

QUARTERLY REPORT

to the 174th Meeting of the
COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES



Photo credit: UN Environment Programme / Lisa Murray

TWENTY-EIGHTH ISSUE

January - March 2026

Table of Contents

1	Significant Developments	1
A.	Global developments	1
B.	Regional developments	5
2	Programme of work implementation	11
A.	Climate stability.....	11
B.	Living in harmony with nature: Land, ocean and freshwater; and achieving land degradation neutrality	13
C.	A pollution-free planet	16
D.	Foundational Subprogrammes.....	20
E.	Enabling Subprogrammes	24
F.	Cross-cutting Issues	29
G.	Opportunities, Challenges and Lessons Learned for UNEP MTS and PoW Implementation	31
3	Resource management and mobilization	33
A.	Financial Resources.....	33
B.	Human Resources.....	41
C.	Audits.....	46
D.	Evaluations	48

INTRODUCTION

This report aims to provide the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) with an update on key developments during the first quarter of 2026, i.e. 1 January to 31 March, in implementation of UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy for 2026–2029 (hereafter MTS 2026-2029) and Programme of Work and Budget for 2026-2027 (hereafter POW 2026-2027). The Report further references linkages between programmatic delivery and progress on the implementation of resolutions adopted by the UN Environment Assembly.

The report covers the period and is organized into three sections:

- Section I highlights key developments in relation to the global and regional environmental challenges and crises, including climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, as well as desertification, land and soil degradation, drought and deforestation.
- Section II provides preliminary results from the implementation of UNEP's 2026-27 POW. This includes results from the three thematic subprogrammes of the MTS 2026-2029, i.e. Climate action, Nature action: land, ocean and freshwater; and Chemicals and pollution action; the two foundational sub-programmes: Science Policy, Environmental Law and Governance; and the two enabling sub-programmes i.e. Finance and economic transformations, Digital transformations. It also reports back on UNEP work to address cross-cutting issues (Gender, Environmental and Social Safeguards, Repositioning of the UN Development system, South-South Cooperation) as well as pertinent challenges and opportunities encountered, and lessons learned and actions taken.
- Section III provides updates corresponding the section VI Budget and resource mobilization of the POW 2026-2027, as well as audits and evaluations.

ACRONYMS

AFCIA	Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AMR	Antimicrobial Resistance
APAN	Asia-Pacific Adaptation Network
APFS	Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development
ASG	Assistant Secretary-General
AU	African Union
BBNJ	Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the
Agreement	Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction
BAQ	Better Air Quality
CAHOSCC	Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCAC	Climate and Clean Air Coalition
COP	Conference of the Parties
CPR	Committee of Permanent Representatives
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
CTCN	Climate Technology Centre and Network
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
ESS	Environmental and Social Safeguards
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GPML	Global Partnership on Marine Litter
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum
IMEO	International Methane Emissions Observatory
INC	Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise
MTS	Medium-Term Strategy
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NbS	Nature-based Solutions
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
OPRCHNS	Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation – Hazardous and Noxious Substances
PET	Polyethylene Terephthalate
PFAS	Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances
PNAR	Plano Nacional de Arrefecimento
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants
PRB	Principles for Responsible Banking
PSC	Programme Support Costs

RAPAP	Regional Action Programme on Air Pollution
RB	Regular Budget
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEEA	System of Environmental-Economic Accounting
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
TNFD	Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures
U4E	United for Efficiency
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEA	United Nations Environment Assembly
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEPCCC	UNEP Copenhagen Climate Centre
UNEPWCMC	UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre
UNSC	United Nations Statistical Commission
USG	Under-Secretary-General
VISC	Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contributions
WESR	World Environment Situation Room
WHO	World Health Organization
WOAH	World Organization for Animal Health
WMPSS	Waste Management and Circular Economy Policy Support System
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

1 Significant Developments

A. Global developments

UNEP Leads Environmental Contributions to the UN80 System-wide Reform Initiative

UNEP is closely engaged in the [UN80 Initiative](#), a system-wide reform process launched by the Secretary-General to strengthen integration, efficiency and coherence across the United Nations system (2025). UNEP, for instance, supported the deliberations of the Informal Ad Hoc Working Group on the Mandate Implementation Review by sharing good practice and lessons learned from United Nations Environment Assembly processes. The ensuing [General Assembly resolution 80/251](#) captures this good practices and contributes to efforts aimed at enhancing the clarity, effectiveness and impact of mandates across the system.

Under [Workstream 3](#), and at the request of the Secretary-General, the UNEP Executive Director, jointly with the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, lead Work Package 27 on the environment, overseeing an assessment of existing institutional arrangements and advancing proposals in line with the Secretary-General's Shifting Paradigms: United to Deliver report.

As part of the process, [a briefing on UN80 Initiative to the Committee of Permanent Representatives](#) in Nairobi, (12 March 2026) with the participation of Under-Secretary-General for Policy, Guy Ryder, provided an opportunity to discuss the latest progress and priorities beyond those areas that UNEP is supporting or leading on.

UNEP Hosts Inaugural Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution

UNEP hosted the inaugural Plenary of the [Intergovernmental Science Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution \(ISP-CWP\)](#), convened in Geneva (2–6 February 2026), bringing together 115 of the 129 members to operationalise this new intergovernmental body established under United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/8 (20 June 2025). Through its Secretariat role, UNEP provided institutional, technical, and procedural support to the Plenary, including facilitating deliberations on governance arrangements and supporting the election of the Panel's Chair, Mr. Osvaldo Patricio Álvarez Pérez (Chile), and the establishment of the first Bureau for a two-year term.

UNEP Participates in Final Preparations for the BBNJ Agreement's Implementation

UNEP participated in the [third and final meeting of the Preparatory Commission for the Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction](#), which was convened following the Agreement's entry into force (23 March–2 April 2026). UNEP supported intergovernmental discussions aimed at preparing for the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties scheduled for January 2027.

Progress achieved at the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5.3)

In line with [UNEA Resolution 5/14](#), which established an intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, the Secretariat of the INC on plastic pollution provided procedural support to a series of activities and meetings. During the reporting period, these initiatives included the [third part of the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee \(INC-5.3](#), 7 February 2026) in Geneva, Switzerland. This convened for organizational and administrative purposes such as election of officers, including the position of Chair. The resumed session was preceded by regional consultations to facilitate regional engagement. Additionally, the Secretariat supported the organization of a series of meetings as laid out in the [letters from the INC Chair](#), in particular, an informal virtual Heads of Delegation meeting (12 March), the first informal webinar with Observers (24 March), as well as monthly INC Bureau meetings.

Cooperation on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

UNEP contributed actively to the 2026 [ECOSOC Partnership Forum](#) (27 January 2026), advancing integrated approaches to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Through its participation in high-level and thematic discussions, UNEP emphasised practical, partnership-based solutions and reinforced the role of environmental sustainability in achieving progress across SDGs.

At the [ECOSOC Coordination Segment](#) (29–30 January 2026), UNEP supported efforts to strengthen system-wide coherence and institutional alignment, including through contributions to discussions marking the Council's 80th anniversary and the UN80 Initiative reform process. These engagements aimed to enhance coordinated action across UN entities and ensure effective translation of global commitments into implementation.

Contributions to International Statistical Standards and Methodologies

At the [fifty-seventh session of the United Nations Statistical Commission \(3–6 March 2026\)](#), UNEP participated in advancing international statistical standards and methodologies supporting implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Key highlights included advancements in environment and climate change statistics, as well as environmental-economic accounting through the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) integration for better policy support.

UNEP Highlights the Water–Gender Equality Nexus at World Water Day 2026

UNEP supported a [high-level World Water Day event](#) held at United Nations Headquarters on the margins of the Commission on the Status of Women (19 March 2026), which underscored the interlinkages between water access and gender equality. A campaign, titled [“Water and Gender Equality – Where Water Flows, Equality Grows”](#) provided a platform to elevate policy dialogue on the disproportionate impacts of water insecurity on women and girls and the importance of gender-responsive water governance. During the event, the [United Nations World Water Development Report 2026, Water for All People: Equal Rights and Opportunities](#)

was launched, presenting evidence on gender-differentiated water impacts and highlighting the leadership role of women in advancing sustainable and inclusive water solutions.

UNEP Champions the Role of Forests in Sustainable and Resilient Economies

UNEP contributed to and participated in the [International Day of Forests observance](#) held at United Nations Headquarters (24 March 2026), convened under the theme “Forests and Economies”, to elevate policy dialogue on the economic value of forests. Through its engagement in the event’s high-level panel discussions alongside Member States, stakeholders and the United Nations system, UNEP reinforced evidence-based messaging on forests as critical enablers of sustainable development, including their role in sustaining livelihoods, supporting food systems, providing renewable materials and energy, and regulating water and climate systems.

UNEP Strengthens Stakeholder Feedback Inform UNEA-8 Planning

UNEP invited accredited UNEP Major groups and Stakeholders to provide feedback on the planning and implementation of their activities during the Seventh Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7), with a view to informing future planning and identifying areas for improvement. UNEP conducted three targeted surveys, covering the Major Groups Facilitating Committee, participants of the Global Youth Environment Assembly and all Major Groups and Stakeholders attending UNEA-7, and consolidated the findings to inform preparations for UNEA-8.

The [analysis](#) revealed that the Global Youth Environment Assembly delivered a strong and engaging platform, with 81 per cent of participants expressing satisfaction and 85 per cent reporting strengthened advocacy at UNEA-7. Participants highlighted the quality and relevance of speakers (88 per cent satisfaction), the diversity of session formats (82 per cent) and strong networking opportunities, with over 80 per cent satisfaction, contributing to enhanced youth engagement, learning and visibility across regions.

UNEP’s analysis further identified key structural and operational constraints, including limited interactivity in some sessions, barriers to inclusivity for grassroots and underrepresented groups, and logistical challenges related to participation costs and accessibility. Additional gaps included communication challenges, limited networking time and unclear pathways for translating youth inputs into UNEA outcomes, which reduced overall effectiveness.

Based on these findings, UNEP identified priority areas to strengthen future iterations of the Global Youth Environment Assembly, including enhanced inclusivity, improved organization and communication, expanded accessibility measures and clearer mechanisms to ensure sustained youth engagement and policy influence.

UNEP technical advice contributes to securing the Future of Nature-based Solutions

During leadership sessions at the [World Sustainable Development Summit](#) (25–27 February 2026), technical guidance from UNEP supported the focus toward specific requirements for protecting land rights and ensuring fair benefit-sharing. By advocating for inclusive and locally grounded strategies, UNEP highlighted the importance of a framework where strong social and environmental safeguards, respect for land and resource rights, benefit-sharing mechanisms work together to deliver durable climate and nature outcomes. Other outcomes of the summit included commitments to clean energy, resilient urban systems, and the launch of initiatives like Mission LiFE Youth Ambassador Programme.

UNEP helps advance Regional Investments and Implementation for Clean Air outcomes

UNEP helped align regional air quality management with global health mandates and environmental resolutions during the [Better Air Quality conference](#) in Bangkok, Thailand (11–13 March 2026). Integrating the technical requirements of UNEA Resolution 6/10 and the World Health Organization (WHO) target to halve air-pollution-related deaths by 2040, it provided the evidence base necessary for Member States to implement national air quality programmes. These efforts also synchronised regional actions with the [Asia-Pacific Regional Action Programme on Air Pollution \(RAPAP\)](#) and the [Thimphu Outcome's "35 by 35"](#) aspirational goal for South Asian countries. Building on this was the establishment of technical and financial pathways required to bridge the regional clean air financing gap by connecting governments, experts, and private sector investors. Through [high-level technical sessions](#), UNEP facilitated the development of scalable, integrated solutions that promote long-term economic resilience and health benefits. These actions focused on building cross-sectoral partnerships and sensitising a broader set of stakeholders to move clean air from a theoretical goal to a primary driver of sustainable growth across the region.

UNEP celebrates the International Day of Zero Waste 2026

The observance of the [International Day of Zero Waste 2026](#), shining a spotlight on food waste, demonstrated significant global reach, multi-stakeholder engagement, and growing momentum (30 March 2026). A total of 167 registered events were held in over 60 countries. UNEP hosted or co-hosted [nine flagship events](#) in key global cities, including New York, Geneva, Istanbul, and Nairobi (26–31 March 2026) bringing together governments, business representatives, civil society organizations, and individuals, reinforcing the International Day's role as a unifying platform for collective action on zero waste and sustainable production and consumption.

Millions of people were reached via high-impact banner placements in major transportation hubs worldwide, including the Mexico City subway system reaching approximately 3.4 million users daily, the Beijing Airport with between 190,000 and 230,000 daily users, and Kansai Airport in Osaka with 7,300 to 8,000 daily users.

UNEP, in coordination with UN-Habitat, developed advocacy for the International Day's worldwide observance, including videos, social media cards, press releases and stories on innovation and action to reduce food waste. Over 21,000 views were registered on Zero Waste Day content hosted on UNEP.org during the two weeks surrounding the campaign.

A key highlight of the 2026 campaign was the strengthened engagement of the private sector. In the context of the International Day, 14 major tourism companies, collectively serving more than 600 million guests annually, joined UNEP and UN Tourism's ["Recipe of Change"](#) initiative to reduce food waste. This collaboration signals a meaningful shift toward industry-led action inspired by the campaign. Companies such as [Barilla](#) (pasta brand), [Turkish Airlines](#) and [KONE](#) (electronics multinational) actively contributed to the campaign by sharing Zero Waste Day messages on their social media channels, amplifying its reach to diverse global audiences. This corporate engagement reflects increased recognition of the campaign and the business case for sustainable product design and waste reduction.

Civil society organizations also played a vital role in expanding the campaign's impact. Engagement from networks such as [UEFA](#), [C40 Cities](#), [Zero Waste Europe](#), and sustainability influencer [@eugreenia](#) helped connect grassroots efforts with global advocacy

A key role in helping strengthen Global Protection for Migratory Species at COP15

UNEP played a key role at the [15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species in Campo Grande](#), Brazil (23–29 March 2026), helping secure decisions that improve the Convention's effectiveness. Parties adopted new requests for UNEP to support resource mobilization aligned with Global Environment Facility (GEF-9) priorities. In this context, enhanced cooperation across biodiversity conventions will be pursued through the Bern Process, alongside the continuation of legal reviews under the Montevideo Environmental Law Programme. Decisions adopted at the meeting will guide UNEP's continued support on marine protected area action, jaguar conservation collaboration, and wildlife health issues linked to migration.

UNEP-WCMC presented the [Interim Report on the State of the World's Migratory Species](#) during a COP15 press conference. In close cooperation with the CMS Secretariat, the latest evidence on the conservation status of listed species informed high-level negotiations. In parallel, UNEP supported the development of the Analysis of CMS National Reports to assess how Member States are progressing toward their international commitments.

UNEP Leveraging Accreditation as a Mechanism for Inclusive Governance

During the reporting period, 29 new organizations were accredited to UNEP and its governing bodies, representing NGOs (22), Scientific and Technological Communities (2), Children and Youth (5). The list of accredited organizations can be found [here](#). As of 31 March 2026, 1,351 organizations were accredited to UNEP and its governing bodies. This collaboration with non-governmental and non-for-profit civil society organizations and networks ensure effective, broad and balanced participation and representation in the intergovernmental decision-making process at UNEP.

B. Regional developments

i. Africa

UNEP Regional Leadership on Water Security and Climate Finance in Africa

[The Thirty-Ninth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union](#) was convened under the theme "Assuring Sustainable Water Availability and Safe Sanitation Systems to Realise the Goals of Agenda 2063". It elevated water and sanitation as a continental priority aligned to Agenda 2063 and global development frameworks (11–15 February 2026). It endorsed the [Africa Water Vision 2063 and Policy](#) framework, providing a strategic roadmap for integrated water resources management, climate-resilient infrastructure, wastewater reuse, and strengthened transboundary water cooperation, while mandating a unified African position for global engagements including the UN Water Conference.

On the margins of the AU Summit, UNEP's Africa Office supported a [Meeting of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change \(CAHOSCC\)](#) which consolidated Africa's common position in global climate negotiations. The meeting endorsed the African Principles for Equity and Integrity in Carbon Markets and called for scaled up and

predictable climate finance, particularly for adaptation. UNEP provided substantive technical support through AMCEN processes, climate policy engagement, integrated water resources management, ecosystem-based adaptation, and climate finance readiness support. These outcomes strengthen Africa's coordinated voice in global fora and provide a policy foundation for advancing water security, climate resilience, and sustainable development across the region.

ii. Asia and the Pacific

UNEP Helps Align Asia-Pacific Development with Environmental Goals

At the [13th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development](#) (24–27 February 2026), UNEP provided technical reporting and policy support to integrate environmental priorities into regional planning. It co-authored four SDG progress briefs and a [Financing for Development](#) brief to establish a robust evidence base for regional policy making. These data-driven tools enabled Member States to accurately track their progress toward the 2030 Agenda. By leading technical dialogues, UNEP further ensured that energy and water management remained central to regional development. UNEP managed a multi-stakeholder [roundtable on energy](#) and moderated high-level sessions on water and development finance. UNEP also delivered an [official statement](#) linking regional efforts to UNEA-7 outcomes and calling for enhanced cooperation between platforms to meet the SDGs.

UNEP Improves Multi-Country Support for Food Systems Transformation in Asia-Pacific

UNEP joined regional partners to support the [fourth Asia-Pacific meeting](#) on food systems transformation in Bangkok (2–3 March 2026). This gathering focused on aligning policy and finance to meet 2030 sustainable food production goals. By engaging 26 countries, the meeting strengthened coordinated support for regional food systems.

iii. Europe

UNEP, UNECE and UNESCO help highlight the role of integrated approaches to urban sustainability

The Issue-based Coalition (IBC) in Europe and Central Asia, which UNEP co-chairs with UNECE and UNESCO, organized a [webinar for UN Country Teams on "Integrated Approaches to Urban Sustainability"](#) and highlighted integrated approaches to sustainable urban development, with a focus on environmental planning, inclusive participation, and the relation between affordability and green transition (22 January 2026).

UNEP uses science to support high level dialogue on protecting the Caspian Sea through improved regional governance

A high-level [dialogue on Strengthening Environmental Governance and International Cooperation for the Protection of the Caspian Sea](#) was held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva (30 January 2026). As the host of the interim Secretariat for the Tehran Convention (also known as the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea) UNEP used this platform to address urgent regional threats, including biodiversity loss and rapidly dropping water levels. By coordinating with the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan, UNEP focused global attention on the need for science-based policies and concrete actions to protect this vital marine environment.

UNEP helped to advance Multilateral Action for Glacier and Mountain Preservation

UNEP advanced the implementation of [UNEA resolution 7/10](#) to protect glaciers and the broader cryosphere during a high-level session at the Palais des Nations (17 March 2026). This event focused on expanding glacier monitoring and open data sharing to address the impacts of ice decline on water security and freshwater species. By contributing to the science-policy interface, UNEP supported efforts to build regional capacities and strengthen knowledge exchange to manage disaster risks and support sustainable development. UNEP helped establish a four-year global agenda for mountain ecosystems at the [Seventh Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership](#) in Andorra (26–28 March 2026). Participants adopted a [declaration](#) to set out a shared direction for mountain action through 2030, ensuring that mountain-specific challenges are integrated into international environmental governance and long-term climate resilience planning.

UNEP Supports the Development of Regional Strategy to Strengthen Soil Health and Contaminated Site Management.

At the [Western Balkans Regional Soil Pollution Conference](#), UNEP supported the development of a regional strategy for managing contaminated sites and improving soil health (26–27 March 2026). Organized under the framework of the South-East Europe Pollution Platform (SEEPP), UNEP brought together national leaders and international experts in Vienna to identify new locations for remediation and improve regional data-monitoring systems. Presentations included practical methodologies from pilot sites in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, highlighting improved soil and groundwater monitoring approaches to address contamination from chromium, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (also known as PFAS or “forever chemicals”), and legacy pesticides. The conference generated new project concepts and funding pathways to help Western Balkan nations meet global standards for chemical and waste management.

iv. Latin America and the Caribbean

Advancing Circular Economy Governance in Mexico’s Electronics Sector

UNEP organized and facilitated a collaborative [national workshop under the project Strengthening the Circularity of the Electronics Sector in Mexico](#) (25–26 February 2026), bringing together representatives from the public sector, subnational governments, academia and industry to strengthen systemic approaches to policy development and institutional coordination.

Through the workshop, UNEP supported the advancement of life-cycle-based policy solutions, including enhanced regulatory coherence, promotion of extended producer responsibility, integration of gender considerations and identification of public–private partnerships to mobilise investment and financing for the electronics sector. The initiative reflected UNEP’s shift from isolated diagnostics toward a comprehensive cooperation and accountability framework linking planning, implementation and reporting to accelerate Mexico’s transition to a circular electronics economy.

UNEP contributes to the High-Level Dialogue on Environmental Justice and Hazardous Waste in Mexico

UNEP contributed substantively to [a meeting on “Environmental Justiciability and Hazardous Waste”](#), convened by the Supreme Court of Justice of Mexico through its Directorate-General

for Human Rights and Pluricultural Justice, in coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Mexico (27 February 2026).

A highlight was UNEP's intervention during the opening session and participation in a keynote panel, providing expertise on environmental governance and the sound management of chemicals and waste, with emphasis on their linkages to human rights, access to justice and the importance of a pluricultural approach. Through these contributions, UNEP supported dialogue among private sector actors, investors and development finance institutions on mobilising business models, finance and partnerships to advance a circular economy transition in the electronics sector.

Regional Cooperation on Waste Management in the Caribbean

UNEP convened and supported regional stakeholders under the European Union-funded Zero Waste in the Caribbean initiative [in Panama City](#) (16–20 March 2026) to strengthen strategic decision-making on waste management. Through technical workshops, policy and financial guidance, and structured dialogue among the Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM) Member States and partners, UNEP advanced circular economy approaches and promoted the application of evidence-based tools. These UNEP-led efforts enhanced regional capacity, identified priority investment areas and strengthened cooperation to reduce pollution, improve waste management systems, and build climate resilience across the Caribbean.

Supporting the Establishment of the Ibero-American Environmental Charter and Agenda

Participating as an observer, UNEP provided technical inputs used to create the new [Ibero-American Environmental Charter](#) and [Agenda](#) during the [ministerial conference in Málaga, Spain](#) (24–26 March 2026). It delivered interventions across all sessions to ensure regional environmental strategies matched global objectives culminating in the adoption of an [official declaration by Ministers of Environment and Climate](#). These efforts successfully aligned the Ibero-American ministerial process with the priorities of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, identifying opportunities for convergence in view of upcoming regional and global milestones.

Integrating Environment into the Regional AMR Strategy¹

UNEP integrated environmental health into the coordinated regional response to antimicrobial resistance (AMR) at the [First Americas Regional Meeting in Brasília](#) (23–27 March 2026). Efforts included facilitation and engagement in specialised technical sessions where UNEP promoted the participation of environmental authorities from across the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region to ensure the environment is a core part of AMR strategies. Its involvement in this contributed to the creation of a regional roadmap intended to improve collective advocacy before the upcoming Ministerial Conference on AMR in Nigeria in June 2026.

¹ More developments in AMR can be found in the Programme of Work Implementation (Section 2 of this report) under A pollution-free planet.

Modernising National Environmental Assessments in Barbados

UNEP supported a more continuous and participatory approach to national environmental reporting by redefining the Global Environment Outlook as a continuous exercise at the GEO-Barbados inception meeting held in Bridgetown (31 March–1 April 2026). Supported by the launch of a real-time scientific data portal, the meeting established a framework for ongoing collaboration and repositioned environmental assessment as an evolving, evidence-driven dialogue. By convening leaders from government, academia, and the private sector, the process integrated scientific rigour directly into national policy planning, strengthened national ownership and institutional memory, and enabled the National Environment Outlook to function as a practical guide for transformative action in priority sectors, including energy transition and sustainable food systems.

Launch of the Brazilian National Cooling Action Plan (PNAR)

UNEP supported the Government of Brazil [in launching the development process of the National Cooling Action Plan \(Plano Nacional de Arrefecimento\)](#) in Brasília (9 March 2026). Led by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MMA) in partnership with UNEP and other federal ministries, the initiative aims to structure an integrated national framework to reduce direct and indirect emissions from the cooling sector while expanding equitable access to sustainable and efficient cooling services. The kick-off ceremony secured broad engagement from several ministries, raising institutional awareness on the implications of extreme heat and establishing the foundation for a coordinated, multi sectoral approach in the plan's next phase.

Strengthening Regional Ecolabelling Governance through the Environmental Alliance of the Americas

UNEP strengthened regional ecolabelling governance and global engagement through its technical-secretariat leadership of the [Environmental Alliance of the Americas \(AAA\)](#) during the reporting period. UNEP convened and serviced the AAA General Assembly (24 March 2026), enabling informed participation by member countries across Latin America and supporting the adoption of high-level decisions and an operational framework for the programme's next phase. UNEP further enhanced the technical credibility of regional ecolabelling standards by facilitating a [public consultation on AAA sustainability criteria for coffee](#) (Q1 2026), ensuring alignment with ISO 14024 principles and establishing a transparent, participatory review process. Through leadership of the AAA Strategy and Innovation Committee and targeted outreach to conformity assessment bodies (29 January 2026; 30 January 2026), UNEP supported the adoption of the 2026–2028 strategic roadmap and strengthened implementation pathways for regional environmental certification across Latin America and the Caribbean. UNEP also aligned regional ecolabelling with corporate climate action by delivering a public webinar on corporate decarbonization strategies (18 March 2026), linking net-zero commitments with market-based certification and advancing private-sector engagement in sustainable consumption and production.

v. West Asia

Monitoring Environmental Harm and Systemic Risks from Conflict

UNEP continued to monitor emerging environmental damage emanating from the conflict in the Middle East echoing the UN Secretary-General's [call](#) for an immediate cessation of

hostilities. In her [statement](#), UNEP's Executive Director warned that the conflict would likely cause even greater stress on natural resources, damage marine and terrestrial ecosystems, set back efforts to enhance water and climate resilience, and impact the food chain and food safety of not just the region but the global community.

2 Programme of work implementation

A. Climate stability

UNEP Strengthens Global and Regional Engagement with Climate Science

UNEP supported [the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's \(IPCC\) sixty-fourth Plenary Session](#) (24–29 March 2026) in Bangkok, Thailand, and subsequently convened an Asia and South-West Pacific regional outreach event (29 March 2026) to strengthen science–policy linkages and scientific contributions. UNEP provided leadership through a delegation led by the Climate Change Division (CCD) Director and via the Asia-Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN) Secretariat. These resulted in inclusive participation in the IPCC process, strengthened coordination among governments and research institutions, and enhanced regional readiness to deliver policy-relevant science for the Seventh Assessment Report.

Countries Deepen Collaboration to Meet Their Climate Planning and Reporting Obligations

UNEP strengthened transparency systems through activities in Fiji, Namibia, and Samoa, alongside global webinars (January–March 2026) by convening expert networks, delivering technical support, and facilitating reporting under the Paris Agreement. This support has contributed to Dominica, Madagascar, and Turkmenistan publishing their first Biennial Transparency Reports and Tuvalu's third National Communication.

[UNEP Copenhagen Climate Centre \(UNEP-CCC\)](#) launched the [Article 6 Pipeline](#) which tracks carbon market activity and country progress in support of Article 6 (18 March 2026). The platform was developed in collaboration with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change secretariat, with its launch event engaging over 900 participants, demonstrating the high demand for such accessible reporting tools.

Brazil launched its [National Climate Change Plan](#) in Brasília to operationalise its Nationally Determined Contribution (16 March 2026). UNEP provided technical and coordination support for this process through UNEP-CCC, the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), the Sustainable Mobility Unit, and the UNEP Brazil Office. The initiative resulted in a comprehensive national strategy containing over 100 measures and clearly defined institutional responsibilities

AI and Low-Cost Observation Technologies Strengthen Early Warning Systems

UNEP improved early warning systems in [Timor-Leste](#), Bhutan, and [Kiribati](#) to support the global [Early Warnings for All](#) initiative (January–March 2026). This was financed from the Green Climate Fund and the Systematic Observations Financing Facility furthering efforts to build stronger management structures, install low-cost observation technology, and launch tools to support local decision-making.

The [Climate Technology Centre and Network \(CTCN\)](#) deployed a [solar-powered, AI-driven smoke detection system](#) to protect Georgia's Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park and nearby communities from wildfires. UNEP's Climate Change Division (CCD) Director further highlighted the use of AI as a practical way to speed up last-mile warning systems and extreme heat governance during his contribution to the Delhi AI Impact Summit (20 February 2026).

National and Subnational Action on Sustainable Cooling Accelerates Across Asia and Africa

UNEP provided technical expertise through the Cool Coalition for Cambodia's [passive cooling guidelines](#) published in Phnom Penh to reduce building energy demand (21 January 2026). The guidelines offer practical design measures to improve thermal comfort and reduce the need for mechanical cooling.

UNEP signed a [Memorandum of Cooperation](#) with the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority during Mumbai Climate Week (17–19 February 2026) to improve urban heat management. Meanwhile, UNEP-supported initiatives at the Tamil Nadu Climate Summit 4.0 (17–18 February 2026) showed the rapid growth of passive cooling. The BeCool project in Chennai has [expanded passive cooling](#) in schools to benefit approximately 150,000 students. Additionally, 30 municipal corporations in Maharashtra and 11 cities in Tamil Nadu joined the Beat the Heat initiative, speeding up local cooling measures.

UNEP's United for Efficiency (U4E) initiative delivered a [training in Kigali, Rwanda and a regional webinar](#) to improve energy efficient cooling standards (February 2026). UNEP also engaged government and industry stakeholders in China to improve cooperation on sustainable cooling and buildings fostering the identification of more opportunities for standards alignment and technology deployment (March 2026).

Climate Finance Leveraged for Development

UNEP mobilised USD 26 million in Global Environment Facility funding for transparency, e-mobility and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) (January–March 2026). Support from the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) contributed to the approval of a [USD 96.9 million Green Climate Fund project](#) encouraging medium and small enterprises in Kenya to adopt climate-resilient technologies in collaboration with KCB Bank.

West Africa's [first solar and battery storage project dedicated to grid frequency regulation](#) was inaugurated in Bokhol, Senegal (22 January 2026). UNEP supported the preparation of the project through the Seed Capital Assistance Facility. This initiative improves grid reliability while reducing emissions from fossil-fuel power plants. The Green Climate Fund approved [USD 85 million for the UNEP-supported Responsible Commodities Facility](#) (28 March 2026). This facility serves as a financial vehicle for deforestation-free soy in Brazil.

Driving Sectoral Action on Methane

UNEP, through the International Methane Emissions Observatory (IMEO), convened more than [150 member companies and stakeholders of the Oil and Gas Methane Partnership 2.0 in Abu Dhabi](#) (9–12 February 2026) to exchange on methane science, policy and management. The conference strengthened methane reporting readiness toward credible, measurement-based methane management at scale. In Algeria and Senegal, IMEO delivered [trainings](#) for 80+ stakeholders, strengthening national methane management capacities.

Unlocking Finance for Adaptation and Nature-Based Solutions

UNEP launched an [Africa-wide call for research proposals on the economics of adaptation](#) (12 February – 5 March 2026). The call received 345 applications from 43 countries. UNEP secured Global Environment Facility endorsement for the [Resilient Infrastructure Fund](#) (8 March 2026), which it designed in collaboration with the Frankfurt School of Finance & Management. This initiative aims to move private finance to adapt existing infrastructure in developing countries to climate change.

Phase two of the CTCN's and [Adaptation Fund's Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator](#) (AFCIA) was also launched (5 March 2026). AFCIA II aims to test, scale up, and secure financing for innovative, transformative, and locally led climate adaptation technologies in 12 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Eighteen proposals were approved, with 50% receiving design support from CTCN.

Finally, UNEP convened the [Forest Investments Marketplace](#) in Hanoi, Viet Nam (31 March – 1 April 2026), under the UN-REDD Programme. The event supported investment readiness and partnerships for nature-based solutions.

B. Living in harmony with nature: Land, ocean and freshwater; and achieving land degradation neutrality

UNEP Outlines Pathways to a Trillion-Dollar Nature Transition Economy

UNEP launched the [State of Finance for Nature 2026: Nature in the Red: Powering the Trillion Dollar Nature Transition Economy](#) (22 January 2026), calling on governments, financial institutions and businesses to speed up a major shift in how nature is valued and financed. The report introduces the Nature Transition XCurve, a framework for phasing out harmful subsidies and investments while growing high-integrity Nature-based Solutions. It shows that moving even a small part of harmful financial flows could close the nature finance gap and unlock a trillion-dollar transition economy.

Leading Marine Governance Reform in Comoros

Comoros validated its new [Sustainable Blue Economy Policy](#) and Integrated Policy Framework (29 January 2026) through the UNEP [SIDS World Restoration Flagship](#). Through this process, a whole-of-government approach to marine governance was advanced, introducing innovations such as multi-tiered governance arrangements, blue-finance mechanisms, and data-driven tools to regenerate natural capital and guide sustainable development.

Advanced Coral Reef Monitoring Across the East Asian Seas

[UNEP-COBSEA](#) hosted an online webinar in collaboration with the Wildlife Conservation Society's MERMAID team to introduce the [MERMAID](#) coral monitoring tool (11 February 2026). Bringing together more than 50 participants from across the region, UNEP led efforts to improve access to effective coral reef monitoring, data collection and reporting systems for the East Asian Seas. This training helps the implementation of COBSEA's Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Framework and strengthens science-based regional action for coral reef conservation.

UNEP-WCMC Launches Navigation Tool for Nature-Related Financial Risk Assessment

UNEP-WCMC launched [The Nature Tools Compass](#) (13 January 2026), reinforcing UNEP's leadership in supporting businesses and financial institutions to assess their nature dependencies, impacts, risks and opportunities. The Compass provides an overview of more than 70 tools, organized using the [Locate, Evaluate, Assess and Prepare](#) approach of [the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures \(TNFD\)](#), and offers practical guidance on their use. It will be a key resource for institutions responding to the findings of the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services ([IPBES](#)) [Business and Biodiversity Assessment](#).

UNEP Delivers Policy-Relevant Insights through Mountains in Motion Report

UNEP launched the report [Mountains in Motion: Global Linkages from Ridge to River](#) (March 2026) to strengthen science-based action for mountain ecosystems. This publication outlines linked challenges facing mountain regions and provides a tool that turns scientific insights into policy-ready options. By using scenario modelling and mountain-specific indicators, UNEP supported countries include mountain priorities in biodiversity, climate, and development planning.

UNEP-COBSEA Advances Marine Spatial Planning in the Philippines

UNEP-COBSEA co-chaired the [Sustainable Ocean Initiative National Workshop on Marine Spatial Planning](#) for the Philippines in Manila (4–6 March 2026). By convening government agencies, NGOs, and development partners, UNEP helped establish marine spatial planning as a core part of the country's ocean governance. This led to the design of biodiversity-inclusive frameworks and identified priority components for a national roadmap aligned with the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Gender-Responsive Watershed Management and One Health Coordination

UNEP led the design and delivery of a multiregional webinar titled [“Gender and Watershed Management: From local action to global impact”](#) (24 March 2026). The dialogue focused on linking gender-transformative watershed practices to global water and climate processes advancing inclusive approaches to water management.

UNEP, in collaboration with Quadripartite partners, also organized an [IHR-PVS National Bridging Workshop](#) in Dili, Timor-Leste (25–27 March 2026). This initiative advanced the country's One Health agenda by strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration. Through this engagement, UNEP supported improved compliance with WHO's International Health Regulations, the World Organization of Animal Health's Performance of Veterinary Services Pathway, and relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

Growing Leadership for Mountain Ecosystems and High-Seas Governance

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UNEP and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched the GEF-funded project [“Global and regional support to the BBNJ Agreement ratification process and implementation readiness”](#) in New York (25 March 2026). Coordinated on the sidelines of PrepCom III, this USD 4.6 million initiative builds global, regional, and national capacity for the high-seas treaty. UNEP's contribution focuses on improving environmental governance and helping countries prepare for effective implementation.

Development Of Brazil's National Strategy for Nature-Based Solutions

An online opening webinar initiated the development process for Brazil's National Strategy for Nature-based Solutions (27 March 2026). UNEP served as a panellist, presenting its role in advancing the Nature-based Solutions agenda both globally and within Brazil. This event brought together government representatives and partner institutions to establish a collaborative framework for the national strategy.

CBD Guidance Shapes National One Health and Biodiversity Alignment in Lao PDR

In Vang Vien, Lao PDR, the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, Ministry of Health alongside UNEP, UNEP-WCMC, UNDP, FAO, WHO and WOAHA co-organized a national workshop to harmonise the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework with One Health planning (10–11 March 2026). Supported by the United Kingdom, the event integrated human, animal, and environmental health sectors. The session used the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Global Action Plan on Biodiversity and Health to align national strategies.

Progress on Land Degradation and Desertification

- **Advancing Toward Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Targets**

UNEP actively supports 38 fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) with 178 projects totalling a \$456 million budget, comprising 23% of its total project portfolio translating to 11% of UNEP's overall multi-year budget. Strategic investment has been pronounced in the context of nature and land action with a 44% allocation to address environmental drivers of instability, with major, high-priority interventions in countries including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Timor Leste, Cameroon, South Sudan, Comoros, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Central African Republic.

- **USD 77.8 Million Restoration Programme for The Great Green Wall**

UNEP led nine projects across [Burkina Faso](#), [Chad](#), [Ethiopia](#), [The Gambia](#), [Mali](#), [Mauritania](#), [Niger](#), [Nigeria](#), and [Senegal](#) (January–March 2026) that were approved under the GEF-8 [Transformation Approach to Large Scale Investment in Support of the Great Green Wall Initiative](#). With a total budget of USD 77.8 million, the organization is driving an integrated, transboundary effort to combat land degradation and rural vulnerability. The projects will restore over 100,000 hectares of degraded land, enhance ecosystem services, and strengthen climate resilience. Looking ahead, these efforts are expected to strengthen food security and livelihoods, with projected benefits for 3.1 million people and the creation of 1.26 million green jobs over the programme period.

Case Study: The Great Green Wall Initiative

The [Great Green Wall Initiative](#) is an ambitious tree planting drive that was launched in 2007 by the Africa Union to restore grasslands, savannahs and farmlands and keep the Sahara Desert from spreading deeper into one of the world's poorest regions. It is a response to the combined effect of natural resources degradation and drought in rural areas. It seeks to help communities mitigate and adapt to climate change as well as improve food security. The Initiative aims to restore 100 million hectares of land, sequester 250 million tonnes of carbon and create 10 million jobs. UNEP plays a critical role in this initiative by coordinating the UN Decade of Ecosystems Restoration.

UNEP, together with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Secretariat, led a [technical training webinar](#) for Anglophone African countries to launch the 2026 UNCCD national reporting cycle (25 February 2026). UNEP played a central role in introducing the two designated regional technical institutions - the [Sahara and Sahel Observatory](#) and the [Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development](#) - and in outlining their support frameworks and communication channels. This engagement is key to

enabling Parties to assess progress toward land degradation neutrality and report on [SDG Indicator 15.3.1](#).

- **UNEP Launches Sustainable Sand Value Chain Project for West African Coastal Resilience**

UNEP started the preparation phase for a Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project to improve sand value chains in The Gambia and Liberia (January 2026). This 36-month initiative, titled “[Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Productive Sectors: Responsible Sand Value Chain for Coastal Resilience in West Africa](#)”, is supported by the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund and focuses on protecting coastal and marine ecosystems by integrating biodiversity considerations into local sand value chains.

C. A pollution-free planet

Driving Coordinated Action on Plastics

UNEP, together with WWF, is leading the [GEF-funded Plastic Reboot Programme](#), helping 15 countries² cut single-use plastics in the food and beverage sector. Through this initiative, national projects began in Nigeria and the Cook Islands (early 2026). Nigeria is working to reduce single-use drinking water sachets and expand safe water access, while the Cook Islands focuses on plastics in food, beverage, and tourism. Both projects, implemented through UNEP and executed by national agencies, have already approved governance frameworks and workplans, showing strong early progress.

UNEP [trained](#) over 180 Indian Administrative Services officers at the [Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration](#) on plastic waste management, strengthening national capacity to enforce bans and extended producer responsibility schemes (January 2026). UNEP also established the [Community of Practice on Informing National Action on Plastic Pollution and Marine Litter](#), which finalised its 2026 workplan and continues to expand the [GPML Global Plastics Hub](#), now engaging 731 organizations worldwide.

Sustainable Chemicals Management in Textiles

Through the GEF-funded Asia Textiles project, UNEP has supported efforts to strengthen chemicals management in the textiles sector across Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Viet Nam. With USD 8 million in funding, UNEP worked with partners³ to develop chemical inventories, regulatory frameworks, and knowledge-sharing platforms. These contributions informed and reinforced [Viet Nam’s updated Law on Chemicals \(No. 69/2025/QH15\)](#), adopted in June 2025 and effective from January 2026. UNEP continues to provide support that encourages sustainability, ensures compliance, and aligns with international best practices.

² Brazil, Cambodia, Burkina Faso, the Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, India, Jordan, Lao PDR, , Morocco, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Senegal, and South Africa

³ Basel Convention Regional Centre for South-East Asia (BCRC-SEA), Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Shifting Gears to Accelerate the Fight Against Transport Pollution

UNEP supports more than 50 low- and middle-income countries to design [electric mobility](#) policies and frameworks that reduce emissions and improve urban life (January–March 2026). This assistance is vital as countries accelerate the shift to cleaner mobility amid fluctuating oil prices and uncertain fossil fuel supplies. Within this framework, Egypt launched its [Active Mobility Strategy Framework \(2025–2034\)](#) to promote walking and cycling with the goal of cutting transport emissions by seven per cent by 2030.

UNEP and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) assisted Morocco in enforcing [EURO VI vehicle emission standards](#). Technical support also enabled Madagascar to join the [global electric mobility programme](#) through a \$6.3 million financing package. In Kenya, the government launched its National Electric Mobility Policy to leverage its renewable energy base and expand charging infrastructure. While [cities](#) across Africa are deploying electric buses and shared transport, Latin America is piloting [digital tools](#) for climate-resilient transit.

UNEP and the CCAC provided countries with tools to measure [fuel quality](#) and [track](#) vehicle fleets to reduce harmful emissions. These resources facilitate the transition to ultra-low-sulphur fuels which can lower emissions by up to 90 per cent. UNEP also serves as a key contributor to the [UN Decade of Sustainable Transport \(2026–2035\)](#), which began with [83 commitments](#) to reshape mobility for climate action and resilience. UNEP promotes the advancement of these global goals through its [electric mobility and active transport](#) initiative while continuing efforts to establish [minimum quality emission standards](#) for used vehicles.

Phasing Out Mercury for Safer Health Practices

UNEP supported WHO in the launch of [guidelines](#) for sustainable oral health care to phase down dental amalgam in Senegal, Thailand, and Uruguay (19 March 2026). Through this [GEF project](#), UNEP provided technical expertise on the environmental impacts of dental materials and practices. This work aligned the new guidance with the Minamata Convention and improved cooperation between the health and environment sectors. Later, UNEP released a [global database](#) and [standardized sampling protocol](#) for mercury-added skin-lightening products in partnership with GEF and the Biodiversity Research Institute (31 March 2026).

Strengthening Hazardous Waste Governance

UNEP assisted the [Bamako Convention](#) in developing a regional [clearing house](#) for hazardous waste data exchange (January 2026). To expand the reach of the treaty, UNEP conducted dialogues with the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali and Somalia. These sessions led to new national commitments to ratify and implement the Convention. Additionally, UNEP started a fellowship for [media](#) and content creators to improve the accuracy of reporting and public accountability regarding hazardous waste.

Tackling Air Pollution Through Innovation and Cooperation

UNEP and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) co-hosted the [Better Air Quality Conference 2026](#) in Bangkok (11–13 March 2026). As the leading forum for Asia and the Pacific, this event engaged governments, cities, and partners to address pollution from transport, energy, agriculture, waste, and industry. Discussions prioritized practical solutions and investment while linking air quality with climate, health, and development goals.

UNEP, the CCAC, and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies also launched a [regional roadmap to end open waste burning](#) during the conference. This initiative addresses one of Asia's largest pollution sources, which contributes to approximately 256 million tonnes of annual emissions.⁴ By providing evidence-based guidance policymakers can eliminate this practice to improve regional health and environmental standards.

Scaling Wastewater Solutions for Pollution Reduction and Strengthening the Environmental Dimensions of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)

UNEP is advancing wastewater surveillance to protect public health and ecosystems by strengthening regional coordination and technical readiness. Under the [Wastewater Surveillance for Africa initiative](#), UNEP convened 21 African countries to build technical capacity and agree on a shared regional roadmap (January 2026). Priority needs identified, along with partners⁵, include laboratory infrastructure and readiness for decision-making, with early warning systems expanded through wastewater sampling at Kenya's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, the Port of Mombasa, and ongoing monitoring in Rwanda.

In Southern Iraq, UNEP and IOM handed over the Islah [constructed wetland](#) (February 2026) serving 30,000 residents and treating 4,000 m³ of wastewater daily. Supported by SIDA and national authorities, the system offers a replicable, low-energy nature-based solution for drought, desertification, and pollution in arid regions.

At the 1st Regional AMR Meeting for the Americas in Brasilia 23–27 March 2026), UNEP's workshop [Strengthening Environmental Dimensions of AMR](#) engaged regional authorities, reinforced environmental integration in AMR governance, advanced National Action Plans, and elevated environmental action as a core pillar of the [One Health approach](#).

Coordinated Action for Pollution Crisis Response

Across the Middle East, UNEP is working with UN partners and regional actors to track environmental risks linked to conflict, in line with [UNEA Resolution 6/12](#). This work focuses on practical early warning, including satellite-based monitoring of maritime oil spills carried out with the International Maritime Organization. The information generated helps Member States better understand emerging risks and respond more quickly during environmental emergencies.

In Ukraine, UNEP completed a project on hazardous waste and asbestos debris management, promoting safe clearance and processing methods tailored to national conditions. The project also clarified technical and institutional needs for scaling up debris management as recovery progresses. As part of wider green recovery efforts, UNEP and partners⁶ released a green job

⁴https://www.ccacoalition.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/OpenBurning_AsiaRoadmap_5_ALL0310.pdf

⁵ United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH), World Health Organization (WHO), and European Union Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (EU HERA)

⁶ Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Ukraine, and the International Labour Organization (ILO)

[assessment](#) in Kyiv estimating the creation of green jobs within the next five years (3 March 2026). Developed under the [Platform for Action](#), the assessment shows how reintegrating veterans into the labour market can support inclusive and sustainable economic recovery.

Regional spill preparedness advanced in South Asia with the launch of the [SASROSRC Regional Coordination Platform](#) by the South Asia Co-operative [Environment Programme](#) (10 February 2026). Covering Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, the platform strengthens coordination on oil and chemical spill response. UNEP provided strategic and technical support to align this initiative with global standards, including the OPRC-HNS⁷ Protocol and Regional Seas objectives, while enabling real-time information sharing, expert networks, and equipment tracking. Member States also began implementing an updated contingency plan addressing hazardous and noxious substances and emerging risks such as alternative marine fuels.

UNEP's Support on Strengthening Plastic Product Management in Thailand's Packaging Industry

UNEP supported Thailand's efforts to improve plastic product management through a national public consultation and inter-agency discussion organized by the National Science and Technology Development Agency in Bangkok (24 February 2026). The meeting brought together around 50 participants from 20 government agencies and stakeholder organizations to advance coordination on plastic policies in the packaging sector. Discussions focused on refining the five-year implementation roadmap for 2026–2030 and improving policy coherence across institutions. Participants emphasized that effective implementation depends on stronger inter-agency collaboration, clearer guidance on reuse systems and high-quality recycled plastics, and expanded capacity-building and public awareness, particularly among younger generations. The dialogue also highlighted the need for clear institutional arrangements for the proposed Circular Economy Commission to ensure accountability and avoid gaps in ministerial responsibility.

UNEP Validation of Minimum Recycled Content for polyethylene terephthalate (PET) Packaging in Malaysia

UNEP supported a stakeholder validation workshop on minimum recycled content for PET packaging, organized by Universiti Malaya in collaboration with the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry, in Kuala Lumpur (16 March 2026). The workshop presented baseline assessment findings and collected structured input from government and industry stakeholders, with discussions focusing on market readiness, supply-chain constraints, and implementation gaps affecting recycled PET uptake. That resulted in a set of technical considerations to inform policy formulation aligned with Malaysia's Circular Economy Policy Framework. Discussions emphasised the importance of early and inclusive engagement across government and industry, as well as the need to strengthen recycled PET supply and build industry capacity prior to introducing mandatory minimum recycled content requirements.

⁷ International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation relating to Hazardous and Noxious Substances (OPRC-HNS)

Fiji Builds National Consensus on a Container Deposit

With support from UNEP, Fiji's Ministry of Environment and Climate Change convened a national consultation on the development of a container deposit regulation system in Suva (4 February 2026). The consultation brought together government agencies, industry representatives, municipal councils, recycling organizations, and community groups to examine options for strengthening waste management systems, reducing plastic leakage, and supporting Fiji's transition toward a circular economy for plastics.

The consultation confirmed broad stakeholder support for establishing a national container deposit system and reached agreement on key design principles, including the establishment of a managing agency and a dedicated revolving fund. Recommendations included a phased rollout starting with PET bottles and aluminium cans, recognition of informal recyclers and community actors, clear transition periods for producers and retailers, and building on existing collection initiatives to ensure efficiency and social inclusion.

Workshop on Environmental Dimensions of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)

A regional workshop led by UNEP and the Cooperative Research Centre for Solving Antimicrobial Resistance in Agribusiness, Food and Environments (CRC SAAFE) in Bangkok introduced a design-thinking approach to address the environmental dimensions of antimicrobial resistance (10–12 February 2026). Representatives from eight countries reviewed a technical toolkit during the session. This tool provides a template for countries to conduct their own co-design workshops to combat drug resistance in local settings.

D. Foundational Subprogrammes

i. Science-policy

Strengthened Cross-Institutional Alignment on Environmental Data at the 57th UNSC

UNEP participated in the [57th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission](#) (UNSC), the UN system's highest decision-making body on international statistics, which brings together chief statisticians from governments and international organizations (3–6 March 2026). The session gathered delegations from more than 120 countries, 44 UN entities, regional and global organizations, and civil society, with the discussions covering environmental-economic accounting, environment and climate change statistics, SDG indicators, and disaster-related statistics, alongside a series of technical side events.

As the UN system's leading authority on environmental data and reporting, UNEP contributed to the Commission's deliberations by delivering official statements on two agenda items. Under environmental-economic accounting, UNEP welcomed progress on updating the [System of Environmental-Economic Accounting Central Framework for 2025–2028](#) and informed the Commission of the release of the Statistical Guideline for Measuring Flows of Plastic throughout the Life Cycle, developed in line with SEEA principles. On environment and climate change statistics, UNEP supported the proposed work programme of the relevant Expert Group and underscored the need for closer coordination between national statistical offices, ministries of environment, and other institutions to improve data production and reporting at national, regional, and global levels, including for the 2030 Agenda and multilateral environmental agreements.

Following the session, UNEP committed to continued collaboration with the global statistical community to shape statistical standards, share practical experience, and coordinate international programmes. This includes sustained engagement in the Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System and support for updating the Roadmap for Innovating UN System Statistics, with the aim of ensuring that environmental statistics are clearly reflected across UN statistical priorities.

Substantive SDG Evidence Informs Global Policy and Progress Reviews

UNEP continued its role as a custodian agency for SDG monitoring, [supporting progress tracking](#) across 25 indicators under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2 February–6 March 2026). It led indicator methodology development, coordinated data collection, and submitted updated data for 18 indicators, along with analytical storylines for 21 indicators. UNEP also strengthened national reporting capacity for Small Island Developing States by developing storylines for four relevant indicators. These contributions will inform the Secretary-General's Progress Report on the SDGs and The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2026.

UNEP Publications Advance Environmental Statistics and SDG Measurement

UNEP and UNITAR launched the [Statistical Guideline for Measuring Flows of Plastic throughout the Life Cycle](#), addressing a major gap in globally agreed methods for tracking plastic flows (30 January 2026). Developed through extensive collaboration with international organizations, national statistical offices, relevant ministries, academia, and research institutions, the guideline provides a common statistical framework for measuring plastics at national, regional, and global levels. By offering clear and practical guidance, the publication supports statistical offices and other institutions responsible for producing reliable data on plastics, strengthening consistency and comparability across countries.

UNEP also released [From Data to Impact: Measuring Progress through Disaggregated SDG Indicators](#) (27 February 2026). UNEP led the design, coordination, and publication of the report, working across the full production cycle and drawing on contributions from other UN organizations in their roles as SDG custodian agencies. This special edition focuses on the environmental dimension of sustainable development by proposing disaggregation approaches for 92 environment-related SDG indicators. The report demonstrates how more detailed data can improve national and sub-national policymaking, while highlighting the potential social, economic, and environmental benefits of evidence-based decision-making.

UNEP co-organized an associated event of the [Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development](#) in Bangkok focused on practical ways to address environmental challenges while advancing the SDGs (23 February 2026). Drawing on the Asia-Pacific Synergy Report, the event presented analysis, case studies, and policy options, and brought together governments, UN entities, and other stakeholders for open dialogue. Discussions across sessions helped shape an action-oriented agenda on synergies to accelerate SDG implementation in the region.

Still in Bangkok, UNEP also supported the second Authors' Meeting for the Asia-Pacific Synergy Report, which reviewed key messages, policy recommendations, and chapter alignment (24–25 February 2026). Building on UNEA resolutions 6/4 and 7/5 on promoting synergies, the report is being developed to provide concrete examples and practical guidance

tailored to regional needs. Based on the report's findings, Member States are expected to consider the approval of a Regional Programme of Action on advancing synergies for sustainable development at the 9th session of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Committee on Environment and Development (1–3 July 2026).

ii. Environmental law and governance

From Policy to Implementations: Environmental Governance Reforms Deliver Results Across Regions

During the reporting period, UNEP strengthened environmental governance and legal frameworks across multiple regions by providing integrated policy, regulatory and institutional support to advance sustainable, inclusive and evidence-based environmental decision-making.

UNEP published an [analytical report on environmental permitting systems across textile value-chain activities](#) (28 February 2026), providing policy-relevant evidence to inform the UNEP Textile Initiative and support the transition towards a sustainable and circular textile sector.

At the national level, UNEP supported the Government of Cambodia in developing a Sub-Decree on Community Protected Areas under the 2023 Code on Environment and Natural Resources, including through a review of domestic legal measures and legislative practices to inform drafting.

UNEP also provided targeted regulatory support by reviewing draft vehicle-emissions regulations at the request of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala (March 2026), contributing technical feedback to strengthen environmental rule of law and air-quality governance.

Through inter-agency collaboration, UNEP worked with UNDP, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), FAO and the UN Economic Commission for Africa to review Mozambique's Carbon Markets Decree under the United Nations Development Coordination Office Issue-Based Coalition on Climate Action, Resilience and Food Systems (February 2026), contributing recommendations to ensure climate integrity and social equity safeguards.

In addition, UNEP supported implementation-focused governance reforms by promoting enforcement of extended producer responsibility for packaging in Nigeria, including through engagement with businesses and investors to advance reuse and refill systems addressing pollution from water sachets, while in South Sudan UNEP engaged the informal sector to create green jobs for women and youth through circular reuse, refill and recycling initiatives, including community plastic collection systems and training on plastic-to-brick manufacturing. At the regional level, UNEP supported the development of a clearing-house mechanism for hazardous-waste information exchange under the [Bamako Convention](#) (January 2026) and facilitated dialogue with Somalia, Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, resulting in commitments to ratify the Convention and renewed commitments to its implementation.

Environmental Rule of Law, Judicial Capacity and Institutional Strengthening

UNEP strengthened environmental adjudication and legal practice in Southeast Asia by providing technical advice at a regional consultation on the preparation of the Guidebook on Rules of Procedure for Environmental Cases (11–12 February 2026), supporting the

development of practical procedural guidance for judges handling environmental cases. In collaboration with the Thailand Institute of Justice and the United Nations Development Programme, UNEP delivered a [regional training programme for lawyers, enforcement officials and judges](#) in Thailand, combining lectures, interactive sessions and a field visit to an illegal industrial waste pollution site in Rayong, and contributed substantive inputs on global trends in pollution law and governance, effective air-quality legislation and the Montevideo Programme (24–27 March 2026).

UNEP further supported regional policy dialogue by delivering remarks at an event with parliamentarians from Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia on environmental and participatory governance, and by presenting on environmental crime and transboundary issues during an information session of the Vietnam Environmental Law Clinics (4 March 2026). UNEP also participated in and supported the event “[The Role of Law and Judges](#)”, held during the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (24 March 2026), contributing to discussions on the role of legal institutions in biodiversity conservation.

To strengthen longer-term institutional cooperation, UNEP concluded a Memorandum of Understanding with the Supreme People’s Procuratorate of the People’s Republic of China to promote exchanges and cooperation in environmental protection.

Global Momentum Grows for Rights-Based Clean Air Governance

UNEP convened a [dedicated session](#) during the Better Air Quality Conference 2026 in Thailand (13 March 2026) to examine linkages between the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment and national air-quality legislation, presenting key findings from [its Global Assessment of Air Pollution Legislation](#) and the [Guide on Ambient Air Quality Legislation](#).

UNEP further contributed to the [event “Keeping the Air We Breathe Safe”](#) in Geneva (9 March 2026), where it presented its work on integrating human-rights-based approaches into air-quality legislation and policy frameworks.

During the sixty-first session of the Human Rights Council, UNEP [delivered a statement](#) in Geneva (6 March 2026) highlighting its support to more than twenty-five countries on air-quality legislation, monitoring and enforcement, and participated as a panellist at a [side event](#) on asbestos impacts and Indigenous Peoples’ rights, reinforcing linkages between environmental governance, access to justice and accountability for environmental harm.

Stakeholders Gain Practical Tools and Knowledge for Environmental

UNEP [collaborated](#) with UNDP in Malaysia at the [Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights in Asia Conference](#) to strengthen capacity of businesses, regulators, investors, civil society and academia on responsible business conduct, and together with UNEP FI leading sessions on nature risk plans and just transition, human rights and rule of law (30–31 March).

UNEP supported validation workshops for the Malawi National State of Environment and Outlook Report identifying priority governance actions including improving enforcement mechanisms, strengthening institutional coordination and improving monitoring and evaluation systems (26–30 January 2026). Additionally, UNEP participated in the [7th Conference of the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in Middle East and North African Universities](#) (ASSELLMU) under the theme *Environmental Law in A Digital Age*,

highlighting the connections between the environmental rule of law and open access knowledge platforms like InforMEA (9-10 February 2026).

UNEP Expands Knowledge Platforms and Legislative Support Tools

UNEP, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, [launched three e-learning courses on the InforMEA platform](#) (26 March 2026) to strengthen the capacity of national focal points and practitioners to implement obligations under these multilateral environmental agreements. UNEP also published communication videos to enhance awareness and use of the [Law and Climate Change Toolkit](#), a climate legislation database developed jointly with the UNFCCC, UN-Habitat and FAO, which highlights governance criteria and provides examples of national legislation supporting the implementation of nationally determined contributions and Paris Agreement obligations.

UNEP Provides Legal and Procedural Support to Intergovernmental Environmental Processes

During the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, UNEP supported the Secretariat by providing procedural and legal assistance to the Committee of the Whole and the Credentials Committee (23–29 March 2026).

UNEP further supported the Secretariat of the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor by providing technical and legal inputs during the first round of negotiations for a binding agreement to establish the Corridor as an international organization with legal personality and governance structures in Panama (26–27 February 2026), including refinements to the treaty zero draft to inform subsequent negotiations.

E. Enabling Subprogrammes

i. Finance and economic transformations

UNEP Supports Youth Employment in Cuba's Sustainable Sugarcane Industry

UNEP co-led the first roundtable on green jobs to help young people find work in Cuba's circular sugarcane industry (28–29 January 2026). Working with UNICEF and the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNEP aligned the [Green Jobs for Youth Pact](#) with national priorities and brought together 20 experts from government and civil society. This coordination ensured that the needs of women and youth were central to the planning process, building on research conducted late last year.

Brazil Improves Rural Credit Rules to Better Align Agriculture and Environmental Protection

UNEP organized a [national workshop](#) in Brazil to validate the results of its UNDA T-15 Project, which focuses on the Safra Plan's rural credit scheme (4 February 2026). During this project, UNEP conducted an analytical study with the University of São Paulo and discovered that 91 per cent of beneficiaries account for only around 4 per cent of related deforestation. UNEP used these findings to help the Ministry of Finance draft and pass a new regulation that tightens environmental and social rules for receiving these loans.

Eco Invest & Brazil Caminhos Verdes: from Implementation to Strategy event

UNEP co-organized the "[Eco Invest & Brazil Green Way](#)" [high-level panel](#) in São Paulo to turn sustainable investment plans into national strategies (3 March 2026). Working as a lead partner with the Innovative Finance for the Amazon, Cerrado and Chaco (IFACC), UNEP convened key government experts from the Ministry of Agriculture, Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária, and the Brazilian Treasury. Through this collaboration, it provided a platform to align public policy with private sector needs, ensuring that green investment models are practical and ready for use.

UNEP FI Capacity-Building and Technical Engagements (Latin America and the Caribbean)

UNEP FI played a central role in strengthening the capacity of financial institutions across Latin America and the Caribbean to integrate nature-related risk management, climate transition planning, impact analysis, and social inclusion into financial decision-making. Through a coordinated programme of regional and national training, UNEP FI translated international sustainability frameworks into practical, context-specific application.

The activities and initiatives⁸ contributed to enhanced institutional readiness to implement the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), the Principles for Responsible Banking (PRB), and emerging climate transition requirements, while promoting just transition and gender-responsive finance.

⁸ [Nature Reporting Preparer Forum \(NRPF\)](#) – Spanish (Caribbean) (January - March 2026): Regional technical training aligned with the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD).

[NRPF](#) – English (Caribbean) (4, 12, and 26 March 2026): Tailored capacity-building to support application of nature-risk disclosure standards in small-island contexts.

[NRPF](#) – Portuguese (Brazil) (27 January; 24 February; 24 March 2026): National workshops adapting TNFD guidance to the Brazilian regulatory and market context.

[Financing for Just Transition in Latin America and the Caribbean](#) (12 March 2026): Technical dialogue on integrating social inclusion and equity into climate strategies of financial institutions.

[Environmental and Social Risk Analysis \(ESRA\) Online Course](#) (2–20 March 2026): Certified training on environmental and social risk identification, assessment, and management, delivered with INCAE Business School.

[Nature and the Financial Sector Workshop – Chile](#) (7 January 2026): National workshop strengthening capacity on biodiversity-related financial risks through public-private collaboration.

[Climate and Gender Finance Training – Panama City](#) (24 - 25 February 2026): National training integrating climate risk analysis and gender considerations into banking sector practices.

UNEP Shares Trends in Environmental Education to Drive Sustainable Behaviour

UNEP shared technical insights on how environmental education can drive cultural and behavioural change during a regional sustainability webinar (29 January 2026). By presenting current global trends at the “[Let’s Talk Green about Environmental Education for Sustainability](#)” event, UNEP provided regional practitioners with specialized knowledge to help them include sustainability principles in their work. The virtual meeting was hosted by the Ministry of Education of El Salvador.

UNEP Promotes Sustainable Behavioural Change at Panama’s Festival EdUnidos

UNEP presented technical insights on how environmental education drives cultural and behavioural change during a national learning festival in Panama City (31 January 2026). By sharing these sustainability perspectives, UNEP helped bring environmental issues into public discourse and provided practical methods for using education to influence long-term behaviour.

UNEP Trains Regional Youth Leaders on Sustainable Mobility and Clean Energy

UNEP shared technical expertise with youth leaders to help them prepare for the 2030 Latin American and Caribbean Forum (12 March 2026). During a specialised training session for the Major Group for Children and Youth, a UNEP specialist provided insights on clean energy progress and sustainable mobility. This lead action provided young advocates with the evidence-based knowledge required to engage in high-level regional policy discussions.

UNEP Aligns Regional Youth Strategy with Climate Action Priorities

UNEP provided technical inputs to update the 2026–2027 Work Plan for [the Regional Collaborative Platform LAC Youth Task Force](#) (12 March 2026). By highlighting how climate action connects with youth needs, UNEP helped shape a strategy that addresses environmental and social challenges together. This leadership ensures that the activities of the participating UN agencies directly support a sustainable and inclusive future for young people in the region.

Advancing Harmonised Ecolabels to Enhance Sustainable Public Procurement in Asia

UNEP supported six Asian countries integrate environmental and social metrics into ecolabel criteria for the textile and construction sectors (January–March 2026). Through the [EcoAdvance](#) project, UNEP provided the technical expertise necessary to create new markets for sustainable goods via public procurement. In [Uzbekistan](#), UNEP guided the adoption of a Green Public Procurement resolution that grants a 5 per cent scoring bonus to building products with ecolabels. UNEP also managed regional negotiations in Thailand that led to a three-way agreement between Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand to recognise cement and concrete standards across borders.

Enhancing Waste Management and Circular Economy Policy Support in Latin America and the Caribbean

UNEP organized a [regional technical workshop in Santo Domingo to support countries use the Waste Management and Circular Economy Policy Support System \(WMPSS\)](#) digital tool

(10–12 March 2026). Working with the Green Growth Knowledge Partnership (GGKP), UNEP shared technical guidance, managed coordination, and provided hands-on training. These actions facilitated countries improve their policy design and track progress toward Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through this, UNEP enabled participating governments to turn complex waste data into practical policy steps while boosting regional cooperation on the circular economy.

Food Waste Solutions in Tourism Scaled from Regional Pilots to a Global Platform

UNEP launched the [global "Recipe of Change" platform](#) to help hotels and restaurants measure and reduce food waste through digital technology and behavioural change (27 March 2026). Working with UN Tourism and the One Planet Programme, UNEP provided a [practical toolkit](#) developed with WRAP to help the tourism sector meet Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 targets. Following successful pilots in West Asia where the "Green Ramadan" campaign achieved food waste reductions of up to 60 per cent in one month, UNEP is now scaling these solutions globally. During the launch at the [International Day of Zero Waste](#), UNEP facilitated high-level messages from the Ministers of Indonesia, Türkiye and Uzbekistan to build international support for zero-waste food chains.

UNEP Leads Development of Global Fiscal Tools for Climate Action

The [Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action](#) approved its 2026 Strategic Work Programme during its [Global In-Person Deputies Meeting in Kampala, Uganda \(9–11 February 2026\)](#). The event brought together nearly 100 representatives from over 50 member countries and 30 institutional partners, emphasising the need for practical tools, peer learning, and applied economic analysis to support politically feasible reforms.

The Strategic Work Programme includes the development of the 2026 Flagship Guide on climate-aligned fiscal policy, led by UNEP in partnership with the Grantham Research Institute at the London School of Economics. This aims at expanding guidance on public investment, adaptation planning, biodiversity, and industrial policy and is to be launched at the Fall Meetings of the World Bank/IMF in Bangkok in October.

The meeting also advanced regional modelling capacity through cooperation with the [African Symposium co-organized by UNEP's PAGE programme \(12–13 February 2026\)](#). It built regional capacity for integrating climate and natural capital risks into macro fiscal planning. The process strengthened political ownership and cross regional support for fiscal guidance linking climate action with stability and growth. Key challenges include varying national priorities and the need for practical tools, while opportunities lie in deeper engagement with finance ministries, enhanced peer learning, and digital delivery. Continuous, structured country consultations remain essential to ensure the Guide responds to real fiscal and implementation needs.

ii. Digital transformations

UNEP Provides Technical Expertise for Responsible Digital Transformation for Resilient and Low-Emission Cities and Industry

UNEP shared technical expertise at the [Sustainable Industry Lab 2026 \(SiLAB'26\)](#) to advance digital solutions for low-emission cities and sustainable industries (18 February 2026). During

the event in Warsaw, Poland, UNEP demonstrated how responsible digital transformation and artificial intelligence (AI) support decarbonization and resource efficiency to address the global environmental challenges and crises.

UNEP shared global policy updates, linking them to the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) resolution on AI environmental sustainability and the Global Digital Compact. Furthermore, it showcased environmental intelligence initiatives, including the [Global Environmental Data Strategy \(GEDS\)](#) and the [World Environment Situation Room \(WESR\)](#).

UNEP Equips Green Small Businesses in Kenya with Digital Skills

UNEP supported the rollout of a [digital skills programme for green micro, small, and medium enterprises \(MSMEs\)](#) across Kenya (January–March 2026) under the DigiKen initiative. Working through a [network of 15 digital innovation hubs](#), UNEP co-designed the digital curriculum with the Kenyan government and local partners. It also provided technical guidance to align the training with sustainable digital principles and coordinated the delivery of the course, which officially launched (9 March 2026).

UNEP Boosts Staff Capacity for Digital Innovation and AI Discovery

UNEP trained staff in Nairobi on new digital tools to improve innovation and access to knowledge (February–March 2026). Through WeShare sessions, practical demonstrations were delivered on the use of the UNEP Sandbox for testing new ideas and [EnvironmentGPT](#) for AI-supported research, strengthening staff capacity to apply digital solutions in project delivery and knowledge management.

UNEP Launches Digital Platform for Integrated Environmental Intelligence

UNEP launched the [World Environment Situation Room \(WESR\) platform](#) in Nairobi to provide an integrated source of environmental data for decision-making (26 March 2026). Leading on all stages of the technical implementation, from defining system requirements to designing the platform's architecture UNEP ensured the system met organizational information and communication technology (ICT) standards while modernizing how environmental intelligence is delivered across the organization.

UNEP Develops New Toolkit to Boost Global Environmental Data Capacity

UNEP advanced implementation of the Global Environmental Data Strategy (GEDS) through the development of the Environmental Data Capacity (EDC) Toolkit. The objective of the activity is to support countries and partners in assessing and strengthening environmental data capabilities. UNEP led the drafting of the toolkit content and coordinated internal technical inputs to ensure alignment with GEDS priorities and UNEP data governance principles. The EDC Toolkit draft has been developed and is currently undergoing internal review. This work contributes to strengthening environmental data governance and supports future country level capacity building under the GEDS framework.

F. Cross-cutting Issues

i. Gender

Foundations Laid for Gender-Responsive Climate Risk Information in Public Health in Timor-Leste

UNEP co-facilitated a [national multi-sectoral training](#) under the [FP171 project](#) in partnership with the Ministry of Health, the World Health Organization and United Nations University (25–27 February 2026), strengthening climate services for health in Timor-Leste. A core contribution of UNEP was the integration of gender-responsive approaches into climate-informed health services, enabling participants to design inclusive and accessible early warning messages that address the differentiated needs of women, girls and vulnerable groups. The training built practical capacity among 43 participants from government, civil society and disability organizations, improving understanding of how gender and social factors shape access to early warning information and strengthening skills to develop people-centred health alerts.

Participant feedback confirmed the effectiveness of UNEP's intervention, with strong gains in knowledge and confidence, while the training also identified opportunities to deepen institutional uptake through targeted follow-up capacity-building and the integration of gender-responsive approaches into decision-support systems such as the Climate Risk Information System for Public Health. UNEP further emphasised inclusive partnerships and knowledge dissemination, including engagement with organizations representing persons with disabilities and the translation of training materials into Tetum to support national ownership and scaling of impact.

Belém Gender Action Plan Priorities Aligned Across Latin America and the Caribbean

UNEP, through its LAC Regional Working Group on Gender and Environment brought together gender experts from 11 countries across Latin America and the Caribbean with the objective of exchanging knowledge on the Belém Gender Action Plan (GAP III), adopted at COP30, as well as discussing recommendations and key gender-responsive messages for the Sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation under the CBD (25 February 2025). The meeting strengthened regional collaboration and highlighted the need for better coordination on biodiversity, climate, and finance.

Public Consultation of Panama's Gender and Environment Action Plan

UNEP supported the Public Consultation [of Panama's Gender and Environment Action Plan](#) (18 March 2026). The online meeting brought together gender UN experts to review and discuss the five pillars of the plan, with the aim of identifying opportunities for improvement and strengthening its overall impact. UNEP contributed by promoting the use of available resources from their LAC Regional Working Group on Gender and Environment, as well as by providing relevant technical inputs to enhance the plan. As a result, the consultation process enriched the plan's design, and strengthened its gender-responsive approach, advancing the integrated sustainability agenda in Panama.

UNEP Advances Gender-Responsive Circular Economy Governance in Mexico's E-Waste Sector

UNEP, through the International Environmental Technology Centre and the Industry and Economy Division, conducted the first comprehensive national gender analysis of Mexico's electronic waste sector under the project [Strengthening Circularity in the Electronics Sector in Mexico](#) (1 January–31 March 2026). The analysis assessed gender dimensions across the e-waste value chain, with a focus on Mexico City and the [federal policy framework](#), generating evidence on structural inequalities in labour participation, income distribution and exposure to environmental and health risks, including the concentration of women in low-value, informal and high-risk activities. Through statistical analysis, legal review and identification of best practices, UNEP developed policy-relevant recommendations to mainstream gender into circular economy and e-waste governance, including documented contributions to regulatory progress such as the integration of gender considerations into Mexico's 2025 Circular Economy Law.

ii. Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS)

UNEP Strengthens Environmental and Social Safeguards Capacity in Somalia

UNEP conducted a Safeguards and Gender mission to Somalia and delivered a capacity building session for 26 government representatives (29 March–1 April 2026) to strengthen national capacity for implementing environmental and social safeguard systems. Through targeted technical support, UNEP advanced the application of Somalia's newly established [Environmental and Social Impact Assessment](#) (ESIA) and Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment regulations, while mainstreaming gender equality and the empowerment of women within safeguard processes. The session enhanced participants' technical knowledge and practical skills in identifying, managing and mitigating environmental and social risks, and strengthened understanding of ESIA preparation, review procedures and compliance requirements, supporting more effective and gender responsive safeguard implementation at the national level.

iii. South-South Cooperation

UNEP Advances South–South and Triangular Cooperation across Regions

During the first quarter of 2026, UNEP advanced South–South and triangular cooperation through targeted initiatives across Africa, Asia Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, with a focus on knowledge exchange, capacity building and regional collaboration.

- In Africa, UNEP co launched the [Climate Resilient Eastern African Transboundary Water Management for Environmental Sustainability \(CREATES\) programme](#) in partnership with regional governments and international organizations during its inception meeting in Nairobi (13–14 January 2026).
- In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNEP facilitated a series of virtual workshops on Sustainable Public Procurement (25 February; 11 and 25 March 2026), strengthening technical capacities, promoting peer to peer learning and supporting the integration of circular economy principles into national procurement systems.

- In Asia Pacific, UNEP [contributed to the thirteenth ASEAN+3 Leadership Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production](#) in Manila (9–11 March 2026), fostering policy dialogue and exchange of best practices among ASEAN Member States and partner economies, with a focus on climate resilience and circular economy approaches.
- UNEP also supported South–South and triangular cooperation through the [inception meeting of the Sustainable Development of the Bamboo Industry and South–South Cooperation project](#) in Beijing (4 February 2026), sharing practical experiences from Kenya and Thailand to support peer learning, replication of successful bamboo sector models and the promotion of nature-based solutions and sustainable livelihoods.

G. Opportunities, Challenges and Lessons Learned for UNEP MTS and PoW Implementation

1. Growing demand for coordinated approaches in responding to regional and national priorities

The [Africa Water Vision 2063](#) and the development of unified African positions on climate issues open opportunities for UNEP to scale up work on water security, climate adaptation, and carbon market integrity, connecting African priorities with global financing mechanisms.

Rising recognition of legally binding frameworks such as the Cartagena Convention and Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Protocol is creating momentum for more coordinated delivery of global biodiversity commitments. Improved alignment between biodiversity planning and reporting processes could unlock additional resources for marine conservation, including in support of BBNJ implementation readiness. These trends also complement recent UNEA resolutions on [coral reefs](#) and [sargassum](#), which call for strengthened regional cooperation and science-based action areas. UNEP is well positioned to respond to this through the Regional Seas Programme and other mechanisms.

UNEP sees similar coordination needs in sub-regional and/or multi-country interventions. Management of transboundary river basins, such as the Mara Basin shared by Kenya and Tanzania, and the Sio-Malaba-Malakisi Basin shared by Kenya and Uganda, demand harmonized governance and stakeholder coordination, supported by data sharing and capacity development. UNEP's Critical Forests Integrated Programmes in the Congo Basin and the Guinean Forest Region demonstrate that effective action against wildlife crime requires harmonized legal frameworks, coordinated judicial cooperation, and jointly developed operational tools and training implemented on the ground.

2. Value of environmental data and the importance of data governance is becoming more prominent.

Hands-on, use case driven approaches are critical for accelerating adoption of digital tools, supported by peer learning and continuous user support. Strong central coordination, clear technical governance and early alignment with ICT standards are essential for deploying complex platforms such as WESR. The fragmented environmental data ecosystem requires coordinated multi-stakeholder action, alignment with national priorities and early, sustained engagement to ensure ownership. Embedding sustainability from the outset through capacity

building, institutionalization and clear implementation pathways is essential to achieving long-term impact.

Limited harmonized data and indicators constrain consistent monitoring across regional and global frameworks, while differing mandates, timelines and information requirements across biodiversity-related processes create coordination challenges that make alignment more complex.

UNEP's response during the reporting period

UNEP in response to *Growing demand for coordinated approaches in responding to regional and national priorities*:

- UNEP's Africa Regional Office has strengthened its support to African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) processes, including engagement with the African Group of Negotiators and the African Diplomatic Corps. Current efforts focus on improving coherence between climate and water policies, increasing engagement on climate finance, and strengthening environmental governance across the region.
- Early sharing of ideas, inclusive engagement with strategic partners, and mutual trust contributed to successful outreach. The UNEP Asia Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN) shared the idea with the Ministry of the Environment, Japan (MoEJ), exploring the possibility for APAN to co-design the outreach event. The strong ongoing partnership with MoEJ enabled UNEP to mobilize its support in designing the event and ensuring MoEJ's participation.

UNEP in response to *Value of environmental data and the importance of data governance is becoming more prominent*:

- Peer-to-peer exchange and multi-agency collaboration such as [DigiKen](#) have enabled knowledge sharing and pooling of expertise, while internal capacity-building efforts (WeShare sessions on the Sandbox and EnvironmentGPT) demonstrated strong demand for practical, AI-enabled solutions. These efforts, alongside platforms such as the World Environment Situation Room (WESR), are strengthening integrated data services and supporting data-driven decision making.
- A [28 January webinar convened environmental education libraries](#) from Chile, Ecuador, Peru, and El Salvador, fostering collaboration and sharing best practices. It improved access to environmental information and strengthened institutional capacities, advancing environmental education and the use of libraries for sustainable development.

UNEP facilitated regional technical dialogue and knowledge exchange among SPAW Focal Points and partners, provided strategic guidance on integrating SPAW obligations into NBSAP updates and CBD reporting, initiated follow up technical exchanges and webinars to address capacity gaps, and promoted the integration of marine biodiversity priorities into regional programmes and project development initiatives.

3 Resource management and mobilization

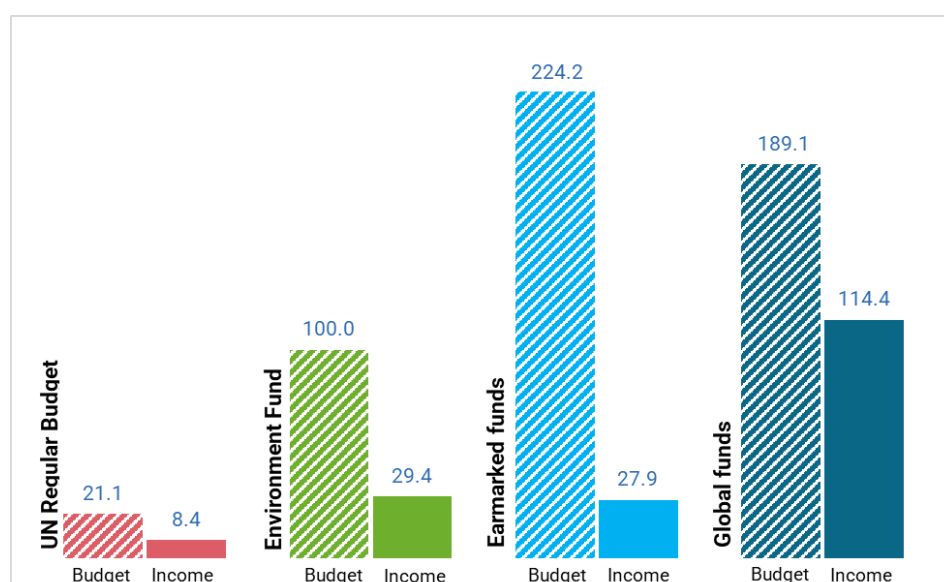
A. Financial Resources

i. Financial Update as at 31 March 2026

a. Overview of income⁹

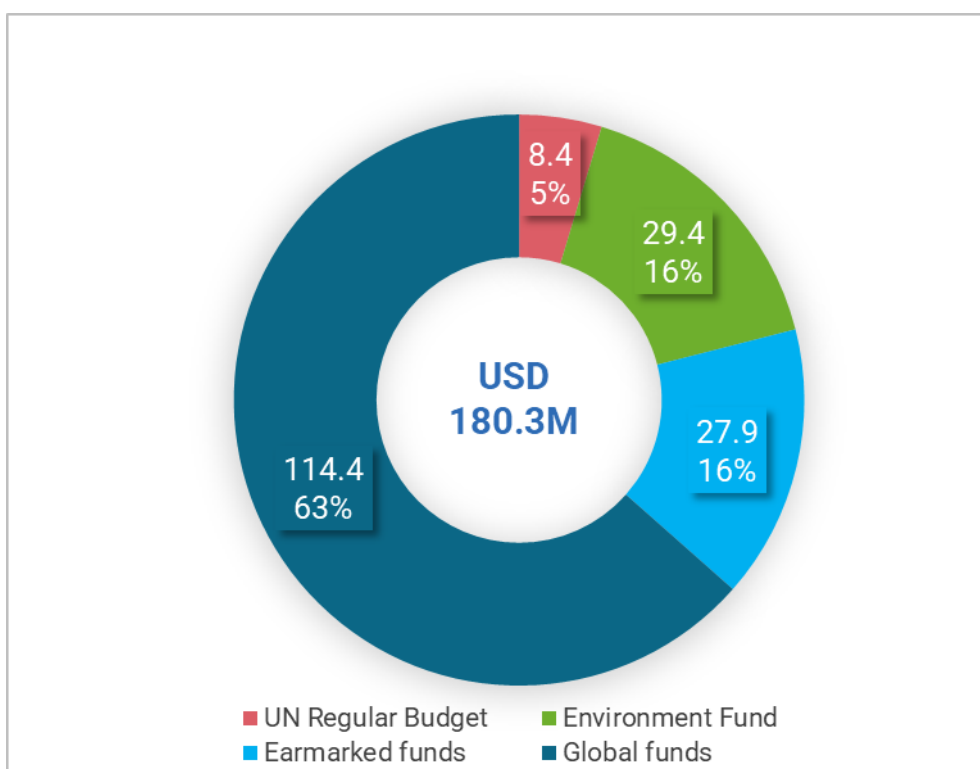
The UN Regular Budget and the Environment Fund provide UNEP's core funding, enabling the organization to respond to the crises of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, land degradation and desertification and pollution and waste, and to implement the programme of work approved by Member States. As of 31 March 2026, core funding represented 21% of UNEP's total income, while Earmarked and Global Funds accounted for 79%. Income from Earmarked and Global Funds includes multi-year elements, such as unspent balances from previous years and funds received for future years' spending.

Graph 1: Annual budget vs income (in million \$) /January 2026 – March 2026



⁹ The figures do not include conventions and protocols administered by UNEP. Per the United Nations Secretariat interpretation and application of the International Public Service Accounting Standards (IPSAS), our financial and administrative management platform, Umoja, does not allow a breakdown of multi-year contributions into annual figures for income. The financial figures presented in this report reflect income based on actual pledges and cash receipts for programme performance reporting purposes and may therefore differ from figures prepared in accordance with IPSAS accrual accounting.

Graph 2: Income per source of funding (in million \$) / January 2026 - March 2026



b. Core funding

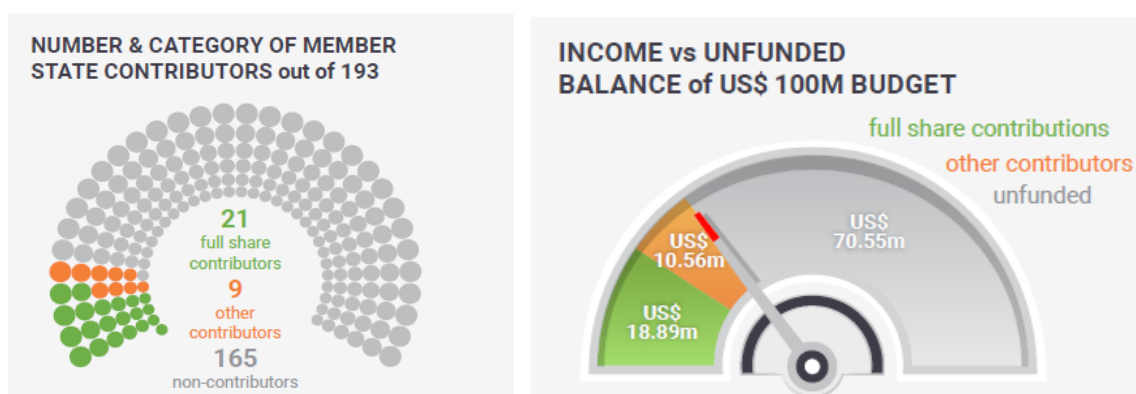
(i) The United Nations regular budget

The United Nations Regular Budget provides core resources to UNEP to support fundamental programme activities. Owing to liquidity constraints, the 2026 initial allotment issued was restricted to US\$ 8.4 million of the approved budget of US\$ 21.1 million. The Corporate Services Division, in consultation with UN Headquarters, continues to manage the expenditures within the authorized allocation, in accordance with guidance from the Office of the United Nations Controller.

(ii) The Environment Fund

The Environment Fund is UNEP's financial backbone for results-focused and balanced programme delivery with robust oversight. As of 31 March 2026, the Environment Fund income amounted to US\$ 29.4 million, representing 29 % of the approved 2026 Environment Fund budget of US\$ 100 million. These contributions were received from 30 Member States, representing 15% of the 193 Member States. Of these, 21 Member States (70%) contributed their full share in accordance with the voluntary indicative scale of contributions (VISC). Twenty-seven (27) Member States have paid their pledges as at 31 March 2026.

Graph 3: Status of the Environment Fund in 2026 (as at 31 March 2026)



UNEP appreciates all contributors with special thanks to the 21 Member States that have provided their full share (Table 1), as well as to the top -15 Member State contributors (Table 2), who together accounted for 99% of the income to the Environment Fund.

Furthermore, UNEP welcomes the increased stability and predictability provided by multi-year agreements/pledges from Belgium and Canada, which amounted to a total of US\$ 6.8 million, representing 23 % of the Environment Fund income as at 31 March 2026.

Table 1: Full share contributors to the Environment Fund in 2026 (as at 31 March 2026)

CONTRIBUTIONS ABOVE AND EQUAL TO FULL SHARE				
Albania	Eritrea	Ireland	Mauritius	Sweden
Armenia	Eswatini	Liechtenstein	Micronesia (FSO)	
Barbados	France	Lithuania	Montenegro	
Belgium*	Georgia	Luxembourg	Philippines	
Egypt	Iceland	Malta	Slovenia	

**Amounts based on pledges, to be confirmed at the time of payment including possible effect of exchange rate fluctuation*

Table 2: Top 15 contributors to the Environment Fund in 2026 (as at 31 March 2026)

Member State	in million \$
France	7.6
Sweden	5.1
Belgium*	4.6
Germany	4.0
Norway	3.0
Canada	2.2
Australia	1.0
Ireland	0.6
Luxembourg	0.3
Philippines	0.2
Kuwait	0.2

Egypt	0.2
Slovenia	0.1
Lithuania	0.1
Singapore	0.1

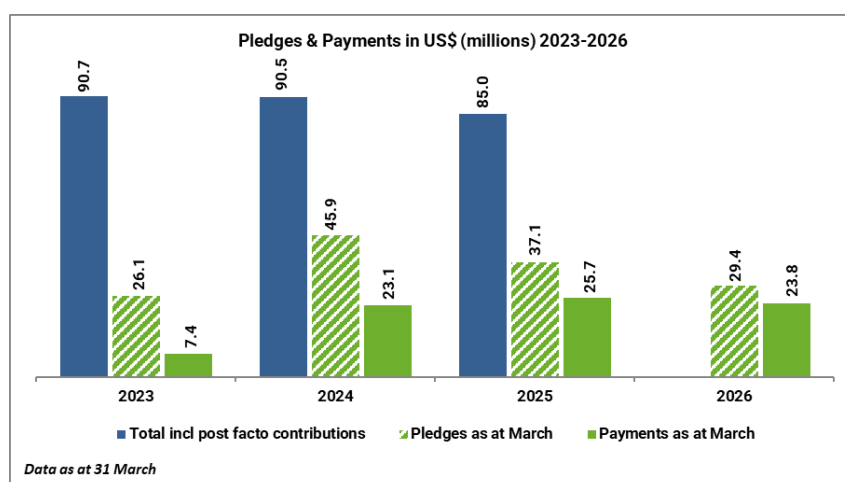
**Amounts based on pledges, to be confirmed at the time of payment including possible effect of exchange rate fluctuation*

(iii) Comparison with previous years

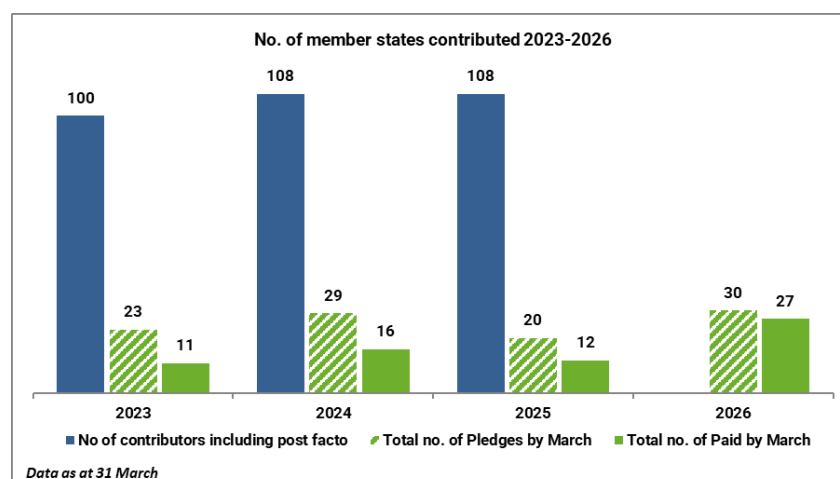
While early contributions slowed in the first quarter of 2025 and 2026 following the peak in 2024, total contributions in 2026 remain 13 per cent higher than those recorded over the same period in 2023 (Graph 4). Encouragingly, the number of Member States pledging contributions increased by 50 per cent compared with early 2025 (Graph 5), signalling broader engagement and a growing level of commitment.

Early contributions remain vital to strengthening funding predictability and stability, thereby enabling more efficient and effective programme delivery. Member States are therefore strongly encouraged to contribute to the Environment Fund as early as possible each year.

Graph 4 Pledges and payments to the Environment Fund 2023-2026



Graph 5: Number of contributors to the environment fund 2023-2026



c. Earmarked contributions

(i) Earmarked funds

As at 31 March 2026, earmarked contributions amounted to US\$ 27.9 million and accounted for 12% of the budget income for 2026, including multi-year agreements. All funds received were tightly earmarked dedicated to specific programmes or projects. To enhance funding flexibility and maximize programmatic effectiveness, UNEP encourages Member States to consider softening their earmarked support, particularly through contributions to the Planetary Funds.

Table 3: Top 15 contributors of earmarked funds in 2026 (as at 31 March 2026)

Funding Partner	USD (Millions)
European Commission	7.02
Japan	5.74
UN Agencies*	4.92
United Kingdom	3.55
Foundations/NGOs	2.20
Germany	2.19
UNEP Finance Initiative**	1.78
Spain	0.14
Canada	0.10
Panama	0.07
Private Sector	0.05
Norway	0.05
Jamaica	0.04
Denmark	0.03
Namibia	0.02

**Funding received through Multi-Partner Trust Funds and other collaboration agreements with UN entities.*

***Partnership between UNEP and the global financial sector to mobilize private sector finance for sustainable development.*

(ii) Global funds

The funds provided by the GEF and the GCF are earmarked to specific programmes and projects. By the end of March 2026, GEF had received US\$ 114.4 million and no income had been received on the GCF. The income received was 61% of the annual budgeted income for the year 2026 including multi-year agreements.

ii. Status of allocations and expenditures as at 31 March 2026

a. Environment fund

The approved Programme of Work and Budget for the Environment Fund for the 2026–2027 biennium amounts to US\$200 million. The interim allocation released for year 2026 so far is

US\$ 36 million, and the expenditure as at 31 March 2026 is US\$ 16 million or 45% of the interim allocation. Further allocation will be released in Q2.

2026 Core Budgets - Programme of Work Budget as of 31 March 2026				
Environment Fund (EF)				
	Functional Area Name	Budget	Allotment	Expenditure
A	Policymaking organs	2,681,500	1,002,729	446,822
B	Executive direction & management	6,346,500	2,146,739	864,277
	Subtotal A + B	9,028,000	3,149,468	1,311,098
C	Programme of work			
1.	Climate action	10,458,000	3,565,913	1,663,199
2.	Digital transformations	7,955,500	2,900,879	533,358
3.	Nature action	12,961,000	4,715,116	2,192,320
4.	Environmental law and governance	15,642,500	5,320,296	3,601,555
5.	Chemicals and pollution action	10,815,500	3,606,120	1,987,168
6.	Finance and economic transformations	11,173,000	3,435,128	1,790,632
7.	Science-policy	8,849,000	3,172,378	1,476,892
	Subtotal C	77,854,500	26,715,828	13,245,125
D	Fund programme reserve	4,000,000	1,500,000	218,066
	Subtotal C + D	81,854,500	28,215,828	13,463,192
E	Programme support and other items			
	Programme support	9,117,500	4,634,705	1,571,866
	Subtotal E	9,117,500	4,634,705	1,571,866
	Total (A+B+C+D+E)	100,000,000	36,000,000	16,346,156

b. Programme Support Cost (PSC)

The income from programme support costs (PSC) is earned through extrabudgetary project implementation. It is used to cover essential administrative and operational expenses. The PSC budget in the Programme of Work and Budget for the biennium 2026-2027 is US\$44.8 million. The interim allocation released for year 2026 so far is US\$13 million, and the expenditure as at 31 March 2026 is US\$2.8 million or 21% of the interim allocation. Further allocation will be released in Q2.

Programme Support Cost (PSC) Fund				
	Functional Area Name	Budget	Allotment	Expenditures
A	Policymaking organs	-	-	-
B.1	Executive direction & management	-	138,480	75,673
	Subtotal A + B	-	138,480	75,673
C	Programme of work			
1.	Climate action	1,600,000	931,484	611,614
2.	Digital transformations	-	420,677	60,342
3.	Nature action	1,650,000	734,718	346,294
4.	Environmental law and governance	1,650,000	427,144	459,045
5.	Chemicals and pollution action	1,250,000	724,035	206,952
6.	Finance and economic transformations	750,000	178,670	192,044
7.	Science-policy	350,000	167,710	340
	Subtotal C	7,250,000	3,584,438	1,876,631
D	Fund programme reserve	-	-	-

	Subtotal C + D	7,250,000	3,584,438	1,876,631
E	Programme support and other items			
	Programme Support	15,150,000	9,296,335	808,996
	Subtotal E	15,150,000	9,296,335	808,996
	Total (A+B+C+D+E)	22,400,000	13,019,253	2,761,300

c. Regular budget (RB)

The General Assembly approved an appropriation of US\$ 21.1 million for Regular Budget (RB) for the year 2026. The interim allotment issued by UNHQ so far amounts to US\$ 8.4 million, and the expenditure as of 31 March 2026 is US\$ 4.4 million or 53% of the interim allotment. Further allotment by UNHQ is subject to the liquidity situation of RB.

Regular Budget (RB)				
	Functional Area Name	Budget (GA approved)	Allotment	Expenditure
A	Policymaking organs	8,300		-
B.1	Executive direction & management	2,928,900	1,170,589	679,660
B.2	United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects on Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR)	1,305,800	522,253	138,004
	Subtotal A + B	4,243,000	1,692,842	817,664
C	Programme of work			
1.	Climate action	1,588,900	592,308	446,331
2.	Digital transformations	1,454,600	555,307	299,769
3.	Nature action	2,107,800	799,848	378,654
4.	Environmental law and governance	3,621,700	1,843,069	793,986
5.	Chemicals and pollution action	2,112,000	751,520	413,034
6.	Finance and economic transformations	1,663,800	629,713	362,782
7.	Science-policy	3,073,100	1,084,010	520,719
	Subtotal C	15,621,900	6,255,775	3,215,276
D	Fund programme reserve	-	-	-
	Subtotal C + D	15,621,900	6,255,775	3,215,276
E	Programme support and other items			
	Programme support	1,225,800	486,583	416,666
	Subtotal E	1,225,800	486,583	416,666
	Total (A+B+C+D+E)	21,090,700	8,435,200	4,449,607

d. Earmarked funds

Expenditures of earmarked and Global Funds comprise actual funds spent during the biennium, commitments pertaining to future years and expenses against unspent balances of previous budgets.

Earmarked and Global Funds			
	Functional Area Name	Budget	Expenditure

A	Polycymaking organs	150,000	-
B	Executive direction & management	650,000	74,214
Subtotal A + B		800,000	74,214
C	Programme of work		
1.	Climate action	177,100,000	91,004,431
2.	Digital transformations	700,000	161,305
3.	Nature action	88,850,000	62,364,874
4.	Environmental law and governance	28,700,000	9,501,919
5.	Chemicals and pollution action	80,550,000	11,006,771
6.	Finance and economic transformations	25,400,000	5,730,493
7.	Science-policy	5,350,000	580,784
Subtotal C		406,650,000	180,350,577
D	Fund programme reserve	-	-
Subtotal C + D		406,650,000	180,350,577
E	Programme support and other items		
	Programme Support	5,800,000	1,430,369
Subtotal E		5,800,000	1,430,369
Total (A+B+C+D+E)		413,250,000	181,855,160

e. Planetary funds

The three Planetary Funds aim at strategically supporting UNEP towards the delivery of the strategic objectives of its Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) 2026-2029 and Programme of Work (PoW) 2026-2027 and beyond, with focuses on Climate Stability, Living in Harmony with Nature, and Towards a Pollution-Free Planet.

The authorised budget is in line with the funds received to date for the funds. The allotments are approved by the Budget Steering Committee based on input from the Sub-Programme Coordinators. Implementation rates are carefully monitored and adjusted to ensure that disbursements are utilised within a maximum expenditure period of 24 months.

The utilisation rate for the Pollution Fund is comparatively lower than that of other funds, primarily due to a projected carry-forward balance of approximately USD 714,095 scheduled for expenditure in 2026. This includes an estimated USD 649,000 under the INC component, which is also planned for implementation within the 2026 financial period.

Status of allocation and expenditures-Planetary Funds (biennium 2024-2025 as at 31st March 2026)				
Thematic Area	Authorized Budget	Expenditure (including commitments)	Consumed Budget	Utilisation %
A - Climate Stability	12,625,585	12,495,577	130,008	99%
B - Living in Harmony with Nature	8,035,581	7,963,357	72,224	99%
C - Pollution Free Planet	8,707,150	7,993,055	714,095	92%
Grand Total A+B+C	29,368,316	28,451,990	916,326	97%

iii. Report on management of trust funds and earmarked contributions

As noted in the Executive Director's report to UNEA-7 (UNEP/EA.7/INF/4), it was envisaged that six trust funds, together with any additional trust funds identified thereafter, would be submitted for formal closure at future sessions of the United Nations Environment Assembly. In line with this expectation, UNEP has subsequently identified two additional trust funds that meet the established criteria for closure. These trust funds will be submitted for formal closure through the UNEA-8 decision on the management of trust funds and earmarked contributions. In accordance with established practice, the administrative closure of these trust funds will be completed in advance of their formal consideration and approval by UNEA.

In this regard, consultations with the respective donors, undertaken in coordination with the relevant offices, have been completed, and the required reconciliation processes have been finalised. These actions ensure that all outstanding financial, contractual, and reporting obligations are fully resolved prior to closure, thereby strengthening fiduciary accountability and supporting the transparent, orderly, and efficient management of UNEP's trust fund portfolio.

iv. Resource mobilization strategy

Building on the [recommendations](#) from the 9th-12th annual subcommittees of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), the Secretariat continues to widen its outreach efforts to broaden Member States' engagement and financial support to the organization, including by providing timely and relevant information and being responsive to Member States' needs and queries. UNEP also continues enhancing the visibility and appreciation of its funding partners, e.g. through regular updates on social media, newsletters, and featured web stories highlighting UNEP's partnerships with Member States.

UNEP is strengthening its results and impact narrative to better demonstrate good value for money. For example, UNEP's [Annual report](#), "Our planet. Our Purpose" highlights the results achieved in 2025 in addressing key environmental challenges through international cooperation, despite ongoing global geopolitical tensions. The organization is also improving the return on investment it provides by increasing efficiencies in its operations.

Finally, UNEP is in the process of preparing a new Resource Mobilization Strategy to ensure adequate resourcing for the delivery of the 2026-2029 Medium-Term Strategy and related Programmes of Work and Budget.

B. Human Resources

General overview

As of 31 March 2026, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) employed 1,289 staff members, reflecting a decrease of 38 positions from the previous quarter. The workforce is comprised of:

- 799 staff (62%) in the professional and higher categories;
- 11 staff (<1%) in the National Professional Officer (NPO) category;
- 479 staff (37%) in the general service category.

The Secretariat comprises 997 staff members, representing 77 per cent of the Organization's total workforce, while the Secretariats of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) employ 292 staff members, accounting for 23 per cent. This staffing distribution reflects UNEP's governance architecture, which delineates clear lines of authority, responsibility and accountability. The Secretariat is mandated to deliver core organisational, administrative and policy functions under UNEP's governing bodies, whereas the MEA Secretariats function as distinct governance entities, providing administrative and technical support to their respective Conferences of the Parties. This arrangement reinforces the institutional separation between the UNEP Secretariat and the MEAs, while enabling coordinated support to intergovernmental environmental governance processes.

i. Senior level staff (UNEP secretariat and MEAs)

At the **P-5 level and above**, the number of staff decreased from **176 in the last quarter** to **173 in quarter 1 of 2026** due to separations and downsizing.

Level	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	Total
Number of Staff (Q4-2025)	1	3	11	48	113	176
Number of Staff (Q1-2026)	1	3	11	49	109	173

Note: USG = Under-Secretary-General; ASG = Assistant Secretary-General; D = Director; P= Professional

The Secretariat holds 131 of these positions, while MEAs account for 42 senior roles as of 31 March 2026

	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	Total
Secretariat	1	2	7	41	80	131
MEAs		1	4	8	29	42

Note: USG = Under-Secretary-General; ASG = Assistant Secretary-General; D = Director; P= Professional

ii. Appointments – P5 and above

In the first quarter of 2026, UNEP filled 4 senior-level positions across its divisions and offices, strengthening its leadership capacity and operational effectiveness. The selected candidates were both internal & external candidates.

Position Title	Grade	Location	Geographical Group	Internal/ External
Executive Secretary, The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)	D-1	Bonn	Western European & Others	Internal
Chief of Service, Programme Management	D-1	Copenhagen	Western European & Others	External
Senior Legal Officer	P-5	Nairobi	Eastern European Group	External
Senior Evaluation Officer	P-5	Montreal	African Group	External

iii. Gender distribution

a. Gender distribution: UNEP status (January to March 2026)

As of March 31, 2026, UNEP employed 1,289 staff members, with 64% (823) female and 36% (466) male representation across all categories. At the professional and higher levels (P+), women account for 59% (475) of staff, while men represent 41% (324). In the General Service category, female staff make up 72% (345), while male staff account for 28% (134).

Overall Gender Parity Status												
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	Total P+	Total NO	Total GS	Total Staff
Female	1	3	8	29	59	140	156	79	475	3	345	823
Male			3	20	50	109	104	38	324	8	134	466
Totals	1	3	11	49	109	249	260	117	799	11	479	1289

Note: USG=Under-Secretary-General; ASG=Assistant Secretary-General; D=Director; P=Professional

b. UNEP Secretariat

Within the UNEP Secretariat, females occupy 60% (373) of professional and higher-level positions (P+), while males make up 40% (249). The gender distribution in the general service category is 70%(255) female and 30% (109) male.

UNEP SECRETARIAT												
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	Total P+	Total NPO	Total GS	Total
Female	1	2	5	22	42	112	127	62	373	3	255	631
Male			2	19	38	88	78	24	249	8	109	366
Total	1	2	7	41	80	200	205	86	622	11	364	997

c. Multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs)

Within the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), women make up 58% (102) of staff at the professional and higher levels (P+), while men account for 42% (75). At the General Service level, 78% (90) of GS staff are women while men account for 22% (25).

UNEP MEAs												
Gender	USG	ASG	D2	D1	P5	P4	P3	P2	Total P+	Total NPO	Total GS	Total
Female		1	3	7	17	28	29	17	102	0	90	192
Male			1	1	12	21	26	14	75	0	25	100
Total		1	4	8	29	49	55	31	177	0	115	292

iv. Geographical representation

a. Geographical representation: progression over the years

As of 31 March 2026, UNEP staff members represent a range of nationalities, while the organisation remains committed to geographical balance and global representation. As noted above, the total number of staff has reduced by 38 compared to the previous quarter.

Region	Total as at 31 December 2025	Total as at 31 March 2026	Variation
African Group	425	401	-24
Asia Pacific Group	252	254	2
Eastern European Group	71	67	-4
Latin American and Caribbean Group	136	135	-1
Stateless	1	1	0
United States of America	33	33	0
Western European and Others Group	409	398	-11
Total	1,327	1,289	-38

b. Geographical representation at professional levels

A breakdown of staff by region within the UNEP Secretariat and MEAs provides further insights into representation status.

Region	UNEP Secretariat	MEA	Total UNEP
African Group	355	46	401
Asia Pacific Group	205	49	254
Eastern European Group	50	17	67
Latin American and Caribbean Group	105	30	135
Stateless	0	1	1
United States of America	25	8	33
Western European and Others Group	257	141	398
TOTAL	997	292	1,289

c. Data overview for P5 level and above by UNEP Secretariat and MEAs by region

Region	P5 and above in UNEP Secretariat	P5 and above in MEAs	Total UNEP
Africa Group	24	11	35
Asia Pacific Group	24	11	35
Eastern European Group	13	3	16
Latin American Caribbean Group	17	7	24
United States of America	8	3	11

Western European & Others Group	45	7	52
---------------------------------	----	---	----

d. Professional level and above geographic distribution trends 2024 to 31 March 2026

The table below displays geographic trends at the professional level and above from January 1, 2024, to 31 December 2025. In addition to the trends between Q4 (31/12/2025) and Q1 (31 March 2026).

Region	2024	2025	31-Mar-26	% Variation, 2024 - 2025	% Variation, Q4 2025 to Q1 2026
African Group	156	158	150	1%	-5%
Asia Pacific Group	173	180	181	4%	1%
Eastern European Group	38	57	54	50%	-5%
Latin America & Caribbean	82	90	90	10%	0%
Other		1	1	0%	0%
USA	40	30	30	-25%	0%
Western European & Others	344	304	293	-12%	-4%

e. Junior Professional Officers (JPOs) in UNEP

UNEP's JPO programme currently engages 42 JPOs.

Country of Sponsorship	Female	Male	Total
Germany	7	2	9
Japan	6	2	8
China	5		5
Italy	4	1	5
Republic of Korea	2	2	4
France	2		2
Australia	1		1
Belgium		1	1
Finland	1		1
Norway	1		1
Portugal		1	1
Switzerland		1	1
The Netherlands	1		1
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	1		1

United States of America	1		1
Total	32	10	42

v. Funding of staff positions

Secretariat/MEA & Fund	USG	ASG	D-2	D-1	P-5	P-4	P-3	P-2	Total P+	Total NO	Total GS	GRAND Total
Secretariat	1	2	7	41	80	200	205	86	622	11	364	997
Environment Fund (EF)		1	3	20	39	57	37	6	163	2	106	271
Programme Support Costs (OTA)				1	5	14	12	6	38	1	61	100
Regular Budget (RB)	1	1	3	10	14	28	10		67	0	10	77
Earmarked Contributions (XB)			1	10	22	101	146	74	354	8	187	549
MEA		1	4	8	29	49	55	31	177	0	115	292
Programme Support Costs (OTA)					2	5	2		9	0	24	33
Trust Funds (XB)		1	4	8	27	44	53	31	168	0	91	259
Total	1	3	11	49	109	249	260	117	799	11	479	1,289

vi. UNEP talent management strategy

During the first quarter of 2026, UNEP delivered four outreach events conducted across three official United Nations languages. These activities comprised two virtual sessions convened under the UNEP *Spotlight* series, which was inaugurated in the fourth quarter of 2024, as well as two in-person engagements organized in Nairobi with visiting academic institutions. In addition, UNEP renewed the second cohort of the *Young Talent Pipeline* initiative for a further year, thereby ensuring continuity in capacity development and sustained engagement with emerging professionals.

C. Audits

i. United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)

a. Implemented audits

No audits were closed during the reporting period; however, progress continued in addressing outstanding OIOS recommendations.

b. Audits in progress and planned

- The Audit of UNEP Secretariat functions provided to the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) is ongoing.
- Audit of management of implementing partners at UNEP has been officially announced and the planning phase is well advanced.
- Audit of management of the UNEP sub-programme on chemicals and pollution, Audit of implementation of UNEP programme delivery model and Review of cross cutting issues for

UNEP secretariats for Multilateral Environmental Agreements were announced as planned for 2026.

ii. United Nations Board of Auditors (BoA)

a. Completed audits

The BoA issued the results of the interim audit for the year ending 31 December 2025 in November 2025 which covered UNEP headquarters and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), on-site in Nairobi and Montreal. During this audit, 5 out of 27 prior year recommendations were closed, while 16 new recommendations were preliminary issued.

b. Audits in progress and planned

The final audit for the year ending 31 December 2025 is scheduled from 6 April to 8 May 2026.

iii. Joint Inspection Unit (JIU)

a. Completed reviews

No JIU system-wide reviews applicable to UNEP have been published during the reporting period.

b. Reviews in progress

In 2025, five system-wide reviews were initiated and remain ongoing, covering: strategic planning function, recruitment policies and practices, travel arrangements, data governance frameworks and Decentralised evaluation function.

Furthermore, three new system-wide reviews have been launched during the reporting period on adapting to challenges in financing, Three Lines Model and shared services. Additional system-wide reviews are planned in 2026 on earmarked funding in mandate implementation, digital transformation and acceptance, implementation and outcomes of the recommendations of the JIU.

Challenges

Challenges include the availability of suitable systems and platforms, as not all tools, whether within existing systems or used by service providers, fully accommodate UNEP-specific needs. In addition, change management remains a key consideration, as the adoption of revised SOPs, new tools, and strengthened controls requires ongoing training and behavioral adjustments. Capacity limitations and resource constraints, including smaller teams, and recent staff turnover within MEA secretariats and programme teams, also affect the timely implementation of enhanced procedures and reporting requirements.

Opportunities

Further opportunities exist to deepen system integration across Umoja, IPMR, and procurement platforms to enhance data consistency and real-time oversight. Continued capacity-building for MEA secretariats and financial and project managers would further

strengthen compliance, transparency, and accountability across programme and financial management processes.

Lessons learned and actions taken

UNEP strengthened procurement oversight and performance reporting through a revised operating model, whereby transactional procurement reviews and approvals are primarily managed by UNON, complemented by the annual review of purchase orders and a comparative assessment of available UN acquisition planning tools. UNEP strengthened the SOP for MEA budget review to provide clearer guidance to MEA secretariats and enhance alignment with UN budgetary standards and transparency requirements. UNEP strengthened financial management and oversight by completing a comprehensive review of all outstanding commitments from 2014–2022 and initiating corrective actions, as well as by issuing guidance clarifying procedures for managing interest income. UNEP strengthened property management by introducing mid-year physical verification and deploying a monitoring dashboard to track discrepancies in Umoja. UNEP strengthened reporting practices by institutionalising semi-annual internal guidance notes reinforcing reporting in the IPMR system. Finally, UNEP strengthened partner selection by updating procedures and delivering organization-wide training, supported by a partnership champions network.

D. Evaluations

a. Overview of Completed and Ongoing Processes

During the reporting period (January – March 2026):

- **3** independent project evaluations were completed
- **14** Management-led project Terminal Reviews were independently validated by the Evaluation Office
- **2** strategic evaluations of the Nature Action and Finance and Economic Transformation Subprogrammes are ongoing
- **22** project evaluations are currently ongoing

b. Completed Independent Terminal Evaluations (TE)

N.	PROJECT TITLE	PERFORMANCE RATING	NO. REC'S	REPORT LINK
1	Consolidating, Running and Implementing a World Water Quality Alliance (PIMS 2041 and SMA ID177344)	Moderately Unsatisfactory	5	https://wedocs.unep.org/ite/ms/83b07593-2955-4190-ae83-e89513da8e84
2	Continuing Regional Support for the POPs Global Monitoring Plan under the Stockholm Convention in the Latin American and Caribbean Region (GEF ID 4881)	Moderately Satisfactory	8	https://wedocs.unep.org/ite/ms/719ead1e-b2fe-42c1-83bb-c014d9aac7a7
3	Continuing Regional Support for the POPs Global Monitoring Plan under the Stockholm Convention in the Africa Region (GEF ID 4886)	Moderately Satisfactory	8	https://wedocs.unep.org/ite/ms/e11db3dd-b636-4427-9fec-f3b854dd1064

c. Evaluation Office Validations of Management-led Terminal Reviews (MLTR)

	PROJECT TITLE	PERFORMANCE RATING	NO. REC'S	REPORT LINK
1	Building Climate Resilience through Rehabilitated Watersheds, Forests and Adaptive Livelihoods (GEF ID 5694)	Moderately Satisfactory	7	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49112

2	Strengthening Plastic Pollution Management in Asia and the Pacific (Mekong River Basin) (SB-021354/SMA ID 130677)	Highly Satisfactory	3	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49187
3	Development of an Improved and Innovative Management System for Sustainable Climate-resilient Livelihoods in Mauritania (GEF ID 5580)	Satisfactory	5	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49114
4	Establishing a Functional Environmental Information System for the Synergistic Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) for Iraq (GEF ID 9744)	Satisfactory	10	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49186
5	Coherent Integration of the Environmental Dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals in Regional and National Policy Frameworks in Africa (PIMS ID 2086)	Satisfactory	5	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49209
6	Support in the Design and Implementation of the Integrated Monitoring System of Climate Change for Honduras (GEF ID 9942)	Moderately Satisfactory	6	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49215
7	Capacity Building for Improved Transparency on Climate Actions through an Environment Registry in Antigua and Barbuda (GEF ID 9849)	Moderately Satisfactory	5	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49221
8	Building Core Capacity for the Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in the Context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Mauritania (GEF ID 9747)	Satisfactory	5	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49262
9	Environment, Health and Pollution (PIMS ID 2021)	Moderately Satisfactory	7	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49267
10	Capacity Building for Enhanced Transparency in Climate Change Monitoring, Reporting and Verification, Eswatini (GEF ID 10002)	Moderately Satisfactory	5	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49323
11	Effective Implementation of the Access and Benefit Sharing and Traditional Knowledge Regime in Peru in accordance with the Nagoya Protocol (GEF ID 8025)	Satisfactory	4	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49332
12	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) for Low Carbon Island Development Strategy for Mauritius, (GEF ID 5649)	Satisfactory	2	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49328
13	Strengthening and Expansion of Capacities in Biosafety that Lead to a full Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in Guatemala (GEF ID 9633)	Moderately Unsatisfactory	4	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49334
14	Strengthening Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) (GEF ID 5744)	Moderately Satisfactory	3	https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/49331

Opportunities, challenges, and lessons learned

All three independent project evaluations place emphasis on the need to strengthen monitoring mechanisms to generate learning and feed into stronger knowledge management systems. In one instance, the importance of linking monitoring (Persistent Organic Pollutants) to national level policy making is stressed. The technical performance of the projects is confirmed, including work on capacity development, although achievements above output level and the sustainability of effects are weaker (e.g. needing more institutional anchoring or cross-workstream integration).

Of the 14 validated management-led Terminal Reviews, 12 were validated with performance ratings in the Satisfactory range (6 at Satisfactory and 6 at Moderately Satisfactory). In three cases, the validation led to a downgrade by one performance step (i.e. from Satisfactory to Moderately Satisfactory and in one case from Moderately Satisfactory to Moderately Unsatisfactory). Making adjustments to ratings during validation is a normal feature of this benchmarking exercise and the frequency of adjustments at the overall level (i.e. 21%) is consistent with the experience of other agencies.



QUARTERLY REPORT

to the 174th Meeting of the

COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES

United Nations Avenue, Gigiri

PO Box 30552, Nairobi 00100, Kenya

Email: unep-policyprogramme-spu@un.org