

Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday, 10th February 2022
10:00 a.m.

2021 Annual Report to the Committee of Permanent Representatives on Private Sector Engagement

The Secretariat has the pleasure to submit the 2021 annual report on the UN Environment Programme's strengthened engagement with the private sector through partnerships and collaboration in areas of common interest for your information.

The Secretariat looks forward to receiving your views or any comments on this report. Please use this email to submit any comments to the Private Sector Unit (unep-privatesector@un.org).



I. Introduction

1. The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) would like to update the Committee of Permanent Representatives on its engagement with the private sector, since the last Report on 13 November 2020. This Report includes active and newly created partnerships from September 2020 to November 2021, which contributed to UNEP's sub-programmes of Climate Change; Resilience to Disasters and Conflicts; Healthy and Productive Ecosystems; Environmental Governance; Chemicals, Waste and Air Quality; Resource Efficiency; and Environment Under Review.
2. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals; the Paris Agreement on Climate Change; and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development; as well as relevant multilateral frameworks under environmental agreements on biodiversity, chemicals and waste, and ozone-depleting substances, all recognize and call for a strengthened relationship with the private sector, including the adoption of more innovative approaches to promote private sector sustainability and transformation and the leveraging of private sector technical expertise and financial resources.
3. In 2021, against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNEP continued to deliver on its mandate and bring together public and private sector actors to ensure the transition to a net-zero carbon world and encourage a sustainable recovery.
4. UNEP's engagement with the private sector has been strengthened across its divisions and regional offices with a refined and rigorous due diligence process that has ensured stronger stand-alone partnerships and a growth in membership-based partnerships, alliances, initiatives, campaigns and consortiums. Throughout last year, UNEP has engaged with private sector entities worldwide through more than 40 initiatives, platforms and networks. These partnerships have created transformative changes, measurable positive impacts, and economic and social benefits across a wide range of industries and sectors, including agriculture, chemicals, construction, energy, fashion, finance, information and communication technology, and tourism. Through private sector engagement, UNEP continues to gain access to data, innovations, best practices, and technologies that contribute to its normative and scientific work, as well as its engagement with Member States.
5. In the run-up to the new Medium-term Strategy (MTS 2022-2025), which sets out UNEP's role and vision on delivering the promises of the 2030 Agenda, UNEP's engagement with the private sector in 2021 has become more strategic for building a common action agenda in its work with the public sector, business and industry. UNEP has been targeting more business entities where transformation will have a global impact and tackle the triple planetary crisis of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste.
6. By bringing more focus and coherence across the many initiatives and platforms with the private sector, UNEP has fostered, amplified and accelerated the scaling up of transformative action in addressing the triple planetary crisis.

II. New partnerships launched in the reporting period

7. In 2021, UNEP continued to partner with key private sector entities of strategic importance to deliver its Programme of Work. In total, sixteen bilateral partnerships have been started or renewed in 2020-2021. While there has been a decrease in new partnerships signed, compared to the previous reporting period and perhaps due to the impact of the COVID pandemic, this is also in line with UNEP's new MTS and its more strategic focus on impact and transitioning to sector-wide action through platforms and initiatives.
8. UNEP's new partnerships contribute to the upcoming Programme of Work by addressing the triple planetary crisis and several have a core component of digitalization. In particular, some of the new partnerships aim to create and support environmental solutions through technology, from open-source data management systems to augmented reality systems and interactive hubs.
9. The following are bilateral partnerships signed from September 2020 to November 2021:

(i) Adobe Inc.



- The partnership contributes to the above two SDGs
 - UNEP Lead: Communication Division
10. UNEP and Adobe, a software and creative design company, use joint marketing and communications to promote the conservation of coral reefs, ocean protection and climate action. In 2021, Adobe's Photoshop Camera launched the Glowing Lens, a free photo filter to make the subject appear underwater, which people could use on their social media to demonstrate their support for coral reef and ocean action. Ten social media influencers with over 100 million followers participated in the campaign, generating over 256,000 filter downloads and 1,500 articles, including in Forbes magazine. UN Oceans Envoy Peter Thomson has also published a blog voicing his support for the campaign.

(ii) Airbnb, Inc.



- The partnership contributes to the above three SDGs
- UNEP Lead: Economy Division

11. The partnership between UNEP and Airbnb, the global online marketplace for lodging and tourism activities, will focus on promoting sustainable behaviors and increase awareness on key environmental issues through the engagement of Airbnb's key stakeholders, and, where possible, in coordination with local and national authorities and other organizations. In particular, UNEP and Airbnb will collaborate to drive action on issues related to plastic pollution, including elaborating and disseminating messages focusing on single-use plastic products and hygiene that are aligned with the COVID-19 requirements and which support tourism stakeholders in the recovery phase from the pandemic and which contribute to the reduction of plastic pollution.

(iii) Coöperative Circle Economy U.A.



- The partnership contributes to the above three SDGs
 - UNEP Lead: Economy Division
12. This partnership with Coöperative Circle Economy, a Dutch think-tank, aims to promote sustainable consumption and production by accelerating the transition to a circular economy. It contributes to UNEP's Resource Efficiency sub-programme. The key expected outcome is to support cities to transition their economies from a linear to circular economy through the monitoring of jobs, to improve policy development, planning and investment for resource-efficient, sustainable, resilient cities promoting circularity in Europe and globally. The partnership has led to the development of a new methodology that can be applied to assess the potential for creating circular jobs in different sectors of a city.

(iv) E.ON SE



- The partnership contributes to the above five SDGs
 - UNEP Lead: Communication Division
13. The partnership with E.ON SE, one of Europe's leading electric utility companies, contributes to the Healthy and Productive Ecosystems sub-programme. This partnership aims to design and develop digital strategies and tools in support of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, as well as give advice on best practices for ecosystem restoration. The first phase of the digital design for the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration interactive hub was completed and the second phase was started in 2021. E.ON SE is also investing in restoration as part of their business activities, by ecologically restoring the land (13,000 sq kms) below their power grids across Europe.

(v) Formula E Operations Limited



- The partnership contributes to the above two SDGs
- UNEP Lead: Communication Division

14. This partnership with the car racing company contributes to the Chemicals, Waste and Air Quality sub-programmes. The partnership, which was started in 2017 and renewed in January 2021, aims to develop and implement communication initiatives focused on air quality, electric mobility and sustainable lifestyles. To this end, Formula E driver, Lucas Di Grassi, supported digital engagement efforts for the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies on 7 September 2021. In previous years, UNEP organized a series of events at the Formula E races, as well as communication campaigns to raise awareness on the benefits of electric vehicles among younger generations and motorsport fans globally.

(vi) GoldenBee (Beijing) Management Consulting Co., Limited



- The partnership contributes to the above five SDGs
- UNEP Lead: Economy Division

15. This new partnership with GoldenBee (Beijing) Management Consulting, sustainability consulting services provider, will contribute to the Climate Change; Chemicals, Waste and Air Quality; and Resource Efficiency sub-programmes. The partnership aims to support UNEP's continuation of work on implementation of the UNEA-4 Resolution (UNEP/EA.4/L.6): *Sustainable Infrastructure*.

(vii) Horn of Africa Sustainability Solutions Limited



- The partnership contributes to the above two SDGs
- UNEP Lead: Ecosystems Division

16. In partnership with Horn of Africa Sustainability Solutions Limited, a consultancy firm with over 35 years of experience in climate change, natural resources management, policy planning and sustainable development, UNEP supported the Government of Somalia to develop a five-year National Environmental Action Plan. The Action Plan addresses pressing environmental challenges, promotes conservation, protection, and sustainable management of the environment on a national scale, and will help the country adapt to the impacts of climate change. This partnership contributes to the Resilience to Disasters and Conflicts sub-programme.

(viii) International Business Machines Corporation (IBM)



- The partnership contributes to the above seventeen SDGs
- UNEP Lead: Corporate Services Division

17. This continued partnership with IBM, a computer and information technology company, promotes innovation and technologies to tackle climate change and protect the environment. IBM has been a member of the Governing Consortium of the UN Science-Policy-Business Forum (SPBF) on the Environment¹ since its creation in 2017. In the reporting period, IBM continued to be SPBF lead technology partner on the Marine Litter Big Data project, having contributed to the data integration part of the Marine Litter Digital Platform, and the first design thinking workshop on Marine Litter Data Integration and Digital Tools. The partner has also provided expert and financial contributions to the SPBF Working Group on Big Data and Frontier Technologies.

¹ The UN Science-Policy-Business Forum on the Environment, previously based in Science Division, was moved to the Corporate Services Division in September 2021.

(ix) MeshMinds PTE. Limited



- The partnership contributes to the above three SDGs
- UNEP Lead: Asia and Pacific Office

18. This continued partnership with MeshMinds, a creative technology studio, contributes to the Climate Change; Healthy and Productive Ecosystems; Chemicals, Waste and Air Quality; and Resource Efficiency sub programmes. To date, through the partnership, UNEP has reached more than 20 million people across 100 countries on six continents with innovative augmented reality experiences that educate and empower youth and communities to make pledges and take action towards environmental protection in their countries.

(x) NetEase Media Technology (Beijing) Co. Limited



- The partnership contributes to the above four SDGs
- UNEP Lead: Ecosystems Division

19. This new partnership with a leading China-based internet, media and technology company contributes to the Healthy and Productive Ecosystems and Resilience to Disasters and Conflicts sub programmes. Through this partnership, UNEP will share a Massive Open Online Course entitled “Nature-Based Solutions for Climate and Disaster Resilience” on NetEase Media’s online platforms, multiplying the reach of the course in China and worldwide.

(xi) Platform3 DMCC



- The partnership contributes to the above SDG
- UNEP Lead: Science Division

20. The partnership with Platform3 DMCC, a corporate advisory firm focused on Africa and the Middle East, contributes to the Resource Efficiency and Environment Under Review sub-programmes. It will support UNEP's Innovation Initiative, which aims to identify and scale up science-based environmental solutions that contribute to the environmental SDGs, through resource mobilization efforts. In the next six months, the first feasibility study for wastewater recovery technology is expected to be completed. UNEP will then roll out pilot testing in Machakos and Kisumu counties in Kenya, with additional piloting planned in the Africa region. More information on impact and results will be reported in 2022, when UNEP's Innovation Initiative is expected to be officially launched.

(xii) (adidas) Runtastic GmbH



- The partnership contributes to the above two SDGs
 - UNEP Lead: Vienna Programme Office (Europe Office) with Ecosystems Division and Communication Division
21. This partnership with a free running application, contributes to the Climate Change and Healthy and Productive Ecosystems sub-programmes. In 2021, the partnership launched the third edition of the Run Wild challenge, mobilizing approximately 700,000 runners worldwide to compete against Gaia, a GPS-tracked mountain lion currently roaming the Cascade Mountains in the United States' Pacific Northwest, and learn about human impacts on species and habitats, including pollution in mountainous areas. Through the challenge, financial resources from partners (including from Adidas Terrex), were provided to the conservation partner S.P.E.C.I.E.S and will support wildlife conservation, including restoration efforts.

(xiii) SailBri Cooper Inc.



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