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Fifth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme V): delivering for people and the planet
Second global meeting of national focal points
Nairobi, 3–5 June 2024
Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Implementation of the Fifth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law: status of implementation, activities and funding

Status of implementation, activities and funding

Report by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 4/20 of 15 March 2019, the United Nations Environment Assembly adopted the Fifth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme V),[1] to start on 1 January 2020 and conclude on 31 December 2029. In paragraph 6 (a) of the Montevideo Programme V, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to serve, within its current mandate and available resources, as the secretariat for the Programme, and to perform certain institutional and monitoring functions, including to report on the Programme's implementation, activities, and funding on a biennial basis.

2. Owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the first global meeting of national focal points for Montevideo Programme V was held in two segments: an online segment, held from 2 to 4 June 2021; and an in-person segment, held in hybrid format at the United Nations Office in Nairobi from 6 to 9 June 2022. During the in-person segment of the resumed first global meeting (the report of which is set out in document UNEP/Env.Law/MTV5/GNFP.1/6/Add.1), the secretariat was requested to provide progress reports in accordance with paragraph 6 (a) (x) of Montevideo Programme V one year in advance of each global meeting of national focal points (UNEP/Env.Law/MTV5/GNFP.1/6/Add.1, annex, para. 6). The present report, prepared pursuant to this request, contains information on the progress made and activities carried out since the previous report of the secretariat on the status of implementation, activities and funding (UNEP/Env.Law/MTV5/GNFP.1/2/Rev.1).

* UNEP/Env.Law/MVP5/GNFP2/1.

[1] UNEP/EA.4/19, annex I.

II. Status of implementation

A. Montevideo Programme V institutional arrangements

1. National focal points

3. During the in-person segment of the resumed first global meeting of national focal points for Montevideo Programme V, the secretariat explained that the COVID-19 pandemic had significantly delayed the holding of the first global meeting and the carrying out of activities under the Programme. The secretariat provided updates on, among other elements, the UNEP Law and Environment Assistance Platform;[2] the development of communication products to raise awareness of the Programme; the number of designated national focal points; and the establishment of the general trust fund for the core activities of Montevideo Programme V (the Montevideo trust fund).

4. The national focal points discussed the possible priority areas proposed by the secretariat for implementation of the Programme, emerging areas of environmental law, and partnerships and stakeholder engagement for advancement of the Programme. The status of the Programme's implementation is outlined in section II of the present report. It should be noted that substantive activities under the Programme did not start until the conclusion of the in-person segment of the first global meeting, which provided the secretariat with clear directions with regard to delivery and implementation.

5. National focal points have been designated by at least 146 Member States and observer States, drawn from all United Nations geographical regions.[3]

2. Steering committee for implementation

6. According to the modalities of work for the steering committee for implementation (UNEP/Env.Law/MTV5/GNFP.1/6, annex, para. 9), the committee should meet at least once a year, either online or in person. In practice, the committee has been meeting twice a year and once before the global meetings of national focal points. Since its establishment, the committee has held seven meetings, with the third to seventh meetings having been held since the submission of the previous report of the secretariat on the status of implementation, activities and funding (UNEP/Env.Law/MTV5/GNFP.1/2/Rev.1). Information on those meetings is as follows:

(a) The third meeting, held in person on 6 June 2022, was largely focused on preparations for the in-person segment of the resumed first global meeting of national focal points.[4]

(b) The fourth meeting, held online on 7 October 2022, included discussions on the outcomes of the first global meeting, updates on proposed implementation road maps for the priority areas for implementation, the core elements of a partnerships and stakeholder engagement strategy (accompanied by a draft strategy outline), a draft resource mobilization strategy and the possibility of creating a logo for Montevideo Programme V.[5]

(c) The fifth meeting, held online on 10 March 2023, included updates on previous discussions, approval by the committee of the implementation road map and an annotated outline of the partnerships and stakeholders' strategy, and appraisal of a revised resource mobilization strategy.[6]

(d) The sixth meeting, held in hybrid format on 13 November 2023, included a focus on several aspects of the Programme's implementation, such as reviewing the draft report on the implementation, activities and funding of the Programme and a full draft of the partnerships and

[2] See https://leap.unep.org/.

3 More information is available at https://leap.unep.org/about/nfps.

[4] The Co-Chairs' summary of the third meeting of the steering committee for implementation is available at https://leap.unep.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Co-Chairs-Summary_Third-Meeting-of-the-Steering-Committee_06June2022_0.pdf.

[5] The meeting documents, including the Co-Chairs' summary of the fourth meeting of the steering committee for implementation, are available at https://leap.unep.org/about/meetings/fourth-meeting-steering-committee-implementation#meeting-documents.

[6] The meeting documents, including the Co-Chairs' summary of the fifth meeting of the steering committee for implementation, are available at https://leap.unep.org/about/meetings/fifth-meeting-steering-committee-implementation#meeting-documents.

stakeholders' engagement strategy. The committee paid special focus to the promotion of the Programme at the regional level and the need to enhance the Programme's visibility.[7]

(e) The seventh meeting, held in hybrid format on 26 and 27 February 2024, included further review by the committee of the revised draft report on the implementation, activities and funding of the Programme, adoption of the partnership and stakeholders' engagement strategy, review of the draft options papers on legal responses to climate change and biodiversity loss, and discussions on visibility issues of the Programme. The committee also agreed on the dates and modalities of the second global meeting of national focal points.[8]

7. Since the previous report, there have been a number of changes in the membership of the steering committee. For Peru, Jimpson Dávila Ordoñez replaced Mariano Castro Sánchez-Moreno, effective 29 April 2022. Mr. Sánchez-Moreno was subsequently replaced by Héctor Daniel Benítez Castro, who was succeeded by Juan Pablo Carrera Luque for the remainder of the term. For Slovenia, Helena Kramar replaced Nataša Petrovčič, effective 23 May 2022. Ms. Kramar was subsequently replaced by Tanja Pucelj Vidović.

3. Partnerships and stakeholder engagement

8. In accordance with the implementation guidelines of Montevideo Programme V, the implementation of the Programme and its activities will be developed and implemented in cooperation, coordination or partnership, as appropriate, with relevant stakeholders, promoting public participation (UNEP/EA.4/19, annex I, para. 5 (c)). Furthermore, supporting collaboration and promotion of partnerships across the United Nations and with other relevant entities, including civil society organizations, in the field of environmental law, is a strategic activity under the Programme (ibid., para. 4 (e)).

9. During the in-person segment of the first global meeting and during the various side events, the engagement and participation of major groups and stakeholders, especially those representing young people, were facilitated and fostered.[9] Following their discussions, the national focal points agreed that, on the basis of their feedback, the secretariat would prepare a draft strategy on partnerships and stakeholder engagement for consideration and possible adoption by the steering committee ((UNEP/Env.Law/MTV5/GNFP.1/6/Add.1, para. 52). A draft outline was discussed by the steering committee at its fourth meeting; the draft was subsequently revised, and consultations on an annotated version were held between June and August 2023. A full draft of the strategy was adopted by the steering committee at its seventh meeting.

10. In addition, the side events foregrounded issues of importance to diverse groups, including faith-based organizations, Indigenous and local communities, legal experts, women and young people, in an effort to promote effective environmental governance within the thematic areas of pollution, climate change and biodiversity.

11. After the first global meeting, the secretariat carried out an extensive mapping exercise to identify key stakeholders and potential partners. The mapping and analysis comprised a very broad group of over 1,000 entities, including organizations accredited with the United Nations Environment Assembly; environmental law organizations; universities and research institutions; secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements; and United Nations entities and other intergovernmental organizations.

12. In the context of regional consultations on the development of a report for the national focal points on options for clearly defined priority areas for legal responses to address climate change that would strengthen, develop or implement appropriate legal and institutional frameworks at the national or subnational level and build the related capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change, while avoiding duplication and ensuring the mutual supportiveness of efforts with processes under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, and a report for

[7] The meeting documents, including the Co-Chairs's summary of the sixth meeting of the steering committee for implementation, held on 13 November 2023, are available at https://leap.unep.org/en/about/meetings/sixth-meeting-steering-committee-implementation#meeting-documents.

[8] The meeting documents, including the Co-Chairs's summary of the sixth meeting of the steering committee for implementation, held on 26 and 27 February 2024, are available at https://leap.unep.org/en/about/meetings/seventh-meeting-steering-committee-implementation#meeting-documents.

[9] Information on the side events held in the margins of the in-person segment is available at https://leap.unep.org/about/meetings/person-hybrid-segment-first-global-meeting-national-focal-points#side-events.

the national focal points on options for clearly defined priority areas to strengthen, develop or implement appropriate legal and institutional frameworks at the national or subnational level to implement biodiversity-related goals and commitments, the secretariat organized the following consultations involving stakeholders and partners: (a) for the Asia-Pacific region, West Asia and Central Asia, including remote participation for the Balkans, Eastern Europe and South Caucasus subregion, consultations were held in hybrid format during the Fifth Montevideo Environmental Law Programme Regional Meeting and third Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Environmental Law Conference, held in Bangkok from 15 to 18 August 2023; (b) for Africa, consultations were held during the fifth Scientific Conference of the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in African Universities, held in Nairobi from 21 to 23 August 2023, and a workshop on the implementation of biodiversity, chemicals and waste multilateral environmental agreements, held in Bugesera, Rwanda, from 29 to 31 August 2023); and (c) for Latin America and the Caribbean, consultations were held in Panama City on 25 and 26 September 2023, followed by the second Annual Forum on Human Rights Defenders in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, also held in Panama City, on 27 and 28 September 2023.

III. Priority areas for implementation of Montevideo Programme V

13. During the in-person segment of the first global meeting, the secretariat presented a document priority areas for implementation (UNEP/Env.Law/MTV5/GNFP.1/4/Rev.1), in which it set out possible priority areas for implementation for the remainder of the Programme, until 31 December 2029.[10] In that document, actions, strategies and intended outcomes of the possible priority areas were identified, including the modalities and mechanisms to support countries in their implementation of the Programme. The information contained in the document was informed by the results of a survey administered to the focal points in January 2021, consultations with internal and external stakeholders, and inputs received during the online segment of the first global meeting.

14. During the in-person segment, the national focal points decided on three core and interlinked thematic areas for implementation of the Programme, namely legal responses to address the pollution crisis, combat the climate crisis, and combat the biodiversity loss crisis, supplemented by the cross-cutting activities of enhancing access to environmental information, public participation in environmental decision-making and access to justice; and strengthening education and capacity-building on environmental law (UNEP/Env.Law/MTV5/GNFP.1/6/Add.1, annex and appendix I thereto). Those thematic areas and cross-cutting activities were to be reviewed and amended as necessary at each subsequent global meeting of national focal points.

15. Notwithstanding the identified thematic areas and cross-cutting activities, countries may still request support on any matter of environmental law that is aligned with the vision and objectives of the Programme. This is in accordance with paragraph 5 (a) of the Programme, according to which activities of the Programme must respond to the needs and priorities of countries (UNEP/EA.4/19, annex I).

16. At the request of the national focal points, the secretariat developed an implementation road map, which was discussed and approved by the steering committee at its fifth meeting.[11] The approved implementation road map was the result of efforts to address challenges in harmonizing the initial priority areas with the thematic areas and cross-cutting activities in a way that was comprehensive but not duplicative, and to better align the implementation road maps with the UNEP medium-term strategy for the period 2022–2025 and programme of work and budget for the biennium 2022–2023, adopted by Member States at the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

17. During the reporting period, the secretariat and its partners worked on advancing the legal responses to address the pollution crisis by developing three key guidance documents on good legislative and enforcement practices (see annex I to the present report); supporting the strengthening, development or implementation of laws and institutions on managing pollution for at least 27 countries; and carrying out training and awareness-raising on various topics, including on trade in environmentally sensitive commodities and the connection between pollution and human rights. On legal responses to address the climate crisis, the secretariat published its *Global Climate Litigation Report: 2023 Status Review*, which contains an overview of trends in climate litigation and predictions

[10] During the online segment of the first global meeting, the national focal points had identified legal responses to the air pollution crisis as the initial priority area for implementation (UNEP/Env.Law/MTV5/GNFP.1/4, annex). Progress in the implementation of that priority area is set out in the previous report on the status of implementation, activities and funding of the Programme (see UNEP/Env.Law/MTV5/GNFP.1/2/Rev.1).

[11] See Co-Chairs' summary of the fifth meeting of the steering committee for implementation. Available at https://leap.unep.org/about/meetings/fifth-meeting-steering-committee-implementation#meeting-documents.

for the future. The publication generated a lot of interest in the media and among stakeholders and was widely disseminated in various forums. In addition, the secretariat participated in the process of drafting laws and regulations in several countries; enhanced its Law and Climate Change Toolkit; and engaged with judiciaries, children, young people and Indigenous groups on climate change.

18. In relation to biodiversity, the secretariat focused on improving education on environmental law through the development of training modules. It also contributed to guidance on mainstreaming human rights into biodiversity strategies and the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, women and environmental defenders in environmental lawmaking and implementation. Lastly, the secretariat worked on matters that cut across the three thematic areas – for example, by supporting the development of environmental codes, guidelines for enforcement actors (e.g. judiciaries), train-the-trainer programmes and the creation of environmental rights toolkits; holding training events, dialogues and consultations with environmental rights practitioners and environmental defenders; and supporting States' efforts to implement the right to a healthy environment.

19. A comprehensive summary of the progress made in implementing the road map is provided in annex I to the present report, and a non-exhaustive list of key activities conducted since the previous progress report is provided in annex II. Those activities have been grouped into the distinct thematic and cross-cutting areas aligned with the implementation road map to facilitate the monitoring of progress.

20. The following table contains a high-level summary of progress made in implementing the road map across the thematic areas of legal responses to the pollution crisis, climate crisis and biodiversity crisis and the cross-cutting activities related to access rights and education and capacity-building.

Progress in advancing the implementation road map (25 March 2022–29 February 2024)

Thematic/cross-cutting area	*Countries supported*	*Knowledge products developed*	*Total number of workshops/training/events*
Pollution	23	4	19
Climate	3	3	11
Biodiversity	5	2	10
Access rights	13	6	9
Education and capacity-building	6	5	7

Note: The figures presented in this table are approximations and may be subject to slight variations owing to ongoing updates and data collection methods.

IV. Programmatic strategies of Montevideo Programme V

A. Partnerships and stakeholder engagement strategy

21. Pursuant to paragraph 4 (e) of Montevideo Programme V (UNEP/EA.4/19, annex I), the Programme will support collaboration and the promotion of partnerships across the United Nations and with other relevant entities, including civil society organizations, in the field of environmental law. Following guidance provided by the national focal points at their first global meeting, and in consultation with the members of the steering committee, the secretariat prepared an annotated outline of a partnerships and stakeholder engagement strategy, which opened for online consultations on 13 June to 15 August 2023, with all identified stakeholders and partners. The secretariat presented an advance draft of the strategy for discussion by the steering committee, at its sixth and seventh meetings, and the draft was adopted at the latter meeting. The strategy is aligned with UNEP policies, strategies and procedures relating to stakeholders and partners. More information on the strategy is available in document UNEP/Env.Law/MTV5/GNFP.2/5.

B. Resource mobilization strategy

22. One of the functions of UNEP, in its role as the secretariat of Montevideo Programme V, is to seek to procure appropriate funding for the implementation of the Programme's activities (UNEP/EA.4/19, annex I, para. 6 (a) (xi)). During the in-person segment of the resumed first global meeting, national focal points invited the secretariat to prepare and provide an estimate of the resources needed to implement the Programme and the implementation road maps, and to develop a resource mobilization strategy for the Programme. The strategy would be reviewed on a regular basis to reflect experiences and possible new priorities identified during the global meetings of national points.

23. In response to the request made by national focal points, endorsed by the steering committee, and in accordance with the organization's resource mobilization strategy,[12] the secretariat developed a resource mobilization strategy for implementation of the Programme. The strategy is continuously reviewed by the secretariat and the steering committee to reflect the latest developments.

V. Law and Environment Assistance Platform

24. The UNEP Law and Environment Assistance Platform comprises three substantive and interconnected sections: (a) technical assistance (a clearing-house mechanism for countries to request technical assistance and a menu of services connected to the core objectives of Montevideo Programme V); (b) a knowledge base containing cutting- environmental law information; and (c) country profiles. To date, the secretariat has received requests for technical assistance from at least 20 countries, some made through the Platform, and it plans to organize training sessions on using the Platform, to be held in the official languages other than English.

25. The Platform reflects requests for technical legal assistance that the secretariat receives through its clearing-house mechanism and offline, with such requests having been received from the following countries: Azerbaijan, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Jamaica, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Morocco, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nigeria, Oman, Sierra Leone, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe. Requests are published on the Platform, provided that consent to do so is granted by the requesting entity and depending on the stage of implementation. The requests are assigned to different officers and progress in their implementation is tracked on the Platform.

26. In addition, the Platform now hosts more than 19,000 information resources, including legislation and case law; toolkits; guidance products and model laws; publications and reports, including meeting reports; e-learning courses; and partners' tools and resources. The secretariat is keen to enhance the Platform's usefulness and its contribution to the UNEP digital transformation agenda, and it has been engaging with the Collective Intelligence team of the Law Division in that endeavour. In terms of engagement, the Platform had more than 1.1 million users between 26 March 2022 and 29 February 2024, with the top five audience countries being China, the Philippines, India, Peru and the United States of America. The secretariat continues to update and improve the Platform in terms of its design, structure and content.

VI. Status of funding of Montevideo Programme V

27. It should be noted that, in accordance with its mandate under the Programme (UNEP/EA.4/19, annex I, para. 6 (a) (xi)), in September 2021, the secretariat established a trust fund for the core activities of the Programme (the Montevideo trust fund), which became operational in May 2022, following its approval by the Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning, Finance and Budget, Controller of the United Nations Secretariat. The trust fund has received the generous contribution of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as well as the contributions of Germany, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Norway, and the Commonwealth.

28. According to the current funding assessment of the thematic areas for implementation and the cross-cutting activities, indicative programmatic and secretariat costs of implementing Montevideo Programme V are estimated at $38,108,652.[13] This figure includes the estimated cost of implementing the implementation road map for the period 2023–2026 (see para. 16 above), as well as governance and secretariat costs.

29. There is a clear deficit in the resources available for implementation of the Programme. In its resource mobilization strategy, the secretariat is seeking:

(a) To raise a sum of at least $5,436,022 annually until 2029;

(b) To maintain a diversified funding base drawn from a broad spectrum of potential donors;

(c) To consult with at least five potential donors every year;

[12] Available at https://wedocs.unep.org/20.500.11822/36793.

[13] The estimate may vary depending on the requests received from countries for assistance and activities related to the governance arrangements for the Programme (e.g. regional meetings of national focal points). The estimate includes programmatic costs (e.g. technical assistance, guidance materials) anticipated on the basis of the priorities for implementation to be identified during the global meetings of national focal points.

(d) To ensure that the Programme has adequate staffing to support the implementation of the core activities.

30. To supplement the trust fund allocations and fill the financial gap, the secretariat continues to rely on resources allocated to the Law Division for activities of the Programme that contribute to the environmental governance subprogramme of the UNEP programme of work. These resources comprise allocations from the Environment Fund, including the thematic funds, and extrabudgetary resources from bilateral donors for earmarked purposes, such as from the European Commission and the United Nations Development Account.

31. The secretariat continues to encourage and welcome additional voluntary contributions from Governments, the private sector, foundations and other entities.

Annex I

Overview of progress in advancing the implementation road maps 2023–2026[1]

I. Thematic area 1: legal responses to address the pollution crisis

Table 1
General overview of progress

Overview	*Indicators*	*Total number*
Laws and institutions are strengthened, developed or implemented and related capacity is built to prevent, control and manage air pollution and pollution of freshwater, marine, coastal and terrestrial environments that could affect the environment and human health	Number of countries supported to strengthen, develop or implement subnational or national laws and institutions to manage pollution, focusing on waste prevention and waste mismanagement and strengthening compliance with and enforcement of legislation to address pollution	23
	Number of female and male legal professionals, including judges, prosecutors, legal practitioners, parliamentarians and enforcement officials, with increased knowledge of how to implement and enforce laws relating to pollution as a result of capacity-building activities (measured through a survey)	200
	Number of regional workshops on compliance and enforcement approaches held, attended by female and male compliance and enforcement personnel from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, developed with gender-sensitive considerations in mind	3

Table 2
Tracking the milestones

Milestone	*Milestone attainment date*	*Overview of progress*
Legislative and enforcement gap analysis on waste mismanagement, with special focus on offences, violations, crimes and penalties, carried out in at least eight countries in the ASEAN region	June 2023	In progress. A full first draft of the legislative and enforcement gap analysis had been completed for 10 ASEAN countries, with a focus on Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam.
Five countries supported in their efforts to develop, implement or strengthen laws and institutions related to waste prevention, waste mismanagement and air pollution, and to comply with and enforce legislation to address pollution	December 2023	The secretariat supported at least six countries in the development, implementation and strengthening of laws on waste prevention, waste mismanagement and air pollution. Specifically, the secretariat supported three countries (Lesotho, Mexico and Uganda) in the review and development of regulations and guidelines related to waste management, including plastic waste management, and three countries (Ghana, Jamaica and Sierra Leone) to develop or strengthen laws on air pollution. In addition, Montevideo Programme V regional focal points and legal experts held a meeting on 15 August 2023 to share global experiences on air pollution

[1] The figures presented in the present annex are approximations and may be subject to slight variations owing to ongoing updates and data collection methods.

Milestone	*Milestone attainment date*	*Overview of progress*
		legislative measures to inform the review and development of the draft clean air act of Thailand.
One forum organized on trends and challenges to address the triple planetary crises through the law	June 2024	The second global meeting of the national focal points will be held in Nairobi from 3 to 5 June 2024.
Two sets of guidance materials developed and disseminated on legislation on air pollution and waste prevention and waste mismanagement	December 2024	UNEP developed and disseminated two sets of guidance materials on air pollution and waste prevention and waste mismanagement. These include the *Guidance on Policy and Legislation for Integrated Waste Management during a Pandemic*, published in April 2022, and the *Guide on Ambient Air Quality Legislation* (available in English, French and Spanish), published in May 2023.
Five additional countries supported in their efforts to develop, review, implement or strengthen laws and institutions on waste prevention and waste mismanagement and air pollution, and to comply with and enforce legislation to address pollution	June 2025	
Two additional countries supported in their efforts to develop, review and strengthen their laws and institutions related to administrative and criminal remedies in response to trafficking in waste	December 2025	
Four initiatives developed and implemented to improve the capacity of female and male legal professionals, including judges, prosecutors, legal practitioners, parliamentarians and enforcement officials, to implement and enforce laws on waste prevention and waste mismanagement and air pollution	June 2026	Two events organized to improve the capacity of legal professionals to implement and enforce pollution-related laws. These events focused: on advancing a human rights-based approach to pollution for people and the planet, held during the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, in May 2023; and on building capacity among judges to address plastic pollution, held during the third session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, in November 2023.
Eight regional workshops organized, incorporating a gender-sensitive approach, on innovative and emerging compliance and enforcement approaches related to air pollution, waste prevention and waste mismanagement, for female and male compliance and enforcement personnel from developing countries and countries with economies in transition	December 2026	At least four training sessions or workshops were organized for compliance and enforcement personnel, as well as a series of meetings and consultations focusing on waste prevention. UNEP held three regional training sessions on combating illegal trade in environmentally sensitive commodities for customs and national ozone officials in South-East Asia and South Asia regions, in March and May 2023, and in the East Africa region, in January 2024. Another training session on transboundary waste management was held for customs and border enforcement officers of Oman, in May 2023.

Abbreviations: ASEAN – Association of Southeast Asian Nations; UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme.

Table 3
Progress on initial priority areas identified by national focal points

Priority area	*Indicators*	*Overview of progress*
Legal responses to address air pollution are developed and/or implemented in and among countries	Number of sets of guidance materials developed on air pollution	One set of guidance materials developed on air pollution – the *Guide on Ambient Air Quality Legislation* – (available in English, French and Spanish), on the basis of the 2021 study *Regulating Air Quality: the First Global Assessment of Air Pollution Legislation*
	Number of countries supported to strengthen, develop or implement laws and institutions to address air pollution	Three countries supported in their efforts to develop, implement or strengthen laws related to air pollution (Ghana, Jamaica and Sierra Leone)
	Number of female and male legal professionals, including legal practitioners, parliamentarians and enforcement officials, with increased knowledge of legal approaches to air quality management	Fifty legal professionals attended events, meetings or training on legal approaches to air quality management
Legal responses to address waste prevention and mismanagement are developed and/or implemented in and among countries	Number of countries supported to strengthen, develop or implement laws and institutions to address waste prevention and mismanagement	Three countries supported in the review and development of regulations and guidelines related to waste management (Mexico, Uganda, and Lesotho)
		At least five events or meetings related to waste prevention and waste mismanagement, including one webinar on legal tools to address marine litter (September 2022)
	Number of guidance and training materials developed on waste management and emerging and innovative compliance mechanisms	One set of guidance materials developed on waste management (*Guidance on Policy and Legislation for Integrated Waste Management during a Pandemic*).
Legal responses relating to plastic pollution	Number of countries with new or improved legislation on the promotion of a circular economy for plastics	Three countries supported in the review and development of regulations and guidelines related to plastics (Lesotho, Mexico and Uganda)
	Number of countries introducing regulatory reform in producer or consumer countries	
Legal responses to enhance compliance with and enforcement of legislation to address pollution are developed and/or implemented in and among countries	Number of countries supported to strengthen, develop or implement laws and regulations to enhance compliance with and enforcement of legislation to address pollution	At least 20 countries supported, including 16 countries participating in two workshops organized by the Green Customs Initiative (GCI) (with OzonAction) on combating illegal trade of environmentally sensitive commodities; Oman, with GCI training on transboundary waste management; Kenya, on development of a green customs training programme; and Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania in two capacity-building events on the development of a regional e-waste model regulatory framework and on green customs.
	Number of countries utilizing United Nations Environment Programme	One guide developed to support countries in strengthening the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, promote

Priority area	*Indicators*	*Overview of progress*
	guides and toolkits and/or participating in training opportunities	sustainable trade and encourage customs and border control officers to a proactive role in protecting the environment (2022: *Green Customs Guide to Multilateral Environmental Agreements* (updated version)).
		The Green Customs Initiative website was upgraded in 2022 to raise awareness among enforcement actors of trade and protection of the environment, including with regard to pollution and human health
	Number of professional network meetings between enforcement agencies to support greater implementation of and compliance with enforcement legislation to address pollution	At least six events, training sessions or meetings held on enhancing the capacity of enforcement agencies

II. Thematic area 2: legal responses to combat the climate crisis

Table 4
General overview of progress

Overview	*Indicators*	*Total number*
Laws and institutions are strengthened, developed or implemented and related capacity built to mitigate and adapt to climate change, contributing to the goals of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Agreement and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements[a]	Number of countries supported to strengthen, develop or implement subnational or national laws and institutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change	4
	Number of female and male legal professionals, including judges, prosecutors, legal practitioners, parliamentarians and enforcement officials, with increased knowledge of legal approaches to climate change on the basis of the Law and Climate Change Toolkit and other tools or knowledge products developed (measured through a survey)	500
	Number of regional workshops convened for female and male professionals on legal responses to climate change on the basis of the Law and Climate Change Toolkit and other relevant tools or knowledge products	4

[a] Pending review of the proposed options by the global meeting of national focal points of Montevideo Programme V, capacity-building and technical assistance on climate change will continue.

Table 5
Tracking the milestones

Milestones	*Milestone attainment date*	*Overview of progress*
One stakeholder consultation organized, in a gender-sensitive manner, on possible priority areas for legal responses to address climate change, taking into account co-benefits relating to pollution prevention and biodiversity	June 2023	The secretariat held three regional consultations to discuss possible priority areas for legal responses to address climate change. The consultations were held for: (a) the Asia-Pacific, West Asia and Central Asia regions; (b) the Africa region; and (c) the Latin America and Caribbean region.
Preliminary list of priority areas identified, integrating feedback from stakeholder consultations	December 2023	In progress

Milestones	*Milestone attainment date*	*Overview of progress*
Options paper on strategies to strengthen, develop and implement laws and institutions relating to climate change prepared and presented at the second global meeting of national focal points of Montevideo Programme V	June 2024	In progress
Road map on legal responses to climate change developed based on identified priority areas under the Programme	December 2024	Completed
Four countries supported to strengthen, develop and implement laws and institutions related to climate change	June 2025	UNEP supported three countries (Djibouti, Kiribati and Timor-Leste) in the review of climate-related laws.
Four regional workshops, organized in a gender-sensitive manner, held for female and male professionals, including judges, prosecutors, legal practitioners, parliamentarians and enforcement officials, on legal approaches to climate change on the basis of the Law and Climate Change Toolkit and other tools or knowledge products developed.	December 2025	UNEP organized the following three workshops or training sessions: one training session for over 60 judges in the Asia-Pacific region on, among other matters, climate law (in 2022); one workshop on climate change and courts, on the occasion of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (in November/December 2023); and one workshop on the latest scientific and legal developments in climate law (December 2023).
Two guidance tools and materials improved, developed and disseminated through UNEP Law and Environment Assistance Platform and other channels, including the Law and Climate Change Toolkit.	June 2026	UNEP developed at least two sets of guidance materials on climate change. Most notably, it published and disseminated the *Global Climate Litigation Report – 2023 Status Review*. In addition, in 2022, the secretariat contributed to the *Practical Guidance for NHRIs on Addressing Human Rights and Climate Change*. Throughout 2022 and 2023, the secretariat has been working to update the "Overarching climate laws" module of the Law and Climate Change Toolkit.
Two initiatives developed on laws and institutions on climate change to improve the capacity of female and male legal professionals of national institutions, as well as civil society organizations, including women's groups, private sector institutions, the media and the public	December 2026	UNEP, in collaboration with IPU, organized a round table for parliamentarians entitled "Improving climate change legislation: informal round table on the Montevideo Programme V and IPU-UNEP technical cooperation — opportunities for parliaments in Africa", held in Luanda on 26 October 2023 in the context of the 147th IPU Assembly.

Abbreviations: IPU – Inter-Parliamentary Union; NHRI – national human rights institution; UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme.

Table 6
Progress on initial priority areas identified by national focal points

Priority area	*Indicators*	*Overview of progress*
Preparation of a report for national focal points on options for clearly defined priority areas for legal responses to address climate change that would strengthen, develop or implement appropriate legal and institutional frameworks at the national or subnational levels and build the related capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change, while avoiding duplication and ensuring the mutual supportiveness of efforts with processes under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement	Options paper developed for national focal points for Montevideo Programme V, focusing on strategies for strengthening laws and institutions related to climate change	In progress. Three regional consultations were held in 2023 on possible priority areas for legal responses to address climate change.

III. Thematic area 3: legal responses to combat the biodiversity crisis

Table 7
General overview of progress

Overview	*Indicators*	*Total number*
Laws and institutions are strengthened, developed or implemented and related capacity built to support relevant goals and commitments under biodiversity related conventions and agreements, including the post-2020 global biodiversity framework[a]	Number of countries supported to strengthen, develop or implement subnational or national laws and institutions related to biodiversity	**5**
	Number of female and male legal professionals, including judges, prosecutors, legal practitioners, parliamentarians and enforcement officials, with improved capacity to tackle biodiversity and wildlife crime as a result of capacity-building activities (measured through a survey)	**100**
	Number of subregional or regional workshops held for female and male legal professionals by Montevideo Programme V, independently or in collaboration with other projects and partners (including the Environmental Treaties Project, joint UNEP-UNODC projects and joint UNEP-FAO projects).	**3**

Abbreviations: FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; UNODC – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme.

[a] Pending review of the proposed options by the global meeting of national focal points of Montevideo Programme V, capacity-building and technical assistance on biodiversity will continue on an ongoing basis.

Table 8
Tracking the milestones

Milestone	*Milestone attainment date*	*Overview of progress*
One stakeholder consultation, organized in a gender-sensitive manner, held on possible priority areas for legal responses to combat the biodiversity crisis, taking into account co-benefits relating to climate change and pollution prevention	June 2023	The secretariat held three regional consultations to discuss possible priority areas for legal responses to address biodiversity loss. The consultations were held for: (a) the Asia-Pacific, West Asia and Central Asia regions; (b) the Africa region; and (c) the Latin America and Caribbean region.
Preliminary list of priority areas identified, integrating feedback from stakeholder consultations	December 2023	In progress
Options paper on priority areas to strengthen, develop or implement appropriate legal and institutional frameworks at the national or subnational levels to implement biodiversity-related goals and commitments prepared and presented to the second global meeting of national focal points for Montevideo Programme V	June 2024	In progress
Road map to strengthen, develop or implement appropriate legal and institutional frameworks at the national or subnational levels to implement biodiversity-related goals and commitments developed based on identified priority areas under the Programme	December 2024	Completed
Six countries supported to strengthen, develop, review and implement environmental laws, including criminal laws, and institutions related to biodiversity-related goals and commitments and enhance their compliance with and enforcement of those laws	June 2025	UNEP supported one country (Somalia) in the implementation and strengthening of laws related to biodiversity. UNEP is also supporting four countries (the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia (Sabah state), Thailand and Viet Nam) in regulatory reform to improve the biosafety of facilities handling wildlife (in progress). UNEP participated in numerous events, training sessions and meetings on strengthening laws and institutions related to biodiversity.
Three initiatives developed to improve the capacity of female and male professionals to negotiate biodiversity goals and commitments, implement the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and enforce biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, in collaboration with the Environmental Treaties Project	December 2025	UNEP developed or contributed to at least two sets of guidance materials designed to improve the capacity of relevant stakeholders to advance the biodiversity agenda. These materials include a training manual for the train-the-trainer program for environmental law academics in law faculties and universities in the Middle East and North Africa region. It also contributed to guidance on integrating human rights in national biodiversity strategy and actions plans, developed under the Issue Management Group of the United Nations Environment Management Group on Human Rights and the Environment (April 2023). UNEP participated in numerous events, training sessions and meetings on strengthening the capacity of relevant

Milestone	*Milestone attainment date*	*Overview of progress*
		stakeholders to develop or improve biodiversity-related laws and institutions.
Two additional countries supported to strengthen, develop, review and implement environmental laws, including criminal laws, and institutions related to biodiversity-related goals and commitments and enhance their compliance with and enforcement of those laws	June 2026	
Four subregional or regional workshops, organized in a gender-sensitive manner, convened for female and male professionals, including judges, prosecutors, legal practitioners, parliamentarians and enforcement officials, on legal approaches to address biodiversity, in collaboration with the Environmental Treaties Project.	December 2026	UNEP supported at least two regional initiatives, including the Fourth Middle East and North Africa Environmental Law and Policy Scholars' Conference, under the theme "Law on Biodiversity, Nature Conservation and the Protection of Cultural Heritage in the Middle East and North Africa region (February 2023); and the session on "Convergence of crimes and investigation techniques" at the Thailand Maritime Stakeholder Workshop to Detect and Investigate Wildlife Trafficking in International Maritime Supply Chains, which included a presentation of legal approaches and capacity building tools on legal approaches to address biodiversity (December 2022).

Abbreviations: UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme.

Table 9
Progress on initial priority areas identified by national focal points

Priority area	*Indicators*	*Overview of progress*
Legal responses to enhance compliance with and enforcement of biodiversity-related laws, including criminal laws	Number of countries provided with technical support to draft legislation on crimes that affect the environment in the field of biodiversity	5 • One country (Somalia) supported in the implementation and strengthening of laws on biodiversity • Four countries (the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia (Sabah state), Thailand and Viet Nam) supported in regulatory reforms to improve biosafety of facilities handling wildlife (in progress)
	Number of female and male participants engaging in capacity-building activities delivered by Montevideo Programme V with improved ability to promote compliance with and enforcement of biodiversity-related laws (measured through a survey)	50
Preparation of a report for the national focal points on options for clearly defined priority areas to strengthen,	Options paper developed for national focal points on strategies	In progress

Priority area	*Indicators*	*Overview of progress*
develop or implement appropriate legal and institutional frameworks at the national or subnational levels to implement biodiversity-related goals and commitments	for strengthening laws and institutions related to biodiversity	

IV. Cross-cutting area: access rights

Table 10
General overview of progress

Overview of cross-cutting activity	*Indicators*	*Total number*
Enhancing access to environmental information, public participation in environmental decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters, in particular for vulnerable groups	Number of countries supported to strengthen, develop or implement subnational or national laws and institutions related to environmental rule of law	13
	Number of intergovernmental bodies or forums supported to advance, strengthen, develop or implement regional or global legal instruments, policies or other approaches related to environmental rule of law	2
	Number of partnerships developed with academia or research institutions, academic networks, judicial training institutions and other actors to support the scale-up of education and training on environmental rule of law and to strengthen awareness and understanding of environmental rule of law and emerging environmental law issues	5

Table 11
Tracking the milestones

Milestones	*Milestone attainment date*	*Overview of progress*
One guidance document or knowledge product developed to support countries to advance good practices on upholding environmental rule of law, in particular for groups in vulnerable situations, including Indigenous Peoples, women and children	June 2023	At least five knowledge products developed to support countries to advance good practices on upholding environmental rule of law These products include policy briefs on environmental constitutionalism in Latin America to assist Chile in its consultations on the inclusion of environmental rights and sustainability in its new constitution (2022); the launch of an environmental rights observatory, together with OHCHR, as a platform for sharing information on procedural environmental rights (2023); a working paper entitled “Environmental rule of law and human rights in Asia Pacific: supporting the protection of environmental human rights defenders” (2023); an information note on the right to a healthy environment (2023); and a guidance note for United Nations resident coordinators and country teams on environmental human rights defenders (2023).
Two intergovernmental bodies or forums supported to take measures to advance or develop a subregional or	December 2023	

Milestones	*Milestone attainment date*	*Overview of progress*
regional framework to realize key components of environmental rule of law, such as laws and institutions, civic engagement, environmental rights and justice		
Two subregional or regional instruments or policies on procedural rights developed, strengthened or implemented with UNEP support	June 2024	In progress (an environmental rights instrument for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations region)
Two countries provided technical services to advance, strengthen, develop or implement legislation and/or policy on key components of environmental rule of law, such as laws and institutions, civic engagement, environmental rights and justice	December 2024	At least one country (Thailand) received technical services through a workshop held with the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand on awareness-raising and capacity-building for a network of community rights and environmentally responsive non-governmental organizations (February 2023)
Two dialogues, networks, forums or platforms convened and supported at national and regional levels to support female and male rights holders to promote, respect, protect and realize the right to a healthy environment	June 2025	UNEP facilitated numerous forums and platforms on awareness-raising and capacity-building on the right to a healthy environment These included training to build the capacity of human rights defenders on human rights and the environment (January 2023); a workshop on procedural environmental human rights, held in Bangkok (September 2023); a regional capacity-building workshop for Pacific environmental human rights defenders (March 2023); environmental human rights defenders forums in Latin America and the Caribbean (September 2023) and Asia-Pacific (September 2023); and a symposium on climate change and human rights (with GANHRI) (December 2023)
Two gender-sensitive initiatives developed to support engagement and information-sharing on environmental rule of law between UNEP divisions and offices (e.g. production of newsletters, development of multimedia materials, convening of interbranch meetings and sharing of knowledge management tools, including through UNEP-LEAP)	December 2025	
Four partnerships developed with universities, academic or research institutions and networks or judicial training institutions and other actors to scale up environmental law education	June 2026	UNEP partnered with the Center for Urban Environmental Reform of the City University of New York School of Law in the development of the first of a six-part graphic novella series entitled, “Earth defenders” (2022)
Two partnerships developed with other actors (e.g. the media, private sector actors and national human rights institutions) to raise awareness of and share information on environmental rule of law	December 2026	

Abbreviations: GANHRI – Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions; LEAP – Law and Environment Assistance Platform; OHCHR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme.

V. Cross-cutting area: education and capacity-building

Table 12
General overview of progress

Type of activity	*Overview of progress*
Knowledge products	At least four knowledge products developed to strengthen education and capacity-building on environmental law. These products include: the publication of the second global report on environmental rule of law (*Environmental Rule of Law: Tracking Progress and Charting Future Directions*) (2023); the development of an intermediate course on environmental adjudication entitled "Upholding environmental justice for judges and lawyers in Asia Pacific" (2022–2023) and an online course for children and young people on human rights and the environment (2022); and the launch of the *Environmental Courts and Tribunals 2021: A Guide for Policymakers* (2022). In addition, resources on the United Nations Environment Programme Law and Environment Assistance Platform were updated or improved throughout 2022 and 2023.
Legal support provided to countries	UNEP supported at least six countries in the development, implementation and strengthening of environmental laws (Cambodia, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, the Philippines, Sierra Leone and Trinidad and Tobago). This support included the holding of a train-the-trainer programme on environmental law in the Philippines (October 2022) and Cambodia (December 2022).
Training, events and meetings	UNEP participated in, organized or collaborated on numerous events, training sessions and meetings on strengthening environmental rule of law. These include the second and third Association of Southeast Asian Nations Environmental Law Conferences (April 2022 and August 2023); the 24-hour global event commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the Montevideo Programme (May 2022); the hosting of the second annual school for human rights and the environment (June 2022); and the Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards (November 2022 and November 2023).

Annex II

Report of activities carried out from 25 March 2022 to 29 February 2024, by thematic and cross-cutting area

I. Thematic area 1: legal responses to address the pollution crisis

Activities

Knowledge products	• 2023: *Guide on Ambient Air Quality Legislation* (available in English, French and Spanish) • 2022: *Guidance on Policy and Legislation for Integrated Waste Management during a Pandemic* • 2022: *Green Customs Guide to Multilateral Environmental Agreements* (updated version) • 2022: Upgrade of the Green Customs Initiative website to raise awareness among enforcement actors of trade and protection of the environment, including on pollution and human health
Legal support to countries	• 2022–2023: Jamaica – assistance in preparing drafting instructions for review of the Natural Resources Conservation (Ambient Air Quality Standards) Regulations • 2022–2023: Lesotho – review of bill on waste and plastics management and draft regulations on plastic waste management • 2022–2023: Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam – National Advisory Committee meetings on the "Unwaste" project on tackling waste trafficking to support a circular economy and consultations on legal frameworks on waste trafficking • 28 and 29 May 2023: Oman – training on transboundary waste management for customs and border enforcement officers of Oman, organized in cooperation with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, Be'ah and the Environmental Authority of Oman • 21–25 May 2023: South Asia (Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal and Sri Lanka) – regional training for customs and national ozone officials on combating illegal trade in environmentally sensitive commodities • 13–18 March 2023: South-East Asia (Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines, Timor-Leste, Thailand and Viet Nam) – regional training for customs and national ozone officials on combating illegal trade in environmentally sensitive commodities • 2022: Ghana – support to draft regulations and drafting instructions on air quality management • 2022: Mexico – policy review for development and implementation of marine litter legislation • 2022: Sierra Leone – support to draft regulations on air quality and pollution • 2022: Uganda – development of regulations and guidelines on plastics, plastic products and plastic waste management
Events/training/meetings	• 7 and 8 February 2024: eighteenth Green Customs Initiative meeting of partners on synergies to enhance capacities of customs and border enforcement agencies in implementing multilateral environmental agreements and to promote a circular economy • 24 and 25 January 2024: East African Community Regional Conference on Green Customs, organized by the secretariat of the Green Customs Initiative and the Kenya School of Revenue Administration • 22 and 23 January 2024: expert consultations on development of a model regulatory framework on e-waste for the East African Community • 8 November 2023: virtual side event in the margins of the third session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment on the theme "The role of judges in addressing plastic pollution", organized by UNEP together with the Global Judicial Institute for the Environment, the World Commission on Environmental Law of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the

International Council of Environmental Law and the International Association of Judges

- 25 September 2023: regional launch of the *Guide on Ambient Air Quality Legislation* at the Montevideo Programme V Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean
- 6 September 2023: an inception meeting, organized by UNEP and ESCAP, in the margins of the Asia-Pacific commemoration of the fourth International Day of Clean Air for blue skies, to operationalize the Regional Action Programme on Air Pollution open-ended working group on air quality standards and data, at which UNEP gave a presentation on air quality standards in legislation
- 15 August 2023: at the request of the Pollution Control Department of Thailand, organization of meeting for the Montevideo Programme regional focal points and legal experts to share global experiences on the Clean Air Act of Thailand
- 14–16 June 2023: regional meeting on waste trafficking and presentation on existing legal frameworks in the South-East Asia region, under the joint UNODC-UNEP "Unwaste" project
- 30 and 31 May 2023: two side events on strengthening ambient quality legislation and on regional cooperation to advance air quality, including the official launch of the *Guide on Ambient Air Quality Legislation*, held during the Climate and Clean Air Conference 2023, in Bangkok
- 10 May 2023: side event on advancing a human rights-based approach to pollution for people and the planet, held during the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions
- 4 May 2023: side event, held in the margins of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, on the theme "Cooperation to combat illicit waste flows to South-East Asia: contribution to the sound management of waste and to the implementation of the Basel Convention", organized with UNODC and UNITAR
- 3 May 2023: side event, held in the margins of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, on the achievements of and lessons learned from Global Environment Facility projects to phase out DDT, organized with UNIDO, WHO and the Government of India.
- 28 April 2023: visit by the "Unwaste" project team to the Thailand Department of Special Investigation, hosted by the country's Office of the Attorney General, where the latter presented its mandate, elements of the Anti-participation in Transnational Organized Crime Act of Thailand and a success story on cross-border cooperation and how it can be adopted in waste crime contexts
- 24 and 25 January 2023: seventeenth Green Customs Initiative meeting of partners on synergies to enhance capacities of customs and border enforcement agencies in implementing multilateral environmental agreements and to promote a circular economy
- 14 September 2022: webinar on "Marine litter: legal tools to address the crisis" (Latin America and the Caribbean)
- 21 and 22 June 2022: event on marine litter and plastic pollution, held during the sixth annual workshop on land and environmental defenders from East Africa, organized with OHCHR and the Centre for Justice Governance and Environmental Action
- 31 May 2022: "Unwaste" first expert group meeting covering the information-gathering process related to waste trafficking and focusing on the following specific topics: categorization and data sources, waste trafficking and waste permits, repatriation data and procedures, recycling capacity and circular economy in the South-East Asia region. Experts from the European Union and international organizations also participated
- 17 May 2022: side event on the role of enforcement actors in implementing waste-related multilateral environmental agreements, organized with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and held in the context of the thirty-first session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
- 14 May 2022: Side event on combating illicit waste flows from the European Union to South-East Asia, held in the margins of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, jointly organized with UNODC and UNITAR

Abbreviations: ESCAP – Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; OHCHR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme; UNIDO – United Nations Industrial Development Organization; UNODC – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; UNITAR – United Nations Institute for Training and Research; WHO – World Health Organization.

II. Thematic area 2: legal responses to combat the climate crisis

Activities

Knowledge products	• 2023: *Global Climate Litigation Report – 2023 Status Review*, accompanied by dissemination activities (e.g. engagement with UNEP Finance Initiative human rights community of practice and in Latin America and the Caribbean at a session on environmental defenders, justice and climate crisis, in September 2023) • 2022–2023: update of the "Overarching climate laws" module of the Law and Climate Change Toolkit, with new taxonomy and recent examples of good practices • 2022: contribution to the *Practical Guidance for NHRIs on Addressing Human Rights and Climate Change*
Legal support to countries	• 2022: Djibouti – review of a legislative proposal for a climate change bill • 2022: Kiribati – review of draft regulations on refrigerant management • 2022: Timor-Leste – review of a draft decree on the control of imports and exports of ozone depleting substances and hydrofluorocarbons under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer • 2022 Asia-Pacific region – training on, among other aspects, climate law for over 60 judges, including honourable chief justices in the Asia-Pacific region (the Chief Justice of Fiji, the Chief Justice of Papua New Guinea, the Chief Justice of Vanuatu and the Chief Justice of Tonga)
Events, training and meetings	• 11 December 2023: United Arab Emirates presidency event in the margins of the twenty-eighth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the theme "Climate change and courts: judicial perspectives on climate litigation", organized by UNEP and Global Judicial Institute on the Environment, in partnership with the Government of Brazil, the International Association of Judges, the European Union Forum of Judges for the Environment and the World Commission on Environmental Law of the International Union for Conservation of Nature • 10 December 2023: a workshop entitled "A dialogue on the latest scientific and legal developments in climate change law", organized by UNEP, the secretariat of Global Judicial Institute on the Environment and New York University, in partnership with the International Association of Judges, the World Commission on Environmental Law of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, International Council of Environmental Law, and the European Union Forum of Judges for the Environment • 26 October 2023: UNEP-IPU round table for parliamentarians entitled "Improving climate change legislation: informal round table on Montevideo Programme V and IPU-UNEP technical cooperation — opportunities for parliaments in Africa", held in Luanda in the context of the 147th IPU Assembly • 25 September 2023: consultations for the Latin America and the Caribbean region on the development of an options paper for legal responses to address climate change, held during the Montevideo Programme V Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean • 21–23 August 2023: consultations for the Africa region on the development of an options paper for legal responses to address climate change, held during the fifth Scientific Conference of the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in African Universities, held in Kenya • 16 August 2023: consultations for the Asia-Pacific, West Asia and Central Asia regions on the development of an options paper for legal responses to address climate change, held during the Fifth Montevideo Environmental Law Programme Regional Meeting and third ASEAN Environmental Law Conference. in Thailand • 14 March 2023: briefing by the secretariat and OHCHR on the environment, climate change and human rights for United Nations staff in the Lao People's Democratic Republic • 28 November–2 December 2022: conference with the Environment and Land Court of Kenya and other partners, convened on the occasion of the Court's tenth anniversary, culminating in a joint communiqué on climate change

	• 14–16 November 2022: training for Indigenous youth on climate justice, as part of the Youth Empowerment in Climate Action Platform, in Chiang Mai, Thailand • 28–30 May 2022: regional dialogue on climate justice for children, young people and future generations for the Asia region

Abbreviations: IPU – Inter-Parliamentary Union; NHRI – national human rights institution; OHCHR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme.

III. Thematic area 3: legal responses to combat the biodiversity crisis

Activities

Knowledge products	• 2022: training manual for the train-the-trainer programme for environmental law academics in law faculties and universities in the Middle East and North Africa region (available in Arabic, English and French) • 2022: contribution to guidance on integrating human rights in national biodiversity strategy and actions plans, developed under the Issue Management Group of the United Nations Environment Management Group on Human Rights and the Environment (April 2023)
Legal support to countries	• 2022: Somalia – support to develop a training module on illicit trade in unique species and implementation of related international instruments • 2022–2023: the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia (Sabah state), Thailand and Viet Nam – National Advisory Committee meetings for the Safety Across Asia for the global Environment (SAFE) project and consultations on legal frameworks for licensing and management of wildlife facilities
Events, training and meetings	• 25 September 2023: consultations for the Latin America and the Caribbean region on the development of an options paper for legal responses to address climate change, held during the Montevideo Programme V Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean • 29–31 August 2023: Consultations on development of an options paper for legal responses to address biodiversity loss, held during a workshop on the implementation of biodiversity, chemicals and waste multilateral environmental agreements, in Rwanda • 16 August 2023: consultations for the Asia-Pacific, West Asia and Central Asia regions on the development of an options paper for legal responses to address climate change, held during the Fifth Montevideo Environmental Law Programme Regional Meeting and third ASEAN Environmental Law Conference. in Thailand • 17 July 2023: Visit by international students to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific compound, hosted by UNEP, to learn about the role of global governance processes in protecting biodiversity • 27 and 28 February 2023: organization of the fourth Middle East and North Africa Environmental Law and Policy Scholars' Conference, together with the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in Middle East and North African Universities, the College of Law of the Hamad Bin Khalifa University and the University of Jordan, on the theme "Law on biodiversity, nature conservation and the protection of cultural heritage in the Middle East and North Africa region" • 6 and 7 December 2022: "Convergence of crimes and investigation techniques" session facilitated by the secretariat in the framework of the Thailand Maritime Stakeholder Workshop to Detect and Investigate Wildlife Trafficking in International Maritime Supply Chains – a presentation of legal approaches and capacity-building tools on legal approaches to address biodiversity • 14 September 2022: interactive policy dialogue on the environment-health nexus in Asia and the Pacific, jointly organized by ESCAP and IISD in collaboration with FAO, UNEP and WHO, with a focus on health risks arising from environmental factors, including climate change, biodiversity loss and unsustainable food systems • 13 September 2022: UNODC-UNEP joint consultation meeting in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, one of the four focus countries of the Safety Across Asia for the global Environment project, with the Department of

	Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Forestry, Lao People's Democratic Republic and other non-governmental and development stakeholders to introduce UNEP activities under the project, engage directly with the Department of Agriculture and Forestry and other relevant stakeholders, and establish a working relationship with relevant actors in the country for the purposes of project implementation • 21 and 22 June 2022: sixth annual workshop for land and environmental defenders from East Africa, on the theme "Strengthening commitments to protect land, ocean and environmental human rights defenders", organized together with OHCHR and the Centre for Justice Governance and Environmental Action • 20–22 April 2022: side event on the theme "Synergies between the Escazú Agreement, human rights law and the Convention on Biological Diversity", held in the margins of the first Conference of the Parties to the Escazú Agreement, in Chile

Abbreviations: ESCAP – Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; IISD – International Institute for Sustainable Development; OHCHR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme; UNODC – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; WHO – World Health Organization.

IV. Cross-cutting area: access rights

Activities

Knowledge products	• 2023–2024: a guidance note for United Nations resident coordinators and country teams on environmental human rights defenders, developed in cooperation with OHCHR, UNDP and other United Nations entities • 2023: launch of the environmental rights observatory, together with UNEP and OHCHR, as a platform for sharing information on procedural environmental rights • 2023: launch of a working paper entitled "Environmental rule of law and human rights in Asia Pacific: supporting the protection of environmental human rights defenders" • 2023: information note on the right to a healthy environment to introduce development of the right to a healthy environment at the national, regional and international levels and elaborate on the importance of the right for the protection of the environment, published with UNDP and OHCHR • 2022: Environmental Human Rights Defenders Toolkit developed with APNED (see https://apned.net/environmental-human-rights-defenders-toolkit/) • 2022: first of a six-part graphic novella series entitled "Earth Defenders", developed in collaboration with the Center for Urban Environmental Reform of the City University of New York School of Law
Legal support to countries	• 2022: Chile – three policy briefs on environmental constitutionalism in Latin America to assist Chile in its consultations on the inclusion of environmental rights and environmental sustainability in its new constitution • 23 and 24 February 2023: Thailand – workshop with the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand on awareness-raising and capacity-building for a network of community rights and environmentally responsive NGOs • 24 and 25 January 2023: Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Timor-Leste – training, developed by Diplomacy Training International, to build the capacity of human rights defenders on human rights and the environment, as part of the thirtieth Annual Human Rights and People's Diplomacy Training Programme
Events, training and meetings	• 5 December 2023: symposium on climate change and human rights and the role of national human rights institutions, organized by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, supported by UNEP, the European Union and the National Human Rights Institution of the United Arab Emirates • 26–28 September 2023: second Annual Forum on Human Rights Defenders in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, Panama • 22 September 2023: workshop on procedural environmental human rights, in Bangkok, including a consultation with environmental defenders on the ASEAN environmental rights framework that is currently being developed

	• 20 and 21 September 2023: third Asia-Pacific Environmental Human Rights Defender Forum, on the theme "Strengthening protection through data collection", bringing together over 200 defenders from all over Asia-Pacific, held in Bangkok • 24 August 2023: a sharing and learning session on the circular economy and human rights in the textile value chain in Asia-Pacific, organized with OHCHR • 21 and 22 August 2023: first meeting of the ASEAN Environmental Rights Working Group. As secretariat, UNEP was requested to incorporate all feedback received to develop a "zero draft" document, noting the points from the working group discussions in the two-day session • 28–30 March 2023: regional capacity-building workshop for Pacific environmental human rights defenders, in Nadi, Fiji • 21 September 2022: side event on mercury, small-scale gold mining and human rights, organized in the margins of the fifty-first session of the Human Rights Council • 16 June 2022: inception workshop on a regional declaration on environmental rights in ASEAN, held with ESCAP and OHCHR, supported by the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights

Abbreviations: APNED – Asia Pacific Network on Environmental Defenders; ASEAN – Association of Southeast Asian Nations; NGO – non-governmental organization; ESCAP – Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; OHCHR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; UNDP – United Nations Development Programme; UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme.

IV. Cross-cutting area: education and capacity-building

Activities

Knowledge products	• 2023: *Environmental Rule of Law: Tracking Progress and Charting Future Directions* report • 2022–2023: development of an intermediate course on environmental adjudication entitled "Upholding environmental justice for judges and lawyers in Asia Pacific", in collaboration with the Environmental Law Programme of the IUCN Oceania regional office • 2022–2024: Enhancements to the UNEP Law and Environment Assistance Platform, including improvements to toolkits and the overall design and updated content • 2022: online course developed for children and young people on human rights and the environment • 2022: launch of the *Environmental Courts and Tribunals 2021: A Guide for Policymakers* to guide policymakers, judges, academics and stakeholders on the establishment of environmental courts and tribunals, with the aim of improving the adjudication of environmental disputes
Legal support to countries	• 2023: Trinidad and Tobago – review of the Environmental Management Act of 1995. • 2022: Sierra Leone – support to develop a training manual on compliance, enforcement processes and procedures of environmental law • 2022: Kyrgyzstan – support to develop an environmental legislative code • 2022: Malawi – support to develop rules for the Environmental Appeals Tribunal and the terms of reference for its members • 8 and 9 December 2022: Cambodia – train-the-trainer programme on environmental law, based on a model curriculum developed by ADB and IUCN • 27 and 28 October 2022: the Philippines – train-the-trainer programme on environmental law for legal education professionals, organized with ADB and the Legal Education Board of the Philippines
Events/training/meetings	• 19 and 20 February 2024: organization of the Fifth Middle East and North Africa Environmental Law and Policy Scholars' Conference, together with the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in Middle East and North African Universities and hosted by the Sohar Faculty of Law, on the theme, "Environmental law and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: legislation towards a sustainable economy in the Middle East and North African region"

	• 28 November 2023: Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards 2023 convened to recognize and encourage the achievements of environmental protectors and entities combating transboundary crimes affecting the environment • 15–18 August 2023: third ASEAN Environmental Law Conference, including sessions on air pollution and climate litigation (dissemination of the findings of the *Global Climate Litigation Report: 2023 Status Report*) • 30 November 2022: Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards 2022 convened to recognize and encourage the achievements of environmental protectors and entities combating transboundary crimes affecting the environment • 20–24 June 2022: second annual school for human rights and the environment, organized by UNEP and the Global Network for Human Rights and the Environment • 31 May 2022: 24-hour global event to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the Montevideo Programme, take stock of the achievements of UNEP, reflect on the progress of environmental law and engage diverse environmental stakeholders from all over the world to discuss topical environmental matters • 5–7 April 2022: second ASEAN Environmental Law Conference, hosted with support from the Asian Research Institute for Environmental Law, ADB, the USAID Reducing Demand for Wildlife initiative, the College of Law (Australia) and EarthRights International

Abbreviations: ADB – Asia Development Bank; ASEAN – Association of Southeast Asian Nations; IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature; UNEP, United Nations Environment Programme; USAID – United States Agency for International Development.