



Washington, DC USA  
8-10 November 2019  
[nmun.org/nmun\\_dc.html](http://nmun.org/nmun_dc.html)



# United Nations Environment Assembly Background Guide 2019

Written by: Christopher Duggan, Director;  
Brian Tomblin, Assistant Director; Analeigh Willett, Director of Information Services



# NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS



# NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

THE WORLD'S LARGEST UNIVERSITY-LEVEL SIMULATION • SINCE 1927

13570 Grove Dr., Suite 294 • Maple Grove, MN 55311

www.nmun.org • info@nmun.org • 612.353.5649

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2019 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 Christopher Duggan and Assistant Director Brian Tomblin. Christopher is a Senior at the Florida State University pursuing degrees in Political Science and International Affairs, with certificates in Intelligence and Emergency Management. Brian holds an M.S. in Biomedical Engineering and is currently a graduate student at the University of Pittsburgh pursuing an M.P.H. in Health Policy and Global Health.

The topics under discussion for UNEA are:

- I. Preventing Marine Plastic Pollution through Sustainable Consumption and Production
- II. Ending Illegal Wildlife Trade and Whaling

As the governing council of the UN Environment Programme, UNEA is the world's highest-level decision-making entity on matters concerning the environment. Since its creation at the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), UNEA has held universal membership with 193 Member States. UNEA meets biennially to prioritize and tackle environmental challenges through developing international environmental policies and fostering partnerships with civil society and the private sector. Delegates of UNEA must work to understand these challenges to preserve and rehabilitate the environment, fulfilling the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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 conduct additional research, explore your Member State's policies in-depth, and examine the policies of other Member States to improve your ability to negotiate and reach consensus. In preparation for the conference, each delegation will use their research to draft and submit a [position paper](#). Guidelines are available in the [NMUN Position Paper Guide](#).

The [NMUN website](#) has many additional resources, including two that are essential both in preparation for the conference and as a resource during the conference. They are:

1. The [NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide](#), which explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions. Delegates should not discuss the topics or agenda with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2. The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#), which includes the long and short form of the rules as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

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

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

Sincerely,  
Christopher Duggan, Director  
Brian Tomblin, Assistant Director

## Committee Overview

### Introduction

Twenty years after the adoption of the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* (1992), the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) called for the strengthening of and upgrading of the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) such that it could better execute on its mandate.<sup>1</sup> In 2013, the Governing Council of UNEP adopted resolution 27/2, expanding the Governing Council to universal membership and requesting the General Assembly to change its designation to UNEA, which it did with resolution 67/251 the same year.<sup>2</sup> UNEA's universal membership strengthens the role of UN Environment in international affairs and increase the responsiveness of Member States in developing environmental policy.<sup>3</sup> UNEA has held four universal sessions, with the most recent in Nairobi, Kenya in March, 2019.<sup>4</sup>

At NMUN•DC 2019, we are simulating the Environment Assembly in terms of composition and size. In addition to making budgetary and programmatic decisions for the United Nations Environment Programme, the Assembly may propose global priorities, policies, and legal frameworks under the mandate of UN Environment.

Under the governance of UNEA, UN Environment's mission is to "provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment" toward environmentally friendly practices and policies in the United Nations (UN) system.<sup>5</sup> It is a program and fund of the UN that encourages 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.<sup>6</sup> UN Environment reports to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).<sup>7</sup>

UN Environment was created as a result of decisions made at the 1972 UN Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden.<sup>8</sup> Six months later, the General Assembly established UN Environment as the official body concerned with environmental issues within the UN.<sup>9</sup> Since 1972, UN Environment has played a significant role in coordinating environmental policy across various UN agencies.<sup>10</sup> UN Environment helped in the planning and execution of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992, the outcomes of which included the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* and *Agenda 21*.<sup>11</sup> These landmark documents provided further guidance and renewed support for UN Environment's role in international cooperation on environmental protection.<sup>12</sup> UNCED marked a turning point for international collaboration to preserve biodiversity and the climate, with the *Convention on Biological Diversity* (1992) and the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change* (1992) both opening for signature at the summit.<sup>13</sup> The *Convention to Combat Desertification* (1994), another major agreement, was adopted two years later.<sup>14</sup> While the three Rio Conventions are each administered

<sup>1</sup> UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> UN Environment, *About the UN Environment Assembly*.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> UN Environment, *About UN Environment*.

<sup>6</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2017-18*, 2017, p. 256.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, pp. 256-257.

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1), Chapter I: Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment*, 1972.

<sup>9</sup> UN General Assembly, *Institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental co-operation (A/RES/2997(XXVII))*, 1972.

<sup>10</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2017-18*, 2017, pp. 256-257.

<sup>11</sup> UN Environment, *The First 40 Years: A Narrative by Stanley Johnson*, 2012.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, pp. 137-139.

<sup>13</sup> Convention on Biological Diversity, *The Rio Conventions*.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

by their own secretariat, UN Environment assisted in negotiating the conventions and was tasked with promoting their implementation through *Agenda 21*.<sup>15</sup>

### **Governance, Structure, and Membership**

UNEA serves as the governing body for UN Environment.<sup>16</sup> The Assembly replaced the former Governing Council of 58 members, which oversaw UN Environment from its inception until 2013.<sup>17</sup> Comprised of all UN Member States, UNEA meets biennially to set the global environmental agenda, discuss emerging environmental challenges, and provide guidance to UN Environment in its strategic plans of actions.<sup>18</sup> The UN Environment Secretariat is responsible for supporting UNEA and consists of a rotating President, three Vice-Presidents, and a Rapporteur.<sup>19</sup> The Committee of Permanent Representatives, which meets at least four times a year, is a permanent subsidiary body of UNEA that prepares its meetings, monitors the implementation of its decisions, and provides advice to UN Environment between the sessions of the Assembly.<sup>20</sup> It is composed of all accredited Permanent Representatives to UN Environment and is an important link between the program and national governments.<sup>21</sup> In addition to the core funding it receives through the UN regular budget, UN Environment collects financial contributions from Member States to implement its global and regional work through its Environment Fund.<sup>22</sup> Member States' are requested to make financial contributions to the fund are based upon the Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contributions, which takes into account their respective economic and social situation to determine the amount paid.<sup>23</sup> Additional funds for project implementation are generated through earmarked contributions and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which together account for 91% of UN Environment's annual expenditures.<sup>24</sup>

Aside from its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, UN Environment has six offices dispersed globally that undertake projects on regional and local levels.<sup>25</sup> Each office holds yearly Regional Consultation Meetings where representatives from various civil society organizations (CSOs) and other stakeholders are invited to engage in an environmental policy dialogue.<sup>26</sup> Those offices bring any concerns or ideas from these meetings to the next UNEA meeting for wider discussion and possible implementation.<sup>27</sup>

### **Mandate, Functions, and Powers**

Guided by the broader substantive priorities of UN Environment, UNEA is tasked to make major strategic decisions for UN Environment, provide political guidance for state and regional programs, and promote scientifically based environmental policies.<sup>28</sup> UNEA is guided by the theme "innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production," and focuses on the three areas: environmental challenges that relate to poverty and natural resource management, including sustainable food systems, food security, and halting biodiversity loss; life-cycle approaches to resource efficiency, energy, chemicals, and waste management; and innovative sustainable business development during rapid technological change.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> UN Environment, *The First 40 Years: A Narrative by Stanley Johnson*, 2012, pp. 155-156.

<sup>16</sup> UN Environment, *Organizational Structure*.

<sup>17</sup> UN General Assembly, *Institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental co-operation (A/RES/2997(XXVII))*, 1972.

<sup>18</sup> UN Environment, *About the UN Environment Assembly*.

<sup>19</sup> UN General Assembly, *Change of the designation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (A/67/784)*, 2013.

<sup>20</sup> UN Environment, *Committee of Permanent Representatives: Overview*.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> UN Environment, *Funding for UN Environment*.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> UN Environment, *Funding Facts*.

<sup>25</sup> UN Environment, *Civil society engagement*.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> UN Environment, *About the UN Environment Assembly*.

<sup>29</sup> UN Environment Assembly, *Theme of the fourth Session of the UN Environment Assembly*, 2019.

With the adoption of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 1972 on “Institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental cooperation,” UN Environment was created with a mandate to “promote international and regional environmental cooperation, develop 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 the Environment Fund”.<sup>30</sup>

The first expansion of UN Environment’s mandate came after the 1992 Rio Conference via *Agenda 21*, which outlined a list of priority areas for its future work and called for the program to gain “access to greater expertise and...adequate financial resources,” as well as closer collaboration with the rest of the UN system to fulfil these new tasks.<sup>31</sup> On the occasion of its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Governing Council of UN Environment held an extensive discussion on the future role of the program that resulted in the adoption of the *Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme* (1997).<sup>32</sup> With a view to the special session of the General Assembly scheduled later that year to review the implementation of *Agenda 21*, the declaration represented a call to governments and the UN system to acknowledge UN Environment’s leadership role.<sup>33</sup> The General Assembly endorsed the *Nairobi Declaration* (2000), and reaffirmed that “UN Environment is to be the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda.”<sup>34</sup>

This assessment was further corroborated with the continued UN reform agenda of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who advocated for strengthening UN Environment’s role as “the focal point for harmonization and coordination of environment-related activities.”<sup>35</sup> In October 1998, per the guidance of the Secretary-General’s Task Force on environment and human settlements, the General Assembly put forth a set of recommendations that would further modify UN Environment’s mandate.<sup>36</sup> As a result, the Executive Director of UN Environment was placed in charge of a new committee called the Environment Management Group.<sup>37</sup> The key purpose of the Environment Management Group 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.<sup>38</sup>

The *Nairobi Declaration* also realigned UN Environment’s core mandate to ensure a more modern and technological approach to environmental issues.<sup>39</sup> It made UN Environment 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.<sup>40</sup> In 2002, the *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development* (2000) called upon UN Environment and its

---

<sup>30</sup> UN General Assembly, *Institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental co-operation (A/RES/2997(XXVII))*, 1972.

<sup>31</sup> UNCED, *Agenda 21*, 1992, par. 38.21-38.23.

<sup>32</sup> Governing Council of UN Environment, *Proceedings of the Governing Council at its Nineteenth Session (UNEP/GC.19/34)*, 1997, pp. 52-56.

<sup>33</sup> UN Environment, *The First 40 Years: A Narrative by Stanley Johnson*, 2012, p. 155.

<sup>34</sup> UN General Assembly, *Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (A/RES/S-19/2)*, 1997, par. 123.

<sup>35</sup> UN General Assembly, *Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform (A/51/950)*, p. 58.

<sup>36</sup> UN General Assembly, *Environment and human settlements: Report of the Secretary-General (A/53/463)*, 1998.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Governing Council of UN Environment, *Proceedings of the Governing Council at its Nineteenth Session (UNEP/GC.19/34)*, 1997, pp. 52-56.

<sup>40</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2017-18*, 2017.

partners to cooperate more closely across sustainable development initiatives for the implementation of *Agenda 21*.<sup>41</sup>

UN Environment monitors the state of the global environment on both an international and regional scale and shares that information with interested parties.<sup>42</sup> Under the direction of UNEA, UN Environment works to develop international environmental law and ensure the proper use of environmental information and instruments.<sup>43</sup> To help achieve its mandate, UN Environment has the ability to create task forces and subsidiaries to implement environmental policies.<sup>44</sup> However, the General Assembly or ECOSOC must approve any resolutions adopted by UNEA on environmental policy or creating new bodies.<sup>45</sup>

### **Recent Sessions and Current Priorities**

UNEA-4 was held from 11-15 March 2019 under the overarching topic of “Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production.”<sup>46</sup> Environment Assembly members were primarily focused on enabling innovative solutions to environmental challenges and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production.<sup>47</sup> Stakeholders addressed necessary mechanisms, such as the enhancement of partnerships with the private sector and the civil society to create favorable conditions for innovation.<sup>48</sup> Members ultimately developed strategies that better supported the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the *Ministerial Declaration of the 2019 United Nations Environment Assembly*.<sup>49</sup> The Executive Director published their report on innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production, outlining the potential solutions to the thematic priorities of UNEA and UNEA-4.<sup>50</sup> Education, technology, and finance were at the forefront, with three main focus areas: environmental challenges related to poverty and natural resource management; life cycle approaches to resource efficiency, energy, and chemicals, and waste management; and sustainable business development in a time of rapid technological change.<sup>51</sup> UN Environment 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.<sup>52</sup>

With the adoption of the *2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development*, the responsibility of UN Environment has shifted towards addressing environmental protection as part of an integrated vision of sustainable development, rather than addressing environmental issues in a silo.<sup>53</sup> UN Environment assesses that 86 of the 169 targets across the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are concerned with environmental sustainability.<sup>54</sup> The paradigm change toward an integrated approach is reflected in the *Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021* that envisions UN Environment as providing “an environmental lens

---

<sup>41</sup> World Summit on Sustainable Development, *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/CONF.199/20)*, 2002.

<sup>42</sup> UN Environment, *Programme Performance Report 2016*, 2016, p. 57.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>44</sup> UNSCEB, *United Nations Environment Programme*.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> UN Environment, *UN Environment Assembly and Governing Council*.

<sup>47</sup> UN Environment Assembly, *Concept note for the theme of the 4<sup>th</sup> United Nations Environment Assembly*, 2018.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*; UN Environment Assembly, *Draft Ministerial Declaration of the 2019 United Nations Environment Assembly*, 2019.

<sup>50</sup> UN Environment Assembly, *Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production: Report of the Executive Director*, 2019.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> UN Environment, *Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021*, 2016, p.16.

<sup>53</sup> UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015; UN Environment Assembly, *Delivering on the environmental dimensions of the 2030 Agenda: Information note of the Executive Director (UNEP/EA.2/INF/4)*, 2016.

<sup>54</sup> UN Environment Assembly, *Delivering on the environmental dimensions of the 2030 Agenda: Information note of the Executive Director (UNEP/EA.2/INF/4)*, 2016, p. 1.

through which to view, understand and advise on sustainable development.”<sup>55</sup> UN Environment's vision for 2030 is built upon the benefits of sustainable natural resource use for sustainable development, the reduction of social and economic cost through improvements in environmental sustainability, and the increased well-being of marginalized populations as a consequence of integrating environmental considerations into development planning.<sup>56</sup> To work toward its vision, UN Environment established, in its *Medium-Term Strategy 2018-2021*, five operating principles that guide the agency's actions and decisions.<sup>57</sup> Those principles include the adoption of a globally coherent and locally responsive approach, the use of results-based management, the development of synergy from strategic partnerships between stakeholders, the strengthening of regional presence to tailor efforts to the needs of regions, and the integration of environment-related frameworks in other UN entities' thematic or functional areas.<sup>58</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The reform process that UN Environment underwent throughout the 1990s redefined the thematic leadership role of the program within the UN system.<sup>59</sup> The recent creation of UNEA represents another key step in UN Environment'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.<sup>60</sup> 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 an integrated approach to environmental protection through the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.<sup>61</sup> By combating pollution and enhancing sustainable production and consumption, UNEA is in a lead role to resolve these challenges threatening global sustainable development.<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> UN Environment, *Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021*, 2016, p. 2.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p.16.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> UN Environment, *The First 40 Years: A Narrative by Stanley Johnson*, 2012, p. 155.

<sup>60</sup> World Summit on Sustainable Development, *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/CONF.199/20)*, 2002.

<sup>61</sup> UN Environment Assembly, *Delivering on the environmental dimensions of the 2030 Agenda: Information note of the Executive Director (UNEP/EA.2/INF/4)*, 2016.

<sup>62</sup> UN Environment, *UN Environment Assembly and Governing Council*.



## Annotated Bibliography

United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Delivering on the environmental dimensions of the 2030 Agenda: Information note of the Executive Director (UNEP/EA.2/INF/4)* [Report]. Retrieved 3 September 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/UNEP/EA.2/INF/4>

*In this information note delivered to the High-Level Segment of UNEA-2 (2016), UNEP's Executive Director outlines the strategic vision of the programme for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. According to UN Environment's assessment, at least 86 of the 169 SDG targets are immediately concerned with environmental sustainability. The note presents a detailed overview of the links between UN Environment's agenda and the SDGs, and suggests a number of overarching principles and concrete measures to ensure that the Programme contributes to the success of the 2030 Agenda. Through this resource, delegates can acquire a better understanding of UNEP's role in the 2030 Agenda, including its institutional connections within the UN system.*

United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, Fourth Session. (2019). *Draft Ministerial Declaration of the 2019 United Nations Environmental Assembly: Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production": Toward a pollution-free planet* [Declaration]. Retrieved 9 April 2019 from: <http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/27701/Draft%20Ministerial%20Declaration%20Final%20Draft%20as%20of%2014.03.2019.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

*The document is a key piece from the most recent session of UNEA, highlighting necessary measures to help create and provide solutions for the current environmental challenges that UN Environment wants to tackle. These include, but are not limited to, the protection of marine and coastal ecosystems and the improvement of environmental monitoring systems, something focused on heavily at the 24th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Katowice. It also outlines the goals for the Fourth Session of UNEA, as well as what they accomplished this past March.*

United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme. (2019). *Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production: Report of the Executive Director* [Report]. Retrieved 14 April 2019 from: <http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/27177/ED%20Report%20to%20UNEA%20for%20final%20editing%20December%202017.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y>

*This document is the culmination of ideas, innovation, and collaboration that was discussed at UNEA-4 in March 2019. The report focuses on the innovation solutions that would better sustainable practices and help achieve the 2030 Agenda. Education, technology, and finance are some of the topics discussed, recommending the increase of investing in the above mentioned. Through the executive's report, UNEA's thematic priorities are given potential solutions to help achieve the 2030 Agenda. This resource will prove useful to delegates as it lays out not only the thematic priorities of UNEA-4 but also where the Assembly plans to move forward past UNEA-4.*

United Nations Environment Programme. (n.d.). *About the UN Environment Assembly* [Website]. Retrieved 11 April 2019 from: <http://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/about-un-environment-assembly>

*This website provides a basic overview of the Assembly and its role within the UN Environment's governance structure, including its history and mandate. The resource represents an entry point for delegates to begin their research on the committee, as it provides an overview of the body's functions, as well as links to the documentation of past sessions and current thematic priorities of the Assembly. It is also here that preparatory material for the upcoming session of the Assembly is collected. This website should help delegates to easily distinguish between UN Environment and the Assembly and understand how they are connected to each other.*



United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021* [Report]. Retrieved 8 April 2019 from:

[http://apps.unep.org/publications/index.php?option=com\\_pub&task=download&file=012120\\_en](http://apps.unep.org/publications/index.php?option=com_pub&task=download&file=012120_en)

*This is the latest Medium Term Strategy for UN Environment, which took effect in 2018 when the previous Medium Term Strategy expired. The document provides a situation analysis of the state of the environment across the seven priority areas of work and briefly outlines what has been achieved through the previous Medium Term Strategy (more information is provided in the 2016 Programme Performance Report). This document is of particular importance for the delegates as it outlines the connection between UN Environment's priority areas and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the program's "Vision 2030."*

## Bibliography

Convention on Biological Diversity. (n.d.). *The Rio Conventions* [Website]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <https://www.cbd.int/rio/>

Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme. (1997). *Proceedings of the Governing Council at its Nineteenth Session (UNEP/GC.19/34)* [Report]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: [https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17274/97\\_GC19\\_proceedings.pdf?sequence=23&isAllowed=y](https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17274/97_GC19_proceedings.pdf?sequence=23&isAllowed=y)

New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2017). *United Nations Handbook 2017-18*. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: [https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Peace-and-Security/United\\_Nations\\_Handbook\\_2017\\_18.pdf](https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Peace-and-Security/United_Nations_Handbook_2017_18.pdf)

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. (1992). *Agenda 21* [Outcome Document]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/Agenda21.pdf>

United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. (1972). *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1)* [Report]. *Chapter I: Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment*. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/a/conf.48/14/Rev.1>

United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Delivering on the environmental dimensions of the 2030 Agenda: Information note of the Executive Director (UNEP/EA.2/INF/4)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/UNEP/EA.2/INF/4>

United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme. (2018). *Concept note on the theme of the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly*. Retrieved 15 September 2018 from: [https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/uploads/2018-09-03\\_concept\\_note\\_-\\_theme\\_unea\\_4\\_rev2\\_after\\_informal\\_consultations\\_tracked.hon\\_rev\\_jlc\\_clean3.pdf](https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/uploads/2018-09-03_concept_note_-_theme_unea_4_rev2_after_informal_consultations_tracked.hon_rev_jlc_clean3.pdf)

United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, Fourth Session. (2019). *Draft Ministerial Declaration of the 2019 United Nations Environmental Assembly: Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production": Toward a pollution-free planet* [Declaration]. Retrieved 9 April 2019 from: <http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/27701/Draft%20Ministerial%20Declaration%20Fifth%20Draft%20as%20of%2014.03.2019.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, Fourth Session. (2019). *Theme of the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly* [Website]. Retrieved 12 June 2019 from: <https://web.unep.org/environmentassembly/theme-fourth-session-un-environment-assembly>

United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme. (2019). *Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production: Report of the*



*Executive Director* [Report]. Retrieved 14 April 2019 from: <http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/27177/ED%20Report%20to%20UNEA%20for%20final%20editing%20December%2017.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y>

United Nations Environment Programme. (n.d.). *About UN Environment* [Website]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: [https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment?\\_ga=2.109303429.1255774256.1533999760-864816293.1533999760](https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment?_ga=2.109303429.1255774256.1533999760-864816293.1533999760)

United Nations Environment Programme. (n.d.). *About the UN Environment Assembly* [Website]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <http://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/about-un-environment-assembly>

United Nations Environment Programme. (n.d.). *Civil society engagement* [Website]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <https://www.unenvironment.org/civil-society-engagement>

United Nations Environment Programme. (n.d.). *Committee of Permanent Representatives: Overview* [Website]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <http://www.unep.org/about/cpr/who-we-are/overview>

United Nations Environment Programme. (n.d.). *Funding Facts* [Website]. Retrieved 15 September 2018 from: <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/funding/funding-facts>

United Nations Environment Programme. (n.d.). *Funding for UN Environment* [Website]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/funding-un-environment>

United Nations Environment Programme. (n.d.). *Organizational Structure* [Website]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/why-does-un-environment-matter/organizational-structure>

United Nations Environment Programme. (n.d.). *UN Environment Assembly and Governing Council* [Website]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <http://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/un-environment-assembly>

United Nations Environment Programme. (2012). *The First 40 Years: A Narrative by Stanley Johnson* [Report]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: [http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/8751/-UNEP\\_The\\_first\\_40\\_years\\_A\\_narrative\\_by\\_Stanley\\_Johnson-2012UNEP\\_The\\_First\\_40\\_Years\\_A\\_Narative.pdf.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y](http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/8751/-UNEP_The_first_40_years_A_narrative_by_Stanley_Johnson-2012UNEP_The_First_40_Years_A_Narative.pdf.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y)

United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021* [Report]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: [http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7621/-UNEP\\_Medium\\_Term\\_strategy\\_2018-2021-2016MTS\\_2018-2021.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y](http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7621/-UNEP_Medium_Term_strategy_2018-2021-2016MTS_2018-2021.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y)

United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Programme Performance Report 2016* [Report]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: [https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/16792/PPR\\_2016.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/16792/PPR_2016.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

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 12 August 2018 from: [http://undocs.org/A/RES/2997\(XXVII\)](http://undocs.org/A/RES/2997(XXVII))

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 12 August 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/S-19/2>



United Nations, General Assembly, Fifty-first session. (1997). *Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform. Report of the Secretary-General (A/51/950)* [Report]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/A/51/950>

United Nations, General Assembly, Fifty-third session. (1998). *Environment and human settlements. Report of the Secretary-General (A/53/463)* [Report]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/A/53/463>

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-sixth session. (2012). *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)* [Outcome Document]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 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 12 August 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/67/213>

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 12 August 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/67/251>

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 2 April 2019 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1>

United Nations System, Chief Executive Board of Coordination. (n.d.). *United Nations Environment Programme* [Website]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <http://www.unsceb.org/content/unep>

World Summit on Sustainable Development. (2002). *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/CONF.199/20\*)*. Retrieved 5 November 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/A/CONF.199/20>

## I. Preventing Marine Plastic Pollution through Sustainable Consumption and Production

*“Plastic isn’t the problem. It’s what we do with it. And that means the onus is on us to be far smarter in how we use this miracle material.”<sup>63</sup>*

### **Introduction**

Plastic, a traditionally cheap and multipurpose material derived from petroleum or natural gas, can be shaped and reshaped easily while heated, allowing for its use in a wide variety of applications.<sup>64</sup> Over three-hundred million tons of plastic are produced globally each year, and roughly eight million tons end up in the world’s oceans.<sup>65</sup> The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has projected that marine plastic production will increase by 40% in the next decade to 34 billion tons by 2050.<sup>66</sup> Due to its wide use, relatively low cost of production, and ease of transport, plastic has positively contributed to multiple areas of everyday life, including in the health and energy sectors, agriculture, and shipping services.<sup>67</sup> However, daily production and consumption of plastic, in these areas and others, have a negative impact on the environment.<sup>68</sup> Plastic tends to degrade slowly, is often disposed of with traditional waste, and can make its way into waterways, affecting the environment for decades.<sup>69</sup> Chemicals used in plastic production have carcinogenic properties, and microplastics in tap water, oceans, and seafood can have detrimental health effects.<sup>70</sup> Although marine environments face an array of issues, plastic pollution has recently taken priority in the international community, as it presents a challenge to not just the world’s oceans but also human health, food safety, tourism based economies, and climate change.<sup>71</sup> Sustainable consumption and production (SCP) is defined by the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) as “the use of services and related products, which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimizing the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle of the service or product so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations.” Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12 highlights sustainable practices and the international community has made efforts to more sustainably consume and produce plastic in line with SDG 12.<sup>72</sup> The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) has adopted multiple resolutions addressing sustainable consumption and production, with common recommendations to pursue sustainable consumption, recycling, and production of plastic material, and a substantial reduction in single-use plastic material.<sup>73</sup>

### **International and Regional Framework**

The *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* (UNCLOS) (1982) mirrors the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945) on the maintenance of peace and cooperation among all Member States in matters of ocean space.<sup>74</sup> UNCLOS provides coastal Member States a two-hundred mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) beyond their territorial sea, granting them jurisdiction over marine resources.<sup>75</sup> In 2012, the

---

<sup>63</sup> Solheim, E., Head of UN Environment, *Single-Use Plastics: A Roadmap for Sustainability*, 2018, p. i.

<sup>64</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature, *Issues Brief: Marine Plastics*, 2019.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> UN Environment, *What are businesses doing to turn off the plastic tap?*, 2018.

<sup>67</sup> UN Environment, *Single-Use Plastics: A Roadmap for Sustainability*, 2018, p. i.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> World Economic Forum, *The world’s plastic problem in numbers*, 2018.

<sup>70</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature, *Issues Brief: Marine Plastics*, 2019.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

<sup>73</sup> UNEA, *Marine plastic litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.2/Res.11)*, 2016; UNEA, *Marine litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.3/Res.7)*, 2017; UNEA, *Addressing water pollution to protect and restore water-related ecosystems (UNEP/EA.3/Res.10)*, 2017; UN General Assembly, *Oceans and the law of the sea (A/RES/70/235)*, 2015.

<sup>74</sup> United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, 1982.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

World Summit on Sustainable Development adopted the *10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP)*, a network of global actions to accelerate sustainable consumption and production.<sup>76</sup> The framework produced the One Planet Network, which aims to further the mission of 10YFP through 2022.<sup>77</sup> One Planet Network has already brought together both Member States and private organizations in the shift toward sustainable production and consumption.<sup>78</sup> In 2015, the General Assembly adopted the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, with SDGs 6, 12, 13, 14, and 15 targeting marine plastic pollution through clean water initiatives, consumption and production practices, climate action legislation policy, marine research cooperation between Member States, and increasing financial resources for the protection of the world's ecosystems.<sup>79</sup> The international community has made several commitments to curb plastic pollution's impact on clean water, marine resources, marine life, and adjacent terrestrial life, especially through sustainable consumption and production.<sup>80</sup> UNEA has adopted multiple resolutions on the topic, including 2/11 (2016), 3/7 (2017), and 3/10 (2017), and in 2015 the GA adopted resolution 70/235, "Oceans and the law of the sea," which includes more sustainable use of plastics.<sup>81</sup>

At the regional level, Latin American states have made efforts to reduce plastic consumption, with Antigua and Barbuda becoming the first Member State to ban plastic bag use in 2016 and several others following suit or enacting other policy strategies to reduce consumption, such as plastic bag taxes.<sup>82</sup> The African Union (AU) has also developed SCP policy and campaigns and partnered with UN Environment on the issue.<sup>83</sup> The AU's actions have led to bans on plastic bag use and efforts to establish plastic waste management programmes.<sup>84</sup>

### **Role of the International System**

The United Nations General Assembly regularly considers environmental matters, and the damage caused by marine plastic pollution was discussed at the 73<sup>rd</sup> session.<sup>85</sup> The President of the General Assembly, Maria Fernanda Espinosa, has indicated that focus areas include accountability measures for plastic pollution, the phasing out single-use plastics, and human and environmental health awareness campaigns.<sup>86</sup> In its last session, the General Assembly worked with UN Environment to launch the Global Plastics Platform.<sup>87</sup> The goal of the Global Plastics Platform is to reduce plastic pollution through exploring innovative consumption and disposal practices.<sup>88</sup> Through the platform, UN Environment aims to assist Member States with sharing effective consumption techniques, policies, and sustainability experiences.<sup>89</sup> The platform builds off UNEP's 2018 Clean Seas campaign to target and drastically reduce single-use plastic use over the next five years.<sup>90</sup>

---

<sup>76</sup> UN Environment, *One Planet Network*, 2019.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> UNEA, *Marine plastic litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.2/Res.11)*, 2016; UNEA, *Marine litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.3/Res.7)*, 2017; UNEA, *Addressing water pollution to protect and restore water-related ecosystems (UNEP/EA.3/Res.10)*, 2017; UN General Assembly, *Oceans and the law of the sea (A/RES/70/235)*, 2015.

<sup>82</sup> National Resources Defense Council, *Latin American Countries Act to Protect Oceans from Plastics*, 2018.

<sup>83</sup> UN Environment, *Africa is on the right path to eradicate plastics*, 2018.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> UNDP, *Assembly President Launches new initiative to purge plastics and purify oceans*, 2018.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid; UN Environment, *Clean Seas, About*, 2019.

<sup>88</sup> UN DP, *Assembly President Launches new initiative to purge plastics and purify oceans*, 2018.

<sup>89</sup> UN Environment, *Nations commit to fight plastic pollution together during the UN General Assembly*, 2018.

<sup>90</sup> UN Environment, *Clean Seas, About*, 2019.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) specializes in matters of food security but also carries out work on matters of sustainability, resilience, consumption, and climate change.<sup>91</sup> FAO regularly examines and reports on plastic pollution with respect to fishing and agriculture.<sup>92</sup> GLOBEFISH, an FAO initiative that provides data and analysis on the international fish trade and markets, makes preventive and corrective suggestions for the international community, states, and the private-sector on reducing plastic use and developing sustainable practices.<sup>93</sup>

Many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also work to improve the sustainable use of plastic.<sup>94</sup> Several NGOs focus on reducing single-use plastic consumption by businesses and corporations and advocate for legislation that addresses consumption practices and raises public awareness.<sup>95</sup> Some companies, particularly those with international reach, have also taken sustainable production steps to prevent further marine plastic pollution.<sup>96</sup> One example is Starbucks Corporation, which is working to remove plastic straws from all of its locations by 2020.<sup>97</sup> Executives within the company made the decision in an effort to reduce their impact on the environment and produce cups that are fully recyclable, directly mirroring the calls for sustainable policies identified by the United Nations Global Compact and Corporate Social Responsibility Advancement and Awareness Initiative.<sup>98</sup>

UNEA's third session on "Towards a pollution-free planet" adopted two resolutions pertaining to marine plastic pollution: "combating the spread of marine plastic litter and microplastics" and "addressing water pollution to protect and restore water-related ecosystems."<sup>99</sup> These resolutions drew attention to efforts to reduce plastic pollution, and encouraged Member States to develop action plans for plastic waste redesign and reuse, curbing unnecessary plastics in production, and improving waste management.<sup>100</sup> UNEA resolution 3/7 (2017) recognizes the need for sustainable consumption and production of plastic not just by Member States but also by corporations, civil society, and NGOs.<sup>101</sup> UNEA resolution 2/11 (2016) included the cleaning and mitigation of abandoned fishing material, such as line and storage devices, sewage channels (and their tendency to carry plastic litter significant distances from its point of origin and into open water ways), and public-private partnerships to ensure plastic materials are disposed of properly through recycling rather than landfills.<sup>102</sup> The suggestions made through this resolution have been reinforced through subsequent meetings of UNEA but have not been completely implemented.<sup>103</sup>

### **Marine Plastic Pollution Prevention Methods**

International legislative action to prevent marine plastic pollution date back to the *Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping Wastes and other Matter*, adopted in 1972 by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).<sup>104</sup> Through this product of IMO, the international community set practical steps to prevent marine pollution and spur effective control with regard to waste management practices.<sup>105</sup> However, the convention has not wholly addressed the issue of marine plastic pollution,

<sup>91</sup> FAO, *About*, 2019; FAO, *Themes*, 2019.

<sup>92</sup> FAO, *GLOBEFISH – Information and Analysis on World Fish Trade: Trade Information*, 2019.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid*; FAO, *GLOBEFISH – Information and Analysis on World Fish Trade: About GLOBEFISH*, 2019.

<sup>94</sup> Ocean Unite, *About Ocean Unite*, 2019.

<sup>95</sup> Ocean Unite, *Key Issues: Marine Plastic Pollution*, 2019.

<sup>96</sup> The Washington Post, *Starbucks will stop handing out plastic straws by 2020*, 2018.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid*; United Nations Global Compact, *Who We Are*, 2019; United Nations Global Compact, *CSR-in-Action (Corporate Social Responsibility Advancement and Awareness Initiative)*, 2019.

<sup>99</sup> UNEA, *UN Environment Assembly and Governing Council*, 2019; UNEA, *Marine litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.3/Res.7)*, 2017; UNEA, *Addressing water pollution to protect and restore water-related ecosystems (UNEP/EA.3/Res.10)*, 2017.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>101</sup> UNEA, *Marine litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.3/Res.7)*, 2017.

<sup>102</sup> UNEA, *Marine plastic litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.2/Res.11)*, 2016.

<sup>103</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature, *Issues Brief: Marine Plastics*, 2019.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>105</sup> International Maritime Organization, *Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and other Matter*, 2019.

primarily due to limited finances and enforcement.<sup>106</sup> Several Member States have developed legislation at local levels to prevent further marine plastic pollution, such as eliminating single-use disposable plastic straws in coastal tourism areas and gradually reducing plastic bag use, but these initiatives are local and have not seen widespread international adoption.<sup>107</sup>

In decades past, international discussions focused on recycling when discussing the disposal of plastic material.<sup>108</sup> Placement of recycling bins by cities and local governments in populated areas serves as a viable option to prevent plastic from entering landfills, beaches, and areas of coastal tourism.<sup>109</sup> However, some studies have shown recycling is one of the least effective measures to prevent marine plastic pollution.<sup>110</sup> Reduction and conservation of plastic materials, cyclical use, and sustainable design by manufacturers have been recognized as more effective and practical solutions, including by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), a collaboration between governments and civil society.<sup>111</sup> Such activities have been taken on by some within the private sector; however, consumption of single-use plastic has continued despite calls by UNEA.<sup>112</sup> According to the IUCN, minimal collaboration between governments and companies and a lack of knowledge sharing has contributed to continued single-use plastic consumption and the absence of viable SCP legislation.<sup>113</sup>

### **Sustainable Consumption and Production**

UNEA's Ad Hoc Open-Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter proposed several options for addressing marine plastic pollution, including prevention efforts, effective management of chemicals, approaches to impose financial responsibility on those who produce plastics, and establishing a knowledge-sharing portal on production methodology.<sup>114</sup> The Expert Group has considered how to improve sustainable consumption and production of plastic, particularly through effective management of chemical and waste products to ensure their impact on the environment is minimal.<sup>115</sup> The Expert Group argues that, because plastic is a synthetic substance, it should be categorized as a chemical, especially due to its ties to petroleum and natural gas and its ability to be manipulated.<sup>116</sup> Doing so would place plastic production and consumption directly under SDG 12.4 and provide increased incentives for Member States, corporations, and local governments to further their SCP efforts.<sup>117</sup>

Since the establishment of UN Environment's Clean Seas campaign in 2018, more than 50 Member States have joined.<sup>118</sup> This has led to public involvement and pledges to reduce single-use plastic consumption through items such as reusable water bottles, glass storage containers, and canvas style bags.<sup>119</sup> The public and shareholders of international corporations, such as Nestle and PepsiCo, are also pressuring businesses to consider alternative and more sustainable practices, reduce the use of plastic for packaging, and release records of annual plastic consumption.<sup>120</sup> Because of this, the private sector is taking the threat of sale decline seriously.<sup>121</sup> Several have already made commitments, such as Unilever's

---

<sup>106</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature, *Issues Brief: Marine Plastics*, 2019.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*; The Washington Post, *Starbucks will stop handing out plastic straws by 2020*, 2018.

<sup>113</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature, *Issues Brief: Marine Plastics*, 2019.

<sup>114</sup> Center for International Environmental Law, *Progress on Plastics Update: Issue 8*, 2018.

<sup>115</sup> UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

<sup>116</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature, *Issues Brief: Marine Plastics*, 2019; Center for International Environmental Law, *Progress on Plastics Update: Issue 8*, 2018.

<sup>117</sup> Center for International Environmental Law, *Progress on Plastics Update: Issue 8*, 2018; IMO, *Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and other Matter*, 2019.

<sup>118</sup> UN Environment, *What are businesses doing to turn off the plastic tap?*, 2018.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*; Center for International Environmental Law, *Progress on Plastics Update: Issue 8*, 2018.

<sup>120</sup> UN Environment, *What are businesses doing to turn off the plastic tap?*, 2018.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

commitment to utilize fully-recyclable packaging material by 2025 and IKEA's pledge to switch from single-use plastic products to fully-recyclable material in all of its stores by 2020.<sup>122</sup> Although these sustainability actions are a step in the right direction, they are voluntary, and companies are not legally obligated to follow through with their sustainability declarations.<sup>123</sup> Several NGOs are engaged in efforts to pressure these companies to follow through with their initiatives.<sup>124</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The international community has taken steps to address marine plastic pollution, but efforts to develop sustainable patterns of consumption and production remain limited.<sup>125</sup> Prevention of future marine plastic pollution through SCP will likely require international effort in fully implementing relevant frameworks, including the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the 10YFP.<sup>126</sup> UNEA regularly reaffirms that Member States and the private sector are key in assuring the international community makes progress on reducing marine litter, but their recommendations have not been fully implemented.<sup>127</sup>

### **Further Research**

Delegates should consider the following questions when conducting their research: What can UNEA do to address consumption and production practices of plastic? What challenges lie ahead for Member States who struggle to implement sustainable plastic consumption methods? What role do private organizations play within the prevention of marine plastic pollution? How can the international community hold private organizations accountable for their production methods? What role does civil society have in plastic pollution prevention methods? How can UNEA build upon existing frameworks to build capacity amongst all Member States?

## **Annotated Bibliography**

Center for International Environmental Law. (2018). *Progress on Plastics Update: Issue 8*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.ciel.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Progress-on-Plastics-Update-Issue-8-AHOEEG-Dec-2018.pdf>

*The Center for International Environmental Law uses legislation to protect the environment while promoting human rights and sustainable societies. This source is a journal article provided by the Center highlighting key initiatives of the third session of UNEA, most notably the Ad-Hoc Open-Ended Expert Group. The article highlights suggestions the Expert Group has made on plastic pollution, sustainable consumption, and production methods. The article provides insight and draws on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Delegates will find this article helpful when researching action and efforts suggested by the international community.*

International Union for Conservation of Nature. (2019). *Issues Brief: Marine plastics* [Website]. Retrieved 23 April 2019 from: <https://www.iucn.org/resources/issues-briefs/marine-plastics>

*The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is an entity consisting of government and civil society organizations, with a mission to enhance human progress, economic development, and conservation of nature through knowledge-sharing. The website and information provided by IUCN gives a definition of plastic, background on plastic pollution in the world's oceans, and potential actions that can be taken to address the issues presented. The source serves as a non-governmental organization view and*

---

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid; UN Environment Assembly, *Marine plastic litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.2/Res.11)*, 2016; Center for International Environmental Law, *Progress on Plastics Update: Issue 8*, 2018.

<sup>126</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature, *Issues Brief: Marine Plastics*, 2019; Center for International Environmental Law, *Progress on Plastics Update: Issue 8*, 2018.

<sup>127</sup> UN Environment, *What are businesses doing to turn off the plastic tap?*, 2018.





*recommendations for action and will provide delegates with reasoning as to why plastic pollution is a problem and why some actions are more sustainable than others.*

United Nations Environment. (28 June 2018). *What are businesses doing to turn off the plastic tap?* [Article]. Retrieved 27 April 2019 from: <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/what-are-businesses-doing-turn-plastic-tap>

*This UN Environment article provided through UNEP offers insights regarding sustainable consumption and production practice, particularly that of businesses. The article draws upon the 10YFP, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and UNEP's Clean Seas Campaign. In addition, the article provides examples of initiatives large corporations are taking and suggestions by NGOs and will allow delegates to draw a connection to everyday plastic use.*

United Nations Environment. (2019). *One Planet Network* [Website]. Retrieved 25 April 2019 from: <https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/one-planet-network>

*One Planet Network in an open partnership to support a shift toward sustainable consumption and production techniques. This website provides information detailing one of the first action plans developed out of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2012. The source outlines key objectives for the 10-year framework, sustainability practices, information sharing techniques, as well as further action to be implemented in plastic pollution prevention. Delegates will find the source provides an action plan dating to 2022, as well as a running list of organizations that are part of the network.*

United Nations Environment Assembly. (2016). *Marine plastic litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.2/Res.11)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 27 February 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/en/UNEP/EA.2/Res.11>

*This UNEA Resolution was adopted on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August 2016, focusing on the presence of plastic in the world's oceans, as well as microplastics. The resolution highlights past actions of UNEA and activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization, particularly the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land Based Activities. The resolution summarizes recent action by UNEA, with respect to plastic litter and the healthier oceans and will serve as a useful tool for delegates when researching past action by UNEA.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)* [Resolution]. Adopted without reference to a main committee (A/70/L.1). Retrieved 24 April 2019 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1>

*This General Assembly resolution sets out the 2030 Agenda. Delegates will find SDGs 6, 12, 13, 14, and 15 all coincide with preventing marine plastic pollution through sustainable production and consumption, and should use the source as a starting point when conducting sustainability research. These goals and their targets include actions to alleviate marine plastic pollution.*

## Bibliography

Center for International Environmental Law. (2018). *Progress on Plastics Update: Issue 8*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.ciel.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Progress-on-Plastics-Update-Issue-8-AHOEEG-Dec-2018.pdf>

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2019). *GLOBEFISH – Information and Analysis on World Fish Trade: About GLOBEFISH* [Website]. Retrieved 24 April 2019 from: <http://www.fao.org/in-action/globefish/background/who-we-are/en/>

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2019). *GLOBEFISH – Information and Analysis on World Fish Trade: Trade Information* [Website]. Retrieved 24 April 2019 from: <http://www.fao.org/in-action/globefish/fishery-information/resource-detail/en/c/1046435/>



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2019). *Themes* [Website]. Retrieved 24 April 2019 from: <http://www.fao.org/themes/en/>

International Maritime Organization. (2019). *Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and other Matter* [Website]. Retrieved 29 June 2019 from: <http://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Environment/LCLP/Pages/default.aspx>

International Union for Conservation of Nature. (2019). *Issues Brief: Marine plastics* [Website]. Retrieved 23 April 2019 from: <https://www.iucn.org/resources/issues-briefs/marine-plastics>

National Resources Defense Council. (8 June 2018). *Latin American Countries Act to Protect Oceans from Plastics*. Retrieved 30 May 2019 from: <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/carolina-herrera/latin-american-countries-act-protect-oceans-plastics>

Ocean Unite. (2019). *About Ocean Unite* [Website]. Retrieved 30 May 2019 from: <https://www.oceanunite.org/about/>

Ocean Unite. (2019). *Key Issues: Marine Plastic Pollution* [Website]. Retrieved 30 May 2019 from: <https://www.oceanunite.org/issues/marine-plastic-pollution/>

The Washington Post. (9 July 2018). *Starbucks will stop handing out plastic straws by 2020*. Retrieved 1 June 2019 from: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/business/wp/2018/07/09/starbucks-will-stop-handing-out-plastic-straws-by-2020/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.615415529f66](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/business/wp/2018/07/09/starbucks-will-stop-handing-out-plastic-straws-by-2020/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.615415529f66)

United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. (1982). *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*. Retrieved 24 April 2019 from: [https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention\\_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos\\_e.pdf](https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf)

United Nations Department of Public Information. (4 December 2018). *Assembly President launches new initiative to purge plastics and purify oceans* [Article]. Retrieved 25 April 2019 from: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/12/1027571>

United Nations Environment. (30 July 2018). *Africa is on the right path to eradicate plastics* [Article]. Retrieved 29 June 2019 from: <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/africa-right-path-eradicate-plastics>

United Nations Environment. (26 September 2018). *Nations commit to fight plastic pollution together during the UN General Assembly* [Press Release]. Retrieved 25 April 2019 from: <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/press-release/nations-commit-fight-plastic-pollution-together-during-un-general>

United Nations Environment. (2018). *Single-Use Plastics: A Roadmap for Sustainability* [Report]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/25496/singleUsePlastic\\_sustainability.pdf?isAllowed=y&sequence=1](https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/25496/singleUsePlastic_sustainability.pdf?isAllowed=y&sequence=1)

United Nations Environment. (28 June 2018). *What are businesses doing to turn off the plastic tap?* [Article]. Retrieved 27 April 2019 from: <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/what-are-businesses-doing-turn-plastic-tap>

United Nations Environment. (2019). *One Planet Network* [Website]. Retrieved 25 April 2019 from: <https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/one-planet-network>

United Nations Environment, Clean Seas. (2019). *About* [Website]. Retrieved 25 April 2019 from: <https://www.cleanseas.org/about>



United Nations Environment Assembly. (2016). *Marine plastic litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.2/Res.11)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 23 April 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/UNEP/EA.2/Res.11>

United Nations Environment Assembly. (2017). *Addressing water pollution to protect and restore water-related ecosystems (UNEP/EA.3/Res.10)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 23 April 2019 from <https://undocs.org/UNEP/EA.3/Res.10>

United Nations Environment Assembly. (2017). *Marine litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.3/Res.7)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 23 April 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/UNEP/EA.3/Res.7>

United Nations Environment Assembly. (2019). UN Environment Assembly and Governing Council [Website]. Retrieved 23 April 2019 from: <http://web.unep.org/environmentassembly/un-environment-assembly-and-governing-council>

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)* [Resolution]. Adopted without reference to a main committee (A/70/L.1). Retrieved 9 August 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1>

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Oceans and the law of the sea (A/RES/70/235)* [Resolution]. Adopted without reference to a Main Committee (A/70/L.22 and Add.1). Retrieved 24 April 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/235>

United Nations Global Compact. (2019). *CSR-in-Action (Corporate Social Responsibility Advancement and Awareness Initiative)* [Website]. Retrieved 29 June 2019 from: <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/participants/12852-CSR-in-Action-Corporate-Social-Responsibility-Advancement-and-Awareness-Initiative->

United Nations Global Compact. (2019). *Who We Are* [Website]. Retrieved 29 June 2019 from: <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc>

World Economic Forum. (13 August 2018). *The world's plastic problem in numbers*. Retrieved 23 April 2019 from: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/08/the-world-of-plastics-in-numbers>

## II. Ending Illegal Wildlife Trade and Whaling

### Introduction

Considered the “Sixth Extinction,” species population has decreased 60% since 1970, with unsustainable consumption as one of the dominant causes.<sup>128</sup> Labeled a transnational crime in 2000 in General Assembly resolution 55/25, the *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* (UNTOC), the illicit trade of wildlife has an annual global retail value of up to \$23 billion.<sup>129</sup> The loss of natural resources from illegal wildlife trade (IWT) compromises the natural wealth of Member States, whether trafficking occurs for medicine or consumer goods.<sup>130</sup> According to the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), six of the 13 great whale species are endangered due to commercial whaling in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>131</sup> While only three states continue to commercially whale in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, their demand for whale meat has caused nearly 40,000 whales to be killed over the past 30 years.<sup>132</sup> The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) has made ending the overexploitation of wildlife a priority since its first session in 2014.<sup>133</sup> Wildlife health influences the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) from the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.<sup>134</sup> To this end, UNEA has continued to not only produce educational research and guidelines on wildlife crime for Member States directly, but also reinforce existing international and regional conservation initiatives.<sup>135</sup>

### International and Regional Framework

Signed in 1973, the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* (CITES) established an information platform recognizing threatened species and regulating their trade.<sup>136</sup> The parties to the Convention are bound by its regulation of trade for over 35,000 species of plants and animals.<sup>137</sup> *The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species Of Wild Animals* (CMS) is a 1979 UN Environment treaty that provides the only international platform for conservation specifically for migratory species.<sup>138</sup> CMS calls upon Member States that contain migration routes to protect endangered species and provide framework to establish regional oversight committees.<sup>139</sup> Citing all of these documents, UNEA resolution 1/3, *Illegal trade in wildlife* (2014), lists specific recommendations, such as resource mobilization and community development, that Member States can follow to combat IWT.<sup>140</sup> Several SDGs include IWT, with SDG 15 addressing the supply, demand, and trafficking of illegal wildlife

---

<sup>128</sup> Ripple et al, *World Scientists' Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice*, 2017, p. 1; World Wild Fund for Nature, *Living Planet Report 2018: Aiming higher*, 2018, p. 13.

<sup>129</sup> UN General Assembly, *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime: Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (A/RES/55/25)*, 2000; Global Financial Integrity, *Transnational Crime and the Developing World*, 2017.

<sup>130</sup> World Wild Fund for Nature, *Fighting Illicit Wildlife Trafficking: A consultation with governments*, 2012, pp. 5, 12.

<sup>131</sup> World Wild Fund for Nature, *Whale: Why They Matter*, 2019; Rocha et al, *Emptying the Oceans: A Summary of Industrial Whaling Catches in the 20th Century*, 2015.

<sup>132</sup> Environmental Investigation Agency, *Commercial whaling: Unsustainable, inhumane, unnecessary*, 2018.

<sup>133</sup> UN Environment, *Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (A/69/25)*, 2014, pp. 20-23; International Fund for Animal Welfare, *Thriving Together: Achieving the SDGs and Improving Well-being for Animals and People*, 2018.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> UN Environment, *Strengthening legal frameworks for licit and illicit trade in wildlife and forest product: Lessons from the natural resource management, trade regulation and criminal justice sectors*, 2018; UNEA, *Illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products (UN Environment/EA.2/Res. 14)*, 2016.

<sup>136</sup> World Conservation Union, *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora*, 1973.

<sup>137</sup> Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, *What is CITES?*.

<sup>138</sup> Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, *CMS*, 2018.

<sup>139</sup> UN Environment, *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*, 1979, pp. 1-3.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid, p. 20-23; UNEA, *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.

products, and SDG 16 on strengthening rule of law as linked to managing IWT.<sup>141</sup> SDGs 8 and 12 include balancing consumption with natural resource sustainability, damaged by the overexploitation of IWT.<sup>142</sup> In addition to the international frameworks, regional action plans managed by Member States, such as the African Elephant Action Plan, allow for conservation protocols with more region-specific goals and methods, a tactic supported by UNEA to combat IWT.<sup>143</sup>

The 1946 *International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling* (ICRW) establishes quota regulations on commercial, aboriginal substance, and scientific whaling through its Schedule.<sup>144</sup> The 1986 ICRW Schedule amendment created a global moratorium on all commercial whaling.<sup>145</sup> These ICRW regulations are supported by the 1982 *Convention on the Law of the Sea* (UNCLOS), which calls upon Member States to cooperate on the conservation of marine mammals.<sup>146</sup> Additionally, CITES and CMS further ban the international trade of any resources from endangered whale species.<sup>147</sup> Similar to IWT, the legal accountability of whaling laws and the sustainable use of marine resources are part of SDGs 8, 12, and 16, while SDG 14 focuses on marine ecosystem health with no direct mention of whaling.<sup>148</sup>

Despite the range of international regulations covering the overexploitation of endangered species, the Secretary-General's 2018 report on "Gaps in international environmental law and environment-related instruments" (A/73/419) researched gaps in those frameworks.<sup>149</sup> With sections on CITES, CMS, and UNCLOS, the report highlights the main problems as a lack of effective national regulation enforcement, minimal interagency collaboration, and unspecified legal definitions.<sup>150</sup> For example, the definition of a whale is not stated in the ICRW, meaning the species of cetaceans that fall under its regulations are not distinct.<sup>151</sup> WWF, similarly, found current regulations to be ineffective, with Member States indicating no reduction in consumer demand and a lack of accountability as the main limitations.<sup>152</sup>

### ***Role of the International System***

The International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), a partnership between the CITES Secretariat, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), UNODC, the World Bank, and the World Customs Organization (2010), works to strengthen wildlife criminal justice systems.<sup>153</sup> UNODC and ICWC have produced national IWT resources, such as the *Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit* and the *Guide on Drafting Legislation to Combat Wildlife Crime*, both of which are compendiums on legislative guidelines needed to address wildlife crime.<sup>154</sup> The World Bank is the leading financier for wildlife law enforcement and a prominent actor in fighting money laundering utilized by international wildlife crime networks.<sup>155</sup> The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the world's largest

---

<sup>141</sup> UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, pp. 25-26; UN Environment, *Advancing Justice, Governance and Law For Environmental Sustainability*, 2012, pp. 36-38.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 22.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>144</sup> International Whaling Commission, *Key Documents*; International Whaling Commission, *Membership and Contracting Governments*.

<sup>145</sup> International Whaling Commission, *International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, 1946: Schedule*, 2018, p. 5.

<sup>146</sup> UN Conference on the Law of the Sea, *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, 1982, p. 48.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22-26.

<sup>149</sup> UN General Assembly, *Gaps in international environmental law and environment-related instruments: towards a global pact for the environment: Report of the Secretary-General (A/73/419)*, 2018, pp. 20-21, 38.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>151</sup> International Whaling Commission, *Taxonomy of Whales*.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-25.

<sup>153</sup> Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, *The International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime*.

<sup>154</sup> UNODC, *Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit: Revised Edition*, 2012, pp. 4-7; UNODC, *Guide on Drafting Legislation to Combat Wildlife Crime*, 2018.

<sup>155</sup> World Bank, *Fighting Wildlife Crime to End Extreme Poverty and Boost Shared Prosperity*, 2014.

environmental network and developer of the Red List of Threatened Species, encompasses 1,300 government and civil society organizations and over 10,000 environmental experts.<sup>156</sup> While these bodies support the conservation of whales, the International Whaling Commission (IWC), established by the ICRW, is the global body for whaling regulations to both conserve whales and utilize them as commercial resources.<sup>157</sup> The 2018 IWC Florianópolis Declaration reaffirmed previous regulations, such as the 1986 moratorium, and redefined the body's mandate to specifically conservation of cetacean populations.<sup>158</sup>

Both the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and General Assembly have adopted resolutions calling for Member States to combat IWT nationally with the help of UN bodies like UN Environment.<sup>159</sup> UN Environment houses the secretariats of both CITES and the *Convention on Biological Diversity* (CBD).<sup>160</sup> UN Environment attempts to support international efforts through numerous programs, including the Green Customs Initiative (GCI), the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UN Environment-WCMC), and the #WildforLife campaign.<sup>161</sup> GCI is an international organization partnership that facilitates the capacity-building of customs and border control officers to prevent IWT.<sup>162</sup> UN Environment-WCMC builds comprehensive biodiversity information systems and data sharing methods accessible to all levels of decision-makers through cooperation with organizations such as IUCN.<sup>163</sup> The #WildforLife campaign, started in 2016, brings together politicians and celebrities to promote commitment to and mobilize resources for stopping IWT.<sup>164</sup> Along with international organizations, regional and national conservation groups, such as the African Wildlife Foundation and the American Cetacean Society (ACS), provide insight to the effectiveness of region-specific research, education, and policies for both IWT and whaling.<sup>165</sup>

### ***Effects of Illegal Wildlife Trade and Whaling and its Measurement***

One of the major issues in quantifying IWT lies with the market and its numerous products and species without a standard unit of measure.<sup>166</sup> UNODC has suggested one possible measurement metric as environmental impact.<sup>167</sup> UN Environment divides the environmental effects of IWT and whaling into impacts on the species, the ecosystem, and the spread of diseases.<sup>168</sup> For example, the depletion of great whale species has drastically changed the species interaction, nutrient transfer, and carbon production in the marine ecosystem.<sup>169</sup> While the CBD and its 2011-2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets make no direct mention of IWT and whaling, its goal to address the causes of biodiversity loss and provide

---

<sup>156</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature, *About*, 2018; International Union for Conservation of Nature, *IUCN Red List: Background & History*, 2019.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>158</sup> International Whaling Commission, *The Florianópolis Declaration on the Role of the International Whaling Commission in The Conservation and Management of Whales in the 21st Century (Resolution 2018-5)*, 2018.

<sup>159</sup> UN ECOSOC, *Crime Prevention and criminal justice responses to illicit trafficking in protected species of wild flora and fauna (E/RES/2013/40)*, 2013; UN General Assembly, *Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife (A/RES/69/314)*, 2015.

<sup>160</sup> Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, *The CITES Secretariat; Convention on Biological Diversity, Secretariat Role*.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21; UN DPI, *UN launches unprecedented #WildforLife campaign to end illegal trade in wildlife*, 2016.

<sup>162</sup> Green Customs Initiative, *Who We Are*.

<sup>163</sup> UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre, *About*; UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre, *Our Partners*.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>165</sup> African Wildlife Foundation, *What We Do: Wildlife Conservation*; American Cetacean Society, *Mission, Vision, Values*, 2018.

<sup>166</sup> UNODC, *World Wildlife Crime Report: Trafficking in protected species*, 2016, p. 30.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>168</sup> UN Environment, *Analysis of the environmental impacts of illegal trade in wildlife*, 2017, p. 20.

<sup>169</sup> Roman et al, *Whales as marine ecosystem engineers*, 2014.

avenues to characterize the status of threatened species' ecosystems and the environmental effect of IWT and whaling.<sup>170</sup>

Another measurement metric proposed by UNODC is the economic value of the products, through revenue or law enforcement seizure comparisons.<sup>171</sup> While ivory and rhinoceros horns are considered some of the most popular and expensive wildlife products, equaling sales of up to \$700 million each in 2015, the pangolin is the most trafficked animal with approximately 100,000 poached each year.<sup>172</sup> Although the majority of illegally acquired wildlife products are sold on black markets, some markets for legally acquired products, such as ivory, sell large shares of illegally acquired products, giving traffickers more potential buyers.<sup>173</sup> In addition to the lost revenue from the resources, nature tourism is negatively affected by IWT.<sup>174</sup> African tourism loses approximately \$25 million annually, as thousands of elephants are poached each year.<sup>175</sup> With commercial whaling only currently practiced in three Member States, research into the economic sustainability of the exercise has been more easily focused.<sup>176</sup> The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), and WWF have separately reported that the industry is not profitable.<sup>177</sup> In contrast, IFAW campaigns for whale watching tourism have shown that it not only generates approximately \$2 billion globally per year but also provides a more sustainable use of whales in whaling states.<sup>178</sup>

### **Case Study: Japan**

Japan has the only remaining major legal trade market for ivory and is one of three Member States still permitting commercial whaling.<sup>179</sup> CITES effectively banned ivory trade by classifying the African elephant as a nearly extinct protected species, and recommending all domestic ivory markets close.<sup>180</sup> UNEA has facilitated the closing of domestic ivory trades, including those in the United States and China in 2016.<sup>181</sup> Despite this, more than 262,000 elephants have been killed since 1970 mainly to produce Japanese hanko stamps.<sup>182</sup> The Japan Tiger and Elephant Fund's (JTEF) 2017 report on Japanese ivory trade highlights the numerous loopholes in national laws allowing illegal ivory to enter the market unregulated.<sup>183</sup> In response to the push for dismantling ivory markets, the Japanese government amended its local conservation law in 2017 to include stricter ivory registration.<sup>184</sup> Japanese officials, however, have indicated there is no connection between the Japanese ivory market and elephant poaching, while defending the trade as fundraising for conservation.<sup>185</sup> After the 1986 IWC moratorium on commercial whaling, the Japanese Institute of Cetacean Research continues to hunt whales for legal

---

<sup>170</sup> UN Environment, *Convention on Biological Diversity*, 1992; Convention on Biological Diversity, *The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (UN Environment/CBD/COP/DEC/X/2)*, 2010.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>172</sup> Global Financial Integrity, *Transnational Crime and the Developing World*, 2017, pp. 53-54.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>174</sup> Naidoo et al, *Estimating economic losses to tourism in Africa from the illegal killing of elephants*, 2016.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*; World Wild Fund for Nature, *Sink or Swim: The Economics of Whaling Today*, 2009; International Fund for Animal Welfare, *The Economics of Japanese Whaling: A Collapsing Industry Burdens Taxpayers*, 2013.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> International Fund for Animal Welfare, *Whale Watching Worldwide: Tourism numbers, expenditures, and expanding economic benefits*, 2009, p. 8; International Fund for Animal Welfare, *Whale watching in the whaling countries*, 2019.

<sup>179</sup> WildAid, *Close Ivory Market in Japan, Beginning with Hankos*, 2019; International Fund for Animal Welfare, *Which countries are still whaling?*, 2019.

<sup>180</sup> Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, *Trade in elephant specimens (Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP17))*, 2016.

<sup>181</sup> Anderson, *Wildlife Crime: Fanning the Ivory Pyres*, *SDG Knowledge Hub*, 2016.

<sup>182</sup> Environmental Investigation Agency, *How Ivory Hanko Destroyed Africa's Elephants and Drives Japan's Illegal Ivory Trade*, 2018, p. 2.

<sup>183</sup> Japan Tiger and Elephant Fund, *Why Should the Japanese Domestic Ivory Market Be Closed?*, 2017.

<sup>184</sup> Government of Japan, *Japan's View and Efforts in regard to Conservation of African Elephants and Trade in Ivory*, 2016; Government of Japan, *FAQ on ivory trade*, pp. 12, 15.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*

scientific research.<sup>186</sup> However, their recent whaling programs came under scrutiny as possible ways to circumvent the moratorium.<sup>187</sup> Following the backlash to its scientific whaling and the adoption of the new, conservation-centric IWC mandate, Japan announced its withdrawal from IWC in December 2018, explaining that the resignation was necessary as IWC was not balancing conservation and sustainable utilization of whaling products.<sup>188</sup>

## Conclusion

The environment is one of the foundations of economic and social development, making wildlife crime and overconsumption a threat to sustainable development.<sup>189</sup> Due to the transnational aspect of IWT, the natural resources of all Member States are impacted.<sup>190</sup> While the economic and environmental impacts of these practices are known, a demand for high-priced wildlife products ensures that wildlife crime and commercial whaling continue.<sup>191</sup> Although international regulations and organizations exist to stop IWT and whaling, a lack of policy enforcement, national commitment, and interagency collaboration has undermined their success.<sup>192</sup> As the main UN body for environmental issues, UNEA has continued to promote cooperation between conservation organizations and continued to support international and regional initiatives through educational campaigns, policy guidelines, and data sharing.<sup>193</sup> However, due to gaps in the international frameworks and the covert nature of IWT, efforts to end IWT and illegal whaling remain timely and important in the context of the SDGs.<sup>194</sup>

## Further Research

As delegates proceed in research, there are multiple questions to keep in mind: Are more specific resolutions targeting key issues in IWT and whaling needed? In practice, how well have the conservation regulatory bodies handled IWT and whaling regulations? How should current conventions be amended to increase adherence and reduce regulatory loopholes? How well grounded is the prohibition of illegal trafficking of wildlife and commercial whaling within the SDGs? What are the drivers for IWT and whaling?

## Annotated Bibliography

Global Financial Integrity. (2017). *Transnational Crime and the Developing World*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [https://www.gfintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Transnational\\_Crime-final.pdf](https://www.gfintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Transnational_Crime-final.pdf)  
*Global Financial Integrity, a non-profit research organization specializing in illicit financial flow analyses, produced this evaluation of transnational crime finances. Section VIII of this report goes into detail on the dynamics of illegal wildlife trade, the value and uses of illicit wildlife products, and how the criminal activity affects national economies. Delegates will not only be able to use this report as a guide to the financial profile of IWT but can also review the similarities between IWT and the finances of other transnational crimes.*

International Whaling Commission. (2018). *International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, 1946: Schedule*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://archive.iwc.int/pages/view.php?ref=3606&k=>

<sup>186</sup> Institute of Cetacean Research, *Overview and Purpose*, 2011.

<sup>187</sup> Institute of Cetacean Research, *Outline of New Antarctic Ridge Science Research (NEWREP-A)*; Ibid; ICJ, *Whaling in the Antarctic (Australia v. Japan: New Zealand intervening)*, *Judgement of 31 March 2014*, 2014, p. 76; International Whaling Commission, *Report of the Expert Panel Workshop on the Proposed Research Plan for New Scientific Whale Research Programme in the western North Pacific (NEWREP-NP) and response to the Report (IWC.ALL.286)*, 2017, p. 4.

<sup>188</sup> Denyer & Kashiwagi, Japan to leave International Whaling Commission, resume commercial hunting, *The Washington Post*, 2018.

<sup>189</sup> UN Environment, *The Rise of Environmental Crime*, 2016, p. 7; Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid, p. 4; Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid, p. 4; Ibid; Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid, pp. 20-21, 38.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid; Ibid, p. 21; Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid, pp. 20-21, 38.



*The 1946 International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling produced a list of regulations on commercial, scientific, and aboriginal substance whaling, known as the Schedule. Amended by the International Whaling Commission, articles 10(d) and (e) initiated the 1986 commercial whaling moratorium. As the only international regulations on whaling, delegates will find this report useful in understanding how the type of whale and type of whaling affects how a member of the Commission can hunt. Additionally, delegates will get context on the commercial moratorium, which is debated between pro-whaling and anti-whaling States, and the given definitions of protected whales, which brings into question the breadth of the Commission's jurisdiction.*

United Nations Environment Assembly. (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*. Retrieved 3 July 2019 from: <http://wedocs.UN>

[Environment.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17285/K1402364.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y](http://Environment.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17285/K1402364.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y)

*The first meeting of UNEA in 2014 produced numerous resolutions, including resolution 1/3 on illegal wildlife trade. That resolution details the first recommendations provided by UNEA to help Member States combat IWT of land and marine animals, including the mobilization of resources, the promotion of cross-agency cooperation, and the implementation of zero-tolerance policies. As these solutions have still not been fully realized, delegates should understand how UNEA started working to combat IWT and whaling and how those recommendations can be revised for future resolutions.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Fifty-fifth session. (2000). *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime: Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (A/RES/55/25)*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from:

<http://undocs.org/A/RES/55/25>

*This UN General Assembly resolution adopted the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), a multilateral treaty against transnational crime including illicit wildlife trade, as well as its two protocols. Annex I gives the full text of the original UNTOC, and operative paragraph 11 establishes the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as its secretariat. Consequently, UNODC has been the lead department in resolving issues related to illicit wildlife trade since 2000, following the procedures of the UNTOC in its efforts. Additionally, the Article 2(b) definition of a "serious crime" is consistently cited in IWT documents, showing the severity of wildlife crime. Delegates will find this report especially helpful as they begin their research, as the resolution outlines the current handling of transnational crime and the central role that UNODC plays in its regulation.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from:

<http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1>

*As the environment is intrinsically linked to sustainable development, delegates will need to fully understand the link between IWT and whaling and the SDGs. While SDG 15 directly discusses IWT, there is no direct mention of whaling in SDG 14. However, numerous targets include judicial accountability, economic prosperity, and sustainable resource consumption, which encompass wildlife activities. As delegates consider the best avenues to end IWT and illegal whaling, they will find this resolution helpful in how those solutions can ensure the realization of the SDGs.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-third session. (2018). *Gaps in international environmental law and environment-related instruments: towards a global pact for the environment: Report of the Secretary-General (A/73/419)* [Report]. Retrieved 2 June 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/A/73/419>

*Requested by GA resolution 72/277, "Towards a Global Pact for the Environment," this 2018 Secretary-General Report specifies flaws in almost every international environmental framework, including CITES, CMS, UNCLOS, and, indirectly, ICRW. The report additionally discusses the overall principles of environmental law and environment-*

*related instruments, such as the World Trade Organization. The report gives a clear understanding of what the UN currently sees as the main problems in IWT and whaling regulations. Delegates should understand these gaps and determine if or how UNEA can facilitate solutions to them.*

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2018). *Guide on Drafting Legislation to Combat Wildlife Crime* [Report]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from:

[https://www.unodc.org/documents/Wildlife/Legislative\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/Wildlife/Legislative_Guide.pdf)

*Produced by UNODC, this guide is the body's guide to assist States in criminalizing and prosecuting serious wildlife offences through national legislation. This toolkit provides information on the terminology and provisions needed in wildlife crime legislation, examples of model legislative provisions from States who have implemented successful regulations, and educational material on the international conventions related to IWT. Delegates will find this source includes the previously agreed upon guidelines for effective, realistic regulations to end IWT and whaling.*

World Conservation Union. (1973). *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora*. Retrieved 1 March 2019 from: <https://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/disc/CITES-Convention-EN.pdf>

*This convention, adopted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, established the preeminent international agreement on international trade of vulnerable wildlife. Species are classified in either Appendix I, II, or III in the document based on whether they are nearly extinct, highly vulnerable, or protected in at least one Member State, respectively. Specific regulations on the trade of species in each Appendix are varied, and the Parties to the Convention can amend the placement of a species as its threatened status changes. Cited by numerous IWT documents, delegates should have a full understanding of the regulations CITES imposes on wildlife trade before discussing or researching improvements to the transnational wildlife trading system.*

## Bibliography

African Wildlife Foundation. (n.d.). *What We Do: Wildlife Conservation* [Website]. Retrieved 2 June 2019 from: <https://www.awf.org/wildlife-conservation>

American Cetacean Society. (2018). *Mission, Vision, Values* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.acsonline.org/mission-vision-values>

Anderson, L. (2016, September 19). *Wildlife Crime: Fanning the Ivory Pyres*. *SDG Knowledge Hub*. Retrieved 3 July 2019 from: <http://sdg.iisd.org/commentary/policy-briefs/wildlife-crime-fanning-the-ivory-pyres-2/>

Convention on Biological Diversity. (n.d.). *Secretariat Role* [Website]. Retrieved 2 June 2019 from: [https://www.cbd.int/secretariat/role/?fbclid=IwAR1\\_J40q2JvyzC3aa75qT6NMW8x8V6AHk4fNMpj9BlpFdoZD4L8CVbV6zaU](https://www.cbd.int/secretariat/role/?fbclid=IwAR1_J40q2JvyzC3aa75qT6NMW8x8V6AHk4fNMpj9BlpFdoZD4L8CVbV6zaU)

Convention on Biological Diversity. (2010). *The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (UN Environment/CBD/COP/DEC/X/2)*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-10/cop-10-dec-02-en.pdf>

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals. (2018). *CMS*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.cms.int/en/legalinstrument/cms>

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. (n.d.). *The CITES Secretariat* [Website]. Retrieved 2 June 2019 from: <https://www.cites.org/eng/disc/sec/index.php>



Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. (n.d.). *What is CITES?* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.cites.org/eng/disc/what.php>

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. (n.d.). *The International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime*. Retrieved 25 July 2019 from: <https://www.cites.org/eng/prog/iccwc.php>

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. (2016). *Trade in elephant specimens (Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP17))*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/document/E-Res-10-10-R17.pdf>

Denyer, S. & A. Kashiwagi. (2018, December 26). *Japan to leave International Whaling Commission, resume commercial hunting*. The Washington Post. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/japan-to-leave-international-whaling-commission-resume-commercial-hunt/2018/12/26/2c32fb20-08c9-11e9-892d-3373d7422f60\\_story.html?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.62c14d6f659c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/japan-to-leave-international-whaling-commission-resume-commercial-hunt/2018/12/26/2c32fb20-08c9-11e9-892d-3373d7422f60_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.62c14d6f659c)

Environmental Investigation Agency. (2018). *Commercial whaling: Unsustainable, inhumane, unnecessary*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://eia-international.org/wp-content/uploads/IWC-report-2018-08.pdf>

Environmental Investigation Agency. (2018). *How Ivory Hanks Destroyed Africa's Elephants and Drives Japan's Illegal Ivory Trade*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/environmental-investigation-agency/assets/2018/10/EIA+Hanko+Report+Final+HiRes.pdf>

Global Financial Integrity. (2017). *Transnational Crime and the Developing World*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [https://www.gfintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Transnational\\_Crime-final.pdf](https://www.gfintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Transnational_Crime-final.pdf)

Government of Japan, Ministry of the Environment. (n.d.). *FAQ on ivory trade*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [https://www.env.go.jp/en/nature/biodiv/zougetorihiki/faq\\_on\\_ivory\\_trade.pdf](https://www.env.go.jp/en/nature/biodiv/zougetorihiki/faq_on_ivory_trade.pdf)

Government of Japan, Ministry of the Environment. (2016). *Japan's View and Efforts in regard to Conservation of African Elephants and Trade in Ivory* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.env.go.jp/en/nature/biodiv/zougetorihiki.html>

Green Customs Initiative. (n.d.). *Who We Are* [Website]. Retrieved 2 June 2019 from: <https://www.greencustoms.org/who-we-are>

Institute of Cetacean Research. (2011). *Outline of New Antarctic Ridge Science Research (NEWREP-A)* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.icrwhale.org/NEWREP-AgaiyouEng.html>

Institute of Cetacean Research. (2011). *Overview and Purpose* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.icrwhale.org/abouticr.html>

International Court of Justice. (2014). *Whaling in the Antarctic (Australia v. Japan: New Zealand intervening), Judgement of 31 March 2014*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/148/148-20140331-JUD-01-00-EN.pdf>

International Fund for Animal Welfare. (2019). *Whale watching in the whaling countries* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.ifaw.org/united-states/our-work/whales/whale-watching-whaling-countries>

International Fund for Animal Welfare. (2019). *Which countries are still whaling?* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.ifaw.org/united-states/our-work/whales/which-countries-are-still-whaling>

- International Fund for Animal Welfare. (2009). *Whale Watching Worldwide: Tourism numbers, expenditures, and expanding economic benefits*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [https://s3.amazonaws.com/ifaw-pantheon/sites/default/files/legacy/whale\\_watching\\_worldwide.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/ifaw-pantheon/sites/default/files/legacy/whale_watching_worldwide.pdf)
- International Fund for Animal Welfare. (2013). *The Economics of Japanese Whaling: A Collapsing Industry Burdens Taxpayers*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/ifaw-pantheon/sites/default/files/legacy/economics-of-japanese-whaling-japan-ifaw.pdf>
- International Fund for Animal Welfare. (2018). *Thriving Together: Achieving the SDGs and Improving Well-being for Animals and People*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [https://www.ifaw.org/sites/default/files/IFAW\\_SDG-animals-human-wellbeing-report.pdf](https://www.ifaw.org/sites/default/files/IFAW_SDG-animals-human-wellbeing-report.pdf)
- International Union for Conservation of Nature. (2019). *IUCN Red List: Background & History* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/about/background-history>
- International Union for Conservation of Nature. (2018). *About* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.iucn.org/about>
- International Whaling Commission. (n.d.). *Key Documents* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://iwc.int/convention>
- International Whaling Commission. (n.d.). *Membership and Contracting Governments* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://iwc.int/members>
- International Whaling Commission. (n.d.). *Taxonomy of Whales* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://iwc.int/cetacea>
- International Whaling Commission. (1946). *International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://archive.iwc.int/pages/view.php?ref=3607&k=>
- International Whaling Commission. (2017). *Report of the Expert Panel Workshop on the Proposed Research Plan for New Scientific Whale Research Programme in the western North Pacific (NEWREP-NP) and response to the Report (IWC.ALL.286)*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://archive.iwc.int/pages/view.php?ref=6419&k=>
- International Whaling Commission. (2018). *International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, 1946: Schedule*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://archive.iwc.int/pages/view.php?ref=3606&k=>
- International Whaling Commission. Sixty-seventh Commission Meeting. (2018). *The Florianópolis Declaration on the Role of the International Whaling Commission in The Conservation and Management of Whales in the 21st Century (Resolution 2018-5)*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://tinyurl.com/y3prbj3>
- Japan Tiger and Elephant Fund. (2017). *Why Should the Japanese Domestic Ivory Market Be Closed?*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [http://www.jtef.jp/document/2017IvoryFullReport/English/JTEF\\_Ivory\\_Full\\_Eng.pdf](http://www.jtef.jp/document/2017IvoryFullReport/English/JTEF_Ivory_Full_Eng.pdf)
- Naidoo, R., et al. (2016). Estimating economic losses to tourism in Africa from the illegal killing of elephants. *Nature Communication*, 7.
- Ripple, W., et al. (2017). World Scientists' Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice. *Bioscience*, 67 (12): 1026-1028.
- Rocha, R., et al. (2015). Emptying the Oceans: A Summary of Industrial Whaling Catches in the 20th Century. *Marine Fisheries Review*, 76 (4): 37-48.

Roman, J., et al. (2014). Whales as marine ecosystem engineers. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, 12 (7): 377-385.

United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. (1982). *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* [Convention]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention\\_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos\\_e.pdf](http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf)

United Nations, Department of Public Information. (2016, May 25). *UN launches unprecedented #WildforLife campaign to end illegal trade in wildlife* [News Article]. Retrieved 3 July 2019 from: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2016/05/530292-un-launches-unprecedented-wildforlife-campaign-end-illegal-trade-wildlife>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2013). *Crime Prevention and criminal justice responses to illicit trafficking in protected species of wild flora and fauna (E/RES/2013/40)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <http://undocs.org/E/RES/2013/40>

United Nations Environment Assembly. (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*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <http://wedocs.UNEnvironment.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17285/K1402364.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>

United Nations Environment Assembly. (2016). *Illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products (UN Environment/EA.2/Res.14)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 3 July 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/UNEnvironment/EA.2/Res.14>

United Nations Environment Programme. (1979). *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals* [Convention]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.cms.int/en/convention-text>

United Nations Environment Programme. (1992). *Convention on Biological Diversity* [Convention]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-en.pdf>

United Nations Environment Programme. (2012). *Advancing Justice, Governance and Law For Environmental Sustainability* [Report]. Retrieved 2 June 2019 from: [http://wedocs.UNEnvironment.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/9969/advancing\\_justice\\_governance\\_law.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](http://wedocs.UNEnvironment.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/9969/advancing_justice_governance_law.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

United Nation Environment Programme. (2014). *Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (A/69/25)* [Report]. Retrieved 20 July 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/A/69/25>

United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *The Rise of Environmental Crime* [Report]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [http://wedocs.UNEnvironment.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7662/-The\\_rise\\_of\\_environmental\\_crime\\_A\\_growing\\_threat\\_to\\_natural\\_resources\\_peace%2c\\_development\\_and\\_security-2016environmental\\_crimes.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y](http://wedocs.UNEnvironment.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7662/-The_rise_of_environmental_crime_A_growing_threat_to_natural_resources_peace%2c_development_and_security-2016environmental_crimes.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y)

United Nations Environment Programme. (2017). *Analysis of the environmental impacts of illegal trade in wildlife* [Report]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [https://wedocs.UNEnvironment.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17554/FINAL\\_%20UNEA2\\_Inf%20doc%2028.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y](https://wedocs.UNEnvironment.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17554/FINAL_%20UNEA2_Inf%20doc%2028.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y)

United Nations Environment Programme. (2018). *Strengthening legal frameworks for licit and illicit trade in wildlife and forest product: Lessons from the natural resource management, trade regulation and criminal justice sectors* [Report]. Retrieved 3 July 2019 from: [http://wedocs.UNEnvironment.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/27282/Strengthening\\_legal\\_frameworks.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](http://wedocs.UNEnvironment.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/27282/Strengthening_legal_frameworks.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)



United Nations Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre. (n.d.). *About* [Website]. Retrieved 2 June 2019 from: <https://www.UN Environment-wcmc.org/about-us>

United Nations Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre. (n.d.). *Our Partners* [Website]. Retrieved 2 June 2019 from: <https://www.UN Environment-wcmc.org/about-us/partners>

United Nations, General Assembly, Fifty-fifth session. (2000). *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime: Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (A/RES/55/25)*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/55/25>

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session. (2015). *Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife (A/RES/69/314)* [Resolution]. Adopted without reference to a Main Committee (A/69/L.80 and Add.1). Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/69/314>

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1>

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-third session. (2018). *Gaps in international environmental law and environment-related instruments: towards a global pact for the environment: Report of the Secretary-General (A/73/419)* [Report]. Retrieved 2 June 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/A/73/419>

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2012). *Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit: Revised Edition* [Report]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/Wildlife/Toolkit\\_e.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/Wildlife/Toolkit_e.pdf)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2016). *World Wildlife Crime Report: Trafficking in protected species* [Report]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/wildlife/World\\_Wildlife\\_Crime\\_Report\\_2016\\_final.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/wildlife/World_Wildlife_Crime_Report_2016_final.pdf)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2018). *Guide on Drafting Legislation to Combat Wildlife Crime* [Report]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/Wildlife/Legislative\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/Wildlife/Legislative_Guide.pdf)

WildAid. (2019, April 25). *Close Ivory Market in Japan, Beginning with Hankos*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://wildaid.org/close-ivory-market-in-japan-beginning-with-hankos/>

World Bank. (2014). *Fighting Wildlife Crime to End Extreme Poverty and Boost Shared Prosperity* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2014/07/17/fighting-wildlife-crime-to-end-extreme-poverty-and-boost-shared-prosperity>

World Conservation Union. (1973). *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora*. Retrieved 1 March 2019 from: <https://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/disc/CITES-Convention-EN.pdf>

World Wide Fund for Nature. (2019). *Whale: Why They Matter* [Website]. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/species/whale>

World Wide Fund for Nature. (2009). *Sink or Swim: The Economics of Whaling Today*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [http://assets.panda.org/downloads/economics\\_whaling\\_summ\\_report\\_final.pdf](http://assets.panda.org/downloads/economics_whaling_summ_report_final.pdf)

World Wide Fund for Nature. (2012). *Fighting Illicit Wildlife Trafficking: A consultation with governments*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [https://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/wwffightingillicitwildlifetrafficking\\_Ir\\_1.pdf](https://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/wwffightingillicitwildlifetrafficking_Ir_1.pdf)



World Wide Fund for Nature. (2018). *Living Planet Report 2018: Aiming higher*. Retrieved 26 April 2019 from: [https://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/wwfintl\\_livingplanet\\_full.pdf](https://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/wwfintl_livingplanet_full.pdf)