



## What's New?

- **The 6<sup>th</sup> UN Environment Assembly - [UNEA-6](#)** concluded on 1 March 2024 having adopted 15 resolutions, 2 decisions and a Ministerial Declaration. The High-Level Segment, under the title “Effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution” comprised three leadership dialogues, a multi-stakeholders dialogue and series of side events. For the first time, UNEA also included an MEAs day addressing the cooperation between the MEAs and UNEP. The Commission (together with the Presidency) hosted a thematic Ministerial breakfast (on biological resources and circular economy) and two Side events (on Ocean and Seas and on Water) and held series of bilateral meetings with third countries, UNEP, MEAs and other stakeholders.
- During the 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting ([COP23](#)) of the Barcelona Convention, Contracting Parties adopted a [Declaration](#) calling for a **green transition in the Mediterranean region**, new species protection regulations, and plans to improve sustainability of aquaculture and agriculture. They also renewed their commitment to protect 30% of coastal and marine areas by 2030.
- The [Bern III Conference](#) for the **implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)** in January gathered 16 MEAs to foster inclusive collaboration and share practical experiences to inform scalable cooperation in implementing the GBF.
- On 17 February, the [CMS COP 14](#) on Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the first global biodiversity gathering since GBF, concluded with set of actions to conserve migratory species. The Convention opened with the **first-ever CMS “[State of the World’s Migratory Species](#)” report** warning on alarming state of decline of world’s migratory species and providing recommendations for actions.
- Ahead of INC-4 INC-4, taking place from 23-29 April 2024 in Ottawa, Canada, the UN published a revised [draft text of Plastic Treaty](#), including in the marine environment.
- The [Global Environment Facility](#) agreed to invest **USD 1.1 billion for international action on biodiversity**, climate change, nature renewal, and pollution control, and met for the first time as Council of the new Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) in February. The Council of the Least Developed Countries Fund and Special Climate Change Fund also endorsed USD 203 million for 21 climate change adaptation projects.
- The Third South Summit in January aimed at [boosting South-South cooperation](#) and called for an international [financial architecture reform](#), including **scaling up the debt swaps for climate and nature**.
- On 22 January, at UN Headquarters, [Palau](#) became the first country to **ratify the [High Seas Treaty](#)**.
- On 15 December, **EU and Horn of Africa** countries signed an [Alliance](#) to boost economic development and combat climate change. EU will allocate € 58 million the region’s resilience.

- Côte d'Ivoire and the EU signed on 20 February a legally binding trade [agreement](#) to **safeguard forests and combat illegal logging**.
- The first meeting of the [Strategic Dialogue on Agriculture](#), launched by President von der Leyen in her State of the Union speech in September 2023, took place on 25 January 2024.
- The 2024 [Future Minerals Forum](#) in January targeted the creation of **resilient and responsible value chains in Africa**.
- UNEP and Rotary International [partnered](#) in January to safeguard, clean up and **restore freshwater resources**.

## EU Policy Developments

### NEW

- The Council and the European Parliament [agreed](#) to establish an **EU carbon removals certification framework**. The voluntary framework is intended to facilitate and speed up the deployment of high-quality carbon removal and soil emission reduction activities in the EU.
- The Commission also adopted on 6 February a [Communication on securing the EU 2040 climate target and path to climate neutrality by 2050](#).
- The Council and the European Parliament struck a [deal](#) on 15 February on the revised directive on **ship-source pollution** proposed by the Commission in June 2023, extending the scope to cover illegal discharges and establishing a strengthened legal framework for penalties.
- The Council and European Parliament reached a [provisional political agreement](#) on 21 February on the **revised EU mercury regulation** proposed by the Commission in July 2023 to prohibit the manufacturing, import and export of a number of mercury-added products, including certain lamps..
- The Council and the European Parliament's negotiators reached a provisional political agreement on 29 January on a revised **urban wastewater treatment Directive**, proposed by the Commission in October 2022 as a key deliverable under the EU's zero-pollution action plan.
- The Commission adopted on 6 February a [Communication on Industrial Carbon Management](#), setting out how to sustainably capture, store and use CO2 and establishing an enabling business environment for a CO2 value chain in the EU.
- The Council and the European Parliament reached on 16 February a [provisional deal on the net-zero industry act](#), a regulation proposed by the Commission in March 2023 to establish a framework of measures for strengthening Europe's net-zero technology products and one of the three key legislative initiatives of the Green Deal Industrial Plan to enhance the competitiveness of Europe's net-zero industry and support a rapid transition to climate neutrality.
- The Council and the European Parliament reached on 14 February a [provisional deal on the right-to-repair directive](#), adopted by the Commission in March 2023 to promote the repair of broken or defective goods.
- The Council and the European Parliament reached a [provisional political agreement](#) on 18 January on **CO2 emission standards for heavy-duty vehicles**, with the aim to further reduce CO2 emissions in the road transport sector and to introduce new targets for 2030, 2035 and 2040.
- The Council and the European Parliament struck a [deal](#) on 14 December on the **Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive** proposed by the Commission in 2022 to protect the environment and human rights in the EU and globally, by setting obligations for large companies regarding actual and potential adverse impacts on human rights and the environment. Despite officially supporting the EU law from the

outset, in February 2024 Germany abstained in voting to support the proposal. To reduce the administrative burden, the Council and Parliament agreed on 14 February to delay the adoption of these new standards by two years, to 30 June 2026.

- Provisional [agreement](#) was reached between the Council and the European Parliament on the **Ecodesign for Sustainable Products regulation**, aiming to catalyse the circularity of EU products and level the internal and external markets playing field.

COMING  
SOON

- Regulation on [Reducing methane emissions in the energy sector](#) (Q1 2024)
- [Directive on common rules for the internal markets in renewable and natural gases and in hydrogen](#) (Q1 2024)
- [Regulation on the internal markets for renewable and natural gases and for hydrogen](#) (Q1 2024)
- Directive on [National Emission Reduction Commitments](#) (Q4 2025)
- [Regulation on a new EU Framework for Forest Monitoring and Strategic Plans](#) (Q1 2024)
- Delegated regulation on [reusing wastewater in agriculture – technical specifications for risk management plans](#) (Q1 2024)
- Regulation on [chemical safety – better access to chemicals data for safety assessments](#) (Q2 2024)
- [Regulation on hazardous chemicals](#) – prohibiting production for export of chemicals banned in the European Union (postponed)
- [Revision of the REACH Regulation](#) on chemicals to help achieve a toxic-free environment (postponed)

## New Reports and publications

- This [2024 edition of the Global Resources Outlook](#) sheds light on how resources are essential to the effective implementation of the Agenda 2030 and multilateral environmental agreements to tackle the triple planetary crisis. The report brings together the best available data, modelling and assessments to analyse trends, impacts and distributional effects of resource use.
- The International Energy Agency (IEA) issued the [Renewables 2023 report](#) in January, providing detailed **country-level analysis on the progress towards the global tripling target**. Alongside the report, an online dashboard is also available, which maps all the relevant data to measure renewable energy deployment through 2028. It also examines key developments for the sector including policy trends, competitiveness, energy storage, capacity for hydrogen production and biogas and biomethane forecast.
- The [Renewable Energy and Sustainability report](#) issued in January by the **REN21 community** of scientists, governments, NGOs and industry, stresses that renewables are the most sustainable energy source and that decision makers and authorities have the duty to define the norms for sustainable practices.
- The 2024 edition of the [Circularity Gap Report](#) released by the Circle Economy Foundation shows how to **accelerate progress towards a circular economy**, focusing on addressing the root causes of linear impacts and recommending policy, finance and labour reforms.
- The 2023 [World Population Data Sheet](#) explores the **role of population data in helping countries prepare and adapt for climate change**, showing how population characteristics like age, gender, and socioeconomic status can make some people more vulnerable to harmful impacts from climate change, and thus helping decision makers allocate resources to areas of greatest need.
- The EU Copernicus [2023 Annual Climate Summary](#) confirmed that 2023 average global temperature surpassed the previous peak set in 2016, and reached the **highest mark since record-keeping** began in 1880.

- The European Environment Agency published its [first progress report](#) on the 8th Environment Action Programme highlighting the **need to conclude negotiations on the Commission's Green Deal proposals** and to deliver systemic changes in key industrial sectors such as agriculture, food and mobility. Notable progress is shown for GHG emissions, air quality, greening finances, and the overall economy.
- [UNEP State of Finance for Nature Report](#) 2023, released in December, exposes the **disparity between Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and nature-negative finance flows**. To close financing gap and meet targets, public and private finance flows to NbS must increase drastically.
- WMO's [decadal assessment](#) of the **state of the global climate** documents the devastating impacts of extreme events, particularly on food security, displacement, and migration.
- DG ENV published a [study](#) on **participatory fire-management strategies** to strengthen wildfire-prone regions by increasing resilience, and an [assessment](#) of **land use impacts on biodiversity** in small-scale Natura 2000 sites.
- The [Global Cooling Watch 2023 Report](#) by the UNEP-led Cool Coalition proposes key measures to **reduce the power consumption of cooling equipment** that would turn down at least 60% off predicted 2050 emissions from the sector.

## Calendar



- **19 February-31 March:** second edition of the [#ForOurPlanet campaign](#) launched by the Commission and the EEAS
- **1 March:** [World Seagrass Day](#)
- **3 March:** [World Wildlife Day](#)
- **7-8 March:** [Building and Climate](#) Global Forum (Paris, France)
- **18-19 March:** [Global Methane Forum](#) 2024 (Geneva, Switzerland)
- **18-19 March:** [29th Session](#) of the International Seabed Authority Assembly and Council
- **21 March:** [International Day of Forests](#)
- **22 March:** [World Water Day](#)
- **30 March:** [International Day of Zero Waste](#)
- **10-12 April:** 2024 UN [Ocean Decade Conference](#) (Barcelona, Spain)
- **15-19 April:** 2024 Latin America and the Caribbean Regional [Forum](#) on Sustainable Development (Santiago, Chile)
- **15-18 April:** [World Circular Economy Forum](#) (WECF2024, Brussels)
- **15-26 April:** 23rd Session of the UN Permanent [Forum](#) on Indigenous Issues (New York)
- **21-30 April:** The [4th session](#) of the Plastic Pollution Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-4) (Ottawa, Canada)
- **22 April:** Earth Day
- **18-24 May:** 10th World Water Forum in Bali, Indonesia
- **29-30 May:** [EU Green Week 2024](#): Towards a water resilient Europe (Brussels)
- **22-23 September:** UN Summit of the Future
- **21 October – 01 November 2024:** UN Biodiversity Conference (COP 16) (Cali, Colombia)
- **11-24 November 2024:** UN Climate Change Conference (COP 29) (Baku, Azerbaijan)

# Training and e-learning

## Training, webinars, e-learning

- 🌱 [Webinar](#) on "Circular Economy: Raising Climate Ambition" hosted by the Green Growth Knowledge Partnership (GGKP) and Global Opportunities for Sustainable Development Goals (GO4SDGs) – recording available online.
- 🌱 The EU Green Deal webinars series can be attended online regularly and you can also watch their recordings in case you have missed them: [Greening EU Cooperation](#)
- 🌱 The [E-course on Circular Economy](#) (5 modules)

## Tools available

- FAO's new [Biodiversity Knowledge Hub](#) allows users to access and use existing tools, guidance and other resources on biodiversity in the agri-food sector.
- [Green Performance Toolkit](#) by the International Trade Centre to assist small business owners in assessing and tracking their environmental performance.
- [EU observatory on deforestation and forest degradation](#) worldwide: on an open-access basis, it provides global forest monitoring as well as mapping of commodity trade.
- UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has launched a [digital platform](#) to support governments and stakeholders in adopting geospatial solutions for sustainable development.

## Green tip #22 – Combat the cold in a sustainable way!

Keeping warm inevitably entails a considerable increase in energy consumption. There are several actions you can take to reduce your carbon footprint and reduce environmental impacts, while also saving money considering the highly fluctuating energy market.

- 🌱 **Insulate your house properly:** start by identifying exterior leakages in your house – check for cold air being transmitted through windows, walls, and doors. To reduce draughts, simply cover these areas with blinds or curtains when there is little to no sunlight or reach out to specialized professionals to seal and install airproof windows and doors.
- 🌱 **Adjust your thermostat settings:** turn off the heating when you are not in the room or at home or make use of features like heating times, especially at night. You can also wear warm clothes at home!
- 🌱 **Select well your energy and heating systems and suppliers:** review the available energy suppliers in your area for those with more sustainable energy sources and use greener heating devices with a higher efficiency rating.
- 🌱 **Buy sustainable winter clothes:** opt for sustainably made clothes – check for brands that work with recycled materials and circular textile practices – or trendsetting attire from second hand and vintage shops and markets.

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