

Summary: UN Environment Programme's Quarterly Report to the 142nd Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (January-March 2018)

INTRODUCTION

This summary is designed to provide a high-level overview to UN Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) members on key developments from the first quarter of 2018 that were reported recently to the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the UN Environment Programme. Please see below select Regional Highlights, Campaigns and Events, and Cross-Cutting Areas of UN Environment Programme's work that is connected to the private sector and that we think may be of interest to bankers, insurers, and investors. Please contact your regional coordinator or [Liesel Van Ast](#) if you have questions or comments about the below, or are interested in seeing the full report which is designed to keep UN member states up-to-date on the activities of UN Environment.

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Africa

- **Strategic partnerships to implement the 2030 Agenda** (27-28 February): In a visit to Ethiopia, UN Environment Programme Executive Director, Erik Solheim, held discussions and agreed upon concrete priorities with the **African Union Commission and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa** on how to strengthen cooperation with and support African countries' efforts to address major environmental challenges. The Executive Director also discussed strategic partnerships with the **UN Economic Commission for Africa, private sector, members of the diplomatic corps** and other stakeholders on support to African countries, and the **implementation of Agenda 2030**.
- UN Environment Programme signed a country agreement with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of the **Federal Republic of Ethiopia**, firming up commitment to build resilience to climate change especially in the water sector, greening and restoring landscapes, and beating pollution.

Asia-Pacific

- **Protecting reefs and wetlands** (14-20 January): On a mission in Fiji, the Executive Director launched, with the Prime Minister of Fiji and UN Special Envoy on Oceans, the **International Year of the Reef** to highlight the state of the world's reefs and their importance. In Australia, he conducted dialogues with political leadership and key partners on issues related to oceans and coral reefs, including the upcoming chairmanship of Australia on the International Coral Reef Initiative.
- **Bahrain and United Arab Emirates** (28 February to 2 March): Bahrain officially joined the CleanSeas campaign and will focus on awareness raising to mobilize different sectors to advocate for reducing single use plastics and plastics packaging. The Executive Director, with Mr. Zayed Al Zayani, the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism of Bahrain, and Dr. Mohamed Bin Daina the Chief Executive of the Supreme Council for Environment in Bahrain, officially inaugurated the country's first Refrigerants

Reclamation Facility in Manana, which will manage a local recovery network among servicing contractors and large end-users of refrigeration and air-conditioning applications.

Europe

- **World Economic Forum** (Davos 23-26 January): UN Environment Programme co-hosted a meeting in Davos on Forest Protection and Sustainable Agriculture with **Rabobank** to broaden our partnership, following the announcement in October 2017 of a US\$1 billion credit facility between the two parties. The Executive Director, the CEO of Rabobank, and the Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of the Netherlands, Sigrid Kaag, gave opening remarks. Also in Davos, the Executive Director and Ellen MacArthur signed a memorandum of understanding between UN Environment Programme and the **Ellen MacArthur Foundation** in a common effort to stimulate public-private sector engagement with circular economy solutions.
- **Security and the environment**: UN Environment Programme hosted its first event at the **Munich Security Conference** in February, aiming to bring attention to and engage in strategic dialogue on the environmental dimension of security. On this auspicious basis, we plan to engage further with the Munich Security Conference on environment and security.

Latin America and the Caribbean

- **The Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean** (Escazú, Costa Rica, 4 March) was adopted at the ninth meeting of the negotiating committee of the regional agreement on **Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration**. The agreement, which is the first legally binding instrument on human rights and the environment in the region, makes history as the first legally binding instrument to protect environmental human rights defenders. It will be open for signature on 27 September 2018 during the General Assembly, with 11 ratifications necessary for its entry into force.

North America

- **Building resilience to natural disasters** (7 March): The UN Environment Programme together with the **Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative** convened a roundtable on “Disaster Vulnerability and Resilience along the Mississippi River”, bringing together mayors from 23 cities and towns along the Mississippi River with leaders from the global and North American insurance industry and other key stakeholders (including state and federal officials, philanthropic organizations, city networks and initiatives). The roundtable’s aim was to discuss how to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to natural disasters within the Mississippi River corridor, and it provided an opportunity to promote the work of UNEP FI’ s Principles for Sustainable Insurance.

Private Sector Engagement

- UN Environment Programme has been working with private sector representatives and associations in the following sectors: finance, oil and gas, waste, water, cooling chains, food and beverages, agriculture and fisheries, forestry, electric power, tire and transport, mining and metals, tourism, building and construction, chemicals – including plastics

and cosmetics, manufacturing – including textiles and leather, Information and Communication Technology, and retail.

- Since January of this year, eight new private sector partnerships have been established, with:
 - Clarity Movement,
 - Coca Cola Company,
 - Ethiopian Airlines,
 - Honeywell,
 - Majid Al Futtaim Holding,
 - Nippon Television Network Cooperation,
 - PayTm, and
 - Rabobank.

- **Planned outcomes** of the enhanced private sector engagement include:
 - **Broadening the partnership base** in sectors and regions, especially where there has previously been limited engagement (such as in our Latin America and the Caribbean, and West Asia operations).
 - Environmental rule of law, governance and business: preparation of a dedicated report is envisaged in partnership with the **Global Compact**.
 - Organization of events engaging the private sector in the run-up to and at the following:
 - **High-Level Political Forum** in New York in July,
 - The Ministerial Conference of the **Partnership for Action on Green Economy** in South Africa in September,
 - The fourth session of the **UN Environment Assembly** in March 2019.

CAMPAIGNS and EVENTS

During the quarter, UN Environment Programme delivered on **all seven of its Programmes**:

1. Climate change,
2. Resilience to disasters and conflicts,
3. Healthy and productive ecosystems,
4. Environmental Governance,
5. Chemicals, waste and air quality,
6. Resource efficiency and,
7. Environment under review.

Campaigns, which are a critical part of UN Environment's advocacy and delivery work, are also reflected.

Climate Change

- **Climate and Clean Air Coalition** continued its support of Mongolia on air quality, cleaner fuels, waste management, district heating and the #BreatheLife campaign.
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- **Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction**, which aims at gathering countries, cities and public and private organizations in the building sector value chain to scale up action to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, had its annual Assembly (19-20 February) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, approving its co-chairs (France and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development) along with the planned action for 2018.

Chemicals, Waste, and Air Quality

- UN Environment Programme, in cooperation with the **International Sustainable Chemistry Collaborative Centre**, kicked off a series of regional meetings on sustainable chemistry innovation and the Global Chemicals Outlook II (Nairobi, Kenya, 7-9 March). African stakeholders explored how megatrends create risks but also opportunities for chemicals management and sustainable chemistry innovation.
- **Chemicals control**: UN Environment Programme convened the second Meeting of the Expert Group for the development of further guidance for chemicals control (Geneva, Switzerland, 22-23 March), bringing together experts from governments, civil society, industry and intergovernmental organizations to review and finalize four guidance documents. The guidance documents will support countries in the development of national legislation on chemicals management.

Clean mobility: The *Africa Clean Mobility Week* (Nairobi, Kenya, 12-16 March) provided a platform for governments, private sector, civil society, and development partners in the fields of environment and transportation to discuss *cleaner* mobility and its impacts on health, *environment* and economic growth *in Africa*.

- **Clean air**: The Asia-Pacific Clean Air Week held (Bangkok, Thailand, March 19-23), brought together celebrities, government officials, cities and financiers to focus on solutions: Cleaner vehicles and fuels, bike sharing systems, changed household energy sources, improved waste management, and incentives to stop open burning. Mongolia's Minister made a call to all countries in the region to follow their lead to install the Green Passport for youth and schools.

Resource Efficiency

- **Environment and Trade Hub**: The Executive Director and World Trade Organization Director-General Roberto Azevêdo, announced at two key meetings at the sidelines of the 2018 Davos World Economic Forum meeting that the organizations will join forces to launch a new dialogue promoting innovative ways of using trade to generate better opportunities to strengthen our economies and our environments at the same time. The partnership aims to provide a platform for interested stakeholders across all sectors of society to exchange ideas and improve understanding of how trade can more effectively help bring about inclusive and sustainable development, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Sustainable trade**: On the side lines of the World Economic Forum, UN Environment Programme and Costa Rica brought together **environment and trade champions** from the public and private sectors to discuss joint leadership to make trade work better for environmental sustainability while creating jobs and more inclusive growth. Trade, Production and Foreign Affairs Ministers from Costa Rica, Argentina, Norway and Guyana, respectively, attended the meeting as well as World Trade Organization Ambassadors from Korea, the European Commission, Japan, Pakistan, Nigeria, Canada, Switzerland and Heads of Organization from World Trade Organization, International Chamber of commerce, HSBC and UN Environment Programme. The group discussed key partnerships and transformations needed to unlock sustainable trade, the role of the private sector and how to best engage the public sector, and the policies and support mechanisms needed to stimulate trade in clean technologies.
- **Resource Efficient Cities**: At the World Urban Forum 9, (Kuala Lumpur, February) UN Environment Programme conducted and participated in over 25 sessions, reflecting the

relevance of environmental issues for the implementation of the **New Urban Agenda** and, through this, progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals. We focused on climate, pollution, natural resources, resilience and circular economy, key sectors – including building and construction, energy, and transport, as well as monitoring and reporting against the Sustainable Development Goals. Implementation of city pilots for integrated delivery across UN Environment Programme projects are progressing in Bartica, Guyana, and Sao Paolo, Brazil.

- **Platform for Accelerating the Circular Economy:** The Leadership Meeting of the Platform for Accelerating the Circular Economy (Davos, January), drew together 40 chief executives, ministers and heads of international organizations to take a critical look at what public-private efforts are required to push progress on the circular economy and review progress to date. The platform is a global, public-private, collaboration platform and project accelerator co-chaired by the UN Environment Programme Executive Director. The International Resource Panel acts as one of the knowledge partners. The meeting reviewed progress of a portfolio of collaborative actions focusing on accelerating circular transformation in the areas of plastics and electronics across China, Asia and Africa.
- **Sustainable Infrastructure:** The Geneva Forum for Sustainable Infrastructure (Gland, Switzerland, 22-23 March) was co-hosted by UN Environment Programme, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the World Wide Fund for Nature, and the University of Geneva. The forum brought together representatives of 48 different organizations and institutions, including infrastructure investors, national stakeholders, and institutions interested in the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals to share experiences, tools, and approaches to making infrastructure projects contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The forum produced a “Call for Sustainable Infrastructure” that lays the groundwork for ongoing engagement.

Campaigns

- **The CleanSeas campaign** is the UN’s most ambitious effort to tackle marine pollution to date. Since the campaign launched in February 2017, more than 40 governments have joined and committed to specific measures to tackle marine plastic pollution. The campaign has struck several partnerships with key private sector and institutional players, including DELL, Volvo Ocean Race, 11th Hour Project, Musto, Volvo Car and the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums.
- **BreatheLife** is run by UN Environment Programme together with the World Health Organization and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, and boasts more than 100 cities, 11 regions, and five national governments (Bulgaria, Colombia, Ethiopia, Mongolia and Singapore) who have signed on to set ambitious goals for clean air. The hashtag #BreatheLife recorded a reach of 96 million users on multiple platforms and 27,000 pledges were signed for clean air on the Environment Assembly platform.

CROSS-CUTTING AREAS

Faith and Environment Initiative

- During the first quarter of 2018, the Faith and Environment Initiative developed a **Corporate Strategy** for Engaging with Faith-Based Organizations and faith leaders, which builds on the 5 principles (People living on a healthy Planet, enjoying Prosperity and Partnerships in Peaceful societies), with three overarching goals: 1) Leadership for policy impact; 2) Financing to support SDGs; and 3) Knowledge-based decision support system. Success in attaining the three goals will largely depend on mobilizing local communities; coordinating communications and advocacy; fostering south-south cooperation; engaging in faith-Environment thematic conversations and empowering UN Environment Programme corporate engagement.
- The Faith initiative along with UNEP Finance Initiative has been working with several partners on **engaging with faith-based organizations** such as the Responsible Finance and Investment Foundation (RFI), Islamic Development Bank, World Council of Churches, the Church of England and many others. A **roundtable on responsible financing** (Zurich, Switzerland, 25-27 April) focused on Islamic Financing and linked responsible financing to **impact financing by faith-based investment bodies** to discuss faith-consistent investment criteria that integrate environmental stewardship and care for the creation.

Extractives

- Under the **Oil for Development Programme** and, together with the Norwegian Environment Agency, UN Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre, worked in **Myanmar** to strengthen the use of biodiversity data in the impact assessment process, and in **Ghana** to support development of an environmental sensitivity atlas for oil and gas development.
- As part of the **Global Mercury Partnership's** technical support to countries developing National Action Plans for the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining sector, in February, UN Environment Programme assisted the government of **Zimbabwe** to deliver a capacity building training that included a visit to the mining community. This provided hands-on experience for the team that will conduct a field study and collect baseline information on the sector in Zimbabwe, aiming to produce a national Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining inventory.
- The **Green Fiscal Policy** team conducted and presented a study on "Funds and Mechanisms for the management of oil and gas revenues to support sustainable development: insights from country experiences and lessons for **Senegal**." The study provides policy options to the Government of Senegal and other countries on fiscal revenue management in oil and gas sectors to support sustainable development.