

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES

139th Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, 19th June 2017

SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Clean Seas Campaign

- On 23 February 2017, UN Environment launched the [Clean Seas](#) campaign aimed at reducing the amount of single-use plastics and banning the use of micro-beads in cosmetics and personal care products, by 2022.
- As of end of May 2017, 17 countries had joined the campaign with ambitious pledges.
- UN Environment is also partnering with Volvo Ocean Race to promote the campaign and reach out to new audiences.

1st Joint Meeting of Environment and Health Ministers with the Arab League Countries, Cairo, 2 March 2017

UN Environment Executive Director spoke at the [1st Joint Meeting of Environment and Health Ministers with the Arab League Countries](#). Ministers from the Arab League agreed upon the first ever Arab Strategy on Environment and Health focusing on nine priorities for the next four years, with water a top priority.

Steering Committee meeting of World Conservation Monitoring, Cambridge, 28 March 2017

The Executive Director chaired the Steering Committee meeting of [World Conservation Monitoring Centre](#) and met with all staff for a dialogue on priorities. He also met leaders at Cambridge University for dialogue on the role of science and education in building sustainable societies.

45th Session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Guadalajara, March 2017

The Deputy Executive Director participated in the official opening of the [45th Session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change held in Guadalajara](#), Mexico. In the margins of this meeting, the Deputy Executive Director met with H.E. Mr Rafael Pacchiano Alaman, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Mexico.

World Environment Day

- [World Environment Day 2017](#) was hosted by Canada, on 5 June under the theme "[Connecting People to Nature](#)", [#WithNature](#).
- According to initial estimates, 1760 events from around the world were registered; 25657 photos shared on Instagram and Twitter; [Google doodle went green](#); more than [40 monuments lit in green](#); and trending status reached 2nd and 4th in the top trending topics worldwide in English and Spanish; and the public service announcement was viewed by more than a million and reached more than 7.6 million people worldwide.

Belt and Road Forum For International Cooperation, Beijing, 14-15 May 2017

The Executive Director visited Beijing, China to represent UN Environment at the opening ceremony and plenary session of the first-ever [Belt and Road Forum For International Cooperation](#), where UN Environment and China's Ministry of Environmental Protection announced an [International Coalition for Green Development on Belt and Road](#) to bring long-term, planet-friendly growth.

The Forum gathered 1,200 participants from 110 countries and 61 International organizations including the UN Secretary-General, the President of the World Bank and the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund.

Wild for Life Campaign

UN Environment's [Wild for Life campaign](#) has won the [2017 People's Voice Webby Award for Best Green Website](#). This is the most prestigious and competitive digital arts and sciences award. The campaign has also just won three [Hermes Creative Awards](#). This builds on UN Environment's Weibo 2016 Top 10 Most Influential Campaigns Award late last year.

They exchanged views on the United Nations Environment Assembly.

Meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, 24 April - 5 May 2017

- Over sixty decisions were adopted across the [three conventions](#). These range from listing of chemicals under the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, legal compliance under the Basel convention, to addressing joint issues under the synergies arrangement.
- Several inter-sessional and expert working groups were agreed upon to support the implementation of the existing decisions.

Launch of Young Champions of the Earth Award, 22 April 2017

On Earth Day, 22 April, the Executive Director launched the [Young Champions of the Earth Award](#) at the [Earth Optimism Summit](#). The Award will identify six youth from around the world between the ages 18 to 30 years with ideas to protect or restore our environment. The winners will receive training, mentorship, and seed funding to bring their ideas to life. They will also have the opportunity to attend the [UN Environment Assembly](#) in Nairobi, as well as the [UN General Assembly](#) in New York.

BreatheLife Campaign

[BreatheLife](#) is a joint campaign led by the [World Health Organization](#), UN Environment and the [Climate & Clean Air Coalition](#) to mobilize cities and individuals to protect our health and planet from the effects of air pollution. A total of 22 cities have now joined the campaign. [The Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development](#) representing 28 countries confirmed support for the campaign.

Meeting of the Nordic Council of Ministers, 2 May 2017

On the 2nd May 2017 the Executive Director took part in the Meeting of the [Nordic Council of Ministers](#) where the Ministers joined the UN Environment Clean Seas Campaign, agreed on a program on minimizing the environmental impact of marine plastic and a joint input to the EU strategy on marine pollution. The Executive Director also took part in the opening of Nordic beach clean-up action day.

Minimata Convention

The 50-ratification milestone required for the [Minamata Convention on Mercury](#) to enter into force was reached on 18 May 2017. The European Union and seven of its Member States, namely the Governments of Bulgaria, Denmark, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania and Sweden deposited their instruments of ratification with the [Office of Legal Affairs](#) at the UN Headquarters in New York on that day. Following this important milestone St Kitts and Nevis also ratified, bringing the current number of future Parties to 53.

Partnership with Formula E, 19-20 May 2017

The Executive Director [launched a partnership with Formula E](#) at the ePrix Paris race with Mr. Alejandro Agag, CEO of [Formula E](#), and Mr. Jean Todt, President of Federation Internationale de Automobile and the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety. This partnership focusing on air quality and electric mobility in anticipation for future Formula E city events to launch the “BreatheLife” campaign and advocate for electric transport.

Climate Principal's Meeting, 27 May 2017

The Executive Director participated in the first Climate Principals' Meeting on Friday 27 May 2017. The Climate Principals include all UN principals as well as other actors, such as the [World Bank](#) and [International Monetary Fund](#), among others, that had been convened to agree on the overall strategy of how the United Nations will address the climate change agenda for the period of 2017-2018. The Executive Director briefed the meeting on the UN Environment deliverables of [climate finance](#) and the entry into force of the [Kigali Amendment](#).

UN ENVIRONMENT IN THE REGIONS

AFRICA

Executive Director's Mission to Somalia, 30 May 2017

The Executive Director visited Somalia and met with Somali national authorities along with the senior leadership of the [United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia](#) to offer UN Environment's support in the implementation of national priorities related to environmental issues.

Following discussions with Prime Minister Hassan Khaire and it was agreed that UN Environment will focus advice and support on three main areas: i) Support the Government to substantially scale up renewable energy through the private sector; ii) Assist the Government manage natural resources (including fisheries), contributing to national revenues; iii) Provide advice on water management, including the possibility of digging a deep oil style well to supply water to Mogadishu. All these efforts will be coordinated by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia with technical support from UN Environment.

Achievement of a cost-benefit analysis study to inform decision making process in Rwanda

The [United Nations Development Programme and UN Environment Poverty Environment Initiative](#) completed a cost-benefit analysis of the Rubaya Green village in support to the Government of Rwanda. The study highlighted how investing in more sustainable environment and natural resource use can reduce poverty. In particular, it showed that if all 30 district of Rwanda had one Green village, as the Government set in its objectives, 3,000 poor people would benefit and the \$48 million of doing so would increase GDP by US \$62 million and reduce extreme poverty rate by 0.71%.

Regional policy dialogue to enhance integration of sustainability into investment management in Central Africa

UN Environment initiated dialogue with the [Development Bank of Central African States](#), an international financial institution in charge of funding the development of the Member States of the [Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa](#). The aim is to enhance public and private partnership to play a major role in ecosystem management and work towards innovative solutions to the impacts of climate change in the region.

Regional Policy Dialogue to support action plans by 6 SWITCH Africa Green countries

UN Environment convened a regional policy dialogue to develop [SWITCH Africa Green](#) action plans. Priority policy interventions to support micro, small and medium enterprises in greening their business through promotion of sustainable consumption and production practices and patterns, were identified.

The dialogue was held in Accra, Ghana on 25-26 March 2017 and involved SWITCH Africa Green countries (Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, South Africa and Uganda). SWITCH Africa green is creating multiplier effects to improve the livelihood especially of women-led enterprises. Technical monitoring of 83 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in the 6 countries indicates that in most cases, sustainable production has led to increased incomes, cost savings, job creation, improved time efficiency and productivity as well as improved health.

The 2017 Annual Regional United Nations Development Group Meeting for Eastern and Southern Africa / Western and Central Africa, Gaborone, 4-5 April 2017

The 2017 Annual Meeting of the Regional Directors was hosted in Gaborone, Botswana on 4th and 5th April, 2017. The theme was "Taking forward the Susa through the prism of the 2016 [Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review](#)" The key outcome of the meeting was an agreement to scale up the various regional initiatives by working with relevant entities at regional level in taking forward those emanating from the Security Council mandates (namely, [Sahel Strategy](#), [Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework](#) and the [Horn of Africa Initiative](#)).

ASIA AND PACIFIC

The Association of South East Asian Nations and UN Environment Secretariat-to-Secretariat Meeting, Jakarta, 18-19 April 2017

The [Association of South East Asian Nations](#) Secretariat-to-Secretariat [Meeting](#) reviewed the implementation of the first Association of South East Asian Nations –United Nations Plan of Action (2016-2020) which is a key instrument for advancing engagement between the two entities to realize the goals of Association of South East Asian Nations [Vision 2025](#). It covers cooperation between the Association of South East Asian Nations and the United Nations in areas such as peace and security, human rights, gender mainstreaming, economic integration, people-to-people connectivity and sustainable development, including climate change and disaster risk reduction among others. UN Environment facilitated the dialogue on environment, climate change and energy.

China Cashless Society Enters its Next Phase for Greening the Economy

On 18 April 2017, ANT Financial, in collaboration with UN Environment and other partners, launched the [Cashless Alliance](#) in Hangzhou, envisioning a cashless society for ANT Financial's business partners that are green and inclusive. Focused on supporting a cash-free, inclusive business community, the initiative builds on the launch of the Green Digital Finance Alliance by UN Environment and ANT Financial at the [World Economic Forum](#) in January 2017.

Gender Mainstreamed in Lao People's Democratic Republic's Biodiversity Action Plans

Key stakeholders in Lao People's Democratic Republic identified concrete actions that can ensure a coordinated approach towards implementing obligations of various biodiversity-related Conventions through [National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans](#) while ensuring linkages to the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). The action plan includes specific actions for mainstreaming gender into the implementation. Through UN Environment's support, the Women's Union is now represented in the institutional arrangements for the implementation of the country's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

NORTH AMERICA

Preparations for the UN Ocean Conference

UN Environment has been fully involved in the preparatory work of the [Ocean Conference](#), participating in the Advisory Group and co-leading two of the seven informal working preparatory groups responsible for preparing inputs to the background notes for the partnerships dialogues. It has also briefed delegations and facilitated information on the main activities UN Environment is implementing on oceans, including the [Regional Seas Programme](#) and the [Global Programme of Action](#), making reference to the Resolutions [2/10](#), [2/11](#) and [2/12](#) adopted by the [United Nations Environment Assembly](#) during its Second Session, on oceans, marine litter and coral reefs. UN Environment participated in the preparatory meeting to the Ocean Conference, in which two side events were organised: one on the regional seas programme and another on the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities. UN Environment has participated in the informal meetings with the co-facilitators of the Call for Action.

Advancing Climate Finance during the World Bank Spring Meetings

The Executive Director attended several high-level meetings during the [World Bank](#) Spring Meetings on climate and sustainable finance. This included a panel dialogue "Unlocking Trillions for Climate Action"; Climate Finance CEO Round table with World Bank President Kim; [Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition High-Level Assembly](#); High Level Climate Action Planning Meeting; and Nationally Determined Contributions Forum.

LATIN AMERICA

BreatheLife Campaign

The Chilean cities of Talca, Concepción, Hualqui and Chiguayante are the latest in a growing global network of cities committed to meeting strict [World Health Organization](#) air quality targets. As the newest member of the global [BreatheLife](#) campaign, a [Climate and Clean Air Coalition](#) initiative led by the World Health Organization and UN Environment. The 4 cities are working to protect the environment and health of their citizens from the effects of air pollution. The cities' quest for cleaner air is part of a nationwide push by the administration of President Michelle Bachelet. When Bachelet took office in 2014, she made tackling air pollution a national priority. Chile has continued to lead the way internationally with Santiago becoming a flagship BreatheLife city in 2016. The four new cities are focusing on a range of initiatives designed to improve air quality. This includes efforts to reduce pollution from burning wood for cooking and heating, improved air quality monitoring, move to cleaner energy sources, protect air quality beneficial eco-systems, improve waste management and adopt sustainable transport systems.

Environmental Peacebuilding in Colombia

UN Environment has provided technical assistance on the preservation of natural resources and peacebuilding to Colombia following a request from H.E. President Juan Manuel Santos, once the process towards a peace agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia was underway. A scoping mission with experts from the Latin America Office and Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch took place from 5 to 17 March 2017. The mission concentrated on understanding the key environmental issues in Colombia and establishing how UN Environment could be of assistance. A full press release is available [here](#). A detailed mission report has now been submitted to President Santos outlining 10 concept areas that UN Environment can take forward within a country programme. Discussions are underway to deploy a senior staff member to Bogota to begin mobilizing for the new programme.

The Guyana Green State Development Strategy

UN Environment has been invited by the Government of Guyana, as a key partner alongside the UN country team and many other partners, to provide technical support in the implementation of the "[Green State Development Strategy](#)". This Strategy will guide Guyana's economic and sociocultural development over the next 15 years. It will lay the foundations for inclusive green economic and social growth, providing a roadmap for achieving sustainable development goals and related targets. The Strategy will be based on a low-carbon development, sustainable management of natural resources (in particular forest), diversification of economy and social wellbeing. A framework document was produced and the first meeting of the Steering Committee took place in Georgetown, on 6 June 2017.

EUROPE

5th Meeting of the EU's Eastern Partnership Panel on Climate Change and Environment, 2-3 March 2017

Following the adoption of a [Ministerial Declaration](#) at the [first Ministerial Meeting of the EU Eastern Partnership Panel on Environment and Climate Change](#) in Luxemburg in October 2016, UN Environment contributed to the development of the [Eastern Partnership Action Plans](#) that will operationalize the Declaration with concrete actions by EU and Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine), as well as international organizations, international financial institutions and civil society.

Launch of UN Environment support to Georgia's Green Growth Strategy

Within the '[Greening Economies in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood](#)' Project, UN Environment held high-level consultations with five Deputy Ministers, representatives of relevant Ministries, academia, civil society, international organizations and development agencies in Georgia in April 2017. The meeting agreed on the scope

of UN Environment's support for the development of the [Green Growth Strategy](#) in 2017 starting with a macroeconomic simulation modelling analysis and recommended the establishment of an inter-ministerial working group for the coordination and guidance of green economy work in Georgia.

Batumi Talk Show: Scoring Sustainable Development Goals through action on green economy and clean air (27 April)

On 27 April, UN Environment in collaboration with [United Nations Economic Commission for Europe](#) organized a side event in form of a “talk show” where new commitments from countries to the [Batumi Initiative on Green Economy](#) and [Batumi Action for Cleaner Air](#) were announced. Representatives from a range of governments were interviewed on the inspiring nature and progress of implementation of their green economy and cleaner air commitments pledged at the Environment for Europe Conference in 2016.

Training workshop on Environment and Sustainable Development Goals' Indicators held in Astana 25-28 April

The training was delivered in close cooperation with [United Nations Economic Commission for Europe](#) and [Statistics Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan](#). In a combination with recent engagement into [Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy](#) Support reports for Central Asia, the training paved the way for more systematic and clear engagement with the countries on [Sustainable Development Goals'](#) reporting and environmental data, as well as improved coordination among different agencies and international partners (including the UN).

WEST ASIA

UN Environment Support to Israel and Palestine

A UN Environment delegation headed by the Chief of Staff, together with the Directors for Europe and West Asia, visited Israel and Palestine on 3-5 April 2017 to strengthen technical and high level dialogue with the two Governments and international partners. Bilateral discussions included understanding better Israeli and Palestinian environment priorities, including the call by the latter for a technical assessment, and exploring how to develop mutually beneficial projects. UN Environment confirmed its willingness to work with both parties for concrete impact for both people and reiterated its hope that the Environment Assembly be focused on fostering the global environment agenda, notably pollution, for the global common good. Follow-up to the mission is underway by the two concerned regional offices, in close coordination with the Executive Office.

UN Environment support to countries meeting their obligations under the biodiversity-related Multilateral Environmental Agreements

The League of Arab States convened a meeting for the Multilateral Environmental Agreements on Biodiversity and Desertification on 10-12 April 2017. UN Environment provided technical assistance and legal guidance to countries in the implementation of their obligations under the relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements, and to develop their national environmental policies and plans, as a follow up to United Nations Environment Assembly [Resolution 2/2](#) on the “Roles and functions of the regional forums of Ministries of Environment”.

Arab Forum on Sustainable Development

To ensure an adequate focus on the environmental dimensions, as well as prepare for the Third Session of the [United Nations Environment Assembly](#), a preparatory meeting for the [2017 Arab Forum on Sustainable Development](#) was held in Cairo on 23-24 April, engaging government representatives and civil society. The meeting focused on the environmental dimensions of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), with a focus on natural resource management and its implications on reducing poverty and advancing prosperity. The outcome document reaffirmed the importance of the active participation of Arab Countries in the Environment Assembly, through the development of a unified Arab position on pollution. This outcome was taken forward to the [Arab Forum on Sustainable Development held in Rabat \(3-5 May 2017\)](#).

Regional United Nations Development Group Sustainable Development Goals Theme Group

A [Sustainable Development Goals](#) Theme Group for Arab states has been established, co-chaired by the [United Nations Development Programme](#), [United Nations Population Fund](#) and UN Environment to coordinate the support that the Regional United Nations Development Group can provide to UN Country Teams in their support of national implementation of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). A stocktaking exercise of existing work and support needs with regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is being undertaken to identify:

1. What has already been done and is ongoing;
2. What support UN Country Teams are planning to provide to Governments; and
3. What support Country Offices require from the Regional United Nations Development Group.

Country-Level Engagement on Sustainable Development Goals in Jordan and Saudi Arabia

The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation in Jordan is working with UN Environment to further strengthen engagement in the ongoing work on the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) in the country, recognizing the critical role that environment has to play, supporting Jordan prepares its Voluntary National Report to the High Level Political Forum in July.

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, UN Environment is working with the UN Country Team to map the Sustainable Development Goals against the [National Transformation Plan 2020](#), which forms part of the [Saudi 2030 Vision](#). The outcomes of the exercise will provide inputs to a specifically-focused national workshop on integrating the environmental dimensions across the evolving government policy and implementation strategy for the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

UN SYSTEM-WIDE COOPERATION AND COHERENCE

Chief Executives Board and Related Mechanisms

The April 2017 meeting of the [United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination](#) reflected the Secretary-General's determination to use the Board as a strategic policy space and key driver for reform, integration and coherence of the UN system. Frank, positive and forward-looking discussions were held on: the 'state of the world'; the 'state of multilateralism', including the relevance of the UN; and 'reform of the development system'.

The [United Nations Development Group](#) revisited its strategic priorities and working arrangements, under the overarching goal of supporting countries to implement Agenda 2030. Three priority areas were identified:

1. 'Giving Voice to Common Values and Norms';
2. 'Advancing Sustainable Development and Strengthening Linkages with Sustaining Peace'; and
3. 'Leveraging United Nations Development System Resources for Higher Impact'.

Also three strategic levers were highlighted, namely: Leadership, Strategic Financing, and Business Innovations.

The United Nations Development Group also endorsed a new [United Nations Development Assistance Framework guidance](#), designed in response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. UN Environment played a very active role in the development of the guidance, ensuring that environment is integrated throughout and especially in the 'sustainability and resilience' core programming principle.

At its March 2017 session, the [High-Level Committee on Programmes](#) held a scoping discussion on the global 'mega-trends' and on the 'frontier issues' that require United Nations system-wide approaches. UN Environment contributed to this discussion drawing on our in-depth work on emerging issues of environmental concern, highlighted in the 2016 and 2017 [Frontiers Reports](#).

The Chief Executives Board also endorsed a 'United Nations system Leadership Framework', which outlines a shared concept of transformative and collaborative leadership that is necessary to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Chief Executives Board further endorsed the 'United Nations System Strategic Approach on Climate Change', developed under the High-Level Committee on Programmes, through a consultative process co-chaired by UN Environment. The Strategic Approach aims to be a driver and tool for the United Nations system to encourage and guide integrated action in the areas of climate and sustainable development. The idea is to

deliver co-benefits across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the [Paris Agreement](#), and to provide better support to Member States.

The Executive Director briefed the meeting on the UN Environment deliverables of [climate finance](#) and the entry into force of the [Kigali Amendment](#).

The Environment Management Group Update

UN System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment

30 UN organizations have completed a survey launched by the [Environment Management Group Secretariat](#) in preparation of the first Synthesis Report on UN agencies contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with focus on the environmental dimension. This activity responds to the United Nations Environment Assembly [Resolution 2/5](#). The report will showcase good practices and list existing inter-agency partnerships and collaboration around the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda. It will also identify potential opportunities for further inter-agency collaboration. A summary of the preliminary findings of the survey are online at, http://unemg.org/images/emgdocs/SOMMeetings/2017/06_Reference_doc_SWFS.pdf

Policy Dialogues on nexus issues of the Sustainable Development Goals to enhance integrated implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, including the environmental dimension in the UN system, the first of a series of Policy Dialogues on environmental nexus issues of the Sustainable Development Goals was held in Geneva on 26-27 April. This Dialogue- was devoted to the introduction of the nexus approach, examples of collaboration at national and global levels and application of the nexus methodology in implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. More details on: <https://unemg.org/emg-nexus-dialogues/dialogue-1>

Environmentally Sound Management of Electrical and Electronic Waste

The inter-agency group on Tackling E-waste: Towards a life-cycle approach for e-products, has prepared a draft report which maps over 150 prior, existing and potential e-waste initiatives across the activities of more than 20 agencies in the United Nations system. A preliminary situational analysis provided in the report is available at: <https://unemg.org/images/emgdocs/ewaste/Preliminary%20Situational%20Analysis.pdf>

Enhancing effectiveness of the Environment Management Group in support of Agenda 2030

In response to [Resolution 2/5](#), a revised Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure for the Group has been prepared which will be submitted to the Senior Officials in September 2017.

Environmental Peer Reviews

Two new Environmental Management Peer Reviews Reports were prepared for the World Food Programme and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East as a result of a Peer Review Process which was carried out in 2016. A new peer Review process has started in April 2017 to review the field operations of the United Nations Development Programme in Amman. Peer Reviews of the headquarters of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Fund for Agricultural Development are under consideration. More information on the Peer Review Process is available at: <http://unemg.org/consultative-processes/environmental-management-peer-review>

Enhancing Sustainability of the Internal UN Operations and Facilities

The inter-agency work on enhancing environmental and social sustainability in the internal work of the United Nations system continues with a focus on awareness raising on the links between the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and sustainability of UN operations, and exploring options for a common approach for application of environmental and social safeguards by the UN system at country level.

Sharing updates on UN agencies contribution to the Environmental Agenda

[The first Environment Management Group Newsletter](#) was released in April 2017, to keep UN agencies and Member States and other stakeholders informed on progress and achievements made within the UN system in responding to the environmental dimensions of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

Inter-Agency Task Team for Science, Innovation and Technology for the Sustainable Development Goals

UN Environment has been actively engaged in UN efforts to leverage science, technology and innovation for the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), by co-chairing the [Inter-agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals](#), in partnership with the [Department of Social and Economic Affairs](#). The task team was instrumental in the preparation of the second Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, which took place from 15-16 May 2017 in New York and the key messages and recommendations of which will inform the High-level Political Forum.

Through the President of the United Nations Environment Assembly, inputs have been provided to the [High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#) to be held in New York from 10 to 19 July 2017. The inputs were based on comments made by the Committee of Permanent Representatives on the draft outline presented at the Annual Sub-Committee Meeting, and highlighted, among others, the importance of effective environmental governance in addressing the key challenges confronting the world today such as climate change and illegal trade in wildlife. The inputs also presented the resolutions adopted at the Second Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in June 2016, particularly in reference to protecting oceans and seas and delivering on the environmental dimension of Agenda 2030.

CORPORATE MANAGEMENT AND MANAGEMENT REFORM

Finance Issues

On 31 March 2017, the Executive Director signed off UN Environment's annual financial statements for 2016. This is the third year of 'International Public Sector Accounting Standards' compliant financial statements and the first year that all financial transactions that form the statements were generated from [Umoja](#) and using the UN Secretariat's new Business Processing Consolidation system. Intensive collaboration between UN Environment and the United Nations Office at Nairobi took place in preparation for the statements, involving cleaning and correction of the data, improvements and enhancements of notes disclosures and detailed analysis to support the numbers. Subsequently the Board of Auditors (Tanzania team) visited Nairobi from 3-28 April to audit the statements and underlying transactions. The Board did not raise any issues that required adjustment to the financial statements and all of their draft audit observations and recommendations have been responded to. The UN Financial Regulations and Rules require the Board to sign off their audit report by 30 June 2017 and an un-qualifying audit opinion is expected.

Green Climate Fund

UN Environment prepared an Entity Work Plan for its engagement with the [Green Climate Fund](#), and shared the document with the Green Climate Fund Board in March 2017. The Entity Work Plan sets out our vision for UN Environment's engagement with the Fund. UN Environment intends to build a portfolio of transformational and sustained impact, based on our comparative advantage, which includes: redirecting unsustainable financial flows by reviewing the regulatory environment for financial systems; promoting ecosystem-based approaches that bring adaptation and mitigation benefits; and fostering low emission development, particularly in rapidly growing urban areas, through the promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy.

UN Environment's portfolio with the Green Climate Fund continues to grow. Two readiness projects have been recently approved (Egypt and Ghana), which brings the total number of the approved readiness projects to ten¹. Nine new proposals have been submitted to the Green Climate Fund for readiness support in 2017², and two Project Preparation Facility Applications (Mongolia and Jordan) were submitted for funding. To-date, 61 countries have

¹ Readiness proposals have been approved by GCF secretariat for Albania, Benin, Comoros, Egypt, Ghana, Montenegro, Serbia, Tonga and Zimbabwe. The fund has also approved a grant in support of processes to develop National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) for Nepal.

² Readiness proposals have been submitted for Jordan, Madagascar, Mongolia, Myanmar (2 readiness proposals: one for NDA support and another for technical support from CTCN), Niger, South Sudan, Dominican Republic request for support for National Adaptation Plans

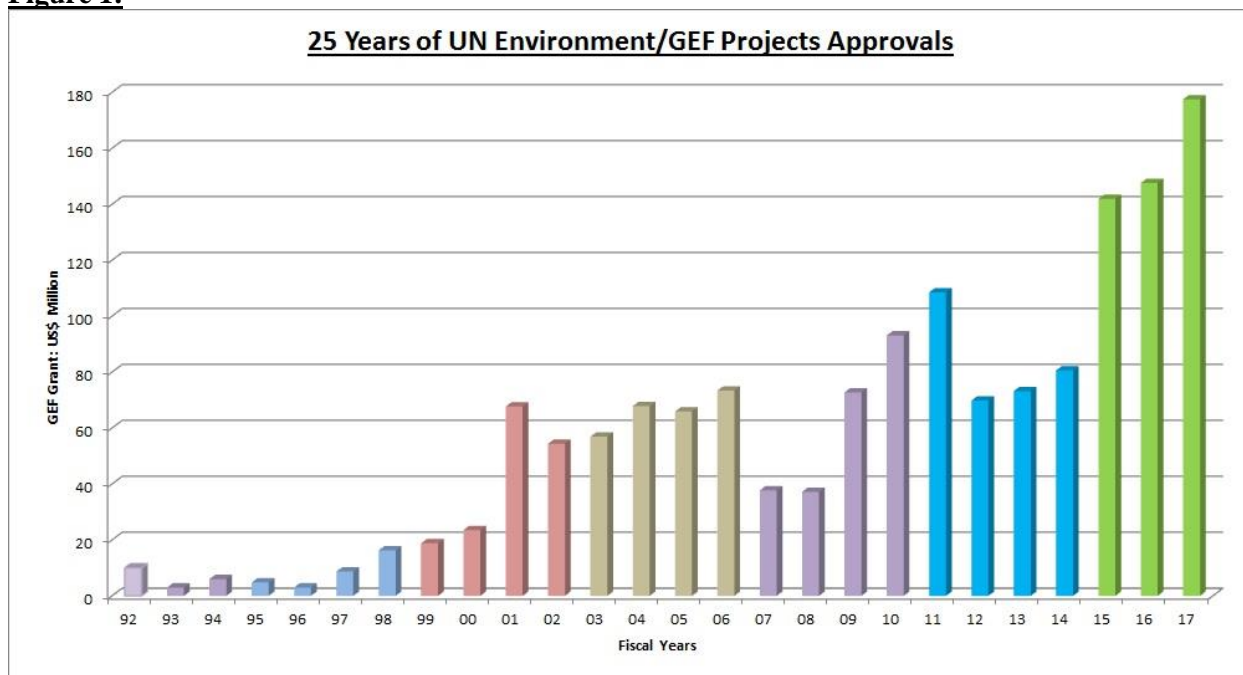
requested support from UN Environment for readiness support, and 25 countries have requested support to develop full funding proposals. These proposals are in various stages of development. UN Environment expects to receive the first disbursement for approved readiness projects soon and looks forward to beginning implementation of activities committed under the same.

New partnerships are under way: Czech Republic and Italy are seeking collaboration with UN Environment towards building the readiness of countries to access Green Climate Fund.

Global Environment Facility

The UN Environment team that supports countries to access finance from the [Global Environment Facility](#) is enjoying a great year with US \$177.5 million in project approvals. The 6th Global Environment Facility replenishment cycle (green histogram bars in [Figure 1](#) below) has seen UN Environment’s strongest performance yet, with almost US \$467 million mobilized to date across our climate change adaptation, mitigation, biodiversity, capacity development, chemicals & waste, land degradation and international waters portfolios. We understand that the Global Environment Facility is facing a significant budget shortfall owing to currency exchange losses and thus fewer approvals are expected in the final year of the cycle. Still, implementation of the current portfolio will keep the team busy as they begin to plan for the next cycle starting on 1 July 2018.

Figure 1:



Human Resources Issues

In response to the “[United Nations Unions Global Staff Satisfaction Survey and the UN Environment Staff Survey on Internal Communication](#)” the Executive Director has put in place a series of action points to address staff satisfaction. Notably, UN Environment will conduct its own Survey early in 2018 to gauge progress made in bringing about culture change within the Organization.

In light of the [United Nations Staff Selection and Managed Mobility System](#), UN Environment is engaged in developing a comprehensive strategy aimed at further preparing the Organization to efficiently manage its workforce.

Annex: List of Programme Activities

CLIMATE CHANGE

Global Centre of Excellence for Climate Adaptation

UN Environment is one of three 'Initiating Partners' of the [Global Centre of Excellence for Adaptation](#) together with a 'soft launch' that took place on 6-7 February 2017. There are plans for the substantive launch of the Centre at the [2017 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bonn](#) in November 2017. UN Environment contributes to the Centre through the secondment of one or more staff.

The Climate and Clean Air Coalition's Working Group, Santiago, Chile, 24 April 2017

[The Climate and Clean Air Coalition](#)'s Working Group gathered in Santiago to celebrate 5 years of action to reduce short-lived climate pollutants, get briefed on the latest science on the subject, and strategize ways to increase the impact and ambition of the Coalition's work going forward. An important task for the working group was to allocate new funding to proposals presented by the coalition's initiatives. The Coalition's Steering Committee has presented their recommendations on the funding allocations to the working group, which agreed to US \$4.6 million dollars in funding.

First International Conference on Sustainable Marine and Fisheries Refrigeration Technologies for Ozone and Climate Protection, Bangkok, 6-8 April 2017

Attended by 180 participants, 60% of which are from the private sector and 40% from the public sector representing 49 countries and covering all international waters, the 3 day international conference discussed for the first time in an international forum, the great importance of moving towards non-ozone depleting, low global warming energy efficient and refrigeration technologies in the mobile marine and fisheries sector. The conference also discussed Montreal Protocol implementation and compliance; adoption of energy efficient, ozone and climate friendly refrigeration technologies in marine vessels; data gaps; off-shore vessels servicing sector challenges; standards and strategic action plans. More Information available at: <http://bit.ly/2pRfPKw>

UN Environment releases the first Global Climate Change Litigation Survey, 22 May 2017

UN Environment and the [Sabin Center for Climate Change Law](#) at Columbia University have on 22 May 2017 released the first ever global climate change litigation survey, '[The Status of Climate Change Litigation – A Global Review](#)'.

DISASTERS AND CONFLICTS

Environmental emergency support provided to Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Ukraine

UN Environment and [United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs](#) has provided technical support to the Ukraine office on chemical hazards. Specifically, on 24 February the [Joint Environment Unit](#) provided technical advice on the possible consequences of an impact on chlorine gas bottles stored at a water filtering station in eastern Ukraine, which could have triggered a chlorine gas release into the environment.

Environmental expert mobilized for floods in Peru

An estimated 615,000 people are affected by floods in Peru since January 2017, with more than 100,000 people estimated to be in need of assistance. Following consultations with Government counterparts, the UN Resident Coordinator requested the deployment of [United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination](#) team to support the Government in multi-sectoral needs assessment and information management.

Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level Demonstration Project in Sinai Informal Settlement

As part of the Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level Programme, UN Environment collaborated with the [Kenya Red Cross Society](#) to implement a project from December 2016 to April 2017. The project aimed to improve the capacity of the community in the Sinai informal settlement in Nairobi to prevent, prepare and respond to emergencies caused by potential technological hazards resulting from activities of a pipeline oil company. The project resulted in enhanced capacity of local community, government and the industry sector to prepare and respond to emergencies.

Jordan Response Plan to the Syrian Crisis

Support to the mainstreaming of environment across humanitarian response, through the use of an [Environment Marker](#) spearheaded by UN Environment, has come to a close in April 2017. The 6 months mission succeeded in organizing a number of capacity development activities for UN agencies working on humanitarian mandates and also for line ministries engaged in the Jordan Response Plan and its sector task teams. It has provided a critical baseline upon which UN Environment can further build capacity, with the approaches now fully socialized through the Jordan Response Plan Sector task Teams; a critical first step.

Arab Preparatory Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, Doha, 30 April - 1 May 2017

Convened by the [United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction](#) in collaboration with the [League of Arab States](#) and the government of the State of Qatar, the [3rd Arab Preparatory Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction](#) was held in Doha, Qatar during the period 30 April – 1 May. The conference brought Arab States together to review regional progress on the implementation of the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#), finalize the [Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2030](#), and agree on a programme of work. A joint regional statement (“Doha Statement”) was adopted in preparation for the [Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Cancun Mexico](#). UN Environment participated in the Arab Science and Technology Advisory Group (Arab-STAG) for Disaster Risk Reduction, and has been invited as standing member to inform ongoing Disaster Risk Reduction strategy orientation and programming throughout the region.

The 5th Annual Conference of the Union of Relief and Development Associations (URDA) – Beirut, Lebanon – 4-6 May

A meeting on [Lebanon Crisis Response Plan](#), was held to facilitate discussion and planning for a UN-Environment mission to Lebanon to support the Environment Task Force in mainstreaming environmental issues into the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan and related projects, including addressing the causes and environmental consequences of the influx of millions of refugees into Lebanon.

Technical Support to Humanitarian Actors in Iraq

Years of conflict and economic stagnation has devastated Iraq's population and environment. The actions of the Islamic State group and the military campaigns against them have contributed to the displacement of over 3 million people and critical levels of environmental contamination. In early 2017 Iraq formally requested UN Environment's assistance to assess environmental damage in the areas in Iraq liberated from the Islamic State group. Ongoing support is provided by the Joint Environment Unit of UN Environment and the [United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs](#) for emergency preparedness (e.g. Mosul Dam); including advice on mitigation of chemical hazard risk and urban risk mapping.

ECOSYSTEMS MANAGEMENT

Lake Naivasha Clean Up, Naivasha, 25-26 March 2017

Supporting an initiative by the Non-Governmental Organization [Clean Up Kenya](#) and the Nakuru County Government, a litter cleanup activity was organized at a public beach in Lake Naivasha (25-26 March) for [World](#)

[Water Day](#), to draw attention to wider pollution issues facing the Lake. The event drew nearly 200 volunteers from across the UN family in Nairobi and was well covered by a number of journalists and social media.

2nd Partners Meeting of Global Peatland Initiative, Jakarta 15- 17 May 2017

The [meeting](#) was attended by the Government of the Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo and Peru, UN agencies, donor institutions, academia, and civil society. The Minister of Environment and Forestry of the Government of Indonesia, Siti Nurbaya, in her opening remarks emphasized Indonesia's commitment towards peatland preservation and degraded peatland restoration. The meeting is instrumental for updating the database of global peatlands and compiling best practices of sustainable peatland management as well as peatland restoration strategies.

Sri Lanka Media Trip on Biodiversity and Ecosystems, Sri Lanka, 12-17 March 2017

Under the initiative funded by the Satogaeri Project, a joint initiative of companies located in Japan, the media field trip was organized by the Asia and the Pacific Office and attended by 18 print and audio-visual international and local media representatives. They visited field sites of UN Environment/Global Environmental Fund-funded projects that are implemented in Sri Lanka in collaboration with partners which provided them an opportunity to see firsthand on-the-ground approaches that address Sri Lanka's declining biodiversity and ecosystems, reduce pollution affecting tea production landscapes and improve people's livelihood. The media group wrote about their experiences in this trip which collectively reached about five million viewers/readers.

UN Environment Freshwater Strategy

The UN Environment Freshwater Strategy is ready for external dissemination and implementation, together with collaborators in the UN Environment Interdivisional Water Group. It is available for downloading at, <http://web.unep.org/ecosystems/freshwater/>

Moreover, feedback from the regional and national consultations on the [International Water Quality Guidelines for Ecosystems](#) have been compiled and analyzed. A revised version of the guidelines is being prepared to be ready for Third Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. They are expected to feed into a potential Resolution that could link to the Sustainable Development Goals by addressing water pollution, water quality monitoring and wastewater.

ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

Third World Conference on Environment, 25-26 March 2017, New Delhi, India

The Conference, co-organized by UN Environment and [India's National Green Tribunal](#) gathered judges, lawyers, scientists, and civil society to advance dialogue on environmental challenges and the legal community's capacity to tackle them. Throughout six interactive and technical sessions, participants focused on identifying the remedial and preventative measures that need to be taken to protect the global environment.

Meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, 24 April - 5 May 2017

- i. Over sixty decisions were adopted across the three conventions. These range from listing of chemicals under the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, legal compliance under the Basel convention to joint issues under the synergies arrangement.
- ii. Several inter-sessional and expert working groups were agreed upon to support the implementation of the existing decisions.
- iii. Programme of Work and budget agreed with 1% decrease from the budget proposal by the Secretariat (proposed 3% increase).
- iv. On the Memorandum of Understandings between the Conventions and UN Environment and the [Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations](#), the Parties noted the progress achieved through the implementation of [Resolution 1/18](#) of the United Nations Environment Assembly and are expecting that the

options of secretarial service and template for Memoranda of Understanding will be ready for next Conferences of Parties consideration.

UN Environment and other Stakeholders provide a Platform to Protect Environmental Human Rights Defenders

As part of efforts to advance the Environmental Rule of Law through highlighting linkages between the environment and human rights, UN Environment in collaboration with the [Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment](#) and other stakeholders have launched an online portal that provides vital information on the situation of environmental human rights defenders. The portal provides a forum for people engaged in environmental protection to access relevant information about their rights. The portal is a 'living' platform that will be regularly updated and expanded and can be accessed at <http://www.environment-rights.org/>

Environmental protection now a significant feature in the Human Rights Agenda

UN Environment's active engagement with various processes and mandates under the [United Nations Human Rights Council](#), has given environmental protection an increased profile in the human rights arena. On 24 March 2017, the UN Human Rights Council adopted [Resolution 34/L.33](#) on Human Rights and Environment. The Resolution specifically welcomes the work undertaken by UN Environment in support of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur in helping to clarify the relationship between human rights and the environment.

UN Environment and the International Law Commission potential collaboration to address air pollution matters

UN Environment on 4 May 2017 agreed with the [International Law Commission](#) and atmospheric scientists at an informal session on the topic of 'Protection of the Atmosphere', to explore avenues to contribute to the Third Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly on air pollution. Cooperation between UN Environment and the International Law Commission is in line with the work of the Law Division under the [Montevideo Programme IV](#), for example on issues of marine litter and lead in paint.

Options for addressing gaps to prevent and reduce marine plastic litter identified

Pursuant to the United Nations Environment Assembly [Resolution 2/11](#), UN Environment has led a process culminating in the development of a Zero Draft of the Marine Litter Assessment. The assessment has further facilitated the identification of options for addressing gaps to prevent and reduce marine plastic litter. The agreed options for addressing the said gaps include a) a hybrid approach involving revising the current framework and include industry; b) a new architecture with a distinct mandate, objectives and scope; and c) maintaining the status quo.

Guidance and sample law on regulating lead in paint submitted for stakeholder review

Pursuant to the UN Environment Assembly [Resolution 1/5](#) requesting UN Environment to continue to build capacity on elimination of lead paint including support for development of national legislation to phase out lead paint, the UN Environment in collaboration with the [World Health Organization](#) and with support from the [US Environmental Protection Agency](#) has drafted a guide and sample law for regulating lead paint ("the guide"). The guide is a culmination of requests by developing countries and countries with economies in transition for legal language that they can use to draft effective lead paint laws. The same has now been circulated to members of the [Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint Advisory Group](#) for input and/or review. The guide is an attempt at collating best practices on lead paint regulation as derived from various existing legislation.

Green Customs workshop in Central America

UN Environment built the capacity of 50 customs officers from Central America in enforcing Multilateral Environmental Agreements through a Green Customs Workshop held at the Regional Center of the World Customs Organization in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic from 3 to 5 May 2017. Participants from Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and local participants from the Dominican Republic interacted with representatives from the [World Customs Organization](#), the [Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora](#), as well as the [Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions](#).

Africa-Asia Inter-Regional Expert Review Meeting on Compilation of Good Practices on Enforcement of Environmental Law

In an effort to promote effective enforcement of environmental laws by national institutions through South-South cooperation, experts from Africa and Asia gathered in Beijing from 8 to 10 May 2017 to share good practices and challenges in the enforcement of environmental law. Discussions focused on joint enforcement action, the calculation of environmental damage and compensation and measurement of the effectiveness of enforcement action.

The Annual Meeting of the Regional United Nations Development Group (Arab Region), Amman, 23 May 2017

To discuss and elaborate how the Regional United Nations Development Group and its members can provide support to UN Country Teams. Specific areas of focus for UN Environment included the discussion around support to the Sustainable Development Goals (promoting the integrated approach) and the Humanitarian and Development Nexus. UN Environment shared its experiences in Jordan and Lebanon.

CHEMICALS AND WASTE

Entry into force of the Minamata Convention on Mercury

The 50-ratification milestone required for the [Minamata Convention on Mercury](#) to enter into force was reached on 18 May 2017. The European Union and seven of its Member States, namely the Governments of Bulgaria, Denmark, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania and Sweden deposited their instruments of ratification with the [Office of Legal Affairs](#) at the UN Headquarters in New York on that day. Furthermore, following this important milestone St Kitts and Nevis also ratified, bringing the current number of future Parties to 53 (the updated list of deposited instruments is available at www.mercuryconvention.org/Countries.)

As a result, on 16 August 2017, the Minamata Convention, which aims at protecting human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds, will become legally binding for all its Parties.

An important milestone for the Minamata Convention in the coming months will be its first Conference of the Parties to be held in Geneva from 24 to 29 September 2017. This Conference will play a critical role in the future of the Convention as it will consider issues and adopt decisions covering technical, administrative as well as operational and financial matters. Participation is expected at Ministerial and higher level from a number of countries and organizations, in particular during the High-Level Segment "Making mercury history" on 28 and 29 September, which will be hosted by the President of Switzerland.

Countries that have not yet done so are encouraged to deposit their instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Office of Legal Affairs at the UN Headquarters in New York at their earliest convenience and no later than 23 June 2017 in order to be Parties of the Minamata Convention at the time of the Conference.

Integrated Solid Waste Strategy discussed by Lebanon's Parliament

For many years, solid waste management in Lebanon has been not only an environmental concern, but a political issue that to a great extent prevented the adoption of a comprehensive, integrated and contemporary waste management vision and strategy. In efforts to bring the political views closer together on this issue, UN Environment held a high level parliamentary session on 12 April 2017 under the patronage of the Minister of Environment and the Chair of the Environment Committee of the Parliament to discuss the status quo, proposed laws, obstacles, elements of the strategy and the way forward. The meeting has been largely successful aligning the views of all participants towards one forward looking vision for an integrated solid waste management strategy.

RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

Six Organizations Join United for Efficiency Partnership

[United for Efficiency](#) welcomed six new Partners to its global Initiative to reduce 2030 electricity consumption by 10 per cent by using more energy-efficient products. These are the [Clean Energy Ministerial Advanced Cooling Challenge](#), [Basel Agency for Sustainable Energy](#), [Energy Efficiency Services Limited of India](#), [the International Institute for Energy Conservation](#), [Neonlite](#) (Megaman) and the [Carbon Trust](#). [ABB](#), a global market and technology leader, renewed its commitment for another three years. There are now 31 Partners including manufacturers, intergovernmental organizations and institutions.

SwitchMed Steering Committee, Vienna, 10-11 March 2017

Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia presented their Sustainable Consumption and Production National Action Plans that were developed with advisory services support from UN Environment over the 2014-2016 period. Implementation of such plans has started with UN Environment support to Egypt, Israel, Jordan and Palestine.

Conference on Inclusive and Sustainable Economies Powering the Sustainable Development Goals, Berlin, 27-28 March 2017

This conference constituted the 2nd Ministerial Conference of the [Partnership for Action on the Green Economy](#) and was co-hosted by Germany. At the conference, participants renewed their commitment to the [Paris Climate Agreement](#) and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). The Executive Director announced Guyana and Uruguay as new members of the Partnership for Action on the Green Economy. The conference also delivered results to provide integrated policy support to assist countries in their pathways towards a green economy, including a [Virtual Policy Solutions Centre](#) – a platform supported by the Partnership for Action on the Green Economy, Germany and Switzerland. The [annual report](#) of the Partnership is available online, as well as [videos](#) and [photos](#) from the conference.

Life-cycle initiative

Following the Second Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, and, in particular, Article 2 of [Resolution 2/8](#) on Sustainable Consumption and Production, the [Life Cycle Initiative](#) has undergone a strategic exercise aimed at envisaging how to better support countries and private sector actors in promoting life-cycle approaches, building capacity and enhancing the availability of life-cycle information. The ultimate vision is that decisions and policies that are informed by life-cycle approaches will help achieve Sustainable Development Goals and other global policies faster and more efficiently, by focusing attention on the key drivers of environmental and social impacts, and by addressing potential trade-offs (e.g. between climate change and biodiversity or water scarcity).

Meetings of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, Paris, 16-18 May 2017

The Coordination Desks of the 6 programmes part of the [10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production](#) Patterns, its Board, and the majority of its donors met in Paris from 16 to 18 May 2017. The meetings established that there is a clear role for the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production to help secure many Sustainable Development Goals' targets by supporting policy-making and generating social and environmental benefits in the 6 programme areas. However, behavioural change of many actors is needed to achieve sustainable consumption, including business, from which more engagement is needed. The 6 Programmes are starting to accelerate the shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns, but need to achieve greater scale by adding partners, fund-raising, and better overall coordination.

Sustainability Toolkit for Trade Negotiators

UN Environment, in collaboration with the [International Institute for Sustainable Development](#), has launched a [Sustainability Toolkit for Regional Trade Negotiations](#). The toolkit helps countries better understand, draft and negotiate environmental provisions in regional trade and investment agreements. The toolkit includes principles,

analysis of examples and best practices for guiding negotiations. In the longer term, this work aims to encourage trade and investment agreements to increasingly facilitate countries' mutual pursuit of environmental and social priorities such as combatting climate change, enhancing resource efficiency, and ensuring social inclusiveness.

Green Economy and Trade E-learning course

UN Environment with [United Nations Institute for Training and Research](#) have launched an interactive and practice-oriented course to provide interested participants from government, business, civil society and academia with an introduction to various approaches to promote and harness opportunities related to sustainable trade. The course will look to address the nexus between trade and environment in the following modules: (i) Key concepts, trends and developments; (ii) Opportunities and enabling conditions for greening trade; (iii) Assessing and seizing sustainable trade opportunities in the agricultural and renewable energy sector (elective modules); and (iv) International trade governance and law.

Trade in Environmentally Sound Technologies

A project was kick-started to explore the implication of reducing trade barriers to Environmentally Sound Technologies including in the context of relevant trade negotiations. It aims to assist particularly developing countries in understanding and assessing related opportunities, benefits and challenges. The project will include a global, regional and national level activities and capacity-building events for developing country policy makers. The project is financially supported by the [European Commission](#) and will contribute to the Third Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

UN Environment Develops Sustainable Conference Menu

UN Environment teamed up with the [Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency](#), Novotel Hotel Bangkok and [Women Organising for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resources](#) to serve a Sustainable Conference Menu for the [Swedish Embassy's Annual Regional Workshop in Bangkok on 21-22 March 2017](#). The menu was prepared to ensure it consists of responsible seafood, vegetarian and vegan, food waste prevention, organic produce, and community based livestock. No plastic, no straws. This event went beyond food sustainability by implementing Sustainable Public Procurement ([Sustainable Development Goal 12.7](#)) procedures and banning the use of single use plastics to become a plastic-free event (Sustainable Development Goal 12.5), thus supporting the actual implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in-house within the UN context. As a last remarkable effort, the team documented all ingredients and reported on the carbon footprint of the event to promote transparency in their environmental management. More information available at: <http://bit.ly/2rlfUb2>

ENVIRONMENT UNDER REVIEW

The UN Africa Office jointly with the African Development Bank launched the Africa Energy Resources Atlas

UN Environment with the Vice-President of the [African Development Bank](#) launched the [Africa Energy Resources Atlas](#) during the [World Economic Forum](#) held Durban, South Africa in May 2017. This joint milestone publication is produced in support of the regional agenda to fast track the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals related to energy, using modern assessment techniques to underpin the scientific analysis of Africa's energy potential. So far the report has been received by over 300,000 recipients through dedicated list servers managed by our partners and it has also been posted on the UN Environment website for public access. The Atlas is being integrated into [Wikipedia](#).

Global Mosquito Alert and Environment Live - pioneering UN backed, Citizen led alliance helping to save 2.7 million lives annually

A new alliance of citizen-science organizations and UN Environment was launched on May 8 in an effort to escalate the global fight against mosquito-borne diseases, responsible for killing close to 2.7 million people annually. The new initiative, launched under the name '[Global Mosquito Alert](#)', brings together thousands of scientists and volunteers from around the world to track and control mosquito borne viruses, including Zika, yellow

fever, chikungunya, dengue, malaria and the West Nile virus. Agreement to launch the initiative was reached at a two-day workshop that took place in Geneva April 3-4, organized by UN Environment, the [Wilson Center's Science and Technology Innovation Program](#) and the [European Citizen Science Association](#).

The Global Mosquito Alert will be supported by a consortium of data and information providers, coordinated through [Environment Live](#). The consortium includes: [Mosquito Alert, Spain](#); [MosquitoWEB Portugal](#); [Zanzamapp](#) in Italy; [Muggenradar](#) in the Netherlands; the [Globe Observer Mosquito Habitat Mapper](#), USA/International and the [Invasive Mosquito Project USA](#).

The information displayed on Environment Live will allow managers to mitigate risk and reduce health threats while opening up an opportunity for concerned citizens to contribute their mosquito observations and possible solutions. Citizen data will augment information already available from Government public health sources. The new consortium has agreed to share current approaches to monitor the spread of key mosquito species and their breeding sites, and to measure the nuisance value of the citizen mosquito experience to support health risk management.

2017 Frontiers Report

The latest [Frontiers Report](#) was presented to the Committee of Permanent Representatives on 18th May. The report addresses six emerging issues of global importance - sand and dust storms, antimicrobial resistance, environmental displacement, governance of marine protected areas, off-grid solar energy; and nanomaterials. The report, produced in all UN languages, will be launched in Europe in June followed by a series of regional and thematic outreach events.

Sixth Global Environment Outlook: Second Authors Meeting in Bangkok

The Second Meeting of the Authors of the [Sixth Edition of the Global Environmental Outlook](#). The meeting will have over 90 meeting participants engaged in the preparation of first-order draft chapters and will address comments from the peer review of these drafts at the upcoming meeting in Bangkok and progress will be made on drafting the Policy Effectiveness and Outlooks chapters. The meeting will include opportunities for interaction among the author teams and a ground-truthing workshop for the Outlooks chapter. An outreach event has been arranged on Tuesday 23 May to attract media attention to the Global Environment Outlook process and specifically to the youth focused elements. Officials from the Thai government are attending the opening ceremonies as well as the outreach events and the Thai Government will also support an evening reception for the meeting participants.