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**Programme, the Environment Fund and administrative
and other budgetary matters**

Synopses of activities in the regions

Note by the Executive Director

In its decision SS.VIII/3, on regional annexes, the Governing Council requested the secretariat to prepare a synopsis by region of the work of each division and to present those synopses to the Governing Council at its regular sessions starting from the biennium 2006–2007 as separate information documents. The synopses contained in the annex to the present note have been prepared pursuant to that decision. The synopses are being circulated without formal editing.

* UNEP/GC.23/1.

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Annex

I. Background issues

1. UNEP carries out work both at the global and regional levels, under the umbrella of six global programmes: Early Warning and Assessment, Policy Development and Law, Policy Implementation, Environmental Conventions, Technology, Industry and Economics and Communications and Public Information.
2. The Division of Regional Cooperation and its six regional offices play a crucial role in this work by catalysing the regional delivery of UNEP's global mandates and work programmes, while responding specifically to the different priorities of and within the regions. Through their direct work with Governments, the regional offices implement and complement relevant parts of UNEP's global programmes through initiating, coordinating and implementing environmental cooperation and action at the regional, sub-regional and national levels, and through responding to environmental problems and emergencies which are specific to those regions.¹ In addition, through its regional offices, UNEP interacts with and supports the regional and sub-regional environmental ministerial forums as well as other inter-governmental forums, hereby providing a crucial link between its policy and programme development and the actual environmental concerns in the regions.
3. The joint work of the UNEP global divisions and the Division of Regional Cooperation ensures that an increased policy dialogue and cooperation at the regional and sub-regional levels will support the integration of global environmental policy concerns with emerging priorities and issues at these levels.
4. In the delivery of this 2006-2007 Programme of Work, therefore, all divisions are paying greater attention to addressing the concerns and emerging priorities of regions and sub-regions, especially those in the developing world, in particular Africa.

II. Regional synopses

A. Africa

5. The Africa region has a wealth of natural resources, including minerals, land, biological diversity, wildlife, forests, fisheries and water. It has the largest tropical rain forests and the second largest freshwater lake in the world. The region offers significant potential for human, social and economic development but is facing enormous challenges. Rapid population growth, rising levels of poverty and sometimes inappropriate development practices are among the main factors influencing the state of the environment in Africa. Other factors that have led to continued environmental degradation include the impacts of natural disasters, widespread land degradation and desertification; loss of biodiversity; deforestation and loss of arable and grazing land; declining soil productivity; pollution and depletion of freshwater and marine resources; and deterioration of air quality. These have wider implications on food security, natural resources management, human health and efforts towards poverty eradication and sustainable development.
6. For a number of years, the international community and the United Nations in particular have all actively supported Africa in facing these increasing environmental challenges. The assistance has covered, among others, a wide range of areas including institutional, technical, financial as well as programmatic delivery mechanisms. Despite these efforts and in view of the challenges, a lot remains to be done in a region where poverty is on the rise, and people's livelihood depends, more than in any other region of the world, on the exploitation of natural resources. Compounding the difficulties is the competition for these resources, which is often fueling a number of conflicts with national and sometimes regional dimensions.
7. It is however encouraging that the African leaders have embarked on a major reform by launching a major economic, social and environmental reform process, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). To bring coherence in the revitalization process, NEPAD has now been agreed to be the programme for the African Union. The Environment Initiative of NEPAD has been developed

¹ Secretary-General's Bulletin ST/SGB/1999/21 "Organization of the secretariat of the United Nations Environment Programme".

into a full and comprehensive Action Plan under the leadership of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN). The task of coordinating the implementation of the Environment Initiative within the cluster on environment, population, and urbanization has been assigned to UNEP. It is in this context that in addition to the substantive share allocated to Africa in its programme of work and programme delivery, UNEP has put new impetus on its support to Africa. This is reflected in GC Decision 22/9 on Support to Africa. The implementation of this decision has been a priority of the work of UNEP as evidenced by our support to various programmes and projects, including the development of the Action Plan of the Environment Initiative of NEPAD.

1. Early warning and assessment

8. In the area of assessment and early warning, UNEP will provide regional support to the follow-up and implementation of the decisions on strengthening UNEP's scientific base and on support to Africa. Particular attention will be given to the regular production of the Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) report and the expansion of the Africa Environment Information Network (AEIN) to more countries in the region from the 13 involved in the pilot phase. In this regard, support will also be given to engage and involve youth in environmental issues, particularly in implementing the AEO -for-Youth Initiative. For the GEO -4 as well as the UNEP GEO Yearbook, regional activities and inputs to both publications will be coordinated at the regional level, including the participation of selected collaborating centres in Africa. UNEP will provide technical and substantive contributions to other reports concerning emerging issues and early warning, including issues related to environment and conflict as well as assistance to countries in Africa and regional organizations on early warning and vulnerability assessment related issues.

9. UNEP will facilitate capacities and capabilities for environmental assessments, environmental data and information under the AEIN and will provide support to regional level information systems to support regional environmental assessment processes. Activities will include training of partners in using the Africa Environment Outlook Environment Information System, a data and indicator tool, which also includes databases on environmental experts and documents. The tool is an Africa regional manifestation of the GEO Data Portal.

10. In partnership with UN-Habitat, UNEP will also launch a GEO Cities Initiative in Africa, working with national and city authorities in a selected number of countries to build capacity in integrated environmental assessment and reporting and produce city environment outlook reports.

11. Outreach to decision -makers and the public will be ensured through the assistance to African countries in conducting national integrated environmental assessments and producing environment outlook reports as well as in assisting in designing and initiating early warning monitoring projects as a means to evaluate perceived environmental threats and support preparedness planning.

12. In cooperation with partners, UNEP will develop and publish integrated environmental assessment methodologies and guidelines, training manuals, Internet and CD-ROM resources and environmental education materials. As part of the Norwegian-supported international partnership initiative programmatic and technical inputs will be provided to strengthen the environmental management capacities at the national and local levels as a contribution to poverty eradication in Africa, with special attention to the role of women in poverty alleviation. Particular emphasis will also be given to the substantive participation in and contributions to the establishment of a regular process for reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment in Africa, building on existing regional assessments.

2. Policy development and law

13. Under the Environmental Law Programme, UNEP will provide law input and assistance to Governments for the development and strengthening of regional and sub-regional legal regimes in areas such as ecosystems and environment management, environment impact assessment (EIA), transboundary water resources, air pollution, wildlife, forestry and waste management. UNEP will also promote and facilitate the effective participation of African countries in negotiation processes and the inclusion of the environmental dimension in areas of ongoing negotiations such as trade and environment (including with a view to promoting gender balanced participation in negotiations) through substantive services, training and other forms of assistance (financial, logistic, provision of background material). Advisory services will be provided, upon request, for the development, strengthening and harmonization of legislation in different areas of environmental law including with the aim of contributing towards the reduction of poverty through the development and implementation of

environmental law. Capacity-building needs in the area of environmental law will be covered through train the trainers workshops for judges as well as national workshops and training programmes in environmental management for judges, lawyers, legal NGOs, academia, policy makers and other stakeholders.

14. Technical support will be provided to major groups and stakeholders in articulating linkages between environment and poverty alleviation through the organization of relevant partnership campaigns and policy dialogues.

15. Environmental policy concerns will be addressed in the area of poverty and the environment through capacity-building workshops on policy integration and coherence with AMCEN and NEPAD to assist in the integration of poverty reduction objectives into their action plans and programmes. Information activities in this area will include the preparation of fact sheets, information kits, technical and policy briefs for governments, civil society and other stakeholders on the linkage between poverty and environment, a database will also be accessible via the internet and it will include indicators, socio-economic instruments and integrated assessment modules for policy makers and government experts.

16. Advice and technical support will be provided to countries (upon request) in mainstreaming urban environmental planning management into poverty reduction strategy papers and in the development and implementation of urban environment policy framework activities in cooperation with UN-Habitat. Issues of air quality will be addressed through advice and technical support to Governments in the development of policies as well as through support to the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV) and the development of urban air quality monitoring. In addition, advice and technical support including the preparation of guidelines and training on additional issues such as: energy policy, provision and management of water supply in rural areas, ecosystem approach to sustainable management of dryland environment, on integrating vulnerability and adaptation to climate change into sustainable planning in six countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, and for the development and implementation of national institutional frameworks for environmentally and socially sound CDM projects, in particular small-scale projects in forestry and biomass energy sector.

17. Technical support will be provided to the major groups and stakeholders in organizing annually the 6 regional preparatory meetings towards the Global Civil Society Forum.

3. Policy implementation

18. In the area of environmental law, activities will include publications, development of laws and advisory services, promotion of the adoption and ratification of global and regional MEAs as well as training courses and seminars. In particular, compendiums of environmental law and of judicial decisions related to the environment in African countries as well as brochures on compliance and enforcement will be published. Advisory services will be provided to governments for the development and harmonization of regional and subregional protocols on environmental laws and institutional issues. Specific activities geared towards the promotion of the adoption and ratification of global and regional MEAs; in particular the African Convention on Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources will be undertaken. Training courses and seminars for judges, magistrates, parliamentarians, NGOs, private sector on implementation of environmental laws will be organized. Capacity-building activities which will include workshops, meetings, training programmes particularly on biodiversity conservation in mountain ecosystems and associated watersheds, on the integration of gender on the effective implementation of biodiversity-related conventions at regional and country level, on rainwater harvesting and policies for poverty alleviation, on design and use of economic instruments for the implementation of selected MEAs, on Environmental Action Learning and for integrating major groups in the management of the environment.

19. The Partnership for the Development of Environmental Law and Institutions in Africa (PADELIA) will increase the number of project-countries, institutions and other stakeholders supported in the implementation of environmental policy and legislation as well as collaborating mechanisms and networks engaged in implementing environmental management measures at the regional and sub-regional levels. Special attention will be paid to environmental law education and training, gender perspective and impact on poverty reduction.

20. The Global Programme of Action (GPA) will undertake activities within its mandated framework to address problems related to municipal wastewater, physical alteration and destruction of habitats and integrated coastal area and river basin management. These activities will include reports, case studies as well as provision of advice and assistance to national and local authorities. The GPA

will contribute to the “African Process” (NEPAD, African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW), AMCEN), to address GPA-relevant issues. Within this framework to address land-based sources of marine pollution in countries along the West Indian Ocean, GPA has secured funding as a counterpart contribution to the GEF-supported West Indian Ocean Project (‘WIO-Lab’). In coastal and marine waters of East Africa, UNEP continues to support regional, national and local activities of the ICRI operational networks (International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN), Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) and Coral Reef Degradation in the Indian Ocean (CORDIO)) to reverse the degradation of coral reefs and to sustainably manage reefs and the goods and services they provide.

21. In the area of environmental emergencies and post-disaster/conflict assessments and clean-up, DEPI will provide information and organize regional and national workshops on the application and use of indigenous knowledge for environmental conservation and hydrological disaster management through an internet portal and on environmentally vulnerable areas for application and use in planning refugee operations in Africa. Field missions will be undertaken jointly with OCHA to provide immediate assessment and technical advice on environmental emergencies as well as to advise and assist in assessing the state of readiness and provide guidance on the systems of preparedness and response to environmental emergencies in Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa and Swaziland. Post-conflict environmental assessment field missions will be conducted as appropriate, to identify immediate risks to human and livelihoods, integrate environmental issues within the reconstruction agenda and strengthen the information base of post-conflict environmental administrations.

4. Technology, industry and economics

22. In the area of energy, UNEP will assist African countries in sustainable energy policy, planning and management, in structuring financing mechanisms that support sustainable energy investments as well as in the application of best practice approaches in sustainable transport in selected countries.

23. Production and consumption activities will concentrate on strengthening the African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production and in the organization of regional and national events including capacity-building activities to develop and implement projects under the 10 year framework plan on sustainable consumption and production. It will also assist in the preparation of information and technical materials on policies and methods to be adopted by governments and business and youth, as well as in the support to the national implementation of MEAs through the use of preventive methods such as life cycle assessments, technology assessments, product design and environmental accounting.

24. Policy and technical advisory services to African countries in implementing specific obligations under the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions will be an important aspect of UNEP’s work in the area of chemicals in Africa. These activities will include the identification, managing and disposing of persistent organic pollutants, advisory services to countries on heavy metals and other chemicals as well as capacity-building activities designed to assist countries in promoting the sound management of chemicals and reducing mercury risks.

25. In the area of economics and trade, the emphasis will be on the organization of regional workshops on priority trade and environment negotiating issues, on financing sustainable energy, on environmental management and reporting for financial institutions and policy makers. As well, UNEP will provide technical assistance to build national capacities of countries in the use of integrated assessment and planning to develop and implement mutually supportive trade and environmental policies.

5. Regional cooperation and representation

26. The provision of secretariat services to the AMCEN meetings, including the inter-sessional meetings, the AMCEN Interagency technical committee meetings, and the Expert group of AMCEN meetings is one of the main activities in the area of regional cooperation. In addition support and contributions are also given to the African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW) as well as to the implementation of the European Union/Africa Water Initiative and the African Water Facility. Advisory services will be provided to the Commission of the African Union as well as to the NEPAD Secretariat in the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD.

27. UNEP will also participate and contribute to other intergovernmental sub-regional processes and meetings of the African Union, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and subregional entities such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Southern

African Development Community (SADC), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Congo Basin Forest Initiative, and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) among others.

28. In collaboration with the Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA), technical support will also be provided to the technical committee of the League of Arab States.

29. Outreach to civil society and the African public in general is covered in conjunction with the Divisions for Policy Development and Law and of Communication and Public Information, inter alia through the organization of special media and outreach events such as World Environment Day, Clean-Up the World, World Day to Combat Desertification, the Africa Environment Day and other major group events. In addition, media briefings, interviews, press conferences, press releases, press articles and opinion editorials are some of the tools used to inform about environmental issues of public interest.

30. The implementation of the Nairobi River Basin Project – Phase Three through the implementation of activities in the area of environmental assessment, capacity-building and awareness raising.

6. Environmental conventions

31. Technical support, public information and capacity-building are the main tools to improve the implementation of MEAs in particular, CBD, CITES and CMS. Specific activities in the area of multilateral environmental agreements will be geared towards the climate change outreach programme and the dissemination of the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report as well as the promotion of the implementation of the UNFCCC New Delhi Work Programme on Article 6. Biodiversity issues will also be covered through workshops on awareness-raising on biotechnology/biosafety including links between the safe application of low-cost biotechnology applications and the role of women in poor communities as well as the development of policies, strategies and action plans for integrating access and benefit-sharing, biotechnology and biosafety into national priorities. Particular emphasis will be made in the enhancement of the participation of indigenous groups, NGOs, the private sector, civil society and community-based organizations in the implementation of MEAs.

32. Ongoing efforts will be enhanced through projects, seminars and regional workshops to develop interlinkages and synergies issue-based modules for the implementation of the chemicals and wastes conventions as well as of biodiversity multilateral environmental agreements at the national level.

33. Partnerships are an excellent way to tackle biodiversity problems in Africa. The Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP) and the Cloud Forest Agenda provide good examples, as they engage the major biodiversity related multilateral environmental agreements, together with governments and civil society to work towards a common goal in biodiversity conservation. UNEP will also support the organization of the 2nd Intergovernmental Meeting on Great Apes and GRASP and will undertake missions to great ape range states to encourage governments to adopt ape friendly activities.

34. Efforts to protect the environment need to be contextualized within the larger framework of sustainable development addressing the root causes of environmental degradation, including socio-economic factors such as unemployment and poverty. Within this framework, pilot projects and workshops will be implemented/organized on the implementation of the ABS frameworks and technology, to enhance national capacities to comply with the UNFCCC, CBD and CCD provisions with the aim of mainstreaming it into poverty alleviation strategies. Participatory processes in national environment-related policy formulation and review will be facilitated. The development of legislative, administrative and policy framework(s) on access and benefit-sharing for African countries to promote and enhance synergies with other relevant MEAs will also be pursued during the 2006-2007 biennium.

35. Intergovernmental negotiations will be strengthened through support to regional preparatory meetings linked to convention conference of parties and through capacity-building activities that contribute to the implementation of the programme of activities of the regional centres of the Basel Convention in Africa. These capacity-building activities will focus on technology transfer and training within the framework of the regional and sub-regional centres.

36. UNEP, through the Nairobi and Abidjan Conventions for the protection management and development of the marine and coastal environment in sub-Saharan Africa, GPA and AMCEN will provide support to the NEPAD secretariat to define, and prioritize the programme of interventions developed under the African process and adopted in NEPAD's Coastal and Marine sub component of the Environment Initiative of NEPAD. Within the framework of these two conventions, the Regional

Seas Programme will also undertake activities in the region focussing on the sustainable management and protection of the marine and coastal environment, including specific activities on marine pollution in cooperation with IMO, coral reefs, assessment and monitoring and SIDS.

7. Communications and public information

37. UNEP will reach out to the public through publications distributed to all regions such as Our Planet and Tunza Magazine. The organization of special events is another tool to reach out to the public and civil society; these include World Environment Day, Clean Up the World Campaign and special awards such as the Champions of the Earth Award and the Sasakawa Environment Prize. Region-specific information activities are undertaken in close collaboration with the Divisions of Policy Development and Law and Communications and Public Information under the umbrella of the Regional Office for Africa.

B. Asia and the Pacific

38. Asia and the Pacific is home to more than half the world population – 3.2 billion out of 6 billion; it accounts for over 40% of the global economy and has an estimated 70% of the global poor. Geographically, it ranges from the fragile small island developing states of the Pacific to the populous and vast coastal and deltaic plains of South and Southeast Asia and the mountainous, landlocked countries of Central Asia. Rapidly growing populations and dynamic economies are exerting considerable pressures on the environmental resources and services of the region. According to GEO -3:

- More than half Asia's drylands are affected by desertification.
- Of the 15 cities in the world with the highest levels of particulates, 12 are in Asia.
- The region has the lowest per capita availability of freshwater, with about half its population living with severe water stress.
- Half the region's coral reefs are degraded and threatened and more than 60 percent of its mangroves have been lost.
- About three-quarters of the world's species extinctions have occurred on isolated islands in the region.
- Positive changes have included improvements in governance by public authorities, growing environmental awareness and public participation, and increasing environmental awareness in industry.

39. In a region as large and diverse as Asia and the Pacific, UNEP recognizes the value of working at the sub-regional level where the commonalities of social, economic and the environment factors are strongest. The five sub-regions of Central Asia, North East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the South Pacific have existing intergovernmental processes and institutions.

40. UNEP has identified four key objectives to provide its services in the region:

- Assist implementing national, sub-regional and global priority environmental programmes: Science and assessment, policy instruments and awareness and providing an interface between national/subregional and global action programmes;
- Establish and host a Regional Environment Knowledge Centre: Information hub, to support integrated planning and implementation of thematic environmental priorities and public participation through enhanced access to information'
- Lead responses to emerging environment issues in the region: Atmospheric Brown Cloud (ABC), Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF), Dust and Sand Storms, Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction from Industry in Asia and the Pacific (GERIAP), e-waste, MEA burdens, sustainable consumption, freshwater, awareness for legislators and business leaders;
- Develop strategic partnerships and optimize resources: Advocate segmentation of UN agency responsibilities; sub -regional delivery and civil society networks; sub-regional environmental policy dialogue; matrix approach for core and specialized staff; flexible and integrated IT office support system.

1. Early warning and assessment

41. In the area of assessment and early warning UNEP will provide regional support to follow up and implement the UNEP GC decision on strengthening UNEP's scientific base. UNEP will also coordinate regional activities and inputs to GEO-4 and to the GEO Year Book reports including the participation of collaborating centres in Asia and the Pacific. In addition to the contribution to other global assessments, UNEP will provide technical and financial assistance to facilitate assessments at the sub-regional, national and city levels in conjunction with governments and expert centres using the GEO process and methodology and will support in the identification of emerging environmental issues in the region

42. With the support of partners, UNEP will develop a harmonized integrated database of indicators for Asia and the Pacific and will also maintain a functional regional environmental knowledge centre that provides a one-stop opportunity for environmental information in the region, and one, which integrates the efforts of various partner agencies and civil society networks.

43. UNEP will conduct capacity-building activities on early warning issues for regional and national partners as well as on integrated environmental assessment and the GEO methodology for regional and national partners.

2. Policy development and law

44. Governments, at their requests, will be assisted to develop and strengthen regional and sub-regional legal regimes in areas such as ecosystems and environment management, environmental impact assessment (EIA), transboundary water resources, air pollution, wildlife, forestry and waste management. UNEP will promote and facilitate the effective participation of countries in negotiation processes and the inclusion of the environmental dimension in areas of ongoing negotiations such as trade and environment. Advisory services will be provided for the development, strengthening and harmonization of legislation in different areas of environmental law including regional training for diverse stakeholders such as judges, legal NGOs, academia, policy makers and other legal stakeholders.

45. Technical assistance will be provided to major groups and stakeholders in articulating linkages between environment and poverty alleviation through the organization of relevant partnership campaigns and policy dialogues.

46. Environmental policy concerns will be addressed through technical support in mainstreaming urban environmental planning management into poverty reduction strategy papers and together with UN-Habitat, through advice and technical support to national and local Government (and their partners) towards the development and implementation of urban environment policy frameworks and activities. Issues of air quality will be addressed through advice and technical support to Governments in the development and implementation of policies as well as through the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV) and the development of sustainable urban transport. UNEP/ROAP has recently developed an urban environment strategy, which will be implemented in 2005. Other issues such as urban waste will be implemented in close cooperation with UN-Habitat.

47. Technical support will be provided to the major groups and stakeholders in organizing annually the 6 regional preparatory meetings towards the Global Civil Society Forum.

3. Policy implementation

48. In the area of environmental law, UNEP will provide advisory services on implementation, enforcement and compliance including MEAs. Support will also be provided in the organization of regional and national training courses, seminars and workshops for parliamentarians, judges, magistrates, legal practitioners, environmental law lectures NGOs, private sector, women and legal and para-legal experts on environmental law.

49. Capacity Building activities will include workshops and training programmes particularly on environmental and natural resources management, on rainwater harvesting and policies for poverty alleviation, on the promotion of the use of economic instruments and for the integration of major groups in the management of the environment.

50. The Global Programme of Action (GPA) will undertake activities within its mandated framework to address problems related to municipal wastewater, physical alteration and destruction of habitats and integrated coastal area and river basin management (ICARM). These activities will include

reports, case studies, as well as the provision of advice and assistance to national and local authorities to undertake projects to promote public-private partnerships and contracts to address land-based activities. Under this programme, UNEP will also provide guidance and assistance to countries for the comprehensive institutionalization of their National Programmes of Action (NPA) including the legislative and economic/legal sector reforms. The GPA will also support the preparation of outreach materials to national and local Governments and other stakeholders to raise awareness on GPA issues and possible solutions. Capacity-building activities will be organized in areas such as municipal wastewater treatment, safeguarding the ecosystem function, preventing degradation of coastal and marine environments caused by the physical alteration and destruction of habitats and budget planning.

51. UNEP will continue to support ICRAN coral reef management, education and capacity-building activities in South Asia, East Asia Seas and the South Pacific through SACEP, UNEP/EAS-RCU and SPREP respectively. This includes a significant participation in the Agence Francaise de Developpement (AFD) Coral Reef Initiative in the South Pacific (CRISP). In addition, UNEP, in collaboration with the ICRAN Coordinating Unit, are investigating the opportunities for expanding ICRAN activities to the South Asian region, inter alia to provide institutional capacity-building and operational support of site-based activities for the sustainable management and development of coral reefs and reef resources.

52. In the area of environmental emergencies and post-disaster/conflict assessments and clean up, UNEP will undertake field missions to assess the consequences of environmental disasters and, jointly with OCHA to provide immediate assessment and technical advice on environmental emergencies. UNEP will also carry out missions to advice and assist in assessing the state of readiness and provide guidance on the systems of preparedness and response to environmental emergencies. As well, post-conflict environmental assessment field missions will be conducted to identify immediate risks to human and livelihoods, integrate environmental issues within the reconstruction agenda and strengthen the information base of post-conflict environmental administrations.

4. Technology, industry and economics

53. In the area of energy, UNEP will provide assistance to countries on sustainable energy policy planning and management and in structuring financing mechanisms that support sustainable energy investments, both from the private sector and through public-private partnerships.

54. Production and Consumption activities will include the organization of regional roundtables to build a conceptual base for the implementation of sustainable consumption and production policies and use of management tools for key sectors including life-cycle assessments, technology assessments, product design and environmental accounting. Information materials, technical materials as well as awareness raising campaigns and briefings on sustainable production and consumption issues will be prepared. Training activities for national counterparts to assist national implementation of MEAs will also be an important part of the activities on sustainable consumption and production in Asia and the Pacific.

55. Economics and trade activities will include the preparation of technical papers on environmental fiscal reform, country project studies on harmful subsidies, trade-related policies in the agricultural sector, integrated assessment and planning on the reduction of poverty. Technical assistance will be provided in the areas of sustainable fisheries policies, to support effective participation in negotiations related to the interface of trade, environment and sustainable development, in the use of integrated assessment and planning. As well, regional workshops will be organized on priority trade and environment negotiating issues, on financing sustainable energy, on incorporating environmental and social criteria into institutional investment and pension fund policies and on reporting for financial institutions and policy makers.

5. Regional cooperation and representation

56. The support to the organization of the annual sub-regional environmental policy dialogue meeting convened to review the regional strategy and provide policy guidance to UNEP as well as the support to the meetings of the sub-regional environmental forums in the region will continue to be one of the main activities in the area of regional cooperation.

57. UNEP will support the expert group reports in support of activities of Atmospheric Brown Cloud project (impact assessment on health, agriculture and water budget; Asia Pacific Model and Policy Linkages), in support of the Glacial Lake Outburst Flooding Project as well as in support of the

report on e-wastes project activities. UNEP will also develop joint project proposals addressing transboundary and common environmental priorities with inter alia, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNDP) and other partners in the region.

58. Regional environmental education initiatives will be promoted in the Asia and Pacific Region through the UNEP-Tongji Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development in Shanghai, China. A master's degree curriculum will be developed and implemented in this region for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

59. UNEP will also reach out to civil society and the Asia and Pacific public in general through support to the organization of special media and outreach events as well as of environmental campaigns, awards and competitions including Champions of the Earth and the Sasakawa Environment Prize. In addition, media briefings, interviews, press conferences, press releases, press articles and opinion editorials are some of the tools used to inform about environmental issues of public interest.

6. Environmental conventions

60. Technical support, public information and capacity-building are the main tools to improve the implementation of MEAs in particular CMS, CBD and CITES. Specific activities in the area of MEAs will be geared towards climate change outreach programme and the dissemination of the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report as well as the promotion of the implementation of the UNFCCC New Delhi Work Programme on Article 6. Awareness raising activities on biotechnology and biosafety issues including links between the safe application of low-cost biotechnology applications and the role of women in poor communities will also be covered through the organization inter alia of workshops. Particular emphasis will be made on the enhancement of the participation of indigenous groups, NGOs, private sector, civil society and community-based organizations.

61. The UNEP Regional Seas Programme will undertake activities in the region within the framework and mandate of the East Asian Seas Action Plan and the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) and the South Asian Seas Action Plan focussing on the sustainable management and protection of the marine and coastal environments, including specific activities on coral reefs, integrated coastal area and river basin management, marine litter, oil spill pollution, assessment and monitoring and SIDS.

62. UNEP activities will be enhanced through projects, seminar and regional workshops to develop interlinkages and synergies issue-based modules for the implementation of the chemicals and wastes conventions as well as of biodiversity multilateral environmental agreements at the national level. Joint polar activities will be promoted through the revitalization of UNEP's Polar Task Force and Strategy.

63. Partnerships are a way to tackle biodiversity problems in Asia and the Pacific. The Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP) and the Cloud Forest Agenda provide good examples, as they engage the major biodiversity related multilateral environmental agreements, together with governments and civil society to work towards a common goal in biodiversity conservation. UNEP will also support the organization of the 2nd Intergovernmental Meeting on great apes and GRASP and will undertake missions to great ape range states to encourage governments to adopt ape friendly activities.

64. UNEP is working closely with Indonesia and Malaysia to promote the preservation of orangutans and the forests on which they and human communities depend. Four of the biodiversity related multilateral environmental agreements are members of the Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP) partnership, and through it, are working together to ensure the survival of this highly endangered flagship species.

65. Socio-economic factors such as unemployment and poverty will be addressed through among others, regional and subregional workshops for policy-makers as well as the development of a legislative, administrative and policy frameworks on access and benefit sharing to promote/enhance synergies with other relevant MEAs.

66. Intergovernmental negotiations will be strengthened through support to regional preparatory meetings linked to convention conferences of parties, through the development of educational and training materials for business including best practices on reduction of GHG emissions, through the development of training courses for lecturers and teachers on climate change issues. Capacity-building workshops will be organized to contribute to the implementation of the programme of activities of the

regional centres of the Basel Convention in Asia. The focus of these workshops will be on technology transfer and training within the framework of the regional and sub-regional centres.

7. Communications and public information

67. UNEP will reach out to the public through publications distributed to all regions such as *Our Planet* and *Tunza Magazine*. The organization of special events is another tool to reach out to the public and civil society; these include World Environment Day, Clean Up the World Campaign and special awards such as the Champions of the Earth and the Sasakawa.

68. Region-specific information activities are undertaken in close collaboration with the Divisions of Policy Development and Law and Communications and Public Information under the umbrella of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

C. Europe

69. The European region comprises 53 countries of highly diverse political and socio-economic characteristics, some amongst the wealthiest nations of the world, others still struggling with serious challenges of ongoing transition. The political landscape of Europe has changed dramatically in the last decades, and overall trends are influenced by the continuous integration around the pole of the expanded European Union, with a number of other countries being in different stages of accession to or association with the European Union.

70. Assessment reports prepared during the Environment for Europe process, which culminated with the Fifth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” in Kyiv, Ukraine, in May 2003, have helped to identify major threats and challenges for the development of environmental policies for and within the region. These were highlighted in the Kyiv Ministerial Declaration adopted at the Conference. The Kyiv Conference also agreed on an environmental strategy for the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) countries as a strategic framework for environmental partnerships in, and assistance to the region. The strategy was reviewed at a Kyiv +1 conference in October 2004 in Tbilisi, Georgia, which specifically stressed the need for increased capacity-building and technology transfer.

71. Key challenges for Europe as a whole, identified in the Kiev Declaration, include:

- Need to strengthen (sub)-regional cooperation and support partnership initiatives;
- Integration of environment into sectoral policies;
- Ecosystems at risk;
- Water quality and water resources under threat;
- Continued growth of transport and tourism;
- Air pollution, especially from particulate matter;
- Waste increase;
- Irreversible soil loss.

72. UNEP views its role in Europe to be the facilitator and supporter of regional and sub-regional cooperation and partnerships, provider of assessments and early warnings, advisor on responses to emerging environmental issues, provider of outreach, environmental education and public information services, and capacity developer in the non-EU countries of eastern Europe.

1. Environmental assessment and early warning

73. In the area of assessment and early warning, UNEP will promote European support to the follow-up and implementation of the GC decision on strengthening UNEP’s scientific base. UNEP will also coordinate and service European activities and inputs to GEO-4 and to UNEP’s annual GEO Yearbooks, through selected Collaborating Centres (CCs) in Europe and otherwise. UNEP will generate a European input and contribution to other global and thematic assessments, as appropriate or required.

74. UNEP will continue to contribute and participate in regional assessment and reporting activities in relation to the “Environment for Europe (EfE)” process, in cooperation with the European Environment Agency (EEA) and ECE. UNEP will also participate in regional/sub-regional

assessments/ environment outlook reports, including the preparation of sub-regional environment outlook reports for the Carpathians Region.

75. UNEP will prepare or assist in the preparation of early warning reports on emerging environmental issues and threats in Europe, especially those of a transboundary nature and will conduct missions to countries and plan follow-up activities and projects, to help assess and mitigate environmental problems which pose security risks.

76. UNEP will continue to assist countries with economies in transition to build and strengthen their capacities and capabilities for environmental assessment, environmental data collection and analysis, and information under the AEIN, and will continue to provide support to regional level information systems for environmental assessment work.

2. Policy development and law

77. UNEP will continue to promote policy exchanges and integration of global environmental imperatives in regional, subregional and national policies, in its contacts and collaboration with and assistance to the countries and subregions of Europe, including the European Union and the EECCA countries.

78. Under the Environmental Law programme, UNEP will continue to assist Governments in Europe in the development and strengthening of regional and sub-regional legal regimes in areas such as ecosystem protection, environment impact assessment (EIA), management of transboundary water resources, air pollution abatement, wildlife conservation, sustainable forest management, and integrated chemicals and waste management. UNEP will also help to service and strengthen relevant Regional Seas Agreements, through the development of protocols, the preparation of legal documents, and other forms of legal capacity-building.

79. UNEP will promote and facilitate the effective participation of countries with economies in transition in the negotiation processes on trade and environment through substantive services, training and other forms of assistance.

80. Advisory services will be provided to the countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, upon request, for the development, strengthening, and harmonization of legislation in different areas of environmental law. Capacity-building needs will, inter alia, be covered through train the trainers workshops for judges, lawyers, legal NGOs, academia, policy makers and other stakeholders. Particular attention will be given to the need to ensure the effective translation in national environmental law and enforcement and compliance practises of existing global and regional MEAs.

81. Technical support will be provided to the major groups and stakeholders in organizing annually the 6 regional preparatory meetings towards the Global Civil Society Forum.

3. Policy implementation

82. Capacity-building activities in eastern Europe will include workshops, meetings, training programmes, technical advisory missions and assistance in among others, the design and implementation of incentive measures for environmental and natural resources management and for promoting the participation of major groups in environmental management policies and programmes.

83. The Global Programme of Action will continue to undertake activities within its mandated framework to address problems in Europe related to municipal wastewater, physical alteration and destruction of habitats and integrated coastal area and river basin management. Support will be provided to the implementation of the EU Marine Strategy to ensure implementation of GPA relevant issues and linkages with Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans operating in European waters or bordering the European Union.

84. In the area of environmental emergencies and post-disaster/conflict assessments and clean-up, UNEP will continue to undertake missions to assess the consequences of environmental disasters in the region and to provide advice and guidance related to the state of readiness for and systems of preparedness and response to environmental emergencies. UNEP will also undertake capacity-building activities in post-conflict countries and conduct post-conflict environmental assessment field missions to identify immediate risks to humans and livelihoods, promote integration of environmental issues within the reconstruction agenda and strengthen the information base of post-conflict environmental administrations.

4. Technology, industry and economics

85. In the area of energy, UNEP will continue to assist countries in eastern Europe, at request, with their efforts to develop a sustainable energy policy, planning and management practice, leading to the deployment of cleaner energy technologies: UNEP will also continue to provide assistance in structuring financing mechanisms that support sustainable energy investments, both from the private sector and through public-private partnerships.

86. Production and Consumption activities in Europe will concentrate on: the organization of regional, subregional and national sustainable production and consumption roundtables to build a base for the implementation of sustainable consumption and production policies and use of management tools for key sectors; the preparation and dissemination of information materials to assist project implementation including awareness raising, public information and briefings on sustainable production and consumption issues; the development of technical materials to assist national partners such as national cleaner production centres (NCPCs) and national sustainable consumption networks to facilitate implementation of sustainable consumption and production policies and life-cycle approaches and to support capacity-building at the national level. Training events will be organized for national counterparts to assist in national implementation of MEAs, through use of preventive methods in sustainable consumption and production such as life-cycle assessments, technology assessments, product design and environmental accounting.

5. Regional cooperation and representation

87. Through its Regional Office for Europe (ROE), UNEP will continue to contribute to and, as appropriate, co-service intergovernmental environment related meetings in the European region, including the Ministerial Environment for Europe Conference, Belgrade 2007, and its preparatory process, the Pan European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy and the Biodiversity in Europe Conference, meetings of the State Signatories to the Framework Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea, and the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, meetings of the Black Sea Commission, meetings related to the UNEP/OSCE/UNDP Environment and Security Initiative, meetings on IWRM (Integrated Water Resource Management), and meetings of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the European Union and its institutions, the Visegrad group, the OECD, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the (Steering) Committees for the Mediterranean, and the International Partnership for the Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions.

88. UNEP will, through its liaison office in Brussels, continue to intensify exchanges and collaboration with the European Union and its institutions, through the implementation of the MOU between UNEP and the European Commission and otherwise. UNEP Vienna/Interim Secretariat to the Carpathian Convention will help ensure closer liaison with the Vienna based UN institutions, and the UNEP Office in Moscow will continue to service the cooperation between UNEP and the Russian Federation.

89. UNEP will promote the signing/adoption/ratification/implementation of the ROE serviced Framework Conventions on the Caspian Sea and the Carpathians, and the Black Sea Nutrient Protocol. It will also participate in ECE led environmental performance review (EPR) missions and provide substantive inputs to international chapters of EPRs for the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central Asia (EECCA).

90. UNEP's Regional Office for Europe will continue to provide advisory services, training and technical assistance, at request, to countries in Eastern Europe, in, inter alia: the preparation of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and Common Country Assessments; the implementation of MEAs, including selective regional and subregional conventions; the establishment and operation of national sustainable consumption networks; the implementation of the UNEP/OSCE/UNDP Environment and Security Initiative, and the implementation of the Action Plans for meeting the biodiversity targets established by the 5th Environment for Europe Conference in Kyiv, of the Biodiversity resolution.

91. Through its Regional Office UNEP will continue to strengthen its contacts and collaboration with non-governmental organizations, through the network of UNEP National Committees and otherwise. Collaboration with Universities and the scientific community in Europe will receive special attention as well as UNEP's efforts to involve the private sector in the implementation of global environmental policies and programmes.

6. Environmental conventions

92. Technical support, public information and capacity-building will remain the main tools to promote and help ensure the implementation of MEAs and their Protocols in Europe

93. Partnerships will be enhanced through projects, seminars and regional workshops to develop interlinkages and promote collaboration on synergies between biodiversity related conventions and between the chemicals and wastes conventions as well as of biodiversity multilateral environmental agreements at the national level. MEA-related intergovernmental negotiations would be strengthened through the support to and sponsoring of regional preparatory meetings for their COPs.

94. The UNEP Regional Seas Programme will undertake activities in the region within the framework and mandate of the Mediterranean Action Plan (Barcelona Convention), the Bucharest Convention (Black Sea) and the Caspian Convention focussing on the sustainable management and protection of the marine and coastal environments, including specific activities on integrated coastal area management, land-based pollution, oil spill pollution and assessment and monitoring.

7. Communications and public information

95. UNEP will continue to reach out to the public through publications distributed to the region such as Our Planet and Tunza Magazine. The organization of special events in Europe will be another tool to reach out to the public and civil society. These events include World Environment Day, Clean Up the World Campaign and special awards such as the Champions of the Earth and the Sasakawa Environment Prize.

96. UNEP will continue to service and alert Europe and its population to the global environmental agenda, through press releases, round tables and other means of communication, including the use of the network of UNEP National Committees, youth and sport advisers, and the like.

D. Latin America and the Caribbean

97. Over 500 million people live in Latin America and the Caribbean, in an area that covers 40% of the earth's surface and possesses, like no other region in the world, important biodiversity, water resources, land and ocean reserves.

98. "In 2002, 224 million people representing almost 45% of the entire population, were living in poverty and 92.8 million (18.6%) were in abject poverty" (ECLAC, 2003). Deforestation, water scarcity and soil degradation in combination with important problems afflicting the urban environment are integral part of this highly vulnerable scenario.

99. UNEP provides support to the governments of the region in seeking solutions for their environmental problems both nationally and regionally. UNEP serves as the Secretariat for the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of LAC, which has been consolidated into a platform for analysis and discussion and an effective mechanism in the promotion of regional cooperation regarding environmental and sustainable development issues.

100. The formulation and adoption of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative on Sustainable Development included as the regional priority in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation is an important milestone in the work of the Forum. This Initiative will form the basis for the focusing of UNEP's work in the Region.

101. The UNEP strategy in the region will be carried out through partnerships with UN and other organizations and will be based on the following key areas:

- **Promote intergovernmental policy dialogue**: Strengthening of the Forum of Ministers, regional delivery and follow-up of WSSD Plan of Implementation, support organization of inter-ministerial meetings and promote the regional contributions to global political processes such as the Barbados Plan of Action;
- **Implement priority global, regional and national environmental programmes**: Ecosystem services, integration of the principles of sustainable development into national policies, urban environmental management, environmental assessment and indicators, emerging issues and early warning;

- **Promote the involvement of major civil society groups** : Outreach to civil society organizations, parliamentarians and judges, undertake environmental training and education, increase awareness of environmental issues through inter alia, special environmental events;
- **Strengthen targeted sub-regional implementation activities**: Support the delivery of UNEP programmes based on national and sub-regional needs and strategic objectives and develop sub-regional plans of cooperation with sub-regional bodies in the Andean, Caribbean, Central American Regions as well as the Southern Cone.

1. Environmental assessment and early warning

102. In the area of assessment and early warning, UNEP will provide regional support to the follow-up and implementation of decisions on strengthening its scientific base. Particular attention will be given to the conduction of integrated environmental assessments and thematic assessments at the regional and sub-regional levels in collaboration with sub-regional organizations and collaborating centres.

103. UNEP will also coordinate the development, publishing and launch of early warning reports on topics of interest to the region such as climate change, health and environment and, shrinking of glaciers. In the process develop networks of thematic experts, promote the development of harmonized assessment methodologies and provide support to countries to replicate such early warning assessments.

104. UNEP will provide technical and financial assistance for the development of city assessments using the GEO Cities methodology in collaboration with partners and municipal authorities and will undertake regional and sub-regional ecosystem assessments of the ecological conditions and trends of freshwater, coastal and marine, and land and forest ecosystems, with a focus on ecosystem goods and services and human vulnerability to environmental change.

105. As well, UNEP will provide regional inputs to publications on environment, security and conflict prevention based on expert group assessment, case studies etc. and contribute to the formulation of a modular environmental assessment partnership framework.

106. UNEP will develop a core set of environmental indicators for LAC supporting the work of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and will coordinate national level data collection and harmonization in collaboration with UNSD and other global and regional organizations. UNEP will also produce data tools for use by countries to help the collection and harmonization of data and indicators.

107. UNEP will also provide technical and financial assistance for the development youth assessment activities within the GEO for Youth programme including regional and national GEO for Youth reports, capacity-building courses etc. and will hold capacity-building workshops on integrated environmental assessment and the GEO methodology for regional and national partners.

2. Policy development and law

108. Under the environmental law programme, UNEP will provide input and assistance to Governments for the development and strengthening of regional and sub-regional legal regimes in areas such as ecosystems and environment management, environment impact assessment (EIA), transboundary water resources, air pollution, wildlife, forestry, waste management. It will also provide input and assistance to Governments for the strengthening of the Regional Seas Agreements and further development of protocols and other related legal documents. UNEP will promote and facilitate the effective participation of countries in the region in negotiation processes and in the inclusion of the environmental dimension in areas of ongoing negotiations such as trade and environment (including with view to promoting gender balanced participation in negotiations) through substantive services, training and other forms of assistance (financial, logistic, provision of background material).

109. Environmental law advisory services will be provided to Governments, upon request, for the development, strengthening, harmonization of legislation in different areas of environmental law including with the aim of contribution towards the reduction of poverty through the development and implementation of environmental law.

110. Capacity-building needs will be covered through train the trainers workshops for judges as well as national workshops and training programmes in environmental management for judges, lawyers, legal NGOs, academia, policy makers and other stakeholders.

111. Technical support will be provided to major groups and stakeholders in articulating linkages between environment and poverty alleviation through the organization of relevant partnership campaigns and policy dialogues.

112. Environmental policy concerns will be addressed in the area of urban environmental planning management, through support to the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV) and the development of sustainable urban transport strategies, through advice and technical support to regional organizations and national Governments to develop and harmonize sustainable energy policies. UNEP has also developed an urban environment strategy, which will be implemented jointly with the UN-Habitat regional offices.

113. Technical support will be provided to the major groups and stakeholders in organizing annually the 6 regional preparatory meetings towards the Global Civil Society Forum.

3. Policy implementation

114. In the area of environmental law, UNEP will provide advisory services on implementation, enforcement and compliance with environmental laws including MEAs and will undertake missions for the development and implementation of environmental laws and strengthening of national environmental institutions. Regional and national training courses, seminars and workshops will be organized for parliamentarians, judges, magistrates, legal practitioners, environmental law lecturers NGOs, private sector, women and legal and para-legal experts on environmental law.

115. Capacity-building activities will include workshops, meetings, training programmes particularly in biodiversity conservation as well as management practices for protection of mountain ecosystems and related watersheds, the integration of gender on the effective implementation of biodiversity-related conventions at regional and country level and rainwater harvesting. These activities will also cover areas such as the design and implementation of incentive measures for environmental and natural resources management. Training programmes will be organized for integrating major groups in the management of the environment, drawing on innovative teaching/learning approaches such as resource-based learning and workplace-based training.

116. The Global Programme of Action (GPA) will undertake activities within its mandated framework to address problems related to municipal wastewater, physical alteration and destruction of habitats and integrated coastal area and river basin management. These activities will include reports, case studies as well as provision of advice and assistance to national and local authorities. The GPA, through the GEF-supported IWCAM project, will also facilitate implementation of pilot projects to build capacities within governments to address urgent threats to coastal zones through, among other things, strengthening legislation and regulatory capacity and facilitating multi-stakeholder partnership forums.

117. The signing of the Mesoamerican Reef Alliance in 2004 represents a major step towards conserving and managing the ecological and socio-economic richness and importance of the reefs in the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef (MAR) region. Over the next 3 years and with support from various partners, a number of projects will be carried out in Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and Honduras to reverse the decline of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef.

118. In the area of environmental emergencies and post-disaster/conflict assessments and clean-up, UNEP will undertake field missions to assess the consequences of environmental disasters in all regions; field missions, jointly with OCHA will also be undertaken to provide immediate assessment and technical advice on environmental emergencies. UNEP will provide advice and assist in assessing the state of readiness and provide guidance on the systems of preparedness and response to environmental emergencies and will also undertake capacity-building activities in post-conflict countries. Post-conflict environmental assessment field missions will be conducted as required to identify immediate risks to human and livelihoods, integrate environmental issues within the reconstruction agenda and strengthen the information base of post-conflict environmental administrations.

4. Technology, industry and economics

119. In the area of energy, UNEP will assist countries in the area of sustainable energy policy, planning and management as well as in structuring financing mechanisms that support sustainable energy investments, both from the private sector and through public-private partnerships.

120. Production and consumption activities will concentrate on promoting the shift towards sustainable patterns of consumption and production (SCP) through supporting the work of the regional council of government experts on SCP implementation of pilot projects capacity-building activities, the organization of regional and national events, promotion of SCP policies and methods to be implemented by governments, business and civil society. UNEP will also support the preparation of information materials to assist project implementation and including awareness raising, public information and briefings on sustainable production and consumption issues. Some of the key areas of work will be on eco-design, life-cycle analysis, sustainable procurement and national/regional strategies and policies on SCP. UNEP will also work on assisting industry to be safer through the dissemination of UNEP's Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level (APELL) methodology by assisting governments and industry to open national and regional APELL centres, providing capacity-building, implementing pilot projects and producing publications.

121. Policy and technical advisory services to Latin American and Caribbean countries in implementing specific obligations under the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions will be an important aspect of UNEP's work in the area of chemicals in the region. These activities will include the identification, managing and disposing of persistent organic pollutants, advisory services to countries on heavy metals and other chemicals as well as capacity-building activities designed to assist countries in promoting the sound management of chemicals and reducing mercury risks.

122. In the area of economics and trade, UNEP will provide countries with technical assistance to build national capacities with regard to the use of integrated assessment and planning to develop and implement mutually supportive trade and environmental policies.

5. Regional cooperation and representation

123. The provision of secretariat services to the XVI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, including the Intersessional meetings and meetings of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee will continue to be a priority for UNEP in the region. As well, UNEP will provide advisory services to the programmes of sub regional bodies such as the Andean Community Secretariat, CARICOM, CCAD and MERCOSUR as well as to the activities with the Organization of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (OCTA).

124. UNEP, through the Environmental Training Network for LAC will support the publication of prototypes of environmental education texts for the basic formal educational system.

125. UNEP will also provide technical advisory services for the implementation of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor and other initiatives such as the Cocos-Galapagos Marine Corridor and the Inca Trail.

126. UNEP will reach out to the public in general through the weekly newspaper supplements part of the Tierramerica Project, the development of information materials and brochures on UNEP/ROLAC activities and the daily online briefing on important environmental events taking place in Latin America and the Caribbean.

6. Environmental conventions

127. Technical support, public information and capacity-building are the main tools to improve the implementation of MEAs in particular, CBD, CITES and CMS. Specific activities in the area of multilateral environmental agreements will be geared towards the climate change outreach programme and the dissemination of the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report as well as the promotion of the implementation of the UNFCCC New Delhi Work Programme on Article 6. UNEP will promote the participation of indigenous groups, NGOs, private sector, civil society and community-based organizations in MEAs and will encourage publication on schools good practices on climate change.

128. The UNEP Regional Seas Programme will undertake activities in the region within the framework and mandate of the Northeast Pacific Action Plan (La Antigua, Guatemala Convention), South-East Pacific Action Plan (Lima Convention) and the Cartagena Convention (Caribbean)

focussing on the sustainable management and protection of the marine and coastal environments, including specific activities on coral reefs, integrated coastal area and river basin management, land-based pollution, oil spill pollution, assessment and monitoring and SIDS.

129. Partnerships will be enhanced through projects, seminars and regional workshops to develop interlinkages and synergies issue-based modules for the implementation of the chemicals and wastes conventions as well as of biodiversity multilateral environmental agreements at the national level. UNEP will promote joint polar activities through the revitalization of UNEP's Polar Task Force and Strategy.

130. Intergovernmental negotiations will be strengthened through support regional preparatory meetings linked to MEA COPs and through the organization of capacity-building workshops to contribute to the implementation of the programme of activities of the regional centres of the Basel Convention. The focus of these workshops will be on technology transfer and training within the framework of the regional and sub-regional centres.

7. Communications and public information

131. UNEP will reach out to the public through publications distributed to all regions such as *Our Planet* and *Tunza Magazine*. The organization of special events is another tool to reach out to the public and civil society, these include World Environment Day, Clean Up the World Campaign and special awards such as the Champions of the Earth Award and the Sasakawa Environment Prize.

132. Region-specific information activities are undertaken in close collaboration with the Division of Communications and Public Information under the umbrella of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean.

E. North America

133. The North American region comprises Canada and the United States of America. Mexico, though geographically associated with the North American continent and economically aligned with Canada and the United States through the North America Free Trade Agreement, is regarded as part of the Latin America and Caribbean Region within UNEP.

134. The region has one of the highest levels of development in the world. Private consumption per capita is about 5 times the global average, and the region, with 5% of the world's population, consumes about 25% of total global energy. As the major consumer of the world's natural resources and producer of its wastes, North America's per capita impact ("footprint") on the global environment is larger than that of any other region.

135. North America has essentially eliminated its CFC consumption and dramatic decreases in sulphate emissions have been achieved however, the region is also the largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world. About half of North America's most diverse ecosystems are classed as severely degraded and invasive species, both aquatic and terrestrial, are a serious issue. Marine ecosystems are under pressure from municipal, industrial and agricultural wastes and marine and coastal habitats are being lost or degraded due to industrial activities and urbanization.

136. Both countries have a long history of working together to address and resolve environmental issues. Several institutions have been created to foster this joint work, among them CEC, the International Joint Commission, and the Arctic Council. Both countries are also highly active in multilateral institutions such as the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Organization of American States. They also actively take part in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

137. UNEP does not deliver programmes within North America. Through its Regional Office, UNEP raises awareness of the critical issues and needs and seeks to enlist the help and contributions of Canada and the United States in the work of developing countries around the world.

138. The overall objective of UNEP in North America is to enhance cooperation between the Governments of the region and UNEP, and to establish partnerships with North American institutes and agencies to support the delivery of UNEP's work programme globally. Five specific objectives are defined to achieve this:

(a) Promote interlinkages at the political level by analysing relevant developments in North America and advise UNEP on how to respond to, and capitalize on these developments and keep governments of the region informed of and engaged in UNEP's work;

- (b) Facilitate access to funding and support from the region;
- (c) Facilitate partnerships and, in some cases implement, in collaboration with relevant UNEP Divisions and Offices, ongoing and currently planned partnerships and collaborative activities with governments and civil society organizations in the region;
- (d) Foster new strategic partnerships with international organizations, civil society organizations and others; and
- (e) Enhance the profile of UNEP in North America through public outreach.

1. Environmental assessment and early warning

139. In the area of assessment and early warning, UNEP will provide support to the implementation of the UNEP GC decision on strengthening UNEP's scientific base by mobilizing North American scientific and technological resources. In cooperation with partners, UNEP will promote environmental assessment and monitoring activities to ensure the availability of scientific information for environmental policy-making and will encourage the monitoring of targets set out in the Plan of Implementation of the WSSD and the Millennium Declaration. UNEP will also coordinate regional activities and inputs to GEO-4 and to UNEP's Annual GEO Year Book reports including the participation of selected collaborating centres in North America. Environmental trends analyses and partnerships with GPA will be presented in an atlas of environmental trends in global coastal zones. UNEP will also catalyse actions for "open access" to articles in scientific journals to strengthen scientific research base in developing countries.

140. In North America, UNEP will support work in developing regions, particularly Africa, to strengthen countries environmental information infrastructure and will develop a partnership with the UN Statistical Division on environmental statistics and MDG indicators.

141. In North America, UNEP will support work in developing regions, particularly Africa, to strengthen countries environmental information infrastructure and will develop a partnership with the UN Statistical Division on environmental statistics and MDG indicators.

2. Policy development and law

142. UNEP will place particular priority on the following issues: poverty and environment interlinkages, environmental law and senior citizens and the environment.

143. On poverty and environment, UNEP will develop and implement a partnership program on poverty, environment, and gender issues with North American-based civil society organizations (CSOs). These efforts will seek to promote the fuller involvement of North American-based CSOs in UNEP's work to deepen understanding of poverty and environment intersections and to integrate environmental issues more fully into poverty reduction strategy papers and other national development plans.

144. In order to highlight international environmental law and foster more active involvement with UNEP's Environmental Law Programme, UNEP/RONA is partnering with North American law schools to create a segment on the UNEP Law Website that will help interested developing country faculties and persons identify opportunities to study and collaborate with the law schools. Additionally, it would identify key UNEP law activities and identify US legal experts and other opportunities that might contribute to UNEP's law programme.

145. Regarding senior citizens, UNEP will seek to deepen public understanding of the impact of environmental problems on senior citizens and to promote their fuller engagement in environmental programs and initiatives.

146. UNEP will also reach out more generally to North American-based CSOs to encourage their participation in UNEP's work. For example, UNEP will provide information materials and organize briefings and public events that increase understanding of global environmental issues and build support for UNEP's role in addressing them. UNEP will also strive to increase the involvement of CSOs in international environmental policymaking by convening Regional Civil Society Forums as an input into UNEP's annual Global Civil Society Forum and Global Ministerial Environment Forum.

3. Policy implementation

147. Within the framework of the White Water to Blue Water (WW2BW) partnership, UNEP/RONA, in collaboration with GPA, helped create the North America Node for the GPA. Situated in the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the North America Node is working with countries, at their request. Through this Node, and by pushing for greater coherence among donors, UNEP will promote implementation of the GPA in the Wider Caribbean Region primarily through increased coordination in the development and operationalization of National Plans of Action.

148. UNEP will finalize agreements on environmental education activities with several CSOs such as the Stevens Institute (New Jersey), John C. Ford Program's Global Tele-Community Education Initiative (GEI, Texas) and Project WET (Water Education for Teachers, Montana).

4. Technology, industry and economics

149. During the 2006-2007 biennium, UNEP plans to conduct several activities in North America in support of UNEP's Sustainable Production and Consumption and Renewable Energy Programmes.

150. UNEP will collect information on best practices and lessons learned in the area of industry practices, particularly as they relate to the 3 Rs: reduce, reuse and recycle. These activities will be done in line with the 10-year sustainable consumption and production framework envisioned by the WSSD.

151. In collaboration with the US National Renewable Energy Laboratory, UNEP will convene a conference in Washington DC of government, finance organizations, private sector, academic and other stakeholders to outline UNEP's solar and wind energy survey assessment (SWERA) project and solicit their interest and participation in it.

5. Regional cooperation and representation

152. In North America, UNEP will support the organization of briefings, seminars, and roundtable meetings on priority environmental topics for the region with major North American environmental NGOs and government officials. Meetings with regional bodies as well as financial institutions represented in Washington D.C. (e.g. Commission on Environmental Cooperation, Organization of American States, World Bank, Inter American Development Bank) will allow harmonization of relationships and enhancement of collaborative activities.

6. Communications and public information

153. UNEP will reach out to the public through publications distributed to all regions such as Our Planet and Tunza Magazine. The organization of special events is another tool to reach out to the public and civil society, these include World Environment Day, Clean Up the World Campaign and special awards such as the Champions of the Earth Award and the Sasakawa Environment Prize.

154. Region-specific information activities and outreach to civil society are undertaken in close collaboration with the Divisions of Policy Development and Law and of Communications and Public Information under the umbrella of the Regional Office for North America.

F. West Asia

155. The West Asia region comprises 12 member states: Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. The Region has undergone major socio-economic transformation with significant improvement in certain human development components over the past three decades, such as life expectancy, access to improved water and adequate sanitation. However, there is considerable high variation in Human Development Index and per capita GDP among the countries. The population of the region is increasing at a rate well above the global average. The growth rate in West Asia for 1995-2000 was 3.12% compared with a global growth rate of 1.3% (GEO Data). A large proportion of the population in the region is young (between 0 and 14 years).

156. The Arab region as a whole, and West Asia in particular, can be characterized as having two major challenges: resource scarcity and habitat pollution². Economic development in the region has been mostly based on the exploitation of exhaustible natural resources. Conflicts over shared water resources are significant in the Region, where nearly 60% of renewable freshwater resources originate from outside the Region. Poor management and inefficient use of irrigation water have accelerated salinization, water logging and nutrient depletion. Arable land, already scarce, is increasingly lost through land degradation and desertification.

157. Urban air pollution is emerging as a serious health hazard both in major and medium size cities. Intense urbanization, inadequate land use planning, the lack of infrastructure and basic services, and dumping of untreated waste have resulted in the degradation of coastal and marine environment quality. Pollution from oil shipments had led to the destruction of marine habitats and ecologically productive areas.

158. UNEP supports the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) and its Bureau to develop regional environmental programmes, capacity-building opportunities and to promote regional mechanisms for sustainable development. In support of the sustainable development initiative in the Arab Region, UNEP will be active in the following priority areas for the biennium 2004-2005:

- Integrated and sustainable water, coastal zone and land management;
- Integrated environmental assessment in support of decision making
- Urban environment management, air quality, waste and sustainable transportation;
- Biodiversity and ecosystems including the Regional Programme of Action for the Protection of Biodiversity;
- Promotion of sustainable production and consumption;
- Promotion of sustainable tourism;
- Promotion of environmental emergency prevention systems, preparedness and response strategies;
- Environmental education, capacity-building, and on the ground pilot projects in priority areas such as health and environment, sustainable energy production and water use;
- Promotion of civil society participation in environmental management.

1. Environmental assessment and early warning

159. In the area of assessment and early warning, UNEP will undertake and support integrated environmental assessments in West Asia within UNEP's integrated global framework, namely: the GEO assessments: including GEO -4, the GEO Yearbook, regional and sub-regional GEOs, and initiating GEO city assessments for selected cities, national assessments and SoE reports. UNEP will also support the development of a regional platform for early warning as well as the preparation of reports on emerging environmental issues, case studies for vulnerability, environment, conflict and peace.

160. UNEP will implement its strategy on data and information management in West Asia through the implementation of the Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative, through the development of a regional programme on environmental indicators, through updating and upgrading the West Asia regional data sets for the GEO process. UNEP will continue to strengthen the capacities of collaborating centres and partner institutions and will as well offer training and technical support to key national and regional institutions.

161. Outreach for decision-makers and the public will be ensured through the production of video documentaries on assessments undertaken and through seminars in several countries in the region on the importance and use of assessment outcomes.

2. Policy development and law

162. Under the environmental law programme, UNEP will lend support to the development of a series of environmental law, education and awareness kits, including legislative guidelines and model

² UNDP Arab Human Development Report, 2002.

legislation. In West Asia, UNEP will also support Governments in the implementation of MEA requirements and will assist in the development and strengthening of regional and sub-regional legal regimes in areas such as ecosystems and environment management, environment impact assessment (EIA), transboundary water resources, air pollution, wildlife, forestry and waste management.

163. UNEP will develop training materials (audio-visual) on major international conventions and legal aspects of contemporary approaches to environment management and sustainable development to be disseminated for use in training programmes in countries in the region.

164. Environmental law advisory services will be given to Governments, upon request, for the development, strengthening, harmonization of legislation in different areas of environmental law including with the aim of contribution towards the reduction of poverty through the development and implementation of environmental law.

165. Capacity-building needs in the area of environmental law will be covered through training for trainers workshops for judges as well as national workshops and training programmes in environmental management for lawyers, legal NGOs, academia, policy makers and other legal stakeholders.

166. Technical assistance will be provided to major groups and stakeholders through the organization of relevant partnership campaigns and policy dialogues.

167. Environmental policy concerns will be addressed through support to countries on ecosystems approaches and policy evaluation for sustainable management of dryland environments and through training courses for national policy makers.

168. Technical support will be provided to the major groups and stakeholders in organizing annually the six regional preparatory meetings towards the Global Civil Society Forum.

3. Policy implementation

169. In the area of environmental law, activities will include, publications, brochures on compliance and enforcement of environmental laws including MEAs, training courses and seminars for judges, magistrates, parliamentarians, NGOs, private sector, environmental lawyers and legal practitioners on implementation of environmental laws.

170. Capacity-building activities will include the organization of an international/regional consultation process in preparation for a major international conference on environmental education and sustainable development that will take place in 2007. UNEP will also provide support to implement the UNEP Water Policy and Strategy in particular rainwater harvesting and integrated water resources management (IWRM).

171. The Global Programme of Action (GPA) will undertake activities within its mandated framework to address problems related to municipal wastewater, physical alteration and destruction of habitats and integrated coastal area and river basin management.

4. Technology, industry and economics

172. In the area of energy, UNEP will provide assistance to countries on sustainable energy policy, planning and management that leads to the deployment of cleaner energy technologies, in structuring financing mechanisms that support sustainable energy investments, both from the private sector and through public-private partnerships and upon request, in the application of best practice approaches in a sustainable transport in selected developing countries.

173. Production and consumption activities will concentrate in the preparation of information materials to assist project implementation including awareness raising, public information and briefings on sustainable production and consumption issues and to assist national partners such as NCPCs to facilitate implementation of sustainable consumption and production policies and life-cycle approaches and to support capacity-building at the national level. UNEP will organize training events for national counterparts to assist national implementation of MEAs through use of preventive methods in sustainable consumption and production such as life-cycle assessments, technology assessments, product design and environmental accounting.

5. Regional cooperation and representation

174. The provision of support to CAMRE and the League of Arab States will continue to be a priority for UNEP in the West Asia region. UNEP will also participate and contribute to other intergovernmental sub-regional processes and meetings in the West Asia Region.

175. Technical support will also be provided, in collaboration with ROA, to the technical committee of the League of Arab States.

176. Outreach to civil society and the West Asia public in general will be covered in conjunction with the Divisions of Policy Development and Law and of Communication and Public Information through the organization of special and outreach events including the Zayed International Prize for the Environment, including the Dubai International Conference 2006, and support to ERWDA in the organization of the Environment 2007 Conference and Exhibition.

6. Environmental conventions

177. Technical support, public information and capacity-building are the main tools to improve the implementation of MEAs. In West Asia, UNEP will support regional preparatory meetings linked to MEA CoPs as well as the organization of capacity-building workshops to contribute to the implementation of the programme of activities of the regional centres of the Basel Convention.

178. The UNEP Regional Seas Programme will undertake activities in the region within the framework and mandate of the Jeddah Convention (Red Sea and Gulf of Aden), Kuwait Convention (ROPME sea area) focussing on the sustainable management and protection of the marine and coastal environments, including specific activities on coral reefs, land-based pollution, oil spill pollution and assessment and monitoring.

7. Communications and public information

179. UNEP will reach out to the public through publications distributed to all regions such as Our Planet and Tunza Magazine. The organization of special events is another tool to reach out to the public and civil society, these include World Environment Day, Clean Up the World Campaign and special awards such as the Champions of the Earth Award and the Sasakawa Prize.

180. Region-specific information activities are undertaken in close collaboration with the Division of Communication and Public Information under the umbrella of the Regional Office for West Asia.
