
2016 Annual Report

Empowering People to
Protect the Planet

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* All dollar (\$) amounts refer to US dollars.
* The term 'one billion' in this report refers to one thousand million.

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We hope you enjoy these highlights of our work in 2016. For more details, please visit our combined Annual Report and Programme Performance Report online.
<http://web.unep.org/annualreport>

Cover photo by Dhilung Kirat

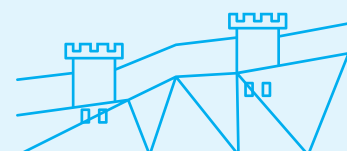
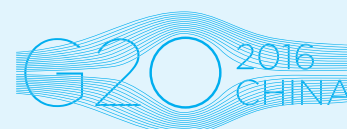
Lava from Mount Kilauea flows into the Pacific Ocean in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park in the United States. The rare "firehose" phenomenon was triggered by the collapse of a lava delta that spanned more than 10 hectares before it fell into the sea on 31 December 2016, producing explosions and giant waves in the area. The park, which celebrated its 100th birthday in 2016, attracts roughly 2.6 million visitors every year.

Highlights



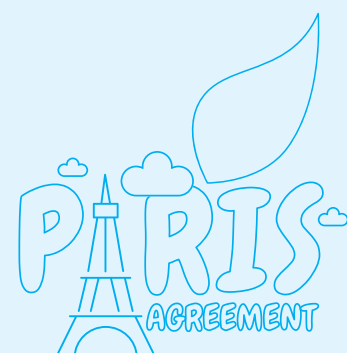
Kigali Amendment delivers a win for the climate

In October, nearly 200 countries struck a landmark deal to reduce the emissions of powerful greenhouse gases, hydrofluorocarbons, in a move that could prevent up to 0.5°C of global warming by the end of this century. The amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, which is hosted by UN Environment, is the single biggest step the world has taken to limit global warming.



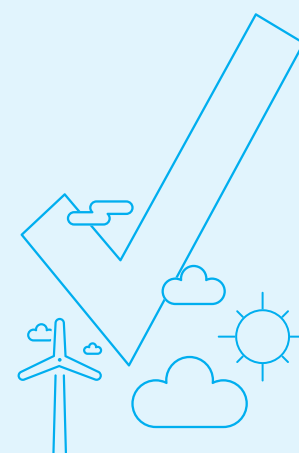
G20 embraces Green Finance

World leaders meeting at the G20 Summit in Hangzhou, China, in September issued a communiqué recognizing the importance of scaling up green finance. They also welcomed options put forward by the G20 Green Finance Study Group, whose secretariat is hosted by UN Environment. "Green finance is vital to a green future, and we at UN Environment are proud to build on our work in this area in supporting the G20," said UN Environment Executive Director Erik Solheim.



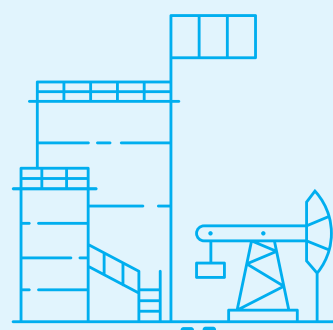
Paris Agreement comes into force

On 4 November – less than a year after it was adopted – the Paris Agreement on Climate Change came into effect after it was ratified by 55 Parties that account for 55 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions. This fast-track ratification is a powerful confirmation of countries' understanding of the urgency of the climate change challenge. UN Environment is working with countries around the world to help them achieve the Agreement's ambitious goal of keeping global warming well below 2°C.



UN Environment earns top marks

In an extensive external review, UN Environment earned "highly satisfactory" ratings in strategic management, operational management, performance management, and relationship management. The review, which was conducted by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network, concluded that UN Environment "shows continued strength in terms of being a global authority on environmental issues and providing a robust evidence base for advocacy and policy dialogue".



Nigeria launches Ogoniland clean-up

In June, the Government of Nigeria set in motion a \$1 billion clean-up and restoration of the Ogoniland region in the Niger Delta, with UN Environment guidance. The region has been subject to a succession of oil spills over the last 50 years, with devastating effects on both the environment and public health. The restoration efforts, which are based on UN Environment recommendations, could prove to be the world's biggest-ever environmental clean-up.



UN kicks off massive campaign to end the illegal wildlife trade

In May, UN Environment led the launch of a global campaign, *Wild for Life*, to tackle the illegal trade in wildlife. The campaign, which has been rolled out in eight languages, has already reached over 1 billion people, inspired 12,000 pledges of action, and been named among the top 10 most influential advocacy campaigns of 2016 by Weibo (Chinese Twitter). In late 2016, several of the campaign's key species were afforded greater international protections and China announced a total ban on commercial ivory. *Wild for Life* is UN Environment's most successful digital campaign to date.

Message from António Guterres

UN Secretary-General



Once again, the past year was the hottest ever. Sixteen of the 17 warmest years on record have occurred during this young century. This trend not only threatens the world's ecosystems and biodiversity but poses a serious risk for peace, security and sustainable development.

Many conflicts are triggered, exacerbated or prolonged by competition over scarce natural resources; climate change will only make the situation worse. That is why protecting our environment is critical to the founding goals of the United Nations to prevent war and sustain peace.

Nations and the international community spend far more time and resources responding to crises than avoiding them. We need a new common-sense approach that emphasizes prevention. Environmental care must be at its heart.

By helping countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change, we can lower the risk of floods, droughts, famine and instability. By ending the illegal trade in wildlife, we can cut off a critical source of funding for organized crime and non-state armed groups. And by promoting a shift to a green economy, we can create jobs, spur inclusive

economic growth and make societies more resilient. These are all critical to sustainable development and a peaceful future.

As the leading environmental authority, UN Environment is promoting the changes the world needs. This Annual Report profiles how the organization is working with a multitude of partners, including governments, United Nations entities, civil society, the private sector and communities on the ground. I commend it to all who are committed to working for a healthy planet and a safer, more peaceful world.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "António Guterres".

Message from Erik Solheim

UN Environment Executive Director



If the United Nations exists on behalf of “we the peoples”, then UN Environment’s mission must be to improve those people’s lives by radically changing the way we treat this planet. Globally, we have enough money to support this fight. In most cases, we are not short of technical solutions, many of which could create jobs and economic growth. The only raw material we lack is political will and, sometimes, public engagement.

That’s why people must always, always, be front and centre in our work to protect the planet.

This was the approach embraced by my predecessor, Achim Steiner. His decade of leadership saw UN Environment triple its budget and multiply its impact around the globe. Following in the footsteps of talented predecessors, he built a strong team – each determined to leave this world better than they found it. When I took the reins in June 2016, I promised to build on that legacy. It is a real adventure to be part of a team striving every day to engage all the world’s citizens in our work to protect the planet.

That means empowering people like the politicians who can create policies to cut pollution and protect our oceans and landscapes. People like the company bosses who can help us change the way the world produces and consumes. And people like the students, youth leaders and individual citizens, who can inspire important lifestyle changes in their communities.

In fact, if there is one lesson to draw from the many unexpected political developments of 2016, it’s that we need to listen to and connect directly with all these people. We need to speak to their gut and to their heart. That means whether we’re talking to a young farmer in Kenya’s Rift Valley, a factory worker in Shanghai, a mayor in the United States, or an industrialist in Germany, we must deliver words and actions with real meaning. We must show why the environment matters to them– from the air they breathe, to the water they drink, to the way they earn a living and feed their families.

Sometimes people ask me: can I change the world? I always tell them: Who else? Who else but you will change the world?

As you will see in this report, UN Environment and its partners are taking huge strides to protect our world. We are working with local leaders in Morocco to promote energy-efficient lighting and helping the people of Haiti build their resilience to hurricanes, earthquakes and other natural disasters. We are bringing political leaders together to phase down the use of hydrofluorocarbons, which could save the world from half a degree in warming. We are helping to drive the fight against the illegal trade in wildlife, which now benefits from a ban on ivory trade in China. And thanks to the "Speedo diplomacy" of our Oceans Patron, Lewis Pugh, Antarctica's Ross Sea is now a protected area.

This shows that we are already connecting with people and helping them make the transition to a greener, more sustainable world. But I know that we can – and we must – do even more.

Sometimes people ask me: Can I change the world? I always tell them: Who else? Who else but you will change the world?

All of humanity's most important struggles – the anti-slavery movement, the feminist movement, the civil rights movements – all started with a small but dedicated group of people who clung to their goals and principles in the face of fierce resistance and formidable challenges.

Change starts with you. Change starts with us. We must refuse to be daunted by the scale of the problems we face. We must take bold steps to build a better, healthier, more sustainable future for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren.



GONZALO FUENTES / REUTERS



Climate Change



In our work on climate change, we focus on achieving results in three areas:

- **Climate resilience**, where we support countries in using ecosystem-based and other approaches to adapt and build resilience to climate change;
- **Low-emission growth**, where we support countries to adopt energy efficiency measures, access clean energy finance, and reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants by transitioning to renewable sources of energy; and
- **REDD+**, where we enable countries to capitalize on investment opportunities that reduce greenhouse emissions from deforestation and forest degradation with adequate social and environmental safeguards.

Through our climate resilience work in 2016, we enabled Albania, Angola and Antigua and Barbuda to access finance for implementing ecosystem-based adaptation, bringing the total number of countries who have done so with our assistance to 45. We also supported Lesotho and Uganda to integrate ecosystem-based and other adaptation approaches into their national plans, bringing the total to 21 countries.

In our work to promote low-emission growth, we supported six East African countries to explore their potential for geothermal energy, enabled the installation of 3 million square meters of solar water heating panels in five countries, and helped eight countries access technologies related to renewable energy and energy efficiency, among many other results.

The UN-REDD Programme, jointly implemented by UN Environment, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN



Morocco embraces efficiency

UN Environment is partnering with the Government of Morocco to reduce the country's electricity consumption by promoting a nationwide switch to Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs). Since the project was launched, 9 million CFLs have been installed in homes and businesses across the country. That translates into significant cost savings for thousands of people, and reduced climate emissions for the country as a whole. The project is expected to avoid more than 4 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions by 2022.

and the UN Development Programme, is supporting 64 countries to become "REDD+ ready", or prepared to welcome relevant investment opportunities. In 2016, Chile, Congo, Ecuador, Peru and Sri Lanka finalized or adopted national REDD+ strategies.

Disasters and Conflicts



In our work on disasters and conflicts, we focus on achieving results in two areas:

- **Risk reduction**, where we improve countries' abilities to use environmental management to prevent and reduce the risks of natural hazards, industrial disasters and conflict; and
- **Response and recovery**, where we support countries in the aftermath of a disaster or conflict to identify and address environmental risks that could have serious social and economic impacts.

Over the course of 2016, we supported 22 countries – including Afghanistan, Georgia, Peru and South Sudan – to reduce the risks of natural disasters, industrial accidents and conflicts. At the global level, one of our key measures of success is the extent to which we can integrate environmental solutions for risk reduction across the UN system. As in previous years, we exceeded our target on this measure for 2016.

We responded to crises and supported recovery in 19 countries in 2016. Some of this work involved deploying teams to the scenes of acute environmental emergencies, such as the fires around Iraq's Mosul Dam and a 7.8 magnitude earthquake in Ecuador. We also conducted post-crisis assessments of environmental damage and recovery needs and provided guidance to those involved in recovery. These missions provide important opportunities for us to address both immediate and long-term environmental challenges.

We also support four countries – Afghanistan, Haiti, South Sudan and Sudan – that require sustained environmental assistance in the wake of conflict or other crises. In these countries, our aim is to help

Weathering the storm

Helping locals reduce their vulnerability to hurricanes and other disasters is a key focus of UN Environment's work in Haiti, the poorest country in the Western hemisphere and one that is frequently struck by storms, earthquakes and floods. That's why UN Environment has integrated disaster risk reduction across all of its programming in the country, reforesting vulnerable land, restoring mangroves, and teaching locals about the value of a healthy environment. Fishermen and others who take part in UN Environment trainings learn how marine and coastal ecosystems can buffer the effects of extreme weather, such as Hurricane Matthew, a Category 4 storm that hit the country in October.



the governments develop the capacity to address environmental challenges on their own.

Ecosystem Management



In our work on ecosystem management, we focus on achieving results in three areas:

- **The enabling environment**, where we help countries incorporate the value and long-term functioning of ecosystems in planning and accounting frameworks;
- **The productivity of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems**, where we help countries use an ecosystem approach to managing terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems; and
- **The productivity of marine ecosystems**, where we help countries use an ecosystem approach in marine ecosystem management.

We help countries take account of ecosystem services, assess water quality and incorporate ecosystems into their policy frameworks. By the end of 2016, 11 countries – including Brazil, Kenya and the Philippines – had operational ecosystem accounts in place. Thirteen countries had taken steps to

update their water quality frameworks, and 44 countries had incorporated the health and productivity of ecosystems in at least two of their policy frameworks.

With our support, 33 countries enabled different sectors of their economies to use an ecosystem approach, and five water basins took steps to secure their terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. We also supported ecosystem restoration and the establishment of protected areas in Bolivia, China and Zambia, among other countries.

Action on marine litter and wastewater continued to increase in 2016, with another eight countries, sub-national governments and private sector entities agreeing on marine litter or wastewater action plans in 2016. Meanwhile, 11 out of 18 of our Regional Seas Conventions or Action Plans or their member states used an ecosystem approach to improve the management of the marine environment.

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