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**Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development:
contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme
to the forthcoming session of the Commission on
Sustainable Development**

Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Report of the Executive Director

Summary

The present report presents a concise overview of the recent activities of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) contributing to the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

* UNEP/GC.23/1.

I. Overview

1. The United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 57/253 of 20 December 2002, endorsed the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The Assembly urged Governments, all relevant international and regional organizations, the United Nations Economic and Social Council, United Nations funds, programmes and regional commissions, as well as other intergovernmental organizations and major groups, to take timely actions to ensure the effective follow-up and implementation of the Johannesburg Declaration and the Plan of Implementation. The Assembly called for the implementation of the commitments, programmes and time-bound targets adopted at the World Summit and, to that end, the provision of the means of implementation. The Assembly, in its resolutions 58/218 of 23 December 2003 and 59/227 of 22 December 2004, further emphasized the need for Governments and all relevant organizations to take actions to implement the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.
2. Furthermore, the General Assembly, in its resolution 59/226 of 22 December 2004, emphasized the need for UNEP, within its mandate, to contribute further to sustainable development programmes, the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation at all levels, as well as to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, bearing in mind the mandate of the Commission.
3. Following the World Summit on Sustainable Development, UNEP has continued to pursue a focused approach to playing its role, underscored by the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21, as the leading global environmental authority responsible for setting the global environmental agenda, promoting the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serving as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.
4. Immediately following the World Summit on Sustainable Development, UNEP began to carry out actions aimed at implementing relevant components of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation in accordance with its mandate. The UNEP programme of work serves as its plan of action for implementing the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, by which actions to meet the internationally agreed goals contained in the Millennium Declaration and other internationally agreed goals will be delivered.
5. The 2004–2005 programme of work has fully integrated the relevant elements of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, focusing on: environmental monitoring, assessment and early warning; implementing the so-called WEHAB (water and sanitation, energy, health, agriculture, and biological diversity) agenda; and promoting policy integration.
6. For the 2006–2007 biennium, the proposed programme of work represents a forward-looking programme of action for UNEP based on the lessons learned in the last 30 years and the clearly articulated needs of member States, and takes as its departure point the international consensus embodied in recent international conferences and the necessity of a results-oriented approach. This approach embodies the understanding that environmental problems must be addressed in their social and economic context. While it is recognized that there is a need for further policy development and guidance, there is consensus that the future emphasis of the work of UNEP must be on implementation, taking into account the gender perspective (see document UNEP/GC.23/10).

II. Water, sanitation and human settlements: Contribution to the Commission on Sustainable Development

7. UNEP, together with other relevant partners, has endeavored to support Governments' efforts to meet the goals, targets and objectives set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation with regard to water, sanitation and human settlements, and, in this regard, has contributed to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The updated UNEP water policy and strategy (UNEP/GC.23/3/Add.5) presents a comprehensive strategic approach to those issues as they relate to the environment. Furthermore, the background paper for ministerial-level consultations on those subjects (UNEP/GC.23/10) presents the issues to be considered as a contribution of UNEP to the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

8. In addition, further progress has been made in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, a summary of which is found in document UNEP/GC.23/3/Add.5. UNEP actions concerning waste management are also discussed in the same document.

III. Poverty, gender and environment

9. Focusing on the root causes of environmental degradation and its relationship with poverty, and under the rubric of “environment for development”, UNEP has undertaken further actions on poverty, gender and environment, in particular through its Environment and Poverty Project, in close cooperation with various partners. UNEP has also strengthened its activities with respect to gender and sustainable development from environmental perspectives. Background papers for ministerial-level consultations on poverty and environment as well as gender and environment present UNEP perspectives, including a summary of its activities in these areas (UNEP/GC.23/10).

IV. Means of implementation: Technology support and capacity-building

10. Means of implementation, in particular technology support and capacity-building, are embodied in the respective activity areas of the UNEP programme of work as cross-cutting issues. For the past three decades, UNEP has been undertaking a broad range of activities relating to technology support and capacity-building, which are summarized in an inventory of such activities (document UNEP/IEG/IGSP/2/3).

11. With a view to further strengthening support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for implementation of internationally agreed goals, targets and objectives, the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, in decision SS.VII/1 on international environmental governance, identified the need to develop an intergovernmental strategic plan for technology support and capacity-building. The Council/Forum, in its decision SS.VIII/1 adopted in Jeju on the subject, further underscored that need, with particular focus on implementing the environmental goals, targets and objectives set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and the urgent need, for that purpose, to develop the intergovernmental strategic plan.

12. The Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, prepared in pursuance of Governing Council decision SS.VIII/1 through the work of the High-level Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on an Intergovernmental Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, will be a significant policy tool for accelerating the work in this area in support of the implementation of environmental goals, targets and objectives especially those contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (see documents UNEP/GC.23/6 and Add.1).

V. Regional support

13. UNEP, especially through its regional offices, has continued to provide support to countries in all regions, including support to regional and subregional environmental ministerial forums as well as capacity-building-related activities at the national, subregional and regional levels. A report on UNEP regional support activities is found in document UNEP/GC.23/3/Add.7.

14. In addition, UNEP, through its programme of work, has devoted particular attention to supporting small island developing States, a summary of which is found in documents UNEP/GC.23/3/Add.6 and UNEP/GC.23/3/Add.6/Rev.1.

VI. Institutional arrangements: International environmental governance

15. The Council/Forum, in its decision SS.VIII/1, recalled that the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, among other things, emphasized that the international community should fully implement the outcomes of decision SS.VII/1 on international environmental governance, and emphasized that all components of the recommendations contained in decision SS.VII/1 should be fully implemented. The UNEP secretariat has pursued further actions aimed at ensuring the full implementation of all the components of that decision. An overview of the actions taken, including those specifically requested by the Council/Forum in decision SS.VIII/1, is found in document UNEP/GC.23/6. Progress in interagency cooperation, through the work of the Environment al

Management Group, is described in document UNEP/GC.23/7. UNEP support to multilateral environmental agreements is discussed in document UNEP/GC.23/3/Add.4.

VII. Progress in other areas

16. In addition to the subject areas mentioned above, UNEP activities have made important contributions to assisting Governments to achieve their environmental targets, goals and objectives in both cross-cutting and thematic areas of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Such contributions include such areas as chemicals management (see document UNEP/GC.23/3/Add.1), environmental emergencies (see document UNEP/GC.23/3/Add.2), environmental law in the context of the Montevideo Programme III (see document UNEP/GC.23/3/Add.3) and relevant aspects of UNEP support to multilateral environmental agreements (see document UNEP/GC.23/3/Add.4).
