



## ENDING THE WAR ON NATURE

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КОНФЕРЕНЦИЯ ООН  
ПО ОКЕАНУ  
НИЦЦА, ФРАНЦИЯ



UN DESA

### ... by driving synergistic and integrated policymaking and action globally

In 2024–2025, UN DESA spearheaded integrated and cross-cutting efforts to accelerate implementation of global commitments across key sectors—energy, climate, transport, forests, the ocean, and water. By supporting Member States and stakeholders through capacity-building and strategic partnerships, the Department fostered stronger alignment of national policies with the 2030 Agenda and unlocked synergies across the SDGs to deliver transformative results.

### UN DESA...

- Successfully organized the third United Nations Ocean Conference, which resulted in over 170 countries adopting the “Our ocean, our future: united for urgent action” declaration as part of the Nice Ocean Action Plan.
- Mobilized over US\$1.4 trillion in Energy Compact commitments by bringing together hundreds of global stakeholders through the EnergyNow SDG 7 Action Forum, driving momentum towards universal access to sustainable energy.
- Led the preparatory process for the Implementation Plan of the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Transport, catalysing multistakeholder collaboration and coordination, mobilizing action and delivering targeted capacity-building support to advance sustainable mobility.
- Fostered stronger links between climate action and the 2030 Agenda by co-convening the fifth and sixth Global Conferences on Climate and SDG Synergies, actively contributing to the preparations of COP29 and COP30.
- Supported Member States in accelerating progress towards the Global Forest Goals, helping harmonize global forest and biodiversity goals at national levels, and facilitating multistakeholder partnerships for forest-based climate actions.
- Paved the way for the 2026 UN Water Conference, by supporting preparations and operationalizing the first-ever United Nations System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation, setting the stage for coordinated global action on water.



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## ENDING THE WAR ON NATURE

Across the globe, communities are increasingly affected by the impacts of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and the rapid decline of biodiversity. These interconnected threats underscore the indispensable role of nature in achieving sustainable development. In response, UN DESA champions integrated solutions to today's most urgent global challenges, helping to accelerate progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals. The Department works to address the systemic drivers of environmental degradation, advocating for a transformative shift in energy and transport systems, and the sustainable, long-term stewardship of vital natural ecosystems—from forests and the ocean to freshwater resources and beyond.

### Catalysing multilateralism to reinforce ocean action

The third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3), held in Nice, France, from 9 to 13 June 2025, marked a milestone moment to accelerate action and mobilize actors to protect the ocean. The high-level gathering brought together a diverse array of stakeholders, including Heads of State, scientists, Indigenous Peoples and civil society, all underscoring the ocean's vital role in regulating the climate, sustaining food security and livelihoods, and preserving biodiversity. More than 170 countries adopted an intergovernmentally agreed declaration called *Our ocean, our future: united for urgent action*, which commits to urgent action to conserve and sustainably use the ocean. The declaration—together with bold voluntary commitments by States and other entities—constitutes the Nice Ocean Action Plan, which successfully concluded the Conference with a commitment to boost multilateralism. In addition, 19 more States ratified the Marine Biodiversity Agreement (BBNJ Agreement) and

20 more signed it during the conference, bringing the total number of signatures to 136 and ratifications to 50 States plus the European Union.

### Advancing united action for water and sanitation

The first-ever United Nations System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation marks a major milestone in decades of global efforts to ensure safe water and sanitation for all, reinforcing its place as a key global priority. Developed in response to the momentum generated by the 2023 UN Water Conference, the Strategy is designed to boost stronger collaboration and coordination across the UN system. It supports countries in accelerating progress on national plans, global water goals, human rights to water and sanitation, and solutions to pressing water challenges. Since the launch of the Strategy at the High-level Political Forum in 2024, UN DESA, through its support to UN-Water, has been developing a Collaborative Implementation Plan to guide the Strategy's operationalization,



Nicolas Entrup of OceanCare (left), Peter Thomson, the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean (centre), and Fabienne McLellan of OceanCare (right) participate in a handover ceremony for a petition to protect ocean health. | UN DESA

localization, and monitoring. This Strategy lays a critical foundation for unified UN action on water and sanitation, setting the stage for bold, coordinated outcomes at the 2026 UN Water Conference.

### Mobilizing global action to achieve sustainable energy for all

UN DESA galvanized governments, the UN system, and civil society—including youth organizations—to strengthen political will and accelerate action on sustainable energy. As the Secretariat of UN-Energy, the Department directed efforts to implement the UN-Energy Plan of Action, driving coordinated, system-wide efforts to achieve three bold targets: universal energy access, tripling renewable energy, and doubling

energy efficiency to achieve SDG 7 by 2030 and beyond. Through the EnergyNow SDG7 Action Forum, UN DESA brought together hundreds of stakeholders worldwide, mobilizing Energy Compact commitments totalling over US\$1.4 trillion. It also led the charge in implementing the UN Decade of Sustainable Energy for All and successfully advocated for its extension to 2030—a powerful reaffirmation of global resolve to realize SDG 7. UN DESA also launched in June the 2025 edition of *Tracking SDG 7: The Energy Progress Report*. This was followed by a series of insightful SDG 7 Policy Briefs unveiled during the 2025 High-level Political Forum in New York on 16 July, where both the Energy Progress Report and the Policy Briefs were presented to high-level policymakers, reinforcing the political momentum for transformative energy action.





Participants discuss the role of bioeconomy as a key economic paradigm for tackling climate change, promoting sustainable development, and restoring forests during a thematic discussion on regenerating nature at the fifth Global Climate and SDG Synergies Conference in September 2024 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. | IISD

## Advancing climate and SDG synergies on the road to COP30

Demonstrating global leadership in aligning climate action and the 2030 Agenda, UN DESA, together with UNFCCC, co-convened the fifth Global Conference on Climate and SDG Synergies, 5–6 September 2024, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Building on the 2024 Global Report on Climate and SDG Synergies, the conference showcased evidence-based and forward-looking solutions to bridge climate and development goals, setting the stage for COP29 and the Summit of the Future. The fifth conference brought together high-level representatives from more than 30 countries, with strong participation from youth, civil society, and UN leadership. At

COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, the Department also organized the SDG Pavilion in collaboration with UNFCCC and DGC, engaging more than 120 partners across more than 100 events to spotlight integrated solutions and transformative partnerships that drive both climate and sustainable development progress.

The momentum continued with the sixth Global Conference on Climate and SDG Synergies, hosted by Denmark, 27–28 May 2025. The sixth conference further advanced this agenda by promoting concrete pathways toward equitable transitions and nature-based resilience, helping to shape the global conversation in the lead up to COP30 and beyond. Together, these efforts underscored the urgency of integrated, inclusive, and ambitious action to tackle climate change while advancing all 17 SDGs.



USG Li Junhua speaks at the opening of the SDG Pavilion at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan. | UN DESA

## Boosting global collaboration on sustainable transport

UN DESA continued to lead global efforts on sustainable transport, playing a pivotal role in preparing the Implementation Plan of the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Transport, which is set to begin in 2026. Through inclusive and collaborative engagement with Member States, the United Nations system, multilateral development banks, think tanks, civil society, and other stakeholders, the Department helped forge a unified global commitment to sustainable mobility. More than 110 organizations across 45 countries also contributed ideas to co-create and shape an ambitious Implementation Plan.

In parallel, UN DESA strengthened national capacities by delivering targeted support to Member States on sustainable transport. For example, a workshop for landlocked developing countries was held in January 2025 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The conversations contributed to a dedicated policy brief addressing the unique transport challenges faced by these countries. Another workshop, co-organized with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in June 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland, focused on empowering developing countries to effectively implement sustainable transport policies and contribute to the Decade's initiatives.





Participants gather at a session on “Strengthening multilateral action for forests through universal and inclusive dialogue” at UNFF20 in New York in May 2025. | UN DESA

## Advancing global forest action towards 2030

UN DESA organized the 2025 session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF20), a key milestone in the global effort to achieve the Global Forest Goals (GFGs) by 2030. The Forum served as a critical platform to assess progress, identify implementation gaps, and chart strategic pathways forward, culminating in a set of concrete proposals to inform both the HLPFs in 2025 and 2026 as well as UNFF21 in 2026. At the Forum, participants highlighted the need to strengthen several key measures, including leveraging the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). The Forum also

featured a series of interactive panel discussions, which explored critical issues such as the valuation of forest ecosystem services to better integrate the economic value of forests into national policies and strategies, the development of a global hub on forest financing to mobilize and coordinate resources more effectively, and the crucial role of dryland forests in climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable livelihoods. These discussions not only deepened understanding of key forest issues but also generated actionable insights to support countries in translating global forest commitments into tangible results on the ground.



Speakers at a Forest Day event during CBD COP16 present a new joint initiative by the UNFF and CBD secretariats under the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, promoting integrated implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. | UN DESA



## Harmonizing global forest and biodiversity goals into national policies and strategies

Responding to Member States’ call for stronger collaboration among the Rio Conventions on forest-related issues, UN DESA and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) launched a joint initiative under the CPF to promote the integrated implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030 and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF). Over the past year, the initiative focused on regional analyses in Latin America and Africa, identifying both opportunities and challenges for advancing the GFGs and the KM-GBF in a coherent, synergistic

manner. Two publications—*Towards a Coherent Forest Agenda* and *The Forest Factor*—were launched during Forest Day at CBD COP16, underscoring the central role of forests in achieving global biodiversity and sustainability targets.



## Catalysing forest-based climate actions through multistakeholder partnerships

At COP29 in November 2024 in Baku, Azerbaijan, UN DESA organized the Forest Pavilion within the SDG Pavilion, marking an important milestone in elevating the role of forests in global climate discussions. This



multistakeholder Forest Pavilion—the first of its kind at any climate COP—brought together more than 500 participants to showcase forest-based climate action and partnerships at national, regional, and international levels by governments, organizations, science and research communities, the private sector, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, and youth. The Forest Pavilion partners launched a communiqué, *From Baku to Belém: Forests for Climate, People, and*

*the Planet*, underscoring forests as the bedrock of the global journey towards a net-zero, climate-resilient, and equitable future for all. It highlights key outcomes and renewed commitments to advancing forest-based climate actions to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030 and introduces the “Roadmap to Belém” that sets the stage for accelerated forest-based climate action leading up to COP30 in November 2025 in Belém, Brazil.



Juliette Biao (left), Director of the UN Forum on Forests secretariat, and Thomas Clark (centre), General Counsel for the Asian Development Bank, participate in an interview at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan. | UN DESA

**Recognizing Indigenous stewardship in the fight against climate change**

UN DESA examined the critical intersection between Indigenous Peoples’ rights to lands, territories, and resources, and the escalating impacts of the climate crisis in its *State of the World’s Indigenous Peoples, Volume VI* report. The report highlights how Indigenous Peoples—who steward about 22 per cent of the world’s land surface and protect 80 per cent of its biodiversity—are not only front-line defenders of the planet, but also are among the most vulnerable to climate-related threats, including displacement, deforestation, and loss of traditional livelihoods, often with limited access to climate finance and policy decision-making. This volume calls for urgent recognition and protection of Indigenous Peoples’ collective rights, as well as the integration of Indigenous knowledge systems into global climate strategies. It emphasizes that safeguarding Indigenous land rights and ensuring free, prior, and informed consent are essential not only to advancing human rights but also to achieving effective and equitable climate action. The report is a compelling reminder that Indigenous-led solutions are indispensable for addressing the climate crisis and building a more resilient, sustainable future for all.



**State of the World’s Indigenous Peoples**

Climate Crisis  
Volume VI

