



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

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

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Agenda Item 6: Ministerial Dialogues about emerging
and relevant issues for the implementation of the Latin American
and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development

**6.4. General information that can be
used by the Ministers and Heads of
Delegation for the dialogue on**

**International Environment Governance
and the reform of the United Nations**

Presentation

1. This subject has been discussed in diverse instances summoned by UNEP, and recently in multilateral consultation processes, as well as formal and informal consultations regarding the future of the International Environmental Governance.

2. During the twenty fourth period of sessions of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environmental Forum (Nairobi, Kenya; 5th to 9th February, 2007), this issue was the subject of extensive discussions and exchanges, first in a general debate and then in the discussions that took place among Ministers and Chiefs of Delegations.

3. **Annex I** contains the section concerning the summary that the Chair of the twenty fourth period of sessions from the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environmental Forum prepared in relation to this subject. In **Annex II** of the present document contains the section of the rapporteur and the decision adopted vis-à-vis the international environmental governance.

3. On the other hand, the government of Brazil convened the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development: Challenges for International Governance in Rio de Janeiro, on September 2007.

4. It was deemed convenient for the Ministers of Environment to exchange information and points of view, looking forwards to:

- a) having updated information concerning the recent events in this area;
- b) commenting on the various exchanges, international governance processes that have been considered in the consultations that have taken place up to the present;
- c) analyzing the challenges and identifying the perspectives that can arise from the debates performed up to now, as well as their implications for the sustainable development of the region

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Annex I

Summary of ministerial consultations on United Nations reform

1. Ministers presented and discussed various options for action for consideration by Governments, UNEP and the international community. The options enumerated below reflect views expressed during the discussions. Their inclusion does not mean that they are without controversy or that each option has been fully considered by each Government. They provide for Governments, UNEP and the international community a fertile source of ideas from which to undertake further exploration.

I. Context

2. The current discussions on environmental governance take place in the framework of United Nations reform measures approved by heads of State and Government in the 2005 World Summit Outcome. Paragraph 169 of the Outcome document sets out areas for further reflection on the current institutional framework of United Nations environment work. These areas include: enhanced coordination; improved policy advice and guidance; strengthened scientific knowledge, assessment and cooperation; better treaty compliance, while respecting the legal autonomy of the treaties; and better integration of environmental activities in the broader sustainable development framework at the operational level, including through capacity-building.

3. The General Assembly established an informal consultative process to consider these areas, which commenced in March 2006. At the same time the Secretary General, as mandated by paragraph 169, convened a High-level Panel on System Wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment. The report of the Panel has been transmitted to the General Assembly, but has yet to be considered.

4. The informal consultative process in the General Assembly culminated in a co-chairs summary which has formed the basis for further consultations that commenced in January 2007. The backdrop to the discussions on improved environmental governance finds its genesis in the "Cartagena Outcome" contained in UNEP Governing Council decision SS.VII/1 on international environmental governance, adopted in February 2002.

5. The aim of the panel and roundtable discussions at the current session was to provide further impetus to implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan and UNEP partnerships with other United Nations system entities, as well as to provide input to the ongoing and forthcoming discussions in the General Assembly.

II. Plenary sessions

6. The discussion commenced in a plenary session entitled "Overview", with an introduction by one of the co-chairs of the General Assembly informal consultative process, following which panellists from Germany, India and the United States of America intervened. It was emphasized that environmental challenges needed to be

integrated into development planning and economic strategies. Implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan would assist in this regard, as would encouraging new partnerships between UNEP, UNDP, UNIDO and others in the United Nations system.

7. Support was expressed for a reformed United Nations institution for the environment as well as for an increase in its financial resources. Complex, growing and interlinked environmental challenges urgently require coordinated responses, including in policy sectors other than environment. A variety of measures were discussed, including better coordination among the institutions currently involved in the environment, more cooperation with multilateral agencies with economic and developmental mandates, strengthening UNEP or upgrading it into a specialized agency with the commensurate authority to foster better coordination, and the establishment of a new United Nations environment organization. The introductory plenary session set the stage for six ministerial round table discussions that explored the challenges, opportunities and possible improvements with respect to environmental governance.

8. At a concluding plenary session, entitled "Feedback", ministers and heads of delegation heard from a number of panellists including ministers from Congo, Norway and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as well as representatives from WWF International, IDDRI and the Third World Network. They pointed out that the urgency and magnitude of environmental problems had outgrown the capacity of existing institutions and that meant that a United Nations environment organization or a strengthened UNEP was necessary. It was underscored that the Secretary General of the United Nations should take urgent steps to advance this process in the United Nations General Assembly. It was mentioned that a reformed United Nations institution for the environment should have closer relations with the World Bank and the World Trade Organization. In reference to the report of the High-level Panel on System Wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment, it was suggested that UNEP should co-chair the proposed sustainable development board.

9. It was further stressed that United Nations reform should provide greater opportunities for developing countries and civil society to contribute more towards international governance. The United Nations must reflect the current reality that its vast membership is from the developing countries and therefore must ensure that its governance structures and decision making respond to this reality.

III. Challenges

10. There was wide agreement that while the international community had created a variety of bodies to deal with environmental issues, deterioration of natural resources had not been successfully halted or reversed. Uncoordinated approaches at the global, regional and national levels, as well as duplication and fragmentation of mandates, had exacerbated this situation.

11. Lack of coordination was not limited to the United Nations system, but also involved Governments, the private sector and civil society. In the United Nations

system the respective mandates of the various agencies, funds and programmes should be better coordinated.

12. There is increased recognition that environmental issues are interlinked not only with development and sustainable economic growth, but also with trade, agriculture, health, peace and security and that these interlinkages increased the need for global environmental leadership.

13. While UNEP, as the environmental pillar of the United Nations system, has achieved important results in discharging its mandate, a lack of sufficient and stable funding has hampered its ability to address emerging threats. The magnitude and severity of environmental challenges in relation to climate change, biodiversity loss and the degradation of ecosystem services threaten to overwhelm the United Nations response and are already constraining prospects for economic development in many countries and regions.

14. The need for predictable resources for UNEP to effectively fulfil its mandate and the expectations of the international community was, however, only one problem that needed to be addressed. With regard to the Global Environment Facility, the roles of the implementing agencies required more attention, as did the relationship between UNEP, UNDP and the World Bank on the one hand and the multilateral environmental agreements on the other.

15. Mainstreaming gender in addressing environmental deterioration continued to present a challenge, as did equity concerns relating to costs associated with the negative impacts of unsustainable management of the environment. These areas require further reflection.

16. With regard to changes to the institutional structures that deal with the environment, a number of countries said that there was a need to discuss the issue of the restructuring of UNEP based on a detailed proposal with the basic elements required to strengthen global environmental governance, including various options and with specific reference to the role of UNEP, and that such a detailed proposal should be formulated for consideration by Governments.

17. There is often a lack of coordination among relevant government ministries with responsibility for the environment at the national level. Implementation of multilateral environmental agreement obligations at the domestic level is often hampered by a lack of capacity. Many Governments feel burdened by a proliferation of reporting requirements, a drain on technical expertise and a multitude of international meetings.

IV. Opportunities

18. The current United Nations reform process presented an opportunity for strengthening United Nations environmental activities; options for reforming or upgrading UNEP should be seen in this context. A steady increase in the political attention being accorded to the environment has supported this process and there is growing recognition that environmental sustainability can not be de-linked from sustainable development and economic growth. Mainstreaming the environment across other sectors, and in the process enhancing the role of environment ministries, would allow such integration.

19. The view was expressed that there was a need for greater effectiveness in disseminating existing knowledge available in scientific institutions and for UNEP to improve its scientific base, as well as its monitoring, assessment and early warning capacity. UNEP should also expand its partnerships with the private sector and civil society and incorporate results-based management.

20. Full implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan was stressed as a vehicle to assist developing countries in building their capacities to address environmental challenges. This would require additional funding and an emphasis on partnerships between UNEP, the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders.

21. Strong support was expressed for the increase in cooperation between UNEP and UNDP, as it would address requests for UNEP to have an operational capacity and enhance effectiveness in environmental capacity-building. The ongoing pilot programmes jointly undertaken by UNEP and UNDP could be expanded to tackle complex subregional environmental challenges.

22. Some suggestions focused on the need for UNEP to have a country presence on a temporary basis as required or through UNDP representation. It was also proposed that United Nations resident coordinators should ensure joint programming and full integration of environmental dimensions in project activities.

V. Possible options/improvements for environmental governance

23. Proposals were made for UNEP to receive greater political authority and for it to have the ability better to coordinate global responses to environmental threats and regional and national implementation. Some suggestions related to an enhanced role for UNEP as the United Nations authority on environment in increasing the coherence of the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements at the national level, while its regional offices could be strengthened better to take into account regional environmental needs. Some suggestions focused on UNEP establishing regional centres for capacity-building and technology transfer.

24. Various ideas were voiced on whether clustering of multilateral environmental agreements could bring about synergies and coherence. These ranged from sectoral clustering to administrative improvements. Some suggestions centred on the role that UNEP could play in ensuring programmatic interlinkages and synergies among multilateral environmental agreements, while proposals were also made that would require the governing bodies of multilateral environmental agreements to explore the frequency of meetings, rationalization of knowledge management and the development of a consistent and methodological approach to enforcement and compliance measures.

25. With regard to improving institutional structures it was widely agreed that any new or improved entity should be based in Nairobi and should build on the current strengths of UNEP. Some suggestions favoured the strengthening of UNEP within its current mandate, while there was significant support for upgrading UNEP to a specialized agency. With regard to the proposal to establish a United Nations environment organization, however, a divergence of opinions persists.

26. While some are of the view that such an organization could provide better political guidance, legitimacy and effective coordination, others remain unconvinced

that it is necessary or desirable, that funding for a new institution would be at higher levels than UNEP has at present or that it would ensure efficiencies. Continued discussions on the possible establishment of a United Nations environment organization, which would also be part of the United Nations system, should not detract from the current need to strengthen UNEP. In that regard it was important to elucidate the functions required to be delivered before agreeing on the form that any such institution might take. Other views expressed took into account the various mandates that exist in the field of the environment and the possibility that an umbrella type arrangement could facilitate synergies, coordination and inter-linkages. A reformed or upgraded UNEP could fulfil this role.

27. Discussions have demonstrated the need for greater precision in the future deliberations on the United Nations environment reform exercise. In that regard ministers took note of the growing consensus in areas where forward movement is possible and options for such progress to be developed in the next several months. They also undertook, as stewards of environmental sustainability in their respective countries, to provide leadership and proposals for taking the United Nations reform process forward. A number of countries requested that the Executive Director assist them through regional and other mechanisms in obtaining relevant information to enable them to engage meaningfully in efforts to strengthen UNEP.

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Annex II
Abstract of the Rapporteur's Report of the twenty fourth
period of sessions of the Governing Council/
Global Ministerial Environment Forum
(Nairobi, Kenya; 5th to 9th February 2007)
on International Environmental Governance

1. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the secretariat said that key topics to be considered were the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building; which would remain a high priority in the UNEP programme of work; the strengthening of the scientific base of UNEP, including the proposed Environment Watch Strategy: Vision 2020; universal membership of the Governing Council; and the voluntary indicative scale of contributions.

2. In the debate that ensued at the Fifth Meeting of the Committee on the afternoon of 7 February, a number of representatives expressed support for universal membership of the Governing Council, combined with the establishment of an executive board. One representative said that universal membership, would result in more open, participatory and transparent Council proceedings and greater ownership of its decisions. Those opposing said that it would make UNEP administration inefficient, that it would be a departure from common United Nations practice; that it was unnecessary inasmuch as the current membership ensured universal participation and nearly all decisions were taken by consensus; and that the presumed goals of universal membership would be undercut by the establishment of an executive board. One representative suggested that the issue should be further considered by the Council/Forum rather than in the United Nations General Assembly, and proposed that the draft decision on international environmental governance reflect that. Another objected to further considering the issue in either the Council or the General Assembly, as no agreement had been reached in either.

3. A few representatives said that the programme of work and implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building should ensure the balanced representation of regions, calling for actions to be prioritized using a country-based, bottom-up approach. One representative said that the draft decision on international environmental governance should call for support to UNEP regional offices for the implementation of the Plan in developing countries.

4. The Environment Watch strategy was widely supported as a way of strengthening the scientific base of UNEP. One representative also supported its emphasis on capacity-building and information sharing and suggested the need for greater links between the Strategy and the Bali Strategic Plan. He wondered how the third pillar of the strategy, the assessment partnership, would function, and who would set the priorities for assessments and actions under this partnership.

5. Several speakers stressed the need for increased coordination and synergies among multilateral environmental agreements. One, however, emphasized the

importance of clear goals, as environmental agreements had different objectives and parties and while some agreements were limited to environmental matters, others dealt with development and social issues, the other two pillars of sustainable development. It was suggested that cooperation among conventions could involve streamlining certain activities, avoiding duplication of effort, maximizing resources and sharing relevant expertise and data.

6. A number of representatives supported strengthening the financial base of UNEP through increased contributions. Many supported the system of indicative scale of contributions, which provided more predictability and stability to the financial situation of UNEP. Concern was expressed, however, that major countries had decreased their voluntary contributions in 2006. One representative said that the contributions should also reflect the principle of fair burden-sharing, which was not adequately reflected in the draft decision on international environmental governance. Another said that the draft decision on strengthening the financing of UNEP gave the impression that the voluntary scale of contributions would become permanent, which he said was premature.

7. Several representatives expressed support for the draft decision on South-South cooperation under the sub-item. It was suggested that the decision should be a part of the draft decision on international environmental governance, however, as it related to the Bali Strategic Plan. Others preferred a stand-alone decision on the matter.

8. On the way forward, a number of representatives supported upgrading UNEP to a United Nations environment organization with stable and predictable resources. It was argued that this would ensure more effective and efficient international environmental action and implementation of the decisions made by the Council/Forum in Cartagena. Others said that they were not convinced of the need for an environment organization and that what was needed was to find ways to strengthen UNEP. One representative said that the key was to make the environment framework of the United Nations more responsive and able to tackle environmental issues in a more efficient, effective and coherent way. Another said that UNEP needed to heighten its effectiveness on the ground, guided by a country-driven bottom-up approach.

9. One representative said that the current system of international environmental governance reflected a good balance between coordination and decentralization, which allowed for greater flexibility and encouraged tailored solutions to unique problems. An organization with authority over multilateral environmental agreements, he said, might result in an additional layer of bureaucracy and would encroach on the autonomy of the governing bodies of existing conventions, leading to inefficiencies and taking resources away from implementation, would divert attention from improving the state of the global environment and it might undermine the financial support for UNEP.

10. Following its discussion, the Committee agreed to forward the draft decisions on international environmental governance and South-South cooperation contained in document UNEP/GC/24/L.1 to the drafting group. At its 8th session, on the evening of 8 February 2007, in the light of the heavy workload of the drafting

group, the Committee agreed that a small group of interested delegations should convene to finalize the decision on South-South cooperation.

11. At its 9th meeting, on the morning of 9 February, the Committee approved for consideration and possible adoption by the Council/Forum the draft decision on South-South cooperation in achieving sustainable development as amended by the small group. The representative of Cuba noted that his delegation had agreed to the removal of references in the draft decision to a number of important South-South summits, including the Group of 77's First South Summit held in Havana, Cuba, in 2000 and the Second South Summit held in Doha, Qatar, in 2005, in the spirit of cooperation. He stressed, however, that those forums had been important for the negotiation of issues relevant to South-South cooperation and he asked that his comments be reflected in the present report.

12. At the same meeting the Committee approved for consideration and possible adoption by the Council/Forum the draft decision on implementation of decision SS.VII/1 on international environmental governance (UNEP/GC/24/CW/L.4), as amended by the drafting group.

Decision 24/1: Implementation of decision SS.VII/1 on International Environmental Governance

The Governing Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme⁽¹⁾ and the Malmö Ministerial Declaration,⁽²⁾

Recalling also General Assembly resolutions 57/251 of 20 December 2002, 58/209 of 23 December 2003, 59/226 of 22 December 2004, 60/189 of 22 December 2005 and 61/205 of 20 December 2006,

Recalling further its decisions SS.VIII/1 of 31 March 2004 and 23/1 of 25 February 2005,

Recalling the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,⁽³⁾ which emphasized the need for full implementation of decision SS.VII/1 of 15 February 2002,

Emphasizing that all components of the recommendations on international environmental governance contained in decision SS. VII/1 should be fully implemented,

Recalling the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building,⁽⁴⁾ which it adopted by its decision 23/1 of 25 February 2005,

⁽¹⁾ Governing Council decision 19/1 of 7 February 1997, Annex.

⁽²⁾ Report of the Governing Council on the Work of its global ministerial environment forum/sixth special session, UNEP/GCSS.VI/9, Annex I.

⁽³⁾ *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 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, Annex.

Recognizing the need, among others, to accelerate implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, including through the provision of additional financial resources for that purpose,

Recalling paragraph 169 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome⁽⁵⁾ and noting its ongoing consideration, particularly through the General Assembly informal consultations on the institutional framework for United Nations environmental activities,

Having considered the reports of the Executive Director on international environmental governance,⁽⁶⁾ on the measures taken for the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building and a proposal for the further implementation of the Plan in the 2008-2009 biennium⁽⁷⁾ and on strengthening the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme,⁽⁸⁾

I

Universal membership of the Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum

1. *Takes note* of General Assembly resolution 61/205 of 20 December 2006 in which the General Assembly decided to consider, if necessary, the issue of universal membership of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme at its sixty-fourth session, while noting the differences in views expressed so far on this important but complex issue;

II

Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building

2. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue to give high priority to the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building as part of the implementation of the approved programme of work of the United Nations Environment Programme;

3. *Encourages* Governments to support the full and effective implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, including through the provision of adequate resources;

4. *Requests* the Executive Director to present progress reports on the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan on an annual basis to the Committee of Permanent Representatives, indicating clearly the ongoing activities and results, including the allocated budgets, that fall within the framework of the Bali Strategic Plan, as well as a biannual summary of activities and results;

⁽⁴⁾ UNEP/IEG/IGSP/3/4, Annex.

⁽⁵⁾ General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005.

⁽⁶⁾ UNEP/GC/24/3.

⁽⁷⁾ UNEP/GC/24/3/Add.1.

⁽⁸⁾ UNEP/GC/24/3/Add.2.

5. *Requests* the Executive Director to strengthen United Nations Environment Programme regional offices in order to contribute to the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan;

III

Strengthening the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme

6. *Welcomes* the consultative process on strengthening the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme as facilitated by the Executive Director and the valuable inputs made by Governments and other stakeholders which have resulted in the draft proposal of the Environment Watch strategy,⁽⁹⁾

7. *Requests* the Executive Director to consult Governments, other United Nations bodies, financial institutions including the Global Environment Facility, the private sector and civil society, multilateral environmental agreements, the scientific community including global observing systems and other partners with a view to improving further the proposed Environment Watch strategy as an integral part of the wider strategic vision of the United Nations Environment Programme, to report back to the Governing Council at its twenty-fifth session with a revised proposal which should include component cost estimates for work proposed for the 2010–2011 biennium and to make those estimates available to the Committee of Permanent Representatives early in the budget process;

8. *Reaffirms* the need to strengthen the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme, within its mandate, including through the reinforcement of the scientific capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the area of protection of the environment;

9. *Reaffirms also* environmental early warning, assessment and monitoring of the state of the global environment as core functions of the United Nations Environment Programme and recognizes the potential value of a network that draws on the experience of existing bodies, including academic institutions and centres of excellence, and the scientific competence of specialized agencies and the scientific subsidiary bodies of multilateral environmental agreements;

10. *Underlines* the vital importance in a globalizing world of enhancing infrastructures and capacities which can sustain cooperation on environmental data and information and which can lead to reduced transaction costs for national reporting, natural resource accounting and decision-making and the integration of environment into development, the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and the achievement of national and international development goals, taking into consideration existing infrastructures, mechanisms and tools in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to maximize synergies in the sharing of data and information;

11. *Supports* United Nations Environment Programme endeavours to enhance information networks at the regional and national levels;

⁽⁹⁾ UNEP/GC/24/3/Add.2.

IV

Strengthening the financing of the United Nations Environment Programme

12. *Emphasizes* the need for stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for the United Nations Environment Programme and the Environment Fund, in the context of the United Nations regular budget, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII);

13. *Reaffirms* its support for the provision of adequate, stable and predictable financing of the United Nations Environment Programme as an essential prerequisite for the strengthening of its capacity and functions as well as for the effective coordination of the environmental component of sustainable development;

14. *Also encourages* Governments, in order to strengthen further the financing of the United Nations Environment Programme and increase the level of the financial reserve as requested in paragraph 8 of Governing Council decision 24/10 of 9 February 2007, taking into account their economic and social circumstances, to make voluntary contributions to the Environment Fund starting in 2007 in an amount equal to or greater than that suggested by the extended pilot phase of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions or on the basis of any of the other voluntary options listed in paragraph 18 of the appendix to decision SS.VII/1;

15. *Requests* the Executive Director, in accordance with paragraph 19 of the appendix to decision SS.VII/1, to notify all United Nations Member States of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions which he intends to propose for the biennium 2008–2009 and urges each Member State to inform the Executive Director whether it will use the proposed voluntary indicative scale of contributions;

16. *Also requests* the Executive Director to prepare a report to the Governing Council for consideration at its twenty-fifth session assessing the operation of the extended pilot phase of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions and the other voluntary options listed in paragraph 18 of the appendix to decision SS.VII/1;

17. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue his efforts in seeking an increase in funding, from all sources, for strengthening the financial base of the United Nations Environment Programme;

18. *Encourages* Governments to the extent feasible to move towards contributions to the Environment Fund in preference to contributions to earmarked trust funds, with a view to enhancing the role of the Governing Council in determining the programme of work and priorities of the United Nations Environment Programme;

V

Issues related to multilateral environmental agreements

19. *Takes note* of the activities undertaken by the Executive Director to improve the effectiveness of, and the coordination and synergy among, multilateral environmental agreements, as well as those activities supporting Governments in their efforts to better implement, comply with and enforce multilateral environmental agreements, taking into account the autonomous decision-making authority of the conferences of the parties to such agreements and the need to

promote the environmental dimension of sustainable development among other relevant United Nations bodies;

20. *Welcomes* the work of the United Nations Environment Programme to support developing countries and countries with economies in transition in order to facilitate further their implementation of multilateral environmental agreements;

21. *Requests* the Executive Director to build capacity and, upon request, to assist countries, particularly developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to integrate the objectives of multilateral environmental agreements into national sustainable development strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers;

22. *Also requests* the Executive Director to assist Governments, where appropriate, to develop strategies for facilitating the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements at the national level;

23. *Welcomes* the decisions of the conference of the parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants at its second meeting, the conference of the parties to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade at its third meeting and the conference of the parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal at its eighth meeting to address the issue of further improving cooperation and coordination among the three conventions and, to that end, to establish an ad hoc joint working group consisting of selected Parties to the respective conventions;

24. *Requests* the Executive Director to cooperate with the Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel Conventions to enhance synergies between the relevant programme activities of the United Nations Environment Programme and the programme activities to be carried out under those conventions;

VI

Enhanced coordination across the United Nations system, including the Environment Management Group

25. *Recognizes* the role of the United Nations Environment Programme in enhanced coordination and collaboration across the United Nations system in order to achieve greater coherence in environmental activities;

26. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue to promote coordination across the United Nations system on environmental activities, in particular those relevant to the operations of the United Nations system, keeping in mind paragraphs 36 and 37 of the appendix to decision SS.VII/1, through the work of the Environment Management Group.

**Tenth session
9th February 2007**