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

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

Discussion paper presented by the Executive Director

Addendum

Africa and the New Partnership for Africa's Development

Summary

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

* UNEP/GC.22/1.

Executive summary

1. Africa has been a major priority for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in recent years, as evidenced by Governing Council decision 20/27 of 4 February 1999 and decision 21/15 of 9 February 2001. This has happened in a context within which the continent has launched a regional integration process encompassing the transformation of the Organization of African Unity into the African Union, as well as initiating the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). These important achievements by the political leadership of the region are likely to constitute the foundation on which most future undertakings of the continent will be built.

2. While mobilizing the international community's support for their new approach to development (the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Group of Eight, the European Union, etc.), the African leadership has wisely integrated important issues such as the environment in the region's new institutional dispensation. Three organs of the African Union are clearly entrusted with handling environmental issues, the Executive Council, the Technical Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, Energy, Natural Resources and Environment, and the Commission. In addition, NEPAD touches on several key areas and has given due consideration to the environment in its environment initiative. Innovative thinking, which is characteristic of the NEPAD approach, is illustrated in its acknowledgement that a core objective of the environment initiative must be to combat poverty and contribute to socio-economic development in Africa. The environment initiative of NEPAD has targeted eight sub-themes for priority interventions: combating desertification; wetland conservation; invasive alien species; coastal management; global warming; transboundary conservation areas; environmental governance; and financing. Cross-cutting issues such as poverty and environment and health and environment are underlying issues and are integrated into the programme. To spearhead the development of the environment initiative and ensure a successful implementation, the Heads of State Implementation Committee has given President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal the lead role. The President has now established an interim secretariat to foster information generation and sharing as well as to facilitate and spearhead the development and implementation of priority environmental programmes and projects in Africa.

3. These new developments are building on the successes of existing structures such as the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) established by African Governments in 1985. AMCEN is a policy forum to enable ministers in charge of environment better to formulate, harmonize and coordinate their activities and programmes. Since its creation, AMCEN has held nine ordinary sessions, which have cumulatively produced tangible results, such as the adoption of the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa in 1991, the adoption of the African Common Position on Environment and Development in 1991, the establishment and promotion of networks and committees for implementation of programme activities and projects, and the harmonization of Africa's position on global environment issues. In particular, AMCEN played a pivotal role in the process of negotiations and implementation of the conventions adopted following the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, including facilitating follow-up of ratification as well as mobilizing political, financial and technical support for the region's effective participation. Recently, AMCEN contributed to formulation of a strong African political declaration which was integrated into the preparatory documentation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

4. The new context is also characterized by UNEP's consistent support to Africa. It encompasses provision of services to policy forums such as AMCEN, the African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW), and support to regional initiatives such as NEPAD and delivery of specific programmes addressing environmental issues pertinent to the region. UNEP has been the secretariat to AMCEN since its creation. The provision of this service by UNEP has enabled AMCEN to engage in substantive policy dialogue and agree on a programme of work. In addition, AMCEN has been able to tap into the technical expertise available within UNEP to secure resources, engage in various consultations and emerge as the voice of Africa in all international environmental forums. Of particular significance is the recent support extended by UNEP to AMCEN in the production of the first ever comprehensive Africa Environment Outlook report and the establishment of an African Environmental Information Network (AEIN).

Recognizing that water is one of the most important resources in Africa, UNEP had assisted the Governments in the region to establish AMCOW in April 2002. UNEP has worked with OAU in the past to establish regional conventions such as the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources as well as fostering policy dialogue in Africa. In anticipation of the transformation of OAU into the African Union and of the need to continue and strengthen its relationship with the newly established Union, UNEP has opened a permanent liaison office in Addis Ababa, which has already launched a number of joint activities with the Union.

5. At the request of African Governments, UNEP has also been spearheading the development of the environment initiative of NEPAD by assisting a Steering Committee which was designated to finalize an action plan. The Committee is composed of 11 countries (Algeria, Cameroon, Egypt, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia), and UNEP, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) secretariat, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union and the African Development Bank (AfDB). A framework action plan for the environment initiative of NEPAD analysed and adopted by the Steering Committee at the level of Ministers at a meeting in Dakar from 12 to 14 June 2002 was endorsed by the ninth ordinary session of AMCEN, held from 1 to 5 July 2002 in Kampala. The framework is being expanded to develop it into a full action plan.

6. In the course of its assistance to Africa, UNEP has developed good working relations with the main subregional economic communities, including the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU). Pursuant to Governing Council decision SS.VII/5, UNEP has also been encouraging the integration of civil society organizations in its work. Recent efforts have included the involvement of African parliamentarians and the judiciary. UNEP has had a number of joint programmes with these institutions. In particular, complementary activities were undertaken during Africa's preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

7. In addition to policy support and advisory services to Governments and capacity-building, UNEP has initiated a wide range of programmes in the region. These include, among others, development of environmental law and institutions; response to environmental emergencies; information gathering and assessment; programmes in the areas of energy, sustainable consumption and production; promotion of urban environmental management; conservation; management of the marine and coastal environment; freshwater resources; management of wastes; and support to the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements.

8. It was in this context that the World Summit on Sustainable Development was hailed as another major opportunity to address Africa's concerns. These were fully integrated into the World Summit process. The Summit adopted in its Plan of Implementation a full chapter (VIII) on sustainable development for Africa, where it agreed on a set of major initiatives, including those related to managing Africa's environment; to reverse the negative trend the region is experiencing. The Plan covers themes and issues which fall well within the mandate of UNEP. The regional dimension emphasized by the World Summit, however, requires a refocused work delivery strategy by UNEP in Africa.

9. The importance of the new developments in Africa and the agreed Plan of Implementation of the World Summit require UNEP to renew and refocus its support to the continent, putting more emphasis on its collaboration with the African Union, including developing a special working relationship with specialized technical committees and building strategic linkages with the Executive Council of the Union. In addition, UNEP will continue supporting the finalization of the NEPAD action plan through the organization of a number of thematic workshops, extending support until the adoption of the NEPAD environment initiative by a special session of AMCEN in June 2003, before the Summit of the African Union endorses it in July 2003. Services provided to the ministerial forums, regional institutions and civil society organizations and the development and strengthening of regional programmes will continue, based on the World Summit Plan of Implementation. UNEP will now enter into broad partnership arrangements within which it will take the lead role in the implementation of certain programme areas of the environment initiative of NEPAD, where

it has comparative advantage. This support will complement UNEP's global support activities, which may benefit the continent as well. In implementing the NEPAD environment activities, UNEP will pursue a participatory approach involving civil society organizations, including the private sector and other major stakeholders, in order to effectively halt and reverse the degradation of Africa's environment. There is now a need to review the existing policies with a view to integrating the priorities of NEPAD and the World Summit Plan of Implementation. In addition, institutional capacity-building remains at the centre of progress in the region. Priority will be given to giving technical and advisory services on the environment to the technical committees of the African Union and assisting them in their work; assisting to strengthen AMCOW, regional institutions and civil society organizations, as well as AMCEN's operational mechanisms, including improving its internal consultative mechanism to reflect regionally based consultative processes for the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum; and establishment of AEIN.

10. UNEP will also continue its support to Africa through regional programmes. UNEP has launched a number of regional initiatives, which are already under way. These activities will be strengthened in partnership with relevant institutions and civil society organizations. The key areas described below where UNEP has comparative advantage will be the main focus of the next biennium programme delivery. Assessment is one key area, including the regular production of the Africa Environment Outlook report, through the AEIN. For shared freshwater resources, UNEP will support the development and implementation of the programme of work of AMCOW and the strengthening of river and lake basin authorities. The promotion of energy self-sufficiency will also be given priority. UNEP aims to contribute towards that agenda by focusing on analysis of environmental implications of energy policy, plans and systems, and hence dissemination of outcomes through policy dialogue and advisory services to Governments on the energy-environment-development nexus, promoting integration of environmental concerns into energy reform and particularly power sector reform. UNEP will also establish and promote programmes, partnerships and initiatives to support Africa's efforts to implement NEPAD objectives on energy, which seek to increase access to reliable and affordable commercial energy supply from 10 to 35 per cent or more in the next 20 years. Efforts will also be made in providing support to implement other initiatives on energy, capacity-building and promotion of renewable energy.

11. Other industry and trade related activities will receive special attention, including support to sustainable consumption and production, advocacy for better terms of trade in support of the environment, enhancement of the contribution of the industrial sector, in particular mining, minerals and metals, to sustainable development of Africa, and sustainable management of chemicals and hazardous wastes. The coastal and marine environment, which is a focus of the NEPAD environment initiative will be supported through strengthening both the Abidjan Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region and the Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region.

12. Additional effort will be made for the promotion of urban environmental management, the development of environmental law and institutions and advisory services in key areas of institutional building, and an increase in UNEP's role in capacity delivery at the country level in Africa. UNEP will pursue the implementation of a wide range of global and regional activities, which will continue to benefit Africa. These include conservation programmes, increased access to GEF resources, regional projects on freshwater vulnerability assessment, (including a project on groundwater pollution in Africa developed by the Division of Early Warning and Assessment in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) and ECA), capacity-building, environmental emergencies, disaster management and post conflict environmental management, and efforts to achieve an understanding of the linkages between poverty and environment, health and environment, and trade and environment.

13. UNEP will be actively participating in the various partnerships announced at the World Summit on Sustainable Development such as the European Union Water for Life Initiative, with a view to reach the target of halving by 2015 the proportion of people lacking access to improved sanitation and/or able to reach or afford safe drinking water, the European Union Energy Initiative for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development, and the United States of America Initiative on Forest Management and Conservation in the Congo Basin.

14. The implementation of this work will be strengthened within the context of the United Nations organizations working in Africa, particularly after the recent decision of the General Assembly to redirect the support of the United Nations within the context of NEPAD. In this context, the recent inter-agency consultation of United Nations organizations working in Africa adopted a new approach in its delivery process. A clustering of organizations handling, for example, environment, habitat and population issues, was adopted with the objective to streamline and coordinate the United Nations system's contribution to NEPAD. UNEP will thus deliver its inter-agency support within this framework and the existing mechanisms such as the Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and other national strategies, as well as the millennium development goals, would continue to be utilized through the United Nations Resident Coordinator system and the United Nations country teams. The central role of the regional economic commissions at the subregional level will be tapped into. Stronger partnership will be built with other key stakeholders, such as AfDB, subregional economic communities and civil society organizations.

I. BACKGROUND ISSUES

15. Africa has been a major priority for UNEP in recent years. In its decision 20/27 of 4 February 1999 on support to Africa, the UNEP Governing Council requested the Executive Director to implement a number of specific activities in the region. A follow-up decision (decision 21/15) was also adopted by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in February 2001.

16. There have been a number of important developments in the African region since the last Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum meeting. The region has now launched a regional integration process encompassing the transformation of OAU into the African Union as well as initiating NEPAD. In NEPAD, the African leaders pledge "... to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development and, at the same time, to participate actively in the world economy and body politic." These important achievements of the region's political leadership, which integrate the work of ministerial forums, are likely to constitute the foundation on which most future undertakings of the continent will be built.

A. African Union

17. The historic Summit of the OAU Heads of State and Government, which was held in Lusaka, in July 2001, established the African Union, which replaced the OAU created in 1963. For the first time in the history of the continent, a strong and more focused regional entity which integrates political, social and economic concerns has been agreed upon. A clear vision and programme has emerged as the centre piece to support and deliver what is most needed for Africa's economic and social development.

18. The leadership of the region is judiciously taking advantage of all the instruments available to achieve its goals. While establishing the African Union, developing NEPAD and mobilizing the international community's support (United Nations Secretary-General, Group of eight, European Union, etc.), they are wisely integrating important issues such as environment in the new institutional dispensation.

19. Article 5 of the Constitutive Act lists the organs of the African Union as follows: (a) Assembly of the Union; (b) Executive Council; (c) Pan-African Parliament; (d) Court of Justice; (e) Commission; (f) Permanent Representatives Committee; (g) Specialized Technical Committees; (h) Economic, Social and Cultural Council; and (i) Financial Institutions, (which include the Central Bank, the African Monetary Fund and the African Investment Bank). It is also stated that the Assembly may decide to establish other organs, as needs arise.

20. The three organs of the African Union which will be handling environmental issues are:

(a) The Executive Council, which will coordinate and take decisions on policies in areas of common interest to the member States, including environmental protection, humanitarian action and disaster response and relief (Art. 13 (e));

(b) The Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, Energy, Natural Resources and Environment (Art. 14 (d). (The Specialized Technical Committees will be composed of ministers or senior officials responsible for sectors falling within their respective areas of competence);

(c) The Commission, as the administrative body of the Union, will also have some responsibilities in this area.

B. New Partnership for Africa's Development

21. At the initiative of several heads of State of Africa, the process for preparing a comprehensive development programme for the continent culminated in the adoption of the New African Initiative at the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, which took place in Lusaka in July 2001.
22. The Initiative, which was later revised at a meeting in October 2001 attended by 10 African heads of State in Abuja, is now referred to as NEPAD. To ensure a coherent and thorough follow-up of NEPAD, a governing structure, composed of a Heads of State Implementation Committee, a Steering Committee and a secretariat, has been put in place.
23. The Heads of State Implementation Committee has chosen President Wade of Senegal to be in charge of the environment initiative of NEPAD. The President has now established an interim secretariat to foster information generation and sharing, as well as to facilitate and spearhead the development and implementation of priority environmental programmes and projects in Africa.
24. NEPAD focuses on those areas where action will be pivotal in kick-starting growth and reducing poverty. At the core of NEPAD is a commitment by African leaders to improve the capability of States so that Governments can fight poverty effectively.
25. NEPAD touches on several key areas, such as poverty and prosperity, the new political will of African leaders, the strategy for achieving sustainable development in the twenty-first century, and the programme of action, among others. NEPAD is giving due consideration to the environment through its environment initiative, which recognizes that a healthy and productive environment is a prerequisite for the success of NEPAD. The framework adopted by NEPAD further recognizes that the range of issues that must be addressed in order to nurture this environmental base is vast and complex, and that a systematic combination of initiatives is necessary in order to develop a coherent environmental programme. This will mean that choices must be made, and particular issues must be prioritized for initial interventions. This innovative thinking, which is characteristic of the NEPAD approach, is an acknowledgement that a core objective of the environment initiative must be to combat poverty and contribute to socio-economic development in Africa.
26. The environment initiative of NEPAD has targeted eight sub-themes for priority interventions: combating desertification; wetlands conservation; invasive alien species; coastal management; global warming; transboundary conservation areas; environmental governance; and financing. Cross-cutting issues such as poverty and environment, health and environment, etc., are underlying issues integrated into the programme.

C. African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

27. African Governments established AMCEN in 1985 as a policy forum to enable ministers in charge of environment issues to better formulate, harmonize and coordinate their activities and programmes. Since its creation, AMCEN has held nine ordinary sessions which have cumulatively produced tangible results, such as the adoption of the Bamako Convention in 1991, the adoption of the African Common Position on Environment and Development in 1991, the establishment and promotion of networks and committees for implementation of programme activities and projects, and the harmonization of Africa's position on global environment issues. In particular, AMCEN played a pivotal role in the process of negotiations and implementation of the conventions adopted following the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, including facilitating follow-up of ratification as well as mobilizing political, financial and technical support for effective participation by the region. Recently, AMCEN contributed to formulation of a strong African political declaration which was integrated into the preparatory documentation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

II. UNEP SUPPORT TO AFRICA

28. UNEP's support to Africa is based on Governing Council decisions 20/27 and 21/15 on support to Africa. It encompasses provision of services to policy forums such as AMCEN, AMCOW, support to regional initiatives such as NEPAD, and delivery of specific programmes addressing environmental issues pertinent to the region.

A. AMCEN

29. Since the establishment of AMCEN, UNEP has served as its secretariat. The provision of this service by UNEP has enabled AMCEN to engage in substantive policy dialogue and agree on a programme of work. Also, AMCEN has been able to tap into the technical expertise available within UNEP to secure resources, engage in various consultations and emerge as the voice of Africa in all international environmental forums. Of particular significance, is the recent support extended by UNEP to AMCEN in the production of the Africa Environment Outlook report, the first ever major comprehensive assessment of the state of Africa's environment. The ninth session of AMCEN, held in July 2002, decided that the report should be produced on a regular basis henceforth and that AEIN, as basis for supporting the Africa Environment Outlook process, should be launched.

B. AMCOW

30. Recognizing that water is one of the most important resources in Africa, UNEP has been assisting African ministers in charge of water development, at their request, to create a consultative forum based on the experience of AMCEN. This assistance drew on the 1998 decision of the United Nations organizations working in Africa, which recommended that UNEP should chair the water cluster working group of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. UNEP, as a first step, working with other co-chairs, was requested to develop a strategy for consolidating progress in the work of the group. This led to UNEP hosting a technical meeting in Nairobi at which a strategy on the way forward was proposed and endorsed. The organization requested the water working group of the Special Initiative on Africa, under the leadership of the co-chairs (UNEP, the World Bank and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)) to take the necessary steps to explore the feasibility of organizing a regional ministerial forum on water. In response to the task given to the United Nations system, UNEP and the secretariat of the Special Initiative on Africa, the World Bank, UNESCO and other organizations extended support to the informal consultations of selected ministers responsible for water, which took place in Nairobi on 11 October 2001. The informal consultations took place in the margins of the launch of the technical segment of the African Water Forum. The informal consultations agreed on the need to establish an intergovernmental mechanism for policy dialogue on challenges of water resources management in Africa. It was also agreed that the consultation should be institutionalized, to be held regularly and to involve all ministers responsible for water resources in the 53 African countries. A task force headed by the Minister of Water Resources of Nigeria was created to spearhead the follow-up activities, leading to the creation of AMCOW. Second and third rounds of informal consultations were held on 15 November 2001 in Abuja and at the margins of the International Conference on Freshwater, (Bonn, Germany, 3-7 December 2001) respectively.

31. These activities led to the launch of AMCOW in Abuja on 30 April 2002. A secretariat is located in Abuja.

C. African Union

32. UNEP has worked with OAU in the past in establishing regional conventions such as the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, as well as fostering policy dialogue in Africa. In anticipation of the transformation of OAU into the African Union and of the need to continue and strengthen its relationship with the newly established Union, UNEP has opened a permanent liaison office in Addis Ababa, which has already launched a number of joint activities with the African Union.

D. Support of UNEP in the implementation of the environment initiative of NEPAD

33. On request by the African Governments, UNEP has been spearheading the development of the environment initiative of NEPAD. With resources mobilized through GEF, an established Steering Committee consisting of 11 countries (Algeria, Cameroon, Egypt, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia), the GEF secretariat, ECA, the African Union and AfDB is currently working on finalizing the action plan.

34. A framework action plan for the environment initiative of NEPAD was analysed and adopted by the Steering Committee at the level of Ministers, in Dakar, from 12 to 14 June 2002. That framework was endorsed by the ninth ordinary session of AMCEN held from 1 to 5 July 2002 in Kampala.

35. The framework contains the eight sub-themes for priority interventions: combating desertification; wetlands conservation; invasive alien species; coastal management; global warming; transboundary conservation areas; environmental governance; and financing. Cross cutting issues such poverty and environment, health and environment, etc., are integrated into the programme. The framework will now have to be developed into a full action plan.

E. Support to regional institutions and civil society organizations

36. UNEP has developed good working relations with the main subregional economic communities in Africa - ECCAS, ECOWAS, COMESA, SADC, and AMU. Pursuant to Governing Council decision SS.VII/5, UNEP has also been encouraging the involvement of civil society organizations in its work. Recent efforts have included the involvement of African parliamentarians and the judiciary. UNEP has had a number of joint programmes with these institutions. In particular, complementary activities were undertaken during Africa's preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

F. Development of specific programmes in the region

37. In addition to policy support and advisory services to Governments and capacity-building, UNEP has initiated a wide range of programmes in the region. These include, among others, programmes for development of environmental law and institutions; response to environmental emergencies; information gathering and assessment; programmes in the areas of energy, sustainable consumption and production; promotion of urban environmental management; conservation; management of the marine and coastal environment; freshwater resources; management of wastes; and support to the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements.

III. AFRICA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION

38. Africa's concerns were fully integrated into the World Summit on Sustainable Development process. The Summit took note of the fact that "since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, sustainable development has remained elusive for many African countries. Poverty remains a major challenge and most countries on the continent have not benefited fully from the opportunities of globalization, further exacerbating the continent's marginalization." In response and to address these issues, the Summit adopted in its Plan of Implementation a full chapter (VIII) on sustainable development for Africa, where it agreed on a set of major initiatives, including those related to managing Africa's environment to reverse the negative trend the region is experiencing. The proposed Plan covers themes and issues which fall clearly under the mandate of UNEP. The regional dimension emphasized by the World Summit, however, requires a refocused work delivery strategy by UNEP in Africa.

IV. UNEP'S WORK IN AFRICA IN LIGHT OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION

39. The importance of the new developments in Africa and the agreed Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development require UNEP to renew and refocus its support to the continent putting more emphasis on the African Union, NEPAD, the ministerial forums, regional institutions and civil society organizations, as well as the development and strengthening of regional programmes. The process will take full advantage of the various partnerships announced at the World Summit.

A. African Union

40. UNEP will need to develop a special working relationship with the specialized technical committees of the African Union, particularly the technical committee that deals with industry, science and technology, natural resources and the environment. UNEP's contribution could facilitate the integration of environmental issues in the work of the institutional arrangements of the newly established African Union. UNEP has a comparative advantage in the formulation and development of environmental policy, which would be of substantive benefit to the specialized committees. UNEP will also need to build strategic linkages with the Executive Council of the African Union, which consists of ministers of foreign affairs, as well as other major ministries such as health, industry, finance and planning.

B. NEPAD

41. NEPAD is now hailed as a major framework for achieving the continent's development goals. The framework has enjoyed a wide range of support since it was launched. In particular, the Secretary-General of the United Nations has embraced it, and the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly in its resolution 57/2 of 16 September 2002 adopted a declaration on NEPAD, identifying it as the framework for Africa's development. The World Summit on Sustainable Development also recognized the imperative need to support the full implementation of NEPAD and other indigenous frameworks that embody poverty reduction strategies. NEPAD is, therefore, a framework for the attainment of the millennium development goals in Africa, such as reducing the region's poverty by half by 2015, and reducing HIV/AIDS infection in the most affected countries by 25 per cent by 2005.

42. UNEP will continue to play a significant role in the finalization of the NEPAD action plan as called for by the ninth session of AMCEN. In addition to the various consultations, UNEP is assisting African experts in finalizing the draft action plans for each of the eight thematic areas identified by NEPAD. The content of the proposal under each theme will be discussed during a series of workshops and consultations with African experts. These eight thematic workshops will lead to the adoption of the NEPAD environment initiative by a special session of AMCEN in June 2003, before the Summit of the African Union endorses it in July 2003.

43. UNEP must now enter into broad partnership arrangements within which it will take the lead role in the implementation of certain programme areas of the environment initiative of NEPAD, where it has comparative advantage. This support will complement UNEP's global support activities, which may benefit the continent as well. In implementing the NEPAD environment activities, UNEP will pursue a participatory approach involving civil society organizations including the private sector and other major stakeholders in order to halt and reverse effectively the degradation of Africa's environment. Within the context of the NEPAD environment initiative, there are a number of key issues that are of utmost concern to the local communities. They include access to sources of energy at affordable prices, modernization of agriculture to increase food production, development of small-scale irrigation schemes in semi-arid areas, reduction of vulnerability of local people to natural disasters and the improvement of endogenous technologies. In view of the fact that there are other ongoing activities with the existing ones, UNEP will endeavor to harmonize the proposed activities with existing ones. The activities will be designed in such a way that they complement and add value to the existing programmes, rather than duplicating each other. UNEP will play a significant role in ensuring that the capacity-building component of NEPAD is implemented.

C. Ministerial forums and relevant institutional mechanisms

44. African Governments and regional entities have in the past put in place various policies for the promotion and improvement of environmental management. There is now a need to review the existing policies with a view to integrating the priorities of NEPAD and the World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation. In addition, institutional capacity-building remains crucial for progress in the region.

1. AMCEN

45. The ninth meeting of AMCEN, held in Kampala from 1 to 6 July 2002, mandated the President of AMCEN to work with the African Union and within the current institutional arrangement of NEPAD to integrate the work of AMCEN and ensure that the Conference plays a significant role in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. For that purpose, the meeting requested UNEP's Executive Director to continue providing the necessary support, through the secretariat of the conference. All these new developments call for refocusing of UNEP's support as the secretariat to AMCEN. The following are among specific activities that would require special attention.

(a) Participation and contribution of UNEP to the upcoming activities to be undertaken with the African Union and AMCEN to ensure that environmental issues are fully integrated in the work of the newly established African Union. Article 14 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union has established specialized technical committees, which are responsible to the Executive Council. Environment is dealt with in the Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, Energy, Natural Resources and Environment. UNEP could provide technical and advisory services on the environment to the Committee and assist in its work. The launch of the Committee and its operationalization will require a number of consultations, which could be supported by UNEP;

(b) The implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development will have significant implications for the work of AMCEN. UNEP may assist the Conference in strengthening its operational mechanisms (regular consultations, more focused bureau meetings, support to African Union technical committee, linkages with subregional economic communities and other relevant regional institutions);

(c) The establishment of AEIN will certainly be an asset for AMCEN. However, an effective network is not feasible without close ties between the UNEP collaborating centres and other important institutions. UNEP's unique networking experience could be used to assist AMCEN in this endeavour;

(d) As discussions continue towards creating a more efficient UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, AMCEN could be supported in improving its internal consultative mechanism to reflect a regionally based consultative processes for the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum.

2. AMCOW

46. Specific activities to be undertaken by UNEP and geared towards the development and implementation of the programme of work of AMCOW will include:

- (a) Keeping the state of Africa's water resources under review;
- (b) Promoting desirable actions of common interest to the continent;
- (c) Facilitating international cooperation through the coordination of issues relating to water policies and actions amongst African countries;
- (d) Development of a regional implementation programme;

- (e) Clearing house of programmes, projects and policies in the water resources management sector.

3. Regional institutions and civil society organizations

47. Although UNEP has had joint activities with such institutions, synergies need to be developed and enhanced among all the partners within the framework of NEPAD. A more systematic approach will be taken by UNEP. Closer ties will be fostered with the subregional economic communities, especially following the recent decision of the Heads of State Implementation Committee of NEPAD which has given those communities the lead role in the implementation of NEPAD. UNEP will work in partnership with them as well as civil society organizations and other partners to:

- (a) Finalize the development of the environment initiative of NEPAD;
- (b) Develop joint partnership/mechanisms for the implementation of the environment initiative of NEPAD in priority areas of interest to UNEP.

V. SUPPORT TO AFRICA THROUGH REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

48. UNEP has launched a number of initiatives, which are already under way. These activities will be strengthened in partnership with relevant institutions and civil society organizations. The key areas where UNEP has a comparative advantage outlined in the following paragraphs, will be the main focus of the next biennium programme delivery.

A. Assessment

49. This will involve the development of AEIN for a sustained production of the Africa Environment Outlook report. The concept and principles of sustainable development continue to be elusive to many African countries. Sustainable development strategic planning in the region still focuses on increased access to and use of the natural resource base. Unfortunately, reliable information on the stock and the state of natural resources on the continent is inadequate. Capacity-building in environmental information management remains a main prerequisite for any sustainable development initiative in Africa. At the eighth session of AMCEN in Abuja in April 2000, the ministers decided that an Africa Environment Outlook report should be prepared with the assistance of UNEP, to provide a comprehensive scientific assessment of the environment and related policies and environmental management programmes. The report was prepared and launched during the ninth session of AMCEN, in Kampala on 4 July 2002, and was adopted by the ministers as the framework for environmental reporting and assessment in Africa. The report was also recommended as a tool for monitoring progress of implementation of the NEPAD environment programmes.

50. The process of producing national and subregional inputs for the Africa Environment Outlook report revealed serious shortcomings in existing information, as well as inadequacies in capacities to sustain a process of this nature. There is a need for a strong information foundation to support the assessment of different scenarios, and to suggest options for environmentally sustainable development. As a result of the gaps and weaknesses identified with respect to existing data and information, the ministers called on UNEP to support a process of strengthening the capacities of African Governments and other institutions on the continent in integrated assessment, which would guide sustainable development planning. The ministers endorsed the proposal by UNEP to establish an environmental information network to act as a framework for capacity-building in integrated environmental assessment in the region.

51. UNEP will thus launch the AEIN initiative, which is intended to address the shortcomings experienced during the Africa Environment Outlook preparation process. It is aimed at strengthening the capacities of the UNEP Collaborating Centres and some key national institutions, as well as establishing a collaborative and participatory institutional framework to support the overall production process for the Africa Environment Outlook report and subregional State of Environment reports and consequently provide

input into the Global Environment Outlook report. It is also intended to gain consensus on critical environmental issues, core data sets and sources, policy-relevant and forward-looking assessments, strategic approaches and identification of emerging environmental issues in the subregion, so as to form a basis for early warning and the establishment of an appropriate framework for regular updating of the Africa Environment Outlook report and associated products. The approach to be adopted by the project is to build upon and strengthen existing assessment and reporting capacities of the proposed network and improve access and dissemination of regional and subregional assessments and associated products.

B. Shared freshwater resources

52. Africa has 83 river and lake basins with over 50 major international water basins such that two or more countries share water courses. Lake Victoria is the largest freshwater lake in the world. Despite the abundant freshwater resources, 14 countries in the region are subject to water stress or water scarcity and a further 11 countries are expected to join this category of countries in the next 25 years. Access to water from shared rivers and lakes may become a source of political tension if the situation is not addressed.

53. One of the top priorities of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa is the equitable and sustainable use of freshwater resources and the “fair share” approach to water resources management. The key areas on which the programme focuses include changes in water policies, institutions and laws to bring the poor majority to the centre of the sustainable water development agenda for Africa. The Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA) of UNEP, funded by GEF, attempts to assess the severity of several priority water-related issues, their geographic distribution and their root causes. Africa constitutes one of the major focus of GIWA.

54. In the management of water resources, activities will encompass:

(a) Support for the development and implementation of the programme of work of AMCOW, which was established in April 2002 in Abuja. The key components of the programme include:

- (i) Development of a regional implementation programme aimed at strengthening the ongoing reforms in Africa;
- (ii) Establishment of a regional Water Technology Collaborating Centre;
- (iii) Development of a regional strategy for provision of technical/advisory services with regard to the policy, legal and other instruments for efficient management of freshwater resources;
- (iv) Designation of a water task force to play the role of a “regional water watch,” to be entrusted with the responsibility of providing scientific information, expert advice and early warning on changes in the water situation in the region;

(b) Support for the strengthening of river and lake basin authorities such as for Lake Chad and the Nile, Zambezi and Niger rivers. Specific tasks will include:

- (i) Assessments of current and future trends with a view to assisting the development of water resources. Emphasis will also be placed on the sharing of water resources amongst neighbouring States;
- (ii) Preparation of a main database in the region serving as a clearing house on the state of the river basins, their management status, areas of institutional collaboration, projects and programmes;
- (iii) Support for the strengthening and/or establishment of subregional and regional agreements on shared water resources, particularly fostering collection of data and information and their dissemination.

C. Promotion of energy self-sufficiency

55. Africa remains a “dark” continent where the vast majority of its population have no access to modern energy services, yet the continent is blessed with untapped sources of all forms of energy. More than 80 per cent of the African people depend on traditional sources of energy. At the same time, most of the countries are reforming their energy sector towards new institutional frameworks and increased private sector participation. The role of Government under the reformed structure has shifted towards facilitation rather than implementation. On the other hand, global environmental concerns are dictating adoption of an energy path that is clean, an aspect that has major financial and social implications for a continent which must to increase energy consumption in order to develop. Hence, to meet the goal of universal access to modern services, a comprehensively coordinated approach is necessary. Faced with other multiple challenges especially in the face of globalization, Governments need assistance in designing and implementing such an approach. While recognizing there is no single solution, UNEP aims to contribute towards this agenda by focusing on the following priorities:

- (a) Analysis of environmental implications of energy policy, plans and systems and hence dissemination of outcomes through policy dialogue and advisory services to Governments on the energy-environment-development nexus;
- (b) Promoting integration of environmental concerns into energy reform and particularly power sector reform;
- (c) Establish and promote programmes, partnerships and initiatives to support Africa’s efforts to implement NEPAD objectives on energy, which seek to increase access to reliable and affordable commercial energy supply from 10 to 35 per cent or more in the next 20 years;
- (d) Provide support to implement other initiatives on energy, including increased use of renewable energy, and to improve energy efficiency and access to advanced energy technologies, including cleaner fossil fuel technologies, particularly in rural and peri-urban areas;
- (e) Capacity-building and promotion of renewable energy (including hydropower) which build on the African Rural Energy Enterprise Development model.

D. Other activities

56. Other specific activities will also receive special attention, including:

- (a) Support for sustainable consumption and production. Support for regional and national initiatives towards sustainable consumption and production to accelerate the shift towards such practices to promote social and economic development within the carrying capacity of ecosystems;
- (b) Advocacy for better terms of trade and environment. Enhance the delivery of coordinated, effective and targeted trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building, to take advantage of existing and future market access opportunities and examine the relationship between trade, environment and development;
- (c) Mining in Africa. Enhance the contribution of the industrial sector, in particular mining, minerals and metals, to the sustainable development of Africa by supporting the development of effective and transparent, regulatory, broad-based participation, social and environmental responsibility and increased market access in order to create an attractive and conducive environment for investment;
- (d) Sustainable management of chemicals and hazardous wastes. Achieve sound management of chemicals, with particular focus on hazardous chemicals and wastes, inter alia through initiatives to assist African countries in elaborating national chemical profiles, and developing subregional and national frameworks and strategies for chemical management, and establishing chemical focal points.

E. Marine and coastal ecosystems and their resources

57. Within the context of the Pan-African Conference on Sustainable Integrated Coastal Management (Maputo, July 1998) and the Conference on Cooperation for the Development and Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment in Sub-Saharan Africa (Cape Town, December 1998) African Governments resolved to take urgent measures to halt and reverse the downward trends in the implementation of the Abidjan Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region and the Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region. These are the two vital instruments for the protection, management and development of the coastal and marine environment in Africa. There is a need to strengthen both the Nairobi and the Abidjan Conventions with a view to obtaining the enforcement of and compliance with international and regional agreements relevant to the protection and management of the marine and coastal ecosystems and the resources therein. In addition, a major ministerial consultative process (the African Process for the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment) adopted at the Cape Town Conference concluded with an agreement on a set of priority projects to be implemented in the region.

58. An agreement has now been reached that the implementation of the NEPAD marine and coastal component will be done through the mechanisms of the Nairobi and Abidjan Conventions. UNEP will thus support the implementation of these priority projects, while extending support to the Regional Coordination Units of the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions.

F. Promotion of urban environmental management

59. Africa is the fastest urbanizing region in the world. Unfortunately, the economic decline of the region has hindered the development of the necessary infrastructure. As a result, environmental degradation has become the main problem in African cities. This situation gives an opportunity to UNEP and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) to strengthen their joint programmes and delivery capacity in Africa, in line with the need for inter-agency collaboration.

60. Area of specific interest will include:

- (a) Water resources and waste management;
- (b) Pollution control;
- (c) Environmental information and awareness.

G. Environmental law and institution-building

61. African countries face several challenges in ensuring that institutions and legislative and regulatory capacity has been built for effective environmental management. In this regard, UNEP has launched a major programme for the development and periodic review of environmental law, as well as strategies to assist countries in key areas of environmental institutional development. There is a need to renew support to this programme, to expand it and integrate all countries in the region. Activities within the framework of NEPAD aimed at enhancing the capacity of Governments, institutions and stakeholders for effective environmental policy implementation and management and to promote the implementation of environmental and environment-related conventions and action plans, could be further strengthened. These activities include:

- (a) Development of environmental law. The objective is to provide technical assistance to African countries for the implementation of environmental laws and institutions, as well as the review of existing environmental legislative mechanisms and institutions, and support harmonization and promotion of compliance with enforcement procedures in environmental law;

(b) Policy and advisory services in key areas of institutional building. The objective is to contribute towards arresting and reversing negative environmental trends arising from the non-application of appropriate environmental standards and management techniques. The objective is consistent with the United Nations Secretary-General's report on environment and human settlements;

(c) Knowledge and skill development. The objective is to assist Governments, key institutions and relevant officials to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and tools for environmental management (including those required for assessing and solving environmental problems) in their countries and subregions;

(d) Promotion of best practices. The objective is to design, operate and coordinate schemes and awards relating to success and best practices in order to promote stakeholder and public participation in environmental management.

H. Increasing UNEP's role in capacity delivery at the country level in Africa

62. Capacity-building and capacity retention have been identified to be a priority focus for NEPAD. The environment initiative has a main component on capacity-building.

63. In addition, in decision SS.VII/1 on international environmental governance, the seventh special session of UNEP's Governing Council, held in May 2002 in Cartagena, Colombia, adopted the report of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or Their Representatives on International Environmental Governance. That report recommended, inter alia, an increased role for UNEP in country-level capacity delivery, entailing capacity-building and training as well as national level coordination of the environmental component of sustainable development. The report recommended that international environmental governance should also cover and support regional and subregional efforts, with UNEP providing support to the strengthening of regional environmental governance to improve coordination, implementation, capacity-building and technology transfer in support of regional initiatives.

64. There is need to develop an integrated UNEP programme of work at the country level in Africa for environmental protection and sustainable development. UNEP activities at the country level would be consistent with national priorities and be integrated into national planning frameworks, such as national sustainable development strategies and poverty reduction strategies.

65. In Africa, and consistent with decision SS.VII/1, UNEP should strengthen its capacity-building activities based on the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Common Country Assessment and the capacity-building needs assessment carried out by GEF. In addition, UNEP may need to develop an inventory of current work by UNEP and activities by other organizations in the countries so that UNEP will provide assistance to countries on a comprehensive, integrated and consistent basis, with a view to avoiding duplication of efforts.

66. Based on the needs of Africa and its comparative advantage, UNEP could focus its activities at country level capacity-building on (a) environmental assessment and early warning; (b) development and implementation of environmental law; (c) environmental emergency management; (d) technology transfer and industry; and (e) management of water resources. Many of these would reinforce the six GEF focal areas as well as implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements.

I. Other programmes of UNEP of benefit to Africa

67. Pursuant to its Governing Council decisions, UNEP has developed a wide range of global and regional activities. Though these programmes are global in nature, their implementation concerns Africa as well. The implementation of these global programmes in the next biennium, will continue to benefit Africa. These include:

(a) Conservation programmes such as the Great Apes Survival Programme, the Memorandum of Understanding on Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia and the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN);

(b) Access to GEF resources, where UNEP, as a GEF implementing agency, has been strengthening its support to African countries in the GEF focal areas of climate change, biodiversity and international waters, and also to the emerging priority areas of land degradation, persistent organic pollutants and biosafety. The UNEP/GEF portfolio also includes a number of full-sized projects that are truly global in scope, and involve participation by African countries. These include development of National Biosafety Frameworks and an assessment of the impacts of and adaptation to climate change in multiple regions and sectors, both of which began in 2001. Several global assessment activities, including the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and GIWA, have involved Africa, and Project Development and Preparation Facility Block B funding was approved for the Dryland Land Degradation Assessment. Several UNEP/GEF transregional (global) projects also involve African countries;

(c) Regional projects on freshwater vulnerability assessment, including groundwater pollution in Africa developed by the Division of Early Warning and Assessment, in cooperation with UNESCO, UN-HABITAT and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA);

(d) UNEP will continue strengthening its strategy for capacity-building consisting of building the capacity of African negotiators in order to enable them to participate in international negotiations for multilateral environmental agreements and related meetings. In particular, this activity will focus on supporting Africa's participation in international forums. The aim is to build capacity of key African negotiators on issues of climate change, biodiversity, desertification, ozone layer depletion and chemicals, including for compliance and enforcement;

(e) For environmental emergencies, UNEP will continue its support to the "Golden Spear" symposia series, within the framework of cooperation between the United States Central Command and African Governments, which has become a strategic forum for policy makers and regional leaders who are responsible for disaster management. The aim is to put in place policies to integrate environmental dimensions in emergency prevention, preparedness, assessment, mitigation and response;

(f) In the area of linkages between poverty, health, trade and the environment, UNEP will continue its efforts to achieve an understanding of the linkages between poverty and environment, health and environment, and trade and environment, with special emphasis on Africa, since more than half the least developed countries are in that region.

VI. PARTNERSHIPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. United Nations organizations

68. Until the launch of NEPAD, United Nations organizations' collaboration in Africa was undertaken within the framework of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa.

69. However, the recent decision of the General Assembly to redirect the support of the United Nations within the context of NEPAD has now been operationalized. This is reflected in the work of the fourth annual regional consultation of United Nations agencies working in Africa, held from 24 to 25 October 2002 in Addis Ababa. Representatives from 28 United Nations agencies, departments and programmes participated in the meeting, as well as the NEPAD secretariat and other observers, such as AfDB, the African Union and the International Organization for Migration.

70. A number of collaborative agreements emanated from the consultations including:

- (a) A set of priority areas for joint United Nations activities in order to promote synergies and maximize impact;
- (b) Identification of a number of “quick wins” for NEPAD for the coming two years, which could serve as benchmarks to measure the United Nations progress and also to provide a basis for a common reporting mechanism and exchange of information among all organizations;
- (c) Establishing modalities for cooperation at the national, subregional and regional levels and for cooperation among organizations within specific clusters and with the NEPAD secretariat;
- (d) Capacity-building for the regional economic communities and key national institutions to advance the implementation of NEPAD;
- (e) Support for NEPAD outreach activities to popularize its objectives and principles.

71. This inter-agency consultation of United Nations organizations working in Africa adopted a new approach in its delivery process. A clustering of organizations handling, for example, environment, habitat and population issues was adopted with the objective to streamline and coordinate the United Nations contribution to NEPAD. UNEP will thus deliver its inter-agency support within this framework in collaboration with UN-HABITAT and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The meeting agreed on modalities for cooperation at the national, subregional and regional level.

72. At the country level, existing mechanisms such as the Common Country Assessment/the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and various national strategies, as well as the millennium development goals, would continue to be utilized through the United Nations Resident Coordinator system and the United Nations country teams. The central role of the regional economic communities at the subregional level will be tapped into. In this regard, the United Nations system, including UNEP, would work very closely with the regional economic communities and the NEPAD secretariat to advance joint activities in order to build the capacity of the subregional institutions.

73. In addition, UNEP will develop joint programmes with ECA and other United Nations organizations based on potential areas of collaboration. The key premise to agree upon is that sound environmental management is paramount to any sustainable social and economic development and welfare. Furthermore also, there is an intimate relationship between poverty reduction and environmental degradation.

B. Other organizations

74. ADB will be playing an increased role in the implementation of NEPAD. UNEP will strengthen its collaborative work with ADB in the implementation of the priority programme areas of interest to both institutions.

75. The subregional economic communities have now been identified as the lead institutions for the implementation of NEPAD. UNEP will foster closer ties with them building on the close collaboration established during the preparatory process leading to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The approach will be similar with civil society organizations.

76. One of the main features of the World Summit on Sustainable Development was its focus on partnership arrangements for effective implementation of the agreed Plan of Implementation and Johannesburg Declaration. Several specific partnerships were announced in which UNEP could play a significant role and assist integration of countries in partnerships. These include, in particular, two type two initiatives in which the European Commission took the lead in Johannesburg.

77. One is the Water for Life Initiative financed by public and private funds and composed of stakeholders and experts with a view to reaching the target of halving by 2015 the proportion of people lacking access to improved sanitation and/or enabling them to have access to or afford safe drinking water. Through this Initiative, the European Union will help its partners to develop integrated water resources

management plans by 2005. All partners are committed to ensuring that clean water and sanitation are given appropriate priority in the future. The creation of AMCOW has been warmly welcomed by the European Union in this respect.

78. The second is the European Union Energy Initiative for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development. This initiative will help deliver the proposed target of increasing the global share of renewable energy sources to at least 15 per cent of primary energy supply by 2010. It also supports the achievement of the millennium development goal of halving the number of people in extreme poverty by 2015 through the provision of adequate, sustainable energy services. The European Union is said to collectively provide around €700 million per year in energy-related development assistance, and this will increase in coming years with requests from developing countries.

79. Further to the two European Union type two partnerships, the European Commission is expected to be involved in a series of initiatives, at different levels. The state of development of these partnerships is uneven; in some of them the partnership has been confirmed while in others it is only expected.

80. The United States of America has also taken the lead in a number of initiatives. Of particular interest to Africa is the Initiative on Forest Management and Conservation in the Congo Basin (the Congo Basin Initiative).
