

Ukraine environmental sustainability

UNEP is mandated to assist countries, upon request, with pollution mitigation and control in areas affected by armed conflict or terrorism. Responding to a request by the Government of Ukraine, this report was drafted as part of a preparatory process to assist Ukraine in recovery from the current conflict and to inform a comprehensive post-conflict assessment. During the conflict that began on 24 February 2022, Ukraine has experienced considerable environmental destruction. Extensive field assessment work will be required to establish the character, magnitude and significance of conflict-related environmental impacts and remediation requirements.

The report presents a snapshot - but by no means a comprehensive picture - of the damage inflicted on Ukraine's environment and the potential environmental and public health impacts, informing priorities for field-level verification work. Initial information shows that Ukraine, already burdened by a host of legacy environmental challenges, is now facing a compounded, multi-dimensional environmental crisis that has either exacerbated existing issues or added new ones. It is essential that the ongoing conflict ends now to ensure greater damage to the environment and to people is averted. The country and the region risk being burdened with a toxic legacy long after the conflict ends.

The Ukraine War Is an Environmental Catastrophe with Global Consequences

When it's time to rebuild, we must prioritize more sustainable and resilient infrastructure in Ukraine

The destruction of Nova Kakhovka Dam in southern Ukraine on June 6 has forced thousands of people to flee their homes. Residents of Kherson returned to their flooded homes while some villages were still underwater. As people face an electricity shortage, floating land mines and a lack of drinking water, the water level hinders the distribution of aid.

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In its war against Ukraine, Russia has sought to cripple the country's critical infrastructure. It has attacked homes and hospitals, transportation networks and farmland, energy and civilian nuclear facilities, drinking water and wastewater systems, chemical and steel plants, mining facilities and vital seed banks.

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