



GATORMUN XXIII

The United Nations Environmental Programme Background Guide

Noelle Morey

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Letter from the Director:

Dearest delegates,

My name is Noelle Morey (she/her/hers) and I am a fourth-year Environmental Science student at the University of Florida with minors in Communication Studies and Agricultural & Natural Resource Law. I currently have the pleasure of serving as the President of UF Model UN, and it is my absolute honor to serve all of you as your director for No Planet B(ee): UN Environmental Protection Programme. My first GatorMUN experience was in 2019, where I competed alongside Secretary-General Dodia in the UN Environmental Programme. This committee is a celebration of all that Model UN stands for: diplomacy, dedication, and most of all, connection. As I enter my 8th and final GatorMUN, I cannot wait to see how each of you will bring this committee to life.

I have a particular passion for environmentalism and the human interface between environmental studies and international policy. This committee allows for you to adopt and explore this same passion, which I hope you will carry with you long after our time together. Through exploring topics such as pollution, pollinator health, and public impact, we can help to make the world we live in a better place with each passing day. This committee will function as a traditional General Assembly, meaning that all delegates must complete a position paper prior to our first session, as well as additional research beyond reading this background guide. This guide serves as a foundation for your understanding of the concepts we will explore in committee, but further research should be undertaken to enhance your performance. Delegate performance will be evaluated on the metrics of speech quality, collaboration with fellow delegates, innovative thinking, and accuracy of country representation. Please do not hesitate to ask questions throughout the research and debate process; I want this to be an educational and exciting experience for each and every one of you!

The thing that has kept me coming back to Model UN year after year is not the awards or the competitive thrill, but rather the genuine connections and innovations we get to shape throughout each conference weekend. I expect each of you to prioritize the factors of kindness, diplomacy, and creativity in and out of each session during our time together. As such, I will emphasize -- both in this background guide and in our committee sessions -- the importance of respect for yourself and fellow delegates. Throughout the preparation process, please lean on your resources and field any questions to the amazing GatorMUN team. I cannot wait to see all that you will accomplish together during GatorMUN weekend!

See you soon, and Go Gators!

Noelle D. Morey

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Rules of Procedure

Quorum

A majority of voting members answering to the roll at each session shall constitute a quorum for that session. This means that half plus one of all voting members are present. Quorum will be assumed consistent unless questioned through a Point of Order. Delegates may request to be noted as "Present" or "Present and Voting."

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of a Moderated Caucus

This motion must include three specifications

- Length of the Caucus
- Speaking Time
- Reason for the Caucus

During a moderated caucus, delegates will be called on to speak by the Committee Director. Delegates will raise their placards to be recognized. Delegates must maintain the same degree of decorum throughout a Moderated Caucus as in formal debate. This motion requires a simple majority to pass.

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of an Unmoderated Caucus

This motion must include the length of the Caucus. During an unmoderated caucus, delegates may get up from their seats and talk amongst themselves. This motion requires a simple majority to pass. The length of an unmoderated caucus in a Crisis committee should not exceed fifteen minutes.

Motion to Suspend the Meeting

This motion is in order if there is a scheduled break in debate to be observed. (ie. Lunch!) This motion requires a simple majority vote. The Committee Director may refuse to entertain this motion at their discretion.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

This motion is in order at the end of the last committee session. It signifies the closing of the committee until next year's conference.

Points of Order

Points of Order will only be recognized for the following items:

- To recognize errors in voting, tabulation, or procedure
- To question relevance of debate to the current Topic
- To question a quorum.

A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker if necessary and it is to be used sparingly.

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Points of Inquiry

When there is no discussion on the floor, a delegate may direct a question to the Committee Director. Any question directed to another delegate may only be asked immediately after the delegate has finished speaking on a substantive matter. A delegate that declines to respond to a question after a formal speech forfeits any further questioning time.

Points of Personal Privilege

Points of personal privilege are used to request information or clarification and conduct all other business of the body except Motions or Points specifically mentioned in the Rules of Procedure. Please note: The Director may refuse to recognize Points of Order, Points of Inquiry or Points of Personal Privilege if the Committee Director believes the decorum and restraint inherent in the exercise has been violated, or if the point is deemed dilatory in nature.

Rights of Reply

At the Committee Director's discretion, any member nation or observer may be granted a Right of Reply to answer serious insults directed at the dignity of the delegate present. The Director has the ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY to accept or reject Rights of Reply, and the decision IS NOT SUBJECT TO APPEAL. Delegates who feel they are being treated unfairly may take their complaint to any member of the Secretariat.

Directives

Directives act as a replacement for Draft Resolutions when in Crisis committees, and are the actions that the body decides to take as a whole. Directives are not required to contain operative or preambulatory clauses. A directive should contain:

- The name(s) of the author(s)
- A title
- A number of signatories/sponsors signatures' necessary to
- introduce, determined by the Director

A simple majority vote is required to introduce a directive, and multiple directives may be introduced at once. Press releases produced on behalf of the body must also be voted on as Directives.

Friendly Amendments

Friendly Amendments are any changes to a formally introduced Directive that all Sponsors agree to in writing. The Committee Director must approve the Friendly Amendment and confirm each Sponsor's agreement both verbally and in writing.

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Unfriendly Amendments

Unfriendly Amendments are any substantive changes to a formally introduced Directive that are not agreed to by all of the Sponsors of the Directive. In order to introduce an Unfriendly Amendment, the Unfriendly Amendment must be the number equivalent to 1/3 of Quorum confirmed signatories. The Committee Director has the authority to discern between substantive and non-substantive Unfriendly amendment proposals.

Plagiarism

GatorMUN maintains a zero-tolerance policy in regards to plagiarism. Delegates found to have used the ideas of others without properly citing those individuals, organizations, or documents will have their credentials revoked for the duration of the GatorMUN conference. This is a very serious offense.

Crisis Notes

A crisis note is an action taken by an individual in a Crisis committee. Crisis notes do not need to be introduced or voted on, and should be given to the Crisis Staff by sending the notes to a designated pickup point in each room. A crisis note should both be addressed to crisis and have the delegate's position on both the inside and outside of the note.

Motion to Enter Voting Procedure

Once this motion passes, and the committee enters Voting Procedure, no occupants of the committee room may exit the Committee Room, and no individual may enter the Committee Room from the outside. A member of the Dias will secure all doors.

- No talking, passing notes, or communicating of any kind will be tolerated during voting procedures.
- Each Directive will be read to the body and voted upon in the order which they were introduced. Any Proposed Unfriendly Amendments to each Directive will be read to the body and voted upon before the main body of the Directive as a whole is put to a vote.
- Delegates who requested to be noted as "Present and Voting" are unable to abstain during voting procedure. Abstentions will not be counted in the tallying of a majority. For example, 5 yes votes, 4 no votes, and 7 abstentions means that the Directive passes.
- The Committee will adopt Directives and Unfriendly Amendments to Directives if these documents pass with a simple majority. Specialized committees should refer to their background-guides or Committee Directors for information concerning specific voting procedures.

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Roll Call Voting

A counted placard vote will be considered sufficient unless any delegate to the committee motions for a Roll Call Vote. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the committee must comply. All delegates must vote: "For," "Against," "Abstain," or "Pass." During a Roll Call vote, any delegate who answers, "Pass," reserves his/her vote until the Committee Director has exhausted the Roll. However, once the Committee Director returns to "Passing" Delegates, they must vote: "For" or "Against."

Accepting by Acclamation

This motion may be stated when the Committee Director asks for points or motions. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the motion to Accept by Acclamation is voided. If a delegate believes a Directive will pass without opposition, he or she may move to accept the Directive by acclamation. The motion passes unless a single delegate shows opposition. An abstention is not considered opposition. Should the motion fail, the committee will move directly into a Roll Call Vote.

Tech Policy

Technology will not be allowed throughout the course of the committee. Delegates are prohibited from using their technology inside the committee room. However, they are encouraged to do research before and during assigned breaks.

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Introduction to Committee

The United Nations Environmental Programme was commissioned in 1972 to address the world's environmental challenges. Tasked with wildlife protection, ecosystem preservation, and the ongoing crisis of climate change, the UNEP is the UN's leading regulatory body. The UNEP is host to the global community's most prominent environmental decision-making body, the UN Environment Assembly¹.

The UNEP headquarters are located in Nairobi, Kenya, where the programme is led by Under-Secretary-General and UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen². Under Andersen's leadership, the Senior Management Team oversees the programme's various divisions, including industry and economy, climate change, law, and ecosystems divisions³. With an expansive reach, the UNEP is able to impact the complex issues faced by the globe's ever-changing environment. Through cross-organ collaboration, mobilization of thousands volunteers and employees, and a universal gathering of 193 member states, the programme's Environment Assembly continues to move the needle toward environmental progress and sustainable responses to dire crises.

¹ <https://www.unep.org/who-we-are/about-us>

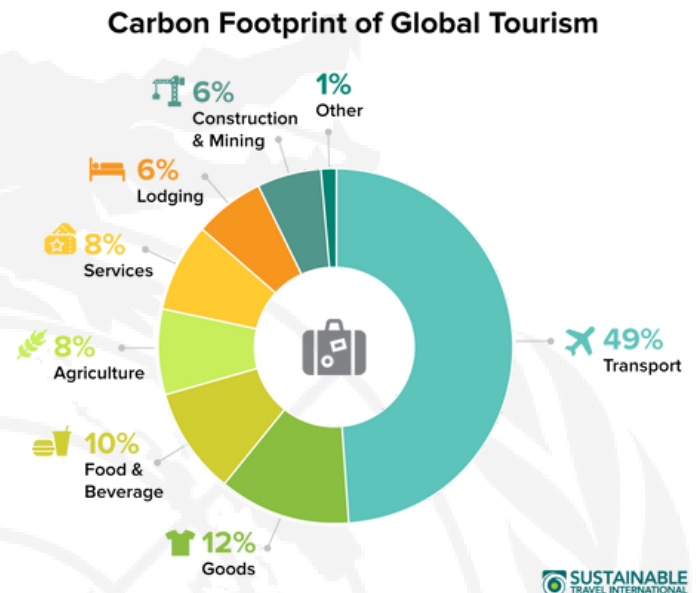
² <https://www.unep.org/people/inger-andersen>

³ <https://www.unep.org/people/leadership>

⁴ <https://sustainabletravel.org/issues/carbon-footprint-tourism/>

Topic A: Addressing the Carbon Footprint of Global Tourism

The tourism industry contributes to 8% of the world's carbon output⁴. As the global community becomes increasingly interconnected through advancements in communication and transportation infrastructure, the tourism industry plays a vital role in social and economic interactions among regions and nations. While tourism impacts employment and overall economic well-being, the energy-intensive nature of the tourism industry is cause for concern. Considering transportation emissions, infrastructure adjustments, and increased consumption, the environmental impact of tourism should be addressed before a point of no return is reached.



Transportation

In 2020, transportation accounted for one fifth of the world's carbon dioxide emissions⁵. Between air travel, ground transportation, and cruise ships, the use of fuel and output of carbon dioxide is significant; transport makes up nearly half of tourism's global footprint. A single five-hour, one-way flight from Toronto, Canada to London, England emits 891.1 kilograms of carbon, enough to account for 5.3 months of the average person's carbon budget under the Paris Agreement's current goals⁶.

Several barriers exist in terms of optimizing the transportation sector's transition to more sustainable sources of energy. Lack of access to the necessary technology, logistical issues with charging capacity for electric vehicles, and a long-standing dependency on fossil fuels all stand in the way of a large-scale shift to renewable energy usage in this sector⁷.

Infrastructural Development

Hotels are recognized as one of the most energy-intensive structures on the planet, with continuous water and electricity use. Operating around the clock, the heating and cooling systems, lighting, and amenities utilize massive amounts of energy. Hotels also account for a large portion of global food and general waste generation⁸.

⁵ <https://ourworldindata.org/co2-emissions-from-transport>

⁶ <https://curb6.com/footprint/flights/london-lhr/toronto-yyz>

⁷ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2949753125000530>

⁸ <https://www.northernridge.earth/environmental-impact-of-hotel-industry-20jul24/>

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Room service, disposable one-use items, and frequent renovations create various kinds of waste that contribute to hotels' impact. Despite their environmental drawbacks, hotel construction projects are on the rise, reaching an all-time high at a count of 15,820 projects in 2024⁹. The urban sprawl associated with tourism-driven development has various impacts on environmental well-being. To make space for these large-scale construction projects, wildlife habitats and ecosystems are often damaged or completely decimated. Expansion of urbanized areas and tourism-related infrastructure also causes habitat fragmentation and industrial runoff from construction, both of which can permanently alter local ecosystems.

Consumption

Short-term stays of tourists cause an increase in food, water, and single-use good consumption than seen in local populations of any particular area. To mitigate the negative impacts of plastic consumption and pollution, the UN World Tourism Organization launched the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative; the 200+ signatories, including both public organizations and private companies¹⁰, are committed to transitioning from single-use plastic packaging to "reusable, recyclable, or compostable" packaging¹¹. Despite the mobilization of this initiative, the world generated an estimated 220 million tons of plastic waste in 2024, a staggering number that suggests gaps in current transition systems¹².

Tourism hotspots continue to face challenges in packaging, recycling systems, and overall waste management infrastructure that can help to mitigate the negative impacts of overconsumption. Ensuring accountability measures and progress checkpoints is necessary to legitimize these initiatives, which are currently more about optics than substance.

Existing Frameworks

UN Tourism oversees various global frameworks and guidelines for sustainable management and expansion of tourism systems, a vital step towards transitioning from simple awareness to collective action. These initiatives help us to understand the current landscape of sustainable tourism and global cooperation towards the cause:

The Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism: With over 900 signatories, the Glasgow Declaration demonstrates a global commitment to cut emissions down by 50% by the year 2030. The declaration consists of five pathways (Measure, Decarbonize, Regenerate, Collaborate, and Finance) that allow for the integration of climate consciousness and action within the tourism industry¹³.

Sustainable Development Goals: SDGs 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and 14 (Life Below Water) help to guide global tourism decisions. Given the SDGs' target year of 2030, the global community must adjust its current path to progress to make significant shifts and meet this widespread goal¹⁴.

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Global Roadmap for Food Waste Reduction in the Tourism Sector: This action framework for the stakeholders of the tourism sector expands upon SDG 12.3, establishing the goal to halve per capita food waste at the consumer level by 2030. Suggesting a “Target – Measure – Act” approach, this roadmap interacts with the aforementioned frameworks to provide more structure for hotels, retailers, and transportation-based corporations that act in the tourism industry¹⁵.

Questions to Consider:

1. In what ways can governments incentivize sustainable tourism without harming economic growth?
2. Should international tourism be subjected to carbon taxation or limitations? If so, to what extent can this be regulated?
3. What particular components of tourism, if any, are the most pressing to your nation? What actions have been undertaken in the past to navigate these?
4. How can tourism-dependent economies transition to sustainable practices? What initiatives exist to promote this transition?
5. What role can policy generation play in tourism-produced waste management?
6. How can international tourism agreements include binding environmental protection measures?
7. What accountability systems, if any, should be implemented for multinational corporations that drive tourism?

Key Terms

- Carbon Footprint: a measure of the carbon dioxide/carbon compounds emitted from fossil fuel consumption by an individual, company, nation, or other entity
- Ecosystem Fragmentation: the phenomenon in which large natural habitats are broken up into smaller, less connected pieces as a result of anthropogenic (human) activities
- Industrial Runoff: water that flows from an industrial site (building, construction site, etc.) and has either had contact with or otherwise accumulated pollutants from exposure to such sites
- Single-use Products: items, often plastics, that are designed specifically for one-time usage; examples are plastic straws, bags, and bottles
- Urban Sprawl: the outward expansion of urban areas/development into surrounding regions, often agricultural or undeveloped lands

⁹ <https://lodgingeconometrics.com/global-hotel-development-pipeline-reaches-historic-milestone/>

¹⁰ <https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/programmes/sustainable-tourism/global-tourism-plastics-initiative/signatories>

¹¹ <https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development/global-tourism-plastics-initiative>

¹² <https://www.safefoodadvocacy.eu/plastic-overshoot-day-2024-global-waste-crisis-surpasses-management-capacity/#:~:text=In%202024%2C%2020%20million%20tons,up%20in%20the%20natural%20environment>

¹³ <https://www.unep.org/people/inger-andersen>

¹⁴ <https://www.unep.org/people/leadership>

¹⁵ <https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development/food-waste-reduction-in-tourism>

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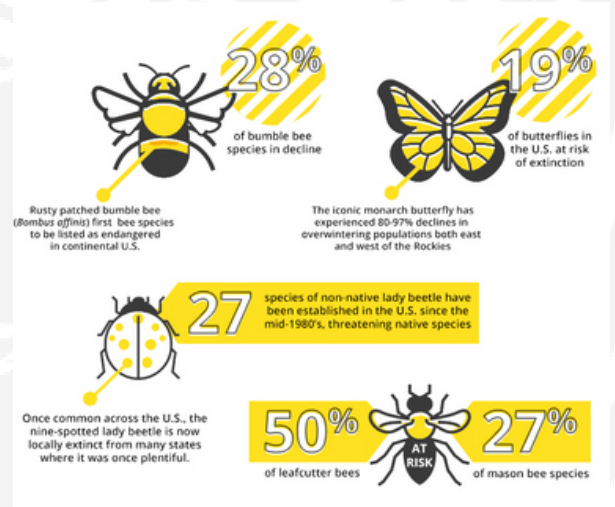
Topic B: Protecting Pollinator Populations

In recent years, the “Save the Bees” movement has gained traction for its use of honeybees as a flagship species for overall pollinator protection. The United Nations itself has affirmed the importance of bees, with World Bee Day being observed annually on May 20th to promote native pollinator conservation. There are over 200,000 species classified as pollinators, and 35% of the world’s crops rely on all pollinators, not just honeybees, for reproduction and survival. One in every three bites of food consumed by an individual can be attributed to the presence of pollinators in the world’s ecosystems. Through fertilizing wild plants, promoting agricultural productivity, and contributing to biodiversity, pollinators play a complex and vital role in our environment. Continued urbanization, unsustainable agricultural practices, and overall development are posing an urgent threat to various pollinator populations.

Driving Forces of Population Decline

Native pollinator populations across various species are in decline, as seen in this graphic generated by the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation¹⁷. As the human population, and subsequently the demand for food, continue to increase, the extensive use of agrochemicals disrupts the natural patterns and habitats upon which insect pollinators rely. Researchers have found that 91% of 1300 analyzed pollen samples were contaminated with pesticides, leaving pollinators at risk of exposure to or consumption of toxic chemicals¹⁸.

Alongside chemical application in agricultural and residential settings, invasive species contribute greatly to the pollinator population decline seen in recent years. With global trade practices increasing the spread of invasive species across regions and continents, native pollinator populations are at risk of being outcompeted for resources¹⁹.



Education and Awareness

As the world continues to digitize, social media’s prevalence in environmental awareness and dialogue has been further emphasized. Influencers, businesses, and other organizations have utilized social media as a platform for advancing awareness regarding pollinator health.

¹⁶ <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/general-information/initiatives-and-highlighted-programs/peoples-garden/importance-pollinators#:~:text=Three%2Dfourths%20of%20the%20world's,bites%20of%20food%20you%20eat>

¹⁷ <https://www.xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/whats-at-stake>

¹⁸ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242418397_What_Have_Pesticides_Got_to_Do_with_It

¹⁹ https://www.pollinator.org/pollinator.org/assets/generalFiles/NAPPC-Invasive-Species-Fact-Sheet_170624_114929.pdf

²⁰ <https://www.un.org/tr/node/217594>

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Digital storytelling allows for citizens, regardless of educational backgrounds, to grasp the importance of pollinator protection while promoting more environmentally-friendly habits through an appeal to online trends²⁰. Offline, the integration of pollinator conservation curriculum into public education, as well as environmental fairs and community events spread awareness around and engagement with the pollinators that need protection.

Policy Efforts

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) was established by the UN General Assembly in 2010 with the purpose of advancing actions toward conservation, preservation, and biodiversity advocacy²¹. The platform, in its four-pronged function, has undertaken a thematic assessment of pollinators and their role in food production. The IPBES report on the findings of this assessment reflect the need for adjustment: although agriculture is becoming more dependent on pollinators, pollinator-dependent crops are lower in yield & stability than their pollinator-independent counterparts²².

Questions to Consider

1. In what ways can consumers be incentivized to purchase pollinator-safe products?
2. What trade policies can be implemented to regulate the impact of invasive species and industry on pollinators?
3. Should governments subsidize alternative pollination technology research and development?
4. What other UN bodies can the UNEP call upon to address pollinator protection?
5. Which species are most vulnerable in your member state? In your region? What are existing management strategies for those specific species?
6. How can public and private stakeholders support farmers and agricultural stakeholders given the unstable pollinator populations?
7. In what ways can pollinator protection be integrated into other infrastructural, social, and scientific undertakings so as to not overburden capacity?

Key Terms

- **Agricultural Productivity:** a measure of the outputs from an agricultural operation (harvest, profit, etc.) in relation to the inputs used to generate them
- **Agrochemicals:** chemicals applied to aid in agricultural productivity, including pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilizers
- **Flagship Species:** a species that is used to represent and generate support for a particular environmental cause or issue
- **Wildlife Pollinator:** an animal or insect that disseminates pollen to plants, thus facilitating fertilization

²¹ <https://www.ipbes.net/history-establishment>

²² <https://zenodo.org/records/3402857>