



UNEP in Europe

NEWSLETTER

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GreenUp the planet: the future we've got?

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Angela Merkel revives debate over two-speed Europe



Just as the situation in Spain was becoming increasingly critical, German Chancellor Angela Merkel revived debate over two-speed Europe in a TV interview given to the German State channel ARD on 7 June. To overcome the crisis, Ms Merkel calls for greater political integration of Europe. In her opinion “we need more of Europe (...), budgetary union (...) and we above all need political union. We must gradually relinquish competences to Europe,” she said. Germany is one of the few eurozone countries registering significant growth; however latest figures showed that its exports had dropped 1.7% in April compared with the previous month, due to weaker global demand.

Several eurozone countries are facing difficulties. The Bank of France has cut its forecast for the French economy. The cut is the latest sign of the lack of growth in the eurozone, which is struggling with the debt crisis. On 7 June, official figures showed that French unemployment had hit 10% in the first quarter of 2012.

Spain's credit rating had been downgraded. Fitch cut its rating on Spanish government debt by three notches to “BBB”, a sign it thinks Spain's ability to honour its debts had weakened. On 9 June, the eurozone ministers agreed to lend Madrid up to 100bn euros (\$125bn; £80bn) to help banks hit by bad property loans.

New government in Greece



Greece finally has a new government formed following the elections held on 17 June. It is a three-party coalition: conservative New Democracy party, the Socialist Party (Pasok), and the Democratic Left party. The New Democracy party won 129 seats in Greece's 300-seat parliament, including a 50-seat bonus for coming first in the election. The head of the New Democracy party, Mr Antonis Samaras, was sworn in as Prime Minister. His new cabinet is dominated by MPs from his party. The socialist Pasok and Democratic Left parties have two party officials in the cabinet, but have barred their MPs from taking part. It is believed they may not want to be associated with austerity measures. Mr Samaras became Greece's fourth Prime Minister in eight months.

International Cartographic Association (ICA) commission Chair Mr Evangelos Livieratos has been appointed Greek Minister of Environment, Energy and Climate Change in the new Greek government. He has been Professor of geo-navigation and cartography at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki with several published articles on cartography in international journals.

Albania elects interior minister as its new President



On 11 June, Albania's parliament elected its interior minister as the country's new president, despite a boycott in the vote by opposition lawmakers. Bujar Nishani's name was put forward after the ruling coalition's previous candidate, Artan Hoxha, pulled out for unclear reasons. The opposition complained it was not properly consulted on the candidates for the largely ceremonial role. The presidential election process is considered a test in Albania's road to integration. The current government, in place since 2009, is expected to stay until the next parliamentary elections, scheduled for 2013, unless unforeseen circumstances occur.

France: New Government



As tradition has it, the Government, formed following the election of François Hollande as President of the French Republic, resigned on 18 June after the parliamentary elections of 10 and 17 June, to make place for a new cabinet. A mini reshuffle took place on 21 June, with four new junior ministers joining the government, while two ministers changed portfolios. Ms Nicole Bricq, formerly Minister of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy, became Minister of Foreign Trade, while Ms Delphine Batho, formerly a vice minister in the Ministry of Justice, took over as Minister of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy. The new government has 19 women and 19 men.

Croatia: Mihael Zmajlovic is new Environment Minister



Mr Mihael Zmajlovic was appointed new Environment and Nature Protection minister by Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic on 11 June, following the resignation on 7 June of Ms Mirela Holy. Ms Holy had sent an e-mail to the head of the state railway company HZ in March, asking him to keep the wife of a party colleague in her job. The e-mail was eventually made public on the website of a state broadcaster. Zmajlovic said the ministry would maintain the current course and that he would manage it transparently and in accordance with the law and international regulations. Mr Zmajlovic was born in Zagreb in 1978. He graduated in economics, is a member of the ruling Social Democratic Party (SDP) and a Member of Parliament, the Chair of the parliamentary Physical Planning and Construction Committee and a member of the Finance and Central Budget Committee. He has been the mayor of Jastrebarsko (a town in Zagreb county) since 2009 and was elected to the SDP Presidency in June 2012.

The UK takes step to protect endangered sharks



Endangered sharks will be given greater protection following the signing of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Memorandum of Understanding on Migratory Sharks of the United Kingdom on 18 June.

The agreement, the first of its kind to address the global conservation of sharks, was signed by Fisheries Minister Richard Benyon on behalf of the UK and a number of its Overseas Territories. The 24th signatory will support efforts to protect these vulnerable species before they are lost forever.



Like most EU Member States, the UK pushes the EU to tighten controls on the practice of shark finning. Shark "finning" -- the practice of slicing off a shark's fins and discarding the body at sea -- is associated with unacceptable waste and unsustainable mortality of sharks. The CMS agreement aims to ensure the long-term survival of sharks.

Under the agreement, work will focus on improving fisheries data for threatened shark species to help inform conservation and management actions.

The signing also extended the agreement to the UK Overseas Territories of Bermuda, the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, British Indian Ocean Territories and Crown Dependency of the Isle of Man.

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The Irish largely approve the European budgetary pact



Irish voters approved the European budgetary pact by a wide majority on 31 May: 60% of them voted "yes" to the ratification of the treaty on stability, coordination and governance signed on 2 March in Brussels by the Heads of State and government of 25 EU Member States (all except the UK and the Czech Republic).

Potočnik launches Resource Efficiency Platform

On 5 June Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik launched the European Resource Efficiency Platform (EREP) with the aim of informing policy for the transition to a more sustainable European economy. The EREP focuses on the resources, sectors and policy areas defined in the 'Roadmap to a resource-efficient Europe.' It also symbolizes a larger movement towards multi-stakeholder dialogue on European resource efficiency challenges. UNEP ED is a member of the platform but was represented by Fanny Demassieux as his Sherpa in this first meeting.

More information: <http://bit.ly/g1pTTQ>



European Parliament adopts plenary Resolution on resource use



The EU must make better use of resources for the sake of its future economic growth and the environment, according to a resolution adopted by Parliament on 24 May. Valuable materials should be recovered instead of landfilled or incinerated, and taxation should penalise resource waste to help boost the EU's competitiveness, say MEPs.

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New forecast report issued by the Club of Rome



In the month of May, in the run-up to the Rio Conference, a new report to the Club of Rome was launched, entitled: "2052 – A Global Forecast for the Next Forty Years", in which author Jorgen Randers tries to answer the question about the state of the world in forty years' time. The report raises fundamental questions about the challenges facing humankind, and whether the planet can survive if we continue to overconsume, the same question behind the Rio negotiations.

Humanity's systems are very resilient towards real change. Rapid change does not happen until people's patience caused by the negative consequences of "business-as-usual" (climate change effects, inequity, resource depletion) runs out. The challenge is that society's main institutions, democracy, and economy are based on short-termism, resulting in a slow societal response to challenges. However, what we need are long-term solutions and investments.

Today's cataclysmic climatic effects demonstrate that regardless of modern society's many achievements, we could be on a path of un-managed decline. We have the opportunity to fundamentally change our ways, but it seems that rather than controlling our destiny, we are merely drifting into our future.

Over the next 18 months, the Club of Rome will be holding a debate on the future of the planet. The debate will address the root causes of the systemic crisis from a number of important aspects: the need for a different set of values underlying society and economy; the need to change economic theory and practice and safeguard resources; the need to create a more equal society, which also produces near to full employment; and the need to redesign governance systems that put people at their centre.

Full report: <http://www.clubofrome.org/?p=4211>



Green growth needed for EU agriculture

At an informal meeting on 3-5 June, the EU agriculture ministers agreed that the future of EU agriculture must get 'more for less.' Experts from OECD, WWF, and Unilever all gave presentations highlighting increasing global environmental challenges. They called for green growth as the only option for agriculture.

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Emission Trading Scheme reduced Greenhouse Gas emissions in 2011

Based on member states' reporting, 2011 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions from those actors included in the Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) were reduced by over 2% compared with 2010. This includes more than 12,000 power plants and manufacturing facilities across the EU27 as well as Norway and Liechtenstein. The ETS also saw success in compliance rates. On the 30 April 2012 deadline for surrendering allowances for 2011 emissions, over 99% of the emissions covered by the ETS were accounted for. Unused emissions, however, continue to contribute to a fall in the price of carbon. The European Commission will take this into account when determining the number of allowances for auction in 2013.

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World Environment Day celebrated across Europe



WED Round Table in Geneva. From left: Mr Perrez, Swiss Ambassador for Environment; Mr Tokayev, Director-General UN Geneva; Mr Dusik, Acting Head UNEP-ROE; Ms Rochat, State Counsellor City of Geneva; Mr Pagani, Mayor of Geneva

On 5 June World Environment Day (WED) was celebrated, dedicated to promoting sustainable living and positive environmental action. Among thousands of events organized by communities, businesses and schools, several UNEP events took place in Geneva, Moscow, Brussels and Vienna. This year's theme was 'Green Economy: Does it Include You?', which focuses on achieving an economy based on low carbon emissions and resource efficiency.

UNEP's Regional Office for Europe began celebrations already on 2 June in Geneva's "Parc La Grange". A hot summer day invited many people to join the triple anniversary celebrating 10 years of Switzerland's admission to the United Nations, the 40th anniversary of UNEP and 20 years from the first Rio conference. Many environmental organizations and companies were present with their stands in the park. Children enjoyed games, face painting and expressed their artistic skills on a 6-metre-long wall that could be painted on. A "sustainable" picnic followed, and the day ended with the screening of "Ice Age".

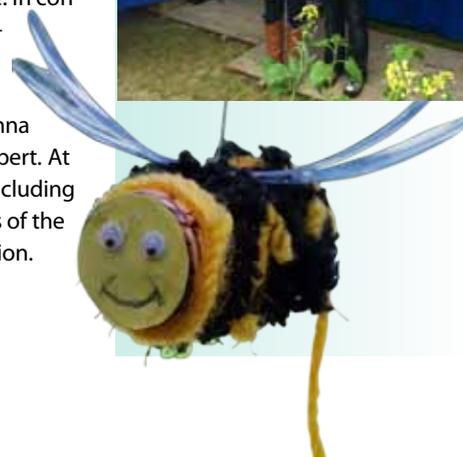
To further promote WED, Swiss caterer DSR partnered with GreenUp – a UNEP initiative to help citizens transition to an environmentally sustainable lifestyle – and on 5 June offered in all its Swiss restaurants a special environmentally-friendly menu.

In Brussels, the WED celebrations began on 3 June with a "fête de l'environnement" at the Parc du Cinquantenaire, right in the centre of the European Union capital. Despite poor weather, thousands of Brussels residents flocked to the Parc to celebrate World Environment Day. The United Nations stand, lead by UNEP and UNRIC, showcased bees as vital to biodiversity and food production – keeping in line with the 2012 theme, 'Sustainable Food.' Through a partnership with Artigraf, a local craft company, children were invited to craft their own bees out of recycled corks, which were proudly displayed at the UN stand. Visitors were also offered a sweet snack of fruit dipped in honey as well as more information on the importance of and threats to bees.

On 3-6 June UNEP and the Bee Biodiversity Network of France staged a flower garden of bee-friendly plants in front of the European Parliament. The installation was designed to raise awareness on the importance of bees to biodiversity and food production worldwide. In conjunction, MEP Gaston Franco hosted a symposium on 5-6 June on bees and biodiversity, marking the first European Week of Bees and Pollination.

Vienna and Moscow also took part in the festivities. On 11 June the Ciné ONU in Vienna screened the film 'Plastic Shores' followed by a roundtable discussion with a UNEP expert. At the UN Information Office (UNIC) in Moscow, a special event took place on 5 June including talks by UN and Russian representatives, as well as the exhibition of the winning works of the UN European Ad Competition Drop by Drop – the Future We Want, on water preservation.

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The fifth Global Environment Outlook from Brazil to Europe

The global launch of (GEO-5) assessment report took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 6 June 2012, with the participation of UNEP's Executive Director Achim Steiner, other senior UNEP staff and Brazilian governmental representatives, among others. At virtually the same time, the GEO-5 report was also launched in nearly 15 other cities in all regions of the world, including three key locations in Europe: Brussels, Geneva and London.

The Geneva launch took place at the UN Palais des Nations. The UNEP team was composed of acting Regional Director Jan Dusik and Ron Witt, DEWA Regional Coordinator for Europe, along with three Coordinating Lead Authors (CLA) of various GEO-5 chapters: Dr Nicolai Dronin (Moscow State University) for Chapter 11 Europe; Ms Jennifer Mohamed-Katerere for Chapter 9 Africa (and also one of the lead authors of the concluding chapter 17 "Global Solutions"); and Dr Laszlo Pinter (Central European University and IISD Fellow) for Chapter 16 "Scenarios".

Representatives of major European and international news media and wire services were present.

Following a brief set of presentations, a lively discussion was held with the press, which helped the presenters to elaborate both on the major messages of GEO-5 and what is entirely new in the report and carries an impact for the global decision-makers uniting in Rio de Janeiro for the Conference on Sustainable Development.

The second European launch took place at the European Parliament (EP) in Brussels, hosted by the EP Environment Chairperson Mr Matthias Groote. UNEP's Jan Dusik spoke alongside GEO-5 Lead Author Mr Marcel Kok (Chapter 17 "Global Responses"), European Environment Agency head Prof. Jacqueline McGlade, and the European Environment Bureau's Secretary General Mr Jeremy Wates.

The third European launch took place at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in London, with UNEP representatives from the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) Dr Matt Walpole (Head of Ecosystem Assessment Programme and co-ordinator of the GEO-5 Biodiversity Chapter) and Dr Jorn Scharlemann (Senior Scientist, contributing author on Biodiversity Chapter and part of technical editorial review team, who were joined by Bernice Lee OBE (Chatham House, CLA for Global Responses Chapter) and Dr Johan Kuylensstierna (Stockholm Environment Institute York, CLA for the Atmosphere Chapter) in a panel presentation followed by questions and a lively discussion.

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Launch of GEO-5 at the European Parliament in Brussels

Caspian littoral states discuss Regional Contingency Planning

The Caspian environmental process, with its landmark Tehran Convention on the protection of the marine environment of the Caspian Sea, has made a vital step forward in becoming operational at a crucial time, when the Caspian region is witnessing unprecedented growth in oil and gas exploration, exploitation and transport.

On June 18-20, a Regional Contingency Planning Workshop for the Caspian littoral States jointly organized by IMO and UNEP and hosted by the State Maritime Administration of Azerbaijan took place in Baku, Azerbaijan. A prominent participants' list included government officials from all five Caspian states (such as representatives from Ministries of Environment, Transport, Emergencies and other governmental bodies); international organizations' staff (from IMO, UNEP through its Tehran Convention Interim Secretariat, and OSCE), and the private sector (such as OSPRI and representatives from the oil and shipping industry).

The workshop was organized in light of the recent adoption of the Aktau Protocol Concerning Regional Preparedness, Response and Co-operation in Combating Oil Pollution Incidents at COP3 of the Tehran Convention in Aktau, Kazakhstan in 2011.

Participants met to give a fresh boost to the Draft Regional Caspian Sea Plan, which provides for regional cooperation in combating oil pollution incidents and was last reviewed in 2005, discussed its adaptation to the requirements laid down in the Aktau Protocol, and succeeded in reaching agreement on a joint way forward in the early implementation of the Protocol.

The 2011 Aktau Protocol, together with the Regional Plan, will link together the national oil spill contingency plans, significantly facilitate communication between the five Caspian states and also, in the event of a major oil spill, provide for efficient resource sharing and joint operations between the Caspian countries for a targeted response to an oil spill incident.

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Monitoring system progress protects against floods in Belarus and Ukraine

A flood monitoring system in Pripjat River Basin was recently expanded with the addition of a fourth hydrometeorological station. The stations, which collect data on water levels, temperature and precipitation, are part of a project developed by the Environment Security Initiative (ENVSEC) and led by NATO.

Coordinated management of the river, which stretches 700km across Belarus and Ukraine, has become increasingly important after severe floods destroyed crops and endangered people and their properties in both countries in recent years. Risks are compounded by radioactive, polluted dredges and nuclear power stations located in the basin.

The data and hydrometeorological services from the four stations are being used by the water management board for flood protection measures, owners of water reservoirs, and by the administration of the Rivne nuclear power plant. The information from the stations has also aided fishery administrations define the time of spawning and been used by researchers studying climate change.

The International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC), under the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), is also assisting the project by training Ukrainian and Belarus experts in Slovakia. The IWAC intends to support further activities by expanding the data results to include water quality, including radiation pollution, and extending the flood forecasting models. "The cooperation of several international bodies under the umbrella of the ENVSEC was and is very much fruitful," said Boris Minarik, IWAC Director.

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the first hydrometeorological station installed on the Pripjat River

Experts report highest elephant poaching and ivory smuggling rates in a decade

Elephant poaching levels are the worst in a decade and recorded ivory seizures are at their highest levels since 1989, according to a report published by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The findings, largely based on information submitted by governments, will be presented and discussed at the 62nd meeting of the CITES Standing Committee to be held in Geneva from 23 to 27 July.

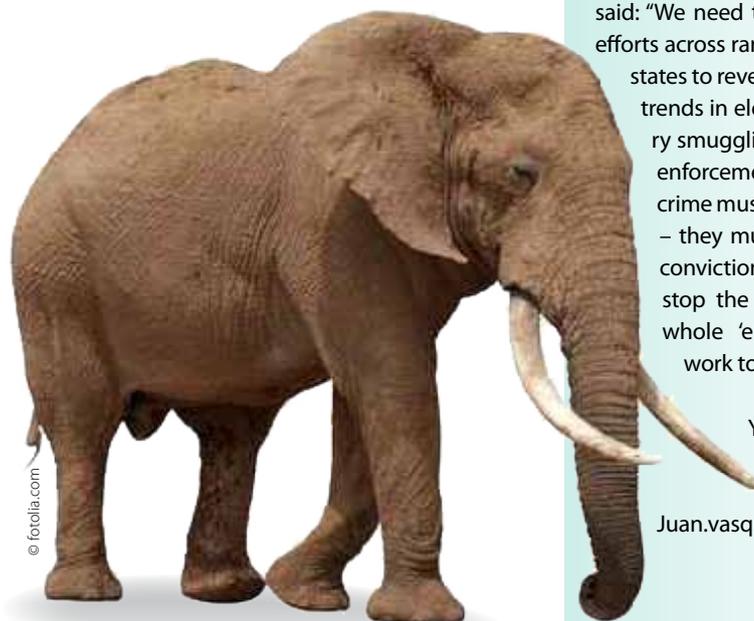
The report analyses data from the CITES programme on Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE), IUCN's data on the status of elephant populations, the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) managed by TRAFFIC, and the CITES trade database managed by the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC).

These authoritative sources of information have shown a very close correspondence between trends in elephant poaching and trends in large-scale ivory seizures, detecting essentially the same patterns at different points in the illegal ivory trade chain.

Commenting on the report, the CITES Secretary-General, Mr John E. Scanlon, said: "We need to enhance our collective efforts across range, transit and consumer states to reverse the current disturbing trends in elephant poaching and ivory smuggling. While being essential, enforcement efforts to stop wildlife crime must not just result in seizures – they must result in prosecutions, convictions and strong penalties to stop the flow of contraband. The whole 'enforcement chain' must work together."

You can download the full report [here](#)

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UNEP/GRID-Geneva presents RiVAMP method

UNEP/GRID-Geneva developed a methodology called RiVAMP for identifying and quantifying the role of ecosystems for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA).

Since May 2012 it is freely available online.

It provides free access to:

- A step by step training manual on RiVAMP methodology
- Data
- Free opensource software for GIS, statistic and beach erosion analysis
- Presentations

The RiVAMP results and methodology were recently presented at the First Meeting of the Scientific, Technical and Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities in the Wider Caribbean Region (LBS Protocol) in Aruba on 5-8 June 2012. At Rio+20, the methodology was introduced within the presentation of UNEP EBA flagship and a one-minute-movie featuring RiVAMP for DRR was also shown.

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Tackling uranium waste in Central Asia

The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) has made significant inroads in its projects tackling uranium waste in Central Asia through its interagency approach, participants heard at the Regional Meeting on Safe Management of Uranium Production Legacy Sites in Vienna, Austria.

ENVSEC and other organizations attended the meeting, held June 12-15, to review the work done under the International Atomic Energy Agency Technical Cooperation (IAEA TC) regional project RER/3/010 for the Europe Region (which includes Central Asia). The IAEA project is aimed at supporting preparation for remediation of uranium production legacy sites. During the meeting, national and international stakeholders involved in related activities shared information on past, current and future plans and projects.

Participants discussed the need to coordinate activities among the international players and the affected Member States to optimize efforts directed at uranium legacy sites.

"ENVSEC is an example of interagency coordination with proven experience in setting up a project formulation and coordination support group for sustainable transboundary management of radioactive waste in Central Asia," said Laura Rio, Senior Programme Manager, ENVSEC.

ENVSEC's partners are UNEP, UNECE, OSCE, REC, UNDP and NATO (as an associated partner).

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UNEP facilitates Multilateral Environment Agreements



Mr Louis Michel, Member of the European Parliament, with ACP MEAs Project Coordinator Mr Mamadou Kane.

UNEP presented the EU-funded programme "Capacity Building related to Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) in ACP countries" to members of parliament in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and the European Parliament in a side event of the ACP-EU Parliamentarian Assembly on 29 May in Horsens, Denmark. The event, hosted by Denmark during its presidency of the Council of the European Union, attracted important policy- and decision-makers from ACP countries and the EU. The joint ACP-EU Parliamentarian Assembly is an advisory body to promote dialogue and consultation between the people of the EU and ACP countries. The 4-year (2009-2013) EUR 21 million ACP MEAs Programme coordinated by the UNEP Division of Environmental Law and Conventions promotes environmental sustainability in ACP countries through enhancing their capacity to implement MEAs.

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Contest to close information gap on short-lived climate pollutants



A contest challenging young people around the world to put a little-known group of harmful pollutants at the forefront of the global development agenda has been announced by the new Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) to Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants.

The outreach contest is open to anyone aged between 12 and 25 who wants to get creative for an international cause and help spread the word about solutions to short-lived pollution.

Led by governments, UNEP and the World Bank, the CCAC is the first global effort to treat short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) as an urgent and collective challenge. On 15 June, Germany became the latest addition, bringing the global alliance to 14 partners.

The contest was announced on 3 June during an event in Stockholm hosted by Sweden's Environment Minister, Ms Lena Ek, and US Secretary of State, Ms Hillary Rodham Clinton, in the presence of HRH Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden.



Minister Ek stressed the importance of communicating about short-lived climate pollutants in a way that will catch people's imagination and is easy to understand. "Short-lived climate pollutants' is a strange and perhaps unfamiliar set of words to most. But SLCPs, such as black carbon, soot, tropospheric ozone, methane and short-lived hydrofluorocarbons all have some characteristics in common as they significantly contribute to global and regional warming," Minister Ek said. "They also impact crop yields, deteriorate air quality and affect human health across the globe. And because they are short-lived, they represent a golden opportunity to slow down climate warming in the near term," the Minister continued.

Secretary Clinton outlined the CCAC's strong momentum since its launch in February 2012, including a near tripling of its size, which will be furthered still by additional engagement with other countries, organizations and private sector players.

"We need to convince decision-makers everywhere, political leaders, CEOs, civil society leaders, investors and students that this is one of those areas where we can show tangible progress almost immediately and that we can do it in a cost-effective way," Secretary Clinton said.

Visit www.unep.org/ccac for contest entry details. The closing date is 24 August 2012.
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Sustainable energy for Eastern Europe

The Inception Meeting of the 'Sustainable Energy Planning in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus towards the Covenant of Mayors - Moldova, Ukraine and Azerbaijan' project took place on 24 - 25 May in Vinnytsia, Ukraine. The objective of the project is to support local authorities to contribute to climate change mitigation through developing a Baseline Emission Inventory (BEI) and a Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) and partially implementing the SEAP. All project partners (the city councils of Beltsy, Icherisheher, Vinnytsia, and the Frankfurt School - UNEP Collaborating Centre) including two mayors - Mr Volodymyr Groysman, Mayor of the city of Vinnytsia, and Mr Vasili Panciuc, Mayor of the city of Beltsy, as well as the Covenant of Mayors-East office participated in the meeting. The participants reviewed and discussed the detailed project implementation plans, coordination mechanisms, reporting and agreed timelines and next steps for the forthcoming six months. The upcoming events are two capacity-building workshops on Climate Change, focused on Building and Transport sectors, which are expected to take place in the cities of Beltsy and Icherisheher in September 2012.

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Reducing mercury use in gold mining

Artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) is the largest demand sector for mercury. UNEP, in collaboration with the Artisanal Gold Council and other partners from the Global Mercury Partnership, has developed a document entitled 'Reducing mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining: A practical guide.' The document is a compilation of experiences from a number of our partners in different regions of the world. The document's purposes are to raise awareness about this issue and to inform governments, miners and civil society about available techniques for reducing, and ultimately eliminating, mercury use in ASGM.

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OzonAction Programme defines action plan



Athematic meeting on Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) Phase out Management Plans (HPMPs), certification of technicians and companies and identification of blends in the framework of the implementation of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was held in Tbilisi, Georgia on 12-14 June. The meeting was organized by the Ministry of Environment Protection of Georgia and the OzonAction Programme of UNEP's Division on Technology, Industry & Economics. Opening remarks were made by Mr George Khachidze, the Minister of Environment Protection of Georgia, who highlighted the importance of the establishment of national certification systems and the use of best practices from the EU countries, and Mr Mikheil Tushishvili, UNEP Programme Officer, who also presented the main goals of the meeting.

The main objective of the regional meeting was to present the umbrella regulation applicable in the EU regarding certification of refrigeration technicians and logbooks/inventories/leakage verification as well as the discussion on the fluorocarbon gas (F-Gas) regulation and potential impact of its implementation. Furthermore, the meeting served as a platform to present training needs and assessment methods for the certification systems and to further discuss opportunities for adopting similar systems in the ECA countries.

The participants included National Ozone Unit (NOU) officers and experts from the Refrigeration & Air-conditioning (RAC) sector of the European and Central Asia (ECA) countries (Armenia, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan). The representative of Azerbaijan (Countries with Economies in Transition - CEITs) also participated in the work of the seminar. Representatives of implementing agencies (UNDP and UNEP) and resource persons (from Hungary and Czech Republic) participated in the meeting and delivered a number of presentations.

Participants agreed on a roadmap and action plan, which will result in the introduction of comprehensive certification schemes at the national levels.

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Green economy study on Montenegro

Green economy interventions that increase energy efficiency in the building and transport sectors and promote domestic supply chains in tourism could effectively reduce energy consumption and the associated GHG emissions; they could also reduce energy expenditure while creating employment for Montenegro, according to a study presented to the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism, and commissioned by UNEP and UNDP. Business-as-usual (BAU) and two Green Economy scenarios - 12 per cent and 20 per cent energy efficiency improvement targets by 2020 - were compared. The study indicates that a 12 per cent energy efficiency improvement target by 2020 in Montenegro would offer a positive return on investment, with the total avoided costs surpassing total investments by 2017 and leading to an economy-wide five-year payback time. However, while total energy costs are estimated to be 15 – 26 per cent lower than in a BAU scenario by 2020, energy prices will still be higher than 2006 and 2010. Hence, supporting incentives and other “flanking” measures (a “social protection floor”) would be needed particularly for low income groups. The results of this study were discussed by Montenegro Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism, the UN Resident Coordinator in Montenegro, UNDP and UNEP, and submitted to the National Council for Sustainable Development on 1 June. This activity is part of a UNEP-UNDP collaboration in support of Montenegro's initiative for a green economy. The results of the UNEP-UNDP study were incorporated into Montenegro's national study on the transition to Green Economy, in preparation for the Rio+20 conference.

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35th Panel Meeting on Climate Change

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) held its 35th session in Geneva, Switzerland, on 6–9 June.

The Panel completed its review of the IPCC's processes and procedures launched in 2010 following recommendations by the InterAcademy Council (IAC), the group created by the world's science academies to provide advice to international bodies. Decisions on adopting a communications strategy and revising governance and management, conflict of interest, and procedures were taken.

"These latest changes further strengthen IPCC operations as it prepares to release its Fifth Assessment Report in 2013 and 2014. With the completion of the review, the IPCC can now focus fully on its mandate to assess in a comprehensive, objective, open and transparent way the scientific, technical and socio-economic information relevant to understanding the scientific basis of the risks of climate change, its potential impacts, and options for adaptation and mitigation," IPCC Chair Rajendra Pachauri said.

The Panel also reviewed progress being made on the forthcoming Fifth Assessment Report. Currently, IPCC is actively seeking wide participation by experts in the review of the drafts, encompassing a range of scientific, technical and socio-economic views, expertise, and geographical representation.

Following the Panel meeting, the Core Writing Team for the Synthesis Report held its first meeting on 11-13 June. The team of 45 authors, selected last March, prepared the work plan for the Synthesis Report, which puts together key findings from the assessment reports of the IPCC's three Working Groups and from recent Special Reports, and presents them in a non-technical style suitable for policy-makers.

In response to an invitation by Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, the Panel has asked its Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (TFI) to review and update its guidance on greenhouse gas emissions and removals from land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) by October 2013, also to ensure consistency with decisions agreed by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Durban at the end of 2011.

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Drop by Drop winner announced



The winner of the United Nations Drop by Drop Ad Competition to Save Water was announced at an award ceremony in Copenhagen on World Environment Day, 5 June. The winner, Daniele Gaspari of Italy, was awarded the 5000 Euro first prize by the Danish Crown Prince. Drop by Drop, another successful collaboration between UNEP and UNRIC, solicited over 3500 entries from across Europe. Over 50 media partners will relay the winning ad and the 30 finalists will appear in exhibitions all over the world - including at the Rio+20 conference.

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Bees biodiversity symposium



On 6 June, Mr Thierry Lucas of UNEP Brussels gave a presentation on “Biodiversity and Pollination Challenges” at a symposium held at the European Parliament.

The symposium, organised as part of European bees and pollination week, brought together scientists, industry and policy-makers to discuss the link between biodiversity and pollinator decline.

The EU must do more to protect Europe’s honeybee population if it wants to secure food production in the years to come, the parliament conference has heard.

Opening the debate, French EPP deputy Gaston Franco, who is Chair of the forestry subgroup in the parliament’s climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development intergroup, warned that the consequences of the disappearance of bees could be a disaster. Bees are in fact crucial to the production of fruit crops and 35 per cent of world food production would be threatened if they were to disappear.

François Wakenhut, the head of the European Commission’s biodiversity unit, used his presentation to assess the role of the EU biodiversity strategy in maintaining pollinator populations. Other speakers included Ms Katarzyna Biala, of the European Environment Agency, coordinator of the Opera research centre in Italy Mr Ettore Capri, and Mr Jean-Marc Petat, the environment director at BASF Agro.

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Brussels premiere of Yann Arthus Bertrand’s ‘Planet Ocean’

To further celebrate World Environment Day, UNEP’s Brussels Head Chris Vanden Bilcke and UNEP Goodwill Ambassador Yann Arthus Bertrand were in Brussels for the premiere screening of Bertrand’s latest film “Planet Ocean” on 26 June. Mr Bertrand said that the film is a plea for humanity to respect the world in which we live, and that it serves a noble and universal cause, the theme of the Rio Earth Summit. The film was organised in collaboration with the United Nations Regional Information Centre as part of the Cine-ONU programme.



UNEP Brussels Head Chris Vanden Bilcke (left) and UNEP Goodwill Ambassador Yann Arthus Bertrand (right)

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM RIO+20

UNEP Launches Sustainable Transport Campaign

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP), together with over 20 train, metro, bus, and car-pooling companies across Europe, launched a campaign aimed at promoting sustainable transport choices among commuters.

The 'Let's Travel Together' campaign, launched at the Rio+20 conference in Brazil, will encourage travellers to share their cars with friends, use public transport and take other actions to reduce carbon emissions from vehicles.

Facebook users can back the campaign and show their support for sustainable transport at www.greenup-unesp.org/traveltogether/

As part of UNEP's GreenUp initiative, 'Let's Travel Together' will show in a virtual and entertaining way how sustainable transport can support the transition towards a low-carbon, resource-efficient green economy.

Moving towards greener societies is not just environmentally friendly, but also economically and socially sound. If we double the market share of public transport, the urban transport energy consumption would only increase marginally, saving around 170 million tonnes oil equivalent and avoiding the emission of around 550 million tonnes CO₂ equivalent in 2025. Get on board on <http://www.greenup-unesp.org/traveltogether/>

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The "Let's travel together" campaign is online!

KNOSSOS project at Rio+20



The KNOSSOS project organised a series of events to tackle the question of "How research can best inform the transition to a green economy." In conjunction with the European Commission, UNEP, GLOBE and IEEP, four events were held - two in Europe and two at Rio+20. Pictured here you see Mr Patrick Ten Brink presenting the latest KNOSSOS policy brief on Green Economy at the Rio+20 conference.

Full details of the events and key message are available on a dedicated blog <http://research4rio.tumblr.com>

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UNEP side event in Rio: “Green Jobs: A chance for youth!”

The side event “Green Jobs: A chance for youth!” was organized by UNEP in partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Government of Tanzania, with the participation of high-level representatives from governments, UN agencies, NGOs, Trade Unions, youth organizations and the private sector. The interactive event explored the links between youth and the green economy, and highlighted strategies for scaling-up green jobs opportunities for youth during an era of record unemployment.



In her opening remark, the Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, Ms Amina Mohamed, cautioned that inadequate investment in youth is an enormous waste of resources that could lead to economic failure across the world. She described UNEP’s efforts to harness the potential of youth to drive the green economy, including: the UNEP-ILO Green Jobs Initiative, the UNEP Governing Council’s long-term strategy for youth engagement, and the UNESCO/UNEP YouthXchange Initiative. She emphasized the need for stronger partnerships for the promotion of green jobs opportunities for youth.

In support of the UNEP/ILO efforts on green jobs for youth, the Executive Director of UNFPA, Dr Babatunde Osotimehin, via a video link urged governments to seize the full potential young people offer and ensure adequate investment in opportunities, health, and livelihood and life skills for youths in order to effectively promote the transition to sustainable development and green economies.

Peter Poschen, ILO, underscored the challenge of turning the largest cohort of young people to enter the labour market into a population dividend, rather than a lost generation facing social and economic alienation.

Highlighting the energy and creativity of young people, Mr John Wali, of Junior Achievement Kenya, shared lessons from the Junior Achievement programme in Kenya, which guides young people in entrepreneurship, financial literacy and work readiness in order to bring innovative business ideas to market.

Ms Rosana Sousa, of Central Única dos Trabalhadores, Brazil, emphasized that green jobs must bring not only employment but also human dignity, and challenged efforts that have portrayed call centres and other insecure, low-paying jobs as “green.” Ms Sousa identified priorities for creating meaningful green jobs, including taxation and monitoring of financial transactions, and social protection for vulnerable labourers and communities.

Mr George Zedginidze, Georgian Deputy Minister of Environment Protection, lamented that youths have been omitted from global efforts to build a better common future, questioning the purpose of educating the next generation, if opportunities to contribute to national, environmental and social goals are not provided. He also emphasized the crucial role of education in the transition to the green economy and the need to invest in young people, in particular in capacity building and training to equip everyone with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes necessary to actively contribute to a sustainable future and a greener world for all.

Mr Modest Mero, Permanent Mission of Tanzania to the UN, said stakeholder collaboration is key in knowledge creation, educational investments, and skills development for making youth a priority in national development.

Serbia, UNDP and UNEP Present First National Green Study at Rio+20

On 21 June, Minister Oliver Dulic of Serbia presented the first national study on ‘Achievements and Perspectives towards a Green Economy and Sustainable Growth in Serbia’ at the Rio+20 side event of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, where post-Rio action plans for the region were discussed.

Led by the Serbian Ministry of Environment, Mining and Spatial Planning - with financial and substantive support of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Environment Programme (UNEP) – the study reviews achievements in ongoing green economy initiatives, and makes recommendations for a shift towards a green economy in Serbia. The report includes sector analysis for different scenarios of greening measures in three main sectors of the Serbian economy: energy demand, energy supply and agriculture.

The Serbian ‘Study on Achievements and Perspectives towards a Green Economy and Sustainable Growth in Serbia’ illustrates many successful Green Economy cases, where decent green jobs were created, while at the same time alleviating poverty and empowering vulnerable people in Serbia. The report will be reviewed based on the conclusions of the Rio summit and will serve as a roadmap for Serbia along the Green Economy path.

To access the full report visit: <http://www.undp.org.rs>, or directly download it clicking [here](#)
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UNEP and ILO had organized two similar events on youth employment and green economy in March 2012 in New York and April 2012 in Geneva. It is worth to note that the Rio outcome document "The future we want" has made several references to address youth employment issues (para 24), active participation of young people for achievement of sustainable development (para 50), the global challenge of youth employment and access to skills (148 & 152), and the promotion of skills, knowledge and partnerships for green jobs.

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UNEP signs agreement with EU Committee of the Regions at Rio+20

On 21 June, at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio (Rio+20), UNEP Deputy Executive Director signed a Memorandum of Understanding with President Mercedes Bresso of the Committee of the Regions. The agreement was signed during an event held jointly by the CoR and the European Commission in cooperation with UNEP. The CoR's President Bresso reiterated the importance of placing sustainable cities at the heart of the global strategy on sustainable development. With cities responsible for consuming some 75% of the Earth's natural resources, the purchasing and policy decisions at a local level can assist the drive towards a green economy and make a key contribution to achieving the objectives of Rio+20.

The agreement sets out a framework for strong cooperation with the shared goal of achieving a sustainable future. Both institutions agreed to prioritise five areas, namely: multilevel environmental governance; green economy and resource efficiency; climate change mitigation and adaptation; biodiversity and ecosystems management; and decentralised cooperation for development. It reinforces both institutions' belief that there is a need to strengthen the role of local and regional authorities within the policy decision-making process if this objective is to be achieved.

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Mercedes Bresso, President of Committee of the Regions, EU, and Amina Mohamed, UNEP Deputy Executive Director, sign the Memorandum of Understanding



'Rhino under threat' film premiere in Rio

On 18 June, as part of the GoodPlanet Film Festival at Rio+20, the United Nations TV (UNTV) and the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) showed the premiere of the 'Rhino under threat' film.

From the massive parks in South Africa and Swaziland, to the crowded streets of Hanoi in Viet Nam, the film shows the brutality of the current spike in illegal killing of rhino and the impact it is having on local communities. The film investigates what is driving the demand for rhino horn in Asia and the powerful measures being taken by national authorities to fight this crime. The CITES/UNTV film 'Rhino under threat' shows the role of organized syndicates in wildlife crime, and the need for a tough coordinated enforcement response.

The movie can be seen at:

<http://youtu.be/t3m7FOXOLbY>

UNCSD has recognized in its outcome document 'The Future We Want' the important role of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Out of the 283 paragraphs contained in the outcome document, many are of relevance to the conservation and sustainable use of wild fauna and flora. However, one paragraph in particular makes reference to the continued significance of CITES in achieving sustainable development through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, namely paragraph 203.

To access the full press release and read paragraph 203: www.cites.org

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If Rio won't come to the mountain...



UNEP ROE Acting Director Jan Dusik and UNEP Vienna–ISCC Head, Harald Egerer at the Mountain Pavilion's opening ceremony

The importance of regional cooperation in mountain regions to achieve Sustainable Mountain Development has been acknowledged in the Rio+20 outcome document. The outcome for mountains builds the basis for future action in the field of regional cooperation: strengthening existing regimes such as the Alpine and Carpathian Convention as well as exploring new arrangements and agreements, where appropriate. This achievement is the result of a common effort of the global mountain community.

Under the leadership of the Government of Peru and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, CONDESAN and other, UNEP has successfully participated in the Mountain Pavilion. As coordinator of the theme "Investment in mountains", UNEP realized several activities including conferences and workshops, and produced thematic posters.

Following the official opening ceremony of the Pavilion on 20 June, UNEP ROE Acting Director Jan Dusik chaired the high-level Conference on "Regional cooperation: From Rio to Rio and beyond". The ceremony was opened by the Minister of the Environment of the Slovak Republic (current presidency of the Carpathian Convention) and the State Secretary of the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs. An intensive discussion followed among important actors in the field of regional cooperation in mountains regions (including Marco Onida, Secretary General of the Alpine Convention and Harald Egerer, Head of UNEP Vienna - Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention).

Another highlight was the conference "Investment in Mountains: Opportunities and Challenges" hosted on 17 June in the Mountain Pavilion." Key experts from various mountains regions worldwide, including high-level participants such as HE Lyonpo Pema Gyamtsho of the Royal Government of Bhutan, presented examples of renewable energy and energy efficiency (hydropower), extractive industries and mining, and sustainable tourism.

UNEP also participated in the Third Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership, which gathered over 70 representatives of governments, IGOs and NGOs from mountain regions worldwide.

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