



**Governing Council  
of the United Nations  
Environment Programme**

Distr.: General  
23 November 2005

Original: English



**Ninth special session of the Governing Council/  
Global Ministerial Environment Forum**  
Dubai, 7–9 February 2006  
Item 8 of the provisional agenda\*

**Outcomes of intergovernmental meetings of relevance to the  
Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

**Outcomes of intergovernmental meetings of relevance to the  
Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

**Report of the Executive Director**

*Summary*

The present document summarizes the outcomes of major intergovernmental meetings of relevance to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum held in 2005, in particular those held between the conclusion of the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, in February 2005, and 22 November 2005.

\* UNEP/GCSS.IX/1.

## I. Outcomes of relevant meetings of the principal organs of the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies

### A. 2005 World Summit: Sixtieth session of the General Assembly

1. The high-level plenary meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly was convened in New York from 14 to 16 September 2005 as the 2005 World Summit. The General Assembly adopted the 2005 World Summit Outcome on 16 September 2005 in its resolution 60/1. In the Outcome document, world leaders reaffirmed that development was a central goal by itself and that sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental aspects was a key element of the overarching framework of United Nations activities.

2. Sustainable development, especially its environmental component, is covered substantively by the World Summit Outcome document under the heading “Sustainable development: managing and protecting our common environment” (section II, paras. 48 to 56). In the chapeau of that section (para. 48), poverty eradication, changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are identified as overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development. The section also makes specific references to a number of key environmental issues, including:

- (a) Promotion of sustainable consumption and production patterns;
- (b) Climate change, in particular in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change<sup>1</sup> and its Kyoto Protocol;<sup>2</sup>
- (c) Energy-related issues, especially in connection with climate change;
- (d) United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”;
- (e) Desertification and land degradation, addressed through the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;<sup>3</sup>
- (f) Biodiversity, addressed through the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity<sup>4</sup> and its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;<sup>5</sup>
- (g) Establishing a worldwide early-warning system for all natural hazards, with regional nodes;
- (h) Implementation of the Hyogo Declaration<sup>6</sup> and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015<sup>7</sup> adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction;
- (i) Assistance to developing countries’ efforts to prepare integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans as part of their national development strategies and to provide access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation;
- (j) Development and dissemination of affordable and cleaner energy-efficiency and energy-conservation technologies, together with the transfer of such technologies;
- (k) Conservation, sustainable management and development of all types of forests;
- (l) Sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes throughout their life cycle;
- (m) Integrated management and sustainable development of the oceans and seas;
- (n) Global Environment Facility and its replenishment.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

<sup>2</sup> FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.

<sup>5</sup> UNEP/CBD/ExCOP/1/3 and Corr.1, part two, annex.

<sup>6</sup> See A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 1.

<sup>7</sup> See *ibid.*, resolution 2.

3. The World Summit Outcome also contains a number of other areas which have a direct bearing on activities of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), particularly in terms of capacity development. Those include South-South cooperation, peace-building and human security, gender equality and empowerment of women, science and technology for development, least developed countries and small island developing states.
4. The ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and the International Conference on Chemicals Management immediately preceding it will provide an excellent opportunity for Member States to address some of the above issues, including energy and environment and also chemicals management.
5. In further follow-up to the outcome of the 2005 World Summit, the General Assembly President has convened a series of consultations to deal with issues such as the establishment of a Peace-Building Commission and a Human Rights Council, and also a comprehensive international treaty on terrorism. Additional consultations on United Nations management reform and system-wide institutional improvements have begun in the margins of the General Assembly.
6. In connection with the latter process and of particular importance to UNEP, under the heading "Environmental activities", section V of the World Summit Outcome contains a paragraph concerning environmental governance, para. 169), as follows:
- "Recognizing the need for more efficient environmental activities in the United Nations system, with 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, we agree to explore the possibility of a more coherent institutional framework to address this need, including a more integrated structure, building on existing institutions and internationally agreed instruments, as well as the treaty bodies and the specialized agencies".
7. The General Assembly President has indicated that he will communicate with Member States to outline a process to consider means to implement that challenging task.

## **B. Economic and Social Council**

8. The 2005 session of the Economic and Social Council took place from 29 June to 27 July and focused on achieving the internationally agreed development goals and outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, and on the progress, challenges and opportunities related thereto. A preparatory meeting for the Economic and Social Council high-level segment was convened on 16 and 17 March 2005, during which round-table discussions took place on all the Millennium Development Goals. UNEP and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) co-hosted a panel on Millennium Development Goal 7. The panel concluded that there was a growing need to build capacities at national levels to enable Governments to mainstream sound environmental management practices into their sustainable development policies. Environmental sustainability underpins most of the development goals, especially in terms of, inter alia, ecosystems management and water supply, loss of biodiversity, land degradation and food production, health and child mortality, and energy accessibility.
9. The Executive Director also participated in a ministerial round-table discussion on Millennium Development Goal 7 on 29 June 2005 during the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council session. The panel comprised Ministers from France and Benin and considered environmental sustainability and proposals to enhance institutional structures responsible for international environmental issues. As is the usual practice, the Economic and Social Council took note of the report of the twenty-third session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum.

## C. Commission on Sustainable Development

10. The two-year cycle of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its twelfth and thirteenth sessions dealt with follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development<sup>8</sup> in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements. Its thirteenth session covered a policy year and its outcome contained a number of references to areas of particular relevance to UNEP, such as integrated water resources management, shared watercourses, land and oceans based water management systems, waste management and sanitation, and linkages between health and environment.

11. The Commission, in its resolution 13/1 entitled "Policy options and practical measures to expedite implementation in water, sanitation and human settlements), emphasized, inter alia, that water, sanitation and human settlements were interlinked and complementary and should be addressed in an integrated manner, and decided to call upon Governments and the United Nations system and to invite international financial institutions and other international organizations, working in partnership with major groups and other stakeholders, to take relevant action.

12. Regarding integrated water resources management, the Commission, in section A of the resolution, recognizing that the 2005 target on integrated water resources management may not be met by all countries, called for action to accelerate the provision of technical and financial assistance to countries in preparing nationally owned integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans tailored to country-specific needs, paying particular attention to economic development, social and environmental needs and supporting implementation by learning-through-doing, and directed, inter alia, towards the following:

- (a) Improving water governance through strengthening of institutional and regulatory reforms, capacity development and innovation;
- (b) Providing technical and management support to local authorities and community-based organizations, taking into account research, traditional knowledge and best practices, to improve water resources management within national policy frameworks;
- (c) Providing additional resources, as appropriate, for regional and subregional initiatives, such as the African Water Facility;
- (d) Encouraging effective coordination among all stakeholders in water-related decision-making;
- (e) Enhancing the sustainability of ecosystems that provide essential resources and services for human well-being and economic activity in water-related decision-making;
- (f) Facilitating information exchange and knowledge-sharing, including indigenous and local knowledge;
- (g) Strengthening the prevention of pollution resulting from wastewater, solid waste, and industrial and agricultural activities;
- (h) Developing preventive and preparedness measures, as well as risk mitigation and disaster reduction, including early warning systems;
- (i) Protecting and rehabilitating catchment areas for regulating water flows and improving water quality, taking into account the critical role of ecosystems;
- (j) Raising awareness of the importance of water use efficiency and conservation;
- (k) Involving all stakeholders, including women, youth and local communities, in integrated planning and management of land and water resources;
- (l) Encouraging, where appropriate and within their mandates, the use of multilateral environmental agreements to leverage additional resources for integrated water resources management;
- (m) Promoting higher priority and greater action on water quality.

<sup>8</sup> See Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, *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.

<sup>11</sup> UNEP/GC.23/L.3/Rev.1\*.

13. The Commission also called for action to support African initiatives in the area of water, within the framework of the African Ministerial Conference on Water, with particular reference to basin-wide initiatives in Africa. Also, it called for enhanced cooperation between riparian States through relevant arrangements and mechanisms, with the consent of the States concerned and taking into account the interests of the riparian States.

14. The Commission called for action also to develop and strengthen national systems to monitor the quantity, quality and use of surface- and groundwater resources at national and local levels so as to measure progress towards internationally agreed goals and targets, as appropriate, and also to assess the impact of climate variability and change on water resources, through the following actions:

- (a) Establishing and managing water information systems;
- (b) Installing networks for monitoring water resources and quality;
- (c) Standardizing methodologies and developing monitoring indicators;
- (d) Transferring monitoring technologies adaptable to local conditions;
- (e) Disseminating information to relevant stakeholders.

15. The Commission also called for action to support more effective water demand and water resource management across all sectors, especially in the agricultural sector:

- (a) Using efficient irrigation and rainwater harvesting technologies;
- (b) Implementing irrigation projects with a focus on the poor, particularly in Africa;
- (c) Training farmers and water user associations in efficient water use and sustainable agricultural land management;
- (d) Promoting the use of wastewater for certain irrigation purposes, subject to health and environmental standards;
- (e) Increasing the efficiency and, where appropriate, the use of rain-fed agriculture.

16. In the same resolution, the Commission requested UN-Water to give equal consideration to the thematic issues for the Commission's thirteenth session – sanitation and water – in its terms of reference and to promote, within its mandate, system-wide inter-agency cooperation and coordination between relevant United Nations organizations, funds and programmes on these issues, and request the Secretary-General to include in his report to the Commission the activities of UN-Water as they relate to the aforementioned thematic issues, including the role of the relevant United Nations organizations, funds and programmes in implementing and monitoring the water and sanitation agenda, including identifying duplication, overlap and gaps.

17. During the session, from 11 to 22 April 2005, UNEP informed participants of the contents of the outcome of the ministerial consultation of the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum as contained in the President's Summary<sup>11</sup> on the environmental aspects central to achievement of Millennium Development Goals 1, 3 and 7, and on the 2004 Jeju Initiative adopted by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eighth special session.<sup>12</sup> UNEP was also involved in a number of side events aimed at showcasing water related activities: the African Ministers' Council on Water; the 2005 Water Resources Alliance Initiative; Wastewater Treatment, Assessment of Water and Sanitation Services, the White Water/Blue Water partnership and the UNEP/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) poverty and environment initiative.

18. UNEP actively participated in the preparatory processes for the session, including the intergovernmental preparatory meeting. United Nations system-wide perspectives on the implementation and policy aspects of water were submitted to the session as a result of coordination through the Environmental Management Group.

<sup>12</sup> UNEP/GCSS.VIII/8, annex II.

## **D. Commission on Human Rights**

19. On 14 April 2005, the Commission on Human Rights adopted resolution 2005/15, entitled "Adverse effects of the illicit movement and dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes on the enjoyment of human rights." In the resolution, the Commission categorically condemned the illicit dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes in developing countries, and reaffirmed that illicit traffic in and dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes constitute a serious threat to human rights, including the right to life, the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and other human rights affected by the illicit movement and dumping of toxic and dangerous products, including the rights to clean water, food, adequate housing and work.

20. The Commission urged all Governments to take appropriate legislative and other measures, in line with their international obligations, to prevent illegal international trafficking in toxic and hazardous products and wastes, the transfer of toxic and hazardous products and wastes through fraudulent waste-recycling programmes and the transfer of polluting industries, industrial activities and technologies which generate hazardous wastes from developed to developing countries.

21. The Commission invited UNEP, the secretariats of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Pesticides in International Trade, the Commission on Sustainable Development, the International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and regional organizations to continue to intensify their coordination and international cooperation and technical assistance on the environmentally sound management of toxic chemicals and hazardous wastes, including the question of their transboundary movement.

22. The Commission expressed its appreciation to the relevant United Nations bodies, in particular UNEP and the secretariat of the Basel Convention, for the support extended to the Special Rapporteur and urged them and the international community to continue to give him the necessary support to enable him to discharge his mandate.

23. The Commission urged the international community and the relevant United Nations bodies, in particular UNEP and the secretariat of the Basel Convention, to continue to give appropriate support to developing countries, upon their request, in their efforts to implement the provisions of existing international and regional instruments controlling the transboundary movement and dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes in order to protect and promote human rights, including the right to life, the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and other human rights affected by the illicit movement and dumping of toxic and dangerous products, including the rights to clean water, food, adequate housing and work. Also, The Commission called upon countries that had not yet done so to consider ratifying the Rotterdam Convention and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

24. The Commission urged States to strengthen the role of national environmental protection agencies and non-governmental organizations, local communities and associations, trade unions, workers and victims, and to provide them with the legal and financial means to take necessary action.

25. The Commission urged all Governments to ban the export of toxic and dangerous products, substances, chemicals, pesticides and persistent organic pollutants which are banned or severely restricted in their own countries, and also urged transnational corporations and other business enterprises involved in the transfer of toxic and dangerous products to adhere to local and international health, environmental, labour and other standards in furtherance of human rights and to promote technology transfers to developing countries that can improve the management of toxic wastes and dangerous products and prevent their adverse impacts on local communities.

26. The Commission urged the Special Rapporteur to continue to undertake, in consultation with the relevant United Nations bodies, organizations and the secretariats of relevant international conventions, a global, multidisciplinary and comprehensive study of existing problems and new trends in, and solutions to, illicit traffic in and dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes, in particular in developing countries, as well as in those sharing borders with developed countries, with a view to making concrete recommendations and proposals on adequate measures to control, reduce and eradicate those phenomena.

27. The Commission also adopted its human rights resolution 2005/60, entitled “Human rights and the environment as part of sustainable development”. While noting the mandate of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the work on environment issues carried out by UNEP, the Commission, in the preamble to the resolution, considered that environmental damage, including that caused by natural circumstances or disasters, could have potentially negative effects on the enjoyment of human rights and on a healthy life and a healthy environment, and that protection of the environment and sustainable development could also contribute to human well-being and potentially to the enjoyment of human rights.

28. On that basis, the Commission reaffirmed that peace, security, stability and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, and also respect for cultural diversity, were essential for achieving sustainable development and ensuring that sustainable development benefits all, as set forth in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.<sup>8</sup> The Commission called upon States to take all necessary measures to protect the legitimate exercise of everyone’s human rights when promoting environmental protection and sustainable development and reaffirmed, in that context, that everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to participate in peaceful activities against violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

29. In the resolution, the Commission also stressed the importance for States, when developing their environmental policies, to take into account how environmental degradation may affect all members of society, and in particular women, children, indigenous people and disadvantaged members of society. It also encouraged all efforts towards the implementation of the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,<sup>13</sup> in particular principle 10, in order to contribute, inter alia, to effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy. The Commission reaffirmed that good governance within each country and at the international level was essential for sustainable development.

30. The Commission invited UNEP, UNDP and other relevant bodies and organizations, within their respective mandates and approved work programmes and budgets, to continue to coordinate their efforts in activities relating to human rights and the environment in poverty eradication, post-conflict environmental assessment and rehabilitation, disaster prevention and post-disaster assessment and rehabilitation, and to take into consideration in their work relevant findings and recommendations of others and avoid duplication. Also, it invited UNEP to continue to coordinate efforts in capacity-building activities in cooperation with other relevant bodies and organizations.

31. The Commission requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission at its sixty-third session a report, consistent with the 2005 World Summit Outcome, on how respect for human rights could contribute to sustainable development, including its environmental component, and could also contribute to poverty eradication and strengthen capacity-building activities for developing countries.

## **E. United Nations Forum on Forests**

32. The fifth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests was held in New York from 16 to 27 May 2005. The outcome of its high-level segment, held on 25 and 26 May 2005, was presented in the Chairman’s summary,<sup>14</sup> which underscored the critical role of forests and trees in supporting the livelihood of people, particularly the world’s poor, and stressed that finding means of managing forests in a more sustainable way was crucial for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.

<sup>13</sup> *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution I, annex I.

<sup>14</sup> E/2005/42-E/CN.18/2005/18, annex II.

33. It was further emphasized that efforts to defeat poverty and pursue sustainable development would be in vain if degradation and natural resource depletion, including loss of forests and illegal activities in the forest sector, continued unabated. Where forests played a critical role in enabling people to cope with poverty, their rights should be safeguarded by providing and securing tenure and access to wood and non-timber forest products. Furthermore, efforts to tackle those challenges and make strides towards sustainable forest management needed to be strengthened at all levels, including a strong international arrangement on forests. The alarming rate of deforestation continued to warrant international attention and there was a need to renew the pledge to combat deforestation, restore the forest's functions in degraded landscapes and improve the livelihoods of poor people living in and around forests worldwide.

34. During the high-level segment, a round table on restoring the world's forests was held. It was acknowledged that despite the alarming rate of deforestation, new strategies had been implemented and were emerging to address that critical matter and to further our understanding of the underlying driving forces. To that end, forest restoration, the natural expansion of forests and the establishment of plantation forests had helped to some extent in countering degradation of forest ecosystems and to bring environmental, commercial and social benefits to society. Recommendations expressed during the round table included: to focus particularly on regions and countries where the restoration of forests was needed most; to support regional activities on forest restoration through existing processes, such as the criteria and indicator processes and the Tehran Process for low-forest-cover countries,<sup>15</sup> and also partnerships such as the Global Partnership on Forest Restoration; to urge the Forum and FAO to facilitate the transfer of environmentally sound forest restoration technology and support capacity-building; to urge the Forum to seek ways and means to establish a finance mechanism for forest restoration; and also to urge the Forum to provide information and assistance to countries to establish clear linkages with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the clean development mechanism under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

35. In addition, a round table on forest law and governance for sustainability was held during the high-level segment. The round-table discussion recognized the fundamental importance of governance for sustainable forest management and the negative linkage between conflicts and natural resource conservation. In many countries, weak governance was associated with poverty. The sharing of the experience of rich countries identified numerous actions at international, regional, subregional and national levels as potentially useful tools to strengthen forest law and governance for sustainability. The round table highlighted, inter alia, the need to strengthen national legislation and enforcement as a priority area, and underscored that regional initiatives, multilateral and bilateral cooperation and agreements also had a significant role to play in strengthening forest law enforcement and governance.

## II. Outcomes of other relevant intergovernmental meetings

36. The following are among the outcomes of other relevant intergovernmental meetings which either resulted in calls for action by UNEP or were highly relevant to its work programme.

### A. High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness

37. The High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness was held in Paris from 28 February to 2 March 2005. Ministers of developed and developing countries attending the Forum adopted the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness<sup>16</sup> on 2 March 2005. The Declaration underscored the ownership of recipient countries, using the recipient country's national development strategies as the basis for donor support, harmonized, transparent and collectively effective donor actions, managing resources and improving decision-making for results, and accountability of both donors and recipients for development results. The 2005 World Summit Outcome welcomed the recent efforts and initiatives to enhance the quality of aid and increase its impact, including the Paris Declaration.

<sup>15</sup> See report of the twenty-sixth FAO regional conference for the Near East, document NERC/02/INF/6.

<sup>16</sup> Available at <http://www1.worldbank.org/harmonization/Paris/FINALPARISDECLARATION.pdf>.



## B. Asian-African Summit

38. Heads of State and Government of Asian and African countries gathered in Jakarta on 22 and 23 April 2005 for the Asian-African Summit. The Summit was to reinvigorate the Spirit of Bandung as enshrined in the Final Communiqué of the 1955 Asian-African Conference and to chart the future cooperation between Asia and Africa.

39. The Summit adopted the Declaration on the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership,<sup>17</sup> in which leaders of Asian and African countries recognized that the current global situation and the prevailing conditions in Asia and Africa necessitate the need to actively pursue a common view and collective action to ensure the equitable sharing of the benefits of globalization. They stressed their determination to meet the internationally agreed targets and goals aimed at poverty eradication, development and growth, underlined the necessity for all parties to honour their commitments in that regard, and emphasized the importance of enhancing cooperation with all regions.

40. They also emphasized that poverty and underdevelopment, gender mainstreaming, communicable diseases, environmental degradation, natural disasters, drought and desertification, the digital divide, inequitable market access and foreign debt remained issues of common concern which called for closer cooperation and collective action. They expressed their support for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). By the Declaration, the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership was established as a framework to build a bridge between Asia and Africa covering three broad areas of partnership: political solidarity, economic cooperation and socio-cultural relations.

## C. Second South Summit

41. The Second South Summit of the Group of 77 and China was held in Doha from 12 to 16 June 2005. At the Summit, the Heads of State and Government of the States members of the Group of 77 and China adopted the Doha Declaration<sup>18</sup> and the Doha Plan of Action.<sup>19</sup>

42. In paragraph 40 of the Doha Plan of Action, the Heads of State and Government of the Member Countries of the Group of 77 and China reaffirmed their call for more funding for and attention to the United Nations Office in Nairobi and to the two United Nations programmes headquartered at Nairobi, UNEP and UN-Habitat. In the following paragraph, they welcomed the adoption of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building,<sup>20</sup> and in that regard, called for a work plan with specific timetables and targets, and decided to cooperate closely for the effective implementation of sustainable development activities through collaborative capacity-building efforts in environmental management, exchanges in technological and scientific know-how and the development of state-of-the-art, environmentally sound technologies among developing countries.

## D. Group of Eight Summit

43. Heads of state and government of the Group of Eight countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States of America) met for their annual summit in Gleneagles, United Kingdom, from 6 to 8 July 2005. The outcome of the Summit, as outlined in the Gleneagles Communiqué,<sup>21</sup> focused especially on climate change, energy and sustainable development on the one hand and on Africa on the other. The Gleneagles Communiqué lists the commitment of the Group of Eight on those issues in detail.

## E. Africa

44. A ministerial session and the Second Summit of Heads of State and Government of Central Africa on the Conservation and Sustainable Management of the Central African Forest Ecosystems were held in Brazzaville, Congo, from 2 to 5 February 2005. The meeting was a follow-up to the first summit, which was held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, on 17 March 1999, during which the heads of state of six countries in Central Africa committed themselves to the sustainability of Congo Basin forest

<sup>17</sup> Available at [http://www.asianafricansummit2005.org/statements\\_declaration.htm](http://www.asianafricansummit2005.org/statements_declaration.htm).

<sup>18</sup> A/60/111, annex I.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., annex II.

<sup>20</sup> See UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1, annex.

<sup>21</sup> Available at [http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/PostG8\\_Gleneagles\\_Communique.0.pdf](http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/PostG8_Gleneagles_Communique.0.pdf).

ecosystems through a strengthened partnership. By the Yaoundé Declaration, signed at the first summit,<sup>22</sup> the six countries agreed to take concerted action, including policy coherence and coordination, for the conservation and sustainable management of the ecosystems of the subregion's forests. The outcome of the second summit was a long-term subregional strategy for the conservation and sustainable management of Central African forest ecosystems, and was seen as a major initiative on forests under the Environment Initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

45. The second Partners Conference on the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development was held in Dakar, Senegal, on 15 and 16 March 2005. The objectives of the conference were to review the implementation of the Action Plan by all the partners, including UNEP, and deliberate on the financial mechanism for that implementation. The outcomes of the conference included a report on the status of the implementation of the Action Plan, the recommendations, in particular on the 10-Year framework programme on sustainable consumption and production and the second African Environment Outlook report, the agreement on the financial mechanisms for the implementation of the Action Plan, and the Dakar Declaration.

46. The seventh ordinary session of the Summit of Leaders and Heads of State of the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on 1 and 2 June 2005. The Summit participants adopted a 2005 budget, and a scale of contributions from member States and discussed political issues, including the situations in Sudan, Somalia, the Central African Republic, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau and Togo. Economic integration was also a major issue discussed. Discussions also touched upon pertinent issues of relevance to the work and mandate of UNEP, including the creation of a water resources management authority.

## **F. Asia and the Pacific**

47. The fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 24 to 29 March 2005. The Conference is convened by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific every five years, and was first held in 1985. UNEP was one of the key partners and contributors to the fifth conference, at which the Executive Director played a substantial role. Under the theme "Green Growth paradigm which harmonizes economic growth with environmental sustainability", the major outcomes of the 2005 Conference included a ministerial declaration, the Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific 2006–2010 and the Seoul Initiative on Green Growth.

48. The first Greater Mekong Subregion Environment Ministers Meeting was held in Shanghai, China, on 25 May 2005. The greater Mekong subregion consists of Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam and China (Yunnan province). The overall theme of the environment ministers meeting was "Managing shared natural resources for sustainable development". The ministers reviewed achievements in environmental cooperation in the region and discussed future directions for regional cooperation in environmental and natural resources management. They also discussed three aspects of enhanced environmental cooperation in the Greater Mekong Subregion Programme, namely: the Core Environment Programme; the Biodiversity Conservation Corridors Initiative; and the Environmental Performance Assessment. The meeting also considered the establishment of a greater Mekong subregion environment operations centre. Toward the end of the meeting, a joint ministerial statement was issued, which formed the basis for preparing an announcement on the Core Environment Program and in particular the Biodiversity Conservation Corridors Initiative, at the Greater Mekong Subregion Summit of Leaders, which was subsequently held in Kunming, China, on 4 and 5 July 2005.

49. A meeting of the Interstate Sustainable Development Commission for Central Asia was held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, on 18 June 2005. The Interstate Sustainable Development Commission consists of five countries of Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The meeting participants took decisions on, among other things, approval of the structure and process for a proposed treaty on environment for sustainable development; approval of a progress report on information support for decision-making provided by scientific information centres; approval of a list of subregional priorities for the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building; development of a three-year strategy and an implementation plan for five regional environmental action plan priorities. The Commission's next meeting is scheduled for the week of 30 January 2006 in Ashgabat.

---

<sup>22</sup> A/C.2/54/5, annex.

50. The Regional Ministerial Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: the Way Forward to 2015 was held in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 3 to 5 August 2005. The meeting was organized by the United Nations special representative on the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific, the UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Asian Development Bank. The ministers and representatives from countries of Asia and the Pacific adopted a declaration restating their commitment to the achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, in which they said there was an urgent need for the region to undertake collective action, considering that five years had passed since the Millennium Development Goals were launched and that much remained to be done in the ensuing ten years. They also stressed the crucial importance of strengthening the capacities of developing countries in Asia and the Pacific for the implementation of sustainable development, including through utilization of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity- building in promoting environmental sustainability in the context of the Millennium Development Goals.

51. The ninth meeting of the Governing Council of the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) was held in Thimphu, Bhutan, from 24 to 26 August 2005. The meeting was attended by senior officials and environment ministers from the member countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka. UNEP assisted in organizing a ministerial forum and attended the meeting as an observer. UNEP presented its strategy for the region, in particular addressing issues relating to institutional frameworks, environmental security, urbanization, a possible regional treaty and paths to sustainable development. Among the major outcomes of the meeting was agreement that SACEP would prepare and finalize a programme of work for 2006–2007); that the core programs would focus on areas of waste, adaptation to climate change, and database management and indicators; and that detailed proposals would be prepared for implementation on waste, adaptation to climate change and a database for a state of the environment report. UNEP was requested to continue its support to SACEP and assist in developing the programme of work and project proposals. The next SACEP Governing Council meeting will be held in Nepal in August 2006.

52. The sixteenth meeting of the secretariat of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) was held in Apia, Samoa, from 13 to 16 September 2005. The objectives of the meeting were to present and review implementation of the 2004 programme of work and budget, to discuss the corresponding 2006 programme of work and budget, and to discuss substantive issues, including a Pacific islands regional oceans policy, a strategy for solid waste management in Pacific island countries and territories, and increasing integration of Pacific island territories into the work programme of SPREP. The meeting participants also approved the SPREP work programme and budget for 2006 in the amount of \$8 million and indicative budgets for 2007 and 2008.

53. In response to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the request of Governments in the Asia and the Pacific region, UNEP initiated the Asia-Pacific Subregional Environmental Policy Dialogue, which brings together the five subregional groups of Asia and the Pacific, namely Central Asia, Northeast Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the South Pacific, as well as eminent personalities from across the region. The high-level forum meets annually to discuss emerging issues and provide guidance to the UNEP programme in the region. In September 2005, the Subregional Environment Policy Dialogue was held in Thimphu, Bhutan.

54. The seventh session of the intergovernmental meeting on the Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its Likely Transboundary Effects for South Asia was held in Delhi, India, on 13 October 2005. The meeting is convened by UNEP in collaboration with the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme and the Stockholm Environment Institute and is hosted by the Government of India with financial support from the Swedish International Development Agency. A major output of the meeting was a subregional implementation plan on transboundary air pollution for the next three years in South Asia.

55. The seventh Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, on 22 and 23 October 2005. Ministers from China, Japan and the Republic of Korea participated. The ministers shared their views on progress in each country in environmental management since the last meeting. They welcomed the outline of China's next five-year plan, which clearly expressed the intention to establish an environmentally-friendly society based on the concept of scientific development. The ministers expressed the belief that Tripartite Environment Ministers meetings had played an important role in promoting regional environmental cooperation and achieving sustainable development in Northeast Asia, and they pledged that the three countries would continue to work together on various regional issues.

56. The Intergovernmental Meeting on the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET)<sup>23</sup> held its seventh session in Niigata, Japan on 21 and 22 November 2005. Representatives of Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Thailand and Viet Nam participated in the meeting. Representatives of Myanmar and Uzbekistan participated as observers. UNEP serves as the secretariat for EANET. Major outcomes of the meeting included the Niigata Decision, which provides the basis for the further development of EANET; the general framework for the five-year medium-term plan, with suggestions for evaluating the activities to be undertaken for EANET; and an awareness report to focus awareness amongst policy-makers.

## G. Latin America and the Caribbean

57. The fifteenth meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean took place in Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on 3 and 4 November 2005. The meeting was preceded by a preparatory meeting of high-level experts and government officials, which took place from 31 October to 2 November 2005. The Forum approved 20 decisions and issued the Caracas Declaration. The ministers placed particular emphasis on the following priority topics, which are all relevant to UNEP programme activities:

(a) **Access and benefit sharing:** In view of the fact that Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the wealthiest regions of the world in biodiversity, the Governments considered it a priority to build their capacity to formulate and negotiate an international regime which guarantees access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable distribution of the benefits arising from their utilization;

(b) **Small island developing States:** In recent years, the Caribbean region in particular has been seriously affected by natural phenomena. The countries of the region face serious and multiple challenges due to their vulnerability to climate change. The ministers pointed out the importance of adaptation and mitigation strategies for facing these challenges, and decided to establish a working group on disasters, preparedness and management which will, among other things, evaluate the costs and benefits of possible actions and strategies for preventing the impacts of future natural disasters;

(c) **Water resources:** The ministers decided to reiterate the need to adopt an integrated planning approach, taking into account the links between land use and watershed and coastal area management, in particular for Caribbean small island developing States, and to enhance the appropriate valuation of the role of water in ecosystems and the role of aquatic ecosystems as resources and essential services providers for sustainable development;

(d) **Health and environment:** The ministers decided to continue promoting synergies between health and environmental policies through strengthening the exchange of information between both sectors and fostering the development and implementation of integrated actions and projects;

(e) **Sustainable management of chemicals:** The ministers decided in particular to support the process for the development of a strategic approach to international chemicals management ensuring that it includes the participation of all major stakeholders and that it adequately addresses the needs and particularities of the countries of the region.

58. Preparation of an action plan for the prevention of the impacts of natural disasters, financing and economic and fiscal policy instruments for environmental management, civil society participation, environmental education, environment indicators, sustainable consumption and production, climate change, renewable energy and trade and environment were priority topics addressed by the ministers.

<sup>23</sup> Website <http://www.eanet.cc/index.html>.

59. A meeting of the health and environment ministers of the Americas was held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, on 16 and 17 June 2005. Health and environment ministers from the Americas gathered to strengthen regional cooperation and to adopt a plan of action to address the growing impacts of environmental-health linkages. UNEP participated in the meeting and will follow the guidelines in the plan of action for developing relevant regional activities. The priority issues of the meeting included children's environmental health, integrated water resources and solid waste management and the sound management of chemicals. Civil society representatives participated in the meeting through written contributions containing recommendations from several workshops and virtual forums. Ministers discussed the progress and challenges faced by the countries of the region in achieving the Millennium Development Goals related to health and environment and the search for strategies for strengthen cooperation with other sectors such as labour and education.

## **H. First intergovernmental meeting on great apes**

60. An intergovernmental meeting on great apes and the Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP) and the first meeting of the GRASP Council took place in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, from 5 to 9 September 2005. Of the 23 great ape range States, 19 were represented at the meeting.

61. The meeting participants adopted the Global Strategy for the Survival of the Great Apes and their Habitat, the stated overall goal of which is to lift the threat of imminent extinction facing most populations of great apes, while conserving in their natural habitats, wherever they exist, wild populations of all species and sub-species of great apes and ensuring that their interactions with people are mutually positive and sustainable.

62. The participants also adopted the Kinshasa Declaration on Great Apes. In the Declaration, the representatives of the great ape range States and other States, donors, the academic and scientific community, non-governmental organizations, industry and the private sector pledge to do everything in their power to ensure the long-term future for all great ape species, and affirm their commitment to the Global Strategy and to support, and in the case of the range States, implement, effective measures to counter the threats facing the great apes. They further resolve to set the target of securing a constant and significant reduction in the current loss of great ape populations by 2010 and to secure the future of all species and sub-species of great apes in the wild by 2015.

## **I. First meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants**

63. The first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants was held in Punta del Este, Uruguay from 2 to 6 May 2005. In accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 20 of the Convention and decision 21/4 of the UNEP Governing Council, the Executive Director of UNEP performs the secretariat functions for the Convention.

64. In its decision SC-1/3, the Conference of the Parties adopted financial rules that envisaged, among other things, the establishment by the Executive Director of a general trust fund and a special trust fund. The Conference of the Parties, in its decision SC-1/4, accepted the invitation of the Conference of the Parties of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade to co-finance in 2006 the position of a joint head of the secretariats of both the Stockholm Convention and the Rotterdam Convention and invited the Conference of the Parties of the Rotterdam Convention to consider at its second meeting continuing the arrangement in 2007 and beyond. The Conference of the Parties, in its decision SC-1/5, decided to accept the offer of the Government of Switzerland to host the secretariat in Geneva.

65. In its decision SC-1/18, the Conference requested the secretariat of the Convention to prepare, in consultation with other relevant secretariats and UNEP, a study on how cooperation and synergies between the secretariats of the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention, the Stockholm Convention and other relevant programmes could be improved, taking into account the special nature of the Rotterdam Convention secretariat, which is jointly provided by the Executive Director of UNEP and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in order to ensure maximum coherence, efficiency and effectiveness in the field of chemicals and wastes, including consideration of the role that common structures might play. The Conference of the Parties invited the Governing Council of UNEP to consider the results of the study at its twenty-fourth session.

66. The Conference of the Parties also adopted a number of decisions concerning the operation of the Convention and its meetings, including decisions on, among other things, establishment of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee, rules of procedure, dispute settlement procedures, guidance to the financial mechanism, a memorandum of understanding between the Conference of the Parties and the Council of the Global Environment Facility, national implementation plans, technical assistance, guidelines on best available techniques and best environmental practices, technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of persistent organic pollutant wastes, a register of specific exemptions and DDT.

#### **J. Second meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade**

67. The second meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention was held at FAO headquarters in Rome from 27 to 30 September 2005. In accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 19 of the Convention and decision SS.V/5 of the UNEP Governing Council, the Executive Director and the Director-General of FAO jointly perform the secretariat functions for the Convention.

68. At the meeting, the Conference of the Parties approved arrangements by the Executive Director of UNEP and the Director-General of FAO for the performance of the secretariat functions for the Convention to be concluded on the basis of a proposed memorandum of understanding between the two organizations. The Conference of the Parties, in a decision on amending the financing and budget arrangements for the biennium 2005–2006, invited the governing bodies of UNEP and FAO to continue their financial support for the operation of the Convention and its secretariat in 2006. It welcomed the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention to co-finance in 2006 the position of the joint head of the secretariats of both the Stockholm and Rotterdam conventions and the invitation to the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam convention to continue with the arrangement in 2007 and beyond.

69. The Conference of the Parties welcomed decision SC-1/18 of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention calling on its secretariat to prepare, in consultation with other relevant secretariats and UNEP, a study on improving cooperation and synergies, including through common structures, for the secretariats of the Basel Convention, the Rotterdam Convention and the Stockholm Convention, with a view to ensuring maximum coherence, efficiency and effectiveness in the field of chemicals and wastes, and requested the secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention to participate in this work by contributing to the study on cooperation and synergies with the Basel and Stockholm Convention secretariats. In this context, the Conference of the Parties invited UNEP to prepare, in consultation with the secretariats of the three Conventions, a supplementary analysis of financial and administrative arrangements that would be needed to implement any changes that the three convention secretariats and UNEP might propose.

70. In addition, the Conference of the Parties adopted decisions on its operations, including those concerning the development of procedures and mechanisms on non-compliance as well as regional and national delivery of technical assistance.

#### **K. Seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa**

71. The seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa took place in Nairobi from 17 to 28 October 2005.

72. The Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development<sup>8</sup> recognized the Convention as a tool for poverty eradication. In its decision 2/COP.7, the Conference of the Parties underlined the potential of the Convention as a tool for meeting the Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goals 1 and 7, and reiterated its call to all development partners to make use of the Convention in their strategies to achieve the Goals.

73. In its decision 28/COP.7, the Conference of the Parties invited reiterated the call by the General Assembly in its resolution 58/211 to Member States and all relevant international organizations to support activities related to desertification, including land degradation, to be organized by affected States Parties, in particular African countries and least developed countries.
74. In its decision 18/COP.7, the Conference of the Parties invited United Nations organizations, international bodies, agencies and developed country Parties to assist developing country Parties in the development of early-warning systems by providing technological and financial support. The Conference, in its decision 14/COP.7, acknowledged that the Convention could benefit from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment findings in its further consideration of benchmarks, indicators and monitoring and assessment activities.
75. In its decision 12/COP.7, the Conference of the Parties underscored activities for the promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and relevant international organizations, institutions and agencies. In the decision, the Conference recognized, inter alia, that the operationalization of funds for climate change adaptation offered additional opportunities to strengthen synergies between the Rio conventions. It invited Parties to review the paper, prepared jointly by the secretariats of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, entitled “Options for enhanced cooperation among the Rio Conventions” and also invited Parties to submit comments prior to the eight session of the Conference of the Parties.
76. In its decision 17/COP.7, the Conference of the Parties requested the secretariat of the Convention, in collaboration with the relevant actors in the field, to facilitate the assimilation and development of regional- or country-specific benchmarks and indicators, and encouraged Parties and interested organizations to involve all stakeholders in the development and the use of such benchmarks and indicators at appropriate scales.
77. In its decision 6/COP.7, entitled “Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility”, the Conference of the Parties decided to conclude a memorandum of understanding with the GEF Council. In the same decision, the Conference welcomed, inter alia, the UNEP medium-sized project on global support to facilitate the early development and implementation of land degradation programmes and projects.
78. Issues considered by the Conference of the Parties of particular relevance to UNEP included benchmarks and indicators, early-warning systems, land degradation assessment in drylands and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.
79. The New Alliance to Combat Land Degradation in Africa (TerrAfrica), in which UNEP is a partner, was launched during the special segment of the session.

## **L. Ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitat**

80. The ninth meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention), took place in Kampala, Uganda, from 8 to 15 November 2005. The Parties adopted a resolution concerning synergies between biodiversity-related conventions and agreements and other international organizations dealing with biological diversity, including collaboration on and harmonization of national reporting. By this resolution, the Conference of the Contracting Parties instructed the Secretary-General of the Convention to ensure close cooperation, and reduction of duplicative activities, with United Nations agencies such as UNEP, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and FAO, and with other relevant intergovernmental organizations, and to continue working with UNEP, and other conventions and agreements themselves, to advance the development and implementation of the issue-based modules for coherent implementation of biodiversity conservation and protection.