

## SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

### **Launch of the Beyond 2020 Process for the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste, 7-9 February 2017 in Brasilia, Brazil**

UN Environment Executive Director delivered a keynote address at the [1st Meeting of the Intercessional Process for Considering the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management](#) and the [Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste Beyond 2020](#). Approximately 270 participants representing governments, industry, United Nations agencies and civil society participated.

### **4th World Ocean Summit, 22-24 February 2017, Bali, Indonesia**

The Executive Director joined over 60 global leaders at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Ocean Summit. He launched the UN global campaign on [#CleanSeas](#) with Indonesian Ministers, private sector leaders, non-governmental organizations and celebrity ocean ambassadors during a beach cleanup in Bali, in conjunction with the Summit. The campaign will run for five years and will be carried out in three different phases in order to achieve a global ban on micro-beads in cosmetics and personal care products and a drastic reduction in the use of single-use plastics. [The digital platform](#) will collate all the notable work that is driven by citizens, the private sector and governments to enhance visibility on a critical issue and build momentum.

### **UN Environment Executive Director visits the Islamic Republic of Iran, 24-27 February 2017**

The Executive Director attended the inauguration of the [16th Iran International Environment Exhibition](#), and met Vice President H.E. Dr. Masoumeh Ebtekar. He also visited Urmia Lake and Urmia City to assess its current condition.

### **Global Centre of Excellence on Adaptation**

UN Environment is closely involved in the development of a new '[Global Center of Excellence on Adaptation](#)', together with the Netherlands and Japan. The [Global Environment Facility](#), the City of Rotterdam, [Acclimatise](#), and the [Delta Alliance](#) also engaged in this initiative. The Government of the Netherlands has committed one million Euros and the center is scheduled to be launched before the end of this year.

### **UN Environment launched the 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase of the Wildfor.Life Campaign in January 2017 to tackle the illegal trade in wildlife**

The [Wildfor.Life](#) campaign has reached 1.1 billion people on social media, with 4.5 million interactions, 45,000 visitors have done 'morphs' of their own profile photos with their kindred species after visiting the website. Some 12,000 people have pledged to take action. China's social media platform "Weibo" named #Wildfor.Life one of its "[Top 10 Most Influential Advocacy Campaigns](#)" for 2016. In February, and for [World Pangolin Day](#), a video on pangolins was watched 183,260 times on Facebook. The Chinese version was reposted by China's state-owned media and by our Goodwill Ambassador Li Bing Bing and was watched 14 million times. A Spanish version was watched 127,000 times.

### **Launch of projects on Capacity Building for Reporting to Climate Conventions, 22 December 2016 in Bahrain and 9-17 January 2017 in Kuwait**

Two projects on national communication and biennial update reports were launched with the participation of stakeholders from various sectors. Training was provided on preparing Greenhouse Gas) as well as impacts, vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning.

### **Enhancement of Civil Society Engagement on Environment, Climate and Science in Kuwait**

UN Environment West Asia Office and [Kuwait Foundation of the Advancement of Science](#) signed a partnership agreement in January 2017 to enhance the capacities of civil society organizations on environment protection and science.

### **Strong support at the World Health Organization Executive Board for a chemicals road map - January 2017**

The [World Health Organization](#) Executive Board discussed a draft [road map](#) to enhance the role of the health sector in the [Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management](#) in achieving the [Strategic Approach 2020 Goal](#) and beyond. The road map outlines concrete actions to be taken in four main areas: risk reduction; knowledge and evidence; institutional capacity; and leadership and coordination. The road map will be presented to the [Seventieth World Health Assembly](#) in May 2017.

### **Private Sector Engagement**

UN Environment received an invitation by the "[Global Alliance for Banking on Values](#)" to participate (physically or virtually) at its Board Meeting on 6-7 March in Nepal. The Alliance currently comprises 40 socially environmentally and culturally committed banks.

### **Beyond Batumi**

[The Committee on Environmental Policy](#) followed up on the outcomes of the Ministerial Conference and lays out the preparations for the Third Session of the United Nations Environmental Assembly, on 25-27 January 2017. Delegates discussed progress on the implementation of the declaration, highlighting good practices and challenges encountered in the implementation of the two Batumi Initiatives — the [Batumi Action for Cleaner Air \(BACA\)](#) and the [Batumi Initiative on Green Economy \(BIG-E\)](#) which consist of concrete voluntary commitments by countries on tackling air pollution and transitioning to a green economy and help countries in achieving the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). UN Environment also hosted a session dedicated to the third session of the Environment Assembly, along with members of the bureau from the United States, Montenegro and the Czech Republic and Costa Rica.

### **Government of Belarus adopts 2016-2020 National Green Economy Action Plan**

On 21 December 2016 the "[Greening Economies in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood Countries](#)" Project, developed by UN Environment in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and funded by the European Union, was adopted by the Government of Belarus. The plan was approved by Belarus' Council of Ministers on 21 December 2016 after getting the green light from all Ministries and taking into account over 100 comments from civil society. This forms part of the green economy commitments made by Belarus under the [Batumi Initiative on Green Economy](#).

### **Lewis Pugh**

UN Environment Patron of Oceans and endurance swimmer Lewis Pugh swam one kilometer in freezing Antarctic waters wearing nothing more than a pair of swimming trunks to bring the world's attention to ocean protection. UN Environment Multi Media Officer was there to record and coverage reached 905,748 users on social media, and the videos were viewed more than 125,000 times so far.

### **The Ocean Conference**

UN Environment is the co-convenor of three Informal Preparatory Working Groups for [the Ocean Conference](#) due to take place 5-9 June 2017 in New York. During a [preparatory meeting](#) in February Sustainable Development Goals 14.1 (pollution), 14.2 (ecosystem management), and 14.5 (marine protected areas) were addressed. Inputs to the plenary discussion on a draft conference Outcome Document and identification of thematic partnership dialogues were also provided.

### **Memorandum of Understanding between UN Environment and the Economic Community of West African States**

This Memorandum of Understanding aims to consolidate their cooperation to advance shared goals and objectives focusing on promoting policy dialogue among Member States in the context of the 2030 Sustainable development Agenda and the African Union Agenda 2063 which includes climate change, chemicals and hazardous wastes management; resource efficiency; sustainable consumption and production; sustainable land management; disasters and conflicts and environment security.

### **Macro-economic study on the economic impact of deforestation launched**

UN Environment through the [United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries](#), successfully launched a [macro-economic study](#) on the impact of deforestation on the economy of Cote d'Ivoire on 31 January 2017.

### **The Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Great Green Wall Initiative countries adopts the 2017- 2020 Action Plan**

The extra-ordinary meeting of the Council of Ministers of the [Great Green Wall Initiative](#) met in Khartoum, Sudan, on 5 – 7 February 2017 and adopted the initiative's 5-year Action Plan and approved its budget for the same period. The eleven member states, which are participants in the Great Green Wall Initiative, are: Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and The Sudan. The Secretariat is hosted by the Government of Mauritania in Nouakchott. UN Environment provides technical support to the Member States to implement the Great Green Wall Initiative.

## UN Environment in the Regions

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### UN Environment – Africa Region:

UN Environment in Africa to enhance the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals:

- **Memorandum of Understanding between UN Environment and the Economic Community of Central African States** to collaborate in achieving their common objectives in the field of the environment, and natural resources. Emphasis has been placed on policy development, technical assistance, training and capacity building, as well as resource mobilization for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Climate Change Agreement.
- **Framework for integrating environmental law in judicial education programmes in Africa agreed:** Participants of a regional programme forum for mainstreaming environmental law in Africa organized by UN Environment and the [South African Judicial Education Institute](#) agreed on an action plan and framework for achieving this integration. The countries, which participated in this forum, include Ghana, Sierra Leone, Kenya, South Africa, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique and Cameroon.
- **Toxic substances used in electric transformers destined for environmentally sound disposal:** 1,600 tons of Polychlorinated Biphenyl, a highly toxic chemical used in electric transformers, is being shipped to France for environmentally sound disposal. Supported by UN Environment, this operation is being conducted under the framework of the Polychlorinated Biphenyl West Africa. The operation is funded by the [Global Environment Facility](#) and covers 14 African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Djibouti, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Chad, RD Congo and Togo).
- **South Africa elected to co-chair the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production:** South Africa has been elected co-chair of the [10 Year Framework of Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production](#) for Sustainable Food Systems. UN Environment will provide technical support to the Department of Trade and Industry of South Africa to fulfill the coordination mandate.
- **The Uganda Wetlands Atlas (Volume 2) was launched** on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2017 in collaboration with the Government and the UN System in the country. This has been used as a guide by the National Environment Management authority and schools. The atlas products have triggered the establishment of a US \$ 100 Million Presidential Initiative on Wetlands which aims to recover, restore and sustainably manage wetland resources in the country.
- **Government of Sudan and UN Environment receive support to capacity building** UN Environment Adapt for Environmental and Climate Resilience in Sudan project has made available, through the UN Environment Sudan Project, funding for the Sudan State of the Environment and Outlook Report. Capacity building support will partly be provided through the Africa Office. The report is planned for completion at the end of 2018.

## UN Environment – Asia Pacific Region:

**UN Environment supports Nepal, Thailand and Maldives to Access Grant Support from the Global Environment Facility to enhance community climate change resilience and economic opportunities deriving from strengthening ecosystems management and governance.**

- **NEPAL:** Resilience to Climate Change will be strengthened through Ecosystem-based Adaptation Measures: In January 2017, a USD 6.242 million GEF grant proposal was approved to enhance resilience to climate change in The Kathmandu Valley of Nepal.
- **THAILAND:** Integration of Natural Capital Accounting in Public and Private Sector Policy and Decision-Making for Sustainable Landscapes: In January 2017, a USD 2.245 million Global Environment Facility grant proposal was approved to enhance protection, restoration and sustainable management of forested landscapes as well as seascapes in Thailand.
- **MALDIVES:** Enhancing National Development through Environmentally Resilient Islands: In February 2017, a USD 4 million Global Environment Facility grant proposal was approved to enhance protection and sustainable management of the coral reef-atoll seascapes, through an in-built design for scaling up from local experience in Laamu Atoll to national scale.

## UN Environment – Europe Region:

- **UN Environment Participation in Arctic Frontiers Conference, 17-27 January, Trømso, Norway** The Prime Ministers of Norway and Finland, along with 2000 attendees from academia, decision-makers and business participated to create a firmer foundation for sustainable development in a region. UN Environment's Europe Director, Jan Dusik, attended the conference and took part in panel discussions on the relation between the [Paris Agreement](#) and the Arctic and on a low-carbon ocean economy.
- **Rome turned its eyes on Sustainable Finance on 6 February**  
A year-long national dialogue led by the Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea, Government of Italy and UN Environment resulted in launching the new report entitled "[Financing the Future](#)", with the participation of Ministers for Environment and for Economy and Finance and the UN Environment Executive Director. The report, which received inputs from over 100 experts from banks, capital markets, insurers, investors, corporations, financial regulators, academics and civil society, is a stepping stone for the meeting of the environment ministers of the [G7](#) in June in Bologna, under the Italian Presidency, where green finance will be a major topic. Italy signed a multi-annual support to the UN Environment Fund.
- **The European Commission and UN Environment Workshop on Oceans**  
This was held in Brussels, 9-10 February in preparation for the UN [PrepCom meeting](#) scheduled between 27 March and 7 April, and was attended by over 40 participants from the European Union, UN Environment and the relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements.
- **The Sixth Edition of the Global Environment Outlook presented in Italy in February on 21 February**  
In the lead-up to the G7 Summit, UN Environment in partnership with the Italian G7 Presidency and the Italian Ministry of Environment organized a Global Open Dialogue and Press Briefing entitled "[Environmental Security in a Changing World](#)". The event will shed light on the top environmental issues proposed for the G7 Agenda in the context of global environmental priorities, growing challenges, and multi-lateral obligations - from the [Paris Agreement](#) to the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). The workshop had around 130 eminent scientists, government representatives from 40 countries, civil society, the business sector and the media.

- **UN Environment participation in 3rd [Environmental Performance Review of Albania in February](#)** UN Environment was part of a wider team led by [the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe](#). For the first time, the Review considered and provided country information on the implementation of [Sustainable Development Goals](#).
- **60 Experts attended the Mainstreaming Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Workshops in Georgia** (20-21 February) and Moldova (27-28 February) to identify environmental issues and threats to forest ecosystems and related services; monitor representative forest ecosystems and protected areas on selected study areas; and build and reinforce local capacity through knowledge transfer in Earth observation related technologies. The meetings are funded by Norway.

### **UN Environment – North America Region:**

- UN Environment held consultations to engage with civil society and to gather regional perspectives to be shared at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. **“The Global Environment Outlook and Pathways to Sustainability” event** was held in cooperation with the University of Ottawa on 2 December 2016. The consultation highlighted key findings and policy recommendations from the [Sixth Edition of the Global Environment Outlook North American Regional Assessment](#). It also served to share information about progression of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).
- In the U.S., the consultation, **“Towards the UN Environment Assembly: Combating Global Pollution,”** was held at the UN Foundation on 9 February 2017. The event addressed the complexities of combating pollution globally and at the national, state, and local levels and highlighted the impact of various types of pollution on human health and the environment. Two North American Regional Representatives were elected during the consultations: Michelle Wyman, Executive Director of the National Council for Science and the Environment, based in Washington, D.C. and Christian Ledwell, Media and Communications Officer for the International Institute for Sustainable Development from Ottawa, Ontario.

### **UN Environment – South America Region:**

- **Caribbean countries moving ahead on the Green Economy**  
UN Environment and through the [Partnership for Action on Green Economy](#) held an inception workshop with the Government of Barbados and key stakeholders to discuss the support needed along with participants from the [United Nations Development Programme](#), [the United Nations Industrial Development Organization](#) and the [International Labor Organization](#). The Partnership for Action on Green Economy mission team hosted bilateral meetings with the ministers of environment, labor, industry and foreign affairs as well as UN agencies, partners, government ministries, national focal points and private sectors, trade unions, and civil societies to prepare for Guyana's Green State Development Strategy
- **Convention on Biological Diversity - Conference of the Parties 13, December 2016 in Cancun, Mexico under the motto “Mainstreaming of Biodiversity for Well-Being”**  
Special emphasis was put on the forestry, fishery, agricultural and tourism sectors. UN Environment built strong partnerships with government agencies, legislators, private sector, academia, civil society and the media. UN Environment leads on Environmental Sustainability and Green Economy.

**UN Environment – West Asia Region:**

UN Environment continued to provide technical support to the United Nations Country Teams in the region that are rolling out UN Strategic Frameworks with a specific focus in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. The support provided has ensured that environment is effectively mainstreamed throughout the documents as well as being the focus of specific outcomes within the results matrix. It has also provided UN Environment with an opportunity to more effectively identify its focused areas of support in line with National Development Planning processes and the Sustainable Development Goals and provides a launch pad for further engagement.

## UN System-Wide Cooperation and Coherence

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### Update by the Environment Management Group Secretariat

#### UN System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment

Following the [United Nations Environment Assembly](#) Resolution 2/5, and the launch of the [UN system Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment](#), the Senior Officials of the [Environment Management Group](#) have been engaged to support the implementation of the environmental dimensions of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) in a collaborative manner. Under this framework and through the Environment Management Group, the UN system will produce a Synthesis Report providing good examples of United Nations entities' responses to the environmental dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development individually and collectively. As a result, areas for further collaboration or possibilities for common strategies on specific environmental goals will be identified. This annual Synthesis Report will be submitted to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in December 2017. A zero draft of the report will be available in April 2017.

#### Enhancing effectiveness of the Environment Management Group in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Furthermore, in response to Resolution 2/5, a proposal on how to further enhance the contribution of the Group to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through a revised Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure for the Group is being prepared, which will be finalized and submitted to the Senior Officials in September 2017.

#### Policy Dialogues on nexus issues of the Sustainable Development Goals with focus on the environment

To enhance an integrated implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals including the environmental dimensions in the UN system, a series of [Policy Dialogues on environmental nexus issues of the Sustainable Development Goals](#) will be organized by the Environment Management Group in 2017. The First dialogue will be held in Geneva in April in the margins of the Conferences of the Parties of the [Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions](#). These Dialogues will contribute to a common understanding of the integrated [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and targets, as well as the requirements and opportunities these bring for UN entities, by offering techniques to think critically about nexus issues between any two or more domains. The Dialogues will also provide an occasion for United Nations entities and other stakeholders to identify areas of mutual interest and collaboration in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in a coherent and collaborative manner.

#### Sustainable Management of the Electronic Waste

A new [inter-agency Group on e-waste](#) has begun the mapping of existing e-waste initiatives across the United Nations system to identify gaps and opportunities for collaboration through a possible system wide approach on electronic waste. A first draft of the Group's report is expected in March.

#### Enhancing Sustainability of the internal UN Operations and Facilities

The inter-agency work on enhancing environmental and social sustainability in the internal work of the United Nations system continues with a focus on awareness raising on the links between the Sustainable Development Goals and sustainability of the UN operations, and exploring options for a common approach for application of environmental and social safeguards by the UN system at country level.

### **Environmental Peer Reviews**

Two new [Environmental Management Peer Reviews](#) were carried out in 2016 for the World Food Programme and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in Amman, Jordan. Three more Peer Reviews will be carried out in 2017, including those of the field operations of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Office for Project Support offices in Amman, and the headquarters of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Bonn. Peer Reviews of the United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees and International Fund for Agricultural Development are under consideration.



## Corporate Management and Management Reform

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### Business Transformation and Change Management Initiative

On 17 January, UN Environment, UN Habitat, and United Nations office at Nairobi launched the Business Transformation and Change Management Initiative. This is a two year, cost shared, jointly managed project of the three entities that aims to drive greater efficiency, transparency, and accountability in core areas of business.

The initiative is led by the three heads of Corporate Services and Administration of UN Environment, UN Habitat, and UNON and is grounded in pragmatism – focusing on what we can do in Nairobi now to make our work more efficient. It responds to United Nations Secretary-General Guterres remarks that, "*We need to simplify, to decentralize, to make things more flexible, and all in the context of transparency and accountability.*" It does not aim to change the world of regulations and policies, but to take practical steps to improve the way we work together in support of the delivery of our programmes of work.

The core team consists of two people, and flex teams are formed with colleagues from across the entities depending on the matter being examined. This means the costs are kept down, and that all entities and their respective experts remain engaged. The team connects to - and is part of - a broader UN network of change management professionals, meaning that what is being improved locally will be on par with - or better than - peers in the UN system.

In the weeks since the Initiative was launched, the team has completed the analysis of the international staff recruitment process and are developing options for improvement. Initial analysis shows a number of areas where better results can be realized with some diligence – and at no additional cost. They have also started analyzing the travel process and business model to see how to reduce costs and improve the way travel is managed. As we see results, new focus areas will be set. It is also useful to note that this is a first of a kind initiative, with no other duty station having such an arrangement at the moment.

### Green Climate Fund

**Framework Agreements signed applied for on-granting application:** UN Environment's engagement with the [Green Climate Fund](#) can be divided into two main streams of work: Project Implementation and Readiness Support. UN Environment is pleased to announce that it has executed framework agreements for both streams: an Accreditation Master Agreement and a Framework Readiness and Preparatory Support Grant Agreement, respectively. These Agreements govern the UN Environment's roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis the Green Climate Fund under the two streams, and will allow UN Environment to access Green Climate Fund resources.

**The Current portfolio:** Our work under the Green Climate Fund continues to strengthen. To-date, approval has been granted for one full sized project for large-scale Ecosystem based Adaptation for the Gambia and seven Readiness proposals. In addition, six proposals have been submitted to the Green Climate Fund Secretariat under the readiness window. A first of the Green Climate Fund's grants in support of processes to develop National Adaptation Plans for Nepal has been approved, while, 35 countries have requested support for National Adaptation Plans formulation and 51 countries have requested support for Readiness work.

Under the full sized project window, 59 countries have requested to work with UN Environment and the proposals are in various stages of development. Twenty four full funding proposals are under development of which three proposals have been submitted to the Green Climate Fund Secretariat and 35 proposals are under discussion.

**Finance:** UN Environment has received a green light from the UN Controller for two new Trust Funds for the managing resources received from Green Climate Fund. UN Environment has sent its first requests for disbursement of funds under the Readiness window and expects to receive the funds soon and to begin implementation of activities committed under the same.

### **Delegation of Authority**

UN Environment has adopted a Delegation of Authority Policy and Framework for the management and administration of Secretariats of Multilateral Environmental Agreements. The new Policy and Framework, which came into force on 1 November 2016, simplifies, standardizes and streamlines the delegation of authority from the Executive Director to heads of Secretariats of Multilateral Environmental Agreements and heads of other bodies for which UN Environment provides the secretariat or secretariat functions. The Policy was adopted following consultations with the secretariats, and takes into consideration their comments.

### **Standardized guidelines and procedures for financial matters**

As a response to Resolution 2/18 UN Environment has also prepared standardized guidelines and procedures for financial matters for the multilateral environment agreements for which UN Environment provides secretariat services. The financial guidelines will assist governing bodies of multilateral environmental agreements in budget preparation, financial monitoring and preparation of financial statements and other financial matters. The guidelines are part of UN Environment work towards enhancing internal processes and policies to make them more efficient, streamlined and transparent.

### **Private sector new work**

The UN Environment has recently put private sector engagement as one of our key areas of operation in order to advance its mandate and objectives, including the promotion of environmental sustainability as a crucial enabler of sustainable development. In line with such prioritization, we have reassigned a staff member to lead and coordinate our engagement with the private sector and seek new opportunities to partner and to enhance our existing relationships with private sector entities.

### **Efficiency savings for 2018 from streamlining the Geneva office**

UN Environment has recently reviewed the functions of operational support through the Operations Service Centre Geneva with an aim to strengthen and align the finance, human resources and general administration functions. This review resulted in various functions being outsourced to UN Geneva and transferred to the Regional Office for Europe or decentralized to UN Environment related entities in Geneva. Consequently, the Operations Service Centre in Geneva has been discontinued as an organizational unit from 1 March 2017, while relevant services in Geneva have been maintained.

Those Corporate Services Division staff remaining in Geneva to perform corporate services functions will now have direct reporting lines to UN Environment in Nairobi under the Human Resources and Legal Units. This re-organization has realized significant cost savings in terms of reduced staffing, reduced office space, etc., and the savings will accrue in 2018.

## Annex: list of programme activities

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### Climate Change

- **Regional Policy Workshop on Adaptation Outlook for the Hindu Kush Himalaya, 2-3 February 2017, Kathmandu, Nepal**

Policymakers and research experts recommended Adaptation Policies and Actions to cope with climate change. The workshop was jointly organized by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), UN Environment and GRID-Arendal.

- **Promotion of Low-Carbon Technology Projects in Asia and the Pacific, 6-7 February 2017, Manila, Philippines**

Government Officials, private sector leaders and Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) and Green Climate Fund (GCF) focal points from Southeast and South Asia brainstormed and agreed on possible collaboration and action plans for the demonstration and diffusion of low-carbon technology in the Asia and the Pacific region.

- **Launching of projects on Capacity Building for Reporting to Climate Conventions, 22 December 2016 in Bahrain and 9-17 January 2017 in Kuwait**

Two projects on national communication and biennial update reports were launched with the participation of stakeholders from various sectors. Training was provided on preparing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) as well as impacts, vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning.

- **Enhancement of Civil Society Engagement on Environment, Climate and Science in Kuwait**

UN Environment West Asia Office and Kuwait Foundation of the Advancement of Science (KFAS) signed a partnership agreement in January 2017 to enhance the capacities of civil Society organizations on environment protection and science. The project is for two years and entails technical profiling for the NGOs, capacity development activities for resource mobilization, partnerships, advocacy and science-based assessments and action.

- **The Africa Policy Dialogue on Climate Change and Sustainable Energy in Africa delivers important outcomes:** Two meetings organized jointly by UN Environment/Africa Office, the Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA), UN Economic Commission for Africa, and the African Climate Policy Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in the lead up to the 28th ordinary session of the Assembly of the Head of State and Government of the African Union (AU) delivered the following outcomes: (a) Recommendations to the Committee of African Heads of state and Government on climate Change (CAHOSCC); (b) A statement of the African non-state actors on sustainable energy in Africa.

### Disasters and Conflicts

- **Regional Training in February 2017, Sao Paulo, Brazil**

UN Environment co-facilitated a regional training, in collaboration with the [Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions](#) and the UN Environment and Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs Joint Unit, on preparedness and response for chemical emergencies in line with the Conventions. Participants came from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay, Peru as well as the Basel Convention Regional Centres in Panama and Uruguay. The workshop was a direct response to the 2016 Latin American and Caribbean Forum of Ministers of Ministers' decision on Chemicals and Waste to strengthen preparedness for environmental emergencies.

## Ecosystems Management

- **Pacific Preparations for the Ocean Conference, 14-16 February 2017, Suva, Fiji**

In partnership with the Government of Fiji (co-hosts of the [Ocean Conference](#)) in June 2017, UN Environment is working with other UN agencies, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations to support Pacific Island countries to effectively advocate Pacific ocean's issues and initiatives. UN Environment through its Pacific Sub-regional Office has produced a series of briefs that Pacific negotiators are using in key areas such as marine pollution, ecosystems management, and climate change and oceans governance. Key milestones for the Pacific preparatory process are the global preparatory meeting 15-16 February in New York and the Pacific Preparatory Meeting in Suva, Fiji, 14-16 March.

- **Inception Workshop on Strengthening National Biodiversity and Forest Carbon Stock Conservation in Cambodia, 22 February 2017, Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

Officiated by the Secretary General of the National Council for Sustainable Development and the Minister of Environment and Chair of the National Council for Sustainable Development of Cambodia, the inception workshop presented the project's framework and strategy to improve the sustainability of Cambodia's national system of protected areas and mainstreaming biodiversity protection into production forests and promoting conservation of carbon stocks.

- **The 23rd Intergovernmental Meeting of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia, 27-28 February 2017, Bangkok, Thailand**

At the 23rd Intergovernmental Meeting, delegations from nine countries in Southeast Asia discussed new strategic directions for the [Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia](#) as well as the recently initiated USD 15 million [Global Environment Facility](#) funded regional project on "[Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea](#)".

- **The Saudi Water & Environment Forum 12-14 February 2017, Saudi Arabia**

The Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture, of Saudi Arabia convened the [Saudi Water and Environment Forum](#) for industries and investment to showcase the latest advances and technologies being used to manage some of Saudi's water infrastructure network. The UN environment, West Asia office supported a high level discussion on, "Changing Management in the Kingdom's Water Sector": driving the sustainable growth of the water sector, Privatization plans for the existing state owned water production facilities, and tariff reforms; "fresh water operational strategy" whilst linking it to [Sustainable Development Goal 6](#) on water indicator monitoring.

- **Iraqi Marshlands High Level Coordination meeting 19-21 February, Iraq**

A strategic and high-level meeting brought together the [United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization](#) the [International Union for Conservation of Nature](#) and local entities in Iraq along with decision makers and other stakeholders to develop a national resource mobilization strategy to support the implementation plan. The inclusion of the Iraqi Marshlands on the [Global World Heritage List](#) in July 2016 requires the activation of the Sustainable Management Plan as the basic contribution of all stakeholders for implementing the obligations under the designation of the Marshlands.

## Environmental Governance

- **Asian Regional Partners Forum on Combating Environmental Crime - Focusing on Gender and Human rights, 15 February 2017, Bangkok, Thailand**

UN Environment facilitated a dialogue on the linkages between gender, human rights and environmental crime at the 18th meeting of the Asian Regional Partners Forum on Combating Environmental Crime.

- **UN Environment supports the “Kuwait Environmental Governance Initiative - 16 January**

UN Environment and in collaboration with [UN Development Programme](#) signed an agreement to support the [Kuwaiti Environment Public Authority](#) in developing its capacities necessary for effective participation in the Multilateral Environmental Agreements including the [United Nations Convention Framework on Climate Change](#), [the Convention on Biodiversity](#), and [United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification](#). The Project will also help to strengthen Kuwait readiness to implement its commitments under the [Sustainable Development Goals](#).

- **Strategic Cooperation Framework for Bahrain, 20-22 January**

As one of the gulf cooperation countries, Bahrain embarked on a process to develop a Strategic Cooperation Framework with UN agencies. UN Environment has initiated a process of prioritization of environmental issues with the Supreme Council for the Environment to plan and agree on delivering tangible results in line with the National Vision 2030 and the National Action Plan 2017-2020.

- **World Government Summit 12-14 February, United Arab Emirates**

UN Environment participated in the [World Government Summit](#), as a member of the International Steering Committee. During the Summit, the Deputy Executive Director of UN environment has stressed on the importance of the integrated approach as the main theme for next year's summit.

- **Smart Cities Summit 14-15 February , United Arab Emirates**

A number of high level meetings and interventions have been provided to the [Smart Cities Summit](#) organized back to back with the World Government Summit in Dubai. UN Environment reiterated on building smart cities to ensure delivering services of the future that ensure sustainable cities delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Diversifying energy and economy mixes are crucial to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Mayors of major cities from around the world attended the Summit.

- **High level Joint Committee meeting on Environment and Development in the Arab World, 13-14 February, Egypt**

The General Secretariat of the League of Arab States organized a joint committee meeting in order to achieve compatibility and alignment with Arab specialized organizations, agencies and academia on the ongoing work to support joint Arab Action Plan.

- **Green Economy Textbook Authors' Meeting, 20-21 February 2017, Tongji, China**

The first meeting of the Green Economy Authors was held at Tongji University premises in Shanghai, China. The Green Economy Textbook is a fruitful product of partnership between UN Environment and [Zayed Foundation for the Environment](#) and [Tongji University](#).

- **Capacity building program for personnel of the Saudi General Authority for Meteorology and Environment Protection**

UN Environment West Asia Office has completed its efforts to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the capacity building and training needs for the staff working in the environmental sector at the [General Authority for Meteorology and Environmental Protection of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia](#). The assessment resulted in developing a training and capacity building program that will contribute to bridging the gap between the current and required capacity of both policy makers and practitioners to develop and implement environmental protection strategies and achieve the agreed sustainable development objectives. The program is designed in two stages

and will be delivered in partnership with the King Abdul Aziz University to ensure its sustainability and national ownership.

## Capacity Building

- **The Colloquium on Integrating Environmental Law into Judicial Education Programmes in Africa, 25-27 January 2017 in Johannesburg, South Africa**

UN Environment and the **South African Judicial Education Institute** organized the Colloquium and agreed on key elements for a common approach to integrating environmental law training into the curricula of judicial training institutions in various countries in Africa. Participants committed themselves to an action plan to guide the integration process and established a core team of 8 countries to champion and monitor implementation of the adopted framework and action plan. The first virtual meeting was conducted on 15 February 2017, to discuss Africa-wide network on judicial education.

- UN Environment supported an **induction workshop** for members of the National Environment Tribunal of Kenya, from 8 to 9 February 2017.
- Representatives from 13 African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Eritrea, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Sao Tomé, Sierra Leone, and Togo met in Abidjan on 13 and 14 February 2017. Participating countries assessed their needs for **strengthening national legislation** to meet the minimum requirements for implementing the [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora](#).
- **Global Biosafety Clearing House Project** - UN Environment will execute the global USD \$ 4.9 million UN Environment-[Global Environment Facility](#) Project for Sustainable Capacity Building for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearing House with 76 developing countries and countries with economies in transition during 2017.
- **InforMEA**: Multilateral Environmental Agreements with regional agencies and interested countries are currently considering enhancing the accessibility to agreements reports with a view to linking the content to the various international environmental goals and targets including [Sustainable Development Goals](#). UN Environment in collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research UNITAR works on the development of a course on International Environmental Governance, that is open to the public.
- **Nagoya Protocol** - UN Environment has been providing significant technical and legal support for 20 countries on the ratification of the [Nagoya Protocol](#) on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization. To date, 18 countries have ratified or acceded to the Nagoya Protocol and two countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Nigeria) are currently actively advancing in the process of ratification.

## Chemicals and Waste

- **Fostering Partnerships for Tackling the Declining Air Quality in Indian Cities, 20 January 2017, New Delhi, India**

Responding to United Nations Environment Assembly's call to support national efforts in addressing air pollution issues, UN Environment in collaboration with the [International Institute for Energy Conservation](#) organized a roundtable that brought together key stakeholders and experts from the government, international donor community, industry and academia, working for the cause of combating air pollution across urban centres in India.

- **Development of Integrated National Waste Management Strategy in the Kingdom of Bahrain**

In January 2017, UN Environment and the [Supreme Council for Environment of Bahrain](#) finalized the first phase of the strategy. Meetings of stakeholders were convened 21-23 January 2017 assessed the status and identified the gaps for a comparative report on the current situation regarding waste management policies, standards, monitoring and reporting.

- **The Global Environment Facility approved the project for Bahrain to develop the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants on 1 February 2017**The Global Environment Facility approved the funding to enable Bahrain to prepare National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
- **[Minamata Convention on Mercury](#)**: Between 1 January and 14 February 2017, three more countries ratified the Convention (Costa Rica, Liechtenstein and Togo), bringing the total to 38. 12 more ratifications are needed for the Convention to enter into force. Africa now has 18 ratifications, with 9 ratifications from the Latin America and the Caribbean region, 7 ratifications from the Asia Pacific region and 4 from the Western Europe and Others. In January, the Bureau met in China, and agreed on the dates and structure for the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The meeting will be held from 24 to 29 September 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland, subject to entry into force of the Convention.
- **Special Programme launches [2nd application](#) round**

The launch of the second round for applications for the 'Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level to enhance the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management' took place on 22 February 2017, with a deadline for applications on 20 June 2017.

## Resource Efficiency

- **Sustainable Development and Our Food Campaign Launched in China**, 18 January 2017 to enhance public awareness on Sustainable Development Goals target 12.3 and engage the youth in building a resource efficient food system in China. Under the theme "Reducing Food Waste: China Youth Originality and Challenge Campaign", the campaign runs until 30 April 2017 and encourages students to submit proposals on reducing food waste in China.
- **Green Digital Finance Alliance Launched, 20 January 2017, Davos, Switzerland**

Founded by UN Environment and Ant Financial Services Group (Ant Financial), China's leading online and mobile financial services provider, the 'Green Digital Finance Alliance' A ground-breaking initiative to harness digital technologies in catalyzing financing that addresses global environmental challenges, the Alliance is a unique partnership that ensures tomorrow's fintech-powered global financial system is aligned with sustainable development.
- **Pioneering Sustainable Rice Cultivation in Viet Nam, 25 January 2017**

The Mekong River is a vital part of rice production in Viet Nam. At the heart of the country's rice producing region is the Mekong Delta, where the Loc Troi Group is helping some of its 37,000 rice farmers to adopt the Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation, with the support of UN Environment and partners. Loc Troi joined the Sustainable Rice Platform in 2015, and is now leading a wide-scale pilot testing of the Standard. The company's rice cultivation practices will comply with the Standard, and preliminary results show savings of 20 per cent in use of water and fertilizers, as well as increased net farm incomes as a result of complying with it.
- **Rice Sustainability Standard Translation** Available in Over 15 Languages for Small Hold Rice Farmers was originally launched on October 2015 in English language. This year, with the help of the UN Volunteers, the Standard is made available in various languages such as the Bahasa Indonesia, Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese, French, Khmer, Hindi, Sinhalese, Tagalog, Portuguese,

Spanish, Tamil, Thai, French, Urdu and Vietnamese for use in key rice-growing countries in the Asia Pacific region, to encourage one million farmers to adopt climate-smart sustainable best practices, as an active contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals.

- **Burkina Faso hosted first [National Green Economy Academy](#) on 14-16 December 2017 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso**

[Partnership For Action on Green Economy](#) partner country Burkina Faso hosted its first Green Economy Academy bringing together more than 300 participants from the government, the private sector and civil society to learn about and advance the Green Economy agenda in Burkina Faso. The Academy was hosted by the Government of Burkina Faso through the Ministry of Environment, with the support of Partnership for Action on Green Economy, the UN Environment, [the United Nations Poverty-Environment Initiative](#), [Switch Africa Green](#) and the [Global Green Growth Initiative](#); in collaboration with the Institut de la Francophonie pour le développement durable. The National Academy on Green Economy leveraged momentum created by [the Marrakech Climate Change Conference](#) and transformed the political will to advance a green economy in the country into action.

- **Launch of the Principles for Positive Impact Finance**

The [Principles for Positive Impact Finance](#) were launched at the prestigious Palais Brongniart in Paris on January 30<sup>th</sup> 2017. The Principles for Positive Impact Finance are a set of guidelines, developed by 19 leading banks and investors<sup>1</sup> of the [UN Environment Finance Initiative](#), totalling US\$ 6.6 trillion in assets, to make a step change in the mobilisation of business and private finance for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Following the launch, the participating 19 financial institutions will develop technical implementation guidelines and work with the corporate sector and the public sector to develop new, impact-based business models that will enable finance to flow to underserved needs.

The International Resource Panel and the European Commission under the aegis of the G7 Resource Efficiency Alliance have organised a workshop on Promoting Remanufacturing, Refurbishment, Repair, and Direct Reuse, which took place on 7-8 February in Brussels, Belgium, to present the preliminary findings of the upcoming **International Resource Panel** report on circular economy processes. The workshop, which took place back-to-back to the G7 Meeting on Resource Efficiency, also discussed concrete measures for overcoming market and policy related barriers to remanufacturing, refurbishment, repair and direct reuse and identify potential opportunities for collaboration between scientists, businesses and governments in order to put the circular economy into practice.

- **Consultation on Green Economy Stocktaking in Kyrgyz Republic** - 8 February 2017, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic: Under the leadership of the Ministry of Economy, stakeholders gathered in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, to discuss the preliminary findings of a green economy stocktaking exercise that kicks off activities of the Partnership for Action on [Green Economy \(PAGE\) in Kyrgyz Republic](#). Representatives from the Ministries of Economy, Agriculture and Finance, the State Agency of Environment Protection and Forestry, the National Statistics Committee, and civil society experts, shared their insights on challenges and opportunities for green economy in the country, including through PAGE.
- The annual meeting of the **Multi-stakeholder Advisory Committee of the [Consumer Information Programme](#) of the 10Year Framework of Programmes** took place on 27-28 February 2017 in Indonesia. UN Environment and the International Trade Centre developed along with consultative expert group the ['Guidelines for providing product sustainability](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Ethical, Banco Itaú, BNP Paribas, BMCE Bank of Africa, Caisse des Dépôts Group, Desjardins Group, First Rand, Hermes Investment Management, ING, Mirova, NedBank, Pax World, Piraeus Bank, SEB, Société Générale, Standard Bank, Triodos Bank, Westpac and YES Bank.



[information](#). The Guidelines aim to ultimately empower consumers to take better decisions, and will be pilot tested with companies, governments and organizations in 2017.

- The **Life Cycle Initiative** launched Volume 1 of the [Global Guidance for Life Cycle Impact Assessment Indicators](#), together with a set of recommended characterization factors. This publication and global endorsement will facilitate the application of Life Cycle Assessment in the many areas of Sustainable Consumption and Production where its use is necessary. In parallel, UN Environment continues to facilitate the multi-government efforts towards launching a global network of Life Cycle Assessment Databases (GLAD).

## Environment under Review

**Global Sustainable Development Report - First Meeting of the Independent Group of Scientists - 21-23 February 2017, United Nations Headquarters, New York:** UN Environment supports the group's work by providing access to the UN Environment Global Database, recent and upcoming assessments, access to science networks, and relevant science-policy meetings.