

QUARTERLY REPORT

to the 158th Meeting of the

COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES

UN 
environment
programme

50 
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FOURTEENTH ISSUE

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Table of Contents

1	Significant Developments.....	3
2	Programme of Work Implementation.....	10
2.1	Climate Action.....	10
2.2	Nature Action.....	12
2.3	Chemicals and Pollution Action.....	13
2.4	Science Policy.....	15
2.5	Environmental Governance.....	17
2.6	Finance and Economic Transformations.....	19
2.7	Digital Transformations.....	20
2.8	Cross-Cutting Issues.....	22
3	Resources and Management Issues.....	23
3.1	Financial Update as at 31 March 2022.....	23
3.2	Status of Allocations and Expenditures as at 31 March 2022.....	26
3.3	Resource Mobilization Strategy.....	28
3.4	Human Resources.....	28
3.5	Audits.....	35
3.6	Evaluations.....	36

1. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS



UNEP UNEA 5.2: High Level Segment Opening Plenary Speech by Executive Director (Photo credit: UNEP/Duncan Moore)

UNEA 5.2

The resumed fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2) took place in Nairobi in a hybrid format, from 28 February to 2 March 2022. The theme for UNEA-5, “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals,” highlighted the pivotal role nature plays in our lives and in sustainable development. More than 5,000 participants from across the world met in a hybrid format to discuss pressing environmental topics. UNEA 5.2 also provided an opportunity to share sustainability perspectives and discuss solutions to curb pollution as well as how to protect and restore nature worldwide in a post-pandemic world.

UNEA adopted a Ministerial Declaration, entitled “[Strengthening actions for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals](#)” (UNEP/EA.5/HLS.1). UNEA-5.2 also adopted 14 [resolutions](#), and one decision. Implementation of these resolutions will, in part, be supported by the current Programme of Work (PoW), but many will require extrabudgetary resources as articulated in the technical notes developed by the Secretariat in advance of UNEA5.2.



Landmark agreement to end plastic pollution by 2024 adopted at UNEP UNEA 5.2 (Photo credit: UNEP)

The Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue held discussions with the UNEA-5 President and the Executive Director, as well as with Ministers, on how to increase synergies between Member States and relevant stakeholders. The engagement of major groups and stakeholders was also fostered through a series of hybrid side events in the so called “Green Room” (the designated Civil Society space at UNEA 5.2); the 2nd UNEA Cities and Regions Summit; the Global Youth Environment Assembly; and the Faith for Earth Dialogue.

UNEA 5.2 garnered a significant amount of global press with 14,449 news articles published in 51 languages. Four press conferences were held, and 12 press releases were communicated during the UNEA 5.2 period. A live blog to cover the proceedings and side events at UNEA 5.2 and UNEP@50 received more than 60,000 views. UNEP social media posts on UNEA 5.2 and UNEP@50 reached over 11 million people around the world. UNEP’s multimedia products received 1.3 million views.

The fifth meeting of the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-5.2), held from 21 to 25 February 2022 preceded the resumed session of UNEA 5.2. More information on events at UNEA 5.2 is included under different sections of this report.

UNEP@50

President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya, Heads of State and Government, as well as high-level participants, affirmed their commitment to environmental cooperation at the UNEP golden jubilee celebration which was held from 3 to 4 March 2022. The Special Session of UNEA to celebrate UNEP@50 adopted a [Political Declaration](#) as envisaged by General Assembly [resolution 73/333](#).

Two Leadership Dialogues enabled the world to reflect on UNEP’s [journey](#) thus far and look forward to the times ahead. An important task identified by the dialogues was the need to close the gap between scientific discovery and action. Ahead of UNEP@50, UNEP published a report entitled [Reflecting on the Past and Imagining the Future: A contribution to the dialogue on the Science-Policy Interface](#). It calls for a more nimble and inclusive science-policy interface. Furthermore, it draws attention to the fact that enhancing this interface requires reform in four broad areas: speed, solutions, diversity and digitalization.

Additionally the <https://wesr.unep.org/> was officially launched at UNEP@50. The platform features new content and key services such as WESR-Common Country Analysis, and the Environment Statistics Explorer.



UNEP UNEA 5.2: Looking back at 50 years of UNEP (Photo credit: UNEP/Cyril Villemain)

Stockholm+50

On 28 March 2022, the President of the General Assembly convened the Preparatory Meeting for Stockholm+50 in New York. Member States, international organizations and civil society gathered in the General Assembly Hall to share perspectives to shape the Stockholm+50 Leadership Dialogues and consider preparations for the international meeting. The preparatory meeting was chaired by co-hosts Sweden and Kenya.

Our Common Agenda

The President of the General Assembly, convened thematic consultations on various proposals, options and potential means of implementation on “[Our Common Agenda](#)”. UNEP participated in the consultations on thematic cluster 4, *Protecting our planet and being prepared for the future*.

The One Health Alliance

UNEP signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with partners WHO, FAO, and the Organisation of Animal Health to transform the previous Tripartite collaboration to a new Quadripartite Alliance on One Health. This MOU draws in UNEP as an equal partner into the former Tripartite Alliance and puts the environment sector on an even footing with the health sectors in the pursuit of health for people, animals and ecosystems. The Quadripartite Alliance on One Health contributes to strengthening the [environmental](#) dimension of UNEP’s global One Health work.



Minamata Convention on Mercury - COP 4.2

Delegates and representatives of 110 Parties and organizations participated in the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Bali, Indonesia, from 21 to 25 March 2022. The five-day meeting concluded with twelve decisions adopted, including:

- an updated guidance on national action plans for artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) covering the management of tailings as well as a guidance on preparing inventories of releases, which suggests using the [UNEP mercury inventory toolkit](#) for Parties developing their own release inventories;
- an expansion of the phase-out list of mercury-added products with eight additional products including compact and cold cathode fluorescent lamps, photograph film and paper, and propellant for satellites;
- an addition of two new measures on the phase-down of dental amalgam, including the use of mercury in bulk form by dental practitioners and the use of dental amalgam for patients under 15 years, pregnant and breastfeeding women; and
- the framework for the effectiveness of evaluation, as an integral part of the Convention, and the establishment of the Open-ended Scientific Group, including experts from UNEP and the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership.

This COP also issued the [Bali Declaration on Combatting Global Illegal Trade of Mercury](#), which aims to carry out a number of measures including: enhanced international cooperation, development of practical tools to monitor and share information, and the exchange of experiences and practices to combat the illegal trade of mercury.

World Wildlife Day

The world celebrated [World Wildlife Day](#) on 3 March 2022, under the theme “[Recovering key species for ecosystem restoration](#)”. The celebrations drew attention to the conservation status of some of the most critically endangered species of wild fauna and flora and drove discussions towards imagining and implementing solutions to conserve them.

66th Session of Commission on the Status of Women

On 14 March 2022, UNEP’s Executive Director welcomed participants with opening remarks at the 66th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. She emphasized the importance of prioritizing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in the work carried out by UNEP; the significance of putting women at the heart of environmental decision-making; and ensuring that the tracks for the just transition to a green, sustainable future are gender responsive. The agreed [conclusions included achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes](#).

Africa



(Photo credit: UNEP/Duncan Moore)

The [African Ministerial Conference on the Environment](#) held its 9th special session virtually from 15-17 February 2022 where it considered matters related to the UNEA 5.2. It also endorsed common regional positions for the 15th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Côte d'Ivoire will host the [UNCCD COP15](#) from 9 to 20 May 2022, under the theme, "Land. Life. Legacy: From scarcity to prosperity".

The [African Group of Negotiators on climate change](#) met in Livingstone, Zambia, from 14 -17 March 2022. The meeting was held to review the United Nations Conference on Climate Change (UNFCCC) [COP26](#) outcomes, and positions Africa for engagement in the UNFCCC COP 27 negotiations to be held in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2022.

The Eighth Session of the [Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development](#) (ARFSD) was held in Kigali, Rwanda, from 3-5 March 2022 under the theme of "Building forward better: a green, inclusive and resilient Africa poised to achieve the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063". UNEP participated in panel discussions on Life on Land (SDG 15) and shared the Outcomes of UNEA 5.2 relating to nature-based solutions. UNEP also presented key messages on sustainable budgeting

during the Plenary presentations and contributed to discussions on sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

The Regional Collaborative Platform is finalizing a joint priority areas matrix for collaboration between the African Union Commission (AUC) and United Nations Africa Regional Collaborative Platform (UN-RCP). Notable collaboration has also been seen through a series of events, including: The Opportunity Issue-Based Coalition -5 (OIBC-5)- Fostering climate action and resilience with AUC's work on supporting African Scientists, and the African Group of Negotiators on Climate Change for participation at the UNFCCC and IPCC Sessions.

Asia and the Pacific

UNEP supported the [roundtable](#) on Sustainable Development Goal 15 (SDG15) "Life on Land" with other UN agencies at the 9th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), which was held between 28-31 March in Bangkok. As a key contribution, UNEP led the joint efforts of UN agencies in the preparation of discussions on SDG15's "Life on Land" Goal Profile for Asia and the Pacific.

The roundtable formulated [a set of recommendations](#) for accelerating actions on SDG15 and drew up key messages for consideration by the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF).

Additionally, UNEP and the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) jointly organized a sub-regional workshop in preparation for the resumed session of UNEA 5.2.

Europe

In line with its mandate, and ongoing Disasters and Conflicts-related work, and at the request of the government of Ukraine, and in coordination with other United Nations partners, UNEP is assisting the Government of Ukraine in several areas. These include: monitoring of the environmental impacts of the conflict; preparing to carry out an assessment of these impacts; and support to mitigation and remediation efforts.

The Issue Based Coalition (IBC) on Environment and Climate Change hosted a series of training webinars (Central Asia 13 January 2022; South-Eastern Europe 20 January 2022; Eastern Europe & the Caucasus 27 January 2022) on mainstreaming environment and climate change and integrating it with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) processes. The IBC is led by UNEP, UNESCO, and UNECE. It also convened its ninth

meeting of the Coalition on 8 March 2022, to discuss the upcoming training programme on green transitions.

The Gokova Bay Initiative (Turkey) was nominated to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration World Restoration Flagships. A “World Restoration Flagship” is a designation in the UN Decade.

In the run-up to UNEA 5.2, the Geneva Environment Network (GEN) platform concluded the second series of Geneva Beat Plastic Pollution Dialogues and organized a briefing, on the Assembly. GEN delivered briefings on a series of specialized agency events including: the GEF-8 Replenishment meetings, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the CITES Standing Committee and World Wildlife Day, Minamata COP-4, the 2nd Environment Peacebuilding Conference, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports outreach, and Stockholm+50.

Latin America and the Caribbean

The Special Session of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean was held on 27-28 January 2022, in San Jose, Costa Rica, to observe the 40th anniversary of the Forum, and accelerate multilateral action to address the triple planetary crisis. During the meeting, the Minister for Pacific and the Environment at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office of the United Kingdom, announced the allocation of US\$ 2.6 million,



UNEA 5.2 Plastic Info-graph exhibit (Photo credit: UNON/NayimAhmed)

to help countries of the newly declared Eastern Pacific Marine Corridor which includes Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Panama. The funds were allocated to expand and connect their marine protected areas as well as to conserve one of the most biodiverse marine environments in the world.

North America

In March 2022 Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced Canada's 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan, a roadmap for meeting Canada's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions reduction commitments at Paris and updates for the Glasgow COP26. The new Plan was mandated under the June 2021 Canadian Net-Zero Emissions by 2050 Accountability Act. The Plan takes a sector-by-sector approach proposing actions and investments, using interactive economic modelling to estimate how these will impact the economy and reductions over time. It proposes CDN \$9.1 billion in new investments across the economy to help drive reductions.

In March 2022, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced its international priorities. The EPA is committed to work with the international community at multiple levels, that include efforts to ensure a healthy future, to protect the global commons, support a robust and sustainable economy creating good jobs, and advance strong environmental governance by deploying U.S. expertise and innovation. The EPA will work with partners in five broad thematic areas including efforts in: combatting the climate crisis; advancing environmental justice and equity; addressing transboundary pollution, both in North America and globally; building environmental infrastructure, green jobs and a green economy, and strengthening environmental governance. Undergirding all of EPA's actions is a strong commitment to the rule of law and sound science.

West Asia

The Arab Forum for Sustainable Development 2022 hosted by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) from 15 to 17 March, focused on resilience and recovery. During the Forum, UNEP and ESCWA hosted two hybrid Special Sessions on [Transboundary climate risks in the Arab region: approaches and solutions](#) and on [ecosystem restoration](#).

On the sidelines of the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development 2022 on 16 March 2022, the Regional Coordination Platform (RCP) was convened in the presence of the UN Deputy Secretary-General. The key objectives of the RCP were to discuss stocktaking on the advancement of COVID-19 related recovery, the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the region and agree on the RCP's strategy to deliver on Issue Based Coalitions.

From 28 -31 March 2022 UNEP along with other UN agencies co-organized the first Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Climate Week 2022, which was hosted by the United Arab Emirates. More than 20 countries participated in the event. UNEP led the Forum Track 3 – Seizing Transformation Opportunities and organized six sessions and several side events. The week aimed to achieve a series of measures through efforts to: accelerate collaboration, integrate climate action into global pandemic recovery, and increase economic development.

In March 2021, UNEP and the Kuwait Environmental Public Authority (EPA) renewed their two-year Memorandum of Understanding, extending it to four years. The agreement is expected to work towards a series of measures including strengthening environmental governance; responses to climate change; building institutional capacities and responding to other regional and national environmental challenges. UNEP signed four donor agreements with the Environment Public Authority in Kuwait in March. The agreements will work towards enhancing support to the authority in developing national strategies on low carbon, sustainable consumption and production and chemical safety, as well as developing the first ever State of the Environment Report in Kuwait.

2. PROGRAMME OF WORK IMPLEMENTATION

THEMATIC SUB-PROGRAMMES

2.1 CLIMATE ACTION¹

Key highlights

Adaptation

The Global EbA Fund, implemented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and UNEP, invited several organizations to submit full proposals as part of its second call, where more than 620 applicants submitted their adaptation project proposals.

With support from the UNEP Green Climate Fund (GCF), after the successful submission of the Nepal National Adaptation Plan [Summary for Policy Makers](#), the draft National Adaptation Plan of Nepal is currently under consideration as part of a process of provincial validation and final review. It is now expected to be approved by June 2022.

A new [interactive map](#) is available on the UNEP website displaying more than 75 projects on climate change adaptation that UNEP has supported in over 50 countries.

Mitigation

On 24 February, 2022, UNEP, through the [Cities and Regions Summit](#), supported a series of initiatives. This included the launch of the Coalition on Sustainable and Inclusive Urban Food, and the release of the [Urban Agriculture's Potential to Advance Multiple Sustainability Goals](#) report. It looks at the potential of urban agriculture to feed growing urban populations while enhancing environmental benefits, including emissions reductions, reduced island heat affects, as well as filtering pollution.

Through the EmPower project, UNEP in partnership with UN Women supported a series of efforts leading to the establishment of 38 women-led enterprises in [Bangladesh, Cambodia](#) and [Viet Nam](#). The Empower Project adopted the use of renewable energy technologies, accessing financing for climate resilient livelihoods, as well as driving forward the mitigation agenda. In total, 424 women reported direct economic benefits from receiving access to renewable energy efforts.

REDD+ & Nature Based Solution (NBS)

A new report, published in February, [Spreading like Wildfire: The Rising Threat of Extraordinary Landscape Fires](#) details how climate change and land-use change are making wildfires worse. The report anticipates a global increase of extreme fires in areas previously unaffected.

UNEP supported Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ghana, and Viet Nam, which have signed a letter of intent to pursue an emissions reduction purchase agreement with the Lowering Emissions by Accelerating Forest finance (LEAF) Coalition, to meet high-integrity market standards.

UNEP contributed to the expert panel of the Integrity Council for Voluntary Carbon Markets. The panel is entrusted with developing the criteria to define carbon credits of high social and environmental integrity.





As a project beneficiary Ma Thi Xue of Viet Nam has ensured a climate resilient livelihood for herself by using renewable energy (Photo: EmPower Project)

Main opportunities, challenges and responses

Safeguards are key to the quality of forest-based emission reductions, as enshrined in forest carbon market standards, e.g., [ART-TREES](#), ART (Architecture for Red and Transactions) and the REDD+ Environmental Excellence Standard (TREES) as applied by the LEAF Coalition. The new UNEA resolution, entitled, [Nature-based solutions for supporting sustainable development \(UNEP/EA.5/Res.5\)](#) can deliver renewed attention to safeguards.

The finalization of the 2022 Emissions Gap Report depends on country submissions of updated NDCs, as requested by COP26. Late submissions risk omission from the Gap Report.

The reliance on climate finance by developing countries is a challenge; however, enabling access to upfront and early climate finance presents a critical opportunity for these countries to build their climate resilience as well as to make strides towards mitigation goals.

2.2 NATURE ACTION

Key highlights

In February 2022, during UNEA5.2, UNEP hosted an event on [5 ways that education can be re-wired for nature](#), and presented innovative ideas around [Nature Positive Universities](#), Sports for Nature, and [Gaming](#).

In March 2022, the establishment of a new Nature for Health Fund led by UNEP in partnership with the Government of Germany, the CBD Secretariat, UNDP, World Health Organization (WHO), World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and the EcoHealth Alliance was announced. The initiative is supported by 50 million Euros in seed funding from Germany and is aligned with the new resolution on Biodiversity and Health adopted at UNEA 5.2.

Post 2020 Framework for Nature

The 3rd Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) meeting on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), held in Geneva in March 2022 was the first in-person meeting in two years. It resulted in a negotiated text

of goals, targets and supporting mechanisms for an ambitious and transformative post-2020 framework for nature scheduled for final agreement at the 2022 UN Biodiversity Conference in Kunming, China.

Before CBD-CoP 15, there was a decision to hold a fourth meeting of the [OEWG](#) on the post-2020 GBF due to unfinished negotiations. It will be held in Nairobi in June 2022. The subsidiary bodies on implementation and science (SBI-3 and SBSTTA-24) will no longer meet in person. Some intercessional work will continue especially on marine biodiversity and the GBF monitoring framework.

Main opportunities, challenges and responses

The two-week meetings of OEWG of the Convention for Biological Diversity produced a new negotiated text of goals, targets and supporting mechanisms for an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework. There is still a long way to go in bridging the gap between finalizing an ambitious framework and securing the necessary means of implementation across all stakeholders to deliver a true whole-of-society approach.



Coral Reef and mangroves in Indonesia (Photo credit: Ocean Image Bank/Alex Mustard)



2.3 CHEMICALS AND POLLUTION ACTION

Key highlights

With the support of UNEP, the Kingdom of Bahrain developed its first National Implementation Plan (NIP) for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, which covers major sources of persistent organic pollutants including their unintentional release. Further to this, UNEP and Iraq collaborated to develop the National Chemical Profile with efforts to enhance the existing institutional and legal structure, and mechanism for managing chemicals in Iraq. The preparation of the national chemical profile has further promoted information exchange and experiences between different agencies and key sectors.

An interactive Forum on Plastic-Free Rivers that attracted around 600 participants from 44 countries was organized from 8-10 March 2022, led by UNEP Asia and the Pacific Office. During the Forum, the Mekong River Commission (MRC) presented their work to help establish a protocol for plastic pollution monitoring in the Mekong River – the world's first protocol of its type for an international river basin.

UNEP and the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), through The SEA Circular project,² supported the advancement of long-term monitoring capabilities in South East Asia by completing a [Regional Guidance on Harmonized National Marine Litter Monitoring Programmes](#). This guidance is expected to strengthen and build efforts toward preventing and reducing marine litter and its negative impacts, in line with the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI).

Cambodia launched its [National Action Plan on Clean Air](#) supported by the Asia Pacific Clean Air Partnership (APCAP) and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC). The plan outlines a package of measures to address the major sources of current and future air pollutants and GHG emissions in the country. Meanwhile, UNEP's Actions on [Air Quality in North America](#) was launched in late February 2022. The report reviews regional conditions, trends, and policy responses to air quality in response to UNEA Resolution 3/8.



UNEP UNEA 5.2 tackled Ecosystem Restoration (Photo credit: Cyril Villemain)



Main opportunities, challenges and responses

Several countries in the West Asian region are initiating the development of integrated chemical management strategies. This presents an opportunity for UNEP engagement.

Similarly, a new project, “Sustainable waste management in the Caribbean” has been initiated. Financial support from the European Union, over the next four years, will help UNEP provide support to Caribbean countries in strengthening legal and policy frameworks, development of waste information systems, enhanced knowledge and awareness raising.

New partnerships have been established with the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank to support [the Voluntary Coalition of Governments and Relevant Organizations for the Progressive Closure of Dumpsites in Latin America and the Caribbean](#). The roadmap for the closure of dumpsites was developed jointly between UNEP and the countries that adopted it. It follows up on a decision of the XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment.

FOUNDATIONAL SUB-PROGRAMMES

2.4 SCIENCE POLICY

Key highlights



UNEP@50 WESR Panel discussion, 3 March, 2022 (Photo credit: UNEP/ Cyril Villemain)

Data for decision and policy making

As a custodian agency for 25 environmental SDG indicators, UNEP submitted data to the [SDG Global Database](#) in March 2022. [Storylines](#) for 21 SDG indicators were also submitted and will be presented during the High-Level Political Forum and included in the 2022 SDG Progress Report.

The Atlantic International Research Centre in Azores joined [UNEP's Global Resource Information Database Centre \(GRID\) Network](#) under the 'One Global Partnership', supporting UNEP to transform big data into information and knowledge for sustainable development at the global, regional and national levels.

Foresight, and the Science-Policy Interface

Culminating the Steering Committee's exploration of options for the "Future of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO)", Member States adopted resolution [UNEP/EA.5/Res.3](#), during UNEA 5.2, providing the mandate for the UNEP Executive Director to initiate the seventh Global Environment Outlook (GEO-7) cycle.

UNEP's [Frontiers 2022 Report 'Noise, Blazes and Mismatches'](#) highlights the critical need to address environmental challenges of urban noise pollution, wildfires and phenological shifts. In addition, UNEP published [Foresight Brief 28](#) on the shrinking Arctic Sea Ice. It takes an in-depth look at the global ecological, climate, economic and geopolitical implications of climate change.





Training workshop on environmental information and data, Hanoi City (Photo credit: UNEP/Science Division)

Regional Capacity Development

In March 2022, UNEP supported the inauguration of an Environmental Information System in Iraq. It was the culmination of the GEF-financed project entitled [Establishing a Functional Environmental Information System for the Synergistic Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements \(MEAs\) for Iraq](#).

Under the European Commission-UNEP partnership project, a national training workshop on environmental information and data was organized by the Vietnam Environment Administration and UNEP that included both online and in person participation in Hanoi City.

UNEP supported eight countries through targeted Common Country Analysis (CCA) and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) processes in Africa. UNEP also supported a sub-regional workshop on [Strengthening Coordination for Measuring Progress on Responsible Consumption and Production and Policy Coherence](#) in January 2022.

Main opportunities, challenges and responses

As part of its efforts to strengthen the Science-Policy interface in accordance with the [Executive Director's report to UNEP@50](#), UNEP is working on developing a robust function of Strategic Foresight. This includes a framework, and approach that integrates horizon scanning capabilities with the aim of improving and strengthening the pathways for science to feed into policymaking.

2.5 ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE³

Key highlights

Capacity building related to Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs)

The African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) MEAs programme [had various highlights in March 2022](#) including a youth empowerment training focussed on young people in Europe; strengthening national capacity for effective implementation of chemicals and waste related MEAs in African countries; while also supporting Antigua and Barbuda in the Phase-Out of Mercury Added Products.

Strengthening African Elephant Management

[Five countries](#) under the [African Elephant Fund](#) completed the initiatives below.

Gabon	Inventory of medium and large mammals established to inform development of an elephant monitoring programme.
Ghana	Law enforcement staff trained and equipped to improve patrol coverage leading to successful arrests and prosecution of wildlife offenders. Mapping of farms vulnerable to crop-raiding by elephants and effective deterrent measures implemented to mitigate crop losses and human-elephant conflicts.
Kenya	Reinforcement of fences and establishment of community based anti-poaching programmes.
Malawi	Law enforcement staff trained and equipped to improve patrol coverage leading to successful arrests and prosecution of wildlife offenders.
Togo	Training on human-elephant conflict management, including elephant push-back techniques that simultaneously serve as income-generating sources.

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) - Nusa Dua Declaration on climate

Through the [Nusa Dua Declaration - Getting to zero: Mobilizing parliaments](#), adopted on 24 March 2022 at the 144th assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), parliamentarians committed to enshrining a net-zero emissions targets into law, drawing on UNEP's [2021 Emissions Gap Report](#).

Environmental Rights in the ASEAN region

UNEP has increased access to information on environmental rights for children across ASEAN through the [translation of the Principles and Policy Guidance on Children's Rights to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment in the ASEAN Region](#) in nine regional languages: Bahasa, Burmese, Cebuano, Filipino, Khmer, Lao, Malay, Thai and Vietnamese.

InforMEA

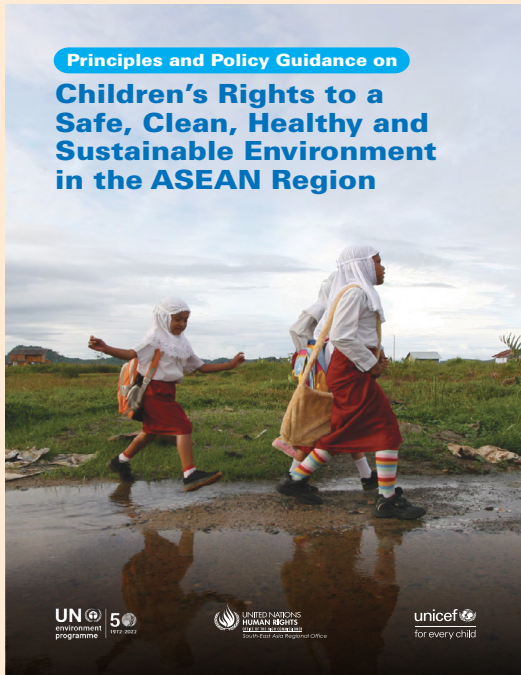
The [InforMEA e-learning portal](#) launched a new course on [Online Negotiations](#). This portal captures some of the best practices and developments in virtual intergovernmental meetings including overhauls of the courses on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) and on Ozone.

Faith for Earth Initiative:

The [initiative](#) mainstreamed faith-based actions to align their efforts with the environment sector with the following measures:

- A [statement](#) by Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) representing 98 religions at UNEA 5.2.
- Launching at UNEA 5.2 of a consortium on science and youth during the [Changing the Future Dialogue](#).
- Supporting Stockholm+50 and designing an [engaging process](#) highlighting faith perspectives.





Main opportunities, challenges and responses

COVID-19 still poses multiple challenges for project implementation. However, UNEP continued to adapt its instruments and processes recognizing opportunities during this period. Examples include, an [assessment](#) highlighting COVID-19 related challenges for environmental protection across Southeast Asia and supporting African Elephant Range states towards reducing human-elephant conflicts during the pandemic.

- Launching an e-learning course on Faith, Environment and Climate Change in addition to e-learning courses in partnership with King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz's International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue; and
- Publishing a [concept report](#) on the Role of Faith, Values and Ethics in Strengthening Action for Nature and Environmental Governance.

ENABLING SUB-PROGRAMMES

2.6 FINANCE AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS

Key highlights

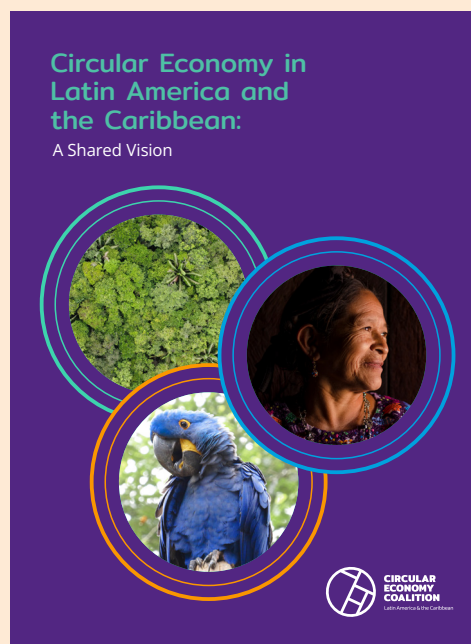
A new subprogramme that is comprised of a reformulation and refocus of interventions of the former Resource Efficiency subprogramme, is underway. It will better align finance, economies and societies to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

UNEP collaborated with the G20 Indonesian Presidency on [green/blue economy issues](#) and carried out a [training](#) with UNITAR on the green economy in Morocco. The UNEP Finance Initiative [guided](#) financial institutions to address solid waste and [helped](#) banks apply the EU Sustainable Finance Taxonomy. UNEP also supported [Mauritius on Small and Medium Enterprises' access to green finance](#).

With UNEP support, on 2 March 2022, the second [High-level Meeting of the Global Alliance on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency](#) took place and the Latin American and the Caribbean Circular Economy Coalition was launched. The latter provides a [shared vision](#) for a circular economy in the region, tailored to the region's unique characteristics and cultures. UNEP supported [Argentina on waste assessment for circularity](#) and [eleven new governments](#) committed to reduce plastic waste.

UNEP supported Ethiopia and Kenya in identifying the gaps and developing recommendations to address the [greening strategy of health care waste management systems](#). Green procurement, green construction, and green facility management were examined as components for establishing sustainable health infrastructures. Increasing the sustainability of healthcare waste improves countries' resilience to COVID-19 and future pandemics.

In West Asia, UNEP's campaign "Recipe of Change" raised awareness on food waste in January and February 2022, and was focussed on how individual behaviour change matters and can significantly reduce



food waste. [The Sustainable Fashion Academy](#) was launched on 21 March 2022, targeting key stakeholders for more sustainability and circularity across the textile value chain.

The findings of the [draft eco-innovation market assessment and policy analysis](#) in Moldova were discussed at a consultative meeting on 16 March 2022. It was agreed that the value chains in textile and wine production would be piloted in eight small and medium-sized enterprise (SMEs).

Main opportunities, challenges and responses

Natural resource extraction, transformation, use and disposal continue to generate significant environmental impacts and contribute to the triple planetary crisis. UNEP continues to identify, communicate and address the drivers of unsustainable production and consumption, especially with financial institutions, and through its collaboration on UN Development System reform and with UN Country Teams.



2.7 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATIONS

Key highlights

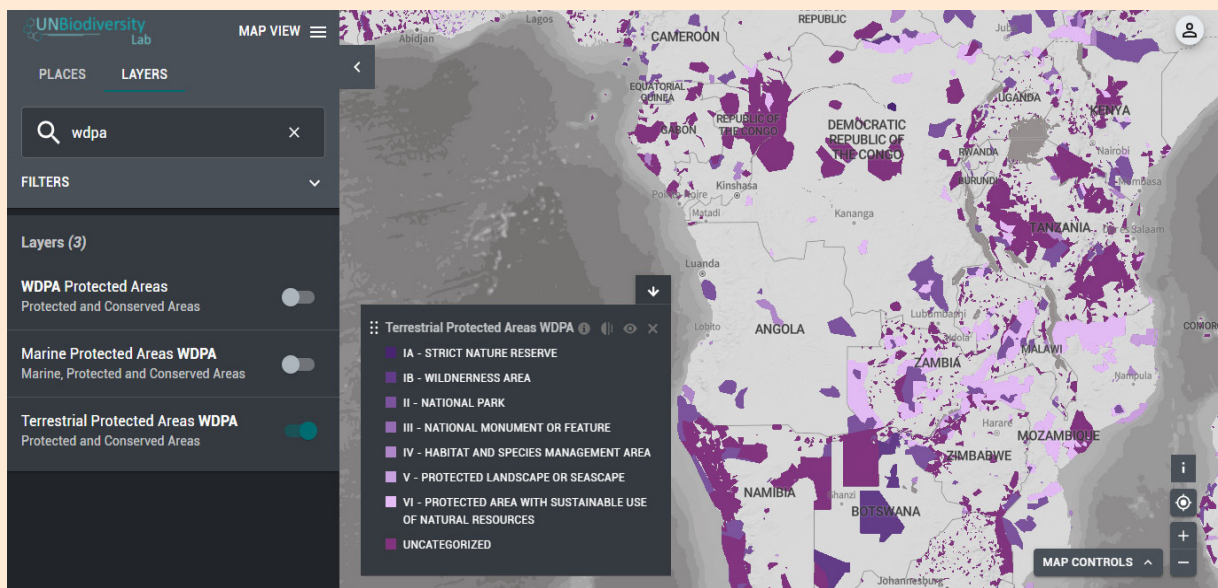
Digital Ecosystem of Data for the Planet

The new [UN Biodiversity Lab \(UNBL\) 2.0](#) was launched and jointly presented by the UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Secretariat of the UN Biodiversity Convention at a [side event](#) of UNEA 5.2 on 2 March 2022. The UNBL 2.0 is a free, open-source platform that enables governments and other stakeholders to access and analyse over 400 state-of-the-art maps and datasets on nature, climate change, and human development to generate insights for nature and sustainable development. It is freely available online to governments and other stakeholders as a digital public good.

Influencing Markets and Consumer Behaviours

UNEP and Adelphi University, under the umbrella of the One Planet Network Consumer Information Programme, continued the launch and dissemination process of new [guidance material](#) that aims to help e-commerce platforms to improve the information on sustainability that they provide to consumers online to enable more sustainable consumption choices. A [web article](#) by UNEP published on 20 January 2022, outlined multiple options and variates to embed information on sustainability into digital platforms.

UNEP and the Climate Works Foundation along with more than 20 other organizations launched the [Carbon Call](#) on 10 February 2022. This initiative is expected to help transform carbon accounting into a standardized, inter-operable and trustworthy framework using digital tools, standards and technologies. The Carbon Call will mobilize collective action, investment and resources from scientific, corporate, philanthropic and non-governmental organizations to enable access to carbon data and science that is reliable, up to date and can be easily exchanged among carbon accounting ledgers.



Version 2.0 of the UN Biodiversity Lab now includes over 400 data layers (Photo credit: UNEP)



What are common obstacles for Behaviour Change and Longer-Term Impacts in an e-commerce setting?

Information overload makes it difficult for relevant sustainability information to cut through all the noise

Ease of comparing prices online largely influences decision processes

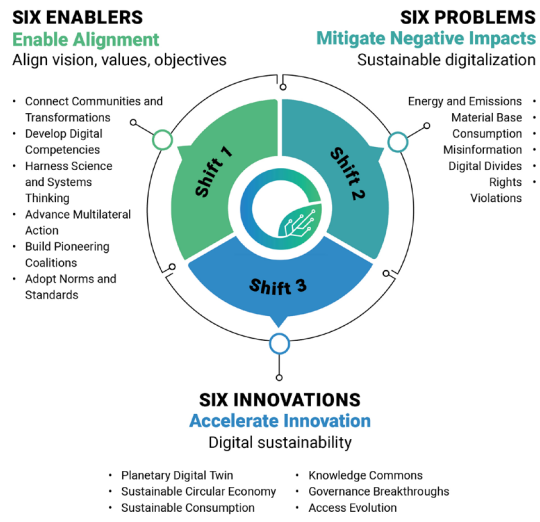
Algorithms are usually based on past purchase patterns, hindering behaviour changes

Predefined consumer profiles, recommendations and 'quick buy' options shorten customer journey

UNEP, Adelphi University and partners such as Consumers International are providing guidance to e-commerce platforms to help accelerate sustainable consumption (Photo credit: UNEP)

Digital literacy, innovation and e-governance

UNEP launched the [Coalition for Digital Environmental Sustainability \(CODES\)](#) as part of the UN Secretary-General's Digital Cooperation Roadmap. In addition to UNEP, CODES co-champions include the German Environment Agency, the Kenyan Ministry of Environment and Forestry, the International Science Council and Future Earth. CODES also includes 1,000 stakeholders from public and private sectors, and civil society who are collaborating to accelerate environmental sustainability and climate action using digital technologies. CODES is currently co-developing an [Action Plan for a Sustainable Planet in the Digital Age](#) that will be launched at Stockholm +50 in June 2022. The draft CODES Action Plan was presented for further stakeholder feedback at a [side event](#) of UNEA 5.2 on 2 March 2022. A [Call to Action video](#) for Stakeholders to join CODES was also issued and received nearly 275,000 views.



The CODES Framework to accelerate environmental sustainability using digital technologies rests on three core shifts: (1) enabling framework; (2) mitigate risks; (3) accelerate innovation (Photo credit: UNEP)

Main opportunities, challenges and responses

One of the main needs and opportunities is to develop awareness raising and training programmes for the public sector on the intersection between digital technologies and environmental sustainability. UNEP plans to collaborate with GIZ, UNFCCC and the European Commission to develop a [digital4sustainability training programme](#). The theme of the first module was announced at COP 26 focusing on Digital4Climate.

atingi

Digital transformation is an enabler for climate action and sustainability!

Join the Digital4Climate Programme

Pre-Register now

Our existence depends on the well-being of the planet.

The well-being of people everywhere is tied to the well-being of the planet. Our personal health, our everyday luxuries, the health of our economies, the stability of our society, indeed our very existence depends on this.

Digital4Climate Interactive Learning Programme

UN atingi giz

Watch on YouTube

The Digital4Climate online training will help policy makers understand the opportunities and risks from digital technologies to accelerate climate action (Photo credit: UNEP)

2.8 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES



Interactive Training: Turning UNEP's Safeguard Policy into Action

Gender and Environmental and social safeguards

UNEP trained 68 staff in project management on the latest tools and guidelines on the updated Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework - ESSF (Safeguards Policy, 2020), through a course entitled "Interactive Training: Turning UNEP's Safeguards Policy into Action". This includes managing safeguards within the new Safeguard and Gender (SAGE) online system. This training and active project reviews worked to include gender mainstreaming in all project planning and development during the quarter.

Endnotes

1. Linked to UNEP resolution UNEP/EA.2/Res.6 and SDGs 13.1, 13.2, 13.3.2, 13.a and 13.b; UNEP/EA.3/Res.8 and SDGs 7.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.2.1, 7.3.1, 7.a.1, 7.b.1, 9.4.1, 12.c.1, 13.3.2, 13.a, 13.b, 17.17.1; and UNEP/EA.2/Res.6 and SDGs 12.c.1, 13.3.2, 13.a, 13.b, 15.1.1, 15.2.1, 15.3.1, 15.6.1 and 17.17.1.
2. An initiative of the UNEP and the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) works to inspire market-based solutions and encourage enabling policies to solve marine solutions at source.
3. Highlights support for the implementation of UNEA resolutions 2/2, 2/5, 2/17, 2/19 and 2/21.

3. RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

3.1 FINANCIAL UPDATE AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

Overview of income

FIGURE 1 Overview of income¹

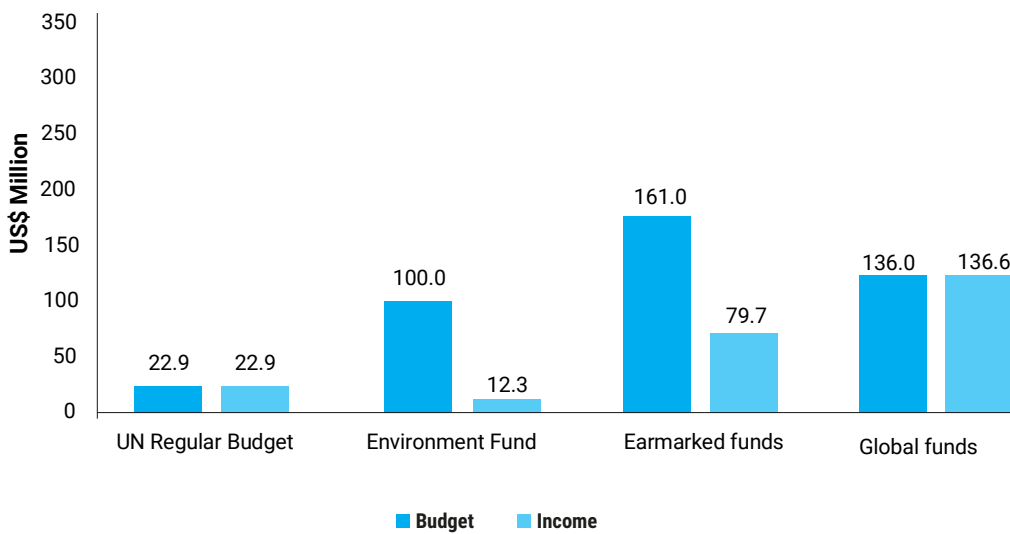
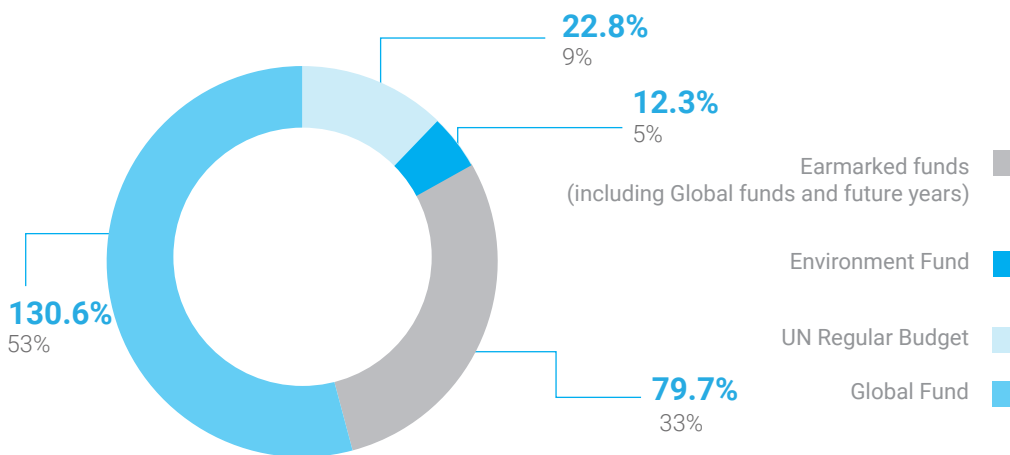


FIGURE 2 Income per Source of Fund (in US\$ Million) January 2022–March 2022



Core funding

United Nations Regular Budget

The United Nations Regular Budget finances a portion of core work in science, capacity building, management, and oversight. Its appropriation is usually fully allotted in advance. However, due to the continuing liquidity challenges the allotments have been released in portions.

The Environment Fund

The Environment Fund, the main source of unearmarked funds to UNEP, is critical to the organization's foundational work on science, policy and environmental law, which in turn support the work on addressing the global challenges of climate, biodiversity and pollution.

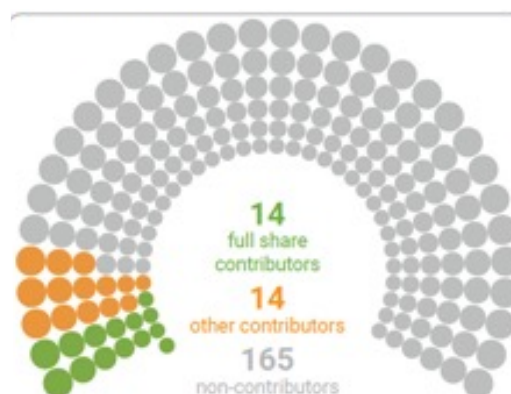
By 31 March 2022, the Environment Fund income amounted to 12% of the approved 2022 budget. Some contributions have been delayed due to the pending determination of UNEP's ODA coefficient by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD - DAC). This issue is expected to be resolved in the next quarter.

Twenty-eight (28) Member States pledged to contribute to the Environment Fund, which represents 15% of the 193 Member States. UNEP invites all the remaining Member States to contribute their full share of the Environment Fund budget as part of honouring their commitment to global environmental action, and to ensuring adequate funding to UNEP.

FIGURE 3 The Environment Fund

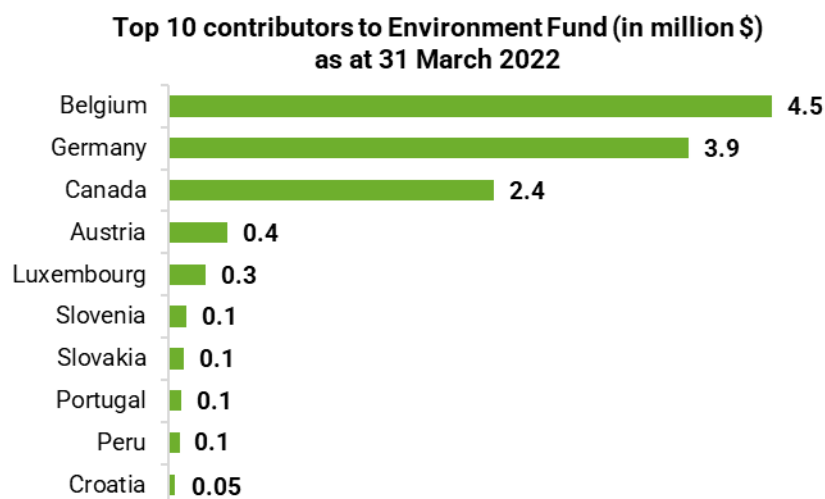


INCOME vs UNFUNDED BALANCE of US\$ 100m budget



NUMBER AND CATEGORY OF MEMBER STATE CONTRIBUTORS out of 193

FIGURE 4 The Environment Fund



Member States that contributed their full share as represented by the VISIC (January-March 2022)

Paid			Pledged
Albania	Cyprus	Mauritius	Barbados
Angola	Eritrea	Slovenia	Belgium
Antigua and Barbuda	Iceland	Timor-Leste	Fiji
Belize	Luxembourg		

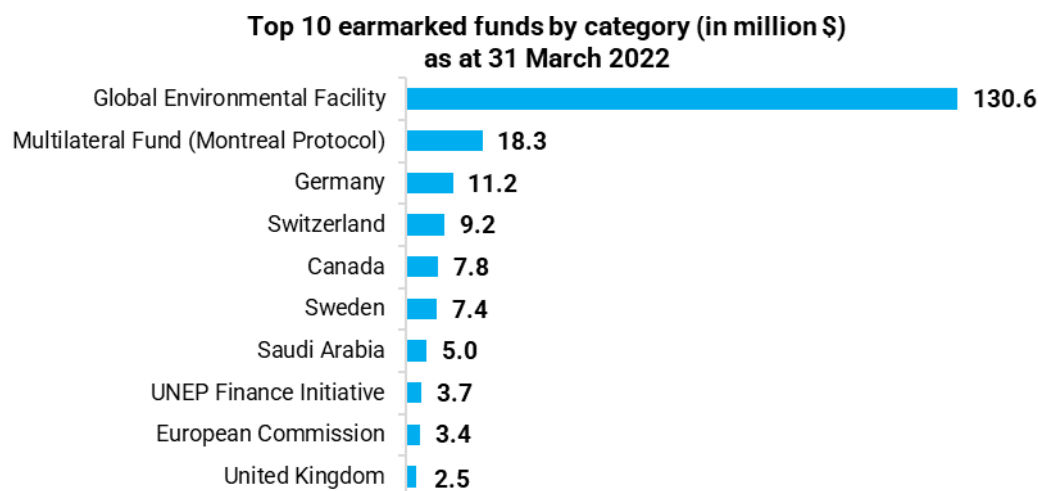
Earmarked contributions

Earmarked funds enable the scaling-up and replication of results of our core work, including capacity-building in more countries and with more partners. Where possible, UNEP encourages “soft earmarking” of the funding, rather than tight earmarking, for example at the sub-programme level. This gives more flexibility in targeting funds to where they are most needed. It also reduces resources spent on administrative procedures and reporting requirements.

By 31 March 2022, the organization had received 50% of the budgeted amount, out of which 9% was “softly earmarked” funds provided by Sweden.

The funds provided by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) are earmarked to specific programmes and projects. Only GEF contributed in the first quarter of 2022 which amounted to 96% of the budgeted income.

FIGURE 5 Earmarked contributions



3.2 STATUS OF ALLOCATIONS AND EXPENDITURES AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

2022 Core Budgets - Programme of work budget					
	Functional Area Name	Environment Fund	Overhead Trust Account	Regular Budget	Grand Total
A	Policy Making Organs	2,000,000	10,000	8,100	2,018,100
B. 1	Executive Direction & Management	4,000,000	-	3,304,200	7,304,200
B. 2	United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects on Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR)	-	-	806,900	806,900
	Subtotal A + B	6,000,000	10,000	4,119,200	10,129,200
C	Programme of Work				
1.	Climate action	12,000,000	2,250,000	2,181,300	16,431,300
2.	Digital transformations	7,000,000	650,000	1,532,400	9,182,400
3.	Nature action	12,000,000	1,200,000	2,564,000	15,764,000
4.	Environmental governance	13,000,000	650,000	4,547,300	18,197,300
5.	Chemicals and pollution action	12,000,000	1,550,000	1,780,000	15,330,000
6.	Finance and economic transformations	13,000,000	1,250,000	1,969,000	16,219,000
7.	Science-Policy	13,000,000	350,000	3,081,100	16,431,100
	Subtotal C	82,000,000	7,900,000	17,655,100	107,555,100
D	Fund Programme Reserve	5,000,000			5,000,000
	Subtotal C + D	87,000,000	7,900,000	17,655,100	112,555,100
E	Programme Management and Other				
	Programme Support	7,000,000	8,100,000	1,138,100	16,238,100
	Subtotal E	7,000,000	8,100,000	1,138,100	16,238,100
	Total (A+B+C+D+E)	100,000,000	16,010,000	22,912,400	138,922,400

2020-2021 Core Budgets - Expenditures as at 31 March 2022*

	Functional Area Name	Environment Fund	Overhead Trust Account	Regular Budget	Grand Total
A	Policy Making Organs	454,597		3,830	458,427
B. 1	Executive Direction & Management	886,281		815,565	1,701,846
B. 2	United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects on Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR)			160,884	160,884
	Subtotal A + B	1,340,878		980,278	2,321,156
C	Programme of Work				
1.	Climate action	2,659,986	152,082	446,735	3,258,803
2.	Digital transformations	873,951	97,065	268,946	1,239,962
3.	Nature action	2,221,236	349,044	607,846	3,178,126
4.	Environmental governance	2,281,498	187,720	1,009,451	3,478,670
5.	Chemicals and pollution action	2,354,702	201,959	435,128	2,991,789
6.	Finance and economic transformations	2,608,254	162,328	378,810	3,149,392
7.	Science-Policy	1,998,642	8,397	543,693	2,550,732
	Subtotal C	14,998,269	1,158,596	3,690,610	19,847,475
D	Fund Programme Reserve	236,362			236,362
	Subtotal C + D	15,234,631	1,158,596	3,690,610	20,083,837
E	Programme Management and Other				
	Programme Support	1,249,443	3,696,616	239,058	5,185,117
	Subtotal E	1,249,443	3,696,616	239,058	5,185,117
Total (A+B+C+D+E)		17,824,952	4,855,212	4,909,946	27,590,110

3.3 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION STRATEGY

The implementation of the UNEP Resource Mobilization Strategy to resource the Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) 2022-2025 and the related Programmes of Work is well under way. To widen the funding base from Member States, formal written invitations for core contributions to the Environment Fund have been sent and increased outreach efforts with Regional Offices, including the opportunities presented by UNEA 5.2 and UNEP@50, continue to take place.

The conceptualisation of the three thematic funds to address the interconnected strategic objectives of the MTS: *Climate Stability*, *Living in Harmony with Nature* and *Towards a Pollution Free Planet* is to shift away from tightly earmarked funding has been completed and opens opportunities for the provision of softly earmarked funding by multiple types of funding partners.

UNEP is preparing a specific strategy and action plan for resource mobilization from the philanthropic sector based on a detailed analysis.

3.4 HUMAN RESOURCES

General Overview

As at 31 March 2022, UNEP employed 1295 staff members consisting of 786 (60.7%) in the professional and above categories, 8 (0.6%) in the National Professional Officer (NPO) category and 501 (38.7%) in the general service category. Of these 789 (61%) are female and 506 (39%) are male.

1. Senior Level Staff (UNEP Secretariat and MEAs)

Total staff at grade P-5 and above as at 31 March 2022

Level	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5
No. of Staff	1	3	10	52	137

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

2. Senior Appointments

Senior appointments in the first quarter (January to March) 2022

Position Title	Grade	Gender	Nationality	Division
PRINCIPAL PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT OFFICER	D-1	Female	Rep. of Korea	Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity
*PRINCIPAL COORDINATION OFFICER	D-1	Female	Russian	Ecosystems Division
CHIEF OF BRANCH, PROGRAMME	D-1	Female	German	Economy Division
PRINCIPAL PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT OFFICER	D-1	Male	British	Economy Division
*CHIEF OF SECTION, HUMAN RESOURCES	P-5	Male	Colombian	Corporate Services Division
*SENIOR PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT OFFICER	P-5	Female	Ethiopian	Africa Office
*SENIOR COORDINATION OFFICER	P-5	Male	Venezuelan	Latin America and the Caribbean Office
*CHIEF OF SECTION, PUBLIC INFORMATION	P-5	Female	Indian	Communication Division

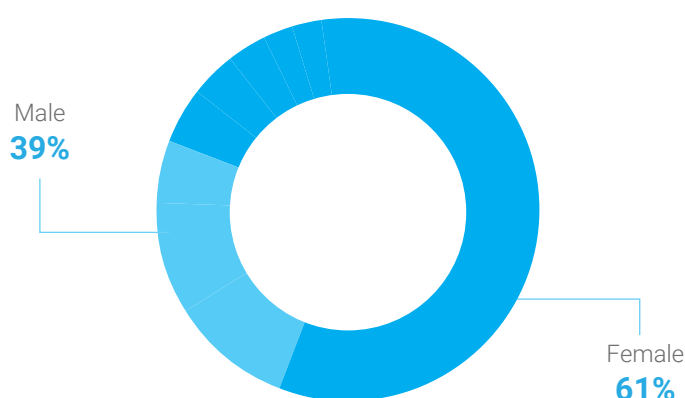
Position Title	Grade	Gender	Nationality	Division
*SENIOR PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT OFFICER	P-5	Female	Italian	New York Office
SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER	P-5	Female	Danish	Corporate Services Division
*SENIOR PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT OFFICER	P-5	Female	South African	Ecosystems Division
*SENIOR PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT OFFICER	P-5	Female	Saint Lucian	Secretariat to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species

*Staff member to assume office after 31 March 2022
The above information does not include TJOs

3. Gender Parity status

The overall gender parity status remains the same at 61% female and 39% male as that of the 4th quarter (October to December) of 2021.

FIGURE 6 UNEP Secretariat Professional & Above Categories



Gender Distribution - UNEP Secretariat and MEAs

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

UNEP SECRETARIAT												
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P2	P3	Total P+	Total NPO	Total GS	Total
Female	1	2	4	21	48	99	49	105	329	3	272	604
Male			2	22	59	105	22	73	283	5	109	397
MEAs												
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P2	P3	Total P+	Total NPO	Total GS	Total
Female		1	3	5	15	29	14	26	93	0	92	185
Male			1	4	15	23	17	21	81	0	28	109
Total	1	3	10	52	137	256	225	102	786	8	501	1295

FIGURE 7 UNEP Secretariat P+ Gender Distribution

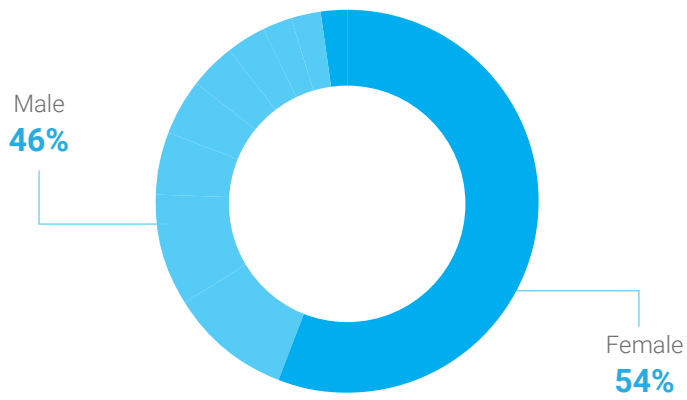


FIGURE 8 UNEP MEAS P+ Gender Distribution

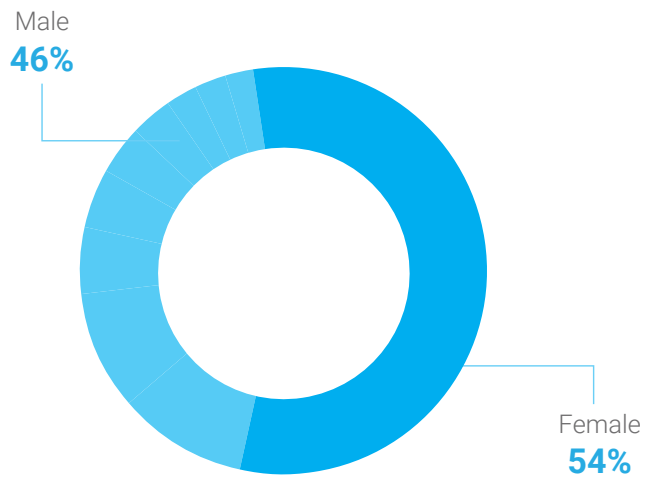


FIGURE 9 UNEP Secretariat GS Gender Distribution

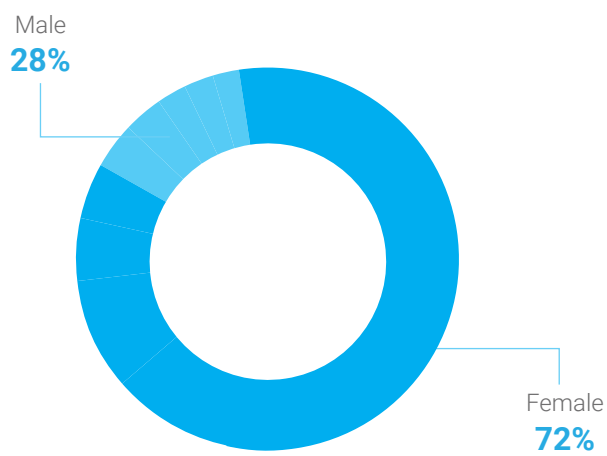
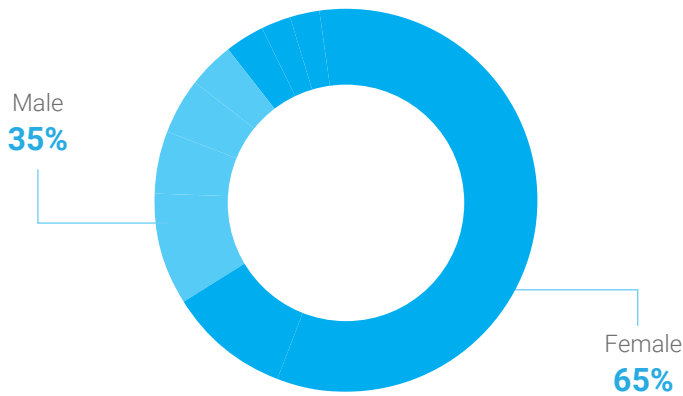


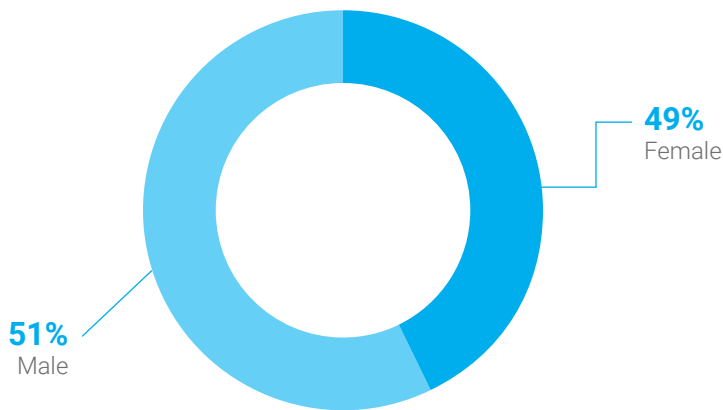
FIGURE 10 UNEP MEAs GS Gender Distribution



4. Gender status for P5 and above level – UNEP Secretariat and MEAs – 31 March 2022

Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	Total
Female	1	3	7	26	63	100
Male			3	26	74	103
Total	1	3	10	52	137	203
Female %	100%	100%	70%	50%	46%	49%
Male %	0%	0%	30%	50%	54%	51%

FIGURE 11 Gender Status for P5 & Above



UNEP SECRETARIAT						
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	Total
Female	1	2	4	21	48	76
Male			2	22	59	83
MEAs						
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	Total
Female		1	3	5	15	24
Male			1	4	15	20
Total	1	3	10	52	137	203

FIGURE 12 UNEP Secretariat P-5 & Above Gender Distribution

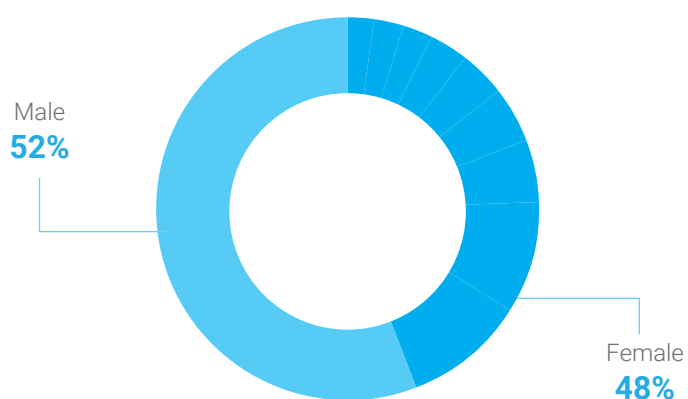
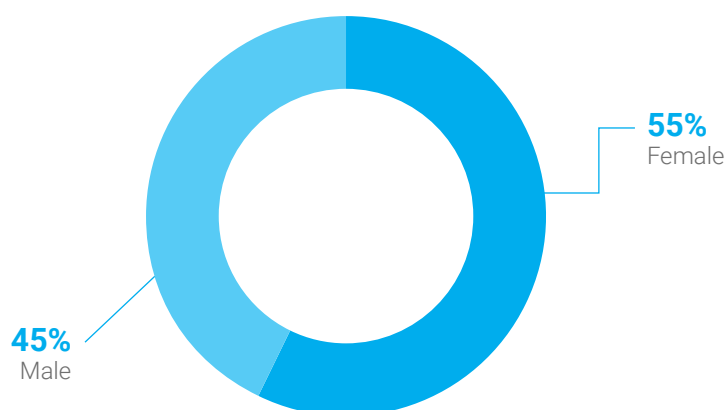


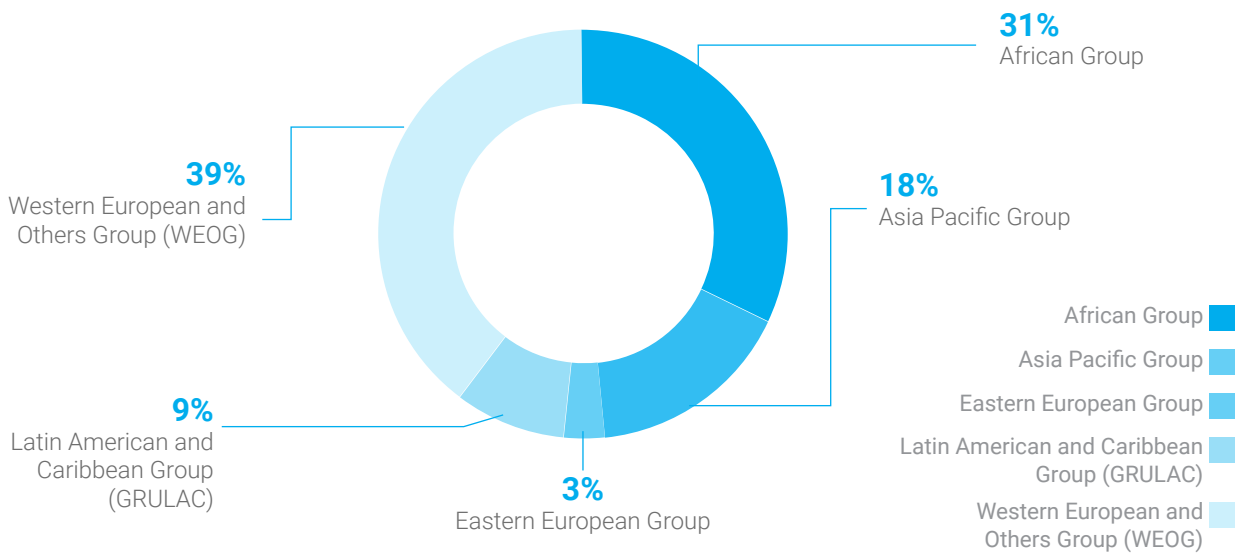
FIGURE 13 UNEP MEAs P5 & Above Gender Distribution



5. Regional Representation of staff (UNEP and MEA Secretariats) as at 31 March 2022

Region	Total
African Group	408
Asia Pacific Group	228
Eastern European Group	36
Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)	117
Stateless	1
Western European and Others Group (WEOG)	505
Total	1295

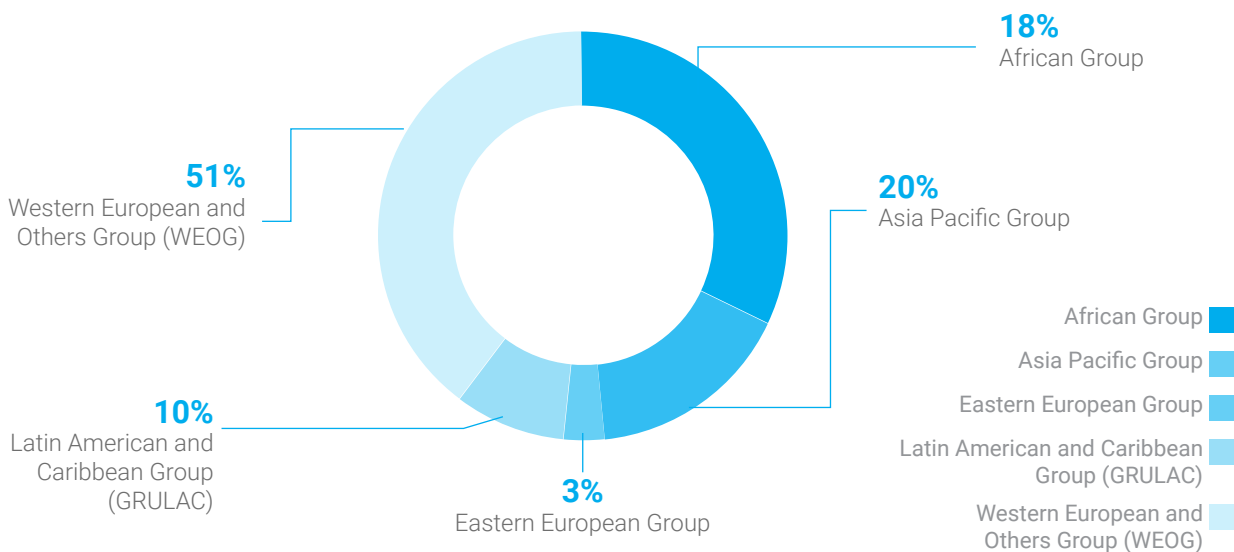
FIGURE 14 UNEP Regional Representation



6. Regional Distribution of UNEP’s Professional and Above Level Staff

Regional Distribution	Professional & Above Level								Total
	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	
African Group		1	3	4	30	58	38	10	144
Asia Pacific Group		1	2	10	26	44	44	28	155
Eastern European Group				3	5	8	6	3	25
Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)			2	5	18	21	20	10	76
Stateless							1		1
Western European and Others Group (WEOG)	1	1	3	30	58	125	116	51	385
Total	1	3	10	52	137	256	225	102	786

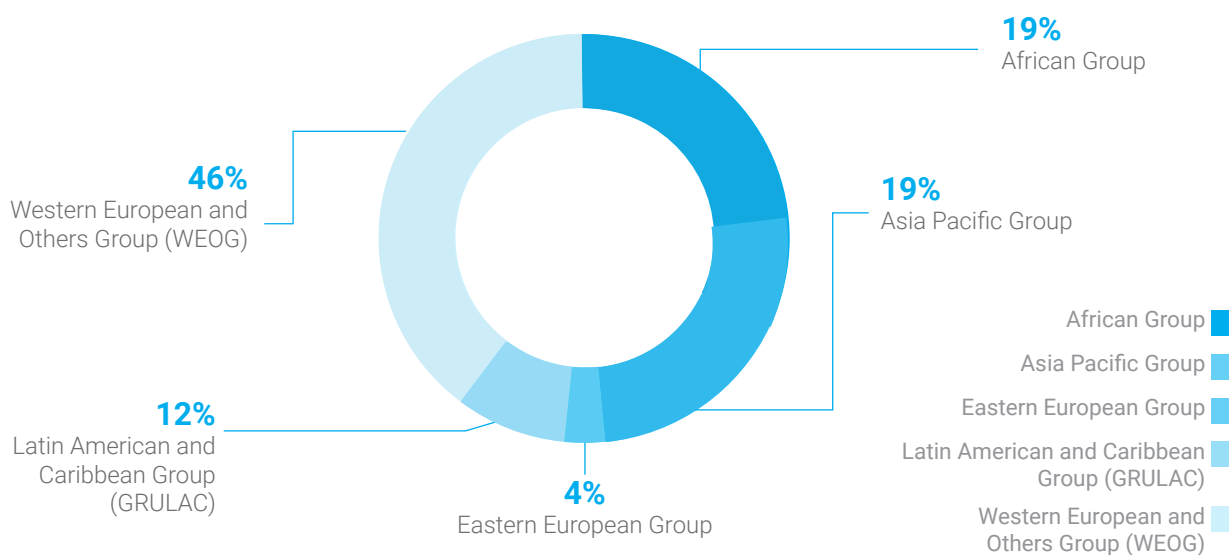
FIGURE 15 Regional Distribution Professional & Above Level



7. Regional representation P5 and above as at 31 March 2022.

Regional Distribution	P5 and above					Total
	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	
African Group		1	3	4	30	38
Asia Pacific Group		1	2	10	26	39
Eastern European Group				3	5	8
Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)			2	5	18	25
Western European and Others Group (WEOG)	1	1	3	30	58	93
Total	1	3	10	52	137	203

FIGURE 16 P5 & Above Staff By Region as at 31 March 2022



8. Key Human Resource Risks and Issues.

Gender

UNEP's Gender parity implementation plan is on track to meet the Secretary-General's UN System-Wide Gender Parity Strategy. At the professional level UNEP's gender ratio is 53 percent female to 47 percent male overall (*under the United Nations Secretariat Framework Gender Parity Strategy, parity is considered to be achieved within the 47 to 53 percent margin*). UNEP is working to meet the parity target at the P5 and above level which is currently 45 percent female and 55 percent male. In the last three months, nine out of 12 senior position appointments have been female. UNEP is monitoring and consistently evaluating its overall gender targets against those set out in the implementation plan.

Geographic Distribution

UNEP currently employs staff from 125 countries. At the professional and above categories, there are staff members from 117 countries. UNEP is working to improve its regional diversity and has made some progress in senior positions, through selections and appointment of professionals from Eastern Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean. UNEP remains committed to improving the geographical representation of its workforce and intends to implement a four-point plan to increase the representation of unrepresented and underrepresented Member States and less represented regional groups. The plan will focus on (a) Increased internal direction, messaging, guidance and monitoring and awareness campaigns targeting both the top management and operations of UNEP and strengthened accountability mechanisms, (b) Continuously enhancing outreach activities both offline and online through existing and new tools and platforms to promote jobs and improve employer brand, (c) Leveraging on the knowledge, experience and resources of Member States, other UN organizations and international organization networks, and (d) Establishing a new talent acquisition programme that will target young graduates to tap into new talent and create a new pipeline for young graduates of less represented regional groups and underrepresented Member States at UNEP. In addition, UNEP is preparing specialized outreach plans according to the position and specific outreach needs and continues to participate in career fairs organized by Member States to raise awareness and interest from applicants from un-represented and under-represented countries. The most recent took place at the end of January 2022.

3.5 AUDITS

Audits: status and key findings

Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS):

Closed:

- Afghanistan Project Office
- Evaluation at UNEP
- Recruitment Process

Under implementation:

- Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (3)
- Abidjan Convention Secretariat (4)
- Management of Partnerships (7)
- Grants Management (2)
- Evaluation of the prevention, response and victim support efforts against SEA (1)

Newly issued recommendations and key findings:

Regional Office for Africa (6): Project monitoring and evaluation, risk management, resource mobilization strategy, support to Member States.

Response to COVID-19 (2): Crisis Management Training and Organizational Resilience Policy update.

Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable (1): review the outstanding VAT transactions.

MLF Montreal Protocol (5): Performance indicators, outstanding advances, project: financial closure; delayed implementation; completion and reporting.

CITES (7): tracking implementation of the decisions COP, resource mobilization strategy, donor agreements compliance, implementing partners: due diligence and comparative assessments; monitoring.

Planned/ongoing:

Management of Data Classification and Data Privacy
Barcelona Convention

Board of Auditors (BoA)

The Board of Auditors is conducting the interim audit for 2021 of UNEP-HQ (including GEF), Secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity (SCBD) and the UNEP North America Office (NAO) remotely from 11 October to 5 November. During this audit 36 out of 65 recommendations (55%) were considered closed as implemented and the remaining 29 recommendations (45%) are under implementation. The final audit is ongoing onsite and is planned to close on 5 May 2022.

3.6 EVALUATIONS

During the reporting period:

- **Three** project evaluations were brought to completion.
- **27** project evaluations are currently ongoing.

Evaluations continue as planned. Where field missions are required, the emerging more favourable COVID-19 related public health conditions are allowing evaluations that were previously put on-hold to recommence.

Selected lesson from the Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF Project “Enabling South Africa to Prepare its Third National Communication (TNC) and Biennial Update Report (BUR-2) to the UNFCCC”

Well-positioned, modest GEF investments can have far reaching, transformative results, when the country-enabling environment is ‘right’. Although the project design did not include or allow the monitoring of higher-level results - outcomes, impacts, and assumptions underlying the Theory of Change (ToC), the Reconstructed ToC prepared in the evaluation identified these higher-level results. This enabled the evaluation to find evidence of the use of the project outputs to bring about changes in institutional arrangements and systemic capacities for reporting to the UNFCCC. It also helped teams visualize and include the integration of climate issues into policies, programmes and strategies at all levels (national, provincial, district, municipality). Enabling conditions that made these results possible include:

- a. Government willingness to engage stakeholders meaningfully in the project process, and putting in place a clear strategy for such participation;
- b. The high levels of awareness of the issues around climate change and its impacts on economic development and livelihoods in the country, partly generated by the country hosting of COP 11 in 2011;
- c. As a result of (a) and (b), willingness of the relevant stakeholders to participate and provide relevant information, including industry and other private sector actors; and
- d. Presence of institutions with relatively high capacities for undertaking project tasks, including government agencies, non-government organizations and the private sector.

Endnotes

1. The figures do not include conventions and protocols administered by the United Nations Environment Programme. 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.





QUARTERLY REPORT

to the **158th** Meeting of the

COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES

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