

# UNEP Newsletter

## Latin America and the Caribbean

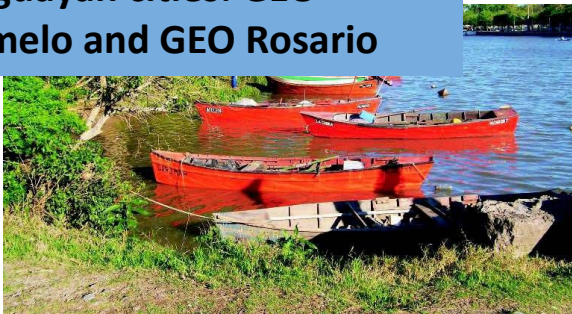


November - December 2011



### Spain-UNEP partnership for the Lifeweb initiative: progress in Volcán Barú and La Montañona

Useful environmental  
assessment tools for two  
Uruguayan cities: GEO  
Carmelo and GEO Rosario

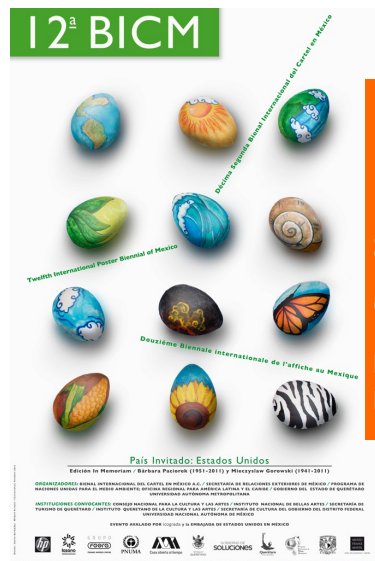


**TUNZA, the dreams of an  
entire generation**

*Regional Meeting for Latin  
America and the Caribbean*



**Propagation/  
Training Centre in  
Haiti nearing  
completion**  
UNEP/EC Caribbean  
Biological Corridor Project



**Looking for  
posters full of  
sustainable  
energy**

International Poster  
Biennial of Mexico

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### Regional

- Sixty delegates from 32 countries attended the Fourth Pan-American Meeting of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, in Jamaica.
- Some 30 Heads of State and Government from Latin America and the Caribbean took part in the foundational summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).
- IDB released its first regional survey about Latin American and Caribbean banks' sustainability. The survey, launched during the Federation of Latin American Banks (FELABAN)'s annual meeting, showed that financial institutions in the region have strong standards for corporate governance but more improvements are needed in terms of environmental and social sustainability.

**Dominican Republic** - The Dominican Republic will include the topic of climate change in the country's educational curriculum and in informal education, in order to help the population adapt to this phenomenon.

### Mexico

- The Bolsa Mexicana de Valores has launched its sustainability index. Companies eligible for inclusion on the index are assessed according to their performance, impact and responses to emerging environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues. These include climate change, human rights and policies and systems to counter corruption.
- A plenary session of Mexico's Senate approved, in broad terms, a General Climate Change Act, which sets forth, as the guiding principles of the National Climate Change Policy, sustainability in ecosystem use; joint responsibility between the State and society for environmental protection; and prudence whenever a threat of serious or irreversible damage arises. The bill was to be sent to the Chamber of Deputies.

**Guyana** - The newly appointed Minister of Natural Resources and the Environment, Robert Persaud, announced that the ministry he heads will focus on coordinating all policies on natural resource use, in keeping with the Low Carbon Development Strategy.

**Peru** - President Ollanta Humala swore in a new cabinet. The changes to the executive branch include the appointment of Manuel Pulgar as Minister of the Environment.

**Paraguay** - Paraguayan Minister of the Environment Oscar Rivas ratified his Government's decision to raise the Secretariat of the Environment to the level of a ministry, in order to address socio-environmental challenges and give continuity to the process of restructuring and modernizing the agency. He said that the move also entails a profound change for the Paraguayan State.

**Brazil** - The Brazilian Senate approved a proposed Forest Code despite criticism from environmental groups. The most controversial point calls for an amnesty for violations to regulations governing permanent conservation areas cleared for agriculture, livestock raising and tourism that have resulted in a high deforestation rate in the Amazon.

### Argentina

- Argentine President Cristina Fernández, re-elected by a 54 percent majority, was sworn in for a second term.
- Argentina signed the Nagoya Protocol on access to genetic resources and sharing of the benefits of genetic resources. Thirteen countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have now signed the agreement.





## The dream of Volcán Barú

A dormant volcano surrounded by life. Volcán Barú National Park is the protected area in Panama with the greatest biological wealth in rare, endemic or restricted-range species. It is situated alongside the Continental Divide of the Cordillera Central and on the Pacific Ring of Fire.

An ambitious joint project being carried out by several organizations and institutions has taken up the challenge of promoting the sustainability of this very special place. The first step was to assess the environmental services provided by the protected area. Depending on this assessment, a proposal on economic and legal mechanisms will be drawn up, in order to avoid unsustainable uses of the park and promote its conservation.

A workshop was carried out on 24-25 November in the province of Chiriquí to examine the importance and progress of the programme, to assess this national park's environmental services, as well as the outlook on a pilot project that seeks to facilitate, at the global level, the conservation of the environment, improving the well-being of communities.

Named “Project to support the protected areas of Mesoamerica: Developing economic and legal mechanisms and instruments to improve protected area management, including through sustainable agricultural practices, as a fire-prevention strategy”, the pilot project is the result of a partnership between the Government of Spain and UNEP. It aims to support the LifeWeb platform of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which seeks to strengthen protected areas.

The project is being implemented by Panama's National Environmental Authority (ANAM) in conjunction with the National Association for Nature Conservation (ANCON) and the Foundation for Integral Community Development and Ecosystem Conservation in Panama (FUNDICCEP), which are working through a partnership.

The project in Panama is part of a Spanish government-funded global initiative to strengthen protected areas. La Montaña Conservation Area, in El Salvador, is also included in this initiative in Latin America.







## La Montañona, a sustainable life refuge that needs to be protected

La Montañona, in El Salvador, is a place waiting to be discovered. When you speak of La Montañona you're speaking of an area with an astoundingly beautiful landscape and ecosystem, an area whose land and vegetation have felt the convulsive history of a 12-year civil war (1980-1992). To take a stroll through La Montañona is, therefore, to travel in time and space. And this is why it is essential to conserve and protect its rich wildlife—not only for the wildlife itself, but also because of its contribution to the

subsistence of the populations that live in the area and to the country's development.

As part of the Spain-UNEP Partnership for the LifeWeb Initiative, La Montañona is one of the pilot areas for implementing a project named “Support for the protected areas of Mesoamerica: Developing economic and legal mechanisms and instruments to improve protected area management, including through sustainable agricultural practices, as a fire-prevention strategy”. The nongovernmental organization Salvadoran Programme for Research on Development and the Environment (PRISMA) is executing the project.

The project's main achievements include a study on the environmental, social and economic valuation of the ecosystem services provided by the La Montañona Conservation Area and a study on the costs associated with biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation in this protected area.

To gain first-hand knowledge of these achievements, decision makers attended a workshop not far from La Montañona on 21 November. It was presided over by the Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources, Herman Rosa Chávez; the UNEP Regional Director and Representative, Margarita Astrálaga; the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System and UNDP Resident Representative in El Salvador, Roberto Valent; and the Head of Food Security Programmes and the Environment for the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) in El Salvador, Natalia Otamendi.

The pilot experience of La Montañona will contribute to the development of innovative policy tools, including economic and legal ones, to guarantee the internalization of these valuations in decision-making processes on development and sector policies, programmes and plans, contributing to the protection of the environment and the sustainable use of biodiversity.



## TUNZA, the dreams of an entire generation



**TUNZA Regional Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean**



TUNZA is not merely a word. TUNZA is not merely a strategy of UNEP, a magazine or a network. TUNZA is much more.

The participants in TUNZA are children and young people who are aware, committed, responsible and capable of devising new ways of interacting, among themselves and with all of the ecosystems that inhabit the Earth. These children and young people participate in networks, get information, communicate, build, and dream of a different future, a

better future for themselves, for the planet and for the citizens who have as yet to arrive. They also promote an environmental culture and a culture of sustainability, of joint work and of searching for solutions, and they made this clear at the TUNZA regional meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean.

The hopes, the ideas, the debates and the proposals of the children and young people of the region converged in Bogota from 24 to 25 November, at a meeting at which the dialogue was focused on the main topics of the Conference Rio+20: green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication and the institutional framework for sustainable development.

The 21 young participants, representatives of all the subregions of Latin America and the Caribbean, adopted the "Declaration of the Children and Youth of Latin America and the Caribbean on the Road to Rio+20". With this statement they made it clear that their responsibility goes further, that



Ronald Toussaint, Minister of the Environment of Haiti, visited the Propagation Centre during the first week of December. It is anticipated that the President of the Republic of Haiti will participate in the official opening of the Centre.

Once officially opened, the Propagation/Training Centre will be a major milestone, not only for the UNEP/EC CBC Project, but also for UNEP/ROLAC, as it will mark a major step in transferring the environmental concepts underpinning the project into tangible actions on the ground and could serve as a vehicle for changing the environmental situation in Dosmond and environs.

## Propagation/Training Centre in Haiti nearing completion

**UNEP/EC Caribbean Biological Corridor Project**

At the time of going to press, works were nearly completed for the establishment of the Propagation and Training Centre in Dosmond, Haiti, in support of the UNEP/European Commission Caribbean Biological Corridor (CBC) Project. The Centre is a critical part of project implementation, in that it will produce seeds and plants, not only to support the rehabilitation of degraded lands in Haiti, but equally important, to serve as the training centre for the entire project.

In order to monitor progress, Joseph



their commitment is renewed each day and that they will continue working to bring about the changes required at different levels to achieve sustainable development.

## UN and Government of Jamaica partner to build resilience of coastal communities to natural disasters

The use of science to show the crucial role of coral reefs, sea grasses and other coastal ecosystems in reducing the impacts of natural disasters and climate change was the focus of a technical workshop held in Kingston this week.

Staged by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Global Resource Information Database (GRID)-Geneva and the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), the training targeted technical experts from government and academia offering them tools to support policy and land-use planning.

The training was the latest step in a global initiative called the Risk and Vulnerability Assessment Methodology Development Project (RiVAMP), which is assisting national and local governments to effectively evaluate their development options by recognizing the role of ecosystems in reducing risks and adapting to climate change impacts.

The Government of Jamaica requested UNEP to conduct national-level training to help build capacity for applying the RiVAMP methodology in other parts of Jamaica and the Caribbean.

## Gathering of Ibero-American Water Directors

From 31 October to 3 November, the Argentine capital hosted the twelfth Ibero-American Water Directors Conference, where member countries renewed their commitment to strengthen the professional capacities of public water management agencies. The meetings were attended by representatives of 18 Ibero-American countries and of different national and international entities, both private and public, including UNEP.

In particular, an agreement was reached approving 24 courses for the 2012-2013 period, to promote innovation through virtual teaching. The costs of the courses will be defrayed by the countries of the region.

Also approved was the UNEP proposal to incorporate two new themes into the Ibero-American Water Training Programme: water and green economy (including issues related to ecosystem-service valuation) and transboundary-basin management.

Meeting participants stressed the need to raise the profile of water on the international agenda, especially in light of two upcoming important events: the World Water Forum and the Rio+20 Conference.



## Seventh Inter-American Dialogue on Water Management contributes to upcoming World Water Forum

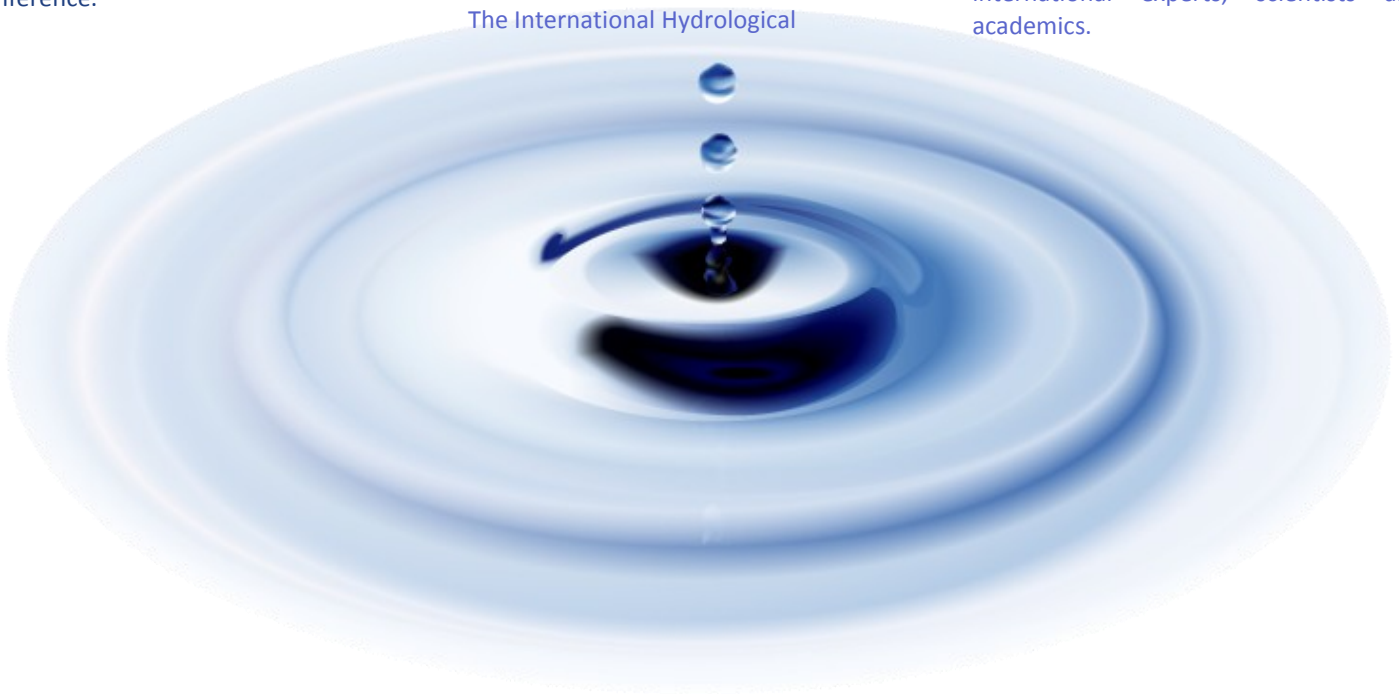
In March 2012, the sixth World Water Forum will take place in Marseille, France. In preparation for the forum, the seventh Inter-American Dialogue on Water Management (13-19 November, in Medellín, Colombia) provided space for the Water Forum of the Americas to carry out a consultation with various public and private sector representatives and different organizations in order to propose eleven water management targets for the continent.

The International Hydrological

Programme of UNESCO for the region (UNESCO-IHP LAC), the Global Water Partnership for Central America (GWP-CA) and Mexico's National Water Commission (CONAGUA, according to its initials in Spanish) took part in the consultation.

The seventh Inter-American Dialogue on Water Management was organized by the Regional Autonomous Corporation of Central Antioquia (CORANTIOQUIA), the Ministries of the Environment and Foreign Affairs of Colombia and the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States. The approximately 1,200 attendees from around the continent discussed topics such as water governance, financing for water and sanitation access and the value of ecosystem services.

Participants included representatives of the governments of the Americas, of indigenous peoples, and of the private sector, as well as Afro-descendants, young people, women, members of law enforcement agencies, national and international experts, scientists and academics.





## Useful environmental assessment tools for two Uruguayan cities: GEO Carmelo and GEO Rosario

For a Global Environment Outlook (GEO) to be carried out, local authorities must raise their awareness of the importance of understanding the status of the environment in their city, the implications of the city's development and the possible options for facing the resulting challenges. And they must do so within a participatory process.

These considerations led local authorities of the Uruguayan cities of Carmelo and Rosario, in collaboration with a number of institutions, to conduct Urban Environment Outlooks: GEO Carmelo and GEO Rosario. The evaluations were presented in early November. The work is the result of the efforts of the government of the Department of Colonia in conjunction with the Interdisciplinary Centre for Development

Studies (CIEDUR). In addition, technical assistance was received from UNEP through its Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNEP/ROLAC).

Located at the confluence of several rivers, Carmelo is a city exposed to extreme natural phenomena. Its economy is centred on agriculture, fishing and livestock raising, but the city is interested in gaining a foothold in the tourism market. According to the report, however, it must first solve the problem of water quality resulting from the disposal of domestic, industrial and agricultural wastewater; expand the sanitation network to cover the entire city; and implement policies on presorting and recycling urban solid waste.

For its part Rosario's once-important

manufacturing industry took a toll on the environment. The presence of solid waste disposed in open-air sites, within inactive industrial facilities, is a cause of concern. Tourism is considered a viable option for reactivating the area's economy, thanks to its beaches and potential for water sports. The GEO Rosario report focuses on areas that represent an opportunity for the authorities to reinforce positive actions that have been implemented to improve urban life, such as integrated management of household and other types of solid waste.

Both reports, GEO Rosario and GEO Carmelo, point to the challenges and outline possible roadmaps, but it is up to the residents of each city to decide on the path and then set out on it.



## How is our planet doing? The GEO5 report will soon answer that question

Given that one of the responsibilities of UNEP is to monitor the world environmental situation, 14 years ago the Programme began to write its Global Environment Outlook (GEO) reports. Its methodology has evolved over the years as have the reports UNEP has presented. The most recent GEO global report, GEO 5, which has yet to be released, includes interesting changes to the methodology used.

In the document's regional section, a study on the geographic areas assesses the effectiveness of environmental policies so as to determine which have contributed to attaining internationally agreed targets as quickly as possible, in order for these policies to eventually be replicated in other countries.

The regional chapter for Latin America and the Caribbean includes contributions of authors from several countries of the area, from all of the subregions. An attempt has been made to ensure a balanced representation of the different countries, maintaining—and bringing into

relief—the differences among them.

The deadline for submitting the final versions of the documents that make up GEO 5 was 13 December. Before being approved, the texts went through a scientific review, which is a new stage in the process. The report's Summary for Decision Makers will be released at the 12th Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of UNEP, in February 2012; and the final report will be presented prior to the 2012 Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20.



## Poverty and the environment: waste workers in Uruguay

On 9 November, representatives of the United Nations System and the Government of Uruguay visited the Ave Fénix recycling cooperative in Montevideo, Uruguay, to become familiar with the activities of the workers employed there. UNEP Director and Regional Representative Margarita Astrálaga was accompanied by UNDP Administrator Helen Clark and Uruguay's

Minister of Land Management, Housing and the Environment, Graciela Muslera.

The Ave Fénix project, which is part of the Poverty and the Environment Initiative (PEI) carried out by UNEP and UNDP, is in its first stage, called "incorporation of the environment in national development processes".

The members of what is now the Ave Fénix Cooperative once did recycling work under unhealthy conditions, selling what they pulled out of the trash in "informal" conditions (30% of the waste collectors in Uruguay are informal workers). Thanks to the joint efforts of UNEP and UNDP, they are now legally registered and work without exposing



themselves to potentially hazardous waste.

Margarita Astrálaga stressed the importance of PEI for medium-income countries and said that the Uruguayan experience has set an important example for other countries where the PEI is carried out, as well as for the implementation of this model outside of the project.

## "Bridging heights" from some of the peaks of the world

The highlands of Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, and northern Peru contain one of the most highly biodiverse mountainous areas on the planet: the páramos andinos, which are home to a large number of indigenous and campesino communities and boast an incomparable cultural wealth.

These ecosystems provide—directly and indirectly—water for a region with more than one hundred million inhabitants. Owing to its special characteristics, the soil of the páramo is an outstanding water regulator.

These are some of the unique characteristics that the Páramo Andino Project (PPA) is attempting to protect. The project is a regional initiative led by the Consortium for Research and Development in the Andean Ecoregion (CONDESAN, according to its initials in Spanish) and financed by the Global Environmental Fund (GEF)/UNEP. For



nearly six years it has been working to conserve these ecosystems and develop and improve the quality of life of their inhabitants.

The PPA is currently systematizing its experience in the northern Andes in order to consolidate important lessons for the region. As a part of this effort, the Páramo Andino "Bridging Heights" Meeting was held from 7 to 10 November in Quito, Ecuador.

More than 100 persons took part in the sessions, including members of the regional and national technical teams, inhabitants of the páramo communities that worked with the project, as well as partners—both individuals and institutions—who were able to share the progress of the systematization of the PPA, assess its outcomes and share learning experiences that will give the páramos of the Tropical Andes a more sustainable future.

## Socio-Environmental Responsibility Exhibition



UNEP Economic and Trade Branch Chief Steven Stone, and UNEP Brazil Representative Denise Hamú participated in the 5th FIESP Socio-Environmental Responsibility Exhibition, held in Sao Paulo, on 22 November. The event, organized by the Federation of Industries of the State of Sao Paulo, was aimed at promoting existing socio-environmental practices from the various sectors of society. The Seminar convened entrepreneurs and representatives from the government and civil society who are committed with the creation of new management models to contribute to the design of an inclusive society that aligns economic growth to social and environmental responsibility.

Steven Stone and Denise Hamú spoke about UNEP's Green Economy Report and highlighted that Rio+20 will be an opportunity for Brazil to occupy a prominent position in the promotion of change.



## National Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production

On 23 November, the UNEP Brazil Representative and the Chief of the UNEP Economic and Trade Branch participated in the National Council for the Environment (CONAMA) meeting on the launch of Brazil's National Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production. The meeting was chaired by the Minister of Environment, Izabella Teixeira, along with officials from CONAMA, which includes all State Secretaries of the Environment. The Minister outlined the importance of the national plan and highlighted the role of UNEP in supporting its design and implementation. The discussion was placed in the context of a green economy transition considering an expanding and empowered middle class who has been acquiring new purchasing power, and the need to reduce waste and contain the environmental footprint of consumption.

## Women for Sustainability

With the aim of consolidating a Network of Brazilian Women for Sustainability, the Ministry of the Environment promoted the "Women towards Rio+20" Seminar, which gathered over 150 Brazilian women holding high-level positions in private and public organizations.

The event, held in Brasilia on 8 November, addressed themes such as the influence of women in the promotion of sustainable corporate strategies.

UNEP Brazil Representative, Denise Hamu, spoke at the Green Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Business Panel.

The meeting was led by the Minister of the Environment, Izabella Teixeira. A work plan was created in order to elaborate proposals for Rio+20. She said

## Workshop on the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity

The German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the Ministry of the Environment of Brazil, in partnership with UNEP and Conservation International (CI), promoted a workshop on the TEEB (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity) methodology for key representatives of Brazilian states. Representatives and experts from the government and business sectors, as well as from the industry, non-governmental and international sectors, were invited on 24 November to discuss challenges and opportunities for the implementation of TEEB in Brazil. The Ministry of the Environment intends to launch the preliminary TEEB Brazil report at Rio+20. The training of national actors is part of the planned activities that compose the process of development of the Brazilian version of the TEEB report. The workshop was held in Brasilia.

that the focus of the meeting was bringing public policies that promoted the inclusion of women in the economy and their contribution in new standards of consumption and production.

In addition, the role of women in sustainability boards of public and private enterprises, in fostering green entrepreneurship (sustainable business) and promoting values pro-sustainability, was discussed.

For more information:  
<http://hotsite.mma.gov.br/mulheresrumoario20/>





# Looking for posters full of sustainable energy

The environmental section of the International Poster Biennial of Mexico is titled: Green Economy: Powering Climate Solutions

There are few more persuasive ways to convey a message than through a poster. UNEP, in conjunction with the International Poster Biennial of Mexico, is once again resorting to this attractive medium to spread the word on topics of special interest for sustainable development from an environmental perspective. The official presentation of the twelfth Biennial took place at Mexico

City's Franz Mayer Museum on 16 December. The UNEP representative in Mexico, María Dolores Barrientos, encouraged creators from around the world to participate in the environmental section of the contest.

Under the heading Green Economy: Powering Climate Solutions, the United Nations Environment Programme is inviting artists to reflect on the types of energy that might help bring about sustainable development, in the framework of the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All, 2012.

The Biennial will be attended by designers from more than 20 countries, and an international meeting of design students from five continents is scheduled. The International Poster Biennial's World Design Congress will be held in Querétaro, a World Heritage City. With the support of local authorities, the event is expected to draw more than 4,000 participants, including students of design schools and professional designers from around the world. Artistic groups from the state of Veracruz are also expected to attend, as Veracruz was invited to the parallel programme of artistic activities to be carried out during the Biennial.

The Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, a co-organizer of the event, will hold an academic meeting with professors representing more than fifteen universities, both public and private, from the United States, the guest country for this edition of the Biennial.

More information is available at:

[www.bienalcartel.org.mx](http://www.bienalcartel.org.mx)

# Dialogue on energy security and climate change with British Defence Ministry



In a visit to Mexico, British Rear Admiral Neil Morisetti gave a presentation at the UNEP offices on energy security and climate change. He was part of a panel that included Sergio Romero Hernández, an energy specialist at the Autonomous Technological Institute of Mexico (ITAM), and César Contreras, Director of Energy Sustainability at Mexico's Ministry of Energy. The purpose of the event was to discuss the challenges that climate change poses to guaranteeing energy security.

Neil Morisetti said that the enormous growth in the world's population, and the strain that this growth exerts on resources and how we use them, means that we are facing new threats to global stability, including the impact of climate change. According to Morisetti, fossil fuels contribute to climate change and heighten the risks to global stability and human security.

In their concluding remarks, the panellists said that it was imperative that we reduced our energy consumption through energy efficiency, although fossil fuel use could not be eliminated. They added that the use of other energy sources that cause less damage to the environment, such as renewable energies, must be promoted.

## 12<sup>a</sup> BICM



País Invitado: Estados Unidos

Edición In Memoriam / Bárbara Paciorek (1951-2011) y Mieczyslaw Gorowski (1941-2011)

ORGANIZADORES: BIENAL INTERNACIONAL DEL CARTEL EN MÉXICO A.C. / SECRETARÍA DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES DE MÉXICO / PROGRAMA DE NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE / OFICINA REGIONAL PARA AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE / GOBIERNO DEL ESTADO DE QUERÉTARO / UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA METROPOLITANA

INSTITUCIONES CONVOCANTES: CONSEJO NACIONAL PARA LA CULTURA Y LAS ARTES / INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE BELLAS ARTES / SECRETARÍA DE TURISMO DE QUERÉTARO / INSTITUTO QUERETANO DE LA CULTURA Y LAS ARTES / SECRETARÍA DE CULTURA DEL GOBIERNO DEL DISTRITO FEDERAL / UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE MÉXICO

EVENTO AVALADO POR LOGOTIPÍA Y LA EMBAJADA DE ESTADOS UNIDOS EN MÉXICO



Contacto y fichas de participación / Contact and entry card: [www.bienalcartel.org.mx](http://www.bienalcartel.org.mx) / Tel: (52-55) 55 14 81 37 y 55 35 92 72 / (52) (55) 517 51 55 / [bicm.mexico@gmail.com](mailto:bicm.mexico@gmail.com)

## Environmental cinema in Mexico

The UNEP Mexico office is continuing to promote the 2011 Itinerant Film Festival, "FIMCA: Cinema and the Environment". In November and December, the festival has travelled to Veracruz and Xalapa (Veracruz), Reynosa (Tamaulipas), Torreón and Saltillo (Coahuila), Campeche, among other cities in Mexico.





## 2011 Green Solutions Exhibition

### “Shaping Clean Policy for a Low Carbon Economy”

After its resounding success at COP16 in Cancún in late 2010, the second “Green Solutions” exhibition was held at the Banamex Exposition Centre in Mexico City from 23 to 25 November. This time the event received the support of public entities such as Pro-México, the Ministry of the Economy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the private sector and civil society were also active participants.

On 23 November, Reforestamos Mexico, A.C. organized a discussion panel on “Sustainability Strategies of Mexican Companies and Value Chains”. Dolores Barrientos, UNEP representative in Mexico, acted as the moderator of the panel of speakers, which included Gustavo Pérez, sustainability director for Restaurantes Toks; Laura Bonilla, manager of corporate affairs for Unilever; and Vivian Alegría, director of the Coca-

Cola Mexico Foundation. In the dialogue that took place, emphasis was placed on the importance of sustainability and community development in companies' corporate strategies. Of particular interest were projects with a high degree of social content such as the organic handcraft supply chains being developed by Restaurantes Toks in indigenous communities in extreme poverty; Unilever's corporate sustainability strategy for 2020; and the reforestation and water-harvesting programme being carried out by Coca-Cola in Mexico.

### “Communication on Climate Change and its Influence on Public Policies”

Participants at this forum, held on 25 November, included Dolores Barrientos, as a panellist; Grethel Aguilar, regional director for Mesoamerica of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN); Marco A. Encalada, general manager of OIKOS Ecuador; and Damiana Sánchez Yeskett, coordinator of advisors to the Office of the President of the Mexico. The panel was moderated by Miguel Ángel Cervantes, an advisor to Senator Alberto Cárdenas.

In her presentation, the UNEP representative emphasized the importance of communicating scientific information on climate change and properly channelling it to decision makers. She also stressed the importance of conveying the complexity of climate change through easily understood and consistent messages, in order to provide incentives for actions on a larger scale for dealing with the phenomenon.

## ECCO Cities in Aguascalientes and Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo

Work on the “Urban Environment and Climate Change Outlook” (ECCO) got underway with the first introductory workshops on ECCO and the GEO methodology in two cities in Mexico. In Aguascalientes, the workshop was carried out on 28-29 November, while in Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo, Guerrero, it was conducted on 1-2 December.

At the first workshop, UNEP experts presented the GEO methodology. In addition, a schedule for the work was established, with the studies expected to be concluded in late 2012. Workshop participants identified two of the main problems in Aguascalientes as the scarcity and inadequate quality of the water. It was also noted that in Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo, coastal pollution and unregulated settlements place stress on local ecosystems and limit the area's sustainable development.

The attendees were environmental experts from municipal governments and civil society, academics and business people interested in contributing their knowledge and experience to the drafting of the reports.

## “Green Economy Prospection for Mexico” study begins

As part of the agreements set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding on Green Economy signed in September by UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner and the head of Mexico's Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources

(SEMARNAT), Juan Rafael Elvira, a study titled “Green economy Prospection for Mexico” was launched. Steven Stone, coordinator of the “Green Economy Initiative” of UNEP, visited Mexico City on 11-12 November to take part in the event. Mr. Stone and Dolores Barrientos met with authorities of SEMARNAT and the National Ecology Institute (INE)—the technical leader of the study—as well as with representatives of public and private



sector entities, civil society, academia and the legislative branch, all of whom will make up the Steering Committee overseeing the study.



## Contributing to sustainable consumption and production patterns

Ecolabelling gives consumers certified information on the environmental impact that arises in making a product. The purpose of an ecolabel classification is to enhance net environmental efficiency throughout a product's life cycle. This tool has been put to good use in several countries (with the Nordic countries at the fore as pioneers in ecological labelling) to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns.

On 17-18 November, in Santiago, Chile, UNEP and Chile's Ministry of the Environment, in coordination with the Nordic Council of Ministers, organized a regional consultation and evaluation workshop on the viability of regional cooperation on ecolabelling in the Southern Cone region. The workshop served as a forum for discussion among

addition to saving time and resources, optimize regional cooperation and integration by improving social and environmental elements of trade and industrial policies. They also address the challenge posed by the proliferation of ecological labels that confuse producers and consumers and undermine the fundamental purpose of ecolabelling.



regional stakeholders on the proposed establishment of a cooperation process focused on ecolabelling along with initiatives for sustainable public procurement. The participants provided specific information and opinions on the technical viability, market demand and opportunities and challenges involved in the process.

It is hoped that progress will be made towards ecolabelling on a regional scale, in keeping with the urgent need for more sustainable production and consumption practices. Ecolabelling policies, in

For Latin America and the Caribbean, Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) is a priority. For this reason, the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean created the Council of Government Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production, which held its sixth meeting in Panama City, on 24-25 November.

The two-day meeting, organized by UNEP with the collaboration of the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), was attended by the national focal points for SCP of 23 countries of the region along with other representatives of governments, regional and international agencies, National Cleaner Production Centres (NCPCs), industrial associations, NGOs, as well as researchers and academics, through plenary presentations, interactive discussions and work sessions.

A global and regional perspective was presented on SCP and the Marrakech Process, which is a platform with numerous stakeholders that aims to support the implementation of SCP projects and strategies and to devise a framework for global action on those projects and strategies. In addition, an update was provided on the progress and achievements of the Regional Strategy on SCP and other initiatives, and the attendees shared their experiences in implementing SCP at the national and regional level. A workgroup dynamic facilitated training in key SCP areas.

The event offered participants an important opportunity to share experiences and expertise and to work together to provide input on the declaration that will be submitted to the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean ahead of Rio+20.

## Latin America and the Caribbean Give Priority to Sustainable Consumption and Production

## Environmental Governance of Coastal and Marine Areas

From 8 to 18 November, the Second Regional Training Programme on Environmental Management of Coastal and Marine Areas took place in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, with the participation of the Ibero-American countries of Latin America and the Caribbean as well as Brazil and Haiti. The course was carried out with the support of the Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs of Spain.

The ten days of meetings opened with remarks by representatives of the Embassy of Spain, of the United Nations and of the “José Benito Vives de Andreis” Colombian Institute of Marine and Coastal Research (INVEMAR, according to its initials in Spanish).

The sessions served as a forum for discussion and exchange of information, allowing attendees to share experiences and deliberate on ways to implement environmental law in marine and coastal areas. One participant noted that the course had provided her with “key elements to make marine conservation viable through governance, with multi-sectoral interaction and shared objectives”. One of the ideas most often put forth by the attendees was that there was a need for a stronger political commitment to regional collaboration.

The fruits of this second training programme on governance of coastal areas were quickly harvested. The representatives of one participant country, the Dominican Republic, used the expression “sowing and harvesting” to convey that, only a few days later, a national training course on integrated management of coastal and marine areas had been held in their country.

## Promoting biodiversity strategies in the region

One of the responsibilities of UNEP is to provide technical assistance to the countries of the region on implementing multilateral environmental agreements. Accordingly, the Regional Workshop for Mesoamerica on Updating National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans was held from 28 November to 2

implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization.

The workshop included a field visit to discover the multiple ways in which Costa Rica supports the conservation and sustainable use of the environment



December in Costa Rica.

The workshop was attended by officials and experts responsible for developing, updating or implementing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and national planning processes. Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama were represented.

The main objectives were to facilitate national implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, exchange opinions and visions and encourage measures for early

(including natural parks, private reserves, ecotourism and environmental research).





## The road to eliminating HCFCs: the case of Antigua and Barbuda

On 24 November, Antigua and Barbuda hosted the meeting to unveil the Hydrochlorofluorocarbon Phase-out Management Plan (HPMP) and its implementation programme in the country. UNEP is coordinating the initiative to instil trust and to increase its own awareness of the concerns of the main stakeholders involved in the cessation of the use of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), which are chemicals that deplete the ozone layer and that continue to be used, for example, in the refrigeration sector.

The HPMP: Consultation Meeting was attended by importers of refrigeration equipment and chemicals, refrigeration contractors, representatives of the Customs office and of national hospitality and fishing associations, and refrigeration technicians. Also in attendance was a representative of the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Public Administration of Antigua and Barbuda, a focal point for the Montreal Protocol.

The experience of Antigua and Barbuda is not alone in this regard. UNEP helps countries throughout the world to gather information and devise projects or strategies to cease to consume this ozone layer-depleting substance.



## Pioneering workshop on energy efficiency in the refrigeration and air-conditioning sector

Paraguay's Secretariat of the Environment (SEAM), in collaboration with the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GIZ) and with technical assistance from Brazil's National Industrial Training Service (SENAI), held a training workshop as part of the implementation of the hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC) management plan in Paraguay. The workshop took place in Asunción, from 31 October to 2 November.

The workshop on energy efficiency in the refrigeration and air conditioning sector was the first of its kind in the region and is part of the

Hydrochlorofluorocarbon Phase-out Management Plan (HPMP). UNEP is the lead agency in implementing the HPMP, with the collaboration of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The workshop began with a general introduction on energy efficiency before examining the refrigeration and air conditioning sectors. After two days of theoretical sessions, the third day was devoted completely to promoting the adoption of measures at a public hospital, the IPS. With 800 beds, the IPS is Paraguay's largest hospital. Its first sections were built 40 years ago.

Workshop participants were divided into two groups that took measurements of the different areas with refrigeration and air-conditioning units. The next day, the data were reviewed and presented. The participants used software developed by the SENAI to evaluate the data they had collected. Their recommendations on improving energy efficiency at the hospital will be submitted to IPS administrators.



## Green Customs in Peru

A training course was held for Customs officials on preventing illegal trafficking of ozone-depleting substances (ODS), in Peru, from 28 November to 2 December. The workshop was organized by the Technical Ozone Office in coordination with UNEP and the National Tax Superintendency, in accordance with the agreements signed on implementing the Montreal Protocol in Peru.

Given at the Institute of Tax and Customs Administration (IATA) and the Maritime Customs Office of Callao (IAMC), the course was attended by Customs officials

from Lima and representatives from Peru's major cities.

It included practical sessions with a state-of-the-art refrigerant gas detector that elicited much interest among the participants because of its accuracy in identifying refrigerant gases. The Technical Ozone Office plans to install these detectors at strategic Customs offices as part of its ongoing efforts to enforce the ozone layer protection guidelines set forth in the Montreal Protocol.

At the end of the weeklong course, all participants received official certification from the

Technical Ozone Office and undertook to coordinate their efforts and work actively in favour of meeting the objectives of conserving and protecting our ozone layer.



## Main Regional Meeting of the OzonAction Networks

The 2011 Main Meeting of the OzonAction Networks for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and Training of Caribbean Ozone Officers was held in Trinidad and Tobago, 24-28 October. This meeting brought together stakeholders at regional and international levels in assisting the member states of the LAC region in meeting and sustaining compliance with

the Montreal Protocol for the Phase-out of Harmful Ozone Depleting Substances.

For the meeting UNEP partnered with the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, thereby adding a new dimension of academic tertiary engagement and involvement. The event was officially opened by Roodal Moonilal, Minister of Housing and the Environment, and Clement K. Sankat, Pro

Vice-Chancellor and Campus Principal University of the West Indies, St Augustine. The Executive Secretary of the Ozone Secretariat to the Montreal Protocol, Marco González, delivered a premium open lecture to the academic body of the university.





## Presentation of the Chemical Information Exchange Network in Bolivia

### Initiative to facilitate implementation of international chemicals agreements signed by the country

On 2 December, the results of the Chemical Information Exchange Network (CIEN) in Bolivia project were presented in La Paz. Attended by representatives of some twenty agencies involved in chemicals management, the event served as a forum for publicizing the website of the CIEN project (<http://www.estis.net/sites/cien-bo/>) and encouraging the participation of the stakeholders in this initiative.

The CIEN-Bolivia Project, promoted by UNEP and executed by the Ministry of the Environment and Water (MMAyA) of the Plurinational State of Bolivia through the National Programme on Persistent Organic Pollutants (PRONACOP), aims to build national capacities to manage risks and implement tools for compiling and disseminating information on the use of chemicals in Bolivia.

Workshop participants welcomed the initiative and recommended that the socialization of the project continue, that the data be periodically updated and that an effort be made to promote the exchange of information among institutions.



## Presentation of the REDD initiative in Paraguay

The UN REDD Programme is the Initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries. The advanced version, called REDD+, promotes the protection, improved management and rational use of forest ecosystems.

From 21 to 23 November, in Paraguay, this interagency programme presented its four key work areas: multiple benefits, REDD costs, mapping and scenarios of deforestation.

During the three days of work, a roadmap, based on the discussions on the project's four fundamental areas, was agreed on. In addition, an assessment was conducted of the methods for executing these components within a REDD+ project and of the interconnections with other programme components, such as the forest inventory.



The workshop was organized by the Secretariat of the Environment (SEAMA), the National Forest Institute (INFONA) and the Federation for the Self-Determination of Indigenous Peoples (FAPI), with the support of UNEP, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

## Communicating on climate change in the basin of the Chucunaque River

A workshop was given in the community of Lajas Blancas, on the bank of the Chucunaque River, that provided training on disseminating the Strategy for Integrated Watershed Management and formulating the action plan for the community promoters on climate change of the Chucunaque watershed. The workshop, from 17 to 22 November, was conducted by UNEP in the framework of the Joint Programme on Climate Change (JPCC) in Panama.

It was attended by 23 community radio journalists and promoters of the Emberá, Wounaan, and Kuna de Wargandí ethnic groups, as well as farmers and residents already trained by the Joint Programme

in environmental legislation and climate change issues. The purpose of the workshop was to plan the intervention agenda of the promoters and radio communicators in their communities.

The event allowed experiences to be shared with promoters of the Tabasará basin, who were invited to this eastern region of the country to become familiar with the Emberá territory and network with their fellow Chucunaque River promoters. The activity generated positive synergies.

The promoters make an important contribution since, through communication for development, the JPCC has created and strengthened social networks in the communities of the basin. The promoters and radio journalists, after receiving training, spread valuable information and messages on climate change, based on their own worldview and in their own language.

# Upcoming Events

**Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.**

**Date:** 31 January to 3 February 2012

**Location:** Quito, Ecuador

**Inception workshop for the development of ILAC environmental indicators in Barbados.**

**Date:** January 2012

**Location:** Barbados

**Workshop for the development of GEO City Tampico.**

**Date:** January 2012

**Location:** Tampico, Mexico

**Intergovernmental Meeting on the GEO-5 Summary for Policy Makers.**

**Date:** 30 January -1 February 2012

**Location:** Metropolitan City of Gwangju, Republic of Korea

**Analysis for options and costs for REDD+**

**Date:** February 2012

**Location:** Panama City, Panama