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Item 5 and 6 of the provisional agenda*

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

**Implementation of the programme of work of the United Nations
Environment Programme and the relevant decisions of the
Governing Council**

**Environmental and equity considerations in the procurement
practices of the United Nations Environment Programme, as well
as environmental housekeeping**

Report of the Executive Director

Summary

The present document is being submitted to the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum pursuant to decision 23/8 adopted by the Governing Council at its twenty-third session.

* UNEP/GC/24/1.

Summary and conclusions

1. At its twenty-third session, in February 2005, the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) adopted decision 23/8. With that decision, the Governing Council:
 - (a) Invited Governments to share with UNEP their experiences, lessons learned and best practices related to environmental and equity considerations in procurement practices;
 - (b) Requested the UNEP Executive Director to prepare a report on environmental and equity considerations in current procurement practices in UNEP and an assessment of its performance for presentation to the Governing Council at its twenty-fourth session;
 - (c) Also requested the Executive Director to report to the Governing Council at its twenty-fourth session on the implementation of the environmental housekeeping aspects of its decision 18/10.
2. The present report focuses on action taken in recent years to introduce environmental and equity considerations into UNEP procurement practices, related efforts to advance similar work in other United Nations agencies and public institutions and recent activities to promote environmental housekeeping and sustainable facilities management in UNEP, the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) and within the rest of the United Nations system. It should be seen within the broader context of efforts to improve managerial efficiency and responsibility in the United Nations system, which are also addressed by the Environment Management Group and through the United Nations Global Compact.
3. The present report goes beyond the requests set out in Governing Council decision 23/8 by describing not only the efforts made in UNEP to address environment and equity in its procurement practices but also the various initiatives that UNEP is leading or participating in to advance sustainable procurement in the United Nations and at the national government level.
4. The report highlights the fact that several initiatives have been launched that are implemented by staff primarily on an ad-hoc or voluntary basis. The ability of UNEP to internalize environmental or equity considerations in its procurement, housekeeping and office management is hampered by a shortage of human and financial resources.
5. No dedicated, qualified staff have been specifically assigned to the issue. Procurement officers at UNON are not qualified to spearhead the integration of environmental issues into building or procurement activities (excluding instances where they have developed some knowledge as a result of personal interest and self-training). Qualified UNEP staff, meanwhile, are not formally assigned to UNON building projects.
6. An effort should therefore be made to advance the general awareness and capacity of staff responsible for procurement and management of facilities. Both procurement staff and staff members requisitioning supplies must be trained in the requirements of sustainability and how they affect all stages of the procurement process, from the soliciting bids to the awarding and managing of contracts. Furthermore, it is essential that staff in general are also trained on sustainable office behaviour in order to promote a consistent approach throughout the organization and to reduce the organization's environmental impact.
7. No dedicated budgetary resources have been assigned to put in place environmental and equity-sensitive procurement practices. The latter are incorporated into UNON or UNEP projects only if the regular budget permits.
8. Given the growing pressure that Governments and civil society are exerting on UNEP and the United Nations in general to include sustainability in procurement and office and facilities management, the development of an appropriate policy and the allocation of appropriate resources, both human and financial, is essential.
9. UNEP is currently exploring how it can develop a more systematic approach to greening procurement practices throughout the United Nations, including initiatives through the Environment Management Group and partnerships such as the one between the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and UNEP that builds on the experience gained from other work with the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office of UNDP and the International Labour Organization (ILO)

10. Finally it is worth noting that while decision 23/8 addresses UNEP, the United Nations complex in Nairobi is managed by the UNON which deals with not only with UNEP headquarters but also the headquarters of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the offices of a number of other United Nations agencies. If, in addition to decision 23/8, UNON was given an official mandate to implement sustainable procurement and facilities management, that could help systematize and strengthen the current relationship with UNEP and the work under way in this domain.

I. Background

11. UNEP actively promotes sustainable procurement, which goes beyond green procurement by including all three pillars of sustainable development in the concept of public purchasing. UNEP defines sustainable procurement as the process by which organizations buy goods or services, taking into account throughout the entire life cycle of those goods or services:

- (a) The best value for money, including considerations such as price, quality, availability, and functionality;
- (b) Environmental considerations such as resource efficiency during production and consumption, emission levels and the climate change impact of the procured good or service;
- (c) Social considerations, including poverty eradication, international equity in the distribution of resources, labour conditions, and fair trade;

12. As a promoter of this concept UNEP currently sees itself playing a role in three areas:

- (a) Facilitating global consensus on the integration of sustainable development considerations into procurement at all levels, including United Nations bodies, national Governments and local authorities;
- (b) Fostering information exchange so that a large number of organizations can benefit from the experiences of others;
- (c) Providing practical tools for capacity-building so as to translate sustainable procurement policies into reality.

13. UNEP has also started applying these principles internally. The present report provides examples of how sustainable procurement is being gradually included in the procurement practices of UNEP.

II. Procurement practices in UNEP

A. Environmental considerations

14. Within UNEP and UNON, a number of actions have been undertaken to integrate environmental considerations in the United Nations tendering procedures, priorities and new criteria. Some of these actions are set out below.

1. Global Compact

15. All vendors that have been awarded United Nations contracts, both within and outside of the United Nations complex in Nairobi are invited to participate in the United Nations Global Compact, to visit the website where they can familiarize themselves with its ten principles on environment, human rights, labour standards, and anti-corruption. They are encouraged to express their support for and advance these core principles. Under a process coordinated by United Nations headquarters, all United Nations agencies follow this procedure in order to advance corporate environmental and social responsibility as called for by the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development.

2. United Nations Office at Nairobi Supplier Sustainable Procurement Guidelines

16. The Supplier Sustainable Procurement Guidelines inform vendors about the environmental aspects of procurement or “green procurement” and product life cycles or the “sustainability principle”. They also provide specific guidance on the supply of goods and services, including furniture and wood products, paper and paper products, office equipment and carpets and textiles. With respect to services, such as cleaning, gardening and maintenance, contractors are encouraged to avoid using any harmful substances.

3. Other UNEP procurement initiatives

17. Other procurement initiatives being undertaken at UNEP offices in Nairobi, Paris, Geneva and Osaka/Shiga, include the purchase of environmentally friendly paper (for use in-house and for publications), furniture and wood products and re-manufactured toners. An effort is also made to ensure that services, such as cleaning and gardening, are provided according to basic environmental criteria. In Nairobi, for instance, cleaning and gardening contractors are requested to use “green” chemicals, detergents and other cleaning materials, fertilizers and pesticides. The UNON Vendor Roster Database lists companies with International Organization for Standardization (ISO) or similar certifiable standards.

4. Challenges and limitations

18. The challenges and limitations that UNEP has experienced so far in its attempts to make procurement practices more sustainable are as follows:

(a) Set alongside the basic procurement criteria of providing the best value for money, fairness, integrity and transparency, effective international competition and serving the interest of the United Nations, the criterion of sustainable procurement is not yet very tangible. A more concrete definition of sustainability has yet to be developed though the establishment of guidelines such as lists of outlawed substances and product selection criteria that are valid throughout the organization;

(b) UNEP and UNON do not always have the means to ensure that suppliers comply with requirements. Normally suppliers, especially manufacturers, would be inspected regularly to confirm continued compliance with sustainable procurement principles. At present, however, UNEP and the UNON lack the expertise and the staff resources to carry out such inspections and related follow-up;

(c) There is a lack of technical support for the development of sustainable procurement evaluation criteria that can be incorporated in solicitation documents or used in requesting bids, proposals or quotations. Current efforts to promote sustainable procurement depend mainly on the good will and shared expertise of staff members. Examples of such initiatives are the “Step-by-Step” initiative in Nairobi and the “Sustainability Group” in Paris, both of which are groups made up of volunteering staff.

B. Equity considerations

19. The main example of UNEP good practices in the area of equity considerations is the “Fair Pack Policy” applied at the Nairobi complex by UNEP and UNON. The Fair Pack Policy was introduced with the aim of improving the working conditions of contractors’ employees working on site at the United Nations Gigiri complex. The policy addresses issues such as the working conditions and health benefits of workers, including education and advice on how to deal with cases of HIV/AIDS. The Fair Pack Policy is meant to ensure that conventions on human rights and labour are respected within the complex and to increase the efficiency and smooth running of day-to-day operations in Nairobi. A monitoring committee, known as the Fair Pack Monitoring Committee was established and given the following mandate:

- (a) To act as a monitoring mechanism for the contracts awarded under the Fair Pack Policy;
- (b) To act as a focal point, both for United Nations staff members and for contractors’ employees, for queries and complaints related to the implementation of the Fair Pack Policy;
- (c) To make recommendations to management regarding the Fair Pack Policy;
- (d) To avoid the involvement of too many staff members in the technical or substantive aspects of contractors’ activities.

20. Over the past two years, the Fair Pack Monitoring Committee has:

- (a) Conducted meetings with contractors and their employees separately;
- (b) Distributed Fair Pack information;
- (c) Shared information with other United Nations agencies;
- (d) Conducted site visits and “audited” the records of the main maintenance contractors.

21. The Fair Pack Policy has improved working conditions for workers and set an example for other contractors and operations in Nairobi in the field of fair work conditions, including occupational health and safety and related social health issues.

22. The challenges experienced with the management of the Fair Pack Policy have included a lack of dedicated staff to ensure strict monitoring and compliance and a lack of a dedicated budget for awareness-raising and capacity-building. The implementation of the Fair Pack Policy is also hindered by the absence of a regular budget to cover the usually higher cost of contractual services that respect the conditions of the Fair Pack Policy and also by the fact that the relatively demanding Fair Pack Policy requirements have limited the number of bidders that can be considered.

III. UNEP work on the practices of public authorities

A. Information collection and dissemination

23. Through participation in different meetings and committees over recent years, UNEP has been observing the different approaches of Governments and local authorities to wider inclusion of environmental or social considerations in procurement. UNEP is, for instance, a supporter of the Procura+ initiative of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. That initiative supports local authorities' efforts to implement sustainable procurement practices. UNEP participates in the development of Procura+ by facilitating a stronger involvement of United Nations agencies and developing countries, as well as by supporting the involvement of the Council in the Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Procurement (discussed below).

24. Since 2005, UNEP has been an active member of the Marrakech Task force on Sustainable Procurement, lead by the Swiss Government in the framework of the Marrakech Process on Sustainable Production and Consumption. The Marrakech Task Force is composed of the following Governments: Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Ghana, Indonesia, Norway, Philippines, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America. Other members of the Task Force are the European Union, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, ILO, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNEP. The overarching goal of the Task Force is to facilitate the adoption of sustainable procurement policies and practices by national Governments through an exchange of practices and the development of specific tools to assist implementation. The Task Force delegated to UNEP the development of one of its major planned outputs, a toolkit on sustainable public procurement to assist Governments and local authorities in preparing and implementing sustainable procurement strategies. The final tool kit will be available by October 2008.

B. Training and awareness-raising

25. UNEP perceives sustainable procurement to be an opportunity for developing countries to guide and support the development of more sustainable local markets while respecting WTO rules and of the plurilateral Agreement on Government Procurement. Within its limited budget, UNEP has worked since 2002 on the challenge of building capacity for sustainable procurement in developing countries.

26. Collaborating with the World Bank and the UNDP Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office, UNEP has developed training materials on sustainable procurement that aim to raise awareness of sustainability among those responsible for procurement in national authorities. The training sessions, which are targeted at government officials, particularly in developing countries, are offered by UNEP upon request and conditional upon the availability of funding. The training is available in English and French. Training sessions were held during an initial testing phase in Ghana (June 2004), Argentina (November 2005) and Morocco (June 2006). After the testing phase a "pedagogical approach" was developed in November 2006 to guide future training sessions.

27. Together with ILO, UNEP will issue in 2006 a one week master course on sustainable procurement for officials in developing countries. The master course will be based on the materials used in the UNDP/UNEP/World Bank course outlined above and will be provided by the ILO International Training Centre in Turin, Italy.

IV. UNEP work in support of sustainable procurement in the United Nations system

A. Survey on sustainable procurement in the United Nations for the Environment Management Group

28. In September 2004 the Environment Management Group asked UNEP to undertake a survey on sustainable procurement in the United Nations system during the years 2005–2006. The survey was meant to serve as a basis for the development of a United Nations-wide policy for sustainable procurement and environmental management systems. It was completed and delivered to the Environment Management Group in March 2006. The survey makes concrete suggestions on how to integrate sustainable development into United Nations procurement practices and on the role of the Environment Management Group in such a process. The survey has opened up options for collaboration with other agencies, in particular with their procurement managers.

29. Fifteen agencies were selected to be interviewed for the report, based on their level of procurement in monetary terms and their symbolic value (for instance, a lead agency in the United Nations Global Compact would be considered to have greater symbolic value than some other bodies).¹ The agencies interviewed were the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office, the International Labour Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNDP, UNEP, UNON, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, UNOPS, the United Nations Procurement Service, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization.²

30. The conclusions of the report are as follows:

(a) The concept of sustainable development informs procurement throughout the United Nations system at least to a limited extent, albeit under different names, and some initial steps are being taken to incorporate environmental or social considerations in purchasing decisions;

(b) No comprehensive coordination or guidelines exist across the United Nations system. Agencies act mainly on their own under the inspiration of some motivated procurement officials;

(c) Personnel responsible for procurement can include sustainability in their decision making but they need a legal mandate, including strong, high-level political signals, training and well-targeted information such as a database or clear guidelines for each product category.

31. The report recommends that the Environment Management Group launch concrete and visible initiatives, both at the political and at the practical levels, to strengthen the discussions already under way with the procurement departments of United Nations agencies. For instance, the Environment Management Group could:

(a) Initiate the necessary steps together with the Inter-Agency Procurement Working Group to propose a United Nations-wide commitment to sustainable procurement signed by the United Nations Secretary-General;

(b) Create and provide financial resources to a group comprising experts on environmental, procurement and social issues that would be mandated to develop training activities aimed at raising the awareness of personnel engaged in procurement and requisitioning on the “what, why and how” of sustainable procurement;

(c) Provide resources for the development and dissemination of a CD-ROM aimed at educating United Nations staff on what can be done in the office and in project management to contribute to sustainability and to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals.

¹ The terms “agency” or “agencies” are used here and throughout the report as a general term to describe the collection of organizations, agencies, programmes, offices, funds and services that make up the United Nations.

² World Health Organization was on the list of agencies to be interviewed. An interview time could not be agreed, however.

B. Partnerships with other United Nations agencies

32. UNEP is one of the initiators of the Environmentally and Socially Responsible Procurement Working Group, which is an inter-agency forum for the exchange of information on the internal and external actions of multilateral development banks and United Nations organizations to support sustainable procurement. More information is available at www.sustainableprocurement.net. The Working Group has met three times: in Washington in 2000 (hosted by the World Bank), in New York in 2002 (co-hosted by UNEP and UNOPS), and in Washington in 2004 (hosted by the Inter-American Development Bank). The next meeting will be co-hosted by the Inter-American Development Bank and UNEP and will take place in Washington in April 2007.

33. UNEP has established a partnership with the ILO International Training Centre in Turin. The partnership focuses mainly on the delivery of training and training materials on sustainable procurement such as the one-week training course in Turin scheduled for March 2007 mentioned above.

34. Establishing sustainable procurement practices also requires changes in day-to-day office behaviour and in the culture of the United Nations system as a whole. To facilitate such a cultural shift, United Nations staff need education, practical tools and guidelines, which should, if possible, be accessible on all United Nations agencies' intranets and websites. The need for such a change in culture was highlighted by the Environment Management Group survey discussed above and also at the first meeting of the Inter-Agency Committee for the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in June 2006 in Paris, France. UNEP has therefore initiated, in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the design of a project for the development of a web-based tool to raise the awareness of United Nations staff on sustainable office behaviour. To enlarge ownership in this tool and encourage participation, the proposal will be presented to other United Nations agencies at a meeting of the Environmentally and Socially Responsible Procurement Working Group in April 2007 and at the second meeting of the Inter-Agency Committee for the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, which will be held in May 2007 in New York.

C. Guides and training tools to assist United Nations agencies

35. In 2005, UNEP and the UNDP Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office co-drafted modules for a two day training session on sustainable procurement targeted at United Nations procurement officers. The modules need a testing ground and the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics has therefore contacted the United Nations Office at Nairobi to explore whether a test training session could be held in Nairobi, possibly in 2007.

36. UNEP and the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office of UNDP sustainable procurement training is aimed at both policy officials and procurement officers. It provides information on the importance of sustainable procurement, the international and United Nations legal framework in which such procurement operates, the concrete advantages that arise from its implementation and the first steps and considerations that are needed to implement it. Training is provided with the use of case studies and through learning on the job. Sustainable procurement should achieve environmental, social and economic goals, in particular by stimulating economic opportunities for domestic businesses. Whenever possible, therefore, the courses include advice and training for officials on how to illustrate to suppliers the new sustainability requirements that the purchasing authority will introduce.

D. Efforts at United Nations system level of key importance to UNEP

37. In the last two years the Secretary-General has launched a process to advance environmental and social responsibility within the United Nations system. At the Global Compact Leaders Summit, held in June 2004, the Under-Secretary-General for Management announced the creation at United Nations headquarters of the Advisory Group on the Internalization of the United Nations Global Compact Principles in the United Nations system. This group is being supported by four working groups on the themes of facilities management, procurement, human resources and investment management (United Nations Pension Fund).

38. Important steps have been taken since then. The United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund has signed the Principles for Responsible Investment that were launched by the United Nations Global Compact and the UNEP Finance Initiative in April 2006. The United Nations Inter-Agency Network of Facilities Managers presented new activities related to training, code compliance and environmental

management at their annual meetings in Beirut in September 2004 and in Addis Ababa in February 2006.

39. In the area of procurement, the United Nations Procurement Service has developed a United Nations Supplier Code of Conduct and supporting implementation documents, including an implementation guide, a self-assessment checklist and a remediation guide. The code is an aspirational document, based on the principles of the United Nations Global Compact. It is designed in the spirit of continuous improvement and contains a set of standards by which the United Nations expects its suppliers to abide. The United Nations Procurement Service is in the process of developing a strategy to promulgate these documents in 2007.

40. Developed in 2004 by United Nations headquarters with support from the business community, the Implementation Guide for Suppliers and the Self-Assessment Guide are tools intended to complement the United Nations Supplier Code of Conduct. These guidebooks help clarify the principles of the Code in a manner that will allow suppliers to adhere to the sourcing expectations set forth by the United Nations procurement service. They help employees, suppliers, vendors, and other interested parties to understand the United Nations Code better. The Self-Assessment Guide provides advice for suppliers regarding self-assessment of their workplace conditions and their adherence to the Code. An Implementation Options Guide was designed to provide the United Nations with options on how best to disseminate, communicate, verify and institutionalize the Code. In addition, a Remediation Guide has been developed to help the United Nations and its suppliers to determine how to improve conditions in worksites covered by the Code. This tool should be used in concert with the Implementation Guide and the Self-Assessment Guide.

V. Facilities management: environmental housekeeping in UNEP and decision 18/10

A. Current practices in buildings management

41. Current UNEP and UNON buildings management practices (addressing design, construction and maintenance) include efforts to improve the efficient use of space, energy and materials and the maintenance of gardens. The following large-scale maintenance initiatives are under way in the Gigiri complex:

- (a) Rainwater and greywater harvesting: water is collected and treated through a five-chamber oxidation pond system, stored and reused as irrigation water;
- (b) Solar heating: all hot water installations at food service areas are solar heated, including the large boiler room at the main cafeteria (using over 70 solar panels);
- (c) An automated irrigation system is being installed throughout the complex to reduce the loss of water by evaporation from daytime watering. Watering will be done in the mornings and evenings.

42. Recent "quick-win" initiatives undertaken at the Gigiri complex are:

- (a) Introduction of dual-flush toilets: the water consumption of approximately 280 toilets has been reduced by five litres per flush, with a total savings of up to 3,000,000 litres annually;
- (b) Paper-saving toilet tissue dispensers have been installed in all toilet rooms, reducing overall consumption and theft; toilet tissue is also made from recycled paper;
- (c) Lighting in non-essential areas of the complex, such as corridors, has been reduced;
- (d) Recycling receptacles have been made available within the complex for paper, plastic and cardboard;
- (e) Glass recycling receptacles, for clear, green and amber glass, have been made available at the petrol station; the service is provided free by Kenya Breweries, the largest consumer of recycled glass in East Africa;
- (f) Plastic shopping bags have been discontinued at commissary and reusable shopping bags are encouraged;
- (g) A new selection of organic products is offered at the commissary.

43. Recent progress in Nairobi includes a large-scale design and construction initiative linked to the creation of a recreation centre at the Gigiri complex. The following innovations have been introduced at the recreation centre:

- (a) Rainwater and greywater harvesting and reuse in the irrigation system following passive (non-chemical) treatment;
- (b) Solar power: all hot water devices in the restrooms and kitchens using solar cells;
- (c) Use of passive or natural ventilation with chimneys creating a natural vacuum and drawing air through the building with no energy use;
- (d) Water-saving plumbing devices in the form of low flow toilets and showers.

44. Open plan office renovation was introduced at UNEP headquarters in June 2005, a process running over three years. This is resulting in:

- (a) More efficient use of space, with a reduction in individual space norms, in line with United Nations standards, and more efficient planning that will ultimately result in a 20 to 25 per cent space gain with no new building construction;
- (b) Natural ventilation, with the reduced number of solid walls increasing air flow;
- (c) Natural light, with the reduced number of solid walls also increasing the amount of natural light from windows and thus decreasing dependence upon artificial light.

45. A new office building is currently in the construction documentation phase. This will be a 15,000 square metre building to be located north of blocks M to Q at the Gigiri complex. Construction is anticipated to start in 2007–2008. Innovations foreseen will include:

- (a) Rainwater and greywater harvesting, using the most progressive system known in Kenya;
- (b) Treatment of building water to the extent that it can be reused to flush toilets;
- (c) Natural ventilation with a passive system in open spaces, augmented where required by solar-powered fans;
- (d) Use of solar power, with hot water at food services areas heated with solar cells;
- (e) Power producing cells with a roof at an 18 degree slope that is optimal for capturing sun energy (the building will be “solar-ready”, although provisions for the purchase of power-producing solar equipment have not yet been made).

B. Current practices in operations management

46. An initial assessment of current operational practices was done by volunteer staff members of the Step-by-Step Group in November 2004. The focus was on the areas of waste, water usage, energy usage and transport-related emissions. Although the 2004 benchmarking assessment was carried out according to well-known and accepted international standards, the collection of data was limited by the means available. Following the 2004 assessment, no additional benchmarking has been done. Thus an agreed and clear baseline is still lacking and progress in environmental performance at the Gigiri complex cannot be measured.

47. Preparations have been made to introduce a formal environmental management system at the Gigiri complex. The process of introducing such a system will start with an initial environmental review of the complex by outside specialists. Terms of reference for outside experts to do the initial environmental review were drafted in early 2005, including a recommendation for the implementation of an environmental management system, in particular the ISO 14001 system, for sustainable building initiatives and practices, and for opening up the Gigiri complex for use by donors to showcase and test new products. The Environment Management Group has been notified of the award of a contract to experts to conduct an initial environmental review, following a competitive tender in June 2005. The process is currently on hold, awaiting funding.

48. UNEP and the United Nations Office at Nairobi have opted not to consider formally future actions on sustainable procurement or environmental housekeeping until an initial environmental review is complete. Therefore, initiatives continue to be undertaken on an ad hoc basis rather than as part of an overall strategy and systematic approach. A more systematic approach could be facilitated the introduction of a formal environmental management system for the whole Gigiri complex.

VI. Suggested initiatives for continual improvement

A. Promoting environmental and equity considerations in procurement practices in UNEP and the United Nations system

49. New plans for procurement within UNEP and the United Nations Office at Nairobi will involve using the United Nations Supplier Code of Conduct, developed by the United Nations Procurement Service. In the light of the survey on sustainable procurement practices in the United Nations system carried out for the Environment Management Group, UNEP has proposed some measures for the United Nations system and for UNEP itself.

50. The United Nations system should:

(a) Capitalize on the work done for the Environment Management Group sustainable procurement survey and deliver a sustainable procurement training session at the yearly meetings of the United Nations Inter-Agency Procurement Working Group and the United Nations Inter-Agency Network of Facilities Managers, thereby strengthening relations with procurement officers in United Nations agencies and creating a constant reminder of the need to integrate sustainable development into United Nations procurement;

(b) Initiate implementation of the proposals of the Environment Management Group survey, in particular by identifying United Nations agencies and funding partners willing to invest in the development and dissemination of a CD-ROM to educate United Nations staff on what can be done in the office and in project management to contribute to sustainability and to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

51. UNEP should:

(a) Create a clearinghouse to collect information on current sustainable procurement initiatives and devise a simple system of information and experience exchange and a sustainable procurement policy framework;

(b) Deliver training for sustainable procurement to UNEP and UNON personnel responsible for procurement;

(c) Develop an online service for United Nations staff to inform and train them on sustainable office behaviour and its concrete implementation;

(d) Implement a carbon neutral policy on UNEP travel.

B. Adoption of environmental management and reporting systems

52. New plans are being developed with respect to environmental housekeeping and environmental management and reporting systems at UNEP and UNON. The process of developing these plans provides an opportunity to manage and communicate progress against key performance indicators, as recommended by the Dalberg review of UNEP and UNDP performance management completed in 2005.

53. In the area of environmental management of facilities, the short-term plans are:

(a) To secure funding for an initial environmental review;

(b) To establish one dedicated post for environmental issues, including building-related projects and possible management of an environmental management system and a reporting system;

(c) To endorse further "quick-win" low-cost initiatives and their formal integration into a UNON workplan.

54. The mid-term plans for environmental management of facilities are:

(a) To adopt and implement an environmental management system, most likely the ISO 14001 system;

(b) To implement more large-scale initiatives, as recommended following the initial environmental review;

(c) To create a carbon neutral UNEP and United Nations Gigiri complex.

55. With respect to reporting systems, UNEP must consider the accumulated experience of the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics with reporting on sustainability, as well as broader developments in the field. For instance, the promotion by public institutions of environmental and sustainability reporting against recognized performance indicators has attracted growing interest in recent years. The Bretton Woods institutions and various government departments and local authorities in different countries, from New Zealand and Australia to Hong Kong, Canada and Europe, are introducing environmental and sustainability reporting systems. This process has been supported by the development of a Public Agency Sector Supplement to the Global Reporting Initiative, developed over the last three years by a multi-stakeholder working group in a process facilitated by the Initiative.

56. Public agencies, such as government departments and United Nations offices, can report on their sustainability performance. Support for doing so is now available through the recently created Centre for Public Agency Sustainability Reporting, established by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. UNEP will explore joint initiatives with the Centre for Public Agency Sustainability Reporting in Melbourne and the Global Reporting Initiative aimed at advancing capacity-building among public institutions in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The need for capacity-building was underlined at the Amsterdam Conference on Sustainability and Reporting, which was hosted by the Global Reporting Initiative from 2 to 6 October 2006 and was the occasion for the launch of the third generation or G3 version of the Global Reporting Initiative guidelines.

C. Travel and greenhouse gas emissions

57. The new environmental management plans also concern travel by UNEP staff. In this context, UNEP is developing a carbon neutral scheme, which is to take effect in 2007. Initially, the scheme will only provide for data collection and offset measures for carbon dioxide emissions from staff travel on official missions and the travel of participants to UNEP conferences whose travel costs are covered by UNEP. In addition, travel of all participants to conferences organized by UNEP will be monitored and reported on and an opportunity will be provided to these participants to voluntarily offset their carbon dioxide emissions. Over time, other sources of carbon dioxide emissions will be included in the scheme, such as emissions from energy use in buildings. UNEP will start to collect data on these other sources in 2007. An amount of certified emissions reductions equivalent to the carbon dioxide emitted will be purchased from and subsequently retired by a broker. In the bidding process, the broker will be requested to purchase only emission reductions from projects fulfilling specific conditions, for example projects in African countries and projects that have a strong social component because they help in the establishment of small businesses. Based on data collected, UNEP will be in a position to set itself an organization-wide voluntary carbon dioxide emissions reduction target.

D. Sharing learning experiences, guidance and training

58. Efforts to promote environmental housekeeping have also been undertaken through the United Nations system and examples from other international organizations such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ISO 14001 certified), the secretariat of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the European Commission are being sought.

59. In 2004 and 2006 UNEP took part in the fifth and sixth annual meetings of the United Nations Inter-Agency Network of Facilities Managers. At the 2004 meeting in Beirut, UNEP introduced facilities managers to the United Nations Global Compact principles and to ways of advancing environmental responsibility within the United Nations system by establishing environmental management and reporting systems. The managers involved welcomed an offer from UNEP to provide them with copies of the Environmental Management Systems Training Kit, produced by the International Chamber of Commerce, the International Federation of Consulting Engineers and UNEP, which facilities managers can adapt and use to introduce environmental management systems. At the 2006 meeting, held in Addis Ababa, facilities managers were given an update on the introduction of sustainable procurement, environmental management and internalization of the Global Compact principles within the United Nations system.

60. The participants in the Inter-Agency Network of Facilities Managers included facilities managers from 30 United Nations organizations, including agencies, programmes, funds and regional commissions, as well as associated bodies such as the Council of Europe, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Intellectual Property Organization. The group agreed on recommendations that were passed on to the United Nations High Level Committee on Management. Discussions with the Network of Facilities Managers included video links with United Nations headquarters to consider the Capital Master Plan for renovating the headquarters in New York, as well

as United Nations procurement. The next meeting of the group, in 2007, will be hosted by UNESCO in Paris and will also be attended by UNEP. The meeting agenda will include, among other things, a template for reporting on progress in sustainable facilities management on a regular basis.

61. In May 2005, UNEP took part in the yearly meeting of the United Nations Inter-Agency Procurement Working Group in Moscow to present the concept of sustainable procurement and the importance for United Nations procurement personnel of integrating sustainability into purchasing practices. The Working Group consists of the heads of procurement of United Nations organizations.

62. The participation of UNEP increased interest in sustainable procurement and since the meeting UNEP has received several requests for assistance from other United Nations agencies on the issue. Members of the Procurement Working Group also contributed greatly to the completion of the Environment Management Group survey on sustainable procurement and provided essential information and insights and, most importantly, advice on what needs to be done in concrete terms to include sustainable development in current United Nations procurement procedures. The partnership with the ILO Training Centre in Turin stems from the Moscow meeting of the Procurement Working Group.

VII. Voluntary action by staff to advance environmental housekeeping

63. As mentioned, UNEP performance in sustainable procurement could be greatly improved and a system could be implemented across the organization if appropriate financial and human resources were made available. In this context, it is worth mentioning that the major achievements in the area of environmental housekeeping and procurement are due to voluntary actions taken by staff. Examples of such staff engagement are the Step-by-Step Group at UNEP and the United Nations Office at Nairobi and the Sustainability Team in the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics in Paris.

64. The Step-by-Step Group, comprising concerned UNDP, UNEP, UN-Habitat and UNON staff members and interns in Nairobi, was formed in 2002 to encourage and catalyze environmental initiatives to improve the internal operations of the United Nations in Kenya. The aim was also to encourage UNEP and UN-Habitat in particular to provide global leadership in this regard and promote the adoption of an environmental management system at the Gigiri complex.

65. The Step-by-Step Group, with information from various UNON offices, undertook the 2004 benchmark assessment of the solid waste, water, energy and transport situation at the United Nations Gigiri complex. Based on the findings of these assessments, a number of recommendations were presented to UNEP and UNON senior management and discussed with some of the diplomatic missions in Kenya. In addition, a number of “quick-win” and awareness-raising initiatives were undertaken in cooperation with, and in support of, UNON (discussed above).

66. Specific activities supported by the Step-by-Step Group, some of which are still under way, include information dissemination through the UNEP “Tidbits” internal newsletter, promotion of reduction and recycling by United Nations staff members and elimination of plastic bag availability at the United Nations Commissary. All United Nations staff members and interns are welcome to be part of the Step-by-Step Group and it is encouraging to see the membership of this informal group expanding, an indication of the degree to which staff members believe that we should “practice what we preach.”

67. At the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics in Paris, a “Sustainability Team” was created in 2004 to pilot a sustainability management and reporting system. As a co-founder of the Global Reporting Initiative process, it was natural for UNEP to develop a reporting system on the sustainability of its operations. The Sustainability Team has agreed on the practical application of the reporting principles and core indicators of the Global Reporting Initiative Guidelines to the operations of the Division of Technology, Industry and Economic and to UNEP as a whole. Through the process of collecting data, the Paris-based team has adapted the core indicators of the Global Reporting Initiative to the economic, environmental and social context of a United Nations agency.

68. The reporting system complements sustainable management and procurement systems being developed at UNEP headquarters, as promoted by the Environment Management Group, which is chaired by UNEP. A report entitled “Learning by Doing, UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics 2004–2005 Sustainability Report” was published in July 2006. The first sustainability report based on the Global Reporting Initiative guidelines to be produced by a United Nations office, it presents a model that is currently being considered for replication by UNEP headquarters and other United Nations offices.