



**United Nations Environment Programme**  
**Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean**

PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE  
PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT  
PROGRAMA DAS NAÇOES UNIDAS PARA O MEIO AMBIENTE

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**Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of  
the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean**

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**A. PREPARATORY MEETING OF EXPERTS  
20<sup>TH</sup> TO 21<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2003**

# **Report of the Secretariat to the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean**



## I. Introduction

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1. The role developed by the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean in fulfilment of its mandate to guide the region in the quest for environment problem solutions reached an important point in the last biennium in the preparation of regional presence in Johannesburg.
2. The Forum achieved an influential role as a catalyst and coordinator in the preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development and closes out the biennium (2002-2003) with a very substantial balance of activities with considerable influence at both regional and subregional levels. The responses to the decisions and recommendations undertaken by the Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean showcase the maturity and effectiveness attained by this regional consensus mechanism.
3. The Forum begins a new biennium (2004-2005) with the challenge of implementing the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), as well as being faced with the task of reviewing its Regional Action Plan and adapting it to the agreed implementation strategy. (See ITC Report **UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XIV/4**).
4. Consequently, the XIV Forum of Ministers affords an excellent opportunity to examine and define priorities and to reconcile the planning of joint activities for the next biennium with a timely reflection on emerging and relevant issues for Latin America and the Caribbean – issues that are linked to the Johannesburg Implementation Plan and the Millennium Development Objectives.
5. Similarly, the process of reviewing the Barbados+10 Programme of Action acquires vital importance, not only for establishing the linkage between the Johannesburg process and the International Meeting to Review the Barbados+10 Programme of Action for the Small Island Developing States but also to properly focus on the specific needs put forward by the governments and civil society organizations of the small island States of the Caribbean.
6. For its part, the UNEP global programme is strategically incorporated with the visions, mandates, and goals of the countries of the region and within this process, opportune synergies are being promoted with the forums and conventions associated with the different multilateral processes on sustainable development.
7. In this Secretariat Report – which covers the period from November 2001 up to October 2003, Part I reports on the state of implementation of the decisions and recommendations derived from the Thirteenth Meeting of the Forum (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, October, 2001) while Part II reports on the decisions from the twenty-first and twenty-second sessions of the Governing Council of UNEP, (Cartagena, Colombia, February 2001, and Nairobi, Kenya, February 2003, respectively).

## **II. Fulfillment of the Ministerial Decisions and Recommendations of the Thirteenth Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean**

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### **Decision 1**

#### **Strengthening of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Plan of Strategic Action 2002-2005**

1. The Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean has made significant progress in establishing mechanisms of consensus and follow-up on environment policies and responses at regional level.
2. The most concrete result of the political dialogue and establishment of a consolidated agenda has been the process of regional preparation for the World Conference on Sustainable Development which resulted in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC).
3. This initiative recognizes the importance of the subregional and regional processes for promoting sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean and reflects the region's singularities, visions, and goals.
4. Through the Summit Preparatory Committees and in Johannesburg, the Forum of Ministers was able to participate with a solid platform of action, with integrated and harmonious negotiation positions.
5. The Forum has made important progress in rapprochement and integration with other sectorial ministerial forums, including the healthcare, urban development, tourism, and economy sectors, as is reflected in the activity reports for the period.
6. The challenge facing the Forum in the post-Johannesburg period is to deploy the ILAC implementation strategy and to convert this framework of cooperation into a catalyst and coordinator for national and regional policies conducive to attaining the Millennium and Johannesburg goals.

### **Decision 2**

#### **International environmental management**

7. In response to the decisions previously taken to work on the issue of international environmental management, in addition to the tasks of the open-ended working group, the Forum held consultations on this issue at the II World Forum of Environment Ministers held in Cartagena, Colombia, in 2002, where important decisions for future UNEP work were taken and are currently in the process of being implemented.

### **Decision 3**

#### **Kyoto Protocol**

8. Pursuant to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, twenty-four countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have ratified the Kyoto Protocol, with a regional strength that has paved the way for its imminent entry into effect.

9. Similarly, UNEP – in cooperation with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the FAO – has provided advice to the countries of the region so that, prior to preparatory and negotiation meetings, they might get together and discuss technical options and common approaches as regards the Clean Development Mechanism and their Forestation and Reforestation Projects.

#### **Decision 4**

##### **Persistent organic pollutants**

10. Throughout 2002, the region advanced considerably in preparing for compliance with the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. Promoted by UNEP and the Convention Secretariat, technical workshops were held in Belize, Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, and Panama, and further workshops are planned to be held in Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, and El Salvador in the latter months of 2003.

11. There was particular collaboration with the Caribbean countries during the Subregional Workshop to Support Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants held in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, which provided technical assistance in environmental legislation and political matters.

12. In addition, support has been provided to Antigua and Barbuda and Cuba in the drawing up of their National Action Plans against persistent organic pollutants and Trinidad and Tobago, Dominica and Granada have been urged to conclude the process of ratifying the Stockholm Convention which, to date, has been ratified by six countries.

#### **Decision 5**

##### **Cartagena Protocol**

13. Ratification of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety has been constantly appealed for on international environmental forums as a valuable tool for sustainable development.

14. Eleven countries of Latin America and the Caribbean contributed by adding theirs to the fifty ratifications needed for the Protocol to come into effect on September 11, 2003.

#### **Decision 6**

##### **Environmental indicators**

15. Work on environmental indicators includes the state of the environment and progress made in terms of sustainable development. In response to the request of the Forum, focal points were identified in the countries of the region, a review was conducted of experiences and work underway, and, based on the information gathered, the First Workshop on Environmental Indicators was held in Costa Rica on August 27 and 28, 2003.

16. Attending the workshop were representatives from Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, and St. Lucia, as well as members of the World Bank, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Inter-American Development Bank, and the United Nations Statistics Division. At the workshop, a series of indicators were proposed to be put into effect immediately in Latin American and Caribbean countries so as to follow up on the ILAC.

17. The second phase will consist of the establishment of a regional project on environmental statistics and to this end, ideas were proposed for preparing the project of

the creation of implementation capacities to be submitted to the XIV Meeting of the Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean.

**18.** UNEP published its edition entitled "Methodology and Results of the Deforestation Indicators Programme for Mexico" and then organized the Meeting on Sustainable Development Indicators in April, 2002.

### **Decision 7**

#### **Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean**

**19.** UNEP has extended the operation of its Trust Fund up to December 2003, thus supporting the various activities of the Environmental Training Network that include the priority and strategic lines defined in the Regional Action Plan for the period 2002-2003.

**20.** The Network has continued working diligently on its Publishing Programme comprised of four series: Environmental Education and Training Manuals; Basic Textbooks for Environmental Training; Latin American Environmental Thinking; and Environmental Forums and Debates. Other activities include technical assistance provided for the organization of seminars, environmental training courses and workshops, and the arrangement of grants to promote environmental awareness. The Network recently announced the special call by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) to initiate courses aimed at creating effective means of cooperation and the equitable participation of the Caribbean communities and institutions that manage the critical use of natural resources.

**21.** In May, 2002, the Network organized the "Rio Workshop to Johannesburg. The Transition Toward Sustainable Development: the Outlook for Latin America and the Caribbean", held in Mexico City. At the workshop, more than 30 documents from academics, researchers, and experts from the region were presented and discussed with regard to the agenda on the environment and sustainable development. One of the main results from the workshop was the publication of the book "The Transition Toward Sustainable Development: Outlook for Latin America and the Caribbean" which was presented at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. See also "Decision 21/14" in this Report, which includes activities promoted by the Network on issues of trade and environment.

**22.** A proposal to review the focal areas and operational methods of the Environmental Training Network will be submitted to the XIV Forum of Environment Ministers for its consideration and approval. See Working Document UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XIV/9.

### **Decision 8**

#### **Working groups and coordinating countries**

**23.** The Group of Experts on Environmental Statistics and Indicators of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean was created in October, 2001, with representatives from seven countries: Brazil; Colombia; Costa Rica (coordinating country); Cuba; Mexico; Peru; and St. Lucia. As shown in "Decision 6" of this Report, the Group met in August, 2003. The other previously established Working Groups did not conduct follow-up on their work. The XIV Forum should give consideration to reintroducing this working method in support of the ILAC implementation strategy.

## **Decision 9**

### **Protection of the ozone layer**

**24.** Regional activities for compliance with the provisions of the Montreal Protocol of the Vienna Convention for the protection of the ozone layer have been intense and are detailed in "Decision 21/9" and in the Working Document UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XIV/7.

**25.** Worthy of note is that during 2003, the UNEP Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) increased its staff and modified its organization, in keeping with the demands imposed by the timeline for compliance with the gradual elimination of ozone depleting substances. The CAP has: a Coordinating Officer; an Officer in charge of Refrigerant Management Plans; an Officer responsible for methyl bromide projects; and an Officer to monitor or follow up on political issues and legislation enforcement. In May, 2003, the 2002 Progress Report on the OzonAction Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean was concluded and presented to the IV Meeting of the Montreal Protocol Executive Committee in July of that year.

**26.** Similarly, in June, 2003, the Individual Country Report on the Status of Compliance with the Montreal Protocol was made available to the countries of the region. This document serves as a tool for monitoring or following up on the situation of each country and was distributed among attendees at the Network meetings.

## **Decision 10**

### **Desertification, drought, and land degradation**

**27.** UNEP, together with the World Mechanism of the International Convention to Combat Desertification, has been developing a regional project on the harmonization of related public policies. The first stage of this project was conducted during 2002 and included a Methodology and Planning Workshop, a Framework Study on Public Policies, the preparation of an Integrated Support Programme for Sustainable Land Management, and a Preliminary Diagnosis of the Performance of Rural Development Projects in Mexico.

**28.** The following CD-ROMs have been brought out: "Public Policies (Mexico)"; "Database on Rural Development Policy Instruments Having a Bearing on Natural Resources and Desertification"; and "Framework Study on Public Policies". The second phase will include the development of studies in Barbados, Panama, and the Dominican Republic.

**29.** Also in collaboration with the World Mechanism of the Convention to Combat Desertification, UNEP supported the Exchange between Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic for the Strengthening of Technical Capacities and Support for the Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Haiti and the Dominican Republic held in Havana in April, 2003, as part of the South-South Cooperation promoted pursuant to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought.

**30.** The recently created UNEP/GEF Unit in the Regional Office has focused on drawing up proposals on the issues of desertification, drought, and land degradation in areas of the Latin American and Caribbean region.

**31.** See also "Decisions 14 and 21/1" in this Report.

## **Decision 11**

### **Evaluation of the environment in Latin America and the Caribbean**

**32.** UNEP continues to provide advice and assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean in preparing region-wide comprehensive environmental assessments, supporting the countries of the region in the preparation of national assessments within the framework of the GEO process and methodology, and in preparing specific sectorial assessments in areas identified by the Forum of Ministers and the Regional Action Plan.

**33.** The GEO 2 Report for Latin America and the Caribbean was published in January, 2002, in both English and Spanish. In addition, GEO Reports were published for the following countries: Nicaragua (2001), Chile (2002), Costa Rica (2002), and Brazil (2002), as well as the Andean GEO (2003). Currently in the process are the GEO Reports for St. Lucia, El Salvador, Panama, and Guatemala.

**34.** In February 2003, "Methodology for the Preparation of GEO City Reports" was published and contains GEO Reports for the metropolitan areas of the region: Manaus (2002), and Rio de Janeiro (2002). Currently being processed are the Reports for: Buenos Aires; Bogota; Havana; Mexico City; San Salvador; and the GEO Caribbean pamphlet.

**35.** GEO publications to encourage the active participation of young people in UNEP activities are detailed in "Decision 21/22" of this Report.

**36.** UNEP has supported the organization of other meetings to develop environmental assessment projects which include the "Latin American and Caribbean Workshop on Strategic Environmental Assessment" held in Colombia in September, 2003.

## **Decision 12**

### **Strengthening of participatory mechanisms in environmental management**

**37.** As part of the regional process in readying for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, pre-summit subregional preparatory meetings were held, for the first time. Consequently, there were four such meetings; one each for the countries of: the Andean Area; the Caribbean Basin; the South Cone; and Mesoamerica. The Secretariat of these meetings was under the auspices of UNEP, and ECLAC.

**38.** Within the context of the Latin American and Caribbean process of preparing for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, four Subregional Civil Society Panels were convened during June and July, 2001 – one each in the South Cone, the Caribbean Basin, Mesoamerica, and the Andean Area, with the participation of Non-Governmental Organizations from each Subregion. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the theme of "Civil Society on the Road to Rio + 10".

**39.** UNEP acts as Operative Secretariat of the Environmental Commission of the Latin American Parliament. In the performance of said duty, the Regional Office's Environmental Law and Policy Programme provide assistance to the above Commission in the organizing and holding of its ordinary and extraordinary meetings. In this capacity, it specifically supported two meetings.

**40.** The first was the XV Ordinary Meeting pertaining to the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Guatemala City on October 8 and 9, 2001. At this Meeting, parliamentarians conducted an analysis of progress made in environmental legislation in the region since the Rio Summit of 1992. Similarly, they adopted the Guatemala



Declaration as a contribution to the preparatory process leading up to the Summit. This Declaration was presented by the heads of the Latin American Parliament's (PARLATINO) Environmental Commission at the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Conference of the Johannesburg Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on October 23 and 24, 2001. The questionnaire on progress achieved in environmental legislation in the countries of the region in the past ten years served as the platform for discussion at the meeting, particularly as regards the implementation of Programme 21 and the Rio Agreements.

**41.** The second was the XVI Ordinary Meeting held on April 25 and 26 in Montevideo. As this Commission's contribution to the preparatory process of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, this Meeting adopted the Montevideo Declaration. At the behest of the Latin American Parliament, this Declaration was distributed among and presented before attendees at the VII Meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee of the Forum of Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean held in Sao Paulo in May, 2002.

**42.** UNEP likewise participated in the British Caribbean Civil Society Meeting held in Dominica on March 9 and 10, 2002, as a preparatory event leading up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The keynote theme of this Meeting was "Civil society and the process leading up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development". In addition, several regional and subregional meetings were organized with civil society entities so as to gather the opinions and input of these groups and incorporate them into the preparatory process of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

### **Decision 13**

#### **Environmental public awareness**

**43.** The UNEP Environmental Citizenship Programme financed by the GEF has entered the implementation stage with six Latin American and Caribbean networks: PARLATINO; Consumers International; IUCA; CEC-UICN; AMARC/ALER; and CLAI; as well as with agencies of seven governments with whom first-phase activities are being conducted: Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, and Peru.

**44.** Following an initial Meeting of the UNEP Environmental Citizenship Programme Networks held in Quito, Ecuador, in September 2002, a Workshop was organized for key groups of the Environmental Citizenship Programme held on January 30 and 31, 2003. Upon conclusion of the Workshop, the networks went on to ratify the agreements with their respective signatures and assuming the commitment to begin the initial formal activities of the Programme as of March, 2003. A Sustainable Consumption Manual was published for the Consumers International organization and work is presently being done on the preparation of a corporate image manual for the Environmental Citizenship Programme which includes a logo, applications, and a website, as well as an operational manual and communication strategy.

**45.** So far, thematic manuals have been prepared on: international waters (Mexico, Ecuador); biodiversity (Chile, Costa Rica, and Mexico); climate change (Argentina); and ozone (Peru and Ecuador).

**46.** Regional communication projects have been strengthened through intense activity on the part of UNEP in the areas of publicity and raising public awareness. The availability of 24 environmental profiles of countries of the region is envisaged by the end of 2003, thus contributing to the dissemination of key information so as to understand the state of the environment in Latin America and the Caribbean.

47. Other important activities include the publication and distribution –in English and Spanish– of various books, CD-ROMs, newspaper supplements (“Tierramérica”), and daily bulletins and newscasts, as well as the organization of environmental press conferences.

48. The Latin American and Caribbean Network of Environmental Video Libraries has continued to grow throughout the region and there are currently eleven countries participating in this project. Each video library has a stock of 250 original videos, and their respective copies. At least four more countries are expected to join the project before the end of 2003.

49. Yet another mechanism which ensures the active participation of young people in the environmental decision-making process is the GEO Youth programme, devoted to promoting environment-related dialogue among youth groups and young individuals alike. The programme targets young people aged between 15 and 25 years and constitutes the most important forum for young people to interact and discuss environmental questions and issues. The most noteworthy activities of the GEO Youth programme are detailed in “Decision 21/22” of this Report.

#### **Decision 14**

#### **Design and approval of regional projects with GEF resources**

50. The context of the regional projects designed through the GEF is defined as per the priorities established by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, by the priority areas identified within ILAC, and by the strategic priorities of the actual GEF Work Plan and the Action Programme for the Small Island States.

51. In this regard, the ILAC document has been reviewed, it now incorporates input from the ITC agencies, and at the present moment, the final version is in the process of being prepared so as to be ratified and submitted to the GEF.

52. The work being done by the GEF in UNEP has been focused on efforts toward working closely with the countries of the region and the ITC to develop a pipeline project entitled “A Programmatic Framework for the Incorporation of World Environmental Issues into the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development”. Similarly, a series of pipeline projects have been developed for which GEF financing is to be requested. UNEP and UNDP have coordinated their actions as regards the support provided to the countries in the drawing up of their national plans for self-assessment of capacities. To this end, a Dialogue Workshop between the countries and the GEF was held from December 4-7, 2002, in Buenos Aires, Argentina and on June 24, 2003, the First Meeting of the GEF –Caribbean Group was held in Havana, Cuba. See Working Document UNEP/LAC/IGWG.XIV/5.

53. The participation of UNEP in regional GEF activities is explained in “Decisions 21/1, 21/8, 21/25, 21/28, 22/13, and 22/19” in this Report.

#### **Decision 15**

#### **Evaluation of the Santa Cruz Hemispheric Action Plan**

54. The review of the Santa Cruz Hemispheric Plan was included as part of preparatory process leading up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and has been taken into account by the countries for presenting their respective national reports to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).

## **Decision 16**

### **Forests, water resources, and ecosystems**

**55.** UNEP action in the management of basins and subterranean aquifers is concentrated on the great basins of the region and, together with the GEF and the OAS, projects are being developed in the basins of the following rivers: the Bermejo, in Argentina; the San Francisco and Pantanal, in Brazil; and the San Juan, in Costa Rica and Nicaragua. New proposals are currently at different levels of formulation in important trans-boundary basins – in the basin of the River Plate, in Belize-Guatemala and Dominican Republic-Haiti, in conjunction with the UNDP.

**56.** UNEP is getting ready to work intensely in the Caribbean, in the management of coastal aquifers of vital importance to this region, particularly taking into account the prevention of saline intrusion into subterranean aquifers, as well as the exchange of experience gained and lessons learned. The deployment of GEF resources in this area is one of the priorities.

**57.** The UNEP Natural Resources Unit promotes a comprehensive approach to ecosystems within the initiatives for the diagnosis and protection of natural areas in Latin America and the Caribbean; a framework that is the cornerstone for the establishment of Biological Corridors for sustainable development. In this regard, work is being done jointly with the Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD) and the UNDP in the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor aimed at the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama. Through the GEF, work has been done on projects – during 2002 and 2003 – to establish a Marine Corridor between the Galapagos Islands and the Cocos Islands, which involves Ecuador and Costa Rica, and to establish an Andean Corridor, which will include Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador.

**58.** Similarly, the UNEP Natural Resources Unit, together with the FAO, promoted the reactivation and restructuring of the Latin American National Parks Network, Other Protected Areas, and Wild Flora and Fauna, which was achieved following participation in the 5<sup>th</sup> World Parks Congress held in Durban, South Africa, in September, 2003.

**59.** In addition, the diagnosis of protected natural areas in Latin America and the Caribbean – with emphasis on the situation of ecosystems – entitled “Current State of the Protected Areas of Latin America and the Caribbean” was presented before the focal points of the Latin American National Parks Network, Other Protected Areas, and Wild Flora and Fauna at the Durban Congress and is available on CD-ROM. At the present time, UNEP is coordinating efforts with the FAO to continue the development of this theme.

## **Decision 17**

### **Joint meeting on health and the environment**

**60.** At the initiative of Canada and with the support of the PAHO and UNEP, the Joint Meeting of Health and Environment Ministers of the Americas (HEMA) was held in Ottawa, Canada, on March 4 and 5, 2002. The main purpose of the Meeting was to address and discuss the countries’ national and regional common objectives so as to open up broad opportunities of equality for sustainable development in the entire region and thus achieve better conditions of health and higher standards of living for the people of the American continent. The common issues of concern identified are: comprehensive management of water resources; air quality; consequences or implications of natural disasters and those caused by human activity; the rational management of chemical substances; the potential impact on health resulting from weather variability and climate

change; the health of workers; food safety and protection; and the ethics of sustainable development from a health and environmental viewpoint.

**61.** The Meeting was attended by twenty-nine Ministers of health and the environment from various countries of the region and by approximately 150 representatives from governmental, inter-governmental, and non-governmental organizations, as well as agencies of the United Nations. During the sessions, an official ministerial communiqué on health and the environment was adopted and served as input for the preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. This document establishes a Work Programme to be developed in the future on issues of health and the environment. One of the key recommendations from the Meeting was the creation of a HEMA Task Force in order to monitor the work programme. UNEP, together with the PAHO, have provided substantial support at the HEMA Task Force Meetings, the first of which was held in Montreal, Canada in May, 2003, and the second in Mexico City in August the same year. The objectives of the second such Meeting were to approve and ratify the structure of the follow-up process of the HEMA to include the establishment of an Operative Follow-Up Group, exchange and evaluate the information obtained from regional and international agencies, take note of the current situation of the countries as regards the attainment of the twelve goals identified during the first Meeting, and to compare different means by which to obtain ministerial support for the HEMA process. The third Meeting of the Task Force of the Ministers of Health and the Environment will be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in November, 2003, the purpose of which is to endorse the follow-up process and devise a region-wide plan of action for the short and medium terms.

### **Decision 18**

#### **Ethics and sustainable development**

**62.** The “Regional Symposium on Environmental Ethics for Sustainable Development” was held in Bogota, Colombia, from May 2-4, 2002. Organized jointly by UNEP, the Government of Colombia and the Earth Council – with the support of the UNDP, ECLAC, and the World Bank, the Symposium brought together a select group of 35 distinguished figures from different spheres of government politics and civil society action groups, including governments, international organizations, scientific and academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations. The Symposium called on a variety of social actors who included parliamentarians, educators, communicators and representatives of interest groups (business people, political leaders, indigenous groups, and afro-descendants). The Symposium generated broad reflection, dialogue, and debate on the ethical principles that should guide the commitments and practices of the main actors and interest groups involved in the economic, social, and environmental management of sustainable development. The wealth of ideas and proposals that resulted from this debate led the participants to the determination to draw up a Manifesto for Life: Ethics for Sustainability. The papers presented at the Symposium have been published in the book “Ethics. Life. Sustainability” under the publishing programme of the Environmental Training Network in its series entitled “Latin American Environmental Thinking”. The “Manifesto for Life” has been published in over ten magazines and has been distributed throughout different electronic media. It can likewise be viewed at: <http://www.pnuma.org/educamb/esp/manintro.htm>

### **III. Implementation of the decisions of the twenty-first and twenty-second sessions of the Governing Council of UNEP in Latin America and the Caribbean**

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#### **Decision 21/1**

#### **Land degradation: support for implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification**

**63.** UNEP supports implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification via its participation in the activities of the world mechanism of the Convention to Combat Desertification, working jointly with the GEF.

**64.** In this regard and within the framework of the Regional Information Exchange System, Desertification Information Network for the LAC Region (DESELAC), UNEP participated in the exchange between Cuba and Haiti to Strengthen Technical and Institutional Capacities in support of Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Haiti and the Dominican Republic held in Havana, Cuba, in April, 2003, as part of the South-South Cooperation promoted by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought.

**65.** UNEP has strengthened its support for implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, working jointly with the GEF. Noteworthy among the activities conducted is the review of the project on land degradation and biodiversity for the Caribbean entitled "Protection of land and the prevention of land degradation in the small island ecosystems of the Caribbean" in February, 2003.

#### **Decision 21/8**

#### **Biosafety**

**66.** In February, 2002, the Group of Like-Minded Megadiverse Countries was created, the Technical Secretariat of which is currently established in Mexico. This Group functions as a mechanism of consultation and cooperation aimed at promoting common interests and priorities pertaining to the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity.

**67.** The Latin American countries belonging to this international group are: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela. The group has recognized the importance of promoting an international system to foster and effectively safeguard the fair and equitable distribution of the benefits obtained from the use of biological diversity and its components, as well as protecting the traditional knowledge associated with biodiversity.

**68.** Support has been given to two meetings of experts from the like-minded megadiverse countries. The first – at the initiative of Government of Mexico – was held in Cancun in February, 2002, which was followed, on February 18, by a Ministerial Meeting that was attended by Environment Ministers from the countries involved. At that juncture, the "Cancun Declaration of Like-Minded Megadiverse Countries" was unanimously adopted. One of the agreements derived from the Meeting was that the next event of the Group should be a meeting of experts to address the issue of legislative and regulatory experience as regards access to genetic resources and the distribution of benefits. This

Meeting was held in Cuzco, Peru, from November 27-29 and was attended by a ministerial group, as well as a group of experts. The Meeting adopted the Cuzco Declaration on Access to Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge, and Intellectual Property Rights” of the Like-Minded Megadiverse Countries.

**69.** As regards the Joint UNEP/GEF Project for the development of National Biosafety Frameworks, UNEP participated in the Regional Workshop on Biodiversity in Latin America and the Caribbean held in Argentina in May, 2002. In March that same year, the First Consultative Workshop on the Outlook for Mesoamerican Biodiversity was organized and in December, support was provided for the organization and coordination of the subregional workshop entitled “Analysis of Risks and Biosafety, Public Participation”.

**70.** In July 2003, UNEP participated in the Working Group Meeting for the Planning of Joint UNEP-GEF Projects on Biodiversity of the Third Series of Regional Workshops on Regulatory and Administrative Systems held in Geneva, Switzerland. That same month, the regional stance on biotechnology-related issues was presented to the Regional Consultative Meeting on Biotechnology for Latin America and the Caribbean held in Brazil and organized by UNIDO in order to assess the opportunities and limitations for biotechnology within a context which prioritises social and economic benefits.

**71.** The principal concerns and efforts of UNEP have been centred on dissemination for the protection of biological diversity against the potential risks of genetically altered organisms, access to genetic resources and the equitable distribution of benefits, the protection of traditional knowledge, and the development of appropriate national legislation.

### **Decision 21/9**

#### **Atmosphere**

**72.** See “Decision 22/3” in this Report.

### **Decision 21/10**

#### **Global Programme of Action for Protection of the Marine Environment against Land-Based Activities**

**73.** Activities conducted under the Global Programme of Action have been concentrated on providing technical assistance to governments to evaluate the environmental impacts of land-based activities and to design policies for the management of sewage. To this end, documents have been upgraded and distributed and these include: “Sewage as a source of pollution in coastal and marine areas of Latin America and the Caribbean”; “Diagnosis of the erosion processes of Caribbean sandy beaches”; “Comparative analysis of policies and legislation relating to the protection and use of coastal zones of the Wider Caribbean”; and, “Usefulness and effectiveness of user fees in the Wider Caribbean region”.

**74.** In addition, two Regional Workshops have been organized on the Management of Municipal Sewage in Latin America and the Caribbean, in 2002 and 2003, respectively. Likewise, the First Technical Meeting on the Processes of Erosion of Sandy Beaches of the Caribbean was held in February, 2003, the “Regional Meeting of Experts to Evaluate the Processes of Erosion of Sandy Beaches of the Caribbean” was held in September 2003 as part of the project “Physical Alteration and Destruction of Habitats” of the Global Programme of Action, and the Workshop on Analysis, Assessment, and Management of



Processes of Erosion of Sandy Beaches of the Caribbean” was also held in September, 2003.

**75.** This workshop is part of the regional process to prepare a Caribbean strategy and present it during the Review of the Plan of Action for Sustainable Development in the Small Island States in August, 2004. The documents that resulted from the workshop are: “Analysis of different indicators relating to the problematics of water in Latin America and the Caribbean”; and “Methodology for the approximate assessment of the pollution load: Cuba and El Salvador”. The Regional Consultative Workshop of the Global Programme of Action for the Wider Caribbean will be held in January, 2004.

### **Decision 21/11** **Water management strategy and the** **United Nations Environment Programme**

**76.** In addition to the items contained in “Decision 21/10” of this Report as regards the Global Programme of Action, water management strategy – as it has been included in the ILAC, constitutes an issue that is being implemented in conjunction with other agencies of the Inter-agency Technical Committee such as the World Bank and PAHO/WHO.

**77.** Water will be one of the keynote issues at the next Meeting of the World Forum of Environment Ministers due to be held in Korea in 2004.

### **Decision 21/12** **Coral reefs**

**78.** The Caribbean Environment Programme and its Regional Coordination Unit (CAR/RCU) – with headquarters in Jamaica and in its role as a focal point for the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) – has undertaken to promote its content and coordinate regional, subregional, and national activities, generally, in collaboration with UNEP and with the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN).

**79.** Since its initial publication in 2001, the World Atlas of Coral Reefs has been promoted and five new communication “tools” have been prepared with the theme entitled “With or Without Coral?”, which serve in helping the tourism industry to explain to tourists the importance of protecting the coral reefs while on vacation.

**80.** The five UNEP/ICRI communication tools contribute toward efforts to raise public awareness on the part of the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN). In collaboration with the SEMARNAT (Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources) and the Quintana Roo Hoteliers Association, 10,000 copies of the five tools “With or Without Coral?” were printed and handed out in that State during 2003.

**81.** In addition, UNEP provided support for the CAR/RCU and the ICRI in the organizing of a Regional Workshop for Tropical America entitled “Improving the conditions of the reefs through strategic alliances” held in Cancun, Mexico, from June 12-14, 2002. The purpose of this Workshop was to review the best practices of management of the local community fishing industry, particularly in areas of sustainable tourism, bearing in mind that the coral reefs constitute the mainstay of the economies of the majority of Caribbean countries.

**Decision 21/13**  
**Global assessment of the state of the marine environment**

**82.** The UNEP Global International Waters Assessment Programme (GIWA) has conducted scale assessments on the scope and impact in the entire region of Latin America and the Caribbean, which, in turn, is divided into the following sub-regions: Eastern Equatorial Pacific; Patagonian Shelf; Northeast Brazil Shelf; Brazilian Northeast; Brazil Current; Amazon; Gulf of Mexico; Caribbean Sea; Caribbean Islands; and the Gulf of California. The majority of these sub-regions belong to the category of large marine ecosystems and have been assessed virtually in their entirety.

**83.** The GIWA subregional assessments include the identification of the main agreements and inter-governmental actors; action programmes, strategies, and research; the state of the regional environment; and GEF programmes in that zone, as well as other initiatives.

**Decision 21/14**  
**Trade and the environment**

**84.** Following participation in the Workshop 21 Programme "Trade and the Environment" held in Honduras in November 2001, the UNEP Environmental Training Network organized the Meeting on Strengthening of Capacities in Environment, Trade, and Sustainable Development for Latin America and the Caribbean held in Mexico City in March, 2003. The UNEP Geneva Office of Economics and Trade, UNCTAD, and the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation likewise provided support for the organization of the aforementioned event.

**85.** The main objective of this Meeting was to identify priorities for activities aimed at strengthening capacities and the development of a long-term programme for the environment, trade, and sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean. UNEP and the ITC have conducted joint endeavours on this issue (See ITC Report UNEP/LAC/IGWG.XIV/4).

**86.** Similarly, UNEP has established an agreement with the Central American Commission for Environment and Development to develop a training programme on the environment, trade, and sustainable development from which a proposal has been submitted to the UNEP Economics and Trade Unit in Geneva that is currently in the process of being approved so as to put the project into operation.

**87.** UNEP has participated in the defining of a regional strategy for sustainable trade in three sectors: textiles; electronics; and agro business. This strategy was agreed upon at the Workshop entitled "Latin American Consultative Meeting on Sustainable Trade" held in Costa Rica in July, 2003. Similarly, UNEP entered into a process of cooperation with ECLAC for the dissemination of and training in trade and the environment in the region.

**Decision 21/17**  
**Additional improvements as regards prevention, preparedness, evaluation,  
response to, and mitigation of environmental emergencies**

**88.** See "Decision 22/8" in this Report.



**Decision 21/19**  
**The role of civil society**

89. See "Decision 22/18" in this Report.

**Decision 21/22**  
**Commitment and participation of young people in  
the United Nations Environment Programme**

90. The participation of young people in UNEP affairs is focused on GEO Youth projects and other activities designed specifically with young people in mind. The objective of GEO Youth is to encourage the commitment and participation of young people in the process of sustainable development in the region. The juvenile editions of GEO reports seek to afford young people a real opportunity to exchange ideas and foster dialogue on the state of the environment. In the current period, the publication was launched in twelve countries of GEO Youth for Latin America and the Caribbean in which 800 young people from Latin American and Caribbean countries participated. Also launched were the Reports: GEO Youth Argentina; GEO Youth Peru; and GEO Youth Mexico. In the latter case, young Mexicans aged 15 to 30 years were invited to enter a contest to design a logo and slogan for the edition GEO Youth Mexico. Work is currently being done on GEO Youth editions for Cuba, Uruguay, and Central America.

91. As to the training and sensitisation of young people, in October 2002, the publication was launched of the Pachamama-Teachers Guide and on April 3, 2003, the Second Pachamama Workshop – Our Earth, Our Future – was held in order to introduce the Pachamama Project and elicit the exchange of experiences among primary and secondary-school students on this work methodology; stressing the importance of action on the part of young people in their local environment as a first step toward global solutions.

92. UNEP has undertaken the development of other activities targeting young people, including: the creation of a new youth website that deals with the ozone layer. This can be visited at: (<http://www.pnuma.org/ozonoinfantil/html/index.htm>); participation as a work-collection centre for the 12<sup>th</sup> Global Children's Painting Contest on the Environment held in January, 2003; and the organization of the Environmental Cartoon Expo entitled "End of the World Humour" to mark the occasion of World Environment Day, 2003. Activities for children and young people are disseminated through the UNEP website at: (<http://www.pnuma.org/rolac/jovenes.htm>).

**Decision 21/25**  
**Participation of the United Nations Environment Programme  
in the work of the Global Environment Facility**

93. In order to expand and strengthen cooperation between UNEP and the GEF, a GEF Regional Coordination Unit was set up in UNEP whose functions are to: identify and draw up eligible projects that respond to national and regional needs within the framework of GEF priorities and the UNEP mandate; identify and prepare facilitation activities within GEF priority areas; provide consultancy regarding the development of policies and the request for GEF resources; review and conclude joint UNEP/GEF projects in the region; and facilitate coordination between activities conducted with GEF funds and the work of the different areas which make up UNEP.

94. To date, more than ten project proposals have been drawn up jointly and sent to the GEF Secretariat requesting their approval. In addition, technical assistance has been provided to countries such as Belize, Dominica, Nicaragua, St. Kitts & Nevis, and Surinam in preparing their proposals for assistance to strengthen national capacities. These proposals will be sent to the GEF.

95. The GEF area within UNEP actively participated in the design of the Strategic Plan 2003-2004 of the GEF's Mesoamerican Biological Corridor Project and in its initial phase of implementation. Activities have officially begun to implement the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor in conjunction with the eight countries which comprise it (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama). The Corridor is located in a zone that contains 10% of the planet's biodiversity.

96. Additionally, technical assistance has likewise been provided to the governments of Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador to prepare the draft project "Development of a Plan to Establish a Biological Corridor in the Inca Route of Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador".

97. Similarly, an internal document has been drawn up that will serve as a framework for coordinating GEF regional projects throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

### **Decision 21/26**

#### **Situation of the international conventions and protocols pertaining to the environment**

98. All of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have been urged to ratify the conventions and protocols that strengthen the regional stance on issues addressed by: the Convention on Biological Diversity; the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals; the Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal; the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer; the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer; the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought; the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitat; and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. To see the regional situation of these Conventions and Protocols, visit: (<http://www.pnuma.org/deramb/frdiseminacion.htm>).

### **Decision 21/27**

#### **Compliance with and enforcement of multilateral environmental agreements**

99. UNEP has provided technical assistance for the preparation of legal framework projects and the design of mechanisms that enable governments to fulfil the commitments assumed upon signing and ratifying the different international conventions and protocols. The governments of the region have likewise received support and advice on the adoption and implementation of multilateral environmental agreements such as: the Convention on Biological Diversity; the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought; the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; and the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol for the Protection of the Ozone Layer. UNEP – concerned about identifying synergies between the multilateral environmental agreements – has participated actively as a provider of technical assistance at Meetings such as the Sixth International Conference on Environmental Compliance and Enforcement held in April, 2002, and has likewise participated in the tasks of the Secretariats of the

multilateral environmental agreements and in the organization of regional meetings prior to Meetings of the Parties to promote regional stances on each one of the issues. In addition, UNEP organized a special meeting on Multilateral Environmental Agreements and a Regional Workshop on Implementation of UNEP Directives for Compliance with and the Enforcement of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, which was held in October, 2003.

**100.** As regards the harmonisation of the reports on international biodiversity conventions, UNEP lent support to coordinate follow-up on this project of regional as well as world scope. The first pilot country is Panama. This harmonisation includes the mechanisms for presenting reports and the systems of environmental information. A Workshop will be held in October 2003 in Panama to validate the information reporting mechanisms.

**101.** The UNEP web page contains a constantly updated report on the situation of the countries of the region as regards ten multilateral environmental agreements. See: (<http://www.pnuma.org/deramb/frdiseminacion.htm>).

### **Decision 21/28**

#### **Development and strengthening of regional seas programmes: promote the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal environments, create alliances, and establish inter-linkages between multilateral environmental agreements**

**102.** Based on the strategy for the enforcement of the Global Programme of Action, UNEP is conducting important ongoing work to promote inter-linkages and synergies between the different regional seas programmes, including the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS), the Regional Seas Programme for the North-East Pacific (NEP), and the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP).

**103.** The Caribbean Environment Programme and its Regional Coordination Unit (CAR/RCU) headquartered in Jamaica have developed the Systems of Information for the Management of Marine and Coastal Resources (CEPNET) designed to create networks for the exchange of data and to strengthen the capacities of the national and subregional authorities for the management of marine and coastal resources.

**104.** UNEP took part in the initiative for the establishment of a marine biological conservation corridor between the Galapagos Islands and the Cocos Islands, pursuant to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Prepared in September 2002, this initiative proposes establishing an area of sustainable development and marine conservation between the Galapagos Islands (Ecuador), the Gorgona and Malpelo Islands (Colombia), Coiba Island (Panama), and the Cocos Islands (Costa Rica). This is about a joint venture between the governments of Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, and Costa Rica which, in addition to UNEP participation, also has the support of Conservation International, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, Stanford University, and the Charles Darwin Foundation.

**105.** Similarly, joint work is being done with the Tropical Agronomic Centre for Research and Learning (CATIE) in the drawing up of a project proposal for Belize and Guatemala – to be headed by the GEF – entitled “Integrated Basin Management for the Large Belize Hydrographic Basin: Initiative of Belize and Guatemala”.

**106.** In June 2002, the Meeting on Regional Seas of the Wider Caribbean was held under the auspices of the project “Physical Alteration and Destruction of Habitats” of the Global Programme of Action. In April 2003, the final report was prepared of the assessment,

conducted jointly with the GEF, on legislation and institutional agreements for the management of coastal zones in Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago, and work is currently being done on the preparation of a project to establish a Programme for Sustainable Land Management, Risk Mitigation, and Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Gulf of Fonseca, which includes Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua.

### **Decision 21/29**

#### **Establishment of a regional seas programme for the East-Central Pacific region**

**107.** The East-Central Pacific is regionally consolidated under the Plan of Action for the North-East Pacific. See "Decision 22/2" in this Report.

### **Decision 22/1**

#### **Early warning, assessment, and monitoring**

**108.** The UNEP Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA-LAC) conducts environmental assessments and furnishes important information in support of environmental management, the decision-making process, and the preparation of policies throughout the region. Together with the region's governments and expert centres, the DEWA-LAC applies the methodology developed by the GEO project and UNEP to conduct integrated environmental assessments (GEO) at municipal, national, subregional, regional, and world levels. In this context, the DEWA-LAC has provided technical as well as financial assistance to the majority of the region's countries in support of the development of GEO assessments, as well as helping other related agencies in conducting their own environmental assessments. In 2003, UNEP produced the following regional or subregional assessments: GEO 2003, for Latin America and the Caribbean; and GEO Andes.

**109.** Similarly, new editions of national GEOs have been added. See "Decision 11" in this Report.

**110.** DEWA-LAC contributes to early warning through the timely identification and assessment of environmental threats that could affect human and ecosystem vulnerability in the long term. For this purpose, it works on environmental vulnerability studies which make it possible to observe and monitor changes, as well as to prevent both natural disasters as well as those caused by human activity. Throughout 2003, the activities of DEWA-LAC concentrated mostly on forest fires, climate change in the Caribbean, and health and the environment.

### **Decision 22/2**

#### **Water - The North-East Pacific Plan of Action, the Antigua Guatemala Convention**

**111.** The Regional Sea of the North-East Pacific is the youngest of the Regional Seas. Its Plan of Action and the Antigua Guatemala Convention were adopted on February 18, 2002. This regional sea takes in Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Mexico.

**112.** At world level, the Plan of Action and the North-East Pacific Convention include the most relevant aspects of the Global Programme of Action (GPA) on land-based sources of marine pollution. In the North-East Pacific, the governments of the region have identified

four priority issues: the impact of sewage on human health and on the health of the ecosystem; the degradation and loss of coastal habitats; overfishing; and pollution caused by oil spills.

**113.** Municipal sewage in the North-East Pacific region constitutes the greatest threat to coastal ecosystems and their human inhabitants. This problem likewise affects the food safety of millions of people along the entire length of the region's coastlines, a fact highlighted during the first two inter-governmental Meetings held under the North-East Pacific Plan of Action. Consequently, the North-East Pacific region is drawing up a proposal for pilot projects on the management of municipal sewage to be presented to partners in the initiative and to different funding agencies so as to thus speed up actions for implementing this Plan.

**114.** The Second Inter-Governmental Meeting of the North-East Pacific Plan of Action was held in Managua, Nicaragua, in March, 2003. At the Meeting, six recommendations were made for implementation of the Plan and agreements were established with regard to the fiduciary agent and the institutional arrangements. These recommendations included the designation of an Executive Secretariat composed of experts from Member States. While UNEP will continue supporting the development of this Plan, the Central American Commission for Maritime Transport (COCATRAM) was designated to continue with the tasks of the Plan Secretariat.

### **Decision 22/3** **Climate and atmosphere**

**115.** Compliance with the Montreal Protocol of the Vienna Convention in the region has been strengthened through the constant organization of principal as well as follow-up meetings held throughout the Spanish-speaking sub-regions of Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean, in South America, and in the English-speaking Caribbean.

**116.** In addition, the UNEP Compliance Assistance Programme has organized Workshops for Compliance with the Montreal Protocol in Latin America and the Caribbean with the objective of closely monitoring compliance on the part of the countries with the goals of eliminating ozone-depleting substances. Protection of the atmosphere also includes technical assistance in activities of institutional strengthening, the holding of regional workshops for the management and inventory of halon gases in the English-speaking Caribbean, workshops for the implementation of licensing systems, and the training of customs officials and refrigeration technicians throughout the entire region.

**117.** With reference to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNEP has collaborated with the countries' governments, with the PAHO, and with the World Meteorological Organization by providing technical assistance and consultancy pertaining to the effects of climate change in the Caribbean. In addition, the "Seminar on Climate Change and Severe Weather Events" was held in Barbados in July, 2003. This Meeting enabled UNEP to expand its activities in support of a Caribbean Centre for Climate Change. The Latin American and Caribbean stance has been reinforced through the ratification by twenty-four of the region's countries of the Kyoto Protocol.

**118.** UNEP is actively participating in the process of the preparation of a common agenda on climate change for the developing countries. Through International Political Dialogue on Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change – an initiative tabled by the government of Mexico and supported directly by the UNDP, UNEP has contributed to generating coordination in stances and activities among the countries of the region toward having the issue of vulnerability to climate change included among the priorities

contained in the agendas of those responsible for devising policies. This issue will also form part of the agenda of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

### **Decision 22/6** **Promoting habits of sustainable consumption and production**

**119.** UNEP has continued to promote activities involving dissemination, as well as technical and policy assistance in different countries at national and regional levels through the organization of workshops on cleaner production and energy efficiency, joining forces with agencies such as: UNIDO; OAS; USAID; Consumers International; the Central American Commission for Environment and Development; the National Council of Industrial Ecologists of Mexico; the Federal Bureau of Consumer Affairs of Mexico; and the Mexican Youth Institute. Similarly, valuable publications have been launched such as the one entitled "Toward sustainable consumption in Latin America and the Caribbean".

**120.** With regard to sustainable consumption and production, from April 23-25, 2003, the First Meeting of Government Experts of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Production and Consumption was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This Meeting was organized through the combined efforts of UNEP, the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development of Argentina, and the United Nations Division for Sustainable Development. The main purpose of the Meeting was to produce basic agreement among representatives of the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean on the thrust of regional action on this issue, therefore, discussion ensued on the content of the paper entitled "Toward habits of sustainable production and consumption in Latin America and the Caribbean". One of the results obtained was the preparation of the Latin American Regional Platform on Sustainable Consumption and Production. Similarly, the decision was made to create a Regional Council of Government Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production whose purpose will be to identify and propose effective mechanisms for putting into practice integrated policies, strategies, and programmes that promote the adoption of habits of sustainable consumption and production on the part of the region's societies. The Council will be composed of one governmental expert from each country in the region, it will have a Steering Committee of three members, chaired by the host country of the most recent Meeting, and it will have a Secretariat coordinated by UNEP.

**121.** The Second Meeting of Government Experts of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Production and Consumption will be held in Nicaragua from October 6-10, 2003. Organization of the Meeting is supported and coordinated by such agencies as the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as well as by the environmental and industrial authorities of Nicaragua. A report on the results will be presented at the next Forum of Ministers.

**122.** In addition, the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics initiated and continue conducting the project "Youth for a Change" which is a joint strategy of the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources, the Federal Bureau of Consumer Affairs, and the Mexican Youth Institute. Similarly, it has organized several training workshops for governmental officials and members of civil society in various countries of the region: Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Nicaragua. In October 2003, the diploma course for personnel of the Federal Bureau of Consumer Affairs entitled "Consumer Education" will be given at the Regional Centre of Cooperation for Adult Education in Latin America and the Caribbean.



**Decision 22/7**  
**Encouraging the participation of**  
**private enterprise and industry**

**123.** The UNEP Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics has encouraged the participation of private enterprise and industry in such issues as cleaner production, the APELL programme, sustainable tourism, sustainable consumption and production, chemical management, climate change, safe technologies, and energy.

**124.** It also participated in the Second Symposium of the Regional Association of Oil and Natural Gas Companies in Latin America and the Caribbean (ARPEL) entitled "Safety, Health, and Environment in the Gas and Oil Industries in Latin America" held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from May 16-18, 2002. The purpose of the event was to examine global trends in the regulation and management of industrial safety, the environment, and occupational health in the oil and gas industries. In December 2002, the workshop was held entitled "A practical approach to identifying opportunities for the reduction of emissions: Latin American and Caribbean examples within the mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol" – organized jointly by the ARPEL, the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA), and UNEP of Costa Rica. In the context of this same industrial sector, UNEP participated as an exhibitor during the Pemex Oil Corporation's "Environment Week".

**125.** With reference to cleaner production, work has continued on promoting adhesion on the part of the governments and industries of the region to the International Declaration on Cleaner Production. Similarly, in March 2002, the OAS, USAID, the Inter-American Forum on Environmental Law, and UNEP together organized the Regional Workshop on Cleaner Production and Energy Efficiency held in Nicaragua. In collaboration with the Cleaner Production Centres and industrial associations, several workshops were organized for training in cleaner production and sustainable consumption in the region. In September 2003, support was provided in the organization and holding in Mexico of the 11<sup>th</sup> International Environmental Congress of the National Council of Industrial Ecologists of Mexico.

**Decision 22/8**  
**Additional improvements as regards prevention, preparedness,**  
**evaluation, response to, and mitigation of environmental emergencies**

**126.** In addition to the intense activities in early warning so as to anticipate environmental emergencies, UNEP has provided technical assistance to governments and to other agencies of the United Nations system to assess and respond to cases of emergency. It provided assistance to the government of Cuba in the aftermath of hurricanes Isidore and Lili in 2002 and provided *in situ* assistance to the UNDP in assessing the impact of the oil spill in Maracaibo, Venezuela, in January, 2003.

**127.** Similarly and in conjunction with the PAHO, it organized the International Course for Heads of Health, Disaster, and Development Management, the purpose of which was to reduce the risk of technological disasters in the region and to introduce the APELL methodology to the course participants.

**128.** At the present time, work is being done on establishing an APELL Centre in Brazil and on the signing of an APELL cooperation agreement with the Colombian Safety Council.

**129.** In September 2002, the situation on forest fires in Latin America and the Caribbean was reviewed, therein presenting tools to monitor and combat fires. Additionally and in

cooperation with the World Bank and ECLAC, in 2002, a review was conducted of the methodology used for the socio-economic and environmental assessment of the damage caused by natural disasters. UNEP likewise collaborated with the UNDP and the GEF to assess vulnerability to present and future weather variants.

**130.** UNEP is an active member of the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team given that the Coordinator of the Natural Resources Unit received the necessary training from the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Ecuador in July, 2003.

### **Decision 22/13** **Small Island Developing States**

**131.** Recognizing the particular environmental and developmental needs of the Small Island Developing States in light of their ecological vulnerability and the problems they face in achieving sustainable development, the GEF Office in UNEP has assessed the state of land degradation, climate change, and the protection of ecosystems in the small island States of the Caribbean. The GEF has been of fundamental support in the follow-up process to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in matters relating to the Small Island Developing States.

**132.** In brief, the preparatory processes for the revision of the Barbados Plan of Action include the following items: technical assistance for the preparation of both national as well as regional reports; consultation with civil society to support the revision process; preparation of the Environmental Panorama of the Caribbean; assessment of the needs of the legislative bodies; and compliance with the multilateral environmental agreements.

**133.** In this context, assistance was given to Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Bahamas, Cuba, Dominica, Granada, St. Lucia, Surinam, and Trinidad and Tobago in preparing their assessments of national capacities. In addition, support was provided to Antigua and Barbuda and Cuba in the preparation of their national plans of action against persistent organic pollutants and the project proposal was prepared entitled "Protect biodiversity and prevent land degradation in the small island States of the Caribbean", which includes: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Jamaica, Granada, St. Kitts & Nevis; St. Lucia; and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

**134.** The technical assistance provided to the countries of the Caribbean additionally includes the publication of GEO Barbados and preparations are underway to publish GEO Haiti and GEO St. Lucia. See also "Decision 21/10" in this Report. The GEF Office has lent support to Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago in the preparation of their Self-Assessment of National Capacities. In May 2003, work was done in conjunction with the Association of Caribbean States to draw up a proposal as regards the initiative to promote the Caribbean Sea as a Special Area for Sustainable Development.

### **Decision 22/17** **Governance and law**

**135.** In the area of environmental law, UNEP has participated in numerous regional activities for the development of legal instruments that contribute to environmental governance and law. Technical assistance and consultancy has been provided to the governments for the preparation of regulations and laws on environmental issues and sustainable development and a considerable contribution was made to the preparation of the UNEP Report on Models of National Legislation, Policies, and Directives in the African

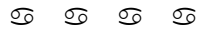


Region, in the Asia-Pacific Region, and in the Latin American Region. Additionally, this document implies access to information on the environment, the participation of civil society in decision-making processes, and access to administrative procedures relating to environmental issues.

**136.** In its role as Operative Secretariat of the Environmental Commission of the Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO), UNEP has guided the legislative decisions of the governments of the region in issues of environmental law and has provided technical assistance for the creation of synergies between Multilateral Environmental Agreements, as well as the incorporation into national legislation of the elements necessary for their implementation.

**Decision 22/18**  
**Civil society**

**137.** See "Decisions 12 and 13" in this Report.





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