UNEP

The United Nations Environment Programme and the 2030 Agenda

Global Action for People and the Planet

Unemployment, resource scarcity, climate change, food insecurity and inequity all signal the need for radical change in our societies. To bring this change, the entire UN system must meet the challenge of delivering sustainable development with shared prosperity for all, within the ecological limits of our planet. The UN's role in this transformation is to assist countries to implement the economic, social and environmental dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a balanced and integrated manner.

UNEP is **committed** to working with all concerned parties to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

UNEP **promotes** environmental sustainability as a crucial enabling factor in implementing the SDGs and ensuring the health of our planet.

UNEP's **goal** is to support countries by ensuring integration of the environmental dimension in sustainable development and building country capacity to track progress.

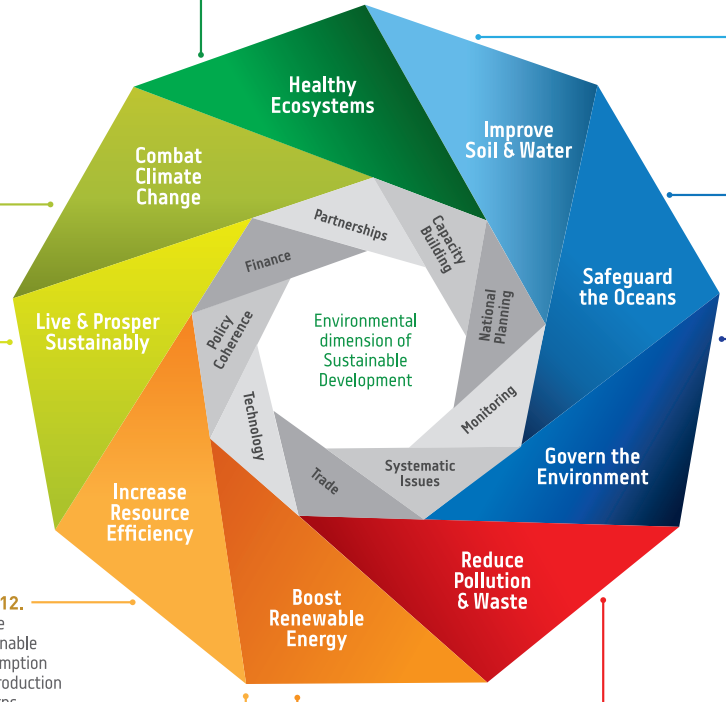
Four core **principles** underpin UNEP's approach to the 2030 Agenda: integration, universality, human rights and equity, and innovation.

- **Universality** [all peoples – beyond borders – collective action]: The 2030 Agenda is global in nature and universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, levels of development, and respecting national policies and priorities. It is a shared agenda that requires a collective response, with countries developing their own pathways to national targets. This will require strengthened governance practice and institutions.
- **Integration** [acting as a harmonious whole]: The 2030 Agenda moves beyond acting as if sustainable development is about three disconnected pillars. Approaches must balance and integrate the social, environmental and economic dimensions, also looking at governance, and interconnect the areas.
- **Human rights and equity** [pathway to a more fair, just and sustainable world]: Inequalities are not just determined by economics. To achieve basic levels of goods and services for all; better redistribution of wealth and resources (both within and between countries); and equitable access to opportunities, information and rule of law, new approaches that build capacities at all level of society are needed.
- **Innovation** [invention is the master key to progress]: The acceleration and transfer of technological innovations is a common concern. In addition to drawing from formal science, traditional knowledge and citizen common sense, new and innovative pathways are needed to allow countries to leap forward.

Environmental sustainability for the Sustainable Development Goals in the 2030 Agenda

In September, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is expected to be adopted at the United Nations summit held in New York. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals build on the eight Millennium Development Goals and aim to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity for all.

⊗ = related goal



Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

1 3 6 8 9 11 12

Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

1 5 10 11 12 14

Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

1 12 15

Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

1 2 8 15

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

1 12 14 15

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

1 10 12

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

1 8 12

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

1 2 3 4 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

1 8 10 11 14 15

Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

1 2 3 4 6 10 12 14 15

Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

1 2 4 8 10 12 13

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

1 2 8 11 14 15

Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

1 7 8 11 12

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

1 10 12

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

5 10 12 16

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

1 2 3 8 9 12 13

Environmental Sustainability for the SDGs in the 2030 Agenda

About half of the SDGs are directly environmental in focus or address the sustainability of natural resources: poverty, health, food and agriculture, water and sanitation, human settlements, energy, climate change, sustainable consumption and production, oceans, and terrestrial ecosystems. Over 86 targets concern environmental sustainability, including at least one in each of the 17 SDGs.

UNEP-Supported Global Initiatives, Partnerships and Networks

Examples of cross-cutting policies and programmes that can be expanded and enhanced to embed the principles of the 2030 Agenda and forge new collaborations with stakeholders working in related sectors

Solutions & Partnerships

UNEP's challenge in the 2030 Agenda is to address its complexity and ambition. UNEP will develop and enhance integrated approaches, across programmes and sectors, to contribute to countries' implementation of the SDGs, ensure coherence and avoid duplication. UNEP will align its strategic planning to the 2030 Agenda and strengthen embedded interactions with the rest of the UN system to build universality and partnerships, while addressing emerging environmental issues.

Climate Change

Inclusive Green Economy (IGE): This evolves from UNEP's earlier work on Green Economy with partners such as the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE). IGE is an integrated approach that can help states maximize the benefits to human well-being that derive from a healthy environment.

Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC): A 100-member partnership to reduce short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs), the CCAC is working on 16 key measures, which if implemented by 2030 can reduce global warming by 0.6°C by 2050.

Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN): the operational arm of the UNFCCC Technology Mechanism and promotes the accelerated development and transfer of climate technologies for adaptation and mitigation. CTCN is hosted by UNEP in collaboration with UNIDO and 11 independent, regional organisations with expertise in climate technologies.

The UN-REDD Programme: An FAO/UNDP/UNEP initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) in developing countries, it corrects market failures by including ecosystem goods and services. The expanded REDD+ includes the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. The next phase is expected to be launched at COP 21. UN-REDD has 63 partner countries, and covers over 60% of all tropical forests.

Resilience to Disasters and Conflicts

Joint Environment Unit: UNEP/OCHA unit housed within OCHA's Emergency Services Branch, which assists Member States to prepare for and respond to environmental emergencies in an integrated manner.

Healthy and Productive Ecosystems

Global Partnership on Marine Litter: UNEP coordinates the Global Partnership on Marine Litter to enhance international cooperation and find solutions for marine debris and its impacts on economies, ecosystems and human health.

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES): The UNEP-hosted IPBES produces fast-track assessments on issues such as pollination and food production, land degradation and invasive species.

Environmental Governance

UNDP-UNEP Poverty and Environment Initiative (PEI): PEI provides tailor-made and practical tools and methodologies for developing countries to catalyze major changes to government policy and budgetary priorities that sustain natural resources and end poverty.

Chemicals and Waste

Global Mercury Partnership/Interim Secretariat for the Minamata Convention: The Minamata Convention was adopted in 2013. Currently administered by UNEP, it is a global treaty to protect human health and the environment from the toxic effects of mercury. It has 128 signatures, and 13 ratifications.

Special Programme for Chemicals Waste: This programme supports country-driven institutional strengthening at the national level, in the context of an integrated approach to address the financing of sound management of chemicals and wastes.

Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM): SAICM's overall objective is the achievement of the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimize significant adverse impacts on human health and the environment.

Resource Efficiency and Sustainable Consumption and Production

International Resource Panel: UNEP's International Resource Panel (IRP) – set up in 2007 – fills an important gap in terms of providing decision makers and other interested parties with scientific assessments on the sustainable use of resources and their environmental impacts over their full life cycles.

10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10YFP): UNEP serves as secretariat and administers the trust fund of the 10YFP – a global framework of action to enhance international cooperation to accelerate the shift towards SCP.

UNEP Finance Initiative: Works on innovative financing with the private and financial sectors, contributing to the discourse on financing for climate and wider sustainability issues. The UNEP Inquiry programme is looking into the design of a sustainable financial system, including policy options in support of financing a green economy.

Energy Efficiency Hub of SE4All: UNEP manages the Energy Efficiency Hub of SE4All, implemented through the Copenhagen Centre for Energy Efficiency as part of the UNEP-DTU Partnership. UNEP is also supporting countries in leapfrogging to energy efficiency with the en.lighten initiative and a new partnership on appliances.

Environment Under Review

Global Environment Outlook: UNEP's flagship Global Environment Outlook assessment is a participatory process that builds capacity for conducting integrated environmental assessments and reporting on the state, trends and outlooks of the environment. GEO is also a series of products that facilitates the interaction between science and policy.

PROVIA: The Global Programme of Research on Climate Change Vulnerability, Impacts and Adaptation (PROVIA) is a global initiative that aims to provide direction and coherence at the international level for research on vulnerability, impacts and adaptation (VIA).

Eye on Earth: This addresses the importance of environmental and societal information and networking to decision-making. It convenes thought and action leaders to collaborate towards strengthening existing initiatives and filling future gaps.

Operating Principles for Effective Delivery

Science-policy interface for evidence-based decision making

UNEP will continue to identify science that integrates social, economic and environmental considerations for policy and decision-making. UNEP is already feeding information from multiple stakeholders into data gathering, analysis and assessment processes at the national, regional and global levels. UNEP will evolve its public advocacy, awareness and outreach to mobilize all those who can influence the changes needed to achieve the SDGs. Through UNEP Live, UNEP will focus on:

1. Developing multi-purpose indicators to track the SDGs at all levels;
2. Creating a National Reporting System and reporting obligations database to help countries reduce the burden of reporting and build on existing data;
3. Building the capacities of countries to collect and analyze data, and establish communities of science that involve all levels of society.

Providing expert knowledge and technical assistance on the environment

UNEP will provide technical guidance and support for environmental governance, developing coherent laws and policies and their effective implementation. This is to ensure that countries have in place frameworks for environmental laws and institutions, and that environmental considerations underpin development policy.

Convening stakeholders to agree on global environmental norms and standards

Inclusivity is an important part of the 2030 Agenda. UNEP recognizes that access to information is a key condition for citizen participation, transparency and accountability.

Significant efforts have been made to ensure that citizens, civil society, various levels of government and the private sector are consulted on the new agenda. UNEP will continue creating and facilitating avenues for cooperation between the UN, governments, bilateral and multilateral agencies, companies and civil society organizations to initiate joint commitments and actions.

Greater integration of normative frameworks into UNEP's work

To deliver on the 2030 Agenda, the UN system needs to be innovative, agile, inclusive, and results-oriented. The UN system recognized the need for integrated system-wide policies and strategies in support of the SDGs – policies that link normative frameworks with operational activities and encompass all UN activities. UNEP will increase integration of these normative frameworks – such as human rights, gender equality, and peace and security – into its work.

Synergy through partnerships for collective impact

The UN system's ability to redefine how it engages with partners and works with other stakeholders towards shared sustainable development outcomes is crucial for the SDGs. Effective sustainable development cooperation will require the formation of issue-based coalitions and platforms that integrate multiple stakeholders (governments, civil society and the private sector) to improve decision-making, strategic planning, service delivery, knowledge sharing, and collective monitoring and accountability at all levels.

Supporting the universal nature of the 2030 Agenda

UNEP will contribute to the UN's efforts for system-wide coherence on sustainable development from its environmental perspective – with a focus on creating coherence in the way the UN system integrates the environmental dimension to implement normative guidance and environmental safeguards, and Delivering as One at the country level.

Many global challenges relate to global public goods, most of which emerge from a multi-level process, requiring policy action at the national, regional and global levels. UNEP's engagement will include methods for reviewing, learning and flexible readjustment, to ensure that actions taken at the national and regional levels are linked to global targets.

Supporting implementation and building capacity through strategic regional presence

A strengthened strategic regional presence will enable UNEP to work towards global consensus and policy coherence on key issues relating to the environmental dimension of sustainable development, while creatively pursuing specific opportunities and approaches available regionally. It will enable UNEP to foster effective partnerships, including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation and with the wider UN system through Delivering as One.

Addressing emerging issues

UNEP will continue, through its Foresight process, to produce a careful and authoritative ranking of the most important emerging issues for the global environment, including those related to the implementation of the SDGs. The aim is keep the international community abreast on these issues, and help shape the work plans of all UN agencies.

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