 28 years. UNEP hosts and administers three of the five MEAs for which GEF serves as the financial mechanism (the CBD, Stockholm and Minamata Conventions) and thus recognizes its great synergies with GEF. UNEP actively programmes finance and delivers results in all GEF focal areas (Biodiversity, Chemicals and Waste, Climate Change Mitigation, Climate Change Adaptation, International Waters and Land Degradation).

UNEP leads, on behalf of the GEF partnership, other GEF agencies in flagship GEF 7 programming initiatives, such as: The Congo Basin Sustainable Landscapes Impact Program, the Sustainable Cities Impact Program, ISLANDS (Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development in Small Island Developing States), and the Global Programme to Support Countries with the Shift to Electric Mobility. These programmes, as well as numerous other projects, are currently under development. At the end of 2020, the UNEP/GEF portfolio of projects under implementation, together with approved concepts under development, was valued at US\$ 1.37 billion, up from US\$ 1.3 billion at the end of 2019.

UNEP and the Green Climate Fund

The GCF is the world's largest global fund dedicated to climate change, with over US\$ 20 billion pledged from 43 governments. The GCF was established as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and serves the Paris Agreement as a key instrument accelerating its implementation. UNEP, as a strategic partner of the Green Climate Fund, and as an Accredited Entity and Delivery Partner, supports developing countries access to GCF resources for low-emission, climate-resilient development.

UNEP was accredited in 2015 to access grant instruments for project management with a value of up to US\$ 50 million per project. In March 2019, that accreditation was upgraded to include grant awards. This accreditation allows UNEP to work with Member States to apply for funds from the GCF. UNEP's support to eligible countries has resulted in a pipeline of GCF-funded projects built around diverse issues, including climate information and early warning systems; low-emission development, including energy efficiency; and electric mobility. UNEP manages three portfolios:

Adaptation and REDD+; Low-Emission Development; and Climate Information and Early Warning Systems.

UNEP's portfolio of GCF-funded projects has grown since the first project began implementation in 2017 and has developed to the current volume of US\$ 206 million for 69 approved projects. In 2020, 22 GCF projects were approved, of which 21 proposals were readiness and preparatory support projects with a total budget of US\$ 17,294,742 and 1 was a Funded Activity Programme for five Pacific Islands (FP147, Enhancing Climate Information and Knowledge Services for resilience in five island countries of the Pacific Ocean) with a total budget of US\$ 50,721,396.

COVID-19 and its resulting mitigation measures have had a significant impact on the UNEP-GCF portfolio. Project development and implementation have undergone delays, as the bans on international and domestic travel, public gatherings and meetings have hindered stakeholder consultations and various processes which are contingent on government approvals or actions. UNEP responses at the portfolio level have included the use of contingency measures, support to climate-resilient recovery efforts, and re-planning of consultations, to ensure the continued delivery of services to countries. UNEP and the GCF are also promoting flexible, expanded opportunities through readiness support to climate-resilient recovery and alignment with the Nationally Determined Contributions. Going forward, countries have expressed their interest in partnering with UNEP and the GCF on initiatives that aim to build back better, by linking recovery efforts with the clean energy transition, nature-based solutions and the Paris Agreement.

United Nations reform

“With the structural aspects of the reforms now well consolidated, it is imperative to keep the foot on the pedal to achieve the cultural change we need for greater collaboration across pillars and tangible results for people on the ground.”

UN Secretary-General António Guterres

The United Nations process of reform, initiated by the Secretary-General, is designed to improve the delivery of the organization's mandate, particularly the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. A new emphasis has been placed on efficient management and systems to achieve these goals. Greater cooperation is required across different sectors of the UN. UNEP has always played a cross-cutting role, and its vital work in placing the environment, climate, and sustainability at the heart of the UN's mission is yielding tangible results.

In 2020, to provide this support and expertise in the UN's work at the country level, UNEP's Regional Offices greatly strengthened their collaboration through the Resident Coordinators. UNEP developed a draft UNEP Offer for UN Country Teams that highlights the areas of work, existing tools and the associated expertise in UNEP that can support UN Country Teams and Regional Collaborative Platforms. UNEP piloted the UN Country Team country focal points system in Asia Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and West Asia regions to lead engagement with the UN Country Teams and governmental counterparts on overall programme and portfolio initiatives.

UNEP actively engaged and participated in the UN system-wide UN Development System (UNDS) reform processes and in the UN SDG Task Teams that are developing guidance and tools for supporting Common Country Analysis, UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (Cooperation Frameworks) and Opportunity/Issue Based Coalitions.



Investing in UNEP

Budget performance

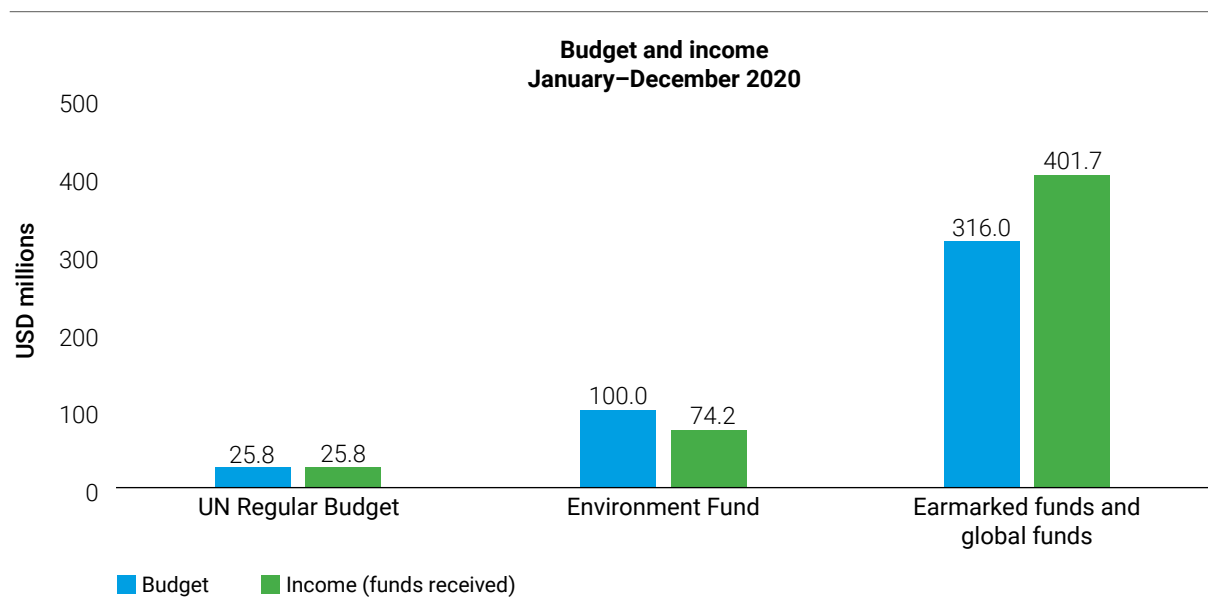
UNEP's projected overall budget for 2020 was US\$ 460.8 million. This comprised the United Nations Regular Budget, including the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation and United Nations Development Account allocations, the Environment Fund, earmarked funds, including global funds (Global Environment Facility and Green Climate Fund), and programme support costs.

The total income for the period that ended December 2020 was US\$ 501.7million⁵⁸ including multi-year contributions to be applied against future years.⁵⁹ Total expenditure in 2020 as at 31 December 2020 was US\$ 452 million and total available resources were US\$ 867.4 million.

Overview of income

The income reported was received for the period January to December 2020 and, in the case of multi-year contributions, for future years as well. While the total income amounted to 109 per cent of the budgeted income, the core resources from the United Nations Regular Budget and Environment Fund – both annual funds – made up only 20 per cent of the total income received. The earmarked income, including trust funds and comprising 80 per cent of the total income, was provided by the Member States, the GEF, the GCF, the European Commission, foundations/NGOs, the private sector and other United Nations entities.

Figure 32. UNEP budget and income



Core funding

The Environment Fund and the UN Regular Budget jointly form UNEP's core funding, which supports the delivery of the organization's mandate. In contrast to earmarked funding, core funding gives UNEP the flexibility to implement the Programme of Work as agreed by the Member States and to strategically respond to emerging challenges, such as COVID-19.

⁵⁸ The figures do not include the Multilateral Fund and conventions and protocols administered by UNEP.

⁵⁹ As per the United Nations Secretariat interpretation and application of the International Public Service Accounting Standards (IPSAS), as the UNEP financial and administrative management platform, Umoja, does not allow a breakdown of multi-year contributions into annual figures for income.

United Nations Regular Budget

The United Nations Regular Budget provided US\$ 25.8 million in 2020 and constituted 5 per cent of the total income, in line with previous years. It covers substantive support for the governing bodies and coordination of environmental programmes in the United Nations system. It also ensures effective cooperation with relevant global scientific and professional communities. In 2019, due to liquidity challenges facing the Regular Budget, the non-staff allocation was not provided in full, therefore UNEP had to be prudent in spending and postpone spending on discretionary activities. As such, the 2019 budget implementation was not driven by programme planning, but rather by cash availability. To minimize the impact on the delay of programme delivery, UNEP had to fund some core activities from the Environment Fund and earmarked contributions.

The Environment Fund

The Environment Fund is UNEP's main source of flexible, unearmarked funds. It is the financial bedrock of UNEP's efforts to provide scientific evidence on the state of the global environment, positively influence government policy, drive global action and respond to environmental challenges around the world. Funding from the Environment Fund is necessary for UNEP to deliver on its strengths.

The fund pays for strategic direction, critical resources for programme delivery, robust oversight and accountability, and supports UNEP's convening power in bringing together governments, the private sector and civil society to advance the global environmental agenda, for example through the UNEA.

In 2020, the contributions received amounted to US\$ 74.2 million out of the approved budget of US\$ 100 million, or 15 per cent of the organization's total income. While the income increased from 2019, a funding gap of 26 per cent remained.

UNEP is grateful for the additional stability and predictability that were provided by multi-year agreements with Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Monaco and the Netherlands, which amounted to US\$ 20.9 million (28 per cent) of the Fund income.

Earmarked contributions

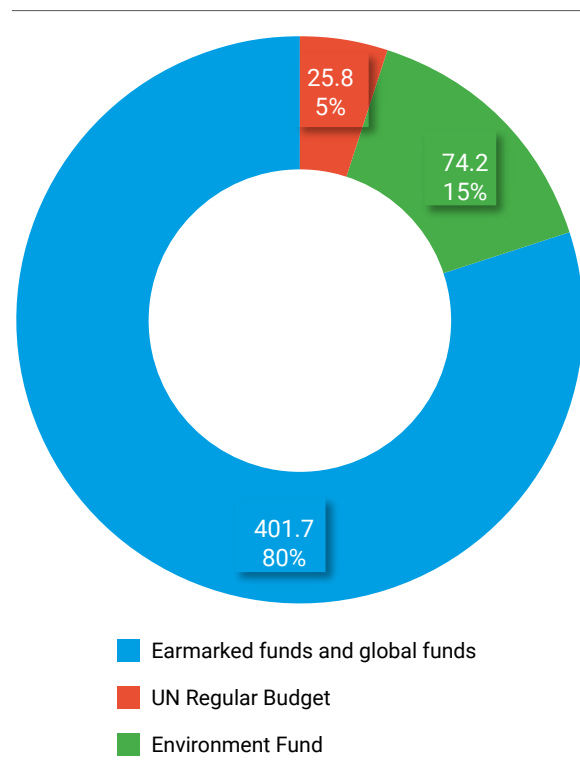
Earmarked contributions (including trust funds) enable the scaling-up and replication of results of core work, including capacity-building in more countries with more partners.

In 2020, earmarked income received, including for future years, exceeded the annual budget by 27 per cent, but totalled 7 per cent less than in 2019. Earmarked contributions were provided by the GEF (46 per cent), Member States (20 per cent), the GCF (16 per cent), United Nations organizations (9 per cent), the European Commission (5 per cent), the private sector, including members of the Finance Initiative (3 per cent) and foundations/NGOs (1 per cent).

Earmarked contributions from the Member States also included flexible, softly earmarked funds received from Finland, Norway and Sweden, which amounted to US\$ 24.6 million (6 per cent).

Earmarked funds provide a welcome complement to core funding, especially the softly earmarked funds. The tightly earmarked funds are more of a challenge for a normative organization such as UNEP as they may not fully align with priorities agreed by all Member States. Furthermore, foundational programmes, such as Environment Under Review and Environmental Governance, tend to receive less earmarked funding than other programmes, putting them at risk.

Figure 33. Income by funding source (in US\$)



Funding partners

The success of UNEP depends on partners who champion and fund our mission. UNEP is grateful to all partners that provide financial support. Every contribution matters.

UNEP thanks all the 77 Member States that contributed in 2020 to the Environment Fund and expresses its deep gratitude to the 32 who led by example and provided funding at or above their “fair share” level, as established by the Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contributions (VISC). UNEP also recognizes and is grateful to the 15 Member States who provided 93 per cent of the income to the Environment Fund.

It is positive to note that the total funding to the Environment Fund increased in 2020 compared to 2019. However, the number of Member States that provided funding decreased from 81 to 77. All 193 Member States of UNEP benefit from its work, and all Member States share the responsibility for contributing

to the Environment Fund. As UNEP relies on the support of its Member States to deliver on its mandate and programme, every country is encouraged to contribute to the Environment Fund

Regarding earmarked funding, a special thank you goes to the top 15 funding partners and groups of funding partners that provided 97 per cent of the total earmarked income.

UNEP continues to collaborate with the Member States to identify and address its funding challenges. In 2020, an [online survey on funding of UNEP](#) confirmed wide support for the UNEP’s mandate, strengths and comparative advantages. The respondents also agreed

| Top 15 contributors to the Environment Fund (January–December 2020) | | | Top 15 contributors to Earmarked Funds (January–December 2020) | | |
|---|----------------|-------|--|-----------------------------|-------|
| Member States | | US\$* | Funding partners | | US\$* |
| 1 | Netherlands | 9.4 | 1 | Global Environment Facility | 183.6 |
| 2 | Germany | 8.3 | 2 | Green Climate Fund | 65.0 |
| 3 | USA | 8.1 | 3 | UN entities | 36.0 |
| 4 | France | 7.6 | 4 | European Commission | 21.4 |
| 5 | Belgium | 4.5 | 5 | Norway | 15.6 |
| 6 | Denmark | 4.4 | 6 | Japan | 12.4 |
| 7 | Sweden | 4.4 | 7 | Germany | 11.0 |
| 8 | United Kingdom | 4.1 | 8 | Sweden | 9.9 |
| 9 | Switzerland | 4.0 | 9 | Finance Initiative | 8.9 |
| 10 | Norway | 3.0 | 10 | Luxembourg | 5.9 |
| 11 | Italy | 2.8 | 11 | Foundation/NGO | 5.3 |
| 12 | Finland | 2.7 | 12 | Switzerland | 4.8 |
| 13 | Canada | 2.2 | 13 | Finland | 4.0 |
| 14 | Japan | 1.7 | 14 | Denmark | 3.0 |
| 15 | China | 1.5 | 15 | Private Sector | 2.9 |

*in US\$ million

Member States that contributed their fair share, as established by the VISC (Jan–Dec 2020)

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Albania | France | Netherlands |
| Armenia | Georgia | New Zealand |
| Barbados | Iceland | Norway |
| Belgium | Jordan | Panama |
| Bhutan | Latvia | Saint Lucia |
| Brunei Darussalam | Liechtenstein | Serbia |
| Cyprus | Luxembourg | Slovenia |
| Denmark | Mauritania | Solomon Islands |
| Eritrea | Mauritius | Switzerland |
| Fiji | Montenegro | Tuvalu |
| Finland | Myanmar | |

with the strategies proposed to address some of the funding challenges identified, e.g. insufficient funding for the Environment Fund; imbalance between core/non-core funding; and the fact that less than half of the Member States provide funding to UNEP. In 2021, UNEP looks forward to implementing some of the recommendations and to continuing the dialogue on funding with the Member States.

Expenditure analysis

Total expenditure as of 31 December 2020 was US\$ 452 million, against available resources of US\$ 867.4 million from all UNEP funding sources excluding MEAs.

Regular budget

The approved appropriation by the General Assembly for 2020 was US\$ 25.8 million, comprising US\$ 23.4 million from the Regular Budget and US\$ 2.4 million from the United Nations Development Account. As at 31 December 2020, UNEP expenditure was US\$ 23.2 million.

Environment Fund

The authorized budget for 2020 was US\$ 100 million. However, the approved allocation was US\$ 78 million, based on the projected income. The total use of the

funds as at 31 December 2020 was US\$ 69.5 million, allocated to the core delivery of the Programme of Work.

Programme support costs

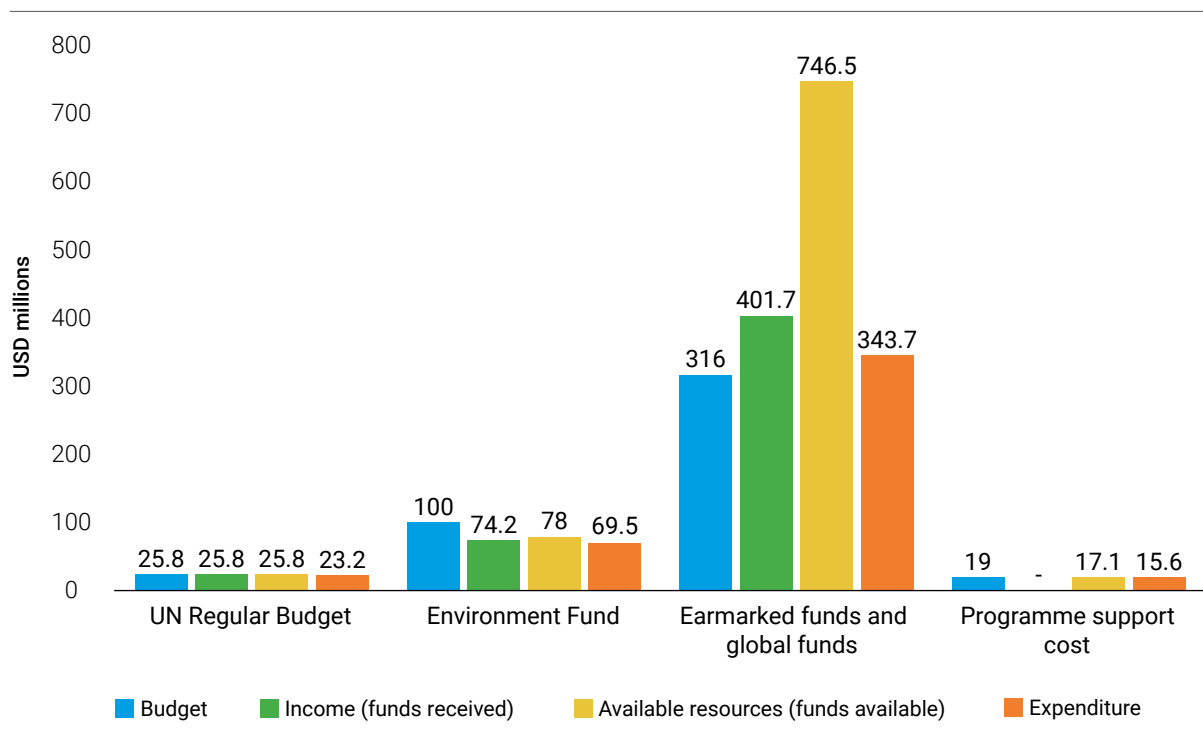
The authorized budget for 2020 was US\$ 19 million, with allocation (recorded budget) of US\$ 17.1 million based on previous years' programme support cost earned from earmarked funds. The expenditure as of 31 December 2020 was US\$ 15.6 million.

Earmarked funds and global funds

The earmarked funds continue to make up the largest part of the UNEP budget. These contributions prioritize core activities that could be implemented over multiple years. As such, the available resources include the 2020 allocation, as at 31 December 2020, as well as balances of previous years. The approved budget for 2020 was US\$ 316.1 million, with available resources as at 31 December 2020 amounting to US\$ 746.5 million. The total expenditure as at 31 December 2020 amounted to US\$ 343.7 million. Within these funds, the global funds authorized budget for 2020 was US\$ 125 million, with US\$ 325.4 million in available resources and expenditure of US\$ 177.9 million as at 31 December 2020.

The table below shows the budget, income, available resources and expenditure for the 12-month period from January 2020 to December 2020.

Figure 34. Budget, income, available resources and expenditure (multi-year funds), January–December 2020



UNEP is committed to providing value for money by efficiently and effectively delivering results, partnering for increased impact, responding to global, regional and local challenges and ensuring robust oversight and accountability.

Human resources

Overview

As at 31 December 2020, UNEP employed 1,269 staff members, with 944 (74 per cent) in the Secretariat and 325 (26 per cent) in the MEAs and conventions. Of the 1,269 staff members, 749 (59 per cent) were in the Professional Category, 8 (1 per cent) were in the National Professional Officer category and 512 (40 per cent) were in the General Service category. At the P5 level and above there were 196 (15 per cent) staff.

is an improvement from 2019, when five out of eight gender parity targets for 2019 were met, maintained or improved.

As at 31 December 2020, the overall gender distribution in UNEP was 61 per cent female and 39 per cent male.

Gender distribution – UNEP Secretariat

The UNEP Secretariat employed 944 staff, of which 60 per cent were female and 40 per cent were male.

UNEP continues to assess and improve its overall Gender Parity Strategy at all levels of the organization. UNEP met its gender parity targets for 2020 at the D2 level and above and is progressively working to meet targets at the P5 and D1 levels. UNEP continues to make a concerted effort to meet targets for P4 and below.

| UNEP staff component | USG | ASG | D-2 | D-1 | P-5 | P-4 | P-3 | P-2 | Total Professional and above | NPO | GS total | Grand total |
|----------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------------------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| UNEP Secretariat | 1 | 2 | 4 | 39 | 100 | 193 | 160 | 70 | 569 | 7 | 368 | 944 |
| MEAs | | 1 | 3 | 10 | 36 | 53 | 49 | 28 | 180 | 1 | 144 | 325 |
| Total No. | 1 | 3 | 7 | 49 | 136 | 246 | 209 | 98 | 749 | 8 | 512 | 1,269 |

Note: USG = Under Secretary-General; ASG = Assistant Secretary-General; D = Director; P= Professional; NPO=National Professional Officer; GS=General Service.

UNEP overall gender distribution

In 2017, the Office of the Secretary-General, through the Office of Human Resources (OHR), provided every UN entity, including UNEP, with a specific set of gender parity targets to be met on an annual basis until full parity at the Professional levels and above is attained by the year 2028. For UNEP in 2020, gender parity targets were met in six out of eight Professional levels and above. This

The overall female to male representation:

- at the ASG level was at parity
- at the professional level was 52 per cent female and 48 per cent male, which is within the UN target of 50 per cent
- at the general service level was 74 per cent female and 26 per cent male.

| Overall gender distribution | USG | ASG | D-2 | D-1 | P-5 | P-4 | P-3 | P-2 | Total professional and above | NPO | Total GS | Total |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------------------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| Female | 1 | 2 | 4 | 19 | 58 | 120 | 126 | 58 | 388 | 3 | 377 | 769 |
| Male | 0 | 1 | 3 | 30 | 78 | 126 | 83 | 40 | 361 | 5 | 135 | 500 |
| Grand total | 1 | 3 | 7 | 49 | 136 | 246 | 209 | 98 | 749 | 8 | 512 | 1,269 |
| Female | 100% | 67% | 57% | 39% | 43% | 49% | 60% | 59% | 52% | 38% | 74% | 61% |
| Male | 0 | 33% | 43% | 61% | 57% | 51% | 40% | 41% | 48% | 63% | 26% | 39% |
| OHR Gender Parity Targets 2020 | 16% | 16% | 51% | 43% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | - | - | - | - |

Note: USG = Under Secretary-General; ASG = Assistant Secretary-General; D = Director; P= Professional; NPO=National Professional Officer; GS=General Service.

Female representation at the entry and mid-management professional levels (P2 to P4), was 55 per cent (down 3 per cent compared to December 2019). At the senior management levels (P5 to D2), 45 per cent were female staff (up 6 per cent compared to December 2019).

Gender distribution – MEAs and conventions

The MEAs and conventions administered by UNEP employed 325 staff, of which 61 per cent were female and 39 per cent male.

The overall female to male representation:

- at the professional level was 51 per cent female and 49 per cent male, which is the same as in 2019
- at the general service level was 74 per cent female and 26 per cent male, the same as in 2019.

Female representation at the entry and mid-management professional levels (P2 to P4) was 55

Gender distribution – UNEP Secretariat 2020

| 2020 gender | USG | ASG | D-2 | D-1 | P-5 | P-4 | P-3 | P-2 | Professional and above total | National Professional Officers | GS total | Grand total |
|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Female | 1 | 1 | 3 | 14 | 44 | 90 | 96 | 47 | 297 | 3 | 271 | 571 |
| Male | | 1 | 1 | 25 | 56 | 103 | 64 | 23 | 272 | 4 | 97 | 373 |
| Grand total | 1 | 2 | 4 | 39 | 100 | 193 | 160 | 70 | 569 | 7 | 368 | 944 |
| Female | 100% | 50% | 75% | 36% | 44% | 47% | 60% | 67% | 52% | 43% | 74% | 60% |
| Male | 0% | 50% | 25% | 64% | 56% | 53% | 40% | 33% | 48% | 57% | 26% | 40% |

Note: USG = Under Secretary-General; ASG = Assistant Secretary-General; D = Director; P= Professional; GS=General Service.

Gender distribution – UNEP Secretariat 2019

| 2019 gender | USG | ASG | D-2 | D-1 | P-5 | P-4 | P-3 | P-2 | Professional and above total | National Professional Officers | GS total | Grand total |
|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Female | 1 | 1 | 3 | 15 | 40 | 79 | 103 | 55 | 297 | 3 | 253 | 553 |
| Male | 0 | 1 | 2 | 27 | 60 | 94 | 58 | 22 | 264 | 5 | 92 | 361 |
| Grand total | 1 | 2 | 5 | 42 | 100 | 173 | 161 | 77 | 561 | 8 | 345 | 914 |
| Female | 100% | 50% | 60% | 36% | 40% | 46% | 64% | 71% | 53% | 38% | 73% | 61% |
| Male | 0% | 50% | 40% | 64% | 60% | 54% | 36% | 29% | 47% | 63% | 27% | 39% |

Note: USG = Under Secretary-General; ASG = Assistant Secretary-General; D = Director; P= Professional; GS=General Service.

Gender distribution – UNEP-administered MEAs 2020

| 2020 gender | ASG | D-2 | D-1 | P-5 | P-4 | P-3 | P-2 | Professional and above total | National Professional Officers | GS total | Grand total |
|--------------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Female | 1 | 1 | 5 | 14 | 30 | 30 | 11 | 92 | 0 | 106 | 198 |
| Male | | 2 | 5 | 22 | 23 | 19 | 17 | 89 | 1 | 38 | 127 |
| Grand total | 1 | 3 | 10 | 36 | 53 | 49 | 28 | 181 | 1 | 144 | 325 |
| Female | 100% | 33% | 50% | 39% | 57% | 61% | 39% | 51% | 0% | 74% | 61% |
| Male | 0% | 67% | 50% | 61% | 43% | 39% | 61% | 49% | 100% | 26% | 39% |

Note: USG = Under Secretary-General; ASG = Assistant Secretary-General; D = Director; P= Professional; GS=General Service.

Gender distribution – UNEP-administered MEAs 2019

| 2019 gender | ASG | D-2 | D-1 | P-5 | P-4 | P-3 | P-2 | Professional and above total | GS total | Grand total |
|--------------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Female | 1 | 2 | 5 | 16 | 24 | 30 | 13 | 91 | 111 | 202 |
| Male | 0 | 2 | 5 | 21 | 23 | 21 | 16 | 88 | 38 | 126 |
| Grand total | 1 | 4 | 10 | 37 | 47 | 51 | 29 | 179 | 149 | 328 |
| Female | 100% | 50% | 50% | 43% | 51% | 59% | 45% | 51% | 74% | 62% |
| Male | 0% | 50% | 50% | 57% | 49% | 41% | 55% | 49% | 26% | 38% |

Note: USG = Under Secretary-General; ASG = Assistant Secretary-General; D = Director; P= Professional; GS=General Service.

per cent (up 2 per cent compared to December 2019) and at the senior management levels (P5 to D2) 41 per cent were female staff (down 4 per cent compared to December 2019).

Regional representation

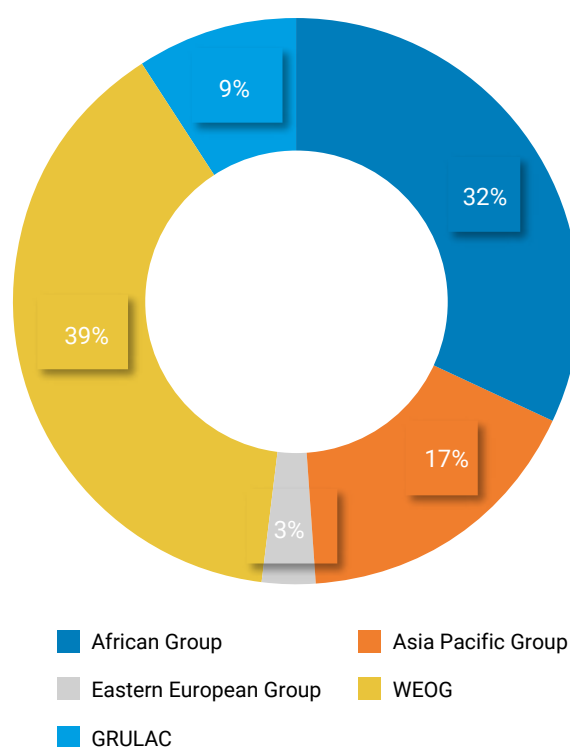
At the Professional and above categories, UNEP currently employs staff members from 125 countries. Since 2019, UNEP has seen a 13 per cent increase in the number of countries represented among its staff. UNEP remains committed to increasing both its geographical and regional representation.

UNEP continues to focus on recruiting staff members from as wide a geographical base as possible and is committed to improving upon both its regional representation and representation from unrepresented and under-represented countries.

Regional Representation – 2020

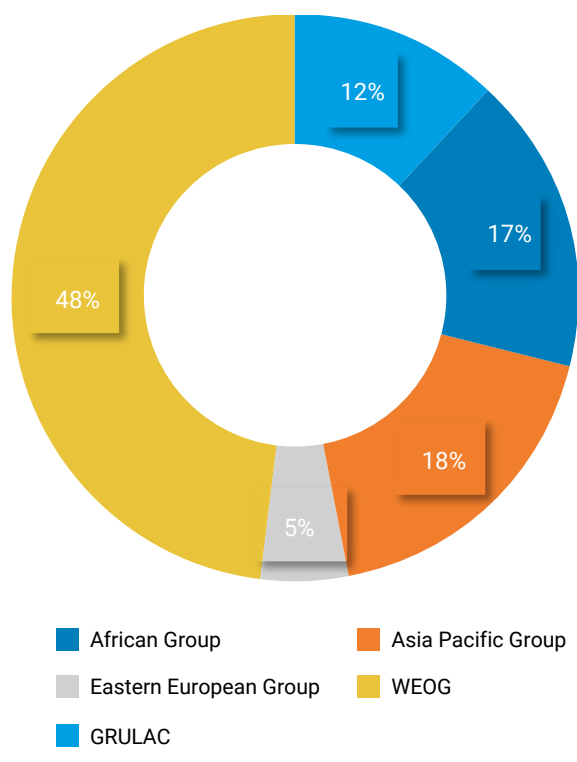
| Region | No. of staff |
|---|--------------|
| African Group | 413 |
| Asia Pacific Group | 212 |
| Eastern European Group | 35 |
| Western European and Other States Group (WEOG) | 498 |
| Group of Latin America and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC) | 111 |

Figure 36. Regional representation of staff



| Region | No. of Staff at P5 and above |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| African Group | 34 |
| Asia Pacific Group | 36 |
| Eastern European Group | 9 |
| WEOG | 94 |
| GRULAC | 23 |

Figure 37. Regional representation – P5 and above, 2020



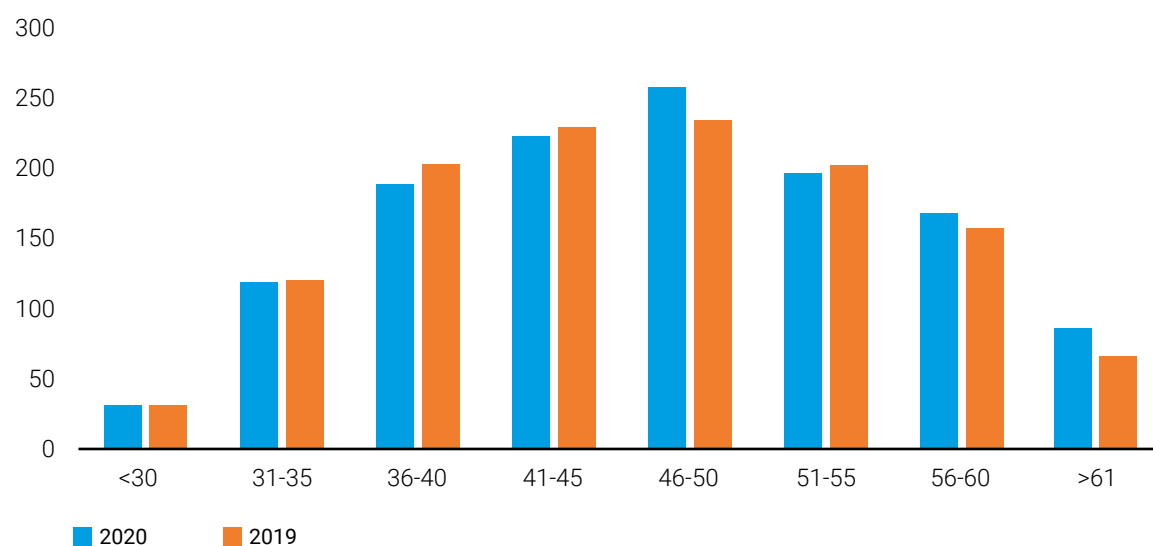
Age distribution

The overall age distribution remained consistent from end 2019 to end 2020. As at 31 December 2020, 51 per cent of UNEP staff was in the 41 to 55 years age group and 27 per cent of staff members were aged 40 years and below. Approximately 7 per cent of the staff will reach the mandatory retirement age in the next four years.

Overall age distribution of staff – December 2020

| Age category | 2020 No. of staff | 2019 No. of staff |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <30 | 31 | 31 |
| 31-35 | 119 | 120 |
| 36-40 | 189 | 203 |
| 41-45 | 223 | 229 |
| 46-50 | 257 | 234 |
| 51-55 | 196 | 202 |
| 56-60 | 168 | 157 |
| >61 | 86 | 66 |
| Grand total | 1,269 | 1,242 |

Figure 38. Age distribution





Looking forward



UNEP is entrusted with the exciting and noble mandate of leading and encouraging partnerships in caring for our planet and improving our quality of life without compromising that of future generations. In 2020, despite disruption from the COVID-19 pandemic, UNEP pushed even harder to fulfil its mandate, including by refocusing some of its work to deal with the immediate environmental impacts of COVID-19, such as increased waste and the need to lay the foundations for a green post-pandemic recovery. UNEP continued to shine a light through science, inform and inspire action, provide effective technical support to countries, leverage partnerships and detoxify the world.

Going forward, UNEP will scale up its work with UN Country Teams as part of UN reform, maximize the promise of digital technology, and seize opportunities in the process of building back better to support implementation of the environmental dimensions of the SDGs. As the world sets out to deliver a transformation for the planet, UNEP will be there every step of the way, providing science, know-how and support to people and planet.

