

also set specific regulations and deadlines to prevent bureaucratic manipulation from interfering with public participation.

- Comprehensive implementation of the proposed procedures would make EIA become part of an integrated, well-balanced part of the decision-making process.

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## REFERENCES TO OTHER TOPICS

### UN

#### – UNSG Urges Action on Climate Change

After personally viewing a rapidly shrinking glacier in Norway, UN Secretary-General (UNSG) Ban Ki-moon has called for actions to be taken immediately to curb the dramatic effects of climate change: "I fully agree with what scientists have been projecting.... We have to keep global temperature rise below two degrees as soon as possible". News story: [http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51360#.Vhd69f\\_ovcs](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51360#.Vhd69f_ovcs).

#### – Resolution on Pacific Islands Forum

The 69th UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted a resolution on the "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum" (UN Doc. A/RES/69/318): [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/318](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/318).

#### – Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development

In a letter to the Chair of the UNGA's Second Committee, the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization has announced 2017 as the *International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development*. Letter: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/309/73/PDF/N1530973.pdf?OpenElement>.

#### – New Leadership on Sustainable Development

UNSG Ban has appointed Rachel Kyte (UK), former Vice President of the World Bank Group as well as its Special Envoy for Climate Change, to serve as Special Representative for the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative. Her appointment is effective 1 January 2016. Press Release: <http://www.un.org/climatechange/blog/2015/09/rachel-kyte-chosen-lead-sustainable-energy/>.

### International Court of Justice

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has presented its report (August 2014–July 2015) to the UNGA, describing contentious proceedings, including several of environmental (marine) interest: *Bolivia v. Chile*, *Nicaragua v. Colombia* and

*Costa Rica v. Nicaragua*. The full report is online at: [http://www.icj-cij.org/court/en/reports/report\\_2014-2015.pdf](http://www.icj-cij.org/court/en/reports/report_2014-2015.pdf). *EPL's* regular update of the environmental docket of the ICJ is scheduled to appear in our next issue.

### UNGA Reports

The following documents are notable among the numerous annual reports available online regarding the current UNGA session agenda. *EPL's* report of the outcomes of these and other UNGA agenda items is scheduled to appear in our next issue:

#### – Rule of Law Activities

This report includes illustrative examples of the broad range of UN work in this area: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/206](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/206).

#### – Assistance in Mine Action

Covering the period August 2013–July 2015, this document is the report of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/207](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/207).

#### – Oil Slick on Lebanese Shores

This annually recurring agenda item on this issue is once again reported to the UNGA in UN Doc. A/70/291: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/291](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/291).

#### – Human Right to Safe Drinking Water

This report illustrates the various human rights, an assessment of the key types of services, and their progressive realisation: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/203](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/203).

#### – Sustainable Energy for All

This UNSG report (UN Doc. A/70/422) describes planned efforts to coordinate activities from 2014–2024: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/422](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/422).

### FAO Report on Illegal Fishing

The 2009 Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing still requires ratification by 13 more States to come into force. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 15 percent of current global output comes from illegal fishing, which includes operating without authorisation, harvesting protected species, using unlawful fishing gear or violating quota limits. Press release: [http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51537#.VhN1ef\\_ovct](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51537#.VhN1ef_ovct).

### UNEP

#### – Online Law Portal

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has launched the *Law and Environmental Ontology* (LEO) portal to increase understanding of the connections amongst multilateral environmental agreements and to provide access to treaties, jurisprudence, legislation, goals and principles, as well as provide concepts, definitions and synonyms applicable to their implementation. Online at: <http://leo.informea.org/>.

#### – Committee of Permanent Representatives

The Executive Director of UNEP, Achim Steiner, has delivered a Progress Update to the 132nd meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives. The document includes highlights, such as outcomes of a climate-change-related meeting in Luxembourg in preparation for the Paris Climate Talks, UNEP's activities in the various regions, as well as updates on programmatic activities.

#### – ProEcoServe Project Report

UNEP has published the results of the four-year project for integrating ecosystem assessment tools into policy, investment decisions and macro-economic tools. Currently running in four pilot States (Chile, Trinidad and Tobago, South Africa and Viet Nam), the project has identified almost US \$1 billion of benefits from ecosystem services. News story: <http://www.unep.org/newscentre/default.aspx?DocumentID=26851&ArticleID=35477>.

### Champions of the Earth Award

The UN's highest environmental honour has been given to five organisations or individuals – Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh (for outstanding leadership on climate change), the National Geographic Society (for science and innovation), Paul Polman, CEO of Unilever (for entrepreneurial vision), the Brazilian cosmetics firm Natura and the Black Mamba Anti-Poaching Unit of South Africa (award for inspiration and action: for fighting illegal wildlife trade at the community level) – for “their roles in policy leadership, science and innovation, entrepreneurial vision and inspiration and action”. News story: <http://nr.iisd.org/news/five-environmental-leaders-receive-champions-of-the-earth-award/>.



Representatives of the Black Mamba Unit at the Champions of the Earth award ceremony  
Courtesy: UNEP

### 2015 UN Equator Prize

Twenty-one initiatives from 19 countries were awarded the 2015 UN Equator Prize for efforts to reduce poverty, protect nature and strengthen resilience in the face of climate change. Recipients include a Brazilian indigenous group, a conservation organisation in Indonesia seeking to save sea turtles, and a pygmy peoples' rights movement in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Press release: [http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51927#.VhJwqv\\_ovcs](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51927#.VhJwqv_ovcs).

### POP/RC-11

The 11th Meeting of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants was held in Rome. Plenary sessions and contact group meetings were reportedly dominated by political issues. Participants noted that the discussions were “less substantive and science-based than in past years”. IISD report: <http://www.iisd.ca/download/pdf/enb15237e.pdf>. *EPL's* report covering this meeting, along with the comparable sessions of the Rotterdam and Basel Conventions, is scheduled to appear in our next issue.

### IPCC-42

The 42nd session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was held in Dubrovnik, Croatia. The primary focus of the meeting was the election of the members of the IPCC Bureau and the Chair, who will be responsible for the IPCC's future work. Former Vice-Chair, Hoesung Lee (Republic of South Korea) was elected to succeed outgoing Chair Rajendra Pachauri (India). Other important aspects included the report of the first year of operation of the new IPCC Error Protocol. IISD's coverage: <http://www.iisd.ca/download/pdf/enb12645e.pdf>.

### EU: Biodiversity Strategy

The European Commission has published its “Mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy”, highlighting progress and the need for further action under the primary objective of halting biodiversity loss by 2020. Further information: <http://nr.iisd.org/news/ec-publishes-mid-term-review-of-biodiversity-strategy/>.

### China and US: Ban of Ivory Import and Export

The Chinese and US Governments have agreed to a near-complete ban on the import and export of ivory. The ban includes hunting trophies and all domestic commercial trade of ivory. It is agreed that restrictions will be put into action in a significant and timely fashion. More information: <http://nr.iisd.org/news/china-and-us-agree-to-ban-ivory-import-and-export/>.

### Kenya: Destruction of Illegal Ivory

The Kenyan government has announced that its current stockpile of 138 tons of ivory will be destroyed. Additional information: [http://www.proplanta.de/Agrar-Nachrichten/Umwelt/Kenia-will-138-Tonnen-Elfenbein-vernichten\\_article1442495172.html](http://www.proplanta.de/Agrar-Nachrichten/Umwelt/Kenia-will-138-Tonnen-Elfenbein-vernichten_article1442495172.html).

### New Zealand: New Marine Reserve

New Zealand has announced plans to establish the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary, a marine reserve that will encompass an expanse of 620,000 km<sup>2</sup> (approximately the size of France). The entire reserve area is within the north-western portion of New Zealand's exclusive economic (ocean) zone, and is said to comprise one of the world's most intact marine areas. Related article: <http://derstandard.at/2000022939170/Neuseeland-richtet-neues-Meeresschutzgebiet-ein>.

### US Presidential Candidates Revile Obama's Clean Power Plan

Presidential candidate Jeb Bush has announced intentions to immediately reverse President Obama's Clean Power Plan should he be elected in the 2016 presidential elections. He stated that it is time to revoke all export restrictions on crude oil and gas, and seek to increase production in that sector. Bush is among more than 10 candidates currently seeking the Republican Party's nomination in next year's election. At least three of them are known to be “climate sceptics”. See: <http://www.klimaretter.info/politik/nachricht/19713-bush-obamas-politik-rueckgaengig-machen>.

**Call for Action on Microbiomes**

*The New York Times* and other leading US publications report that American scientists are urging governments to develop initiatives aimed at improving our understanding of so-called “microbiomes” – microbial communities that are understood to play an important role in human health, such as fighting diseases and maintaining the balance of the human immune system, as well as providing important functions in the regulation of the natural environment. News story: [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/29/science/national-initiative-microbes-and-microbiomes.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/29/science/national-initiative-microbes-and-microbiomes.html?_r=0).

**Love Song to the Earth**

Several influential musicians, including Paul McCartney and Jon Bon Jovi, have joined forces to release “Love Song to the Earth” in anticipation of inspiring action towards a global climate agreement in Paris in December. The song can be downloaded online, with proceeds being donated to Friends of the Earth US and the UN Foundation. Press release: [http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51804#.VhdtYf\\_ovcs](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51804#.VhdtYf_ovcs).

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