

UNFCCC COP28 – Dubai, UAE
30 November to 12 December 2023

CONCEPT NOTE

The Impact of Crimes that Affect the Environment on Natural Carbon Sinks and Ecosystems Resilience

Friday 1 December 18.30-19.25

UNFCCC Pavilion SE Room 6

Organized by:

*United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)*

Environmental crime degrades ecosystems and contributes to climate change. The high-level event will provide a compelling case on biodiversity-climate-crime nexus and set actions for the Global Stock take to integrate into approaches to reduce deforestation and marine degradation for climate mitigation.

Description

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) repeatedly warn about the decline of ecosystems resilience and ability to sequester carbon. Destruction and degradation are key drivers of biodiversity loss. Protection of critical carbon sinks is fundamental not only to keep on track below 1.5 C, but to avoid biodiversity loss and water resources collapse globally.

Deforestation, illegal exploitation of natural resources, marine pollution, underpinned by corruption, accelerate the erosion of ecosystems at an alarming rate. Illegal timber trade is worth ~\$51-152bn a year, which is 15-30% of global timber production and, in some countries, up to 90% of national production. World Bank analyses of the impacts of continued deforestation in the Amazon suggest that loss of 20-25% of the remaining biome could trigger its dieback and more emissions.

Oceans absorb a third of CO₂ and 90% of excess heat created by global warming. Higher temperatures and rising ocean acidity, combined with illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and widespread marine pollution, reduce oceans' ability to absorb carbon dioxide.

The COP28 Global Stocktake calls for a clear and robust plan of action. Building on COP26/27 commitments to curb deforestation and biodiversity loss, the high-level diverse speakers will reinforce the biodiversity-climate nexus, highlighting how addressing environmental crime will increase ecosystems resilience for climate mitigation. The role of indigenous communities in protecting carbon sinks will be highlighted.

Proposed format

Series of high-level speakers with examples of cases and success stories from various country perspectives.

Speakers

Lt. Gen. H.H. Sheikh Saif Bin Zayed Al Nahyan

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of the United Arab Emirates

Ms. Ghada Waly

Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

H.E. Mr. Santiago Peña

President of the Republic of Paraguay

H.E. Mr. Andreas Bjelland Eriksen (*tentative*)

Minister of Climate and the Environment, The Kingdom of Norway

Mr. David Cooper (*video message*)

Acting Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

MC: Mr. Alan Cole

Chief, Border Management Branch, UNODC

Link with SDGs, innovation and UAE priorities

- This event contributes to all SDGs, but in particular SDGs 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. IPBES has warned that environmental crisis undermines progress towards 80% of SDG targets and biodiversity loss is already impacting climate.
- Innovation is in the fact that key players will highlight the urgency to address the illegal exploitation of natural resources and crimes that affect the environment for promoting ecosystem resilience and supporting the Paris goals.
- The event will contribute to United Arab Emirates' priorities for mitigation and set actions for the Global Stock take to accelerate ecosystem-based climate mitigation.

Contact persons in lead organization

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