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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**

**Implementation of the long-term strategy on the engagement and  
involvement of young people in environmental issues**

**Note by the Executive Director**

The Executive Director has the honour to provide, in the annex to the present note, a report on the implementation of the long-term strategy on the engagement and involvement of young people in environmental issues. The annex is being circulated without formal editing.

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\* Re-issued for technical reasons.

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## I. Conclusion

1. The UNEP Governing Council decision 22/18II welcomed and endorsed the activities of the long-term strategy on the engagement and involvement of young people in environmental issues – the “Tunza”<sup>1</sup> programme – for a period of six years from 2003 to 2008. The decision recognized the work of UNEP in promoting the participation of young people in environmental issues and reinforced UNEP’s mandate in working with young people.

2. Two years since its adoption, the Tunza programme has generated extensive interest from children and youth organizations and from a variety of UN and international partners, including from the private sector. As a result, UNEP has expanded its network, increased the frequency and substantive base of its processes for young people and signed several partnership agreements. UNEP has also increased the frequency and regularity of its conferences and publications for children and youth. Tunza conferences for young people are held every year (one year for children and the next year for youth). The Tunza magazine is published on a quarterly basis, and UNEP has initiated a series of Tunza environmental storybooks for children, of which two have so far been published.

3. To ensure the implementation of the Tunza programme and meet the need to engage young people in all corners of the world, the number of staff for the Children & Youth/Sport & the Environment programme has been slightly increased. UNEP has negotiated substantial funding for the Tunza programme from Bayer AG. The company will provide a million Euros annually to support the programme. Nevertheless, full implementation is still hampered by inadequate financial resources.

## II. Background

4. The present document provides information on the implementation of the long-term strategy on the engagement and involvement of young people in environmental issues which was adopted by the Governing Council (GC22/18II) in February 2003. It informs Governments about efforts undertaken by UNEP to implement the strategy, provides information on major challenges faced in the implementation of the strategy and makes recommendations for further actions.

5. This section is divided into the four focus areas of the strategy, namely: information exchange; awareness building; youth in decision-making processes; and capacity building.

### A. Information exchange

6. Following the adoption of the strategy, UNEP introduced a new range of information materials and Internet services for children and youth.

7. UNEP launched its Tunza magazine - a new flagship publication for young people - in June 2003. The magazine is published quarterly and focuses on topical environmental issues. Tunza is aimed at young people from 15 to 24 years of age. The contributors are also mainly from within that age group and from all regions of the world. The magazine also carries interviews renowned sports personalities. Past issues of the magazine have focused on: food and the environment; sport and the environment; indigenous knowledge and the environment; and, sustainable consumption.

8. Tunza is published in English, French and Spanish and distributed to young people around the world. In addition, partners in China and the Republic of Korea are also publishing Chinese and Korean language versions of the magazine. A Japanese version of the magazine is expected in 2005. The web site for the magazine attracts over 100,000 young readers on a monthly basis.

9. UNEP launched Tunza: Acting for a Better World, a state of the environment report for and by young people, in August 2003 at the first Tunza International Youth Conference in Dubna, Russia. Based on the UNEP publications Global Environment Outlook-3 (GEO-3) and Taking Action: An Environmental Guide for You and Your Community, Tunza: Acting for a Better World carries information on the state of the environment as seen by young people. It provides tips on what young people can do to address environmental problems in their communities and lists best environmental

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<sup>1</sup> “Tunza” means “to treat with care or affection” in Kiswahili, a subregional language in Eastern Africa with links to other languages. It was chosen as the brand name for UNEP’s long-term strategy for engaging and involving children and youth in its activities.

practices by young people. Partners in China and the Republic of Korea have published the Chinese and Korean language versions of the publication.

10. UNEP also launched a new illustrated environmental series for children. Two issues of the publication (Tessa and the Fishy Mystery and Theo and the Giant Plastic Ball) have been published. Each publication focuses on an environmental issue and is presented through a child character who goes out seeking solutions to an environmental problem confronting his/her community.

11. An information folder on UNEP's activities and publications for young people was published in 2004. The folder was mainly developed for Governments, major partners and potential sponsors and provides information on the range of activities offered by UNEP to young people around the world.

12. A new and revamped Tunza web site for children and youth was launched in 2004. The web site provides information on UNEP products and activities for children and youth and facts on topical environmental issues. It also has interactive sites (chat rooms and e-dialogue pages) for information sharing with children and youth and their organizations. The chat facilities are used to discuss UNEP's activities with members of the Tunza Youth Advisory Council<sup>2</sup> and the Junior Board<sup>3</sup> of UNEP's children's conferences.

13. As part of the Tunza Programme, UNEP's Division of Environment Policy Implementation launched *Water World: Children's Voices*, an educational book on water for children, in December 2003. The publication looks at the importance of water through the eyes of children from around the world, using pictures, poems and essays to complement the main storyline. The publication, which is available in English, has been distributed to schools and community youth organizations around the world.

14. UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics launched an animated video "Ozzy Ozone" to spread the message about the harmful effects of ultraviolet (UV) radiation to children. The video seeks to encourage children to protect themselves better from ozone related problems. It was launched on the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer on 16 September 2004 in Barbados.

15. The UNEP-UNESCO YouthXChange partnership programme on youth and sustainable consumption has developed a training kit and web site on consumption issues. The project, which is coordinated by the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, aims to create awareness among young people about the impact of their consumption patterns. It is made up of a guidebook and a web site and provides training tools for communicating sustainable consumption concepts in an entertaining and compelling way. The project is already listed as one of the tools for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. The web site is now available in English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Italian and Norwegian. Other language versions are being developed.

16. A youth version of the African Environment Outlook (AEO) is being prepared by leaders of youth organizations in Africa with the Division of Early Warning and Assessment. The process, which has involved young people from all sub-regions in Africa, defines environmental priorities as seen by young people in the region. It also provides ideas on what young people can do in their communities to address these issues. The publication will be launched in mid 2005.

## **B. Awareness building**

17. UNEP's network for children and youth organizations continues to grow. The network now has over 10,000 organizations in over 150 countries who regularly receive environmental information from UNEP. Apart from the traditional network, UNEP has developed electronic networks (list-servers) for information sharing with children and youth organizations. Regional offices have also created networks for children and youth organizations. For example, the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is in the process of setting up five sub regional networks in the region. UNEP has developed a network of specialized media (magazines, newspapers and Internet sites) for children and youth. This has increased the outreach potential of UNEP's children and youth programmes.

<sup>2</sup> The Tunza Youth Advisory Council is a group of 28 youth leaders elected at the Tunza International Youth Conference to advise UNEP on better ways of engaging youth and to represent youth in international environmental negotiations. Each region is represented by 4 youth leaders and indigenous youth organizations are also represented by 4 representatives.

<sup>3</sup> The Junior Board is a group of six children elected at the Tunza international Children's Conference to advise on the preparations and organization of the next children's event.

18. Following the adoption of the Tunza programme, UNEP established a consistent sequence of Tunza children and youth conferences. Starting with the Tunza International Youth Conference in Dubna, Russia, in August 2003, and the Tunza International Children's Conference in New London, Connecticut, USA, in July 2004, UNEP has set the pace of the Tunza conferences on a sustainable path. Subsequent conferences for youth are scheduled for India, in October 2005, and China, in 2007.

Children's conferences are tentatively scheduled for the 2006, in Brazil, and in 2008, in Norway. UNEP is also organizing the Children's World Summit for the Environment. This seminal event for children will be held in the cities of Toyohashi and Toyota, Japan, 26-29 July 2005, in conjunction with EXPO 2005. UNICEF is helping to identify participants for the Summit.

19. The Tunza conferences provide opportunities for young people from around the world to share environmental information and increase their involvement in environmental actions. They also provide young people with opportunities to develop joint strategies to address environmental problems in their communities. For instance, the Tunza International Youth Conference in 2003 developed the "Tunza Commitments for Youth" – ten actions to be undertaken by young people to promote sustainable development. UNEP's regional offices are also exploring the possibilities of organizing regional processes to engage young people. In July 2003 the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific organized Eco-Innovate, a regional youth conference to discuss innovative ways of addressing environmental issues.

20. UNEP successfully launched Plant for the Planet, a children's tree-planting campaign at the 22nd session of the UNEP Governing Council. Since the launch, over 200,000 trees have been planted in Kenya. The campaign is also being implemented in Ghana, Uganda, Zambia and Bangladesh and will be launched in several more countries in 2005.

21. As part of the Tunza programme, UNEP has also organized public events, entitled "Play for the Planet", to promote the linkages between sport and the environment. The events bring together hundreds of children from schools and communities, particularly in underprivileged areas, to engage in sports, mainly soccer and tennis. Alongside sport, environmental activities such as clean up and training seminars are organized for teachers and children to raise awareness of what they can do to protect and restore the environment.

22. UNEP and Volvo signed an agreement on a recognition programme for children. The Volvo-UNEP adventure programme provides an opportunity for schools to register their projects in a competition. The projects are then monitored for a period of two to six months and the best projects selected to compete for top prizes of US \$10,000, \$6,000 and \$4,000 for the first, second and third prizes respectively. Representatives of all short-listed projects are invited to share their experiences at a Volvo Conference for young people in Gothenburg in May each year.

23. UNEP has revamped its annual International Children's Painting Competition on the Environment. This competition has been held annually since 1990 with the Japan-based Foundation for Global Peace and Environment. Bayer AG became a partner for the competition from 2004. Each year's competition is aligned with the theme of the subsequent World Environment Day. The prizes for both regional and global winners are awarded during the main celebrations of World Environment Day.

24. Since the adoption of the long-term strategy, UNEP has strengthened and forged partnerships with a number of UN entities and international organizations. Among these partners are UNICEF, UNESCO, UN-HABITAT and the World Organization of the Scout Movement, with more than 30 million members worldwide. UNEP also concluded a partnership agreement with the Norway-based Inky Ecodetectives to use its educational cartoon series to promote environmental awareness among children worldwide. UNEP is also discussing a partnership agreement with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

### **C. Youth in decision-making processes**

25. The Tunza Youth Advisory Council continues to play an active role in advising UNEP on better ways of engaging young people. A new Council was elected at the first Tunza International Youth Conference in Dubna, Russia, in August 2003. Representatives of the Council participated in the Special Session of the Governing Council in March 2004 in Jeju, Korea.

26. The Council advises UNEP on better ways of engaging young people in environmental issues and represents youth organizations in international environmental negotiations. It is composed of four youth leaders per region and four representatives of indigenous youth organizations.

27. The fourth Tunza Global Youth Retreat was organized from 16 to 18 February 2005, prior to the 23rd session of the UNEP Governing Council. The Retreat reviewed the implementation of the Tunza programme and advised on UNEP's work with young people. Representatives of the Council are participating in this session of the Governing Council.

28. The Tunza Youth Advisory Council and the Junior Board of UNEP's children's conferences have been given the responsibility of making decisions on the themes, outcomes and type of discussions to have at the Tunza conferences and other youth processes.

#### **D. Capacity-building**

29. Since the adoption of the strategy, the UNEP Children and Youth Programme has maintained an average of six interns. These interns, who are drawn from various parts of the world, are given opportunities to gain experience with UNEP and to provide inputs to UNEP's work with young people. Countries represented so far include Finland, Germany, Cameroon, China, France, Ethiopia and Kenya. The interns are also given valuable opportunities to coordinate some of UNEP's processes for young people.

30. UNEP continues to support the nature and sport camp in Kenya. This leadership training programme for children from underprivileged communities provides basic training on sport and the environment. The first camp, which was launched in Kenya in 2001, has provided leadership training to over 10,000 children. UNEP and the Japan-based Global Sport Alliance are exploring the possibility of establishing similar camps in Brazil, Afghanistan and Cambodia.

31. UNEP supports the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy Programme for young people in Asia and the Pacific region. The programme gives young people a unique opportunity to gain first-hand experience of best environmental practices. Participants, selected from various countries in the region, are given an opportunity to travel to Germany for a week-long field trip where they witness a wide range of environmental protection measures. After returning from the field trip, the environmental envoys share their experiences with their organizations and communities.

### **III. Resources for implementation**

32. There has been an increase in the number of staff for the Children & Youth / Sport & the Environment Unit from three to five (2 professionals and 3 general service staff). The Unit also benefits from a team of interns.

33. In terms of fundraising, UNEP signed a major partnership agreement with the German-based chemical and healthcare company, Bayer AG for an annual contribution of 1 million Euros for youth and environment programmes for 3 years. The partnership, endorsed by the UNEP Committee of Permanent Representatives, will support the organization of the Tunza international conferences, the international children's painting competition and the development and distribution of the *Tunza* magazine. It will also support the development of sub-regional networks in Asia and the Pacific and training/exchange programmes for youth leaders mainly from Asia and the Pacific. The focus in Asia and the Pacific is as a result of the strong presence of Bayer AG in that region. UNEP has also raised funds through local partners to organize international conferences for children and youth in Dubna, Russia, and New London, Connecticut, USA. Successful fundraising has also been accomplished for the Children's World Summit in Japan in 2005 and the Tunza International Youth Children's Conference in Norway in 2008.

### **IV. Challenges**

34. The main challenge for the Tunza programme is related to the limited resources available for implementation. The budget of the Division of Communications and Public Information is not sufficient to support many of the activities. Implementation of the strategy therefore relies heavily on external support. Even though the Bayer funding will support the implementation of some key activities of the programme, additional external funding is required to ensure a full implementation of the strategy.

35. The Tunza programme provides an opportunity to engage young people all over the world and inspire them to take action for the environment. There is therefore a strong need to expand the outreach potential of the programme and to engage children and youth organizations in all parts of the world. However, to be able to do this, UNEP needs the support of Governments to create links with children and youth organizations in their countries.

36. Due to limited resources, UNEP information materials are often published only in English or infrequently in French and Spanish and a few other UN languages. To be able to reach out to many more young people, it is important to produce UNEP information materials in at least all six UN languages.

## **V. Need for support**

37. To successfully implement the strategy, UNEP requires support from Governments to finance the activities of the programme and promote it to children and youth organizations in their respective countries.

38. UNEP also requires support from Governments to print and distribute UNEP information materials to organizations in their respective countries and to host exchange programmes for youth leaders from other countries.

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