



Quarterly Report
to the 166th Meeting of the
Committee of Permanent Representatives
January – March 2024

ADVANCE UNEDITED VERSION

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1 SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

A. Global developments

[Sixth session of United Nations Environment Assembly \(UNEA-6\)](#)

[UNEA-6](#) took place between 26 February and 1 March in Nairobi. It focused on the overall [theme](#) of *Effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution*. It brought together 5,621 attendees, including 161 Member States and Observers represented by 1,683 delegates, with 12 Heads of State and Government (or their Deputies) and 131 ministers and vice ministers in attendance. Major Groups and Stakeholders were strongly represented by 1,032 representatives.

The Assembly [adopted](#) 15 resolutions and two decisions aimed at halting the progression of the three planetary environmental crises. Member states also adopted a [Ministerial Declaration](#) which underlines their collective resolve to tackle these crises, committing the world's ministers to cooperate for effective, inclusive and sustainable solutions for the planet under a reinvigorated environmental multilateral system. The Declaration will be transmitted to UN General Assembly for consideration at the upcoming [Summit of the Future](#) in September 2024.

[Three leadership dialogues](#) during the high-level segment explored transformative, multi-stakeholder and multi-level actions and solutions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. These included whether science, data and digitalization are speeding the transition to a sustainable future ([Dialogue 1](#)); whether the global financial system can really tackle climate change, nature loss and pollution ([Dialogue 2](#)); and whether environmental multilateralism is delivering fast enough ([Dialogue 3](#)). In addition, two [high level dialogues](#) focused on enhancing the relationship with Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) by strengthening convergence of actions and sharing of experiences, while increasing MEA visibility.

The preceding [sixth meeting](#) of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (19–23 February) helped to lay the groundwork for the Assembly by deliberating and pre-negotiating upon the content and wording of proposed resolutions, declarations and decisions.

Representatives of the Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) participated actively in UNEA-6 through the preparation of statements and positions, a series of hybrid “Green Room” [side events](#), daily morning briefings promoting internal dialogue, and the organization of a [multistakeholder dialogue](#) (29 February) on synergies between the three planetary environmental crises and technology. They identified focal points to facilitate coordinated inputs on draft resolutions and crafted their positions, statements, and contributions for the UNEA-6 process through the [Global MGS Forum](#) (24-25 February).

Furthermore, a [Global Youth Environment Assembly](#) (17-18 February) resulted in a [Global Youth Declaration on the Environment](#) calling for policies and mandates centred around the principle of intergenerational equity and applying a long-term perspective. The UNEA Ministerial Declaration welcomed the Youth Environment Assembly and its role in fostering active participation by youth in multilateral environmental governance.

UNEP co-organized a [Cities and Regions Summit](#) (23 February) in the run-up to UNEA-6, which underscored cities' role in addressing the three planetary environmental crises. Discussions

centred on reinforcing multi-level governance and urban financing for effective climate, biodiversity, and pollution mitigation. UNEP also co-organized a [workshop](#) (24 February) to address integrating the Global Stocktake and COP28 outcomes into forthcoming Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). It further co-led a [side event](#) (28 February) which explored, together with 12 countries, ambitious NDC approaches, synergizing climate and biodiversity agendas for enhanced targets and nature-positive outcomes.

In preparation for UNEA-6, UNEP convened regional preparatory meetings for Member States in West Asia (15-16 January, Riyadh) to harmonize efforts and prioritize contributions. It offered extensive guidance and support to all delegations, delivered comprehensive presentations on UNEA-6 preparations, including anticipated political outcomes, demonstrations of online tools, and interactive Q&A sessions.

UNEA-6 garnered extensive global coverage, with mentions in more than 10,000 news stories, across 158 countries and 61 languages. Media outreach was complimented by a curtain raiser opinion piece by the Executive Director published in 24 global outlets ahead of UNEA-6. UNEA-6 content on social media reached 50 million views while videos were viewed more than seven million times. Key highlights included the [Gala of Hope](#) that celebrated new [World Restoration Flagships](#); re-launch of [Young Champions of the Earth](#); and successful engagement with Goodwill Ambassadors.

UNEP's Executive Director (ED) briefed Member States in UNHQ (13 March) on the outcomes of UNEA-6. Member States welcomed the outcomes and reaffirmed UNEP's important role in multilateral environmental action. Some Member States underscored the importance of implementation and acknowledged the difficulties to achieve more ambitious outcomes at UNEA-6. Strong support was also expressed for the MEA Day and the opportunity to hear from various secretariats.

International day of zero waste

To mark the second annual [International Day of Zero Waste](#) (30 March), UNEP launched the [Food Waste Index Report 2024](#) (27 March, Nairobi) which provides the latest global estimates on food waste occurring at retail and consumer level. It also jointly published the [Global Waste Management Outlook 2024](#) (28 March) which provides an update on global waste generation and the cost of waste and its management since 2018.

UNEP co-organized observances (27 March) in multiple locations and online, including [Geneva](#), [Nairobi](#) and New York to discuss the benefits of zero waste and highlight global leadership on zero-waste initiatives through sharing success stories. In [Bangkok](#), UNEP co-organized a half-day workshop (29 March) to foster a sustainable lifestyle that maximizes resource efficiency and minimizes waste generation. In [Kingston](#) (26 March), UNEP co-organized an online event aimed at promoting zero waste initiatives and inspiring youth engagement. Key outcomes of these events included increased awareness, sharing of initiatives and engagement of stakeholders.

First international day of the Arabian leopard

UNEP [co-organized](#) the first celebration of the [International Day of the Arabian Leopard](#) (12 February), proclaimed as 10 February by the UN General Assembly, to raise awareness about the critically endangered status of the species. The event offered an opportunity to detail existing habitat conservation efforts and celebrate success stories on work to protect this endangered species.

Quintet of change initiative

UNEP continued to work to enhance its anticipatory and futures focus in line with the Secretary General's [Quintet of Change](#) initiative focused on stronger capabilities for data, innovation, strategic foresight, behavioural science and results. To this end, UNEP completed the review and analysis of signals of change provided through its six [regional foresight workshops](#) and presented the data to its [Foresight Expert Panel](#) during the [Second Sensemaking Workshop](#) (19-20 March, Paris).

The panel reviewed the collection of signals and prioritized those which would be carried forward as input into the second [Delphi Survey](#), which was launched in early April 2024. Combined with the outcomes of the discussions of the regional contextualization workshops and the results of the exploratory horizon scan, these inputs will form the basis of the upcoming Global Foresight Report which is expected to be published in July 2024 at the [High-Level Political Forum](#) ahead of the Summit of the Future in September.

ECOSOC partnership forum

During the [ECOSOC Partnership Forum](#) (30 January, New York), UNEP co-led two Action Segments on [SDG13](#) and [SDG16](#) to increase understanding, engagement, and commitment on a multi-stakeholder partnership approach on climate action, the rule of law and justice, including environmental justice. [Summaries](#) of the Action Segment proceedings will feed into the preparatory documents for the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF).

ECOSOC coordination segment

During the ECOSOC [Coordination Segment's](#) (31 January - 1 February, New York) panel session on *Sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions to advance climate action*, UNEP underlined key transformative actions for the implementation of SDG13 including: investing in climate science; working on advancing sectoral solutions; and enhancing assistance to capacity building. The Segment focussed on strengthening its ability to coordinate the UN system and its subsidiary bodies in the economic, social, health, environmental and other related areas. UNEP's inputs and suggestions have been included in the preparatory documents for the HLPF.

Declaration on future generations

A joint statement of the UNEP-constituted High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) Core Group on Future Generations was delivered during UN system consultations (15 January) in preparation for intergovernmental negotiations on the [Declaration on Future Generations](#). UNEP also provided a [written submission](#) for consideration by co-facilitators. If inter-governmentally agreed, the Declaration will be annexed to the [Pact for the Future](#) and form one of the outcomes of the [Summit of the Future](#).

Global digital compact

UNEP provided written inputs for the [zero draft](#) of the [Global Digital Compact](#), in response to an invitation from the co-facilitators of the [intergovernmental process](#) for the Compact which is expected to outline shared principles for an open, free and secure digital future for all.

High level committee on programmes (HLCP)

UNEP's Executive Director chaired the HLCP's spring meeting (11-12 March, New York) which sought to foster coherence, cooperation, and coordination on the programme dimensions of

strategic issues facing the UN system. UNEP also contributed technical inputs to various work streams of the HLCP.

UNEP reports

During the reporting period, UNEP released several important reports as part of its contribution to action on critical environmental issues, including [Used Heavy- Duty Vehicles and the Environment](#) (22 February), [Global Waste Management Outlook 2024](#) (28 February), [Global Resources Outlook 2024](#) (1 March), [Global Status Report on Buildings and Construction](#) (7 March) and the [2024 Food Waste Index Report](#) (27 March).

A full list of UNEP publications released between 15 August 2023 – 10 April 2024, as well as concepts approved by the Publications Board for future release dates, can be found [here](#). Upon release, select publications are made available [here](#).

Accreditation to UNEP

During the reporting period, 43 new organizations, including four intergovernmental organizations,¹ were accredited to UNEP and its governing bodies representing Business and Industry (4), Children and Youth (2), Indigenous Peoples and Communities (2), Scientific and Technological Community (8), Women (1) and NGOs (26). The list of accredited organizations can be found [here](#). As of 31 March, UNEP had accredited 1,131 organizations.

B. Regional developments

i. Africa

Bureau of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN)

AMCEN's [35th Bureau meeting](#) (1 March, Nairobi), hosted by UNEP, acknowledged progress on biodiversity conservation and plastic pollution, urging Member States' active participation in forthcoming negotiations. The Bureau agreed on hosting a special session on land degradation, desertification and drought in 2024, with Cote d'Ivoire offering to host. As the Secretariat of AMCEN, UNEP facilitated the dialogue, provided technical expertise, and advocated for Africa's interests in global environmental governance.

ii. Asia and the Pacific

11th Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD)

UNEP provided support to strengthening the environmental dimension of the [11th APFSD](#) (20-23 February, Bangkok) by co-leading the development of an [SDG 13](#) (Climate Action) profile reviewing progress in Asia Pacific, co-organizing an SDG 13 multi-stakeholder roundtable, jointly developing SDG Goal Profiles on [SDG 2](#) (Zero Hunger), [SDG 16](#) (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) and [SDG 17](#) (Partnerships), and supporting two other Round Table Discussions on SDG 16 and SDG 17 in collaboration with partners.

UNEP co-organized four [side events](#) covering [sustainable transport, accelerating actions towards SDGs through KM-GBF implementation, engaging youth in green and just economy](#)

¹ Organization of Southern Cooperation (OSC), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), European Space Agency (ESA) and Joint Songwe River Basin Commission.

[transition at scale](#), and [building synergies at the climate-health nexus](#). UNEP further contributed to the [APFSD Youth Forum](#) (18-20 March, Bangkok) by delivering a presentation on progress gaps and challenges towards SDG 13 in Asia Pacific and how young people can advance progress. UNEP also delivered a [formal statement](#) to update Member States on the fifth Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific ([5th AP Forum](#)), regional Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) consultations and UNEA 6.

Third meeting of the ASEAN environmental rights working group

UNEP, together with OHCHR and ESCAP, provided technical support to the [Working Group](#) (27-28 February, Manila) to advance regional instruments to uphold the right to a healthy environment. The Working Group agreed to continue developing the ASEAN Declaration on Environmental Rights with the draft to be submitted to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights ([AICHR](#)) within 2024 for further consideration by ASEAN leaders. The meeting also agreed to release the draft for consultation in preparation for its 4th meeting in May 2024. It also identified the importance of developing a regional plan of action for the declaration's implementation.

Asia Pacific regional consultations in preparation for INC-4

The hybrid [consultations](#) (5-6 March, Bangkok) aimed to prepare members for the [fourth session](#) of the INC to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. UNEP, together with the INC Secretariat, provided support for facilitating the arrangements for in person and virtual participation, while Bureau Members led the development of the agenda, focusing on the details of the revised draft text and expected outcomes from INC-4. A total of 35 countries were represented. As a result of the consultations, increased engagement of Member States can be expected at INC-4.

iii. Europe

14th meeting of Conference of Parties (COP) to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)

UNEP's Executive Director attended [COP 14](#) of the CMS Convention, hosted by Uzbekistan (10-14 February, Samarkand). This was the first ever CMS COP held in Central Asia, a region highly vulnerable to climate change, nature loss and land degradation. Under the title "Nature Knows No Borders," UNEP co-organized the Conference where resolutions, decisions and concerted actions were taken on over 100 distinct topics, including new measures to safeguard migratory species, the addition of 14 species to the coverage of the Convention, and an agreement on a Central Asian Flyway spanning 30 Range States of migratory birds.

Regional forum on sustainable development for the UNECE region

UNEP, through the Issue Based Coalition (IBC) on Climate and Environment which it co-chairs, supported the deliberations of the [Regional Forum](#) (13-14 March, Geneva) which focussed on the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions in times of multiple crises. The IBC organized a peer learning roundtable on Climate Action (SDG 13) whose outcomes are reflected in the Forum's [report](#), which will constitute the official input from the ECE region to the 2024 HLPF.

South-eastern Europe pollution platform - Western Balkans regional waste conference

UNEP co-organized [Conference](#) (26-27 March, Vienna) brought together over 50 government representatives and international stakeholders to discuss ways to promote waste reduction, recycling, and circular economy principles to create a cleaner and healthier environment in the sub-region. It addressed harmonization of the global and regional plastics agenda and deep

dived into the waste high-impact sectors, reflecting on the outcomes of UNEA 6. The Conference also presented the Pollution Platform's work plan for 2024 and beyond and celebrated the International Day of Zero Waste. Conference participants agreed on the importance of strengthening partnerships in the fields of waste and pollution prevention, monitoring and reduction, and UNEP's essential role in this regard.

iv. West Asia

Arab forum for sustainable development (AFSD)

UNEP highlighted the importance of the three environmental planetary crisis through its engagement in the [AFSD](#) (5-7 March, Beirut) which brought together Arab Governments and a broad range of stakeholders to address sustainable development priorities from a regional perspective, discuss progress, review national experiences and enhance the region's voice at the HLPF. UNEP co-organized a preparatory meeting on environmental aspects of the Agenda 2030 (14-15 February, Cairo) and moderated a [Special Session](#) during the AFSD where stakeholders from the Arab region explored proposed solutions to facilitate the institutional implementation of strategic foresight.

Oman conference for environmental sustainability (decarbonization)

UNEP co-organized a [Conference](#) (26-28 February, Muscat) focussed on addressing the impacts of climate change and advancing decarbonization initiatives. The conference attracted 200 scientific research papers from 25 countries and served as a platform for fostering collaboration and facilitating knowledge exchange among scientists, researchers, policymakers, industry leaders and environmentalists, all united by a strong commitment to decarbonization.

2 PROGRAMME OF WORK IMPLEMENTATION

A. Climate stability

Buildings and Climate Global Forum

The UNEP co-organized [Forum](#) (7-8 March, Paris) gathered 1,450 participants from state and non-state organizations involved in the buildings sector (engineering, construction, real estate), to further international collaboration for decarbonisation and resilience of buildings. Seventy countries endorsed the Ministerial [Declaration de Chaillot](#), which aims to create momentum for building decarbonisation and climate resilience by reinforcing international collaboration and making calls for commitments, both from governments and state and non-state actors in the building and construction sectors.

Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction

UNEP published [the Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction](#) with the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (7 March) which provides an annual snapshot of the progress of the buildings and construction sector on a global scale. It reviews the status of policies, finance, technologies and solutions to monitor whether the sector is aligned with the Paris Agreement goals. It also provides stakeholders with evidence to persuade policymakers and the overall buildings and construction community to take action.

Operationalizing the loss and damage fund

UNEP co-organized a [webinar](#) on *Tackling the Loss and Damage Fund: Dialogue on the Funds Operationalization, Challenges and Opportunities* (19 March). With 248 participants, the webinar supported an enhanced understanding on different elements and considerations in operationalizing the Fund. Key issues related to the work of the Fund Board, including operational modalities, were highlighted. The dialogue also [identified](#) essential considerations necessary to enhance the Fund's impact in the Asia-Pacific region, including access modality recommendations and policy and capacity-building, impact in the region, including recommendations to increase access to the Fund and policy and capacity-building.

Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF)

Through [SOFF](#), UNEP continued to support developing countries to close critical weather and climate data gaps. The 7th SOFF Steering Committee approved (7 March) two UNEP-prepared investment funding requests totalling US\$4.5 million for [Bhutan](#) and US\$ 3.8 million for [Cabo Verde](#). In addition, the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund approved (28 March) disbursements to UNEP for a US\$ 4.8 million project in [Maldives](#) and a US\$ 10.8 million project in [Kiribati](#) which had been approved by the previous [6th SOFF Steering Committee](#). These funds will be used to strengthen national capacity for collecting and sharing weather and climate data to meet the Global Basic Observing Network ([GBON](#)) standard.

Greenhouse Gas Abatement Cost Model (GACMO) tool

UNEP organized a [webinar](#) (15 February) to launch the upgraded version of [GACMO](#), a greenhouse gas emissions projections tool which allows countries to carry out accurate and rapid scenario analysis of how mitigation options impact emissions, enabling high-impact decisions-making and increasing transparency around decisions. The webinar provided participants an understanding of how GACMO 2.0 can provide countries with a clear understanding of the implications of their climate actions to enact meaningful change and contribute to global emissions reduction goals.

Paris Agreement reporting

UNEP organized a technical workshop (13-14 March, Santo Domingo) on the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) and on gaps and barriers for complying with reporting requirements under the Paris Agreement. The workshop shared experiences on methodological and technical challenges of implementing country-tailored ETF systems, under the Paris Agreement.

Maldives national adaptation plan process

UNEP, in partnership with the Government of Maldives, launched a new climate adaptation [project](#) (15 March, Malé) that will culminate in the development of a National Adaptation Plan (NAP). The NAP process aims to reduce the country's vulnerability to the impacts of climate change by identifying and addressing long-term adaptation needs through strategic planning guided by the latest climate science and projections. UNEP is the implementing partner for the project, providing technical support and facilitating access to finance. The launch event brought together key stakeholders and served as a platform to deliberate on the NAP coordination mechanism and composition of the major coordinating bodies.

Early warnings for all in Maldives

Following the GCF's approval (19 March) of a US\$0.3 million [Project Preparation Facility \(PPF\) proposal](#) for Maldives, UNEP will lead a project to develop a GCF funding proposal to establish an end-to-end multi-hazard early warning system and strengthen the country's climate information services, which represent important milestones towards achieving "[Early Warnings for All](#)" in Maldives.

Capacity assessment of Somalia's environment and climate change ministry

UNEP supported Somalia's Ministry of Environment and Climate Change to produce and launch its first ever capacity assessment report (February). The Report analyzes capacities, areas of support and costs out capacity support for the future. There has been significant donor interest in supporting the implementation of the Report's recommendations. The Report will also feed into the finalization of Somalia's National Adaptation Plan.

Climate finance support to Somalia

UNEP provided coordination and preparatory support for the GCF Executive Director's visit to Somalia in March, resulting in a commitment to provide investments and readiness support in excess of US\$100 million to Somalia by mid-2025. As a signatory of the [COP28 Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery and Peace](#), GCF is taking active steps to build climate resilience at the scale and speed required in highly vulnerable countries and communities.

Climate, peace and security in the Horn of Africa

The first [Bi-annual Meeting](#) (29-30 January, Kampala) to launch the UN Regional Prevention and Integration Strategy for the Horn of Africa focused on several thematic areas, among which were recent developments in climate, peace and security in the region, including the establishment of the UN Climate, Peace and Security Hub in partnership with UNEP. Several areas of cooperation were agreed upon between UNEP and other UN agencies, funds and programmes in this realm.

Climate, peace and security in Haiti

Building on UNEP-led work on climate, peace and security in Haiti, the Haitian Prime Minister indicated interest (26 January) to the UN Resident Coordinator to launch a national policy dialogue on the topic. Following the signature of the *innovative youth, agroecology and green jobs for peace in Haiti*, UNEP carried out a series of activities, including workshop with other

UN Peace-Building Fund projects in Haiti for methodological cross-feeding (27-28 February) and a training of trainers to build capacities of 25 local authorities and civil society organizations (4-8 March).

B. Living in harmony with nature

One health approach in biodiversity and wildlife conversation

UNEP participated in an ASEAN [Technical Forum](#) to reflect on the relevant role of biodiversity, wildlife conservation, and environment in building resilience through One Health Approach (5-6 February, Bangkok). On behalf of the Asia-Pacific Quadripartite Alliance on One Health, UNEP co-delivered a presentation on the Safety across Asia for the global Environment ([SAFE](#)) Project's relevance to the One Health approach and highlighted the importance of mapping policy and legal framework across sectors in the region relevant to One Health. Participating member states discussed ways to better integrate the three environmental planetary crises in One Health approaches and expressed interest in including One Health in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan (NBSAP) revision process through close collaboration with UNEP.

One health second annual executives meeting

UNEP hosted and chaired the [meeting](#) on the Quadripartite Collaboration on One Health (FAO, UNEP, WHO, WOH) (28 February – 5 March, Nairobi) on the margins of UNEA 6. The Principals of the four organizations [reaffirmed](#) their commitment to further enhance the [One Health Joint Plan of Action's](#) policy impact and mobilize sustainable resources to support [One Health implementation](#) at all levels.

National biodiversity strategies and action plans for Pacific Island Countries

UNEP co-organized a sub-regional [Dialogue](#) (18-21 March, Nadi, Fiji) with representatives from 15 countries focused on knowledge and experience sharing on updating and revising NBSAPs in alignment with the KM-GBF, and existing tools and initiatives that can support GBF implementation efforts, including the UNEP-GEF Early Action Support programme.

National food security and nutritional strategy for cities in Brazil

Brazil's Ministry of Social Development launched the [Strategy](#) (7 February) whose component on *Healthy and Sustainable Food Production in Cities* will be implemented based on [Guidelines](#) for Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture developed by UNEP under the TEEB [AgriFood Initiative](#). The Ministry has committed financial support to implement the strategy in 12 metropolitan regions over the next two years.

Advancing sustainable blue economy in India

UNEP co-organized a [technical workshop](#) (15 March, Chennai) to build awareness and capacity of policymakers and practitioners in Tamil Nadu on scaling-up and adoption of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and other integrated approaches that support the transition towards a Sustainable Blue Economy - one of the strategic areas of focus under India's Presidency of the G20.

Biodiversity stocktaking support to UNCT in Indonesia

UNEP, at the request of the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) for Indonesia, co-organized a briefing (20 March) for the UN Country Team (UNCT) on the UN Common Approach to Biodiversity and nature-based solutions and the development of a UN system-wide strategy on biodiversity. UNEP is currently assisting the UNRC and UNCT in undertaking a stocktaking analysis of existing initiatives on biodiversity in the country, which will be used as a basis for developing a UN system-wide strategy on biodiversity for Indonesia. The results of the

analysis will also inform the Common Country Analysis and the development of the next UNSDCF for Indonesia.

Malawi national environment outlook (NEO)

UNEP co-organized a [workshop](#) with 76 participants to kick start the preparatory process of Malawi's NEO (19-21 March, Lilongwe). UNEP will co-lead the national state-of-the-environment assessment, to provide the evidence base to inform national policies and decisions to better protect the country's ecosystems and strengthen local and national resilience to climate and disaster impacts. The workshop provided training on how to conduct Integrated Environmental Assessments (IEA) for the eventual production of the NEO. The challenges for implementing a NEO were identified together with solutions.

Peacebuilding and nature-based solutions in Somalia

The UNEP co-implemented *Breaking the climate conflict cycle* [project](#) in Hirshabelle State concluded in February. The project combined natural resource management with peacebuilding and nature-based solutions, leading to a district wide agreement between conflicting clans which will be monitored and be the subject of follow-up programming with police and local peacekeeping stakeholders to ensure longer-term sustainability of climate adaptation and local security delivery.

C. Towards a pollution-free planet

Regional consultations for INC-4

UNEP organized regional consultations for Asia-Pacific (5-6 March, Bangkok), Eastern Europe (25 March, Vienna) and [LAC](#) (20-22 March, Panama City) to support Member States' preparations for the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment ([INC-4](#)). Participants undertook strategic discussions on the details of the revised draft text and expected outcomes and formulated regional positions. Through the [Geneva Beat Plastic Pollution Dialogues](#), the Geneva Environment Network ([GEN](#)) supported actors in the Geneva community and beyond to engage in the INC process and other processes tackling plastic pollution. An informal observers' [webinar](#) (27-28 March) was also convened by the Chair to provide a space for them to share reflections and ideas.

Regional knowledge-sharing meeting on plastic pollution

UNEP organized the second round of Meetings for LAC (13 March, online) and [Asia-Pacific](#) (7-8 March, Bangkok) to strengthen technical understanding of specific interventions to end plastic pollution, while providing a regionally tailored opportunity for learning and knowledge sharing on relevant issues in preparation for INC-4. Experts addressed the three priority technical issues for the countries, chosen through a UNEP-coordinated survey. The consultations delved into discussions on polymers and chemicals of concern, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and the finance landscape. UNEP also organized a training (8 March) for Member State representatives of Pacific Island Countries on monitoring coastal and riverine plastic pollution.

Options for addressing asbestos contaminants in products and the environment

UNEP co-released an options [paper](#) (6 February) which highlights ongoing evidence that mismanagement of asbestos is resulting in elevated healthcare expenses that surpass any benefits. Over the lifetime of all patients with an asbestos-related disease, the burden of disease costs is estimated to be US\$11 billion. The paper outlines options for the management of asbestos including reinforcing legal frameworks, investigating and adopting safer alternatives to asbestos and adopting evidence-based strategies to deal with asbestos.

Cost of inaction and action on plastic pollution in Asia-Pacific

A UNEP co-organized expert [workshop](#) (1 February, Bangkok) with 60 participants sought to provide tangible and objective information on the societal, economic and environmental costs related to plastic pollution. The workshop resulted in a baseline analysis and a network of relevant experts interested in being involved in further iterations of this work. The results will feed into the deliverables of a project on *Strengthening Plastic Pollution Management in Asia and the Pacific (Mekong River Basin)*.

Strengthening air quality and health management capacities in Central America

UNEP, as part of its support to air quality monitoring and the development of a model legislation on air quality and health that can be adopted by the member states of the Central American Integration System (SICA), co-organized the [workshop](#) (12-14 March, Medellin). This workshop facilitated an exchange of information, capacity building and promoted political support for air quality monitoring and regulatory development in SICA countries and will inform the SICA Council of Ministers of Environment and Health.

Zero waste in the Caribbean

UNEP launched a [webinar series](#) entitled *Resilient Islands: Zero Waste and Circular Caribbean* to increase awareness about the importance of sustainable waste management practices and circular economy principles. Three webinars were held during the first quarter of 2024 on *Waste Management Synergies: Bridging Public and Private Sectors for Sustainable Solutions* (January 31), *Strengthening Waste Information Systems in the Caribbean* (February 29) and *Empowering Women in the Caribbean: Navigating Sustainable Paths through Waste Management and Circular Economy* (March 12).

Emission inventories & source apportionment of air pollution in Southeast Asia

UNEP hosted Secretariat of the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET) co-organized a kick-off meeting (26 March, Bangkok) for the [project](#) on *Stocktaking and Methodological Assessment of Emission Inventories and Source Apportionment of Air Pollution in Southeast Asia*. The meeting aimed to better understand the emissions inventory/source apportionment situation in Southeast Asia and discuss the detailed activities to be carried out in the project with potential partners. Thirty-one participants shared experiences on conducting emission inventories and source apportionment. The project will compile and analyse key studies in Southeast Asia and present them to EANET participating countries, to facilitate the improvement of emissions inventories and source apportionment in the region, as fundamental elements of air quality management.

Financing agrochemical reduction and management (FARM)

UNEP launched (12 March, Nairobi) the GEF-funded [FARM](#) Programme, a five-year US\$37 million project which seeks to catalyse a framework for regulatory and financial investment to detoxify the agriculture sector by eliminating the use of the most harmful inputs to food production systems in Ecuador, India, Kenya, Laos, Philippines, Uruguay and Vietnam. FARM has a particular focus on leveraging finance from public resources and the financial sector, and aims to align policy, enforcement and finance towards the environmentally sustainable management of pesticides and agricultural plastics.

Debris quantification and scenario modelling in Gaza

UNEP led a debris quantification exercise for the Gaza Strip (22 February) to provide baseline information on the quantities of debris created by the conflict and to develop scenarios for debris management, with a view to informing coordinated and effective debris management planning, with recycling as an overall ambition. Debris management is a major challenge

emanating from the Gaza conflict and UNEP's debris analysis is to be included in the UN Interim Damage Assessment.

Debris management in conflict-affected areas in Iraq

UNEP handed over a [debris recycling system](#) (March) to Kirkuk Governorate in northern Iraq to support the sustainable clean-up of demolition waste created by conflict. The one-year demonstration recovered nearly 60,000 tonnes of debris of which around 14,000 tonnes was processed into recycled construction aggregate. Almost 400 displaced persons from destroyed villages were employed to remove and sort the debris under cash-for-work schemes providing much needed livelihoods support. A key project highlight was the construction of the first asphalt road from recycled materials in compliance with national road construction standards. Furthermore, UNEP has been providing advisory support to the Central Organization for Standardization and Quality Control of the Ministry of Planning in developing recycled aggregate standards to help scale-up circular waste management in the construction sector and reduce depletion of natural resources.

Address environmental crimes in Kenya

UNEP co-organized (12 February) a High-Level Dialogue to address the crimes that affect the environment in Kenya, from illegal waste dumping to pollution caused by illegal mining. This event was the first of its kind to adopt a sector approach for all types of crimes that affect the environment. In doing so, it acted as a bridge between traditional environmental institutions and criminal justice agencies.

Law and regulation for air quality management in Thailand

UNEP supported the [Thailand Pollution Control Department's](#) workshop on law and regulation for air quality management (27-29 March, Bangkok). The [workshop](#) gathered insights on the development and enforcement of laws aimed at mitigating transboundary haze pollution, as Thailand develops its first-ever clean air act. UNEP provided technical legal advice for the draft clean air act and facilitated sharing of international good practices on air quality governance, including on transboundary air quality management.

Rubymar maritime disaster in Yemen

In response to the sinking of the MV Rubymar in the Red Sea (18 February), UNEP provided technical advisory support to the Government of Yemen on oil spill response, satellite imagery to track and monitor the vessels status and potential spills, modelling of the potential spills to identify where they could land and their impact, and contingency planning and preparedness. As a member of the UN Technical Support Team responding to the incident, UNEP facilitated cooperation with the Emergency Cell created by the Government and contributed to the preparation of a technical report on the incident.

D. Foundational subprogrammes

i. Science-policy

Seventh global environment outlook (GEO-7)

In implementation of UNEA Resolution 5/3 on [Future of GEO](#), UNEP convened the [Second Authors' Meeting](#) for GEO-7 (15-19 January, Vienna) where more than 200 experts and authors from 82 countries contributed to the First Order Draft (FOD) of the GEO-7 assessment report, which is under peer review. UNEP also convened the first GEO-7 Indigenous Knowledge and Local Knowledge (IK&LK) [Dialogues](#) (25-27 March, virtual) with the aim of incorporating an Indigenous perspective in the second-order draft of the GEO-report.

SDG indicators data

UNEP reported data (1 March) to the UN Statistics Division on the 25 SDG indicators for which it serves as a [custodian](#), for inclusion in the SDG Global Database and provided story lines for the preparation of SDG Progress Report 2024. UNEP also published (February) the [Circular Economy: from Indicators and Data to Policy-making](#) report which aims to provide a statistical framework to measure progress towards the shift to a circular economy.

Asia-Pacific SDG progress report 2024

The [Report](#) (15 February, Bangkok) showcases transformative actions and trends, as well as unique challenges faced in the different parts of the region. UNEP contributed to the report through the Regional Collaborative Platform (RCP), and the successful outcome of a UNEP project was presented as a success story. The establishment of [national environmental data portals](#) in 14 Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS) - through the regional UNEP-GEF [Inform Project](#) - was showcased to highlight the value of enhancing regional collaboration and partnerships in strengthening informed environmental decision-making.

SIDS partnership symposium

UNEP contributed to the [Symposium](#) (19-23 February, Bangkok) which was organized to explore how to enhance coalitions and partnerships on key regional SIDS priorities including partnerships for science, technology, innovation and digitalization. UNEP shared examples of collaborative science-policy initiatives tailored to the specific needs of SIDS, including the establishment of environmental data portals in the Pacific SIDS and the [Green Fins Initiative](#), a partnership for sustainable coral reef tourism and citizen science.

Wastewater solutions

UNEP developed a [prototype Wastewater Solutions Space](#) on the World Environment Situation Room (WESR) which was showcased during UNEA6. The use-case will be further developed using a user-centred design process. The Space is aligned with UNEA resolution [6/13](#) which calls for reducing water stress risks and pollution, and adapting water reuse strategies, inter alia by enhancing wastewater reuse.

National state of the environment report Uzbekistan

UNEP's Executive Director launched (13 February, Samarkand) Uzbekistan's National State of environment Report ([NSoER](#)) on the margins of CMS COP14. The first to be produced after a ten-year pause, UNEP provided technical support and training to Uzbekistan in developing the report. It provides a snapshot of current environmental trends, and reviews relevant policy priorities and strategies to outline responses to address environmental challenges.

ii. Environmental governance

Enforcing trade related MEAs on hazardous waste

The UNEP-hosted Green Customs Initiative ([GCI](#)) conducted a [panel discussion](#) (29 February, Nairobi) during UNEA6 on the role of customs officers in enforcing trade-related MEAs on hazardous waste, fostering collaboration among national authorities and relevant international entities, and enhancing monitoring and enforcement of environmental regulations on hazardous waste movement. UNEP facilitated the event through the provision of expertise on environmental regulations and SDGs. The event contributed to increased awareness among customs officers on combating illegal trade in environmentally sensitive commodities and advancing the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda.

Green customs initiative (GCI) 18th annual partners meeting

The UNEP-hosted GCI partners [meeting](#) (7-8 February, Brussels) focused on recent decisions of MEAs governing bodies and developments related to prior informed consent procedures, risk profiling, and standard of procedures. The Partners also agreed on a joint work plan for 2024. It followed the [8th Meeting](#) of the Environmental Network for Optimizing Regulatory Compliance on Illegal Traffic (ENFORCE) (5-6 February, Brussels). As an observer, UNEP explored new partnerships to combat hazardous waste trafficking. Both meetings' outcomes underscored the power of collaboration in advancing global MEAs compliance efforts.

Al-Mizan: A covenant for the Earth

UNEP's Faith for Earth Coalition played a key role in facilitating the process leading to the launch (27 February, Nairobi) of the [publication](#) during UNEA-6. The publication highlights the importance of culture and religion in driving behavioural change, along with scientific, technical, and political solutions, and is the result of four years of extensive research and consultations with more than 300 Islamic and International Organizations.

Guide on air quality legislation in French and Spanish

UNEP broadened access to the [Guide on Ambient Air Quality Legislation](#) by releasing translated versions in [French](#) and [Spanish](#) in January. The Guide has gained traction, prompting more countries to seek UNEP's technical legal assistance to improve ambient air quality standards through legislation. With air pollution posing a significant global challenge, ensuring the availability of essential resources in multiple languages is crucial for effective environmental stewardship.

Practical tools for parliamentarians on climate legislation

UNEP provided insights into its [Montevideo Environmental Law Programme](#) during the Inter-Parliamentary Union's (IPU) 148th Assembly [workshop](#) (25 March, Geneva) to equip parliamentarians with practical tools to enhance climate legislation. UNEP co-developed [Law and Climate Change Toolkit](#) was highlighted as a valuable resource for policymakers and legislators in strengthening climate legislation. The workshop resulted in enhanced capacity and awareness of parliamentarians of the practical tools and resources on climate legislation.

Introduction to environmental crime

UNEP co-organized a [webinar](#) (20 March) to assist prosecutors to increase their knowledge of environmental crimes and to better understand its convergence with other forms of criminal activity. UNEP spoke on MEAs and environmental crime during the event which highlighted the importance of networks and the need for close collaboration between law enforcement and prosecutors to tackle this type of crime.

Training on ICT enabled environmental crimes in Central America

UNEP participated in the training (19-21 March, San Salvador) aimed to enhance understanding of environmental crimes that are facilitated by ICT, highlighting the pivotal role of digital evidence, and clarify how judges can effectively interpret it within the framework of the criminal justice process. UNEP providing an overview of the state of the environment and environmental challenges in the Central American region, with references to key information technologies supporting judicial tasks. Future activities will be held in Costa Rica, El Salvador and Panama to further advance these endeavours.

Environmental sustainability management working group

The UNEP hosted Sustainable United Nations (SUN) facility organized [3rd Meeting](#) of the Working Group (27-29 February, online) covering data management, environmental governance survey and the timeline for Greening the Blue report 2024. Focal points from UN

entities received updates on latest developments on Article 6.4 of the Paris Agreement, Water Quality and Monitoring via Citizen Science, and the World Intellectual Property Organization's [WIPO GREEN](#) online platform for sustainable technology innovations.

Fifth scientific conference on environmental law in MENA universities

UNEP supported the [5th Scientific Conference](#) of the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in Middle East and North African (MENA) Universities ([ASSELLMU](#)) (19-20 February, Sohar, Oman) to further knowledge sharing and exchange of best practices on environmental law developments. UNEP emphasized the importance of strengthening environmental rule of law for SDG advancement and presented a conference paper addressing the role of the textile industry. The outcome of the Conference will enhance the region's capacity to improve environmental legislations, rule of law and inclusive approaches to their implementation.

Asia-Pacific regional seminar on environmental rule of law

The UNEP organized online [Seminar](#) (14 March) introduced findings and recommendations of the [Global Environmental Rule of Law Report](#) and facilitated discussions to promote and strengthen environmental rule of law. The Seminar brought together 140 plus participants from 30 plus countries to raise awareness, discuss the Report's key findings and commendations and identify potential avenues for collaboration and possible next steps.

Environmental public interest litigation in Southeast Asia

UNEP co-organized a [webinar](#) (25 January) to launch a [Briefing Report](#) on *Enhancing the Role of Environmental Public Interest Litigation to Advance Environmental Rights in Southeast Asia*. The report advances UNEP's work on access to environmental justice and provides an overview of such litigation systems in Southeast Asia and outlines recent progress. Such litigation can serve as a potentially transformative mechanism to empower communities to play a significant role in ensuring that environmental laws are complied with, and that ecosystems and the communities that depend on them are protected.

East Africa Community (EAC) regional green customs conference

The UNEP hosted GCI co-organized [Conference](#) (24-25 January, Kigali) gathered customs officers and environmental authorities from EAC countries to address illegal trade in environmentally sensitive goods. UNEP facilitated discussions on MEAs enforcement and shared expertise. Key outcomes included discussions on trade facilitation within MEA implementation, and the proposal of elements for a regional green customs action plan. The conference coincided with expert consultations on developing an e-waste model regulatory framework for EAC countries, providing a platform to showcase UNEP's initiatives under GCI, the [Montevideo Programme V](#), and the joint UNODC-UNEP [Unwaste](#) project.

Regional environmental dispute resolution mechanism for the Pacific

UNEP provided technical and secretariat support to a Working Group meeting (12-14 February, Sydney) to establish the first regional environmental court for the Pacific – a dispute resolution mechanism to support access to justice to address environmental issues of common concern. The meeting confirmed the mechanism's medium and long term goals and strategic direction and finalized its proposal document for presentation to the [annual meeting](#) of the Pacific Chief Justices' Leadership Forum (20 February, Apia, Samoa).

Children's rights to a healthy environment in ASEAN

UNEP provided technical inputs and feedback during a Children's [Focus Group Discussion](#) (19 February, Bangkok) on the development of the ASEAN Environmental Rights Framework. The discussions aimed to inform children about the Framework and solicit their views on its key thematic areas.

Strengthening sustainable oceans governance in Ghana

A [national validation workshop](#) (19 March, Accra) considered the draft report of UNEP-led institutional capacity needs assessment (CNA) of Ghana's efforts in sustainable oceans planning and governance. The CNA sought to strengthen capacities of core environmental institutions, specifically in marine and coastal management planning, in support of a sustainable oceans plan (SOP). Core areas of the CNA assessment included: environmental legal and policy frameworks, institutional architecture and coordination, environmental data management, environmental assessments and planning, conservation and management, and marine pollution including from oil spills.

National air quality management legislation workshops: Indonesia and Singapore

UNEP co-organized workshops on Law and Regulation on Air Quality Management in Singapore (27 March) and Indonesia (29 March) to facilitate knowledge exchange on the development and implementation of national air quality legislation, with a focus on managing transboundary air pollution. UNEP moderated the sessions and provided expert input and guidance on crafting effective national air quality legislation. The insights gained from these workshops are intended to inform the finalization of Thailand's Clean Air Act by the Pollution Control Department (PCD), drawing upon lessons learned from the discussions.

Training on human rights and environmental rule of law in the Philippines

UNEP co-organized a [training](#) (20-21 March, Manila) for the UN Country Team and UN staff on human rights in the Philippines on the role of Environmental Rule of Law in upholding the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. The training aimed at building UNCT capacity and knowledge on the linkages between human rights and the environment, in order to integrate it into their work and to implement the [United Nations Guidance Note on Environmental Human Rights Defenders](#).

Pollutant release and transfer register (PRTR) law of Thailand

UNEP participated in a [panel discussion](#) (23 February, Bangkok) on the issue of emissions from industrial plants and solutions through the PRTR law. UNEP emphasized the importance of developing and supporting PRTR laws to further public disclosure of pollution data in environmental law and realize the right to a healthy environment.

E. Enabling subprogrammes

i. Finance and economic transformations

Nature-related financial disclosures

The UNEP co-chaired Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures ([TNFD](#)) [announced](#) during the World Economic Forum (16 January, Davos) that 320 organizations from over 46 countries have committed to start making nature-related disclosures as part of their annual corporate reporting for FY2023, FY2024 or FY2025. This first cohort of adopters of TNFD recommendations includes, among others, leading publicly listed companies representing US\$4 trillion in market capitalisation, and over 100 financial institutions representing US\$14 trillion in Assets under Management (AUM).

Guidelines for climate target setting for banks

UNEP-FI's Net Zero Banking Alliance (NZBA) released (13 March) updated [guidelines](#) for banks on credible and ambitious climate target setting, in line with achieving the objectives of the Paris Agreement. The new version reflects changes in science, regulation, data and methodologies that took place in the three years since the original version was published. The

updated version of the guidelines will apply to all new targets and any new iterations of existing targets set by NZBA member banks after 22 April 2024.

Climate target setting for automotive sector financing

Given that decisions on vehicle design have an outsized impact on the lifecycle emissions of a vehicle, the UNEP-FI NZBA [publication](#) (February 2024) sets out the design choices relevant for banks setting targets to reduce emissions associated with their financing for vehicle manufacturer and original equipment manufacturer (OEM) clients.

Serving asset owner clients through climate stewardship

The UNEP-FI convened Net Zero Asset Owner Alliance (NZAOA) issued a [call to action](#) (6 February) for asset managers to serve net-zero committed asset owner clients through [Climate Stewardship](#). The call to action references the Alliance's tools and guides on asset management engagement (proxy voting, policy engagement, engagement best practices, and private markets) to assert that asset owners committed to net-zero expect their asset managers in private and public markets to pursue integrated and tailored climate strategies across all their functions.

Course on introduction to nature and responsible banking

The UNEP-FI launched [course](#) (19 March) equips learners with essential frameworks and guidance into assessing nature-related impacts and risks, helping banks to contribute positively to the preservation and restoration of nature. It encourages the integration of nature considerations into strategic decision-making processes and capital allocation, and prompts learners to contemplate how they can implement nature-responsible practices and engage with customers to identify nature-positive opportunities.

Target setting in the sustainable blue economy

UNEP-FI launched (15 February) a [manual](#) to support financial institutions to implement the [Turning the Tide](#) and [Diving Deep](#) sector guidance. It enables institutions to set targets that align with the guidance, provides recommendations for target-setting in the fisheries and aquaculture sector, and supports the transition to a Sustainable Blue Economy, in line with the objectives of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Paris Agreement.

Recipe of change – sustainable Ramadan campaign

Under UNEP's [Recipe of Change](#) initiative which aims to empower food industry stakeholders with practical strategies to combat food waste, the second edition of the [Sustainable Ramadan](#) campaign was launched (11 March) to foster behavioural change and raise awareness about food waste and its adverse impacts on the environment, climate change and food security. The [campaign](#) features Chef Leyla Fathallah, UNEP's advocate on food waste in West Asia, alongside other regional chefs. Building on the first edition's success which saw a 61% reduction in food waste across three Hilton hotels in Doha, Dubai and Riyadh, 32 Hilton hotels in Bahrain, Kuwait, Malaysia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and UAE joined the 2024 campaign.

Blue transformation initiative in the Mediterranean

UNEP's One Planet Network affiliated [SFS-MED Platform](#) organized a [webinar](#) (20 March) to raise awareness and promote dialogue on the enabling conditions and practices for blue transformation. Participants deliberated on measures, strategies and incentives and collaboration needed to accompany blue transformation. UNEP contributed through the UNEP-MAP [Regional Plan on Aquaculture Management](#), underscoring the commitment to sustainable practices.

Role of metrics in LAC's transition to circularity

The UNEP-coordinated [Circular Economy Coalition for LAC](#) organized a [virtual event](#) (30 January) to present the results of a 2022-2023 initiative focused on exploring how metrics can be fundamental in the transition towards more circular economic models in LAC. This initiative led to substantial progress in understanding and applying circularity metrics in the region, providing participants with valuable insights and tools necessary for measuring circular economy progress.

Circular economy roadmaps in LAC

The LAC Circular Economy Coalition organized another [virtual event](#) (12 March) to present the main conclusions from 2023 peer exchanges on how countries in LAC have progressed in the formulation, development and implementation of circular economy strategies and roadmaps in LAC. The initiative was significantly enhanced by the Coalition's role in facilitating knowledge sharing and leveraging its network to support and assist in the realization and improvement of circular economy roadmaps.

Sustainable finance for LAC

UNEP Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) hosted a [Regional Roundtable](#) (30-31 January, Bogota) which brought together 650 plus participants to explore the next steps and actions needed to mainstream sustainable finance in the LAC region. Building on the success of regional roadmaps and strategies initiated by the Principles for Sustainable Insurance initiative ([PSI](#)), the [Bogota Declaration on Sustainable Insurance](#) was launched with 33 signatories from the insurance industry committing to support SDG achievement.

Capacity building for banks in LAC

UNEP FI provided capacity building to banks on a range of topics including Net Zero and the Low Carbon Economy (29 January, Bogota), Financing Sustainable Livestock Production (2 February, Bogota), [Sustainable Finance for LAC](#) (30-31 January, Bogota), Target Setting in Nature (14 and 27 March, online) and Agricultural Sector Insurers (14 March, Panama City). The objective was to strengthen their capabilities and support them in the implementation process of the [Principles for Responsible Banking](#).

Environmental alliance of America

UNEP received official communications from Colombia, Ecuador and Mexico (March) expressing their interest to become founding members of the [Environmental Alliance of America](#). This Alliance aims to establish a common and reliable environmental labelling platform in the LAC region. UNEP is providing technical assistance to the Alliance within the framework of the [EcoAdvance](#) project to promote eco-labels and sustainable public procurement practices, contributing significantly to the protection of climate and biodiversity.

Insuring the climate transition in Brazil

The UNEP-FI launched (January) [Report](#) is based on inputs from 21 leading insurers in Brazil, and constitutes an initial exercise towards assessing climate-related risks in an integrated manner and aligning disclosures with the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures ([TCFD](#)) recommendations, thereby also supporting insurers to meet insurance regulator requirements.

China national level dialogue on green jobs for the youth for circularity

The UNEP co-organized [dialogue](#) (19-21 March, Xi'an) engaged 150 participants in active discussions on best practices and opportunities for green jobs, green skills and green entrepreneurship in the circular economy transition. The workshop raised awareness on these

topics in line with the [Green Jobs for Youth Pact](#) and paved the way to advance UNEP's work at the national level.

Panama sustainable finance taxonomy

As part of a project [launched](#) (27 March) to align Panama's financial flows with the Paris Agreement's climate change objectives, UNEP FI will serve as technical partner for Panama in elaborating a sustainable finance taxonomy to classify investments and economic activities that contribute to achieving the country's climate change goals. The taxonomy will direct private capital into the investments required to transit to a low emission and climate resilient economy and help Panama achieve its objective of being carbon negative by 2050.

Greening higher education for green skills building in Thailand

The UNEP co-organized [workshop](#) (25 January) convened 60 participants with the objective of supporting universities in greening their curricula and identifying existing green skills gaps in Thailand. The workshop contributed to strengthened multi-stakeholder partnership and collaboration around the theme of green jobs creation and green skills building in line with the [Green Jobs for Youth Pact](#) roll-out at the national level.

Sustainability guide for Uruguayan wineries

UNEP provided technical assistance in the development of the [guide](#) which was delivered to national counterparts (15 March, Montevideo) to equip local wineries with practical tools and strategies to enhance their sustainability practices, emphasizing the preservation of natural resources and promoting winemaking excellence as a strategic opportunity. The guide showcases tangible steps taken towards environmental sustainability and the promotion of resource-efficient and circularity practices in the viticulture sector.

ii. Digital transformations

UNEA6 digital accelerator lab

UNEP organized an exhibition space called the [Digital Accelerator Lab](#) during UNEA 6 (26 February – 1 March). It provided a platform for various teams within UNEP to showcase their digital tools, solutions and prototypes, while actively engaging with users to gather feedback related to those solutions. UNEP curated and showcased a diverse array of tools, including 11 prototypes, nine solutions and 14 reports and resources and TED-style talks. Through the exhibition, UNEP aimed to highlight the role of data in environmental action and policymaking, aligning with the objectives of the [Global Environmental Data Strategy](#) to enhance effective environmental data management and use.

Education for digital sustainability

In March, UNEP co-launched module 3 of the [Digital4Sustainability e-learning programme](#), focusing on digital technologies for nature action. The module offers insights into the opportunities and challenges presented by leveraging digital innovation for nature action. Through real-world examples, it provides an overview of how digital transformation can be harnessed to protect and sustain our planet's rich variety of life forms.

F. Cross-cutting issues

i. Gender

Invest in women: accelerate progress towards a sustainable future

On the occasion of [International Women's Day](#), UNEP designed and implemented a [campaign](#) (7 March) to highlight women as role-models. It shared the success stories of nine women

from the Montreal Protocol community, showcasing their leadership and their role in environmental protection. UNEP also organized an interagency panel discussion (7 March) which focussed on the urgent need to accelerate women's empowerment in the green jobs sector, highlighted women's remarkable contributions to environmental activism, and discussed the critical role of international cooperation in promoting gender equality and empowering women in environmental initiatives.

The key outcomes of this initiative are that female professionals were showcased to decision-makers as being competent and capable in environmental protection and leadership and that investing in them is a good decision. The initiative also provided inspiration and advice to young women and girls and demonstrated, through examples, the achievements and contributions of female colleagues in the implementation of the [Montreal Protocol](#) and its [Kigali Amendment](#).

EmPower programme

Through the [EmPower](#) Programme's [Pioneer Facility](#), UNEP supported multiple low-carbon projects and social enterprises across Asia (March 2024). The Facility supports small and medium-sized enterprises to scale climate positive low-carbon, clean water, clean energy, and waste management solutions and bring positive benefits to low-income communities, women, and marginalized groups. UNEP's support has played a catalytic role in attracting private investment into the Facility towards gender and just energy transitions. Through the EmPower Programme, UNEP has also co-launched the [Low Carbon Earth](#) Accelerator programme and investor forum which has selected 67 clean-tech startups – including 23 women-led clean-tech start-ups – and trained them on business management (March).

Gender and e-mobility project

UNEP organized a workshop (30 January, Kampala) with 36 participants to raise awareness on the interlinkages between gender and e-mobility and showcase successful initiatives. It subsequently organized a [webinar](#) (13 March) which was attended by 170 participants, to [present](#) the [initial findings](#) of its gender and e-mobility baseline study in Colombia, Ecuador, Indonesia, Kenya, Uganda and Vietnam, as e-mobility can be a driver for gender transformative change.

Cambodia clean energy market assessment

UNEP conducted an assessment (February) of the potential of Cambodia's clean energy market to promote climate resilient livelihoods, entrepreneurship and benefits for women and marginalized communities. This led to the identification of five prospective renewable energy technologies and prospective provinces with high likelihood of demand for clean technology.

Gender inclusivity in the ASEAN energy sector

UNEP raised awareness on gender inclusivity in the ASEAN energy sector during a [webinar](#) (27 March) on Inspiring Women's Leadership in Energy for an Inclusive ASEAN. The objective was to increase regional and national actors' knowledge to implement and monitor gender-responsive and human rights-based climate change, renewable energy and disaster risk reduction policies and plans.

ii. UN reform

UNEA-6 call for strengthened UNEP country presence

The UNEA-6 [Ministerial Declaration](#) (paragraph 18) articulated a strong call for strengthening UNEP engagement with UN Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams (UNCTs) to respond to their increasing demands for stronger and more coherent environmental support.

The Declaration was reinforced by UNEA [Resolution 6/6](#) (1 March) which requests UNEP to strengthen cooperation with UNCTs and furthermore calls for MEAs to be mainstreamed in the work of UNCTs.

Empowering Resident Coordinators on plastic pollution in Asia-Pacific

During the Asia-Pacific Resident Coordinators' Annual Retreat, UNEP co-organized a [session](#) (15 February, Bangkok) on plastic pollution, providing an overview of priorities regarding plastic pollution management in Asia-Pacific as well as updates on the [INC process](#). The session sought to foster better understanding and management of plastic pollution, further actionable solutions to beat plastic pollution, unpack bankable projects & strategies and further collaboration between UNRCs and UNEP on the subject matter.

G. Challenges, opportunities and lessons learned

i. Challenges

Gender mainstreaming

UNEP is committed to gender mainstreaming and equality through a gender responsive approach. Achieving this goal is a considerable challenge that requires extensive contextual data and knowledge of the contexts in its work areas. Significant investments and capacity building for both UNEP staff and implementing partners are essential to effectively demonstrate gender responsiveness.

Implementing UNEP's environmental and social sustainability framework (ESSF)

Since the approval of [ESSF](#) in 2020, UNEP has been committed to implementing the Framework's provisions. The scope and requirements of the ESSF are broad and complex, aimed at addressing potential or actual socio-economic, environmental, and human rights impacts. Establishing mechanisms to respond to stakeholder concerns grievances involves building internal capacity, allowing time for processes to mature, and regularly revising implementation arrangements.

ii. Opportunities

Utilizing lessons learned for climate resilience project in Djibouti

UNEP and the Government of Djibouti have [announced](#) (10 January) a US\$26 million project aiming to build climate resilience. The project targets Djibouti's Dikhil and Tadjourah regions, which host 20% of the country's population and where rural and urban communities rely significantly on goods and services provided by wadi ecosystems - impermanent watercourses prone to flash flooding - leading to a process of environmental degradation. The project will build on insights from the forthcoming publication of the terminal evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund (LCDF) - Djibouti 2 project. By leveraging this knowledge base, UNEP will be better equipped to navigate complexities, enhance community engagement, and fortify environmental stewardship, ultimately advancing the shared goal of bolstering climate resilience through the implementation of replicable and scalable strategies that foster sustainable outcomes in other regions.

North American marine protected areas network (NAMPAN)

UNEP, as NAMPAN coordinator, co-hosted a [virtual event](#) titled *Evidence Gathering for Climate Change Adaptation Strategies and Marine Protected Areas* (13 February). Forty participants from Canada, Mexico and the US examined the challenges of monitoring and evaluating climate change adaptation strategies in MPAs including funding, complexity of working within

marine environments and information exchange on migratory species across borders. This provides opportunities for UNEP to deepen its engagement with the three countries on ocean issues of common interest through NAMPAN, and to leverage tools for information exchange across borders to address common issues and challenges.

Digital transformation advancement with global environment data strategy (GEDS)

GEDS is designed to overhaul global environmental data management. It creates a great opportunity for UNEP to standardize environmental data governance structures, enhance data accessibility, enhance interoperability, and elevate data quality. A significant emphasis should be placed on capacity building to enable the effective utilization and governance of environmental data.

iii. Lessons learned

Lessons learned from OECPR-6 and UNEA-6

The Secretariat initiated work on preparing a paper outlining observations, lessons learned and recommendations from UNEA-6 and OECPR-6 immediately following the conclusion of the Assembly. The paper factors in recommendations made by the CPR Bureau (19 March) and recommendations made by the OECPR-6 co-facilitators. The paper will also take into account views expressed by Member States, observers and major groups and stakeholders in upcoming consultations by the subcommittee of the CPR and is expected to be considered for final consideration and possible endorsement by Member States during the 166th CPR meeting in June.

Closing adaptation knowledge disparities

In a bid to address critical gaps in adaptation planning and implementation in Hindu Kush Himalayas (HKH), the UNFCCC Secretariat, the UNEP Global Adaptation Network and International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) are collaborating to implement the [second phase](#) of the Lima Adaptation Knowledge Exchange (LAKI) for the HKH sub-region. [LAKI](#) is an action pledge aiming to bridge knowledge barriers that hinder adaptation efforts in subregions. A virtual expert [meeting](#) (6-7 March) brought together 20 experts from nine institutions to co-design actions to address the priority knowledge gaps for the defined targeted knowledge users for the HKH. Through the co-design strategy, the UNEP-hosted GAN secretariat learnt of the importance of consistent and ongoing engagement with experts and partners in building momentum, engagement, and ownership in the planning and implementation of adaptation at sub-regional levels.

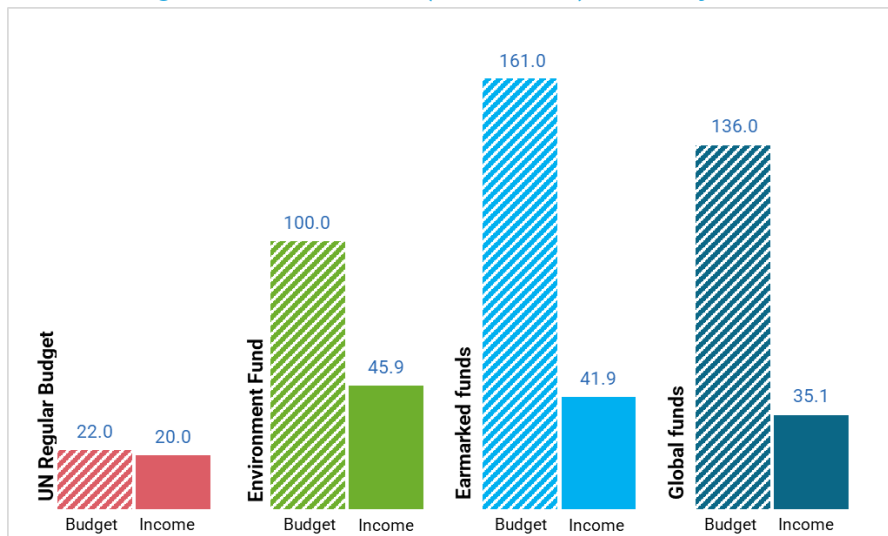
3 RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

A. Financial resources

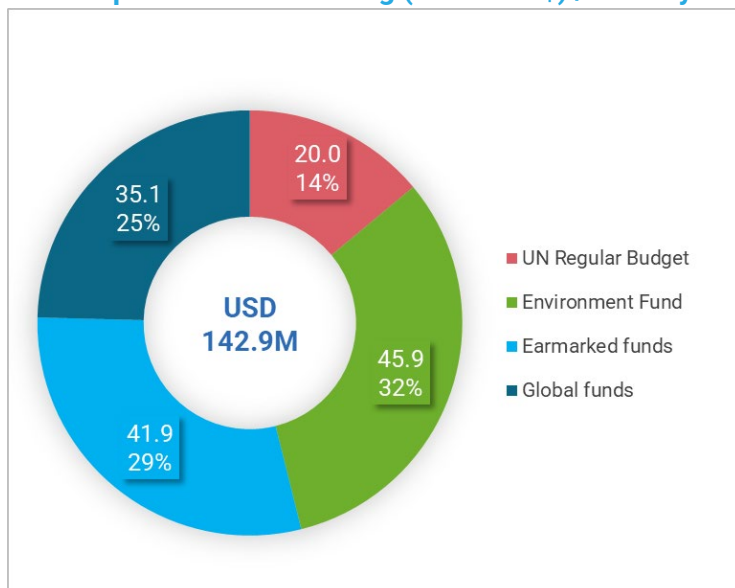
i. Financial update as at 31 March 2024

a. Overview of income²

Annual budget 2024 vs income (in million \$) / January 2024 – March 2024



Income per source of funding (in million \$) / January 2024 - March 2024



² The figures do not include conventions and protocols administered by UNEP. Per the United Nations Secretariat interpretation and application of the International Public Service Accounting Standards (IPSAS), our financial and administrative management platform, Umoja, does not allow a breakdown of multi-year contributions into annual figures for income.

b. Core funding

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

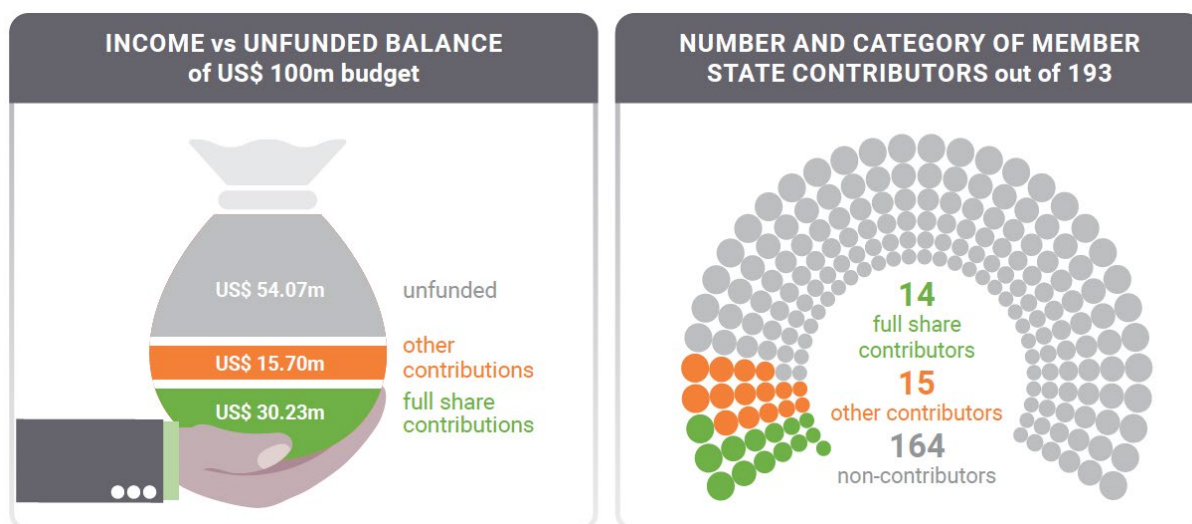
United Nations Regular Budget

The United Nations Regular Budget provides a portion of the UNEP Secretariat costs to cover fundamental programme activities. Due to liquidity challenges, the 2024 allotment issued was restricted to US\$20 million which is lower than the approved budget of US\$22 million. The Corporate Services Division is taking measures in consultation with UN Headquarters to manage spending within the allocation, including by freezing hiring on vacant posts.

The Environment Fund

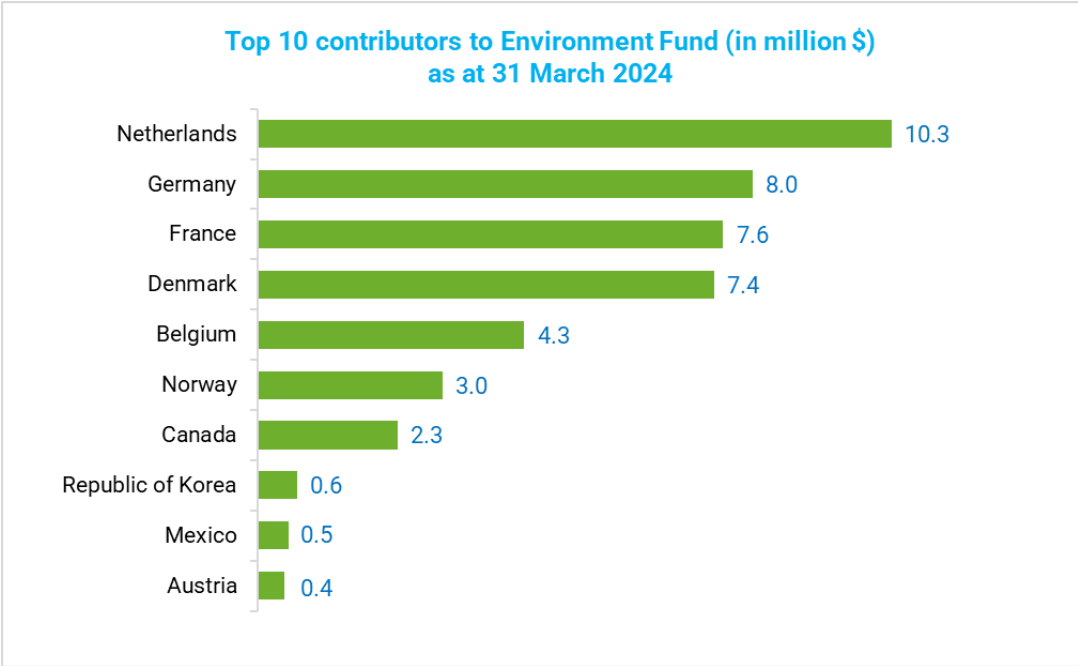
The Environment Fund provides UNEP the essential capacity to provide scientific evidence on the state of the global environment; to identify emerging environmental issues and innovative solutions; to raise awareness and advocacy; and to build capacity. It invests in results-focused programme management and robust oversight.

Status of Environment Fund in 2024 (as at 31 March 2024)



The approved budget for the year 2024 is US\$ 100 million. By 31 March 2024, the Environment Fund income amounted to US\$45.93 million which is 46% of the approved 2024 budget. These contributions were received from 29 Member States, which represents 15% of the total 193 Member States. Out of the 29 Member States, 14 (48%) contributed their full share as per the voluntary indicative scale of contributions (VISIC). Fifteen (15) Member States have paid their pledges as of 31 March 2024.

UNEP is grateful to all of these contributors with special thanks to the 14 Member States that have provided their full share and to the top-10 Member States who have provided 97% of the income to the Environment Fund. Furthermore, UNEP appreciates the increased stability and predictability provided by multi-year agreements/pledges from Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Monaco, Netherlands, and South Africa, which amounted to a total of US\$ 23.05 million or 50% of the Environment Fund income as of 31 March 2024.



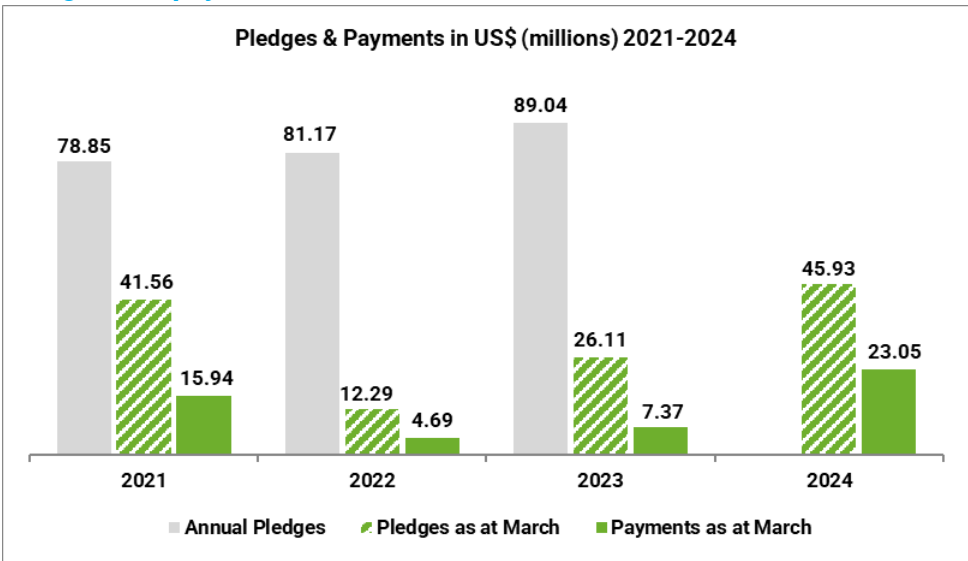
**Member States that contributed their full share as represented by the VISC
(as at 31 March 2024)**

Paid			Pledged	
Denmark	Netherlands	Saint Kitts and Nevis	Belgium	Gambia
Dominican Republic	Peru	Slovenia	Fiji	Monaco
Maldives	Philippines	Somalia	France	

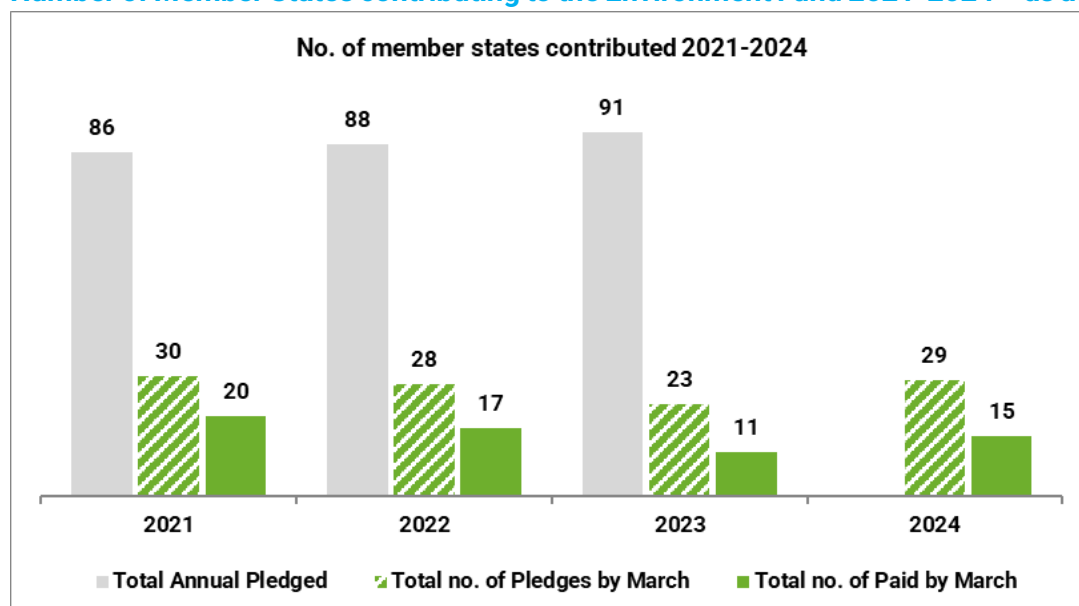
Comparison with previous years

The total pledges by the end of March totalled US\$ 45.93 million which is US\$ 19.84 million or 76% higher compared to the same time last year. Twenty-nine (29) Member States have pledged by the end of March 2024 which is also an increase of six Member States (26%) from March 2023. Funding of UNEP is the responsibility of its 193 Member States – it is a shared responsibility and the support of Member States is critical to allow UNEP to fulfil its mandate and to implement the Programme of Work.

Pledges and payments to the Environment Fund 2021-2024 – as at 31 March



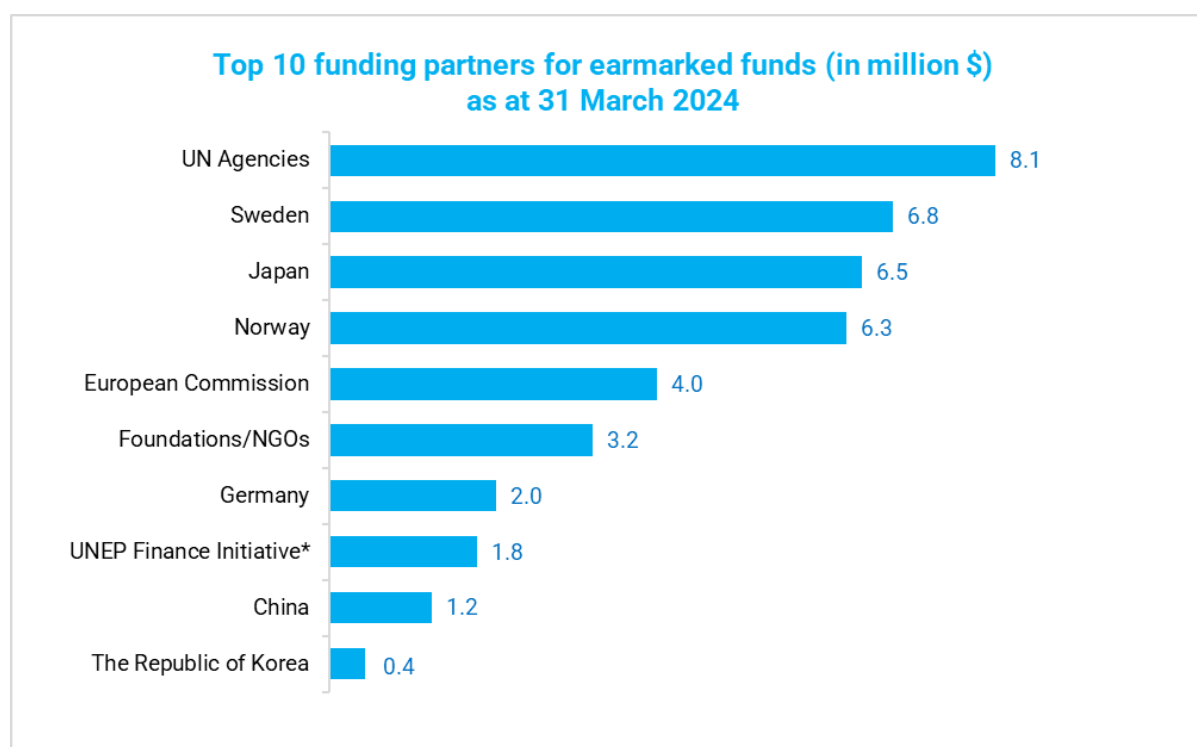
Number of Member States contributing to the Environment Fund 2021-2024 – as at 31 March



c. Earmarked contributions

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

Earmarked funds



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

By 31 March 2024, UNEP had received 29% of its total budgeted amount for the year, of which 84% was tightly earmarked and 16% was softly earmarked funds (SIDA Programme Cooperation Agreement).

The support to the three *Thematic Funds* for Climate Stability, Living in Harmony with Nature and Pollution-Free Planet totalled US\$ 23 million from their initiation in 2022 until 31 March 2024. Efforts on biennial reporting, as well as the communications and marketing tool-kit commenced with the publication and dissemination of investment case for the funds [For People and Planet: How Your Contributions Can Help Build a More Sustainable World \(unep.org\)](#)

Global funds

Funds provided by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) are earmarked to specific programmes and projects. By the end of March 2024, GEF had received US\$ 31.9 million and GCF US\$ 3.3 million bringing the total income from global funds to US\$ 35.1 million. The income received was 24% of the budgeted income for the year 2024.

ii. Resource mobilization strategy

Following the [recommendations](#) from the 9th and 10th annual subcommittees of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), UNEP continues its outreach efforts to demonstrate its value as a “partner of choice” in addressing the environmental challenges, including working across the house on joint strategic messaging. In the first quarter of 2024, a joint One UNEP exhibition during UNEA-6 showcased results achieved and included a call for action to partners to contribute core and other flexible funding to UNEP.

The booklet [UNEP-Your Partner for People and Planet](#), which details the value of UNEP, its mission, vision, strategy, action and results achieved was updated prior to UNEA-6. In addition to previous language versions in English, [French](#) and [Spanish](#), the booklet is also available in [Arabic](#) and [Russian](#).

On increased visibility to contributors of core funding, UNEP continued expressing gratitude to Member States for their contributions to the Environment Fund, by providing updates and news on social media. In addition, during UNEA-6 in Nairobi, UNEP conducted several video interviews with Ministers from countries that contribute their full share to the Environment Fund. These video-articles will provide public visibility to funding partners and their work on addressing environmental challenges and will be published in the second quarter.

In the first quarter, the partnership with the European Commission saw some important developments. Through the UNEP-EC Framework Agreements, the European Commission provides earmarked funding to portfolios of projects managed and implemented by UNEP Divisions and the MEA Secretariats. In March, the Directorate General for Environment increased the funding of the third Framework Agreement (Programme Cooperation Agreement - PCA III) by US\$ 13.8 million, reaching an overall US\$36.5 million under the PCA III, to support the strengthening of international action on climate change, biodiversity and environment. This was received by UNEP with great gratitude.

iii. Status of allocations and expenditures as at 31 March 2024*

2024 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	463,300	2,473,300
B.1	Executive Direction & Management	4,000,000		2,859,600	6,859,600
B.2	United Nations Scientific Committee on the effects on Atomic radiation (UNSCEAR)			1,022,400	1,022,400
	Subtotal A + B	6,000,000	10,000	4,345,300	10,355,300
C	Programme of Work				
1.	Climate action	12,000,000	2,250,000	1,985,900	16,235,900
2.	Digital transformations	7,000,000	650,000	1,451,400	9,101,400
3.	Nature action	12,000,000	1,200,000	2,446,400	15,646,400
4.	Environmental governance	13,000,000	650,000	4,321,100	17,971,100
5.	Chemicals and pollution action	12,000,000	1,550,000	1,613,400	15,163,400
6.	Finance and economic transformations	13,000,000	1,250,000	1,856,200	16,106,200
7.	Science-policy	13,000,000	350,000	3,010,800	16,360,800
	Subtotal C	82,000,000	7,900,000	16,685,200	106,585,200
D	Fund Programme Reserve	5,000,000			5,000,000
	Subtotal C + D	87,000,000	7,900,000	16,685,200	111,585,200
E	Programme Management and Other				
	Programme Support	7,000,000	8,100,000	959,700	16,059,700
	Subtotal E	7,000,000	8,100,000	959,700	16,059,700
	Total (A+B+C+D+E)	100,000,000	16,010,000	21,990,200	138,000,200

2024 Core Budgets - Allotments as of 31 March 2024					
	Functional Area Name	Environment Fund	Overhead Trust Account	Regular Budget	Grand Total
A	Policy Making Organs	1,046,000		460,769	1,506,769
B.1	Executive Direction & Management	1,647,000	84,000	3,599,701	5,330,701
B.2	United Nations Scientific Committee on the effects on Atomic radiation (UNSCEAR)				-
	Subtotal A + B	2,693,000	84,000	4,060,470	6,837,470
C	Programme of Work				
1.	Climate action	6,771,785	429,020	1,814,804	9,015,609
2.	Digital transformations	1,227,852	-	1,338,018	2,565,870
3.	Nature action	4,822,214	526,000	2,255,296	7,603,510
4.	Environmental governance	5,746,144	652,000	4,059,689	10,457,833
5.	Chemicals and pollution action	4,102,451	764,310	1,455,268	6,322,029
6.	Finance and economic transformations	6,313,860	360,670	1,678,190	8,352,720
7.	Science-policy	3,931,695	204,000	2,379,138	6,514,833
	Subtotal C	32,916,000	2,936,000	14,980,403	50,832,403
D	Fund Programme Reserve	321,900		-	321,900
	Subtotal C + D	33,237,900	2,936,000	14,980,403	51,154,303
E	Programme Management and Other				
	Programme Support	3,193,000	6,549,000	915,527	10,657,527
	Subtotal E	3,193,000	6,549,000	915,527	10,657,527
	Total (A+B+C+D+E)	39,123,900	9,569,000	19,956,400	68,649,300

2024 Core Budgets - Expenditures as of 31 March 2024					
	Functional Area Name	Environment Fund	Overhead Trust Account	Regular Budget	Grand Total
A	Policy Making Organs	1,063,886	-	-	1,063,886
B.1	Executive Direction & Management	955,333	4,178	958,240	1,917,751
B.2	United Nations Scientific Committee on the effects on Atomic radiation (UNSCEAR)				-
	Subtotal A + B	2,019,220	4,178	958,240	2,981,637
C	Programme of Work				
1.	Climate action	2,504,102	262,990	521,549	3,288,641
2.	Digital transformations	1,600,495	-	185,216	1,785,711
3.	Nature action	2,083,239	413,590	493,841	2,990,670
4.	Environmental governance	2,741,857	316,697	1,106,746	4,165,301
5.	Chemicals and pollution action	2,870,772	172,034	383,023	3,425,830
6.	Finance and economic transformations	2,614,422	145,470	350,634	3,110,527
7.	Science-policy	2,602,744	11,748	575,724	3,190,217
	Subtotal C	17,017,631	1,322,530	3,616,734	21,956,896
D	Fund Programme Reserve	380,466	-	-	380,466
	Subtotal C + D	17,398,097	1,322,530	3,616,734	22,337,362
E	Programme Management and Other				
	Programme Support	1,687,168	2,079,435	151,152	3,917,755
	Subtotal E	1,687,168	2,079,435	151,152	3,917,755
	Total (A+B+C+D+E)	21,104,485	3,406,143	4,726,126	29,236,753

*The allotments reported amount to about 40% of the expected full allotments, which are to be confirmed during the second quarter of 2024.

B. Human resources

General overview

As of 31 March 2024, UNEP employed 1369 staff members consisting of 831 (61%) in the professional and above categories, nine (1%) in the National Officer (NO) category, and 529 (39%) in the general service category. 850 (62%) of these are female, while 519 (39%) are male.

i. Senior level staff (UNEP Secretariat and MEAs)

Total number of staff at grade P-5 and above as of 31 March 2024

Level	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	Total
Number of Staff	1	2	10	50	122	185

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

ii. Appointments

Appointments in the first quarter (January to March) 2024

Position Title	Grade	Gender	Nationality	Internal/ External	Division/Office/MEA
Principal Coordination Officer	D-1	Female	Japanese	External	Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity
Senior Programme Management Officer	P-5	Female	Egyptian	Internal	Ecosystems Division
Senior Programme Management Officer	P-5	Male	Indian	Internal	Africa Office

The above information excludes Temporary Job Openings.

iii. Overall gender parity status

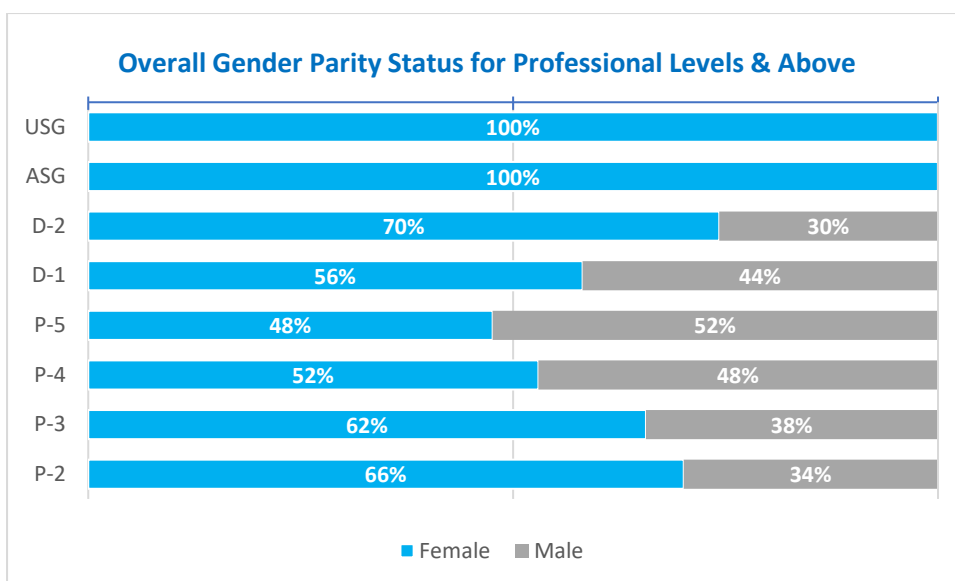
The table below shows the overall gender parity status for the first quarter (January to March) of 2024.

Overall Gender Parity Status												
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	Total P+	Total NO	Total GS	Total Staff
Female	1	2	7	28	59	148	159	70	474	4	372	850
Male	0	0	3	22	63	136	97	36	357	5	157	519
Totals	1	2	10	50	122	284	256	106	831	9	529	1369

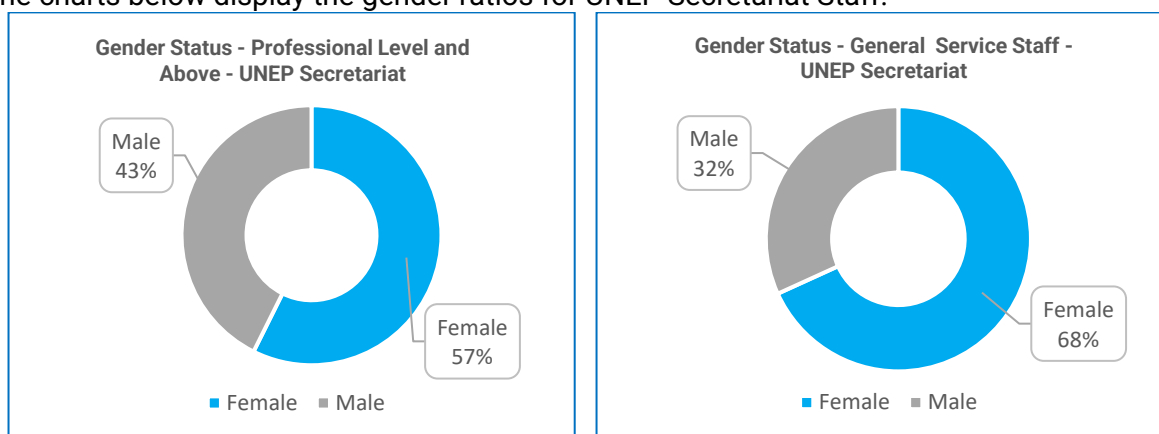
Note: USG=Under-Secretary-General; ASG=Assistant Secretary-General; D=Director; P=Professional; NO = National Officer; GS = General Service.

iv. Overall gender parity status for professional and above levels

The overall gender parity status in UNEP at the professional and above levels is 43% to 57% (male to female) ratio. The gender data below includes personnel on temporary contracts, temporary assignments, and Junior Professional Officers.



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



v. Gender distribution - UNEP Secretariat and MEAs – 31 March 2024

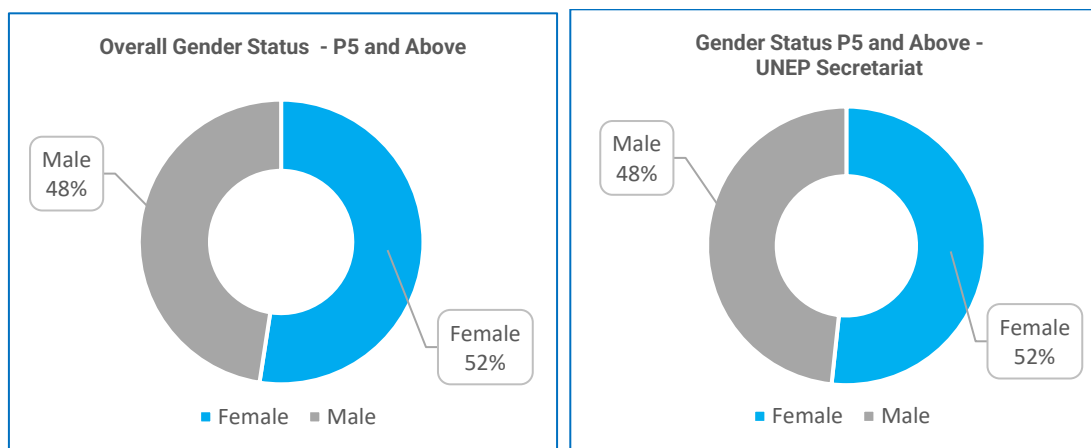
The table below disaggregates the gender distribution between the UNEP Secretariat and MEAs.

UNEP SECRETARIAT												
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	Total P+	Total NPO	Total GS	Total
Female	1	2	4	23	46	118	132	54	380	4	281	665
Male			2	20	49	116	75	19	281	5	131	417
UNEP MEAs												
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	Total P+	Total NPO	Total GS	Total
Female			3	5	13	30	27	16	94	0	91	185
Male			1	2	14	20	22	17	76	0	26	102
Total	1	2	10	50	122	284	256	106	831	9	529	1369

vi. Gender parity status for P5 and above level – UNEP Secretariat and MEAs

Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	Total
Female	1	2	7	28	59	97
Male	0	0	3	22	63	88
Total	1	2	10	50	122	185
Female %	100	100	70	56	48	52
Male %	0	0	30	44	52	48

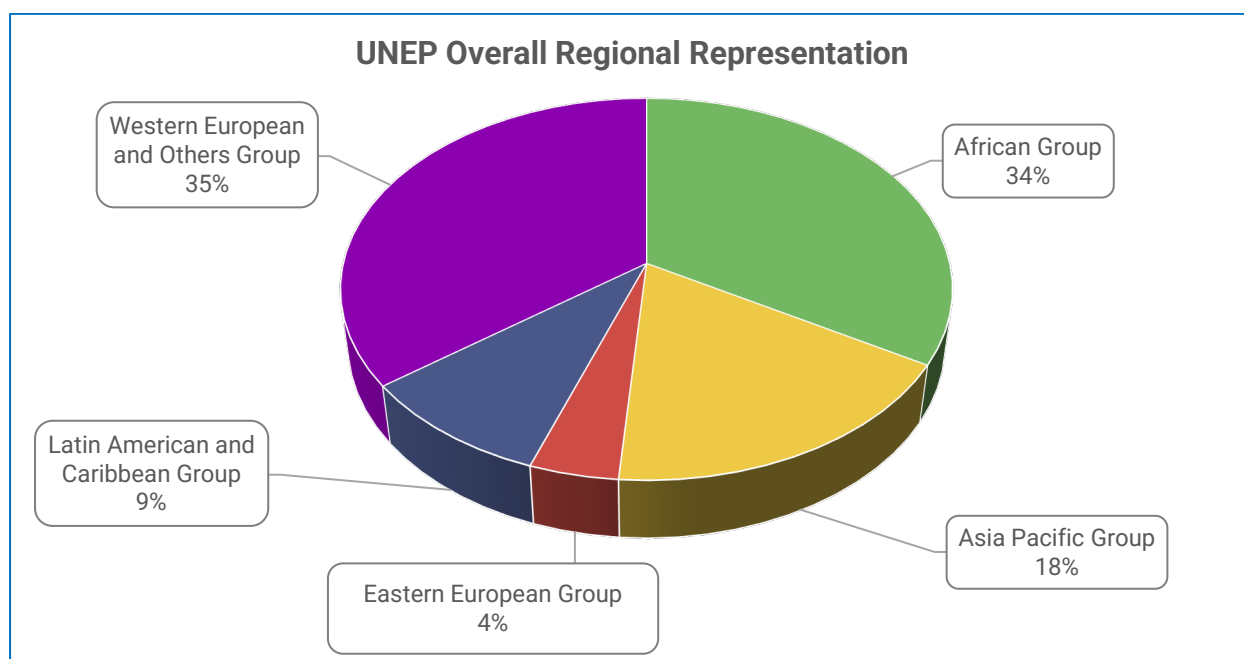
The charts below show the overall gender ratio at P5 and above level and those of the UNEP Secretariat.



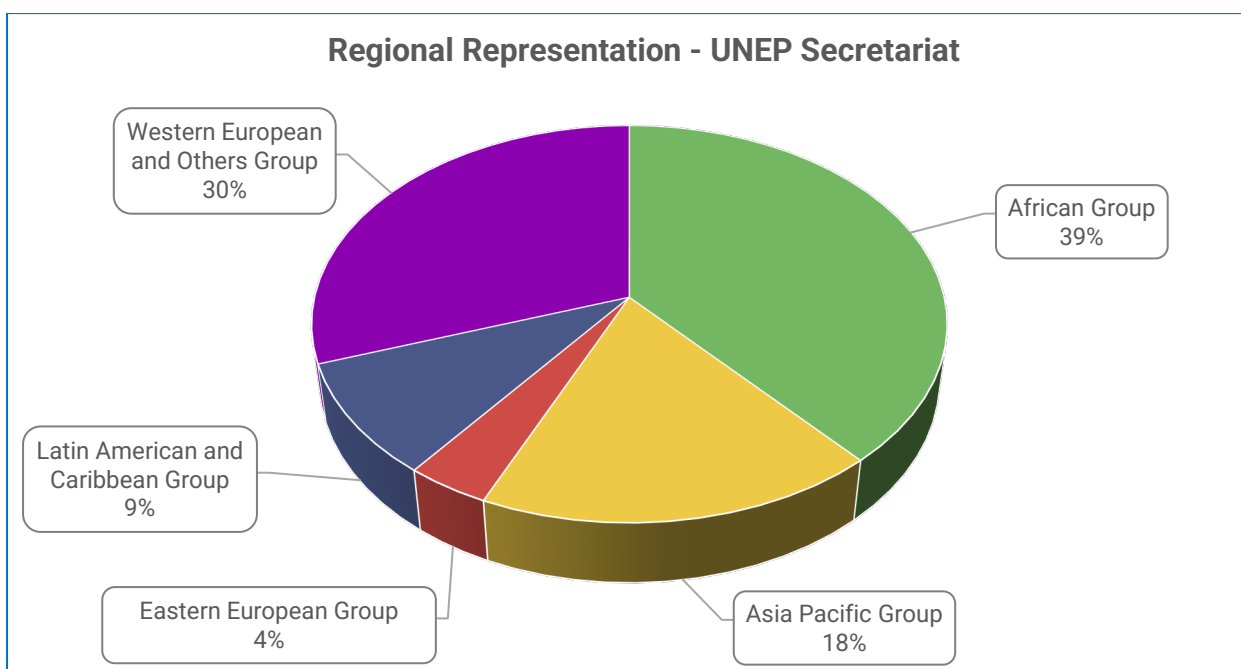
vii. Overall regional representation of staff (UNEP and MEA Secretariats) - 31 March 2024

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

UNEP Overall Regional Representation	
Region	Total
African Group	458
Asia Pacific Group	244
Eastern European Group	57
Latin American and Caribbean Group	127
Western European and Others Group	483
Total	1369



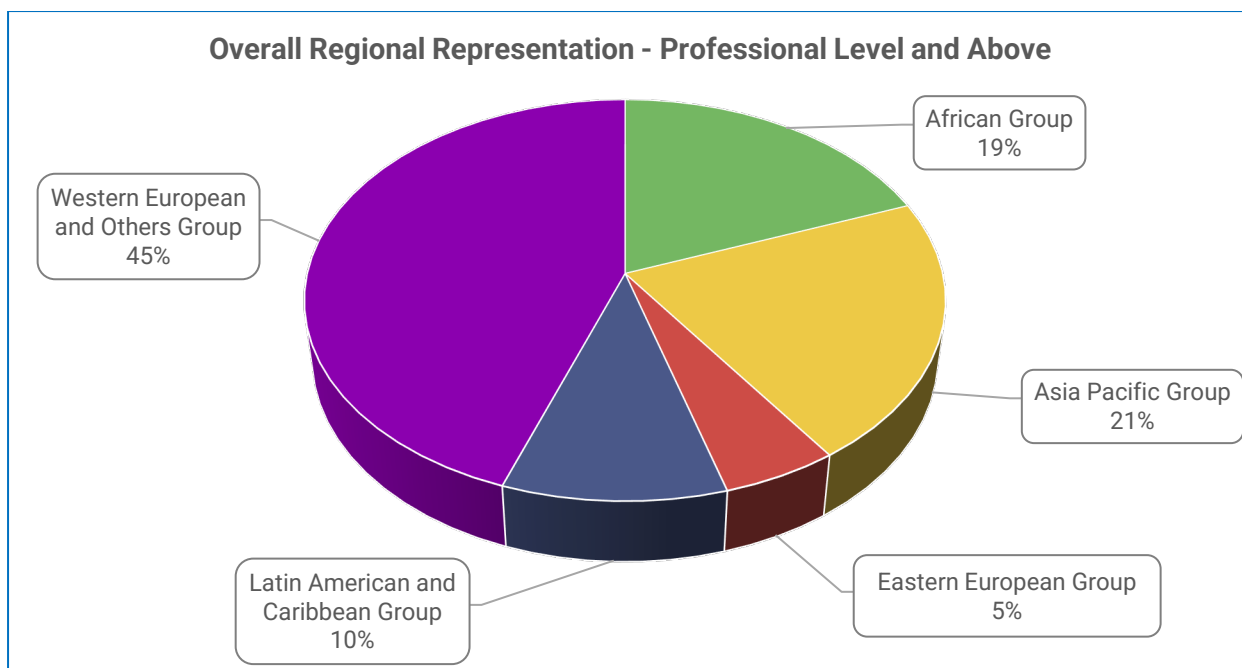
Regional Representation - UNEP Secretariat	
Region	Total
African Group	417
Asia Pacific Group	196
Eastern European Group	41
Latin American and Caribbean Group	100
Western European and Others Group	328
Total	1082



The table and chart below present the overall Regional Representation of UNEP’s staff at the Professional level and above as of 31 March 2024.

Overall Regional Representation Professional Level and Above

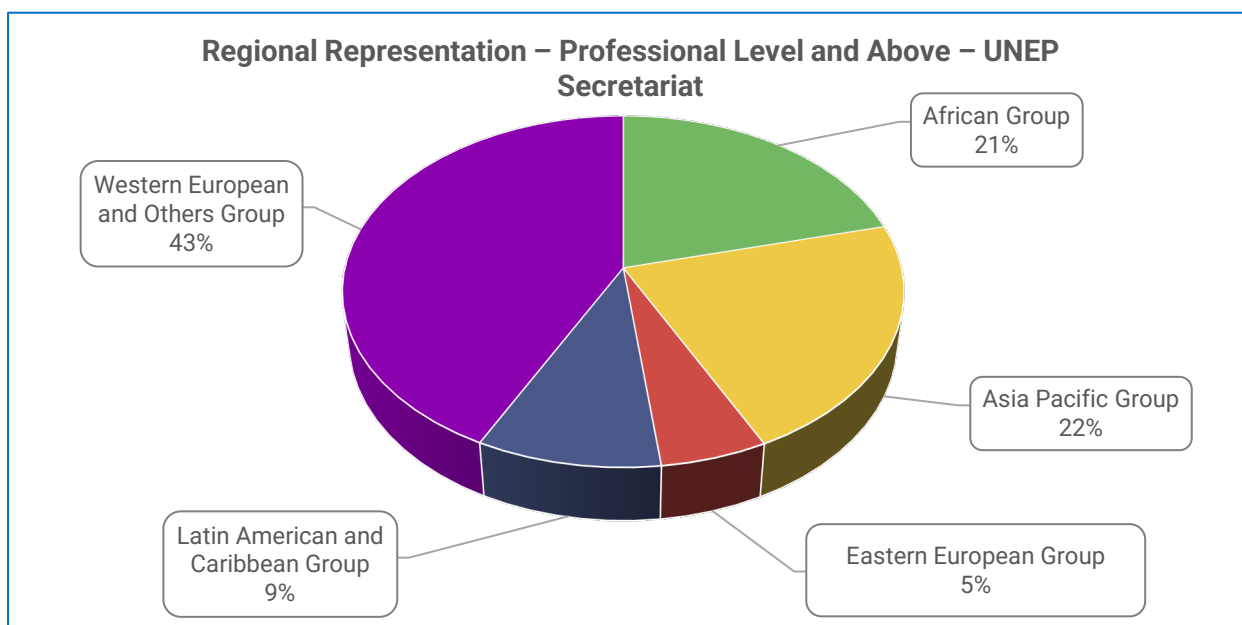
Regional Distribution	Professional & Above Level								Total
	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	
African Group		1	3	4	29	58	53	11	159
Asia Pacific Group		1	2	9	21	58	53	32	176
Eastern European Group				5	6	12	11	9	43
Latin American and Caribbean Group			2	6	15	25	27	8	83
Western European and Others Group	1		3	26	51	131	112	46	370
Total	1	2	10	50	122	284	256	106	831



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

Regional representation – Professional level and above – UNEP Secretariat

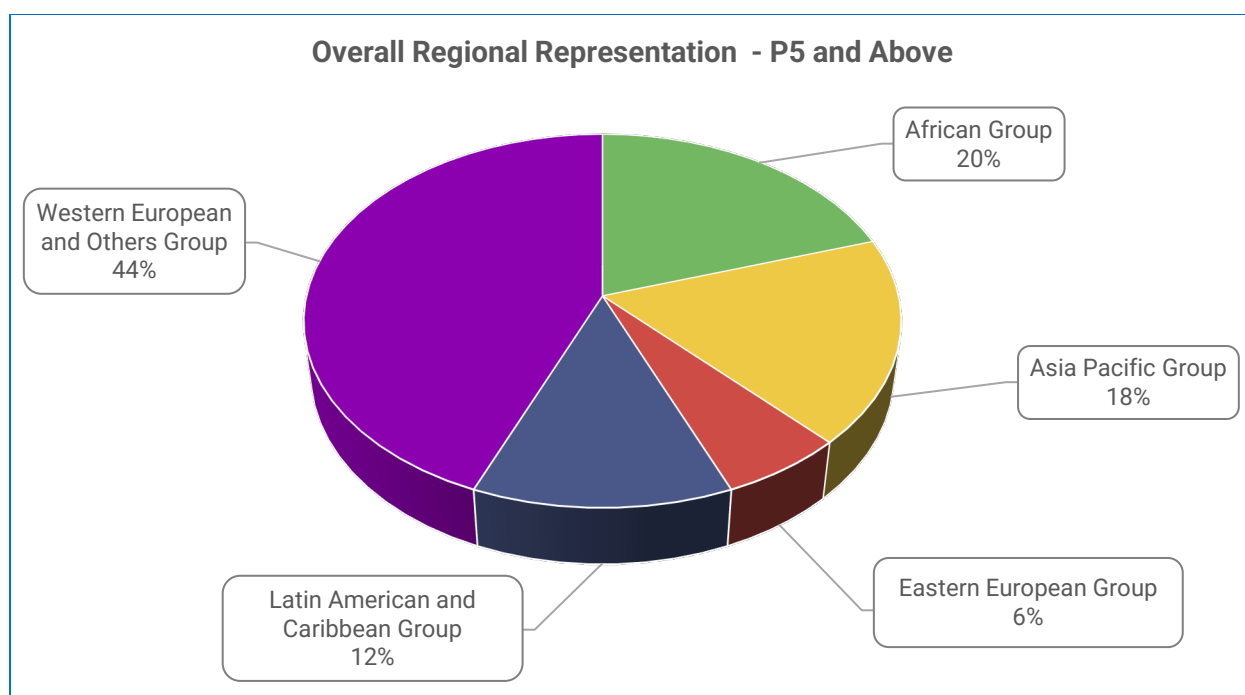
Regional Representation	Professional and Above Level - Secretariat								Total
	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	
African Group		1	2	4	21	54	47	10	139
Asia Pacific Group		1	1	7	16	50	45	23	143
Eastern European Group				4	5	10	9	8	36
Latin American and Caribbean Group			1	5	10	20	22	4	62
Western European and Others Group	1		2	23	43	100	84	28	281
Total	1	2	6	43	95	234	207	73	661



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

Overall regional representation P5 and above-31 March 2024

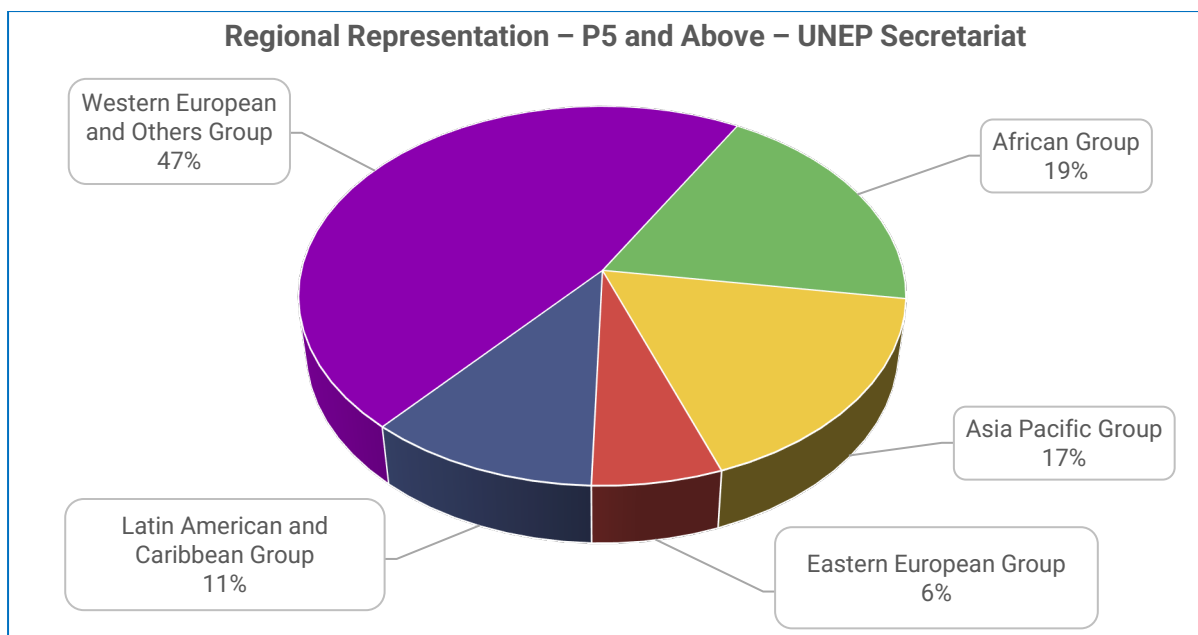
Regional Distribution	P-5 & Above					Total
	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	
African Group		1	3	4	29	37
Asia Pacific Group		1	2	9	21	33
Eastern European Group				5	6	11
Latin American and Caribbean Group			2	6	15	23
Western European and Others Group	1		3	26	51	81
Total	1	2	10	50	122	185



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

Regional Representation – P5 and Above – UNEP Secretariat

Regional Distribution	P5 and Above Level - Secretariat					Total
	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	
African Group		1	2	4	21	28
Asia Pacific Group		1	1	7	16	25
Eastern European Group				4	5	9
Latin American and Caribbean Group			1	5	10	16
Western European and Others Group	1		2	23	43	69
Total	1	2	6	43	95	147



viii. Human resources issues

In 2023, UNEP demonstrated significant progress in bolstering regional geographical diversity. Noteworthy achievements include 63% of external selections originating from historically less represented geographical regions. The organization experienced encouraging growth in staff from regions such as Africa (AFG) (+9%), Asia Pacific (APG) (+6%), Eastern Europe (EEG) (+12%), and Latin American and the Caribbean (GRULAC) (+2%) as well as a marginal decline from Western European and Other States (WEOG) (-2%).

Despite these advancements, attracting candidates from less represented geographical regions presents challenges primarily due to limited awareness of job opportunities within the United Nations system. Many individuals in these regions may not have access to information about vacancies or the recruitment process, leading to a lack of engagement with UN job opportunities. Additionally, there is often a lack of proper understanding of the UN recruitment system, including the application process, eligibility criteria, and required qualifications, which can deter potential candidates from pursuing positions within the organization.

Furthermore, the reluctance to relocate to a different country for employment, coupled with concerns about cultural adjustment, language barriers, and unfamiliarity with the host country's working environment, further hinders the recruitment of qualified candidates from underrepresented regions. These factors collectively contribute to the challenge of attracting diverse talent from less represented geographical areas to UNEP positions.

ix. Opportunities

UNEP has been actively pursuing strategic outreach initiatives to foster geographical diversity and engage with Member States and candidates from less represented geographical regions. In the first quarter of 2024, UNEP organized five targeted talent outreach events, including three in-person gatherings and two online sessions, attracting over 1,400 participants. Among these activities was a Youth Consultation with Children and Youth Major Group (CYMG) representatives, held alongside the OECPR, to gather feedback on stakeholder perceptions of employment at and with UNEP. Furthermore, UNEP capitalized on the UNEA-6 week to engage

with stakeholders and initiate discussions with Member States regarding future direct talent outreach events.

In addition to these outreach efforts, UNEP has commenced the internal process to launch the second cohort of the Young Talent Pipeline, further demonstrating the organization's commitment to nurturing and recruiting diverse talent from underrepresented regions and Member States.

x. Lesson learned

The insights gained from the Youth Consultation on employment opportunities at UNEP have revealed a critical information gap rooted in misconceptions held by potential applicants. These assumptions about the application process and the profiles sought by UNEP often diverge from the actual procedures and selection criteria in place. This valuable lesson underscores the need to enhance strategic communication efforts aimed at dispelling myths surrounding employment at UNEP, clarifying job opportunities for young professionals, and tailoring talent outreach initiatives to address the specific information requirements of diverse audiences and potential applicants.

Moreover, the engagement observed during UNEA-6 has highlighted Member States' keen interest in collaborating with UNEP on talent outreach endeavours. In response to this positive reception, UNEP is poised to enhance its close collaboration with Member States to organize targeted outreach events throughout 2024. These initiatives will complement the existing general talent outreach activities, reflecting UNEP's commitment to fostering strategic partnerships and expanding opportunities for engagement with a diverse range of stakeholders.

C. Audits

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

a. Completed audits:

OIOS conducted the audit of the UNEP Delegation of Authority from August to November 2023. The audit covered the period from 1 January 2021 to 30 September 2023. While generally satisfactory, the audit highlighted shortcomings in monitoring delegated functions. To address this, OIOS issued five recommendations, including regular reviews of access roles, ensuring proper staff training documentation, and expediting the closure of outstanding balances. UNEP has accepted these recommendations and has begun implementing corrective actions. These measures aim to strengthen governance, risk management, and control processes within UNEP's delegation of authority framework.

b. Audits under implementation (26):

- Delegation of Authority (5)
- Audit of the UNEP Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (5)
- Procurement (6)
- Ecosystems Division (1)
- Cybersecurity (2)
- Audit of UNEP Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) (4)
- Partnerships (1)
- Grants Management (1)
- Audit of UNEP Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (1)

c. Audits in progress:

Audit of the projects in the Industry and Economy Division: The objective of the audit is to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes in ensuring the effective implementation of projects in the Division. The audit will cover high and medium-risk projects of the Industry and Economy Division, which include: (a) project planning and design; (b) performance monitoring; (c) project reporting; and (d) evaluation.

Audit of UNEP Secretariat of Convention Migratory Species (CMS): The ongoing audit is based on an activity-level risk assessment and will cover high and medium-risk areas which include: (a) implementation of decisions of the Conference of the Parties (COP) and Meetings of the Parties (MOP); (b) financial management; (c) project implementation and monitoring; (d) partnership management; (e) evaluation; and (f) human resources management.

d. Planned audits for 2024:

Audit of climate change subprogramme at UNEP

ii. United Nations Board of Auditors (BoA)

The Board of Auditors concluded the interim audit for the financial statements of 2023 in Nairobi in November 2023. As a result, the interim audit report was shared with UNEP in March 2024 outlining 18 observations, of which UNEP accepted 14. Of the recommendations from prior financial periods, 39 recommendations are under implementation, 11 recommendations were closed as implemented, and 1 recommendation was assessed as being overtaken by events. Implementation plans for all outstanding and new observations have been drafted and monitoring is ongoing.

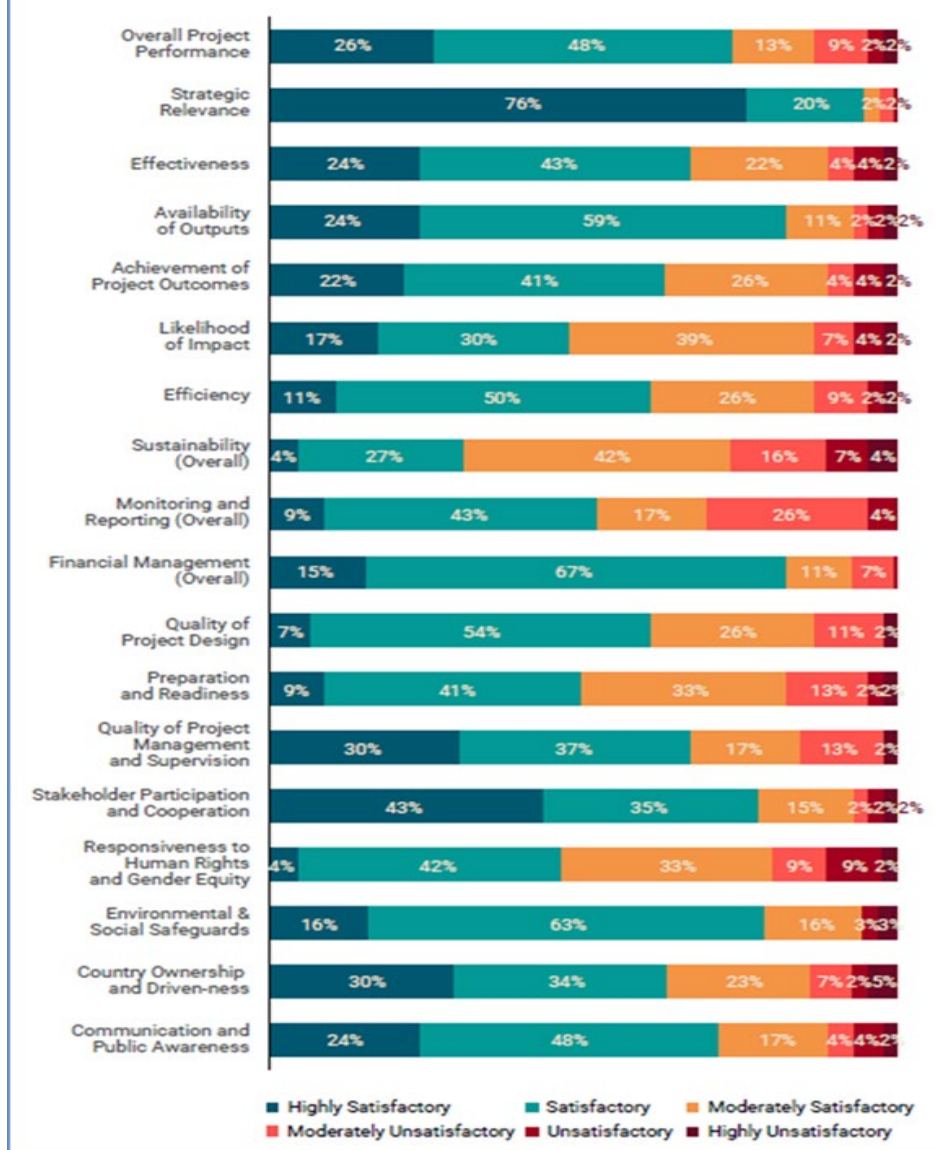
D. Evaluations

i. UNEP evaluations

During the reporting period four independent project evaluations were completed, one management-led Terminal Review was independently validated by the Evaluation Office and 30 project evaluations are currently ongoing. In addition, the Evaluation Office prepared and published the [Biennial Evaluation Synthesis Report 2022-2023](#). The report summarises findings derived from the work of the Evaluation Office. It draws on in-depth evaluations of various UNEP initiatives and projects, offering an analysis of 46 evaluations conducted in 2022 and 2023, and examining performance trends over four previous biennia.

A positive performance trend continues for the proportion of projects attaining overall performance ratings in the Satisfactory range (HS, S and MS) – this remains high across most evaluation criteria as it has for the last five biennia. The average proportion of projects attaining a Satisfactory (S) or Highly Satisfactory (HS) rating for overall project performance across the four previous biennia was 56% compared to 74% of projects in 2022-2023. Across the same 10-year period, the 2022-23 biennium shows the highest proportion of projects rated 'Highly Satisfactory' for their overall performance, with 26%.

Figure ES.1 Summary of project performance against evaluation criteria, 2022-2023



Improvements in evaluation recommendation implementation compliance are evident in 2022 and 2023. A larger proportion (59%) of recommendations were closed as 'Compliant' in 2022 and 2023 compared to the previous biennium (53%). The proportion of recommendations closed as 'Not compliant' also fell from 10% in the previous biennium to 2% in 2022 and 2023.

Completed independent terminal evaluations included:

[Ecosystem approach to Haiti Cote Sud \(GEF ID 5531\)](#)

Overall performance rating: Satisfactory

Key findings: The project goal was to rehabilitate the Haitian environment and reduce poverty. The project's specific objective was increasing resilience to climate change risks and decreasing disaster risk using an ecosystem management approach targeting protected areas and fragile ecosystems in the southwestern peninsula of Haiti. The communities involved in this project were small, vulnerable and often isolated villages, with many residents located in and around legally declared and future protected sites. These communities are living in a state of permanent extreme vulnerability due to their location in coastal zones, low-

lying areas and small islands, as well as due to extreme poverty and heavy dependence on natural resources.

The project accomplished most of its outputs and all seven outcome indicators were achieved. The long-term impact is 'Highly Likely' because the project accomplished a transformational change in the target population and local partner organizations it worked with, although, the higher risk in the future is poverty and lack of work, which is evident all over the south region of Haiti. Despite their limited resources, local organizations will continue working on these issues and sensitizing local communities about the advantages of better productive practices and sustainable use of natural resources. The project made good use of adaptive management to deal with internal and external challenges, for example COVID-19, political unrest, and natural disasters.

[IKI grant –Advancing and measuring sustainable consumption and production \(SCP\) for a low-carbon economy in middle-income and newly industrialized countries](#)

Overall performance rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory

Key findings: Advance SCP was designed to contribute to the Consumer Information Programme (CI-SCP) under the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP). The International Climate Initiative (IKI) grant sought to promote SCP tools and practices as a mean to contribute to climate change mitigation. Advance SCP aimed at supporting Sustainability Information Systems (SIS), developing policy frameworks, building capacities, and formulating Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) related to SCP and sustainability information. Activities implemented by UNEP focused initially on four countries (Chile, Ethiopia, Morocco, Peru), with activities in three more countries (Brazil, Ecuador, Paraguay) added as part of a grant extension. Advance SCP played a relevant role supporting the CI-SCP.

In collaboration with other initiatives, the IKI grant was effective at convening stakeholders and kickstarting work under CI-SCP. As a result, the number of CI-SCP partners increased steadily and working groups created under CI-SCP engaged in relevant activities to promote SCP worldwide. Working groups supported by Advance SCP produced guidelines and knowledge products that have proven relevant and valuable and continue to be disseminated by UNEP and other CI-SCP partners. The partnership with the online platform maintained by the OnePlanet Network contributed decisively to the wide dissemination of the knowledge products delivered by Advance SCP. The platform was also key to hosting and promoting knowledge dissemination events delivered by the grant.

Advance SCP was conceived as a climate change mitigation project intended to develop SCP policies and tools to reduce GHG emissions in participating countries. However, the focus on climate change mitigation was gradually lost. The deviation by Advance SCP from its original focus on climate change mitigation was accentuated following the 2019 grant extension. Advance SCP delivered relevant results under most outputs, and most output targets were met. On the other hand, given the grant's limited contribution to climate change mitigation and the fact that grant's intended outcome and impact were defined in terms of GHG emissions reductions, the IKI grant fell short of its stated objectives.

[Macaya Grand Sud phase II \(MGS II\) – regenerating ecosystems, building green and blue economies to achieve sustainable livelihoods](#)

Overall performance rating: Satisfactory

Key findings: The project aimed to bolster local capacities to combat ecosystem degradation and introduce sustainable livelihoods on a large scale in the Macaya and Port Salut-Abacou protected areas and their surrounding zones. Its overarching goal was to assist Haitian authorities and communities in implementing practical ecosystem management approaches in these two protected areas, ultimately reducing environmental degradation, and enhancing the well-being of local populations. This, in turn, contributed to maintaining healthier terrestrial and marine ecosystems while promoting sustainable livelihoods to alleviate poverty and food insecurity.

[Agricultural biodiversity conservation and man and biosphere reserves in Cuba: bridging managed and natural landscapes \(performance assessment GEF ID 4158\)](#)

Overall performance rating: Moderately Satisfactory

Key findings: The project was implemented from 2013 to 2019 in Cuba's MAB reserves of Sierra del Rosario and Cuchillas del Toa, with the objective of conserving diversity within and around protected areas by mainstreaming agricultural biodiversity into the management of Cuba's MAB reserve system. The project broke new ground by demonstrating approaches to biodiversity conservation and protected area management that were innovative to the Cuban context. The project played a strategic role by supporting Cuba's access to global knowledge, and by generating spaces for dialogue, exchange and collaboration with recognized technical and scientific institutions. This was key a driver of performance, combined with the technical competence and institutional commitment of project partners.

The project's main contributions were to the research, inventorying and conservation of indigenous and underutilized crops, and wild crop relatives (Outcome 1). This led to an important increase in the number of registered plant species and conservation / reproduction of genetic material. At policy level, agrobiodiversity was successfully incorporated within the national protected area strategy of CNAP and both MAB management plans (Outcome 2). Project impacts and sustainability were likely to have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and its repercussions on Cuba's economy and the operational capacity of government partner institutions.