UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

UNECE support for climate action

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Geneva, 2024

"Our region is one of the largest producers and consumers of energy and resources. This comes with an increased responsibility to deliver real climate action for our world.

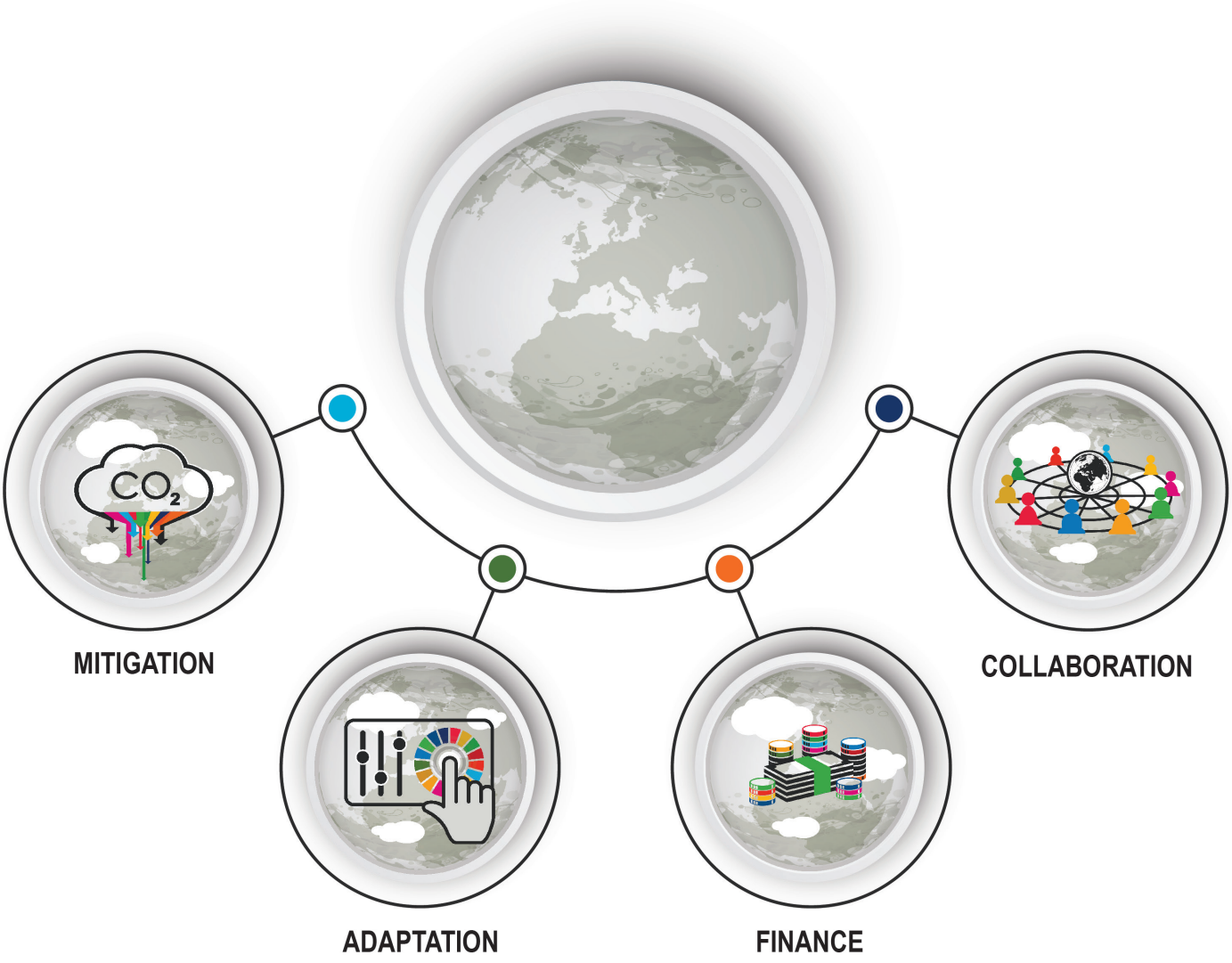
I urge governments to scale up their ambition, making the most of the practical regulatory and policy tools developed at UNECE and increase cooperation through our expert bodies.

I believe that only bold, immediate and sustained actions will enable decarbonization in time to avoid a climate disaster, and to adapt to the increasing impacts of climate change that our region and the world can no longer ignore."

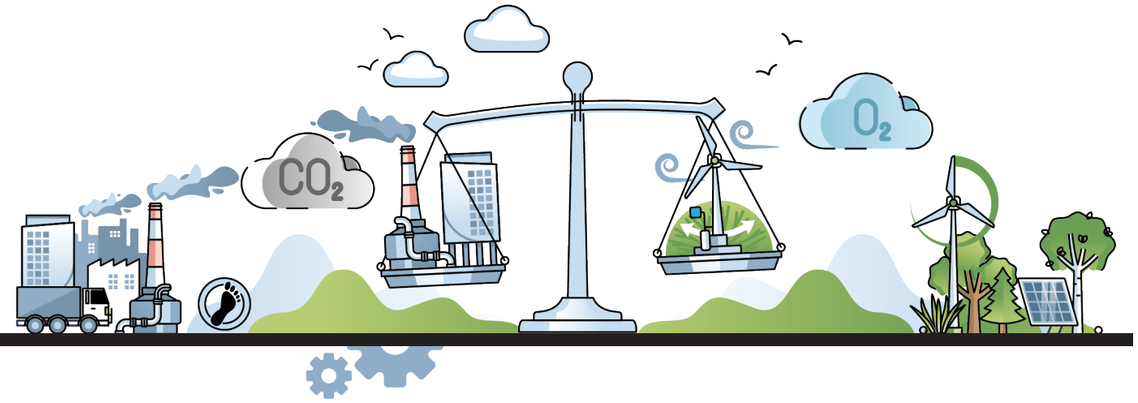
Tatiana Molcean
UNECE Executive Secretary

UNECE support for climate action

- The UNECE region is a major source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, responsible for 34% of the world's CO2 emissions from fossil fuel combustion. The people of the region are increasingly feeling the impacts of climate change - from wildfires to flooding, heatwaves and drought.
- Through its norms, standards, conventions and policy assistance, UNECE provides practical tools to support countries in their climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts, to leverage financing, and to strengthen collaboration.



MITIGATION



- Action to tackle air pollution and reduce GHG emissions is mutually reinforcing. UNECE's Air Convention is a unique instrument that helps 51 countries work together for cleaner air on a broad regional basis, reducing emissions of key air pollutants by 53% (for nitrogen oxides) to 83% (for sulphur) since 1990 in the UNECE region. Emissions of fine particles have been reduced by 44%. Its amended Gothenburg Protocol is the only international legally-binding agreement to tackle short-lived climate pollutants including black carbon – some 680 times more heat trapping than CO2 – and targets key ground-level ozone precursors.

- The Inland Transport Committee's (ITC) Decarbonization Strategy, adopted in February 2024, can help countries decarbonize inland transport which accounts for 72% of the transport sector's overall carbon footprint (23% of global energy-related CO2 emissions). As the United Nations platform for inland transport – with a role equivalent to that of IMO for maritime transport or ICAO for civil aviation – and custodian of 61 UN Conventions, UNECE provides a harmonized legal and regulatory framework to decarbonize mobility and transport, facilitate the shift to more energy efficient modes such as rail and inland waterways, and lower the carbon intensity of vehicle use.

- UN vehicle regulations and Global Technical Regulations developed at UNECE enable harmonized measurement of fuel consumption and tailpipe CO2 emissions from powered two- and three-wheelers, cars, vans, trucks buses and coaches. These harmonized international regulatory tools also enable the widespread introduction of renewable and sustainable fuel sources for vehicles including electric, hybrid and hydrogen, while ensuring stringent requirements for safety and durability. To holistically capture the carbon footprint of vehicles, UNECE has started to develop a globally harmonized methodology to determine the GHG emissions of road vehicles throughout their life cycle.

- Doubling the current level of cycling would reduce GHG emissions by 8 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent with indirect economic benefits of €1.1 billion per year in the region. The first Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion provides a blueprint to help countries achieve this by 2030. A UNECE group of experts has also prepared guidance to improve the safety and comfort of cyclists across the region and to assist governments in designating and developing cycling networks. UNECE, together with WHO/Europe, is further supporting thedevelopment of a Master Plan on Walking under the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme.

- As part of comprehensive policy dialogue and cooperation to accelerate the region's sustainable energy transition, UNECE helps countries to develop national strategies on energy efficiency, renewable energy and low- carbon development, in particular through the Carbon Neutrality Toolkit. Recent examples include the application of the model in Central Asia, support to planning the reconstruction of the energy sector in Ukraine and the energy transition in Moldova.

- Coal still represents an important source of energy in the UNECE region and coal-based infrastructure is at the heart of industrial complexes that include mines, power stations, steel production, other affiliated industries, and urban areas. The substantial industrial and urban ecosystems that have developed around coal facilities represent an important socio-economic and political barrier to diversifying away from coal mining. UNECE promotes the adoption of just transition approaches by integrating social progress, workers' protection, environmental awareness, and economic growth within a framework of democratic governance. Support for a just transition includes convening stakeholders to share good practices and challenges, supporting piloting and monitoring progress in the just transition approaches.

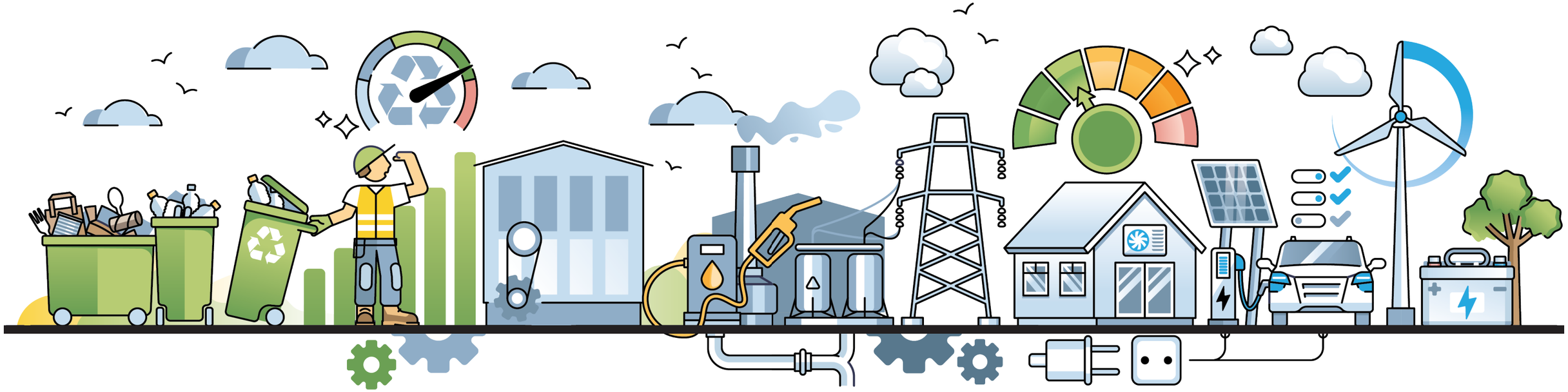
- Methane is a potent GHG with 100-year global warming potential 25 times higher than that of CO2. Emissions originating from human activities such as extraction and use of fossil fuels, agriculture, landfills, and wastewater treatment account for about 60% of global methane emissions and have been continuously rising since the industrial revolution. At the same time, readily available mitigation measures – primarily in the fossil fuels sector – could reduce anthropogenic methane emissions by 45% within a decade, if fully implemented. This could limit global warming by nearly 0.3°C by 2045, keeping within the 1.5˚C target. UNECE guidance documents for effective methane management in the oil and gas sectors, as well for both operating and abandoned coal mines, together with support for emissions' monitoring, reporting, and verification - offer concrete solutions for practitioners and policy makers.

- Critical Energy Transition Minerals (CETM) such as lithium, nickel, copper, cobalt, manganese, graphite and rare earth elements are essential to deliver on the Paris Agreement and SDGs. Used in electric vehicle batteries, wind turbines, solar panels, and in a range of digital technologies, they will underpin the green and digital transitions. However, rapidly rising demand is putting great pressure on limited resources: the World Bank estimates that over 3 billion tonnes of minerals and metals will be needed to deploy wind, solar and geothermal power and energy storage required to deliver a future below 2°C.

- UNECE proposes a comprehensive framework and toolkit to support countries' sustainable management of these minerals, including the UNECOSOC-endorsed United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) and the United Nations Resource Management System (UNRMS); Building Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) standards; and supporting traceability of critical raw materials. UNECE's Multilateral Environmental Treaties can also help address key risks. Together, these tools can support the implementation of Principles developed by the Secretary General's Panel on CETM to guide the management of these minerals toward greater sustainability, equity and justice.

- Measures under the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents apply to many industrial facilities with hazardous substances and processes that are being increasingly used for the energy transition, such as hydrogen and certain critical minerals. As such, the Convention provides a basis to address industrial safety aspects of the energy transition.

- UNECE recommendations to help scale up hydrogen use, together with policy support and cooperation, can aid the region's sustainable



- energy shift. Combined with electricity from renewable sources, hydrogen – which can be used in transport, homes, industry and power generation – has the potential to replace hydrocarbons in the region by 2050, particularly in certain hard-to-abate industries and where hydrogen is used as a feedstock in chemical processes. To provide a comprehensive and comparable means to assess its sustainability credentials, the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) is being extended to hydrogen through the development of dedicated specifications.

- Carbon Capture Use and Storage (CCUS) technology could contribute to decarbonizing the region's energy sector and hard-to abate industrial sectors in the medium term, to bridge the gap until the next generation of low-, zero-, or negative- carbon energy technologies becomes available. Captured CO2 can be used in a range of mineralization, chemical and biological processes, with applications in the industrial, steel, cement and chemicals sectors. In a future hydrogen economy, this captured carbon could be used to make many of the chemicals and plastics currently made using fossil fuels.

- Buildings account for around 40% of CO2 emissions through the energy services they require and around one third of the global consumption of materials.

  Framework Guidelines for Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings developed by UNECE provide a set of principles to improve sustainability in the conception/design, construction, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning/recycling of buildings and their components.

- UNECE member States endorsed Place and Life in the UNECE – A Regional Action Plan 2030 that identifies measures to support responses to the climate crisis, together with key challenges including COVID-19 pandemic recovery and the housing emergency – at the level of the region, city, neighbourhood and home.

- The #Housing2030 initiative launched by UNECE, UN-Habitat and Housing Europe, supports decision making by providing examples of climate policy tools that can help in the implementation of climate neutral and affordable housing solutions.

- In addition, the COVID-19 Recovery Action Plan for Informal Settlements in the UNECE Region makes recommendations on how increased pandemic resilience and achievement of the SDGs can be advanced simultaneously, especially in the case of climate change mitigation.

- UNECE drove processes resulting in pledges to restore 7 million hectares of forest landscapes by 2030 in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. UNECE supports countries to implement these commitments in contribution to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and related climate action. National Policy Guiding Principles developed by UNECE offer a further tool for countries' Forest Landscape Restoration policies, strategies and laws.

- Food loss and waste is responsible for 8% of global GHG emissions. To provide policy guidance and help to quantify loss and waste, a Code of Good Practice for Reducing Food Loss in Handling Fruit and Vegetables has been developed along with a food loss and waste measuring methodology for fresh produce supply chains. This is further complemented by Minimum Quality Specifications for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables.

- GHG emissions from textiles production amount to 1.2 billion tonnes annually, which is more than the emissions of all international flights and maritime shipping combined. Until now, lack of transparency in complex global value chains has remained a barrier to improving sustainability in the sector. UNECE has developed an industry-ready normative framework and a technical standard for full traceability of sustainable and circular value chains in the garment and footwear sector, as part of an EU-funded project. Harnessing new technologies to enable transparent, open, efficient and innovative value chains, the toolbox was piloted in a blockchain system, with more than 50 industry actors from 20 countries across the globe, covering the entire garment and footwear value chain, from field to shelf and beyond. On textiles, UNECE also continues to work on the Forest4Fashion initiative on Man Made Cellulosic fibres, which can offer a reduced climate footprint compared to other material such as polyester and cotton.

- The UNECE region is home to 42% of the world's forests, accounting for a net biomass carbon sink worth 433 million tonnes of carbon per year, and a living biomass carbon stock in forest land worth about 93 billion tonnes. UNECE/FAO provide wide-ranging support for the protection and sustainable management of these precious forest resources. Among many areas covered are mobilizing science and policy expertise on boreal forests, which are the world's largest terrestrial carbon storehouse; and advancing the sustainable use of wood energy – the leading source of renewable energy in the region, accounting for 35.4% of renewable energy supply for 31 countries.

- Wood, trees and forests contribute to climate action in urban areas in the region. UNECE/FAO supports policy and action to advance urban trees and forests as a nature-based solution to lower energy consumption by reducing air conditioning and cooling needs by up to 25%; and to promote the use of wood in construction, which offers a material with carbon emissions 40% lower than concrete and 30% lower than steel. Since 2023, UNECE leads the Trees in Dry Cities Coalition, championing this nature-based solution for urban areas in drylands through a collaborative environment.

- As co-coordinator of the UN-Water Expert Group on Water and Climate together with WMO and UNESCO, UNECE has contributed to the development of a technical study on Water for Climate Mitigation to estimate the freshwater requirements of climate mitigation measures. This is the basis for the UN-Water Analytical Brief on Water for Climate Mitigation, presented at COP 29, which aims to discuss the dependency of climate mitigation on the use of water, and the implications of water resource management on climate action - and for achieving both SDG 6 on water and sanitation and SDG 13 on climate.

ADAPTATION

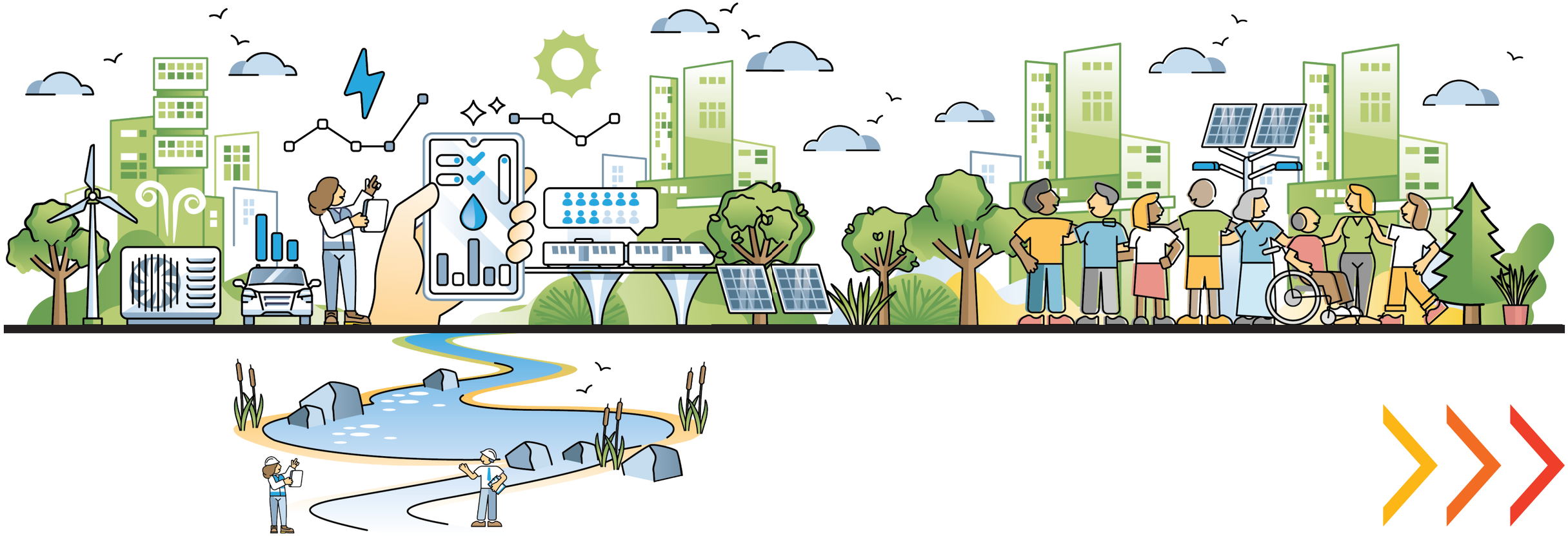
- The Water Convention provides a global legal and inter-governmental framework for cooperation between countries on climate change adaptation in shared basins, which are home to more than 40% of the world's population. Working together across borders is essential to make adaptation more efficient, strengthen resilience to water-related disasters including floods, droughts and storms, and helps access climate finance for adaptation efforts. The Water Convention helped to increase resilience to climate change in 6 major basins directly (Chu Talas, Dniester, Drin, Neman, North Western Sahara Aquifer System and Sava, with a total population of around 33 million persons). The Water Convention's Global network of basins working on climate change adaptation has supported 13 additional basins to implement transboundary adaptation measures, strengthen capacities, share knowledge and support basins in accessing finance for climate change adaptation.

- However, increased commitments are needed in shared basins for climate change adaptation and to reduce climate-related disasters, according to the third reporting exercise for SDG indicator 6.5.2 on transboundary water resources management, supported by co-custodians UNECE and UNESCO. In 2023 more than three quarters of transboundary basins reported having no joint disaster risk reduction and no joint climate change adaptation strategies (80% and 84% respectively). In addition, 70% of transboundary basins reported having no coordinated or joint alarm systems for droughts.

- In the pan-European region, climate change-related extreme weather events such as intense precipitation and flooding bring risks of overflow of untreated sewage into water bodies, leading to outbreaks of water-related diseases. Decreases in precipitation also reduce freshwater availability, leading to an increased concentration of pollutants in water bodies, posing a threat to human health. Such impacts impede the achievement of the human rights to water and sanitation. The UNECE-WHO/Europe Protocol on Water and Health supports governments to strengthen resilience to climate change impacts such as water scarcity, water-related disasters, and related health risks. Its target-setting mechanism allows countries to set climate-sensitive targets in relation to stormwater management and reuse of wastewater in agriculture, to adapt to changing climate patterns and extreme weather events. Additionally, the Protocol supports countries with the establishment of surveillance systems and response to water-related diseases triggered by climate change. These measures also include the establishment of water and sanitation safety plans that explicitly address climate risks.

- From road and rail networks to ports, airports and inland waterways, critical transport resources are facing unprecedented threats from a climate which is already changing. For instance, over 60% of EU seaports may be under high flood risk by 2100, causing disruptions to operations and damages to port infrastructure and vessels, especially along the North Sea coast, where the traffic of over 500 ports accounts for up to 15% of the world's cargo transport. UNECE pioneered work to map key risks and hotspots, and to build resilience of transport infrastructure and operations and made them available on a GIS platform. These key risks are further analysed to understand if transport infrastructure construction standards need to be adapted to future conditions. Guidance for stress-testing transport assets to climate hazards and guidance on adaptation pathways in the transport sector have also been developed. In addition, UNECE is working to establish climate incident-related losses to transport operators in order to develop business cases for adaptation.

- The increasingly frequent and severe impacts of climate change, such as floods, heavy storms and wildfires, are heightening the risks of Natural Hazard-Triggered Technological Disasters (called Natech accidents). The UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents supports countries in the prevention of such accidents and to prepare for and respond to them should they occur, including for their transboundary aspects. Convention Parties have committed to addressing these risks and integrating Natech risk management in climate adaptation efforts. UNECE support has addressed Natech risk management with OECD, developed forthcoming guidance with OECD and the European Commission Joint Research Centre, and prepared Words into Action guidelines on man-made/technological hazards with UNDRR. UNECE also mainstreams Natech risk management in its capacity building activities, such as through activities to strengthen mine tailings safety in Central Asia.



- Together, the Water Convention and Industrial Accidents Convention provide a legal framework for addressing the risk of transboundary water pollution arising from industrial accidents, including those caused by Natech events. Their Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents developed sector-specific guidance materials such as safety guidelines and good practices for oil terminals, pipelines and tailings management facilities. It also developed checklists, such as on transboundary contingency planning, and supports countries in their application.

- To help local governments better withstand shocks and stresses, including in relation to climate change, UNECE – together with UN Regional Commissions, UN-Habitat and the UN Capital Development Fund – has supported 16 cities globally to design, implement and monitor sustainable, resilient and inclusive COVID-19 economic and financial responses, recovery and rebuilding plans. In the UNECE region these include Tirana (Albania), Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), and Kharkiv (Ukraine). Among areas covered are recommendations to mainstream nature-based solutions and their enabling frameworks across national policy frameworks.

- The UNECE-developed Smart Sustainable Cities Profiles for the cities of Goris, Armenia (2017), Voznesensk, Ukraine (2019), Nur-Sultan (Astana), Kazakhstan (2021), Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (2022), Ålesund, Asker, Bærum, Rana and Trondheim, Norway (2022), Tbilisi, Georgia (2023), Grodno, Belarus (2023), Almaty, Kazakhstan (2023) and Podgorica, Montenegro (2023) include recommendations for climate adaptation. Measures include urban planning approaches to promote compact urban development, and promoting circular economy approaches through better recycling and reuse of resources.

- The intersection of ageing populations and escalating climate change demands immediate, concerted action. Climate disasters hit everyone, but older persons, especially women in poverty with health conditions or disabilities, and those in vulnerable coastal regions, are hardest hit. Despite their vulnerability, they are often excluded from climate plans. Policy exchange through the UNECE Standing Working Group on Ageing supports the integration of population ageing considerations in climate change policies and older persons' participation in decision-making on climate action. UNECE policy briefs on older persons in emergency situations and in vulnerable situations further support rights-based and inclusive adaptation approaches.

FINANCE

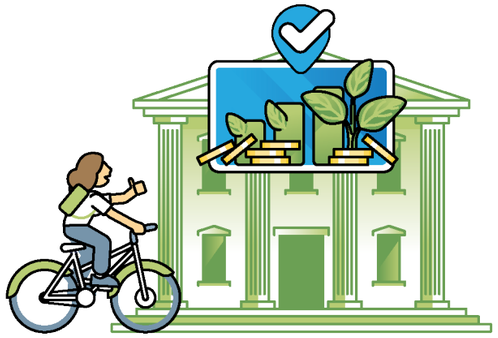
- According to IEA projections, reaching net-zero globally by 2050 will require six times more mineral inputs in 2040 than today. The UN Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) facilitates comprehensive resource classification and management, addressing technical, social, environmental, and economic issues, to help compare and steer investment options towards sustainable resource choices.

- Countries including Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, Sweden and Finland, UK, Mexico and China have successfully tested the application of UNFC, while – supporting the goals of the EU Green Deal – the EU Critical Raw Materials Act stipulates its use across the EU and with the countries signing Strategic Partnerships in Critical Minerals; and the African Union has mandated the use of UNFC-based African Minerals and Energy Classification and Management System. The UN Secretary-General's Policy Brief calls on extractive industries to align sustainable resource management efforts with UNFC.

- Internationally harmonized UNFC specifications also enable the assessment and reporting of renewable energy resources including geothermal, bioenergy, wind and solar. This can be vital to channel increased investments and to support concrete action: Queensland, Australia, became the first jurisdiction to mandate UNFC use for geothermal energy. UNFC can also help identify new regional and national production opportunities, including for secondary raw materials – helping to unlock circular economy approaches.

- UNECE facilitates the showcasing of energy transition projects to investors (including in the framework of UNFCCC) and fosters the development of transition finance instruments. This work mobilizes governments, financial sector actors, project sponsors, civil society and key stakeholders in the area of sustainable consumption and production and the circular economy to identify high-impact climate action projects. These focus on areas from scaling up renewables deployment to means of energy storage, and from critical energy transition minerals to waste and digitalization, and form part of a UN compendium of climate finance initiatives.

- High-quality data is crucial for countries to make informed decisions on investment in climate action and to monitor their effects, and to strengthen the evidence base to mobilize climate finance. Robust and comparable data is also vital to evaluate and manage climate-related economic risks at the global level. UNECE brings together National Statistical Offices through the Conference of European Statisticians to identify data gaps, develop common guidance, and help countries improve the availability of relevant statistics.



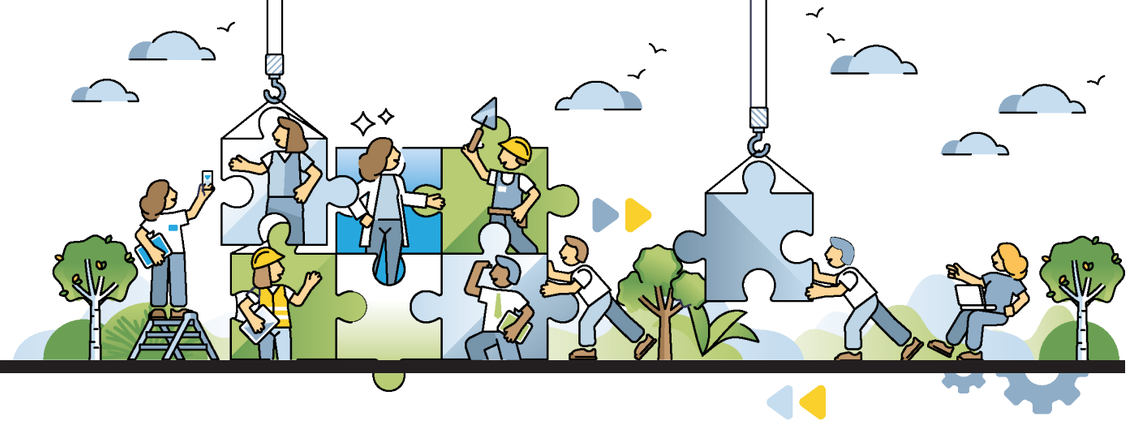
- The UNECE Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Programme helps countries to produce and collect high-quality and comparable data to monitor trends and inform policy measures. It also supports countries to produce and share climate change indicators based on the UNECE set of environmental indicators, and oversees preparation of regular pan-European environmental assessments that address climate change, among other issues, and that provide policy recommendations.

- The Water Convention supports countries and basins to unlock financing of transboundary water cooperation, basin development and climate change adaptation in shared basins through training, workshops, development of guidance documents and projects on the ground. Practical resources on Financing Climate Change Adaptation in Transboundary Basins support the preparation of bankable project proposals. The Water Convention also supported the Chu-Talas, the Dniester and the Drin basins in mobilizing international funding for climate change adaptation and integrated water resource management. In addition, the basins of the Global network of basins working on climate change adaptation have benefited from exchange of experience and training focused on facilitating funding for climate change adaptation in transboundary basins.

- Helping to mobilize funds for climate action as part of sustainable urban development efforts, UNECE released the Compendium of Practices on Innovative Financing for Smart Sustainable Cities Projects, which builds on the U4SSC Guidelines on tools and mechanisms to finance sustainable smart cities projects developed within the United for Smart Sustainable Cities Initiative. Under an interagency UN project on innovative financing for sustainable smart cities, UNECE also produces guidelines on tools and mechanisms to finance Smart Sustainable Cities. UNECE Principles for Green Financing for Sustainable Real Estate, Infrastructure and Urban Transformation Projects can guide national, regional and local governments, and other relevant stakeholders towards environmental sustainability and financial resilience in their projects.

- Infrastructure is responsible for 79% of all GHG emissions. The UNECE Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) and Infrastructure Evaluation and Rating System (PIERS methodology) integrates climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in its evaluation and scoring of PPPs and infrastructure projects for their contributions to the SDGs. This aims to help governments and private companies identify, develop and implement projects that create value for people and value for the planet, with a focus on the most vulnerable, and to make infrastructure projects more sustainable and more attractive to investors.

COLLABORATION



- Through its work on statistics related to the environment, climate change and hazardous events and disasters, UNECE helps countries to compile reliable, comparable statistics for climate-related policymaking, international reporting and informing the public. UNECE produced the first ever Recommendations on Climate Change-Related Statistics and the first internationally-agreed Set of Core Climate Change-related Indicators and Statistics, and is currently working on guidance on the role of statistical producers in meeting national climate objectives. UNECE also continues to facilitate a dialogue between users and producers of climate-related statistics and the exchange of best practices through its annual Expert Fora and an annual document "Climate Change-Related Statistics in Practice".

- Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs) and the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment help countries to integrate climate change measures into policies and planning. The fourth cycle of EPRs strengthens the in-depth assessment of climate change impacts on priority sectors, helps integrate climate adaptation policies in key areas, and supports GHG emissions reductions and low-carbon development, among other issues. By mid-2024, 58 EPRs have been conducted, of which five are for countries outside the UNECE Region (for Mauritania and Morocco in cooperation with UNECA, and for Mongolia with UNESCAP).

- Through the Trees in Cities Challenge, UNECE promotes collaborative action to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Establishing, expanding and sustainably managing urban trees and forests can unlock many important benefits for climate action, such as reducing urban temperatures by up to 8 degrees Celsius, and reducing flood and landslide risk. Since its launch in 2019, over 18.5 million trees have been planted in more than 80 cities worldwide.

- The Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) and its Protocol on Pollutant release and Transfer Registers (Protocol on PRTRs), open for accession to any UN Member State, provide legally binding frameworks to effectively implement the procedural human rights of access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters, including regarding climate change.

- The Aarhus Convention promotes the public's role in climate change negotiations and in shaping climate policies in domestic, international and transboundary contexts. Under the Convention, a Special Rapporteur, Michel Forst, has been elected to protect environmental defenders, who are increasingly under threat for their climate activities.

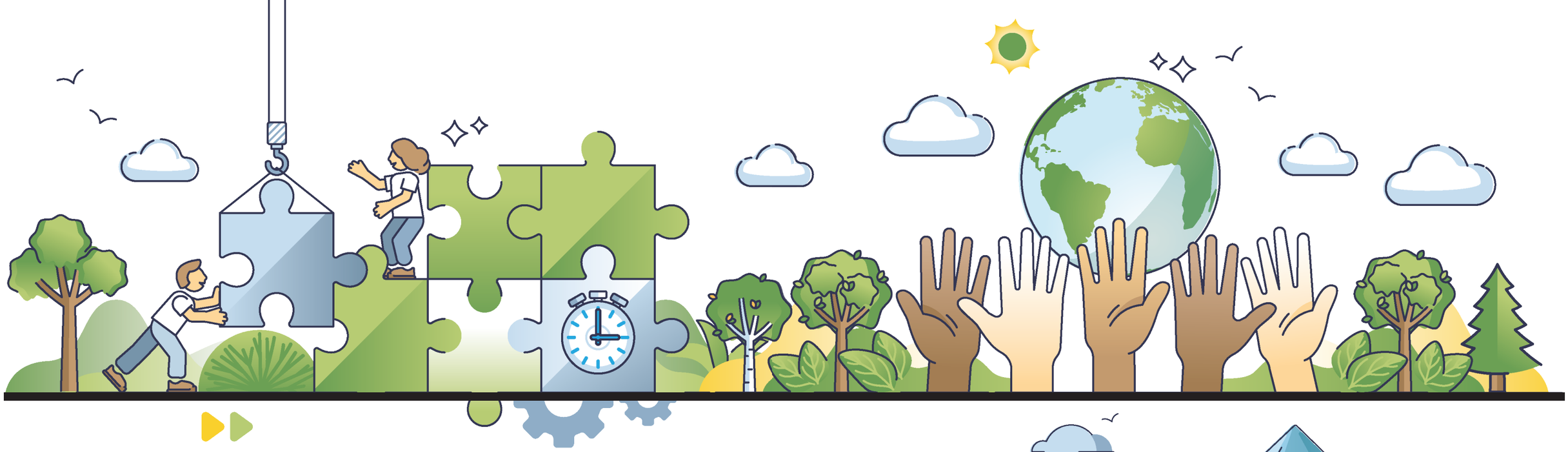
- The Protocol on PRTRs facilitates public access to integrated data and information on releases of GHG and hazardous chemicals and wastes. By supporting adequate measurement, reporting and dissemination of information, implementing PRTR systems helps governments and stakeholders to manage risks in production processes and throughout product lifecycles, and support the sound management of chemicals as part of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. Results from a survey among Parties and stakeholders on the experiences in implementing the Protocol showed that using PRTR together with, and for, other existing reporting obligations may also improve data quality and reduce costs for its reporting, management and use. This could also facilitate analysis related to cross-cutting issues, helping to improve, for example, cooperation and coordination under the UNFCCC and Stockholm, Rotterdam and Minamata Conventions.

- The Aarhus Convention and Protocol on PRTRs support implementation of UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, through building capacity of Member States on how to engage public in climate-related activities. Due to their cross-cutting nature, these treaties also promote synergies between human rights, climate and other environmental processes through cooperation with relevant bodies dealing with these subjects.

- Under the Air Convention, UNECE assists countries in Central Asia to design integrated air pollutant and GHG emissions inventory systems, which is more efficient and cost-effective. Compiling air pollutant and GHG inventories in tandem can help improve data quality and allows decision-makers to strengthen monitoring of the impact of air pollution and GHG mitigation measures.

- UNECE Renewable Energy Hard Talks bring together governments, investors and other key stakeholders to help countries such as Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Turkmenistan and Ukraine to identify potential bottlenecks, find solutions and recommend strategies, policies and actions to increase their renewables uptake.

- According to the UN International Resources Panel, resource extraction and processing account for half of total GHG emissions, excluding those related to land use. Adopting circular economy principles offers a unique opportunity to improve resource efficiency and decarbonize our economies. From its leading normative work to policy support and platforms for cooperation, UNECE provides a variety of tools to facilitate the widespread adoption of circular economy approaches.



- Cities are faced with tackling complex climate change impacts, but are also taking ambitious climate action on the ground. In a highly urbanized region – where some 75% of the population already lives in cities – UNECE's pioneering Forum of Mayors, a subsidiary body of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, brings together urban leaders to share concrete challenges, experiences and solutions. These encompass endeavours like sustainable mobility initiatives, incorporating nature-based solutions into climate action plans, ensuring climate-neutral and energy-efficient homes, and beyond. The Forum contributes to a new, networked and inclusive multilateralism that connects local, national and regional policy dialogue to jointly address key challenges.

- Through the San Marino Declaration, governments in the region have agreed on a first-of-its-kind set of Principles for Sustainable and Inclusive Urban Design and Architecture, to be applied to the design of all buildings and urban developments. Climate neutrality, resource efficiency and circularity, and disaster resilience are key dimensions, where the principles offer a tool to support the crucial role of urban practitioners to achieve change on the ground. Leading architects and practitioners have signalled their readiness to translate them into action.

- The Water Convention mainstreams water and the benefits of transboundary cooperation into climate processes, such as under UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement, through building capacity of countries and basins to integrate these issues into their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) as well as by contributing to the Global Stocktake, Global Goal on Adaptation and the Adaptation Committee processes. In addition, UNECE as a co-coordinator of the UN-Water Expert Group and Water and Climate Change promotes the role of water for both adaptation and mitigation. The Water Convention also strengthens synergies between climate, water and environmental processes through cooperation with the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

- UNECE helps to foster a coordinated, agile response to climate action needs from the UN system in Europe and Central Asia at regional, subregional, transboundary and national levels.

- UNECE co-chairs, alongside UNEP and UNESCO, the 17-member UN inter-agency Issue-based Coalition on Environment and Climate Change for Europe and Central Asia. The Coalition provides coordinated support to UN Country Teams on, for example, integrating climate change into UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (agreed with governments at the national level), and specific topics requested by Country Teams. Tailored support includes on the link between climate and migration with a focus on just and green transition; disability-inclusive climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction educational materials; and climate action that leaves no one behind.

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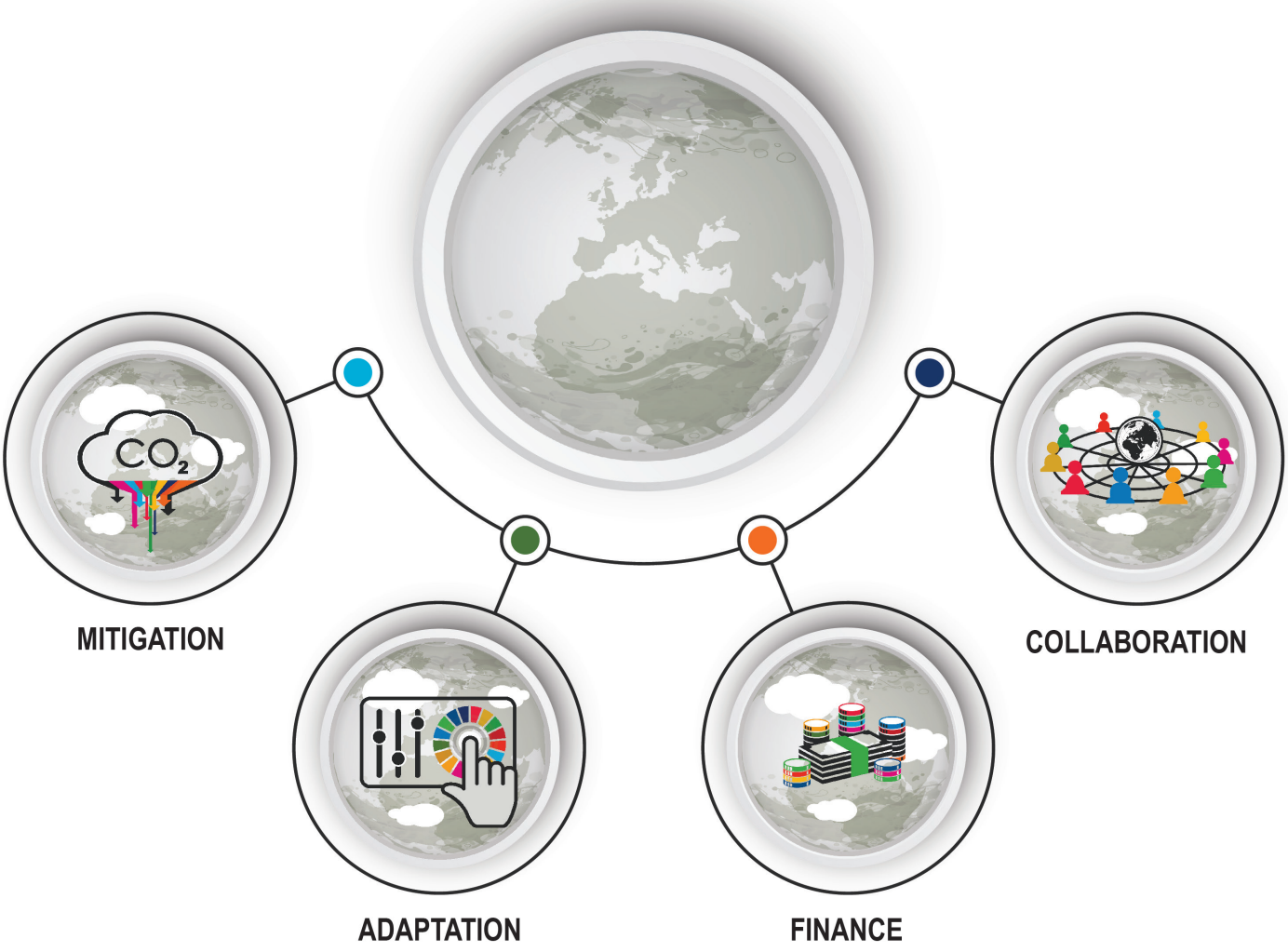
CLIMATE ACTION



UNECE support for climate action

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