

**MICHAEL JOHN WILLIAMS**  
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**American and Swiss citizen**

## **PERSONAL PROFILE**

An international communications and external relations manager specializing in climate, the environment and sustainable development. I develop strategies, create projects, build partnerships and raise funds for innovative outreach activities. To build on my lengthy career in the United Nations system, I seek to continue advocating for action on climate and the environment by working with a dynamic organization.

## **KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Led UNEP Information Unit for Conventions and managed communications and outreach for the UNFCCC, IPCC, CBD, CITES, CMS, and Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (1991-2007)
- Created an [innovative campaign](#) engaging well-known TV weather presenters as climate change communicators with USD 400 000 from Denmark and UN Foundation and support from the IPCC, the UN and other partners (2014-2017)
- Established and raised over a million Swiss francs for the highly successful UNEP-led [Geneva Environment Network](#), which after 20 years is still thriving
- Produced the first UN-system-branded climate change information materials and organized and funded workshops in Africa, Russia and elsewhere for the UNFCCC and the IPCC (1990s)

## **SKILLS**

- Communicating environmental science, policies, and economics
- Building partnerships, raising funds, and managing staff, projects and budgets
- Writing, editing, video production, media relations, websites and social media

## **EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

### **Consultancies**

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)	2019/2022
UN Environment Management Group (EMG)	2021-2022
UN Climate Change (UNFCCC), Bonn, Germany; COP18 strategic communications	2018

**World Meteorological Organization (WMO)**, Geneva, Switzerland 2012-2017

**Chief, Communications & Public Affairs.** Developed and implemented the WMO communications strategy. Managed the communications team and outreach activities, including website, media outreach, exhibits, workshops, and print and multi-media products. Supported SIDS, WCDRR, Rio+20 and other events. Engaged TV weather presenters as climate communicators. Scripted and produced animations and videos to explain complicated issues.

**Group on Earth Observations (GEO)**, Geneva, Switzerland 2007 - 2012

**External Relations Manager.** Managed outreach for engaging 90 governments and 64 international organizations that are interlinking their environmental monitoring systems to form a Global Earth Observation System of Systems, or GEOSS.

**United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**, Geneva, Switzerland 1991-2007  
**Head, Information Unit for Conventions (IUC)**. Managed media relations and public information and served as spokesman for UNEP and the secretariats of United Nations conventions on climate change (UNFCCC), biological diversity (CBD), international trade in endangered species (CITES), hazardous wastes (Basel), persistent organic pollutants (Stockholm) and ozone-depleting substances (Montreal), as well as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Raised funds for workshops, publications and the Geneva Environment Network. As UN spokesperson for UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol, responsible for press relations at huge high-pressure conferences.

**World Economic Forum**, Geneva, Switzerland 1988-1991  
**Senior Editor, "World Link"**. Interviewed ministers, CEOs and Nobel prize-winners for an international magazine on politics and economics read by the highly influential "Davos elite"

**Business International** (part of the Economist Group), New York, USA 1982-1988  
**Managing Editor** with full editorial, staff and budget responsibility for weekly newsletter on international corporate finance and a monthly journal on currency and interest-rate forecasting.

## EDUCATION

New York University, completed one year (50%) towards Masters in Economics 1985-1988

University of Sussex, Falmer, UK, Master of Arts, International Relations 1979-1980

State University of New York at Albany, USA, Bachelor of Arts, Political Science 1975-1979

UN proficiency in French

## PRINT AND VIDEO PORTFOLIO

Please visit <https://michaeljwilliams.ch/Michael-at-work/>

## REFERENCES

Jonathan Lynn, Head, Communications and Media Relations, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), [jlynn@wmo.int](mailto:jlynn@wmo.int)

Ivonne Higuero, Secretary-General, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), [Ivonne.Higuero@unep.org](mailto:Ivonne.Higuero@unep.org)

Robert Bisset, Head, Communications, Global Environment Facility (GEF), [rbisset@thegef.org](mailto:rbisset@thegef.org)