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United Nations Environment Assembly Background Guide 2024

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2024 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce to you our committee, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA). Your committee's work is facilitated by volunteer staffers. This year's committee staff are: Director Nour Abd Eldayem and Assistant Director Maddie Weimer (Session 1), and Director Nicole Fett and Assistant Director Cristina Sedano (Session 2). Nour Abd Eldayem completed her B.Sc. in Computer Science at the American University in Cairo and is currently pursuing an M.Sc. in Advanced Cybersecurity. She also works as a cybersecurity consultant. Maddie Weimer holds a B.A. in International Relations from Austin College. She currently works in the government relations realm and is ambitious in her career growth and exploration. Nicole Fett graduated from the University of Magdeburg with a Bachelor's degree in European Studies and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in International Organizations and Crisis Management at the University of Jena. Cristina Sedano is an Environmental Scientist for the California Environmental Protection Agency and has a background in water quality issues. Cristina has two Bachelor's degrees (Environmental Studies and Geography) and a Master's degree (Social Sciences and Globalization) from California State University, San Bernardino. The preparation of these materials was supported by Under-Secretaries-General Vikram Sakkia (Session 1) and Christopher Duggan (Session 2).

The topics on the agenda for this committee are:

1. Environmental Sustainability in the Textile and Fashion Industries
2. Implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the conference, each delegation should submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. ET on 1 March 2023 in accordance with the guidelines in the [Position Paper Guide](#) and the [NMUN•NY Position Papers website](#).

Two resources, available to download from the NMUN website, serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions:

- The [NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide](#), which explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions.
- The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#), which includes the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory [NMUN Conduct Expectations](#) on the NMUN website. They include the conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. If you have any questions concerning your preparation for this committee, please contact the Deputy Secretaries-General at dsg.ny@nmun.org.

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Nour Abd Eldayem, Director
Maddie Weimer, Assistant Director
Session 1

Nicole Fett, Director
Cristina Sedano, Assistant Director
Session 2



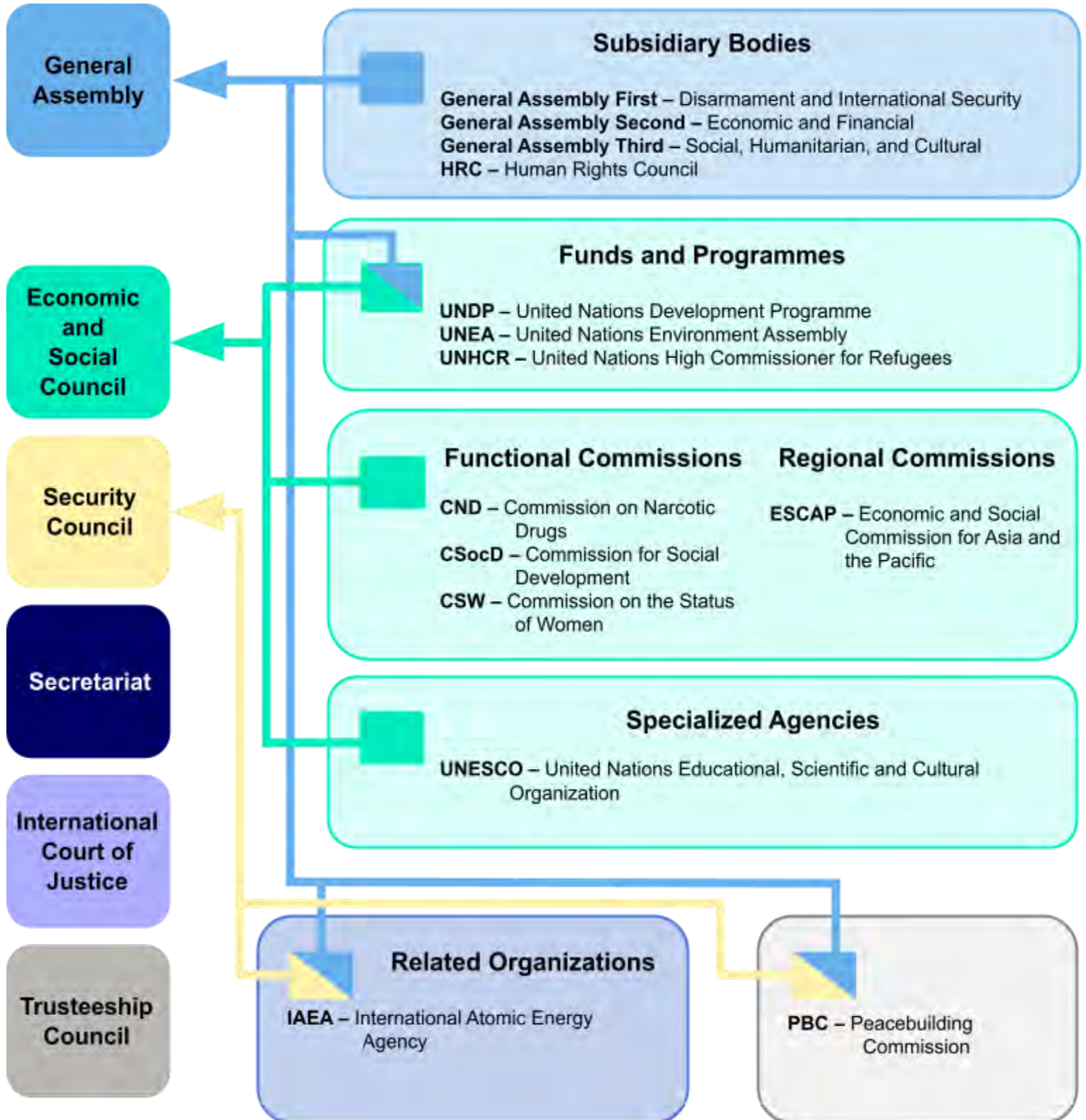
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United Nations System at NMUN·NY

This diagram illustrates the United Nations system simulated at NMUN·NY. It shows where each committee “sits” within the system to demonstrate the reportage and relationships between entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee’s position, purpose, and powers within the United Nations system.





Committee Overview

Introduction

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) is the primary governing body of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and is the international community's highest-level decision-making body on environmental matters.¹ In partnership with other United Nations institutions, it outlines the international environmental agenda and sets priorities for the international community.² Although its resolutions are not binding, UNEA brings together relevant international actors to address global environmental issues and shape environmental governance.³

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

Twenty years after the adoption of the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* (1992), the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development called for the strengthening and upgrading of UNEP so it could better execute its mandate.⁴ UNEA was created in 2012 as the successor to UNEP's Governing Council.⁵ Whereas the Governing Council was composed of 58 Member States and sat within UNEP, UNEA is structured as a distinct entity and enjoys universal membership with 193 Member States.⁶ As a high-level governance body, UNEA reviews and coordinates the work of the international community on environmental matters while serving as a forum for and initiator of debates to be continued by other, more specialized bodies.⁷

While the following list is not exhaustive, the mandate of UNEA can be summarized as:

- **UNEA will generally:** set broad priorities for global environmental policy; identify emerging themes in environmental governance; progressively develop international environmental law and begin negotiations on environmental treaties; define the work and priorities of UNEP; create ad-hoc committees and subsidiary bodies to further discussions on specific areas of environmental concern when necessary; make recommendations to Member States and other international organizations.⁸
- **UNEA will not generally:** engage in operational projects; complete negotiations on environmental treaties, but rather identify emerging issues and promote an architecture for future environmental governance.⁹

UNEA and UNEP are distinct entities. UNEA is the primary governing body and priority-setting mechanism of UNEP and does not operationalize these priorities itself.¹⁰ In contrast, UNEP undertakes programs, projects, and awareness campaigns and provides support to national governments to achieve environmental obligations in line with the priorities set out by UNEA.¹¹

¹ United Nations Environment Assembly. *About the United Nations Environment Assembly*. N.d.

² Ibid.

³ United Nations Environment Programme. *Q&A: UN Environment Assembly*. N.d.

⁴ United Nations, General Assembly. *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)*. 2012. p. 18.

⁵ United Nations Environment Assembly. *About the United Nations Environment Assembly*. N.d.

⁶ Ibid.; United Nations Environment Programme, Governing Council. *Proceedings of the Governing Council at its Nineteenth Session (UNEP/GC.19/34)*. 1997.

⁷ International Institute for Sustainable Development. *The United Nations Environment Assembly's Role as a Governance Architect*. 2022.

⁸ United Nations Environment Programme. *What you need to know about the United Nations Environment Assembly*. N.d.

⁹ Ibid.; International Institute for Sustainable Development. *The United Nations Environment Assembly's Role as a Governance Architect*. 2022.

¹⁰ Office of the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth. *UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme*. N.d.

¹¹ Ibid.



Governance, Structure, and Membership

All 193 United Nations Member States are represented in UNEA.¹² The Assembly meets every two years to set priorities for global environmental policy, discuss developments in the area of environmental legislation, and assist in the implementation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda) (2015).¹³

Consisting of ten Ministers who each serve a two-year term and are selected based on geographical rotations, UNEA's Bureau is responsible for the general conduct of business.¹⁴ UNEA also has a Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), a subsidiary inter-sessional organ of UNEA that meets at least four times a year.¹⁵ The CPR contributes to the preparation of the UNEA agenda, holds an advisory role in policy matters, and monitors the implementation of decisions.¹⁶ The CPR also holds discussions on key issues, promotes the inclusion of non-resident members of the Committee, and performs other tasks given by UNEA.¹⁷ The CPR consists of all accredited Permanent Representatives to UNEP and is led by a five-member Bureau that is elected for two years.¹⁸

UNEP relies on three main financial sources: earmarked funds, the Environment Fund, and the United Nations's regular budget.¹⁹ Earmarked funds, also known as earmarked contributions, are funds appropriated for specific projects, themes, or countries.²⁰ These funds aim to expand and/or replicate the results of United Nations Environment's work in more countries and in cooperation with more partners.²¹ The Environment Fund aids in maintaining the capacity, balance, and efficiency needed for UNEP to function.²² Earmarked contributions and the Environment Fund are comprised of voluntary contributions; hence, 95% of UNEP's income is received on a voluntary basis from Member States.²³ The United Nations' regular budget supports the regular work of UNEA and the UNEP Secretariat.²⁴

¹² United Nations Environment Assembly. *About the United Nations Environment Assembly*. N.d.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ United Nations Environment Programme. *Committee of Permanent Representatives*. N.d.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ United Nations Environment Programme. *How is UNEP funded*. N.d.

²⁰ *Ibid.*; United Nations Environment Programme. *Earmarked Contributions*. N.d.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² United Nations Environment Programme. *How is UNEP funded*. N.d.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*



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United Nations, General Assembly. *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)*. 2012. Retrieved 20 October 2023 from: <http://undocs.org/en/A/RES/66/288>



1. Environmental Sustainability in the Textile and Fashion Industries

Introduction

The world is facing a “triple planetary crisis of climate change,” defined as the interlinked nature of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution.²⁵ Although all human activities release greenhouse gasses (GHGs), the main emitters include energy use, agriculture, manufacturing, and transport.²⁶ With the fashion and textile supply chains spanning agriculture, manufacturing, transportation, and disposal, unsustainable practices within these supply chains continue to significantly contribute to the climate crisis.²⁷ According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), due to the rise of production and consumption levels, the textile and fashion industries now generate 20% of global water waste, making them jointly the second highest generator of wastewater worldwide.²⁸ The fashion industry emits about 3.3 billion metric tons of GHGs per year, which represents about 4% of the global emission rates.²⁹ Due to the disposal of clothes before they reach the market to be sold and low levels of recycling at the end of the product life cycle, the fashion industry loses about \$500 billion of value annually.³⁰ Moreover, it heavily relies on plastic, especially in synthetic fiber production, which contributes significantly to plastic pollution.³¹ According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the fibers that make up clothing are responsible for an estimated 1.4 million trillion plastic fibers in the ocean.³² The fashion industry’s growth is responsible for the use of 24% of insecticides and 11% of pesticides annually, leading to increased biodiversity loss and water pollution.³³ There has also been a rise in consumption patterns, with consumers now purchasing 60% more products and keeping purchased items for half the time compared to 15 years ago.³⁴

According to UNEP, consumer pressure for constant change is fueling the fast fashion business model, which thrives on “quick turnover, high volume, and low prices,” and is enabled by unsustainable practices that are exhausting the world’s generational capacity.³⁵ To promote wider adoption of sustainable consumption and production (SCP) in the textile and fashion industries, each stage of the value chain, defined by UNEP as stages that add value in the product’s lifecycle, can be a candidate for more sustainable practices.³⁶ UNEP defines SCP as “the use of services and related products, which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimizing the use of natural resources and toxic materials, as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle of the service or product so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations,” directly correlating with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12 (responsible consumption and production).³⁷

²⁵ United Nations Climate Change. *What is the Triple Planetary Crisis?* N.d.; United Nations Environment Assembly. *Q&A: UN Environment Assembly*. 2022.

²⁶ United Nations Climate Change. *What is the Triple Planetary Crisis?* N.d.

²⁷ United Nations Environment Programme. *UN Alliance For Sustainable Fashion addresses damage of ‘fast fashion’*. 2019.

²⁸ United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. *Fashion and the SDGs: What Role for the UN?* 2018. p.1.

²⁹ United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: Global Stocktaking*. 2020; UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion. *Home*. N.d.

³⁰ United Nations Environment Programme. *UN Alliance For Sustainable Fashion addresses damage of ‘fast fashion’*. 2022.

³¹ United Nations Environment Programme. *The environmental costs of fast fashion*. 2022.

³² United Nations Environment Programme. *Fashion’s tiny hidden secret*. 2019.

³³ United Nations Environment Programme. *UN Alliance For Sustainable Fashion addresses damage of ‘fast fashion’*. 2022; United Nations Environment Programme. *Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs)*. N.d.

³⁴ United Nations Environment Programme. *UN Alliance For Sustainable Fashion addresses damage of ‘fast fashion’*. 2022.

³⁵ *Ibid.*; United Nations Environment Programme. *The environmental costs of fast fashion*. 2022.

³⁶ Earthday.org. *Fashion for the Earth*. N.d; United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: Global Stocktaking*. 2020; United Nations Environment Programme. *UN Alliance For Sustainable Fashion addresses damage of ‘fast fashion’*. 2022.

³⁷ United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainable consumption and production policies*. N.d.



As the leading United Nations entity pertaining to the environment, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) supports the implementation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and promotes multi-stakeholder action on environmental issues, addressed in goals such as SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 14 (life below water).³⁸ UNEA not only oversees relevant stakeholders' participation to ensure that sustainability is recognized as a priority in the international community, but it also facilitates conversations between all Member States and the community at large, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), on topics within UNEA's mandate.³⁹ Amongst its functions, UNEA serves as the primary governing body of UNEP, which focuses on areas of work such as climate change, environmental governance, harmful substances, and sustainable consumption and production.⁴⁰ With unsustainable practices in the fashion and textile industries encompassing multiple environmental issues such as the use of toxic chemicals, significant levels of waste generation, material underutilization, and contribution to plastic pollution, addressing the shift to more sustainable practices within both industries aligns with UNEA's priorities.⁴¹

International and Regional Framework

The *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) (1992) established an international environmental treaty that identified human activities as having a large role in the increase of climate change effects faced globally.⁴² Additionally, UNFCCC set a global objective to stabilize the concentration of GHGs by calling upon industrialized Member States to submit annual inventories of GHG emissions.⁴³ The *Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention On Climate Change* (Kyoto Protocol) shortly followed the UNFCCC to operationalize the UNFCCC with individual commitments by developed countries to reduce emissions.⁴⁴ In 2015, the *Paris Agreement* was adopted at the 21st UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP21) as the first legally-binding international climate change initiative inviting all States parties to develop Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to reduce long-term GHG emissions.⁴⁵ In 2018, UNFCCC initiated the adoption of the *Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action* to "drive the fashion industry to net-zero emissions no later than 2050," aligning the industry with the UNFCCC and *Paris Agreement*, and pushing the fashion industry towards a more sustainable production model.⁴⁶ Moreover, the *Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action* recommends a collaboration amongst all stakeholders to decarbonize the industry in an attempt to decrease its contribution to climate change.⁴⁷

In order to advance the adoption of SCP practices across key industries, Member States committed during the 2012 Rio+20 conference to the implementation of the *10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production* (10YFP) to achieve set economic and social development

³⁸ United Nations Environment Programme. *The United Nations Environment Assembly*. N.d.

³⁹ Center For International Environmental Law. *Expanding Engagement in International Institutions: The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA)*. 2015; Wagner et al. *The United Nations Environment Assembly's Role as a Governance Architect*. 2022.

⁴⁰ United Nations Environment Programme. *About the United Nations Environment Programme*. N.d.; United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme*. N.d.

⁴¹ United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: Global Stocktaking*. 2020; United Nations Environment Programme. *UN Alliance For Sustainable Fashion addresses damage of 'fast fashion'*. 2022.

⁴² United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. *What is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change?* N.d.; United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. 1992.

⁴³ Ibid..

⁴⁴ United Nations Climate Change. *What is the Kyoto Protocol?* N.d.

⁴⁵ United Nations Climate Change. *Paris Agreement*. 2015. p.3.

⁴⁶ United Nations Climate Change. *Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action*. 2021. p.3.; United Nations Climate Change. *Everything You Wanted to Know About the Fashion Charter*. 2022.

⁴⁷ United Nations Climate Change. *Everything You Wanted to Know About the Fashion Charter*. 2022



goals.⁴⁸ In 2022, the board of the 10YFP reiterated the importance of and its commitment to SCP through the adoption of the *Global Strategy on Sustainable Consumption and Production*.⁴⁹ African states adapted the 10YFP to African priorities by adopting the *African 10 Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption And Production* to monitor African progress towards SCP.⁵⁰ The *Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean*, jointly created by UNEP and the Mediterranean Action Plan in 2017, highlights the importance of policies that promote SCP in food, fisheries, agriculture, tourism, goods manufacturing, housing, and construction.⁵¹ In accordance, the General Assembly adopted resolution 77/162 on “Promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, building on Agenda 21,” highlighting the importance of SCP for the achievement of the SDGs.⁵²

On the use of harmful chemicals, the *Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer* (Montreal Protocol) was adopted in 1987 and set the foundation for sustainable production through the regulation of approximately 100 man-made chemicals, also known as ozone-depleting substances (ODS), some of which are used within the fashion and textile industries.⁵³ The textile industry is one of the world’s highest users of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).⁵⁴ In 2004, the *Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants* was adopted to regulate the use and disposal of POPs specifically, due to their significant adverse effects on human health and the environment.⁵⁵ This convention expands upon the measures outlined by the *Montreal Protocol* (1987), the *Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal* (1989), and the *Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade* (1998), which all call for the restriction of movement of several toxic chemicals, and establish the need for consent of import from receiving countries.⁵⁶

The *Convention on Biological Diversity*, a legally binding treaty adopted during the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, underscores the importance of biodiversity protection, sustainable use of biodiversity, and equitable sharing of benefits from genetic resources, in which the textile industry plays a significant role.⁵⁷ The *Regional Seas Convention and Action Plans* aim to address the deterioration of oceans on the

⁴⁸ Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. *United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20*. N.d.; One Planet Network. *The 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production: The multilateral cooperation framework for Sustainable Consumption and Production*. 2023.

⁴⁹ One Planet Network. *Global Strategy on Sustainable Consumption and Production*. 2023.

⁵⁰ United Nations Environment Programme. *The African 10 Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production*. 2005.

⁵¹ United Nations Environment Programme. *Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean*. 2017.

⁵² United Nations, General Assembly. *Natural plant fibres and sustainable development (A/RES/74/240)*. 2019; United Nations, General Assembly. *Promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, building on Agenda 21 (A/RES/77/162)*. 2022.

⁵³ United Nations Environment Programme. *About Montreal Protocol*. N.d; Global environment facility. *Investing in the phase-out of ozone-depleting substances: The GEF Experience*. 2010.

⁵⁴ United Nations Environment Programme. *Textile-producing nations unite to reduce chemical waste*. 2022.

⁵⁵ United Nations Environment Programme. *Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) as amended in 2009*. 2009.

⁵⁶ United Nations Environment Programme. *Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal: Protocol On Liability And Compensation For Damage Resulting From Transboundary Movements Of Hazardous Wastes And Their Disposal*. 2011; United Nations Environment Programme et al. *Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade*. 2017.

⁵⁷ Convention on Biological Diversity. *The Convention on Biological Diversity*. 2022; United Nations Environment Programme. *UNEP and Biodiversity*. N.d.



regional level with the primary focus on sea and land pollution linked to the production of plastics and wastewater.⁵⁸ For example, the *Nairobi Convention* of Eastern Africa promotes regional collaboration and coordination to address pollution and the protection of flora and fauna.⁵⁹ Similarly, in the Caribbean Region, the *Cartagena Convention* aims to prevent, control, and reduce pollution, as well as to promote the development of technical assessments to measure progress.⁶⁰

Role of the International System

UNEA began discussing SCP and plastic pollution in its first conference, in which UNEA adopted resolutions 1/5 and 1/6 on “Chemicals and waste” and “Marine plastics and debris,” respectively.⁶¹ More recently, during its fifth session in 2022, UNEA adopted resolution 5/11 on “Enhancing circular economy as a contribution to achieving sustainable consumption and production” underscoring the importance of prioritizing the design of products and services that promote re-use, lifetime extension, and easy recycling.⁶² Through its ministerial declaration entitled *Strengthening actions for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals* (2022), UNEA made efforts to promote a resilient, sustainable world.⁶³ Additionally, UNEA adopted resolution 5/14 on “End Plastic Pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument” pushing for a legally binding document that addresses plastic pollution and its effects on marine environments.⁶⁴ Through the *Report on the work of the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics at its fourth meeting* (2020), UNEA proposed the creation of a digital multi-stakeholder platform to monitor the progress of marine litter and microplastics in each Member State.⁶⁵ Additionally, the Regional Seas Programme was established as a key mechanism for the conservation of marine and coastal environments from the adverse effects of pollution and waste on a regional level.⁶⁶

To promote the transformation of the textile value chain to a more sustainable and circular business model, UNEP published *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain - A Global Roadmap*, which addresses what each stakeholder group can do to reach the common goal of a sustainable and circular textile sector.⁶⁷ In 2020, UNEP released the *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: Global Stocktaking* report to highlight the varying impacts of hotspots throughout the textile value chain.⁶⁸ According to the report, although the value chain is global, production and consumption levels vary across regions, which have to be considered when addressing the efforts needed to promote sustainable consumption and production.⁶⁹ For example, regions in Asia and developing countries lead in the raw material extraction and manufacturing stages of production, while regions in North America and

⁵⁸ United Nations Environment Programme. *Regional Seas Programme*. N.d.

⁵⁹ United Nations Environment Programme. *The Nairobi Convention*. N.d.

⁶⁰ United Nations Environment Programme. *Cartagena Convention*. N.d.

⁶¹ United Nations Environment Programme. *Resolutions and decisions adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme at its first session on 27 June 2014*. N.d.

⁶² United Nations Environment Assembly. *Enhancing circular economy as a contribution to achieving sustainable consumption and production (UNEP/EA.5/Res.11)*. 2022.

⁶³ United Nations Environment Assembly. *Ministerial declaration of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its third session : Towards a pollution-free planet (UNEP/EA.5/HLS.1)*. 2018.

⁶⁴ United Nations Environment Assembly. *End Plastic Pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument (UNEP/EA.5/Res.14)*. 2022.

⁶⁵ United Nations Environment Assembly. *Report on the work of the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics at its fourth meeting*. 2020. p.5.

⁶⁶ United Nations Environment Programme. *Regional Seas Programme*. N.d.

⁶⁷ United Nations Environment Programme. *UNEP Circularity Platform: Textiles*. N.d; United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain - A Global Roadmap*. 2023.

⁶⁸ United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: Global Stocktaking*. 2020.

⁶⁹ Ibid.



Europe represent higher relative consumption levels.⁷⁰ In 2023, the UNEP and UNFCCC jointly created the *Sustainable Fashion Communication Playbook* noting the importance of the fashion industry aligning its goals with the SDGs and the targets set in the *Paris Agreement*, and outlined action plans to help the industry shift to more sustainable consumption patterns.⁷¹

In 2018, the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) held a side event titled the United Nations Partnership on Sustainable Fashion and the SDGs in which various United Nations organizations came together to discuss concerns and make recommendations for the industry to align its practices with the SDGs.⁷² Following this side event, the UNEA established the United Nations Alliance for Sustainable Fashion as an international initiative to align the work of United Nations entities and allied organizations on introducing more sustainable practices in the fashion industry and reducing the adverse environmental effects caused by the industry.⁷³ Established in 2019, the Fashion Pact is a global initiative led by various organizations working in the fashion industry to reach a common agenda within three different directions, namely the “restoration of biodiversity, end of global warming, and protection of the ocean.”⁷⁴

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) publicizes projects by fashion students promoting biodiversity and sustainable fashion through the BioTrade Initiative.⁷⁵ The BioTrade Initiative also provides UNCTAD with a platform to promote sustainable fashion and a biodiversity focus in both the fashion industry and fashion curricula globally.⁷⁶ To further its advocacy for sustainable fisheries management and use of aquatic resources, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supports the Blue Growth Initiative (BGI), calling upon Member States and organizations in the fashion industry to promote Blue Fashion, which focuses on the use of marine raw materials and by-products to develop sustainable bio-alternatives for the fashion industry.⁷⁷ Within the fashion sector, the International Labour Organization (ILO) created a toolkit entitled “Greening The Sector” to tackle communal confusion in Asia regarding the differences in textile stakeholders and platforms by analyzing the performance standards of each environmental initiative, each program’s offerings, and sharing further knowledge to companies within the industry.⁷⁸

Achieving Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Era of Fast Fashion

The effects of fast fashion on the environment and the achievement of the SDGs are primarily driven by its fast-paced consumption and production patterns.⁷⁹ By design, fast fashion is based on a business model in which garments are made inexpensively, in large quantities, and with quick turnover to offer consumers constant change.⁸⁰ It is estimated that between 2018 and 2030, the global consumption of

⁷⁰ United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: Global Stocktaking*. 2020.

⁷¹ United Nations Environment Programme. *The Sustainable Fashion Communication Playbook*. 2023.

⁷² United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. *United Nations High Level Political Forum: UN Partnership on Sustainable Fashion and the SDGs*. 2018.

⁷³ UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion. *Home*. N.d.

⁷⁴ The Fashion Pact. *The Fashion Pact*. 2023.

⁷⁵ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *UNCTAD establishes three partnerships to boost fashion industry’s support of biodiversity*. 2011.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. *Agricultural Innovation for Family Farmers*. N.d.

⁷⁸ International Labour Organization. *Greening the sector: Environmental initiatives and tools in the garment sector in Asia*. N.d.

⁷⁹ United Nations Environment Programme. *UN Alliance For Sustainable Fashion addresses damage of ‘fast fashion’*. 2019.

⁸⁰ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *UN launches drive to highlight environmental cost of staying fashionable*. 2019; United Nations Environment Programme. *The environmental costs of fast fashion*. 2022.



garments will increase from 62 million tonnes to 102 million tonnes, with a diminishing clothing lifespan.⁸¹ Thus, the fast fashion era has had an increasingly significant impact on the achievement of social and environmental development targets as defined by the SDGs, specifically SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production).⁸²

UNEA has consistently prioritized SCP in its work.⁸³ One example is UNEA resolution 4/1 on “Innovative pathways to achieve sustainable consumption and production,” which underscores the importance of adhering to policies that promote SCP and the movement toward sustainable practices.⁸⁴ UNEA also adopted resolution 4/4 on “Addressing environmental challenges through sustainable business practices,” highlighting the need for collaboration between Member States and the private sector to push towards the adoption of sustainable business practices through sustainable material management, resource efficiency, trade, and achievement of SCP.⁸⁵ Given the importance and scale of the textile industry, transitioning to a sustainable and circular textile value chain can promote business models that prioritize sustainable sourcing, manufacturing, marketing, and consumption.⁸⁶ According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, circular business models provide a way to “reduce the extraction and use of natural resources and the generation of industrial and consumer waste.”⁸⁷ UNEP offers a platform for different stakeholders to convene to define priorities and align efforts pertinent to sustainable production through engagements such as the 2022 Circular Systems for a Net Positive Fashion Industry event.⁸⁸

The fashion industry represents a significant marketing power, allowing it to wield influence over consumption patterns and play an important role in sustainable fashion communication.⁸⁹ In response, UNEP published the *Sustainable Fashion and Communication Strategy 2021-2024*, outlining the effect of the fashion industry on the environment due to its promotion of overconsumption, and how the industry can shift its practices to reduce consumption and disposal of textiles.⁹⁰ More recently, the UNEP and UNFCCC jointly published the *Sustainable Fashion Communication Playbook* to highlight the role fashion communicators play in the achievement of the SDGs.⁹¹ FAO also published reports on sustainable production, including the *Measuring Sustainability in Cotton Farming Systems: Towards a Guidance Framework* outlining metrics to assess sustainability in cotton production.⁹² With public funding ranging between 12% to 30% of a country’s gross domestic product (GDP), shifting public spending towards sustainable consumption can signal the importance of directing funding towards more sustainable initiatives, and contribute significantly to the reduction of carbon emissions and increased resource

⁸¹ Shukla. *Fast Fashion Pollution and Climate Change*. 2022; United Nations Environment Programme. *The environmental costs of fast fashion*. 2022.

⁸² UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion. *Home*. N.d.

⁸³ United Nations Environment Programme. *UN Environment Assembly 4 (UNEA 4) Resolutions*. 2019; United Nations Environment Programme. *UN Environment Assembly 5 (UNEA 5.2) Resolutions*. 2022.

⁸⁴ United Nations Environment Assembly. *Innovative pathways to achieve sustainable consumption and production (UNEP/EA.4/Res.1)*. 2019.

⁸⁵ United Nations Environment Assembly. *Addressing environmental challenges through sustainable business practices (UNEP/EA.4/Res.4)*. 2019.

⁸⁶ United Nations Environment Programme. *Building Sustainability And Circularity In The Textile Value Chain*. N.d.

⁸⁷ The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. *Business Models for the Circular Economy, Opportunities and Challenges from a Policy Perspective*. 2018.

⁸⁸ United Nations Environment Programme. *Online Event: Accelerating sustainability in the textile value chain: inspiring action and behaviour change*. 2021; United Nations Environment Programme. *UNEP Event: Global Fashion Agenda & UNEP present: Circular Systems for a Net Positive Fashion Industry*. 2022.

⁸⁹ United Nations Environment Programme. *Shifting the fashion narrative*. N.d.

⁹⁰ Arthur. *Sustainable Fashion and Communication Strategy 2021-2024*. 2022.

⁹¹ United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainable Fashion Communication Playbook*. 2023.

⁹² Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations et al. *Measuring Sustainability in Cotton Farming Systems: Towards a Guidance Framework*. 2015.



efficiency on a governmental level.⁹³ Traceability, which refers to the tracking of the movement of goods along an item's value chain, offers organizations a mechanism to keep track of adherence to sustainable production methods throughout their vendor network to make procurement and partnership decisions.⁹⁴

With UNEP's support through its Major NGOs accreditation, many initiatives by the global community have encouraged the adoption of sustainable production methods.⁹⁵ Fashion Enter Ltd., a United Kingdom-based NGO, works to disseminate best practices for new, more sustainable manufacturing methods in the fashion industry.⁹⁶ The Revival, a community-led effort in Ghana raising awareness about ways to recycle textile waste, aims to increase the adoption of environmentally sound models within the fashion and textile industries.⁹⁷ Thus, the Revival supports Ghana by establishing upcycling global textile waste through the creation of educational workshops and campaigns thereby further promoting an environmentally sound environment.⁹⁸ Additionally, the *Financing Nature: COP27 Special Podcast* was created by the Green Finance Institute and UNEP to further promote awareness to create nature-based outcomes to decrease climate change and promote greener practices.⁹⁹ Moreover, initiatives such as the #ActNow Fashion Challenge promote sustainable consumption and invite individuals to contribute to the zero-waste challenge through behavioral change on an individual level.¹⁰⁰ The work of civil organizations complements and supports the work of UNEA and UNEP, as they continue to share their diverse expertise and promote dialogue around sustainable consumption and production.¹⁰¹

Promoting Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste in the Textile and Fashion Industries

According to the United Nations Alliance for Sustainable Fashion, the fashion industry loses \$100 billion annually due to resource and material underutilization.¹⁰² Around 15% of fabric used in garment manufacturing is thrown away before it reaches any consumer.¹⁰³ Exacerbating this issue are the low levels of textile recycling, as about 57% of discarded garments are not recycled.¹⁰⁴ The fashion and textile industry also utilizes a large amount of resources, consuming about 215 trillion liters of water annually, while cotton cultivation covers 2.5% of the global arable land.¹⁰⁵ According to UNEP's *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: Global Stocktaking* report, on average, 1 kilogram of textiles requires 0.58 kilograms of chemicals for production, thus posing a hazard to both environmental and human health.¹⁰⁶

⁹³ United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainable consumption and production policies*. N.d.

⁹⁴ United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. *Traceability for Sustainable Garment and Footwear*. N.d.

⁹⁵ United Nations Environment Programme. *Non governmental organizations*. N.d.

⁹⁶ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Upcycle, repurpose and make on demand - Sustainable Fashionable Future: Fashion-Enter Ltd (Other relevant actor)*. N.d.

⁹⁷ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Conscious Fashion and Lifestyle Network: Engaging the fashion and lifestyle sectors to accelerate action in support of the Sustainable Development Goals*. N.d.; United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *The Revival: Upcycling and Circular Economy, Ghanaian Creative solutions to Global Textile Waste: The Revival Earth Organization (Non-governmental organization (NGO))*. N.d.

⁹⁸ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *The Revival: Upcycling and Circular Economy, Ghanaian Creative solutions to Global Textile Waste: The Revival Earth Organization (Non-governmental organization (NGO))*. N.d.

⁹⁹ United Nations Environment Programme. *Financing Nature: COP27 Special Podcast*. 2022.

¹⁰⁰ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *ActNow for Zero-Waste Fashion*. 2019.

¹⁰¹ United Nations Environment Programme. *Non governmental organizations*. N.d.

¹⁰² UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion. *Home*. N.d.

¹⁰³ Shukla. *Fast Fashion Pollution and Climate Change*. 2022.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion. *Home*. N.d.; United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: Global Stocktaking*. 2020.

¹⁰⁶ United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: Global Stocktaking*. 2020.



Chemical use is prevalent throughout the textile and fashion value chains, with approximately 8,000 chemicals being used across the entire value chain, mainly in fiber production, textile processing, and garment manufacturing.¹⁰⁷ According to UNEP's *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: Global Stocktaking* report, 2,450 of the chemicals used in the textile value chain were analyzed, and it was found that 750 chemicals are known to be hazardous to human health.¹⁰⁸ To reduce the use and accumulation of harmful chemicals and waste, UNEA has adopted multiple resolutions, most recently resolution 5/7 on "Sound management of chemicals and waste," in which it noted the lack of achievement of targets set for environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste, and the persistent issue of illegal transboundary movement of chemicals.¹⁰⁹ UNEA also called for support of the implementation of the *Basel Convention*, the *Rotterdam Convention*, and the *Stockholm Convention*.¹¹⁰ UNEA has adopted resolutions such as 5/14 entitled "End plastic pollution: Towards an international legally binding instrument" and along with the General Assembly have also adopted resolutions 5/5 on "Nature-based solutions for supporting sustainable development" and 76/223 on "Natural plant fibers and sustainable development" respectively, to promote the use of nature-based fibers to replace synthetic fibers.¹¹¹

Despite concern over chemical use in the textile industry, a lack of capacity and transparency poses a challenge to studying the use of chemicals and their associated emitted throughout the value chain.¹¹² Moreover, the production of textiles, specifically cotton production, represents the highest contribution to water scarcity in the apparel value chain across all Member States.¹¹³ The stages of bleaching, dyeing, and finishing of textiles, also known as the wet treatment of textiles, rely heavily on toxic chemicals that are later released into bodies of water, soil, and the atmosphere throughout the textile supply chain.¹¹⁴ Two of the common chemicals of concern are POPs and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAs).¹¹⁵ As reported by the World Health Organization, POPs, which are found in pesticides, industrial chemicals, and byproducts of the manufacturing process, have several adverse effects on human and animal health, and can persist in the environment for long periods of time.¹¹⁶ Similarly, PFAs, which are used in garments for oil and water repellency and as a flame-retardant, are considered toxic, persistent, accumulative, and can spread via air, soil, and water.¹¹⁷

¹⁰⁷ United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: Global Stocktaking*. 2020.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ United Nations Environment Assembly. *Sound management of chemicals and waste (UNEP/EA.5/Res.7)*. 2022.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ United Nations, General Assembly. *Natural plant fibres and sustainable development (A/RES/74/240)*. 2020; United Nations Environment Assembly. *Nature-based solutions for supporting sustainable development (UNEP/EA.5/Res.5)*. 2022; United Nations Environment Assembly. *End plastic pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument (UNEP/EA.5/Res.14)*. 2022.

¹¹² Natural Resources Defense Council. *Engaging the Textile Industry as a Key Sector in SAICM: A Review of PFAs as a Chemical Class in the Textile Sector*. 2021.

¹¹³ Fibre2Fashion. *Textile industry releasing toxins into atmosphere*. 2013; United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: Global Stocktaking*. 2020.

¹¹⁴ United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: Global Stocktaking*. 2020.

¹¹⁵ United Nations Environment Programme. *Persistent organic pollutants (POPs)*. N.d.; Natural Resources Defense Council. *Engaging the Textile Industry as a Key Sector in SAICM: A Review of PFAs as a Chemical Class in the Textile Sector*. 2021; Global Environment Facility. *Reducing uses and releases of chemicals of concern, including POPs, in the textiles sector*. 2023.

¹¹⁶ World Health Organization. *Persistent Organic Pollutants Impact on Child Health*. 2010.

¹¹⁷ Natural Resources Defense Council. *Engaging the Textile Industry as a Key Sector in SAICM: A Review of PFAs as a Chemical Class in the Textile Sector*. 2021.



The textile industry accounts for 8% of microplastics released into the oceans annually, leading to biodiversity loss, reduction in fish production, spread of bacteria, and harm to human health.¹¹⁸ In efforts to reduce the use of single-use plastics, UNEA adopted resolution 4/9 on “Addressing single-use plastic products pollution” which calls upon Member States and the private sector to find sustainable alternatives to single-use plastics.¹¹⁹ In 2020, UNEP published *An Assessment Report on Issues of Concern: Chemicals and Waste Issues Posing Risks to Human Health and the Environment*, showing that microplastics, as one of the 11 substances identified by the *Global Chemicals Outlook*, are persistent and mobile, leading to high levels of toxic exposure for humans and the environment.¹²⁰ Other efforts that support the adoption of natural alternatives to synthetic fibers include FAO’s work on Blue Fashion and UNECE’s Forests4Fashion initiative.¹²¹ The Forests4Fashion initiative supports the achievement of SDG 12 by demonstrating that forest fibers can be used as a nature-based solution to synthetic fibers, leading to a fashionable yet greener textile value chain.¹²²

Conclusion

Given the scale and impact of the fashion and textile industries on the environment, they play a critical role in the achievement of SDGs.¹²³ Past efforts have attempted to address waste, chemical use, underutilization, and unsustainable consumption and production, however, progress has been limited.¹²⁴ Some of the challenges hindering the achievement of the set targets include the adoption of unsustainable business practices, lack of transparency across the fashion supply chain, reliance on harmful substances, low rates of recycling of waste, and a lack of consumer awareness.¹²⁵ Stakeholders across the textile and fashion value chains including brands, policymakers, financial institutions, manufacturers, recyclers, consumer engagement actors, civil society, and the scientific community, can play a unique role in adopting more sustainable practices across the fashion and textile value chains and contributing to the achievement of the SDGs.¹²⁶

Further Research

As delegates conduct further research, they should consider: How are the fashion and textile industries contributing to the achievement of the SDGs? What is hindering the adoption of sustainable business models in the fashion industry? How can civil society and the scientific community further the adoption of SCP? In what ways are current chemicals and waste management practices contributing to the achievement of environmental sustainability in the fashion and textile industries? How can recycling be more widely adopted in the textile/fashion industry?

¹¹⁸ United Nations Environment Programme. *Marine and Coastal*. N.d.; United Nations Environment Programme. *From Pollution to Solution: A global assessment of marine litter and plastic pollution*. 2021.

¹¹⁹ United Nations Environment Assembly. *Addressing single-use plastic products pollution (UNEP/EA.4/Res.9)*. 2019.

¹²⁰ United Nations Environment Programme. *Global Chemicals Outlook II*. 2019; United Nations Environment Programme. *An Assessment Report on Issues of Concern: Chemicals and Waste Issues Posing Risks to Human Health and the Environment*. 2020.

¹²¹ United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. *FORESTS4FASHION*. N.d.; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. *#BlueFashion: From Lake Turkana to the runway: Promoting a sustainable blue economy to support livelihoods in Kenya*. 2018.

¹²² United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. *FORESTS4FASHION*. N.d.

¹²³ United Nations Environment Programme. *The environmental costs of fast fashion*. 2022.

¹²⁴ UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion. *Home*. N.d.

¹²⁵ United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainable consumption and production policies*. N.d.; Natural Resources Defense Council. *Engaging the Textile Industry as a Key Sector in SAICM: A Review of PFAs as a Chemical Class in the Textile Sector*. 2021; Shukla. *Fast Fashion Pollution and Climate Change*. 2022.

¹²⁶ United Nations Environment Programme. *Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain - A Global Roadmap*. 2023.



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2. Implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

"Nature is humanity's best friend."¹²⁷

Introduction

There are currently around 40,000 species listed as at risk of extinction, 10 million hectares of forest are being destroyed yearly, and more than half of the key biodiversity areas are unprotected from human impacts.¹²⁸ Biodiversity is the diversity of all living organisms on Earth and the source of soils, weather, water, and the air that organisms breathe.¹²⁹ Biodiversity's complexity includes the genetic diversity of species, habitats, and biomes.¹³⁰ Many of Earth's ecosystems are also complex, with various new species discovered every year.¹³¹ The loss in biodiversity affects not only organisms in their natural habitats but also humans, especially as a loss in biodiversity can be detrimental to the advancement of both medicine and science.¹³²

To ensure the protection of biodiversity and to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Conference of the Parties to the *Convention on Biological Diversity* (CBD) (1992) adopted the *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework* (GBF) (2022) during its 15th meeting (COP15).¹³³ The GBF laid out strategic frameworks to continue protecting biodiversity, including with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and also includes four goals for 2050 and 23 targets for 2030.¹³⁴ The GBF and its goals aim to establish plans and effective monitoring of biodiversity in an effort to improve the resilience of ecosystems, advance the sustainable use of biodiverse nature, and also provide financial resources for least developed countries.¹³⁵ The vision for GBF is a world living in harmony with nature, and its mission is to take urgent action to reverse the depletion of the natural world and put nature on a recovery path.¹³⁶ The next meeting for COP will be in 2024 and will focus on addressing the progress made and the remaining gaps regarding the targets and commitments of the GBF.¹³⁷

Biodiversity and ecosystem loss are endangering progress toward 80% of the SDG targets and may considerably increase the risk of global food insecurity and inhibit the production of medicine because of nature's role in providing food, energy, and supplies.¹³⁸ More than 75% of international food crop types rely on animal pollination, and pollinator loss has put up to \$577 billion in annual crop outputs at risk.¹³⁹ The Earth is now experiencing the first human activity-induced mass extinction with the increase in

¹²⁷ Guterres. United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Secretary-General's remarks at the UN Biodiversity Conference - COP15*. 2022.

¹²⁸ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss*. N.d.

¹²⁹ Altman. United Nations Foundation. *Biodiversity explained: facts, myths, and the race to protect it*. 2023.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (CBD/COP/DEC/15/4)*. 2022.

¹³⁴ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*. 2023.

¹³⁵ Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (CBD/COP/DEC/15/4)*. 2022.

¹³⁶ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*. 2023.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. *Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. 2019. p. XIV.

¹³⁹ Ibid.



anthropogenic activities and climatic change.¹⁴⁰ Human drivers of biodiversity loss include changes in land and sea use, pollution, production, and consumption patterns.¹⁴¹ Climate change is another contributor to biodiversity loss, with higher global temperatures, wildfires, and other climate-related degradation.¹⁴²

Indigenous communities have long acted as environmental stewards and indigenous people currently manage between 20 and 25% of Earth's land, an area that accounts for 80% of the world's biodiversity.¹⁴³ In a 2022 interview, indigenous rights activist and SDG advocate Hindou Ibrahim expressed that indigenous communities have a way of living where biodiversity is protected and respected and that they have done so for generations.¹⁴⁴ United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres stated that although in many cases indigenous people are denied human rights, they remain pioneers in protecting nature and biodiversity.¹⁴⁵ In 2007, the General Assembly passed the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)* to affirm that indigenous people have the same equal rights as all people in the world and should be able to participate in all matters of government, economics, and culture.¹⁴⁶

International and Regional Framework

The CBD was adopted at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit to promote sustainable development and focuses on the balance between humans and the natural environment.¹⁴⁷ It is the international instrument for biological conservation and the sustainable use of nature by humans.¹⁴⁸ In 2000, the United Nations General Assembly marked 22 May, the day of the adoption of CBD, as the International Day of Biodiversity to highlight the importance of conserving landforms and protecting species.¹⁴⁹ The various conventions and protocols that resulted from CBD pertain to biological diversity and safety, which include benefit sharing with international organizations and biosafety for the public.¹⁵⁰

The *Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity (2000)* established a framework for safe handling, transportation, and the use of living modified organisms which could put humans at risk and have negative effects on biological diversity.¹⁵¹ Later, the *Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2010)* was created as a supplement to provide additional international rules and regulations related to living modified organisms.¹⁵² Further augmenting the CBD, the *Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological*

¹⁴⁰ London School of Economics and Political Science. *What are the extent and causes of biodiversity loss?* 2022.

¹⁴¹ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. *Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. 2019. p. XVI.

¹⁴² Altman. United Nations Foundation. *Biodiversity explained: facts, myths, and the race to protect it*. 2023.

¹⁴³ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Challenges and Opportunities for Indigenous Peoples' Sustainability*. 2021.

¹⁴⁴ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Hindou Ibrahim: Living in Harmony with nature*. 2022.

¹⁴⁵ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *'Let us learn from indigenous peoples', UN chief declares*. 2022.

¹⁴⁶ United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*. 2007.

¹⁴⁷ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *The Convention on Biological Diversity*. 2022.

¹⁴⁸ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Introduction*. 2012.

¹⁴⁹ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Convention on Biological Diversity, key international instrument for sustainable development*. N.d.

¹⁵⁰ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity: text and annexes*. 2000.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety*. 2018.



Diversity (2010) establish mechanisms to ensure the fair and equitable use of genetic resources to ensure a transparent and legal framework for the international community.¹⁵³

The 1973 *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* (CITES) is an international agreement with the goal of ensuring that the trade of organisms does not result in endangerment or extinction.¹⁵⁴ Trade of animals and plants is done both domestically and internationally, and CITES aids in regulating for conservation purposes and in the protection of specimens.¹⁵⁵ The 1983 *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals* (CMS) is a United Nations environmental treaty that aims to protect and conserve the sustainable use of terrestrial, aquatic, and avian animals along with their habitats.¹⁵⁶ CMS established a framework of protection measures and restoration efforts and aids in the work of various non-governmental organizations by helping to ensure successful conservation efforts from Member States.¹⁵⁷ The *International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* (2001) is an international agreement that focuses on establishing a global system that provides those in agricultural fields, such as scientists and farmers, with access to plant genetic resources.¹⁵⁸ This treaty aims to recognize the importance of the agriculture sector and to give support to those in this field but also to ensure that benefits of genetic resources are distributed equally to ensure sustainable agriculture.¹⁵⁹

The *Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat* (1971), also known as the *Ramsar Convention*, is an intergovernmental treaty that centers on the protection of wetlands and natural freshwater sites.¹⁶⁰ It highlighted the importance of wetlands for human and animal survival, as wetlands provide a vital ecosystem service and biodiversity in landforms.¹⁶¹ At the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, commonly known as the Rio+20 conference, the General Assembly adopted *The Future We Want*, which highlighted biodiversity, the importance of sustainable agriculture, and the significance of water and sanitation, each of which are harmed by the realities of climate change and linked to many global challenges.¹⁶² Addressing water resources and biodiversity common at international environmental conferences, including at the 2023 United Nations Water Conference, during which attendees from the secretariat of various conventions, indigenous groups, and other stakeholders discussed biodiversity and its connection to water conservation.¹⁶³

Role of the International System

In February of 2022, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) had its fifth session, in which 14 resolutions were adopted that related to various biodiversity issues, including protection, health, and habitats.¹⁶⁴ UNEA has previously adopted many biodiversity resolutions, including UNEA resolution 5/6 on “Biodiversity and Health,” which included topics relating to sustainable use of biodiverse natural resources

¹⁵³ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization*. 2011.

¹⁵⁴ Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. *What is CITES?* 2023.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals. *Introduction*. 2023.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. *International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*. 2023.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Convention on Wetlands Secretariat. *The importance of wetlands*. 2023.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² United Nations, General Assembly. *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*. 2012.

¹⁶³ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Sustainable Development, Water and Biodiversity: Global to local action in support of Water and the Sustainable Development Goals - SDG Media Zone (UN 2023 Water Conference)*. 2023.

¹⁶⁴ United Nations Environment Programme. *UN Environment Assembly concludes with 14 resolutions to curb pollution, protect and restore nature worldwide*. 2022.



and Member State support in future research between biodiversity and medicine.¹⁶⁵ The upcoming sixth session of UNEA will occur in February 2024 and focus on many topics and includes an emphasis on climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution.¹⁶⁶

UNEP is the leading authority on global environmental stewardship and provides secretariat services for various multilateral environmental agreements, including CBD, while UNEA sets global environmental policies.¹⁶⁷ UNEP supports the GBF by sharing innovative strategies in sustainable agriculture, guidance in ecosystem restoration, and also by reinforcing the importance of biodiversity.¹⁶⁸ The United Nations Development Programme also supports the GBF and has highlighted the importance of achieving the goals of the framework by awarding the Equator Prize to those who demonstrate community efforts in the themes of conserving biodiversity.¹⁶⁹

When the Conference of the Parties to the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) (1992) held its 21st Conference of Parties, it adopted the *Paris Agreement* (2015), which emphasized the importance of biodiversity protection while addressing climate change.¹⁷⁰ The UNFCCC Secretariat has also published numerous and varied case studies on biodiversity, many of which have shown that climate change is causing biodiversity loss and ecosystem depletion.¹⁷¹ The studies also explored how the conservation and rehabilitation of landforms can aid in mitigating the effects of anthropogenic climate change.¹⁷² In June of 2023, during the 58th session of the UNFCCC Secretariat's Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice, known as the Bonn Climate Change Conference, Member States discussed the issues of global cooperation and the importance of making just transitions and making progress on critical issues.¹⁷³

Some regional intergovernmental organizations have also developed biodiversity strategies and actions plans, which can establish more localized strategies and targets.¹⁷⁴ Such strategies can enhance cooperation with the CBD Secretariat and contribute to global efforts to reach biodiversity targets.¹⁷⁵ One of these regional organizations, the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) aims to promote sustainable development in the Amazon basin of South America, including its vast biodiversity.¹⁷⁶ ACTO also launched Wakaya, a name of indigenous origin, a biodiversity program that provides data and technical document sharing for the Amazon Basin Region and also highlights the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples.¹⁷⁷ Another regional organization, the European Union, announced its intent to double its biodiversity financing and increase the funding for biodiversity conservation in the public and private sectors ahead of COP 15.¹⁷⁸

¹⁶⁵ United Nations Environment Programme. *UN Environment Assembly 5 (UNEA 5.2) Resolutions*. 2022.

¹⁶⁶ United Nations Environment Assembly. *Theme*. 2023.

¹⁶⁷ United Nations Environment Programme. *Secretariats and Conventions*. N.d.

¹⁶⁸ United Nations Environment Programme. *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework: How to halt and reverse biodiversity loss*. 2023.

¹⁶⁹ United Nations Development Programme. *To achieve the commitments of the Global Biodiversity Framework, local action must take centre stage*. 2023.

¹⁷⁰ Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. *Paris Agreement*. 2015.

¹⁷¹ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. *Search: Case Studies*. 2023.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ United Nations Environment Programme. *Bonn Climate Change Conference*. 2023.

¹⁷⁴ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Regional Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans*. 2019.

¹⁷⁵ Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. *The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (UNEP/CBD/COP/DEC/X/2)*. 2010.

¹⁷⁶ Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization. *About us*. N.d.

¹⁷⁷ Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization. *ACTO launches Biodiversity Program: Wakaya*. 2023.

¹⁷⁸ European Commission. *COP15: historic global deal for nature and people*. 2022.



The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is an intergovernmental organization that provides governments, the private sector, and civil society with independent assessments of biodiversity.¹⁷⁹ IPBES also published a Global Assessment Report in 2019 that acknowledged the trends in biodiversity and ecosystem management, human well-being, and the effectiveness of global responses.¹⁸⁰ IPBES has also initiated regional assessments to analyze trends and strengthen science in policy-making.¹⁸¹ Another major entity is the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, an international network supporting public, private, and non-governmental organizations, which works as a monitor for biodiversity and aids in policy writing for the conservation and protection of the natural world.¹⁸² Supporting many of these bodies, the Global Biodiversity Information Facility is an international database funded by various Member States to provide free access to all types of biodiversity data.¹⁸³ It has sources that originate from the 18th century, but also DNA barcodes and smartphone photos, and provides a broad range of data sources.¹⁸⁴

Conserving Biodiversity in Human-Modified Landscapes

Most terrestrial environments and ecosystems have been shaped, altered, and transformed by human activities, including agriculture, deforestation, industrial activities, and urbanization.¹⁸⁵ Agriculture and urbanization in particular have been identified as the main drivers of land-use change, which has many negative effects on biodiversity, including air, water, and soil pollution.¹⁸⁶ In targets 10 and 12, the GBF specifically addresses human-modified landscapes, such as urban and densely populated areas and those under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, and forestry, and calls for the sustainable development and management of these landscapes.¹⁸⁷

Urban areas, including towns, cities, and suburbs, are characterized by a high density of human structures, including houses, commercial buildings, and roads.¹⁸⁸ Today, around 4.4 billion people live in urban areas, making up 56% of the world's population, and by 2050, their number is predicted to increase to 6.2 billion people, accounting for over 70% of the world's entire population.¹⁸⁹ This growth of the world's urban populations and areas will be an important driver of changes in land use, causing biodiversity losses through the destruction and fragmentation of habitats, introduction of invasive alien species, and pollution.¹⁹⁰ The management of those developments and their negative impacts will have a significant effect on whether the goals and targets set out by the GBF can be achieved.¹⁹¹

As highlighted by the CBD Secretariat's *Cities and Biodiversity Outlook* and other assessment reports, urbanization can also become a driver for change and transformation through sustainable development

¹⁷⁹ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. *Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. 2019.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. *Regional/subregional assessments on biodiversity and ecosystem services*. 2018.

¹⁸² International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. *Our work*. N.d.

¹⁸³ Global Biodiversity Information Facility. *What is GBIF?* N.d.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss*. N.d.

¹⁸⁶ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. *Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. 2019. p. XXXII.

¹⁸⁷ Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (CBD/COP/DEC/15/4)*. 2022.

¹⁸⁸ National Geographic. *Urban Area*. 2023.

¹⁸⁹ World Bank. *Urban Development*. 2023; United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Cities for a sustainable future*. 2014.

¹⁹⁰ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Global Biodiversity Outlook 5*. 2020. p. 168.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.



and management.¹⁹² Urbanization through nature-based solutions, which are actions that aim to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified landscapes and ecosystems, may provide a sustainable path forward.¹⁹³ Nature-based efforts can simultaneously benefit people and nature by addressing societal challenges such as climate change, food security, human health issues, and biodiversity loss.¹⁹⁴ Some analyses have indicated that they have the potential to significantly contribute to climate change mitigation efforts.¹⁹⁵ In urban settings, nature-based solutions such as biodiversity-friendly water bodies, low-impact transportation systems, green roofs, urban parks, and living shorelines provide benefits for both biodiversity as well as human well-being.¹⁹⁶ For instance, many kinds of green infrastructure, such as green roofs and corridors, have low rates of heat absorption and can thus mitigate heat waves while simultaneously safeguarding biodiversity.¹⁹⁷

The integration of these solutions requires coordination between all levels of government, the creation of investment opportunities, innovative financing approaches on municipal and national levels, and an understanding of the socio-economic potential of nature-based solutions for urban development.¹⁹⁸ In the southern German City of Stuttgart, for instance, new buildings must be equipped with green roofs but they are provided with tax incentives and suitable financial programs.¹⁹⁹ In the Chinese city of Shenzhen, around \$200 million will be invested in the water-sensitive re-designing of large areas of the city.²⁰⁰ In the Global South, where most urban growth is forecasted to take place, policymakers and urban planners face additional challenges, such as limited governance capacity and financing mechanisms.²⁰¹ To overcome these challenges, the local government of the Brazilian city of Salvador has developed a variety of political tools to facilitate the conservation of rainforests in the town at low investment and operational costs.²⁰² They have facilitated the involvement of private companies and local citizens, which have assisted in planting 75,000 trees and creating 39 conservation areas.²⁰³

The growing world population not only poses considerable challenges to biodiversity in urban areas but also to biodiversity in agricultural contexts due to an increased need for food production.²⁰⁴ At the same time, agricultural expansion already significantly contributes to global biodiversity loss by driving 90% of global deforestation and threatening 86% of the species at risk of extinction.²⁰⁵ Mono-culture-based

¹⁹² United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Cities for a sustainable future*. 2014; Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Cities and Biodiversity Outlook*. 2012. p. 20.

¹⁹³ United Nations Environment Programme. *Nature-based Solutions*. N.d.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid; International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. *Nature-based solutions*.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. *Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. 2019. pp. XXII, XLVII; ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability. *Nature-based solutions for sustainable urban development*. 2017.

¹⁹⁷ ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability. *Nature-based solutions for sustainable urban development*. 2017.

¹⁹⁸ United Nations Environment Assembly. *Cities and Regions Summit*. 2022.

¹⁹⁹ ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability. *Nature-based solutions for sustainable urban development*. 2017.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. *Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. 2019. p. XLVII.

²⁰² World Wide Fund for Nature International. *Urban Nature Based Solutions. Cities leading the way*. 2021. pp. 12-13.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. *The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*. 2019. p. 3.

²⁰⁵ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss*. N.d.; United Nations Environment Programme. *Our global food system is the primary driver of biodiversity loss*. 2021.



agriculture is especially unsustainable and negatively impacts biodiversity through loss of habitat and genetic diversity, contamination of soil and water, and the emergence of new pests and diseases.²⁰⁶ Since healthy ecosystems deliver a variety of supporting and regulating services, such as pollination, climate regulation, nutrient cycling, and pest and disease control, their protection and enhanced biodiversity can have a significant impact on the sustainability, resilience, and productivity of agriculture.²⁰⁷ In Ethiopia, for example, surveys have shown that the cultivation of a large number of barley varieties reduced the risk of crop failure, increasing the resilience of the production system.²⁰⁸

To conserve and restore biodiversity in agricultural areas, the GBF calls for “a substantial increase in the application of biodiversity-friendly practices.”²⁰⁹ Making agriculture more sustainable and biodiversity-friendly involves not only rehabilitating degraded habitats, promoting organic agriculture, and encouraging agricultural diversification, but also subsidizing the use of climate-resilient crops and creating incentives for lower fertilizer use.²¹⁰ The strong interrelation of biodiversity and agriculture and the needs of growing populations makes instituting such methods difficult in many Member States, but international organizations have worked to strengthen cooperation among all stakeholders at all levels and promote the establishment of appropriate policy frameworks.²¹¹

Ensuring the Full and Effective Participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

Currently, about one quarter of the world’s land is owned, managed, or occupied by its 476 million indigenous people.²¹² About 80% of the world’s remaining biodiversity is hosted in these areas and faces a less severe decline compared to the diversity of species in non-indigenous territories, partly due to the traditional knowledge systems that indigenous peoples and local communities have acquired over time.²¹³ Such knowledge can not only contribute to the conservation of nature and biodiversity but also to national and international biodiversity strategies.²¹⁴ Where these strategies are ineffective, indigenous peoples and local communities are also disproportionately affected by declines in biodiversity due to their well-being and livelihoods often being directly connected to natural resources.²¹⁵

Considering not only their traditional knowledge but also their vulnerable position, protecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities is one of the main goals of the GBF and the entire United Nations system.²¹⁶ The framework recognizes the role indigenous people and local communities can play in the conservation of biodiversity and calls for their full and effective participation in decision-making.²¹⁷ To facilitate those contributions, indigenous peoples and local communities were invited to actively engage in the process of creating the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, which later became the

²⁰⁶ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Global Biodiversity Outlook 5*. 2020. p. 65.

²⁰⁷ Ibid. p. 160; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. *The State of the World’s Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*. 2019. p. 18.

²⁰⁸ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. *The State of the World’s Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*. 2019. p. 25.

²⁰⁹ Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (CBD/COP/DEC/15/4)*. 2022.

²¹⁰ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Global Biodiversity Outlook 5*. 2020. p. 64.

²¹¹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. *The State of the World’s Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*. 2019. pp. 450-451.

²¹² United Nations Environment Programme. *Unsung heroes of conservation: Indigenous people fight for forests*. 2023.

²¹³ Ibid; United Nations Environment Programme. *How indigenous knowledge can help prevent environmental crises*. 2021.

²¹⁴ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Global Biodiversity Outlook 5*. 2020. p. 115.

²¹⁵ Ibid. p. 18.

²¹⁶ United Nations Environment Programme. *Unsung heroes of conservation: Indigenous people fight for forests*. 2023.

²¹⁷ Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (CBD/COP/DEC/15/4)*. 2022.



GBF.²¹⁸ The framework is an example of how collaborations of all stakeholders, including indigenous and local communities, the scientific community, and policymakers, can lead to more effective and holistic problem-solving and decision-making.²¹⁹ Additionally, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* requires that, in matters fundamental to their rights, survival, dignity, and well-being, indigenous peoples must be consulted and give their free, prior, and informed consent.²²⁰ To ensure fair and equal participation, the declaration calls for these consultations to follow the local processes and structures of indigenous communities, be held in their languages, and be entirely free of coercion or threat.²²¹

As custodians of local biodiversity, indigenous peoples and local communities can make significant contributions to its conservation and restoration, including the monitoring and management of wild species, the restoration of degraded habitats, and the cultivation of local crop varieties and animal breeds.²²² In Guatemala, for instance, indigenous communities contribute their traditional and local knowledge and practices through community-based monitoring of local forests and endangered species.²²³ In the Pacific Region, several countries collaborated with regional organizations, indigenous peoples, and local communities to develop a comprehensive strategy to combat invasive alien species through reporting and education.²²⁴

Although such projects have already improved indigenous participation in biodiversity conservation, equitable benefit-sharing, improved collaboration, and the establishment of co-management arrangements often remain limited, a reality that has been highlighted as limiting the positive contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities.²²⁵ Some analyses have highlighted that effective collaboration and participation is especially limited due to a lack of national legal recognition of indigenous land tenure, which refers to the ability of indigenous communities to own and manage their lands.²²⁶ So far, only a few states recognize the land rights of indigenous peoples, and even in cases where they possess the legal rights to their lands, governments often lease out certain territories for mining or logging.²²⁷ To support the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities, the World Bank has indicated that actions need to be taken by international organizations, funders, and national governments, including creating indigenous-led conservation areas, advancing income-generating activities, and providing funding in reasonable timeframes.²²⁸ Furthermore, many actors are calling for more funding, as currently less than half of requested biodiversity financing is secured.²²⁹ Specifically, the Conference of Parties to the GBF has called for at least \$200 billion of additional funding to implement biodiversity strategies annually to meet the targets set out by the framework.²³⁰

²¹⁸ Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (CBD/COP/DEC/14/34)*. 2018.

²¹⁹ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Global Biodiversity Outlook 5*. 2020. p. 115.

²²⁰ United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*. 2007.

²²¹ United Nations Environment Programme. *Indigenous peoples and the nature they protect*. 2020.

²²² Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. *Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. 2019. pp. XXXV-XXXVI.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Global Biodiversity Outlook 5*. 2020. p. 119.

²²⁵ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. *Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. 2019. p. XXII.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Environment*. N.d.

²²⁸ World Bank. *The Role of Indigenous Peoples in Biodiversity Conservation*. 2008. pp. xiv-xvi.

²²⁹ United Nations Environment Programme. *Unsung heroes of conservation: Indigenous people fight for forests*. 2023.

²³⁰ Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (CBD/COP/DEC/15/4)*. 2022.



Conclusion

The loss in biodiversity is currently putting an estimated one million species at risk of extinction.²³¹ In the face of this reality, the GBF has provided a comprehensive framework aimed at halting and reversing biodiversity loss.²³² The full implementation of the framework, including its mission, vision, goals, and targets, depends not only on the provision of adequate financing and action at all levels but also on effective cooperation to build capacity and share technology.²³³ Its successful implementation will further rely on the participation and contributions of women, youth, indigenous peoples and local communities, civil society organizations, and other relevant stakeholders.²³⁴ The GBF highlights the significance of international action in its implementation and that biodiversity and a healthy planet are essential for all people.²³⁵

Further Research

As delegates conduct further research and consider how to address this topic, they should consider the following: How can UNEA foster international cooperation toward implementing the GBF? How can other bodies of the United Nations assist in implementing the framework? How can UNEA ensure that all stakeholders are equitably involved in the process? How can policymakers ensure the simultaneous protection of indigenous peoples and local communities and their rights while also leveraging their local and traditional knowledge to conserve and restore biodiversity?

²³¹ United Nations Environment Programme. *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*. 2022.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (CBD/COP/DEC/15/4)*. 2022.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ Ibid.



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