

United Nations Environment Assembly

President's Letter

Hello delegates and welcome to the St. Bonaventure University Model UN conference! We're excited to have you participate in the United Nations Environment Assembly. My name is Haylei, and my co-chair is Ian. We'll be guiding you throughout the conference, but the real

The Topics:

1. Sustainable and Clean Energy:

Unsustainable patterns of energy production and consumption threaten not only human health and quality of life but also our ecosystem itself and contribute to climate change. Sustainable energy can be an engine for poverty reduction, social progress, equity, enhanced resilience, economic growth, and environmental sustainability.

Research Sources

UNEP Activities in Energy

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

The State of Sustainable Development

2.

Guiding Questions

How can the UN work with existing international organizations to mitigate negative environmental effects of deforestation?

How can the UN ensure the success of forest-conservation efforts while balancing financial dependencies on forest products?

Should there be any punishments against nations that don't comply?

Do you have any specific policy proposals to deal with this issue?

Research Sources

National Geographic overview of deforestation:

<http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/global-warming/deforestation-overview/>

The United Nations Forum on Forests: <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/>

UN-REDD: <http://www.un-redd.org/>

3. Ocean Pollution:

The ocean is arguably the world's greatest resource. Today, nearly 44% of the world lives in coastal regions. The ocean is responsible for 90% of global transportation; it is an international highway that carries cargo ships from Beijing to Sydney to San Francisco. The bounty of the oceans provides livelihoods for nearly 200 million fishermen around the world, and is responsible for feeding more than one billion people.

Ecologically, the ocean harbors the greatest biodiversity of any habitat in the world. To date, hundreds of thousands of unique species have been discovered in the ocean; however,

scientists predict that millions more species exist near the dark recesses of the ocean floor and are just waiting to be found.

The ocean covers 71% of the Earth's surface and contains 97% of its water. Of that, nearly 1% is potable and 2- 3% is locked up in polar ice caps. As a result of global warming, these ice caps are gradually melting, causing the ocean to cover a greater amount of the Earth's surface, among other climate changes.

The ocean, like all resources, must be protected. In the past sixty years, the amount of garbage that ends up in the ocean has skyrocketed. Today, nearly 80% of marine pollution originates from land. Oil pollution, garbage and sewage, and chemical run off are just a few examples of ocean pollution:

Oil spills are one of the biggest sources of ocean pollution. In 2010, the Deepwater Horizon spilled 4.9M barrels of crude oil into the Gulf of Mexico. The spill area affected 8,332 species and killed 11 people. Although oil spills are devastating in the severity of their impact on the environment, they only account for roughly 12% of oil in the sea. Most of the oil pollutants in the ocean result from land-based run off, such as production plants, leaking septic tanks, or even oil dispersed into the air from car exhaust.

Plastic is another major marine pollutant. Nearly 90% of all trash floating on the ocean's surface is plastic-based. The origin of this debris is legion; plastic bags from landfills, plastic cans that enter storm drains, even rubbish left on the beach can get washed into the ocean and exacerbate the problem. Many animals mistake these floating pieces of garbage for food, resulting the deaths of over 100 000 marine mammals and one million seabirds annually.

Chemical pollutants are a growing source of pollution and concern in ocean. One major source of chemical pollution stems from pesticides. Most farmers utilize more pesticides

Does your country believe that protecting the ocean should be part of the Sustainable Development Goals?

Research Sources

- USA's Marine Protected Areas <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/ecosystems/mpa/>

Additional Topic:

Promotion of Smart Agriculture