

MAY
2016

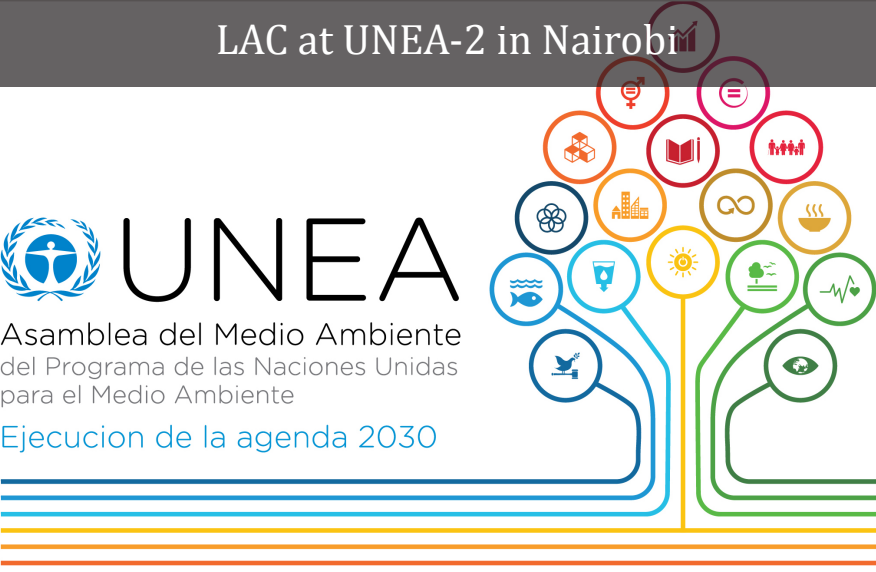
NEWSLETTER

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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LAC at UNEA-2 in Nairobi



UNEA
Asamblea del Medio Ambiente
del Programa de las Naciones Unidas
para el Medio Ambiente
Ejecucion de la agenda 2030



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Latin American and the Caribbean Environment Ministers will be participating on May 23-27 at the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-2) in Nairobi, Kenya.

The Assembly, comprising the 193 Member States in the United Nations, is the highest-level environmental decision-making forum in the world and will culminate in key resolutions for advancing towards sustainable development,

while making a global call to action to address the critical environmental challenges facing today's world.

The Assembly's overarching theme is "Delivering on the Environmental Dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

During the Twentieth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in March in Cartagena, Costa Rica was nominated to chair UNEA-2 with Barbados as co-chair.

The ministers of the region defined their vision and contributions for UNEA-2 on a set of priorities ranging from climate change and air quality to biological diversity and chemicals.

More than 2,000 participants, including heads of state and government, ministers, directors of the United Nations and multilateral and bilateral agencies, and civil society and private sector representatives, are expected at the more than 100 events within the framework of UNEA-2.

[See report](#)



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CLIMATE CHANGE

New Communities of Practice

ClimaLAC, the new UNEP communities of practice on climate change, are available as of May and will focus on themes such as regional policy dialogue, legal and institutional frameworks, and jurisdiction and access to justice.

The goal of ClimaLAC is to create a space for sharing knowledge, information, and lessons learned on climate change in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Participants will be able to access webinars on key topics. The first, on May 13, was on the region’s contributions to climate change law and the challenges countries are facing with regards to regulatory instruments.

Two specific cases were analyzed during

the webinar: the general climate change law in Mexico and the degree of progress towards creating a climate change law in Chile.

ClimaLAC, a UNEP project with European Union support through its EUROCLIMA program, is being implemented by the Mexican Center for Environmental Law (CEMDA).



- ▶ Women and Original Ethnic Groups, Key to Climate Change Adaptation in the Tropical Andes
- ▶ A Carbon-Neutral Economy is Possible in Latin America and the Caribbean, according to UNEP Report

Debate on Energy Efficiency

Energy-efficiency and climate change decision-makers from national energy and environment ministries in Latin America and the Caribbean met on April 27-28 in Montevideo to exchange experiences in the generation and implementation of energy efficiency projects and their funding mechanisms.

Attendees agreed that energy efficiency is a lever for competitiveness and contributes to compliance with both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

The Seventh Latin American and the Caribbean Energy Efficiency Seminar, hosted by the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE), was held in collaboration with the Uruguayan Ministry of Industry, Energy, and Mining (MIEM) and the UNEP through the REGATTA initiative.



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Women and Original Ethnic Groups, Key to Climate Change Adaptation in the Tropical Andes

The inclusion of women and original ethnic groups could be the key to implementation of a regional strategy for climate change adaptation in the tropical Andes, according to a recent report released in April in the Peruvian capital city.

The publication, “Outlook on Climate Change Adaptation in the Tropical Andes Mountains”, warns that by the end of the century the area could sustain higher temperatures than human beings have ever had to adapt to in the past.

The tropical Andes are home to many diverse communities where some 60 million people are living.

The document argues that traditional knowledge needs to be included in the design of mountain climate change adaptation policies and points out that women have an in-depth knowledge of their environment and natural resource management.

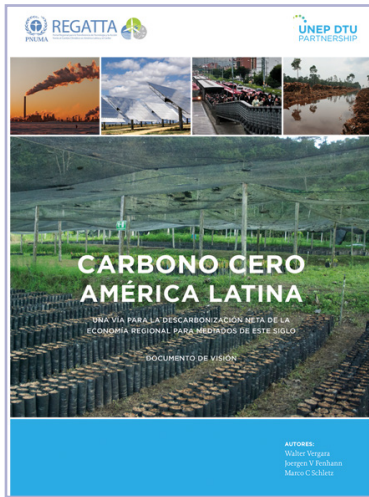


The report, prepared by the UNEP, GRID-Arendal, and the Consortium for Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion (CONDESAN), calls for adopting long-term measures that include protecting the ecosystem services provided by mountains.

The publication is part of a series that includes information on the Southern Caucasus and the Western Balkans, Eastern Africa, Central Asia, the Carpathians, the Hindu Kush Himalaya, and the tropical Andes.

- ▶ New Communities of Practice / Debate on Energy Efficiency
- ▶ A Carbon-Neutral Economy is Possible in Latin America and the Caribbean, according to UNEP Report

A Carbon-Neutral Economy is Possible in Latin America and the Caribbean, according to UNEP Report



Latin America and the Caribbean would gain substantial economic, environmental and social benefits if it transits to a carbon neutral economy by the middle of this century, according to a UNEP report now available in Spanish.

The report, “Zero Carbon Latin America: A Pathway for Net Decarbonisation of the Regional Economy by Mid-Century,” published by the UNEP DTU Partnership research center, based in Denmark, analyzes the route the region should follow in four sectors that account for 90% of greenhouse gas emissions: power generation, transportation, land use, and industry.

The region contributes relatively little to global emissions, but is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The financial costs associated with this phenomenon were estimated to be in the range of US \$100 billion in 2015.

The report gives recommendations primarily for Latin America in the light of its emissions and potential, but many of these

could be applied to the Caribbean.

“Latin America and the Caribbean is not a very large emitter; it produces just some 10% of greenhouse gas emissions but it can make a huge contribution to efforts for controlling climate change,” said UNEP Regional Representative and Director Leo Heileman, in reference to the universal agreement that officially opened for signing on April 22 at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

“This report indicates that total elimination of these emissions in Latin America and the Caribbean is feasible with bold, concrete actions that can dramatically enhance people’s quality of life,” Heileman said.

▮ [See report](#)

- ▶ New Communities of Practice / Debate on Energy Efficiency
- ▶ Women and Original Ethnic Groups, Key to Climate Change Adaptation in the Tropical Andes

UNEP Participated in a Mission in Paraguay

UNEP was part of the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team that visited Paraguay April 18-28. The mission's goal was to help design a strategic plan that would enable the country's UN agencies and their national counterparts to access the United Nations' Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to implement response measures and humanitarian aid in the country after this year's flooding.

The UNDAC team visited the departments of Concepción, San Pedro, Ñeembucú, Presidente Hayes, Alto Paraguay, and the Asunción municipality's Bañado Norte and Bañado Sur.

UNEP identified environmental impacts from both the catastrophe itself and subsequent response activities.



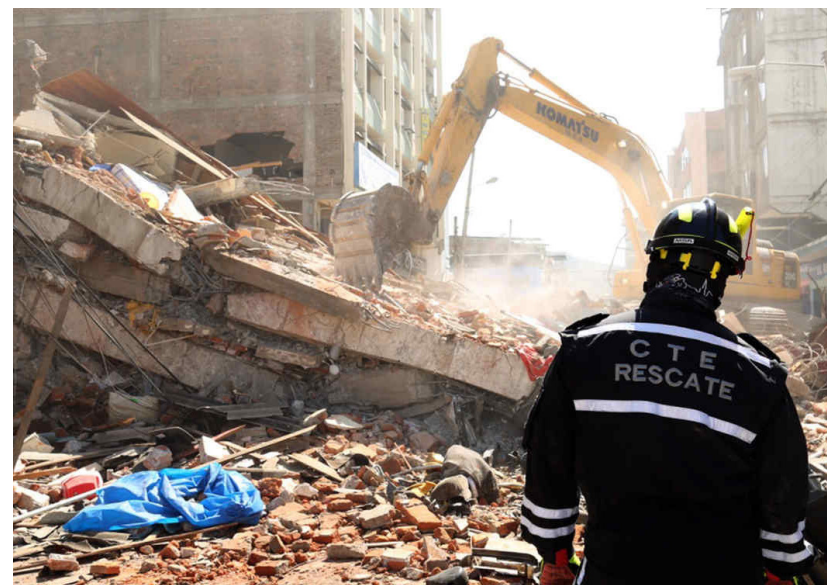
► Plan Prepared for Strengthening Environmental Emergency Management in Ecuador

Plan Prepared for Strengthening Environmental Emergency Management in Ecuador

Following the earthquake that shook Ecuador on April 16 of this year, UNEP has been helping the country's Ministry of the Environment develop an environmental plan for the affected area.

The goal of the plan is to assess the country's environmental needs, strengthen waste management and advise on the potential development of a protected area strategy while assisting with the ministry's needs to identify damages and recovery costs for the affected areas.

The mission could be the start of long-term collaboration for helping to incorporate environmental and humanitarian aspects that can build the ministry's capacity to manage environmental emergencies.



► UNEP Participated in a Mission in Paraguay



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ECOSYSTEMS MANAGEMENT

Let's End Illegal Wildlife Trafficking



Illegal wildlife trafficking is estimated to generate global earnings of up to US \$100 billion every year. The organized crime wave of trade in wildlife species, led by armed groups of clandestine hunters acting across borders, endangers past conservation achievements and threatens whole ecosystems in many countries.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, illegal trafficking affects a wide range of reptile, bird, and precious timber tree species. This illegal business not only degrades ecosystems, but also undermines the region's economies and affects the security of the communities.

World Environment Day seeks to inspire everyone around the world to take measures to keep the growing pressure on Planet Earth's natural systems from reaching a breaking point.

Stay abreast of the activities being organized for this World Environment Day in your region and the world [HERE](#).

■ [See UNEP infogram](#)

World Environment Day, celebrated every year on June 5, will be dedicated in 2016 to the issue of illegal wildlife trafficking which, according to Interpol, is the world's third most important illegal business after drug and arms trafficking.

- ▶ The State of Biodiversity in the Region
- ▶ World Oceans Day / Initiative to Protect the Amazon Biome

ECOSYSTEMS MANAGEMENT

The State of Biodiversity in the Region

On May 22 UNEP will present its State of Biodiversity in Latin America and the Caribbean report, a mid-term assessment of the region's progress towards meeting the Aichi Targets, at the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-2).

In 2010, the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, a ten-year global framework for action aimed at conserving biodiversity and increasing its sustainable use to enhance people's lives.



This report identifies the opportunities and challenges of implementing the Aichi Targets in the region and recommends actions for accelerating progress towards its implementation by 2020.

Successful and innovative examples of biodiversity conservation abound in the region, but there are also high rates of urbanization that, together with agricultural and industrial development, pose tremendous challenges to achieving conservation and sustainable use of its natural resources.

- ▶ Let's End Illegal Wildlife Trafficking
- ▶ World Oceans Day / Initiative to Protect the Amazon Biome

World Oceans Day

Marine debris affects the biodiversity and functioning of the marine and coastal ecosystem services of Panama and many of the region's countries. Reports show that fauna is being harmed by entanglement in and ingestion of debris. At present the scientific community is focusing on understanding the risks posed by micro-plastics and their effects on the environment, including their effects on human health, which are still unknown.

UNEP will be organizing an event for June 8, coinciding with World Oceans Day, to raise awareness of the effects of marine debris in Panama. Attending the event will be representatives from the Ministry of the Environment, the Aquatic Resources Authority of Panama, the municipality of Panama, and MarViva.



Initiative to Protect the Amazon Biome

Protected areas are the key to conserving the Amazon and developing the countries it covers. Delegates from Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela met in La Paz, Bolivia, on April 18-20 to move towards a regional financial sustainability strategy for the Amazon biome protected areas.

The IAPA – Amazon Vision project is funded by the European Union, coordinated by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and implemented jointly by UNEP, WWF, IUCN, and Redparques.

The participants in the meeting agreed to prepare a work plan to strengthen Amazon protected areas and move forward on identifying mechanisms that can ensure their resources over the long term.

- ▶ Let's End Illegal Wildlife Trafficking
- ▶ The State of Biodiversity in the Region

XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

During their biennial forum in Cartagena, Colombia, on March 28-31, the region's ministers of environment committed to accelerating collective action on a set of priorities ranging from climate change and air quality to biological diversity and chemicals.

At the 20th Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, hosted by the Colombian government with the help of UNEP in its capacity as Forum Secretary, the ministers adopted the Cartagena Declaration (11 decisions), agreeing to provide leadership, inputs and contributions on the environmental dimension for regional monitoring mechanisms in implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the region, and for the UNEA, the global decision-making forum on the environment.

They also adopted an updated Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), in light of the recently adopted 2030 Agenda, and agreed to establish a Regional Cooperation Platform on Climate Change for Latin America.

Latin America and the Caribbean is responsible for less than 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions, yet the region is at the forefront of efforts to tackle them. During the forum the ministers agreed to establish a Regional Cooperation Platform on Climate Change for Latin America.

They also agreed to establish an intergovernmental network to strengthen environmentally responsible management of chemicals and waste, and to promote stronger efforts for air quality through implementation of the Regional Plan of Action on Atmospheric Pollution.

The Latin America and the Caribbean region will continue to support implementation of the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP), promote environmental education and training, and work towards full implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.

Argentina and Paraguay will host the 21st Meeting of the Forum in 2018.



- ▶ Principle 10 Implementation Guide / Meeting of the Environmental Training Network
- ▶ Partnering with Universities

Principle 10 Implementation Guide

In Montevideo, UNEP presented a guide for putting into practice Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, in addition to the Bali Guidelines adopted in 2010.

The guide is intended as a tool to help countries draft national legislation on access to information, access to public participation in decision-making, and access to justice in environmental matters.

It compiles examples of the laws and actions of countries at varying stages of development, making it useful for legislators, politicians, and civil servants, as well as civil society organizations and the general public.

The presentation was given in an informative meeting during the Third Meeting of the Negotiating Committee of the Regional

Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, ending on April 8 and organized by the Uruguayan government and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).



- ▶ XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean
- ▶ Partnering with Universities

Meeting of the Environmental Training Network

Del 8 al 11 de marzo se reunieron en República Dominicana los puntos focales de la Red de Formación Ambiental (RFA-ALC) del Foro de Ministros de Medio Ambiente de América Latina y el Caribe, para intercambiar experiencias exitosas sobre educación ambiental formal y no formal con actores clave del país y dar a conocer las experiencias de la región.

Durante la reunión se analizaron las implicaciones de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible, así como del recientemente adoptado Acuerdo de Paris sobre cambio climático para los programas de educación ambiental de los ministerios del Ambiente.

También se discutieron los avances de los ministerios de Ambiente en el seguimiento a los resultados del VII Congreso Iberoamericano de Educación Ambiental y se revisó el progreso en la ejecución del plan de trabajo de la RFA-ALC para el período 2014 – 2016.

Partnering with Universities

In May 2016, UNEP's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Universidad de Ciencias Aplicadas y Ambientales (UDCA) of Colombia renewed their ties of cooperation.

The goal of this new agreement, which has a regional projection, is for UNEP's Global Universities Partnership on Environment and Sustainability (GUPES/UNEP) and the Alliance of Ibero-American Networks of Universities for Sustainability and the Environment (ARIUSA), coordinated by UDCA, to carry out actions to promote the cooperation of universities with the ministries of environment and especially with the Environmental Training Network focal points.

The institutions will also foment the role

of university networks in participating in and formulating policies and programs in line with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.



1st World Environmental Law Congress

The international environmental law community met in the first World Environmental Law Congress on April 27-29 in Río de Janeiro to discuss progress and challenges in environmental legislation.

Participating in the event was UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner.

The congress provided a global forum for understanding the role of law in the development and implementation of solutions for ensuring ecological sustainability.

Organized under the auspices of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in cooperation with UNEP and the Organization of American States (OAS) and in close collaboration with other law organizations, the event took place in the Supreme Court of the State of Río de Janeiro and permitted the launch of the Global Judicial Institute for the Environment.

- ▶ XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean
- ▶ Principle 10 Implementation Guide / Meeting of the Environmental Training Network

Regional Workshop on Sustainable Waste Management

During a regional workshop held on May 10-12 in Montevideo, Uruguay, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean discussed strategies for improved waste disposal at the national and municipal levels and the conversion of wastes into energy resources.

The participants also identified each country's recycling potential and waste treatment and elimination options.

The region's generation of municipal waste, now at 160 million tons, has been progressively expanding due to urbanization, increased consumption, and the changing lifestyles of urban inhabitants, after the drop in recent years of poverty indexes.

Waste generation in the region is estimated to double by 2025.

Several countries have taken such measures as increasing the waste collection coverage area, closing down open-air dumps, and reinforcing the laws.



The workshop was organized by UNEP with the support of the Basel Convention Coordinating Centre / Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Uruguayan Ministry of Housing, Land Planning, and Environment.

▶ Regional Initiative for Prevention of Lead Pollution

CHEMICALS AND WASTE



Regional Initiative for Prevention of Lead Pollution

Government and recycling sector representatives of nine countries in the Mesoamerican sub-region – Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Panama – addressed the problem of used lead-acid batteries during a workshop organized by UNEP and the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Central America and Mexico (BCRC-CAM) that ended on February 25.

Lead emissions pose a high risk for human health and the environment. The World Health Organization cites exposure to lead as one of the world's top ten environmental health threats. There is no safe level of lead exposure for people, and children are especially vulnerable as lead poisoning affects development of the nerve and cognitive systems, leading to a variety of consequences such as kidney damage or loss of IQ.

Jordi Pon, Coordinator of the UNEP Chemicals and Waste Sub-programme for Latin America and the Caribbean, noted that the program expects to continue helping countries develop national and regional strategies and facilitating the exchange of experiences and regional cooperation, affirming that the countries will soon have an opportunity to seek agreements on this issue within the framework of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-2) in Nairobi, Kenya, in May.

▶ Regional Workshop on Sustainable Waste Management

RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

International Congress on Sustainable Cities

Sustainable lifestyles, resource efficiency, use of public spaces, and inclusive cities are some of the topics for May 17-20 during the 2016 International Sustainable Building Congress in San Jose, Costa Rica.

The event, organized by the Green Building Council of Costa Rica (GBC-CR), the World Resources Forum (WRF), and UNEP, proposes four days of plenaries, workshops, and scientific and entertainment sessions.

Experts from all over the world will share their experiences with participants on a wide array of such topics as sustainable natural resource management in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the unlinking of economic growth from natural resource use, and environmental degradation in cities, among others.

Urban areas are responsible for 60 to 80% of global energy consumption and more than 75% of the world's natural resources.

Advances in the promotion of low-carbon sustainable cities and international cooperation on the matter, in accordance with the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP), will be shared during the Congress.

[More information](#)



- ▶ Green Economy in Jamaica
- ▶ UNEP and OAS Promote Sustainable Public Procurement

RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

Green Economy in Jamaica

In March, the government of Jamaica and UNEP presented two new studies in Kingston tracing a roadmap for the country towards sustainable development through the implementation of green economy policies: Green Economy Scoping Study for Jamaica and Vision 2030 Jamaica and the Green Economy (available in English).

The first study concentrates on five key sectors of the economy – agriculture, tourism, construction, energy, and water and sewage – while the second shows existing connections between Jamaica’s current national development plan and an inclusive green economy.

The documents recommend government actions and policies aimed at improving efficiency and climate change resiliency, creating jobs, and attracting investment in all economic sectors, fostering the transition to resiliency from a high level of indebtedness and dependency. The study also highlights the leadership of the private sector and civil



society.

According to Daryl Vaz, minister without portfolio in the Jamaican Ministry of Economic Development and Job Creation, “Following the global trend, the study shows that the green economy constitutes a new growth driver; it’s a net job generator, which is vital for eliminating poverty.”

“The report also seeks to motivate policy makers to create the conditions for increased investment in the transition to a green economy, and reiterates the need for public-private partnerships,” he said.

- ▶ International Congress on Sustainable Cities
- ▶ UNEP and OAS Promote Sustainable Public Procurement



RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

UNEP and OAS Promote Sustainable Public Procurement

UNEP and the Organization of American States (OAS) are working together to promote sustainable public procurement systems in Latin America and the Caribbean. A workshop organized with the collaboration of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) was held in April in Bogotá, Colombia for countries to exchange their experiences in the matter.

Participating in the workshop were representatives from member organizations of the Inter-American Network on Government Procurement (RICG) in 21 countries in the region.

UNEP presented a project entitled “Stimulating the Demand and Supply of Sustainable Products through Sustainable Public Procurement and Ecolabelling,” funded by the European Commission.

To facilitate sustainable public procurement (SPP) in the region, UNEP and OAS will develop a web platform so that those interested in implementing SPP can find guidance on the topic in a single place.

Habitat III Preparatory Meeting

Authorities and experts met in Toluca, Mexico in April to discuss the design of a new urban agenda, the focus of the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) to be held in October of this year in Quito, Ecuador.

During the regional preparatory meeting, UNEP organized, together with the Rockefeller Foundation, a round table where experts discussed the region’s opportunities for implementing energy efficient programs, reducing the impact of climate change on cities, and promoting sustainable resource management.

The meeting resulted in the adoption of the Toluca Declaration, which will contribute to the Habitat III discussions in Quito.

Included in the Declaration are the key topics of land planning, governance, housing, sustainable mobility, and soil and environmental management.

- ▶ International Congress on Sustainable Cities
- ▶ Green economy in Jamaica



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ENVIRONMENT UNDER REVIEW

GEO-6 Regional Assessment

At the end of May UNEP will present the regional assessments of the sixth edition of its flagship report, Global Environment Outlooks (GEO-6).

The six regional assessments – for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, and Western Asia – will be presented at the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-2) between May 23 and May 27 in Nairobi, Kenya.

Each of the assessments includes a review of regional priorities, the state of the region’s environment, major trends that will affect it in the future, and an analysis of actions needed to achieve sustainable and inclusive development. These will be the key inputs for the GEO-6 global assessment.

The Latin America and the Caribbean assessment, prepared with the help of some one hundred experts, is structured into four chapters. The first chapter gives the region’s environmental

priorities and assesses the main socioeconomic change drivers. The second assesses the pressures, state and trends of the environment in five specific areas: air, freshwater systems, oceans and seas, land, and biodiversity. The third addresses policy options that would contribute to enhancing the efficiency and impact of responses to the region’s main environmental challenges. Finally, the fourth chapter explores future scenarios and environmental outlooks for the region, particularly within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



Regional Assessment of Climate Pollutants

A summary for decision makers of the Integrated Assessment of Short-Lived Climate Pollutants for Latin America and the Caribbean, prepared by UNEP and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, will be presented on May 19 during the Science and Policy Forum at UNEA-2.

The report, prepared with the participation of more than 90 regional and global experts, gives a diagnostic and a set of policy recommendations to reduce the emissions of these gases, which are affecting health and the climate.

Preparation of the report has made it possible to take a regional emissions inventory and establish baselines and likely scenarios at 2030 and 2050, based on existing policies being implemented by the countries in the region.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

10-12 may

Regional Workshop on Sustainable Waste Management
Montevideo, Uruguay.

17-20 may

International Congress on Sustainable Cities 2016.
San José, Costa Rica.

22 may

International Day for Biological Diversity

23-24 may

World Humanitarian Summit
Estambul, Turquía.

23-27 may

United Nations Environment Assembly, UNEA-2
Nairobi, Kenya.

5 june

World Environment Day.

8 june

World Oceans Day.

17 june

World Day to Combat Desertification

[See more](#)



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