

Environment and Humanitarian Action

The integration of environment into humanitarian action is critical to ensure effectiveness, sustainability and accountability of humanitarian operations.

Integrating environmental considerations during the early phases of emergency response strengthens people's livelihoods, fosters resilience and reduces the risk of cascading impacts and future emergencies.

Proactively addressing environmental issues in humanitarian action can contribute to reversing unsustainable trends leading to deforestation, desertification, soil erosion and pollution; all of which have significant impact on community resilience, biodiversity, food security and economic development.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) and the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Joint Unit (JEU) works at the interface of environment and emergencies, liaising closely with humanitarian and environmental actors to strengthen the sustainability of humanitarian response.

The JEU offers the following services:



Mobilizes environmental and technical experts for humanitarian field operations



Provides remote environmental analysis for humanitarian crises



Develops customized tools and guidance



Trains experts to enhance readiness



Conducts environmental assessments of humanitarian activities



Contributes to policy and advocacy at the interface between environment and emergencies



Shares knowledge and convenes networks

Support our work

Member States, environmental and humanitarian organizations, private sector, civil society and academic institutions are invited to enhance the sustainability of humanitarian action by:

Joining the Environment and Humanitarian Action (EHA) Network

for information-sharing and collective action

Supporting the Environmental Assessment and Analysis Cell

operating under the OCHA assessment and analysis mechanisms in providing real-time environmental support to crisis response

Sharing guidance and knowledge

through the EHA Connect platform (<https://ehaconnect.org>) and the Environmental Emergencies Centre (www.eecentre.org) online toolkits for environmental and disaster managers

Operationalizing environment in humanitarian response

by providing remote support and requesting/mobilizing environmental expertise



Assessing the environmental implications of humanitarian projects

and interventions, using the Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool (NEAT+) (<https://ehaconnect.org/neat>)

Raising awareness and strengthening capacities

by taking the 1,5 hour free online course on Environment and Humanitarian Action, available in multiple languages on the Environmental Emergencies Centre learning hub (<http://learning.eecentre.org/>)

Collaborating on joint projects

for example related to climate change and humanitarian action or the use of plastic packaging in relief operations

Joint Environment Unit:

The United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) respond as one UN to the environmental dimensions of emergencies. The partnership assists countries affected by disasters and crises and works to enhance the sustainability of humanitarian action.

Contact information

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