

QUARTERLY REPORT

to the 164th Meeting of the

COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES



TWENTIETH ISSUE

July – September 2023

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1. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

A. Global Developments

78th Session of UN General Assembly

UNEP actively engaged in the [high-level](#) week of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly (18-26 September, New York). During the [SDG Action Weekend](#) (16-17 September), UNEP, in coordination with other UN system entities, led the presentation of the [High-Impact Initiative on Nature Driving Economic Transformation](#), which featured examples of national initiatives focused on integrating nature and biodiversity and its values in economic policies. UNEP also led a side event on sustainable [Digital Public Infrastructure](#) (DPI) focussed on bringing digital solutions for the SDGs to scale. UNEP emphasized DPI as a vital enabler for creating a global environmental data strategy and exchange framework to address environmental crises.

UNEP further engaged in follow-up of the discussions of Member States in the framework of the [SDG](#)

[Summit](#) and the [High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development](#), as well as the [Preparatory Ministerial Meeting](#) on the [Summit of the Future](#). It participated in the [High-Level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response](#), highlighting the close interlinkages between ecosystems health and human health, and promoting the [One Health](#) approach. During the [Climate Ambition Summit](#), UNEP supported the discussion on net-zero targets and on critical minerals for the energy transition.

Among other initiatives, [Lewis Pugh](#), UNEP Patron of Oceans, made a grand entrance after completing a 507 kilometres swim down the Hudson River to shine a spotlight on the benefits of cleaning up long-neglected waterways. UNEP unveiled a 40-meter-high [mural](#) to call leaders to Act for Nature. Entrepreneur and climate advocate Chris Kemper was designated as a [UNEP Advocate for Partnerships](#) (19 September) and UNEP Goodwill Ambassadors - actress [Dia Mirza](#), chef [Massimo Bottura](#) and musician [Rocky Dawuni](#) - left strong impacts.



Lewis Pugh wraps up 500 km-plus Hudson swim, showcasing a river on the rebound
(Photo credit: Lewis Pugh Foundation)



The high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) began its work with a plenary meeting in the General Assembly hall
 (Photo credit: UN Photo/Manuel Elías)

2023 High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF)

The [2023 HLPF](#), held under the auspices of ECOSOC, took place under the theme *Accelerating the recovery from COVID-19 and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels* (10-19 July, New York). It reviewed progress of the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [6](#), [7](#), [9](#), [11](#), and [17](#). Thirty-eight (38) countries and the European Union (EU) presented their voluntary national reviews ([VNRs](#)). UNEP's [participation](#) in the 2023 HLPF aimed to ensure consideration of the environmental dimension of sustainable development across preparatory processes, background and working documents, in different thematic sessions, side events and special events.

A UNEP organized HLPF side-event on strong data for science-based circular water solutions (18 July) showcased progress in water data availability and highlighted innovative ways to close remaining data gaps. Through an exchange of practices, panellists shared their insights on how water stewardship can facilitate achievement of environmental dimension of SDGs.

4th International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies

To commemorate the [International Day](#) (7 September) - designated through General Assembly resolution [74/212](#) - UNEP hosted a series of events globally under the theme of *Together for Clean Air*, to call for [action](#) on stronger partnerships, increased investment, and shared responsibility to overcome air pollution. Pertinent initiatives included the launch of an [event map](#) to track stakeholder actions on promoting clean air, a practical how-to [guide](#) on solutions to air pollution, and an [air pollution note](#) displaying the global state of air pollution, major sources, the impact on human health, and national efforts to tackle this critical issue.

At UN Headquarters (New York), UNEP co-organized a commemoration with the participation of 58 representatives from Member States. Near Washington D.C, UNEP co-convened a [reception](#) where NASA showcased new air quality data from the [TEMPO](#) satellite. Across LAC, UNEP co-organized an [activation](#) activity engaging academic institutions, governments, and civil society organizations doing citizen science to make air quality measurements in public places and share their results and measurement technologies in real-time, to raise awareness on the health effects of exposure to air pollution.



In Geneva, UNEP co-organized a [side event](#) to the 61st Session of the [Working Group](#) on Strategies and Review of the [Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution](#). The event culminated with the announcement of a new joint UNEP-UNECE project to be initiated in early 2024 for Accelerating Clean Air policies in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. In Belgrade, a UNEP [co-organized](#) event highlighted advance findings from its upcoming working paper on *Wasted Air: Impact of Landfill Fires on Air Pollution and People's Health in Serbia*.

In Nakuru (Kenya), a UNEP co-hosted [workshop](#) raised awareness on enhancing air quality, promoting accessible air quality and climate data, and using

linkages between air quality data and climate change issues to develop evidence-based policies and strategies. UNEP partnered in the installation of eight air quality sensors in Nakuru as well as a platform for public access to real-time air quality monitoring data from these locations.

In Bangkok, UNEP co-organized [commemoration](#) events to promote the co-benefit of air quality management and climate solutions and the crucial role of collaboration with partners to reduce pollution and improve air quality. In Almaty, UNEP announced the 3rd Central Asia Air Quality Platform (AQCA) conference (Tajikistan, February 2024) and presented results from a UNEP-supported US State Department [project](#) to strengthen regulatory and monitoring capacity of government actors and expand awareness of air quality issues among decision makers and the general public. In Uzbekistan, UNEP [co-announced](#) a new MoU to collaborate on air quality actions and other relevant topics with the ZAMIN Foundation.

International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste

UNEP co-convened the fourth edition of the [International Day](#) (Rome, 29 September) with the theme of *Reducing food loss and waste: Taking Action to Transform Food Systems*. UNEP took the lead in organizing the [#EveryPlateCounts](#) social media challenge, as well as workshops and cooking demonstrations to raise awareness around food loss and waste (especially among youth) and concrete tips on how to reduce food waste at the household level.



Amid crisis in food waste, celebrity chef Massimo Bottura gives produce a second life
(Photo credit: UNEP)

World Environment Day 2024 and 2025

Further to an open call inviting Member States to express an interest in hosting WED in 2024 and 2025, UNEP announced (on 12 September) that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will host [WED 2024](#) with a focus on land restoration, desertification and drought resilience, and the Republic of Korea will host [WED 2025](#) (announced on 21 September) with a focus on ending plastic pollution.

7th Global Environment Facility (GEF) Assembly

The [Assembly](#) (22-26 August, Vancouver) convened environmental leaders from 185 countries, alongside representatives from government, business, academia, and civil society, in a critical stocktaking for 2030 goals to end pollution and nature loss, combat climate change, and propel inclusive, locally-led conservation in the context of the historic US\$ 5.35 billion GEF-8 replenishment. It launched the GEF-managed Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) with initial pledges of C\$ 200 million (Canada) and £10 million (United Kingdom), with UNEP expected to play a lead role in Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF) implementation once operationalized.

UNEP organized and participated in several high-level roundtables and side events and engaged with Member States and Agency representatives in strategic discussions on emerging agreements on marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), plastics and how UNEP can position itself

with GEF to best accelerate progress in these areas. Its engagement emphasised the increased trust and expectations Member States and the GEF Secretariat continue to place on UNEP's convening power and science base to support impactful GEF programming to address the climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution crises. This is evidenced by over US\$ 350 million in UNEP-led projects and programmes thus far approved in the current GEF cycle, which are expected to deliver action on: creation and improved management of terrestrial and marine protected areas; mitigation of direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions; and reduction of chemicals of global concern and their waste.

Fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5)

The UNEP organized [ICCM5](#) (25-29 September, Bonn) brought together governments, private companies and NGOs and culminated in the [adoption](#) of the *Global Framework on Chemicals*. Based around 28 targets, the framework outlines a roadmap for countries and stakeholders to collaboratively address the lifecycle of chemicals, including products and waste. The Conference adopted the [Bonn Declaration for a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste](#), with a commitment to prevent exposure to harmful chemicals, phase out the most harmful ones, and enhance the safe management of such chemicals. It also decided to set up a *Global Framework on Chemicals Fund* to be administered by UNEP to unlock financing for Framework implementation.



ICCM5, Bonn, Germany
(Photo credit: UNEP/Alejandro Laguna)

Quintet of Change initiative

UNEP is enhancing its anticipatory and futures focus in line with the Secretary General's [Quintet of Change](#) initiative focused on stronger capabilities for data, innovation, strategic foresight, behavioural science and results. To this end, UNEP completed a global Delphi survey and held the [First UNEP Sensemaking Workshop](#) (21-22 September, Paris, France) with its [Foresight Expert Panel](#) - established to support the identification and evaluation of emerging issues and signals of change. The panel reviewed data collected through the Delphi Survey with the view to identify strengths, gaps and any additional guidance on themes and emergency changes that could be considered in UNEP's work. Combined with the outcomes of the discussions of the upcoming regional contextualization workshops, this will form the basis of the upcoming Global Foresight Report which is expected to be published in June or July 2024.

UNEA-6 preparations

A [UNEA and CPR Bureaux joint retreat](#) (6-7 July, Tangier, Morocco) endorsed the UNEA-6 [provisional agenda](#), the [annotated provisional agenda](#) and the programme of work ([structure](#)), including having a Multilateral Environmental Agreements day on 28 February 2024, three leadership dialogues and a multistakeholder dialogue. The Bureaux further endorsed the [guidelines](#) for the submission of draft resolutions and decisions and welcomed the [communication strategy](#) for UNEA-6. The meeting benefitted from informal inputs from members of the Major Group Facilitating Committee, based on a hybrid preparatory meeting (4-5 July, Rabat, Morocco).

Greening the Blue survey and inventory exercise

The UNEP-hosted Sustainable UN (SUN) facility completed the 2023 cycle of its Greening the Blue survey and inventory exercise to measure the environmental impact of the global UN System. Overall UN system GHG emissions in 2022 remain below their pre-COVID-19 amount. However, GHG emissions from air travel notably increased in 2022. The UN System-wide results on Environmental Governance and Human Resources revealed that, as of the end of 2022, six UN entities met the requirements for an Environmental Management System, 15 approached



the requirements, and one entity exceeded the requirements. 69 per cent of UN entities provided environmental training to their personnels. Final figures will be available when the [Greening the Blue report](#) is launched in December 2023.

High-level Dialogue on Sustainable Cooling

UNEP was the official knowledge part, co-organizer and moderator of a [High-level Dialogue on Cooling](#), as part of the Clean Energy Ministerial-Mission Innovation [Summit](#) (21 July, Goa, India). Several ministers and high-level representatives rallied behind the [Global Cooling Pledge](#), an initiative led by the COP28 Presidency and supported by the UNEP-led [Cool Coalition](#) and its partners, including Sustainable Energy for All Initiative ([SEforALL](#)) and the International Renewable Energy Agency ([IRENA](#)).

Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF)

UNEP and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat, in collaboration with Canada and China, [briefed](#) Permanent Missions in New York on the KM-GBF (6 July, New York), with the aim of advocating for the translation of international targets into national strategies. Attendees expressed full support for coordinated efforts towards the implementation of the Framework.



At the @UNEP@UNBiodiversity briefing to permanent missions on the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, ASG Ligia Noronha and Head of @UNEP_NYO highlights the importance of the framework to address the #biodiversity crisis & achieve the #SDGs.

(Photo credit: NYO X account)

G20 Energy Transitions Ministerial

The [Ministerial](#) meeting (22 July, Goa, India) highlighted the need to maintain responsible and sustainable supply chains for critical minerals such as copper, lithium, nickel and cobalt, along with a range of other materials and technologies. UNEP shared information on the initiative launched in the framework of the Secretary-General's [UN Working Group on Transforming the Extractive Industries for Sustainable Development](#) to support just transitions in low-carbon technologies by focusing on critical energy transition minerals.

WTO support to a Nature Positive Future

During the 2023 World Trade Organization (WTO) Public Forum (13 September 2023), UNEP co-convoked a [panel discussion](#) on *Biodiversity Crisis: Can WTO Support A Nature Positive Future?*, where it highlighted opportunities to build a mutually supportive nexus of trade and biodiversity to tackle the nature loss crisis and the openings that the KM-GBF offers. UNEP also shared its ongoing support to regions and countries under the auspices of Trade, Development and Environment Hub (TRADE Hub).

Marine Sand Watch

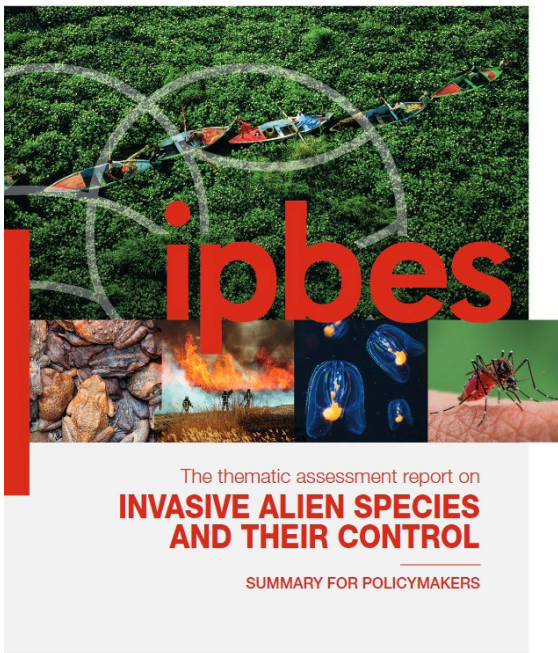
UNEP supported the launch of the [Marine Sand Watch](#) (6 September), a global platform designed to monitor large vessels engaged in dredging activities in the marine environment. This platform provides all stakeholders including Member States and the dredging sector with the required data and information to engage in talks with UNEP on how to improve dredging standards globally.

UNEP Reports

During the reporting period, UNEP promoted the launch of several reports, including [Global Climate Litigation Report: 2023 Status Review](#) (27 July), [Wastewater - Turning Problem to Solution](#) (23 August), [Invasive Alien Species Report](#) (4 September), [Building Materials And The Climate: Constructing A New Future](#) (12 September) and [United in Science 2023](#) (14 September).

Accreditation to UNEP

During the reporting period, 51 new organizations were accredited to UNEP and its governing bodies representing Business and Industry (7), Children and Youth (1), Indigenous Peoples and Communities (1), Scientific and Technological Community (3), Women (1) and NGOs (38). The list of accredited organizations can be found [here](#). As of 30 September, there were 1068 accredited organizations.



B. Regional Developments

i. Africa

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN)

As the Secretariat for AMCEN, UNEP supported the convening of its [19th Ordinary Session](#) (14 - 18 August, Addis Ababa) with the theme of *Seizing opportunities*

and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa. The Conference resulted in the [Addis Ababa Declaration](#) where Member States committed to tackling environmental challenges on the continent, capitalizing on available opportunities for national and regional sustainable development agendas. They pledged to strengthen AMCEN's role as the primary forum for advancing collective national and regional environmental policies and actions.

The Conference adopted five key decisions on: seizing opportunities and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa; African participation in an international legally binding [instrument](#) on plastic pollution (including marine pollution); African preparations for the [fifth session](#) of the International Conference on Chemicals Management; engagement of Africa at the [6th session](#) of UNEA; and climate change. The Conference was preceded by a regional consultative meeting for Major Groups and Stakeholders, with over 60 participants attending, resulting in the preparation of a [statement](#) calling for concerted action and dedication to addressing a range of environmental and sustainability challenges, involving diverse stakeholders, including women and youth in environmental governance which was delivered to AMCEN.

Africa Climate Week and Africa Climate Summit 2023

The [Africa Climate Week and Summit](#) (4-8 September, Nairobi) brought together over 10,000 participants from governments, multilateral organizations, the private sector and civil society to seek solutions and explore ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions



At Africa Climate Week, climate justice was front and center
(Photo credit: UNEP/Ahmed Yusuf)

while adapting to the mounting fallout from the climate crisis. UNEP co-organized a [series of sessions](#) on climate adaptation, convened [15 side events](#) to advance its key programmatic priorities and advocacy vis-a-vis nature-based solutions, e-mobility, energy efficiency and methane (among others), partnered on [five affiliated events](#), undertook [social media](#) outreach including a [curtain raiser video](#), provided [live updates](#), developed [news stories](#) and organized a joint exhibition covering the four tracks defined for the regional climate weeks.

The Summit underscored Africa's priorities for climate adaptation and culminated in the adoption of the [Nairobi Declaration](#), where with UNEP support, biodiversity is strongly reflected with a commitment to strengthen actions to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, deforestation, desertification and restore degraded lands to achieve land degradation neutrality. The Declaration further commits to: the development of global standards, metrics and market mechanisms to accurately value and compensate for the protection of nature; finalizing and implementing the AU Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan; the promotion of regenerative blue economy; and support to the implementation of the Africa Water Investment Programme.

A parliamentarians dialogue held on the sidelines of the Summit (6 September) aimed to establish a platform for members of parliament to engage in discussions focused on climate change issues and strategies specific to the African continent. UNEP partnered to support the Senate of Kenya to produce a report summarizing the results of the Dialogue, which will serve as the foundation for an outcome statement to be deliberated in the Kenyan Parliament. As a follow up to the dialogue, UNEP is committed to delivering tailored support to countries that have expressed a need for assistance, focusing on addressing gaps in climate change legislative development and implementation.

7th Africa Annual Animal Welfare Conference

UNEP co-organized the [Conference](#) (25-27 September, Kigali, Rwanda) with the theme of *Navigating the delicate balance of animal welfare, climate change and development: concerted actions towards a healthy and sustainable environment*. The Conference addressed, inter alia, the implementation of [UNEA resolution 5/1](#) on the animal welfare - environment - sustainable development nexus. The conference adopted several resolutions to promote animal welfare in Africa's development agenda, including on mainstreaming, transformation of the food system, improving livestock production systems, the welfare of fish and wildlife, and continued partnership with UNEP.

ii. Asia and the Pacific

8th Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation (APAN) Forum

The Executive Director of UNEP participated in the [Korea Global Adaptation Week](#) and the 8th APAN Forum (31 August -1 September, Incheon, Republic of Korea) which serves as a primary regional platform for adaptation practitioners to meet, exchange knowledge and experiences, and collaborate towards the pertinent outcomes and practical solutions that are needed to address the challenges of climate change.

UNEP co-led the ecosystems resilience stream of the 8th APAN Forum where the Executive Director delivered a closing keynote [stressing](#) upon the need for real leadership and action on adaptation as much as mitigation. The Forum captured [insights](#) on transformative adaptation to achieve resilience and enhanced understanding of climate change adaptation issues, approaches, and policies in the Asia Pacific region among stakeholders.



A pre-forum [webinar](#) featured thematic sessions on regional cooperation, capacity building, technologies and financing. Furthermore, the UNEP-hosted Global Adaptation Network (GAN) facilitated other events under the Korea Global Adaptation Week including a workshop for the Lima Adaptation Knowledge Initiative (LAKI) in the Hindu-Kush Himalayan region and an event at the [regional NAP Expo](#).

On the sidelines of the event, the Executive Director signed an [agreement](#) with the Minister of Environment of Korea for continued support to the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) and discussed the country's effort on [reforestation](#) and [Seoul's air quality](#) with pertinent officials.

G20 Environment & Climate Sustainability Ministerial Meeting

The UNEP Executive Director delivered a [keynote speech](#) during the Meeting (27-29 July, Chennai, India) highlighting the choice between leading the world down the same high-carbon path that threatens to cripple the planet, or leading it down a new, better path that brings the world into harmony with nature. The outcome of the meeting is an [Outcome Document and Chair's Summary](#) unanimously agreed upon by all delegations. The ED also participated in discussions with the Tamil Nadu State Government on sustainable cooling and the launch on the Tide Turners Plastics Challenge (TTPC) across schools in Tamil Nadu.

China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development

During the Council's Annual General Meeting (28-30 August, Beijing, China), the UNEP Executive Director [highlighted](#) climate change as the biggest challenge of our times, stressed the importance of China's reach for carbon neutrality, its impressive step-up on renewables and the need to systematically phase out coal. She highlighted the importance of implementing the KM-GBF during a [plenary on biodiversity](#), outlined four critical points for green prosperity and ecological civilization during a [plenary on climate](#), and reflected on important takeaways during the [closing](#).

iii. Europe

Delivering on environment in UN country programming

UNEP, as co-lead of the UN Issue-based Coalition on Environment and Climate Change (IBC), co-delivered a [workshop](#) (12-14 September, Istanbul) to increase awareness and strengthen the capacities of Resident Coordinator Offices (RCOs) and UN Country Teams (UNCTs) to effectively address and integrate the three environmental planetary crises into UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs) and UN cooperative delivery. Attended by over 100 UN staff from 15 Agencies across 15 countries and territories, the participants developed ideas for future collaboration at the country and regional levels and identified ways to jointly prepare for the Climate COPs and to implement the KM-GBF, among other key environmental goals.



Workshop on UNSDCFs, 12-14 September 2023, Istanbul
(Photo credit: uneuropecentralasia.org)

Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (7MCEH)

UNEP collaborated in the convening of [7MCEH](#) (5-7 July, Budapest, Hungary), held at the mid-point review of the 2030 agenda to focus on health challenges related to three environmental planetary crisis. Attended by stakeholders from 46 countries from Europe and Central Asia, the conference adopted a Roadmap and the [Budapest Declaration](#) with concrete commitments to accelerate action on addressing the health dimensions of climate change, environmental pollution, land degradation and biodiversity loss. The Declaration makes references to UNEA resolutions [5/5](#) (Nature-Based Solutions), [5/8](#) (science-policy panel) and [5/14](#) (Plastic pollution) and also focuses on strengthening governance, investing in human resources, and advancing knowledge and tools for inaction, to strengthen the capacities of countries to fulfill commitments made under the Declaration.

iv. Latin American and the Caribbean

Council Of Ministers for Environmental Sustainability (Com:Es 10) of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)

The Anguilla Chaired 10th regular Council meeting ([COM:ES10](#)) (11-13 July, Anguilla) themed *Positioning OECS SIDS for Accelerated and Sustainable Transformation*, considered a Roadmap to 2030 and regional frameworks - including Climate and Disaster Resilience, Waste and Pollution Management, Ocean Governance and Fisheries, and Biodiversity and Ecosystems – strongly aligned with the three environmental planetary crises. The Ministers also highlighted a role for the Cartagena Convention Secretariat to adopt an action plan against sargassum.

The meeting [culminated](#) in the adoption of a Roadmap for 2030 to chart the regional agenda and priorities for Environmental Sustainability, and guide the work of the OECS Commission, Member States, and partners operating at the regional level. UNEP provided technical support to Roadmap preparations and ministerial discussions and encouraged all OECS States to become party to the Protocols on *Land Based Sources of Marine Pollution (LBS)* and *Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA/W)* of the [Cartagena Convention](#)

UNEP encouraged the OECS to actively participate in the co-development of new projects on the new GEF Integrated Programmes, and recommended that the

OECS Commission, the [Caribbean Biodiversity Fund](#), and other relevant development partners, collaborate further towards the implementation of the [KM-GBF](#) and the [30x30 targets](#) through the identification and implementation of appropriate financing mechanisms, in support of regional conservation of natural resources, climate resilience, as well as environmental and economic sustainability. UNEP further updated ministers on the INC's work to develop an internationally legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

LAC Issue-Based Coalition (IBC) on Climate Change and Resilience

The UNEP co-chaired Coalition developed an inter-agency brief on [The El Niño Event in LAC](#) (August) and delivered [five webinars](#) during the reporting period to prepare LAC for COP28. Through such positioning of UNEP's regional guidance to the UN System on climate change, resilience and gender, these activities have led to increased interagency collaboration, enhanced UN Country Teams and Resident Coordinator Offices capacities, and furthered the capacities of and coherence amongst environment ministries in LAC.

v. West Asia

Regional Workshop on Capacity Development for Climate Change Negotiations for the Arab Countries

The UNEP co-organized [16th Regional Workshop](#) (16-18 July, Kuwait City) discussed outcomes from the [58th session](#) of the *UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies from the Bonn Climate Change Conference*. It supported the Arab Group of Negotiators in their implementation of decisions stemming from [COP 27](#), and initiated conversations leading up to [COP 28](#).

Iraq National Adaptation Plan

A UNEP co-organized workshop (25-26 September, Basra Governorate) under the National Adaptation Plan aimed at raising the awareness of key stakeholders in the health sector on the impacts of climate change on health and wellbeing, in the context of increasing climate-induced health problems in the Governorate as a result of increased temperatures, drought and water scarcity. The participants developed a shared understanding and awareness of the impact of climate change on health and agreed upon a set of recommendations to share with policy makers to address this matter.



Workshop for Iraqi Parliamentarians
(Photo credit: UNEP/West Asia Office)

State of the Environment (SoE) in Saudi Arabia

UNEP organized a workshop and consultation (11-12 September, Riyadh) to build the capacity of the national author team developing the new State of the Environment report and to revise the zero draft. The

workshop served as a platform to share global best practices on developing such reports at the national level, including knowledge sharing by experts from Environment authorities from other countries.

2. PROGRAMME OF WORK IMPLEMENTATION

A. Climate Stability

9th Ecosystems-based Adaptation (EbA) Knowledge Day

The UNEP co-organized [Day](#) (21 September) focused on accelerating EbA to achieve the SDGs and to connect global climate change efforts with EbA and Nature-based Solutions (NbS). Lessons generated on four key areas - Global Stocktake, Global Goal on Adaptation, Loss & Damage and National Adaptation Plans and NDCs – provided the basis for UNEP to make inputs to the HLPF, COP 28 and other policy fora.

Net Zero Nature Positive Accelerator Integrated Programme

UNEP as Global Lead of the GEF-8 Programme co-organized a [roundtable](#) (24 August, Vancouver, Canada) with the [objective](#) of raising awareness on the importance of integrating national goals and targets on climate and nature into national strategies and plans. The roundtable also brought together Multilateral Development Banks to present how they are integrating financing for climate and nature within their respective organisations and in their lending operations.

Contribution of geospatial Information to SDG attainment

UNEP participated in an SDG Summit [side-event](#) (17 September, New York) which [highlighted](#) the value and utility of geospatial information, as a critical component of a national infrastructure and knowledge economy, providing a blueprint of what happens where, and providing the means to integrate a wide variety of government services that contribute to SDG attainment. UNEP, as Chair of the UN Geospatial Network, contributed with proposals for a nexus approach, including the extensive use of geospatial technologies and applications at all three levels (global, regional and national) for the acceleration of Agenda 2030 and SDGs.

United in Science annual report

UNEP contributed to the [United in Science](#) report launched (14 September) at the margins of the UN General Assembly and the Climate Summit. UNEP's contribution consisted of co-authoring a chapter titled "State of the Science" which contained a section on "Science for climate action" that discussed the Emissions Gap Report. An annual, multi-organization, high-level compilation of the latest weather, climate and water-related sciences and services for sustainable development, the report found very limited progress in reducing the emissions gap for 2030 and calls for urgent and ambitious mitigation and adaptation action.





The Steering Committee and Lead Authors Meeting for the UNEP's Emission Gap Report (EGR), Copenhagen, Denmark 30 August 2023
 (Photo credit: UNEP)

Emission Gap Report preparation

The Steering Committee and Lead Authors Meeting (30-31 August, Copenhagen) for the preparations of UNEP's Emission Gap Report met with the objective of: discussing chapter content; increasing clarity of key messages; identifying and discussing cross-cutting issues; and discussing initial communication and outreach plans. The outcomes included a common understanding and increased clarity on the overall narrative and emerging key messages, and revisions of draft chapters. The meeting found work to be on track for the launch of the report prior to COP 28, as UNEP's contribution to the Member States' and Parties' negotiations.

Reducing emissions while improving food security in Kenya

A UNEP co-convened workshop (11-12 September, Nairobi) on the launch of a [new project](#) to strengthen Kenya's transparency for climate action in the agricultural sector, helped to forge a common understanding and agreement on the way forward with project implementation. The project's main objective is to build a sustainable crop sub-sector measurement, reporting, and verification system to collect data on emissions, and track the progress at national and county levels in meeting Kenya's commitments to the global community.

Sustainable climate actions in Lebanon

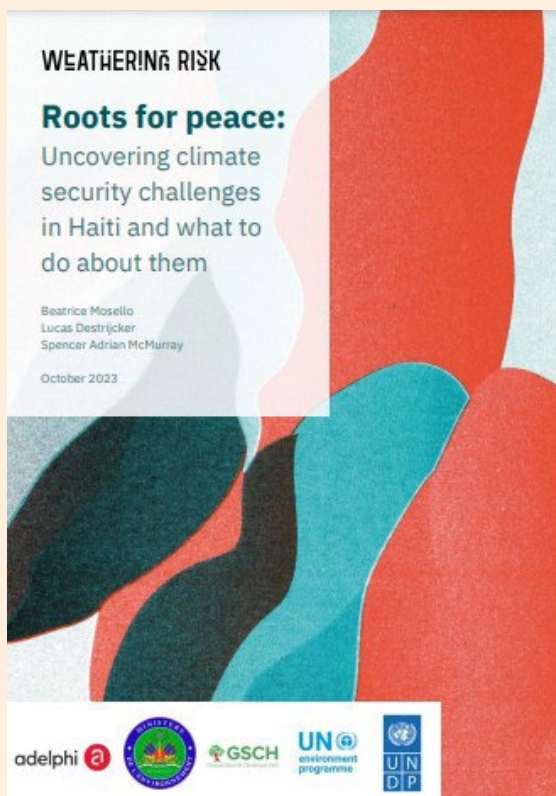
UNEP partnered with the UN Country Team in Lebanon to develop a Korea International Cooperation Agency (KICA) funded US\$ 4 million project (approved in August) on natural resources management, including the implementation of sustainable climate actions to achieve peace and security in North-East Lebanon.

Early Warnings for All (EW4All) in Maldives

During the first [National Consultation](#) on EW4All (4-5 July, Maldives), UNEP facilitated discussions on national priorities that could be addressed under a new UNEP-led GCF project entitled [Toward Risk-Aware and Climate-resilient communities \(TRACT\)](#). The project intends to establish nationwide Climate Information Services and a people-centered Multi-Hazard Early Warning System, which are crucial for informing evidence-based actions to build resilience and reduce the impact of climate-related hazards in Maldives.

Climate Security in Haiti

The UNEP-led Group on Climate Security in Haiti completed a [national study](#) on climate security in August. The study provides a robust set of evidence, data, surveys and analytics that highlights five cross-feeding dynamics and interactions between climate change and security in Haiti including food insecurity,



forced mobility, human rights abuse and social instability, eventually contributing to the multifaceted destabilization of the country. Building on this report, the Government of Haiti submitted a text on climate security to the Declaration of the XXIII Forum of Ministers in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Strengthening climate resilience in Mozambique

As the co-implementing entity for the project on strengthening Mozambique's climate resilience, UNEP co-organized an [inception workshop](#) (22 September) on the capacity building and planning component of an EbA project in the Greater Maputo Area (GMA). Aimed at substantially improving Mozambique's ability to adapt to climate change while simultaneously protecting its natural resources and valuable ecosystems, the workshop culminated in the launch of the project component.

Using Nature-based-Solutions (NbS) to build resilience to climate change impacts in Nepal

In implementing the project *Catalysing Ecosystem Restoration for Climate Resilient Natural Capital And Rural Livelihoods In Degraded Forests And Rangelands Of Nepal*, UNEP published a [story and video](#) (24 August) looking at how communities are using NbS to

build resilience to the impacts of climate change. The aim is to raise awareness on the importance of NbS to tackle climate change by promoting success stories from UNEP projects.

B. Living in Harmony with Nature

Roadmap for aligning financial flows with Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF)

The UNEP published (July) [high-level financial sector roadmap](#) for aligning financial flows with the KM-GBF aims to support and enable all interested actors within the financial landscape to build action on nature in line with the KM-GBF's 23 targets for action by 2030. The roadmap proposes recommendations for all actors within the financial landscape on integrating the KM-GBF within their policies and decision-making processes, proposes key action that each actor within the financial landscape can take to support KM-GBF implementation and contribute to achieving its 2030 mission of reversing nature loss, and 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature.

Nexus Dialogue on Environmental Aspects of Minerals and Metals Management

An UN Environment Management Group (EMG) [Nexus Dialogue](#) (30 August), on the environmental aspects of minerals and metals management - building on the [outcomes](#) of the *2020 Nexus Dialogue on Mineral Resource Governance*, updated UN system entities on the implementation of [UNEA resolution 5/12](#). The Dialogue served as a forum for the identification of next steps for system-wide collaboration on the topic and the establishment of a network of focal points from interested agencies and stakeholders for further dialogue and follow up with respect to the implementation of potential future UNEA resolutions on minerals.

Nature-Positive Insurance briefing paper

The UNEP launched (September) [briefing paper](#) on *Nature-Positive Insurance: Evolving Thinking and Practices* articulates the insurers' role in supporting the KM-GBF's goals and ultimately support the transition to a nature-positive global economy. The paper's themes build on work in addressing nature-related risks including tackling illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, environmental pollution liability, plastic pollution, high-impact hydropower projects, protecting UNESCO World Heritage Sites and building climate resilience by protecting ecosystems such as coral reefs and mangrove forests.



policy agenda for the next 15-years, focused on data, monitoring and assessments, planning and implementation, and NbS finance for disaster and climate resilience, with a focus on youth and cultivating the next generation of Eco-DRR champions.

Nexus Dialogue on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)

The second EMG [Nexus Dialogue](#) on SCP (11 September, Paris) sought to enhance coordination and unlock cooperation opportunities for sustainable living and to leverage the UN system to engage all voices for social inclusion in sustainable lifestyles, aspirational consumption and traditional knowledge. A summary, including recommendations for the UN system to strategically support the transition to sustainable lifestyles in a coordinated and inclusive manner through appropriate mechanisms and focused actions, building on the [One Planet Sustainable Lifestyles and Education Programme](#) and the [Consumer Information Programme](#), will be available on the [EMG website](#).

Scaling Regenerative Agriculture Practices in North America

A UNEP co-convened [Executive Roundtable](#) on *Scaling Regenerative Agriculture Practices* (13-14 September, Minneapolis) gathered leaders from the food and agriculture sector in North America to determine whether and how greater collaboration in companies' incentive programmes could help to drive scale in the uptake of regenerative agriculture practices in key geographies and commodities. The meeting concluded

Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction (PEDRR)

The UNEP co-founded [PEDRR's](#) 5th Science-Policy [Workshop](#) (13-15 September, Bonn) themed *Nature as a connector between DRR, climate, land, and biodiversity*, resulted in defining PEDRR's science-



The 1st Asia Pacific Quadripartite One Health Workshop, 5-8 September 2023, Bangkok, Thailand (Photo credit: WHO)

that international organizations such as UNEP may be in a position to enable the conditions for sustainable food systems (agriculture, health, environment) by laying out a global framework for a food business that incorporates health and the environment and finds acceptance among growers, processing companies, retailers and consumers.

Asia-Pacific Quadripartite One Health Workshop

The UNEP co-organized [Workshop](#) (5-8 September, Bangkok) brought together representatives from ministries of health, agriculture and environment from 17 Member States to raise awareness of the One Health approach (human, animal, wildlife and environment interface), the [One Health Joint Plan of Action 2022-2026](#) (OH JPA) and its Implementation Guide. The meeting provided a platform for participants to discuss critical issues related to the environmental dimension of One Health, as well as a roadmap for each country in further developing and implementing a national OH JPA.

Sustainable and inclusive nature-positive trade in Asia

The UNEP co-hosted [Regional Stakeholders Consultation](#) in Asia (26-27 September, Jakarta) discussed regional priorities, challenges and opportunities and provided recommendations for

actionable solutions to move towards a sustainable and inclusive nature-positive trade that supports countries to: i) achieve sustainable supply chains of agricultural commodities; ii) facilitate market access to all stakeholders in compliance with regional trade agreements and MEAs (e.g., KM-GBF) and better prepare for changing market regulations; iii) advance national plans for sustainable socio-economic development; and iv) hold cross-regional exchange on a trade system that supports sustainable agriculture, the protection of biodiversity and the facilitation of sustainable development.

Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Framework in East Asia

The Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) held a [regional workshop](#) (11-12 September, Bali) to further develop the new Strategic Directions 2023-2027 to identify priorities and guide COBSEA activities in the coming five years. Following the workshop, COBSEA held the [first meeting](#) (13 September) of the *Working Group on Marine and Coastal Ecosystems*, to guide implementation of the recently adopted [Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Framework](#); and the [Fifth Meeting](#) (13 September) of the *Working Group on Marine Litter*, toward achieving the [Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter](#) and facilitate meaningful participation of COBSEA countries in the upcoming third meeting of the Plastics INC.



ASEAN Blue Economy Framework

During the [ASEAN Blue Economy Forum](#) (2-4 July 2023), UNEP contributed to developing a [Framework](#) to guide ASEAN blue economy initiatives while encouraging regional integration and cooperation and strengthening Member States' capacity to maximise the sustainable use of aquatic spaces. UNEP presented Blue Economy global and regional trends and experiences and supported ASEAN in operationalizing the 2021 [ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on the Blue Economy](#), through webinars and contributions to major meetings held by Indonesia since 2022. UNEP's contribution was acknowledged in the [Chair's statement](#) adopted at the 13th ASEAN-UN Summit (7 September).

Data Reporting Tool (DaRT) for MEAs in China

A UNEP hosted [workshop](#) on DaRT for MEAs (6-8 September, Beijing) brought together experts from China's biodiversity related MEAs and their supporting institutions to explore mutual interests including: organizing senior level meet-ups during upcoming major events such as the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice ([SBSTTA](#)) and the Subsidiary Body on Implementation ([SBI](#)) of the CBD; inviting China to participate in future dialogues and events and share DaRT experience; and piloting DaRT for the development of China's 7th National Report to the CBD.

Safety across Asia for the global Environment (SAFE)

The Second National Advisory Committee Meeting of the UNEP co-implemented [SAFE](#) project (28-30 August, Hua Hin, Thailand) addressed challenges - including the absence of in-country quarantine requirements, a monitoring system, and licenses based on animal species rather than facilities purposes. UNEP presented preliminary findings from the legal review on the licensing and management of wildlife facilities in Thailand and sought government feedback and inputs on recommendations for national guidelines. UNEP will utilize the findings to prepare a revised legal review and draft initial recommendations for national guidelines, to address insufficient collaboration between government agencies that impact licensing processes and facilities' compliance.



UN-Civil Society dialogue on Climate, Biodiversity and Gender in Thailand

The UNEP supported [dialogue](#) (18 July, Bangkok) between the UN Country Team and more than 140 civil society representatives from Thailand explored intersections related to biodiversity, gender, and youth within the context of environmental rights. UNEP co-facilitated a session to deepen partnerships and advance solutions and concrete actions on the Universal Human Right to a Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment.

UAE National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) revision

UNEP provided technical advice on NBSAP targets during a [national workshop](#) (22-24 August, Dubai) to update UAE's NBSAP 2031. Bringing together 35 experts and staff from different ministries and authorities, the updates purport to meet international commitments towards biodiversity and align with leadership directions and national policies. Initiatives and projects related to biodiversity conservation were presented and the KM-GBF discussed in terms of objectives and indicator analysis.

C. Towards a pollution-free planet

Kakhovka dam breach in Ukraine

Following the breach of Kakhovka dam on 6 June, and in response to request for support by the government of Ukraine, UNEP mobilised a team of international experts to prepare a Rapid Environmental Assessment on the consequences of the disaster. The report, to be finalized in October, concludes that the breach of the Kakhovka hydroelectric dam is a far-reaching environmental disaster that goes beyond Ukraine's borders; the magnitude of which might not be clear for years or even decades to come. Hundreds of square kilometers were flooded, and thousands of square kilometers of reservoir and wetlands were desiccated.

Strengthening waste information systems in the Caribbean

UNEP co-organized a [regional training](#) and technical exchange activity (12-14 September, Kingston) through the [project](#) 'Zero Waste in the Caribbean: New ways, new waves,' to strengthen waste information systems and enhance the capacity of Caribbean countries to generate accurate waste management statistics. Some 23 participants from 12 Caribbean countries and international organizations concluded that data and information on waste and the circular economy are significant for informed decision-making, development and evaluation of waste management policies.

Strengthening ASEAN member state policies with environmental health data

UNEP completed (August) a UN Development Account funded [project](#) to develop capacities and facilitate South-South cooperation around the use of data and tools to assess co-benefits and costs of inaction on environmental health issues. It had a strong focus on air pollution to support integrated and science-based policy interventions. The project culminated in the generation of a range of knowledge products such as [guidance](#), [policy brief](#), [report](#) and national assessments of [Cambodia](#), [Indonesia](#) and [Thailand](#).

Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET)

The UNEP-hosted EANET [Working Group Meeting](#) (22-23 August, online) - with over 50 representatives from 13 [participating countries](#) - discussed collaborative efforts for better air quality in East and Southeast Asia, notably, EANET activities in 2022-23, mid-term review of the EANET Medium Term [Plan](#) for 2021-25, project plans for 2024 and project guidelines.

Subsequently, the 24th Senior Technical Managers' Meeting ([STM24](#)) on EANET (29-30 August, Niigata, Japan) brought together 40 plus senior technical officials and [discussed](#) Network monitoring activities status, [Overview of the Preliminary Draft Data](#)



Caribbean Countries Meet in Jamaica to share their experiences on Waste Management to Better Protect the Environment, Kingston Jamaica, September 2023
(Photo credit: pressroom.oecs.int)

Report 2022 and Evaluation of the Results of the Inter-laboratory Comparison (ILC) Projects 2022. It also considered National Monitoring Plans (NMPs), current monitoring activities for EANET, and Overall Air Concentration Monitoring Status of participating countries.

Wastewater – Turning Problem to Solution report

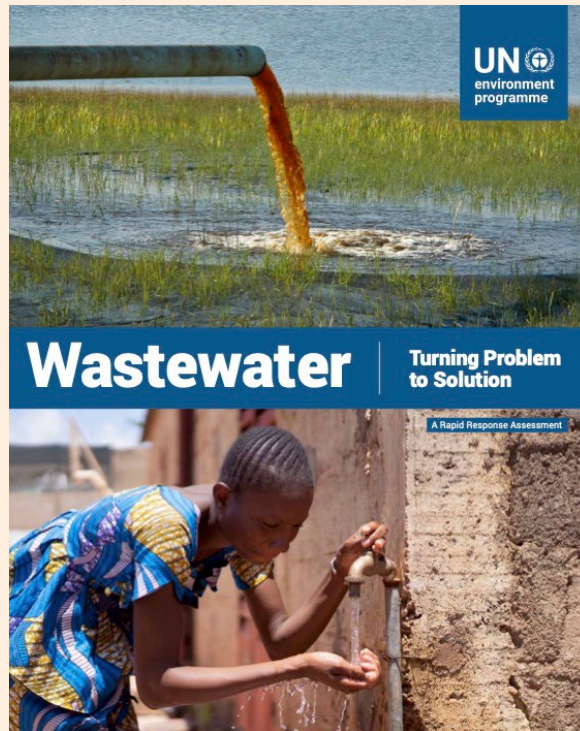
Co-developed by UNEP and GRID-Arendal, the [report](#) (launched 23 August) urges governments and businesses around the world to implement solutions in optimizing wastewater resource recovery and prevent pollution through action areas reducing the volume of wastewater produced, preventing and reducing contamination in wastewater flows, and sustainable management of wastewater for resource recovery and reuse.

Minamata Convention on Mercury – Asia-Pacific consultations

The UNEP hosted Asia-Pacific [regional preparatory meeting](#) for the 5th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention (5-6 September, Bangkok) deliberated upon the [COP-5](#) agenda (30 October - 3 November, Geneva), development of positions on issues to be addressed, and Article 4 (Mercury-added products) and rules of procedure.

Science Policy panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution – Asia-Pacific consultations

The UNEP organized Asia-Pacific [Regional Meeting](#) of the *2nd Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) for Science Policy panel on chemicals, waste and pollution* (7 September, Bangkok) undertook [strategic discussions](#) to prepare for the second OEWG session (11-15 December, Nairobi), including various aspects of establishing the panel - constitution of stakeholders, responsibilities, approaches to stakeholder participation and the way forward.



Regional Consultations on Cooperation for Better Air Quality in West Asia

The UNEP co-organized [workshop](#) (3-4 September, Amman) with representatives from ministries of environment and health from 10 West Asian countries focused on enhancing coordination on air quality management issues and discussed the proposed establishment of a Regional Air Quality Network for West Asia, in complementarity with similar networks established in other region. West Asian countries further requested UNEP to assess the status of their air quality management and identify the proposed Network's work priorities.



Digital solutions in determining plastic pollution origins in South & South-East Asia

During the SDG Action Weekend session on [Digital Public Infrastructure](#) (Sept 17, New York), UNEP presented digital solutions in determining plastic pollution origins through the [project](#) *Promotion of action against marine plastic litter in Asia and the Pacific*. Also known as [CounterMEASURE](#), the project [geolocated](#) over 5,500 plastic leakage points along rivers in India (Ganges), South-East-Asia (Mekong), and Sri Lanka, and reached out to nearly a [half-million](#) people to spread the word about [plastic pollution in rivers](#). The project confirmed that the use and disposal of medical supplies and personal protective equipment to fight COVID-19 have exacerbated plastic pollution in rivers and enabled the development of three protocols of the Mekong River Commission's Detailed Methodology (under publication) for the Cost-Effective and Long-term Monitoring of Riverine Plastic Debris Pollution in the Lower Mekong River.

Combating plastic pollution in coastal and urban environments in LAC

Supported by UNEP, the Governments of Colombia, Jamaica, and Panama [launched](#) (15 August) the GEF-funded US\$ 42 million [project](#) - *Reduce marine plastics and plastic pollution in LAC cities through a circular economy approach* - to facilitate and engage governments and businesses at the city level to accelerate circular economy transitions. The inception and first project steering committee meeting (15-17 August, Panama City) provisionally adopted its Terms of Reference (ToR) and approved the targeted technical assistance by UNEP.

Mississippi River Plastic Pollution Initiative

UNEP co-launched (13 September) the [final report](#) of the [Initiative](#) summarizing methods, findings and policy implications of the citizen-science data collection undertaken in the river basin during 2021 and 2022. The data points towards specific interventions and areas that could be targeted to maximize impact, including a [risk map](#) to help prioritize areas for decision makers.

Resource deck for addressing plastic pollution in South-East Asia (SEA)

Through the [SEA circular](#) project, UNEP [launched](#) (September) a [resource deck](#) to showcase innovative and circular solutions available within the region, guidance and manuals to enable a rights-based approach by duty bearers along the plastic value chain, data and scientific assessments on plastic leakage



Mississippi River Plastic Pollution Initiative

Apex Report

hotspots to improve waste management strategies at city-level, marine litter monitoring and a range of advocacy and sensitization tools to strengthen regional capacity and address knowledge gaps in beating plastic pollution in South-East Asia.

Guatemala National Action Plan on Marine Litter (2023-2032)

UNEP co-supported the [launch](#) of the [National Action Plan](#) (25 August, Guatemala City) which aims to contribute to protecting Guatemala's coastal marine environment and reduce the impacts from marine litter and plastic pollution on human health and ecosystems. In addition to technical assistance to Plan development, UNEP provided wider global and regional context.

D. Foundational Subprogrammes

i. Science-Policy

Global Environment Outlook (GEO-7)

As part of the preparatory process for the UNEP hosted and coordinated 7th edition of the intergovernmental and expert-led [GEO-7](#), an author writing sprint was hosted by the University of Tonji (4-7 September). The zero draft of the report is now ready and undergoing the first internal review. GEO-7 covers all strategic

Strategies on the Environment, the Environment Management Group Dialogues, and the Update on the EMG-DCO collaboration to strengthen UN system-wide support to address the triple planetary crisis at country level.

Right to a Healthy and Sustainable Environment (R2HE) – Maldives

UNEP co-organized a Call 2 Action Dialogue (10 July, Male) focused on the recognition and promotion of the universal human right to a healthy and sustainable environment. UNEP supported the preparation of a problem analysis on the right and delivered a presentation on this topic. As an outcome of the Dialogue, it was decided to organize a training session dedicated to R2HE for the UNCT in the Maldives in November 2023.

ASEAN Environmental Rights Working Group (AER WG)

UNEP provided technical support to the [1st Meeting](#) of the Working Group (21–22 August, Bangkok) focussed on developing a regional framework on environmental rights in accordance with international norms and standards, focusing on the rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, for consideration by ASEAN Sectoral Bodies before eventual adoption by ASEAN leaders. As an outcome of the meeting, the AER WG Secretariat has been requested to incorporate all feedback received to develop a “zero draft” document.

Regional consultations on Montevideo Programme V

In line with UNEA [resolution 4/20](#) on the *Fifth Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law* ([Montevideo](#)

[Programme V](#)), a series of regional consultations was convened by UNEP to collate inputs on legal responses to address the biodiversity and climate crises. These consultations took place for Asia Pacific, West Asia and Central Asia Regions in [Bangkok](#) (15 August), for Africa in [Nairobi](#) (21 August) and for LAC in [Panama City](#) (25-26 September). Additionally, a *Capacity building workshop for national focal points of MEAs and the Montevideo Programme V* was held in [Bugasera, Rwanda](#) (29 August).

The consultations resulted in valuable feedback on several key aspects, including the regions’ legal needs, enhancement of legal frameworks, promotion of the science and policy interface, the importance of awareness-raising, capacity-building needs, opportunities for collaboration with potential partners, and research priorities for Montevideo Programme V. Notably, a Regional Platform of Environmental Law Lecturers in LAC was launched during the Panama consultations. As a result of the consultations, interest in the Montevideo Programme V has increased, with the Programme’s Secretariat receiving more requests for technical legal assistance.

Green Customs

UNEP hosted a Green Customs [workshop](#) (3 August, Panama City) focused on presenting the [Pilot Curriculum](#) for Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean to integrate environmental compliance and enforcement into customs training programs. Developed within the framework of [Training for the prevention and prosecution of illicit trafficking of chemicals and hazardous wastes in the sub-regions of South America, Central America and Mexico](#), the workshop facilitated an open dialogue between customs officials and other significant actors in the compliance chain, fostering discussions about training opportunities, potential regional and inter-institutional collaborations, and the next steps necessary to further strengthen environmental protection efforts in the region.

Roundtable Discussion on Business and Human Rights in Asia and the Pacific

UNEP participated in a roundtable discussion (30 August, Bangkok) which brought together stakeholders representing various sectors to engage in a comprehensive dialogue on the intersection of business and human rights in the Asia-Pacific region. UNEP contributed with insights from an environmental standpoint, shedding light on how business operations can significantly influence the realization of the right to a healthy environment. The roundtable built connections between development partners and explored opportunities for future collaboration on Business and Human Rights.





African Elephant Fund (AEF)

The UNEP hosted African Elephant Fund (AEF) Secretariat finalized (July) the revision, translation and circulation of the African Elephant Action Plan ([AEAP 2023](#)) to now list “Reduce Human-Elephant Conflict” as a first priority objective, and to guide elephant management and conservation for the next five years. During the reporting period, the Fund completed projects in Ghana and Kenya to enhance human-elephant coexistence and better elephant management through integrating local communities in project implementation. In Ghana, wildlife staff and 11 local communities around the Bia Conservation Area were trained on appropriate approaches for managing and reducing human-elephant conflicts (HEC), particularly mitigating crop-raiding incidences. In Kenya, daily patrols to combat poaching

and mitigate HEC in the Greater Amboseli Ecosystem over 12 months resulted in no elephants being killed and a reduction in illegal activities.

Environmental Human Rights Defenders (EHRD)

The UNEP co-organized 3rd EHRD [Forum](#) in Asia-Pacific (20-22 September) focussed on creating a safe and collaborative space for over 200 EHRDs to discuss challenges, share knowledge, access information and build capacity, to strengthen protection through data collection in the context of promoting, protecting, and realizing environmental rights in the region. Discussions also included sessions on engagement with the media and further contributed to building relations between EHRDs and the diplomatic community. The key outcome messages will be further amplified in other spaces such as COP28.

The UNEP co-convened [Second Annual Forum](#) of Human Rights Defenders in Environmental Matters in LAC (26-28 September, Panama City) facilitated the sharing of experiences and best practices in the promotion, prevention and protection of environmental defenders in the LAC region. The Forum also provided a platform for the ongoing consultations on the Draft [Regional Action Plan](#) on Human Rights Defenders on Environmental Matters in LAC.



Banner for the 3rd Environmental Human Rights Defender (EHRD) Forum
(Photo credit: OHCHR)



Ecosystems restoration mural, Climate Week, New York
 (Photo credit: www.decadeonrestoration.org)

Interfaith Rainforest Initiative (IRI) in Brazil, Colombia DRC and Peru

The UNEP implemented IRI organized a national [roundtable](#) on zero deforestation policy in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (5-6 July, Kinshasa) to discuss and clarify concepts influencing sustainable forest management and advance concepts like “zero deforestation,” “high-value forest,” and “forest definition,” as outlined in the [second letter of intent](#) signed between the DRC and Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) in 2022. Through the roundtable, IRI DRC is working to advance environmental citizenship in all levels of forest and natural resource governance and promote local community forest concessions. Participants proposed legal mechanisms for sharing benefits from these concessions and connecting CAFI law with the nationally determined contribution (NDC) roadmap.

IRI in Brazil, Colombia, and Peru issued [a call to action](#) (6 August) to Amazonian country presidents attending the Amazon Summit (8-9 August, Belém do Pará) urging their governments to take measures to combat deforestation, safeguard indigenous land rights, address environmental crimes and violence, counter

drug trafficking, and invest in sustainable development projects. Key government officials, including Ministers of the Environment (Brazil, Peru) and Indigenous Peoples (Brazil) pledged support to the call. The three IRI country programmes also conducted a comprehensive communication campaign highlighting Amazon-related issues and IRI’s work.

In advance of Colombia’s regional elections, IRI in Colombia conducted a comprehensive advocacy campaign (14 August - 6 September), holding [debates](#) with gubernatorial candidates in three departments which provided a platform for candidates to present their environmental proposals and encouraged them to commit, through a programmatic agreement and commitment statement, to promote policies and programmes for the restoration and preservation of the Amazon ecosystem once elected. As a result, 37 mayoral candidates signed IRI Colombia’s programmatic commitment statement and agreement, committing to prioritize Amazon Forest protection, develop projects for ecosystem restoration and conservation, and uphold the rights of local communities, emphasizing equity and environmental justice.

E Enabling Subprogrammes

i. Finance and Economic Transformations

Common Framework for Sustainable Finance Taxonomies for LAC

UNEP co-launched (10 July) the [Common Framework](#) to provide guidance to LAC countries engaged in or planning to develop sustainable finance taxonomies. The initiative will establish a comprehensive framework for taxonomies, promote consistency and interoperability in taxonomies and initially focus on climate change objectives for key economic sectors in LAC.

Circular Economy Coalition for LAC

The UNEP coordinated [Coalition](#) co-orchestrated a series of virtual exchange workshops. ([4 and 11 July, 30 August](#)) for five countries and two regions (in Argentina and Costa Rica) to convene and exchange insights on their respective plans, steps, strategies and methodologies pertaining to the circular economy. These peer-to-peer meetings provided the opportunity to actively contribute to the formulation



of circular economy strategies, encompassing not only the national level but also discussions on local implementation within the region.

Global Intergovernmental Meeting on the Environmental Aspects of Minerals and Metals Management

The [Meeting](#) (7-8 September, Geneva) assessed ongoing efforts in the public and private sectors to enhance the environmental sustainability of minerals and metals. The Meeting considered the outcomes of the implementation of UNEA resolution [4/19](#) on mineral resource governance, including key findings from all regional consultations and 24 draft “non-prescriptive proposals” (NPPs) on a range of topics such as: a global assessment; the establishment of a possible working group; capacity building and technical assistance for tailings management and mine closures, and a global sand observatory. The Meeting also worked on refining and prioritizing NPPs for consideration at UNEA-6.

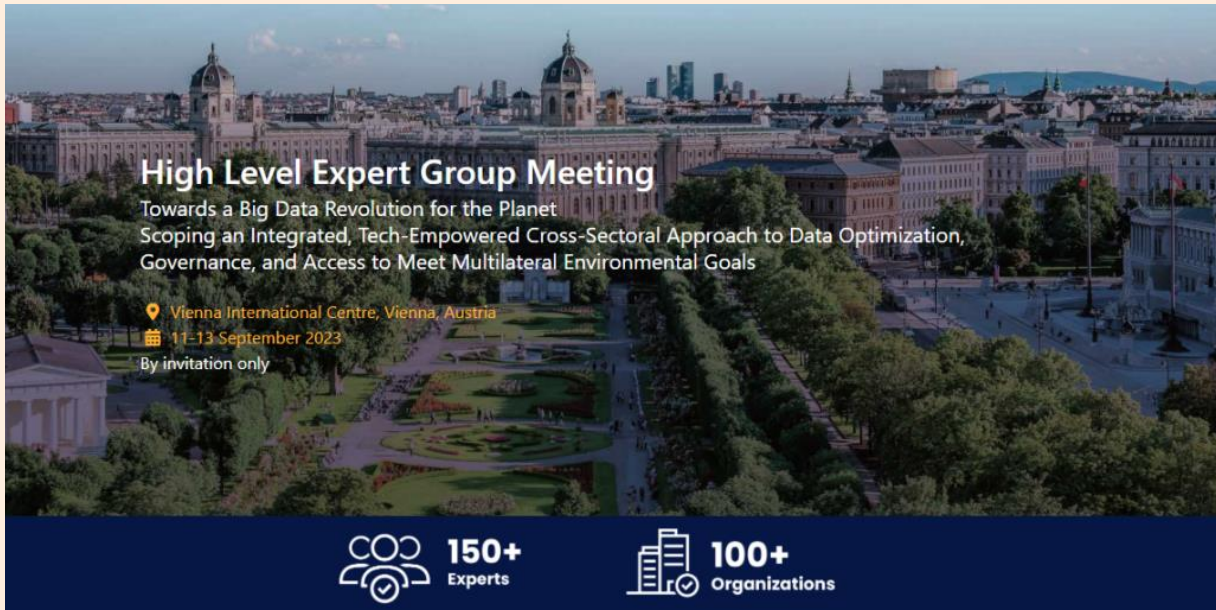
Consumer Behavioural Change for Food Waste Reduction

Under the GO4SDGs initiative, UNEP co-launched a [webinar series](#) (31 August) for the West Asia Regional Food Waste Working Groups focused on action and the delivery of a *National Food Waste Reduction Strategy*. The first webinar entitled *Consumer Behaviour Change Programmes* shared insights on how behavioural change can trigger action and impact in reducing food waste through means such as campaigns.

ii. Digital Transformations

Data for the Environment Alliance (DEAL)

The [Expert Group Meeting](#) (11-13 September, Vienna) of DEAL - A Member-State-led global cooperation initiative facilitated by the UN Science-Policy-Business Forum - focused on the need for a Big Data revolution to enable SDG achievement, data for better decision making and technology as an empowering agent. UNEP supported the meeting as an input to the development of the Global Environmental Data Strategy (GEDS) under UNEA Resolution [4/23](#). One of the meeting’s main outcomes was a recommendation for GEDS to focus on global environmental data exchange frameworks that enable discoverability, inter-operability and quality-control, combined with the identification of environmental data use cases.



Education for Digital Sustainability

UNEP co-launched (September) [module 2](#) of the Digital4Sustainability e-learning programme, focusing on digital technologies for climate action, as a contribution to COP 28 preparations. With more than 12,000 participants in its inaugural year, the programme stands as a testament to the global appetite for understanding the double-sided nature of digital technologies – their potential to catalyze climate action, nature conservation, and pollution prevention, juxtaposed against the inherent risks they pose.

in sustainable land use. UNEP oversaw the development of the KPIs and communications with the Environmental and Social Knowledge Exchange Network (ESKEN) to capture the positive impact of sustainable land use investment on women, using the [2X challenge](#). This has resulted in funds using the gender KPIs or referring to them.

F. Cross-cutting Issues

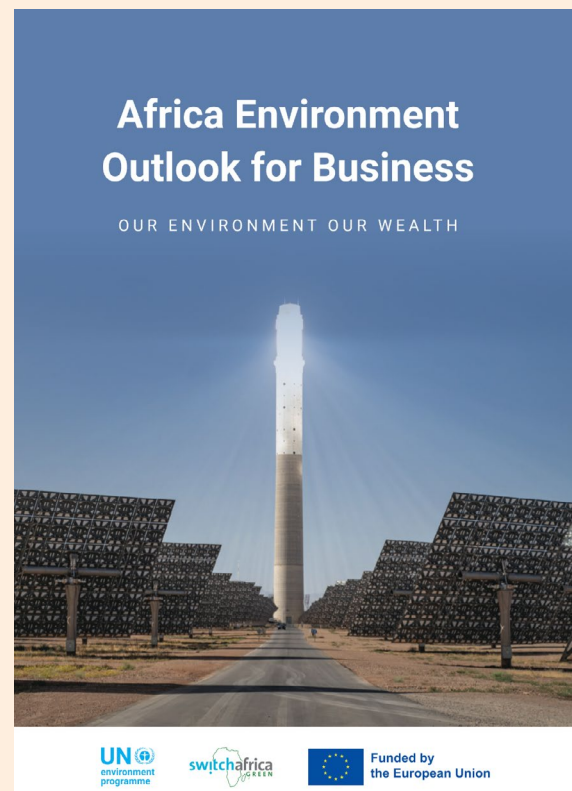
i. Gender

Gender-responsive 'Africa Environment Outlook for Business'

UNEP's *Africa Environment Outlook for Business* [report](#) (launched 17 August) harnesses links between science, policy, and business to showcase the opportunities for stimulating green growth in Africa's economies for the benefit of women, men, girls, and boys in the context of leaving no one behind. The report contributes to UNEA resolutions [4/17](#) (Promoting gender equality and the human rights of women and girls in environmental governance) [5/5](#) (Nature-based Solutions) and [5/11](#) (sustainable consumption and production).

Gender responsive KPIs for investment in sustainable land use

UNEP's *Land Use Finance Impact* [Hub](#) developed and launched (25 August) gender responsive key performance indicators ([KPIs](#)) for investment



Gender-responsive Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

Several UNEP MEA Secretariats co-organized a [side-event](#) (23 August, Vancouver) during the 7th GEF Assembly on gender-responsive MEAs, focused on the importance of gender equality in Conventions, gender-responsive policies and programmes and how to harmonize and enhance synergies among various international agreements and instruments in the implementation of these action plans and mandates. The event fostered discussions with governments, MEAs gender focal points, implementing agencies and GEF on how the gender action plans or other gender-related mandates of MEAs could feed into and shape the work, policy and strategies of the GEF and its implementing agencies. It also highlighted areas for collaboration between MEAs on gender issues, including through capacity-building, awareness raising, collection of gender-related data and financing.

Mainstreaming gender in water management

During a [World Water Week](#) workshop on [Promoting gender contextualisation of the SDG 6 global indicators](#) (20 August, Stockholm) focussed on mainstreaming gender into water management policy and planning, UNEP presented results on lessons learnt from pilots conducted in Brazil and Senegal, with the intent of utilizing the knowledge and experience to roll out similar programmes in regions within these countries and conducting analysis and reporting in the form of a document.

Furthering gender-consciousness in banking

A UNEP co-organized [webinar](#) (6 July) presented its work with UN Women to launch a new [Framework](#)

for Gender Action for Banks to assist Principles for Responsible Banking (PRB) members in setting clear and specific targets around gender equality. Discussions on the framework focussed on setting the right foundations for systemic work on gender equality, including clear definitions and metrics and the best course of action to allow financial institutions to contribute to achieving gender equality worldwide.

Gender inclusion in electric mobility

Between July and September, as one of the lead partners of the Solutions+ Electric Mobility [Project](#), UNEP integrated a gender criterion in demonstration projects in three cities in Rwanda, Togo and [Uganda](#) respectively, to increase the number of women in the transport workforce. This resulted in at least 45 more women in the transport workforce. UNEP is also actively involved in the implementation of the country demonstrations to ensure that learnings are being shared across countries and regions to achieve the project goals.

ii. Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS)

Monitoring of safeguard risk management

In a bid to enhance understanding and compliance with human rights, safeguard risks, and gender responsiveness, UNEP conducted a mission to Tanzania (July) to strengthen safeguard risk management, based on understanding of challenges and capacity building needs of national executing partners. Capacity-building was carried out through interactions with local communities, senior government officials, steering committees, and other individuals directly involved in or impacted by the projects.



A Masai village in Tanzania implementing UNEP-GEF project
(Photo credit: UNEP/Yunae Yi)

Safeguards Information Systems (SIS)

The UNEP organised *Regional Exchange on Safeguards and Integrity in LAC* (27 July, online) shared experiences and insights on integrated safeguards approaches in the context of REDD+ in LAC to improve environmental and social integrity. UNEP also organized the [second session](#) of the *Safeguards and Integrity Working Group for LAC* (7 September) to present and discuss lessons learned and challenges in updating the SIS in Ecuador.

Stakeholder Response Mechanism (SRM)

UNEP is engaging a SRM expert to formalize the institutional arrangement for handling compliance and grievance cases via the SRM. The SRM is one of the key elements of UNEP's Safeguards Policy (Environmental, Social and Sustainability Framework - [ESSF](#)) providing an avenue for UNEP project-affected stakeholders to seek redress for their complaints.

iii. UN Reform

Bridging the gap between MEAs and UNCTs in Africa

A UNEP co-organized [workshop](#) (25-28 July, Addis Ababa) brought together UNCT representatives and national focal points for MEAs related to biodiversity and chemicals/ waste, to discuss how to bring MEAs efforts and commitments closer to the UNCT programming processes. The workshops focused on increasing coherence and synergy of actions through strengthening collaboration between national MEA Focal Points and the UNCTs; establishing the link between environmental statistical data generated for MEAs and the UN Common Country Analysis (CCA); identifying tools that enable integrated environmental assessments in support of national development planning, UN Cooperation Frameworks and MEAs; and exploring innovative financing mechanisms to enhance and support MEA implementation at national and regional levels.

Entry Points for Resident Coordinator System (RCS) in Kunming-Montreal GBF

As part of its effort to engage with the RCS to support KM-GBF implementation, UNEP participated in a policy webinar (12 July) for UN Resident Coordinators focussed on the KM-GBF for SDG acceleration, and entry points for the RCS to support KM-GBF implementation. Opportunities and challenges in integrating biodiversity into the work of the UNCTs were highlighted, including: the need for more economic



valuations of biodiversity to help push forward whole-of-government approaches; recalibrating the discourse on energy transition to include biodiversity and biodiversity loss risks; and utilizing food systems and agriculture as the highest-level entry points to push for the environmental agenda.

Harnessing Critical Energy Transition Minerals for Sustainable Development

As a member of the *Secretary General's Working Group on Transforming Extractive Industries for Sustainable development (TEI4SD)*, UNEP co-led a virtual World Café (26 July) for economists in UN Resident Coordinator Offices (RCOs) where it presented developments on an [initiative](#) to mobilize key UN actors and other experts to provide technical guidance to LDCs, LLDCs and developing countries with critical energy transition minerals. The discussions focused on: risks, challenges and opportunities from the growing demand for Critical Energy Transition Minerals; initial feedback on the UN toolkit for Resident Coordinators and the UN Framework on *Just Transitions for Critical Energy Transition Minerals*; and a peer exchange on the opportunities and challenges of supporting national governments in this realm.

Steering Committee of the Joint SDG Fund

UNEP joined (August) the Steering Committee of the [Joint SDG Fund](#) which resources UNCTs to help countries deliver on the SDGs. Membership provides UNEP the opportunity to further advance the environmental agenda at the country level, increase its knowledge on fund mechanisms, influence Fund priorities and boost the implementation of environmental SDGs.



Strengthening capacities on environment in UN Country Programming

UNEP co-facilitated a workshop (12-14 September, Istanbul) for Resident Coordinators and UNCTs to strengthen their respective capacities in effectively integrating climate change, pollution and biodiversity for a just transition in UN Cooperation Frameworks (CFs). The workshop was among the first in a series of steps in the European region to increase awareness and integration of the three environmental planetary crisis - particularly [the UN Common Approach to Biodiversity](#) - into the CFs and joint programming. Participants developed several ideas for future collaboration on Just Transition for All, climate and energy, and biodiversity and air pollution (among others) and discussed how different sub-regions can prepare jointly for [COP28](#) and [KM-GBF](#) implementation.

G. Opportunities and Lessons Learned

i. Opportunities

Greater emphasis on adaptation in Africa

There is an opportunity for UNEP to capitalize on the increasing priority that Africa is placing on adaptation as a core strategy for tackling climate change as evidenced through the outcomes of the Africa Climate Week and Summit. There will be demand for knowledge, expertise and best practices to which UNEP can respond.

Increasing the ambition of climate and nature-related responses

For UNEP to assist Member States to increase both the ambition of and coordinated action on climate and nature-related responses necessitates addressing key questions including: the institutional structures needed for a coordinated and coherent response; how to achieve a whole of government and whole of society

approach; how to make long-term decarbonization strategies more nature-positive, what investments to prioritize and where to pursue the double dividend of halting climate change and reversing nature-loss; the role of public finance and budgeting processes in supporting climate and nature action; and the role of international finance institutions in supporting countries to raise their ambitions on climate and nature, and pursue greater coordination and coherence in responses.

Strengthening partnerships on EbA, early warnings and for sustainable interventions

With a reliable ally in IUCN, there is an opportunity for UNEP to co-create to shape the future of the EbA Knowledge Day. It is necessary to build a shared vision of the objectives, relevant stakeholders, and funds allocation to address multiple barriers to EbA. Additionally, for Community of Practices to be effectively convened, there is need to look at options for more effective online platforms to host multi-session meetings.



UNEP can leverage its work with CBD, BRS, FAO, UNCCD, WHO and WMO to mainstream Early Warning for All (EW4all) - Early Warning for Environment (EW4 Environment). Through collaborations with UN Resident Coordinators and through facilitating the preparation of a case study for the Capacity Development Benchmarking Report, visibility and understanding of the GCF-funded Early Warning Systems (EWS) can be improved.

Increasing attention from health sector on pollution

The 76th World Health Assembly approved [resolution](#) on the impact of chemicals, waste and pollution on human health will lead to an increase in amount of data on the health and economic impacts of pollution (e.g. air pollution and antimicrobial resistance) and help make the case for action.

Programmatic approach to address polycrisis

With an unprecedented polycrisis, countries are asking for advice on policies, finance and investments that create wealth and jobs while making their economies more competitive and resilient. The programmatic approach enables UNEP to offer a package of support comprising institutional capacity building, analytics, and advice on policies and finance to transform high impacts sectors. It aims to leverage, consolidate and scale up ambition and impacts through strategic partnerships and enhanced coherent delivery of sectoral portfolio by One UNEP teams across divisions and regional offices. Focusing on high-impact sectors enables the transformation of whole value chains through targeted enabling policies and business practices, to lead to significant environmental, economic and social benefits at scale.

Sustainable Budgeting Approach (SBA)

Opportunities exist to engage large scale investors and sovereign debt buyers to raise the incentives for Member States to use tools like the SBA and attract more long-term capital to support national sustainable recovery goals/efforts.

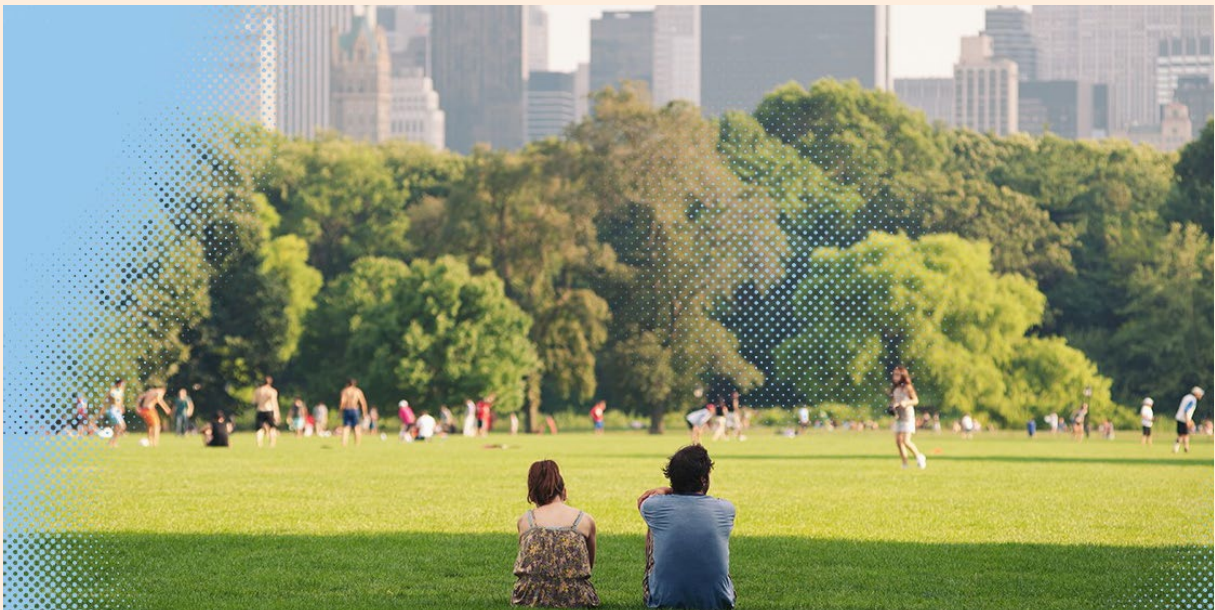
ii. Lessons Learned

Furthering trade, biodiversity and sustainable development

Lessons learned and opportunities identified through UNEP's work at the nexus of trade and biodiversity include the importance of strengthening cooperation between the environment, trade, finance and development communities. The KM-GBF provides a unique opportunity to re-assess how trade and trade-related policies and measures can facilitate and promote the conservation and restoration of biodiversity, while supporting sustainable socio-economic development of countries. UNEP has taken action to address these through hosting and participating in high-level dialogues with WTO members, trade and environment stakeholders, to explore and propose possible solutions to build mutually supportive collaboration and to help countries in developing and aligning policies to move forward common agendas on trade, biodiversity and sustainable development.

Furthering digital transformation

Furthering digital transformation necessitates additional emphasis on international data standards and governance frameworks, to enable data discovery, inter-operability and quality control. This lesson will feed into the development of the Global Environmental Data Strategy under UNEA resolution [4/23](#).



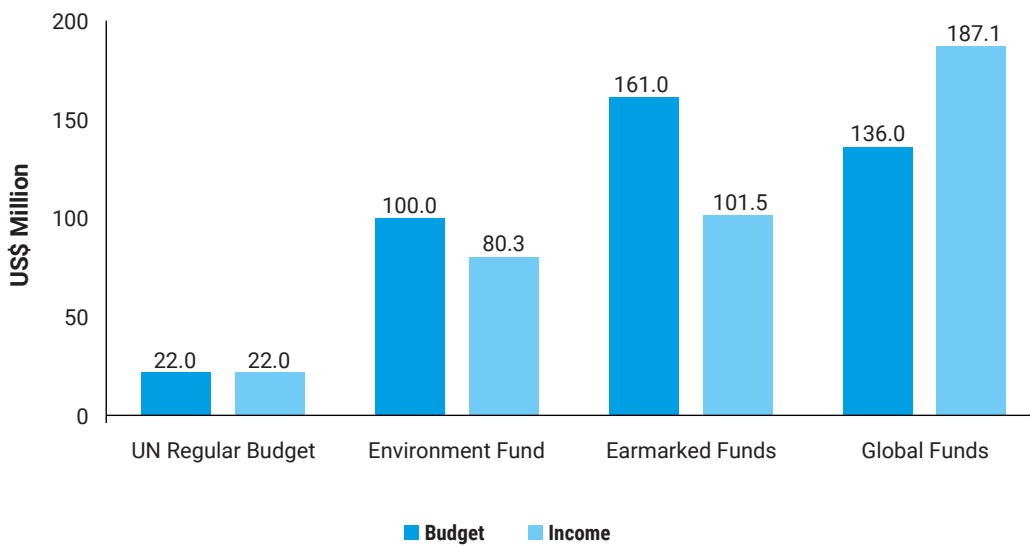
3. RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

A. Financial Resources

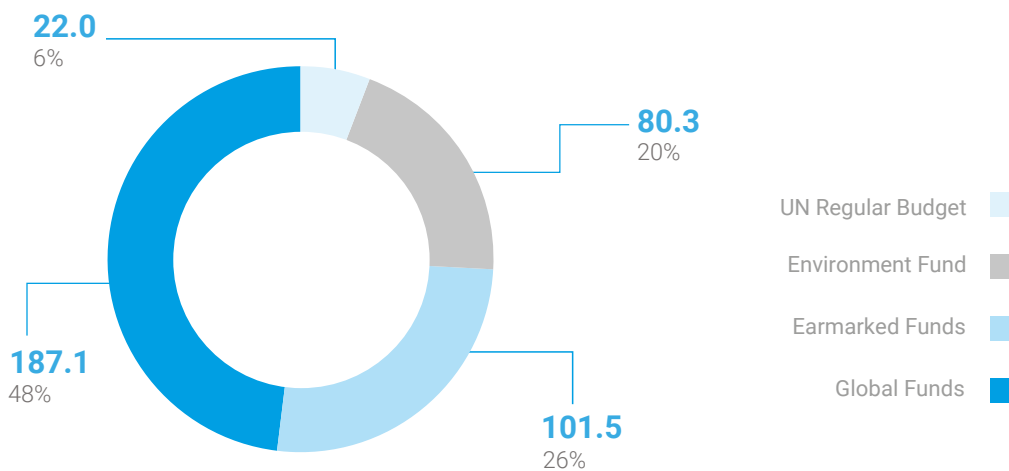
i. Financial Update as at 30 September 2023

a. Overview of income¹

Annual Budget 2023 vs Income (in million \$) / January 2023 – September 2023



Income per source of funding (in million \$) / January 2023 -September 2023



¹ The figures do not include conventions and protocols administered by UNEP. Per the United Nations Secretariat interpretation and application of the International Public Service Accounting Standards (IPSAS), our financial and administrative management platform, Umoja, does not allow a breakdown of multi-year contributions into annual figures for income.

b. Core funding

The UN Regular Budget and the Environment Fund provide the core funding for the organization which gives UNEP the flexibility to respond to the three planetary environmental crises of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste, and implement the programme of work as agreed by the Member States.

United Nations Regular Budget

The United Nations Regular Budget amounts to 6% of UNEP's total. In 2023, further to the initial temporary recruitment freeze introduced in July 2023, additional precautionary measures have been implemented by the Office of the UN Controller in September 2023 to restrict spending against non-post resources as a result of the ongoing liquidity crisis. Corporate Services Division is working closely with Divisions and Regional Offices to manage the negative impact of the lagging regular budget collection.

The Environment Fund

The Environment Fund provides UNEP the remaining capacity to provide scientific evidence on the state of the global environment; to identify emerging environmental issues and innovative solutions; to

raise awareness and advocacy; and to build capacity. It invests in results-focused programme management and robust oversight.

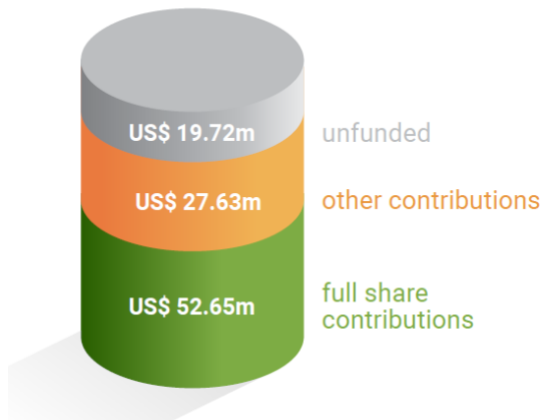
The approved budget for the year 2023 is US\$ 100 million. By 30 September 2023, the Environment Fund income amounted to US\$ 80.28 million which is 80% of the approved 2023 budget. These contributions were received from 52 Member States, which represent 27% of the total 193 Member States. Out of the 52 Member States, 23 (44%) contributed their full share as per the voluntary indicative scale of contributions (VISC). Forty-one (41) Member States have paid their pledges as at September.

UNEP is grateful for all these contributors with special thanks to the 23 Member States that have provided their full share and to the top-10 Member States who provided 85% of the income to the Environment Fund.

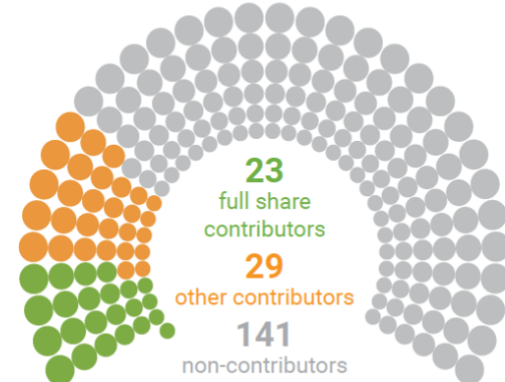
Furthermore, UNEP appreciates the increased stability and predictability provided by multi-year agreements/pledges from Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Monaco, Netherlands and South Africa, which amounted to a total of US\$ 23 million or 29% of the Environment Fund income as at 30 September 2023.

Status of Environment Fund in 2023 (as at 30 September 2023)

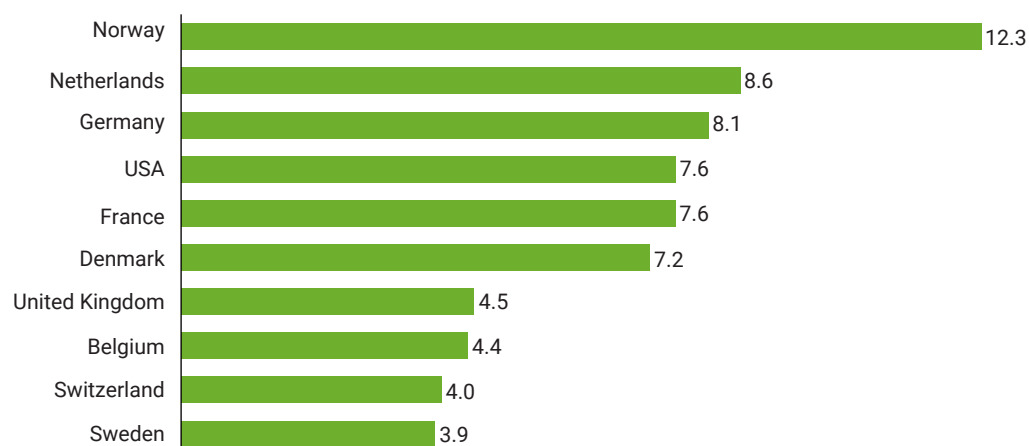
INCOME vs UNFUNDED BALANCE of US\$ 100m budget



NUMBER AND CATEGORY OF MEMBER STATE CONTRIBUTORS out of 193



Top 10 contributors to Environment Fund (in million \$) as at 30 September 2023



Member States that contributed their full share as represented by the VISC (as at 30 September 2023)

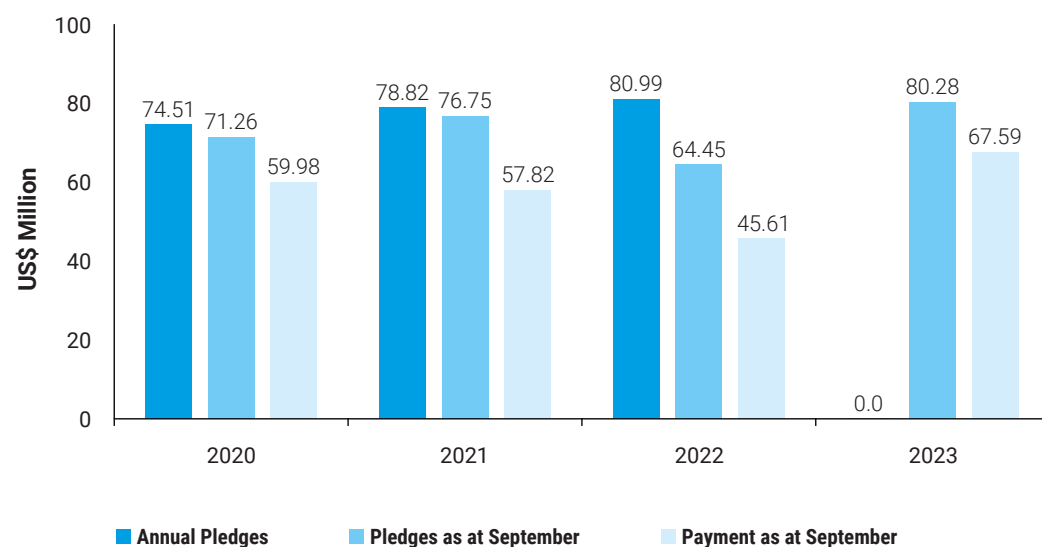
Paid				Pledged
Canada	Guyana	Latvia	Slovenia	Belgium
Denmark	Iceland	Mauritius	Switzerland	Dominican Republic
Eritrea	Ireland	Netherlands	United Kingdom	Monaco
Fiji	Jordan	Norway		Saint Lucia
France	Kenya	Peru		Tanzania

Comparison with previous years

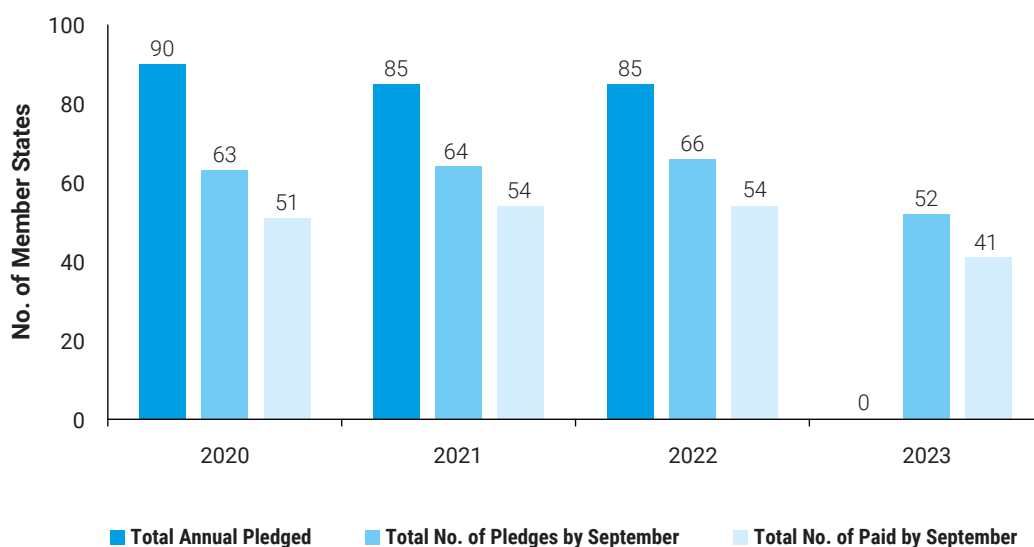
Compared to the same time last year, the pledges are higher by US\$ 15.83 million, or 25% higher than the total pledges for September 2022. But only fifty-two (52) Member States have pledged by the end of September 2023, which is lower than September 2022

by 21%. Given this background, UNEP urges those Member States who have not yet made contributions to the Environment Fund to consider doing so. This support is invaluable and plays an integral role in delivering our collective mission.

Income to the Environment fund 2020 -2023



Number of Member States contributing to the Environment Fund 2020-2023



c. Earmarked contributions

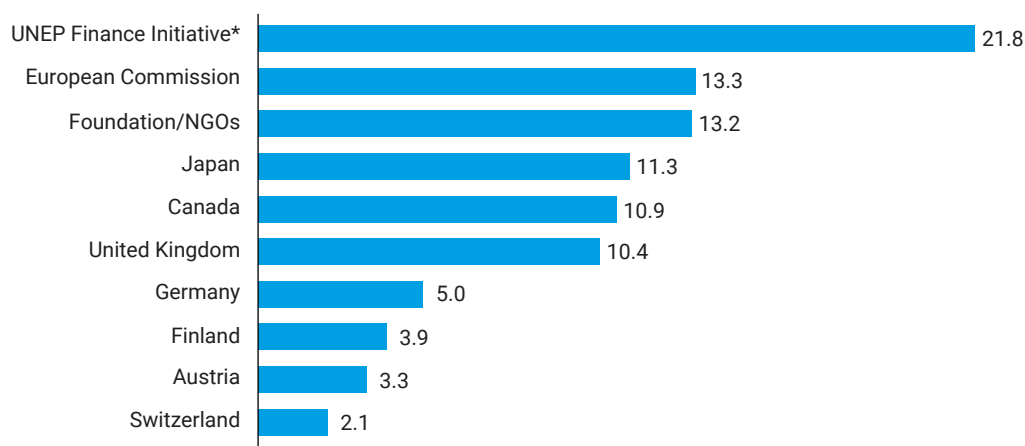
Earmarked funds are critical to UNEP’s work and provide a means to leverage and direct resources towards priority areas. They also help to scale up and replicate the core work of UNEP, including capacity-building in more countries and with more partners. UNEP encourages Member States to consider soft earmarking, especially at a thematic level, to provide greater flexibility in the use of funds.

Earmarked funds

As at 30 September 2023, UNEP had received 63% of its total budgeted amount for the year, of which 94% was tightly earmarked and 6% was softly earmarked funds.

The support to the three *Thematic Funds* for Climate Stability, Living in Harmony with Nature and Pollution-Free Planet totalled US\$ 20 million from their initiation until the end of the reporting period, of which 85% was allocated to programmes and projects in line with the MTS and the Programme of Work and is being actively implemented. Work on the communications and marketing tool-kit for the Thematic Funds started with the publication and dissemination of investment case for the funds: [For People and Planet: How Your Contributions Can Help Build a More Sustainable World](#).

Top 10 earmarked funds by funding partner (in million \$) as at 30 September 2023



*Partnership between UNEP and the global financial sector to mobilize private sector finance for sustainable development.

Global funds

The funds provided by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) are earmarked to specific programmes and projects. By the end of September 2023, GEF had contributed US\$

173.6 million and GCF US\$ 13.5 million bringing the total income from global funds to US\$ 187.1. The income received was 138% of the budgeted income for the year 2023.

ii. Status of Allocations and Expenditures as at 30 September 2023

2022-2023 Biennium Core Budgets - Programme of work budget					
	Functional Area Name	Environment Fund	Overhead Trust Account	Regular Budget	Grand Total
A	Policy Making Organs	4,000,000	20,000	16,900	4,036,900
B. 1	Executive Direction & Management	8,000,000	-	6,274,100	14,274,100
B. 2	United Nations Scientific Committee on the effects on Atomic radiation (UNSCEAR)	-	-	1,588,600	1,588,600
	Subtotal A + B	12,000,000	20,000	7,879,600	19,899,600
C	Programme of Work				-
1.	Climate action	24,000,000	4,500,000	4,157,700	32,657,700
2.	Digital transformations	14,000,000	1,300,000	2,693,500	17,993,500
3.	Nature action	24,000,000	2,400,000	5,034,500	31,434,500
4.	Environmental governance	26,000,000	1,300,000	8,735,300	36,035,300
5.	Chemicals and pollution action	24,000,000	3,100,000	3,395,900	30,495,900
6.	Finance and economic transformations	26,000,000	2,500,000	3,810,200	32,310,200
7.	Science-policy	26,000,000	700,000	6,075,700	32,775,700
	Subtotal C	164,000,000	15,800,000	33,902,800	213,702,800
D	Fund Programme Reserve	10,000,000			10,000,000
	Subtotal C + D	174,000,000	15,800,000	33,902,800	223,702,800
E	Programme Management and Other				-
	Programme Support	14,000,000	16,200,000	2,163,600	32,363,600
	Subtotal E	14,000,000	16,200,000	2,163,600	32,363,600
	Total (A+B+C+D+E)	200,000,000	32,020,000	43,946,000	275,966,000

2022-2023 Core Budgets - Allotments as of 30 September 2023					
	Functional Area Name	Environment Fund	Overhead Trust Account	Regular Budget	Grand Total
A	Policy Making Organs	4,503,490	-	16,900	4,520,390
B. 1	Executive Direction & Management	7,811,632		6,274,100	14,085,732
B. 2	United Nations Scientific Committee on the effects on Atomic radiation (UNSCEAR)	-	-	1,588,600	1,588,600
	Subtotal A + B	12,315,122		7,879,600	20,194,722
C	Programme of Work				
1	Climate action	21,905,127	2,189,046	4,157,700	28,251,873
2	Digital transformations	13,875,312	-	2,693,500	16,568,812
3	Nature action	21,487,917	2,815,544	4,956,625	29,260,086
4	Environmental governance	24,837,309	2,824,749	8,933,175	36,595,232
5	Chemicals and pollution action	22,594,355	2,883,600	3,395,900	28,873,854
6	Finance and economic transformations	22,937,962	1,866,188	3,610,200	28,414,349
7	Science-policy	22,779,218	789,417	6,155,700	29,724,335
	Subtotal C	150,417,199	13,368,543	33,902,800	197,688,542
D	Fund Programme Reserve	5,365,771	-	-	5,365,771
	Subtotal C + D	155,782,970	13,368,543	33,902,800	203,054,313
E	Programme Management and Other				
	Programme Support	13,401,908	29,857,675	2,163,600	45,423,183
	Subtotal E	13,401,908	29,857,675	2,163,600	45,423,183
	Total (A+B+C+D+E)	181,500,000	43,226,218	43,946,000	268,672,218

2022-2023 Core Budgets - Expenditures as of 30 September 2023					
	Functional Area Name	Environment Fund	Overhead Trust Account	Regular Budget	Grand Total
A	Policy Making Organs	3,958,677	-	15,715	3,974,392
B. 1	Executive Direction & Management	6,854,015	41,020	5,505,591	12,400,626
B. 2	United Nations Scientific Committee on the effects on Atomic radiation (UNSCEAR)	-	-	1,384,719	1,384,719
	Subtotal A + B	10,812,692	41,020	6,906,025	17,759,737
C	Programme of Work				
1.	Climate action	18,366,206	2,124,384	3,713,131	24,203,721
2.	Digital transformations	10,448,600	-	1,877,357	12,325,957
3.	Nature action	19,590,236	2,755,457	4,802,690	27,148,383
4.	Environmental governance	19,673,086	2,123,554	8,160,144	29,956,784
5.	Chemicals and pollution action	18,389,724	2,031,099	3,184,158	23,604,981
6.	Finance and economic transformations	15,700,167	1,453,936	2,537,642	19,691,745
7.	Science-policy	19,010,637	295,053	5,721,322	25,027,012
	Subtotal C	121,178,656	10,783,483	29,996,445	161,958,584
D	Fund Programme Reserve	3,027,295	-	-	3,027,295
	Subtotal C + D	124,205,951	10,783,483	29,996,445	164,985,879
E	Programme Management and Other				
	Programme Support	10,077,771	23,711,018	1,504,663	35,293,452
	Subtotal E	10,077,771	23,711,018	1,504,663	35,293,452
Total (A+B+C+D+E)		145,096,414	34,535,521	38,407,133	218,039,068

iii. Resource Mobilization Strategy

Following the recommendations Member States made at the 9th Annual Subcommittee Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, UNEP has expanded its regional outreach on funding. For the first time, the funding dialogue at the regional ministerial level was included in the 19th Ordinary Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), subsequent to which the African Member States included a commitment to contribute to the Environment Fund in the [Ministerial Declaration](#). UNEP is actively planning similar regional funding dialogues in the Asia-Pacific and LAC regions.

UNEP is consolidating Thematic Funds resource mobilisation and outreach for year two, building on the foundation developed during year one, with the support of funding partners such as Belgium, Finland and Norway. The focus going forward is on outreach to philanthropies and foundations and outreach to Member States.

B. Human Resources

As of 30 September 2023, UNEP employed 1347 staff members consisting of 821 (61 percent) in the professional and above categories, 12 (1 percent) in the National Professional Officer (NPO) category and 514 (38 percent) in the general service category. 848 (63 percent) of these are female, while 499 (37 percent) are male.

i. Senior Level Staff (UNEP Secretariat and MEAs)

Total number of staff at grade P-5 and above as of 30 September 2023

Level	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	Total
Number of Staff	1	2	11	48	122	184

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

ii. Appointments

Appointments in the third quarter (July to September) 2023

Position Title	Grade	Gender	Nationality	Internal/External	Division/Office/MEA
Senior Programme Management Officer	P-5	Male	Turkish	Internal	Ecosystems Division
Senior Programme Management Officer*	P-5	Female	Estonian	Internal	Industry and Economy Division
Senior Programme Management Officer*	P-5	Male	Swedish	Internal	Ecosystems Division
Senior Programme Management Officer*	P-5	Female	of Rep. of Korea	Internal	Asia Pacific Office
Executive Officer	P-5	Male	Nigerian	Internal	Early Warning and Assessment Division

The above information excludes Temporary Job Openings
*Staff members to assume office after 30 September 2023

iii. Overall Gender Parity status

The table below shows the overall gender parity status for the third quarter (July to September) of 2023.

Overall Gender Parity Status												
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	Total P+	Total NO	Total GS	Total Staff
Female	1	2	8	29	57	137	158	75	467	6	375	848
Male	0	0	3	19	65	138	95	34	354	6	139	499
Totals	1	2	11	48	122	275	253	109	821	12	514	1347

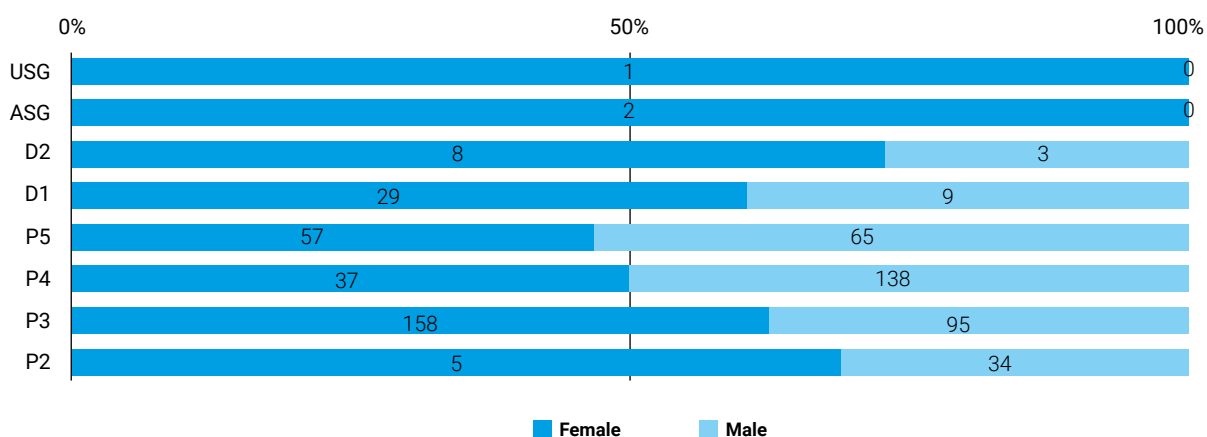
Note: USG=Under-Secretary-General; ASG=Assistant Secretary-General; D=Director; P=Professional

iv. Overall Gender Parity Status for Professional and Above Levels

The overall gender parity status in UNEP at the professional and above levels is 43% to 57% (male

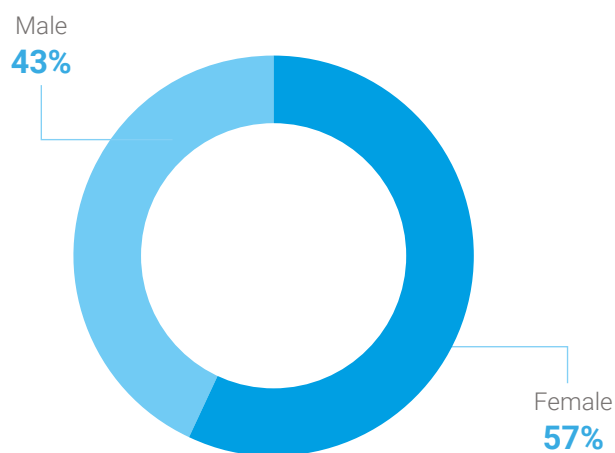
to female) ratio. The gender data below includes personnel on temporary contracts, temporary assignments, and Junior Professional Officers.

UNEP Gender Parity Status Professional Level and Above

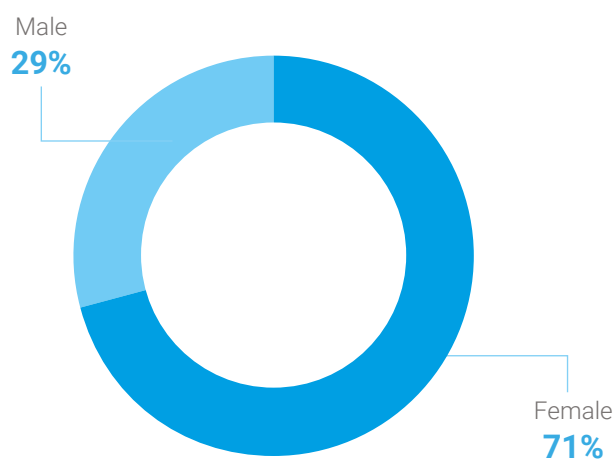


The charts below display the gender ratios for UNEP Secretariat Staff.

Gender Status - Professional Level and Above - UNEP Secretariat



Gender Status - General Staff - UNEP Secretariat



v. Gender Distribution - UNEP Secretariat and MEAs – 30 September 2023

The table below disaggregates the gender distribution between the UNEP Secretariat and MEAs.

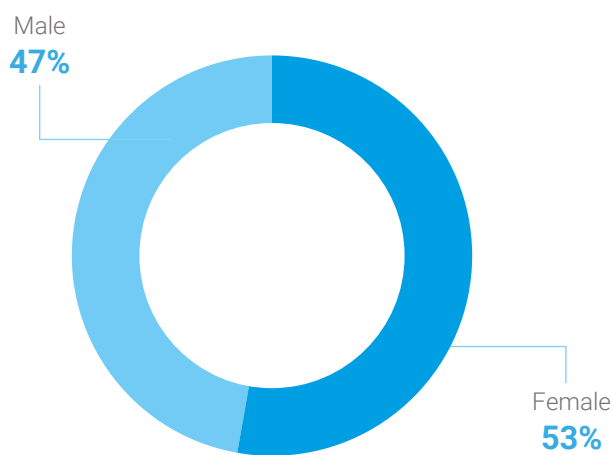
UNEP SECRETARIAT												
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	Total P+	Total NPO	Total GS	Total
Female	1	2	5	24	42	106	134	59	373	6	284	663
Male	0	0	2	18	50	119	74	20	283	6	114	403
UNEP MEAs												
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	Total P+	Total NPO	Total GS	Total
Female	0	0	3	5	15	31	24	16	94	0	91	185
Male	0	0	1	1	15	19	21	14	71	0	25	96
Total	1	2	11	48	122	275	253	109	821	12	514	1347

vi. Gender Parity Status for P5 and above level – UNEP Secretariat & MEAs

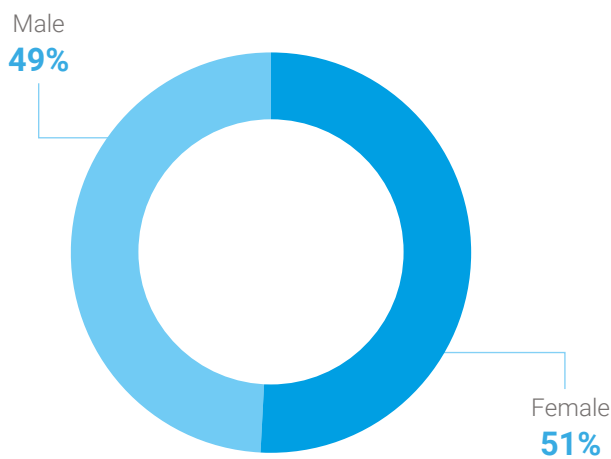
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	Total
Female	1	2	8	29	57	97
Male	0	0	3	19	65	87
Total	1	2	11	48	122	184
Female %	100%	100%	73%	60%	47%	53%
Male %	0%	0%	27%	40%	53%	47%

The charts below show the overall gender ratio at P5 and above level and those of the UNEP Secretariat.

Overall Gender Status - P5 and Above



Gender Status P5 and Above UNEP Secretariat



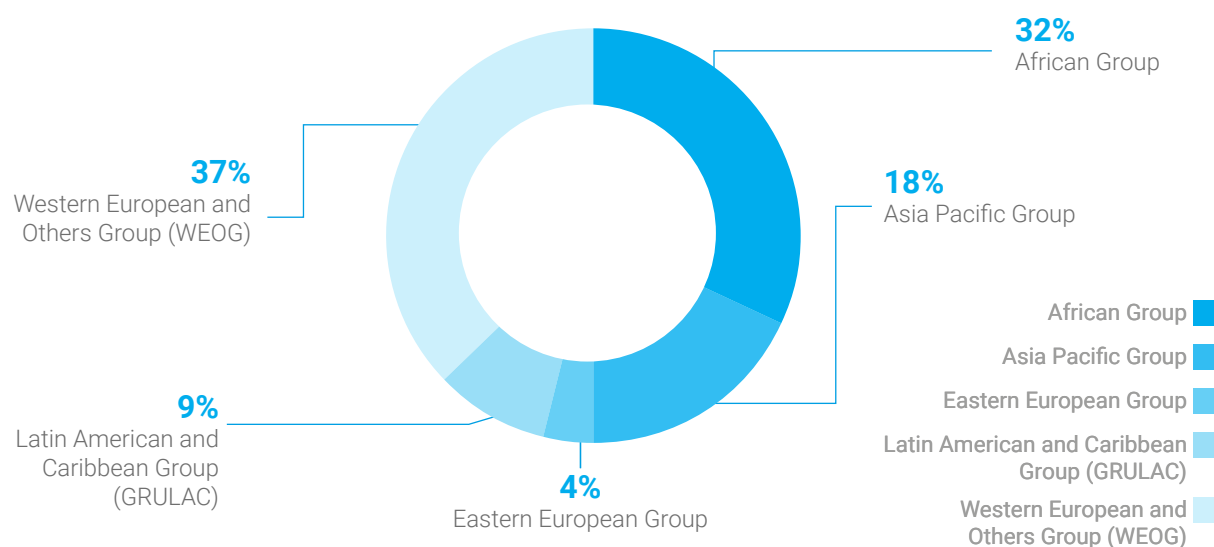
vii. Overall Regional Representation of staff (UNEP and MEA Secretariats) - 30 September 2023

The table below disaggregates the regional representation of all UNEP staff.

Overall Regional Representation of Staff

Region	Total
African Group	436
Asia Pacific Group	246
Eastern European Group	47
Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)	125
Western European and Others Group (WEOG)	493
Total	1347

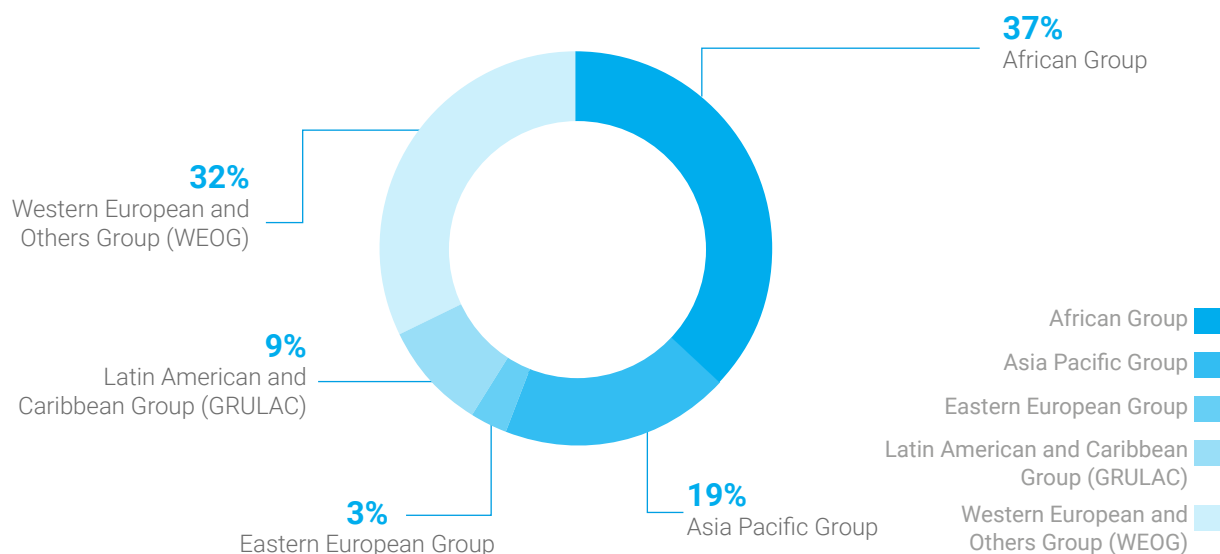
UNEP Overall Regional Representation



Regional Representation - UNEP Secretariat

Region	Total
African Group	399
Asia Pacific Group	198
Eastern European Group	34
Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)	99
Western European and Others Group (WEOG)	336
Total	1066

Regional Representation - UNEP Secretariat

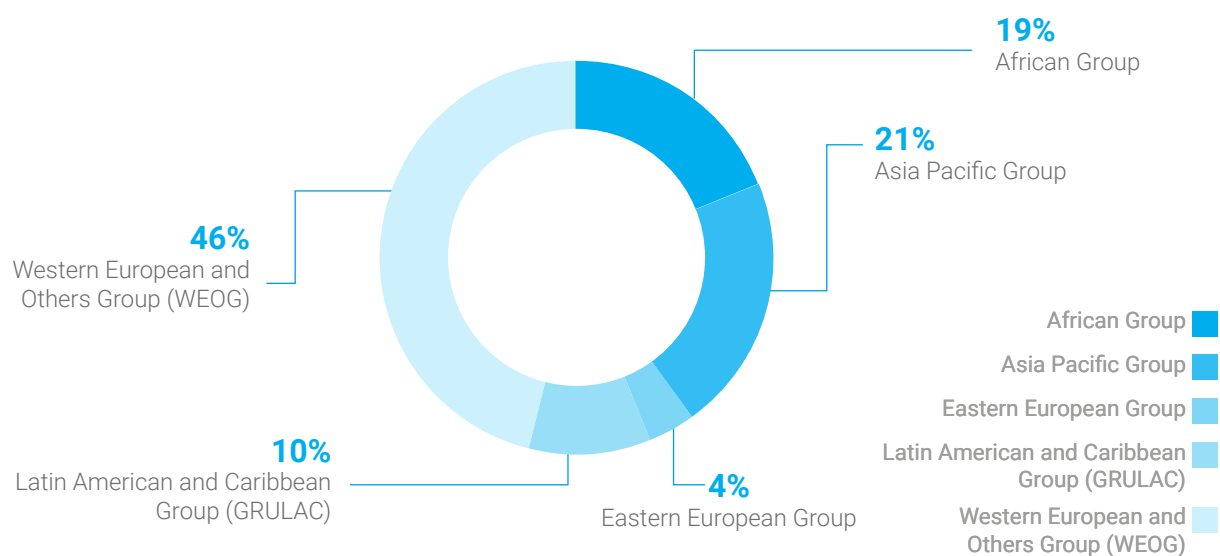


The table and chart below present the overall Regional Representation of UNEP's staff at the Professional level and above as of 30 September 2023.

Overall Regional Representation Professional Level and Above

Regional Group	Professional & Above Level								Total
	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	
African Group		1	3	4	28	56	48	12	152
Asia Pacific Group		1	2	9	20	58	51	35	176
Eastern European Group				5	5	10	9	7	36
Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)			2	5	16	24	25	8	80
Western European and Others Group (WEOG)	1		4	25	53	127	120	47	377
Total	1	2	11	48	122	275	253	109	821

Overall Regional Representation - Professional Level and Above

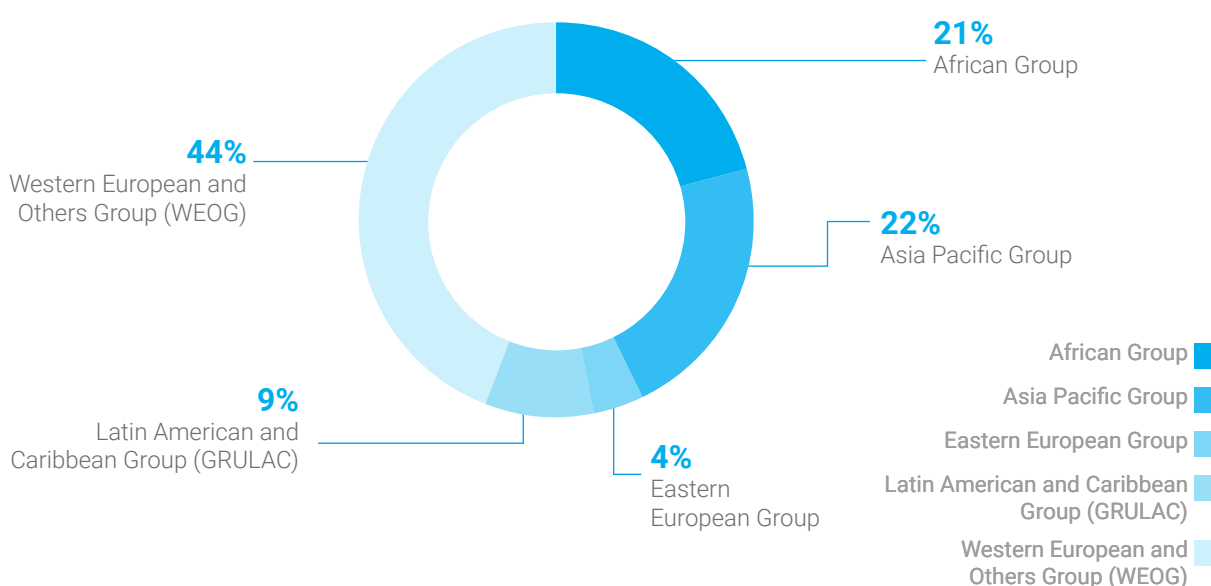


The table and chart below present UNEP Secretariat staff regional representation excluding the MEAs.

Regional Representation – Professional Level and Above – UNEP Secretariat

Regional Representation	Professional and Above Level - Secretariat								Total
	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	
African Group		1	2	4	20	52	45	11	135
Asia Pacific Group		1	1	7	14	50	43	27	143
Eastern European Group				4	4	8	8	6	30
Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)			1	4	11	19	20	5	60
Western European and Others Group (WEOG)	1		3	23	43	96	92	30	288
Total	1	2	7	42	92	225	208	79	656

Regional Representation – Professional Level and Above – UNEP Secretariat

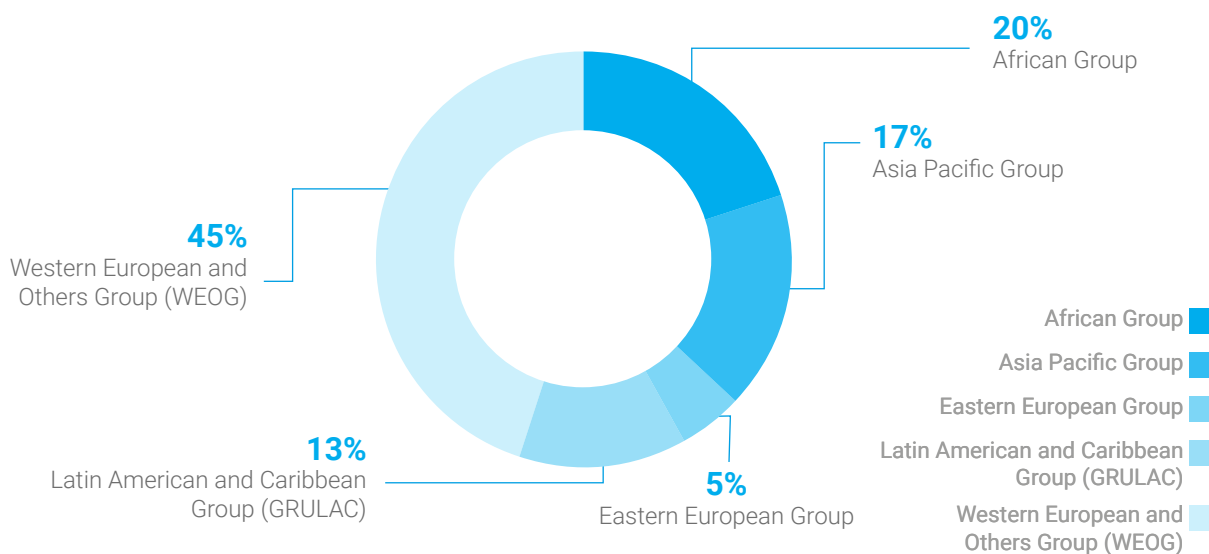


The table and charts below present the regional representation of staff at the P5 and above level within UNEP.

Overall Regional Representation P5 and Above - 30 September 2023

Regional Group	P-5 & Above					Total
	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	
African Group		1	3	4	28	36
Asia Pacific Group		1	2	9	20	32
Eastern European Group				5	5	10
Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)			2	5	16	23
Western European and Others Group (WEOG)	1		4	25	53	83
Total	1	2	11	48	122	184

Overall Regional Representation - P5 and Above

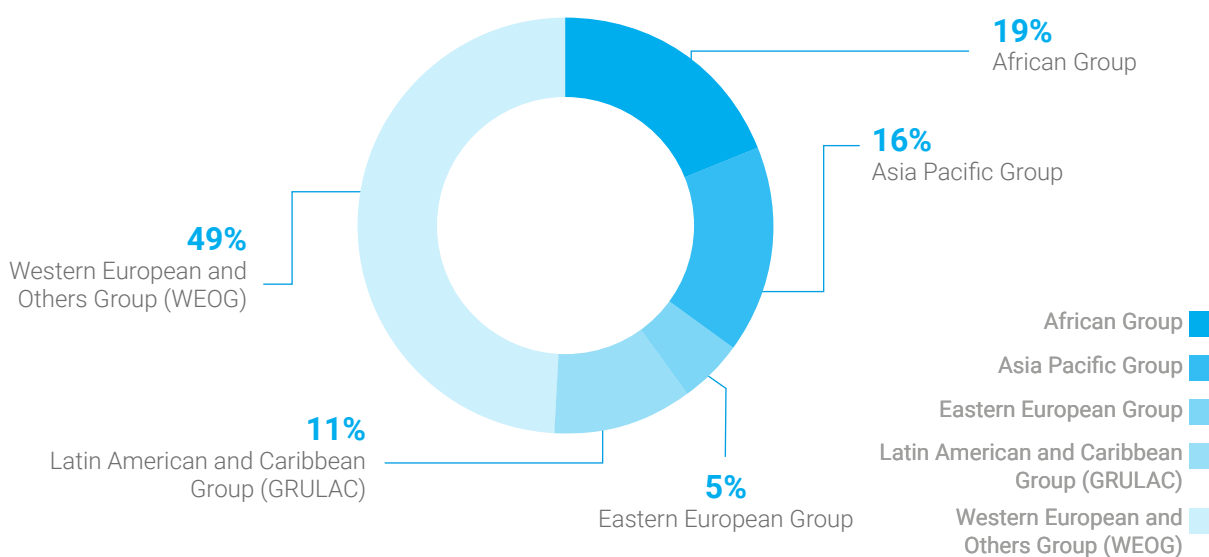


The following table and charts present the regional representation of staff within the UNEP Secretariat at the P5 and above level.

Regional Representation – P5 and Above – UNEP Secretariat

Regional Group	P5 and Above Level - Secretariat					Total
	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	
African Group		1	2	4	20	27
Asia Pacific Group		1	1	7	14	23
Eastern European Group				4	4	8
Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)			1	4	11	16
Western European and Others Group (WEOG)	1		3	23	43	70
Total	1	2	7	42	92	144

Regional Representation – P5 and Above – UNEP Secretariat



viii. Human Resources Issues

UNEP remains committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in accordance with the UNEA Resolution [5/13](#). As of 30 September, 63% of the staffing composition was female and 37% male. UNEP exceeded its gender parity targets for all Professional and above levels, with female representation exceeding male representation at a rate of 57% versus 43%. UNEP continues to monitor gender ratios at all levels to maintain parity. UNEP is among the top 10 entities within the UN Secretariat with the highest levels of female representation in the professional and above levels. UNEP is ranked second in the list of entities within the UN Secretariat with more than 100 international staff members with the highest levels of female representation in the professional and above levels.

Regarding regional geographical diversity, as of 30 September, 71% of external selections in 2023 for positions at the Professional level and above corresponded to candidates from less represented geographical regions. This demonstrates UNEP's commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion in the recruitment of new staff members. By actively seeking applicants from less represented geographical regions, the organization seeks to achieve a more balanced and representative workforce, thereby fostering a greater diversity of perspectives and experiences. Furthermore, during the third quarter of 2023, UNEP finalized the assessment process of the applicants to the 12 programmatic positions of the first cohort of the Young Talent Pipeline initiative, which will be recruited under the UNV specialist modality. The selections will be confirmed during the last quarter of 2023, and it is expected that the candidates will be onboarded before the end of the year, subject to their availability.

During the third quarter of 2023, UNEP also conducted a direct talent outreach activity with the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which attracted over 200 participants. This talent outreach event was held in response to the Note Verbale sent by the Secretariat of Governing Bodies to all members of the CPR in the first quarter of 2023, inviting Member States to collaborate with UNEP on direct outreach events for their constituents.

UNEP also conducted a training on unconscious bias for staff members with hiring roles to raise awareness on the topic and the impact it may have on diversity and inclusion during recruitment processes. The training aimed to equip staff members with strategies and tools to mitigate unconscious bias in their decision-making processes. By addressing this issue, UNEP is committed to promoting fair and inclusive hiring practices that foster diversity within the organization.

UNEP acknowledges that increasing the geographical diversity of its staff is a long-term goal. Significant progress has been made in this regard, most notably the increase in the number of staff members from less represented geographical regions. This advancement is the result of the organization's efforts to attract and recruit talent from a variety of regions, while simultaneously nurturing diversity and inclusion initiatives. By prioritizing geographical diversity, UNEP intends to ensure that its workforce reflects the global character of its mission and can effectively address global environmental challenges. The organization continues to implement strategies such as targeted recruitment campaigns and partnerships with regional institutions to increase the staff representation of underrepresented regions. In this context, the active participation of Member States enables UNEP to access a larger pool of potential candidates by leveraging their knowledge, experience and resources.

C. Audits

i. United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)

a. Completed Audits:

The audit for the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions Secretariat was completed and the following recommendations were made:

BRS Secretariat has been advised to strengthen management of the delegation of authority and its enterprise risk management, improve coordination mechanisms with UNEP Divisions as well as improve the public awareness and advocacy programme, ICT systems and mechanisms for reporting to the parties.

b. Audits Under implementation (21):

- Cyber-security preparedness (7)
- Grants Management (1)
- Partnerships Management (1)
- Convention on Biological Diversity (2)
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (4)
- Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West, and Central African Region and its Protocol– (Abidjan Convention) (1)
- Audit of the Ecosystems Division at UNEP (2)
- Audit of the UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan for the Barcelona Convention (3)

c. Ongoing Audits:

Delegation of Authority (started in August 2023): The audit on the delegation of authority (DOA) at UNEP aims to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the DOA framework. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit will cover high and medium risk areas in the DOA, which includes (a) sub-delegation policies, structures, and processes; (b) decision making processes and alignment to programme delivery; (c) monitoring mechanisms; (d) reporting and management of exceptions; and (e) relationship with service providers for the DOA areas: finance and budget, human resource management, procurement and property management.

d. Planned Audits:

Audit of the Industry and Economy Division (late 2023 to 2024)

ii. United Nations Board of Auditors (BoA)

The Board of Auditors conducted the final audit for the financial statements of 2022 in Nairobi between 3 April and 7 May 2023. As a result, the audit report was shared outlining 24 observations for the 2022 financial period, which UNEP has accepted, of which 4 recommendations have already been requested closed as implemented. For the prior financial periods, 20 recommendations are under implementation. 7 recommendations have been requested for closure. Implementation plans for all outstanding and new observations have been drafted and monitoring is ongoing.

D. Evaluations

i. UNEP Evaluations

During the reporting period three independent project evaluations were completed, four management-led Terminal Reviews were independently validated by the Evaluation Office and 27 project evaluations are currently ongoing.

In addition, the Evaluation Office prepared a synthesis of issues commonly occurring in the [recommendations](#) made in GEF Project Evaluations and, additionally, produced a summary of findings emerging from a [portfolio of evaluations](#) undertaken on the theme of Sustainable Land Management.

Completed Independent Terminal Evaluations include:

[Joint Evaluation of the UNEP-UNDP Poverty Environment Action \(PEA\) project](#)

- Overall Performance Rating: “Moderately Satisfactory”
- Key Findings: This global project, jointly implemented by UNDP and UNEP, aimed to strengthen integration of poverty-environment-climate objectives into policies, plans, regulations and investments of partner countries to accelerate delivery of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The PEA Project was implemented through two types of projects: Full-fledged country projects and technical assistance (TA) projects. A total of eight full-fledged country projects were being supported through the initiative with four in Africa (Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique and Rwanda) and four in Asia (Bangladesh, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Nepal) with different implementation arrangement modalities. Overall, the PEA Project’s outcome indicators were more output-oriented than outcome-oriented. This in turn affected the design and monitoring of outcome-oriented results at the fully-fledged country and country TA projects. While the PEA Project endeavoured to make a transformational impact change, this did not fully materialise. However, the PEA Project model serves as an example to further develop the UNDP-UNEP cooperation. To steer joint programmes/projects of a complex nature effectively and efficiently, they

need to be well-funded with adequate secured resources, well-equipped with technical expertise and have strong senior management support. Integrating sustainable poverty-environment mainstreaming, natural resource management and climate resilience building in UNCT country processes and their respective country programmes could potentially increase by building strong connections and relationships with country-level UNRCs and other UN agencies.

Developing Core Capacity for Decentralized MEA Implementation and Natural Resources Management in Afghanistan (GEF ID 5017) (report available on request)

- Overall Performance Rating: “Moderately Satisfactory”
- Key Findings: The project had an appropriate focus on establishing the basic policy and institutional conditions required for environmental governance and translating obligations under MEAs into policy and action. Overall, the project enhanced the capacity to implement MEAs, albeit with significant capacity and financial constraints remaining. Integration of MEAs in national policies and strategies related to natural resource management, environment, climate change, and disaster management was facilitated. After the operational completion of the project, the Taliban regime took over control of Afghanistan, disrupting the scope for post-project sustainability.

[Scaling Up Sustainable Land Management and Agro-Biodiversity Conservation to reduce Environmental Degradation in Small-Scale Agriculture in Western Kenya \(GEF ID 5272\)](#)

- Overall Performance Rating: “Highly Unsatisfactory”
- Key Findings: The project sought to establish “how to scale-out from the successful, but often fragmented and localized, Sustainable Land Management/Sustainable Forest Management (SLM/SFM) initiatives, to programmes that are fully integrated within the county development plans and budgets and hence are both institutionally and financially sustainable”. The project targeted the Kakamega and Nandi Forest in Western Kenya and adjacent farming areas. A decision taken by the Project Steering Committee substantially scaled down project ambitions. The target values of the indicators at objective level of relevance for the GEF were reduced by approx. 80%. The reduction in targets constituted a ‘major amendment’ as per the GEF Guidelines. As a major amendment,

the reduction in targets should have been approved through a formal process involving UNEP and the GEF and would most likely have required adjustments to the agreed workplan and budget. This is an issue also raised in the recommendations made by the OIOS Audit of the Ecosystems Division of UNEP in 2022. The project neither delivered its expected outputs nor achieved its outcomes. The capacities of Implementing Partners, Trainers of Trainers, Sub-county Agricultural Officers and Ward Agricultural Officers were not sufficiently developed to promote learnings amongst the farming communities. In addition, the counties of Kakamega, Nandi and Vihiga could not integrate the SLM strategies into their County Integrated Development Plan (CIDPs), because they were developed at a very late stage of the project’s implementation period. The strategies did not present a level of detail that could help the county government to develop actual actions upon them. Finally, the inter-county forum to promote LSM/SFM was not established during the life span of the project.

Independently Validated management-led Terminal Reviews:

[Expanding the ongoing support to Least Developed Countries with country-driven processes to advance National Adaptation Plans” \(GEF ID 5868\)](#)

- Overall Validated Performance Rating: “Satisfactory”
- Key Findings: The NAP GSP LDC II project has achieved significant success in surpassing its targets and implementing activities to support NAP development in LDCs. The review also highlights challenges in measuring institutional and technical capacity enhancement in countries for advancing their NAP process. The implementation of the project was highly cost-effective, achieving its objectives while keeping management costs below the efficient threshold. It had a well-built joint implementation model, close coordination with partners, and a small core team. Collaboration with other initiatives and partnerships further reduced costs and increased impact. The project adapted to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by reallocating savings to communication and outreach activities. Overall, the NAP-GSP project demonstrated its effectiveness in resource utilization and leveraging partnerships, providing valuable support to LDCs in addressing global challenges.

[Integrating the Management of Protection and Production Areas for Biodiversity Conservation in the Sierra Tarahumara of Chihuahua, Mexico \(GEF ID 4883\)](#)

- Overall Validated Performance Rating: "Satisfactory"
- Key Findings: The project sought to integrate biodiversity conservation considerations into the management of protection and production areas in the Sierra Tarahumara, which is associated to global goals of the UNCBD. The project mainstreamed biodiversity in local planning and environmental management, informed by the identification and monitoring of biodiversity and ecosystem services at the landscape level, was innovative and ensured good participation and appropriation from local stakeholders, especially ejidos, Indigenous Peoples (IP) and NGOs. It achieved the majority of its planned outputs and outcomes, and also generated a noticeable change in behaviour and attitude of the local governments. Major operational challenges included security issues related to narcotraffickers and illegal loggers, accompanied by the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak.

[Equatorial Africa Deposition Network Project \(EADN\) \(GEF ID 3401\)](#)

- Overall Validated Performance Rating: "Unsatisfactory"
- Key Findings: The project's primary objective was to establish a network for monitoring the atmospheric transport and deposition of nutrients (phosphorus and nitrogen) in sub-Saharan Africa and to use the data collected by the network, along with model simulations driven by the data, to determine sources of atmospheric nutrients and their contribution to lake nutrient budgets. However, the project's delivery was delayed, outputs were only partially delivered, and outcomes only partially achieved. Sustainability was rated as 'Highly Unlikely'. There was moderate ownership, interest and commitment among the government and other stakeholders. Whilst participating countries are signatories to international conventions on the environment and had relevant national policies and nearby communities embraced the project, the prioritisation of issues and national-level financial allocations need to match the commitments.

["EUROCLIMA+ - Accelerating Climate Action in Latin America](#)

- Overall Validated Performance Rating: "Satisfactory"
- Key Findings: The project aimed to support the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the UNFCCC by promoting low-emission and climate-resilient development with a focus on key sectors identified as strategic for the successful implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions in the region, namely policy dialogue, electric mobility and ecosystem-based adaptation. Stakeholders commented on the high quality and timeliness of the activities implemented and outputs delivered such as regional meetings, webinars, guidelines, technical/policy advice (e.g., strategies), studies, methodologies, learning exchanges, regional outlooks (publications) and country analyses. The project clearly prioritised a regional approach in line with decisions adopted by the beneficiary countries in specialized technical events and high-level ministerial forums. This allowed UNEP to also promote south-south cooperation in the two selected sectors (electric mobility and ecosystem-based adaptation).



QUARTERLY REPORT

to the **164th** Meeting of the

COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES

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