



ENDING THE WAR ON NATURE

... by ensuring synergistic and integrated policymaking and action globally

In 2023–2024, UN DESA continued to work with Member States and other stakeholders to build capacities and partnerships, accelerating cross-sectoral implementation of global commitments on energy, climate, forests, the ocean, and water. These efforts support the 2030 Agenda and accelerate progress towards the SDGs.

UN DESA...

- Fostered stronger connections between the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, by hosting more than 80 panel discussions at the SDG Pavilion at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP28).
- Supported the Global Stocktaking on SDG 7, with regional consultations and a Call to Action for universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services by 2030.
- Led the preparatory process for the 2025 UN Ocean Conference, including a workshop on the Communities of Ocean Action to exchange best practices.
- Helped Member States build capacity to restore forest landscapes and conduct a midterm review of the International Arrangement on Forests, charting the course to achieve the Global Forest Goals.
- Supported implementation of the Water Action Agenda commitments, through a follow-up survey and progress report in the lead up to the UN 2026 Water Conference.
- Explored the role of families as educators, consumers, and advocates in climate action, offering recommendations for local and national levels.

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The world faces cascading and interlinked environmental crises of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss, affecting every sector and society at all levels. This triple planetary crisis emphasizes the critical role of nature in underpinning sustainable development in all its dimensions. UN DESA promotes a coherent approach to address many of the pressing global challenges that will accelerate progress towards the SDGs. The Department addresses the drivers of the war against nature, advocating for a holistic and comprehensive approach to global energy transitions and sustainable use and management of ecosystems such as the ocean, freshwater, and forests, among others.

Global stocktaking on SDG 7 and a call to action

UN DESA brought together governments, the UN system, and civil society including youth organizations, to accelerate implementation of SDG 7 by 2030 and beyond. The outcome was a call to action urging all stakeholders to step up action towards universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services by 2030; accelerate global energy transitions and actions towards net zero emission energy systems; scale up finance and investment for developing countries; ensure that no one is left behind; and follow up on the UN Decade of Sustainable Energy for All, including through a UN conference on energy. The Global Stocktaking was convened in collaboration with UN-Energy, supported the President of the General Assembly to mark the completion of the UN Decade, in April 2024. UN DESA conducted regional and thematic consultations in preparation of the Stocktaking, meeting experts and collecting written inputs from Member States through an online survey.



Showcasing solutions and collaborations on climate and SDG synergy

The groundbreaking *First Global Report on Climate and SDG Synergies* was launched in September 2023 by UN DESA and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The report was prepared by the Expert Group on Climate and SDG Synergy – 14 renowned experts from diverse thematic and geographic backgrounds – and serves as a valuable tool for policymakers to advance synergies between climate action and the SDGs. Building on the findings of the first global report, a new 2024 edition was launched during a special event at the HLPF in July 2024. This new report provides a roadmap for policymakers with concrete recommendations on realizing synergistic climate and SDG actions on the ground.

To accelerate action and build new partnerships, UN DESA hosted its fifth SDG Pavilion during COP28 in



Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Li Junhua speaks at the Global Stocktaking on SDG 7. | UN DESA

Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Organized in collaboration with UNFCCC and DGC, this space hosted more than 80 panel discussions and fireside chats by more than 120 multi-stakeholder partners, including UN entities, Member States, academia, and youth groups. The Pavilion inauguration was attended by Dennis Francis, President of General Assembly; Li Junhua, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs; and Daniele Violetti, Senior Director for Programmes Coordination at UNFCCC; and concluded with a heartfelt call to action from young representatives.

UN DESA also emphasized the importance of linking the climate and SDG agendas in various intergovernmental initiatives. In March 2024, the Expert Group Meeting on SDG 13 was co-convened by UN DESA and UNFCCC in Tokyo, hosted by the Ministry of the

Environment of Japan. More than 60 experts gathered to examine progress and contribute to the SDG 13 thematic review during the HLPF in July. UN DESA, with the UNFCCC, also hosted a side event during the 60th meeting of the Subsidiary Bodies in Bonn, Germany, in June, launching four thematic reports that inform the final 2024 edition of the Global Synergy Report. Meanwhile, UN DESA continued to support preparations for the Summit of the Future, COP29, and COP30, driving action and collaboration for the SDGs and addressing climate-related challenges. To build momentum for these upcoming events, UN DESA and UNFCCC organized the fifth Global Conference on Synergizing the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, in September 2024 in Rio de Janeiro, hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil.



Speakers discuss primary forests at the "Climate & Canopy: Amplifying Action for SDG 13 & 15 through Primary Forest Conservation" event at the SDG Pavilion. | UN DESA

Advancing towards the next milestone for global ocean action

The ocean plays a fundamental role in addressing the triple planetary crisis, promoting food security, poverty eradication, gender equality, and economic growth. UN DESA leverages interlinkages among the SDGs and promotes synergies between different intergovernmental processes to help safeguard our ocean.

UN DESA supported Member States in their call for a third Ocean Conference in 2025 to galvanize global ocean action and build on the outcomes of the previous two Ocean Conferences, the SDG Summit, the fourth International Conference on SIDS, the Summit of the Future, and recent climate and biodiversity COPs. As the secretariat of the Ocean Conference, UN DESA is leading the analytical work in support of the Preparatory Meeting of the 2025 Conference, with a transparent and inclusive approach involving extensive

consultations with Member States, UN system representatives and other stakeholders.

UN DESA has been engaging actively with governments and stakeholders to ensure previous voluntary commitments and pledges are translated into tangible results towards SDG 14. The Department organized a workshop in Incheon, Republic of Korea, in October 2023, bringing together past hosts of the UN Ocean Conference with the co-hosts of the 2025 Conference, France and Costa Rica, along with voluntary commitment holders and the Communities of Ocean Action, to exchange best practices and key challenges.

Accelerating water actions leading to the UN 2026 Water Conference

After the historic UN 2023 Water Conference, UN DESA supported Member States and relevant stakeholders to

follow up on the Water Action Agenda commitments, as well as achieving SDG 6 and other water-related goals and targets. UN DESA conducted the first follow-up survey on the Water Action Agenda and issued its progress report, *Mapping and Progress of the UN 2023 Water Conference Water Action Agenda*. The report identified gaps and challenges that commitment holders were facing, including financing and creating an enabling environment, nominated good practices and lessons learned, and presented the overall progress of the Water Action Agenda.

UN DESA, together with UN-Water, also developed the first-ever UN system-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation in consultation with Member States. The strategy, launched by the Secretary-General at the SDG 6 and Water Action Agenda Special Event during the 2024 HLPF, aims to enhance the coordination and delivery of water priorities across the UN system.

Strengthening the science-policy interface through GSDR dissemination

Building on the launch of the 2023 quadrennial *Global Sustainable Development Report* (GSDR) written by the Independent Group of Scientists appointed by the Secretary-General, UN DESA brought together a wide range



Delegates participate in the 19th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests in New York. | UN DESA

of stakeholders to explore how the report could mobilize SDG acceleration in different regions and national contexts through a series of regional launches and operationalization workshops held in the Republic of Korea, South Africa and Brazil. The workshops strengthened the science-policy-society interface in support of science-based transitions towards the SDGs.

Supporting accelerated actions to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030

The 2024 UN Forum on Forests (UNFF19), supported by UN DESA, culminated in a high-level segment declaration and an omnibus resolution calling for actions across 10 key areas of the International Arrangement on Forests, as well as the quadrennial programme of work of the Forum for 2025–2028. More than 400 representatives from Member States—including 19 Ministers and Vice Ministers responsible for forests—the UN system and other stakeholders participated in the Forum, which served as a midterm review of the International Arrangement on Forests. Participants exchanged ideas on how to strengthen interlinkages between forests and the SDGs under review at the 2024 HLPF and support implementation of the Rio Conventions. In doing so, participants also highlighted key emerging issues that need to be addressed urgently, such as wildfires, energy and livelihoods, and mobilizing increased financing for forests.

Building capacity to restore forest landscapes

To address the underlying drivers of deforestation and ecosystem degradation, UN DESA started a capacity-building initiative on integrated forest landscape restoration in selected developing countries, including Malawi, Fiji, and Viet Nam. The project applies and adapts methodologies, tools and training programmes developed by UN DESA for integrated forest landscape restoration and sustainable forest management. UN DESA supports participating countries in developing a national integrated forest landscape strategy, together with financing options.



Participants hear a presentation at the Capacity-building Workshop on Forest Landscape Restoration in Viet Nam. | UN DESA

To foster synergies with global efforts, UN DESA and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) are jointly developing open access e-learning courses on Integrated Forest Landscape Restoration. UN DESA has also been supporting a regional initiative for the establishment of a decade of afforestation and reforestation and an International Conference on Afforestation and Restoration, held in July 2024 in the Republic of Congo.

and the Paris Agreement. They highlighted the opportunities of the declaration of the Second Summit of the Three Basins, and the Belem Declaration, stressing the importance to accelerate forest-based climate actions, particularly through increasing forest finance and capacity-building for developing countries.

Exploring the role of families in climate action

UN DESA explored the role of families in climate action as educators, consumers, and advocates through an expert group meeting as part of the 30th anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2024, and the observance of the International Day of Families on “Families and Climate Change” on 15 May 2024. Participants recommended that as educators, families can foster environmentally-friendly behaviours among family members, and advocate for the inclusion of climate change in school curricula throughout the child’s life. Likewise, as consumers, families can support renewable energy-based patterns of production, voting



At COP28 in November 2023, UN DESA focused attention on forests through a series of high-impact events. These events brought together senior officials of Member States, heads and principals of member organizations from the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, and other stakeholders in support of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and its Global Forest Goals, the SDGs,



Panellists discuss ways to halt and reverse deforestation at a high-level dialogue at COP28 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. | UN DESA

with their wallets for environmentally friendly products and services. Lastly, as advocates, the participants emphasized that families can demand public policies that endorse and support renewable energy usage and

sustainable physical environments in their communities and beyond. They can also demand family impact assessments of policies and practices linked to climate change.