For a number of years, UNOG has been working to confront climate change. The Secretary-General’s determination to minimize the United Nations system’s own carbon footprint and his pledge to make the United Nations a climate-neutral organization has given further impetus to our green considerations at UNOG.

UNOG works to advance the green mission through a number of different measures, including efficient use of energy, elimination of wasteful practices, sustainable procurement and management of demand. All hot water in the old building of the Palais des Nations is generated by 60 m$^2$ of solar panels that were recently installed. The temperature in air-conditioned meeting rooms is kept at an average of 24°C (74°F) when the rooms are in use, and all air conditioners must be turned off when the rooms are not in use. Security officers are instructed to switch off lights, photocopiers and other appliances when doing their rounds at night.

These small, concrete practices have contributed to significant energy savings over time. Over the last six
years, UNOG has achieved a reduction in consumption of electricity of 16.1 per cent, of water of 41.4 per cent, and of heating fuel of 19.5 per cent. In addition to limiting negative environmental effects, this represents an estimated cost avoidance of over SwF 4.3 million, or almost US$ 3.8 million, for the Organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reduction in use of water, electricity and heating oil by UNOG, 2000–2007</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduction by volume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water 710 885 m³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity 10 625 758 kWh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heating oil 1 433 430 l</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Efforts have expanded into such areas as garbage recycling, landscaping and ecosystem maintenance. UNOG further improved waste management by establishing new waste collection and recycling centres by different waste categories. Two types of bins were installed in all offices of the Palais des Nations to separate recyclable and non-recyclable waste. Organic waste from parks and gardens on the Palais des Nations grounds is used to produce green fertilizers.

In addition, green considerations are integrated into our procurement practices. UNOG participates actively in the joint United Nations process to establish baseline specifications for sustainable procurement. Environmental performance criteria are crucial factors in our procurement decisions, including procurement of vehicles, travel services, office supplies, information technology and printing equipment, painting, lighting as well as cleaning services. Eighty per cent of the paper purchased is made from “sustainably managed forests”, and all documents are printed on chlorine-free and Forest Stewardship Council-accredited paper. 3,288 earphones in meeting rooms, have been replaced with mercury-free devices. To reduce paper consumption, staff members are encouraged to print their documents double-sided and use electronic means whenever possible for internal and external communications. Several offices have established “green task forces” to review office procedures with a view to further limiting paper use.

Recently UNOG signed a contract with Services Industriels de Genève regarding two projects in compliance with the United Nations environmental policy:

(a) The Geneva-Lake-Nations “GLN” Project: supplying the Palais des Nations with Geneva Lake water for cooling purposes. The energy required for cooling the buildings is generated through heat exchangers and supplied to several international organizations as well as private and non-governmental entities. By retiring traditional cooling towers UNOG will make use of 100 per cent renewable energy (Lake Geneva water) in addition to reducing electricity and water consumption;

(b) Natural Gas Project: replacing the heating oil used in UNOG’s main boiler house with natural gas. The main impact on the environment will be a reduction of emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) as well as nitrogen oxide and dioxide (NO and NO₂) and sulphur dioxide (SO₂). An additional benefit is that vehicles used in delivering heating oil will be dispensed with.

Since the “Bike to Work” campaign initiative launched in 2007, more United Nations staff members are using eco-friendly transportation. In response, UNOG plans to create an additional 140 parking spaces for bicycles and 32 for motorcycles, as well as six extra showers, to provide further incentives to leave the car at home.

Additional measures to be implemented include:

- Replacement of the old sewage evacuation system with a new network separating waste and rain water in compliance with local legislation
- Installation of more solar panels for hot-water production
- Installation of additional light motion sensors, water timers and double-flush toilet systems to further reduce electricity and water consumption
- Progressive replacement of old official cars with more ecological ones
- Progressive replacement of old fuel-based gardening equipment with new electrical equipment using ecological fuel.

At the core of these efforts is UNOG’s firm commitment to improving the environment and combating global warming.