



**GREENING  
THE  
BLUE**

**UN**  
environment  
programme

# Greening the Blue Report 2022

The UN System's Environmental Footprint and Efforts to Reduce It

**2021 Data Highlights:  
Overview**

The 2022 edition of the *Greening the Blue Report* provides United Nations (UN) system-wide 2021 data on the environmental impact areas and management functions identified in the *Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System 2020-2030, Phase I: Environmental Sustainability in the Area of Management* (here after *Sustainability Strategy I*).

The *Report* highlights the 2021 environmental impacts of 307,000 personnel in 53 reporting entities across Headquarters, field offices and operations on the ground. It is composed of the 2021 data highlights, which are based on UN system-wide results, as well as more dynamic individual entity information that is provided by the *Report's* data tables and entity-specific webpages.

The UN system's environmental footprint decreased in 2021. The UN system also improved in the areas of environmental governance and environmental training. Forty-six per cent of entities have environmental training available for staff; and,

compared to 2020, double the number of entities meet the requirements of an environmental management system.

Fifty-six entities comprise the Greening the Blue community including the Green Climate Fund (GCF), which is the first non-UN organization to join the community. Three entities did not provide any data for this edition of the *Report*. As well, not all entities provided data in all reporting areas. For these reasons, the number of personnel and the number of entities included in each reporting area is specified.

Please note, throughout the *Report* percentages are rounded to the nearest integer, as a result they may not total 100.



Entity-specific data are available on the *Report's* data tables at [greeningtheblue.org/reports/greening-blue-report-2022](https://greeningtheblue.org/reports/greening-blue-report-2022) and entity webpages at [greeningtheblue.org/performance/entities](https://greeningtheblue.org/performance/entities)



## Greenhouse Gas Emissions

TOTAL EMISSIONS 2021

**~1.2 million  
tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>eq**



## Climate Neutrality

**97%**

OF THE UN SYSTEM'S  
REPORTED 2021 GREENHOUSE  
GAS EMISSIONS ARE OFFSET



## Procurement

**95%**

OF ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDED  
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS IN  
PROCUREMENT PROCESSES



## Human Resources

**8**

ENTITIES HAVE MANDATORY ENVIRONMENTAL  
TRAINING FOR STAFF AND/OR PERSONNEL

**17**

ENTITIES HAVE PROVIDED VOLUNTARY  
ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINING



## Environmental Governance

**33%**

OF UN ENTITIES MET OR APPROACHED  
THE 2025 TARGET THAT ALL UN ENTITIES  
IMPLEMENT AN ENVIRONMENTAL  
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



The environmental impact areas included here are those identified in the [Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System 2020-2030, Phase I: Environmental Sustainability in the Area of Management](#) and for which UN entities have provided 2021 data. For each environmental impact area, the *Sustainability Strategy I* establishes a UN system-wide objective to be achieved by 2030. How best to achieve this objective is specific to each UN entity.



To learn how a specific entity is working to achieve a particular objective, please visit their entity page at [greeningtheblue.org/performance/entities](https://greeningtheblue.org/performance/entities)



### GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS 2021 UN SYSTEM DATA<sup>1</sup>

#### TOTAL EMISSIONS

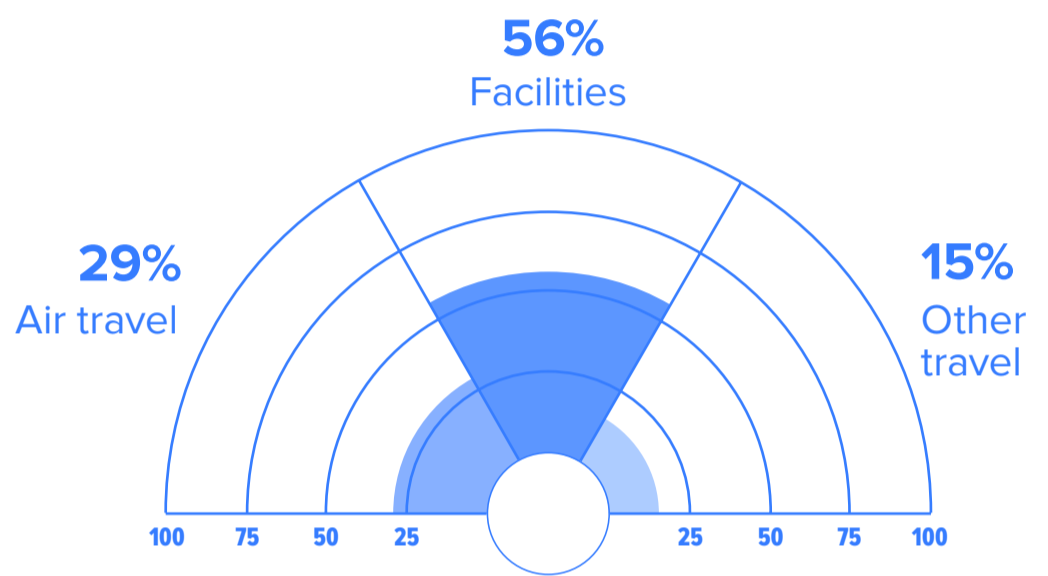
# ~1.2 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>eq

#### PER CAPITA EMISSIONS

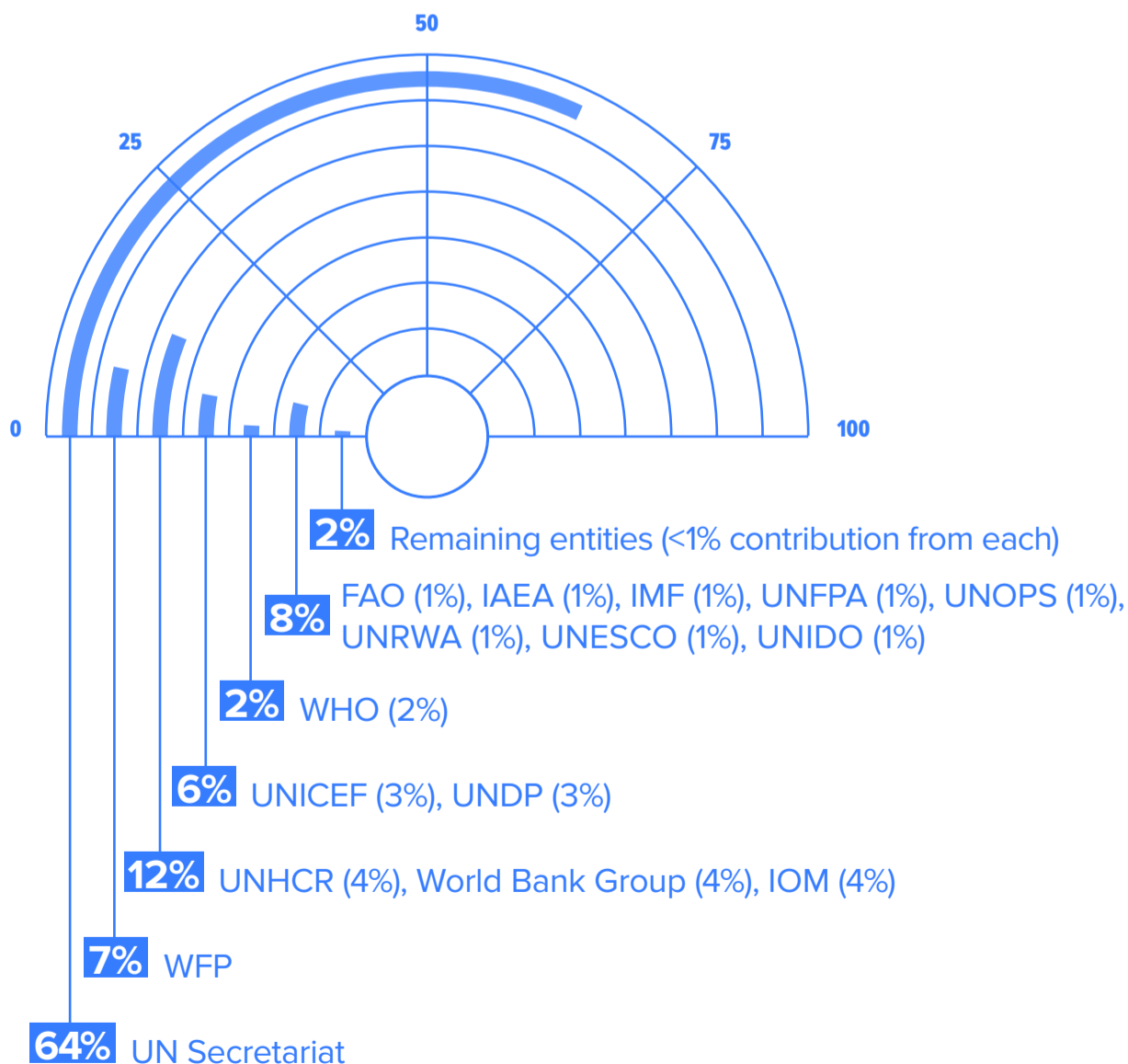
# 4 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>eq

**307,000** personnel in **53** UN entities are included in this system-wide data

#### EMISSIONS (tCO<sub>2</sub>eq) BY SOURCE



#### SHARE OF TOTAL EMISSIONS BY ENTITY



A detailed table with each entity's reported 2021 data is available at [greeningtheblue.org/reports/greening-blue-report-2022](https://greeningtheblue.org/reports/greening-blue-report-2022)

#### Climate Neutrality

# 97%

OF THE UN SYSTEM'S REPORTED 2021 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS ARE OFFSET<sup>2</sup>

#### Renewable Energy

# 22%

OF THE ELECTRICITY THAT WAS CONSUMED BY THE UN SYSTEM IN 2021 CAME FROM RENEWABLE SOURCES

**282,000** personnel in **51** entities are included in this system-wide data

<sup>1</sup> GCF is included in this data.

<sup>2</sup> At time of publication, IMF is still in the process of securing their climate neutral status. Based on previous years' status, the UN system percentage assumes IMF is climate neutral for 2021. The UN system's climate neutrality status is lower for 2021 than for 2020 due to one of the entities with a larger share of the total emissions not being climate neutral for 2021.



The UN Secretariat comprises almost two-thirds (64 per cent) of the UN system's carbon footprint. It is a large and complex organization, performing different functions around the world. Here is a breakdown of the main entities comprising the UN Secretariat that contribute to the *Report*, by their respective greenhouse gas emissions.

The clustering of entities under different titles has been done based on their functions using the [UN System Chart](#) as a reference.

### GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: UN SECRETARIAT 2021 DATA

TOTAL EMISSIONS

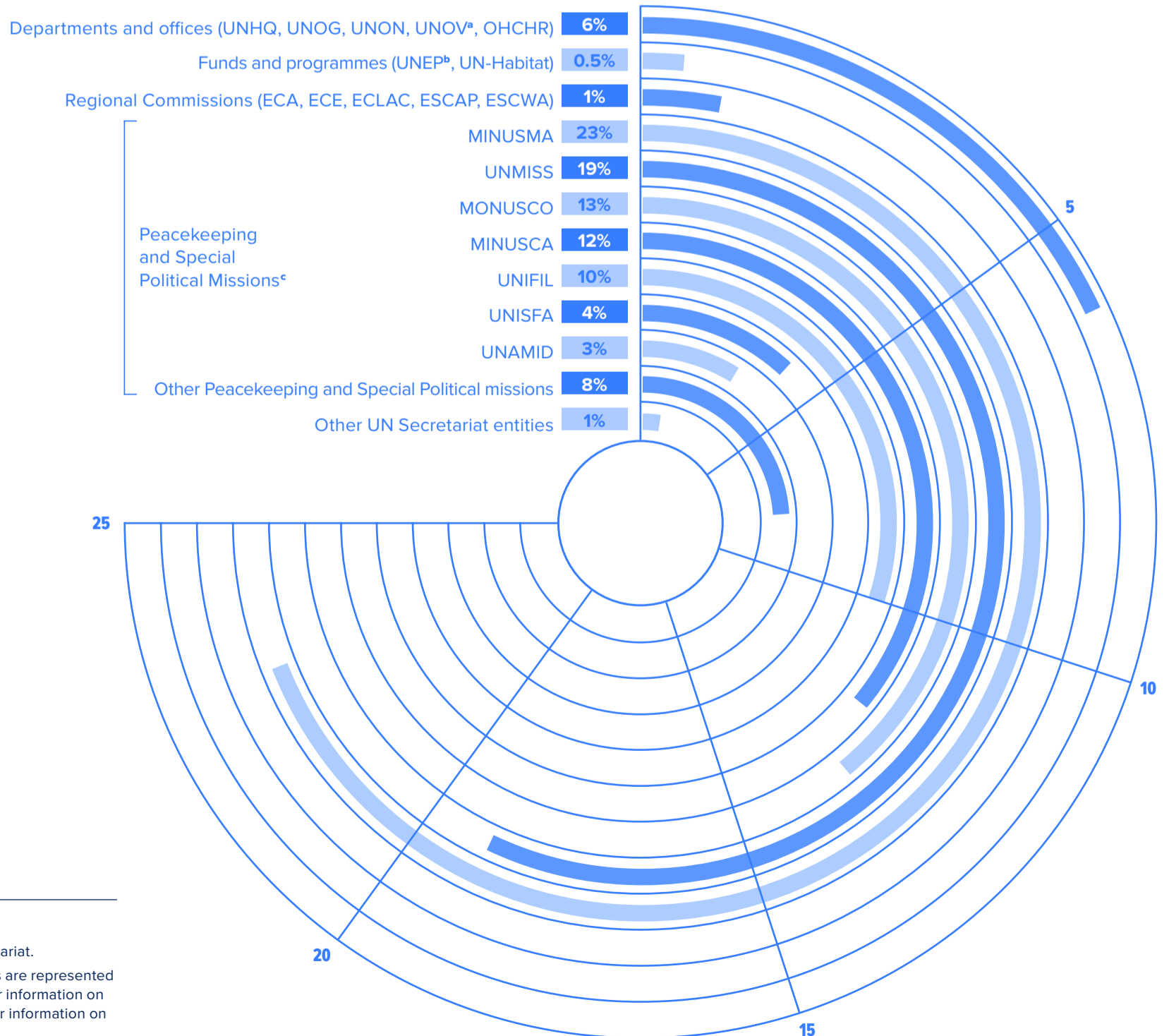
**~802,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>eq**

PER CAPITA EMISSIONS

**6 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>eq**

**128,000** personnel in **17** entities are included in this data

### SHARE OF TOTAL UN SECRETARIAT EMISSIONS BY ENTITY



<sup>a</sup> UNOV includes UNODC.

<sup>b</sup> UNEP includes BRS, CBD and Ozone Secretariat.

<sup>c</sup> Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions are represented as one entity in all other parts of the *Report*. For information on Peacekeeping, see [peacekeeping.un.org/en](https://peacekeeping.un.org/en) For information on Special Political Missions, see [dppa.un.org/en](https://dppa.un.org/en)



# 316 kg/person

AVERAGE WASTE GENERATED FOR THE WHOLE UN SYSTEM

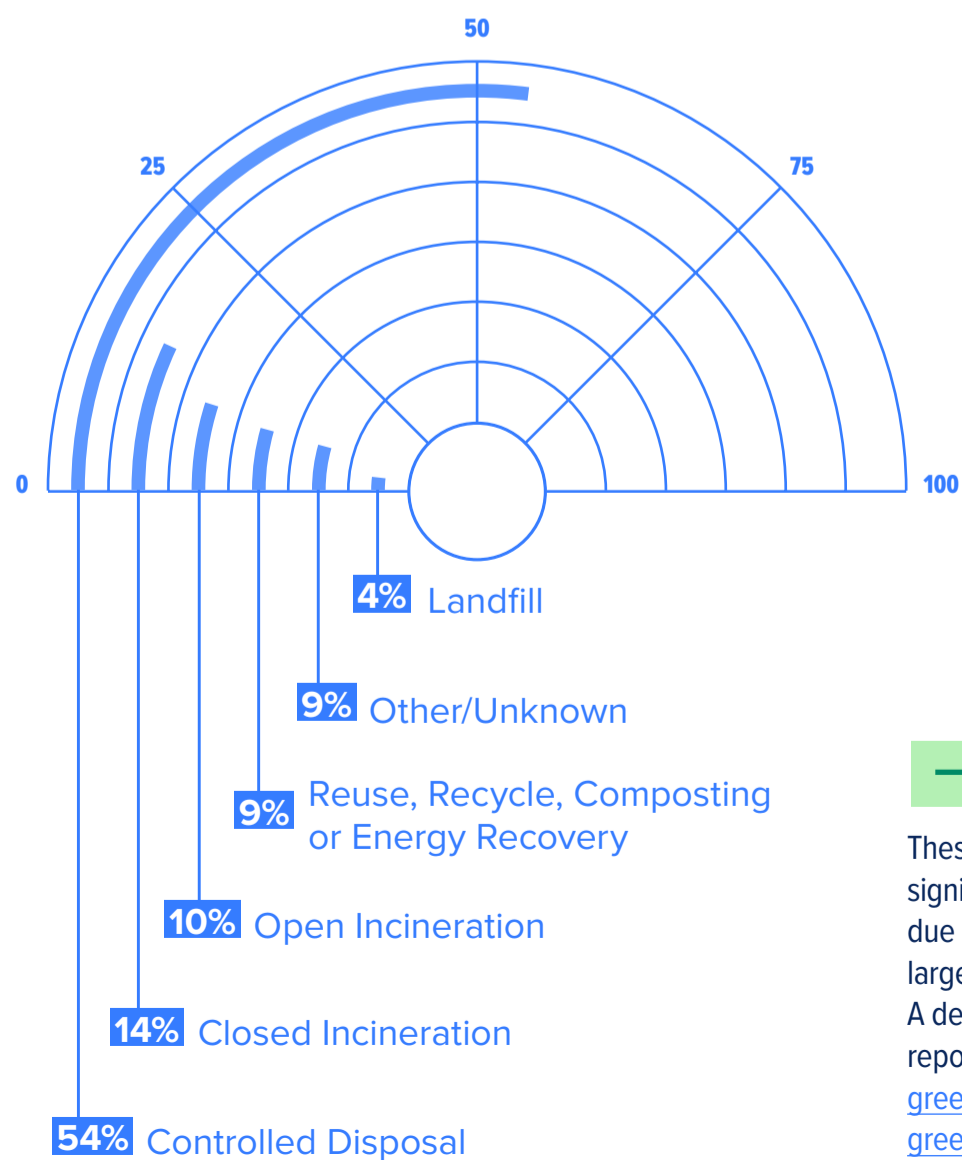
**267,000** personnel in **48** entities are included in this system-wide data

# 110 kg/person

FOR THE UN SYSTEM EXCLUDING PEACEKEEPING AND SPECIAL POLITICAL MISSIONS

Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions have a higher waste generated average than other entities as their waste generation includes living quarters.

### DISPOSAL ROUTES OF WASTE GENERATED BY THE UN SYSTEM



These percentages are subject to significant variations year-to-year due to specific circumstances, such as large construction projects. A detailed table with each entity's reported 2021 data is available at [greeningtheblue.org/reports/greening-blue-report-2022](https://greeningtheblue.org/reports/greening-blue-report-2022)

<sup>1</sup> GCF is excluded from this data.



### AIR POLLUTION IN THE UPPER AND LOWER ATMOSPHERE 2021 UN SYSTEM DATA<sup>1</sup>

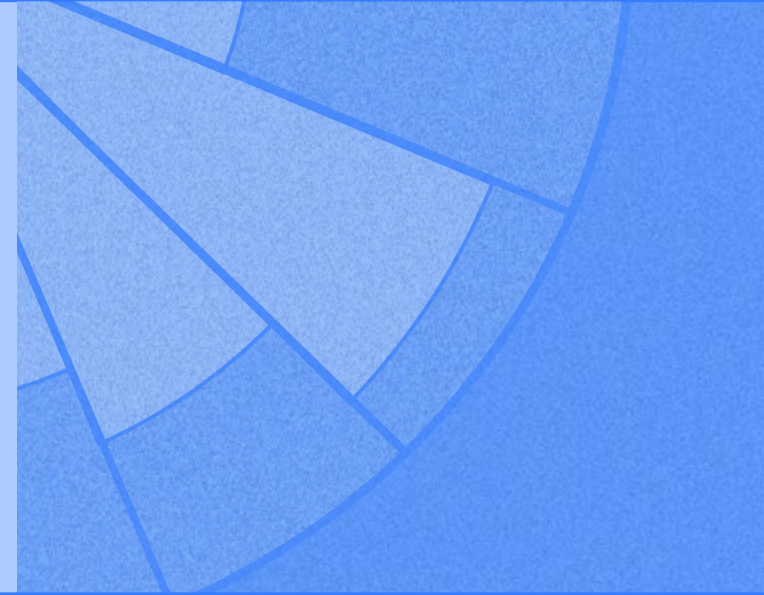
#### AIR POLLUTANTS IN THE LOWER ATMOSPHERE (GROUND-LEVEL)

THE UN SYSTEM UTILIZED

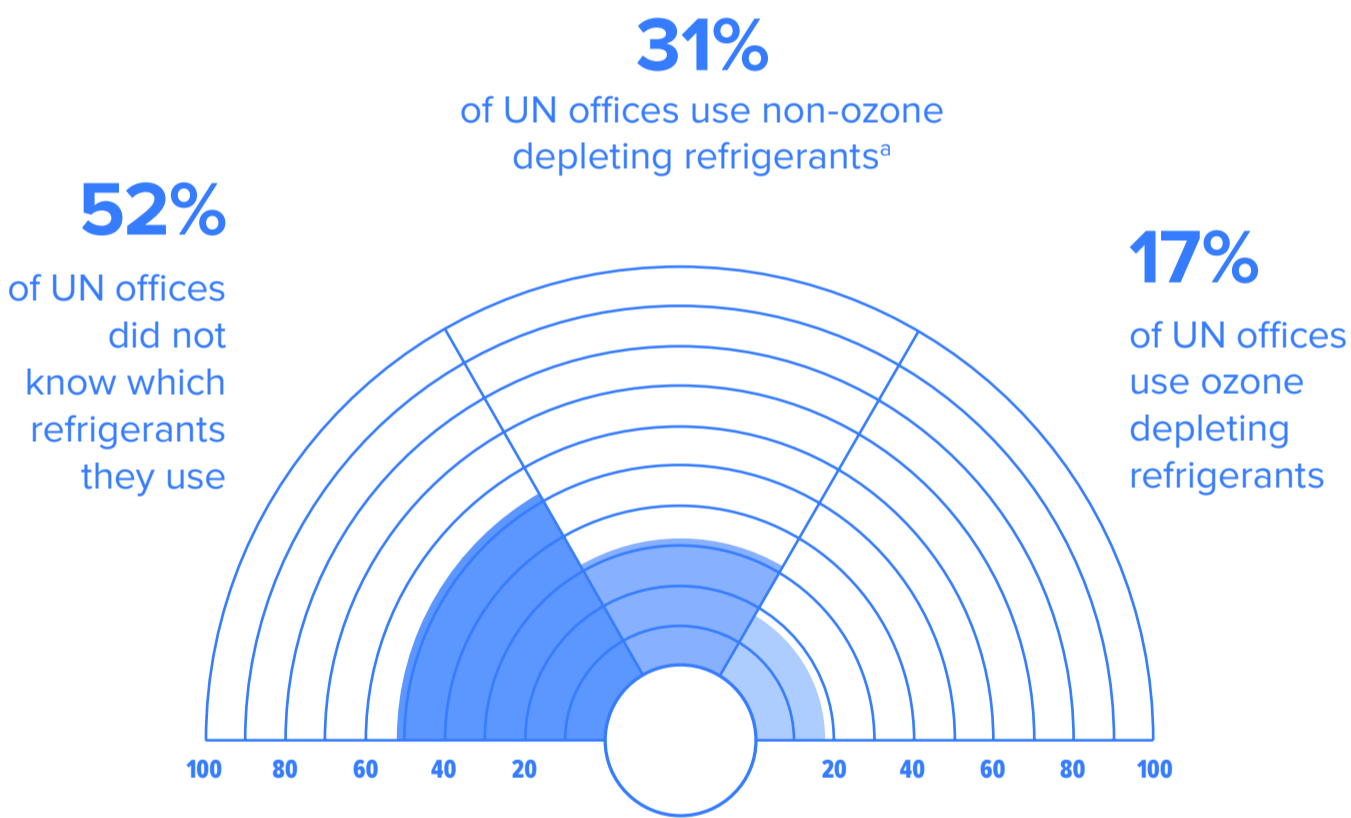
**~310 million litres of fuel**

TO RUN ITS VEHICLE FLEETS AS WELL AS ITS FACILITIES' GENERATORS AND BOILERS

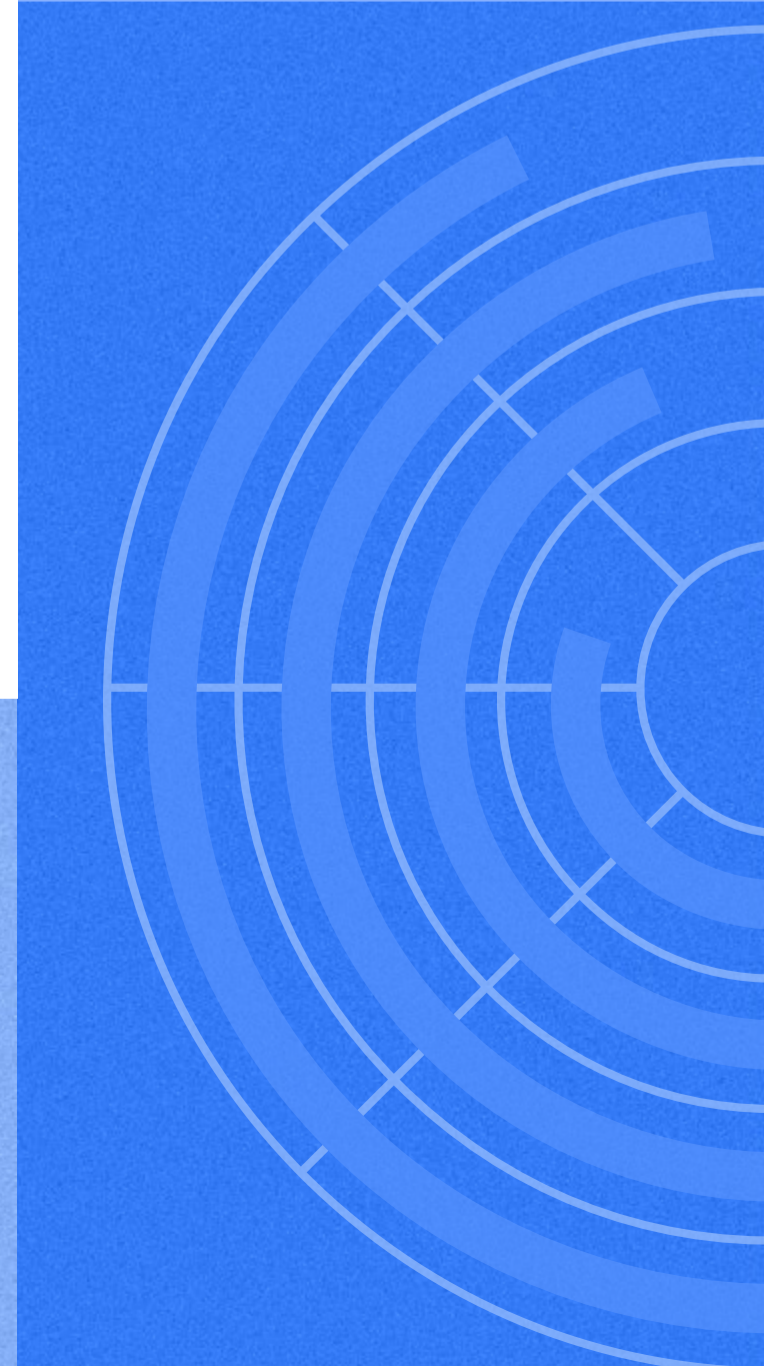
**307,000** personnel in **53** entities are included in this system-wide data



#### OZONE DEPLETING SUBSTANCES IN THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE (STRATOSPHERE)



**287,000** personnel in **51** entities are included in this system-wide data



<sup>a</sup> Offices that use non-ozone depleting refrigerants include the 4 per cent of offices that use low Global Warming Potential (GWP) refrigerants.

<sup>1</sup> GCF is included in this data.



## WATER AND WASTEWATER

2021 UN SYSTEM DATA<sup>1</sup>

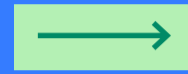
# 37 m<sup>3</sup>

PER UN PERSONNEL PER YEAR

# 4%

OF THE WATER CONSUMED BY THE UN SYSTEM IS RECYCLED

**256,000** personnel in **49** entities are included in this system-wide data



A detailed table with each entity's reported 2021 data is available at [greeningtheblue.org/reports/greening-blue-report-2022](https://greeningtheblue.org/reports/greening-blue-report-2022)

<sup>1</sup> GCF is included in this data.

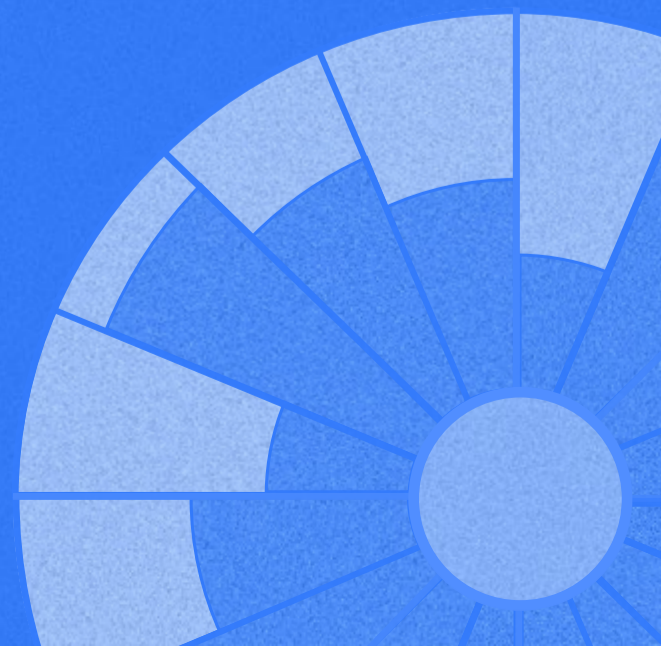


## BIODIVERSITY

The UN Common Approach to Biodiversity was adopted in May 2021. “The Common Approach” provides an overarching framework for collective action and joint delivery on biodiversity. During 2021 and through 2022, the UN system further elaborated indicators on biodiversity and in 2023 will begin a piloting process for entity-level reporting on the four management areas covering:

- Procurement
- Operations and Facilities
- Staff Awareness
- Meetings and Events

The UN system has also created a companion piece to “The Common Approach,” which recommends ways to integrate biodiversity and nature-based solutions. “50+ ways to integrate biodiversity and nature-based solutions – a UN system commitment to collective action for people and planet” includes recommendations such as, “addressing all forms of inequality [e.g., gender] and exclusion in sustainable use and management of biodiversity” (p. 7).





The *Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System 2020-2030, Phase I: Environmental Sustainability in the Area of Management*, identifies environmental governance as an overarching approach and five management functions to mobilize to reach the *Sustainability Strategy I's* objectives. These management functions are included in the *Sustainability Strategy I* in recognition "of the need to mainstream the environment across key management functions of the United Nations system" (p. 19).

For each of the management functions, the *Sustainability Strategy I* establishes a UN system-wide objective to be achieved by 2030; except for environmental

management systems, which are to be implemented at entity level by 2025. As with the environmental impact areas, how best to achieve these objectives is specific to each entity.

The category of Other UN Secretariat entities has been excluded from the calculations on Mainstreaming Management Functions because this entity lacks organizational boundaries and its own management structure. Therefore, a total number of 55 entities is used as baseline in these sections.



### ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

### 2021 UN SYSTEM PERFORMANCE<sup>1</sup>

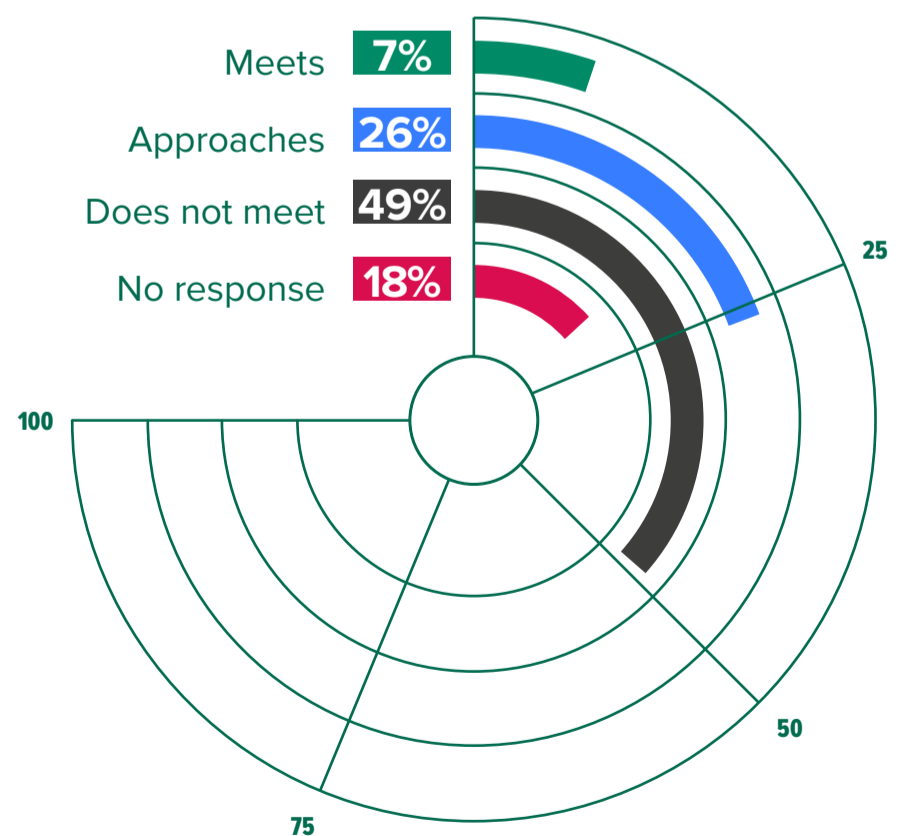
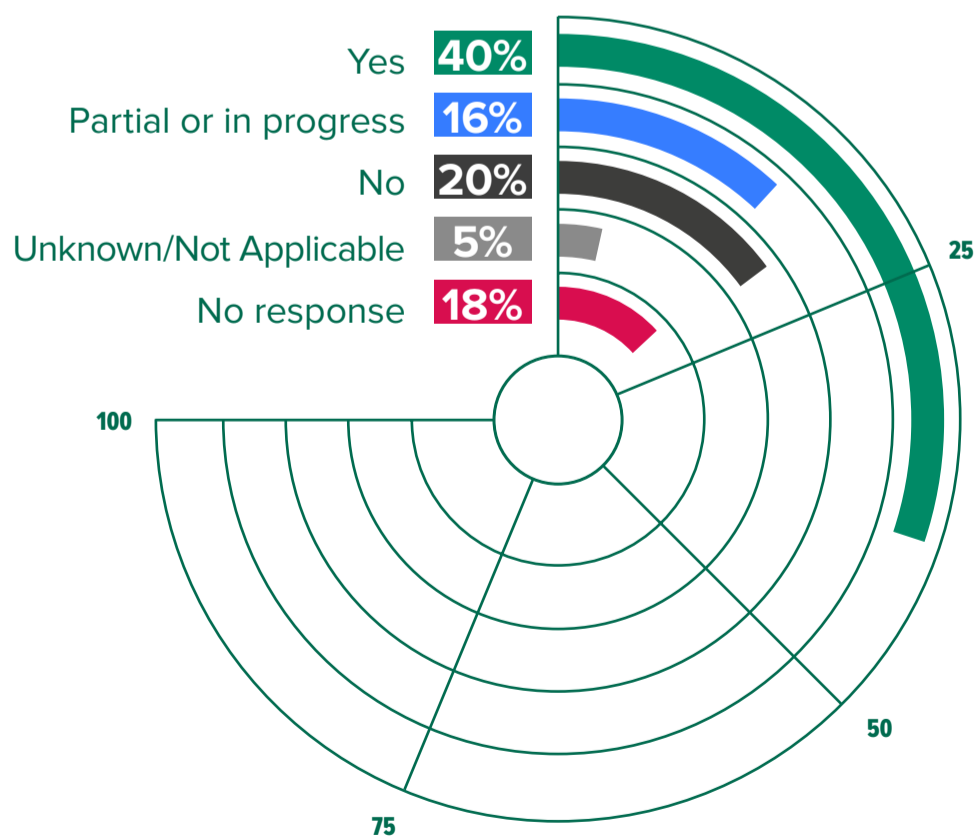
# 299,648 personnel in 45 entities reported their 2021 data in this area.

Ten entities did not report in this area but are included in the system-wide reporting as they represent a sizeable portion of the UN system-wide performance.



### ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS AND STANDARDS IN POLICIES, PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

### ENTITIES' ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM STATUS



<sup>1</sup> GCF is included in this data.

<sup>2</sup> For more information on definitions and the data analysis criteria, please see [greeningtheblue.org/methodology](https://greeningtheblue.org/methodology)

The *Sustainability Strategy I's* target is for all UN entities to implement an environmental management system by 2025. The recommended approach is the international standard ISO 14001:2015<sup>2</sup>.



In the UN system, sustainable procurement is defined as:

practices [that] integrate requirements, specifications and criteria that are compatible and in favour of the protection of the environment, of social progress and in support of economic development, namely by seeking resource efficiency, improving the quality of products and services and ultimately optimizing costs.<sup>1</sup>

The data published here is from the [2021 Annual Statistical Report on UN Procurement \(ASR\)](#). The data is obtained through a voluntary questionnaire that is shared with all UN organizations reporting to the ASR.



### PROCUREMENT

## For the **39 UN organizations** that submitted sustainable procurement data to the 2021 ASR:

THE PERCENTAGE OF ENTITIES THAT IMPLEMENTED SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT POLICIES ROSE FROM

**64%** in 2020 to  
**74%** in 2021 (p. 24)

THE NUMBER OF REPORTING UN ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAD PLANS TO DEVELOP OR HAD DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT STRATEGIES ROSE FROM

**29** in 2020 to  
**30** in 2021 (p. 24)

**95%**  
OF ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDED ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS IN PROCUREMENT PROCESSES (p. 25)

THE INCLUSION OF SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS, SUCH AS GENDER INCLUSION AND LABOUR STANDARDS, IN PROCUREMENT PROCESSES INCREASED SHARPLY, FROM

**79%** in 2020 to  
**97%** in 2021 (p. 25)

<sup>1</sup> High Level Committee on Management Procurement Network, Sustainable Procurement Statement, 2009, p1.





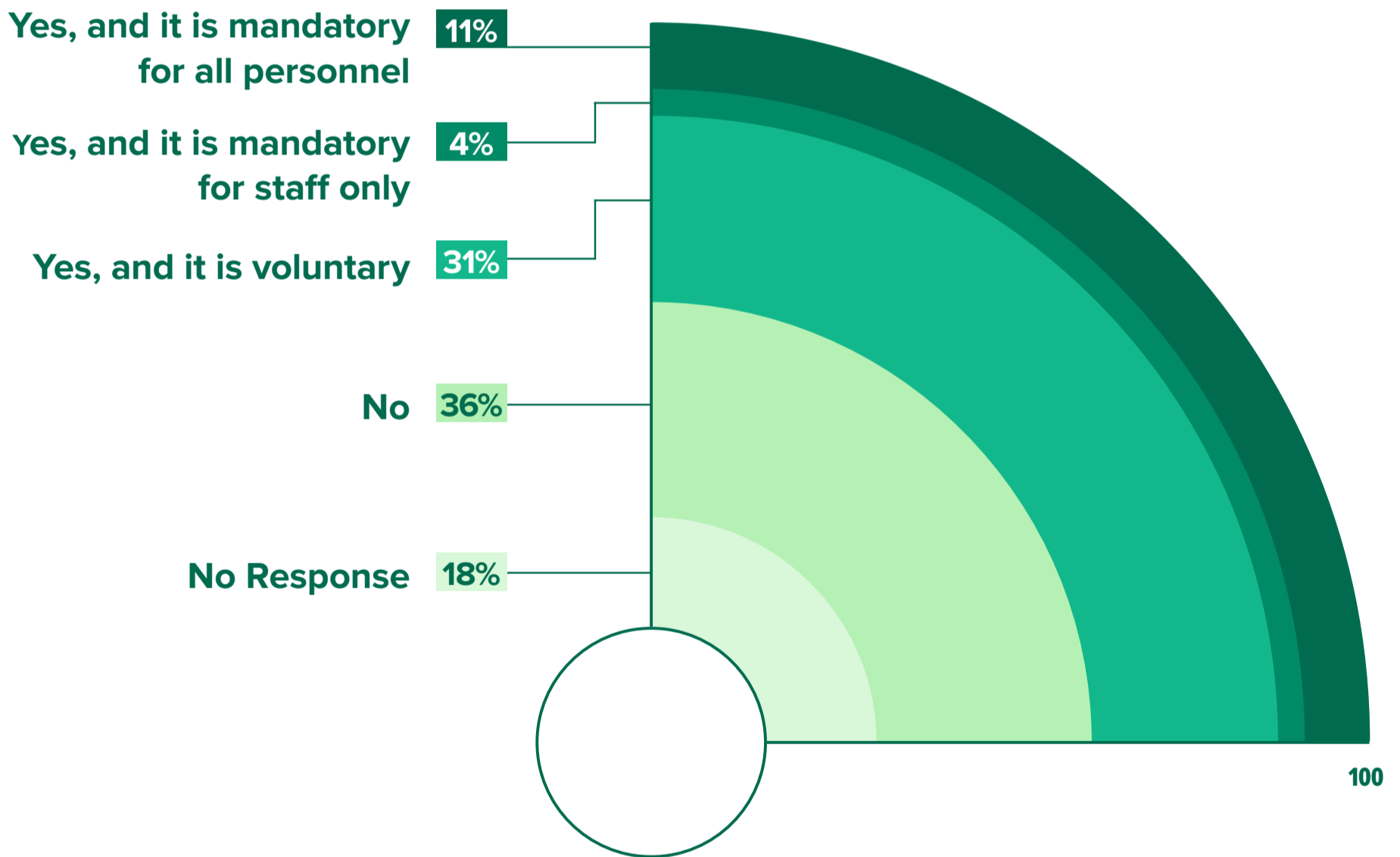
### HUMAN RESOURCES 2021 UN SYSTEM RESULTS<sup>1</sup>

**299,648** personnel in **45** entities reported their 2021 data in this area.

Ten entities did not report in this area but are included in the system-wide reporting as they represent a sizeable portion of the UN system-wide performance.

In 2021, **six** entities mandated environmental training for all personnel; **two** mandated training for staff; **17** provided voluntary training; **20** do not yet require or provide training.

### ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINING FOR PERSONNEL



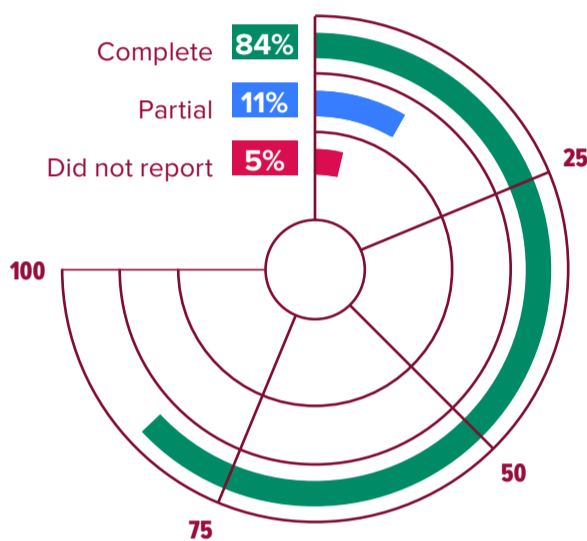
<sup>1</sup> GCF is included in this data.

Commitments to tracking and reporting on the environmental impact areas and management functions are a key aspect of the *Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System 2020-2030, Phase I: Environmental Sustainability in the Area of Management*. Therefore, part of the performance of each entity documented in the *Greening the Blue Report* is their level of reporting completeness.

For these calculations, the Green Climate Fund is included while the category of Other UN Secretariat entities is excluded, meaning a total of 55 entities is used to calculate these results.

### 2021 UN SYSTEM RESULTS

#### GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS



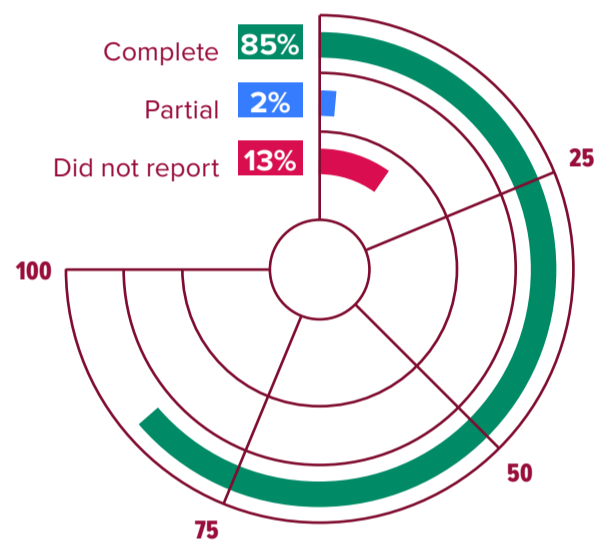
**Complete:** Entity reported on greenhouse gas emissions for all personnel with the defined boundaries for the reporting year.

**Partial:** Entity reported on greenhouse gas emissions for a percentage of total personnel for the reporting year or reported on emissions from the previous year.

**Did not report:** Entity did not report on greenhouse gas emissions.

**Note,** the published statistics on Air Pollution data are calculated from the Greenhouse Gas Emissions data submitted by entities. Hence, Air Pollution is not its own reporting area and lacks specific criteria for reporting completeness.

#### WASTE

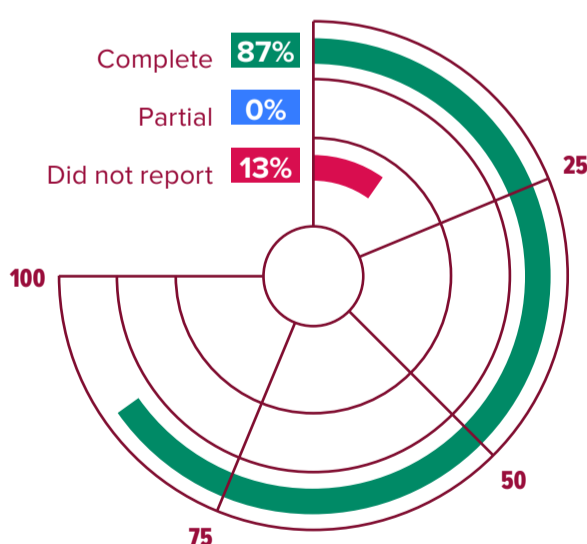


**Complete:** Entity reported quantitative data for some or all its waste for the reporting year.

**Partial:** Entity reported qualitative data for the reporting year or reported quantitative data from previous years.

**Did not report:** Entity did not report waste data.

#### WATER

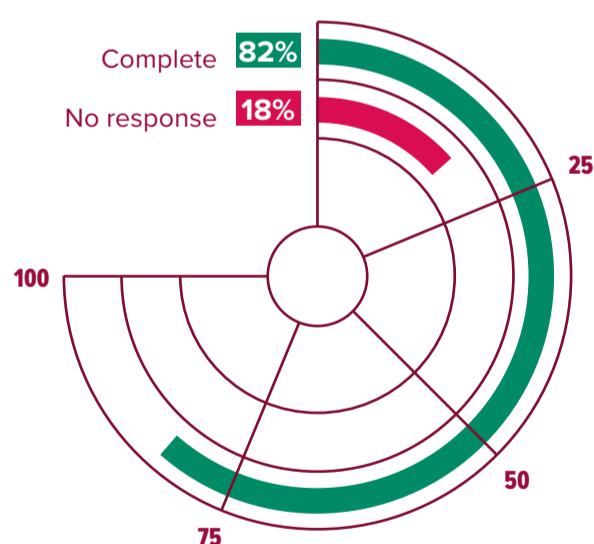


**Complete:** Entity reported quantitative data for some or all its water for the reporting year.

**Partial:** Entity reported qualitative data for the reporting year or reported quantitative data from previous years.

**Did not report:** Entity did not report water data.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

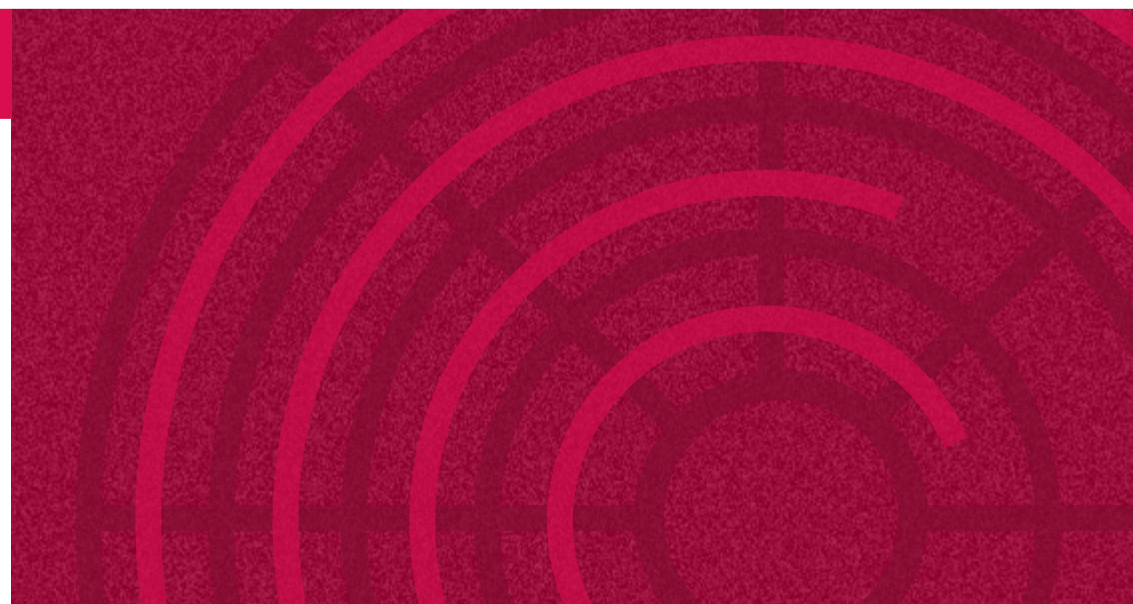


Environmental Governance and Human Resources are grouped because data on these two areas were submitted jointly via a survey.

Entities had to complete the entire survey to submit any data, which is why partial is not a category for these areas.

#### PROCUREMENT

Procurement is not included under Reporting Completeness as data for that management function is taken from the *2021 Annual Statistical Report on UN Procurement (ASR)*, which uses its own methodologies to gather and analyse data from UN entities.





## METHODOLOGY

Information on the methodology and data collection process used for the *Greening the Blue Report 2022* is available online at

 [greeningtheblue.org/methodology](https://greeningtheblue.org/methodology)

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## CONTRIBUTING ENTITIES

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Green Climate Fund (GCF), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Trade Centre (ITC), International Training Centre International Labour Organization (ITC-ILO), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), UN Secretariat (Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (BRS), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Ozone Secretariat, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), United Nations Headquarters (UNHQ), United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV), Other UN Secretariat entities), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC), United Nations University (UNU), United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Universal Postal Union (UPU), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and World Bank Group.

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