



COP17/CMP7
 UNITED NATIONS
 CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE 2011
 DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

Green Economy: Powering Climate Solutions

UN system-wide response to climate change

Under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General, the Chief Executives Board (CEB) brings together 29 UN system organizations to jointly support Member States in meeting global challenges.

In 2007, the CEB adopted the Climate Change Actions Framework, a joint action-oriented approach in line with the decisions of the UNFCCC Parties. The UN system supports Member States in implementing their commitments and in responding to the emerging challenges.

At COP 17 / CMP 7, the UN system is presenting its ongoing work and practical solutions and tools at side events, exhibits and by sharing a joint package with thematic information.

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www.unsceb.org/ceb/priorities/climate-change/

For societies around the world to better understand, mitigate and adapt to climate change, they need to know what is at stake.

The planet is warming due to increased concentrations of heat-trapping gases in our atmosphere. Most of the increased concentrations of these gases over the last century are due to human activities, especially the burning of fossil fuels. A major shift is needed to reduce emissions by half by the middle of the century. According to the IPCC, changes in lifestyles and consumption patterns that emphasize resource conservation can contribute to developing a low-carbon economy that is both equitable and sustainable. Education and training programmes can help overcome barriers to the market acceptance of energy efficiency, particularly in combination with other measures.

With an informed population, a knowledgeable workforce, enlightened government officials and an environmentally aware youth, the world will be in a far better position to deal with the causes and impacts of climate change.

It is therefore important that young people make their concerns heard and engage in actions that bring a fundamental change on how society moves forward in the coming decades. Education and awareness raising on environmental issues play a pivotal role in sensitizing young people on fundamental environmental issues and empowering them, as young people, to mitigate the impact of these issues. These awareness-raising initiatives will result in informed citizens able to critically engage in decision-making and action-taking for sustainable development.

United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

Climate Change Action Framework

Focus (left) and Cross-Cutting Areas (right) have been identified in pursuance of the broader mandates and capacities in the UN system (with corresponding convening agencies) to ensure better coordination and cooperation for concrete deliverables:

Adaptation
 Technology transfer
 Forestry and Agriculture
 Financing mitigation and adaptation action
 Capacity-building

Climate knowledge; science, assessment, monitoring and early warning
 Supporting global, regional and national action
 Public awareness-raising
 Social Dimensions of Climate Change

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Activities

UN is partnering with young people from around the world on various environmental initiatives. Young people have demonstrated their concern for the environment and are changing their lifestyles and consumption partners in order to conserve the environment.

Under the UNEP Tunza Programme for young people, over 30,000 children and youth organizations globally are participating in environmental projects and actions. The Tunza Strategy focuses on four main areas: awareness building, capacity building, information exchange and involvement of youth in decision making processes. The activities include conferences, painting competitions on the environment, a children's environmental book series and a flagship environmental magazine for youth.

Through its environmental education and training activities UNEP is collaborating with universities and other institutions on issues of environmental education, training and research. As a member of the UN Working Group on Climate Change, UNEP and UNESCO are collaborating with the UN Communications Group to showcase inspiring case studies on the impact of awareness raising on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

UNEP is providing scientific data to stakeholders on environmental issues and is working closely with UNFCCC in articulating and refining policy issues for intergovernmental processes. Jointly with UNESCO, UNEP has developed guidebooks and reference materials on sustainable development.

During COP 15 UNICEF organized the Children's Climate Forum in Copenhagen which brought together 160 young people from 44 countries to discuss climate change and build their skills to make change in their communities. This was the beginning of widespread action on climate change and adolescent participation in Country Offices and National Committees worldwide. In Canada, UNICEF works with educators to raise awareness around children's rights and promote "Learning for a Sustainable Future". In Palestine and India, UNICEF trains students to test water quality in their schools and communities, enabling them to advise local leaders about solutions and to educate their community about water and health. These Water, Sanitation and Health projects closely address issues of climate mitigation and adaptation in water-stressed areas.

In China, UNICEF is running Environment, Climate Change & Disaster courses in a few pilot schools, and has support to scale this

up to 100 schools. UNICEF has developed an interactive and integrated school climate programme which encourages children to take tangible actions such as planting trees, stabilizing slopes, planting vegetables for nutrition purposes, and teaching children to calculate their carbon emissions. The Water, Sanitation and Health projects closely address issues of climate mitigation and adaptation.

UN-HABITAT and the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) have developed a climate awareness cartoon for children to sensitize them to issues of climate change and sustainable production and consumption. This awareness raising film invites the children to take environmental actions.

The World Bank has launched Connect4Climate to help young people to engage on the critical issue of climate change and to give them a voice in the global climate change conversation. The Connect4Climate competition is offering young people a platform - via websites and Facebook pages – not only to articulate the challenges of climate change seen from their perspective, but also to use their enormous potential as agents of social change to raise awareness and mobilize for climate adaptation and mitigation within Africa.

Through photos and videos of 60 seconds or less, those entering the Connect4Climate competition are encouraged to answer the question: 'What does climate change mean to you, your family, your community, your country?' The award winners will be announced at COP 17.

Moving forward

The UN agencies will continue to engage young people on environmental programmes and actions globally. At COP 17, the UN will be hosting a side event on climate change awareness and education. Through highly interactive panel discussions, the youth will share their experiences and actions they have taken towards adopting sustainable lifestyles.

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