



The eight events you can't miss in 2022

Mark your calendars, clean your webcams and pack your bags – these are the eight sustainable development events you cannot miss in 2022.

1. The state of our economy explained

On 13 January, UN DESA experts will reveal their latest estimates of the state and future of the global economy. See if the tenuous recovery from the pandemic is taking hold and if the promises of building back better and greener are being fulfilled.

2. Focus on Least Developed Countries

The world's 47 least developed countries (LDCs) have been hit particularly hard by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and their recovery has been seriously hampered by unequal access to vaccines. The LDC 5 Conference will focus on the needs of countries most at risk of being left behind. The event was originally scheduled to take place from 23 to 27 January, but has been postponed due to the current rise in COVID-19 cases. The General Assembly is expected to decide on new dates in January.

3. Climate action is SDGs action

Limiting global warming to 1.5°C would require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The Sustainable Development Goals can provide a pattern for a transition that is global, holistic and just. But the SDGs and climate communities must work together. The Climate-SDG synergies conference in Tokyo in March will aim to bring them even closer together.

4. How has COVID-19 changed the global population

The first global estimate of the world's population since the global pandemic hit will be released in May. Stay tuned to see how COVID-19 has impacted the number and composition of our societies around the world. Follow the 2022 World Population Prospects launch.

5. Saving our Ocean

Producer of half of the world's oxygen. A source of livelihoods for over 3 billion people. Home to up to 10 million species of living creatures. Our ocean is a critical part of the Earth's life-support system. We cannot afford to destroy it. In June, the second UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon, Portugal, will spearhead action to #SaveOurOcean.

6. High-level Political Forum

HLPF – these four letters have become synonymous with the largest annual gathering of governments, activists, researchers and anyone who believes in working together for a greener, more just and more prosperous world. As every year, the world will come together in July to take stock of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and chart the way forward.

7. A world on the move

Urbanization, technology, climate change, economic opportunity, wars. There are many reasons why people around the world decide to leave their country. Later during the year, a new report from the UN DESA Population Division will explore the migration megatrends to explain how, why, and where people move.

8. Clean water and sanitation for all

The world is not on track to achieving safe water and sanitation for all. We need concrete and bold action to make sure nobody is hung out to dry. While the UN Water Conference is planned for 2023, the preparation begins already this year. Don't miss the Preparatory Meeting for the UN 2023 Water Conference taking place in November in New York.

Don't fall out of the loop! Stay abreast of these – and many more – events this year by following UN DESA on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). And don't forget to sign up to our monthly newsletter [UN DESA Voice](#).





Behind the numbers: predicting the state of our global economy

Every year, UN DESA's economists crunch the numbers to project the latest global economy trends. On 13 January, the new estimates for 2022 and beyond will be released. What goes into this work and why is it

important for people and our planet? To find out, we spoke with Helena Afonso and Sebastian Vergara, who are part of the World Economic Situation and Prospects report team.

You are part of the team that crunches the numbers and analyses global economic trends for the World Economic Situation and Prospects report; what is the secret behind doing this job successfully?

Sebastian Vergara: "There is no secret. As in any other job, strong efforts! We are a diverse team that is passionate about macroeconomics, development, and the world we all live in. There are different skills and functions in our team but for most of us the job requires a deep understanding of development issues. It also requires pondering and integrating different analyses from across the world into meaningful narratives and messages. But, while it is crucial to build global perspectives, it is also important to emphasize regional particularities. The challenges for countries in Latin America are different than for countries in Europe."

Looking back at previous projections, does the team usually get it right?

Helena Afonso: "It is difficult to make predictions, especially about the future' as the saying goes. Accuracy varies from year to year as we had to learn painfully when the pandemic erupted and rendered our projections meaningless. But overall, the WESP is historically on par with other major publications. Most important to us is that the report is not only, or even mainly, about its numerical forecasts. It is about the messages and priorities on how countries can move towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. For example, for years we have been advocating for a more proactive role of fiscal policies in shaping development prospects, something that has been evident in the current crisis."

In your view, what impact does your analysis have for countries and people around the world? Can governments use it to make their economic decisions?

Helena Afonso: "Our reports, briefings and notes are mostly designed to inform the decision-making process of Member States as they negotiate and cooperate on global economic and social matters at the UN. But, where our outputs are publicly available, we are also keen to contribute to the research and debate of global and regional macroeconomic and development issues, which naturally interests academics, students, public policy analysts and practitioners across the globe, and often journalists and the public at large."

Can you tell us about this upcoming projection, can we expect any surprises?

Sebastian Vergara: "In this report, we highlight how the global economy is hanging in a delicate balance, with enormous challenges and risks ahead. New COVID-19 variants and the tightening of global financial conditions are risks that may provide surprises. We also call attention to the importance of supporting employment to promote an inclusive recovery. But I won't say more, hope you read the WESP 2022!"

The World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2022 report will be available [here](#) on 13 January 2022.



THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW



Meet the UN Public Service Award winners

Effective public service delivery is often taken for granted until a major crisis like COVID-19 puts a strain on the system. The pandemic showed the key role public institutions play in our daily lives. Recognizing the importance of these institutions is something the

UN Public Service Awards does every year. Here are 4 things you should know about the winners of this prestigious award.

1. The winners come from all corners of the world

In 2021, ten public institutions from Bangladesh, Brazil, Ghana, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Romania, and Thailand were recognized for their vision and creativity in fostering innovation and enhancing the effectiveness of public institutions. In 2020, seven winning initiatives came from Bangladesh, Botswana, Brazil, Mexico, Portugal, the Republic of South Korea and Spain.

2. They help deliver the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals

The winning initiatives all make contributions to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals through their innovation in public service delivery.

3. Initiatives boost women's empowerment, digital inclusion and ocean health

Since 2003, the UN Public Service Award winners have made a positive impact on the lives of many people around the world. Here are just a few examples: in Bangladesh, the *Women Empowerment in Cyclone Preparedness Programme* engages more women in cyclone preparedness to reduce the impact of the natural disaster and gender-specific violence associated with it. In Ghana, more rural children have access to digital tools for basic and secondary education through the *Hands-on Mobile ICT Classes Project*. In the Republic of Korea, the Clean Marine Environment Initiative has tackled the cleaning of oil and waste from the ocean. In Romania, the Department of Sustainable Development is working with ministries, departments, civil society organizations and the private sector to mobilize support and raise public awareness to implement the SDGs.

4. Winners take the stage at award ceremony in Dubai

The winners were recognized for their creative solutions for public service delivery on 13 December 2021 in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates during the UN Public Service Awards Ceremony. Relive this joyous moment with the winners at the award ceremony [here](#).

Learn about the winning initiatives at [the Public Service Innovation Hub](#).



Ride the Rising Wave to the 2022 UN Ocean Conference

By Ambassador Peter Thomson, UN SG's Special Envoy for the Ocean

By now you would all have heard the mantra, there can be no healthy planet without a healthy Ocean, and the Ocean's health has been measurably in decline for some time now. We need to take to heart that all of us have been party to driving the decline in the Ocean's health. Thus, we all have a role to play in developing and implementing the solutions.

For the future security of our species on this planet, it is vital, in the true sense of the word, that we stop the decline and work to restore a healthy Ocean. Before describing the big events over the next six months that will all be working on that turn-around, I urge you to consider what your contribution will be? I urge you to discuss this with family and friends, in your communities and workplaces.

As an overarching starting point, your consideration might take up the need for all of our societies to govern our activities with a logical and ethical dedication to sustainability. I believe the time has come to accept that linear exploitation of finite planetary resources is a dead-end street, and that we have reached a point on humanity's path whereupon global transformation to circular recycling systems of production and consumption has become a straight-forward matter of survival. I see this as the great transformational challenge facing us in the 21st Century, a tectonic transformation akin to when human societies moved from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age.

Turning to the international events of the next six months. There is a wave that is building, one that that will sweep around the world over the six months, carrying with it the science-based solutions that will make the next [UN Ocean Conference](#) the seminal moment we need in order to stop the decline of the Ocean's health. Co-hosted by the governments of Kenya and Portugal, the conference will be held in Lisbon from June 27th to July 1st, 2022. It is mandated by all 193 UN Member States to scale up Ocean Action for the implementation of SDG14, based on those science-based solutions, and on partnerships and the power of innovation. I have no doubt that, like the first UN Ocean Conference in 2017, the Lisbon conference will prove to be a game-changer for Ocean Action around the world, guided by that wise trio of science, innovation and partnerships.

The building wave rises in Brest on the north-west coast of France, where President Macron will host the One Ocean Summit from 9th to 11th February. A week later, the governments of Palau and the US will co-host the Our Ocean Conference in Palau. Every effort is being made to synchronize the content and outcomes of these conferences so that they are carried forward on the wave of solutions as it continues to build.

Then, in Nairobi, at the UN Environment Assembly in the first week of March, attention will turn to the mandating of an internationally binding treaty to combat plastic pollution. Around that time, it's also expected that the postponed WTO Ministerial Meeting will be held in Geneva, where it is expected that Member States will finally agree to ban the scourge of harmful fisheries subsidies.

In March in New York, the fourth negotiating session of a UN agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) gets underway. And then, in Kunming, China, at the UN Convention on Biological Biodiversity's COP15, we hope to see the adoption of a target to conserve 30% of the planet's surface by 2030.

In June in Geneva, as a direct result of the excellent progress that was made on the Ocean-Climate nexus issues at the UNFCCC COP 26 in Glasgow, the UNFCCC SBSTA will be considering these critical issues a few weeks before we meet at the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon. Meanwhile over the next six months a plethora of business, civil society and scientific conferences are being held at global, regional and national levels, all concerned to see progress in our universal aim of safeguarding the Ocean's well-being.

The build-up of this wave of multilateral activity on Ocean action is unprecedented, and so it should be. For in describing Ocean-Climate nexus issues as critical, I mean to emphasize that they are inextricably linked to the future of human security. The massive scale at which we burn fossil fuels, creating the greenhouse gases that blanket our atmosphere, are commensurately changing the composition of the Ocean. The Ocean has absorbed 90 per cent of the heat from global temperature rises, so it should not be a surprise that immense changes are underway within it and that we now witness such phenomena as the death of coral reefs. It is tragic to contemplate that if present global warming trends continue, the 21st Century will witness widespread saltwater engulfment of low-lying land, of atolls, and river deltas, that have for thousands of years been home to biodiversity, food production and unique manifestations of human culture.

There are many causes for the decline in the Ocean's health, including overfishing, habitat destruction and the pollution we inflict, ranging from noise to chemicals to plastic and everything in between. But lest there remain doubt in anyone's mind, the central fact is that the great nemesis driving the decline in the Ocean's health is humankind's continuing burning of fossil fuels. In the name of intergenerational justice, is time to stop that folly.



SDG 1 IN NUMBERS



GOVERNMENTS WORLDWIDE HAVE PUT IN PLACE
1,600 SHORT-TERM SOCIAL PROTECTION MEASURES
IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

----- ↓ ↓ ↓ -----
BUT **4 BILLION PEOPLE** ARE STILL NOT COVERED BY SOCIAL PROTECTION



COMING UP



[MORE EVENTS](#)

FIND US ALSO ON:



© United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
[Unsubscribe](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Privacy Notice](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Copyright](#)