

DEC.
2016

NEWSLETTER

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

CALENDAR

CONTACT

MINISTERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD PLEDGE TO INTEGRATE BIODIVERSITY INTO KEY ECONOMIC SECTORS



CLIMATE CHANGE



DISASTERS & CONFLICTS



ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT



CHEMICALS & WASTE



ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE



RESOURCE EFFICIENCY



ENVIRONMENT UNDER REVIEW



1
Environmental
Governance

2
Disasters &
Conflicts

3
Ecosystems
Management

4
Climate
Change

5
Chemicals &
Waste

6
Resource
Efficiency

7
Environment
Under Review

DEC.
2016

CALENDAR

CONTACT

◀ HOME

COP13-COPMOP8-COPMOP2
CANCUN, MEXICO 2016



MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY FOR WELL-BEING
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Ministers from around the world pledge to integrate biodiversity into key economic sectors

Ministers from around the world who participated in the high-level meeting of the UN Biodiversity Conference in Cancun, Mexico, committed on 3 December to integrate biodiversity into the agricultural, forestry, tourism and fisheries sectors.

In the Cancun Declaration, the ministers agreed on urgent coordinated action to advance progress on biodiversity targets for the conservation, sustainable use, management and restoration of biological diversity and ecosystems.

“Biodiversity makes business sense. Biodiversity makes common sense. It’s the food we eat, the water we drink, and the air we breathe. Let’s follow this declaration with action”, said Erik Solheim, Head of UN Environment.

Reports show that about two-thirds of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets will not be reached by 2020. This could have serious implications for the human well-being.

The Aichi Targets point to actions to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity on the planet. They also address issues ranging from the loss of natural habitats, sustainable agriculture and the decline of fish stocks, to equitable access to and distribution of the benefits of the use of genetic resources, indigenous knowledge and awareness of values of biodiversity.

Achieving these targets is essential to advance the goals of two other historic global agendas agreed last year: the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.



1
Environmental
Governance

2
Disasters &
Conflicts

3
Ecosystems
Management

4
Climate
Change

5
Chemicals &
Waste

6
Resource
Efficiency

7
Environment
Under Review

UN Environment and ParlAmericas will strengthen the environmental agenda in the Americas

UN Environment and ParlAmericas, the network of the national legislatures of member states of the Organization of American States (OAS), agreed to work together on strengthening the legislative agenda for environmental sustainability in the Americas.

UN Environment regional director Leo Heileman and the ParlAmericas president Marcela Guerra signed a memorandum of understanding on 6 December in Mexico City, Mexico.

With this agreement, which was signed during the 13th plenary assembly of ParlAmericas, the parties will prioritize in the legislative agenda issues such as climate change, and its social, economic and environmental impacts, and the strategies to address them.

The implementation of an integrated approach to the 2030 Agenda will also be promoted.

“We face a unique opportunity to address environmental, social and economic dimensions as essential components of sustainable development”, said Heileman.

ParlAmericas serves as an independent forum for parliamentarians of the Americas and the Caribbean committed to cooperative political dialogue and participation in the inter-American system.



- ▶ The activist Berta Cáceres and the biologist José Sarukhán received Champions of the Earth award
- ▶ Canada to host World Environment Day in 2017

The activist Berta Cáceres and the biologist José Sarukhán received Champions of the Earth award

The Honduran activist Berta Cáceres and the Mexican biologist José Sarukhán received the Champions of the Earth award, the United Nations’ highest environmental accolade.

UN Environment posthumously awarded Cáceres for her tireless grassroots struggle for the rights of marginalized and poverty-stricken indigenous peoples in her native Honduras.

José Sarukhán received the award for a life of leadership and innovation in the conservation of biodiversity in Mexico and around the world.

The 2016 winners also include: Afroz Shah, Indian beach cleaner organizer in Mumbai; Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda; Masen, Moroccan agency for sustainable energy; and Leyla Acaroglu, sustainability strategist in Australia.

The awards were given out as part of a high-level reception hosted by the Government of Mexico at the UN Biodiversity Conference in Cancun in December.

The annual Champions of the Earth prize is awarded to outstanding leaders from government, civil society and the private sector whose actions have had a positive impact on the environment.

Since being founded twelve years ago, the awards have recognized 78 laureates - ranging from leaders of nations to grassroots activists - in the categories of policy, science, business and civil society.



- ▶ UN Environment and ParlAmericas will strengthen the environmental agenda in the Americas
- ▶ Canada to host World Environment Day in 2017



Canada to host World Environment Day in 2017

Canada today demonstrated its commitment to environmental action as Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Catherine McKenna, and UN Environment chief Erik Solheim announced that Canada will host World Environment Day in 2017.

The UN Environment-led global event, the single largest celebration of the environment each year, takes place on June 5 and is celebrated by thousands of communities worldwide. Canada will use World Environment Day to showcase to the world the beauty of its natural environment on land and water.

“The Canadian spirit of collaboration is

only one of the reasons Canada is a natural choice to host World Environment Day,” Catherine McKenna said at a launch event during the United Nations General Assembly in New York. “World Environment Day will be an important part of Canada 150 celebrations.

“On June 5, 2017, we will blend Canadians’ pride in our environment with our determination to address climate change challenges. We are looking forward to showing the world the made-in-Canada approaches that will make our country cleaner and more competitive for businesses.”

- ▶ UN Environment and ParlaAmericas will strengthen the environmental agenda in the Americas
- ▶ The activist Berta Cáceres and the biologist José Sarukhán received Champions of the Earth award



1
Environmental
Governance

2
Disasters &
Conflicts

3
Ecosystems
Management

4
Climate
Change

5
Chemicals &
Waste

6
Resource
Efficiency

7
Environment
Under Review

UN Environment continues to support the people of Haiti



Hurricane Matthew has had a devastating effect on the Grand Sud region of Haiti, where UN Environment has been working for the past six years.

With numerous bridge collapses, road access is highly challenging and telecommunications systems are not functioning in several areas. The disaster has caused loss of human lives, damaged infrastructure, caused total or partial loss of harvests, uprooted trees and destroyed a large number of houses due to the effects of the waves and/or high winds.

Latest figures from the Government of Haiti, cited by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), estimate that 1,410,907 people are currently in need of assistance.

In the days leading up to the hurricane, UN

Environment assisted the Government of Haiti in the South, notably in the evacuation of people living in vulnerable zones near to the coast or small islands along the southern coast. UN Environment played a key role in arguing for the evacuation of people from these small islands, and also supported the Civilian Protection Agency in the immediate relocation of the most exposed families.

In the Sud Department, one of the zones most affected by the hurricane, UN Environment directly helped the evacuation of fishing communities and their fishing materials.

Protecting what protects us: A network of conservation areas in the Amazon



Over the last several years, different initiatives have been put in place to stop this devastating process. Currently, 47 per cent of the Amazon biome is under some guise of protection. UN Environment along with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Wildlife Fund, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and Network of National Parks (Redparques) are developing a project called the **Amazon Ecosystem Conservation Vision**.

The project's key aim is increasing ecosystem resilience by maintaining the provision of goods and services which benefit biodiversity, communities and local economies in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guiana, Guyana, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela.

This initiative will engage in activities related to conservation, governance, financial sustainability, and the effectiveness of managing protected areas. It is also expected to define priority landscapes, one in the north and the other in the south of Amazonia, and to implement action plans for their conservation. The northern landscape occupies some 43,000 km² and is located in portions of Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia. The southern landscape is located in portions of Brazil, Peru, and Bolivia and encompasses an area of more than 128,000 km².

It is the largest tropical forest in the world, a land of myths and magic. The Amazon provides ecological services not only to the 33 million people who live there, but to the rest of the planet.

This vast region suffers the effects of pollution and climate change. Despite recent advances in tackling degradation and deforestation, the Amazon's survival is still threatened.

- ▶ Guatemalan artisans contribute to the sustainable use of biodiversity
- ▶ Grenada coral farmers restore reefs to their original beauty
- ▶ Conservation agreements help preserve Andean ecosystems
- ▶ Project to integrate biodiversity in agriculture to begin in Mexico

ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT



Guatemalan artisans contribute to the sustainable use of biodiversity

The common calabash tree (*Crescentia alata* and *Crescentia cujete*) has a slender trunk and long branches replete with small green leaves and scattered, large, oval-shaped fruit. The “niij” (*Llaveia axin*) is an insect less than two centimeters long, so round and covered by a sort of white powder as to look like a cotton ball. Both are used to create the beautiful handicrafts produced traditionally by the inhabitants of Rabinal in the Guatemalan department of Baja Verapaz.

UN Environment has been working for more than two and a half years with the Guatemalan National Council for Protected Areas (CONAP) on the Project ABS Guatemala -Access To and Benefit Sharing and Protection of Traditional Knowledge to Promote Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use. It aims to preserve this distinctive traditional knowledge in the municipality of Rabinal, improve the livelihoods of the area’s inhabitants and protect biodiversity. The project is funded by the Global Environment Facility, the largest public funder of international environmental projects.

The Rabinal handicrafts are produced by carving the calabash-like fruit of the tree. Subsequently it is treated with wax made from the niij insect which gives the piece a special “shine”. The project has introduced innovations –new products such as lamps, jewellery boxes and Christmas decoration- that will help the artisanal workers diversify their products and reach out to different markets, thus increase the communities’ earnings.

The project also seeks to create local organizations for managing biological diversity and traditional knowledge and help the artisanal sector to develop business plans to ensure artisans have a good understanding of their craft and value of their products.



- ▶ Protecting what protects us: A network of conservation areas in the Amazon
- ▶ Conservation agreements help preserve Andean ecosystems

- ▶ Grenada coral farmers restore reefs to their original beauty
- ▶ Project to integrate biodiversity in agriculture to begin in Mexico



1
Environmental
Governance

2
Disasters &
Conflicts

3
Ecosystems
Management

4
Climate
Change

5
Chemicals &
Waste

6
Resource
Efficiency

7
Environment
Under Review

Conservation agreements help preserve Andean ecosystems

Andean ecosystems are under threat from unsustainable agricultural and rangeland management practices, fire, deforestation, and overexploitation of natural resources.

To overcome this challenge, Peru and Ecuador have put in place conservation agreements to help stem damage to the Andean region's globally significant carbon stocks and biodiversity.

This is one of the main achievements of a 2014-2018 project led by UN Environment at three sites in Ecuador and two in Peru.

By June 2016 the project had promoted [conservation agreements](#) covering 30,503 hectares of montane forests, and 19,220 hectares of páramo (montane vegetation above the continuous timberline) and punas (high, cold, dry plateaus) in Ecuador and Peru. The project also promoted restoration practices in nearly 7,300 hectares of high Andean ecosystems that are expected to sequester around 30,000 tons of carbon dioxide by 2018.

Formal collaboration agreements with local governments at each site have guaranteed that project interventions become [part of the community's agenda](#), and thus consolidate the sustainability and replicability of the expected results.



- ▶ Protecting what protects us: A network of conservation areas in the Amazon
- ▶ Guatemalan artisans contribute to the sustainable use of biodiversity

- ▶ Grenada coral farmers restore reefs to their original beauty
- ▶ Project to integrate biodiversity in agriculture to begin in Mexico



ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

Grenada coral farmers restore reefs to their original beauty

Coral reefs are an important source of income for Caribbean islands such as Grenada, as they provide viable and profitable tourism, recreation and fishing opportunities. More importantly they are vital for protecting the island against waves, storms and hurricanes.

However, human activities as well as climate change and pollution are drastically reducing coral populations. With half of its coral reefs gone since the 1980's, the Caribbean is one of the worst affected regions.

Acting on this urgent environmental challenge, last year UN Environment joined forces with the Government of Grenada and launched the Building Capacity for Coastal Ecosystem-based Adaptation in Small Island Developing States project.

The goal of this first of its kind initiative is to farm corals in areas with good temperature and acidity conditions. In May 2015, the project established coral farms at Quarantine Point and Mabouya. By mid-2016, the community used 2,000 coral fragments grown on Quarantine Point and Mabouya farms and transplanted these in the pilot areas of Grand Anse and Carriacou.

Project to integrate biodiversity in agriculture to begin in Mexico

Integrating the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services into decision-making and planning instruments of public and private key actors in the Mexican agricultural sector is the aim of a new project launched at the UN Biodiversity Conference in Cancun.

The new project will be undertaken by UN Environment together with the German cooperation agency GIZ and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO.

These organizations will implement instruments for the protection of biodiversity and the promotion of sustainable land use practices with actors from the public and private sectors of Mexico, as well as with research institutions and civil society groups.

The 4 year- project Mainstreaming biodiversity into agriculture in Mexico has a budget of 5 million euros financed by the International Climate Protection Initiative, IKI, of the Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation, Construction and Nuclear Safety of Germany.

[More information here.](#)

- ▶ Protecting what protects us: A network of conservation areas in the Amazon
- ▶ Conservation agreements help preserve Andean ecosystems

- ▶ Guatemalan artisans contribute to the sustainable use of biodiversity



1
Environmental
Governance

2
Disasters &
Conflicts

3
Ecosystems
Management

4
Climate
Change

5
Chemicals &
Waste

6
Resource
Efficiency

7
Environment
Under Review

Implications of the Paris Agreement for Latin America and the Caribbean

UN Environment has produced three studies on the implications of the Paris Agreement for Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as a study on electric mobility and its implementation in the region.

According to the latest report, the deployment of electric cars in Latin America could mean fuel savings of approximately USD 85 billion by 2050.

These studies have been developed within the framework of the EUROCLIMA program financed by the European Union and are intended to contribute to regional climate change adaptation and mitigation actions.

Available PDF versions of the studies can be found at the following links:

[The Paris Agreement and its implications for Latin America and the Caribbean.](#)

[Initial analysis of the implications of the Paris Agreement on climate change mitigation and adaptation in Latin America and the Caribbean.](#)

[The Paris Agreement and the means of implementation: its importance for Latin America and the Caribbean.](#)



▶ Electric mobility could save 85 billion dollars in fuels to Latin America

Electric mobility could save 85 billion dollars in fuels to Latin America



The deployment of electric mobility in Latin America could mean fuel savings of approximately 85 billion dollars for 2050, according to preliminary data from an analysis conducted by UN Environment and developed under the EUROCLIMA program.

According to the preliminary results of the report, the car fleet in the region will reach 200 million units by 2050. This will mean an increase in the demand for fuels and greenhouse gas emissions, GHG, and other harmful pollutants.

In this context, electric means of transport can be a sustainable alternative. The deployment of electric vehicles in the region could mean a reduction of 1.4 gigatonnes in CO2 emissions by 2050. By that year, electric cars could account for approximately 20% of the regional fleet, with a total of 45 million units, based on conservative estimates.

The report is based on the scenario proposed by the International Energy Agency (IEA) to maintain the global temperature increase by 2 °C. According to this forecast, 150 million electric cars will be in operation worldwide by 2050.

► Implications of the Paris Agreement for Latin America and the Caribbean



1
Environmental
Governance

2
Disasters &
Conflicts

3
Ecosystems
Management

4
Climate
Change

5
Chemicals &
Waste

6
Resource
Efficiency

7
Environment
Under Review

Countries in the region join forces to improve management of chemicals and waste



The intergovernmental network on chemicals and waste for Latin America and the Caribbean kicked-off with the establishment of a working group that will develop its action plan and priorities. The network's steering committee, convened for the first time from 15 to 17 November in Panama, also agreed to develop the network's operational regulations, ie, the necessary tools to get it started.

The LAC Forum of Ministers have recognized the urgent need for concerted action by all countries in the region to effectively address the risks posed to human health and the environment associated with the unsound management of chemicals and all wastes, as well as of the importance to have regional coordination mechanisms.

The network's steering committee's initial members are Mexico, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Brazil, Colombia, Peru and Uruguay.

UN Environment regional director Leo Heileman noted that "environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste is one of the requirements for sustainable development. This was integrated directly and indirectly into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which gives us a great opportunity to ensure greater political attention to this area."

Chile hosted forum on sustainable finance in the Southern Cone

Experts from Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and Chile met in Santiago on 3 November to discuss sustainable finance, that is, the one that promotes investments for sustainable development and the transition to low carbon economies.

The forum Promoting sustainable finance in the Southern Cone was organized by the UN Environment Financial Initiative and the Latin American Development Bank, CAF. The aim is to establish a high-level dialogue platform for the financial sector and thus support the construction of national sustainable finance strategies.

To include the concept of socio-environmental sustainability in the risk analysis processes of the banking sector “is no longer a trend but a factor of competitiveness, it is good business”, said Elliott Harris, director of the UN Environment Office in New York.

Discussions focused on the role of ministries, financial sector regulators, banks associations and the banks themselves to promote the adoption of sustainability criteria.





ENVIRONMENT UNDER REVIEW

New campaign raises public awareness of air pollution

The World Health Organization, WHO, and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, CCAC, launched the global campaign Breathe Life to raise awareness about air pollution and mobilize citizens to cut the number of deaths caused by pollution each year in half by 2030.

It is estimated that eight to nine million people die prematurely each year from air pollution. According to WHO, 92% of the world's population lives in places where air quality levels exceed the limits set.

The campaign emphasizes policies that cities can take (improving housing, transport and energy and waste management systems) and measures that people can take at the community or individual levels (stop burning waste, promoting green spaces and walking or cycling) to improve air quality.

The CCAC is a coalition promoted by UN Environment and made up of governments, the private sector and civil society organizations whose mission is to improve air quality and protect the climate of future generations by reducing short-lived climate pollutants.



1
Environmental
Governance

2
Disasters &
Conflicts

3
Ecosystems
Management

4
Climate
Change

5
Chemicals &
Waste

6
Resource
Efficiency

7
Environment
Under Review



JOIN THE CONVERSATION



UN ENVIRONMENT

**www.pnuma.org
noticias@pnuma.org**

**UN Environment Regional Communications Unit
Panama City, Panama**



1
Environmental
Governance

2
Disasters &
Conflicts

3
Ecosystems
Management

4
Climate
Change

5
Chemicals &
Waste

6
Resource
Efficiency

7
Environment
Under Review