



## SUMMARY OF THE NEW YORK MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF MINISTERS OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES ON INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE: 25 JANUARY 2002

The penultimate meeting of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or their Representatives on International Environmental Governance (IGM) was convened in New York at UN headquarters on Friday, 25 January 2002. Just over one hundred delegates from 67 countries participated, including five environment ministers. Approximately 75% of the participants came from their New York missions to the UN. Participants were informed that a depleted International Environmental Governance (IEG) Trust Fund had imposed a limit on the number of ministers and Permanent Representatives to UNEP who were able to attend.

A decision to convene the one-day meeting in New York was taken at a joint meeting of the Bureaux of the UNEP Governing Council, the Committee of the Permanent Representatives to UNEP and the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) on 23 May 2001. In the words of UNEP Governing Council President David Anderson, Minister of Environment of Canada, the meeting was convened so that the IEG process could continue to benefit from the views of New York-based delegations and to ensure a close linkage with the preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). Many of the participants were also preparing to take part in the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the WSSD, scheduled to take place at UN headquarters from 28 January - 8 February. A number of delegations, including Australia and the EU, indicated that they had been led to understand that the New York meeting had been convened for informational purposes.

During the one-day meeting, participants took part in morning and afternoon plenary discussions, offering general and then specific responses to President Anderson's revised "building blocks" paper, now entitled the *Draft Report of the President of the UNEP Governing Council for Consideration by the Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or their Representatives on IEG* (UNEP/IGM/SS/

2). Keen to underline and protect the inclusive and participatory nature of the IEG process, with its inputs from experts, civil society, elements of the UN system together with those of State representatives, President Anderson announced that he had purposely avoided the use of bracketed wording in his new document, which incorporates new elements agreed at IGM-4 in Montreal. He explained that the objective of the IEG process was to achieve a consensus agreement rather than engage in traditional formal negotiation. He suggested that this approach would help participants to collectively refine recommendations without losing sight of their overall objective.

Participants used the plenary sessions to restate and elaborate their views on the IEG process and on the President's draft recommendations on:

- the role and structure of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF);
- strengthening the role, authority, and financial situation of UNEP;
- improving the coordination and coherence of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs);
- capacity building, technology transfer, and country-level coordination for the environment pillar of sustainable development;
- enhanced coordination across the UN system, including the role of the Environmental Management Group (EMG); and
- the future perspective.

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Members of the G-77/China and the US continued to express nervousness about the insistence of the President to avoid what the US described as a “true negotiation” in the lead up to the final IGM meeting on 12 February in Cartagena, Colombia, where Anderson will present a detailed report reflecting all the views presented during the IEG process. Some participants warned that the President’s recommendations would remain open until they could negotiate.

### **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE PROCESS**

The IEG process was initiated in decision 21/20 of the UNEP Governing Council that provides for the further strengthening of UNEP, and decision 21/21, on international environmental governance. Decision 21/21 calls for a comprehensive policy-oriented assessment of existing institutional weaknesses, as well as future needs and options for strengthened governance, including financing of UNEP.

The background to decision 21/21 includes a number of key events in UNEP’s development. The 1997 Nairobi Declaration was adopted by the UNEP Governing Council and endorsed by the UN General Assembly, and confirmed UNEP as the “principal UN body in the field of the environment.” The 1998 Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements appointed by the UN Secretary-General within the overall reform effort of “Renewing the United Nations” recommended the establishment of an EMG to improve interagency coordination, including conventions in its mandate, and the creation of a GMEF.

**MALMÖ MINISTERIAL DECLARATION:** The first meeting of the GMEF, held in Sweden in May 2000, adopted the Malmö Ministerial Declaration, which focused on areas such as the major environmental challenges of the 21st century and agreed that the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development should review the requirements for a greatly strengthened institutional structure for international environmental governance. In this regard, it concluded that UNEP’s role was to be strengthened and its financial base broadened.

**FIRST MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF MINISTERS (IGM-1):** This meeting, convened on 18 April 2001 at UN headquarters in New York, was attended by 93 countries and chaired by Canadian Environment Minister David Anderson, as President of the UNEP Governing Council and IGM Chair. Participants reached consensus on a number of issues, including the need to, *inter alia*: better define international environmental governance; review international environmental governance within the context of sustainable development; involve ministers outside environment ministries; strengthen UNEP and ensure more predictable funding; make better use of existing structures, including the coordination and clustering of multilateral environment agreements; involve stakeholders; and ensure the effective participation of developing countries.

**EXPERT CONSULTATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE:** Convened in accordance with UNEP decision 21/21, this expert consultation was held in Cambridge, UK, on 28-29 May 2001. Discussions were held on the future role of UNEP in relation to sustainable development and on the financial constraints that hinder the Programme in meeting its goals. The consultations noted that any discussion on UNEP being transformed into a specialized agency was premature, and identified three pressing issues concerning IEG: clustering of MEAs, the multi-layering of governance, and the need to look beyond environmental governance.

**SECOND MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF MINISTERS (IGM-2):** This one-day meeting was held in Bonn, Germany, on 17 July 2001, and was chaired by Karen Redman (Canada), on behalf of IGM Chair David Anderson. The purpose of the meeting was to offer input to the Governing Council Bureau, which could be used to inform substantive deliberations at IGM-3. The meeting noted that: a proliferation of meetings had contributed to a loss of policy coherence and a reduced impact of the limited resources available; there is a need to support international sustainable development governance and a strong role for the EMG; civil society participation in the process is important; and there is a need to take into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Other issues included interest in some form of MEA clustering and the need for stable funding for UNEP, possibly through the use of the UN system of assessed contributions.

**THIRD MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF MINISTERS (IGM-3):** This meeting took place in Algiers, Algeria, from 9-10 September 2001. Prior to this session, two consultative civil society organization (CSO) meetings were held in Nairobi, Kenya, in May and August 2001. The IEG process also received from input from UNEP’s Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR).

The Algiers meeting considered a revised list of proposals on options and elements for the IEG process, and decided to add two “building blocks” of proposals, on sustainable development, and on capacity building and technology transfer, respectively. Discussions gave rise to several ideas, including: coordination of domestic implementation of MEAs to support coordination at the international level; clustering at functional and regional levels in the medium term; and improving the co-hosting of Conferences of the Parties (COPs) with related agendas. Countries agreed that UNEP should be strengthened and that the GMEF should constitute the cornerstone of the institutional structure of international environmental governance. The meeting gave UNEP three tasks: to provide further information on options for strengthening UNEP’s financial situation; to analyze the legal status of the GMEF, based on UN General Assembly Resolution 53/242; and to prepare a study on the proliferation of MEAs.

**FOURTH MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF MINISTERS (IGM-4):** IGM-4 was convened in Montreal, Canada, on 30 November and 1 December 2001. Over two hundred participants were in attendance, including thirty-two at the ministerial level.

Participants were invited to consider, *inter alia*, revised proposals drawn up by UNEP Governing Council President David Anderson to take account of proposals tabled at IGM-3. The President’s recommendations included core sections on:

- improving coherence in policy-making, that is the role and structure of the GMEF;
- strengthening the role, authority, and financial situation of UNEP;
- improved coordination and coherence between MEAs;
- capacity building, technology transfer and country-level coordination for environment and sustainable development;
- enhanced coordination across the United Nations system, specifically the role of the EMG; and
- future scenarios.

Participants also considered a number of papers tabled by participating countries, including Norway and the US.



Some progress was achieved in each of three working groups. In a group working on the role and structure of the GMEF, participants reached agreement on using the President's recommendations as the basis for negotiation and tabled proposals reflecting divergent views on the level of authority to be enjoyed by the GMEF in a policy guidance role on MEAs. Members of the working group on improved coordination between MEAs, capacity building, technology transfer, country-level coordination and the EMG, worked into the early hours of Saturday, 1 December, to reach agreement on a range of issues. The UNEP Secretariat tabled a paper on financing of UNEP to assist the deliberations of a third working group, which attempted to narrow differences over the respective merits of voluntary contributions, mandatory assessed contributions, negotiated assessed contributions, and negotiated assessed contributions based on a separation of administrative and operational costs.

### REPORT OF THE MEETING

The New York Meeting of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or their Representatives on IEG was declared open by UNEP Governing Council President David Anderson at 10:30 am on Friday, 25 January, at UN headquarters in New York. He recalled the history and progress to date of the IEG process and looked forward to the final IEG meeting and the seventh special session of the GC/GMEF in Cartagena, Colombia, in February 2002, when recommendations on IEG will be formally adopted for transfer to the third preparatory session for the WSSD. He underlined the UNEP Governing Council view that IEG should be seen within the broad context of multilateral efforts to achieve sustainable development.

Turning to the *Draft Report of the President of the UNEP Governing Council for Consideration by the Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or their Representatives on IEG* (UNEP/IGM/SS/2), President Anderson summarized the development of the document, which is the latest version of his "building blocks" paper first introduced at IGM-3 in Algiers and revised on the basis of inputs at IGM-4 in Montreal. He informed delegates that the Draft Report had been reviewed and endorsed by those who chaired the three working groups at IGM-4 in Montreal and expressed confidence that participants were in a position to use the document as the basis for further progress. He hoped that his approach to the pursuit of a consensus-based document would facilitate a collective refinement of the recommendations without losing sight of the overall objective, and underlined the inputs from NGOs, actors in the UN system, including MEA secretariats, and the UNEP CPR.

He noted that the IEG process would again benefit from the views of New York-based delegations to ensure a close link to the WSSD preparatory process. Anderson noted that he would prepare a detailed report to be tabled at the final IGM session on 12 February in Cartagena, on the eve of the seventh special session of the GC/GMEF.

Anderson suggested that there was broad agreement on the basic tenets of the IEG proposals. This included agreement on the need: for GMEF to act as a global forum on "big picture" environmental issues, with wide participation and an authoritative ministerial voice capable of ensuring that environmental issues are registered at other international fora; for national and international coherence in the implementation of MEAs; for an enhanced EMG; for a commitment to address capacity development; and on the need to achieve agreement on the creation of a strong UNEP, taking into account a report based on consultations on financing UNEP being conducted by Canada and Norway.

Concluding, President Anderson invited general statements followed by comments on the core recommendations in Chapter Three of his Draft Report.

UNEP Executive Director Klaus Töpfer expressed confidence that participants would reach a constructive final decision in Cartagena. He summarized the IEG process, underlining its inclusive and transparent approach, with inputs from experts, civil society, convention secretariats and UN agencies, together with those from ministers of the environment and foreign affairs, and permanent representatives in New York and Nairobi. He expressed thanks to the UNEP CPR for their major contribution. He noted the role of the CSD in the WSSD preparatory process and underlined the need for discussions on sustainable development governance and IEG to be mutually reinforcing, taking into account an evolving consensus.

He underlined the importance of streamlining IEG and ensuring ownership by developing countries through a partnership-based approach, and noted the UN Secretary-General's view that the IEG discussions constitute a process and not an event, the culmination of which will represent a major contribution to institutional reform and revitalization, with an improved role for the GMEF and the use of existing structures to maximum effect. He described effective environmental assessment, monitoring and early warning as essential components of a more integrated and efficient IEG system.

On UNEP financing, Töpfer said UNEP urgently required a solution following many years of requests by the Governing Council for stable and predictable funding. He noted that 80 countries now make contributions. He expects this figure to rise to 100 in 2002.

Participants proceeded to adopt the Provisional Agenda (UNEP/IGM/SS/1). On the organization of work, President Anderson announced that discussion would take place in morning and afternoon plenary sessions.

### CONSIDERATION OF ISSUES, OPTIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

Anderson invited participants to comment on his Draft Report, which includes two preliminary sections on the background to the IEG process and a third section containing the President's draft recommendations to the GC/GMEF.

**GENERAL COMMENTS:** UNEP Executive Director Klaus Töpfer informed participants that a revised version of his report on IEG had been tabled.

Venezuela, on behalf of the G-77/China, noted that the IEG process had been fruitful and considerations would proceed as part of the WSSD preparatory process. On the President's Report, he stated that:

- a number of the Group's concerns had not been reflected;
- General Assembly resolution 53/242 on the GMEF is the framework for any discussion on IEG;
- the Governing Council of UNEP is not an institution in itself and cannot have open membership, according to UN legal opinion;
- the GMEF should not be strengthened to the detriment of the CSD and ECOSOC;
- there should be no redefinition of the EMG mandate;
- the Group has reservations about Norway's proposal for an inter-governmental panel to assess global environmental change;
- UNEP should have adequate, stable, and predictable funding within the framework of the Rio Declaration and without any further burden falling on developing countries; and
- the Group supports consideration of multi-year voluntary pledges for UNEP.



Spain, on behalf of the EU, conveyed his understanding that the New York Meeting had been convened for informational purposes. He welcomed the discussion on the eve of the second preparatory session for the WSSD and underlined the group's belief that it is essential that IEG be considered within the context of sustainable development.

On the outcome of IGM-4, the EU commented that the meeting had confirmed the President's recommendations as the basis for further discussion, and there is support for a stronger political role and enhanced authority for the GC/GMEF, and for enhanced environmental assessment and monitoring. He suggested that a new understanding on IEG coherence could be contained in a new UN General Assembly resolution, following the WSSD. On UNEP funding, he supported the use of the UN's assessment system for agreed contributions. On the GC/GMEF, he indicated that his group would elaborate on how this body could become an umbrella policy forum on international environmental governance issues.

Juan Mayr, Minister for the Environment, Colombia, invited participants to Cartagena to continue their negotiations on IEG and agree on strengthening UNEP.

Kezimbira Miyingo, Minister of State for Environment, Uganda, and Vice-President of AMCEN, also acting as Rapporteur for the New York Meeting of the IGM, said the time had come to act on recommendations to strengthen UNEP. He outlined four main challenges for the WSSD:

- comprehensive reform of UNEP's legislative authority and mandate and universal membership of the GC/GMEF;
- the rescue of UNEP from the vagaries of unpredictable funding by introducing assessed contributions or voluntary agreed contributions;
- the need to address the burden of responsibilities emanating from MEAs, especially that shouldered by developing countries, by allocating enhanced coordination responsibilities to the GMEF; and
- enabling UNEP to undertake delivery of country-level capacity building.

Concluding, he hoped that the signs of infighting within UN bodies and among personalities would not delay progress and appealed to participants to refer to their governments and ministers rather than express personal views.

In a second intervention, Minister Miyingo also questioned the opposition to proposals for a stronger GC/GMEF, and called for consistent positions within regional groups. In response, Malaysia expressed a concern that enhancing the GMEF might result in neglect of the social and economic dimensions of sustainable development. With Egypt, she said that the GMEF should focus on environmental issues and not attempt to be a substitute for the CSD. She noted that the CSD is the only high-level UN forum with responsibility for sustainable development. Nigeria responded with an explanation that the G-77/China operated on the basis of consensus building, with each member having veto power. He said that the G-77/China representative speaks with one indivisible voice. Egypt explained that the position presented by the G-77/China represents all regions including Africa.

Switzerland supported the view that the common aim in the IEG process is poverty alleviation and underlined the need to support each of the sustainable development pillars, especially the environment.

China described IEG as one component of a discussion that should take place within the context of international sustainable development governance.

Papua New Guinea cautioned against any skewing or insertion of language in the outcome document from the New York Meeting that might result in environmental considerations taking a lead role. He added that his delegation did not have the authority to commit to a document that may have hidden financial implications.

Many participants favored evolutionary institutional reform over a revolutionary approach. Some stated that the IEG, as a continuing reform process, should be based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Some objected to creating new organizations, citing the expense of such an undertaking. The US suggested deleting Part I (Background) and Part II (The UNEP Governing Council IEG Initiative) of the President's Draft Report. Brazil suggested focusing on points of strong disagreement and urged delegations to reach consensus at the final IGM in Cartagena.

South Africa restated his support for the inclusion of an additional building block on regional mechanisms in the President's draft recommendations.

**COMMENTS ON THE IEG PROCESS:** Participants generally recognized the significance of the IEG process for the WSSD, with some expressing a desire to use the President's draft recommendations as the basis for reaching agreement in the forthcoming discussions in Cartagena. The US expressed concern that the IEG process does not reflect consensus and pointed out that some conclusions in the President's Draft Report are not shared by many delegations.

Brazil supported calls for direct negotiations as a means of arriving at a consensus. Nigeria challenged the use of the President's "progress reports" at the IEG meetings and warned that proposals going forward to the meetings in Cartagena would be considered totally open for negotiation. Saudi Arabia suggested that the President's Report had exceeded the terms of UN General Assembly Resolution 53/242 on the GMEF by incorporating recommendations on over-arching advice, a policy dialogue and the state of environmental law and enforcement.

Switzerland described the President's Report as the best possible document to take forward to Cartagena. He said it would be useless to consider a new document or another way of proceeding at this stage.

Australia said that his country had understood that the New York Meeting was to take the form of a briefing.

### **CONSIDERATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS**

Participants proceeded to restate and elaborate their views on the draft recommendations set out in the President's Report.

**THE ROLE AND STRUCTURE OF THE GMEF:** Most speakers endorsed the proposal to improve the effectiveness of the GMEF. Speaking on behalf of the least developed countries (LDCs), Bangladesh recalled the Rio Declaration and requested that special priority be given to countries vulnerable to climate change and other environmental problems. He said that, in the meantime, the CSD's role should be strengthened and its linkages with UNEP well defined. The Russian Federation noted that the IEG process should be considered in tandem with the CSD's work, and such institutional issues should be further discussed at the WSSD's preparatory sessions. Malaysia was not in favor of a new mandate for the GMEF. The US questioned the independent legal status of the GMEF and pointed out that it was inappropriate to define the GMEF as an over-arching authority for providing policy advice.

Iran, on behalf of G-77/China, requested further clarification of the proposal on universal membership for the GMEF and its role in providing policy guidance on cross-cutting issues. Regarding civil



society's participation in the GMEF, he stressed that such participation should be within the framework of established UN rules. Egypt added that NGO participation should inform governments' decision-making rather than become part of the process. He also supported the participation of COP bureau members in meetings of the GMEF. Indonesia recognized the need to strengthen the GMEF's role and called for more discussion on the concept of universal membership. Mexico underscored that the goal of the IEG process is to create an institutional framework for sustainable development, with full recognition given to the CSD's contribution and flexibility for the GMEF to interact with international financial and trade institutions.

Nigeria cautioned against treating the GMEF as an independent body and suggested that the relationship between the UNEP Governing Council and the CSD was the issue that needed to be addressed, as opposed to membership. China said that it would be premature to discuss an extension of the GMEF's mandate and membership. She called on participants to adhere to the relevant UN General Assembly resolutions. The Republic of Korea warned that an enhanced role for the GMEF could interfere with other bodies, including the CSD. Australia argued that the GMEF's existing role and scope to advance environmental priorities had not yet been fully explored. The Russian Federation described proposals for universal membership of GMEF as dubious.

**STRENGTHENING THE ROLE, AUTHORITY AND FINANCIAL SITUATION OF UNEP:** Many delegations supported proposals to strengthen UNEP as the key environmental body in the UN system. As the host to UNEP's headquarters, Kenya strongly supported UNEP's role as the leading authority on the international environmental agenda and said that without adequate, stable and predictable funding for UNEP, the IEG process would not succeed. Supported by South Africa and Uganda, he noted the need for UNEP to hold its regular Governing Council sessions in Nairobi with a view to strengthening the role of the United Nations Office at Nairobi and maintaining UNEP's presence in Nairobi. The G-77/China and the EU welcomed UNEP's developing partnership with the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Some delegates supported a Norwegian proposal for an intergovernmental panel to assess global environmental change, while Brazil and the US argued that the proposal was premature.

Indonesia and Brazil supported proposals to enhance funding arrangements for UNEP but cautioned against creating an extra burden for developing countries. The Czech Republic called for the observation of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities in discussions on UNEP financing. Mexico supported a negotiated and voluntary contribution system, open to multi-annual contributions. The EU said that any financial contribution system needs to be based on equal burden sharing. He cited the UN scale of assessment as an accurate reflection of the economic conditions in member States. Brazil said the UN scale of assessments should not be used. She supported approaches involving the GEF and other financial institutions, and voluntary multi-year pledges by those States willing to make them. Nigeria underlined the G-77/China's support for voluntary multi-year pledges and cautioned that any negotiated outcome on financing could imply a mandatory approach.

The US called for a system of expected contributions for UNEP's Environment Fund based on agreed guidelines. He supported the possibility of multi-year pledges for those in a position to make them. He did not favor the development of a strategic partnership between UNEP and the GEF for the purpose of mobilizing financial resources.

Norway reported that two informal consultations had taken place on financing options for UNEP. He recalled that IGM-4 had called for reports on the system-wide implications of voluntary assessed contributions and on the relationship between UNEP's administrative and operational costs. He recalled the UN General Assembly resolution 2997/27 on the establishment of UNEP, which states that UNEP's administrative costs should be covered by the UN's regular budget. Canada explained that informal consultations on finance had taken place since IGM-4. The main focus has been the possibility of an indicative scale of contributions, drawing from positive experiences in MEAs. He called for indicative targets for contributions to heighten awareness that some level of contribution should be forthcoming. He lamented the current absence of any means of prompting UNEP contributions on an annual basis and suggested the possibility of phasing in targets. He noted with interest a US proposal on using agreed guidelines for contributions and ruled out the possibility that developing countries would not have to pay more over time.

China called for implementation of relevant UN General Assembly resolutions on adequate, stable and predictable funding for UNEP, and supported careful study of a solution based on separate treatment of UNEP's administrative and operational funding. Papua New Guinea objected to a reference in the President's Report to forging a special and strong relationship/partnership between UNEP and the GEF, where the GEF would fund mutually-agreed activities of UNEP. He suggested that the recommendation would result in UNEP competing with the GEF's role. Australia said that agreement on a level of financing and a modality would follow agreement on UNEP's function. The Russian Federation argued that organizational and budgetary decisions should not lead to an increase in UNEP's overall budget load and called for agreement on criteria for voluntary contributions.

On major group participation, the Russian Federation called for adherence to existing United Nations procedures and cited the CSD's positive experience.

**IMPROVED COORDINATION AND COHERENCE BETWEEN MEAS:** The G-77/China indicated that back-to-back meetings of the GMEF and MEA COPs would not be practical. He added that such decisions should be left to COPs. While welcoming a proposal to invite MEA COP bureau members to participate in the GMEF meetings, Indonesia noted the need to consult with other legal entities and respect their authority. Mexico, supported by Chile, called for consideration of both regional and functional approaches to coordinating MEAs. The EU suggested pilot projects on strengthening the coordination of MEAs at functional, regional and programme levels.

Uganda supported efforts to rationalize and reduce the number of meetings, to improve coordination, and thus make participation more affordable for developing countries. China supported enhanced coordination on the basis of the views put forward by the decision-making bodies of MEAs, some of which are sustainable development agreements. She cautioned that a forum with an environmental function could hardly undertake coordination of sustainable development agreements.

The US suggested that the reference to MEA "coherence" should be replaced by a reference to "effectiveness." He supported proposals to encourage coordination among MEA secretariats in specific functional areas. Australia argued that the GMEF's existing mandate permits it to make recommendations on clustering and improving MEA coherence.



## **CAPACITY BUILDING, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND COUNTRY-LEVEL COORDINATION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT PILLAR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:**

There was general support for proposals on capacity building, technology transfer and country-level coordination. The G-77/China noted the need to identify special capacity-building needs in developing countries. Bangladesh, on behalf of LDCs, underlined the important role of MEAs in regional capacity-building work. The EU called for the prioritization of African countries, while South Africa called for special attention to indigenous people's knowledge and technologies. The Czech Republic and the Russian Federation made reference to the capacity-building needs of countries with economies in transition.

Norway explained that his country's proposal for an implementation strategy was designed to reduce bottlenecks in implementation. He reminded participants that only States could agree on such a strategy. Responding to supportive comments on a proposed inter-governmental strategic plan for implementation, the US noted that the proposal needs further elaboration.

China called for more specific recommendations on technology transfer and capacity building, while Papua New Guinea called for a regional approach to capacity development. Australia described references to a role for UNEP in country delivery capacity as unclear. He expressed a preference for a focus on institutional capacity building and assisting national coordination. He suggested that programme delivery should be left to the UN Development Programme.

## **ENHANCED COORDINATION ACROSS THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM—THE ROLE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT GROUP:**

The G-77/China said that the EMG should continue its work in inter-agency coordination. He said the EMG's mandate should be clarified but ought not to impinge on inter-governmental processes. He supported a proposed reporting relationship between the EMG and the CSD. Malaysia said that discussion should be based on General Assembly resolution 53/242 on the GMEF. Argentina supported a strengthened EMG for the purpose of better MEA coordination. Mexico said that the EMG should avoid bureaucratic procedures and structures and be maintained as a flexible coordination mechanism. The US said that the GMEF should use the EMG to realize the potential for mainstreaming the environment into relevant activities across the UN system, without redefining the EMG's mandate. Australia argued that the EMG's existing mandate and resources are sufficient.

Nigeria suggested that clarification of the EMG's role would be preferable to the allocation of new functions. China noted that the EMG is a new body with a coordinating role and not a policy-making role. She called on those who have made recommendations on the EMG to adhere to the relevant UN General Assembly mandate. The Russian Federation called for discussions on the EMG to include consideration of the implications for links between the EMG and ECOSOC.

**FUTURE PERSPECTIVES:** Norway proposed that the President introduce a new draft recommendation to the GC/GMEF to consider, in the longer term, the strengthening of the role of the UNEP Executive Director by establishing him as high commissioner for the environment, without introducing new legal functions.

## **CLOSING COMMENTS**

President Anderson said he would continue to undertake inter-sessional discussions with interested delegations up to 12 February, the date of the final session of the IGM. There being no other matters, the President moved to close the New York Meeting of the IGM shortly after 5:00 pm.

## **THINGS TO LOOK FOR BEFORE THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**WSSD PREPCOM II:** This meeting will take place from 28 January to 8 February 2002, at UN headquarters in New York. It will review the results of national and regional preparatory processes, examine the main policy report of the Secretary-General, and convene multi-stakeholder dialogues. For more information, contact: Andrey Vasilyev, DESA; tel: +1-212-963-5949; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: vasilyev@un.org; Major groups contact: Zehra Aydin-Sipos, DESA; tel: +1-212-963-8811; fax: +1-212-963-1267; e-mail: aydin@un.org; Internet: <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/>

## **OPEN-ENDED INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF MINISTERS OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES ON INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE:**

The final meeting of the IGM will take place in Cartagena, Colombia, on Tuesday, 12 February 2002. For more information, contact: Bakary Kante, Director, Division of Policy Development and Law, UNEP; tel: +254-2-624-065; fax: +254-2-622-788; e-mail: bakary.kante@unep.org; Internet: <http://www.unep.org/IEG>

## **GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM/ SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL:**

This meeting is scheduled to take place from 13-15 February 2002, in Cartagena, Colombia. Agenda items include adopting the report on international environmental governance and UNEP's contribution to the WSSD, and a review of the Report on the implementation of the decisions of the twenty-first session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. For more information, contact Beverly Miller, Secretary for UNEP Governing Council; tel: +254-2-623431/623411; fax: +254-2-623929/623748; e-mail: beverly.miller@unep.org; Internet: [http://www.unep.org/governingbodies/gc/specialsessions/gcss\\_vii/](http://www.unep.org/governingbodies/gc/specialsessions/gcss_vii/)

**WSSD PREPCOM III:** This meeting will take place at UN Headquarters in New York from 25 March to 5 April 2002. It will aim to produce the first draft of a "review" document and elements of the CSD's future work programme. For more information, contact: Andrey Vasilyev, DESA; and Zehra Aydin-Sipos for information for major groups (see above).

**WSSD PREPCOM IV:** This meeting will take place from 27 May to 7 June 2002 in Indonesia. It will include Ministerial and Multi-stakeholder Dialogue Segments, and is expected to result in elements for a concise political document to be submitted to the 2002 Summit. For more information, contact: Andrey Vasilyev, DESA; and Zehra Aydin-Sipos for information for major groups (see above).

**WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** The World Summit on Sustainable Development will take place in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002. For more information, contact: Andrey Vasilyev, DESA; and Zehra Aydin-Sipos for information for major groups (see above).