# NMUN•DC

# UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY
## BACKGROUND GUIDE 2017

Written by: Estefani Morales, Director; Lindsey Velde, Assistant Director;
Frank Cassata, Substantive Assistant

# NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

# NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

THE WORLD'S LARGEST UNIVERSITY-LEVEL SIMULATION • SINCE 1927
2945 44th Avenue South • Minneapolis, MN 55406
www.nmun.org • info@nmun.org • 612.353.5649

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2017 National Model United Nations Conference in Washington, DC (NMUN•DC)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA). This year's staff is: Director Estefani Morales and Assistant Director Lindsey Velde. Estefani completed her B.A. in International Relations in 2011 and her M.Sc. in Environment, Politics, and Globalization in 2016. She currently works as a Caseworker/Congressional Aide for the U.S. House of Representatives in the San Francisco Bay Area. This will be her second year on DC staff, and she is excited to return to NMUN•DC. Lindsey will be graduating with a B.S. in Marketing with minor in Information Systems Management from The University of South Florida in 2018. Following her graduation she will be enrolling into a graduate program in Statistics. This will be her first year on DC staff, and she is looking forward to experiencing NMUN•DC.

The topics under discussion for UNEA are:

1. Protection of the Environment in Areas Affected by Armed Conflict
2. Safeguarding our Oceans

UNEA is the highest-level decision making body of the United Nations on issues concerning the environment. It is the governing body of the United Nations Environment Program and has a universal membership of 193 Member States. The Assembly meets biannually in order to decide on priorities for the following years, and to enact policies and international law to tackle the challenges facing the environment. In essence, it sets the international agenda for UN agencies and multilateral organizations to cooperate together in order to protect and improve the environment. The Assembly provides leadership and through its resolutions and calls for action, inspires intergovernmental work and collaboration.

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 Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the Conference, each delegation will submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) on 13 October 2017 in accordance with the guidelines in the *NMUN Position Paper Guide*.

Two resources, to download from the NMUN website, that serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions are the:
1. *NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide* - 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. Delegates should not start discussion on the topics with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2. *NMUN Rules of Procedure* - include 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 the committee or the Conference itself, please contact the Deputy Secretary-General, Jess Mace, at dsg.dc@nmun.org.

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

Estefani Morales, *Director*
Lindsey Velde, *Assistant Director*

# Committee Overview

*"At the current rate, we will soon need two planet earths. But we have only one planet. There can be no Plan B because there is no planet B. Both science and economics tell us that we need to change course, and soon."*[1]

## *Introduction*

The United Nations (UN) Environment Programme (UNEP) is the "advocate, educator, catalyst, and facilitator" in promoting environmentally friendly practices and policies in the UN system.[2] It is a program and fund of the UN that ensures international, regional, and local coordination for environmental issues, and it also ensures that various other UN entities take environmental impacts into account when executing their missions.[3] UNEP reports to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).[4]

> The **United Nations Environment Assembly** (UNEA) is the governing body of the **United Nations Environment Programme** (UNEP), which is a programme and fund of the United Nations that reports to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

UNEP was created at the recommendation of the 1972 UN Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden.[5] Six months later, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 1972 on "institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental cooperation," which established UNEP as the official body concerned with environmental issues within the UN.[6] Since that time, UNEP has played a significant role in coordinating environmental policy across various UN agencies.[7] UNEP helped in the planning and execution of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992.[8] UNCED led to the adoption of *Agenda 21* (1992) and the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* (1992).[9] Chapter 38 of *Agenda 21* led to the creation of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD), of which UNEP is the task manager concerned with the areas of the atmosphere, toxic chemicals, hazardous waste, desertification and drought, and biodiversity.[10]

To better promote friendly practices and the coordination of environmental issues, the General Assembly adopted resolution 67/251 of 2013 on "Change of the Designation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme," which formally established UNEA.[11] Through its universal membership, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) aims to strengthen the role of UNEP in international affairs and increase the responsiveness and accountability of Member States in developing environmental policy.[12] UNEA has held two universal sessions since its creation.[13] The first session of UNEA was held in June 2014 and a total of 17 resolutions and two decisions were adopted.[14] The resolutions covered a wide range of topics, from marine plastic debris to environmental sustainability in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.[15]

---

[1] UN Radio, *No "Plan B" for climate action as no "Planet B"*, 2014.
[2] UNEP, *What UNEP Does*, 2017.
[3] Ibid.
[4] UN DPI, *The United Nations System*, 2015.
[5] UNEP, *Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment*, 1972.
[6] UN General Assembly, *Institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental co-operation (A/RES/2997(XXVII))*, 1972.
[7] UNEP, *What UNEP Does*, 2017.
[8] UN System Chief Executive Board of Coordination, *United Nations Environment Programme*, 2017.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] UN General Assembly, *Change of the designation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (A/RES/67/251)*, 2013.
[12] UNEP, *About UNEA*, 2017; UN General Assembly, *Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twelfth special session and the implementation of section IV.C, entitled "Environmental pillar in the context of sustainable development", of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (A/RES/67/213)*, 2012, p. 3.
[13] UNEP, *About UNEA*, 2017.
[14] UNEP, *Resolutions and decisions adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme at its first session on 27 June 2014*, 2014, p. 1.
[15] Ibid.

*Governance, Structure, and Membership*

UNEP's structure includes the UNEA, Secretariat, Environment Fund, and Committee of Permanent Representatives.[16] At its inception, a Governing Council of 58 members oversaw UNEP until UNEA took its place in 2013.[17] UNEA, comprised of all Member States, meets biennially to set the global environmental agenda and to discuss emerging challenges.[18] The UNEP Secretariat is also responsible for supporting UNEA and consists of a rotating President, three Vice-Presidents, and a Rapporteur.[19] The Environment Fund is UNEP's main source of funding.[20] Member States' financial contributions to the fund are based upon the Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contributions, which means Member States are not required to provide funding to UNEP, though they are highly encouraged to donate.[21] UNEP's Committee of Permanent Representatives consists of all Permanent Missions to the UN, and their purpose is to give advice to UNEA and create subsidiary organs that may be necessary to complete UNEP's functions.[22]

UNEP has six regional offices throughout the world that undertake UNEP's projects on regional, sub-regional, and local levels.[23] Each office holds yearly Regional Consultation Meetings, where representatives from various civil society organizations (CSOs) are invited to engage in an environmental policy dialogue.[24] With the UNEA being the governing and legislative body of UNEP, the internal structure is different than that of UNEP.[25] Similar to the structure of the General Assembly, each UNEA session begins with the election of a President and Vice-Presidents who will oversee and manage the work of the body.[26] As the legislative governing body of UNEP, the work of UNEA deals largely with setting the global environmental agenda for UNEP, with the reports of the biennial UNEA meeting being reported to the General Assembly and ECOSOC.[27]

*Mandate, Functions, and Powers*

Upon the adoption of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 1972 on "institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental cooperation," UNEP was mandated to promote international and regional environmental cooperation; help in establishing environmental policy; highlight global and regional problems; facilitate the transfer of scientific knowledge; assist developing Member States in environmental matters; review reports of the Executive Director; and approve the annual program on the allocation of UNEP's main source of funding, the Environment Fund.[28] With the creation of UNEA and its universal membership, the mandate of UNEP has become more centered on the creation and promotion of environmental policy worldwide.[29]

The first expansion of UNEP's mandate came in 1992 via *Agenda 21*, which led to UNEP's involvement with IACSD.[30] In 1995, the General Assembly held a special session to review the implementation of *Agenda 21* and amended UNEP's mandate to be the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda."[31] In 1997, the Executive Director of UNEP was placed in charge of a new committee called the

---

[16] UNEP, *UNEP Governance Structure*, 2017.
[17] UN General Assembly, *Institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental co-operation (A/RES/2997(XXVII))*, 1972.
[18] UNEP, *UNEP Governance Structure*, 2017.
[19] UN General Assembly, *Change of the designation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (A/67/784)*, 2013.
[20] UNEP, *UNEP Funding*, 2017.
[21] Ibid.
[22] UNEP, *Committee of Permanent Representatives*, 2017.
[23] UNEP, *Regional Presence Office*, 2017.
[24] Ibid.
[25] UNEP, *United Nations Environment Programme Upgraded to Universal Membership Following Rio+20 Summit*, 2017.
[26] UNEP, *Major Groups and Stakeholders: UNEA 2*, 2017.
[27] UNEP, *About UNEA*, 2017.
[28] UN General Assembly, *Institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental co-operation (A/RES/2997(XXVII))*, 1972.
[29] UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012, p. 18.
[30] UN System Chief Executive Board of Coordination, *United Nations Environment Programme*, 2017.
[31] UN General Assembly, *Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (A/RES/S-19/2)*, 1997, par. 123.

Environmental Management Group (EMG).[32] The key purpose of EMG is to coordinate and facilitate access to relevant information and findings concerning the environment and human settlements, in order to ensure the most efficient and cost-effective allocation of resources and information.[33]

Upon the adoption of the *Nairobi Declaration* at the 19th session of the UNEP Governing Council in 1997, UNEP realigned its core mandate to ensure a more modern and technological approach to environmental issues.[34] The new core mandate made UNEP responsible for using the best available scientific methods and evidence to analyze global environmental trends; utilizing early warning systems; furthering the development of international environmental law and policy; monitoring and fostering Member State compliance with existing international environmental norms; strengthening its role in coordinating UN environmental activities; serving as a link between the scientific community and the UN; and providing key policy advice for UN bodies, governments, and other institutions.[35] In 2002, the *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development* called upon UNEP and its partners to cooperate more closely across sustainable development initiatives for the implementation of *Agenda 21*.[36]

Operating within the broad substantive priorities of UNEP, UNEA has a mandate to make major strategic decisions for UNEP, provide political guidance for state and regional programs, and promote scientifically-based environmental policies.[37] UNEA has set a robust agenda for UNEP to address 12 specific thematic areas: coordinating the environmental dimension of the SDGs, implementing the *Paris Agreement* (2016), promoting sustainable consumption and production, addressing food waste, safeguarding ecosystems, combating illegal trade in wildlife, advancing natural capital management, promoting biodiversity, monitoring and preserving air quality, protecting the environment in areas of conflict, preventing marine litter, and promoting waste management.[38] The new mandate of UNEA allows for better monitoring and fostering of Member State compliance within these 12 thematic areas while creating an atmosphere for collaboration between Member States, UN entities, and CSOs.[39]

UNEP ensures the implementation of UNEA's agenda by promoting international cooperation on existing environmental policies, guides the creation of new environmental policies, and uses environmental awareness to help Member States and CSOs respond to environmental threats.[40] UNEP also monitors the state of the global environment on both an international and regional scale and shares that information with interested parties.[41] Under the direction of UNEA, UNEP works to develop international environmental law and ensure the proper use of environmental information and instruments.[42] To help achieve its mandate, UNEP has the ability to create task forces and subsidiaries to implement environmental policies.[43] However, the General Assembly or ECOSOC must approve any resolutions adopted by UNEP on environmental policy or creating new bodies.[44]

### Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

UNEP currently operates under seven thematic priorities: climate change; resilience to disasters and conflicts; healthy and productive ecosystems; environmental governance; chemicals, waste, and air quality; resource efficiency; and environment under review.[45] A focus of these priorities is to decrease carbon emissions globally and promote the use of sustainable technologies in order to improve and maintain the state of the world's environment.[46]

---

[32] UN General Assembly, *Environment and human settlements: Report of the Secretary-General (A/53/463)*, 1998.
[33] Ibid.
[34] UNEP, *1997 - Nairobi Declaration redefines and strengthens UNEP's role and mandate*; UNEP, *UNEP's Coordination Mandate*, 2017.
[35] New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2016-17*, 2016.
[36] UN System Chief Executive Board of Coordination, *United Nations Environment Programme*, 2017.
[37] UNEP, *About UNEA*, 2017.
[38] Ibid.
[39] UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012, pp. 17-18.
[40] UNEP, *What UNEP Does*, 2017.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.
[43] UN System Chief Executive Board of Coordination, *United Nations Environment Programme*, 2017.
[44] Ibid.
[45] UNEP, *Medium Term Strategy 2014-2017*, 2015, p. 18.
[46] Ibid, p. 1.

These seven areas were chosen because they represent the most pressing and emerging issues, allowing UNEP to operate flexibly at international, regional, and state levels.[47]

The adoption of the SDGs has altered how the international community will develop sustainable development policy; the Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021 is a primary example of this.[48] Rather than focus on decreasing global carbon emissions as a component of climate change response, UNEA has directed UNEP to focus on climate change in relation to all three pillars of sustainable development.[49] The three pillars of sustainable development as discussed by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) are: economic, social, and environmental.[50] By 2050, global demands for food are expected to increase by over 60% and global demands for water are expected to increase by over 55%.[51] In response to increasing resource demands and changing demographics, the Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021 focuses on improving utilization of natural resources that influence the social and economic dimensions of sustainable development.[52] UNEP also recognizes the crucial importance of implementing the *Paris Agreement* to address climate change.[53] As the Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021 has not yet come into action, performance measurements and indicators for how UNEA will hold Member States accountable under the *Paris Agreement* have not been fully developed.[54] However, during UNEA-2, the Assembly discussed various administrative and substantive issues that encompass the goal of the Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021 and how various targets will be measured.[55] As preparations are made to implement the policies desired in the Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021, UNEP has begun laying out fundamental frameworks with other UN institutions such as UN Habitat to ensure achievement in building and promoting sustainable cities.[56] Lastly, to best advance the policies prescribed in the Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021, UNEP is dedicated to assessing the thematic areas of the Medium Term Strategy 2014-2017 to note best practices and continued themes of importance in this next cycle of policy reform.[57] Working towards meeting SDGs 13 and 14, UN Environment has dedicated efforts to the 2017 Ocean Conference in New York City from 5-9 June 2017.[58] Emerging from the 2017 Ocean Conference, all 193 Member States unanimously agreed to a set of policies that would begin a reversal to the deteriorating health of Earth's oceans.[59] The open dialogues presented at the Ocean Conference had produced a Call to Action demanding developments be made at both a domestic and international level to protect Earth's oceans and reverse the damage done by pollution contributing to climate change.[60]

UNEA-2 was held 23-27 May 2016 in Nairobi, Kenya, with the theme "Delivering on the Environmental Dimension of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*."[61] A total of 25 resolutions were adopted by the Assembly, ranging in coverage from administrative amendments and rules of procedure to substantive decisions on biodiversity and engaging with the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.[62] In order to increase the participation of private sector and civil society stakeholders in UNEA-2, an online policy forum was used for disseminating information and holding discussions on various topics of interest.[63] All adopted resolutions relate to one or more of the seven

[47] UNEP, *Policy Statement by Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary-General and UNEP Executive Director*, 2014.
[48] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[49] UNEP, *Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021*, 2016, pp. 3-4.
[50] ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*, 2017.
[51] UNEP, *Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021*, 2016, p. 3.
[52] Ibid, pp. 2-4.
[53] Ibid, p. 4.
[54] Ibid, p. 54.
[55] UNEP, *Report of the Second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme*, 2017.
[56] UNEP, *Medium Term Strategy 2014-2017*, 2015, p. 12.
[57] Ibid, p. 18.
[58] The Ocean Conference, *Countries Agree on Decisive and Urgent Actions to Restore Marine World to Health as Ocean Conference Concludes*, 2017.
[59] Ibid.
[60] UN General Assembly, *Draft Call for Action (A/CONF.230/11)*, 2017.
[61] UNEP, *The path towards UNEA 2*, 2017.
[62] UNEP, *Report of the Second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme*, 2017.
[63] UNEP, *The path towards UNEA 2*, 2017.

thematic priorities of UNEP and prepare for the implementation of the Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021.[64] UNEA-3 is scheduled to take place in Nairobi Kenya from 4-6 December 2017.[65] At UNEA-3 the thematic discussions will focus on the theme of "Towards a Pollution Free Planet" in relation to SDGs: 3; Good Health & Wellbeing, 6; Clean Water & Sanitation, 9; Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure, 11; Sustainable Cities & Communities, and 12; Responsible Consumption and Production.[66] In response to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 by the General Assembly, UNEA has placed an increased focus on legislation regarding the implementation of the goals.[67] Through the adoption of resolution 2/5 on "Delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" of 3 August 2016, the UNEA has committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through setting the global environmental agenda and fostering positive relations for achievement of goals.[68]

UNEP advanced their work towards climate change protection in October 2016 with the adoption of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the Ozone Layer.[69] UNEP further called for the nearly 200 Member States who agreed to the amendment to decrease their greenhouse gas emissions and hydrofluorocarbon emission; leading to the potential prevention of a 0.5 Celsius increase of Earth's temperature.[70] Additionally, the adoption of the *Paris Agreement* initiated continued work by UN Environment to collaborate with Member States regarding benchmarks and steps towards meeting the goal of a sub-2 degree Celsius change in Earth's temperature.[71] Furthermore, the *Paris Agreement* calls in Article 7 for increased capacity to strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change.[72] Under the *Paris Agreement*, developed states play a large role in the financial leg by providing financial resources to assist developing states in the implementation of the Agreement on the domestic level in their respective state.[73] In 2016, UN Environment had exceeded its annual target for response to disaster and conflict with a 100% response rate to requests for emergency assistance having been met.[74] Most recently in February 2017, UN Environment organized a roundtable on "Healthy Wetlands, Resilient Communities," where over 40 representatives of Permanent Missions attended and discussed the importance and practical usage of wetlands as a tool for disaster risk reduction.[75] From this roundtable, the outcomes will be advanced to the 2017 Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction in Cancun, Mexico for discussion.[76]

### *Conclusion*

UNEP is the UN's official program concerned with the environment.[77] Its expertise and knowledge is crucial for the implementation of a variety of established programs within the UN and Member States' governments. The creation of UNEA further accelerates UNEP's mission to ensure that the work of all UN entities, Member States, and CSOs are environmentally sustainable and in line with international laws and norms concerning the environment.[78] The creation of an environmental entity with universal membership that oversees the world's environmental policy agenda reflects the growing importance of environmental issues and allows for a broader environmental agenda to be discussed and implemented to combat climate change as a whole.[79]

---

[64] UNEP, *Report of the Second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme*, 2017.

[65] UNEP, *3rd Meeting of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-3)*, 2017.

[66] IISD, *UNEA-3 Preparations Progress on "Pollution-Free Planet"*, 2017.

[67] UNEA, *Delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UNEP/EA.2/Res.5)*, 2016.

[68] Ibid.

[69] UNEP, *Annual Report 2016*, 2017.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

[72] UNFCC, *Paris Agreement*, 2015, p. 13.

[73] Ibid.

[74] UNEP, *Annual Report 2016*, 2017.

[75] UNEP, *Healthy Wetlands, Resilient Communities: World Wetlands Day 2017 in Geneva*, 2017.

[76] Ibid.

[77] UNEP, *What UNEP Does*, 2017.

[78] Ibid.

[79] UN General Assembly, *Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twelfth special session and the implementation of section IV.C, entitled "Environmental pillar in the context of sustainable development", of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (A/RES/67/213)*, 2012, p. 3.

# Annotated Bibliography

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *About the United Nations Environment Assembly* [Website]. Retrieved 29 June 2017 from: http://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/about-un-environment-assembly

> *This website provides a basic understanding of UNEA and its role within UNEP, including its structure, mandate, and why it is important to the UN system. It is a critical location for delegates to begin their research as it provides brief summaries on the functions, recent and past sessions, and thematic issues of UNEA, while also providing links to detailed resolutions and reports on various topics. This website should help delegates to easily distinguish between UNEP and UNEA and understand how they are connected to each other.*

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *About UN Environment* [Website]. Retrieved 29 June 2017 from: http://www.unep.org/about/who-we-are/overview

> *This webpage gives the basic information concerning what UNEP does and how their responsibilities are executed. It gives a basic overview of what UNEP's work under three principles of: assess, develop, and strengthen in addition to their mission statement of purpose. Delegates should read over this page and follow the links to more detailed information in order to fully understand UNEP's powers and functions as a committee including the Annual Report and Performance Reports.*

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021*. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: https://wedocs.unep.org/rest/bitstreams/11369/retrieve

> *This is the next medium term strategy for UNEP, which will take effect in 2018 when the current medium term strategy expires. This document is of particular importance for the delegates as it takes into consideration the* 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *while continuing to emphasize the seven priority areas. The document briefly outlines what has been achieved in the current medium strategy (more information is provided in the 2014-2015 Programme Performance Report) and uses a variety of statistics to illustrate the work and priorities of UNEP for the next five years.*

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Report of the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme*. Retrieved 29 June 2017 from: http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17512/K1608503.pdf?sequence=6&isAllowed=y

> *This report as the official outcome document of the 2016 UNEA-2 provides a large deal of information on the work of the UNEA, including membership and attendance, agenda prioritization, biennium budget, and thematic discussions which had taken place during the session. Additionally, the language of resolutions discussed and approved by the body is included in full text format. Delegates should make reference to this document in order to understand the most recent thematic priorities discussed by the UNEA as well as gain a basis of what matters remain high priority for UNEA-3.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-sixth session. (2012). *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)* [Outcome Document]. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/66/288

> *As the official outcome document of the Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), this document provides delegates with an updated set of information regarding the meetings which took place in Rio de Janeiro on sustainable development 20 years following the adoption of Agenda 21. The document further addresses the continual problems that are present such as prolonged poverty and hunger decades after the Rio Conference had worked to protect against the problems. Delegates seeking a longitudinal approach to the practices set forth and their effective implementation should consult this document to understand the progress made and ongoing challenges facing environmental security.*

# Bibliography

International Institute for Sustainable Development. (2017, May 16). *UNEA-3 Preparations Progress on "Pollution-Free Planet"* [News Article]. Retrieved 20 May 2017 from: http://sdg.iisd.org/news/unea-3-preparations-progress-on-pollution-free-planet/

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2016). *United Nations Handbook 2016-17.* Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: https://mfat.govt.nz/assets/_securedfiles/Handbooks/United_Nations_Handbook-2016-2017.pdf

The Ocean Conference. (2017, June 9). *Countries Agree on Decisive and Urgent Actions to Restore Marine World to Health as Ocean Conference Concludes* [Press Release]. Retrieved 29 June 2017 from: https://oceanconference.un.org/prjune9

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. (1992). *Agenda 21* [Outcome Document]. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/Agenda21.pdf

United Nations, Department of Public Information. (2015). *The United Nations System* [Report]. 21 May 2017 from: http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/structure/pdfs/UN_System_Chart_30June2015.pdf

United Nations Environment Assembly, Second Session. (2016). *Delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UNEP/EA.2/Res.5)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 19 May 2017 from: http://undocs.org/UNEP/EA.2/Res.5

United Nations Environment Programme. (1972). *Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment*. Retrieved 29 June 2017 from: http://www.un-documents.net/unchedec.htm

United Nations Environment Programme. (2003). *Proceedings of the Governing Council/Global Environment Forum at its Twenty-Second Session*. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/10645/K0360655-E-GC22_Proceeding.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

United Nations Environment Programme. (2014). *Resolutions and decisions adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme at its first session on 27 June 2014* [Outcome Document]. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/pages/files/k1402364.pdf

United Nations Environment Programme. (2014, June 27). *Policy Statement by Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary-General and UNEP Executive Director* [News Article]. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://www.unep.org/newscentre/policy-statement-achim-steiner-un-under-secretary-general-and-unep-executive-director

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *1997 - Nairobi Declaration redefines and strengthens UNEP's role and mandate* [Website]. Retrieved 11 July 2016 from: http://staging.unep.org/Documents.multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=287&ArticleID=1728&l=en

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *About the United Nations Environment Assembly* [Website]. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/about-un-environment-assembly

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Annual Report 2016*. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://www.unep.org/annualreport/2016/index.php?page=0&lang=en

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Committee of Permanent Representatives* [Website]. Retrieved 21 May 2017from: http://www.unep.org/about/cpr/

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Funding for UN Environment* [Website]. Retrieved 29 June 2017 from: http://www.unep.org/about/funding/our-funding/overview-funding

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Governance Structure* [Infogram]. Retrieved 29 June 2017 from: http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/14064/UNEnvironment%20organigramme_January%202017.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Healthy Wetlands, Resilient Communities: World Wetlands Day 2017 in Geneva* [News Release]. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://www.unep.org/disastersandconflicts/news/healthy-wetlands-resilient-communities-world-wetlands-day-2017-geneva

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *List of Resolutions adopted at UNEA-2* [Website]. Retrieved 19 May 2017 from: http://www.unep.org/unea/list-resolutions-adopted-unea-2

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Major Groups and Stakeholders: UNEA-2* [Website]. Retrieved 20 May 2017 from: http://www.unep.org/about/majorgroups/events/un-environment-assembly-unea/unea-2

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Medium Term Strategy for 2014-2017* [Report]. Retrieved 9 July 2016 from: https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7670/-UNEP_Medium_Term_Strategy_2014-2017-2015MTS_2014-2017.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021* [Report]. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: https://wedocs.unep.org/rest/bitstreams/11369/retrieve

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *The path towards UNEA 2* [Website]. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://www.unep.org/about/majorgroups/path-towards-unea-2

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Regional Presence Office* [Website]. Retrieved 29 June 2017 from: http://www.unep.org/about/how-we-operate/regional-presence-office

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Report of the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme* [Website]. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17512/K1608503.pdf?sequence=6&isAllowed=y

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Toward a Pollution-Free Planet: UN Environment Assembly* [Website]. Retrieved 19 May 2017 from: http://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2015). *Paris Agreement*. Retrieved 16 June 2017 from: https://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_paris_agreement.pdf

United Nations, General Assembly, Twenty-seventh session. (1972). *Institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental cooperation (A/RES/2997(XXVII))* [Resolution]. Adopted on the report of the Second Committee. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/2997(XXVII)

United Nations, General Assembly. (2017). *Draft Call for Action (A/CONF.230/11)* [Outcome Document]. Retrieved 17 June 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/CONF.230/11

United Nations, General Assembly, Nineteenth special session. (1997). *Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (A/RES/S-19/2)* [Resolution]. Adopted without reference to a Main Committee (A/S-19/29). Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/S-19/2

United Nations, General Assembly, Fifty-third session. (1998). *Environment and human settlements. Report of the Secretary-General (A/53/463)*. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/53/463

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-sixth session. (2012). *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)* [Report]. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/66/288

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-seventh session. (2012). *Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twelfth special session and the implementation of section IV.C, entitled "Environmental pillar in the context of sustainable development", of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (A/RES/67/213)* [Resolution]. Adopted on the report of the Second

Committee (A/67/437/Add.7). Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/67/213

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1) [Resolution]*. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-seventh session. (2013). *Change of the designation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (A/RES/67/251)* [Resolution]. Adopted without reference to a Main Committee (A/67/784). Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/67/251
United Nations Radio. (2014, September 21). *No "Plan B" for climate action as no "Planet B"* [News Article]. Retrieved 29 June 2017 from: http://www.unmultimedia.org/radio/english/2014/09/no-plan-b-for-climate-action-as-no-planet-b/#.WVUadtOGOb8

United Nations System Chief Executive Board of Coordination. (2016). *United Nations Environment Programme* [Website]. Retrieved 21 May 2017 from: http://www.unsceb.org/content/unep

# I. Protection of the Environment in Areas Affected by Armed Conflict

*"The environment is a vital tool for building sustainable peace and respect for human rights. The need to protect it in the context of armed conflict is more urgent today than ever before."*[80]

## Introduction

Since the inception of war, the environment has suffered as a silent victim of the effects of conflict.[81] The invention of the atom bomb and nuclear weaponry brought on fears of nuclear fallout, a devastating after affect that can last generations.[82] The Vietnam War brought about deep concerns regarding the use of chemical weapons on a large scale, including Agent Orange, which was a mixture of chemical defoliants meant to eliminate forest coverage in Vietnam and parts of Cambodia.[83] The United States led "Operation Ranch Hand" sprayed over 19 million gallons of herbicides over the forests and vegetation of 4.5 million acres of land in Vietnam, devastating plants, animals, and humans alike.[84] In the Iraq-Kuwait war in the 1990's, over 600 wells were lit on fire and some burned for over eight months, creating extreme and lasting damages to the local environment.[85]

The environment is not only damaged through the actions of humans during conflict. Exploitation of resources, including the extraction of timber, diamonds, oil, land, and water has been found to be a main casualty of 40% of internal conflicts, and, the desire to continue to do so can often be the reason that conflicts restart once peace agreements have been reached.[86] The international community has turned to the creation of multiple legal frameworks to protect the environment during conflict and has created partnerships to enact policies to preserve the environment during and after conflicts.[87] The United Nations (UN) Environment Assembly (UNEA), plays an important role in addressing environmental preservation during armed conflicts and continues to significantly contribute to the achievement of peace and security, as outlined with the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015).[88]

## International and Regional Framework

The international community has recognized the importance of environmental protections through a series of treaties and conventions. Article 55 of the 1907 *Hague Convention IV* details that, during times of conflict, foreign forces have custody over, and also obligations to, protect their occupying territories, such as buildings, estates, and forests.[89] Furthermore, Article 35 and Article 55 of the *Additional Protocol I* to the 1949 *Geneva Convention* explicitly call for the prohibition of weapons of severe and wide spread environmental damages in times of conflict.[90] One of the first prominent conventions created by the UN system that focuses on protecting the environment was the *Stockholm Declaration* on 16 June 1972, which established the world's shared responsibilities in protecting the earth's resources.[91] As a result, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), a critical organization within the UN system addressing environmental issues on a global scale, was created.[92] A decade later, the *Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer* (1987) was adopted, which was pivotal in calling Member States to action to specifically address the damage to the ozone layer.[93] The Protocol outlined severely harmful chemicals and established a fund for less developed Member States to eliminate their use as

---

[80] UNEP, *Top UN Official: Environmental Protection in War More Urgent Than Ever*, 2016.
[81] UNEP, *Working to Protect the Environment in Armed Conflict*, 2016.
[82] The Guardian, *Climate Threat from Nuclear Bombs*, 2006.
[83] History, *Agent Orange*, 2016.
[84] UNEP, *Working to Protect the Environment in Armed Conflict*, 2016.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Europa.eu, *Environment is the "silent casualty" of armed conflict*.
[87] Ibid.
[88] UN-DESA, *United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP*, 2017; INTERPOL and UNEP, *Environment, Peace, and Security: A Convergence of Threats*, 2016.
[89] ICRC, *Annex to the Convention: Regulations Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land*.
[90] UN General Assembly, *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II)*, 1977.
[91] UN General Assembly, *Stockholm Declaration*, 1971.
[92] Ibid.
[93] UNEP, *The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer*, 2017.

suggested by the Protocol.[94] Furthermore, the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) (1992), adopted during the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, acknowledges Member States' right to development, while noting that Member States must be cautious regarding unnecessary pollution being released into the atmosphere and the harm it may cause to neighboring states.[95] A specific tool which developed from these principals is the International Committee of the Red Cross' "Guidelines for Military Manuals and Instructions on the Protection of the Environment in Times of Armed Conflict."[96] UNEA points to this manual as a guideline for Member States to use in military training concerning environmental protection during conflict.[97] However, even with these conventions, provisions, and global actions, some argue that legal protections for the environment during times of conflict remain insufficient.[98]

Renewed efforts to protect the environment reside with the sustainable development goals (SDGs), adopted by the General Assembly in September 2015.[99] The fulfillment of SDGs 2, 3, 6, 12, 13, 14, and 15, which highlight clean water, responsible management of resources, protection of flora and fauna, marine life, and tackling climate change, all share intimate ties with the environment.[100] SDG 16 is of particular importance as it addresses the need for global justice, peace, and strong institutions.[101] UNEA resolution 2/5 on the topic of fulfilling the SDGs, adopted during UNEA's second session (UNEA-2) in May 2016, reaffirms UNEA's commitment to the achievement of the SDGs and draws attention to addressing environmental issues in conflict.[102]

### Role of the International System

Despite legal frameworks and protocols establishing precedence for the protection of the environment during conflict, implementing these rules has been difficult.[103] UNEP has been one of the most predominant actors enacting programs and promoting policies to protect the environment from damages caused during times of war.[104] UNEP has conducted over 20 post-conflict assessments since 1999 and has found that conflict poses devastating effects on the surrounding environment.[105] In response, UNEP developed the Disasters and Conflicts Program, which works to reduce threats to the environment and prevent harm to humans by examining and creating policies to reduce risk, emergency response during armed conflict, and post-conflict recovery.[106] From 2014 through 2015 the program has worked on environmental issues within Afghanistan, Cote D'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Nigeria, Sudan, and South Sudan.[107] As the highest-level governing body of UNEP, UNEA has called upon multilateral agreements, Member States, and legal frameworks to be used to tackle specific issues regarding the environment.[108] Most recently, during UNEA-2, the body adopted resolution 2/15 on the topic of "protection of the environment in areas of armed conflict," which encourages Member States further implementing international environmental laws, strengthening domestic legislation concerning environmental consequences during conflicts. [109] The resolution also calls on the Executive Director of UNEP to work with governments, UN agencies, and civil society organizations to provide assistance to Member States that sustain environmental damage and degradation

---

[94] Ibid.

[95] UNFCCC, *The Convention*, 2014; *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change*, 1992.

[96] ICRC, *Guidelines for Military Manuals and Instructions on the Protection of the Environment in Times of Armed Conflict*, 1996.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Weir, *Armed conflict, environmental protection and the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2016.

[99] UNDP, *Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017.

[100] Weir, *Armed conflict, environmental protection and the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2016; UNDP, *Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017.

[101] UNDP, *Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017.

[102] UN-DESA, *United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP*, 2017.

[103] Ibid.

[104] Ibid.

[105] UNEP, *Environment and Legal Protection*.

[106] UNEP, *Protecting the Environment During Armed Conflict: An Inventory and Analysis of International Law*, 2009.

[107] UNEP, *Disasters and Conflict*.

[108] Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building, and Nuclear Safety, *Ministerial Outcome Document of the First Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme*, 2014.

[109] UNEA, *Protection of the Environment in areas affected by armed conflict*, 2016.

due to armed conflict.[110] UNEA specifically calls on assistance to be provided during post-conflict and recovery periods, with special attention to those with World Heritage sites.[111]

The UN General Assembly is another key actor in providing environmental protections during conflict. General Assembly resolution 44/228 adopted on 22 December 1989, entitled "United Nations Conference on Environment and Development," calls for Member States' intensified responsibility of managing domestic and foreign environmental resources during conflict.[112] Resolution 47/37 entitled "protection of the environment during times of armed conflict," adopted on 25 November 1992, reinforces signatories' further implementation of existing international legal frameworks, and encourages those who have not ratified to consider signing and adopting these treaties .[113] Moreover, strong partnerships within the UN system play a vital part in UNEA's work concerning the environment during times of peace and conflict. For example, a joint operation known as the UNEP/ United Nations Office of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Environment Unit (JEU), which focuses on environmental emergency response and capacity building, provides logistical, technical, and programmatic support to Member States facing environmental crises, such as oil spills, toxic waste dumping, and environmental disasters stem from conflict.[114] Within the JEU is OCHA's Emergency Services Branch (ESB), which has been responding to environmental emergencies on 45 missions within the last five years.[115]

Civil society organizations (CSOs) also contribute immensely to the ability of the global community to develop policies and actions towards protecting the environment during times of conflict. The border wetlands between the Iran and Iraq were once teeming with biological life, and were a primary stop for many migratory bird species in the hot and dry region.[116] However, conflict between Iran and Iraq in the 1980's caused erosion and degradation of the marshes as troops dug dikes to drain stretches of land for troop movement.[117] The Gulf War and subsequent conflicts around the area in the 1990s and 2000s used similar practices, which depleted the marshes to 10% of their original land coverage.[118] After the marshes were given World Heritage status, initiatives by the government of Iraq began to attempt to restore the marshes, however, it has been CSOs, such as the Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Initiative and Nature Iraq, that have mobilized resources to monitor the progress of this restoration and hold the government accountable.[119]

### The "Greening" of Peacekeeping Operations

Since 1990, at least 17 UN peacekeeping missions caused exploitation of natural resources, and over the last 60 years 40% of conflicts have involved damages to natural resources.[120] The Security Council's Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs) play a unique role within the UN system as they are the only ground troops subject to dispatch by a UN organ to areas of conflict and post-conflict.[121] In 2012, UNEP produced a report discussing how UN peacekeeping operations affect and are affected by the natural environment.[122] The report highlighted specific measures the Security Council's PKO's have adopted to minimize their impact on the environment.[123] One example includes conducting environmental baseline studies to establish the health of the natural environment before PKO's commence.[124]

---

[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.
[112] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development*, 1989.
[113] UN General Assembly, *Protection for the Environment during times of armed conflict (A/RES/47/37)*, 1992.
[114] UN OCHA, *Environnemental Emergencies*, 2017.
[115] UN OCHA, *Environnemental Emergencies*, 2017; UN OCHA, *Emergency Services Branch*, 2017.
[116] Sulaymaniah, *The Border Wetlands of Iran-Iraq: an Environmental Crisis with Regional Consequences*, 2017; Weert, War and the Environment: War can wreck landscapes and ecosystems as well as people, *World Watch Institute*, 2017.
[117] Weert, War and the Environment: War can wreck landscapes and ecosystems as well as people, *World Watch Institute*, 2017.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Sulaymaniah, *The Border Wetlands of Iran-Iraq: an Environmental Crisis with Regional Consequences*, 2017; Weert, War and the Environment: War can wreck landscapes and ecosystems as well as people, *World Watch Institute*, 2017.
[120] UNDP, *Natural Resource Management in Transition Settings*, 2013.
[121] UNEP, *Greening the Blue Helmets: Environment, Natural Resources, and Peacekeeping Operations*, 2012, p. 9.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid, p. 19.

The operation in the Democratic People's Republic of Congo (DRC) has cost the UN $11.6 billion and is mandated to prevent the illicit trade of resources, especially minerals.[125] The United Nations Organization Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) has been criticized regarding peacekeeping troops using charcoal and timber for fuel, which contributed to deforestation in the region.[126] In 2010, the MONUSCO Special Representative to the Secretary-General decided that troops would no longer be allowed to use charcoal as a source of fuel, and in 2011 the Force Commander created Environmental Guidelines which included the recommendation to end the usage of firewood in all places where missions were taking place.[127] This case also highlights how partnerships between intergovernmental organizations can effectively combat harm to the environment during times of conflict.[128] The International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) has been involved in the DRC as an enforcer of national and international treaties to support the rights of the environment.[129] INTERPOL, MONUSCO, and the DRC have worked together to combat gorilla smuggling, with MONUSCO operations airlifting endangered gorillas to safe sanctuaries.[130] This is in line with, and is just one example of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support's (DFS) efforts to green peacekeeping operations to minimize carbon footprint during deployment.[131]

*Post-Conflict Environmental Management of Resources*

One large focus of protecting the environment affected by conflict is to plan for post-conflict management of resources that can keep conflicts from resurfacing or continuing at a smaller scale.[132] As part of the Environmental Peacebuilding initiative, increasing cooperation between Member States to tackle illicit smuggling of natural resources, strengthening the rule of law, and effectively reestablishing governance after the end of violence are some solutions highlighted by the policy brief.[133] Addressing resource depletion in Afghanistan is an excellent example of international cooperation.[134] A UNEP post-conflict assessment showed that as much as 80% of the Afghan population was affected by the poor conditions of the natural resources around them.[135] In reaction to this situation, the United States Agency for International Development funded the Afghanistan Conservation Corps (ACC), which initiated over 300 local projects to plant over five million trees.[136] UNEP also worked with the Afghan National Environmental Protection Agency to develop and implement policies and laws to promote sustainable resource recovery in the region.[137]

Additionally, women play a crucial role in managing natural resources pre and post conflict as they are often the primary providers of food, water, shelter, and fuel for families, which make them highly affected by changes in the availability of resources when conflict occurs and the environment is severely degraded.[138] A joint report with contributions from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office, and UNEP states that women often work on the land but are often barred from owning land and the decision making processes of resource management.[139] Women must be empowered and allowed to participate in resource management decisions as they are vital to understanding the needs of children and families of the land affected by conflict.[140] In Aceh, Indonesia, a conflict which lasted for over 40 years resulted in a massive depletion of agricultural resources.[141] In Aceh, only men

---

[125] Ibid, p. 37.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid, p. 8.
[132] UNDP, *Natural Resource Management in Transition Settings*, 2013.
[133] Environmental Peacebuilding, *Natural Resource Programming in Post-Conflict Situations*, 2014, p. 7.
[134] UNEP, *From Conflict to Peacebuilding: The Role of Natural Resources and the Environment*, 2009, p. 23.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.
[138] UNEP et al., *Women and Natural Resources: Unlocking the Peacebuilding Potential*, 2013, p. 5; UNEP et al., *Women and Natural Resources: Unlocking the Peacebuilding Potential*, 2013, p. 7.
[139] UNEP et al., *Women and Natural Resources: Unlocking the Peacebuilding Potential*, 2013, p. 5.
[140] Ibid, p. 21.
[141] Ibid.

have the legal right to control and own cash crops.[142] This policy was particularly destructive as men were also the primary combatants in the conflict, and if they were killed, they often left behind women who would then become the head of the household.[143] However, with the partnership between the government of Aceh and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research, support was provided to women's agricultural groups to develop home gardens, allowing them to become more self-sufficient.[144] It serves as an example of how CSOs can contribute to enhancing the equity of resource management post conflict and how this in turn can help reduce the probability that conflict will reoccur due to resource scarcity.[145]

### Conclusion

Conflicts can begin due to scarcity or mismanagement of resources, which can cause or exacerbate existing environmental issues and sometimes result in long lasting effects to the environment. However, through the UNEA's agenda setting and recommendations, the international community can, and does, come together to tackle environmental issues stemming from conflict by building partnerships, utilizing existing tools and mechanisms, and improving adherence to international legal instruments. UNEA's continued focus and work towards achieving the SDG targets will benefit the cause of finding solutions to protecting the environment during conflict as many of the SDGs cannot be achieved without addressing this critical issue.

## Annotated Bibliography

International Committee of the Red Cross. (1996). *Guidelines for Military Manuals and Instructions on the Protection of the Environment in Times of Armed Conflict* [Website]. Retrieved 19 April 2017 from: https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/article/other/57jn38.htm

> *This document is cited as pivotal for providing guidelines on how to prepare military forces to become more environmentally friendly and sustainable. The manual is recommended by UNEP for Member States' reference in creating their rules for military practice. Delegates will benefit from learning about an important document that proposes solutions that UNEP and UNEA believe are important to follow and to take inspiration from for future policy recommendations.*

International Police Organization and United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Strategic Report: Environment, Peace, and Security, A Converging of Threats*. Retrieved 20 July 2017 from: https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17008/environment_peace_security.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

> *This report discusses the intersection that lies between security threats and the environment. It details various ways in which the environment is used to commit crimes that are harmful to the environment and humans at large. The Executive Summary lists INTRPOL and UN Environment's goals to address how natural resources can be abused during conflicts and how that abuse can continue the cycle of violence in an area. Delegates will find this document helpful in outlining the myriad of ways in which the environment can be abused during times of conflict and points to resolutions UNEA has made to address criminal activities involving the environment.*

United Nations, General Assembly. (1949). *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II)*. Retrieved 2 July 2017 from: https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%201125/volume-1125-i-17512-english.pdf

> *These Additional Protocols are instrumental in the establishment of the rights of the environment during times of conflict. This is the first time the environment is explicitly stated as protected during times of violence. The protocol expresses the desire to preserve the natural environment from severe, long-term, and widespread damage. Delegates will find Articles 35 and 55 especially useful when building a foundation of knowledge for the way in which the international community has decided to set out legal frameworks for its protection.*

---

[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2009). *Protecting the Environment During Armed Conflict* [Report]. Retrieved 20 April 2017 from: http://www.un.org/zh/events/environmentconflictday/pdfs/int_law.pdf

> *This report takes an in-depth look at international laws, including international environment law (IEL), international criminal law (ICL), international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (HRL), and their applicability to environmental degradation and protection during armed conflict. The document looks to find room for improvement in existing international environmental laws to seek out policy prescriptions, and also aims to promote increased use of international environmental law in post-conflict reconciliation. Delegates can use this report as a starting point to understanding how international law on multiple levels support the necessity of environmental protection.*

United Nations Environment Programme. (2012). *Greening the Blue Helmets: Environment, Natural Resources, and UN Peacekeeping Operations* [Report]. Retrieved 3 July 2017 from: http://www.un.org/en/events/environmentconflictday/pdf/UNEP_greening_blue_helmets.pdf

> *This report highlights the ways in which UN Peacekeeping troops and missions attempt to adhere to policies to keep their operations environmentally sustainable and responsible. Most of the reporting is from past practices with ideas for improvements provided. This is a great resource for delegates as the report provides valuable insights on how troops can concretely work to preserve the environment and overcome the challenges in post-conflict situation.*

## Bibliography

Environmental Peacebuilding. (2014). *Natural Resource Programming in Post-Conflict Situations*. Retrieved 5 July 2017 from: https://environmentalpeacebuilding.org/assets/Documents/LibraryItem_000_Doc_426.pdf

Europa.eu. (n.d.). *Environment is the "silent casualty" of armed conflict* [Website]. Retrieved 25 July 2017 from: https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/unep/blog/environment-silent-casualty-armed-conflict

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building, and Nuclear Safety. (2014). *Ministerial Outcome Document of the First Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme*. Retrieved 5 July 2017 from: http://www.bmub.bund.de/fileadmin/Daten_BMU/Download_PDF/Europa___International/unea_ministerial_outcome_document_en_bf.pdf

The Guardian. (2016. December 12). *Climate Threat from Nuclear Bombs*. Retrieved 25 July 2017 from: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2006/dec/12/nuclearindustry.climatechange

History. (2016). *Agent Orange* [Website]. Retrieved 25 July 2017 from: http://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/agent-orange

International Committee of the Red Cross. (1996). *Guidelines for Military Manuals and Instructions on the Protection of the Environment in Times of Armed Conflict* [Website]. Retrieved 19 April 2017 from: https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/article/other/57jn38.htm

International Police Organization and United Nations Environment Program. (2016). *Strategic Report: Environment, Peace, and Security, A Converging of Threats*. Retrieved 20 July 2017 from: https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17008/environment_peace_security.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Sulaymaniah, E. (2017). *The Border Wetlands of Iran-Iraq: an Environmental Crisis with Regional Consequences* [Website]. Retrieved 22 July 2017 from: http://www.iraqicivilsociety.org/archives/7330

United Nations, Division for Sustainable Development. (2017). United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP [Website]. Retrieved 22 July 2017 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=243&men

United Nations, General Assembly, Third session. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*. Retrieved 2 July 2017 from: http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/

United Nations, General Assembly. (1976). *United Nations Convention on the Prohibitions of Military or any other use of Environmental Modification Techniques*. Retrieved 20 April 2017 from: https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1978/10/19781005%2000-39%20AM/Ch_XXVI_01p.pdf

United Nations, General Assembly. (1979). *Additional Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions-Article 35(3) and Article 55(1)*. Retrieved 29 April 2017 from: https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%201125/volume-1125-I-17512-English.pdf

United Nations, General Assembly, eighty-fifth session. (1989). *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (A/RES/44/228)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 22 July 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/44/228

United Nations, General Assembly, seventy-third session. (1992). *Protection of the environment in times of armed conflict (A/RES/47/37)* [Resolution]. *Retrieved 22 July 2017 from:* https://undocs.org/A/RES/47/37

United Nations, General Assembly. (2001). *Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or the have Indiscriminate Effects*. Retrieved 19 April 2017 from: http://unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/(httpAssets)/40BDE99D98467348C12571DE0060141E/$file/CCW+text.pdf

United Nations Environment Assembly. (2016). *Protection of the Environment in relation to armed conflict* [Resolution]. Retrieved 2 July 2017 from: http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/11189/K1607252_UNEPEA2_RES15E.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

United Nations Environment Programme. (n.d.). *Disasters and Conflict* [Website]. Retrieved 5 July 2017 from: http://staging.unep.org/disastersandconflicts/

United Nations Environment Programme. (n.d.). *Environment and Legal Protection* [Website]. Retrieved 5 July 2017 from: http://staging.unep.org/disastersandconflicts/Introduction/EnvironmentalCooperationforPeacebuilding/EnvironmentandLegalProtection/tabid/54592/Default.aspx

United Nations Environment Programme. (2009). *From Conflict to Peacebuilding: The Role of Natural Resources and the Environment* [Report]. Retrieved 22 July 2017 from: http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/pcdmb_policy_01.pdf

United Nations, Environment Programme. (2009). *Protecting the Environment during Armed Conflict: An Inventory and Analysis of International Law* [Report]. Retrieved 2 July 2017 from: http://www.un.org/zh/events/environmentconflictday/pdfs/int_law.pdf

United Nations Environment Programme. (2012). *Greening the Blue Helmets: Environment, Natural Resources, and UN Peacekeeping Operations* [Report]. Retrieved 3 July 2017 from: http://www.un.org/en/events/environmentconflictday/pdf/UNEP_greening_blue_helmets.pdf

United Nations Environment Programme. (2016, November 3). *Top UN Official: Environmental Protection in War More Urgent Than Ever* [Press Release]. Retrieved 25 July 2017 from: http://www.unep.org/newscentre/top-un-official-environmental-protection-war-more-urgent-ever

United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Working to Protect the Environment in Armed Conflict* [Website]. Retrieved 5 July 2017 from: https://medium.com/@UNEP/working-to-protect-the-environment-in-armed-conflict-

ce9aff1aa479

United Nations Development Programme. (2017). *Sustainable Development Goals* [Website]. Retrieved 22 July 2017 from: http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html

United Nations Environment Programme et al. (2013). *Women and Natural Resources: Unlocking the Peacebuilding Potential* [Report]. Retrieved 5 July 2017 from: http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/crisis%20prevention/WomenNaturalResourcesPBreport2013.pdf

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2014). *The Convention* [Website]. Retrieved July 2, 2017 from: http://unfccc.int/essential_background/convention/items/6036.php

United Nations Office of Humanitarian Affairs. (2017). *Environmental Emergencies* [Website]. Retrieved 4 July 2017 from: https://www.unocha.org/legacy/what-we-do/coordination-tools/environmental-emergencies

Weert, S. (2008). War and the Environment: War can wreck landscapes and ecosystems as well as people. *World Watch Magazine* 21 (1). Retrieved 22 July 2017 from: http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5520

Weir, D. (2016). *Armed conflict, environmental protection and the Sustainable Development Goals* [Website]. Retrieved 2 July 2017 from: https://newint.org/blog/2016/02/01/environmental-protection-and-the-sustainable-development-goals/

## II. Safeguarding Our Oceans

### Introduction

The world's oceans cover 70% of the planet.[146] Marine resources from the oceans contribute around $28 trillion to the global economy, therefore the conservation and sustainable uses of these resources are essential to sustaining life on earth.[147] However, the oceans face several threats, such as ocean acidification (OA), overfishing, and eutrophication, which is an increase in coastal water deoxygenation due to the overflow of nutrients from terrestrial origins.[148] Additionally, from 1974 to 2013, biologically sustainable fish stock levels dropped from 90% to 69%, and as of 2016, only 19% of key biodiversity areas were protected.[149]

The United Nations Environment Assembly's (UNEA) authoritative agenda tackles several global ocean-related concerns, such as implementing the *Paris Agreement* (2015), safeguarding our oceans' ecosystems, promoting biodiversity, and preventing marine litter.[150] The UNEA's ocean agenda can be directly linked to the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.[151] In particular, Goal 14, regarding Life Below Water. Conservation and the sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources was a common theme during the UNEA's second session (UNEA-2), where several resolutions were adopted regarding ocean sustainability and conservation.[152] The following background guide will address the importance of conservation and sustainable uses of our oceans and access the benefits of a blue economy, which are imperative to the health of our oceans, seas, marine resources, and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[153]

### International and Regional Framework

There have been several international initiatives related to ocean conservation. In 1982, the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* (UNCLOS) was established in order to define the rights and responsibilities of each Member State regarding oceans, as discussed in article 235.[154] UNCLOS discusses exclusive economic zones, highly migratory species, safeguard implementations, continental shelf, and seabed rights while also addressing the obligations of land-locked states.[155] UNCLOS encourages Member States to pursue peaceful uses of the sea and marine scientific research and technology.[156] Meanwhile, it urges the protection of marine environments from the harmful effects of drilling, dredging, excavation, disposal of waste, and other related activities.[157] 10 years later, the *International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage* was adopted in 1992, which assigns liability to ship owners regarding oil pollution produced by vessels.[158] Furthermore, the *Convention on Biological Diversity* (1992) created the foundation regarding financing, monitoring, training, and incentive measures that would be included in future international discussions on this topic.[159] As a result, during the Conference of Parties, a strategic plan to safeguard the biodiversity of our oceans was created, which included the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and regional action plans, such as the *North-East Atlantic* (1992), the *Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean* (1995), and the *Wider Caribbean Region*.[160] The *Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic* started implementing the North-

---

[146] UN World Ocean Assessment, *World Ocean Assessment I*, 2016.
[147] UN ECOSOC, *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2016.
[148] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015; UN World Ocean Assessment, *World Ocean Assessment I*, 2016.
[149] UN ECOSOC, *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2016.
[150] UNEP, *About UNEA*, 2016.
[151] UNEP, *Oceans and seas*, 2016.
[152] UNEP, *Oceans and seas*, 2016; UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[153] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[154] *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, 1982.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Ibid.
[158] IMO, *International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage*, 1969.
[159] UNCED, *Convention on Biological Diversity*, 1992.
[160] Convention on Biological Diversity, *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including Aichi Biodiversity Target*; UNEP, *Marine plastic litter and microplastics*, 2016.

East Atlantic Environment Strategy (NEAES) in 1998 to improve upon current measures regarding pollution and the conservation of ecosystems and biological diversity.[161] Lastly, the *Paris Agreement* (2016) plays a vital role in the fulfillment of the SDGs by strengthening the global efforts to combat the threat of climate change and by recognizing the importance of all ecosystems, including our oceans, in the decision-making process for Member States.[162]

In 2000, the *United Nations Millennium Declaration* was adopted by the General Assembly during its fifty-fifth session.[163] The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were not fully achieved due to a lack of resources and an efficient monitoring and evaluation system.[164] Following the MDGs, the SDGs were established when the General Assembly adopted the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* on 25 September 2015.[165] In this regard, goal 14 "conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development," focuses on 10 target goals which are directly linked to the process of safeguarding our oceans.[166] Target 14.1 states that by 2025 the international community will prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution.[167] Target 14.2 and target 14.21 aim to protect marine and coastal ecosystems from significant impacts by incorporating Economic Exclusive Zones (EEZs).[168] The SDGs provides a blueprint for the UN system's work for the next 15 years, and the UNEA's work is crucial to the achievement of a sustainable future.[169]

### Role of the International System

During UNEA-2, hosted in Nairobi, Kenya in May 2016, the body addressed several global concerns regarding our oceans, including marine litter, microplastics, and coral reef management.[170] UNEA-2 produced 25 resolutions, three of which are related to the process of safeguarding our oceans.[171] UNEA resolution 2/10, "oceans and seas," urges UNEP's continued works through the Regional Sea Programme, including the implementation of the ecosystem approach, which enables the management of marine and coastal environments, coastal zoning and marine spatial planning.[172] It also requests that Member States continue their work towards SDG 14 and its interrelated targets.[173] Additionally, UNEA resolution 2/11, "marine plastic litter and microplastics," encourages assistance to be offered to small island states and developing countries (SIDS) to create sustainable marine ecosystems by managing marine litter and microplastics, and therefore moving towards a sustainable EEZ.[174] UNEA resolution 2/12, "sustainable coral reefs management," strongly encourages Member States to participate in developing a comprehensive and sustainable management of coral reefs plan and place a priority on achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Target 10 on coral reefs.[175]

With the important emphasis on SDG 14, on 22 December 2015, the General Assembly adopted resolution 70/226 on "sustainable use of marine resources," which resulted in the Oceans Conference on 5-9 June 2017 in New York.[176] The conference brought together stakeholders, such as governments, intergovernmental organizations,

[161] OSPAR, *Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic*, 1998.
[162] COP 21, *Paris Agreement*, 2015.
[163] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*, 2000.
[164] UN DESA, *World Economic and Social Survey 2014/2015: Learning from national policies supporting MDG implementation (E/2015/50)*, 2015; UN ECOSOC, *Thematic evaluation of monitoring and evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals: lessons learned for the post-2015 era (E/AC.51/2015/3)*, 2015.
[165] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[166] Ibid.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid.
[169] UN-DESA, *United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP*, 2017.
[170] UNEP, *About UNEA*, 2016.
[171] UNEP, *Oceans and seas*, 2016.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Ibid.
[174] UNEP, *Marine plastic litter and microplastics*, 2016.
[175] UNEP, *Sustainable coral reefs management*, 2016.
[176] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal:14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development (ARES/70/226)*, 2015; UN Ocean Conference, *About*, 2016.

scientific and academic communities, the private sector, and philanthropic organizations.[177] The conference identified several ways to support the fulfillment of SDG 14 by addressing marine pollution, deep-sea science, financing the blue economy, strengthening ocean governance, rebuilding fisheries, ocean acidification, and other numerous key issues.[178] As a result, the conference produced outcome document "Our ocean, our future: call for action."[179] The draft calls for immediate action regarding the improvement of sustainable fisheries and the development of mitigation measures towards OA.[180] It also highlights the need for renewed efforts regarding the reduction of marine pollution and many other sustainable ocean concerns.[181]

Beyond the UNEA, other UN organs collaborate on issues related to ocean protection. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a specialized UN agency that focuses on achieving food security.[182] In pursuit of SDG Goal 14, the FAO is dedicated to reducing hunger, alleviating poverty, and stimulating economic growth through fisheries and aquaculture.[183] "The State of Worlds Fisheries and Aquaculture," an FAO publication, plays a critical role in monitoring and reporting on targets relevant to FAO's mandate under SDG 14.[184] Along with these efforts, FAO has also addressed illegal, unregulated, and underreported (IUU) fishing with the *Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing*, which entered into force in.[185] Additionally, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO), which advocates for international cooperation in marine research, services, and hazard mitigation, particularly in developing regions, was established in 1960.[186] The IOC-UNESCO has contributed to the management of marine resources by creating the Integrated Coastal Area Management systems, coral reef monitoring systems, and a marine spatial planning initiative.[187] Also, during the recent UN Ocean conference, the IOC-UNESCO was at the forefront in partnership dialogues and contributions to the "call for action" outcome document.[188]

Furthermore, there are several non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including the International Ocean Institute, which strives to educate the public on the topic of marine conservation by hosting training session and conducting research efforts around the world.[189] The International Union for the Protection of Nature (IUPN) focuses on species survival, environmental law, social and economic policy, ecosystem management, and education and communication.[190] IUPN works with local governments and policy makers, including the Biodiversity Assessment Unit, to advocate for the expansion of the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), which are protected areas that allow marine life and their habitats to counter the effects of human activities.[191] Ultimately, the continued collaboration and work between civil society and the UNEA is critical in order to make significant strides towards the sustainable use of our oceans.

### *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Oceans*

Around 40% of our world's oceans are affected by human activities, which include pollution, overfishing, and depletion of coastal habitats.[192] There have been several initiatives implemented to conserve our oceans by creating sustainable fisheries and promoting small-scale fisheries.[193] Sustainable fisheries management underlines the best sustainable practices of fisheries and practical management strategies.[194] These plans make small-scale fisheries

---

[177] UN Ocean Conference, *About*, 2016.
[178] Ibid.
[179] UN General Assembly, *Our ocean, our future: call for action*, 2017; UN General Assembly, *Draft call for action*, 2017.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid.
[182] FAO, *About FAO*, 2017.
[183] FAO, *Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017.
[184] FAO, *The State of the Worlds Fisheries and Aquaculture*, 2016.
[185] Ibid.
[186] UNESCO, *About the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (ICO)*, 2017.
[187] Ibid.
[188] UNESCO, *United Nations Ocean Conference*, 2017.
[189] International Ocean Institute, *IOI Vision, Mission, and Goals*.
[190] International Union for the Protection of Nature, *About*, 2017.
[191] International Union for the Protection of Nature, *Explore our Work*, 2017; Our Ocean, *Marine Protected Areas*, 2017.
[192] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[193] UN General Assembly, *Sustainable Fisheries*, 2014.
[194] Ibid.

effective by enabling participants' access to marine resources and by improving socio-economic levels.[195] There are several establishments that provide initiatives in curbing these international dilemmas.[196] The Ocean Foundation formed the World Ocean Initiative, which provides funding, research, and consulting.[197] The Ocean & Climate Platform was created by an alliance of NGOs and research institutes with the support of IOC-UNESCO.[198] One of the platforms' focal points is ecosystem resilience and the importance of MPAs, which are a viable counter reaction to the declining rates in biodiversity and fish stocks.[199] One of the contributing members to the platform is Mission Blue Alliance, whose research found that only 5.1% of the world's oceans are MPAs.[200] By the year 2030, Mission Blue seeks to increase that percentage to 30% by creating "Hope Spots," their term for MPAs.[201] The Mission Blue alliance is currently performing case studies regarding their Hope Spot initiative, MPAs, and the implementation in the Balearic Islands and the Gulf of California to boost ocean resource regeneration.[202] Moreover, the Ocean Acidification International Coordination Centre, established by the International Atomic Energy Agency, hosts capacity building workshops for policymakers, the scientific community, and the general public to address OA.[203]

*The Blue Economy*
According to UNEP, "blue economy" is a socio-economic model that elevates sustainable development with a focal emphasis on the world's oceans to improve participating member's food security and social equity.[204] Blue economy also assists in curbing environmental risks and ecological insufficiencies.[205] In 2016, the *Abu Dhabi Declaration* recognized the blue economy model as a vital tool in the promotion towards sustainable development, poverty relief, and climate change mitigation.[206] The blue economy model was initially addressed in support of the livelihood of SIDS, as most SIDS fisheries account for 10% of their GDP and over 50% of their exports.[207] In the Seychelles, the implementation of a blue economy was put into place to achieve economic diversification, high-value jobs, food security, and to sustainably manage and protect the marine environment.[208] During the drafting process of the Seychelles' EEZ, the government's objective was to allocate 30% of the EEZ to MPAs.[209] In addition, during a community-based case study in Madagascar, processes were implemented that allow for the sustainable use of small-scale fisheries by establishing MPAs and locally-managed marine areas (LMMAs).[210] As a result, the LMMA network in the southwest region of Madagascar has been integrated into 85 fishing villages, which includes approximately 60,000 people.[211] For the exponential success of blue economy, it is vital to enhance reliable and inclusive knowledge bases that are complemented by resources, tangible goals, and an effective monitoring process.[212]

**Conclusion**

Oceans are one the world's largest and greatest resources, and despite all overarching efforts toward the sustainable use of our oceans, seas, and marine resources, many challenges remain.[213] When the UN included SDG 14 in the 2030 Agenda, safeguarding our oceans was highlighted as a priority.[214] While the UNEA's contributions to

---

[195] UN Ocean Conference, *Call for Action*, 2016.
[196] The Ocean Foundation, *World Ocean*.
[197] Ibid.
[198] Ocean & Climate Platform, *About us*, 2017.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Mission Blue: Sylvia Earle Alliance, *About us*, 2017.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Mission Blue: Sylvia Earle Alliance, *Hope Spot Case Studies*, 2016.
[203] IAEA, *What is ocean acidification?*, 2010; LEMONSEA, *Ocean acidification*.
[204] UNEP, *Blue Economy: Sharing Success Stories to Inspire Change*, 2015, p. 10; UNCTAD, *The Oceans Economy: Opportunities and Challenges for Small Island Developing States*, 2014, p. 2.
[205] Ibid.
[206] UNEP, *Blue Economy: Sharing Success Stories to Inspire Change*, 2015, p. 9; ADSW, *Abu Dhabi 2016 Blue Economy Declaration*, 2016.
[207] UNEP, *Green Economy in a Blue World: Synthesis Report*, 2012.
[208] UNEP, *Blue Economy: Sharing Success Stories to Inspire Change*, 2015, p. 18.
[209] Ibid.
[210] Ibid, p. 37.
[211] Ibid.
[212] Ibid, p. 42.
[213] UN ECOSOC, *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2016.
[214] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

safeguarding our oceans are significant, it will take international cooperation among Member States, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, NGOs, civil society organizations, scientific academic institutions, and the private sector to create further progress towards the conservation and sustainable use of our oceans, seas, and marine resources.[215] However, with the continual efforts of the UNEA and the international community, the improvement of the conservation and sustainable uses of our oceans are attainable.

# Annotated Bibliography

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2014). *The Oceans Economy: Opportunities and Challenges for Small Island Developing States* [Report]. Retrieved from 18 May 2017 from: http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditcted2014d5_en.pdf
> *This report highlights the important relationship between SIDS and the blue economy, and how they relate to one another. The opportunities and challenges SIDS face while implementing the oceans economy model are discussed. The blue economy addresses, the trade and development agenda, relations to fisheries, aquaculture, tourism and several other related topics. It will be important for delegates to be familiar with the emerging concept of a blue economy as it will be often referenced throughout the delegates research.*

*United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*. (1982). Retrieved 22 April 2017 from: http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf
> *UNCLOS was created to form parameters for all uses of the oceans and ocean resources. It underlines Member States' rights and responsibilities regarding the usage of our oceans. UNCLOS also discusses a state's sovereignty over territorial waters, continental shelf and the importance of sustaining ocean resources. Meanwhile, addressing important guidelines for economically exclusive zones, which can be directly related to ocean conservation. The Convention will be an important source for the delegates while performing their research regarding the frameworks of conservation and the sustainable use of our ocean.*

United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *Blue Economy: Sharing Success Stories to Inspire Change* [Report]. Retrieved 20 April 2017 from: http://apps.unep.org/redirect.php?file=/publications/pmtdocuments/-Blue_economy__sharing_success_stories_to_inspire_change-2015blue_economy_sharing_success_stories.pdf.pdf
> *This UNEP report discusses the critical role of the Blue Economy. The report underlines several fruitful initiatives that have been implemented regarding the Blue Economy. It encourages a global transition to a Blue Economy by implementing marine protected areas. Along with the reports focal initiatives, it highlights six case studies and discusses their successes and noticeable efforts towards the 2030 Agenda, more specifically Goal 14.*

United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Oceans and seas* [Resolution]. Retrieved 22 April 2017 from: http://undocs.org/unep/ea.2/res.10
> *The contents of this resolution are instrumental in the delegates preparation work. It highlights global concerns, regarding the well-being of our oceans and the importance of their conservation. The resolution reminds the international community of their responsibility in achieving SDG 14: converse and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources. It also encourages all Members States to uphold their agreement to UNCLOS, participation in ocean-related conferences, effectively manage marine protected areas, and other efforts towards the betterment of our oceans.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 20 April 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1
> *This resolution is a call for action to all Member States to assist and invest in sustaining the world's future by tackling critical global issues. Goal 14 of the 2030 Agenda addresses the global concerns regarding our oceans. In efforts to curb these concerns, the United Nations has constructed ten targets. These targets include reducing marine pollution protecting marine and*

---

[215] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015; Ocean Conference, *About*, 2016.

*coastal ecosystems, minimizing ocean acidification, eliminating overfishing, conservation of coastal and marine areas, increasing the benefits of SIDS and LDCs, and several other prevalent objectives. Becoming familiar with goal 14 of the SDGs will assist delegates in their continued research on the topic of safeguarding our oceans.*

## Bibliography

Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week. (2016). *Abu Dhabi 2016 Blue Economy Declaration* [Website]. Retrieved 18 May 2017 from: http://abudhabisustainabilityweek.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Abu-Dhabi-2016-Blue-Economy-Declaration-FINAL.pdf

Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Twenty-first session. (2015). *Paris Agreement*. Retrieved 17 June 2016 from: http://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_paris_agreement.pdf

Convention on Biological Diversity. (1992). Retrieved 14 June 2017 from: https://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-en.pdf

Convention on Biological Diversity. (n.d.). *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including Aichi Biodiversity Targets* [Website]. Retrieved 3 July 2017 from: https://www.cbd.int/sp

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2016). *The State of the Worlds Fisheries and Aquaculture* [Report]. Retrieved 16 June 2017 from: http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5798e.pdf

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2017). *About FAO* [Website]. Retrieved 12 May 2019 from: https://www.fao.org

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2017). *Sustainable Development Goals* [Website]. Retrieved 12 May 2017 from: http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/goals/goal-14/en/

International Atomic Energy Agency & Ocean Acidification International Coordination Centre. (2010). *What is ocean acidification?* [Website]. Retrieved 18 May 2017 from: https://www.iaea.org/ocean-acidification/page.php?page=2181

International Maritime Organization. (2017). *International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage* [Website]. Retrieved 16 May 2017 from: http://www.imo.org/en/About/conventions/listofconventions/pages/international-convention-on-civil-liability-for-oil-pollution-damage-%28clc%29.aspx

International Ocean Institute. (n.d.). *IOI Vision, Mission, and Goals* [Website]. Retrieved 15 June 2017 from: https://www.ioinst.org/about-1/

International Union for the Protection of Nature. (2017). *About* [Website]. Retrieved 15 June 2017 from: https://www.iucn.org/about

International Union for the Protection of Nature. (2017). *Explore our Work* [Website]. Retrieved 14 June 2017 from: https://www.iucn.org/our-work

LEAMONSEA. (n.d.). *Ocean Acidification* [Website]. Retrieved 18 May 2017 from: http://lemonsea.org/ocean-acidification-in-a-nutshell/

Mission Blue: Sylvia Earle Alliance. (2016). *Hope Spot Case Studies*. Retrieved 17 May 2017 from: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/66fld068qveug6w/AABfv9CnJ_O8EYCr4rnSXn83a?dl=0

Mission Blue: Sylvia Earle Alliance. (2017). *About us* [Website]. Retrieved 18 May 2017 from: https://www.mission-blue.org/about/

Ocean & Climate Platform. (2017). *About us* [Website]. Retrieved 18 May 2017 from: https://www.ocean-climate.org/?page_id=80

The Ocean Foundation. (n.d.). *World Ocean* [Website]. Retrieved 18 May 2017 from: https://www.oceanfdn.org/our-work/ocean-initiative/world-ocean

OSPAR Commission. (2017). *Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic* [Website]. Retrieved 10 May 2017 from: https://www.ospar.org/convention

Our Ocean. (2017). *Marine Protected Areas* [Website]. Retrieved 18 May 2017 from: https://www.ourocean2016.org/marine-protected-areas/

*United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*. (1982). Retrieved 22 April 2017 from: http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *World Economic and Social Survey 2014/2015: Learning from national policies supporting MDG implementation (E/2015/50)* [Report]. Retrieved 15 June 2017 from: http://undocs.org/E/2015/50

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2017). *United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP* [Website]. Retrieved 18 July 2017 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=243&men

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2015). *Thematic evaluation of monitoring and evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals: lessons learned for the post-2015 era (E/AC.51/2015/3)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 15 June 2017 from https:undocs.org/*E/AC.51/2015/3*

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2016). *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals* (*E/2016/75)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 18 May 2017 from: http://undocs.org/E/2016/75

United Nations, General Assembly, Fifty-fifth session. (2000). *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 12 June 2017 from: http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 11 June 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal:14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development (A/RES/70/226)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 12 June 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/226

United Nations, General Assembly. (2016). *World Ocean Assessment I* [Report]. Retrieved 23 April 2017 from: http://www.un.org/Depts/los/global_reporting/WOA_RPROC/WOACompilation.pdf

United Nations, General Assembly. (2017). *Draft call for action* [Draft Resolution]. Retrieved 4 July 2017 from: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/CONF.230/11&Lang=E

United Nations, General Assembly. (2017). *Our ocean, our future: call for action* [Draft Resolution]. Retrieved 4 July 2017 from: http://undocs.org/A/CONF.230/L.1

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2014). *The Oceans Economy: Opportunities and Challenges for Small Island Developing States* [Report]. Retrieved from 18 May 2017 from: http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditcted2014d5_en.pdf

United Nations Development Programme. (2010). *Green Economy in a Blue World: Synthesis Report* [Report]. Retrieved 18 May 2017 from:
http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Environment%20and%20Energy/Water%20and%20Ocean%20Governance/green_economy_blue_world_synthesis_report.pdf?download

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2017). *About the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)* [Website]. Retrieved 12 May 2017 from:
https://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/ioc-oceans/about-us/

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2017). *United Nations Ocean Conference* [Website]. Retrieved 4 July 2017 from: http://en.unesco.org/united-nations-ocean-conference

United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *Blue Economy: Sharing Success Stories to Inspire Change* [Report]. Retrieved 20 April 2017 from: http://apps.unep.org/redirect.php?file=/publications/pmtdocuments/-Blue_economy__sharing_success_stories_to_inspire_change-2015blue_economy_sharing_success_stories.pdf.pdf

United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *About UNEA* [Website]. Retrieved 14 May 2017 from:
http://www.unep.org/unea/about-unea

United Nations Environment Programme, Second session. (2016). *Marine Plastic Litter and Microplastics* [Resolution]. Retrieved 22 April 2017 from: http://undocs.org/unep/ea.2/res.11

United Nations Environment Programme, Second session. (2016). *Oceans and seas* [Resolution]. Retrieved 22 April 2017 from: http://undocs.org/unep/ea.2/res.10

United Nations Environment Programme, Second session. (2016). *Sustainable Coral Reefs Management* [Resolution]. Retrieved 22 April 2017 from: http://undocs.org/unep/ea.2/res.12

United Nations Ocean Conference. (2016). *About* [Website]. Retrieved 14 May 2017 from:
https://oceanconference.un.org/about

United Nations Ocean Conference. (2016). *Call for Action* [Website]. Retrieved 14 June 2017 from:
https://oceanconference.un.org/callforaction