

NIKO URHO



I am an author, scholar, and consultant dedicated to addressing pressing global sustainability challenges by identifying holistic and practical governance solutions. My focus is on UNEP's reform and thematic policy issues, such as chemicals, plastics, and biodiversity, including their intersections. My studies are highly participatory, involving stakeholders from data collection to final review, which has been instrumental in influencing decision-making. My clients and partners include governments, academic institutions, UNEP, and MEA secretariats.

EXPERIENCE

UNEP (CONTRACTOR SINCE 2019)

- Serving as one of the three lead consultants for the financial needs assessment of the Stockholm Convention for the period 2026-2030 (client: BRS Secretariat)
- Prepared an [analysis](#) and [report](#) on the mutually supportive implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the Global Biodiversity Framework (client: Minamata Convention Secretariat)
- Prepared an analytical study of current reporting obligations that intersect the chemicals and waste and biodiversity clusters of MEAs (client: Law Division)
- Facilitated the preparation of an Umbrella Strategy for 2022-2025 for the Law Division's Environmental Governance and Conventions Branch (client: Law Division)
- Validated information on quantities of POPs stockpiles in developing countries to support the financial needs assessment of the Stockholm Convention for the period 2022-2025 (client: BRS Secretariat)
- Co-authored a [study](#) on industry involvement for financing the sound management of chemicals and waste (client: SAICM)
- Authored a [review](#) of economic instruments for financing the sound management of chemicals and waste (client: SAICM)

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG, AUSTRALIA (CONTRACTOR SINCE 2019)

- Supporting implementation of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, including elaborating a capacity building plan (Client: UNEP)
- Co-authoring a report on opportunities to enhance synergies and address governance in managing plastics across MEAs (client: BRS Secretariat)
- Co-authoring a report of opportunities to address microplastics in the plastics instrument (Client: Minderoo Foundation)
- Co-authored a [report](#) elaborating on the options of the draft plastics instrument to manage chemicals of concern (client: Minderoo Foundation)
- Co-authored a [report](#) on problematic, unnecessary, and avoidable plastic products (client: Nordic Council of Ministers)
- Co-authored a [report](#) seeking to identify options to address the climate-plastics nexus in the global plastics instrument (client: Grid-Arendal)
- Co-authored a [report](#) on the science-policy interface for plastic pollution (client: Grid-Arendal)

- Co-authored a [report](#) on global governance of plastics and associated chemicals (client: BRS Secretariat)
- Facilitated the preparation of [UNEP's Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2022-2025](#) (client: UNEP)
- Co-authored a Nordic [report](#) to inform the development of a global plastics agreement (client: the Nordic Council of Ministers)

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON (CONTRACTOR BETWEEN 2017-2021)

- Prepared a [study](#) that presents options for global commitment platforms for sound chemicals management (client: Swedish Chemicals Agency)
- Supported the preparation of the financial needs [assessment](#) of the Stockholm Convention for 2022-2026 (client: BRS Secretariat)
- Organized a [workshop](#) on international environmental governance reform in September 2019 in Chexbres, Switzerland (client: Swiss Federal Office for the Environment)
- Authored a Nordic [report](#) on international environmental governance reform after Rio+20 (client: Nordic Council of Ministers)
- Functioned as lead author in the preparation of the UN Global Chemicals Outlook II [report](#) (client: UNEP)
- Authored a [report](#) outlining options to reform global chemicals and waste governance (client: Ministry of the Environment of Finland)

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT, FINLAND (SENIOR ADVISER, 2008-2017)

- Supported international efforts to enhance synergies among global environmental agreements relating to biodiversity and chemicals and waste
- Functioned as the national focal point for UNEP and UN-Habitat (2011-2013) and lead negotiator for the Habitat III Conference (2015-2016)
- Supported the establishment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)
- Participated in the international environmental governance reform process that culminated in the creation of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA)
- Led the Nordic project "Assessing forms and functions for an effective global Post-2020 Framework for chemicals and wastes"
- Participated in over 20 UN conferences, including participation in negotiations and co-chaired several contact groups

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI (2000 – 2008)

- Master of Science in Environmental Biology

UNEP-UEF COURSE (2008)

- Two-week course on international environmental law-making and diplomacy, organized in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa
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LANGUAGE SKILLS

ENGLISH

- Excellent written and oral knowledge

FINNISH

- Excellent written and oral knowledge

SWEDISH

- Good written and oral knowledge

SPANISH

- Good written and oral knowledge
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MEMBERSHIPS

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

- Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Governance and Sustainability (September 2017-February 2023)

UN ENVIRONMENT

- NGO Focal Point to the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (2018-2023)
- Co-chair of the Executive Board of UNEP's Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level for implementation of the chemicals and waste cluster (2016-2017)
- Member of the Executive Board of UNEP's Quick Start Programme (2015-2017)

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF FINLAND

- Secretary of Finland's Habitat Committee preparing for the Habitat III Conference (2015-2016)
- Secretary of Finland's National Committee of International Biodiversity Experts (2011-2013)

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS AND REPORTS

- Minderoo Foundation (2024). Elaborating on the options of the draft plastics instrument to manage chemicals and polymers of concern. Raubenheimer, K. Urho, N. 61 pp.
- Raubenheimer, K., Urho, N. (2024). Global criteria to address problematic, unnecessary and avoidable plastic products. Nordic Council of Ministers, Copenhagen. 88 pp.
- Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury (2024). Mercury and Biodiversity. Pessoa de Miranda, M., Urho, N. 45 pp.
- Grid-Arendal (2024). Climate impacts of plastics: Global actions to stem climate change and end plastic pollution. Norway. 81 pp.
- Grid-Arendal (2023). Science-policy interface for plastic pollution. Raubenheimer, K., Urho, N. 80 pp.
- Urho, N. (2021). Commitment platforms and the global agenda for chemicals and waste management. Center for Governance and Sustainability, University of Massachusetts Boston. 42 pp.
- Raubenheimer, K. & Urho, N. (2020). Possible elements of a new global agreement to prevent plastic pollution. Nordic Council of Ministers, Copenhagen. 148 pp.
- Alpizar, F., Backhaus, T., Decker, N., Eilks, I., Escobar-Pemberthy, N., Fantke, P., Geiser, K., Ivanova, M., Jolliet, O., Kim, H., Khisa, K., Gundimeda, H., Slunge, D., Stec, S., Tickner, J., Tyrer, D., Urho, N., Visser, R., Yarto, M. & Zuin, V. G. (2019). Global Chemicals Outlook II: From Legacies to Innovative Solutions. UNEP. 700 pp.
- Urho, N., Ivanova, M., Dubrova, A. & Escobar-Pemberthy, N. (2019). International Environmental Governance: Accomplishments and Way Forward. Nordic Council of Ministers, Copenhagen. 104 pp.
- Urho, N. (2018). Options for effective governance of the Beyond-2020 framework for sound management of chemicals and waste – lessons learned from other regimes. Center for Governance and Sustainability, University of Massachusetts Boston. 57 pp.

- Nummelin, M. & Urho, N. (2012). Kansainväliset ympäristösopimukset ja Suomen kehityspolitiikka. Ulkoasiainministeriö, kehityspoliittinen viestintä. 144 pp.
- Urho, N. (2009). Possibilities of enhancing cooperation and coordination among MEAs in the biodiversity cluster. Nordic Council of Ministers, Copenhagen. 80 pp.
- Urho, N. (2007). Biodiversiteetin kestävä käytön periaatteet. Suomen ympäristö 8/2007. Edita Publishing Ltd, Helsinki. 74 pp.

ARTICLES AND BOOK SECTIONS

- Nils, S., Raubenheimer, K., Urho, N. et al. (2021). *A binding global agreement to address the life cycle of plastics*. Science 373: 43-47
- Raubenheimer, K. & Urho, N. (2020). *Rethinking global governance of plastics – The role of industry*. Marine Policy 113: 1-4
- Urho, N. & Nummelin, M. (2020). Biodiversiteetti kansainvälisissä sopimuksissa, 35-52. In: Mattila, H. (ed). Elämän verkko: Luonnon monimuotoisuutta edistämässä. Printon Trükikoda, Tallinn, Estonia.
- Nummelin, M. & Urho, N. (2018). *International Environmental Conventions on Biodiversity*. Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Environmental Science.
- Urho, N. & Niinistö, V. (2015). *Future Prospects for Enhancing Sustainable Use of Natural Resources: The role on International Environmental Governance after Rio+20*, p. 201-215. In: Kuokkanen, T., Couzens, E., Honkonen, T. & Lewis, M (eds.). International Environmental Law-making and Diplomacy: Insights and overviews. Routledge Research in International Law. Routledge, London.
- Niinistö, V. & Urho, N. (2015). *Future prospects for enhancing sustainable use of natural resources: The role of international environmental governance and Finland's priorities after Rio+20*, p. 51-72. In: Couzens, E. & Honkonen T. (eds.). International Environmental Law-making and Diplomacy Review 2013. Department of Law, University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu.
- Carruthers, C. & Urho, N. 2013. *A multilateral simulation exercise of an Ad Hoc Joint Working Group meeting of the Biodiversity Related Conventions*. In: Couzens, E. & Honkonen, T. (eds). International Environmental Law-making and Diplomacy Review 2011. p. 187-223. Department of Law, University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu.
- Urho, N. 2010. *Enhancing synergies among biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements*, p.40-42. In: Nordic Biodiversity Beyond 2010: Challenges and Experiences in Global Perspective, Nordic Council of Ministers.
- *Nordic Expert Symposium: "Synergies in the Biodiversity Cluster"*. MEA Bulletin. Guest Article no. 100 (24 September 2010).

UN DOCUMENTS, CONFERENCE PAPERS AND WORKSHOP REPORTS

- Minamata Convention Secretariat (2023). Analysis of the mutually supportive implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. UN doc. UNEP/MC/COP.5/INF/27
- BRS Secretariat (2023). Global Governance of Plastics and associated chemicals. Raubenheimer, K., Urho, N. UN Doc. UNEP/PP/INC.1/INF/6
- UNEP (2023). Reporting obligations that intersect the chemicals and waste and biodiversity clusters: Options for approaches and tools for joint reporting and action. Urho, N.
- UNEP (2022). Study on Industry Involvement in the Integrated Approach to Financing the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste. N. 115 pp.
- BRS Secretariat (2022). Report on the outcomes of the validation work as input to the Needs Assessment: Updated report on the outcomes of the validation

work as input to the Needs Assessment. Urho, N. UN Doc.
UNEP/POPS/COP.10/INF/56/Add.1

- UNEP (2021). Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2022-2025. Raubenheimer, K., Urho, N. 38 pp.
- BRS Secretariat (2021). Report on the outcomes of the validation work as input to the assessment of funding needed for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention from 2022 to 2026. Urho, N. & Dubrova, A. 42 pp. UN Doc. UNEP/POPS/COP.10/INF/56
- Ivanova, M., Urho, N. & Dubrova, A. (2020). Report from the International Environmental Governance workshop. 9-11 September 2019, Chexbres, Switzerland. Center for Governance and Sustainability, University of Massachusetts Boston. 18 pp.
- SAICM (2020). Review of cost recovery mechanisms and other economic policy instruments for financing of the sound management of chemicals and waste. Urho, N. 38 pp. UN Doc. SAICM/IP.4/7.
- Report from a Nordic Symposium: *Synergies in the Biodiversity Cluster*, 8–9 April 2010, Helsinki Finland. Ministry of the Environment of Finland. 13 pp.
- Urho, N. & Niemelä, J. (2008). *National review from Finland for the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy focusing on “Biodiversity & Industry”*, 17–21 Nov. 2008, Paris, France.
- Urho, N. & Niemelä, J. (2007). *National review from Finland for the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy meeting focusing on “Shaping European Biodiversity Research for a Sustainable Europe”*. 5–7 May 2007, Leipzig, Germany.