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INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND PROTOCOLS IN THE
FIELD OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Report of the Executive Director

This document is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 3436 (XXX) of 9 December 1975 and Governing Council decision 24 (III) of 30 April 1975. It reports on action taken pursuant to that Governing Council decision and decision 66 (IV) of 13 April 1976 gives information on developments in respect of conventions in the field of the environment from 15 October 1981 to 15 October 1982, and outlines action taken to keep the Governing Council informed of the status of existing conventions and protocols. 1/

A. INTRODUCTION

1. By decision 24 (III) the Governing Council urged all States entitled to become parties to existing conventions and protocols in the field of the environment to do so as soon as possible, and requested the Executive Director to inform the Governing Council at each session about the status of both new and existing environmental conventions. Each report was to include information about accessions, ratifications and dates of entry into force, and to summarize the decisions of various Governments regarding their participation in environmental conventions.
2. Subsequently, by resolution 3436 (XXX), the General Assembly expressed concern that existing international conventions or protocols in the field of the environment had not yet received the wide acceptance and application they deserved, and requested the Governing Council to keep the Assembly informed annually of any new convention concluded in this field and of the status of existing conventions.

3. The information contained in the present report is taken from replies to the Executive Director's letters of 2 February 1982 and 12 October 1982.

B. DEPOSITARIES

4. The following Governments and international organizations reported on the status of conventions for which they serve as depositaries: Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Kuwait, Mexico, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; International Labour Office, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Maritime Organization, International Atomic Energy Agency, Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, Council of Europe, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Organization of African Unity and Organization of American States.

C. NEW CONVENTIONS

5. The secretariat has been informed of 11 recent international conventions in the field of the environment other than those already recorded in document UNEP/GC/INFORMATION/5/ and its Supplements 1-5:

(a) Optional Protocol Concerning the Compulsory Settlement of Disputes, signed on 21 May 1963 in Vienna;

(b) The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, signed on 27 January 1967 in Washington;

(c) Protocol concerning Regional Co-operation in Combating Pollution by Oil and Other Harmful Substances in Cases of Emergency, signed on 23 April 1978 in Kuwait;

(d) Additional Protocol to the European Convention for the Protection of Animals during International Transport, signed on 10 May 1979 in Strasbourg;

(e) Convention for Co-operation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region, signed on 23 March 1981 in Abidjan;

(f) Protocol Concerning Co-operation in Combating Pollution in Cases of Emergency, signed on 23 March 1981 in Abidjan;

(g) Regional Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment, signed on 14 February 1982 in Jeddah;

(h) Protocol Concerning Regional Co-operation in Combating Pollution by Oil and Other Harmful Substances in Cases of Emergency, signed on 14 February 1982 in Jeddah;

(i) Annex 16, Volume II, to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, adopted by the Council on 31 June 1981, effective 18 February 1982;

(j) Protocol Concerning Mediterranean Specially Protected Areas, signed on 3 April 1982 in Geneva.

(k) Convention on the Law of the Sea, signed on 10 December 1982 in Montego Bay.

6. Further to the Conference of the Human Environment in the South Pacific, convened in Rarotonga, Cook Islands, in March 1982, a meeting of legal experts was convened to consider:

(a) A preliminary draft convention for the protection and development of the natural resources and environment of the South Pacific region;

(b) A draft protocol concerning co-operation in combating oil pollution emergencies in the South Pacific region;

(c) A preliminary draft protocol for the prevention of pollution of the South Pacific region by dumping.

These three legal instruments will be reviewed and revised at a meeting of legal and technical experts in Noumea, 24-28 January 1983.

7. For the South-East Pacific region, negotiations began in September 1982 on a Draft Protocol for the Protection of the South-East Pacific Against Pollution from Land-Based Sources.

8. In the Caribbean region, two draft instruments are under consideration with a view to their adoption in March 1983:

(a) Draft convention for the protection and development of the marine environment of the wider Caribbean region;

(b) Draft protocol concerning co-operation in combating oil spills in the wider Caribbean region.

D. CHANGES IN STATUS OF EXISTING CONVENTIONS

9. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda became a party to the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (as amended) (1946).

10. The Government of Australia became a party to the Amendments to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution of the Sea by Oil (1954) Concerning the Protection of the Great Barrier Reef (1971) and Concerning Tank Arrangements and Limitation of Tank Size (1971).

11. The Government of Austria became a party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973).

12. The Government of Bangladesh became a party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973) and the International Convention Relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties (1969).
13. The Government of Belgium withdrew from the Convention on the Conservation of the Living Resources of the Southeast Atlantic (1969) and became a party to the Protocol relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Pollution by Substances Other Than Oil (1973).
14. The Government of Belize became a party to the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (as amended) (1946).
15. The Government of Benin became a party to the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972).
16. The Government of Brazil adhered to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (1972) and the Convention Concerning the Protection of Workers Against Occupational Hazards in the Working Environment Due to Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration (1977).
17. The Government of Burundi became a party to the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972).
18. The Government of Canada ratified the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (1979), and withdrew from the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (as amended) (1946).
19. The Government of Chile became a party to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (1971).
20. The Government of Colombia became a party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973).
21. The Government of Denmark became a party to the European Convention for the Protection of Animals for Slaughter (1979), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979), the European Convention for the Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes (1976) and the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).
22. The Government of El Salvador accepted the revised text of the International Plant Protection Convention (1951).
23. The Government of Egypt ratified the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979).
24. The Government of Finland accepted the revised text of the International Plant Protection Convention (1951).

25. The Government of France approved the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (1979) and the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution from Land-Based Sources (1980), ratified the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (1980), and accepted the Amendments to the Plant Protection Agreement for the South East Asia and Pacific Region (as amended) (1956).
26. The Government of Gabon became a party to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (1972), the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage (1969), the International Convention on the establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage (1971), the International Convention Relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties (1969) and the Convention Relating to Civil Liability in the Field of Maritime Carriage of Nuclear Material (1971).
27. The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany became a party to the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (as amended) (1946) and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (1973).
28. The Government of Greece became a party to the European Convention on the Protection of the Archeological Heritage (1969), the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972) and the Protocol of 1978 Relating to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (1973).
29. The Government of Guinea became a party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973).
30. The Government of Guyana accepted the revised text of the International Plant Protection Convention (1951).
31. The Government of the Holy See became a party to the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972).
32. The Government of India ratified the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979), and became a party to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (1971) and the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (1969).
33. The Government of Ireland ratified the Convention for the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft (1972), and became a party to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (1972), the European Convention for the Protection of Animals for Slaughter (1979), the European Convention for the Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes (1976) and the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

34. The Government of Israel accepted the revised text of the International Plant Protection Convention (1951).
35. The Government of Italy became a party to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979), the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (1976), the Protocol Relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Pollution by Substances Other Than Oil (1973) and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (1973) and its 1978 Protocol.
36. The Government of Japan deposited an instrument of ratification to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (1972), and an instrument of admittance to the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (1976).
37. The Government of Kenya became a party to the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (as amended) (1946).
38. The Government of Kiribati became a party to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (1972).
39. The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic accepted the Amendments to the Plant Protection Agreement for the South East Asia and Pacific Region (as amended) (1956).
40. The Government of Liechtenstein became a party to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).
41. The Government of Luxembourg became a party to the European Convention for the Protection of Animals for Slaughter (1979), the European Convention for the Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes (1976) and the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979), and ratified the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979).
42. The Government of Malawi became a party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973) and the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972).
43. The Government of the Maldives became a party to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution of the Sea by Oil (1954).
44. The Government of Mauritania became a party to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (1971).

45. The Government of Mexico accepted the revised text of the International Plant Protection Convention (1951).
46. The Government of Monaco became a party to the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (as amended) (1946).
47. The Government of the Netherlands extended to the Netherlands Antilles the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (as amended) (1946). It also approved (for the Netherlands only) the International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage (1971), accepted the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (1979), and approved the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979). The Kingdom of the Netherlands signed in Brussels an Agreement between Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg with respect to the protection of nature and landscape. The Agreement is not yet in operation. Finally, it accepted the revised text of the International Plant Protection Convention (1951) and became a party to the European Convention for the Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes (1976) and the Protocol of 1978 Relating to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (1973) (except in respect of annex IV of the Convention).
48. The Government of Nicaragua became a party to the Convention Concerning the Protection of Workers Against Ionizing Radiations (1960) and the Convention Concerning Protection Against Hazards of Poisoning Arising from Benzene (1971).
49. The Government of Norway became a party to the European Convention for the Protection of Animals for Slaughter (1979).
50. The Government of Oman became a party to the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972).
51. The Government of the Philippines became a party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973).
52. The Government of Portugal became a party to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979), the European Convention for the Protection of Animals for Slaughter (1979), the European Convention on the Protection of the Archeological Heritage (1969), the European Convention for the Protection of Animals During International Transport (1968) and the European Convention for the Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes (1976).
53. The Government of Peru became a party to the Antarctic treaty (1959) and to the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972).
54. The Government of the Republic of Korea became a party to the Plant Protection Agreement for South East Asia and the Pacific Region (as amended) (1956).

55. The Government of Saudi Arabia deposited instruments of ratification to the Kuwait Regional Convention for Co-operation on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Pollution (1978) and the Protocol Concerning Regional Co-operation in Combating Pollution by Oil and Other Harmful Substances in Cases of Emergency (1978).
56. The Government of Senegal became a party to the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (as amended) (1946).
57. The Government of Singapore became a party to the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage (1969).
58. The Government of Spain became a party to the Antarctic Treaty (1959), the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (1971), the International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage (1971) and the Convention Concerning the Protection of Workers Against Occupational Hazards in the Working Environment due to Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration (1977).
59. The Government of Sudan became a party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973).
60. The Government of Sweden became a party to the European Convention for the Protection of Animals for Slaughter (1979).
61. The Government of Switzerland became a party to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).
62. The Government of Tonga became a party to the Plant Protection Agreement for the South East Asia and Pacific Region (as amended) (1956).
63. The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland became a party to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979) and accepted the revised text of the International Plant Protection Convention (1951). It has extended the International Convention Relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties (1969) and the Protocol Relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Pollution by Substances Other Than Oil (1973) to the following territories: Anguilla, British Antarctic Territory, British Virgin Islands, Falkland Islands and Dependencies, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Henderson, Ducie and Oeno Islands, St Helena and Dependencies, Turks and Caicos Islands, United Kingdom Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia on the Island of Cyprus.
64. The Government of the United States of America became a party to the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (1979) and accepted the revised text of the International Plant Protection Convention (1951).
65. The European Economic Community became a party to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

E. GOVERNMENTS REPORTING NO CHANGES IN PARTICIPATION

66. The following Governments have reported that there has been no change in their participation in multilateral conventions registered with UNEP and, in most cases, provided the Executive Director with a list of the Conventions to which they are parties: Ethiopia, Finland, Ghana, Israel, Mali and Nigeria.

F. REGISTER OF INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND PROTOCOLS IN THE FIELD OF THE ENVIRONMENT

67. The Governing Council, in decision 66 (IV), requested the Executive Director to continue the systematic collection, analysis and presentation of data and information relating to international conventions and protocols in the field of the environment.

68. To help Governments identify environmental conventions to which they may be entitled to become parties, as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 3436 (XXX), and to provide the Governing Council regularly with the information it requested in decisions 24 (III) and 66 (IV), a list of important international conventions adopted in the field of the environment since 1933 has been presented in documents UNEP/GC/INFORMATION/5/ and Supplements. This collection forms the nucleus of a UNEP register of international conventions and protocols in the field of the environment. The register is updated by means of annual supplements, and consolidation is planned in 1983. UNEP uses it to help identify and overcome difficulties which prevent Governments from becoming parties to or implementing environmental conventions.

Note

1/ It should be noted that earlier reports were compiled on the basis of information received during a given period. However, in the context of the ongoing consolidation of the register of international conventions and protocols in the field of the environment, considerable information was received from depositary States on developments occurring prior to the period covered by this report. In order to limit the documentation submitted to the Governing Council, this information is consequently not reflected here, but will be integrated in Supplement 6 to the register and in the consolidated version to be issued in 1983.

Annex

SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Governing Council may wish to take note of the present report and authorize the Executive Director to transmit it, together with document UNEP/GC/INFORMATION/5/Supplement 6, to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, in accordance with resolution 3436 (XXX).
