UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

BACKGROUND GUIDE

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CANADA

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A WELCOME FROM THE DIAS

Dear delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)! Your committee will be stafffed by Katie Wynen (Director), and Priyanka Goel (Chair). Katie is a third-year University of Ottawa Political Science and Economics student. She has recently returned from a semester abroad at Sciences Po Paris and is passionate about international relations and environmental sustainability. Priyanka is in her third year of a Bachelor of Science at the University of Ottawa. She has attended several MUN conferences throughout North America and is currently organizing a University of Ottawa MWHO conference that will be held in September 2017.

The following topics will be discussed by UNEP:
1.   Encouraging Sustainable Development within the Tourism Industry;
2.   Implementing an Integrated Approach to Ecosystems Management.

UNEP plays a unique role within the United Nations, as the leading global environmental authority. In this role, UNEP sets the global environmental agenda and promotes coherent implementation of sustainable development policies within the United Nations system. UNEP reports its annual decisions and main actions to the General Assembly of the UN.

We hope that you will find this Background Guide useful in your preparation for the conference. You are also encouraged to do your own research to explore in-depth your own Member State's policies. The bibliographies in this document and the UNEP website are good starting points.

Each delegate will also be required to submit a Position Paper before **16 February 2017** to unep@canimun.org. Guidelines and requirements are available on CANIMUN website under the Delegates Resources section.

Prior to the conference, please review our Rules of Procedure and Delegate Code of Conduct, both of which can also be found on our website.

If you have any questions regarding the committee or the conference, feel free to contact us at unep@canimun.org.

We wish you all the best in your preparation and look forward to meeting you at CANIMUN 2017!

Katie Wynen	**Priyanka Goel**
Director	*Chair*

COMMITTEE OVERVIEW

Introduction

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was established after the 1972 Stockholm United Nations Conference on the Human Environment by Maurice Strong, its first director. The aftermath of the Second World War and the rise of the nuclear age, along with recent advancements in space travel, provided a new motivation for environmental protection. Thus, on December 15, 1972, the UN General Assembly adopted *Resolution 2997*, in which it formed the UNEP Governing Council, the UNEP Secretariat, and a voluntary Environment Fund, with the intention to "provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment."[1] This would eventually be followed by the Brundtland Commission, the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, and the promotion of environmental sustainability within the Millennium Development Goals (2000) and the Sustainable Development Goals (2015). Most recently, the *2016 Paris Agreement* represented the agreement of 196 different parties to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and global warming (see the section on *Recent Work and Upcoming Challenges*).

Governance, Membership, and Organization

Originally, the UNEP was managed by its Governing Council, which reported to the United Nations General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council. It had 58 members, based on regional representation, selected for four-year terms each.[2] To date, the UNEP Governing Council has adopted about 700 decisions and resolutions,[3] many of which are designed to coordinate international environmental policy. More recently, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) replaced the Governing Council as the UNEP's principle decision-making body. The UNEA is a body which includes all 193 United Nations Member States in addition to other stakeholders. It met in May 2016 for the second time at the UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.[4] Following a decision by the UNEA, the Committee of Permanent Representatives is charged with monitoring and implementing the UNEA's decisions, among other duties.

Meanwhile, the Secretariat of the UNEP, which includes UNEP Executive Director Erik Solheim and Deputy Executive Director Ibrahim Thiaw, is responsible for general oversight of the UNEP and its administrative functions.[5] The UNEP is further divided into seven regional offices (responsible for more local projects and Regional Consultation Meetings), as well as various secretariats and collaborating centres tasked with implementing

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[1] United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *UNEP Organization Profile*, p. 2.
[2] Ibid, p. 3.
[3] United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *UNEP Governing Council.*
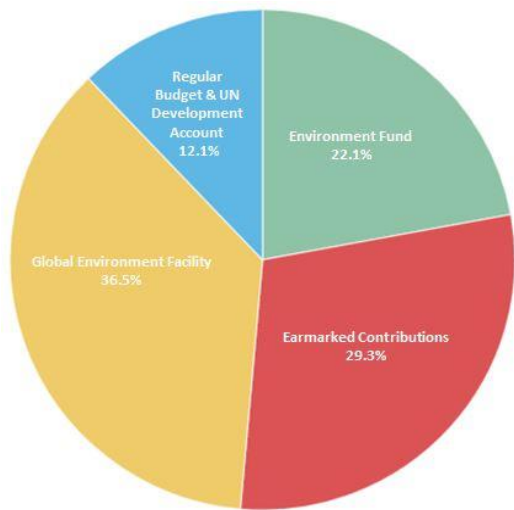[4] United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *About UNEA.*
[5] United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *UNEP Senior Management Team.*

the UNEP's treaties and conventions.[6] The UNEP receives most of its funding from the Global Environment Facility (a project of the World Bank), Earmarked Contributions (from member states and other bodies), and the Global Environment Fund (an investment firm), with about 12% coming from the United Nations Regular Budget. In this committee, delegates will be representing Member States in the United Nations Environment Assembly, the main decision-making organ of the UNEP.[7]

Mandate and Functions

The UNEP was founded as a body of the United Nations to address environmental concerns at the global and regional level. Its mission statement is the following: "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."[8] As described in its *Medium Term Strategy, 2018-2021*, the UNEP has seven key thematic priorities, based on scientific evidence: climate change; resilience to disasters and conflicts; healthy and productive ecosystems; environmental governance; chemicals, waste, and air quality; resource efficiency; and environment under review. These priorities are designed to be implemented on a regional basis, broadly aligning the work of the UNEP as a whole. [9]

2016 Income (as at 31 July 2016)

Retrieved from
http://web.unep.org/about/funding/our
-funding/overview

The UNEP submits a yearly report to the Second Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (the Economic and Financial Committee), while also liaising independently with member states and other organizations. The UNEP also publishes various other reports, atlases, and newsletters, while sponsoring projects related to environmental sustainability and ecosystems protection. As a 'programme,' however, the UNEP has very limited funding and authority compared to a United Nations Specialized Agency. Still, although any UNEP resolution must also be passed by the UN General Assembly or ECOSOC, it is nonetheless able to promote international cooperation, to develop regional programmes, to raise awareness of environmental threats, and to work with Member States to create international environmental law.[10] The UNEP also works

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[6] For a full list, see United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *UNEP Structure*.

[7] United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *UNEP Funding*.

[8] United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *UNEP Organization Profile*, p. 2.

[9] United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021*, p. 16.

[10] United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *UNEP Organization Profile*, p. 18.

closely with organizations and subdivisions such as the Global Environmental Facility, the Division of Early Warning and Assessment, and the Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics.[11]

Recent Work and Upcoming Challenges

Recent UNEP work has been largely inspired by the 2016 Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the seventh Millennium Development Goal (Ensuring environmental sustainability). The *Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021* aims to implement the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) by setting out an analysis of some of the biggest challenges of climate change. The UNEP also launched the Green Economy Initiative (GEI) in 2008, providing research and investment to support environmental investment policy decisions.[12] Likewise, recent projects on disaster management and renewable energy were some of the highlights of the UNEP's 2015 Annual Report.[13] Above all, the UNEP is most proud of the 2015 21st meeting of the *Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, or COP21. The adoption of the *Paris Agreement* by 195 countries marked a renewed international commitment to lower emissions and to stay below a 2 degree Celsius global temperature rise.[14] In spite of this, there remain many global environmental challenges, not least of which are moving towards a greener economy, dealing with threats to ecosystems and biodiversity, and responding to environmental disasters and conflicts.

Retrieved from http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/secretary-general/

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[11] Ibid, p. 21.
[12] United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *What is an "Inclusive Green Economy" ?*
[13] United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Annual Report 2015.*
[14] Ibid, p. 4.

Conclusion

Environmental challenges are some of the most pressing concerns faced by humankind in the 21st century. Moreover, there is often limited agreement between countries with respect to their legal environmental obligations. While more developed countries may disagree over greenhouse gas emission limitations, less developed countries argue that they have limited funds for environmental investment, and that they should be permitted their own economic development. Within the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme is an essential body for raising awareness of these issues and providing a forum for international cooperation on the matter. Delegates within this committee are strongly encouraged to review the resources in this bibliography, as well as their own countries' positions, in order to better contribute to the debate and to the development of international frameworks for better environmental sustainability.

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United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021* [Report]. Retrieved November 1 2016.
> *This Medium Term Strategy provides a summary of the UNEP's progress in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It provides an analysis of the current global environmental situation, as well as operating principles and recommendations for the UNEP to use when implementing its agenda, and it is a good resource for delegates wishing to understand the link between the UNEP's strategies and outcomes.*

United Nations Environment Programme. *UNEP Organization Profile* [Brochure]. Retrieved September 27 2016 from: http://www.unep.org/PDF/UNEPOrganizationProfile.pdf
> *The UNEP's most recent Organization Profile provides a thorough and complete presentation of the UNEP as an organization and its history. After describing the UNEP's mission, governance, and membership, the Profile further details the UNEP's history from 1972-1992 and beyond. It also presents the UNEP's sub-bodies and various graphs and charts explaining the UNEP's work and funding. This brochure will provide a valuable reference tool for delegates to review the UNEP's history and structure.*

United Nations General Assembly. (15 December 1972). *United Nations Conference on the Human Environment* [UNGA Resolution]. A/RES/2994. Retrieved November 1 2016 from: http://www.unep.org/documents.multilingual/default.asp?documentid=97&articleid=1503
> *This is the UNGA Resolution that established the United Nations Environmental Programme after the 1972 Stockholm Conference. It provides the basis for all subsequent international environmental law and agreements, and is a good foundation for delegations to understand current and historical international framework on the environment.*

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United Nations Environment Programme. *UNEP Funding* [Website]. Retrieved September 27 2016 from: http://www.unep.org/about/funding/

United Nations Environment Programme. *UNEP Governing Council* [Website]. Retrieved November 1 2016 from: http://www.unep.org/newyork/IntergovernmentalPolicyCoordination/UNEPGoverningCouncil/tabid/52273/Default.aspx

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United Nations Environment Programme. *What is an "Inclusive Green Economy" ?* [Website].
Retrieved September 27 2016 from:
http://web.unep.org/greeneconomy/what-inclusive-green-economy

United Nations Global Issues. *Environment.* [Website]. Retrieved November 1 2016 from:
http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/environment/

TOPIC 1: ENCOURAGING ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Introduction

On December 4th, 2015, the United Nations General Assembly made a declaration marking 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.[15] The UNEP has marked sustainable tourism as one of its priorities with the 10YFP Sustainable Tourism Programme, but the development of environmentally sustainable tourism remains an enormous challenge for many Member States. In particular, tourism can have both socio-cultural impacts, as well as environmental dangers such as ecosystem damage and natural resource depletion. Still, the tourism industry has enormous potential to help less developed countries engage in sustainable development, including in countries like Costa Rica and India. In particular, ecotourism, which is a form of sustainable tourism, is a form of tourism where individuals can travel to natural environments to support conservation efforts.

According to the United Nations (UN), sustainable development is the idea that development can meet the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.[16] It includes three core dimensions: economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection. However, to effectively stimulate development, tourism must be done in a way that generates infrastructure and employment opportunities, while also having a minimal impact on the environment. Unfortunately, it is possible for the development of the tourism industry to have a damaging impact on both the environment and local communities.[17] Hence, the challenge for the UNEP in years to come will be to seriously consider all aspects of environmentally sustainable tourism and to come up with creative and innovative proposals, while also keeping in mind financial and political limitations.

International Framework

Following the increased environmental and cultural awareness of the 1960s, one of the first United Nations efforts to recognize environmental conservation was the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s 1972 *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*,[18] which marked the beginning of a new era in the protection of natural spaces. A few years later, in 1980, the World

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[15] World Tourism Organization UNWTO. (December 7 2015). *United Nations declares 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development*.
[16] United Nations. (2016). *The Sustainable Development Agenda*.
[17] Ole Kamuaro. (2016). "Ecotourism: Suicide or Development?" *United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service*.
[18] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (1972). *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*.

Tourism Organization released the *Manila Declaration on World Tourism*.[19] This document, while reaffirming the value of tourism in promoting international cooperation and economic well-being, was one of the first to encourage states to implement policies which promote sustainable tourism. Eventually, the 1995 *World Charter for Sustainable Tourism*, the 2002 *Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism*, and the 2007 *Davos Declaration on Climate Change and Tourism*, among many others, emphasized the importance of sustainable tourism industries for economic development and environmental protection within developed and developing countries.[20]

As reflected by the 2014 United Nations General Assembly Resolution 69/233 on the *Promotion of sustainable tourism, including ecotourism, for poverty eradication and environment protection*, there is a general international agreement that environmentally responsible tourism, including ecotourism, is a "cross-cutting activity that can contribute to the fight against poverty, the protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development."[21] This resolution invited governments and international organizations to develop policies and best practices encouraging the development of legitimate sustainable tourism industries. On the other hand, there is less of a consensus when it comes to factors like funding for such industries, or the degree to which local communities and Indigenous groups should be involved in the implementation of sustainable tourism. Moreover, many international organizations, including UNESCO and the WTO, have made conventions and declarations on various aspects of sustainable tourism such as protecting biodiversity or cultural heritage.[22]

Within the UNEP, the value of tourism as a "driver of growth for the world economy" is widely respected.[23] Consistently with its role in the international community, the UNEP has published a number of reports and guides; while some analyze the economic potential of ecotourism, others offer recommendations and guidelines for policymakers to make tourism more sustainable.[24] Likewise, the UNEP is committed to the implementation of both the Millennium Development Goals and the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs, which followed the Millennium Development Goals, provide a framework and a call to action for fighting poverty, inequalities, and climate change.[25] Some of the targets that are particularly relevant to the development of sustainable tourism include increasing income and job creation, safeguarding natural and cultural heritage, and achieving sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.[26] Taken together with relevant programmes and partnerships, these are some of the elements of the evolving

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[19] World Tourism Conference. (1980). *Manila Declaration on World Tourism.*
[20] World Charter for Sustainable Tourism. (2015). *Conventions and Declarations*
[21] United Nations General Assembly. (2014). *Resolution on the Promotion of sustainable tourism, including ecotourism, for poverty eradication and environment protection.*
[22] For a full list see World Charter for Sustainable Tourism, 2015.
[23] United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Tourism.*
[24] For one example, see United Nations Environment Programme. (2005). *Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy Makers.*
[25] United Nations. (2016). *Sustainable Development Goals.*
[26] United Nations. (2016). *Sustainable Development Goals.*

international framework on sustainable development within the tourism industry, and delegates should take particular care to research their own countries' implementations of the SDGs.

Role of the International System

Internationally, although the framework on environmentally sustainable tourism continues to evolve, there have been several international committees and organization established to promote sustainable tourism and better understand its economic and environmental impacts. At the level of the UN, there are various agreements and resolutions on environmentally sustainable tourism. In addition, the UN has established several committees and sub-bodies specifically related to tourism, the environment, and sustainable development. One such committee is the UN Steering Committee on Tourism for Development (SCTD), a partnership between 9 different UN bodies including the UNEP and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). The SCTD specializes in providing technical expertise to assist developing countries with sustainable national tourism sectors. Indeed, organizations like the UNWTO, which specializes in the promotion of international tourism, play an important role in encouraging the development of sustainable tourism industries among member states. The UNWTO in particular has a programme for Promoting Sustainable Tourism Development, a joint project with the UNEP which focuses on sustainable consumption and production within the tourism sector.[27]

In fact, one of the largest partnerships between the UNEP and the UNWTO is the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, or 10YFP. This program has four main objectives; integrating sustainable consumption and production in policies and frameworks, collaboration among stakeholders, fostering the application of guidelines to mitigate tourism impacts, and enhancing sustainable tourism investment and financing.[28] Working within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, and reinforced by UNGA Resolution 66/288,[29] the 10YFP attempts to respond to a certain "lack of access to markets and capital."[30] Meanwhile, another program launched by the UNEP itself, the 'Green Passport,' aims to provide travel guides and information for tourists hoping to travel sustainably.[31] There are also various promotional campaigns organized by the UNEP and its partners, including the 'Making Tourism More Sustainable' policy guide.[32] Ultimately, the UNEP works mainly to raise awareness of the sustainable tourism sector within the structure of the SDGs through its awareness programs and educational reports.

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[27] United Nations World Tourism Organization. (2016). *Sustainable Development of Tourism*.
[28] United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Sustainable Tourism Programme*.
[29] United Nations General Assembly. (2012). *The Future We Want* [UNGA Resolution 66/288].
[30] United Nations World Tourism Organization. (2016). *Sustainable Development of Tourism*.
[31] United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Green Passport*.
[32] United Nations Environment Programme. (2005). *Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy Makers*.

Alternatively, there are numerous other international organizations, specialized agencies, and regional institutions who also have programs promoting sustainable tourism, including ecotourism. One such program is the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, a coalition between both international organizations like the UNEP and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like the Rainforest Alliance. The Global Sustainable Tourism Council, initially founded to promote sustainability within hotel and tour operators, now runs programs like the 'Destination Criteria' and the 'Tour Operator Initiative.'[33] Meanwhile, the International Ecotourism Society (TIES) is a non-profit organization founded in 1990 that advocates for ecotourism. It now has over 750 organizations and 14,000 individuals in its network.[34] Finally, on a regional basis, there are countless smaller, independent businesses, nonprofits, and regional organizations that promote various forms of sustainable tourism with events and advertisements, such as Kerala Tourism or the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA). Still, there remain large gaps in the ability of some developing countries to implement their own sustainable tourism strategies, often when it comes to funding or political will.

Protecting Cultural and Natural Heritage While Encouraging Ecotourism in Costa Rica

As one of the most biodiverse countries in the world, Costa Rica has enormous potential as a destination for ecotourism, and is even considered one of the best examples of successful ecotourism. Indeed, although the Costa Rican ecotourism industry emerged originally with biologists and conservationists, the government quickly jumped on board and instituted a national tourism development plan between 2002 and 2012, focused mainly on sustainable tourism.[35] The focus is now on conservation, with various regulations intended to protect natural resources in force. Unfortunately, these regulations often go unenforced, and the government is often unable to offer preferential treatment by supporting businesses which promote sustainable tourism. Moreover, there are concerns about the social impacts of tourism on local Indigenous communities, who face difficulties with the preservation of their languages and culture. The Certification for Sustainable Tourism (CST) aims to overcome some of these obstacles by rewarding socially and environmentally responsible businesses from an independent commission.[36] Although Costa Rica is a great example of a country with extensive protected national parks, there remain problems with its model; notably, visitor overcapacity and profit maximization.[37]

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[33] See Global Sustainable Tourism Council. (2016). *Our History.* for more details

[34] The International Ecotourism Society. (2016). *Uniting Conservation, Communities and Sustainable Travel.*

[35] United Nations Environment Programme. (2005). *Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy Makers*, p. 139-143.

[36] United Nations Environment Programme. (2005). *Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy* Makers, p. 141.

[37] Noella Gray and Lisa Campbell. (January 5 2009). "A Decommodified Experience? Exploring aesthetic, economic and ethical values for volunteer ecotourism in Costa Rica." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism.*

Unsustainable Waste Management in the Indian Region of Kerala

Another region where ecotourism and sustainable tourism has been heavily promoted since the 1980s is Kerala, India. It is a region popularized by the "Kerala - God's Own Country" campaign, and is known for its successful ecotourism industry, as well as its preservation of the Muziris Port historical site. The "Kerala – God's Own Country" was one of several campaigns where Kerala Tourism promoted the region around the world as a tourist destination with a well-preserved natural environment. However, Kerala has also had many issues in the past, in particular with respect to its management of waste and wastewater. There is a concern that interest in Kerala from foreign tourists is waning, a concern aggravated by the heaps of waste and garbage often left at the side of the road. Although the Clean Kerala Mission has been attempting to address the waste that comes from rapid urbanization and development since 2002, waste disposal remains an enormous issue in the region, particularly e-waste and wastewater.[38] Across India, the rapidly growing population and space limitations mean there is simply not enough landfill space to put the garbage, a problem only aggravated by the tourism industry in Kerala. Nor is incineration the answer, as this process releases incredibly harmful pollutants into the atmosphere. Indeed, with nowhere to put increased amounts of waste from the tourism industry, it can be left to build up across the countryside, and there came a point of crisis in Kerala where the waste totally discouraged new tourists.[39]

Conclusion

Ultimately, without a stronger, universal strategy for environmentally sustainable tourism, there will certainly be a lack of sustainable development that could otherwise have much improved the state of many developing countries. Moreover, without a stronger set of universal regulations for the tourism industry, problems like waste management, energy misuse, and transportation over-consumption will continue to weigh heavily on the environment. These are just some of the problems that face the environmentally sustainable tourism industry today. There is also a lack of funding, even for international organizations like the UNEP. More importantly, despite the many positive results of environmentally sustainable tourism, there is a lack of political will and finances to implement fully sustainable tourism industries in many developing countries. Needless to say, many countries also dispute their role and how much they should be contributing to international standards on sustainable tourism. Delegates are highly encouraged to continue their research by thoroughly examining their Member State's positions on environmentally sustainable development, and reflect carefully on the following research questions.

[38] Rajkumar Joshi and Sirajuddin Ahmed. (October 20 2015). "Status and challenges of municipal solid waste management in India: A review." *Cogent Environmental Science* Vol. 2 Issue 1.
[39] Frederico Neto. (2003). *A New Approach to Sustainable Tourism Development: Moving Beyond Environmental Protection*, p. 6.

Questions to consider for delegates:
1. To what extent is environmentally sustainable tourism important to my Member State's economy?
2. What has my Member State agreed to do to promote environmentally sustainable tourism (i.e. conventions, declarations, resolutions, committee positions, etc.)?
3. Does my Member State have any opposition to the development of the tourism industry?
4. What problems are there with ecotourism in countries like Costa Rica and India?
5. How can the UNEP work in partnership with individual countries and other organizations to implement environmentally sustainable tourism projects, and what are some of the ways by which such projects be financed? Who should pay for these projects?

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> *This article provides a critical perspective on environmentally sustainable tourism and ecotourism that is valuable for delegates looking to develop their understanding of the issues surrounding sustainable tourism. It describes some of the concerns with the development of ecotourism from a developing country's perspective; for instance, environmental hazards, social degradation, and consequences for Indigenous peoples. This article is a valuable resource for delegates to understand some of the current challenges and controversies within the field of environmentally sustainable tourism.*

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2013). *Sustainable tourism: Contribution to economic growth and sustainable development* [Issues Note]. Retrieved September 27 2016 from: http://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/ciem5d2_en.pdf
> *This is an issue note prepared by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development that presents a new understanding of the link between sustainable tourism and poverty reduction. It provides a perspective on the possible economic impact of the tourism industry in various countries, followed by an examination of policies which might encourage more sustainable tourism. It is an effective resource both for delegates looking to understand the magnitude of the problématique and also begin to examine possible solutions.*

United Nations Environment Programme. (2005). *Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy Makers* [Report]. Retrieved September 27 2016 from: http://www.unep.fr/shared/publications/pdf/DTIx0592xPA-TourismPolicyEN.pdf
> *This guide is a joint publication by the UNEP and the World Tourism Organization in order to raise awareness of the sustainability of tourism and provide information for policymakers on how to implement sustainable tourism. It is also a valuable resource for strategies and policies that may be considered by UNEP delegates, and contains ten case studies illustrating successful sustainable tourism policies.*

United Nations Environment Programme. (2011). "Tourism: Investing in energy and resource efficiency." *Towards a Green Economy* [Chapter in a report]. Retrieved September 27 2016 from: http://www.unep.org/resourceefficiency/Portals/24147/scp/business/tourism/greeneconomy_tourism.pdf

> *This overview of greener tourism was produced jointly by the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Tourism Organization. It presents the idea of a greener economy based off of tourism, followed by the challenges and opportunities of 'greening tourism.' It also advocates strongly for increased environmentally sustainable tourism. The key messages are of particular importance for delegates to examine when beginning their research into the subject.*

United Nations General Assembly. (2014). *Promotion of sustainable tourism, including ecotourism, for poverty eradication and environment protection* [UNGA Resolution 69/233]. Retrieved September 27 2016 from: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/233

> *This document is an official United Nations General Assembly Resolution signed in 2014 promoting environmentally sustainable tourism as a means of economic growth. After outlining past international documents in support of environmentally sustainable tourism, it argues for increased use of sustainable tourism by governments to strengthen their own economies and protect the environment. This resolution contextualizes for delegates the official United Nations perspective on ecotourism, and provides the starting point off of which delegates of the UNEP may work.*

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TOPIC B: IMPLEMENTING AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO ECOSYSTEMS MANAGEMENT

Introduction

United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) aims to implement a multifaceted strategy to improve ecosystem management; issues of climate change and environmental sustainability are currently being monitored by various fields that address and improve awareness on climate change management, ecosystem management, chemical waste management respectively. To specifiy, ecosystems are communities of biological organisms that are essential to sustaining human life. Not only are they fully responsible for the goods and services used by humans, but also serve to sustain all life on earth. Recent reports, such as the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment conducted by UNEP in 2005, suggest that "60% of the ecosystem services that support life on Earth are being degraded and used up faster than they can be replensished". As the increase in global populations continues, the issue of improving ecosystem management must be addressed. By highlighting the importance of sustainable efforts across businesses and regions, we can create a greener tomorrow. A multilevel approach that targets different professional fields will allow public awareness to increase. The UNEP seeks to increase responsible ecosystem management amongst businesses, schools and environmental sciences careers. To date, UNEP has made great leaps in public accessibility to information regarding responsible ecosystem management, through updated, online databases and e-learning courses. Furthermore, UNEP has created educational frameworks through the Global University Partnership on Environmental Sustainability. The greatest boundary UNEP faces is ways in which the importance of ecosystem maintenance can be incorporated into the education of doctors, lawyers, corporate leaders and others whose careers seldom require consideration of the environment. Overcoming this boundary would result in large economic growth towards a greener and stronger economy for future generations.

In contrast, professions that play a large role directly on the environment, such as agriculturists, engineers and environmental scientists should be informed on the importance of management of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in agricultural and industrial practices. These consists of hazardous chemicals, predominantly used as fertilizers, that are extremely toxic to wildlife, take years to degrade and are found worldwide due to their ease of spread via air and water. The total of 26 POPs listed also cause severe damage to humans because of their highly carcinogenic nature. Even after UNEP has implemented a global monitoring plan on POPs, a large proportion of countries choose not to take part. Other methods of proper waste disposal, such as the chemicals Cadmium and Lead, are vital to responsible industrial practices. Through implementing appropriate Climate Change Initiative Platforms many issues about waste management and greenhouse gas production can be addressed and monitored.

International Framework

The United Nations Environment Program aims to "promote a cross sectoral, integrated approach to ecosystem management" in order to improve environmental conditions that promote prosperity and resilience. Initially in 2005 UNEP conducted the *Millenium Ecosystem Assessment (MA)* that has effectively demonstrated the link between ecosystems, their services and human welfare. Advances in this assessment have been conducted by the Global Environment Facility with support from partners such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, the International Council for Science, the UK Department for International Development and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The three pillars UNEP uses in promoting the implementation of a strong integrated approach to ecosystem management internationally are the following:

1. To strengthen knowledge on the connection between biodiversity, ecosystems, their services and human well being
2. The broadening of developmental processes while promoting poverty reduction strategies
3. Educating stakeholders about ecosystem maintenance and creating synergies with human well-being

Currently the UNEP's GEO-4 assessment approximate that 60% of the entire world's ecosystem services are being used unsustainably. The summation of issues such as insufficient policies regarding ecosystem management, inadequate ecosystem protection and those living in poverty ultimately give rise to this statistic. Those especially at risk are those who depend greatly on ecosystem services which includes many of the world's subsistence farmers. Current research, along with the destruction caused by natural disasters, has increased the awareness of the importance of ecosystem management. Challenges such as sustainably managing agricultural lands and, international policy support would help with maintaining ecosystem diversity while fostering ecosystem growth for international trade. Improvements similar to these results have shown potential for expansion at the *Kellogg Biological Station Long Term Ecological Research Program in Michigan*. Their research has shown that managing environmental benefits does not mean lower yields in resources placed in consumer markets. They argue that aiming for sustainability at all levels of the ecosystem would allow for resource efficiency while supply and demand needs are met. Issues regarding economic welfare may be overcome through international conservation programs similar to those such as the *Conservation Reserve Program* and the *Wetland Reserve Program.* Both these programs, that show potential for international expansion, support the income of farmers, agriculturalists and environmental scientists without minimizing ecosystem services for trade.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are global goals put forth by the United Nations that aims to guide the role of the non-profit and profit sectors in transforming our world by 2030. Though the achievement of all the goals requires equal improvement in each of the 17 goals, UNEP aims to primarily address the climate based global goals. These include goals 2, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17; achieving food security through sustainable agriculture, ensure access to sustainable energy, promote sustained economic growth, make cities sustainable, responsible consumption and production patterns, take immediate action

to combat climate change, conserve oceans and terrestrial ecosystems, and strengthen implementations and global partnerships. Similar global goals that focus primarily on food scarcity and economic stimulation are defined by the World Trade Organization; *Green Box Programs* and institutional *Green Chemistry* programs used in schools and by chemists, are important for supporting the income of agriculturalists and when determining incentives for environmental sustainability and greener alternatives.

Role of International System

Internationally, many different programs have been implemented based off the three pillars of the *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.* Countries such as Sweden through its SwedBio program has been a strong partner with UNEP. After the post-MA partners meeting in 2007, the SwedBio program has given $1.7 million in support of the global MA strategy. Under the International Advisory Group, the UNEP secretariat of Kenya is one of the many countries that will supervise the "implementation of the global MA follow up strategy". The UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre is currently developing an addition support MA assessment for practitioners called the *Ecosystem Assessment Manual.* The aim of this assessment is to discuss best environmental practices for corporations through subgoal levels.

The 2016 UNEP Frontier 2016 Report has highlighted the emerging issues of environmental concern that must be addressed over the following year. Troubled foodchains that have experienced invasive species and unmonitored management have increased the risks associated with climate change. To combat these issues, while maintaining economic prosperity, agriculturalists and those in the private sector can be informed of climate change issues. Their understanding of the issue and bringing to light internationally set SDGs companies can be incentivized to promote production through sustainable practices. Industry level pledges such as the *Zero net deforestation pledge,* can allow companies to maintain ecosystem quality by offsetting the impacts of their practices through replantation. So far worldwide companies such as Wilmar, Nestlé, Mars and Cargil have made these commitments and have increased their production revenue while being mindful of ecosystems.

Current cost effective solutions being used to address many issues regarding the UNEP's GEO-4 assessment are payments for ecosystem services (PES). Though this strategy is not meant to rectify issues of equity or fairness it provides a cost-effective solution especially in developing countries. UNEP's principles for evaluating payments for ecosystem services that aim to maintain equity to ensure payment for ecosystem services, are presented in the UN Economic Commission for Europe code of conduct. Furthermore, ideas from this code have been used to inspire the formation of international PES through the collaboration between the World Conservation Union and UNEP. The aim of this international program is to address policy challenges that connect experts with policy makers and agriculturalists. It's aim to reduce deforestation which has been widely accepted by many

European countries such as France and the UK. Similarly, methods of protecting biodiversity have been widely accepted by European countries, Canada and the US.

Kenya's Greenhouse gas protocol aimed to provide alternative income sources for communities

UNEP has developed a project in Kenya that aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation while maintaining the country's infamous national parks. By reducing poverty and maintaining water supplies in rivers that run through the national parks many of national parks such as the Masai Mara National Reserve and the Serengeti National Park in Tanzania can be preserved. The preservation of these parks can will not only protect these crucial ecosystems but create jobs within the parks specific to sustainable management. Collaborations between the Kenyan government, NGOs and foreign funding from countries such as Spain have allowed the proper assessment and implementation of ecosystem management. This program allows for alternative income sources for communities especially through carbon trade and tourism.

As stated in the GEO-6 Regional Assessment for Africa, indicates that many areas within Africa, that expand beyond Kenya, contain abundant natural assets that face many environmental threats. The Regional Environmental Information Network has implemented new strategies for the management and upkeep of environmental trends such as annual precipitation. Areas with sufficient data on such issues are the basis for determining probable decreases in precipitation. The decrease in precipitation which has led to a significant number of droughts in Kenya is a response due to the increase in greenhouse gas concentrations. This high degree of temporal and spatial variability in precipitation that has greatly affected terrestrial wildlife especially those in Kenya. Reserves and farming in the region have been damaged due to the water shortage and have caused food scarcity to become a growing issue among the people.

Internationally, the decrease in precipitation has also taken a toll on aquatic ecosystems, predominantly within those of the Indian Ocean. As global temperatures rise, the Indian Ocean has heated faster than it ever has over the past 100 years (+0.5 degrees Celsius). The increase in convection due to the heating of the Indian Ocean are large contributors to the decrease in annual precipitation for areas within Africa. This highlights the importance of International Policy when establishing environmental protocols and searching for alternative income sources.

Currently the greenhouse gas protocol in place in Kenya focuses on Global Environmental Goals (GEGs) that aim to reduce air pollution and improve air quality, in order to induce appropriate amounts of rainfall for agriculturalists and wildlife in the region. Their goals consist of reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with Climate change (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1994), reducing the dependence of solid fuels for cooking and heating by providing affordable energy (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, 2002), developing pollution control measurements by monitoring air

pollution (Agenda 21, 1992) and prohibiting the use of POPs whether intentionally or unintentionally as set forth by the Stockholm Convention on POPs in 2004.

Though Africa, specifically Kenya, are not the largest global contributors to global warming, this content experiences one of the severest impacts of climate change. Kenya specifically relies on climate sensitive economic sectors that take a serious hit when there is environmental variability such as floods or droughts. Similar to the African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change, the importance for many countries which experience similar difficulties brought on by severe environmental variability, is to mitigate climate change, without compromising the continent's development agenda. Keeping in mind GEGs and SDGs, it is possible for international development to occur in a sustainable manner.

The "In town, without my car", Car Free Day campaign in the EU and Colombia aimed to increase sustainable transport

In town, without my car! is an EU campaign held once a day every autumn to increase the use of vehicles other than cars. The implementation of this car free day in 2000, seeks to encourage uses of alternative forms of transportation and raise awareness within the country of mobility and its associated risks with pollution. Ten years after car free days were implemented in the EU, it has globally expanded into 39 countries. The deep-rooted issue that the Director-General of Environment of the European Commission faces is changing car culture; In many cultures, cars are seen as a status symbol. The Director-General goes on to explain that, implementing similar policies around the world will take time and require improved public awareness and information in order to open people to the possibility of such change.

Once this European wide initiative was established, the European Commission enlarged the program to a full European Mobility week. Shortly after this became a major focus for the European Commission, in 2000 a global World Car free Day program was launched. Increased media coverage of these events has allowed for the awareness of such campaigns to be recognized worldwide. Furthermore, similar events in places such as Indonesia, Colombia and Israel have been held and have shown a dramatic reduction in air pollution.

For the past 16 years Bogota, Colombia has made Car Free days a permanent occasion within their city. Through the implementation of a Car Free Day policy, it's densely populated region has been able to address topics such as the reclamation of public space, improvement of public transport, promotion of non-motorized transport and the implementation of auto restriction measures. This policy has caused a significant decrease in pollution with nitrogen oxide levels that drop by 99% on these days. It has also allowed people to invest more in public transportation, increase activity rates and created much more attractive public spacing and shown decreases in crime rates. Economically, property values on "Transit-oriented development (TOD)" tends to increase as people's desires for residential areas along transit corridors increase, due to the proximity to transit areas.

Improving awareness and environmental sustainability has caused the country to further implement a Car Free Week.

In January of 2016 the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport agreed that "striving toward a future where global temperatures rise, no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius" requires an immediate climate action plan that must include sustainable methods of transport. Due to the large percent of greenhouse gas emissions that are attributed to the transport sector, fossil fuel use must be addressed. Days such as Car Free Day Campaigns can significantly mitigate potential threats to the environment "while also enhancing growth and development". Currently, several of the SDGs directly target issues related to sustainable transport (see SDGs 3,7,9,11 and 12). Therefore, the most cross cutting issue is educating the masses in order to address sustainable consumption and the potential negative repercussions that may occur if not addressed.

Conclusion

UNEP aims to improve public understanding of sustainable ecosystem management at a local and international level. Through implementing strategies of accessibility to databases, communicating research and involving the majority of countries in management strategies, information will be able to reach all members in society. Multiple different strategies have been put in place to fulfill international agendas and maintain sustainable practices. It is key for education programs be put in place for private and public sector stakeholders. Awareness is a large issue that can help alleviate many of the issues that come with unsustainable practices. Public awareness will also help with policy implementation in governments around the world, as more people emphasize the importance of climate change.

Terrestrial and aquatic environments face a great deal of overexploitation from under-reported agricultural practices. Similarly, issues of urbanization, mining, deforestation and agricultural expansion must be addressed through good spatial planning at all levels of the government. Important issues that must be addressed in order to combat the effects of climate change are fossil fuel that lead to many issues behind greenhouse gas production. Not only there be an aim to reduce the change in global temperatures over the next years, but cultural attitudes towards sustainable community management must also be met. Synergies between public support, political will, financial resources and human capacity must be achieved in order to make large scale changes.

Though the issue of improving awareness can be met through events or campaigns, the best guidance can be seen through the SDGs set in 2016. Simply put, climate change is the largest threat to human advancement and development. It affects everyone and ultimately affects the poorest and most vulnerable the most. Broad international cooperation must take place in order to lower carbon pathways and reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. Though the Paris Agreement signed in April of 2016 helped reduce the pace of climate change among 175 member states, more specific strategies must be implemented in order to enhance international cooperation and fight the effects of climate change.

With this in mind, we can consider the following questions when determining feasible methods of combatting economic management:

1 How can research that explores new ways to increase agricultural diversity be applied internationally, without sacrificing market needs?

2 How can markets be better established with sustainable ecosystem practices in order to incentivize businesses to protect ecosystems?

3 How can pre-existing conservation programs be applied internationally while considering the social and financial constraints of each country?

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This website provides a database for sharing international climate change initiatives that have currently been put in place or are underway. These initiatives have been recognized by the UN and zero in on specific topics within these publicly accessible reports. As delegates consider the role that their country plays in tackling climate change, they may use this source to keep in mind the advantages and limitations of certain awareness programmes.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2015) *UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2015* [Report]. Retreived November 10th 2016 from:
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This a report that provides the framework on how to address global warming and measures that can be taken to keep temperature increase below 1.5-2 degrees celcius by the end of the century. Many of the goals are in line with current SDGs put forth but the UN. It provides access to other reports made publc by UNEP and other Climate Initiative Platforms.

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  This article gives an overview of the Q&A sessions of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Group. It looks at the importance of sustainable transport and discusses the critical role in modern sustainable transport. It is a good starting point for delegates who seek to understand what populations experience the greatest negative effects of climate change. Futhermore, it expands on the economic implications of such matters.

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