



# UNEP in Haiti

## 2010 Year in Review

United Nations Environment Programme



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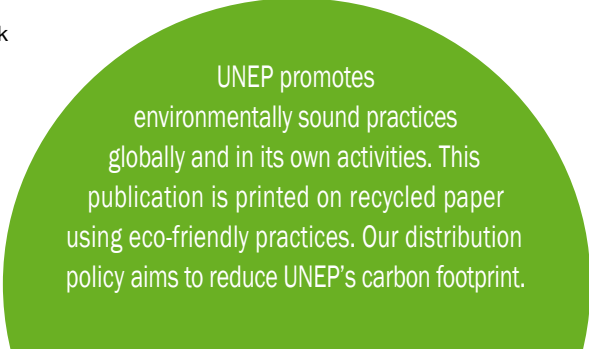
United Nations Environment Programme  
P.O. Box 30552, Nairobi, KENYA  
Tel: +254 (0)20 762 1234  
Fax: +254 (0)20 762 3927  
E-mail: [uneppub@unep.org](mailto:uneppub@unep.org)  
Web: <http://www.unep.org>

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Cover Image: © UNEP, The January 2010 earthquake was a significant setback  
to efforts to reverse years of environmental degradation in Haiti

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## Acronyms and abbreviations

BME	Bureau des Mines et de l'Energie (Haiti)
CIRH	Commission for the Reconstruction of Haiti
CSI	Côte Sud Initiative
DINEPA	Direction Nationale de l'Eau Potable et de l'Assainissement
FoProBiM	La Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversité Marine
GDP	Gross domestic product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
HRI	Haiti Regeneration Initiative
IASC	UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IRHC	Interim Haiti Recovery Commission
MERHAITI	Marine Environment Regeneration in Haiti
MINUSTAH	UN Mission for Stabilization in Haiti
MTPTC	Ministère des Travaux Publics, Transports et Communications (Haiti)
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NRM	Natural Resource Management
PARD	Plan for National Recovery and Development
PDNA	Post-Disaster Needs Assessment
REA	Rapid Environmental Assessment
SMCRS	Metropolitan Service for the Collection of Solid Waste
TAF	Technical Assistance Facility
UGSE	Energy Sector Management Unit
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

## A challenging year

The massive earthquake that hit Haiti on 12 January 2010 left in its wake a plethora of environmental problems to compound the devastation and human misery inflicted on the country's citizens. As the year ended, most of these problems remained unsolved.

*UNEP in Haiti: 2010 Year in Review* tells the story of a challenging 12 months for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Haiti. This is just part of the much wider picture of Haiti, an already fragile nation crippled by natural disaster and disease in 2010 – surely one of the most devastating periods for a single country and its people in recent years.

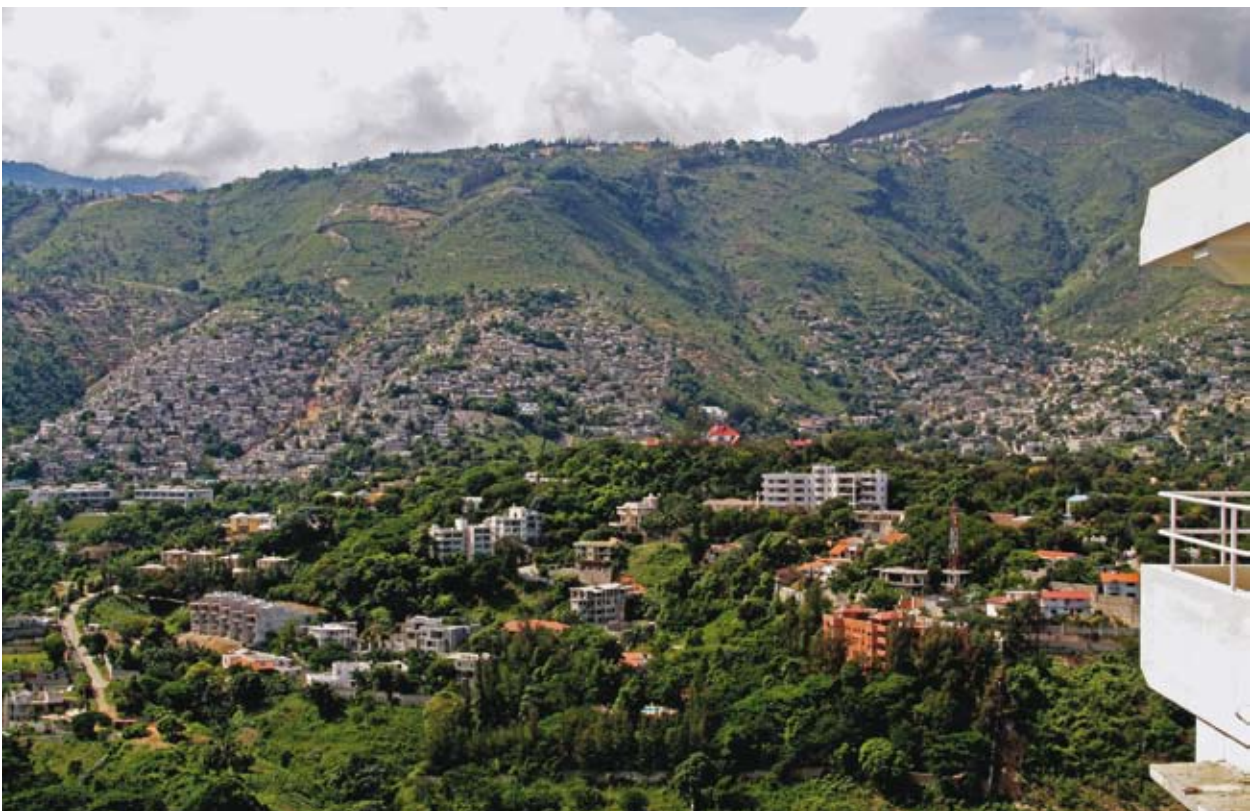
This publication provides a snapshot of the acute and chronic environmental issues facing the country and UNEP's efforts to help resolve them. It gives an insight into the types of activities and challenges that UNEP and its partners have to deal with in such a post-disaster setting, and sets out lessons learned so that UNEP itself – and other environmental organizations – can better understand and prepare to assist in the event of future major crises.

## A troubled nation

As 2010 began, the tiny Caribbean nation of Haiti was already suffering as the poorest, most environmentally degraded and politically unstable country in the Western Hemisphere.

Haiti covers a surface area of 27,750 km<sup>2</sup> in the western part of the island of Hispaniola, with the Dominican Republic (48,730 km<sup>2</sup>) occupying the eastern part. It is a small and crowded Least Developed Country with a population of approximately 9.8 million and a density of 350 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. It is highly mountainous with an overall tropical climate and a wide variation in rainfall by regions, resulting in a number of microclimates and different eco-regions. The main environmental problems are deforestation, soil erosion, freshwater pollution and coastal and marine degradation.

Haiti has an estimated per capita annual income of around US\$650 and 54 per cent of the population exists in extreme poverty (less than \$1/day) and 78



Urban setting in Jalousie, Port-au-Prince, Haiti





Prior to the earthquake, Haiti's environment was already severely degraded

per cent in poverty (less than \$2/day), while a small minority (less than 1 per cent) is relatively rich and controls much of the fertile land. Approximately 65 per cent of the population is directly dependent upon agriculture and 62 per cent suffers from food insecurity, with more than half of the national food supply being imported.

Haiti has been plagued by political turmoil since the 1990s. In 2004, the United Nations intervened with the creation of the UN Mission for Stabilization in Haiti (MINUSTAH), which has succeeded in creating a more secure – although still fragile – environment in the country.

In August 2008, four tropical storms or hurricanes hit Haiti, causing human losses and massive infrastructure and livelihood destruction. In October 2008, the United Nations (including UNEP), the World Bank, the Government of Haiti and other partners

undertook a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) and associated disaster recovery appeal. Recovery funds received were in the order of US\$200 million or more, to be spent within two years.

A substantive United Nations country team programme was already in place in January 2010, with the bulk of expenditure going on disaster relief, tackling chronic food shortages and the provision of basic services including water supply, sanitation and emergency health care.

On the development side, a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) document, signed between the Haitian Government and the UN System in December 2008, established the cooperation framework for 2009-2011. Much of the planned development work had already been delayed or changed due to the 2008 hurricane disaster.



Rural landscape in Jacmel illustrates the high level of deforestation and soil erosion in Haiti

Table 1. Haiti – key environmental statistics as at December 2010

Forestry
Percentage of remaining original forest cover: less than 1%
Current total forest cover (all types): 1.5-2.6%
Ongoing deforestation rate: not quantified but significant
Percentage of cooking energy derived from woodfuel and charcoal: 70%
Biodiversity and protected areas
Percentage of areas under effective protected area management: 0-0.35%
A single site in the Massif La Hotte contains the entire known population of 13 critically endangered and endangered species, more than any other site in the world
Of Haiti's 50 frog species, 46 are threatened
Soil and erosion

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