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**Policy issues: Emerging policy issues
Outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development**

**BACKGROUND PAPER FOR THE MINISTERIAL-LEVEL CONSULTATIONS:
REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE
WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Discussion paper presented by the Executive Director

Summary

The present document is a background paper intended to stimulate discussion and identify questions of concern to Governments to be addressed by ministers and heads of delegation during their ministerial-level consultations at the twenty-second session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum.

* UNEP/GC.22/1

I. BACKGROUND ISSUES

1. In the present context of rapidly accelerating globalization, the relationships between economic change, poverty, and environmental degradation have not yet been fully explained. The fact that increases in global production, trade and consumption are accompanied by deteriorating poverty indices and environmental degradation, has prompted a review of traditional assumptions about globalization and responses to those challenges. A direct cause and effect relationship between environmental degradation and globalization as such may be difficult to identify; it is arguable, however, that limitations in integrating and addressing regional and local realities in the development of global environmental policies and strategies reduce the effectiveness of those policies and strategies for sustainable development.
2. As Governments tend to form regional economic clusters, the need arises for the United Nations system to develop new approaches and mechanisms for achieving sustainable development. Past experience has shown that a stronger focus on the local and regional levels is crucial to the ownership and successful development of sustainable livelihood strategies. In many local and regional contexts, governance arrangements and sustainable development initiatives tailored to local conditions are already emerging and deserve attention and support. At the same time, regionalization can foster local capacity development and provide an enabling environment for local development initiatives oriented towards combating poverty and reducing environmental degradation.
3. Before the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (Doha, November 2001) and the International Conference on Financing for Development (Monterrey, Mexico, March 2002), recognized the importance of regional focus in the fostering of sustainable development and in the integration of developing countries in the world economy. The seventh special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (Cartagena, Colombia, February 2002) also stressed the need to consider environmental governance from a multi-level approach: international, regional, subregional and national. It called on the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in cooperation with relevant regional and subregional organizations, to provide support to the strengthening of regional environmental governance in order to improve coordination, implementation, capacity-building and technology transfer in support of regional initiatives.

II. THE WORK OF UNEP IN THE REGIONS

4. As set out in the Secretary-General's Bulletin ST/SGB/1999/21, entitled "Organization of the secretariat of the United Nations Environment Programme", UNEP has the following tasks in the regions: (a) undertaking relevant information and data-gathering and, based on that, bringing regional perspectives to the development of UNEP policies and programmes; (b) presenting UNEP global policies in the region and enlisting support for them at all levels; (c) implementing and complementing relevant parts of UNEP's global programmes through initiating, coordinating and catalysing regional and subregional cooperation and action in response to environmental problems and emergencies; (d) assisting in the development of policies and programmes on global and regional environmental issues between and within Governments in the region; (e) providing advisory services to help Governments translate global commitments into national action for the protection and enhancement of the environment; (f) raising public awareness of environmental problems and creating a consistency for environmental action; (g) promoting cooperation between UNEP and non-governmental organizations, and the private sector; and (h) broadening the constituency of UNEP.
5. The Governing Council, in its decision 20/39, entitled "Functioning of the regional offices and proposed measures for the strengthening of regionalization and decentralization," requested the Executive Director to "continue to strengthen regionalization and decentralization, while maintaining the central coordinating role of the Programme's headquarters in Nairobi." In response to that decision, the Executive Director has taken and will continue taking steps to reinforce the regionalization of UNEP's work and to strengthen the institutional framework in the regions.

6. Regional offices have had a crucial leading role in the identification, definition, development, and implementation of regional strategies and policies that are an integral part of UNEP's overall vision and mandate. The connections and networks of the regional offices allow UNEP to understand regional and national priorities better, which in turn helps to determine the design of UNEP's programmes. Their role in the elaboration and delivery of UNEP's work programme and the coordination of the preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development has proved to be progressively more important. UNEP's regional delivery has also been strengthened by its growing significance and participation in the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, in the context of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other financing institutions.

7. For the past few years, UNEP has been working towards an increased policy dialogue and cooperation at the regional level, with a view to maximizing the integration of global environmental policy concerns with emerging priorities and issues at the regional and subregional levels. In doing so, due attention has been paid to the need to make environmental management an integral part of the broader sustainable development debate. The role of regional and subregional ministerial forums and the work of the regional offices with those forums is providing a crucial link between UNEP's policy and programme development and the actual concerns in the regions.

8. At the same time, and on the basis of General Assembly resolution 53/242 of 28 July 1999, UNEP has also enhanced the regional nature of its Governing Council process. In alternate years, the Global Ministerial Environmental Forum features regional issues prominently on its agenda, and its venue moves from region to region (Malmö, Sweden, in 1999 and Cartagena, Colombia, in 2001).

III. PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A. Mandate for regionalization

9. The Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development¹ adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development expresses support for "the emergence of stronger regional groupings and alliances, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development, to promote regional cooperation, improved international cooperation and sustainable development" (para. 23). The Plan of Implementation of the World Summit² puts a strong focus on initiatives, experiences, and institutional framework at the regional level. It recognizes the importance of regional, subregional and transregional action to promote sustainable development. Finally, it calls for support for the development, enhancement and implementation of agreed regional sustainable development strategies and action plans, reflecting national and regional priorities. The Plan of Implementation emphasizes regional specificity, priorities and action throughout its text. The following sections are specifically devoted to the regional dimension of the implementation: VIII (Sustainable development for Africa); IX (Other regional initiatives); and X (Institutional framework for sustainable development), section 6 (Strengthening institutional arrangements for sustainable development at the regional level). The relevant paragraphs from the Johannesburg Declaration and the Plan of Implementation are reproduced in document UNEP/GC.22/INF/34.

B. Partnerships

10. On 30 August 2002, a partnership plenary session on regional implementation took place at the World Summit on Sustainable Development³. On that occasion, it was reiterated and emphasized that "Actions taken at the regional and subregional levels provide a bridge between national realities and global priorities, while also addressing common areas of concern and shared interests associated with geographic proximity, relative homogeneity and shared history." It was also stated that "The regional commissions and other regional institutions have strategic advantages in performing a number of functions, including (a) promoting regional partnerships and regional cooperation through inter-disciplinary and cross-sectoral partnerships; (b) providing forums for intersectoral and multi-stakeholder dialogues at the regional level, particularly in preparation for global negotiations and conventions; (c) acting as think tanks and undertaking analyses of

transboundary problems related to environment and sustainable development; (d) supporting capacity-building efforts and information exchange at the regional level; (e) monitoring and assessing progress made, including the follow-up to Summit outcomes.”

11. At the World Summit, a series of partnerships was established in which UNEP is now playing a major role, such as the European Union “Water for Life” initiatives with Africa and the Newly Independent States, the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development, the Water for Asian Cities Initiative, the Initiative on Health and Environment, and the White Water to Blue Water Initiative.

IV. IMPACT OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON UNEP’S PROGRAMME OF WORK: MANDATE FOR REGIONALIZATION

12. Both during and after the world Summit, it became clear that the major thrust and strength of its follow-up is in the furtherance and implementation of partnerships at the regional and subregional level. UNEP has worked closely with, and in some regions actively supported as a secretariat, the establishment and work of regional forums of ministers of environment, which can and should play a strong catalytic role in creating regional alliances towards the implementation of regional initiatives. Partnership with other regional United Nations agencies and organizations has been integral to the delivery of UNEP’s mission. Cooperation with the economic commissions was best illustrated through the World Summit preparatory process, when joint secretariats were formed to prepare the regional inputs, declarations or initiatives. At the same time, and to further respond to the World Summit’s emphasis on a regional focus, UNEP is forging regional alliances of United Nations organizations, other regional intergovernmental institutions, including the ministerial councils of the regional seas conventions, regional development banks, civil society, the private sector, and other major stakeholders. Recent efforts also include partnerships with parliamentarians and the judiciary.

13. Within the framework of UNEP’s strategy for enhancing civil society engagement, the involvement of civil society organizations in UNEP’s work at the regional level will be strengthened. Regional and outposted offices will be the “front line” in implementing UNEP’s civil society engagement strategy. The regional offices will play a leading role in fostering programmatic engagement and will help deliver UNEP outreach to business and industry. They will also identify appropriate civil society partners and convene periodic consultations with them, in order to foster regional networking structures. In particular, regional offices will play a key role in facilitating participation of civil society organizations in the Global Civil Society Forum, held in conjunction with sessions of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, in order to ensure a balanced representation from all regions, including at local and national levels. To that end, UNEP’s civil society strategy envisions increased support for the convening of subregional and regional multi-stakeholder forums, on the model of the preparatory process of the World Summit. These regional processes would nominate representatives to the Global Civil Society Forum, taking into account the topics that will be discussed, with the objective to consider and benefit from all views presented.

14. The proposed UNEP programme of work 2004-2005 includes activities identified as part of the execution of the World Summit Plan of Implementation. These activities stem from the ongoing work with regional ministerial forums and aim towards strengthening UNEP’s participation in the development and implementation of regional initiatives, such as the ones mentioned in the following subparagraphs and detailed in the regional annexes to the present report:

(a) The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), recently adopted by African heads of State has now become the major framework for the region’s development. One of the main components of NEPAD is its environment initiative, in the development of which UNEP is involved (see document UNEP/GC/22/8/Add.1);

(b) The Latin American and Caribbean Initiative on Sustainable Development was formulated as part of the region's preparatory process for the World Summit. It was then approved in Johannesburg by the ministers of the region. UNEP is engaged with the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean in the implementation of the Initiative;

(c) UNEP is working closely with the League of Arab States to identify the most appropriate mechanism for the implementation of the Arab Initiative for Sustainable Development developed during the preparatory process of the World Summit;

(d) In the Americas, UNEP is exploring a number of new initiatives to strengthen its cooperation with regional organizations, civil society and the private sector, so as to increase collaborative activities and enhance the region's contribution to UNEP programmes in all regions. Among others, UNEP has assisted in the organization of a meeting of western hemisphere Health and Environment Ministers of the Americas, which is developing a work plan expected to take into account the outcomes of the World Summit;

(e) In Europe, UNEP is a participating and/or servicing partner in various regional ministerial forums and processes, including the Environment for Europe process and its constituent bodies. A stronger UNEP presence in the region will help ensure an appropriate integration of the global dimension in the debate at the forthcoming Environment for Europe Conference in Kiev, in May 2003, which will address ways and means to strengthen the environmental governance structures in the region;

(f) In Asia and the Pacific, UNEP will continue participating and supporting relevant ministerial forums at the regional and subregional level, such as those of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), amongst others.

15. Regional delivery has been a key element in UNEP's inter-divisional collaboration for the preparation of the current and future biennial programmes of work. Closer integration of the work of the programme divisions and the regional offices has been achieved, so as to tailor programme delivery even closer to regional priorities.

Discussion items

16. Guidance from the Governing Council to strengthen capacity for increased responsiveness, effectiveness, and efficiency, as well as for enhanced complementarity in support of UNEP's common goals and agreed strategies, is needed to meet the stronger regional emphasis emanating from the Cartagena and Johannesburg meetings. The regional geographical scope of advocacy, awareness-raising, policy and strategy development, programme implementation, capacity-building, assessment and responses to emergencies requires stronger flexibility, decentralization and integration of the work of the substantive divisions and of the Division for Regional Cooperation and Representation.

17. Draft regional annexes, detailing the work of UNEP in each region beyond the programme of work of the individual regional offices have been prepared in conjunction with UNEP's overall programme of work and budget and are attached to the present document. The experience and impact of regional delivery will be given adequate attention also in UNEP's quarterly and biennial reports.

18. Stronger regional governance is to be reflected in mechanisms that allow regional institutions to work effectively in bridging national realities with global priorities and policies. In that context, a shift towards the regionalization of the Governing Council process (preparations and follow-up) is needed to complement and support this course of action, and to strengthen and facilitate the policy exchange between the regional and global levels. The proposed main components of this process are a more significant role of the chairs of regional and subregional groups; recognition of the central role of regional offices in the preparations for the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum sessions, so as to take advantage of their close

relationship with Governments and non-governmental partners in the regions; and a revision of the structure of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum sessions in favour of flexibility, efficiency and participation of regional entities.

19. The mandate that transpires from this context creates a window of opportunity to strengthen UNEP's effectiveness and impact, in order to develop and deliver its programme of work. With a renewed mandate from the Governing Council and greater resources, UNEP will be able to focus on the regional priorities along the lines of the World Summit Plan of Implementation, and as detailed in the regional annexes attached hereto.

Questions

- (1) Are UNEP's proposals for the implementation of the regional and subregional initiatives and the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, as contained in the regional annexes, in line with your expectations?
- (2) UNEP is increasingly involved in initiatives at the regional and subregional levels. How can this development assist in implementing UNEP's Cartagena mandate of capacity-building at the national level?
- (3) In the light of its mandate, how could UNEP increase its presence at regional and subregional levels?
- (4) What role could regional forums of ministers for the environment play in the formulation and follow-up of policies as decided by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum?

Recommendations/elements for a decision

20. The following paragraphs present possible conclusions of the debate on the issues discussed in the present report. The Governing Council considered the report of the Executive Director on regional implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (UNEP/GC/22/8). During its discussions, the Council took into consideration the conclusions and decisions of the seventh special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, the provisions of the Johannesburg Declaration and the related actions in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, UNEP's proposed programme of work, 2004-2005, and other relevant documentation before the Council.

21. As a result of its discussions, the Governing Council might:

- Agree that global environmental policy setting and implementation in today's globalizing world can only be effective if it takes full account of regional priorities and specificities;
- Underline the crucial role of UNEP's regional offices with respect to policy development, integration, and delivery in the regions, and note with satisfaction the proposal of the Executive Director, as contained in the draft programme of work 2004-2005, to increase the budget and capacity of the regional offices;
- Agree on the importance of strengthening UNEP's regional presence and capacity, as a timely and adequate response to the calls for increased policy integration and delivery of UNEP's programme of work;
- Recognize the importance of the preparation and submission of regional annexes to the 2004-2005 draft programme of work to the Governing Council Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eighth special session in 2004. These regional annexes should contain progress reports on the

implementation of global priorities and progress made in promoting regional cooperation to address regional priorities;

- Underline the importance of the support to the development and implementation of regional and subregional initiatives, (such as the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development, NEPAD, the Arab Initiative for Sustainable Development, and the Central Asian Initiative);
- Agree on the need for Member States to support UNEP's work in the regions and, as and where appropriate, assist in strengthening the capacity and resources of the regional offices to that effect;
- Agree on the importance of establishing an environment that is conducive to peace and security at all levels, including the regional level, as a prerequisite for achieving the goals of sustainable development;
- Endorse the priorities for attention and action in the regions, as contained in the regional annexes to the report of the Executive Director on regional implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (UNEP/GC.22/8) and elaborated in the proposed programme of work 2004-2005;
- Request the Executive Director to establish and strengthen partnerships at the regional and subregional levels with other United Nations bodies, regional commissions, development banks and other institutions, including major civil society groups, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the development and delivery of UNEP's programme of work in the regions.

Regional annex I

Africa

Please refer to the separate document on Africa prepared for the Governing Council in document UNEP/GC.22/2/Add.4.

Regional annex II

Asia and the Pacific

Introduction

1. The environment agenda in Asia and the Pacific is influenced by rapid economic growth and difficult social conditions. The region hosts over 60 per cent of the global population and 70 per cent of the poor. It represents over 40 per cent of the global economy. The land, air, water and biodiversity are being affected as a result of rapid economic growth. In the past few years, the region has witnessed a move to consolidate and strengthen political and economic grouping at the subregional levels. These five subregions are Central Asia, North-east Asia, South Asia, South-east Asia, and the South Pacific. Environment priorities are emerging as one of the topics within these subregional groupings.

2. The World Summit on Sustainable Development has added momentum to the environment for sustainable development agenda. Many of the countries and subregional groupings are reviewing the millennium development goals for implementation. In partnership with subregional groupings, building capacity for the implementation of environment issues in sustainable development will be the challenge as Governments prepare strategies for sustainable development and poverty reduction.

World Summit on Sustainable Development follow-up: Support to ministerial forums, other relevant institutional mechanisms and regional initiatives

3. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) continues to play a key role in strengthening regional/subregional mechanisms and initiatives. UNEP hosted the secretariat for the World Summit on Sustainable Development preparations in partnership with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia (ESCAP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and co-hosted the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit in partnership with the Government of Kyrgyzstan, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and other key players in the mountain agenda. UNEP, together with ADB and UNDP, co-hosts the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific every five years, convened by ESCAP since 1985. The 2000 Ministerial Conference assessed the regional state of the environment as well as policies for sustainable development, and developed a strategic approach for addressing the critical environmental issues of the region in the new millennium. The major outcomes of the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in 2000 were the adoption of the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development 2001–2005, a ministerial declaration, as well as a regional message for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

4. UNEP played an active role in the World Summit on Sustainable Development preparatory process for Asia and the Pacific. A task force was established with representatives from ADB, ESCAP, UNDP and UNEP to execute the preparatory process of the World Summit in the region. A partnership was also forged with intergovernmental agencies in the region for the preparatory process. UNEP has served as a focal point and secretariat for the task force.

5. Promoting policies for regional cooperation to address transboundary and common issues of concern through scientific assessment is a priority. UNEP is assisting in a number of regional initiatives; in Central Asia, the Regional Environment Action Plan; in North-east Asia, on dust storms and the Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia; in South Asia, the Glacial Lake Outburst Floods project and the Male Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its likely Transboundary Effects for South Asia; and in South-east Asia, on transboundary haze and for the South China seas.

6. At the subregional level, UNEP provides support to the following institutions:

(a) Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): A memorandum of understanding was signed between UNEP and ASEAN in January 2002, and assistance is being provided by UNEP to support ASEAN's working groups on multilateral environmental agreements, the coastal and marine environment, and biodiversity, as well as activities under the ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment towards implementation of the ASEAN Strategic Plan of Action on the Environment, 1999-2004. UNEP has assisted with the development of a legal framework for the prevention of transboundary haze pollution, the second ASEAN State of the Environment Report (2000), and the ASEAN Environmental Education Action Plan, 2000-2005. Key issues in the subregion are deforestation and biodiversity loss, urban air pollution, seasonal smoke and haze, soil degradation, freshwater pollution, urbanization and waste disposal and management, degradation of the coastal and marine environment, and natural disasters, such as flooding;

(b) South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP): UNEP has assisted in the development of the SACEP's strategy and programme, which are targeted towards the following areas: capacity-building and institutional strengthening; conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; ecosystems conservation and management; environmental information and assessment; and education and enhancement of awareness. Priorities in South-Asia are degradation of land resources, freshwater pollution and scarcity, loss of biodiversity, atmospheric air pollution and climate change, natural disasters, urbanization and poverty;

(c) South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP): UNEP signed a memorandum of understanding with SPREP in March 2000. UNEP's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific will seek to involve SPREP closely in strengthening capacity-building of the Pacific island countries in addressing trade and environment issues. In that regard, the Regional Office and the Economics and Trade Branch will be organizing a high-level forum on trade and sustainable development in May 2003, in Seoul, including participation from the Pacific subregion. Key issues in the Pacific subregion are climate change and sea-level rise, water scarcity and degradation, soil degradation, deforestation and biodiversity loss, degradation of the marine environment, and increasing vulnerability to natural disasters;

(d) North Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC): The three priority areas identified by NEASPEC are energy and air pollution, nature conservation and capacity-building. Several UNEP assisted projects on energy and air pollution, including training workshops, technology demonstration projects, and monitoring/data collection projects, have been identified and implemented with financial assistance from ADB and other partners. Priority in the subregion will be given to land degradation, atmospheric pollution, deforestation and biodiversity loss, degradation of freshwater quality, degradation of the marine environment, and natural disasters;

(e) In addition to NEASPEC, UNEP has also been supportive and participated in other subregional forums, such as the Northeast Asia Conference on Environmental Cooperation (NEAC) and the Environment Congress for Asia and the Pacific (ECO-Asia);

(f) UNEP has also fostered close ties with subregional bodies and has visibly enhanced its role and recognition at the subregional level by assisting with the development and implementation of subregional action plans.

7. UNEP is carrying out a comprehensive assessment of the relevant targets and benchmarks outlined in the World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation, endorsed by heads of Government. The Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is consulting with subregional bodies and partners to adapt the global priorities as expressed in the Plan of Implementation at the regional and subregional levels, in congruence with agreed regional and subregional action plans. Based on that analysis, UNEP has tentatively identified potential projects and activities, which could be undertaken at the regional, subregional and national levels, in conjunction with other stakeholders and with substantive support from UNEP headquarters. As a matter of priority, particular attention is being given to the areas of water and sanitation, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity.

8. UNEP will implement its support and cooperation in the above areas through:

(a) Partnerships and cooperation with subregional bodies, such as the Hanns Seidel Foundation (environmental education and urban environmental management), the private sector such as GAIAX Incorporated (environmental education), bilateral donors (Sweden, the Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction from Industry in Asia and the Pacific (GERIAP) project; Denmark, workshop on linking freshwater and coastal management; Australia, on sustainable consumption); the Consumer Unity and Trust Society (trade and environment); ADB (cleaner production and desertification); the World Conservation Union (IUCN), (Global Environment Facility (GEF) projects, environmental education); and ESCAP (through the memorandum of understanding signed in January 2002 for undertaking joint activities).

(b) Inter-agency collaboration: Thematic Working Group on Environment and Development (TWGED), plus individual areas of cooperation between UNEP and a number of other United Nations organizations, such as FAO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations University (UNU) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and others. At the national level, many of the countries are reviewing commitments that have been made. These commitments include: multilateral environmental agreements, millennium development goals and the World Summit Plan of Implementation. Many of the countries have requested UNEP for assistance to build capacity to fulfil these commitments. Together with the subregional groupings, UNEP will need to strengthen partnerships with ADB, United Nations Resident Coordinators, civil society groups, IUCN, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and bilateral agencies in these capacity-building efforts.

Regional annex III

Latin America and the Caribbean

Introduction

1. The Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development was approved by the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin American and the Caribbean at its first extraordinary meeting, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 31 August 2002 in the margins of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The initiative was incorporated into the World Summit Plan of Implementation, together with other regional initiatives.
2. Institutional arrangements, as well as the necessary mechanisms for the implementation of the Initiative, are currently under discussion by country experts and representatives of the Inter-agency Technical Committee comprising the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and will be submitted for approval to the ministers at the next meeting of the Forum.
3. Progress has been made in relation to some of the components of the initiative. Two of these are the increasing use of renewable energy in the region and the access to genetic resources and equitable sharing of benefits. The Forum of Ministers of the region has approached the European Union and is holding technical consultations envisaging the harmonization of targets, a joint approach in international forums, and a common programme of action, among other collaborative efforts. On the other hand, an exchange of legal experiences and information on access to genetic resources and traditional knowledge and intellectual the property rights in mega-diverse like-minded countries is expected to propose guidelines for future action in the framework of the initiative.

World Summit on Sustainable Development follow-up: Support to ministerial forums, other relevant institutional mechanisms, and to regional initiatives

4. UNEP acts as secretariat for the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, which decides on common concerns and shared priorities. The environmental priorities are incorporated into its plan of work and taken into account in the development of the global policies and strategies of UNEP.
5. UNEP coordinates the Inter-agency Technical Committee (comprising UNDP, ECLAC, the World Bank and IDB). This institutional mechanism of inter-agency coordination for decision-making adds to the efforts to allocate the technical and financial resources available in accordance with the regional environmental agenda. UNEP is expected to provide secretariat support and advisory services in the implementation phase of the Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development, particularly in the environmental related components. It is hoped that it may also facilitate linkages with programmes developed by regional economic commissions, other United Nations bodies, and partners. UNEP's networking capacity with subregional organizations, civil society and academic sectors is considered an asset for the forthcoming phases.
6. In support of the initiative, UNEP will focus on the following areas:
 - (a) Biodiversity: protected areas, integrated ecosystems management, access and benefit-sharing of genetic resources;
 - (b) Watershed management, land-based sources of pollution, physical alteration of coastal areas;

- (c) Urban environmental management, water pollution, solid wastes;
 - (d) Vulnerability and early warning, human settlements and sustainable cities, particularly the preparation of the Global Environment Outlook Cities project for selected cities in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the Local Level (APPEL) programme;
 - (e) Health, environment and poverty, in particular vector-borne diseases, air pollution and chemicals;
 - (f) Renewable energies and cleaner production, including corporate responsibility;
 - (g) Promotion of new patterns of consumption and production, including support to the target of renewable energy at 10 per cent of the total energy use in the region by the year 2010, as well as the establishment of Cleaner Production Centers in all countries of the region;
 - (h) Environmental education and capacity-building in priority areas such as environmental law and synergy between conventions;
 - (i) Environmental assessment and indicators;
 - (j) Promotion of participation of civil society, parliamentarians, academics and other groups in environmental issues.
7. Partnerships and inter-agency collaborative efforts seem to be the best way to achieve the expected results and the Inter-agency Technical Committee created in the framework of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean can be considered as a successful model.

Regional annex IV

North-America

Introduction

1. The Governments of Canada and the United States of America work together and independently on a broad range of environmental issues. The region has a wide range of expertise, experience and resources which provide significant support to the global programme of work of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

2. The North American region contributes to UNEP's programmes, providing access to the two countries' extensive experience with environmental policy development involving the private sector and civil society, compliance with and enforcement of global multilateral environmental agreements, work on voluntary industrial initiatives, development of economic instruments and pollution control technology, public participation in environmental decision-making, and environmental information and education.

World Summit on Sustainable Development follow-up: Support to ministerial forums, other relevant institutional mechanisms, and to regional initiatives

3. UNEP does not provide direct programme support to the region of North America as it does to other regions, although UNEP does call the attention of the two Governments in North America to the critical issues and needs of the other regions and seeks to enlist their help and contributions to the work of other regions.

4. Canada and the United States cooperate in a number of regional organizations. They actively take part in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, and they are engaged in a range of regional and bilateral organizations, such as the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation and the International Joint Commission. The Environmental Commission cooperates with UNEP in the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, the biodiversity programme and in trade and the environment. North America is also the location of the UNEP administered secretariats of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol and the Convention on Biological Diversity. UNEP's Global Resource Information Database (GRID) facility at Sioux Falls is also housed in North America, with Government support.

5. UNEP's Regional Office for North America also maintains close contact with and disseminates to UNEP, information and analysis from a number of institutions, including multilateral organizations such as the World Bank group and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and from civil society organizations and think-tanks such as the World Resources Institute.

6. UNEP is exploring with North American organizations a number of new initiatives to strengthen UNEP's cooperation with them, civil society and the private sector, with a view to strengthening collaborative activities and enhancing the region's contribution to UNEP's programmes. These include (a) monitoring the North American partnerships announced at the World Summit on Sustainable Development so as to help track progress and facilitate UNEP's contribution to them; (b) a regional effort with a network of universities to promote a university Global Resources Institute initiative; (c) an initiative of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment involving the United States and a number of Caribbean countries; (d) an effort to involve Canadian and United States companies in UNEP's renewable energy activities; (e) support to the work of the Division of Early Warning and Assessment and the outposted GRID facility at Sioux Falls; and (f) working with several key regional civil society organizations to identify where UNEP may collaborate more fruitfully with them in their programmes. Specific World Summit partnerships are the Global Network on Energy for Sustainable Development, the White Water to Blue Water Initiative, the Global

Partnership for Cleaner Fuels and Vehicles for Cleaner Air, the Indoor Air Quality Initiative and the Children's Environmental Health Indicators Initiative.

Regional annex V

West Asia region

Introduction

1. The League of Arab States is the political umbrella within the Arab region, and it is through the League that the required synergy for the implementation of sustainable development can be found. The League has two councils addressing the three pillars of sustainable development:

(a) The Economic and Social Council, represented at the level of minister of economics of each of the 22 member States, reporting to the League Council and supported by a technical secretariat;

(b) The Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE), represented at the level of ministers of environment of each of the 22 member States, reporting to the League Council and supported by a technical secretariat.

2. Under the umbrella of CAMRE is the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR), which consists of all Arab countries, and is chaired by the Chairman of the CAMRE session. Membership comprises UNEP, other regional United Nations organizations and regional and Arab organizations working on environment and development, such as the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. JCEDAR acts as a discussion body for the development of regional programmes. Both the CAMRE technical secretariat and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Office for West Asia currently serve as the joint secretariat for JCEDAR.

3. Cooperation between UNEP and CAMRE was formally established in 1986. The support is aided through the establishment by UNEP of the Arab League Liaison Office, in Cairo.

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4. UNEP works closely with the CAMRE technical secretariat in the development and implementation of the priorities of the region. During 2001, in order to coordinate the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development in the region, a joint secretariat was formed, comprising the CAMRE technical secretariat, UNEP and the Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA). The joint secretariat mechanism proved successful in coordinating the regional preparations for the World Summit, and it is proposed that such a mechanism, expanded to involve also the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), should be pursued for the delivery of sustainable development solutions in accordance with the priorities of the region.

5. The Arab Initiative, developed during the preparatory process for the World Summit and endorsed by the League of Arab States, will be used as the blueprint for action to implement sustainable development throughout the Arab region. The key components of the Initiative are peace, security and institutional structure, poverty eradication, population and health, education, research and technology transfer, resource management, production, and consumption and trade. The proposed mechanism for implementation is a joint council for sustainable development in the Arab region, comprising the Councils of the League and CAMRE, and a secretariat comprising the League technical secretariats, UNEP, ESCWA and UNDP.

6. Key areas of focus for 2003, developed as a result of the outcomes of the World Summit, the WEHAB (water and sanitation, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity) agenda and the Arab Initiative, are:

(a) Further development of regional programmes for the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, etc.) using the model adopted by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD) for a regional approach and continued provision of technical guidance for member States attending conferences of the Parties;

(b) Development and implementation of regional programmes on water resource management, including continued work with ESCWA on the equitable sharing of water resources, to address both the management of shared water resources and also water demand management, efficiency and use of wastewater in relevant applications;

(c) Continued implementation of the Subregional Action Programme under UNCCD and its further development using funding secured both from the Global Mechanism of UNCCD and from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. The pursuit of such innovative sources of funding will continue in the region, especially with respect to the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based activities;

(d) The regionalization of the industry programme, including a regional strategy for the management of chemicals and wastes, a regional strategy on cleaner production and sustainable consumption, a regional energy strategy linked to the WEHAB agenda initiative, regionalization of centres and facilities of excellence concerned with information and technology in the various sectoral services and programmes;

(e) Development of a programme on environmental law in the region, further to the recent signing of a memorandum of understanding with the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Centre for Environmental Law and Kuwait University to implement a series of capacity-building activities to assist Member States in policy and legislation development, implementation and enforcement;

(f) The establishment of a regional centre for environmental information and assessment and early warning, under which the assessment of environmental priorities will be carried out, providing the baseline data upon which programmes and activities will be developed;

(g) Capacity-building activities in all aspects of the UNEP programme to build capacity within the region for the implementation of sustainable development solutions to environmental priorities by establishing projects/activities involving all stakeholders, including at the community level.

7. The countries of West Asia were particularly interested in the water, clean fuel and mountains initiatives during the World Summit. Efforts are under way to organize a meeting of oil companies working in the area with a view to joining the Clean Fuel and Vehicles Initiative. The Arab Union for Waste Management, a first time initiative between non-governmental organizations in the region, was launched with a view to encouraging sustainable patterns of solid waste management in the region.

8. In implementing the environmental aspects of the Arab Initiative, UNEP will support joint partnerships of regional groups such as local government, economic development agencies, community organizations, business representatives and educational institutions.

9. The special relationship between the Arab-African States and the New Partnership for Africa's Development is to be further developed to create synergy and linkages between the two regional initiatives.

Regional annex V

Western and Eastern Europe, including the Newly Independent States

Introduction

1. The environmental agenda in Europe is influenced by the developments in the European Union accession process and in the larger pan-European Environment for Europe process. Decisions related to the enlargement of the European Union are strengthening and enhancing the environmental authority and outreach of the Union's policies, while increasing the opportunity and necessity for alliances and support to the non-accession countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States.
2. These developments coincide with the review of the Environment for Europe process in preparation of the Environment for Europe Conference in Kiev, in May 2003. That review might lead to enhanced cooperation and coordination among environmental institutions, processes and activities in larger Europe, with a specific emphasis on policy integration and technical cooperation with the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. A strategy to that effect is being prepared for adoption at the Kiev Conference.
3. The current developments are also consistent with the outcome and call of the World Summit on Sustainable Development for regional and subregional action and partnerships in areas which the region and subregions consider to be of priority concern. Examples are, first of all, the European Union Water Initiative for the Newly Independent States and the initiatives to develop regional or subregional legal instruments and/or regimes for the protection and sustainable management of the mountain regions in the Carpathians, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Examples include, furthermore, the call by Eastern Europe to be assisted in translating global commitments and policies, in particular the provisions of global strategies and multilateral environmental agreements, into national and subregional realities and action.

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4. The agenda and activities of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Europe can be seen and considered as part and parcel of the World Summit process. They consist firstly of efforts to strengthen the liaison with the European Union and its institutions in Brussels, with a view to optimizing scientific analysis and policy interaction and support for global priority setting and translation to other regions in the world. There is a need to strengthen this liaison work for UNEP's assessment, policy development and technical cooperation work, and to continue and further strengthen UNEP's office in Brussels and cooperation with the European Environment Agency and its affiliates. At the same time, UNEP's office in Geneva maintains close links between the organization and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and other United Nations bodies relevant to the overall programme of work of UNEP. UNEP also maintains an office in Moscow with liaison functions.
5. A second area of concentration links UNEP's capacity and expertise to regional and subregional initiatives and partnerships, with specific attention and emphasis on partnerships announced and enlisted during the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Consequently, the role and activities of UNEP in a number of areas should be strengthened, inter alia in:
 - (a) The preparation and implementation of the Environmental Strategy for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, including the European Union Water Initiative for Newly Independent States;
 - (b) Demand-driven coalitions with its partners to assist Eastern European countries to enforce and comply with the provisions of regional and global multilateral environmental agreements;
 - (c) Promoting and implementing the 10-year strategy and action plan on sustainable consumption in Eastern Europe;

(d) Creating and servicing with its partners, awareness-raising and action to promote environmental security;

(e) Developing and servicing subregional instruments and programmes for the protection and sustainable management of mountain regions, water bodies, and other similar areas.

6. UNEP's interest lies thirdly in strengthening its coalition with European partners and processes towards improving the effectiveness and impact of the governance structures and preoccupations in the region. Proposals for clustering and streamlining the agendas and meetings related to the Environment for Europe process, the Environment and Health process, the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forest in Europe, and other related processes, should be supported and include possibilities for integrating the global environmental agenda and work and priorities of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum.

7. The Regional Office for Europe is actively contributing to the implementation of a number of partnerships launched at the World Summit. For instance, it provided four background papers for the strategy for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia as a contribution to the East-West partnership, and will continue to participate in the further development and implementation of this strategy. The Regional Office is also supporting the European Union Water Initiative for Newly Independent States through background papers related to regional seas, including legal and economic measures for the environmental protection and sustainable management of the Caspian and Black Seas. Within the framework of the Global Mountain Partnership, the Regional Office assisted in organizing the Global Mountain Summit in Bishkek in November 2002. The Regional Office is also assisting the Carpathian and Caucasus countries in developing appropriate instruments for the protection of those mountains, and will continue to participate in the further development and implementation of those instruments. In the context of its programme of work for the present and future bienniums, the Regional Office will intensify its activities related to specific initiatives and partnerships launched at the World Summit, including the proposal for longer term strategies for sustainable consumption, capacity-building and training related to the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, and the contribution to better understanding and enhancing environmental security in Europe.

8. Part of the governance debate concerns the implementation of the principles of access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in Europe. UNEP's role and activities in supporting and strengthening its network of national committees, its partnership with civil society and the private sector, establishing and managing, in collaboration with ECE, a clearing house for information exchange under the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, and raising environmental awareness among the judiciary and the clergy, deserve increased attention and support.

¹ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

² Ibid, resolution 2, annex.

³ See A/CONF.199/16/Add.3.
