



WASHINGTON, DC
30 October - 1 November 2015
nmun.org/nmun_dc.html

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME BACKGROUND GUIDE 2015

Written By: Aiskell Román, Director;
Daniel Sweeney, Assistant Director



NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS





THE 2015 NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

SPONSORED BY THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE CONFERENCE ASSOCIATION

30 October - 1 November • www.nmun.org

Patrick Parsons
Secretary-General

Katrena Porter & Lauren Shaw
Under-Secretaries-General

Angela Shively
Director of Conference Services

Leah Madeleine Schmidt, Director
Jeffrey A. Thorpe II, Assistant Dir.
General Assembly First Committee

Christopher McKenna, Director
Analeigh Willétt, Assistant Director
General Assembly Second
Committee

Aiskell Román, Director
Daniel Sweeney, Assistant Director
UN Environment Programme

Camille Ellison, Director
Chase W. Mitchell, Assistant Dir.
United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization

Dieyun Song, Director
Eileen Austin, Assistant Director
UN Human Settlements Programme

Jessie-Lynn Anik Mace, Director
Joshua Cummins, Assistant Director
United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees

Tristan M. Rightnar, Director
Kelly Morrison, Assistant Director
Commission on the
Status of Women

Ashley Boyer, Director
Emma Ogg, Assistant Director
Security Council

Courtney Indart & Joseph Trimmer
Substantive Assistants

NMUN·DC ADVISORY GROUP

Michael Aguilar
Prof. Francine D'Amico
Prof. Crissy Estep
Kristina M. Getty
Prof. Martin W. Quirk
Cara Wagner

NCCA BOARD of DIRECTORS

Prof. Eric Cox
President
Prof. Kevin Grisham
Vice-President
Prof. Chaldeans Mensah
Treasurer
Prof. Pamela Chasek
Secretary
Jennifer Contreras
Raymond J. Freda
Rachel Holmes
Prof. Donna Schlagheck
Prof. Markéta Židková
Members Ex-Officio
Michael Eaton
Executive Director
Prof. Richard Murgo
President Emeritus
Prof. Richard Reitano
President Emeritus

Dear Delegates,

We are pleased to welcome you to the 2015 National Model United Nations Washington, D.C. Conference (NMUN·DC)! This year's United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) staff is: Director Aiskell Roman and Assistant Director Daniel Sweeney. Aiskell currently works for the scholarly journal *Latin American Perspectives* as its coordinating secretary and will begin her first year of law school this fall. This is her third year on staff. Danny is an undergraduate student enrolled at Lynchburg College. This will be his second year on NMUN staff and his first with NMUN·DC.

The topics under discussion for UNEP are:

- I. Paris 2015: Towards a Universal Climate Agreement
- II. Organized Crime in Gold, Wildlife and Timber
- III. Marine Plastic Debris and Microplastics

The United Nations Environment Programme is one of the main entities within the United Nations that addresses environmental issues by encouraging cooperation in the local, regional and global level. Within its mandate, UNEP is able to consider new environmental challenges and to continue to improve previous conditions, to create international tools that promote discussions, oversight and programs, and to work in cooperation with global institutions to advance the responsible management of the environment. UNEP's goal is to mainstream the importance of protecting and encouraging the sustainable use of the environment while promoting social and economic development.

We hope you will find this Background Guide useful as it serves to introduce you to the topics for this committee; however, it is not meant to replace further research. We highly encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in full detail and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography as part of your research to expand your knowledge on these topics and prepare to discuss solutions with fellow delegates. Prior to the conference, each delegation will submit a [position paper](#) based on their preparation (due 1 October). Please take note of the [NMUN policies](#) on the website and in the [Delegate Preparation Guide](#) regarding plagiarism, codes of conduct/dress code/sexual harassment, awards philosophy/evaluation method, etc. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory.

The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) are available for download from the NMUN website. This document includes the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure. It is thus an essential instrument in preparing for the conference and a reference during committee.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for this committee or the Conference itself, you are welcome to contact Under-Secretaries-General Lauren Shaw (usglauren.dc@nmun.org) and Katrena Porter (usgkat.dc@nmun.org).

We wish you all the best during your preparation and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Sincerely,

Aiskell Roman, *Director*
Daniel Sweeney, *Assistant Director*

The NCCA/NMUN is a Non-Governmental Organization associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information and a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization of the United States.



Committee Overview

Introduction

Arguably, one of the biggest challenges facing the United Nations (UN) is the effect of climate change and its broader impacts on the global environment. Developing a greener future world has been a major focal point within the international community as has been evidenced by both the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and the proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

History

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was established in 1972 at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm, Sweden, which was organized by Maurice Strong, who later became UNEP's first Executive Director.¹ As the challenges surrounding the environment continue to grow increasingly difficult, it has been the same spirit outlined in the original Stockholm Declaration that has awarded increased responsibility, energy, and funding towards UNEP administered programs. Headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, and currently under the direction of Executive Director Achim Steiner, UNEP has six regional offices throughout the globe to administer its programs.² As the world's largest forum for international environmental policy, UNEP has a long-standing track record of excellence in responding to the challenges brought forth by climate change, most notably by being a leader for the ratification of the *Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Kyoto Protocol)* in 1992.³ With six major program divisions in addition to regional offices around the world, UNEP has grown immensely since 1972 and wields a tremendous amount of influence within the international sphere.

Mandate

With a consistently renewed focus on promoting environmentally sustainable practices, UNEP has worked tirelessly to carry out its mission "to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations."⁴ UNEP focuses on seven major themes: Climate Change, Disasters and Conflict, Ecosystem Management, Environmental Governance, Ecosystems and Waste, Resource Efficiency, and Environment Under Review.⁵ UNEP's work includes assessing global, regional, and national environmental conditions and trends; developing international and national environmental instruments; and strengthening institutions for the wise management of the environment.⁶ To achieve these goals, UNEP has six divisions including the Division of Communication and Public Information; the Division of Environmental Policy Information; the Division of Early Warning and Assessment; the Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics; the Division of Environmental Law and Conventions; and Global Conventions and Funds.⁷ By virtue of UNEP having these distinct divisions, it is able to work toward achieving many goals simultaneously and address a wide array of topics.

Governance

In recent years, UNEP has gone through extensive changes in governance to better respond to the ever-growing environmental challenges. The catalyst for these changes was the 2012 Rio+20 conference and its outcome document *The Future We Want*, which stressed the need for UNEP and its programs to receive better funding in order to provide a more stable future to address environmental concerns.⁸ Previously, a 58-member Governing Council administered UNEP.⁹ In 2013, membership to UNEP became universal through the United Nations

¹ UNEP, *Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment*, 1972.

² UNEP, *UNEP Structure*, 2015.

³ Encyclopedia Britannica, *United Nations Environment Programme*.

⁴ UNEP, *About UNEP: The Organization*, 2015.

⁵ UNEP, *About UNEP*, 2015.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ UNEP, *UNEP Structure*, 2015.

⁸ UNEP, *UNEP Funding Strategy*, 2014.

⁹ UNGA, *Change of the Designation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (A/RES/67/2)*, 2013.

Environment Assembly (UNEA), which became the new UNEP governing body by virtue of the General Assembly's resolution 67/251.¹⁰ The UNEA meets biannually during even numbered years (first in 2014) and is guided by the Secretariat of Governing Bodies (SGB) to ensure effective agenda setting, in addition to receiving support from the Committee of Permanent Representatives and Scientific Advisory Groups to help promote best practices and a clear understanding of the challenges that Member States face.¹¹

Functions and Powers

In 2014, UNEP published a new funding strategy in line with the outcome of Rio+20's desire to see an increase in resources available to the agency.¹² Perhaps the biggest change in the funding strategy has been to pool contributions together rather than allowing Member States to donate to specific causes.¹³ Another component is ensuring greater accountability in how funds are spent and receiving greater returns on investment.¹⁴ There is also a considerable effort to widen the base of donations as currently 93% of all cash donations come from 15 Member States.¹⁵ Truly, these are exciting times for UNEP with a new governance structure and a plan to increase resources for the agency, and Member States have made a significant effort in the past few years to reaffirm the commitments made in 1972 in Stockholm. Having developed a firm outline for future goals in addition to passing resolutions on several important global issues, UNEA is poised to lead UNEP into the post-2015 development agenda era.¹⁶

UNEP has become increasingly concerned with energy efficiency in the past year, especially within the Asian-Pacific region. A report released in May 2015 titled, *Indicators for a Resource Efficient and Green Asia and the Pacific*, expressed a concern about the use of resources quadrupling in the past forty years within the Asian-Pacific region, notably because of increased urbanization.¹⁷ Executive Director Achim Steiner noted in the report that ensuring sustainable development within the region is a necessary step to promote the same concept throughout the world.¹⁸ While the increase in greenhouse gas emissions was a cause for concern, the same report applauds the remarkable water efficiency showcased with the urbanization of the region.¹⁹

In an effort to promote energy efficiency globally, UNEP began to consider a plan to develop a large-scale geothermal hub near its headquarters in Kenya.²⁰ It is UNEP's hope that this proposed center will establish a sustainable model for the rest of the world to showcase best practices.²¹ In addition to logistical benefits, Kenya was also chosen because of its preexisting private and public commitments to geothermal technology.²² Using this technology, which is designed to absorb natural heat from beneath the Earth's surface, Kenya will be able to make power more affordable throughout the country connecting 80% of its population to the electrical grid by 2020, up from 35% in 2015, through an environmentally friendly process that could have profound benefits on energy efficiency across the globe.²³

Recent Sessions

The first ever session of the UNEA was held from 23-27 June 2014 and produced seventeen resolutions pertaining to environmental standards throughout the world.²⁴ The inaugural meeting spent a significant portion of time

¹⁰ UNGA, *Change of the Designation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (A/RES/67/2.)*, 2013.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² UNEP, *UNEP Funding Strategy*, 2014.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ UNEA, *Proceedings of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme at its first session*, 2014.

¹⁷ Greentech Lead, *4-fold increase in energy use in Asia-Pacific: UNEP*, 2015.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Capital News, *UNEP to Establish a Geothermal Centre of Excellence in Kenya*, 2015.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ UNEA, *Proceedings of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme at its first session*, 2014.

discussing the transition from the MDGs to the post-2015 development agenda and examined how the UNEA would interact with UNEP as an agency.²⁵ Most notably, this session adopted resolutions concerning illegal trade in wildlife, science-policy interface, chemicals and waste, and ecosystem based adaption.²⁶ These discussions also focused on creating the opportunity to discuss gender and development in the Global South within the purview of the environment, but also gave the opportunity to address the media and raise awareness on the issues that the UNEA would be discussing.²⁷ Concluding with the election of a new SGB govern in the interim between the conclusion of the four-day event and the UNEA's second meeting in 2016, the UNEA has firmly established itself as an effective body capable of crafting solutions to the world's environmental issues.²⁸

Conclusion

It is clear that UNEP has a tremendous amount of responsibility in defining the future of the international community. Member States have the opportunity to further an already existing dialogue under the pretense of a renewed commitment and sense of urgency concerning environmental issues in the coming years. With the change to universal membership, UNEP has the increased ability to discuss global issues and integrate more ideas and concepts than it has in the past. Member States will need to work cooperatively within and outside of UNEP to create the highest level of resolution possible.

Annotated Bibliography

United Nations, General Assembly. Sixty-seventh session. (2013). *Change of the Designation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (A/RES/67/2.)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 20 May 2015 from: <http://undocs.org/a/res/67/2>

This source outlines the shift from the UNEP's Governing Council to the UNEA. It is an important document in helping delegates to understand the framework relevant to the structure of their committee. Further, this is the most telling sign of the UN's renewed focus and commitment towards UNEP.

United Nations Environment Programme. (1972). *Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment.* Retrieved 5 May 2015 from:

<http://www.unep.org/Documents.multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=97&ArticleID=1503>

Outlining the prime directive in the establishment of UNEP, this source is useful for understanding the motives that drove the creation of the committee. In understanding what UNEP stands for, it is important to understand the motives in creation. For delegates, this should help provide information concerning the original intentions of UNEP and best see how it has evolved as a UN agency.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2014). *Proceedings of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme at its first session* [Website]. Retrieved 20 May 2015 from:

http://www.unep.org/unea/UNEA_Proceedings.asp

With UNEA being the new governing body of UNEP, this document is critical to understanding both what it is working to achieve in the present as well as future scenarios. These proceedings show what work has already been started and give indication to what its long term plans are. With UNEP going through such a dramatic shift recently, the inaugural proceedings give good indicators as to what it hopes to do in the future.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *About UNEP* [Website]. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from:

<http://www.unep.org/About/>

This page delivers both the main mission of UNEP in addition to several sub-goals that it hopes to accomplish. In understanding the various committee topics within the context of UNEP, this should help delegates devise a strategy of how to address them best. In addition, this should

²⁵ UNEA, *Proceedings of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, at its first session, 2014.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

provide clarity between the agency and the committee, as this is a recent development in structure for UNEP.

Bibliography

- Capital News. (2015). *UNEP to establish geothermal centre of excellence in Kenya*. Retrieved 8 June 2015 from: <http://www.capitalfm.co.ke/news/2015/05/unep-to-establish-geothermal-centre-of-excellence-in-kenya/>
- Greentech Lead. (2015). *4-fold increase in energy use in Asia-Pacific: UNEP*. Retrieved 8 June 2015 from: <http://www.greentechlead.com/news/4-fold-increase-in-energy-use-in-asia-pacific-unep-23644>
- Encyclopedia Britannica. (2015). *United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)*. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/616431/United-Nations-Environment->
- United Nations, General Assembly. Sixty-seventh session. (2013). *Change of the Designation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (A/RES/67/2.)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 20 May 2015 from: <http://undocs.org/a/res/67/2>
- United Nations Environment Programme. (1972). *Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment*. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: <http://www.unep.org/Documents.multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=97&ArticleID=1503>
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2012). *UNEP Executive Directors* [Website]. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: <http://www.unep.org/40thAnniversary/executivedirectors/strong.asp>
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2012). *United Nations Environment Programme Upgraded to Universal Membership Following Rio+20 Summit* [Press Release]. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: <http://www.unep.org/NEWSCENTRE/default.aspx?DocumentId=2700&ArticleId=9363>
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2013). *UNEP Funding 2013 Statistics* [Website]. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: <http://www.unep.org/about/funding/UNEPFunding2013Statistics/tabid/1060038/Default.aspx>
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2014). *Proceedings of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme at its first session* [Website]. Retrieved 20 May 2015 from: http://www.unep.org/unea/UNEA_Proceedings.asp
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2014). *UNEP Funding Strategy* [Website]. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: <http://www.unep.org/about/funding/portals/50199/UNEP%20Funding%20Strategy-Final.pdf>
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *About UNEP* [Website]. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: <http://www.unep.org/About/>
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *About UNEP: The Organization* [Website]. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: <http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=43>
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *Achim Steiner UNEP Executive Director and Under-Secretary-General of the United Nation* [Website]. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: <http://www.unep.org/about/executivedirector/Biography.aspx>
<http://www.unep.org/about/executivedirector/Biography.aspx>
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *UNEA Schedule* [Website]. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: http://www.unep.org/unea/docs/UNEA_events_calendar_updated_June27.pdf
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *UNEP Structure* [Website]. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: <http://www.unep.org/about/Structure/tabid/129623/Default.aspx>

I. Paris 2015: Towards a Universal Climate Agreement

- What topics should be considered when forming a universal climate agreement?
- How are different Member States affected by climate change and how can this impact the type of solutions needed to solve climate change problems?
- In what ways can the United Nations work within its subsidiary bodies to help reach a universal climate agreement?

Introduction

This year marks a historical landmark for the benefit of the environment and the future of generations as people from all levels of society and organizations come together to have their voices heard to pressure world leaders to adopt a universal climate agreement. Even though the term, consequences, and existence of climate change have been extensively debated and found controversial for several decades, the planet is facing growing environmental, social, and economic impacts caused by climate change and a lack of preventive and responsive actions to cope with its growing risks.²⁹ Climate change is currently defined by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Article 1 as “a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods,” which highlights both man-made and natural causes as part of the contributing factors to climate change.³⁰ Hence, it is important to note that climate change has different dimensions that negatively impact our economic and social development and make our societies vulnerable. It affects all levels of our ecosystem, food production, causes floods and droughts, and undermines safety and economic growth.³¹

The UNCCC’s 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) will take place this year from 30 November to 11 December in Paris, France.³² This meeting also serves as the platform for the 11th session of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP11), and both have the combined goal of finalizing a post-Kyoto successor agreement.³³ The international efforts to combat climate change began with the UNFCCC’s adoption at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.³⁴ The UNFCCC came into force in 1994, and it has met every year since to discuss how societies, but mainly industrialized states, can prevent and continue to combat man-made harm to the Earth’s ecosystem.³⁵ The Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP) meets simultaneously to the Conference of the Parties (COP) to reconsider the progress and further necessary steps for the continuous implementation of the *Kyoto Protocol*.³⁶ As the largest climate change conference, the world should turn with anticipation to COP21 with the hope and support to reach international consensus on a legally binding agreement that lays out a framework for mitigation, low carbon transition, and adaptation strategies, as well as outlining a platform for parties to provide country-specific policies and goals and establish funding mechanisms and commitments.³⁷

International and Regional Framework

Climate change negotiation started in the beginning of the 1990s and has gained momentum since then.³⁸ The UNFCCC was adopted in 1992 at the Earth Summit and has been ratified by 195 parties with the twin goals of assessing the effects of rising climate temperatures and determining how the international community can properly respond to the social, economic, and environmental consequences of those effects.³⁹ The first follow-up conference was in 1995 in Berlin, Germany, and during COP3 in 1997 the *Kyoto Protocol* was adopted in Kyoto, Japan.⁴⁰ The

²⁹ UNEP, *Climate Change Introduction*, 2015.

³⁰ UNFCCC, *Climate Change*, 2015.

³¹ UNEP, *Climate Change Introduction*, 2015.

³² COP21, *What is a COP?*, 2015.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ UNFCCC, *Background on the UNFCCC: The international response to climate change*, 2014.

³⁵ UNFCCC, *First steps to a safer future: Introducing The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, 2014.

³⁶ UNFCCC, *Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP)*, 2014.

³⁷ COP21, *COP21 Main Issues*, 2015.

³⁸ UNFCCC, *Background on the UNFCCC: The international response to climate change*, 2014.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

Kyoto Protocol implements carbon emission reductions, monitoring and reporting commitments, and compliance for industrialized countries and establishes a mechanism to trade carbon emissions and limit worldwide emissions to a safe level.⁴¹ The Protocol came into force eight years later at COP11 in Nairobi, Kenya, where parties furthered negotiations under the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) that is commonly known as the Nairobi Work Programme on Adaptation (NWP).⁴² Most recently, at the COP20 in Lima, Peru, UNEP, in collaboration with the NWP, promoted the Lima Adaptation Knowledge Initiative to create, manage, and distribute knowledge and adaptation responses by focusing on certain regions and themes that are needed to implement similar climate change measures globally.⁴³

In 2010, in Cancun, Mexico, parties agreed to the Cancun Agreements to promote measures that could be adopted by all parties, including reduction of greenhouse emissions, capacity building initiatives to aid developing states in a cost effective way, and to monitor progress made to limit the increase in global temperature below 2° Celsius.⁴⁴ Another important milestone of COP16 was the creation of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to implement future financial mechanisms established by the UNFCCC.⁴⁵ The purpose of the Fund, once it is fully functional, will be to act as a transparent mechanism for countries to receive funds according to their specific needs, to make the shift to and implement low carbon emissions strategies, reduce greenhouse emissions, and to adopt other policies to adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change.⁴⁶ Moreover, in 2012, during the COP18 in Doha, Qatar, Member States continued talks and negotiations to enhance international action by adopting the *Doha Climate Gateway*, which reemphasized the importance of the *Kyoto Protocol* and reaffirmed a new commitment period to ensure that the Protocol continues to be one of the leading legal and monitoring documents to combat climate change.⁴⁷ In addition, COP18 adopted the *Bali Action Plan* to pave the path to the 2015 negotiations that reiterate similar principles of adaptation, mitigation, technology development, capacity building, finance and deforestation to be implemented as a long-term action plan for the Convention.⁴⁸ At COP19 in Warsaw, Poland, one of the major outcomes of the conference was the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts (Loss and Damage Mechanism) with the intent to bridge the knowledge gap, enhance technologies and share information and guidance to effectively address the loss and damage due to climate change, as well as by promote international cooperation of policies and programs.⁴⁹

Last year at the COP20 in Lima, Peru, parties discussed very challenging topics on how to cap and reduce carbon emissions, yet they faced difficulties on committing and taking responsibility on action plans to mitigate and overcome the risks associated with climate change.⁵⁰ Even so, some progress was made such as pledges for funding to the GCF and an agreement by developed countries to be subject to supervision of their emission targets through a Multilateral Assessment.⁵¹ Also, other agreements were made to encourage the public, civil society, and governments to educate, build awareness, encourage technology development and access, and mainstream climate change through various stakeholders.⁵² These stakeholders must raise global consciousness and responsibility to incorporate the sustainable development agenda and to adopt previous COP recommendations and increase efforts to adapt and mitigate climate change.⁵³

Role of the International System

As a way to prepare for the Paris 2015 negotiations, during COP19 and COP20 world leaders committed to submit by March 2015 their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), meaning their proposed targets for emission reductions.⁵⁴ These INDCs are based on each country's national circumstances, priorities, and goals that

⁴¹ UNFCCC, *Making those first steps count: An Introduction to the Kyoto Protocol*, 2014.

⁴² UNFCCC, *Background on the UNFCCC: The international response to climate change*, 2014.

⁴³ UNFCCC, *Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change (NWP)*, 2014.

⁴⁴ UNFCCC, *The Cancun Agreements*, 2014.

⁴⁵ IISD Reporting Services, *Summary of the Lima Climate Change Conference*, 2014.

⁴⁶ GCF, *Background*, 2015.

⁴⁷ UNFCCC, *The Doha Climate Gateway*, 2014.

⁴⁸ UNFCCC, *Bali Action Plan: Report of the Conference of the Parties on its thirteenth session (FCCC/CP/2007/6/Add.1)*, 2008.

⁴⁹ UNFCCC, *Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts*, 2014.

⁵⁰ IISD Reporting Services, *Summary of the Lima Climate Change Conference*, 2014.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ WRI, *What is INDC?*, 2015.

work within established international frameworks to reduce annual carbon emissions while also implementing social, economic, and environmental strategies as put forward by the Convention.⁵⁵ In order to have effective negotiations, INDCs should include a timeframe and a target goal of when and how much greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions the country will emit, a close examination of the country's relationship between gross domestic product and their GHG emissions to measure their expected future GHG emissions based on their economic growth, and a framework to evaluate and measure the results of the GHG emission reduction plans.⁵⁶ Hence, INDCs will be a key aspect of the COP21 negotiations as they encourage countries to reevaluate their national situations, make ambitious commitments for the future, and work in cooperation with the international community to achieve these commitments timely and sustainably through renewed sources of financing, technology, experience, and capacity building.⁵⁷

Adaptation is another important aspect that will be part of the COP21 discussion. Adaptation focuses on measuring and examining the current impact that climate change has in different countries and regions and taking this information to assess current challenges and build awareness about future problems.⁵⁸ As part of international efforts to mainstream adaptation as one of the key responses to climate change, UNEP has published *The Adaptation Gap Report 2014*. This report describes three important gaps in the context of adaptation: finance, technology, and knowledge, and it highlights how these areas can be improved emphasized to achieve the targets and goals as proposed by parties to the UNFCC.⁵⁹

Climate Change and Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is closely related to climate change given that strategies to combat climate change must be implemented sustainably with the best interest of our societies, economic development, and environmental protection.⁶⁰ Just as with climate change, the goal of sustainable development is to use our current resources wisely and efficiently to meet our current demands but also to protect those resources for the future without compromising the health of the environment and society or undermining economic growth.⁶¹ Furthermore, "the link between climate change and sustainable development stems from the fact that climate change is a constraint to development, and sustainable development is a key to capacities for mitigation and adaptation."⁶² Hence, sustainable development must be at the heart of the climate change negotiations.

While implementing the commitments and targets made to balance sustainable development policies with climate change mitigation strategies focus on a variety of topics including poverty eradication, environmental protection, increasing women's participation and equality in society, supporting sustainable use of natural resources, and promoting economic development, investment and cost effective policies.⁶³ For instance, Africa is one of the poorest and least developed continents, thus its GHG emissions contribution is less than that of more industrialized continents; however, the impact of climate change in Africa is more problematic since many African countries that are negatively affected also lack technological, economic, and social resources to properly address climate change and adapt to its challenges.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, recognizing the disparities between developed and developing countries is essential to find the support necessary to implement adaptation and mitigation measures through sustainable development.⁶⁵

The international community can also learn from country-specific national policies that have successfully balanced climate change mitigation with sustainable development strategies. For example, Bangladesh has taken action to work in cooperation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society, the private sector, academic experts, and leaders to address climate change through the National Appropriate Plan of Action, which led the way

⁵⁵ WRI, *What is INDC?*, 2015.

⁵⁶ International Partnership on Mitigation and MRV, *Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs)*, 2015.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ UNFCC, *Adaptation*, 2015.

⁵⁹ UNEP, *The Adaptation Gap: A Preliminary Assessment Report*, 2014, pp. xi-xii.

⁶⁰ FAO, *Climate change impacts, adaptation and links to sustainable development in Africa*.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ The Guardian, *13 steps towards ending poverty and climate change*, 2015.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ FAO, *Climate change impacts, adaptation and links to sustainable development in Africa*.

to greater national action.⁶⁶ To further address climate change and its analogous relationship with sustainability in socioeconomic development, Bangladesh implemented the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) to focus and implement solutions on six areas including “(i) food security, social protection and health, (ii) comprehensive disaster management, (iii) infrastructures, (iv) research and knowledge management, (v) mitigation and low carbon development, and (vi) capacity building and institutional strengthening.”⁶⁷ Thus, even though international collaboration and support is imperative, national policies that connect socioeconomic development with climate change are also key to achieve the goals committed in previous and future conferences and resolutions.

Regional Participation toward Paris 2015

Another important aspect of COP 20 is that it paved the path for regions to emphasize what issues need to be considered during the COP21 negotiations. As one of the regions most affected by climate change, Africa expressed that without financial support and guidance, viable solutions to transition and build capacity against climate change cannot be implemented or carried out in the region.⁶⁸ To make climate change solutions comprehensive, Africa highlighted the need to include women and youth participation, adaptation, and financing for climate resilient policies and sustainable cities.⁶⁹ Furthermore, the European Union has specifically requested that the Paris conference negotiations result in a legally binding agreement that requires implementation by all parties and includes ambitious targets and commitments and strengthens oversight and transparency to ensure countries review progress and meet their targets to reduce greenhouse emissions.⁷⁰ Recently, to support efforts toward COP21, Caribbean countries reiterated that international collective action and responsibility must be taken and included in the global climate agreement.⁷¹ With this idea in mind, the Caribbean heads of state adopted the *Declaration of Fort-de-France* to highlight the need for international cooperation to take responsibility not only for reaching GHG emission reduction targets but to also ensure that communities and the environment continue to exist and be fruitful.⁷² Despite the challenges that climate change is already imposing throughout the world, Caribbean countries strongly support international collaboration to share scientific knowledge and technology.⁷³ Thus, to ensure the success, efficiency, and continuity of the Paris 2015 agreement, it is a must to include the multidimensional issues that affect the different regions of the world.

Conclusion

An agreement reached at Paris 2015 must be ambitious, strong, and long-lasting. The road to creating and maintaining climate resilient societies has faced many struggles, yet COP21 has the capacity, knowledge, and resources to establish straight-forward commitments and to ensure a wide range of focus areas are included in a post-*Kyoto* successor agreement. The key aspect of this agreement is not only setting a framework for countries to follow individually but to work in cooperation with the international community to have access to green technologies, proper financing for transitioning economies, and capacity-building to share and adopt policies to deal with the impacts of climate change.⁷⁴ It is important that the agreement take into consideration each country’s needs and contributions to apply target levels depending on their social and economic capacities. In addition, it is also essential to streamline sustainable development policies that include the social, economic, and environmental development strategies to eradicate poverty while transitioning to a low carbon economy and a climate resilient world.⁷⁵

⁶⁶ Peoples’ Republic of Bangladesh, Ministry of Environment and Forests, *Bangladesh Rio +20: National Report on Sustainable Development*, 2012, p. 63.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ African Development Bank Group, *Africa sets path to the post-2015 new climate agreement discussed during Africa Day at COP 20*, 2014.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ European Commission, *The 2015 international agreement*, 2015.

⁷¹ IISD Reporting Services, *Caribbean Countries Call for Effective 2015 Climate Agreement*, 2015.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Green Alliance, *Paris 2015: Getting a global agreement on climate change*, 2014, pp. 5-6.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

Annotated Bibliography

Green Alliance. (2014). *Paris 2015: Getting a global agreement on climate change*. Retrieved 27 May 2015 from: <http://www.green-alliance.org.uk/resources/Paris%202015-getting%20a%20global%20agreement%20on%20climate%20change.pdf>

This document describes the past, present, and future expectations of the COPs. Most importantly, it considers the path ahead and the items that need the outmost attention in order to make COP21 successful. Delegates should consider this document to help them visualize how members of civil society envision reaching and achieving commitments for Paris 2015.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2014). *The Adaptation Gap: A Preliminary Assessment Report*. Retrieved 27 May 2015 from:

http://www.unep.org/climatechange/adaptation/gapreport2014/portals/50270/pdf/AGR_FULL_REPORT.pdf

This report by UNEP explains what the adaptation gap is and describes the different current types of gaps faced by the international community when dealing with climate change. This document further explains how adaptation can be a major tool to combat the threats of climate change and how it can be incorporated into the national policies of Member States. Delegates may use this document to better understand how to bridge climate change gaps between regions and Member States.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *Climate Change – Introduction* [Website]. Retrieved 27 May 2015 from: <http://unep.org/climatechange/Introduction.aspx>

This website provides an overview about climate change and the topics that are part of the main current discussions such as adaptation, mitigation, deforestation and finance. Delegates will find this website useful to learn the basics and further their research. This site also provides external links to more resources and it covers different regional areas and success stories.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2014). *Adaptation* [Website]. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: <http://unfccc.int/adaptation/items/4159.php>

As a key aspect of combating climate change, delegates should be well versed on what adaptation policies are and how they can be implemented within their policies as agreed by COP21. A number of resources are linked to this page for further research. This website may provide delegates with additional resources available to aid with the implementation of adaptation policies, including finance, technology and knowledge.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2014). *Background on the UNFCCC: The international response to climate change* [Website]. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from:

http://unfccc.int/essential_background/items/6031.php

This page provides delegates with a reference guide to all UNFCCC sessions, some not mentioned in this guide. Further, it highlights some of the important outcomes of each COP. Delegates should find this background page useful when examining the importance of each COP and learning what has been done and what discussions still need to be incorporated into international debate.

Bibliography

African Development Bank Group. (2014). *Africa sets path to the post-2015 new climate agreement discussed during Africa Day at COP 20* [Website]. Retrieved 10 June 2015 from: <http://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/article/africa-sets-path-to-the-post-2015-new-climate-agreement-discussed-during-africa-day-at-cop-20-13850/>

COP21. (2014). *COP21 Main Issues* [Website]. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: <http://www.cop21.gouv.fr/en/cop21-cmp1/cop21-main-issues>

COP21. (2014). *What is a COP* [Website]. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: <http://www.cop21.gouv.fr/en/cop21-cmp1/what-cop>

- European Commission. (2015). *The 2015 international agreement*. Retrieved 10 June 2015 from: http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/international/negotiations/future/index_en.htm
- European Commission. (2015). *Our Oceans, Seas and Coasts*. Retrieved 11 June 2015 from: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/marine/good-environmental-status/descriptor-10/index_en.htm
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (n.d.). *Climate change impacts, adaptation and links to sustainable development in Africa* [Website]. Retrieved 27 May 2015 from: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/i0670e/i0670e03.htm>
- Green Alliance. (2014). *Paris 2015: Getting a global agreement on climate change*. Retrieved 27 May 2015 from: <http://www.green-alliance.org.uk/resources/Paris%202015-getting%20a%20global%20agreement%20on%20climate%20change.pdf>
- Green Climate Fund. (2015). *Background*. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: <http://www.gcfund.org/about/the-fund.html>
- The Guardian. (2015). *13 steps towards ending poverty and climate change*. Retrieved 27 May 2015 from: <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2015/mar/02/poverty-climate-change-sustainable-development-goals>
- International Institute for Sustainable Development Reporting Services. (2014). *Summary of the Climate Change Conference*. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol12/enb12619e.html>
- International Institute for Sustainable Development Reporting Services. (2015). *Caribbean Countries Call for Effective 2015 Climate Agreement*. Retrieved 10 June 2015 from: <http://sids-1.iisd.org/news/caribbean-countries-call-for-effective-2015-climate-agreement/>
- International Partnership on Mitigation and MRV. (2015). *Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs)*. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: <http://www.mitigationpartnership.net/intended-nationally-determined-contributions-indcs>
- Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh, Ministry of Environment and Forests. (2012). *Bangladesh Rio +20: National Report on Sustainable Development*. Retrieved 12 June 2015 from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/981bangladesh.pdf>
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2014). *The Adaptation Gap: A Preliminary Assessment Report*. Retrieved 27 May 2015 from: http://www.unep.org/climatechange/adaptation/gapreport2014/portals/50270/pdf/AGR_FULL_REPORT.pdf
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *Climate Change* [Website]. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: http://unfccc.int/files/documentation/text/html/list_search.php?%20zwhat=keywords&val=&valan=a&anf=0&id=10
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *Climate Change – Introduction* [Website]. Retrieved 27 May 2015 from: <http://unep.org/climatechange/Introduction.aspx>
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2014). *Adaptation* [Website]. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: <http://unfccc.int/adaptation/items/4159.php>
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2014). *Background on the UNFCCC: The international response to climate change* [Website]. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: http://unfccc.int/essential_background/items/6031.php

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2014). *The Cancun Agreements* [Website]. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: <http://cancun.unfccc.int/cancun-agreements/significance-of-the-key-agreements-reached-at-cancun/#c45>

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2014). *Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP)* [Website]. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: <http://unfccc.int/bodies/body/6397.php>

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2014). *The Doha Climate Gateway* [Website]. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: http://unfccc.int/key_steps/doha_climate_gateway/items/7389

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2014). *First steps to a safer future: Introducing The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* [Website]. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: http://unfccc.int/essential_background/convention/items/6036.php

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2014). *Making those first steps count: An Introduction to the Kyoto Protocol* [Website]. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: http://unfccc.int/essential_background/kyoto_protocol/items/6034.php

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2014). *Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change (NWP)* [Website]. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: <https://www3.unfccc.int/pls/apex/f?p=333:1:303843174913964>

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2014). *Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts* [Website]. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: http://unfccc.int/adaptation/workstreams/loss_and_damage/items/8134.php

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Thirteenth session. (2008). *Bali Action Plan: Report of the Conference of the Parties on its thirteenth session (FCCC/CP/2007/6/Add.1)*. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/cop13/eng/06a01.pdf#page=3>

World Resources Institute. (2015). *What is INDC?*. Retrieved 27 May 2015 from: <http://www.wri.org/indc-definition>

II. Organized Crime in Gold, Wildlife, and Timber

- How can the UNEP encourage more thorough implementation of existing frameworks like the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild fauna and Flora?
- What is the role of the UNEP in combating organized crime in gold, wildlife, and timber and how can it better interact with aspects of the UN system that focus on crime and security?
- How can the international community be incentivized to implement stronger laws nationally, regionally, and internationally to combat the illicit resource trade?

Introduction

The growth of organized crime in the African continent contributes to both increased destabilization of the region and the number of human rights violations. The illegal trade of natural resources and animal parts is a revenue source for transnational gangs and terrorist organizations alike. The sale of these resources allows criminal organizations to gain access to stronger arms and munitions, which in turn destabilizes the regions most affected. Reducing their access and capacity to illegally trade natural resources is instrumental to diminishing the influence and power they have gained. Throughout the past fifteen years, organized crime in gold, wildlife, and timber has been a source of increased discussion; however, there remains a great deal of work to be done.

International and Regional Framework

In 2007, the Security Council reaffirmed states' sovereignty over the trade of their own natural resources, noting that it was necessary for economic and social development.⁷⁶ Thus, fighting organized crime is particularly important in the Global South in order to strengthen governing structures that provide for the betterment of the entire country, not just those who ally themselves with armed insurgent groups. However, it was not until 2008 that the Security Council passed resolution 1807, which prohibits states from either directly or indirectly supporting criminal organizations who participate in the illegal trade of gold, wildlife, or timber.⁷⁷ This was renewed in 2010 with the adoption of resolution 1952.⁷⁸

It has become a common practice for private sector companies to invest in the development of the African continent. Global Witness, which specializes in researching the protection of natural resources, has recommended that all trade deals come with greater levels of transparency to ensure that they are mutually beneficial for private companies and the regions in which they invest.⁷⁹ While private investment could be a useful tool, there must be proper monitoring to ensure that labor is not fully exploited creating a potentially worse scenario than the existing gang violence.⁸⁰ Human Rights Watch has extensively researched the illegal trade of gold and has found that the same poor conditions exist from western gold mining companies that are presented by criminal organizations.⁸¹ In regions where organized crime is prevalent, the private sector could be a valuable source for development and investment to stabilize the area, yet there must be adequate oversight or it will fail to create a tenable situation that can be beneficial for the affected peoples.

At the inaugural meeting of the UNEA in 2014, the East Africa Initiative on Illegal Timber Trade was announced by the United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD).⁸² Focusing specifically on illegal trade of timber, this initiative features a partnership between Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya, in addition to Norway, the UN, and Interpol.⁸³ Given that timber is a valuable economic resource in the African states, there was clearly a need to address illegal deforestation and to stop the use of Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya as transit states via poorly guarded roadways for the transportation of these illegally obtained natural resources.⁸⁴ Norway will be taking the lead on this new initiative in strengthening law enforcement and discouraging criminal organizations operating in less stable regions.⁸⁵

Role of the International System

Illegally traded goods have been a focal point for the UN, and UNEP remains the frontline organization for rallying action to protect natural resources. On 15 April 2015, UNEP and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) released a report highlighting the human rights violations that are a result of illegal natural resource trade in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where the issue is most prevalent.⁸⁶ This report, titled *Experts' background report on illegal exploitation and trade in natural resources benefitting organized criminal groups and recommendations on MONUSCO's role in foster stability and peace in eastern DR Congo*, only provides recommendations on how to further MONUSCO's mission

⁷⁶ United Nations, *Security Council Underscores Need for Peacekeeping Mandates to Consider Helping States Prevent Illegal Exploration of Natural Resources From Fueling Conflict*, 2007.

⁷⁷ UNSC, *Resolution 1807 (S/Res/1807 (2008))*, 2008.

⁷⁸ UNSC, *Resolution 1952 (S/Res/1952 2010)*, 2010.

⁷⁹ Global Policy Witness, *China and Congo: Friends in Need*, 2011, p. 7.

⁸⁰ Global Policy Witness, *China and Congo: Friends in Need*, 2011, p. 36.

⁸¹ Human Rights Watch, *Papua new Guinea: Serious Abuses at Barrick Gold Mine: Systemic Failures Underscore Need for Canadian Government Regulations*, 2011.

⁸² UNEA, *Proceedings of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme at its first session*, 2014.

⁸³ UN-REDD, *Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda Unite Efforts to Combat Illegal Timber Trade in East Africa with Support from Norway, UN and INTERPOL*, 2014.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ UNEP & MONUSCO, *Experts' background report on illegal exploitation and trade in natural resources benefitting organized criminal groups and recommendations on MONUSCO's role in foster stability and peace in eastern DR Congo*, 2015.

in the DRC and lacks a real action plan for implementation of their recommendations.⁸⁷ As the Security Council has the greatest capacity and the authority to make decisions concerning the sovereignty of individual countries and safety of global citizens, it has been arguably the most active in addressing this issue.⁸⁸ One challenge for Member States of the UNEA is figuring out its role alongside the Security Council while staying within the confines of its capacity and mandate.

The growing amount of cooperation between Member States, inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), and NGOs regarding organized crime in gold, wildlife, and timber has been very promising in properly addressing this issue. The WWF has taken a firm stance on the illegal trade of animal pelts and bones noting that there is low risk in this trade for leaders of organized criminal organizations because the implementation of laws are only effective in catching low level poachers.⁸⁹ In May of 2015, Amnesty International led the writing of an open letter signed by 157 international groups urging the European Union to do more in ensuring suppliers of gold, timber, and wildlife are receiving their goods through legal means.⁹⁰ Two days after the letter was sent, the European Union voted in favor of a new law that would enhance regulators' authority over conflict mineral.⁹¹

Conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

To fully understand the impact of organized crime in gold, wildlife, and timber, it becomes crucial to look into the economic development and human rights violations that it can have on a country. In 2013, Al Jazeera reported on the displacement of over 100,000 people in Darfur because of violence resulting from different tribes attempting to gain control over local gold mines.⁹² The United Nations Office of Humanitarian Affairs at the time stated that it was the biggest displacement of individuals seen in years.⁹³ However, the issue in Darfur has not proven to be the largest instance of organized crime and illegal trade of natural resources, rather this has been in the eastern part of the DRC. On 15 April 2015, UNEP released data jointly with MONUSCO and the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region concerning organized crime in the DRC.⁹⁴ Within the DRC, there is an estimated \$1 billion taken from the local economy annually and there has been an increase of illegal trade in the past few years.⁹⁵ Despite MONUSCO having 20,000 uniformed personnel on the ground, the largest of any UN peacekeeping mission, they have struggled to adequately address this issue alone in the DRC as the problem has only grown in nature.⁹⁶ Roughly 98% of the profit went to transnational crime organizations that base themselves in and around the eastern part of the DRC causing increased destabilization to the region.⁹⁷ With these armed criminal groups receiving 3% of the DRC's GDP, they are able to wield a tremendous amount of influence and power, taking it away from the governments and reducing the amount of political will to actually solve the situation.⁹⁸ As the growth of these organizations continues, so will their influence in the region, making it increasingly difficult for anything substantive to be done. In addition, one of the more worrisome findings by Human Rights Watch is how transnational crime organizations based in and around the DRC are increasing their access to sources of gold in other parts of the African continent.⁹⁹ By increasing their revenue sources, their capacity for outreach will also grow outside of the DRC. Uganda and the Rwanda both have seen the effects of gang violence funded by the illegal trade

⁸⁷ UNEP & MONUSCO, *Experts' background report on illegal exploitation and trade in natural resources benefitting organized criminal groups and recommendations on MONUSCO's role in foster stability and peace in eastern DR Congo*, 2015

⁸⁸ UNSC, *Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo S/2001/1072*, 2001.

⁸⁹ WWF, *Illegal Wildlife Trade*, 2015.

⁹⁰ Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, *European Union Votes in Favour of Binding Regulation on Conflict Minerals*, 2015.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Martin, *Darfur Tribal Violence Flares Over Gold Mines*, 2013.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ UNEP & MONUSCO, *Experts' background report on illegal exploitation and trade in natural resources benefitting organized criminal groups and recommendations on MONUSCO's role in foster stability and peace in eastern DR Congo*, 2015.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ UNEP, *Organized Crime in Wildlife, Gold and Timber, Worth Over One Billion USD, Further Fuels Conflict in Eastern DR Congo - UN Report*, 2015.

⁹⁷ UNEP & MONUSCO, *Experts' background report on illegal exploitation and trade in natural resources benefitting organized criminal groups and recommendations on MONUSCO's role in foster stability and peace in eastern DR Congo*, 2015.

⁹⁸ UNEP, *Organized Crime in Wildlife, Gold and Timber, Worth Over One Billion USD, Further Fuels Conflict in Eastern DR Congo - UN Report*, 2015.

⁹⁹ Human Rights Watch, *The Curse of Gold*, 2005.

of gold. With so many of these illegal minerals coming out of the DRC, combatting the illegal trade of organized crime in gold, wildlife, and timber there could have the largest impact.

Human Rights Watch also voiced concerns about the South African Gold Mining Company AngloGold Ashanti and its relationship with the Nationalist and Integrationist Front (FNI), an armed rebel group within the DRC.¹⁰⁰ Human Rights Watch reports that the FNI provides security and transportation for representatives of AngloGold in return for indirect support from the mining company.¹⁰¹ Although this agreement was contradicted by spokespeople for AngloGold, there is evidence to suggest that they have given direct financial payments in addition to logistical support for travel and imports of arms and munitions.¹⁰² The Security Council is clear in their stance against private mining corporations who either take an active or indirect approach to supporting the illegal trade of gold, wildlife, and timber.¹⁰³

Since 2001, the Security Council has been working with a panel of experts to determine the causes that surround the illegal trade of natural resources in the DRC.¹⁰⁴ According to the Security Council, “without a resolution of the broader conflict in the DRC and the region it would be highly unrealistic to expect an end to the natural resources and other forms of wealth in the country.”¹⁰⁵ It is by their estimation that any resolution that will adequately address the illegal trade of gold, wildlife, and timber in the region must address the broader conflict within the region.¹⁰⁶ At the plea of the DRC’s Prime Minister, the Security Council has attempted to enact economic sanctions against states that actively or indirectly support organized crime groups; however this problem has continued to get worse in nature as the region becomes increasingly unstable.¹⁰⁷ Member States can examine DRC’s case to understand the severity of this issue and the necessity for something to be done. By taking into account the recommendations of the Security Council to create a resolution that addresses the greater conflict in the region, Member States can hope to bring stability to the DRC which will diminish the role of organized crime.

Conclusion

The increase in power by organized crime groups has been propelled by their access gold, wildlife, and timber as revenue drivers. The UN system has worked closely with NGOs and IGOs, such as the European Union, in recent years to combat this type of illegal trade. This issue creates a significant array of problems that must be solved including how to ensure proper implementation of resolutions and determining what the role of UNEP is in this conflict. Member States should ensure they are working cooperatively in order to achieve the greatest solutions possible. The World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) has stated that demand drives the supply, which in turn means that this issue must be addressed globally as opposed to only in the areas where the illegal natural resources come from.¹⁰⁸ The United States of America’s Justice Department has taken an active role trying to lessen this demand by prosecuting smugglers of illegal African animal furs, skulls, and other parts and other international organizations like the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice have to combat the illicit resource trade as a serious crime, but there is still much more that can be done.¹⁰⁹ UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner called for a swift and strong response to combat organized crime stressing this as an issue of sovereignty.¹¹⁰ While some frameworks already exist, the international community must now resolve how it can implement these resolutions effectively.

¹⁰⁰ Human Rights Watch, *The Curse of Gold*, 2005, p. 63.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² Human Rights Watch, *The Curse of Gold*, 2005, p. 67.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ UNSC, *Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo S/2001/1072*, 2001.

¹⁰⁵ UNSC, *Addendum to the report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo S/2001/1072*, 2001.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ UNSC, *Resolution 1807 (S/Res/1807 (2008))*, 2008.

¹⁰⁸ WWF, *Illegal Wildlife Trade*.

¹⁰⁹ United States of America, Justice Department, *Environment and Natural Resources Division*, 2015.

¹¹⁰ UNEP, *Organized Crime in Wildlife, Gold and Timber, Worth Over One Billion USD, Further Fuels Conflict in Eastern DR Congo - UN Report*, 2015.

Annotated Bibliography

Amnesty International. (2015). *Open Letter to Members of the European Parliament on the EU Conflict Minerals Regulation*. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/IOR60/1667/2015/en/>

This open letter from one of the largest NGOs represents the political pressure being put on legislators to address the illegal trade of natural resources. This is particularly remarkable considering they address a specific law to be voted on within the world's largest economy. In addition to this being put together so recently, it is incredibly relevant to the type of focus being put on this issue.

Global Witness. (2011). *China and Congo: Friends in Need*. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <https://www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/friendsinneed.pdf>

The Security Council has noted that in order to address organized crime in gold, wildlife, and timber, there must be sustainable development in the Congo where this trade is most prevalent. This article highlights a partnership between two UN Member States attempting to improve technology within the Congo. It also notes some of the issues that can arise from private entrepreneurship being the main source of development within a country.

United Nations, Security Council. (2001). *Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo S/2001/1072* [Report]. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <https://www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/0412report.pdf>

This Security Council report helps create a broad timeline starting in 2001 of what their efforts have been and what type of outside political pressures have been concerning the situation in the DRC. It cannot be overstressed that the illegal trade of natural resources is as much about state sovereignty as anything else. With that in mind, analyzing the situation would be incomplete if one were to ignore the Security Council's recommendations and their expert analysis.

United Nations Environment Programme & United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. (2015). *Experts' background report on illegal exploitation and trade in natural resources benefitting organized criminal groups and recommendations on MONUSCO's role in foster stability and peace in eastern DR Congo*. Retrieved 6 May 2015 from:

http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/UNEP_DR Congo_MONUSCO_OSESG_final_report.pdf

With so much of the organized crime in natural resources being stationed in the Congo, it is important to take a look at what UNEP is saying concerning the issue. In addition, this document entails more about partnerships already in place between UN organizations. Without fully comprehending its report and what it intends to do it will be difficult for delegates to understand their role within UNEP in addressing this issue.

United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation. (2014). *Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda Unite Efforts to Combat Illegal Timber Trade in East Africa with Support from Norway, UN and INTERPOL* [Website]. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: <http://un-redd.org/Newsletter2014Issue3/EAIIllegalTimberTrade/tabid/133455/Default.aspx>

Announced at the inaugural UNEA, this partnership showcases one of the only forceful measures taken to fight organized crime in gold, wildlife, and timber, particularly as it comes to transportation. What is most remarkable and notable about this new alliance is that Norway will be the leader in the strategic planning. With support from other IGOs, this extraordinary display of cooperation should help guide delegates into what they should try and focus on in their working papers.

Bibliography

Business and Human Rights Resource Centre. (2015). *European Union Votes in Favour of Binding Regulation on Conflict Minerals*. Retrieved 8 June 2015 from: <http://business-humanrights.org/en/european-parliament-votes-in-favour-of-binding-regulation-on-conflict-minerals>

Global Policy Reform. (2015). *Minerals in Conflict*. Retrieved 6 May 2015 from: <https://www.globalpolicy.org/the-dark-side-of-natural-resources-st/minerals-in-conflict.html>

Human Rights Watch. (2011). *Papua New Guinea: Serious Abuses at Barrick Gold Mine: Systemic Failures Underscore Need for Canadian Government Regulation*. Retrieved 6 May 2015 from: <https://www.globalpolicy.org/the-dark-side-of-natural-resources-st/minerals-in-conflict/49778.html?itemid=893>

Martin, H. (2013). *Darfur Tribal Violence Flares Over Gold Mines*. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/02/20132492740789874.html>

United Nations. (2007). *Security Council Underscores Need for Peacekeeping Mandates to Consider Helping States Prevent Illegal Exploration of Natural Resources From Fueling Conflict* [Press Release]. Retrieved 6 May 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/press/en/2007/sc9060.doc.htm>

United Nations, Security Council. (2001). *Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo S/2001/1072* [Report]. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <https://www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/0412report.pdf>

United Nations, Security Council. (2001). *Addendum to the Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo S/2001/1072* [Report]. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <https://www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/1113report.pdf>

United Nations, Security Council, 5861st meeting. (2008). *Resolution 1807 (S/Res/1807 (2008))* [Resolution]. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/DRC%20SRES1807.php>

United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *Organized Crime in Wildlife, Gold and Timber, Worth Over One Billion USD, Further Fuels Conflict in Eastern DR Congo - UN Report* [Website]. Retrieved 6 May 2015 from: <http://www.unep.org/newscentre/Default.aspx?DocumentID=26802&ArticleID=34958>

United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *UNEA Schedule* [Website]. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: http://www.unep.org/unea/docs/UNEA_events_calendar_updated_June27.pdf

United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. (2015). *Experts' background report on illegal exploitation and trade in natural resources benefitting organized criminal groups and recommendations on MONUSCO's role in foster stability and peace in eastern DR Congo*. Retrieved 6 May 2015 from: http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/UNEP_DRCongo_MONUSCO_OSESG_final_report.pdf

United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation. (2014). *Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda Unite Efforts to Combat Illegal Timber Trade in East Africa with Support from Norway, UN and INTERPOL*. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: <http://un-redd.org/Newsletter2014Issue3/EAlllegalTimberTrade/tabid/133455/Default.aspx>

United States of America, Justice Department. (2015). *Illegal Importation Of South African Leopard Hides And Skulls*. Retrieved 6 May 2015 from: <http://www.justice.gov/enrd/illegal-importation-south-african-leopard-hides-and-skulls>

The Washington Post. (2010). *US Financial Reform Bill also Targets "Conflict Minerals" from the Congo*. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <https://www.globalpolicy.org/the-dark-side-of-natural-resources-st/minerals-in-conflict/49324.html>

World Wildlife Foundation. (2015). *Illegal Wildlife Trade*. Retrieved 6 May 2015 from: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/threats/illegal-wildlife-trade>

III. Marine Plastic Debris and Microplastics

“We need to address marine debris collectively across national boundaries and with the private sector, which has a critical role to play both in reducing the kinds of wastes that can end up in the world’s oceans, and through research into new materials. It is by bringing all these players together that we can truly make a difference”¹¹¹

- How can the impact of marine plastic debris and microplastics be minimized?
- In what ways do marine plastic debris and microplastics affect different Member States in varying regions?
- What alternatives are there to plastics that may eliminate similar problems in the future?

Introduction

Marine litter is described as “any persistent, manufactured or processed solid material that is discarded, disposed of, or abandoned in the marine environment;” this includes plastic as the largest and most long lasting culprit on a global scale.¹¹² Not only does marine plastic debris present a threat to marine and human ecosystems, but microplastics are also found within this debris. Microplastics are defined as plastic particles less than 5 millimeters in diameter.¹¹³ Microplastics come from two sources: plastic that has been exposed to UV light and different temperatures and fragmented into smaller pieces and plastic particles manufactured for consumer or industrial purposes.¹¹⁴ The issue of plastic as part of marine litter is important because it negatively impacts the marine ecosystem and human health, while deleteriously affecting the environment since it can travel long distances, thereby contaminating areas and organisms outside human reach.¹¹⁵

International and Regional Framework

Concerns over marine litter were first recognized in 1995 in the *Washington Declaration on Protection of Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities*, which established the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA).¹¹⁶ This UNEP initiative was created to highlight the issues of marine plastic debris and to coordinate efforts and address waste that negatively affects the marine environment.¹¹⁷ The GPA was created to assist governments in streamlining national efforts to identify and implement initiatives that promote the protection and conservation of the marine environment and biological diversity, resources, and public health and to reduce the physical degradation of marine and coastal ecosystems due to destructive practices of land-based activities.¹¹⁸ UNEP manages and reviews the progress of the GPA Coordinating Unit, which assists countries in the implementation of national activities and helps them to work in cooperation with other organizations.¹¹⁹ In 2004, further problems with marine debris were emphasized in General Assembly resolution 59/25, *Sustainable Fisheries*, and called upon UN organizations to monitor and take action over the impact of discarded fishing gear and other marine debris in the ecosystem.¹²⁰ In 2005, the negative impact of marine debris was reemphasized in General Assembly resolution 60/30, *Oceans and the Law of the Sea*, which encouraged greater and stronger steps toward the prevention of marine pollution by recommending national and regional capacity building initiatives, to provide options to aid ships to correctly dispose of marine debris, and most

¹¹¹ UN News Centre, *Trash in world’s oceans threatens wildlife, economy and human health, UN warns*, 2011.

¹¹² UNEP, *Microplastics*, 2013, p. 2.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ UNEP, *UNEP Year Book 2014 emerging issues update Plastic Debris in the Ocean*, 2014, p. 50.

¹¹⁵ CBD, *67 Impacts of Marine Debris on Biodiversity: Current Status and Potential Solutions*, 2012, p. 8.

¹¹⁶ UNEP, *Washington Declaration on Protection of Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities*, 1995, p. 2.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ UNEP, *Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (UNEP(OCA)/LBA/IG.2/7 (1995))*, 1995, p. 7.

¹¹⁹ UNEP, *The Coordinating Office*, 2015.

¹²⁰ UNGA, *Sustainable fisheries, including through the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, and related instruments (A/RES/59/25)*, 2004.

importantly, to increase the development of research and data to determine the significance and magnitude of marine litter impact on the ecosystem.¹²¹

Most recently, UNEP partnered with the United States of America's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to host the Fifth International Marine Debris Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii, in 2011.¹²² In the resulting outcome, the Honolulu Strategy, the main focus is to mainstream three goals across all levels of the international community, which include: reducing and preventing land and sea-based marine debris that ends up in the sea, to build awareness, and to develop strategies, data, and technologies to remove marine debris.¹²³ In 2012, the Rio + 20 outcome document, *The Future We Want*, recognized that marine debris is a threat to marine biodiversity and commits to increase efforts to limit the detrimental effect of marine pollution by implementing and monitoring the progress of international conventions, initiatives and the collection of data.¹²⁴

Role of the International System

UNEP started working to eliminate the threat of marine litter when it created the Regional Seas Programme in 1974.¹²⁵ Further, UNEP is now working to support international strategies such as the “legal, administrative, substantive and financial framework for the implementation of Agenda 21 (in particular chapter 17 on Oceans), for the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002) and for the Bali Strategic Plan (2004).”¹²⁶ UNEP's Regional Seas Programme promotes international and regional cooperation to protect and manage the use of shared marine environment.¹²⁷ In addition, the Programme recognizes the importance of mainstreaming regional programs with international initiatives in order to prevent duplication of efforts and ensuring that sustainable policies are in place to protect and improve the world's oceans.¹²⁸ Since marine litter is a challenge that crosses borders, the work of UNEP's Regional Programme has been imperative to the success of increasing global awareness and active regional participation in addressing the issue of marine litter.

Human and Marine Harm

Marine plastic debris not only affects marine ecosystems, but it also affects the health of people and aesthetic presentation of coastal environments. To successfully address the issue of marine litter, it is essential to consider the consequences it also has on people and how all levels of society can have a role in combating this global threat. For example, marine debris and microplastics are so abundant in beaches that the water becomes unhealthy for people to swim in and eventually leads to beach closures.¹²⁹ Furthermore, marine waste is consumed by the fish and shellfish that people eat, making the seafood poisonous and toxic for consumption.¹³⁰ At the commercial level, marine litter is not cost effective as plastic can cause damage in vessels and equipment, destroying marine ecosystems and causing species extinction that not only harms biodiversity, but also reduces food sources.¹³¹ Additionally, fishers may face loss of revenue due to lack of fish as animals that are caught in fishing nets and float in the ocean discourage fish from approaching certain areas.¹³² Without proper consideration, these negative consequences ultimately can create animosity among locals and regions as resources become scarce and problems become more difficult to resolve.¹³³

Marine litter poses a serious threat to marine wildlife when animals ingest or are entangled with marine debris, which can “cause death by drowning, suffocation, strangulation, starvation through reduced feeding efficiency, and injuries.”¹³⁴ Additionally, if death does not occur, animals can become injured by discarded plastic pieces and

¹²¹ UNGA, *Oceans and the Law of the Sea (A/RES/60/30)*, 2005.

¹²² SIMDC, *The Fifth International Marine Debris Conference*, 2011.

¹²³ SIMDC, *The Honolulu Strategy: A Framework for the Prevention and Management of Marine Debris*, 2011, p. ES1-2.

¹²⁴ UNGA, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012, para. 163.

¹²⁵ UNEP, *Marine Litter: A Global Challenge*, 2009, p.15.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ UNESCO, *Marine Pollution*, 2014.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ Greenpeace, *Plastic Debris in the World's Oceans*, 2006, p.7.

prevent them from swimming or flying as well as to diminish their ability to escape or deal with predators.¹³⁵ For instance, a major issue faced by marine wildlife is abandoned finishing nets left in the sea, which can travel for long distances capturing, injuring and killing sea creatures and birds as they travel; this unfortunate phenomenon is known as ghost fishing.¹³⁶ Another common problem faced by sea animals is ingestion of marine debris, which is often accidentally confused for food.¹³⁷ For example, sea turtles tend to eat plastic bags because they look similar to the jellyfish that they consume.¹³⁸ Plastic ingestion by marine creatures can not only harm their digestive system, but toxins and sharp objects can result in death or pain; in addition, plastic that takes longer to digest thus stays within the animal's stomach. This can cause starvation and malnutrition.¹³⁹

Sources, Reduction and Prevention of Marine Debris

To be able to properly address the social, economic, and environmental cost of marine debris, it is important to be aware that debris is caused by human activities and can come from sea or land-based sources.¹⁴⁰ On one hand, sea based debris is related to fishing, commercial, military, and tourist ships and boats, and their abandoned and discarded gear and waste such as nets, ropes, and untreated sewage waste.¹⁴¹ On the other hand, sources of land-based litter encompass a higher proportion of the litter found at sea since it includes improper and even illegal disposal of domestic and commercial waste, lack of proper management and processing of sewage, public dumps and solid waste.¹⁴² Since marine debris is a cross cutting issue, it cannot be solved by only addressing one side independently.

To reduce marine litter, communities, the private sector, and organizations must implement different types of approaches according to their capacity and resources. Durability is plastic's greatest benefit to humans, yet it is also the environment's greatest threat. As such, recycling or repurposing is one major approach to implement proper management of waste. For instance, recycling, using less plastic and light-weight packaging materials can considerably reduce unnecessary waste; however, it is also important to highlight that production of these items must continue to decrease in order not to offset the benefits of reusing and reducing plastic production.¹⁴³ Since efforts to control waste management have usually rested in the hands of local governments and is often financed through public funds, it is necessary for governments to work in cooperation with industries to take responsibility and develop cost-effective ways to sustainably improve and finance the use, reuse and disposal of plastic including packing materials and design.¹⁴⁴

In addition, to alleviate land based marine debris, it is essential to educate and inform communities on marine preventive measures to promote conservation of coastal environments, to reduce litter accumulation, to build awareness through local initiatives and campaigns, and to work with governments to encourage proper waste disposal facilities and equipment, and support recycling measures and other good practices to reduce litter.¹⁴⁵ For example, Ocean Conservancy has been promoting marine litter clean up initiatives for 25 years by encouraging communities to volunteer and take action.¹⁴⁶ The focus is to promote global participation through the International Coastal Cleanup initiative to clean waterways and the ocean, while also conducting research and knowledge sharing about marine pollution that is based on science and can offer guidance to local governments.¹⁴⁷ Most importantly, Ocean Conservancy encourages the empowerment of local communities, experts and leaders to find new solutions and promote good policies to bring attention to this issue.¹⁴⁸ Moreover, actions at the regional level have also gained attention, for instance, the European Union recently implemented a new initiative titled Towards a Circular

¹³⁵ Greenpeace, *Plastic Debris in the World's Oceans*, 2006, p.15.

¹³⁶ Greenpeace, *Plastic Debris in the World's Oceans*, 2006, p.17.

¹³⁷ Greenpeace, *Plastic Debris in the World's Oceans*, 2006, p.19.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ UNEP, *Guidelines on the Use of Market-based Instruments to Address the Problem of Marine Litter*, 2009, p.19.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ CBD, *67 Impacts of Marine Debris on Biodiversity: Current Status and Potential Solutions*, 2012, p. 31.

¹⁴⁴ CBD, *67 Impacts of Marine Debris on Biodiversity: Current Status and Potential Solutions*, 2012, p. 33.

¹⁴⁵ CBD, *67 Impacts of Marine Debris on Biodiversity: Current Status and Potential Solutions*, 2012, pp. 36-37.

¹⁴⁶ Ocean Conservancy, *Fighting for Trash Free Seas*, 2015.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

Economy: A Zero Waste Programme for Europe to adopt legislation that decreases marine litter by 30% until 2020 through the efficient reuse of products to reduce waste and improve resource productivity.¹⁴⁹

Conclusion

Marine plastic debris and microplastics are a transboundary issue that needs to be addressed locally, regionally and internationally in order to analyze and measure the extent of the problem globally and to raise greater international attention to implement and streamline proposals for action in the current environmental discussions. The problem of marine litter rests on all Member States, on their consumption patterns, their ability to recycle and reuse plastic and to properly discard waste. Further, they are responsible to educate and build awareness on how to properly address these problems and how they affect the environment that must be cherished and conserved. Most importantly, it is essential to ensure that industrial responsibility is recognized and maintained, not only in the production of plastic products, but with the proper monitoring, accounting and management of solid waste, sewage, and litter.

Annotated Bibliography

Greenpeace. (2006). *Plastic Debris in the World's Oceans*. Retrieved 24 May 2015 from:

http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/marinelitter/publications/docs/plastic_ocean_report.pdf

This source describes extensively how plastic debris harms marine wildlife as it details different types of threats it poses on animals. Further, it examines how different countries and regions are affected by marine plastic debris. Delegates will find this document useful as it will show them how marine plastic debris is a continuous, long-lasting issue that requires regional cooperation and community education and action.

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. (2012). *67 Impacts of Marine Debris on Biodiversity: Current Status and Potential Solutions*. Retrieved 24 May 2015 from: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/publications/cbd-ts-67-en.pdf>

This document provides an overview of the marine debris problem by defining the problem, addressing strategies to minimize locally and commercially the risks of marine litter, and highlighting through research and data how this issue has evolved and become a problem to many countries. It also contains a good history overview on how this issue has gathered international response. Delegates may utilize this source in order to holistically understand the marine litter issue.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2009). *Marine Litter: A Global Challenge*. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from:

http://www.unep.org/pdf/unep_marine_litter-a_global_challenge.pdf

This document describes the work of UNEP's Regional Seas Programme and how it works in cooperation with programs and regions to sustain and improve the world's oceans. In addition, this overview provides details about the marine litter situation and actions taken in different regions of the world and suggests solutions on how to address the problem. Delegates may find this document useful for researching ways to address marine litter in a regional sense.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2013). *Microplastics*. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from:

http://www.unep.org/yearbook/2013/pdf/Microplastic_english.pdf

This article provides delegates with a complete understanding of what, where, and how microplastics exist. It also includes the problems that accompany such microplastics. This document should help delegates better understand the different dimensions that must be addressed in order to effectively negotiate a comprehensive set of strategies to reduce marine litter that targets the problem from its roots and its consequences.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2014). *UNEP Year Book 2014 emerging issues update Plastic Debris in the Ocean*. Retrieved 24 May 2015 from: <http://www.unep.org/yearbook/2014/PDF/chapt8.pdf>

This report describes what marine plastic debris and microplastics are. Delegates may find this document useful as they grasp the meanings of these terms and further learn how they are

¹⁴⁹ European Commission, *Our Oceans, Seas and Coasts*, 2015.

currently becoming a greater problem for the ecosystem and for Member States. This quick sheet provides the fundamental objectives that must be covered when addressing marine plastic litter.

Bibliography

The Fifth International Marine Debris Conference. (2011). *Home*. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <https://5imdc.wordpress.com/>

The Fifth International Marine Debris Conference. (2011). *The Honolulu Strategy: A Framework for the Prevention and Management of Marine Debris*. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <https://5imdc.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/honolulustrategy.pdf>

Greenpeace. (2006). *Plastic Debris in the World's Oceans*. Retrieved 24 May 2015 from: http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/marinelitter/publications/docs/plastic_ocean_report.pdf

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. (2012). *67 Impacts of Marine Debris on Biodiversity: Current Status and Potential Solutions*. Retrieved 24 May 2015 from: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/publications/cbd-ts-67-en.pdf>

United Nations, General Assembly, Fifty-ninth session. (2004). *Sustainable fisheries, including through the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, and related instruments* [Resolution]. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/59/25>

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixtieth session. (2005). *Oceans and the Law of the Sea (A/RES/60/30)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/60/30>

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-sixth session, (2012), *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/66/288>

United Nations Environment Programme. (1995). *Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (UNEP(OCA)/LBA/IG.2/7 (1995))*. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <http://unep.org/gpa/documents/meetings/Washington/GPAFullTextEn.pdf>

United Nations Environment Programme. (2009). *Guidelines on the Use of Market-based Instruments to Address the Problem of Marine Litter* [Website]. Retrieved 24 May 2015 from: http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/marinelitter/publications/docs/Economic_Instruments_and_Marine_Litter.pdf

United Nations Environment Programme. (2009). *Marine Litter: A Global Challenge* [Website]. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: http://www.unep.org/pdf/unep_marine_litter-a_global_challenge.pdf

United Nations Environment Programme. (2013). *Microplastics* [Website]. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: http://www.unep.org/yearbook/2013/pdf/Microplastic_english.pdf

United Nations Environment Programme. (2014). *UNEP Year Book 2014 emerging issues update Plastic Debris in the Ocean* [Website]. Retrieved 24 May 2015 from: <http://www.unep.org/yearbook/2014/PDF/chapt8.pdf>

United Nations Environment Programme. (2015). *The Coordinating Office* [Website]. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <http://unep.org/gpa/About/CoordinationOffice.asp>

United Nations Environment Programme. (1995). *Washington Declaration on Protection of Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities*. Retrieved 23 May 2015 from: <http://unep.org/gpa/documents/meetings/Washington/WashingtonDeclaration.pdf>



UN News Centre. (2011 March 25). *Trash in world's oceans threatens wildlife, economy and human health, UN warns*. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37894#.VWYjIhayBx0>