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Committee of Permanent Representatives to  
the United Nations Environment Programme

## **REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL/GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY-JUNE 2008 AND THE PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE 2008-2009 BIENNIUM**

**January-June 2008**

**Report of the Executive Director**

### **Summary**

The Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has the honour to provide an executive summary of the status of the implementation of the decisions adopted by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its twenty-fourth session and its tenth special session, held in Nairobi from 5 to 9 February 2007, and in Monaco from 20 to 22 February 2008, respectively. The present report covers in Part I the activities for the period January-June 2008.

This report also provides in Part II a review of performance of UNEP in implementing the expected accomplishments and the programme of work for the period 2008-2009 also for the period January-June 2008.

The present report is being submitted to Governments in keeping with Governing Council decisions 19/32 of 4 April 1997, 20/31 III of 4 February 1999, SS.VI/2 of 31 May 2000 and 24/9 of 9 February 2007.

It is to be noted that the meeting of Joint Subcommittees I and II of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP, held on 11 September 2008, considered Part I of the report, therefore, the present submission is to provide the Committee with the report in its entirety.

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## PART I:

### REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL/GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM ADOPTED AT THE TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION AND THE TENTH SPECIAL SESSION

January-June 2008

Part I of the present report provides the report on the status of the implementation of decisions of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum adopted at the twenty-fourth session and the tenth special session, with respect to those decisions which facilitate policy-making by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. This report covers the activities for the period January-June 2008.

The status of the implementation of other decisions, namely those which call for actions of UNEP in the context of the approved programme of work is provided as an integral component of Part II, which is the programme performance report for the biennium 2008-2009.

#### Decision 24/1 (Implementation of decision SS.VII/1 on international environmental governance)

#### III Strengthening the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme

##### Relevant operative paragraphs

6. *Welcomes* the consultative process on strengthening the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme as facilitated by the Executive Director and the valuable inputs made by Governments and other stakeholders which have resulted in the draft proposal of the Environment Watch strategy;

7. *Requests* the Executive Director to consult Governments, other United Nations bodies, financial institutions including the Global Environment Facility, the private sector and civil society, multilateral environmental agreements, the scientific community including global observing systems and other partners with a view to improving further the proposed Environment Watch strategy as an integral part of the wider strategic vision of the United Nations Environment Programme, to report back to the Governing Council at its twenty-fifth session with a revised proposal which should include component cost estimates for work proposed for the 2010–2011 biennium and to make those estimates available to the Committee of Permanent Representatives early in the budget process;

8. *Reaffirms* the need to strengthen the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme, within its mandate, including through the reinforcement of the scientific capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the area of protection of the environment;

9. *Reaffirms also* environmental early warning, assessment and monitoring of the state of the global environment as core functions of the United Nations Environment Programme and recognizes the potential value of a network that draws on the experience of existing bodies, including academic institutions and centres of excellence, and the scientific competence of specialized agencies and the scientific subsidiary bodies of multilateral environmental agreements;

10. *Underlines* the vital importance in a globalizing world of enhancing infrastructures and capacities which can sustain cooperation on environmental data and information and which can lead to reduced transaction costs for national reporting, natural resource accounting and decision-making and the integration of environment into development, the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and the achievement of national and international development goals, taking into consideration existing infrastructures, mechanisms and tools in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to maximize synergies in the sharing of data and information;

11. *Supports* United Nations Environment Programme endeavours to enhance information networks at the regional and national levels;

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In late 2007 the Executive Director wrote to all Governments (ministers for environment), relevant UN bodies, key scientific institutions, secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements and multilateral financial institutions (including GEF), private sector and civil society partners, requesting their inputs on improving the Environment Watch strategy. Reminders were sent in March-May 2008 and the comments are still being collected. All comments received are posted on the Science Initiative website ([www.unep.org/science](http://www.unep.org/science)) and a document will be prepared for submission to the twenty-fifth session of GC/GMEF to provide a synthesis of the feedback, as well as to update and cost the Strategy.

UNEP participated in the three informal consultations held in May-June 2008 on the draft UN General Assembly resolution on international environmental governance, answering questions of Permanent Missions related to, among others, strengthening the scientific base of UNEP, its financing and governance structure. In addition, UNEP held various bilateral meetings with member States on issues related to IEG.

## Decision 24/1 (Implementation of decision SS.VII/1 on international environmental governance)

### IV Strengthening the financing of the United Nations Environment Programme

#### Relevant operative paragraphs

12. *Emphasizes* the need for stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for the United Nations Environment Programme and the Environment Fund, in the context of the United Nations regular budget, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII);

13. *Reaffirms* its support for the provision of adequate, stable and predictable financing of the United Nations Environment Programme as an essential prerequisite for the strengthening of its capacity and functions as well as for the effective coordination of the environmental component of sustainable development;

14. *Also encourages* Governments, in order to strengthen further the financing of the United Nations Environment Programme and increase the level of the financial reserve as requested in paragraph 8 of Governing Council decision 24/10 of 9 February 2007, taking into account their economic and social circumstances, to make voluntary contributions to the Environment Fund starting in 2007 in an amount equal to or greater than that suggested by the extended pilot phase of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions or on the basis of any of the other voluntary options listed in paragraph 18 of the appendix to decision SS.VII/1;

15. *Requests* the Executive Director, in accordance with paragraph 19 of the appendix to decision SS.VII/1, to notify all United Nations Member States of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions which he intends to propose for the biennium 2008–2009 and urges each Member State to inform the Executive Director whether it will use the proposed voluntary indicative scale of contributions;

16. *Also requests* the Executive Director to prepare a report to the Governing Council for consideration at its twenty-fifth session assessing the operation of the extended pilot phase of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions and the other voluntary options listed in paragraph 18 of the appendix to decision SS.VII/1;

17. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue his efforts in seeking an increase in funding, from all sources, for strengthening the financial base of the United Nations Environment Programme;

18. *Encourages* Governments to the extent feasible to move towards contributions to the Environment Fund in preference to contributions to earmarked trust funds, with a view to enhancing the role of the Governing Council in determining the programme of work and priorities of the United Nations Environment Programme;

The new voluntary indicative scale of contributions (VISC) was developed for 2008-2009 biennium, and communicated to 191 UN member States. During the first six months of 2008, 58 countries paid and pledged a total of US\$45.72 million. 44 countries (76%) paid according to VISC or above it, while 14 countries (24%) paid below VISC. 32 of the above donor countries (55%) increased their payments to the Environment Fund, including 6 countries that paid below VISC. This positive trend shows that more and more countries are trying to pay their voluntary contributions closer to VISC level or above it.

It is expected that the total contributions to the Environment Fund for 2008 will exceed the target of US\$72

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million set up by the twenty-fourth session

**Decision 24/15: Provisional agendas, dates and venues for the tenth special session of the Governing Council/Global Environment Forum and the twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

**Relevant operative paragraphs**

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

1. *Decides* to hold the tenth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in February 2008;
2. *Approves* the following provisional agenda for the tenth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum [provisional agenda deleted]:

**II Twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

3. *Decides* that, in accordance with rules 1, 2 and 4 of its rules of procedure, the twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum shall be held in Nairobi in February 2009;
4. *Decides also* that informal consultations between heads of delegations should be held on the afternoon of the day before the opening of the twenty-fifth session;
5. *Approves* the following provisional agenda for the twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum [provisional agenda deleted]:

The tenth special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum was held in the Principality of Monaco from 20 to 22 February 2008, preceded by the ninth Global Civil Society Forum, held on 19 February 2008. The event was participated by 138 countries which includes approximately 100 countries represented at the ministerial-level. Approximately 190 participants from civil society organizations were also in attendance. The tenth special session of the Council/Forum adopted by consensus a total of five decisions, including decision on the medium-term strategy for the period 2010-2013. The Ministerial Consultations resulted in the Summary of the President on the two themes I and II, namely, Globalization and the Environment – Mobilizing Finance to meet the Climate Challenge; and International Environmental Governance and United Nations reform, respectively. The Summary reflects the various options discussed by ministers and heads of delegations for action that Governments, UNEP and the international community could consider. In addition, a total of 15 events including special events, exhibition, and press conferences, were organized during the session of the Council/Forum.

UNEP organized a major briefing by the Deputy Executive Director, April 2008 in New York, to Permanent Missions to the United Nations on the results of the tenth special session of GC/GMEF particularly on the Medium Term Strategy 2010-2013 and new approach to the Strategic Framework 2010-2011. The briefing by the Deputy Executive Director also highlighted UNEP efforts in implementing the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building.

The preparation for the twenty-fifth session of the GC/GMEF has been initiated. The Executive Director addressed all CPR members inviting comments and suggestions for possible themes of the Ministerial Consultations. The meeting of the Bureau of GC/GMEF was held on 17 June 2008 via video-conference, which agreed the preliminary recommendations by the Executive Director for the structure and organization of the twenty-fifth session. These recommendations were presented to the CPR at its 103<sup>rd</sup> meeting, held on 18 June 2008.