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**Governing Council
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Environment Programme**

**Twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council/
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Items 4 (a), (d) and (e) of the provisional agenda*

**Policy issues: state of the environment; coordination within
the United Nations system on environmental matters;
coordination and cooperation with major groups**

**Progress reports mandated by the Governing Council at previous
sessions**

Report by the Executive Director

Summary

The present report provides information on the following subjects, as mandated by the Governing Council in decisions adopted at previous sessions:

- (a) Implementation of decision 26/14 on the Global Environment Monitoring System Water Programme, pursuant to paragraph 5 of the decision;
- (b) Outcomes of the ninth meeting of the international Advisory Group on Environmental Emergencies, pursuant to decision 26/15, paragraph 9;
- (c) Contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme to promoting South-South cooperation, pursuant to decision 26/16, paragraph 7;
- (d) Work of the Environment Management Group, pursuant to decision SS.XII/2, paragraph 4;
- (e) Mid-term progress in the implementation of the long-term strategy on the engagement and involvement of young people in environmental issues, pursuant to decision 25/6, paragraph 7.

* UNEP/GC.27/1.

I. Implementation of Governing Council decision 26/14 on the Global Environment Monitoring System Water Programme (paragraph 5)

A. Background

1. The present section provides information on the accomplishments and challenges related to the implementation of the Global Environment Monitoring System Water Programme (GEMS/Water) in its four focus areas: securing adequate additional funding from diverse sources; improving global coverage and consistency of water quality data; improving data access for users; and increasing developing country capacity for water quality monitoring.

2. Pursuant to this mandate, the activities and projects described below were carried out under the programme in the period from March 2011 to December 2012.

1. Securing adequate additional funding from diverse sources

3. The Uruguay River Administrative Commission and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) signed a donor agreement in June 2011 worth \$81,925 for technical cooperation in support of a laboratory performance evaluation study involving 24 laboratories in Argentina and Uruguay. The main purpose of the study was to assist the Commission in selecting laboratories capable of producing reliable data for water quality analysis.

4. The Government of Norway has approved \$420,000 for the years 2012 and 2013 to support the preparation of a new global water quality assessment report by the Division of Environmental Policy Implementation and the Division of Early Warning and Assessment of UNEP through GEMS/Water, the Office of the Chief Scientist and collaborating scientific institutions and experts worldwide.

2. Improving global coverage and consistency of water quality data

5. Another laboratory performance evaluation will be conducted in 2013, in which approximately 200 developing-country laboratories that monitor water quality are expected to participate. The primary purpose of the evaluation is to assess and report on the comparability and reliability of the analytical data generated by these laboratories.

3. Improving data access for users

6. A new GEMS/Water website (www.unep.org/gemswater) was launched in March 2012 on the occasion of the sixth World Water Forum, held in Marseilles, France. Implemented in collaboration with the UNEP Division of Communications and Public Information, the activity involved the redesign of the website and its migration to the www.unep.org platform and the hosting of the new website on the UNEP server. Institutional issues, such as corporate identity and the common look of the website and server domain, were also part of the project.

7. The architectural upgrade of the source code for the Global Water Quality Data and Statistics (GEMStat) intelligent online data acquisition system (see www.gemstat.org), including technical support for and the maintenance of the latest GEMStat web-based system, is an important activity. Launched in 2011, it is expected to be completed in early 2013.

8. The updating of the directory of GEMS/Water national and collaborating focal points was carried out for Southern and Eastern Africa (18 members of the GEMS/Water global network), the Asia-Pacific region (15 members) and the Latin America and Caribbean region (10 members). The updating process continues for Western, Central and Northern Africa (21 members).

9. Water quality data sets from GEMStat have been included in the UNEP-Live platform, enhancing its reach and distribution.

10. The following developments have taken place since 2011:

(a) New institutions have joined the GEMS/Water global network, including the Institute of Rangeland Hydrology, located in Argentina, which joined in October 2012 and has three stations and 1,612 data points, the Ministry of the Environment of China, which joined in October 2012, and the National Water Agency of Brazil, which joined in November 2012;

(b) Some national focal points have increased their station networks and data contributions to GEMStat, including Argentina, with one new station and 665 data points as at November 2011, Israel, with one new station and water quality and biological data dating from 1969 to 2006 as at February 2012, Panama, with 21 new stations and up to 62,000 data points as at October 2012, the

Republic of Korea, with nine new stations and new data pending as at October 2012, and Sri Lanka, with 30 new stations and 2,861 data points as at April 2011;

(c) There was an increase in overall data contribution during 2012 from several countries, including Belgium, with approximately 21,000 data points, Japan, with approximately 9,168 data points, Morocco, with approximately 1,600 data points, New Zealand, with approximately 37,000 data points, the Russian Federation, with approximately 11,000 data points, South Africa, with approximately 6,800 data points, and Sri Lanka, with approximately 2,608 data points.

4. Increasing developing country capacity for water-quality monitoring

11. Three regional capacity-building workshops were organized in 2012 as follows:

(a) Johannesburg, South Africa, 16–18 April, for Southern and Eastern Africa, in collaboration with the South African Department of Water Affairs and Forestry and the UNEP Regional Office for Africa;

(b) Panama City, 24–26 April, for Latin America and the Caribbean, in collaboration with the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean;

(c) New Delhi, 5–8 November, for the Asia-Pacific region, in collaboration with the India Water Foundation and the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

12. The workshops were intended to raise awareness at the national and regional levels about water quality monitoring and the GEMS/Water programme, to increase participation in the GEMS/Water global network and the submission of raw data to GEMStat, to identify prevailing challenges at the national and regional levels in water quality data acquisition, sharing, monitoring, assessment and reporting, and to determine the level of technical support, expertise and advice in water quality analysis required by laboratories in the countries participating in the workshops.

13. A regional workshop for Western, Central and Northern African members of the GEMS/Water network is being organized in collaboration with the Water Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research of Ghana, and will be held in Accra beginning on 11 March 2013.

14. An electronic survey on the GEMS/Water websites and activities at the national and regional levels was sent to all national focal points and regional workshop participants to collect information on country participation in the GEMS/Water programme and network, in particular regarding the submission of data to GEMStat, and to ascertain what challenges members faced with regard to becoming more active in the network and submitting data to the global database. The survey was prepared and conducted through a joint effort between the GEMS/Water team and the Early Warning Branch of the Division of Early Warning and Assessment.

15. A new partnership was established with the Government of Israel, through the Water Authority of Israel and the Agency for International Development Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel, to revise the current GEMS/Water course entitled “Lake and Reservoir Water Quality Management” and the delivery of training to water quality practitioners from the developing world.

16. UNEP and other partners are proposing to support the countries of the Lake Tanganyika basin through the Lake Tanganyika Authority by offering water quality monitoring and capacity-building initiatives aimed at preserving the lake’s ecosystem composition, structure, function and services through enhanced water quality monitoring and assessments that will contribute to transboundary governance. GEMS/Water is participating in this project.

17. GEMS/Water has finalized the technical evaluation of tender offers for the development of water quality training course modules on laboratory operations, management, quality assurance and quality management systems. A contract for the development of the modules is expected to be awarded by December 2012 and the delivery of course modules is expected to begin in March 2013.

B. Programmatic and international visibility

18. The GEMS/Water programme has participated in several international and regional meetings to increase the visibility of GEMS/Water activities and expand the network of collaborators.

19. GEMS/Water activities are among the actions proposed as strategic priorities in the UNEP freshwater operational strategy for the period 2012–2016. These activities include facilitating strategic partnerships with agencies to address the global water quality challenge, supporting countries in their efforts to improve and expand water quality data collection and intensifying global and regional assessment of water quality in critical freshwater systems. The implementation of policies emanating from the operational strategy began in 2012.

C. Challenges

20. The GEMS/Water programme is currently in a transitional phase. An agreement between UNEP and Environment Canada, signed in 2010, will come to an end on 31 March 2014, and Environment Canada will no longer support GEMS/Water financially beyond that date. GEMS/Water has been able to attract some additional funding, but it has been earmarked entirely for programme activities.

21. Other major challenges for the GEMS/Water programme include:

(a) The need to find a donor country and/or institution that can secure a sustainable home for the programme;

(b) The need to secure funds for a secretariat-type global coordination and management unit, which is critical to ensuring the global coordination of the programme and its global networks, establishing partnerships and capacity-building initiatives required by developing countries to strengthen their water quality monitoring programmes and facilitating the submission of further data to GEMStat;

(c) The need to develop GEMS/Water materials and products in all United Nations languages, which would require additional support to maintain an adequate level of communication and interaction;

(d) The need for the partnerships mentioned above to expand the outreach potential of the programme to all developing countries and to engage the various actors in the water quality monitoring community, such as transboundary river basin and lake commissions, in GEMS/Water.

D. Links to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development: the future we want

22. GEMS/Water can play a very important role worldwide in mobilizing and supporting the generation and sharing of and access to quality-assured data on water quality in freshwater ecosystems and water quality indices and indicators that would allow Governments, researchers and societies to assess the quality of critical freshwater resources and how it is changing; in enabling the implementation of integrated water resource management; and in the formulation and adoption of measures and policy options to reduce and control water pollution, increase water quality and ensure the safety of freshwater ecosystems and the services that they provide.

23. Through its global network of collaborating national and international centres, GEMS/Water can support and help increase the institutional and technical capacity of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to monitor water quality, thus facilitating the integration of water quality concerns into national and transboundary resource planning and sustainable development.

II. Outcomes of the ninth meeting of the Advisory Group on Environmental Emergencies (paragraph 9 of Governing Council decision 26/15)

24. The ninth meeting of the Advisory Group on Environmental Emergencies (AGEE) was held in Bern from 18 to 20 May 2011. The meeting was jointly organized by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and UNEP and was hosted by the Government of Switzerland.

25. AGEE meets every two years, bringing together environmental and disaster managers from around the world to share information, experiences and lessons learned to improve prevention, preparedness and response in respect of environmental emergencies. The Joint UNEP-OCHA Environment Unit serves as the secretariat of the group. AGEE also reviews the work of the Joint Unit, and provides advice and guidance on areas needing development, thereby defining the future activities of the Unit.

26. The ninth meeting brought together representatives from 23 States Members of the United Nations, international organizations, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations to discuss issues and challenges related to environmental emergency preparedness and response. The following main agenda items were addressed at the meeting:

(a) Environmental Emergencies Centre and strengthening national capacities. Under this agenda item, UNEP, OCHA and their partners pledged to build the capacities of national authorities

and responders to prepare for environmental emergencies through the Environmental Emergencies Centre;

(b) Regional approaches to improving environmental emergency preparedness and response. Under this agenda item, UNEP, OCHA and their partners pledged to facilitate the collaboration of actors at the regional level;

(c) Implementation of Governing Council decision 26/15. Under this agenda item, UNEP, OCHA and their partners pledged to compile a comprehensive document listing all current efforts in the domain of environmental emergencies so as to identify gaps and overlaps.

27. The three main agenda items and initiatives are described in further detail below.

A. Investing in preparedness to reduce the risks of disaster through the Environmental Emergencies Centre

28. Investing in the preparedness of vulnerable countries reduces the risks posed to them by future disasters and can ultimately save lives and livelihoods and protect property. At its ninth meeting AGEE recognized that the shift away from providing response to countries, and enabling them to do preparedness work themselves was an important step and a major turning point for OCHA and UNEP.

29. The Environmental Emergencies Centre is a web-based platform designed to assist Government authorities and emergency managers in learning from and sharing best practices.

30. UNEP and OCHA are working with various partners:

(a) To develop the Environmental Emergencies Centre and tools, guidelines and online training to build national preparedness through its electronic learning portal;

(b) To act as a library of multilingual materials and an information hub offering links to other useful sources;

(c) To deliver a number of operational services, including online training and tailor-made in-country (face-to-face) activities;

(d) To raise the level of awareness of environmental emergencies and their devastating effects.

31. The Joint Unit, in collaboration with the Environmental Emergency Centre, held a pilot training course for the Economic Community of West African States in Abuja from 5 to 9 November 2012, entitled "Beyond response: better preparedness for environmental emergencies". More information is available at www.eecentre.org.

B. Regional approaches to improved emergency preparedness and response

32. Since 2011, the Environmental Emergency Centre has been working on developing a regional approach to environmental emergency preparedness, in collaboration with the Haze Centre of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the ASEAN Coordination Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management. Only a few regions have successfully established close cooperation on this issue. In September 2012, the Joint Unit organized a workshop with ASEAN member States to discuss how to move the regional approach for environmental emergencies forward and develop a roadmap that describes any necessary adjustments to the different regional contexts. On the basis of the roadmap, training and other activities will be developed to help shape the new approach. More information is available at <http://environment.asean.org>.

C. Improving the coordination of environmental emergency response systems

33. Currently, countries and international organizations have a patchwork of agreements, institutions and guidelines pertaining to environmental emergency responses. One country might be covered by an agreement for industrial accidents or forest fires but might not be covered in case of a nuclear emergency or an oil spill. As there is no mechanism to connect such initiatives, the result is fragmentation, gaps and limited coordination.

34. Recognizing the current limitations of international response systems with regard to the environmental impacts of natural and human-caused disasters, at its twenty-sixth session the UNEP Governing Council adopted decision 26/15 on strengthening international cooperation on the environmental aspects of emergency response and preparedness. In the decision the Council requested UNEP and to work closely with OCHA on this important issue.

35. To address the issue, UNEP and OCHA are preparing a baseline document that describes the current roles and responsibilities of, and divisions of labour between, international organizations involved in responding to environmental emergencies. The end result will contribute to a more effective overall response system, and countries and organizations will have a better understanding of what assistance can be provided and by whom, depending on the type of emergency. In addition, UNEP and OCHA are facilitating a process, initiated in May 2012, to ensure that key organizations involved in responding to environmental emergencies have a clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities in various scenarios.

III. Contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme to promoting South-South cooperation (paragraph 7 of decision 26/16)

A. Background

36. Under the Bali Strategic Plan for Capacity-Building and Technology Support, UNEP is mandated to strengthen and integrate South-South cooperation as a primary delivery mechanism for capacity-building and technology support among developing countries. Moreover, the UNEP medium-term strategy for the period 2010–2013 calls for enhanced implementation to be pursued through a number of processes and partnerships, including the facilitation of South-South cooperation.

37. The outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, “The future we want”, provides UNEP with an additional mandate to strengthen existing internal efforts and processes to advance South-South cooperation as a delivery mechanism for capacity-building and institutional support to countries.

38. In response to specific provisions of these policy instruments, as well as Governing Council decisions 24/12, 25/9 and 26/16 and relevant General Assembly resolutions, UNEP continues to promote South-South cooperation as a means of supporting capacity-building efforts in developing countries and countries with economies in transition through partnership-building and the exchange of expertise, experiences, best practices and knowledge between experts and institutions of the South.

B. Progress and current status

1. Implementation of South-South cooperation activities in the context of the programme of work

39. South-South cooperation has been increasingly incorporated into the UNEP programmes of work for the bienniums 2010–2011 and 2012–2013 as a key mechanism for delivering capacity-building and technology support. Projects and activities with South-South cooperation modalities exist in all six subprogrammes of the programme of work: climate change, disasters and conflicts, ecosystem management, harmful substances and hazardous waste, resource efficiency and environmental governance.

40. The South-South cooperation approaches that have been used in capacity-building activities include specialized data support, policy advice, technical backstopping support, training and related capacity-development initiatives and expertise inputs, including tools and methodologies, outreach materials and mechanisms for information-sharing.

41. The use of centres of excellence, collaborating centres, specialized networks and partnerships with other organizations, including the scientific and research community, to provide medium- to long-term support, in the form of data, expertise, methodologies, tools and databases, was reported as the preferred mode of institutional strengthening, and has been incorporated into several long-standing UNEP programmes and projects.

42. The third category of reported activities comprises initiatives under the rubric of North-South-South cooperation, which serve to leverage complementary technical and financial resources from partners in the North to those in the South.

43. To guide the systematic integration of South-South cooperation approaches into the design and implementation of capacity-building activities, UNEP continues to draw on its policy guidance on South-South cooperation.

44. Details of the range of partnerships and the contributions they bring to the process are contained in document UNEP/GC.27/INF/15.

2. Established and strengthened South-South cooperation partnerships

45. UNEP maintained and strengthened its interaction with the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation of the United Nations Development Programme, which is mandated to coordinate United Nations inter-agency policy dialogue to advance South-South cooperation in the United Nations system. Regular consultations were held focusing on the UNEP contribution to and participation in relevant global South-South cooperation processes and events, including:

(a) Global South-South Development Expo, held at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome in December 2011, where UNEP and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) convened a solution forum on the environment and climate change;

(b) United Nations inter-agency meetings on South-South cooperation, held in Rome in December 2011 and in New York in March 2012;

(c) Seventeenth session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, held in New York in May 2011;

(d) Global South-South Development Expo, held at UNIDO headquarters in Vienna in November 2012, where UNEP, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity convened a solution forum on biodiversity, forests and land degradation.

46. In addition, UNEP support for South-South cooperation in the context of the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity was scaled up in response to Governing Council decision 26/16. A high-profile joint event on South-South cooperation was co-organized by UNEP and the Convention secretariat at the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, in Hyderabad, India, on 17 October 2012, to elaborate the programmatic synergies between the UNEP South-South Cooperation Exchange Mechanism and proposed centres of excellence under the Convention, in support of the implementation of the Multi-Year Plan of Action on South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development.

47. A positive development in this context was the participation of the Convention secretariat in, and its substantive contributions to, the UNEP solution forum on biodiversity, forests and land degradation held during the Global South-South Development Expo in Vienna in November 2012.

3. UNEP South-South Cooperation Exchange Mechanism

48. In response to Governing Council decisions 24/12 and 25/9, UNEP developed the South-South Cooperation Exchange Mechanism (see www.unep.org/south-south-cooperation) to assist countries in identifying and gaining access to a wide range of information on available technologies, expertise, experiences, opportunities, best practices, methodologies, advisory services, training opportunities and appropriate networks, especially in the countries and regions of the South. The mechanism serves to match available South-specific solutions to priority capacity-building needs identified in countries of the South. More than 30 case studies covering a wide range of environmental and sustainable development topics have been shared through the Exchange Mechanism.

49. The Exchange Mechanism was officially launched on 23 May 2012 in New York at the seventeenth session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation. Presentations on the mechanism were made at several high-level policy forums, including meetings of the UNEP Committee of Permanent Representatives, in June 2011, and the Nairobi chapter of the Group of 77 and China, in November 2011 and June 2012, and at the Global South-South Development Expo, in Rome, in December 2011, and in Vienna, in November 2012.

C. Challenges

50. The expansion of the case base for the Exchange Mechanism is resource intensive and requires investment in sufficient capacity to develop and submit case studies on a continuing basis. Accordingly, UNEP has initiated efforts to establish partnership arrangements with United Nations entities, international and regional organizations, academic and research institutions, centres of excellence and networks for the development of case studies and case stories, based on those partners' successes in the area of South-South cooperation, for posting on the Exchange Mechanism, as well as the development of joint initiatives.

51. At the programmatic level, the UNEP policy guidance on South-South cooperation continues to serve as a practical tool for steering internal efforts to advance South-South cooperation within the organization. UNEP will devote time and effort to strengthening internal capacity and coordination to

ensure that this guidance is provided in a timely manner and is harmonized with other project management tools applied in UNEP projects.

52. Strategic partnerships with relevant bilateral and multilateral institutions will be developed or strengthened to leverage complementary technical and financial resources for identified South-South cooperation activities in the UNEP programme of work.

53. At the global level, UNEP will step up efforts to support policy dialogue on South-South cooperation on environmental issues at international conferences, including meetings of the conferences of the parties to relevant multilateral environmental agreements, so as to promote partnerships for enhancing South-South and triangular cooperation. In particular, UNEP will continue to provide substantive inputs and will participate in the biennial conferences of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation.

54. In addition, UNEP will continue to take the lead in the organization of the solution forum on climate change and the environment as a key component of the annual Global South-South Development Expo in order to showcase UNEP-supported initiatives that have provided successful solutions to climate change and environmental problems through effective leadership, innovation and partnerships.

D. Conclusion

55. UNEP continues to register significant progress in advancing South-South cooperation as a delivery mechanism for capacity-building and technology support activities; to raise awareness of the value of applying South-specific approaches to tackling the shared challenges of the countries of the South; to leverage the necessary partnerships at the strategic and operational levels; and to deliver on its commitments regarding relevant global initiatives and processes to meet the growing request for UNEP support at various levels.

56. There is every indication that Governments and other partners will continue to have high expectations of UNEP regarding the delivery of environmental capacity-building and technology support through South-South cooperation arrangements. The Rio+20 commitments on South-South cooperation and relevant global policy instruments, including General Assembly resolutions and the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020, which call for increased efforts in the implementation of South-South cooperation, are a clear manifestation of such expectations. Meeting them will require UNEP to make regular adjustments in its programming and operational processes, including by leveraging sufficient resources for the envisaged expansion of the portfolio of South-South cooperation initiatives.

IV. Report on the work of the Environment Management Group (paragraph 4 of decision SS.XII/2)

57. Information on the work of the Environment Management Group, as requested by the Governing Council in its decision SS.XII/2, will be provided in an addendum to the present report.

V. Mid-term progress report on the implementation of the long-term strategy on the engagement and involvement of young people in environmental issues (paragraph 7 of decision 25/6)

A. Background

58. At its twenty-fifth session, the Governing Council adopted decision 25/6, in which it welcomed and decided to implement the second long-term strategy on the engagement and involvement of young people in environmental issues, known as the Tunza Programme, for a period of six years from 2009 to 2014. The present section provides a brief mid-term report on the implementation of the Programme from 2009 to 2012.

B. Activities

59. The Tunza Programme continues to generate extensive interest on the part of organizations representing children and youth and of a variety of partners. UNEP has expanded its network for children and young people, and regional and subregional networks have been strengthened by the UNEP regional offices. UNEP continues to organize international, regional and subregional Tunza conferences. To ensure implementation of the Programme, Tunza focal points have been designated in regional offices, and UNEP divisions are playing an active role in engaging young people.

60. The UNEP Tunza network, which includes electronic and postal mailing lists, has been consolidated and includes contact information for over 20,000 organizations representing children and youth worldwide. UNEP has also organized annual conferences since 2009. Global conferences were held in Daejeon, Republic of Korea, in 2009; in Nagoya, Japan, in 2010; and in Bandung, Indonesia, in 2011. In Africa, UNEP has organized three regional children's and youth conferences since 2009 to raise awareness of environmental issues among children and young people. In the Asia-Pacific region, UNEP organized 14 subregional conferences, which resulted in the submission of statements to major United Nations conferences and strengthened the youth network in the region. In Europe, UNEP engaged young people in the regional consultation of major groups and stakeholders held in Bonn, Germany, in September 2011, providing participants with an opportunity to discuss their contribution to Rio+20. In North America, UNEP organized three Tunza North America youth network conferences to showcase the environmental activities of young people. In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNEP organized annual conferences for young people to discuss their involvement in issues ranging from sustainable consumption to Rio+20.

61. UNEP continues to use the website www.unep.org/tunza to provide information on environmental issues to young people and showcase their work. UNEP also continues to publish its quarterly magazine for young people, entitled *Tunza*, containing information on a wide range of environmental issues. UNEP has also worked on a youth version of the fifth Global Environment Outlook report. That publication, entitled *Tunza Acting for a Better World – GEO5 for Youth*, is scheduled to be launched just before the opening of the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council.

62. UNEP is currently working with other United Nations entities and international and regional organizations on the implementation of the Tunza Programme. UNEP is part of the United Nations inter-agency youth development network, a forum for exchanging information on ways in which United Nations entities are engaging with young people. Between 2009 and 2012, UNEP worked on various activities with the United Nations Children's Fund, FAO, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Volunteers programme, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, the World Organization of the Scout Movement, the Goethe-Institute and the Eco-Schools "Environment and Innovation" programme.

63. UNEP has actively engaged student groups to promote environmental education and awareness. More than 700 students from all over the world attended the annual international student conferences on environment and sustainability, hosted jointly by UNEP and Tongji University, in Shanghai, China, in June 2011 and June 2012. In addition, the 2012 World Student Summit for Sustainability brought together around 200 students in Nairobi in November 2012. The main goal of the Summit, which was a collaborative effort between UNEP and the World Student Community for Sustainable Development, was to build student understanding and stewardship of a green economy.

64. UNEP, in collaboration with the State Department of the United States of America, launched the Young Environmental Journalist Award Africa in 2010. The Award seeks to recognize the very best in original, accurate and inspiring reporting on the environment by young journalists in Africa.

65. Since 2009, climate change has been a major priority for the Tunza Programme. The Tunza International Children and Youth Conference on Climate Change, held in Daejeon, Republic of Korea, in August 2009, focused on climate change and resulted in a statement for the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Copenhagen in December 2009. UNEP also engaged young people in subsequent global and regional conferences on climate-related subjects. Climate change was the theme for the 2009 International Children's Painting Competition, which received more than 600,000 entries from all over the world. The winning entries were exhibited at the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Copenhagen in 2009.

66. The UNEP 2011 Tunza International Children and Youth Conference, held in Bandung, Indonesia, in September and October 2011, focused on the Rio+20 themes. A total of 1,400 participants developed a children and youth statement that fed into the zero draft of the Rio+20 outcome document. Seven regional and subregional conferences were organized in 2011 and 2012 on the Rio+20 preparations. UNEP continues to offer opportunities for its Tunza Youth Advisory Council members to attend Governing Council sessions as observers.

67. UNEP and UNESCO have continued to work closely on the YouthXchange initiative, launched in 2001, in an effort to increase young people's understanding of resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production. This initiative promotes responsible consumption and sustainable lifestyles through education, capacity-building, awareness-raising and dialogue between young people worldwide.

68. In 2010, UNEP worked closely with the organizers of the Indian Premier League to promote environmental messages (mainly on ecosystems management) at League events. Indian cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar was the main driver of the campaign. Targeted environmental tips were used during League matches to urge spectators to adopt environmentally friendly habits. UNEP also worked with Puma, a sports and lifestyle company, to promote biodiversity conservation in Africa. The campaign, entitled Play for Life International, broadcast messages on biodiversity conservation from the African football star Samuel Eto'o and targeted young people in Africa and globally. The International Children's Painting Competition, held in 2010 and 2011, focused on biodiversity and green communities.

69. In September 2010, UNEP published a special issue of Tunza on the theme "Hazards and disasters". The magazine provided information on catastrophes and disasters and what young people could do to address them.

70. As part of the European environment and health process to involve young people in environmental and health issues, UNEP launched a project in 2010 to explore what was being done to protect children's health from environmental hazards. The project also showcased ways in which young people were engaged in improving drinking water, sanitation and hygiene conditions and ecological wastewater treatment in their communities.

C. Implementation and challenges

71. In terms of fundraising, Bayer, a chemical and health-care company, continues to be the main source of funding for the implementation of the Tunza Programme. UNEP renegotiated an extension of funding, which provides €1.2 million annually, until 2013, to support the Programme. Currently, Bayer provides €655,000 annually for the implementation of activities within the context of the Programme. UNEP has also leveraged partnerships through hosts of its international children's and youth conferences.

72. The main challenge facing the Tunza Programme is the limited funding available for its implementation. The Environment Fund does not provide funding for this very important UNEP activity and the number of staff responsible for the implementation of the Programme has been decreasing over the years, even as needs and opportunities are increasing. Given the scope and opportunities for engaging young people in the Rio+20 outcomes, more financial and human resource support would enable UNEP to increase its outreach to young people throughout the world.

D. Future actions

73. UNEP could benefit from the extensive involvement of children and youth in environmental issues, especially in the areas of green jobs. The Tunza Programme will take into account the outcomes of Rio+20 and engage young people throughout the world in its implementation. UNEP will link children's and youth activities to relevant UNEP campaigns, such as the campaign tackling food waste that is being implemented in collaboration with FAO.

74. UNEP is currently exploring the possibility of splitting its children and youth conference to focus on organizing youth conferences, which would enable UNEP to strengthen its outreach to youth organizations subregionally, regionally and worldwide. In view of its limited capacity to handle the growing needs of the Tunza Programme, UNEP will seek a partner with relevant experience to assist in organizing future conferences for children.
