



**Governing Council
of the United Nations
Environment Programme**

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/GC.22/INF/17
17 December 2002



ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**Twenty-second session of the Governing Council/
Global Ministerial Environment Forum**
Nairobi, 3-7 February 2003
Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda?

Policy issues: State of the environment

**ADDRESSING CHALLENGES OF BIODIVERSITY AND BIOSAFETY ISSUES
IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Note by the Executive Director

The present note contains information on the activities of the United Nations Environment Programme in addressing challenges of biodiversity and biosafety issues in the context of sustainable development. The note has been divided into four chapters, on the implementation of Governing Council decision 21/8 on biosafety; the implementation of Governing Council decision 21/12 on coral reefs; a status report on the Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP) and a status report on the UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). It has been issued without formal editing.

? UNEP/GC.22/1
K0263603 030103

A. Implementation of Governing Council decision 21/8 on biosafety

I IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNEP/GEF GLOBAL PROGRAMME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL BIOSAFETY FRAMEWORKS (NBFs) 2001 - 2004

1. The full description of this \$26m programme, which spans over the period 2001-2004 was given in document UNEP/GC/21/INF.18 presented at the last meeting of the Governing Council.
2. Just over one year after its start in June 2001, pursuant to paragraph 2 of the Governing Council Decision, the UNEP-GEF global project on the "Development of National Biosafety Frameworks" has exceeded its initial target of supporting up to 100 participating countries and now has 106 countries on board. The current status of 106 participating countries is as follows: 18 countries have started their NBF projects; another 47 projects have been approved and will begin shortly; 6 national project documents (NDPs) are being finalised with countries and a further 35 countries have expressed interest and are eligible to join the project according to the eligibility criteria.
3. It should be stressed that even when more than 100 countries express their interest in participating in the NBF development project, UNEP will still be able to request additional funding from GEF for these countries, as GEF Council agreed to fund as many countries as wished to join.

Regional Biosafety Awareness Workshops

4. In the implementation of paragraphs 5 and 6 of the GC Decision, a first round of regional workshops on improving understanding of the issues involved in developing national biosafety frameworks amongst countries in the regions was completed during the 1st half of 2002. Four biosafety regional workshops were carried out as part of the component on regional capacity building activities of relevance to the development of NBFs. The workshops brought together participants from eligible countries from each of the four regions: Africa (in Nairobi), Central and Eastern Europe (in Nitra, Slovakia), Asia-Pacific (in Beijing, China) and Latin America and the Caribbean (in Buenos Aires, Argentina).
5. The purpose of these workshops was to increase participants' awareness and understanding of the process and elements of developing their country's National Biosafety Frameworks (NBF). This synthesis report brings together the discussions and conclusions from these four regional workshops, summarised according to the format of the workshops. These results provide an insight into the critical elements of NBF as seen from the perspective of the participants from each of the regions, and highlight the issues that are a common concern to all countries participating in the global project on development of NBFs. The synthesis brings together both the discussions in plenary sessions in each of the four workshops, as well as the main issues raised during small group discussions.

Key Issues

6. In addition to the discussions on key elements of an NBF, a number of important issues were raised during the workshops that impact on the development of NBF. The key issues highlighted as requiring attention in the development and future implementation of a National Biosafety Framework included: information gathering, further help needed; project sustainability; national constraints, sub-regional, regional and global aspects; the obligations of the Protocol on Biosafety; and indicators/criteria for project success.
7. Suffice it to state that participants raised a number of issues requiring adequate capacity building to address provisions/obligations under the Cartagena Protocol during the workshop discussions on the development of NBFs. These included: advance informed agreement; information-sharing; socio-economic aspects; liability and redress; identification and labeling; risk assessment and risk management; administrative and institutional arrangements; focal points and national competent authorities; transit and contained use; deliberate release of LMOs; LMOs for food, feed and processing; financial mechanisms;

compliance, exemptions for pharmaceuticals; and LMOs in transit. Some participants also raised the question of those issues not covered by the Protocol, and what a country could do to cover itself.

8. A critical issue worth highlighting concerned the criteria or indicators of project success. At the workshops, participants stressed the need for some "Indicators of Success" that would determine if a country had done a good job in developing its NBF. The suggested list of criteria of success that goes across all regions includes the following:

- (i) Official Government approval particularly at Cabinet level of the Framework, and the country's ratification of the Protocol, as well as compliance with international obligations, and harmony with other regional and international NBFs. Continued funding by Government would be an indicator of political support for the NBF.
- (ii) The degree of acceptance, endorsement and ownership at the national level by all stakeholders. This may include short-term voluntary compliance before the requisite legislation is in place, and national consensus on the way ahead amongst the different stakeholders.
- (iii) Stakeholders have assured access to information on biosafety.
- (iv) The laws and regulations are developed in a flexible manner allowing for amendments when necessary.
- (v) An action plan is adopted and implemented so that everything is ready for the implementation phase, and the country is able to attract funding for implementation of its NBF.
- (vi) Increased capacity within the country, including increased awareness of biosafety and biotechnology, leading to informed debate amongst stakeholders.
- (vii) Strengthened scientific expertise for decision making on risk assessment and management
- (viii) A process of continuous monitoring, as well as feedback from stakeholders, would help to show that the different elements of the NBF were functioning in a coordinating manner.
- (ix) An independent review by international and national experts would also help determine if the country had done a good job.

9. In essence, the workshop discussions reflected the participants concerns for the need for a comprehensive NBF that includes the basic key elements. These elements were common to all countries, but each country would naturally express these elements differently in developing its NBF. This expression would be rooted on the country's own political, social, legislative, environmental, cultural and economic context. Thus the UNEP/GEF programme on Biosafety should be flexible and not aim to be prescriptive about how an NBF should look or even to provide models that could be copied. Each country needed an understanding of the critical mass of elements for inclusion in an NBF, but equally a unique, national way of developing an NBF was crucial.

Biosafety Training Workshops

10. In further pursuance of para.6 of the GC Decision, the UNEP/GEF Programme on Biosafety addresses the need to lay the groundwork that would facilitate the establishment and/or strengthening of regional/sub-regional biosafety risk assessment capabilities. Based on the results of the first round of awareness raising workshops at the regional level, the UNEP-GEF Biosafety project intends to stage two further rounds of training workshops. These workshops will aim to help participants learn about lessons and best practices so that they can facilitate the development of the national biosafety framework in their own countries.

11. Between November 2002 and April 2003, six sets of sub-regional workshops will be held:

- (i) Windhoek, Namibia (12-15 November 2002) for Anglophone Africa;
- (ii) Mexico City (10-13 December 2002) for Latin America;
- (iii) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (21-24 January 2003) for Asia;
- (iv) Nadi, Fiji (18-23 February 2003) for SIDS;
- (v) Dakar, Senegal (11-14 March 2003) for Francophone Africa;
- (vi) Istanbul, Turkey (1-4 April 2003) for Central and Eastern Europe, and Central Asia.

12. Each set will consist of two simultaneous workshops on risk assessment and management, and on engagement of Civil Society. There will also be joint sessions for all participants as well as work in smaller groups throughout the workshops. UNEP-GEF will sponsor four participants from each country participating in the global NBF development project. Two of these participants will take part in the workshop on Risk Assessment and Management while the other two will attend the workshop on Public Participation that will take place at the same time.

UNEP/GEF Demonstration Projects On Implementation of NBFs

13. With respect to the implementation of paragraphs 5 and 6 of the GC Decision on Biosafety, an appropriate UNEP/GEF project proposal was submitted to the GEF for funding, addressing the issue of capacity building for the effective implementation of the NBFs once they have been developed. At its meeting held in November 2001, the GEF Council approved 8 country-based demonstration projects aimed at assisting in capacity building for effective implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks. Following their endorsement by the GEF Chief Executive Officer in July 2002, these Demonstration Projects, involving Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Kenya, Namibia, Poland and Uganda, became effective from September 2002 for a duration of 3 years. In the formulation of these demonstration projects, due account was taken of the recommendations of the ICCP Bureau meeting held in Yaounde, Cameroon in February 2002. Activities for the implementation of the NBFs in these countries will cover the following areas at the national level: finalisation of the legislative/administrative frameworks needed to operationalize the biosafety regulatory system; strengthening local human resources/capacity through training activities; strengthening national institutional facilities; strengthening the biosafety information system within the context of the BCH of the Protocol, and engaging civil society through, among others, enhancing public awareness and public participation. Best practices and lessons learned will be disseminated to guide future implementation activities envisaged under the Protocol on Biosafety.

II SUPPORT TO THE WORK OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE OF THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL (ICCP) AND OTHER COMPLEMENTARY GLOBAL BIOSAFETY INITIATIVES

14. In the further implementation of decision GC 21/8 on Biosafety, UNEP in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), among others, supported and collaborated in a large number of global biosafety initiatives including, in particular the intersessional activities of the Intergovernmental Committee on the Cartagena Protocol (ICCP) throughout 2001 and 2002. The activities that took place during this period are listed below in chronological order.

- (i) The Expert Meeting on Handling, Transport, Packaging and Identification of Living Modified Organisms held from 13-15 June 2001 in Paris, France.
- (ii) Expert Meeting on Capacity Building for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety 11-13 July 2001 (Havana, Cuba)
- (iii) The International Workshop on Financial Support for National Biosafety Frameworks in Havana, Cuba 14 July 2001.
- (iv) International Conference on New Biotechnology, Food and Crops: Science, Safety and Society, Bangkok 10 - 12 July 2001.
- (v) Open-ended meeting of Experts on a Compliance Regime under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, Nairobi, 26-28 September 2001.
- (vi) The Second Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP-2), Nairobi, 1-5 October, 2001.
- (vii) The meeting of the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Committee on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP), held in Cameroon 18-19 February 2002
- (viii) The Meeting of the Technical Experts on Article 18 paragraphs 2(b) / 2(c) and of the Biosafety Protocol Montreal 13-15; March 2002.
- (ix) The Meeting of the Technical Experts on the requirements of paragraph 2(a) of Articles 18 of the Biosafety Protocol , held in Montreal 18-20 March 2002

- (x) The third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP-3) held at the Hague, Netherlands 22-26 April 2002

15. The climax activity was undoubtedly the third and final meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety ICCP-3 held immediately after CBD COP-6. The meeting was chaired by Ambassador Philemon Yang (Cameroon). It was attended by 580 participants from 147 countries and over 100 intergovernmental, non-governmental and industry organizations.

16. The meeting adopted 10 recommendations (3/1 to 3/10) to be forwarded to the First Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties (COP/MOP-1) for consideration as follows:

- 3/1 Liability and redress (Articles 27)
- 3/2 Procedures and mechanisms on compliance under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- 3/3 Information-sharing (Article 20)
- 3/4 Roster of experts on biosafety
- 3/5 Capacity-building (Article 22 and 28, paragraph 3)
- 3/6 Handling, transport, packaging and identification (Article 18)
- 3/7 Monitoring and reporting (Article 33)
- 3/8 Consideration of other issues necessary for the effective implementation of the Protocol (e.g., Article 29, paragraph 4)
- 3/9 Entry into force of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- 3/10 Tribute to the Government and people of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

17. A major issue at ICCP-3 concerned documentation and modalities for handling, transport, packaging and identification of LMOs, particularly regarding provisions in Article 18.2 on information requirements for documentation accompanying living modified organisms (LMOs) for food, feed or processing (LMO-FFPs); contained use, and intentional introduction into the environment.

18. Four other key issues that also needed to be resolved were addressed, namely: compliance; liability and redress; capacity building; and information sharing; as well as the dominant question of process and substance in respect of the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (MOP-1). The detailed information in this regard is provided in document UNEP/GC.22/INF/17. A Brief Summary of the key issues that needed to be resolved at ICCP-3 is given below:

(i) Documentation and Identification

19. From the outset, it was clear that discussions on documentation requirements were not going to be easy, especially since documentation for LMO-FFPs was the very final element agreed upon during the Protocol's negotiations. Most delegates acknowledged the significant contribution of the two technical expert groups on Article 18.2b/c and 18.2a (held in Montreal from 13-20 March 2002), which laid the groundwork for recommendations on documentation issues under Article 18.2.

20. The central point of debate boiled down to interpretation of the Protocol's language in Article 18.2. **While some delegates took and stuck to** a strict interpretation in terms of identifying shipments of LMO-FFPs as "may contain LMOs," and LMOs for contained use simply as "LMOs, **a majority of** delegations, including the African Group and the EU, **insisted on and stuck to** a broader interpretation of the Protocol's language to include requirements on particular names, modifications and potential unique identifiers. These two perspectives were evident throughout ICCP-3. Those supporting a wider view worked to maintain existing and include additional options, most particularly in the Chair's summary of negotiations on Article 18.2, whereas those supporting a more limited approach urged focus on and support for the technical expert groups' draft recommendations.

(ii) Compliance

21. Extended debates on the functions and procedures of a compliance mechanism revealed the

difficulty in striking the balance between the Protocol's requirement to establish the mechanism by COP/MOP-1 and the need for time to address its inherent complexities and implications. As such, tensions and frustrations were inevitable over the still-bracketed text on issues such as (a) who could trigger the compliance mechanism and (b) measures to address non-compliance. This dilemma was more or less anticipated, given the complexity and volume of work experienced in developing compliance mechanisms under other multilateral environmental agreements. However, language adopted by ICCP-3 on the different capacities of Parties to comply represents a step forward, as it accommodates the concerns of developing countries regarding their undeveloped regulatory and institutional frameworks.

22. Political posturing and positioning on the compliance issue was quite evident during the closing Plenary discussions, where delegates debated whether the draft procedures and mechanisms on compliance would still be open for discussion at COP/MOP-1. Some delegations stressed the adage that, from a legal point of view, "nothing is agreed until all is agreed"- i.e. any ICCP-3 recommendation would remain open until its adoption by the COP/MOP-1.

23. A majority of delegations observed and feared that the attempt to introduce the views of a few countries into the meeting's report in the form of an undiscussed general statement, implied bad faith and undermined the Protocol's future. They also wondered if those few countries would ratify the Protocol and thus be present as Parties at COP/MOP-1 to discuss the text(s) they made sure would remain under future discussion.

(iii) Liability and Redress

24. In accordance with the ICCP's mandate, discussions on liability focused on process rather than substance. There was much support for information-gathering exercises, although for different reasons. Developing countries welcomed information to establish or revise national regimes for immediate application. In contrast, some developed countries stressed the complexity of establishing an international liability regime, underscoring not just the legal issues involved but also the different approaches taken in national instruments.

25. It is worth noting that those stressing the complexity of establishing an international regime had also argued, during the Protocol's negotiations, that the issue should be addressed under national law. There were delegations which cautioned that continued information gathering could result in delaying substantive work on a liability regime.

26. The Annexed Questionnaire provoked extended debate over the contents, as requests for information on substantive issues appeared to some delegations to exceed the ICCP's mandate. The adoption of the recommendation and the attached questionnaire was thus an important initial step forward in developing common understandings on the eventual structure and content of the future liability regime.

(iv) Capacity Building and Information Sharing through the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH)

27. Debate on the issues of capacity building and information sharing through the BCH went rather smoothly. However, most delegates from developing countries regretted lack of progress in drafting specific language, timescale and funding commitments on capacity-building measures for BCH, and other activities, such as national and regional workshops. Other participants noted that various ongoing activities and initiatives may have decreased the impetus and momentum on overall focus on these areas.

28. Additionally, discussions on the issue of scientific cooperation and capacity building for identification of LMOs continued to highlight gaps between the Protocol's obligations and the ability and capacity of many countries to develop the necessary regulatory, legislative and institutional structures and facilities. Nevertheless, it was generally felt that the BCH would be fully functional at the Protocol's entry into force, although questions still linger about its operability through national nodes and links to customs and border authorities.

B CORAL REEFS--Implementation of Governing Council decision 21/12

ICRI

29. The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) is a partnership among nations and organisations seeking to implement Chapter 17 of Agenda 21, and other international Conventions and agreements for the benefit of coral reefs and related ecosystems. The Initiative was established in order to stop and reverse the global degradation of coral reefs and related ecosystems. The ICRI partnership and approach thus far has been to mobilise governments and a wide range of other stakeholders in an effort to improve management practices, increase capacity and political support, and share information on the health of these ecosystems.

30. A number of operational networks have been recognized by ICRI as elemental in achieving the Framework for Action. Each of the networks involve specific tasks or operate within specific areas, but are coordinating with one another in working toward the common goal of sustaining coral reefs for the future. UNEP is particularly active in two of these, with a coordinating role in the management partnership International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN) and as a co-sponsor to the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN).

31. UNEP has been active in ICRI since its launch, and is currently participating in and broadening a discussion on ICRI CPC reforms, which has become increasingly important in light of the recommendations in the WSSD Plan of Implementation. These reforms are intended to initially establish firmer procedure at the ICRI-CPC, but at a later stage also take further steps in making ICRI more transparent and influential. It will also address issues such as regional anchoring, implementation and 'adherence' to recommendations made.

32. A detailed proposal for procedures at the meetings of the Coordination and Planning Committee (CPC) has been put forward by the US, and UNEP is collaborating with them on further developing this, as well as, at a later stage, broadening the scope to address other issues also identified in a matrix of reform needs prepared by UNEP's Coral Reef Unit.

33. UNEP is also offering to increase its direct support to the ICRI Secretariat as needed to fully implement the reforms under discussion. UNEP is managing earmarked funds provided by the US, which have been used e.g. to provide travel assistance to scientists from developing countries to participate in ICRI Regional Workshops, as well as publication of Proceedings of the East Asian and Eastern African Workshops. Currently, UNEP is liaising with the UK for additional support. Further, UNEP is active in ensuring a smooth transition in the revolving Secretariat, contributing to the negotiations between the current Swedish Philippine Secretariat and the potential future hosts UK and Tanzania.

34. UNEP is also considering whether they can help to improve the international governance framework for coral reefs, e.g. by exploring the opportunities for the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) with an interest in coral reefs to become more integrated in coral reef conservation at global and regional level, in particular through increased involvement in ICRI. A poster has been made on the programmes of work of selected MEAs in relation to coral reefs, and documents have been prepared for e.g. the CITES COP.

35. The ICRI Secretariat is organising the Second International Tropical Marine Ecosystems Management Symposium (ITMEMS2) in Manila, the Philippines, 25-28 November 2002. UNEP is providing support to the symposium by generating regional reports through the Regional Seas Programmes and by providing a number of case studies from the ICRAN Demonstration and Target sites.

ICRI Coordination

36. The Coordination and Planning Committee (CPC) is the advisory committee of the ICRI Secretariat, which meets twice per year, often opportunistically to coincide with other international meetings. CPC members, representatives from the founding Countries, multilateral Banks, International Agencies, NGOs, scientific bodies and the private sector, and importantly the Regional Seas programmes, are requested to

facilitate the objectives and projects of ICRI. Regions also meet to prepare scientific action agendas based on specific circumstances in each region at ICRI Regional Workshops.

37. ICRI CPC Meetings in Noumea, New Caledonia, 22-24 May 2000, Cebu, Philippines, 2-4 April 2001, Maputo, Mozambique, 26-28 November 2001 and Cancun, Mexico, June 12-14, 2002 were attended by UNEP, and UNEP provided support to the organization of the meetings. In addition to a number of decisions, resolutions passed at the CPC meetings include: sustainable fisheries, MPAs, sustainable fisheries and food security, sustainable and equitable practices in the international trade in coral reef species, ICRAN, ICRIN, GCRMN and funding and collaboration

38. Notably, the Maputo meeting passed a resolution on Coral Bleaching and Climate Change to the World Summit of Sustainable Development (WSSD), where delegates called for coral reefs to be put at the centre of the WSSD agenda and warned that coral reefs were being affected by a wide range of man-made threats including bleaching, over-fishing and pollution. It calls on nations to protect coral reefs from pollution, damaging activities such as dynamite and cyanide fishing and, by reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, the deleterious effects of climate change. In connection with the Maputo CPC Meeting, the Government of Mozambique declared the entire Bazaruto Archipelago a protected area. At 1,400 square kilometres, it will rank among the largest marine National Parks in Eastern Africa, if not the world. UNEP launched a press release on the issue. WWF, an ICRAN partner with an extensive network of tropical marine conservation projects, has been working in Bazaruto for over a decade.

39. At the CPC meeting in Cancun, the committee decided that major efforts were needed to increase government participation in its meetings in order to strengthen ICRI. UNEP supports this initiative and is actively taking part in its follow up.

40. Regional Workshops are usually held in connection with the CPC meetings, and UNEP provides both organizational and substantive support to these. The Regional Workshops provide a tool for managers, scientists, and other practitioners to review advances and share experiences, discuss priority activities in the implementation of the Call for Action, and provide outputs and resolution to the CPC for consideration.

41. Further information is available at the ICRI web site www.icriforum.org.

Regional Coordination of ICRI in Eastern Africa

42. In Eastern Africa, a Coral Reef Taskforce has been set up by the Nairobi Convention, with assistance from UNEP, to coordinate work on coral reefs and their associated ecosystems in the region, comprising the nine signatories to the Eastern African/Western Indian Ocean Region. It will also represent the countries of the region at the ICRI CPC and report on progress. This provides a good model for participation in ICRI, where a region can speak with one voice at the CPC, reducing costs and increasing effectiveness. It is also in line with the 'implementation through Regional Seas' maxim.

ICRAN

43. UNEP continues to give its full support to the coordination and implementation of the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN) project, an operational network of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI). ICRAN is a partnership between UNEP, UNF, and some of the worlds leading research, conservation and management organizations and NGOs, working together to halt and reverse the decline in the health of the worlds coral reefs through concerted and coordinated management, public awareness, capacity building and assessment efforts, where each partner contributes their respective expertise and knowledge. ICRAN aims at reducing the rate of loss of biodiversity in coral reef areas as well as reducing poverty amongst reef-dependent coastal communities by involvement of all stakeholders in the partnership.

44. At the Site level, ICRAN is implemented through Regional Seas programmes, while further activities are implemented through ICRAN's global partners. Activities continue at the ICRAN Sites in the Caribbean, Eastern Africa, East Asia and the South Pacific. In addition, ICRAN will also broaden its network and

continue to strengthen Regional Seas by expanding to the Arabian Seas and South Asian Regions, incorporating PERSGA, ROPME and SACEP in the programme. The geographical extension of ICRAN was given added urgency with a study published in the 15 February 2002 issue of Science magazine identifying the world's top ten marine hotspots for coral reef endemism, e.g. the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. Additional expansion may also include a focus on Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

45. The ICRAN Coordinating Unit is firmly established at UNEP-WCMC, staffed by a Director, an Assistant Director, and an Administrative Assistant. The Director of ICRAN, Dr. Meriwether Wilson, left the project by mutual agreement in April 2002, after which Arthur Dahl, the Director of the UNEP Coral Reef Unit assumed the role of Acting Director of ICRAN until his retirement in August 2002 to prevent loss of momentum in the programme. Presently the recruitment of a Director is underway. Under new Terms of Reference, as agreed on by the Executive Committee in October 2002, the appointee will be selected for fundraising qualities as well as professional knowledge of conservation.

46. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and Reefcheck have been accepted as full partners to ICRAN, further strengthening the partnership, and SACEP, PERSGA and ROPME are about to join. UNEP are pressing for other individuals and organisations to be admitted into the main organs of ICRAN to provide a better geographic and thematic balance. There is a need for greater representation of developing countries; and also a need to work more closely with experts from user interests, at global, regional and local level. The role of corals as nurseries for food fish, and suppliers of living resources for the global aquarium industry make it particularly important to engage these sectors. An expansion to ICRAN to engage with the tourist sector is already under way, under the guidance of UNEP.DTIE.

Project Implementation:

Start-up and Bridging Phases

47. The Start-up and Bridging phases of ICRAN have been closed, with an impressive list of outputs and products.

48. During the Start-up Phase, the ICRAN Strategic Plan was produced. It identifies each ICRAN component in detail, and presents the priorities of the Action Phase, the specific activities to be undertaken, the partners involved, the outputs and timing expected and the specific costs. In separate sections, the governance and resource mobilization strategies required to meet ICRAN's goal are described. Further, it discusses how this catalytic effort relates to other coral reef conservation initiatives aimed at similar goals. Other products included a number of publications, e.g. reports on the status and management of Marine Protected Areas in Eastern Africa, and a series of training and capacity building workshops were held. In the Caribbean a training of trainers course was developed, including course materials in both English and Spanish, and several courses were held. 'A Reefs at Risk' assessment was carried out in Eastern Asia.

49. The Bridging Phase prepared the project for the full-scale action phase. Additional financial support was secured from UNF, and major fundraising campaign was launched in collaboration with a professional fundraising agency, Community Counselling Services (CCS), hired as a consultant to ICRAN. Public awareness activities were initiated by producing project flyers and various public awareness and education materials. The ICRAN Coordinating Unit was established at UNEP-WCMC for day-to-day management of the project and to oversee and coordinate fundraising, project implementation and development.

50. An evaluation of the start-up and bridging phases of the ICRAN project took place in February 2002. The consultant undertaking the evaluation met with the Coral Reef Unit Director and the ICRAN project officer in Nairobi, contacting all other partners involved by phone, email or fax. The evaluation concluded that the quality of the projects is ranging from "excellent" to "good", with an overall rating of "very good".

ICRAN Action Phase: Highlights June 2001 – October 2002

51. The Action Phase of ICRAN was launched on schedule in June 2001. Project implementation is well underway in all regions and by all partners. All current Regional Seas in ICRAN have recruited dedicated officers for ICRAN activities in their respective regions. The high level of implementation has firmly

established ICRAN in its original Regional Seas areas, providing a good basis for extending it to additional regions and sites.

- i. In January 2002 a meeting of the Regional Group of Experts on the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN) was organized in Phuket, Thailand, and recommendations for “Best Practices and Proposed Pilot Projects for ICRAN implementation in the East Asian Seas” was published. A fund providing grants of up to \$10,000 for Monitoring Changes of Coral Reefs for Better Management Schemes in the East Asian Region was set up in April 2002.
- ii. In February 2002 Draft Management Plans were finalized in both Aleipata and Safata MPAs in the South Pacific. Ecological baseline surveys were completed and final reports compiled. A socio-economic assessment was also undertaken. In the Jaluit Atoll Conservation Area, Marshall Islands, a Conservation Area Coordinating Committee (CACC) has been established and a project on Sustainable Management of Aquarium Harvesting Operations in Fiji is under implementation.
- iii. Starting March 2002, ICRAN projects initiated by the UNEP Caribbean RCU include building fundraising capacity in the Bonaire National Marine Park, public education and outreach in the Soufriere Marine Management Area, environmental education and outreach in the communities of the The Hol Chan Marine Reserve and technical assistance and capacity building in the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve.
- iv. In April 2002, projects at the Eastern African Demonstration sites Malindi and Dar-es-salaam were initiated. In Malindi, visitors facilities and the information center have been upgraded and boat sheds, engine workshops and a community mangrove boardwalk constructed. A management effectiveness initiative in collaboration with IUCN organized a training workshop in St. Lucia, South Africa 9-22 June 2002. The first meeting of the Coral Reef Taskforce of the Nairobi Convention was convened in Nairobi, 4 September 2002. The Task Force will coordinate work on coral reefs in the region, and represent the countries of the region at the ICRI CPC.
- v. In February 2002 a ‘Reefs at Risk’ assessment for Southeast Asia was released by WRI, UNEP, ICLARM and UNEP-WCMC. A 40-page summary of the report has been prepared in Bahasa Indonesian.
- vi. An ICRAN-ICLARM international consultative workshop on economic valuation and policy priorities for sustainable management of coral reefs, “Population Interdependencies in the South China Sea Ecosystem” was organized at the Research Institute for Aquaculture III in Nha Trang Vietnam, February 18-20, 2002. ICLARM also launched a revised online version of ReefBase.
- vii. The development of a Spanish version of the World Atlas of Coral Reefs, due for launch in 2003, is underway, and maps, tables and text have been translated. UNEP-WCMC has prepared high-resolution coral reef maps for use e.g. by WRI in reefs threat analysis, and a planned second edition of the World Atlas of Coral Reefs.
- viii. In November 2002, a Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) Status of the Coral Reefs of the World 2002 report is being launched at ITMEMS2 in Manila. UNEP and the Regional Seas Programmes have contributed significantly to the report. UNEP continues to participate in and support central coordination of GCRMN as a co-sponsor of the network. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has recently also joined as a co-sponsor.
- ix. The ICRAN Web Site (www.icran.org) was completely redesigned and expanded during April 2002, with information on ICRAN's structure, activities, sites, products and relevant documents. The site is maintained by the ICRAN Coordinating Unit and hosted for ICRAN by the World Bank.
- x. Collaboration in the area of coral reefs and tourism between ICRAN and UNEP-DTIE was initiated in March 2002. With support primarily from the Government of France, activities are set to start by further disseminating the coral education and awareness tools prepared by DTIE. Partnerships are actively sought with the private sector.
- xi. The Coral Reef Alliance/ICRAN, UNEP and other ICRAN partners published an ICRAN information brochure entitled ‘Coral Reef Action – Sustaining Communities World Wide’ in June 2002.

Management of ICRAN

The ICRAN Board

52. The ICRAN Board is the principal fund-raising body for ICRAN. It provides oversight and accountability for ICRAN funds, endorses and promotes the ICRAN Strategic Plan, and approves the programme and budget recommended by the Steering Committee. The ICRAN Board's financial responsibilities include allocation of funds on the recommendation of the Steering Committee, assisting ICRAN with fund-raising strategies and awareness, and developing and managing an international Coral Reef Fund. The members of the ICRAN Board are listed in Annex II.

53. An ICRAN Board meeting was organized in Washington DC, 12-13 March 2002, attended by the Executive Director of UNEP. The meeting concluded that coral reefs should be given high visibility at WSSD and that the ICRAN project should be presented as a Type II Partnership. The Board also agreed that the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF International) should be invited as a full partner in ICRAN.

54. At the ICRAN Board Meeting in Washington DC, 29-30 October 2002 progress of ICRAN, its Action Phase and fundraising among partners as well as board members was discussed in order to consolidate the strategic planning of the project. The meeting also covered the establishment of the Coral Reef Fund and admission of new members to both the Board and the Steering Committee.

The ICRAN Steering Committee

55. The Steering Committee is the operational unit of ICRAN, with the members of the Steering Committee actually carrying out the work. Its responsibilities are to approve work plans and budgets, prepare and update the ICRAN Strategic Plan and decide on priority actions to implement it, approve the principal outputs of ICRAN, approve the project Director, select some members of the ICRAN Board, select the executing agencies for implementing ICRAN activities, ensure appropriate financial management processes are in place, and ensure effective communication of the results of ICRAN to the constituencies that individual Committee members represent. The members of the ICRAN Steering Committee are listed in Annex II.

56. The ICRAN Steering Committee meets twice per year. The Steering Committee Meeting in Maputo, Mozambique on 24-25 November decided among other things on the establishment of the ICRAN Executive Committee, and agreed to set up a Corals Task Force to deliver ICRAN in each of the four regional Seas Areas where ICRAN is active. On 9-10 June Steering Committee met at one of its demonstration sites, the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve in Mexico. It noted that progress in implementing field activities to improve coral reef management was accelerating established an ICRAN communications task force that will be involved in overall public relations, fundraising, environmental education and outreach strategies. An ICRAN Task Force for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was formed to ensure that ICRAN has substantial input into this convention. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) was accepted as an ICRAN partner.

The ICRAN Executive Committee

57. The ICRAN Executive Committee was established at the Steering Committee meeting in Maputo, Mozambique, November 2001, to provide guidance to the ICRAN Director on administrative, management and strategic development issues. The EC, meeting approximately fortnightly by teleconference, discusses progress, current issues and arising matters of interest, and provides guidance and direction to the project. Due to frequent meetings the project can react to new issues arising quickly, and relevant information can reach the partners, the Steering Committee and the Board for discussion and/or decision. The members of the ICRAN Executive Committee are listed in Annex II.

Staffing and other UNEP Support

58. UNEP is providing significant in-kind support to the ICRAN partnership, with several UNEP staff members working part time on ICRAN activities, and by covering costs such as travel to meetings. In addition, UNEP has during 2001-02 increased its support, covering the costs for publications for WSSD, teleconferences, and the translation of the World Atlas of Coral Reefs into Spanish.

Three posts central to implementing UNEP's coral reef work programme have been vacant or temporarily filled for extended periods of time. For example, over several months Arthur Dahl held both the CRU and ICRAN Directors posts, both of which are now vacant, and the Programme Officer (P4) position at the Coral Reef Unit is yet to be filled. Despite this, both ICRAN and UNEP's Coral Reef Unit have consistently managed to produce high-quality outputs according to work plan and schedule.

Fundraising

59. Fundraising is and remains one of the priority activities for ICRAN, and UNEP has consistently encouraged all ICRAN partners to actively seek financing from outside the partnership to broaden its funding base. It is through project implementation and on-the-ground action that advances in sustainable management of coral reefs can be made, but these need appropriate, sustainable funding. Several factors contribute to building donor confidence and provide incentives to support ICRAN, e.g. packages to suit governments or other donors who may want to contribute to one particular area or partner programme, and matching funds provided by the United Nations Foundation (UNF). ICRAN is also broadening the scope of its fundraising efforts to focus on Europe, in addition to North America, and discussions with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) on ways of cooperating are underway.

60. The United Nations Foundation (UNF) initially provided US\$ 5 million for the Start-up and Bridging phases of the project, with another US\$ 5 million available in matches to funds raised by the partnership and its individual partners during the Action Phase, which commenced in June 2001. A major fund-raising campaign is underway, and the fundraising taskforce that was set up at the first ICRAN Board meeting has been active in identifying possible donors. An ICRAN information paper and a feasibility and planning study report were prepared. The latter aims at evaluating ICRAN's fundraising potential, plans for its resource mobilisation and ICRAN's ability to establish sustainable financing through a Coral Reef Fund. The fundraising consultants CCS, under contract with ICRAN until June 2002, rubbed off a lot of their experience and knowledge on the project, but unfortunately did not secure donations, and the financial climate particularly in the US after 11 September 2001 has made fundraising more challenging.

61. Different options have been explored for setting up the Coral Reef Fund, and it has been decided it should be hosted at UNEP-WCMC. However, there is still a possibility that regional funds will be set up in key areas or strategic locations. This is seen as a vital development for the ICRAN project as well as the coral reef management community as a whole as it will help secure sustainable financing of coral reef activities for years to come.

Major New Funding

62. During the second half of 2002, ICRAN received two major grants, both of which received a one to one match from UNF: US\$ 1.5 million from USAID, and US\$ 250,000 from the Goldman Fund. This provides an additional US\$ 3.5 million for ICRAN's activities, a great achievement of the partnership as a whole, and much thanks to tireless efforts of the ICU. It is also an indication that ICRAN now has gained the donor confidence needed to successfully fundraise for future activities as well as the Coral Reef Fund to be established.

63. The funds provided by USAID are targeted at the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef, while the match released from UNF along with the contribution from the Goldman Fund and its match will be allocated to other activities as decided by the ICRAN partnership.

64. This leaves US\$ 3.5 million of the original Turner Foundation money available for matches to further grants, which together with the strong support of ICRAN's activities in the WSSD Plan of Implementation provides good incentives to continue the work already underway and fundraise for additional activities.

WSSD

65. ICRAN was well represented at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), Johannesburg 26.08-04.09.2002, organizing or co-organizing three successful events and participating in the lead-up Preparatory Committee meetings. The Executive Director of UNEP, Dr Klaus Töpfer was a keynote

speaker at the main ICRAN presentation, and the presence of the ICRAN Director (now retired), the Acting Director of ICRAN, and the Deputy Director of UNEP DEC/DEPI greatly contributed to the success.

WSSD PrepComs

66. A CRU staff member attended the 3rd WSSD Preparatory Committee meeting in New York, 26 March to 3 April 2002 to take part in and provide input to the discussions on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), oceans, coral reefs and Type II partnerships, contribute to the preparation of UNEP targeted outcomes on these, as well as on Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA) activities.

67. In connection with the 3rd Preparatory Committee meeting, the recommendation was made that UNEP/CRU prepare a detailed proposal for ICRAN as a Type II activity, attempting to retain coral reef references in the main WSSD documentation at the 4th Preparatory Committee meeting and reinforcing UNEP's commitment to coral reefs, biodiversity, SIDS and other related activities.

68. At the 4th Preparatory Committee meeting a joint coral reef side event was organised by ICRAN and WWF, the then most recent ICRAN partner, and ICRAN also contributed assistance and expertise to an event on the private sector and tourism organised by UNEP. An informal task force "Corals at Johannesburg" was formed in May to prepare ICRAN's programme at WSSD.

ICRAN Exhibition

69. The ICRAN Exhibition was displayed throughout the Summit, from 28 August to 3 September 2002, at the H2O-pavilion, shared among others with the GPA, IOC of UNESCO and UNEP-WCMC at the WaterDome. A wide variety of information was presented using different media – posters, video, presentations, handouts and events, providing an opportunity for interactions between coral reef related public and private initiatives, as well as the large numbers of interested individuals who visited the pavilion.

ICRAN Side Event

70. The ICRAN side event 'People and Reefs: A Partnership for Prosperity', held on Sunday 1 September in the WaterDome, was attended by over 100 guests and media representatives. The event presented ICRAN, its current work, and its future plans for expansion to address the outcomes identified at WSSD.

71. Speakers included the Minister of the Environment of the Seychelles Ronnie Jumeau, the Executive Director of UNEP Klaus Töpfer, the President of United Nations Foundation (UNF) Timothy Wirth, and the Assistant Administrator of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) Emmy Simmons. Also speaking at the event were Genevieve Verbrugge, Policy Advisor at the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development, France, Brooks Yeager, Vice President for WWF's Global Threats Programme, and the Acting Director of ICRAN Kristian Teleki. Robert Hepworth, Deputy Director of the UNEP Divisions of Environmental Policy Implementation and Conventions compered the event.

72. USAID announced a US\$ 1.5 million grant to ICRAN's work on the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef, which was matched by the same amount by UNF. The ICRAN Type II partnership was launched by announcing an expansion to South Asia and the Arabian Seas region, and a special focus on coral reef based tourism was also initiated, coordinated by UNEP DTIE in Paris.

73. A new ICRAN leaflet 'People and Reefs: A Partnership for Prosperity' was distributed in four languages (Spanish, French, Arabic and English, see Annex III), along with a CD with publications relevant to ICRI, the ICRAN partnership and coral reefs in general. A press release (Annex IV) about the event in general and the significant financial contributions to coral management in particular was picked up in many media.

ICRI Seminar at WSSD Parks

74. The ICRI Event at the IUCN Environment Center on 2 September, co-organized by the ICRI Secretariat, Sweden, ICRAN and UNEP's Coral Reef Unit, was primarily a discussion seminar with presentations from a number of key scientist and a statement by the Swedish Minister of the Environment Lena Sommestad,

delivered on her behalf by a ministry representative. Rob Hepworth on behalf of the ED of UNEP Klaus Töpfer, emphasised UNEP's commitment both to ICRI and ICRAN, launched a poster on the relevance of selected MEAs to coral reefs and presented the Swedish Minister with a copy of the World Atlas on Coral Reefs. The seminar was well attended and provoked a good discussion.

The ICRAN Type II – “People and Reefs: A Partnership for Prosperity”

75. The ICRAN Type II Partnership was presented at WSSD by announcing new activities by present partners, and expansion of ICRAN's geographical coverage in collaboration with SACEP, PERSGA and ROPME. This means ICRAN now includes all seven Regional Seas with major coral reefs, providing a truly global network for the exchange of expertise, experiences and knowledge.

76. A special focus on coral reef based tourism was also initiated, coordinated by UNEP DTIE in Paris, with a view to create an environmentally as well as economically sustainable tourism industry through outreach and awareness campaigns and by forming public-private partnerships. This will build further on the 5 Tools “Coral or no coral? It's my choice” produced by DTIE, increasing dissemination and developing new products.

77. A compilation of proposed activities was produced, including an introduction and 25 outline proposals, for fundraising activities (summarized in Annex V). The new ICRAN leaflet ‘People and Reefs: A Partnership for Prosperity’, available in four languages (see Annex III), produced especially for WSSD together with a CD-ROM of publications relevant to ICRI, the ICRAN partnership and coral reefs in general provide additional information.

The WSSD Plan of Implementation

78. The WSSD Plan of Implementation adds urgency to the plight of coral reefs. It provides further backing to the work of ICRAN, listing numerous priority activities currently undertaken by ICRAN and its partners, as well as identifying several additional activities where ICRAN can intensify and expand its activities. The importance of Regional Seas programmes as implementers of activities on coral reef management, protection and especially the ICRI Call to Action, is restated. Great emphasis is put on the need for partnerships and networks of all relevant stakeholders in planning as well as implementation, and the knowledge, rights and needs of local and indigenous communities are firmly recognized. It also calls for development of international and public-private partnerships for the effective implementation of the Convention of Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention and ICRI, particularly in hot-spot areas and on channeling financial and technical support to developing countries. Sustainable tourism is recognized as an invaluable tool for improving the livelihoods of many coastal communities while contributing to protecting and conserving coral reefs, and sustainability in the world's fisheries is called for as a matter of urgency. Africa and Small Island Developing States are recognized for their respective needs, but also potential, calling for increased technical and financial support. Last but not least, it calls for corporate responsibility, accountability and transparency in the development of international and public-private partnerships as elemental for sustainable development. For a list of the Plan of Implementation paragraphs relevant to coral reefs and ICRAN, see Annex VI.

79. In all these areas, ICRAN is a pioneering project, bringing together nations, organizations and stakeholders in its broad partnership and providing a holistic work programme to address the needs of people as well as reefs. It is also a vital tool for nations, organizations and individuals to work towards fulfilling commitments made, with stakeholder involvement and regional as well as global coordination, making it a classic Type II Partnership.

Other Coral Reef Unit Activities

Coral Reefs, UNEP and MEAs

80. In collaboration with the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land Based Sources of Pollution, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, the World Heritage Convention, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the International Coral Reef Initiative, a poster was produced by

UNEP's Coral Reef Unit, outlining their respective mandate, programme of work and focus in relation to coral reefs. This is an important step in the process of harmonising work programmes and reporting procedures between various MEAs, networks and the UN system. The poster was launched at the ICRI seminar at WSSD in September 2002. Efforts are also made to further integrate MEAs and ICRI, e.g. in terms of inclusion of ICRI resolutions in the work programmes of the MEAs, as well as encouraging increased participation by the MEAs in ICRI meetings and activities. The Coral Reef Unit has also contributed to an Information Document for the CITES COP.

Coral Reef Mapping and Atlas

81. The UNEP-WCMC World Atlas of Coral Reefs was launched on 11 September 2001. The 428-page full colour Atlas provides the most detailed assessment ever of the distribution and status of the world's coral reefs. It shows both the extent of coral reefs around the world, and their rapid rate of degradation, identifying the size and types of coral reefs by country, as well as unique and threatened coral reef ecosystems. It also lists management, research and other initiatives responding to the challenges documented in the atlas, mentioning ICRAN as the most important global partnership. The World Atlas of Coral Reefs received the 'Best Reference Work Award' of the Geoscience Information Society in 2002. Maps, tables and text from the Atlas are being translated, and a Spanish World Atlas of Coral Reefs will be launched in early 2003 as an ICRAN product.

82. Coral reef mapping efforts continue, with a view to producing high-resolution maps that are more relevant to reef users on a local scale. Maps with scales ranging between 1:75,000 and 1:1,000,000 have been prepared by UNEP-WCMC using data from numerous sources, e.g. the Royal Navy, airborne and satellite data. Data on Caribbean coral reef MPAs has been thoroughly updated, and a preliminary analysis of the global area of coral reefs within protected areas has been carried out in collaboration with ICLARM and WRI.

IGOS Coral Reef Sub-theme

83. The former Director of UNEP's Coral Reef Unit and NOAA co-led a team of remote sensing and reef monitoring specialists from a broad range of organizations, including IOC of UNESCO, ICLARM, GCRMN, UNEP-WCMC and NOAA, in preparing a Coral Reef Sub-theme for the Integrated Global Observing Strategy (IGOS) Partnership, including ways to predict, observe and assess major coral bleaching events. The theme proposal was submitted to the IGOS Partners at their meeting in Kyoto on 8 November 2001.

84. The IGOS Partnership brings together the world's space agencies in the Committee for Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), the Global Observing Systems and their sponsors, and international research programmes. The coral reef theme report will identify strategies for improved observations of coral reefs, both from satellites and in the field, in order to support better coral reef management.

Increased Coral Outreach through Private Sector Partnership

85. A 3D IMAX coral reef film entitled "Blue Magic", produced by 3D Entertainment in collaboration with UNEP's Coral Reef Unit and Dr Mark Spalding of UNEP-WCMC, who wrote the script, was released on 30 September 2002. The film shows the immense diversity of the marine life on the world's coral reefs, while illustrating the dangers threatening them. It is accompanied by a variety of outreach materials such as a school teachers guide and the toolkit CD "Coral or no coral? It's my choice", launched by UNEP DTIE in December 2001.

86. In a remit to look for co-sponsors from the tourism sector and to form private sector partnerships, UNEP has entered an MoU with 3D Entertainment on further collaboration in the production of educational and outreach materials and awareness and fundraising campaigns for coral reefs, to accompany the film. This private sector partnership will involve UNEP's Coral reef Unit, DTIE, DCPI and ICRAN.

World Summit on Eco-Tourism

87. UNEP and the Coral Reef Unit were represented at the World Summit on Eco-tourism in Quebec Canada in May 2002, by the Deputy Director of DEC. Presenting the ICRAN partnership as an important

collaborator for sustainable tourism development, he launched the ICRAN Eco-tourism Supporter Scheme, which will involve eco-tourism operators in the work of ICRAN for a subscription fee. For the fee the supporter gets promotional material, leaflets and window stickers, as well as the toolkit CD "Coral or no coral? It's my choice". In addition, they will also receive special information sheets describing health and threats to the coral reefs in their area of operation, generated by ReefBase and ICLARM. The revenue generated will go directly to tourism related projects and increasing awareness among key communities. The collaboration between ICRAN and DTIE on tourism in coral reef areas increases the reach of the activities, and the possibilities for further private sector involvement was conveyed to the meeting.

Relocation of the Coral Reef Unit

88. From 2003, the Coral Reef Unit will be relocated to UNEP-WCMC. This will bring together UNEP's capacity and knowledge on coral reef related issues, with the added benefit of shared resources e.g. between CRU and ICRAN, whose Coordinating Unit is hosted by UNEP-WCMC. This will further strengthen UNEP-WCMC as a world authority on coral reefs, and is an important step in the development of a centre of excellence for coral reefs within UNEP.

Further Information and Information Resources

89. The Coral Reef Unit (CRU) Internet Newsletter "bREEFings" (<http://www.unep.ch/coral/breefing.htm>) was launched in 2001, giving a monthly update on the activities within the CRU and other coral related matters, activities and findings.

Web based information resources produced by ICRAN and its partners include:

- i) the ICRAN Web Site (www.icran.org), completely redesigned and expanded during April 2002, with information on ICRAN's structure, activities, sites, products and relevant documents. The site is maintained by the ICRAN Coordinating Unit and hosted for ICRAN by the World Bank;
- ii) the International Coral Reef Information Network (ICRIN) web site (www.coralreef.org), formally launched on 18 March 2002 by the Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL), with some of the most thorough, yet understandable information about coral reefs;
- iii) the revised online version of ReefBase (www.reefbase.org), containing extensive information on the location, status, threats and management of coral reefs, an online mapping system and a bleaching database.

C Status Report on and the Implementation of the Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP)

90. The aims of GRASP listed in the WSSD partnership document are:

- (i) to lift the threat of imminent or medium term extinction faced by the four main kinds of great apes
- (ii) to strengthen the capacity of great ape range states in equatorial Africa and Southeast Asia to conserve viable wild populations of great ape species and the ecosystems of which they form part
- (iii) to provide support and foster alternative livelihoods for local communities who traditionally depend on ape habitats especially forests for resources including food, timber and medicine
- (iv) to exemplify the added value provided when UNEP facilitates a full operational partnership between UN bodies, the environmental conventions, range states, donor states and civil society, including non-governmental conservation bodies and industry

91. GRASP has a number of innovative features, notably:

- ☞ The appointment of three special UNEP envoys in 2001 – Dr Russell Mittermeier, Director of Conservation International; Dr Jane Goodall, the celebrated primate conservationist who is already a UN

special envoy; and Professor Toshisada Nishida, a renowned primatologist from Kyoto University in Japan. All three envoys have made themselves available to support GRASP, particularly in raising public consciousness and additional resources needed to fund the initiative;

- ⌘ The central role of a regularly updated “project portfolio” both for fund-raising and to attract additional partners. UNEP has circulated the portfolio extensively, both in formal letters to governments and potential donors, and via the project website (www.unep.org/grasp).
- ⌘ A light and flexible management system to avoid over-bureaucratization and avoidable expenditure on travel and meetings. The key features are a small unit comprising a UNEP officer qualified in primatology, two consultants (recruited by open advertisement) in Nairobi and the UK, technical support commissioned from NGOs, a cross-Divisional team in UNEP, and quarterly teleconferences with partners.
- ⌘ Concentration in the early phase on a number of practical “quick win” projects in African and Asian range states; promoting the project messages through the website and specially commissioned public-service TV spot advertisements; demonstrating the serious crisis facing people and great apes reliant on forest habitats, particularly through a new publication “Great Apes – The End of the Road?” produced jointly by UNEP GRID Arendal and UNEP-WCMC using the GLOBIO methodology to predict that 95% of prime Asian great ape habitat, and 90% of African habitat would be lost by 2030, based on present trends;
- ⌘ Conducting a series of swift missions at technical level to range states to establish the main priorities, encourage the appointment of focal points within the Governments of each range state, and help to prepare suitable planning tools including National Great Ape Survival Plans (NGASPs) which can form a link to other biodiversity mechanisms and multilateral agreements. By October 2002 13 of the 23 range states has received missions, and further ones are planned including one at the invitation of the President of the Central African Republic. Future missions will have a stronger diplomatic component to ensure that the technical results are fully discussed with policymakers and other partners in the range states. There are now 11 official focal points for GRASP in the following range states : Cameroon, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Senegal and Uganda. UNEP expresses its appreciation to all the range states – including some in difficult circumstances - who have expressed support for the initiative, appointed focal points or received missions. No country has expressed any opposition to the project, and UNEP hopes that the remaining range states will be able to appoint focal points in the near future.

92. During the pilot phase, GRASP also broadened itself by extending the number of partners, and designing its operations to meet all the criteria for a WSSD (Type II) Partnership. When GRASP began in September 2001 it had a dozen partners, including the three biodiversity-related conventions (CMS, CITES and CBD) and 9 NGOs. By the time of the major global launch of GRASP as a Type II partnership at WSSD a year later in early September 2002, this had grown to a total of 21 partners, including UNESCO and virtually all the main NGOs with major programmes in Africa or Asia dealing with ape conservation. During the same pilot period, donor resources of about \$ 700,000 were raised in return for UNEP's initial investment of \$150,000.

93. One of the two consultancy posts deals specifically with fund-raising: the successful GRASP launch event at WSSD marked the beginning of a major campaign. UNEP is particularly grateful to the donor countries in Europe who have supported the initial phases of the Partnership, and given conspicuous support to GRASP at public events.

94. Following the pilot phase of the project, UNEP submitted a detailed WSSD Partnership document to WSSD. In parallel, UNEP and the GRASP partners (including UNESCO) prepared a short strategy document. The strategy (in English) was published at a side event at WSSD. A French version should be available early in 2003. Copies of the strategy are being circulated to the Governing Council under a separate cover. Both the Partnership document and the strategy set testing, public targets for GRASP over the next 3-

4 years on fundraising, range state participation; the development of NGASPs (or equivalent plans); training of local staff; co-operative arrangements with industry (notably timber, mining and tourism) and the MEAs.

95. Since September 2002 GRASP has been fully operational as a WSSD Partnership. Amongst its short term aims are

- ⌘ to secure results from the four NGO-led GRASP projects under way on the ground in Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria and one transboundary project in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda.
- ⌘ to establish a small grant scheme providing seed funds for local or community-based projects
- ⌘ to establish a scientific advisory panel, for which we have agreed in principle to utilise the IUCN Species Survival Commission Primate Specialist Group to avoid creating an additional body . Synergy between UNEP and IUCN will be further enhanced by the agreement by IUCN to utilise the National Great Ape Survival Plans as the equivalent of their SSC Action Plan for these particular species.
- ⌘ to prepare a consolidated report and recommendations from the 2002 technical missions to range states, and to follow them up with technical and capacity building workshops in key ape range states. The outcome of these workshops will be National Great Ape Survival Plans (NGASPs). In September 2002 the first of these workshops was held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, attracting 200 participants from all relevant parts of the country.
- ⌘ to publish in 2003 a World Atlas of Great Apes compiled by UNEP-WCMC and IUCN. Work on this is well under way although further donor contributions are required to complete it;
- ⌘ to finalise an MoU with UNESCO, whose main contribution to GRASP is in the area of the World Heritage Convention, on scientific and educational issues and remote sensing;
- ⌘ to announce a special“ GRASP “ award under the “UNEP Global 500” scheme and to undertake other activities to raise the profile of the project, including major media events.
- ⌘ to raise a further \$10m during 2002-3, and submit major project proposals to GEF and to the UN Foundation who announced a planning grant of \$75,000 to GRASP in September 2002;
- ⌘ to promote GRASP with the relevant Convention Secretariats and to seek support from them in addressing specific issues, for example illegal trade in apes or their products, forest ecosystem conservation and utilisation programmes, increasing the protection of key sites and transboundary agreements to preserve specific populations;
- ⌘ to make arrangements to transfer the GRASP core unit to UNEP-WCMC whilst keeping a strong focal point in Nairobi. This is likely to take place at the end of 2003.

96. Details of GRASP activities and outputs are contained in the Programme of Work for 2004-5. The POW also includes references to the key areas of the WSSD Plan of Implementation which GRASP will help to address, notably under the sections dealing with biodiversity, forests, tourism, mining, and sustainable development for Africa and Asia.

97. There will be an independent, external review of GRASP in May 2003. The results will be used in designing the contract arrangements for the transfer of the GRASP core unit to UNEP-WCMC later in the year, and in updating the strategy.

D - - Status Report on the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)

Background

98. Close links between UNEP and WCMC have existed for 15 years. In 1988, the then IUCN Conservation Monitoring Centre in Cambridge (UK) was reconstituted as the "World Conservation Monitoring Centre" funded by UNEP, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). This tripartite sponsorship lasted for more than a decade. During this period WCMC had the status of a charitable organization registered in the UK.

99. In 1998 two events prompted a re-think of the governance of WCMC. First, IUCN and WWF decided that their future policy and financial direction should not involve any core funding for the Centre. Second, the need for UNEP to strengthen its capacity in the field of information, assessment and monitoring was highlighted in the report to the Secretary General submitted by the UN Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements. These events led to a series of reviews of WCMC's role; negotiations with the UK Government which donated over \$1 million largely to clear the mortgage on WCMC's premises; and ultimately a change of WCMC's status in June 2000 to that of a specialist centre or agency of UNEP ("UNEP-WCMC"). As part of the same policy of broadening its capacity, UNEP has established relationships with other centres such as GRID Arendal in Norway and the UNEP Collaborating Centre on Water and the Environment in Denmark.

100. The relationship between UNEP and UNEP-WCMC since June 2000 is governed by a Framework Document setting out the respective resource and accountability obligations. During the last two years UNEP-WCMC has become more closely integrated as an assessment and monitoring centre with UNEP's policy and programme of work, whilst retaining substantial autonomy and flexibility concerning administrative, personnel and financial arrangements. The Director of UNEP-WCMC is a full-time staff member of UNEP, and was confirmed in post following an open competition in September 2002. The remainder of the Centre's staff are employed by a charitable body ("WCMC 2000").

101. The acquisition of UNEP-WCMC as a team of 40 professionals, together with its databases and international reputation, represents very good value for money. In particular, UNEP-WCMC's status has allowed it to continue to raise more than 80% of its funds from projects (2001 figures). Of these activities, almost 60% serve a wide variety of users outside UNEP in the intergovernmental, governmental and private sectors. The 40% of projects linked to UNEP represent much-needed support to the work programmes of all Divisions, UNEP-GEF and the UNF. Details of the Centre's activities contained in the annual reports are circulated.

102. In addition to its own programmes of work and projects, the Centre also hosts components of a number of activities that are executed on behalf of a group of partner organizations. The Centre hosts the Directorate of the ICRAN network, the Ecosystem Condition Working Group and the data management component of the Millennium Assessment and the IUCN Red List and Publications Unit staff. It is also envisaged that UNEP will allocate the work of the UNEP Coral Reef Unit to UNEP-WCMC early in 2003, where it will benefit from synergy with existing capacity on coral reef mapping and assessment. Plans are also being laid for the Centre to take greater responsibility in the implementation of the Great Apes Survival Programme.

United Nations List and World Database of Protected Areas

103. At its twenty-seventh session in 1959 the UN Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 713 (XXVII):

“The Economic and Social Council,

Noting that national parks and equivalent reserves have been established in most countries which are Members of the United Nations or the specialized agencies, and that they contribute to the inspiration, culture and welfare of mankind,

Believing that these national parks are valuable for economic and scientific reasons and also as areas for the future preservation of fauna and flora and geologic structures in their natural state,

(1) *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish, in co-operation with UNESCO, FAO, and other interested specialized agencies, a list of national parks and equivalent reserves, with a brief description of each, for consideration by the Council at its twenty-ninth session, together with his recommendations for maintaining and developing the list on a current basis and for its distribution;

(2) *Invites* State Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies to transmit to the Secretary General a description of the areas they desire to have internationally registered as national parks or equivalent reserves; and

(3) *Furthermore invites* the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and other interested non-governmental organisations in consultative status to assist the Secretary-General, upon his request, in the preparation of the proposed list.”

104. This decision resulted in the *World List of National Parks and Protected Areas*, and commenced a periodic process of reporting known as the *UN List of Protected Areas*. To date 13 reports have been produced.

105. The repository of *UN List* data at UNEP-WCMC is the basis of World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA). The database currently holds more than 94,000 records in the database, of which 60% meet the IUCN definition of a protected area. Although housed and managed by UNEP-WCMC, the WDPA is a key global resource for many stakeholders and partners, in particular national governments, the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), international convention secretariats and the UN network, and non-government organisations. An important role is the provision of protected areas data for global environmental monitoring (Millennium Development Goals, Global Environment Outlook and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, etc) and environmental conventions, such as the World Heritage Convention. The WDPA will also provide protected area information for achievement of WSSD targets that relate to biodiversity and marine protected areas.

106. During 2001-2002 UNEP-WCMC undertook a review of the WDPA and the *UN List* process with IUCN, the WCPA and other stakeholders (including WWF, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy, Birdlife International). As a result of this review the following has been agreed by all parties, including the UNEP ED, IUCN Director General and WCPA Steering Committee:

1. To establish a Consortium of global stakeholders in the World Database on Protected Areas that will operate on agreed principles, including assistance in the procurement of funds to maintain the WDPA.
2. UNEP-WCMC to be the custodian of the WDPA.
3. UNEP and IUCN to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding on the principles of operation of the WDPA as a key tool in global biodiversity monitoring to be launched at the World Parks Congress in Durban in 2003.
4. To renew the 1959 UN mandate on the preparation of the *UN List* to reflect:
 - ? the growing importance of protected areas data for global monitoring;

- ? the importance of the World Database on Protected Areas as the global core dataset and reference standard;
- ? custodian role of UNEP-WCMC for the WDPA on behalf of UNEP, IUCN and global stakeholders;
- ? the key role of UNEP in global protected areas data collation, as the UN agency for global environmental issues, in collaboration with UNESCO, FAO and IUCN (as the main partners named in the 1959 resolution); and
- ? the formation of a global WDPA Consortium that will operate under agreed principles, including open access to data.
