

UNEP North America Regional Newsletter – May 2025

This email is being sent to you on behalf on the [Regional Facilitators of Major Groups and Stakeholders, North America](#) for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), not from the UNEP Secretariat itself.

We are thrilled to welcome you to the inaugural edition of the **UNEP North America Regional Newsletter**! This platform will keep you informed with regular updates on key developments from UNEP-led environmental processes, meetings, and opportunities for engagement. Our aim is to ensure you stay connected, engaged, and empowered to contribute to global environmental decision-making.



Road to UNEA-7

The countdown is on — we are now just seven months away from the [Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives \(OECPR-7\)](#) and the [seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly \(UNEA-7\)](#)! UNEA-7 will take place from **8 to 12 December 2025** at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, under the theme: **“Advancing Sustainable Solutions for a Resilient Planet”**

This timely theme underscores the importance of promoting inclusive, sustainable development and environmental stewardship to shape the just and resilient future envisioned in the [“Future We Want”](#).

UNEA-7 will be preceded by **OECPR-7**, scheduled for **1 to 5 December 2025**.



Learn more about UNEA-7 preparations via [this dedicated website](#) and the resources listed below.



Key Resources Ahead of UNEA-7

Stay informed and engaged with these important resources:

-  [Structure of UNEA-7](#) — Current draft programme and agenda

-  [Draft Ministerial Declaration](#) — Open for stakeholder input in the lead-up to UNEA-7
 -  [Roadmap for UNEP Governing Bodies](#) — A living document tracking key CPR meetings and key consultations on the road to UNEA-7, like those on the ministerial declaration and the draft resolutions for UNEA.
 -  [UNEA Resolutions, decisions and declarations](#) — A searchable repository of all resolutions, decisions, and declarations since 1973
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Get Involved

Join the Regional Consultative Meeting Planning Committee

We're calling for volunteers to help shape this year's North America Regional [Consultative Meeting \(RCM\)](#)! The RCM is a vital space where Major Groups and Stakeholders contribute to the [Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum \(GMGSF\)](#) and provide regional insights for the Assembly. It also serves as an excellent capacity-building and networking opportunity.

This year, we envision a multi-session format, including:

- A capacity-building session on engaging with UNEP/UNEA
- Priority-setting discussions
- An opportunity to review and provide input on draft UNEA resolutions

Join the Group of Friends (GoF)

We're also seeking two additional North America representatives to join the Group of Friends for Enhanced Civil Society Participation in UNEP-Led Events.

The GoF aims to:

1. Foster more inclusive, meaningful participation of Major Groups and Stakeholders in UNEP-led processes
2. Strengthen collaboration and information-sharing on environmental priorities between civil society and Members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR)

Learn more about the GoF via [this concept note](#).

Upcoming Engagement Opportunities

SPP OEWG 3.2: Science-Policy Panel

 15–18 June 2025 | Punta del Este, Uruguay
(Regional consultations: 14 June)

While registration is now closed, you can find details and follow developments on the [OEWG website](#).

INC-5.2: International Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution

 5–14 August 2025 | Geneva, Switzerland
(Regional consultations: 4 August)

Note: Registration deadline is 6 June 2025, 23:59 EAT. Visit the [INC-5.2 web page](#) for more information.

Save the Date: Capacity Building Session

We're excited to announce a capacity building session for North America-accredited organizations focused on engagement opportunities with UNEP and UNEA.

 Wednesday, 11 June 2025

 11:00 am – 12:30 pm ET

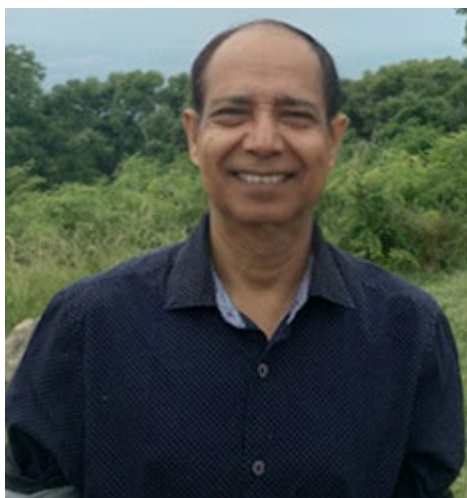
Mark your calendars — more details to follow!

Meet Your North America Regional Co-Facilitators

As your Regional Co-Facilitators, we're here to support North America's accredited organizations in navigating UNEP processes and ensuring your voices are heard. While we don't formally represent the region, we coordinate opportunities for Major Groups and Stakeholders to contribute to UNEP-led dialogues and processes, especially through Regional Consultative Meetings and other consultations. Each Major Group also has its own co-facilitators to help guide engagement in UNEP activities.

 [Find your Major Group Facilitators here](#)

For additional background, the [UNEP Handbook for Stakeholder Engagement](#) provides a helpful overview of UNEP's Major Groups and Stakeholders system.



Prof. Medani P. Bhandari

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Prof. Medani P. Bhandari, Ph.D., is an International Program Director at the Atlantic States Legal Foundation Inc. (ASLF) in New York, USA. He has a multidisciplinary background and specializes in climate resilience and adaptation, as well as nonprofit management, sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, inequality, etc. He is a well-known humanitarian, professor, author, editor, and co-editor of several books, and author of hundreds of scholarly papers on social and environmental sciences. He is a poet, essayist, environmentalist, social activist, etc. His field experiences span Asia, Africa, North America, Western Europe, Australia, Japan, and the Middle East.

In addition to his service at ASLF, he remotely serves as a Professor at Akamai University, USA, Sumy State University, Ukraine, Kathmandu Forestry College, and Gandaki University, Nepal. <https://www.akamai.university/dr-medani-bhandari-phd.html> (Prof. Bhandari is also a Lead Author for Chapter 21, COP 7, Global Environment Outlook Project of UNEP and a member of the Climate Resilience and Adaptation and Behavior and Social Sciences task forces. He lives in Fairfax, Virginia.



Kelly Sheridan

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U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC)

Kelly Sheridan serves as the Vice President of Environmental Affairs at the U.S. Dairy Export Council, where she manages engagements with multilateral organizations regarding the U.S. dairy's commitment to environmental stewardship. Prior to

joining in 2022, Kelly worked at Dairy Management Inc. as the Vice President of Environmental Stewardship. During this time, she was responsible for the overall operations and project management of environmental initiatives, including the U.S. dairy industry's pursuit of its 2050 Environmental Stewardship Goals and its Net Zero Initiative.

Kelly was the Chief of Staff to the EVP for External Affairs at Corteva Agriscience (a spinoff of the DowDuPont merger). She spent eight years with DuPont, working in various roles within their government affairs department. Kelly previously worked as a U.S. Congressional aide to the House Majority Whip.

Kelly received a master's in Sustainable Food Systems from Arizona State University in 2024. Kelly holds a B.S. in Government with a minor in Economics from Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts. She currently resides in Connecticut.