



UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

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Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

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## UNEP Wins UN21 Award for Climate Neutrality

**New York / Nairobi, 3 August 2011** - The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has received the UN21 Award for Climate Neutrality from the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

UNEP was unveiled as the co-winner of the award along with the UN Department of Field Support during a ceremony at the Dag Hammarskjöld Library Auditorium at UN Headquarters in New York.

Held every year, the UN 21 Awards recognize outstanding initiatives by United Nations staff members or teams to improve the delivery of the Organization's programmes and promote its values. The winners' stories are intended to inspire other staff members to follow their example, replicate good practices and make strides to improve the delivery of UN programmes and services.

"When the UN 21 Awards were initiated 15 years ago, the idea was to honour initiatives that would help to prepare the United Nations for the twenty-first century", said UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the awards ceremony in New York.

"We are now well into the twenty-first century, but the purpose of the Awards remains as relevant as ever. We are an evolving Organization, always eager to find better ways of doing business, to implement best practices, and to strengthen the work we do for the world's people", added Mr. Ban.

UNEP, which has been climate neutral since 2008, is at the forefront of ongoing sustainability efforts within the United Nations.

Last year, it became the first UN organization to publish an Emission Reduction Strategy, including a target to reduce emissions by 3% per annum in 2010-12 (from 2009 levels). Implementing the efficiency measures could save UNEP an estimated US\$800,000 per year.

The new office facility that houses UNEP and UN-HABITAT headquarters in Nairobi set a new benchmark for sustainable buildings when it was opened by the UN Secretary-General in March 2011.

The new offices boast myriad environmental features, including 6,000 square metres of solar panels installed on the roof, environmentally-friendly paint and rainwater collection systems.

The building is "energy neutral", which means it generates as much power (via renewable sources) as it consumes over the course of a year. Energy consumption is estimated at 42.5 kWh per square metre each year, which ranks highly among green buildings worldwide.

Earlier this year, UNEP coordinated the publication of the total greenhouse gas emissions for 52 United Nations institutions, covering 200,000 employees, as part of ongoing efforts to reduce the Organization's carbon footprint. UNEP has also provided advice to other UN organizations on how to reduce emissions from travel in its 2010 report Sustainable Travel in the UN, which built on existing UNEP guidelines on sustainable buildings, sustainable procurement and the use of video-conferencing to reduce air travel.

The Greening the Blue initiative, coordinated by UNEP, was launched in 2010 to bring together the latest information about sustainability within the UN and to offer suggestions for both staff members and external organizations towards achieving climate neutrality.

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