

ANNUAL REPORT 2010



United Nations Environment Programme

ANNUAL REPORT

A YEAR IN REVIEW

The mission of the United Nations Environment Programme is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

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* The term 'one billion' in this report refers to one thousand million

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These icons appear throughout the report to indicate the six cross-cutting thematic priority areas identified for UNEP in its Medium-Term Strategy 2010-2013:



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• UN Secretary-General, BAN Ki-Moon ©UN

Message from United Nations Secretary-General

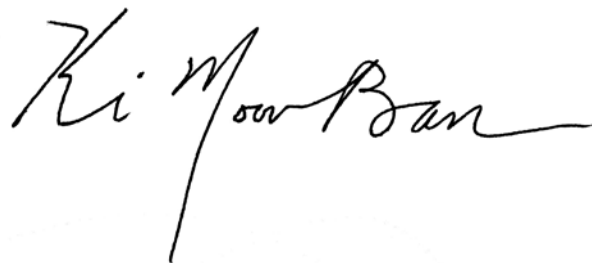
The global environment claimed headlines throughout 2010. Greenhouse gas emissions and global temperatures continued to rise. Pakistan suffered its worst floods in more than a century; Russia fought unprecedented wildfires and China faced drought, flooding and mudslides of an intensity not seen in decades — a pattern of increasingly extreme weather events consistent with the assessments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

On a more positive note, at the climate change conference in Cancun, Mexico, governments took an important step towards building a low-emissions, climate-resilient future by agreeing on a balanced package of measures that formalizes mitigation pledges and includes progress on forest protection, climate finance, adaptation and technology.

Throughout the year, UNEP worked to expand understanding of how environmental sustainability and green growth are mutually supporting elements for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and speeding recovery from the global economic crisis. Tackling climate change, water scarcity, biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation, and addressing shifting demographic and consumption patterns, will require bold new approaches. Green economics can weave together these multiple strands and will be an important focus for my High-level Panel on Global Sustainability, whose work will feed into preparations for the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 and other international deliberations.

UNEP is also central to promoting environmental sustainability throughout the United Nations system, so we can truly claim to practise what we preach. That effort encompasses coordinating emission-reduction planning for UN entities and spearheading the UN-wide Greening the Blue campaign that highlights how we can all do more, from sustainable procurement to more resource-efficient peacekeeping. Green principles also underpin the ongoing renovations of the UN Headquarters complex in New York.

Better managing our finite natural resources is a job for all — from governments to individuals. I look to UNEP to continue to provide leadership and ideas as we work together for a more sustainable, equitable and secure future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ki Mow Ban". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.



• UNEP Executive Director, Achim Steiner © UNEP

Introduction by the Executive Director

2010 was a year of many signals and mixed feelings. As UNEP's scientific assessments and reports showed, global indicators demonstrate that the world is still heading in the wrong direction for sustainable development.

However, UNEP documented through its work including on the 'transition towards a green economy' a remarkable momentum at local and national levels to 'change course'.

Global environmental action and governance have come under increasing scrutiny. Perhaps it is time to consider the implications of these developments and remind ourselves that multilateralism must combine a top-down with a bottom-up approach to succeed. Nowhere has this become more visible than in the fields of climate change and biodiversity.

While the UN's International Year of Biodiversity began on a sobering note when the *Global Biodiversity Outlook 3 Report* indicated that not a single country had met the target to substantially reverse the rate of biodiversity loss, it ended on a far higher one.

In October, in Nagoya, Japan, governments re-engaged on the biodiversity and ecosystem challenge, setting new and in some cases, more ambitious targets by 2020.

Importantly, they also agreed — and after almost two decades of stalemate — an international regime on the access and benefit sharing of genetic resources (ABS).

Through '*The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity*' study (TEEB), a global and pioneering partnership, hosted

by UNEP and bringing together economists and researchers, the economic valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services broke new ground.

Such efforts were further strengthened by the UNEP coordinated process to establish an Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) — an 'IPCC for nature' if you will, which the General Assembly endorsed in December 2010.

In May, in New York, during the opening of the Commission of Sustainable Development (CSD) UNEP's work on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) was spotlighted. The 10-Year Framework of programmes on SCP, which we hope to be agreed at this year's CSD, and the Green Economy will be key themes for the Rio+20 conference in 2012.

UNEP emphasised that a Green Economy echoes to the challenges and opportunities of all economies — be they more state-led or more market oriented in their policy outlook.

In a world of nearly seven billion, rising to nine billion people by 2050, it is in the interests of all nations to forge a development path that decouples growth from the unsustainable use of natural resources.

UNEP's contribution in the context of Sustainable Consumption and Production speaks to this objective, as did the decision of the UN's Environment Management Group to address the transition towards a Green Economy through a Joint Issues Management Group involving over twenty UN entities as well as the IMF and the World Bank.

The same imperative is at the centre of the climate change challenge. Like biodiversity, nations meeting in Cancun, Mexico re-engaged rather than retreated from the issue and agreed on steps to move forward in areas such as forests, the Green Fund and to anchoring the pledges made twelve months earlier in Copenhagen.

UNEP, working with climate modelling centres worldwide, provided a key reference document for countries in Cancun and beyond through its *Emissions Gap Report*. Even the most optimistic scenario shows an emission gap of some five Gigatonnes between what countries have pledged so far and where they need to be in 2020 to have a running chance of keeping a global 21st century temperature rise under 2° C.

Yet, what was also clear in 2010 was that despite the struggles of the formal negotiations, many countries, regional and national governments, companies and civil society, are already moving towards a low carbon path.

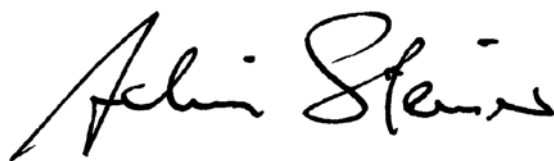
2010 has not been an easy year for many Member States as the on-going financial and economic crisis, which emerged in 2008, continues to challenge national budgets and development options in the North and South.

Despite a financially challenging year, UNEP embarked upon the implementation of its new results-based Medium Term Strategy and Programme of Work for 2010-2011.

Its Programme Performance Report for 2010 indicates that progress has been good and that the reform process has put UNEP on a new trajectory towards a more results-focused and effective organization.

In this respect, I wish to acknowledge the important and continued role of UNEP's Committee of Permanent Representatives in this process as well as the commitment and leadership of UNEP's Deputy Executive Director, Angela Cropper and our staff in 'delivering on the promise'.

I would like to end by expressing our deep appreciation to Member States and hundreds of partners for your continued support of UNEP's work across its range of activities, which I hope is providing new, fresh and inspiring direction to the sustainable development community and the work of the United Nations.



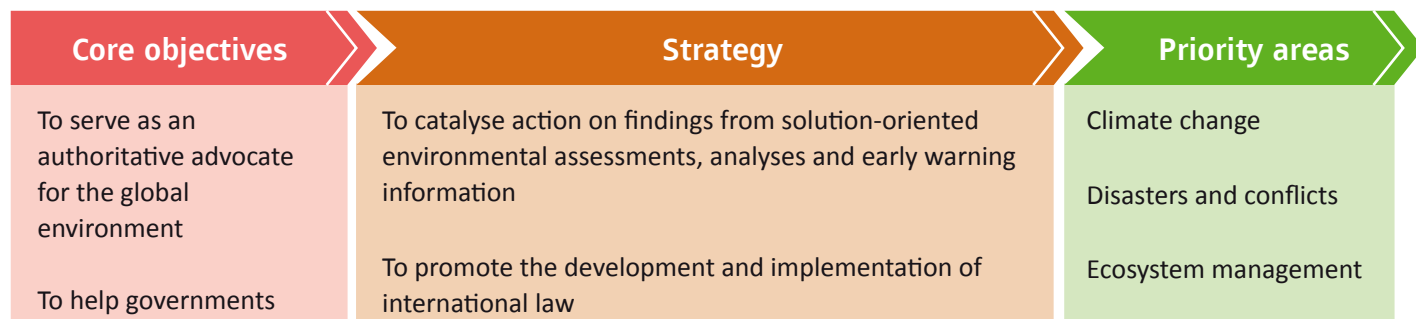
The United Nations Environment Programme

2010 was important for many reasons, a year of on-going financial instability set against an increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters and shifting weather patterns. UNEP's broad response through 2010 is catalogued in this report – from global assessments to rapid mechanisms in Haiti in response to the January earthquake and advisory services to countries interested in transitioning to greener economies. This report attempts to set UNEP's work over the last year in context and show its future relevance in meeting the emerging challenges of the coming years.

The core objective of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is to serve as an authoritative advocate for the global environment, to help governments set the global environmental agenda, and to promote the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system.

2010 marked the beginning of a period of new, strategic and transformational direction for UNEP as it began implementing its Medium Term Strategy (MTS) for 2010-2013 across six areas: Climate change; Disasters and conflicts; Ecosystem management; Environmental governance; Harmful substances and hazardous waste; Resource efficiency, Sustainable consumption and production.

A key feature of UNEP's transition was making the organization's work more strategic and coherent, while addressing country needs more effectively and demonstrating results.



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