

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

COP27 electronic press kit

6-18 November

Overview

6-18 November 2022, the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt will host the 27th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (COP 27), with a view to building on previous successes and paving the way for future ambition to effectively tackle the global challenge of climate change.

Among key focus areas will be the promise of innovation and clean technologies as well as the centrality of water and agriculture to the climate crisis. The role of science will also be highlighted in addition to biodiversity loss, energy transition, decarbonization efforts and finance.

For the first time UNODC is actively participating in the COP on climate change, leading the narrative on crimes that affect the environment which contribute to the triple planetary crisis of biodiversity loss, pollution, and climate change.

Crimes that affect the environment - including wildlife and forest crime, crimes in the fisheries sector, waste trafficking, illegal mining and trafficking in precious metals and stones - are frequently interlinked with corruption and other crimes. They have far-reaching effects on security and human health by taking away the livelihoods of local communities and negatively impacting climate mitigation and adaptation strategies. Criminal groups exploit gaps in national law enforcement and criminal justice systems, and the ultimate beneficiaries of these crimes are often not brought to justice.

To support nature's ability to mitigate climate change, it is critical to scale up initiatives to combat crimes that affect the environment and integrate the justice system response to these crimes into biodiversity, climate and circular economy agendas.

Further information on UNODC's mandate and work to prevent and combat crimes that affect the environment is available online: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/environment-climate/>

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Social media

Please tag @COP27 | @UNODC

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Webpage links:

COP27: <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/cop27>

COP27 presidency: <https://cop27.eg/>

Key messages

- Crimes that affect the environment (environmental crime) contribute to the triple planetary crisis of biodiversity loss, pollution, and climate change.
- The impact of corruption on the most significant drivers of climate change – including illegal deforestation, ecosystem degradation, and waste trafficking – is considerable and needs to be better understood.
- The increase in crimes that affect the environment, such as deforestation, marine pollution, fishery crimes, and waste trafficking contributes to the degradation of natural ecosystems, decline of biodiversity, release of carbon dioxide (CO₂), and other harmful gases, into the atmosphere.
- Crimes that affect the environment impair the resiliency of natural ecosystems to withstand climate change.
- Criminal justice, including robust anti-money laundering frameworks has an important role in safeguarding ecosystems, biodiversity, and environmental services that safeguard our climate and support the health of the planet. They also have an important role in ensuring safety for vulnerable communities, livelihoods and stable financial inclusion
- To support nature's ability to mitigate climate change, it is critical to scale up initiatives to combat environmental crime and integrate the financial frame and justice system response to these crimes into biodiversity, climate and circular economy agendas.
- COP27 provides an opportunity to highlight the current and prospective role of criminal justice in addressing and mitigating climate change.
- Illegal exploitation of natural resources has far-reaching impacts for the economy and livelihoods, security and the environment because it contributes to biodiversity loss and climate change by destroying natural carbon sinks, altering ecosystems, and disturbing the balance of the oceans.
- Current efforts to mitigate climate change are undermined by criminality and unlawful activities and are thus likely to fail or fall short unless countries improve criminal justice responses to crimes that affect the environment.
- Healthy marine ecosystems can mitigate and promote adaptation to climate change by advancing carbon sequestration and storage and reducing risks from extreme weather events. To tackle marine pollution, we must develop sustainable production and consumption patterns, improve waste management, and enhance legal and policy frameworks for achieving stronger enforcement and compliance.
- Combating waste trafficking and supporting environmentally sound management of waste can contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promote the circular economy as a climate change mitigation strategy.
- Waste transported illegally ends up in public ecosystems, illegal landfills or is burned in the open. Failure to safely manage it affects health, environment and contributes to greenhouse gas emissions (for example black carbon aerosols may have as much as 5,000 times the global warming potential of CO₂).
- According to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, plastic waste trading becomes illegal if it does not follow the convention protocols particularly that both exporting and importing countries must consent to the exchange. This has led to the emergence of an illicit plastic waste economy, which includes fraudulently mixing clean with unclean plastics or camouflaging its origin.
- Crimes in the fisheries sector deplete fish stocks and threaten biodiversity and livelihoods, particularly if done in violation of regulations that are part of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Given that the majority of marine life is near the surface of the ocean and near the shores, safeguarding Marine

Protected Areas (MPAs) is critical to maintaining biodiversity and its capacity to provide services, including absorbing GHGs.

- Criminal profit incentivizes environmental crimes – therefore it is imperative that the environment and climate agendas include the strengthening of all measures to combat money laundering related to these crimes as per the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force. Transnational financial crimes rob low-income countries of development resources and their people of financial inclusion and livelihoods. It exposes entire vulnerable communities to the threat an intimidation of transnational organised crime.

UNODC side events					
Date and time	Event title	Event Objective	Location	Language of event	Additional Information
9 November 10:00 – 11:15	Roles of the Congo Basin Rainforest, Protected Areas, Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Sites in Climate Change Resilience and SDG Implementation in Central Africa	Examine the importance of addressing crimes that effect the environment in Congo Basin and the relevance of this work for climate mitigation.	UNESCO Pavilion, Green Zone	French	Participation: ECCAS, UNESCO UNOCA, UNODC and the African Development Bank Live streaming: TBC
9 November 11: 30 – 12:30	Money laundering Associated with Environmental Crime to Showcase the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Work	Discuss the experiences, trends and challenges in tackling illicit financial flows from environmental crimes, the role of the fight against money laundering as an effective tool to address climate and environmental crimes, and the findings from the FATF's 2021 report on Money Laundering from Environmental Crimes.	Germany Pavilion, Blue Zone	English	Participation: UNODC, the German Ministry of Finance, South Africa FIU, UNEP, United for Wildlife Financial Taskforce, Basel Institute on Governance Live streaming: TBC
10 November 13:15 – 14:45	How Combatting Plastic Pollution and Illegal Traffic in Plastic Waste can Help Reduce Carbon Emissions	Improve awareness of actions across the plastics value chain to end plastic pollution and discuss the existing governance for transboundary movements for plastic waste by the Basel Convention, thus reducing GHG emissions as a climate mitigation strategy.	UNFCCC Pavilion, Blue Zone	English	Participation: UNODC, BRS Secretariat, UNCTAD, UNEP, WTO, Commonwealth Secretariat and Ministers from Seychelles, Ecuador, Palau Live streaming: Yes
11 November 12:30 – 13: 30	Unmanaged Waste: A Hidden Cause of Climate Change	Analyse how combating waste trafficking and supporting environmentally sound management of waste can contribute to reducing GHG emissions and promote circular economy as a climate mitigation strategy.	EU Pavilion, Blue Zone	English	Participation: UNODC, EU, UNEP, BRS Secretariat, and Ministers from Egypt and Ghana Live streaming: Yes
11 November 15:00 – 16:30	Eco-system Based Climate Mitigation to Protect People and Planet- Raising the Ambition for Nature	Shed light on challenges and opportunities related to nature's capacity to mitigate climate change, reinforcing the Glasgow pact and the Egypt led ecosystem initiative for climate action.	UN Egypt Pavilion, Blue Zone	English	Participation: UNODC, WWF, UNOCA, AU Commission, Norway NICFI, and Ministers from Egypt, Kenya (tbc) and Malawi (tbc) Live streaming: Yes