

REFERENCES TO OTHER TOPICS

UNEP:**– Impacts of Peacekeeping Operations**

UNEP has released its report: *Greening the Blue Helmets: Environment, Natural Resources and UN Peacekeeping Operations*. A recent article in the *Economist* cites that lax sanitation standards on a base of the UN's current force in Haiti (MINUSTAH) have been linked to the cholera outbreak in 2010. Lawyers have filed 5,000 complaints to the force's claims office on behalf of the victims, seeking at least \$250 million in damages. Report: http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/UNEP_greening_blue_helmets.pdf; Article: <http://www.economist.com/node/21553450>.

– South-South Exchange Mechanism

This is the first online portal designed to strengthen partnerships between sustainable development projects in developing countries and to enable communities to better manage their natural resources and local environment. Interested actors can submit content, as well as share their expertise and experiences with peers. www.unep.org/south-south-cooperation.

– Water and Ecosystem Services

UNEP's report: *Releasing the Pressure: Water Resource Efficiencies and Gains for Ecosystem Services* urges policy-makers and resource managers to shift from the traditional focus on water productivity per unit of agricultural yield to a broader view. http://www.unep.org/pdf/Releasing_the_%20pressure_2012.pdf.

UN/HQ Renovations

In response to a question about asbestos abatement during the renovation of the Secretariat buildings, a UN official said that asbestos handling in construction projects is among the most strictly regulated areas of any industry in the United States. Capital Master Plan Website: <http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/cmp/>.

Status of Elephants

A report highlights that elephant poaching levels are the worst in a decade and recorded ivory seizures are at their highest levels since 1989. The situation demonstrates the urgent need to implement the African Elephant Action Plan created by all range States in 2010. See: <http://www.cites.org/eng/com/SC/62/E62-46-01.pdf>.

UN Population Fund

After establishing expectations for the annual report of the strategic plan, 2008–2013 (decision 2011/14), the Executive Board received the 2011 report of the Administrator (DP/2012/7). <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Executive%20Board/2012/Annual-session/English/dp2012-7.doc>.

Hazardous Electronic Waste

A new agreement between the UN International Telecommunication Union and the Secretariat of the Basel Convention seeks to strengthen collaboration to address the issue of growing electronic waste and the slow progress of recycling. Press release: http://www.itu.int/net/pressoffice/press_releases/2012/CM01.aspx.

Green Jobs

A study led by the International Labour Organization's Green Jobs Initiative finds that a transformation to a greener economy could generate 15-60 million additional jobs globally over the next two decades, but that these gains will depend on the right set of policies. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_181836.pdf.

World Bank President Named

Dr Jim Yong Kim has been tapped to serve as the 12th president of the World Bank Group. He is a co-founder of Partners in Health and former director of the HIV/AIDS Department at the World Health Organization. (TRY)

WMO: New Climate Service System

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has announced the creation of the "Global Framework for Climate Services" (GFCS), with the goal of providing advance warning of weather changes

that influence water, food security, natural disasters and health. The system is intended to provide "reliable long-term data", which can help assess, monitor and predict difficult weather conditions. See http://www.wmo.int/pages/gfcs/index_en.php. (TRY)

CBD: 20 Years of Progress

For the fourth time, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has convened an *ad hoc* working group to review progress on the implementation of the CBD. This meeting will be reported in *EPL* 42/5. Summary: <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/wgri4/>. (TRY)

ITLOS: Bay of Bengal

A judgment has been rendered in Case No. 16 *Dispute concerning delimitation of the maritime boundary between Bangladesh and Myanmar in the Bay of Bengal*. http://www.itlos.org/fileadmin/itlos/documents/cases/case_no_16/1-C16_Judgment_14_02_2012.pdf.

Ocean Declaration

The Co-Chairs of The Oceans Day at Rio+20 issued a declaration calling for strong and immediate action to meet the sustainable development goals for oceans, coasts, and small island developing States (SIDS). http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SC/pdf/pdf_Rio_Ocean_Declaration_2012.pdf.

UNESCO: Sustainable Ocean Management

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission has released its report *Healthy Ocean, Healthy People* outlining initiatives, programmes and proposals on three interconnected themes: knowing our ocean, protecting marine treasures and empowering ocean citizens. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002166/216651e.pdf>.

IWC: Atlantic Sanctuary Proposal

At their annual meeting, the Parties to the International Whaling Convention (IWC) have rejected a Latin American proposal to create a "South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary" encompassing nearly all of the Atlantic Ocean south of the Equator and linking the existing Southern Ocean Sanctuary with the Indian Ocean Sanctuary. Late reports from participants indicate that the vote was less rancorous than similar votes in recent years. (TRY)

UNECE:**– Participation at Rio+20**

A small delegation led by the Executive Secretary co-organised a number of events to share experiences and expertise, such as:

- Developing a legally binding agreement similar to the Aarhus Convention in the Latin American Region;
- The expansion of the Water Convention by allowing/encouraging universal accession by the end of this year;
- Developing a conceptual framework for measuring sustainable development in cooperation with EUROSTAT and ECOSOC amongst others;
- Undertaking in-depth analysis of the outcome of Rio+20 and discussing action with Member States.

– LRTAP

The Executive Body has adopted amendments to the Convention's 1999 Gothenburg Protocol concerning emission reduction commitments for fine particulate matter, including black carbon. Meeting website: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=28153>.

– Aarhus Convention Expansion

A recent mission sought to encourage Mongolia to act on its interest in acceding to the Convention, by promoting a better understanding of the benefits and opportunities offered by its framework. Statements by the President and a number of ministers reaffirmed strong support for accession.

– Pan-European Sustainable Development

A report prepared as input to Rio+20 concludes that a new growth model in the region is necessary and possible. It is one of the first attempts to take an integrated look at the issue and present new policy proposals. <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=28153>. ➤

Arctic Leadership

The US Coast Guard Academy and the Law of the Sea Institute at the University of California's Berkeley School of Law sponsored a two-day conference on key issues facing global leaders tasked with shaping and implementing policy in the Arctic. More information at: <http://www.uscga.edu/arctic/>.

Chagos Archipelago

An international petition launched on the *We the People* section of the website [whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov) garnered the requisite number of signatures asking the United States President to consider the situation of native Chagossians expelled by the US and UK upon construction of a military base on the island of Diego Garcia in the 1960s. See also *EPL* 41/3, p. 143 and *EPL* 40/5, p. 232.



Courtesy: Abdool Kalla

Alpine Convention

After years of side-stepping ratification, Italy has implemented eight of the Alpine Convention's nine protocols, excepting the transport protocol owing to allegations that it poses a competitive disadvantage for the trucking industry. Switzerland now remains the only Member State not to have ratified any of the Convention's protocols, espousing the position that Swiss policy is more sustainable than that of any other Alpine State.

GMOs and Adaptive Pests

A scientific study indicates that GMO plants developed to increase pest resistance have not met the long-term success that has been, until recently, attributed to them. In China and the US, studies of Bt cotton indicate that cotton boll worms and other lepidopterans have been adapting themselves to the modified crops. See <http://www.uanews.org/node/47788>. At the same time, the use of Bt cotton is being lauded by developing countries still experiencing increased yields. See <http://www.nature.com/news/genetically-modified-cotton-gets-high-marks-in-india-1.10927>. (TRY)

EU:

– Court of Justice

Member States of the European Union have appointed 11 judges and three Advocates-General to the Court of Justice for the period 7 October, 2012 to 6 October, 2018. List of current judges and biographies: http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/jcms/Jo2_7026/.

– Marine Fuels

Upon the initiative of "trilogue" meetings between the Council, the Parliament and the Commission, the Committee of Permanent Representatives endorsed a compromise proposal for amendments to directive 1999/32/EC concerning sulphur content of marine fuels. The directive aims to render the most recent International Maritime Organization rules on marine fuel standards mandatory for EU Member States. <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=PRES/12/208&type=HTML>.

– Access to Sustainable Energy

The European Commission aims to support the provision of sustainable energy services to 500 million people in poorer States by 2030. A new initiative creates a Technical Assistance Facility worth €50 million while focusing on refining, expanding and improving energy-related financial instruments and risk guarantee schemes to unlock greater private investment. http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/energy/sustainable/se4all_en.htm.

– Renewable Energy

A communication of the European Commission confirms the market integration of renewables, the need for their growth after 2020 and calls for a more coordinated European approach in the establishment and reform of support schemes, as well as an increased use of renewable energy trading among Member States. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012DC0271:EN:NOT>.

IUCN Academy: State Reports

The IUCN Academy of Environmental Law's *eJournal* features reports from scholars situated in 25 jurisdictions across the globe highlighting developments in policy, statute, and case law over the past year. <http://www.iucnael.org/en/e-journal/about-the-journal.html>.

Central Africa: Tri-National Protected Area

The Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), Cameroon, and the Central African Republic have successfully requested that the United Nations Education, Science, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declare a trans-frontier protected area, spanning over 25,000 km² of rainforest, to be a World Heritage Site. Known as the Sangha Tri-National Protected Area, this is the first time any site has been declared spanning three States. The site is one of 26 inscribed this year. See <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/903>. (TRY)

Costa Rica/Nicaragua: New Challenges

Costa Rica has officially asked Nicaragua for more details about its proposed US\$30 billion ECOLCANAL project and its potential environmental impacts. The proposal raises a red flag under a previously negotiated treaty, entitled the *Treaty on the Canalization of San Juan River* adopted on 22 June 1940. Costa Rica has requested that Nicaragua supply it with "all documentation related to the possible construction of said canal". (TRY)

USA:

– Environmental Law Honour

The American Bar Association will posthumously honour Svitlana Kravchenko with its highest honour in environmental law. The ceremony to convey the ABA Award for Distinguished Achievement in Environmental Law and Policy will take place in Chicago on 5 August.

– Wild-fires

The head of the Climate Analysis Section at the United States National Centre for Atmospheric Research has reportedly expressed "no doubt" that climate change is "playing a role" in the current spate of wild-fires plaguing many parts of the United States. See <http://www.sltrib.com/sltrib/news/54409427-78/climate-wildfires-dry-utah.html.csp>. (TRY)

Cambodia: Irrawaddy Dolphin

The Government of Cambodia announced that it is cooperating with international experts to promote the conservation of the endangered Irrawaddy oceanic dolphin species. The programme involves international scientific experts convened by the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), and purportedly extends to trans-border populations of the species, bringing in collaboration with Laos. (TRY)

Australia: Koalas

The Australian Minister of Environment has announced that the Koala is considered a "vulnerable species" under law. The declaration applies only to populations in the provinces of Queensland, New South Wales and the Capital Territory. The government has stated that, in other provinces, populations of the marsupial remain stable (and are in some cases growing). (TRY)

(All References ATL, unless noted otherwise)

