



RONA works with government and civil society in Canada and the United States to promote effective responses to international environmental challenges. RONA's mission is to promote effective responses to these challenges, and to foster cooperation on environmental issues between North America and the broader international community. To achieve this mission, RONA's strategy is to promote collaboration between UNEP and all sectors of North American society, including U.S. and Canadian governmental institutions, the private sector and civil society groups.

Highlights:

• The Marine Litter Challenge

RONA supports the implementation of the Global Programme of Action to address land-based sources of marine pollution by fostering awareness, dialogue and action in North America. Activities include the coordination of the 5th International Marine Debris Conference (5IMDC) that resulted in the "Honolulu Strategy" and "Honolulu Commitment." These two outcomes spurred the creation of the new Global Partnership on Marine Litter. RONA is now working to help implement the Global Partnership with a focus on preventing marine litter at the source. As a first step, RONA organized a marine litter workshop for North American experts in Washington, D.C. and San Francisco which dealt with the legal, policy and market-based approaches to preventing the creation of marine litter.

• Sustainable Consumption and Production

RONA is working with governments and Major Groups in the region to promote strong North American engagement in the newly-adopted 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10-YFP), including its initiative on sustainable buildings and construction, sustainable public procurement, sustainable tourism, consumer information and sustainable lifestyles and education.

The U.S. and Canada have well-developed environmental laws and regulations but nevertheless face environmental challenges, in particular those related to high levels of consumption and waste

Regional Facts

Population: 346 million

Land Area: 19.7 million km²

Environmental Challenges: Extreme weather, poor performance on resource efficiency, high levels of per capita consumption

Regional Forums and Consultations on Environment



North America Regional Consultation with Major Groups and Stakeholders of Civil Society:

The meeting, held in December 2012 in Washington D.C., called on UNEP to facilitate the development of a new narrative that captures the urgency of the environmental challenges as well as the opportunities for collaboration.

Post-2015 Development Agenda

At its annual regional consultation with civil society, RONA organized a discussion on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and its link to the Sustainable Development Goals, which were agreed upon at Rio+20. The consultation included a presentation by Jeffrey Sachs, Special Advisor to the UN Secretary-General on the Millennium Development Goals and Director of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network. RONA will endeavor to collaborate with UN DESA and UNDP on future regional civil society consultations.

UNEP's work on the ground

Strengthening collaborative activities with North American Partners

North America is rich in analytical and technical expertise. RONA works closely with governments and other entities in the region to bring the expertise, experience and resources of the United States and Canada to the benefit of the global environment, particularly in the developing world. RONA also promotes UNEP's global initiatives in the region, and works to leverage expertise and programmes that further the implementation of such initiatives.



UNEP IN THE REGIONS



Regional Office for North America (RONA)

UNEP's work on the ground

Environmental Education

RONA works with partners in North America on issues related to environmental law, including poverty and environment linkages as well as urban environmental issues and environmental education. RONA also supports existing North American Environmental Education Networks such as the U.S. partnership for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. For more information see: www.uspartnership.org.

LifeWeb

RONA is actively engaged in a Spain-UNEP LifeWeb Marine Mammal Initiative called: Broad-scale Marine Spatial Planning of Marine Mammal Corridors and Protected Areas in the Wider Caribbean and Southeast and Northeast Pacific. RONA facilitates regional data collection efforts for spatial planning purposes, provides technical input on policy papers and supports inter-regional training workshops on integrated marine management and governance options for migratory marine mammals. RONA is also coordinating a Regional Institutional Network Building activity to facilitate information exchange between countries in the North and the South East Pacific related to the transboundary management of marine mammals.

Outreach Activities

UNEP seeks to increase the flow of information to and from North American governments, multilateral institutions, civil society, businesses and academic institutions. Activities include special events, press conferences and the launch of reports and presentations to the offices of members of Congress to inform them about the work of UNEP.

The Arctic

RONA is actively engaged in the UNEP Arctic Working Group. At UNEP's Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in February 2013, RONA launched a background paper entitled New Awareness of and Opportunities for UNEP to Address Climate Change in the Arctic, which focuses on the impacts of climate change on the Arctic, particularly on countries outside the Arctic region, and catalogues current UNEP Arctic work. The paper also suggests additional areas where UNEP might contribute to issues stemming from Arctic change. RONA is also managing a project to engage Arctic indigenous communities on issues dealing with short-lived climate pollutants.

Two Minutes on Oceans with Jim Toomey

RONA has partnered with cartoonist Jim Toomey - creator of the nationally syndicated cartoon Sherman's Lagoon- in developing a series of six two-minute videos intended to raise awareness of the importance of oceans and the coastal environment. The videos use animation and humor to explain in clear and simple language the role oceans play in our lives and our very survival. Themes of the two-minute videos include blue carbon, marine litter, climate change, the true value of our oceans, nutrient run-off and ocean acidification. To watch the videos, visit: <http://unep.org/rona/toomey>.

Working with Civil Society

RONA stresses the importance of civil society and hosts meetings and special events throughout the region to discuss international environmental priorities, such as sustainable consumption and production, trade and environment linkages, green building and construction activities and environment-friendly procurement practices. For more information, see: http://www.rona.unep.org/partnerships/civil_society_involvement.html

UNEP and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel

UNEP provides the Secretariat of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). STAP, which provides scientific and technical advice on GEF policies, is made up of internationally recognized experts in the GEF's focal areas of work: biodiversity, climate change, international waters, persistent organic pollutants and sustainable land management.

UNEP's Global Initiatives

RONA supports UNEP's global initiatives by helping to build partnerships with governments and other entities. RONA works with multilateral organizations with headquarters in North America, including the World Bank, the Organization of American States, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Commission for Environmental Cooperation, to create synergies between UNEP programmes and the environmental activities of these organizations. RONA also supports UNEP's global initiatives by organizing and coordinating special events, press conferences, briefings and meetings.

Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC)

UNEP, the governments of the United States and Canada, as well as other governments recently partnered to launch the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (CCAC). RONA is working to raise the profile of the CCAC among influential policymakers in the region by organizing briefings and undertaking other outreach efforts. RONA is also encouraging the active involvement of North American governments and other actors involved in CCAC's flagship initiatives by promoting more aggressive domestic action to reduce short-lived climate forces.

North America has the world's highest per capita water consumption, however the past years have seen important regional water shortages, which has intensified the competition for water