



**UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

**Environment for Development**

## UNEP is the voice for the environment within the United Nations system

UNEP's mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.



## Sound environmental management for sustainable development

UNEP is an advocate, educator, catalyst and facilitator, promoting the wise use of the planet's natural assets for sustainable development.

UNEP works with many partners: United Nations entities, international organizations, national governments, non-governmental organizations, business, industry, the media and civil society.



## What UNEP does

- Assessing global, regional and national environmental conditions and trends
- Developing international agreements and national environmental instruments
- Strengthening institutions for the wise management of the environment
- Integrating economic development and environmental protection
- Facilitating the transfer of knowledge and technology for sustainable development
- Encouraging new partnerships and mind-sets within civil society and the private sector



## UNEP around the world

UNEP's global headquarters are in Nairobi, Kenya. Being based in Africa gives UNEP a first-hand understanding of the environmental issues facing developing countries.

UNEP is represented across the globe by six regional offices:

- **Africa:** Nairobi, Kenya
- **Asia and the Pacific:** Bangkok, Thailand
- **Europe:** Geneva, Switzerland
- **Latin America and the Caribbean:** Mexico City, Mexico
- **North America:** Washington DC, USA
- **West Asia:** Manama, Bahrain



UNEP's Division of Technology, Industry and Economics is located in Paris, France, with branches in Geneva, Switzerland, and Osaka, Japan.

UNEP also has liaison offices in Beijing, China; Brasilia, Brazil; Brussels, Belgium; Moscow, Russia; and New York, USA.

UNEP supports a growing network of centres of excellence, such as:

- the UNEP Collaborating Centre on Energy and Environment (UCCEE)
- the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)
- the Global Resource Information Database (GRID) centres in Norway, Switzerland and USA.



## How UNEP works

UNEP has eight Divisions to promote and facilitate sound environmental management for sustainable development:

- Early Warning and Assessment
- Policy Development and Law
- Environmental Policy Implementation
- Technology, Industry and Economics
- Regional Cooperation
- Environmental Conventions
- Communications and Public Information
- Global Environment Facility (GEF) Coordination



UNEP hosts several environmental convention secretariats including:

- the Ozone Secretariat
- the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol
- the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- the Convention on Biological Diversity
- the Convention on Migratory Species
- the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous and Other Wastes
- the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)
- the Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent\*

\* co-hosted with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)



## UNEP milestones

- 1972: UNEP established after UN Conference on the Human Environment
- 1973: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- 1975: Mediterranean Action Plan: first of thirteen regional action plans under the UNEP Regional Seas programme
- 1979: Bonn Convention on Migratory Species
- 1985: Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer



- 1987: Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer
- 1988: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) established to assess information related to human-induced climate change
- 1989: Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes
- 1992: Convention on Biological Diversity
- 1995: Global Programme of Action (GPA) launched to protect marine environment from land-based sources of pollution
- 1998: Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent
- 2000: Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety adopted to address issue of genetically modified organisms



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- 2000: Malmö Declaration: a call for action by the first Global Ministerial Environment Forum
- 2000: Millennium Declaration: environmental sustainability listed as one of eight Millennium Development Goals
- 2001: Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)
- 2002: World Summit on Sustainable Development reaffirms UNEP's central role in international efforts to achieve sustainable development
- 2005: Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building adopted by UNEP Governing Council mandating national level support to developing countries
- 2005 World Summit emphasizes key role of environment in sustainable development



## Environmental assessment, monitoring and reporting

The international community needs to be able to evaluate, predict and respond to existing and emerging needs if it is to effectively address the environmental issues of the twenty-first century.

UNEP provides access to environmental data and information and helps governments to use environmental information for planning for sustainable development.



UNEP's flagship assessment is the Global Environment Outlook (GEO), produced in cooperation with a network of national, subregional, regional and global partners. These partners feed into the GEO process and into other assessments including the Global International Waters Assessment and the Millennium Ecosystems Assessment.

UNEP helps governments to anticipate, respond to and manage disasters caused by environmental factors, or which have profound effects on the environment.

UNEP also assesses the environmental consequences of armed conflict, and provides post-conflict clean-up and mitigation guidance.



## Legal and institutional strengthening and environmental policy development

UNEP is helping to develop the institutional and legal infrastructure to safeguard the global environment.

Many international environmental agreements have been established with UNEP's assistance—such as the Montreal Protocol to restore the ozone layer; the growing number of treaties that govern the production, transportation, use, release and disposal of chemicals; and the family of treaties that protect global biodiversity.



UNEP provides support to national governments, especially in the developing world, to participate in international negotiations, to fulfil their obligations under international agreements, and to develop institutions and formulate and enact legislation to protect the environment.

UNEP works to develop policy guidelines for addressing major environmental issues, such as the increasing scarcity of fresh water, the degradation of the marine environment and the pollution of the atmosphere.

UNEP has also initiated a ministerial-level intergovernmental process to strengthen environmental governance and reinvigorate global commitment to sustainable development.



## Sustainable use and management of natural resources

UNEP works with governments, the private sector and civil society to protect natural resources worldwide.

As well as supporting assessments and developing institutional and legal capacity, UNEP promotes dialogue and cooperation among stakeholders, the exchange of best practices and success stories, the transfer of knowledge and technology, and the establishment of demonstration projects.



Examples include:

- The OzonAction programme, which is helping to implement the Montreal Protocol and restore the Earth's ozone layer by phasing out ozone-depleting substances
- The Global Programme of Action, which protects the marine environment from land-based sources of pollution by promoting the integrated management of river basins and coastal zones
- The International Coral Reef Action Network, which is facilitating the conservation and sustainable management of coral reefs worldwide
- The Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP), which is mobilizing political will to preserve humankind's closest relatives and their crucial forest habitats



## Integrating economic development and environmental protection

UNEP encourages decision makers in government, industry and business to develop and adopt environmentally sound policies, strategies, practices and technologies. This involves raising awareness, building international consensus, developing codes of practice and economic instruments, strengthening capabilities, exchanging information and initiating demonstration projects.



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UNEP has a vigorous energy programme to address the environmental consequences of energy production and use, including global climate change and local air pollution.

UNEP is concerned with renewable energy, energy efficiency, transport, energy finance and policy issues.

UNEP assists decision makers in government and the private sector to make better, more informed energy choices which fully integrate environmental and social costs.



UNEP is addressing sustainable consumption and production issues by working with governments and the private sector to:

- Integrate environmental considerations into international and national trade policy
- Facilitate the exchange of sustainable consumption and production practices and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries in areas such as water, waste management and food production
- Promote the safe management of chemicals
- Encourage sustainable procurement and environmental responsibility through voluntary schemes such as the International Declaration on Cleaner Production, the Global Compact, the Global Reporting Initiative, the Finance Initiative, the Global e-Sustainability Initiative and the Tour Operators Initiative



## Promoting public participation in environmental management

UNEP believes in engaging civil society—especially non-governmental organizations and major groups such as women and indigenous cultures—and promoting their involvement in environmental decision making.

UNEP places special emphasis on facilitating access to environmental information and on incorporating civil society into the deliberations of the UNEP Governing Council and the annual Global Ministerial Environment Forum.



UNEP has a wide-ranging programme for children and youth. Conferences, campaigns and other events combine with targeted publications and a web site to educate children and youth about sustainable living. UNEP also operates environmental education and training programmes for all levels of society.

UNEP publications, media outreach, special events like World Environment Day and Clean Up the World, and environmental prizes, such as Champions of the Earth, the UNEP Sasakawa Prize and the photographic competition Focus on Your World, help to keep the environment as front-page news.



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