



**UNITED
NATIONS**

UNEP/EA.7/11



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**

Distr.: General

5 August 2025

Original: English

**UNEDITED
ADVANCE
VERSION**

**United Nations Environment Assembly
of the United Nations Environment Programme
Seventh session**

Nairobi, 8–12 December 2025

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

International environmental policy and governance issues

Progress in the implementation of resolution 6/7 on sand and dust storms

Report of the Executive Director

I Introduction

1. The United Nations Environment Assembly, in its resolution 6/7, requested the Executive Director of UNEP, subject to the availability of resources, to support Member States and members of specialized agencies of the United Nations system through the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (UNCCSDS), among others, in collaboration with relevant United Nations conventions and entities and other partners and stakeholders, in addressing the challenges of sand and dust storms, as appropriate, building on the “Global assessment of sand and dust storms” report requested in General Assembly resolution 70/195.
2. The Environment Assembly, in the resolution also requested the Executive Director, subject to the availability of resources, to organize a workshop, involving Member States, members of specialized agencies of the United Nations system, technical and financial institutions and other relevant stakeholders, in the margins of the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) to explore possible gaps and areas for improvement in order to address sand and dust storms and their adverse effects at the regional and subregional levels.
3. The Environment Assembly, in the resolution further invited and called on Member States to work towards combating sand and dust storms in the following ways: build capacity relating to research, modelling and early warning systems; enhance the sharing of best practices and knowledge; implement practices, measures and policies responsive to the needs of women and promoting their informed representation and participation; promote cooperation through programmes, research, South-South and triangular initiatives and practical interventions; and contribute financial resources to regional initiatives and projects on sand and dust storms.

II Progress in the implementation of resolution 7

4. UNEP has supported Member States in addressing the challenges of sand and dust storms in a number of ways. UNEP has designated the Disaster Risk Reduction Unit (DRRU) within the Disasters and Conflicts Branch of the Ecosystems Division as the main focal point for sand and dust storms. Previously, this thematic issue was spread across the Early Warning and Assessment Division (EWAD), Industry and Economy Division and Ecosystems Division.

5. UNEP is now actively participating in the UNCCSDS and has already conducted bilateral meetings with its co-chairs from ESCWA and ESCAP to explore how UNEP can best contribute to addressing this issue. UNEP is also conducting meetings with Member States to better understand their priorities and agendas regarding sand and dust storms. In this regard, UNEP has participated in meetings on the topic between the UNCTs of Iran and Iraq, together with the concerned Regional Offices and country focal points.

6. Within the context of its strategic cooperation with the Government of Saudi Arabia, UNEP, through its Regional Office for West Asia, is partnering with the Sand and Dust Storms Regional Centre based in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to develop a regional master plan to combat sand and dust storms in the West Asia region. The Master Plan incorporates an assessment of the main sand and dust storms sources, their root causes and mitigation measures. It will support countries in the region in coordinating their responses as well as provide a framework for evaluating the impacts of these mitigation measures on the frequency and intensity of sand and dust storms. In addition to the above engagements, UNEP is also pursuing strategic partnerships that can facilitate resource mobilization for this work.

7. The workshop on sand and dust storms, as requested by the sixth session of UNEA, will take in the margins of UNEA-7. Funding of USD 20, 000 has been secured from the UNEP Seed Fund for the implementation of resolutions, and the necessary event applications have been submitted. The workshop's content is being developed in consultation with UNEP's relevant regional offices and with Member States. UNEP is also planning to hold a preparatory half-day workshop in October to refine priority topics and shape the agenda for the UNEA-7 session.

III Lessons learned

8. Proactive and comprehensive financial resource mobilization is needed to secure resources beyond the allocated UNEA-6 resolution budget to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of the resolution. Collaboration through frameworks such as the UNCCSDS and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) underscores the importance of unified efforts in tackling challenges posed by sand and dust storms.

IV Recommendations and suggested actions

9. UNEP will continue to:

a) Strengthen collaboration with key platforms like the International Sand and Dust Storm Monitoring Initiative and the Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership, both launched in Riyadh during UNCCD16.

b) Enhance coordination with existing partners, mainly through the UN Coalition to Combat SDS and the UNCCD.

c) Foster dialogue and share knowledge on the environmental dimensions of the issue through the existing platforms.

d) Develop a knowledge product to analyze and more clearly articulate its comparative advantage and added value, with particular attention to the environmental and transboundary aspects of sand and dust storms.