



A word from the Director

The health status of our planet is at its worst and all indicators flashing red. Only a short lapse after our global gathering in Glasgow, mobilization - and maybe even interest - seems to have died down. In its [latest report](#), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change once again sounded the alarm, highlighting we are currently scarring the environment not only for decades, but for centuries. Equally distressing is the realization that global warming is already impacting 40% of the world's population.

In this month's edition of our Digest, we are exploring one of UNDP's six signature solutions: Environment. From the Sahel to Mauritius, Africa does not rest still at the planet's bedside. People and [government](#) are mobilizing to protect our [collective resources](#) – the essence of our [existence](#) and survival. Developing pathways to live [in harmony](#) with nature while accelerating development, UNDP is working with [policymakers](#), [civil society](#), [young innovators](#) and [citizens](#), such as in Togo, Benin, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, or Ghana to lead the way towards greater [mitigation](#) and a critically urgent adaptation to the climate changes we are living through.

Ahunna Eziakonwa



Safeguarding the source of life, water

One of the most felt and dramatic impacts of climate change is on our life-sustaining resource: water. Five countries in Africa (Chad, Senegal, Guinea-Bissau and Togo) have already acceded to the [Water Convention](#) and UNDP is [supporting Uganda](#) to be next. Our unravelling drought and [floods challenges](#) are increasingly calling for reinforced and [innovative transboundary water cooperation](#). Harnessing the power of South-South cooperation, our AcCLab is testing Eswatini's [plastic waste management](#) solution

in Lesotho to solve the country's increasing water pollution. Water also generates peculiar and unique ecosystems, such as [wetlands](#), which, in Africa, provide cultural, economic, and biological value that is key to our existence. Find out how our actions in [Gabon](#), in [Zimbabwe](#), and [Uganda](#), help control floods, reduce erosion, improve water quality, provide habitat to wildlife and support food chains. Their existence determines our very own.



Protecting sustenance, food and agriculture

The climate crisis is generating an increased scarcity of resources, particularly of food. The convergence of the climate crisis and rising food imports in Africa is a recipe for catastrophe. If no actions are taken, by 2050, Africa may only be able to meet 13% of its food needs. Adapted [crop production](#) and [farming](#), such as [slow food](#) initiatives in Lesotho or cultivating [climate-smart lowland seed rice](#) in Liberia, will be critical to survival, stability and peace in the years to come. UNDP in Togo is supporting an [experimental maggots farm](#) to generate alternative cattle feed. In Uganda and Gabon, UNDP is proving that [building capacities](#) of [farmers](#), school pupils and extension officers at Local Government helps in the conservation of [soil](#) and water resources. In Niger, we are working with the government to [restore](#) some of the damaged or polluted agricultural lands. Liberia is also forging ahead in [waste management](#) and renewable energy, and Botswana is now sharing the results of a unique five-year [biogas project](#).



The air we breathe, caring for the lungs of the planet

Forests bear cultural and historical meanings in Africa but they are also crucial to the daily life and subsistence of many, and [this blog](#) from Liberia highlights the difficulty of preserving both. Outliving us by hundreds of years, trees benefit our entire humanity. They help us slow global warming and generate oxygen. They supply us with food, medicine and materials. They provide habitat as well as make up part of vital forest ecosystems. Several UNDP offices are leading tree planting campaigns, such as in [Madagascar](#) or in [Nigeria](#). In [Zimbabwe](#), our office is leading on a [long-term initiative](#). For already six years, it has supported the [Zambezi Valley Biodiversity Project](#) mobilizing people to care for our joint crucial reserve.



Living in harmony, gender equality and protecting wildlife

Women are the ones hit hardest by crises, and the climate crisis is no exception. In many countries, the gendered division of labour means women still directly depend on natural resources and are greatly affected by climate change and [biodiversity](#) loss. Gender biases of various kinds also still exclude women from decision-making processes, which they could contribute to with important experiences and perspectives. However, very often, women are the ones [leading on climate action](#), such as in [Zimbabwe](#) where they play a key role in protecting wildlife. In Ghana, UNDP is addressing forest degradation challenges whilst promoting the [shea value chain and women's empowerment](#).