

# UNEP – your partner for people and planet

## Part 3 UNEP partnerships



**2024**  
EDITION

UNEP is grateful to all partners that support and enable its work.



Environmental challenges have no borders and are too vast and too complicated for any single entity to address alone. UNEP partnerships with governments, environmental conventions, the scientific community, academia, private sector, civil society, international and regional organizations, global funds, the financial sector, philanthropies, individuals, UN entities and others help to deliver on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Being a key partner of major environmental funds such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Global Environment

Facility (GEF), the Adaptation Fund (AF) and the Multilateral Fund (Montreal Protocol) UNEP enables countries to access financing and programming through them and other bilateral or multilateral public sources.

While it is impossible to list all partners UNEP engages with, the ones highlighted in this chapter are some of the partners UNEP engages with on a wide range of issues across its mandate. Some of these partners are also important funding partners.

## Multilateral Environmental Agreements

Since 1972, UNEP has supported the negotiation and implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) to complement and guide national legislation and bilateral or regional agreements by forming the overarching international legal basis for global efforts to address environmental issues.

UNEP hosts the secretariat of 15 MEAs that cover a wide range of regional and global environmental issues, such as hazardous chemicals and waste, biodiversity, oceans, and rehabilitation of the ozone layer.

The knowledge portal **InforMEA** – facilitated by UNEP and funded by the European Union – provides a bird's-eye view of all major environmental treaties across key topics.

## UNEP is governed by its Member States

Member States meet every second year at the **UN Environment Assembly** (UNEA). Every four years they approve UNEP's Mid-Term Strategy and every second year they approve the Programme of Work and Budget. Member States also play a critical role in formulating policy and in championing solutions to our shared environmental challenges, through the adoption of UNEA resolutions. The resolutions identify specific environmental areas of importance where action is needed by countries, stakeholders and the UN system as a whole. Member States also have a collective responsibility to finance the implementation of UNEP's programme, in particular through UNEP's core fund, the **Environment Fund**.

The **Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR)** is a subsidiary body to UNEA which meets regularly in between UNEA sessions to oversee the implementation of UNEP's Programme of Work and the UNEA resolutions, and to prepare future UNEA meetings. At the end of 2023, 133

Member States out of 193 were accredited to the CPR, but every country is welcome! Benefits to Member States from participating in the CPR include the possibility to influence discussions in CPR; contribute to the preparations of UNEA; and provide guidance both on the implementation of UNEP's strategy and programme and in the preparation of new ones. Accredited members will also receive valuable information on the progress of UNEA resolutions and other multilateral environmental processes.

For UNEP, a greater ownership and interest in the organization from an increased number of Member States is important. Not only does this contribute to ensuring that the strategy and programme are better aligned to the priorities of a wider membership, it also strengthens and increases the legitimacy of UNEP as the global authority on environment.

## All UNEA Member States are encouraged to join the Committee of Permanent Representatives

**Regional Ministerial Environment Forums** provide an important space for political dialogue and collaboration on environmental matters at regional levels. They serve as a platform for the Member States to promote regional environmental cooperation and to agree on common positions and initiatives for multilateral environmental

conferences and negotiations, including for UNEA. The meetings of these ministerial forums take place during the inter-sessional period of UNEA, and are in most cases organized by the UNEP Regional Offices in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, and West Asia.

## Partnering within the UN family

UNEP partners directly with the UN family, including having strategic partnerships with FAO, OHCHR, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, and others. UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy (2022-2025) identifies working with the wider UN as one of the levers of change for better delivery of the strategy and its programmes.

In this regard, the **UN development system reform** provides an opportunity for UNEP to work with its sister UN entities in support of all UN Member States. Leveraging the UN reform's platforms and processes at global, regional and national level, UNEP is enhancing its support to UN Country Teams, including by ensuring environment is addressed in Common Country Analyses and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, and by providing sound environmental data. To support this work, UNEP has a network of focal points to UN country teams, mostly working from the regional offices. Collectively, these focal points cover support to the existing 130 UN Country Teams.

Other opportunities for deepened collaboration within the UN family include:

- » **The roll-out of the Common Approach to Biodiversity**
- » **UN Development System response to the triple planetary crisis**
- » **Implementing the UN Secretary General's Common Agenda**

UNEP also leverages its role as the secretariat and chair of the **UN Environment Management Group** to better mainstream environmental issues into the work of the UN system while coordinating the Group's environmental activities for maximum impact and efficiency.

**UN reform is an opportunity to extend UNEP's reach as the global environmental authority in support of all Member States.**



## Global Funds

As a founding partner of the **Global Environment Facility (GEF)**, UNEP has been supporting national governments to access GEF funding and take action on their most pressing environmental issues for 30 years. Together, UNEP and GEF have implemented over 1,000 projects across more than 160 countries, helping to build the local capacity, international knowledge base and shared policy frameworks needed to overcome the defining environmental challenges of our time. The UNEP-GEF partnership continues to grow, with UNEP leading a wide range of flagship GEF global initiatives, as well as hosting the GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel and three of the five MEAs for which GEF serves as the financial mechanism (the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Stockholm convention, and the Minamata convention).

With close alignment between GEF programming and UNEP's 2022-25 Medium-term Strategy, UNEP expects to further reinforce its collaboration with the GEF, and the support this provides to Member States, in the 2022-2026 GEF-8 funding cycle.

Since 2015, UNEP has been an accredited entity of the **Green Climate Fund (GCF)**. UNEP envisions its partnership with the GCF to garner country-owned and country-tailored innovative solutions in niche areas to help achieve the climate objectives under the Paris Agreement, and ultimately accelerate climate action and ambition to deliver results for Member States. As at January 2024, 70 Member States have been supported through 89 projects, to access GCF resources and to enable a shift towards climate resilient and low emission pathways.



## Multilateral Partners

### Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol

Since 1991, UNEP has been an Implementing Agency of the **Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol**, which provides financial and technical assistance to developing countries to help them comply with their obligations under this multilateral environmental agreement. As one of four implementing agencies, UNEP has worked with 147 developing countries to meet and sustain their compliance obligations to phase out ozone depleting substances and now, with the Kigali Amendment, to mitigate climate change through the phase down of HFCs. By end of 2021, UNEP's portfolio includes more than 2,700 projects valued at US\$ 403 million. (See also p.14)

### The European Union and the European Commission

The **European Union** and its Member States are important political and financial supporters to UNEP and the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) administered by UNEP. EU Member States are among the top 15 contributors to the Environment Fund and together with the **European Commission**, they are also amongst the top contributors for earmarked funding. Between 2016 and 2021, the European Commission contributed around US\$ 229 million to UNEP and the MEA Secretariats, supporting all UNEP's programme areas.

## The UNEP Science-Policy-Business Forum on the Environment

Established in 2017, the Science-Policy-Business Forum is a solutions-focused community of 3,500 multi-sector actors engaged in green technology innovation, empowering policies and sustainable finance. It plays an advisory role to UNEA by building consensus, encouraging cooperation and tearing down traditional barriers between these sectors.

### Partnering with the private sector

Engaging with the private sector provides UNEP with crucial data, innovation, best practices, and technologies that support its normative and scientific work. These engagements target transformation that will address the challenges of the triple planetary crisis.

In 2023, UNEP strengthened and refined its approach for a more strategic engagement with business. This shift includes an increased focus on multistakeholder partnerships that can accelerate transformation towards an inclusive green economy in support of sustainable production, consumption and investments. These

partnerships will have economic and social benefits across a wide range of industries and sectors.

More specifically, UNEP is engaging with the private sector globally through 35 multi-stakeholder and 35 bilateral partnerships involving a range of diverse stakeholders—policymakers, civil society, scientists, academics and private sector. The partnerships are industry-specific and include agriculture, chemicals, energy, extractives, plastics and transport.



## UNEP - a trusted partner

### Important role of UNEP reaffirmed

An **online survey** on funding of UNEP, to which Member State representatives from 80 countries responded, reaffirmed the role and importance that Member States attribute to UNEP. Almost all (95 per cent) agreed that UNEP leads as the global authority on the environment and has the global convening power to bring all environmental stakeholders together, provides strong science policy data and solutions to its Member States, and effectively raises awareness about critical environmental issues. A large majority (over 85 per cent) agreed that UNEP is good at developing the capacity of Member States in dealing with environmental matters.

### Focus on results

UNEP applies a strong focus on results-based programming and learning lessons from its work. The independent **Evaluation Office** assesses performance against the planned use of resources in projects and programmes, ensuring accountability to management and funding partners. UNEP collaborates closely with the **United Nations Board of Auditors (BoA)**, the **Office of Internal Oversight**

**Services (OIOS)** and other oversight mechanisms that provide independent expert advice and recommendations for improved efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and compliance with regulations and rules. They also report on the health of UNEP's finances.

### Positive assessment by MOPAN

In 2021, UNEP underwent a substantive evaluation by the 21-member **Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN)** to assess the performance of major multilateral organizations they fund. The assessment looked at UNEP's organizational performance from mid-2016 to 2020, concluding that:

**“UNEP remained highly relevant and its role in global environmental issues increased and it effectively delivered scientific assessments, policy advice and technical capacity building to Governments with visible outcomes.”**

