

What UNEP does:

- Monitors the global environment and relays scientific information to governments and other stakeholders
- Supports the development of solutions to environmental challenges, including binding international agreements and voluntary measures
- Assists countries to take action at the national level, through capacity building and technical assistance
- Encourages partnerships with civil society, including the private sector

UNEP's work focuses on 6 areas:

- Climate Change
- Post-Conflict and Disaster Management
- Ecosystem Management
- Environmental Governance
- Harmful Substances
- Resource Efficiency/Sustainable Consumption and Production

The mission of UNEP is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.



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UNEP

United Nations Environment Programme

the authority on the environment in the UN system

helping the world kick the CO₂ habit

leading by example in North America

Regional Office for North America (RONA)

RONA, established in Washington, D.C. in October 2000, serves Canada and the United States. RONA's mission is to build support in the region for UNEP's work, to promote effective responses to international environmental challenges and to foster cooperation on environmental issues between North America and the broader international community.

To achieve this mission, RONA's strategy is to promote collaboration between UNEP and all sectors of North American society, including U.S. and Canadian governmental institutions, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other civil society groups.

“As the voice of the environment in the United Nations, UNEP is proud that its Regional Office for North America has achieved LEED Gold certification. This achievement demonstrates that green building and office practices are indeed possible, through strong partnerships and a shared commitment to our planet.”

-Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director



Welcome to UNEP's Regional Office for North America (RONA)

UNEP RONA has put into practice the principles that we advocate by obtaining LEED certification.

We invite you to tour our offices and see how we have lowered our carbon footprint.

Not only is UNEP RONA LEED certified, we have achieved LEED Gold. This achievement is the result of an unprecedented collaboration among a team of partners including landlords, architects, contractors, real estate agents, and building management companies.

UNEP RONA and the project team took advantage of the opportunity presented by our relocation to new offices by employing eco-friendly building practices to help us “kick the carbon habit.” The green strategies implemented provide UNEP staff with an energy efficient, healthy, environmentally sound and sustainable office.

With employee comfort and indoor air quality as high priorities, the project team selected low-emitting adhesives and paints as well as lighting and thermal controls which enable individuals to manage their indoor environment.

Recycling and construction waste management were parallel goals focused on the long-term protection of the environment. Dedicated bins provide a place to recycle paper, glass, and plastic.

UNEP and the design and construction team went above and beyond efforts made in similar projects to reuse materials and furniture from our former offices. The general contractors exceeded expectations by salvaging nearly 90% of construction debris. Glass panels were recovered and carefully placed to enhance the design of the new space. Partially frosted panels provide privacy to perimeter offices while allowing natural light to filter into corridors and interior work areas. Almost all furniture and millwork was reinstalled in the new offices. These measures address the ‘embodied energy’ inherent in materials, and kept waste from going to landfills unnecessarily.

Material-related strategies included specification of recycled content and locally manufactured materials and wood from certified, renewable sources.

Examples include:

- (1) Ceiling tile with recycled content (*not shown*)
- (2) Carpet with recycled content
- (3) Doors with Forest Stewardship Council certification
- (4) Rapidly renewable bamboo trim and flooring
- (5) Flooring made from recycled plastic bottles
- (6) Alkemi countertops made from post-industrial scrap
- (7) Bio-composite desks made from compressed wheat

In an effort to reduce environmental impact from employees commuting to work, UNEP worked with the real estate agent and other team members to:

- Select a building near metro and bus lines
- Identify a space within walking distance of a range of services
- Provide secure bike storage and access to showers and changing rooms

Steps to minimize energy consumption included: layout and selection of light fixtures to decrease lighting power density, provision of occupancy sensors and daylight-responsive light fixtures, and selection of Energy Star rated items for 97% of the appliances and equipment.

Environmental efforts made by UNEP RONA, which occupies a suite in an eleven-story building, has had an impact on the green practices of the entire building—for example, the management is lowering the thermostat temperature in winter and raising it in summer, in line with a directive of the UN Secretary General.

The UNEP RONA office is only a small part of an innovative initiative that UNEP is undertaking with architects worldwide to promote green building practices on a global scale: www.unep.or.jp/ietc/Activities/Urban/ and www.unep.fr/scp/sun/.



Partners who made UNEP RONA's LEED GOLD possible:

- The Ezra Company
- Grubb & Ellis
- Hitt Contracting
- ING
- OTJ Architects
- Sustainable Design Consulting
- Vornado Realty Trust



The U.S. LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings which utilizes a voluntary, point-based rating system for building projects. LEED for Commercial Interiors (LEED-CI) is the green benchmark for tenant improvement projects, such as the refurbishment of the UNEP offices in Washington, D.C.