



The fifth UN Environment Assembly (UNEA 5) convened as a hybrid online-on-site events.  
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## UN Volunteers supporting environmental multilateralism

The UN Volunteers (UNV) programme partners with UN Environment (UNEP) for the conservation, protection, enhancement and support of nature and natural resources. Volunteer action is important for tackling environmental challenges and the spiraling global climate crisis. Volunteers work within communities at the grassroots levels, hence are well placed to build community resilience to climate change impacts.

In 2021, 164 UN Volunteers served with UNEP in Kenya in areas such as environmental law, communications, governance, and policy. As former UNEP Deputy Executive Director, Ms Joyce Msuya, said during International Volunteer Day 2021, [UN Volunteers make important contributions to UNEP and around the world.](#)

A number of UN Volunteers with UNEP supported the recently concluded [United Nations Environment Assembly \(UNEA\)](#). Every two years, environment ministers, civil society and private sector representatives from all around the world gather in Nairobi, Kenya, to address the critical challenges facing our planet through the United Nations Environment Assembly.

The UNEA is the world's highest-level decision-making body on the environment and enjoys the universal membership of all 193 UN Member States and the full involvement of major groups and stakeholders. Through its resolutions and calls to action, the Assembly provides leadership and catalyzes intergovernmental action on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity restoration, plastic waste, marine litter and chemical pollution.

The 5th session of UNEA was held as a hybrid virtual-onsite event in Nairobi, Kenya, from 22 February to 2 March 2022, and bore the theme "Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals".

UNEA-5 provided an opportunity for Member States and stakeholders to take ambitious steps towards building back better and greener by investing in economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jewel Omollo, UN Volunteer Programme Assistant in the Governance Affairs Office the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), contributed to the success of the assembly session.

"I support effective, efficient and responsive conference services and the organization and coordination of intergovernmental meetings/events of the UNEP governing bodies, including the meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the organization of the UNEA," Jewel says.

She facilitates communication and outreach to Member States and stakeholders, meeting coordination and documentation and diplomatic correspondence. "It has been an interesting learning experience to support the coordination and facilitation of virtual negotiations due to the COVID-19 pandemic," she explains.

“ The pandemic has shown us that we need to re-evaluate our interactions and relationship with

“ nature. Ecosystem- and nature-based approaches and solutions, such as reforestation and afforestation, enable us to achieve human wellbeing, tackle climate change and protect our living planet. -- Jewel Omollo Programme Assistant, Governance Affairs Office, UNEP

"I believe the political momentum generated by UNEA-5 and its decisions will ensure the protection of nature and vital ecosystems to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), advance momentum for a green recovery from COVID-19 and address the plastic waste and micro-plastics pollution problem, which is one of the biggest threats to land and marine ecosystems," Jewel adds. "This is essential as we head into the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration from 2021 through 2030."



## Nairobi, Kenya

Graham Janji is another UN Volunteer supporting UNEP's Governance Affairs Office as the ICT Assistant and Development Officer. He deals with web development and maintenance of the unit's website content, manages

various virtual meeting platforms, assists in convening the meetings virtually, and provides IT support to service the UN Environment Assembly and the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives.

“ Environmental multilateralism is vital because it provides a platform for global consensus on key environmental issues. I work backend, enabling Member States representatives to meet and advance the green agenda virtually. --Granham Janji, UN Volunteer ECT Assistant and Development Officer with UNEP in Kenya

Another UN Volunteer serving with UNEP, Solomon Macharia is a Programme Assistant in the Chemicals, Waste & Air Quality and Resource Efficiency Sub-programmes of UNEP's Economy Division. His assignment entails preparing the programme performance reports on chemicals and waste that are delivered to Member States to showcase progress made.

“ I am inspired to be contributing to the team for chemicals, waste, air quality and resource efficiency. The decisions taken by UNEA directly enhance UNEP's work and mandate. I am glad that one of the major resolutions of UNEA-5 was to [end plastic pollution by 2024](#). --Solomon Macharia, UN Volunteer Programme Assistant with UNEP, Kenya

 East and Southern Africa

• environmental sustainability • COVID-19 • Coronavirus

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities  
SDG 13: Climate change SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals