

TOWARDS A POLLUTION-FREE PLANET

Communication Strategy for the 2017 Environment Assembly

Lead-up Phase: Thematic Campaign

UN Environment will conduct a global campaign to raise awareness and mobilize action on the theme of the third UN Environment Assembly –*Pollution*.

The objective of the campaign is to demonstrate the relevance of the Assembly to people's lives. All communication activities will emphasize the issue of pollution, not on the complex, political process.

A focus on pollution presents a unique opportunity to position UN Environment and its Assembly as the foremost political forum for solving environmental problems, through hard-edged and measureable commitments and outcomes, and the thought leader on environmental issues, through launching ground-breaking research on pollution.

1. COMMUNICATION FOR ADVOCACY

Choosing pollution as the theme of the third Environment Assembly sent a strong signal that Member States wish to use the meeting to deliver concrete political solutions to this global issue.

UN Environment's Communication Division will support political advocacy efforts to build momentum for action and secure the agreements and pledges a pollution-free planet demands. The Division will work with the Regional Offices and other secretariat functions to help countries in raising awareness of pollution problems and solutions, including through propagating new science and highlighting success stories.

Objectives

1. **Raise awareness of pollution:** Highlight the pollution challenge by demonstrating its impact on health, children, ecosystems, economies and livelihoods. Give the problem and its solutions a human face and rally positive actions towards a pollution-free planet
2. **Support countries' actions:** Highlight local, national and global success stories in the fight against pollution. Publicize voluntary pledges and commitments by member states and cities, especially under the ongoing campaigns on marine litter, air quality, lead in paint, etc
3. **Legacy:** the UN Environment Assembly to be remembered for the commitment to a pollution-free planet, progress against which UN Environment and its Assembly keep under review

2. A PHASED CAMPAIGN APPROACH

Communication activities are planned in three phases, each with a different approach, regional focus, success criteria and requirements for delivery:

1. a heavily regionalized, issue-oriented and country-driven lead up to the UN Environment Assembly

2. global media outreach during the UN Environment Assembly, driven by the Communication Division
3. post- UN Environment Assembly outreach, promoting the outcomes of the meeting

This note only covers the first phase of the communication campaign on the theme for the Environment Assembly—the lead up to the December Assembly

PHASE I: LEAD UP TO THE UN ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY

This phase will depend on engagement of countries and will be rolled out on a national and regional level. The focus of this stage will be entirely on the issue of pollution and how it affects people's lives. Mentions of the UN Environment Assembly will not be the primary objective of this phase.

Goals

1. Raise awareness of the urgency of the pollution problem; its impacts on health, economies and ecosystems in selected countries and the available solutions
2. Build political momentum and public expectations for delivering solutions to the problem at the UN Environment Assembly with VIPs confirming attendance and pledges announced in advance
3. Leverage ongoing campaigns to amplify the messaging on pollution

Related actions:

1. Citizen and opinion leader engagement: Raise awareness and inspire measureable action through digital outreach and a participatory Pollution-Free Planet campaign, rallying pledges to a citizens' Clean Planet Charter
2. Identify key international events where countries would make ambitious calls for specific policy outcomes of the UN Environment Assembly
3. Offer support to countries:
 - a. factsheets, infographics, reports to bridge the data gap
 - b. key messages on selected environmental issues
 - c. drafting and placing op-eds and other media materials
 - d. arranging interviews and briefings with local media on the countries' pollution issues
 - e. working with goodwill ambassadors to encourage leadership and institute a race-to-the-top with outreach and engagement
 - f. support media field trips relevant to the country and to the UN Environment Assembly's agenda and expected outcomes
4. Leverage ongoing campaigns to drive the pollution agenda by fusing them under a common umbrella of a pollution-free planet. The campaigns include:
 - a. Breathe Life – a joint campaign to improve air quality in cities, conducted with the World Health Organization and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition

- b. Clean Seas – a campaign to reduce marine litter, particularly plastic waste in oceans
 - c. the campaign to ban lead in paint under the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint
 - d. Green Passport - a campaign promoting sustainable tourism
 - e. Connecting people with nature – theme of the 2017 World Environment Day
 - f. ongoing advocacy efforts to reduce mercury emissions
 - g. advocacy for better fuel quality standards
5. Encourage countries to:
- a. involve state broadcasters in raising awareness of pollution issues
 - b. involve country's celebrities
 - c. involve civil society, assisting them with tools so that they can encourage their countries to show greater leadership
 - d. Mobilize cities to take local action that can be showcased by a representative at the UN Environment Assembly.
 - e. give a media briefing on the country's goals for the UN Environment Assembly
 - f. plan to travel to Nairobi with a pool of national journalists
6. Highlight countries' voluntary commitments to tackle pollution: Publicize countries' pledges to address pollution and success stories that could be replicated globally, leveraging the ongoing campaigns as vehicles for communicating commitments
7. Work with all UN Environment Divisions, Regional Offices and relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements to:
- a. identify communication opportunities (e.g. media field trips on the side-lines of regional ministerial fora, press briefings at multilateral conferences, etc)
 - b. encourage countries to join the ongoing campaigns on pollution (marine litter, air pollution, connecting with nature)
 - c. work with state broadcasters in the region to raise awareness about pollution
 - d. work with national and regional environment authorities to arrange interviews; place op-eds and hold briefings on pollution
8. Stakeholder engagement: Empower major groups and stakeholders to drive the pollution agenda, including engaging with the private sector and faith groups

Success criteria

- 1. In news media, pollution is the second most-often cited global environmental issue, after climate change

2. Governments, civil society and other stakeholders support UN Environment campaigns on pollution, adapt the messaging to local circumstances and publicly advocate for specific solutions

Premises for successful delivery

1. Countries are heavily involved in public advocacy for specific outcomes of the UN Environment Assembly
2. Politicians of national and regional stature, celebrities and big NGOs are vocal about the pollution problem and advocate specific solutions.
3. Adequate resources for the production and dissemination of communication products
4. Civil society is given a voice and is encouraged to advocate specific outcomes

3. DIGITAL PLATFORM SUPPORT FOR THE CAMPAIGN

Objectives

1. Create palpable social buzz around the UN Environment Assembly and a hub and gathering point for Member States and citizens to explore ways and means to address the multifaceted pollution challenges
2. Engage and empower the broader community outside of UN Environment on the issue of pollution and what needs to be done to solve it
3. Engage with the on-line audience, science community and policy makers asking them to present innovative ideas to combat pollution and its impacts

a) Amplifying the campaign through social media

1. Design events dedicated to innovative actions related to pollution reduction
2. Identify member states willing to conduct photography competitions in their countries related to the theme
3. Distribution of social media pack to all partners

b) Strategic use of multimedia for the campaign

1. Identify opportunities and stories to show case through the production of 3 minute documentaries
2. 30-50 second, concise interventions by key politicians and personalities for use in social media closely linked to pollution
3. Field media visits (With VR component – see below) can present opportunities to gather important audiovisuals to showcase during the UN Environment Assembly

c) Online outreach through UN Environment Assembly website

1. Allow the audience to share their stories and innovations to address pollution challenges around the globe
2. Curate the cream of the crop content from social media and ongoing campaigns such as Breathe Life and Clean Seas
3. Act as a knowledge hub for pollution related data, information, multimedia and other relevant content.