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### INTEGRATING THE VALUE OF NATURE INTO OUR ECONOMIES

*“Biodiversity makes business sense. Biodiversity makes common sense. It’s the food we eat, the water we drink, and the air we breathe.”*

**Erik Solheim, Head of UN Environment**

The Asia and Pacific region has some of most diverse and rich ecosystems in the world. It holds 20 per cent of the world’s biodiversity, 14 per cent of the world’s tropical forests, and 34 per cent of the world’s coral reefs, including the greatest number of marine species in the world. This biodiversity supports humanity with food, livelihoods, environmental resilience and services (e.g. food, flood protection) and income and development opportunities. However, population growth, rapid industrialization and urbanization are exerting pressures on the region’s natural resource base. The environmental, social and economic costs of habitat loss and degradation, overexploitation, climate change, pollution and invasive alien species are increasing. UN Environment works with a wide range of partners across the region to realign economic development priorities and financing to address environmental degradation and loss of economic opportunities caused by declines in the natural resource base. We support governments, businesses and communities in their efforts of ‘going green’ by both protecting and responsibly managing the natural wonders such as Tiger, rainforests, and reefs, promoting sustainable production systems such as fisheries and agriculture, as well as working towards integrating the values of ecosystems into development planning and investments.

### UN Environment focuses on:

#### Areas

#### Approaches



#### Protecting and managing terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems

- **Mainstreaming biodiversity in production landscapes and seascapes**

Helping countries to apply ecosystem management approaches. These approaches include voluntary certification programmes, market-based instruments, protecting the genetic diversity of key agriculture crops, transformation of sectors to adopt more environmentally friendly practices (e.g. green fins, eco-tourism, area-based tools, greening of commodities), and preventing and managing invasive alien species

- **Strengthening Protected Area networks and connected landscapes**

Supporting countries towards strengthened governance, sustained financing and site management of protected areas in a landscape context; introducing market-based instruments investing in forest landscape restoration, small-holder production and green infrastructure

- **Green Economy and green finance for maintaining Natural Capital**

Facilitating the adoption of Green Growth practices and Natural Capital investments in decisions and operations of key economic sectors and government mechanisms supporting the integration of the Natural Capital values in the private sector and financial institutions’ investment decisions, business plans and reporting

- **Species conservation and combatting illegal trade in wildlife**

Supporting countries in combating wildlife crime through policy dialogues, cooperation, capacity building and awareness raising, and applying innovative approaches to species conservation programmes for iconic and endangered species such as Great Apes and Dugong

- **Marine litter**

Supporting countries in addressing marine litter problems by putting environmental, health and recreational problems of marine litter higher on their action agenda



#### The enabling environment

- **Implementation of biodiversity-related Conventions**

Supporting countries in implementing biodiversity-related Conventions, with focus on National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP) and Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing



## Partnerships for concerted action

### • Partnerships with sub-regional bodies

Facilitating regional dialogues and promoting actions to address trans-boundary issues by working in close partnerships with key regional bodies (e.g. ASEAN, SACEP, SPREP)

### • Regional ocean governance

Under the East Asian Seas and North West Pacific Action Plans, promoting collaboration in addressing land-based sources of marine pollution, coastal and marine habitat conservation and management

### • Partnerships with the private sector

Supporting public-private partnerships and corporate social responsibility of the scuba diving industry by reducing environment impacts of recreational diving and integrating reef management in local development programs. Greening the tea and cocoa industries through working with smallholders, corporate partners along the chain of custody, and government sector agencies



## Signature programmes in Asia Pacific

UN Environment supports 41 countries across Asia and the Pacific on ecosystem management issues, working out of four offices in Apia, Bangkok, Beijing, and New Delhi. Our work is guided by UN Environment's Programme of Work and the national and regional priorities identified by our country partners.

### Key projects and initiatives:

- 1) *Green Fins*: A public-private partnership for reducing the environmental impact of recreational diving and snorkeling, engaging over 500 individual companies in the region – <http://www.greenfins.net>
  - 2) *Forest Certification for Ecosystem Services (ForCES)*: Strengthening the business case for sustainable forest management practices through certification programmes – <http://forces.fsc.org>
  - 3) *Strengthening Forest and Ecosystem Connectivity in the RIMBA Corridor in Central Sumatra*: Facilitating the adoption of green growth practices and Natural Capital investments in routine local government operations in Sumatra, Indonesia
  - 4) *Removing Barriers to Invasive Species Management in Production and Protection Forests in Southeast Asia (FORIS project)*: Reducing impacts of invasive (pest) species to natural and man-made production systems - <http://gefforestinvasivessea.org>
  - 5) *Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project*: Working with local communities in the conservation of dugongs and their habitats, while promoting sustainable fisheries and improvement of livelihoods – [www.dugong.conservation.org](http://www.dugong.conservation.org)
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- 6) *Global Coral Reef Partnership*: Hosted at the Asia Pacific Regional Office, the initiative supports provision of sound data on coral reef status and trends, climate change vulnerability, ecosystem service values, and human dependence for ecosystem-based management - <http://coral.unep.ch>
  - 7) *South China Sea Strategic Action Programme Implementation*: In partnership with COBSEA, assisting countries in area-based management of mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass and wetlands and strengthening the regional coordination.
  - 8) *Regional Marine Litter Initiative*: Supporting countries in addressing marine litter problems through regional cooperation in partnership with COBSEA and global programmes



## PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are crucial in supporting countries to meet environmental goals. The Asia and Pacific office works closely with Governments, the private sector, civil society, universities, communities, UN agencies, foundations, the press and others. A GEF funding partnership has a portfolio value of 350 million USD in biodiversity, land and water management.

### Mainstreaming Gender into Conservation

Women are often disproportionately vulnerable to environmental degradation, and have a crucial role to play in biodiversity conservation and management and therefore they need to be prominently represented in decision making. Within the framework of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, UN Environment gives priority to gender equality- including enabling technologies, strengthening the presence of women and promoting equitable access to resources.



## CONTACT

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