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**Tenth special session of the Governing Council/
Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

Principality of Monaco, 20-22 February 2008
Items 4 and 5 of the provisional agenda*

4. Policy issues: (a) State of the environment; (b) Emerging policy issues; (c) Environment and development

5. Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations summits and major intergovernmental meetings, including the decisions of the Governing Council;

**Draft decisions prepared by the Committee of Permanent Representatives
to the United Nations Environment Programme**

Summary

The Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme submits herewith draft decisions prepared by the Committee for consideration by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its tenth special session pursuant to the Committee's mandate set out in Governing Council decision 19/32 of 4 April 1997.

CONTENTS

- 1. Chemicals management including mercury and waste management**
- 2. Medium-term strategy for the period 2010-2013**
- 3. Response to the findings of the fourth Global Environment Outlook report**
- 4. Sustainable development of the Arctic region**
- 5. International Year of Combating Climate Change**

* UNEP/GCSS/X/1.

Draft decisions prepared by the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP

1. Chemicals management including mercury and waste management

The Governing Council,

Recalling decision 24/3 on Chemicals Management and in particular section IV on mercury, and decision 24/5 on waste management,

Further recalling General Assembly resolution 53/242 of the 28 July 1999 to establish the Global Ministerial Environment Forum, which provides a high-level environment policy forum in the United Nations system;

Noting that in accordance with resolution 53/242 operative paragraph 6, the primary intention of special sessions of the GC/GMEF is to focus on the review of important and emerging policy issues in the field of the environment;

Emphasizing that wherever possible significant programme related decisions of the GC/GMEF are dealt with at its regular sessions:

1. *Acknowledges with appreciation* the Reports of the Executive Director on 'Chemicals management' (UNEP/GCSS.X/4), Progress report of the ad hoc open-ended working group on mercury' (UNEP/GCSS.X/5), and 'Waste management' (UNEP/GCSS.X/7), as requested by the Governing Council;
2. *Takes note* of the particular significance of the 'Tangible recommendations' as referred to in section II (I) of the Report of the Executive Director on 'Waste management' (UNEP/GCSS.X/7) to developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
3. *Decides* in view of the significant programme related matters raised in the Reports to consider them at its twenty-fifth session; and
4. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue to implement its decisions 24/3 and 24/5 and to present a full report on the implementation of these decisions at its twenty-fifth session.

2. Medium-term Strategy for the period 2010-2013

The Governing Council,

Recalling paragraph 13 of its decision 24/9, by which it requested the Executive Director to prepare, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, a medium-term strategy for 2010–2013 with a clearly defined vision, objectives, priorities, impact measures and a robust mechanism for review by Governments, for approval by the Governing Council at its twenty-fifth session,

Noting with appreciation the open, transparent and extensive consultation process undertaken by the Executive Director with the Committee of Permanent Representatives in developing the United Nations Environment Programme Medium-term Strategy 2010-2013;

Also noting with appreciation the consultation with the multilateral environment agreement secretariats administered by the United Nations Environment Programme and with civil society and the private sector in developing the medium-term strategy,

Further noting with appreciation that the medium-term strategy developed by the Executive Director is well focused, results-based and incorporates a logical hierarchy of mutually reinforcing results and that it elaborates six cross-cutting thematic priority areas of work and various means of implementation as a way of focusing the work of the United Nations Environment Programme in the period 2010–2013,

Welcoming the scientific evidence provided by the fourth Global Environmental Outlook report: *environment for development*,

Further welcoming the medium-term strategy's particular emphasis on significantly enhancing the capacity of the United Nations Environment Programme to deliver on the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building;¹ on the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the principal United Nations body in the field of environment; on ensuring that United Nations Environment Programme interventions are founded on sound science; and on fully implementing results-based management,

Noting the time set by the United Nations secretariat in the Instructions issued for the preparation of the Strategic Framework 2010–2011 by each Fund, Programme and Department of the United Nations secretariat,²

Acknowledging that in order for the medium-term strategy developed by the Executive Director to be linked in a meaningful fashion with the strategic framework and subsequent programme of work 2010–2011 it is essential that the Governing Council should first approve the medium-term strategy at its tenth special session,

1. *Approves* the United Nations Environment Programme Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013 as the basis for the preparation of the Strategic Frameworks and Programmes of Work and Budgets for 2010-2011 and 2012-2013;

2. *Requests* the Executive Director to use the United Nations Environment Programme Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013 to guide the formulation of the Strategic Frameworks and Programmes of Work and Budgets for 2010-2011 and 2012-2013;³

3. *Notes* that any budgetary issues arising from the United Nations Environment Programme Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013 will be addressed through the Programmes of Work and Budgets for 2010-2011 and 2012-2013;

¹ Adopted by the UNEP Governing Council in decision 23/1 I.

² Proposed Strategic Framework for the biennium 2010–2011, Instructions, issued by the United Nations Programme Planning and Budget Division on 11 October 2007. The Instructions will be made available at <http://ppbd.un.org>.

³ UNEP/GCSS.X/8, annex.

4. *Emphasizes* that the Environment Fund, rather than earmarked contributions, must provide the primary financial basis of United Nations Environment Programme activities, enabling the effective implementation of the Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013;
5. *Encourages* the Executive Director to continue to strengthen results-based management in the United Nations Environment Programme and, working within the approved Programme of Work 2008–2009, to use the period 2008–2009 to commence the implementation of the transition to becoming a fully results-based organization;
6. *Requests* the Executive Director to inform Governments of the implementation of the United Nations Environment Programme Medium-term Strategy 2010-2013 at regular intervals and to submit to the Governing Council, at its twenty-sixth regular session in 2011, a progress report on the implementation of the Strategy.

3. Response to the findings of the fourth Global Environment Outlook report

The Governing Council,

Pursuing its functions and responsibilities as outlined in General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15th December 1972, including to keep under review the world environmental situation in order to ensure that emerging environmental problems of wide international significance are prioritized and receive appropriate and adequate consideration by Governments and to promote the contribution of the relevant international scientific and other professional communities to the acquisition, assessment and exchange of environmental knowledge and information,

Recalling its decisions 22/1 of 7 February 2003 on early warning, assessment and monitoring, 23/6 of 25 February 2005 on keeping the world environmental situation under review and 24/2 of 9 February 2007 on the world environmental situation,

Welcoming with appreciation the preparation, publication and wide dissemination of the findings of the fourth Global Environment Outlook report by the Executive Director,

Also welcoming with appreciation the in-kind contribution from experts, governments, United Nations bodies, collaborating centres, the private sector and civil society, and the statement by the Second Global Intergovernmental and Multi Stakeholder Consultation on the Fourth Global Environment Outlook Report held September 2007, which endorsed the Summary for Decision Makers of the report,

1. *Remains* deeply concerned over the evidence in the assessment of unprecedented environmental changes at all levels, including the natural and social time lags involved in addressing these changes and the risk of approaching tipping points beyond which there may be abrupt, accelerating and possibly irreversible changes, and their potentially negative implications for human well-being and economic and social development, especially for the poor and vulnerable groups in society;
2. *Acknowledges* that current environmental degradation represents a serious challenge for human development, peace and security, and that the benefits of early action outweigh the costs and represent opportunities for the private sector, consumers, local communities and for strengthened cooperation at the national and international levels to achieve sustainable development;
3. *Stresses* that the transition towards sustainable development may involve hard choices among different concerns and interests in society which need to be supported by well-governed, innovative and results-oriented institutions able to create the appropriate conditions for change, and that the United Nations Environment Programme should promote such efforts, and lead by example,;
4. *Urges* Governments, United Nations bodies, international organizations, the private sector, civil society and the public at large to work with the United Nations Environment Programme and other environmental authorities at the global, regional, national and local levels for sustainable development and to take immediate and urgent action to prevent, mitigate, and adapt to unprecedented environmental change as articulated in the Summary for Decision Makers underpinned by the main report of the fourth Global Environment Outlook;
5. *Requests* the Executive Director, through the programmes of work by working with national and regional environmental authorities, including through capacity-building and technology transfer, to support the efforts outlined in paragraph 4 above, *inter alia* by:
 - (a) Making full use of the findings of the fourth Global Environment Outlook report in programme planning and the implementation of all relevant programme activities;
 - (b) Continuing to widely disseminate the findings of the fourth Global Environment Outlook report and other relevant recent assessments, to public and private decision makers at all scales, including by seeking the opportunity to present the findings of the outlook to ECOSOC;
 - (c) Promoting, in his capacity as chair of the Environment Management Group a results based approach, *inter alia* through the use of environmental targets, to integration of environmental considerations

in relevant policies, programmes and plans of other bodies in the United Nations system and facilitate the exchange of best practices in this respect; and

(d) Facilitate, upon request, and subject to availability of resources, reviews and monitoring of the effectiveness of environmental programmes of governments and the United Nations system;

6. *Also requests* the Executive Director, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, in building on the experiences gained from the preparation of the fourth Global Environment Outlook report, and other environmental assessments such as the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment as well as other recent developments aimed at strengthening the scientific base of international environmental governance like the proposed Environment Watch Strategy, to present to the Governing Council at its next session:

(a) An assessment of ways to strengthen synergies between international assessment processes; and

(b) Possible options for the development of a scientifically credible and policy-relevant global assessment of environmental change and its implications for development, which strategically underpin the development of the UNEP programme of work and environmental activities by governments, relevant United Nations bodies, including Multilateral Environmental Agreements, and other relevant public and private stake holders.

4. Sustainable development of the Arctic Region

The Governing Council,

Recalling UNEP Governing Council decision 22/11 (Sustainable development of the Arctic) of 7 February 2003;

Deeply concerned that, despite the many successful and continuing efforts of the international community since the Stockholm Conference, and some progress having been achieved, the environment and the natural resource base that supports life on Earth continue to deteriorate at an alarming rate as shown in UNEP's 4th Global Environment Outlook report, with specific concerns highlighted in relation to melting Arctic sea ice (GEO4 Summary for Decision Makers: Polar, p. 19);

Recalling that "Melting Ice – A Hot Topic?" was the theme for the 2007 World Environment Day, focusing on the effects of climate change on polar ecosystems and communities, ensuing consequences around the world, and actions that can be taken to avoid abrupt, accelerating, or potentially irreversible environmental changes;

Extremely concerned over the impact of climate change on the polar regions, especially the Arctic which is experiencing some of the most extreme and fast moving change evidenced anywhere, with increasingly dramatic effects on Arctic peoples and biodiversity, as well as significant global consequences, e.g., through contributions from glaciers and the Greenland Ice Sheet to sea level rise;

Convinced of the need to protect the Arctic marine environment and to ensure environmental security for its indigenous and other peoples, as well as for its biodiversity;

Well aware of the globally strong influence of Arctic sea ice dynamics on the planetary climate system and ocean circulation;

Also well aware of the need for and importance of cooperative measures to promote adaptation of Arctic marine ecosystems to climate change, and for adaptive management of these ecosystems in the face of rapid climate change;

Emphasizing that the International Polar Year 2007-2009 (IPY), which involves thousands of scientists from over 60 countries working at both poles, provides a foundation to enhance the scientific basis for informed decision-making;

Acknowledging the deep concern over the vulnerability of the environment and fragile ecosystems of the Arctic Ocean and Arctic sea ice, and the need for States to strengthen scientific cooperation, as noted in the preambular paragraphs of the UN General Assembly omnibus resolution on the Ocean and the Law of the Sea adopted by the UN General Assembly in December, 2007;

Emphasizing that the exploitation of Arctic resources should be done in a sustainable manner;

Believing that, the Arctic marine environment, its peoples and biodiversity would benefit from the efforts of Arctic rim States, as well as other interested States and stakeholders, in ensuring its protection and management regarding commercial activities including shipping, fishing, oil, gas and mining operations in recently opened ice melt areas of the Arctic marine environment,

1. *Encourages* UNEP to actively co-operate with Multilateral Environmental Agreements, the Arctic Council and other relevant regional and international players to increase the knowledge of the decision makers at UN-level on the environmental security of the Arctic marine environment and its peoples.
2. *Urges* Governments of Arctic States and other interested stakeholders to ensure full implementation of the Precautionary Approach as set forth in Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, in conjunction with environmental impact assessments where appropriate, in making decisions affecting the Arctic marine environment, and correspondingly its Arctic peoples and biodiversity;
3. *Requests* Governments, together with the International Council for Science (ICSU) and WMO, the sponsoring agencies of the International Polar Year (IPY), and other relevant regional and

international players including Multilateral Environmental Agreements, UNEP and the Arctic Council, to enhance the scientific basis for informed decision-making through the promotion of international scientific collaboration and coordination to better track, understand, and predict Arctic change as a key IPY legacy activity;

4. *Also requests* Governments of Arctic States and other interested stakeholders to individually and collectively expedite the implementation of the appropriate measures for adaptation to climate change as part of on-going cooperation in the region.

5. International Year of the Combating Climate Change

The Governing Council,

Remaining deeply concerned that all countries, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island developing States, face increased risks from the negative effects of climate change,

Recalling the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including the acknowledgement that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

Noting the significance of the scientific findings of the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which contribute positively to the discussions under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the understanding of the phenomenon of climate change, including its impacts and risks,

Determined to maintain and to boost the spirit of international solidarity and commitment generated by the outcomes of the Thirteenth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Third Session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol held in Bali on 3 to 15 December 2007, as well as the Bali Action Plan (or "Bali Roadmap"),

Reaffirming its commitment to supporting efforts for mitigating and adapting to climate change, which are interlinked with efforts for reducing significantly the loss of biodiversity, promoting desertification control, eradicating extreme poverty and famine, promoting sustainable development and improving the lives of affected or vulnerable populations,

Recommends to the United Nations General Assembly to declare, at its sixty-third session, an International Year of Combating Climate Change as soon as possible.