



## **THIRD SESSION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL OPEN-ENDED INTERGOVERNMENTAL WORKING GROUP ON AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL STRATEGIC PLAN FOR TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT AND CAPACITY BUILDING: 2-4 DECEMBER 2004**

The third session of the UN Environment Programme's High-level Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on an Intergovernmental Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building opens today at the Intercontinental Resort in Bali, Indonesia. The aim of the session is to resume negotiations on the draft Intergovernmental Strategic Plan based on the UNEP Executive Director's compilation of proposals (UNEP/IEG/IGSP/3/2), with the aim of producing a final Intergovernmental Strategic Plan for consideration at the 23rd session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in February 2005. The formal session of the Intergovernmental Working Group was preceded by a day of regional group meetings, as well as informal consultations among government delegations.

### **INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS**

Arcado Ntagazwa (Tanzania), Chair of the Intergovernmental Working Group, opened an informal plenary session on Wednesday afternoon, 1 December. He informed delegates that the Executive Director's compilation paper would be used as the basis of discussion in Bali. He highlighted the outcomes of the informal consultation in Dar es Salaam in October 2004, including a new paper (UNEP/IEG/IGSP/3/3), containing proposals on how to address the contentious elements of the IGSP, such as issues related to needs and objectives, implementation, governance, regional dimensions, and financing. He then called upon delegates to focus on issues of implementation of the plan, regional action plans and funding.

In response to the Chair's suggestion to convene informal working group sessions immediately after the informal plenary, the Netherlands for the EU, supported by Pakistan for the G-77/CHINA and the US, requested more time for informal consultations among regional groups. The US cautioned against starting informal negotiations immediately and said they preferred to have informal discussions among governments instead. The plenary agreed to have regional group meetings followed by informal sessions of the two working groups.

### **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL STRATEGIC PLAN**

In recent years, technology support and capacity building have become a key part of the quest for sustainable development. Issues encompassing human, scientific, technological, organizational, institutional and resource capabilities are core components of the mandate and work of UNEP and feature

prominently in both Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Capacity building, in particular, has become an explicit priority for the UN system.

### **SIXTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL/GMEF:**

The sixth Special Session of UNEP's Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GCSS-6/GMEF) took place from 29-31 May 2000, in Malmö, Sweden. Ministers adopted the Malmö Ministerial Declaration, which called on the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development to review the requirements for a greatly strengthened institutional structure for international environmental governance (IEG).

### **INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW:**

Issues regarding IEG were subsequently taken up at the 21st session of the UNEP Governing Council/GMEF, which met from 5-9 February 2001, in Nairobi, Kenya. The Council established an Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or Their Representatives (IGM) to undertake a comprehensive policy-oriented assessment of existing institutional weaknesses, as well as of future needs and options for strengthening IEG. The Group of Ministers met five times, and reported to the seventh Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council/GMEF in 2002.

### **SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL/GMEF:**

The report on IEG was presented during the seventh Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council/GMEF, which was held from 13-15 February 2002, in Cartagena, Colombia. The GC/GMEF adopted decision SS/VII/1 on IEG, with the IGM report as an annex. In the report, the IGM underscored the need for UNEP to play a more prominent role in supporting country-level capacity building and training, and national-level coordination of the environmental component of sustainable development. The IGM also recommended that UNEP help strengthen regional environmental governance and improve coordination, implementation, capacity building and technology transfer in support of regional initiatives. The IGM also recognized the need to strengthen the ability of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to participate fully in the development of international environmental policy, including support for countries to undertake the requisite implementation of international environmental agreements at the national level. In terms of technology support, the IGM highlighted the need to establish and facilitate arrangements for the transfer of environmentally-sound technologies to developing countries. The IGM noted that UNEP, in cooperation with relevant regional and subregional organizations, could help strengthen regional environmental governance.

The Group of Ministers also recommended that an Intergovernmental Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building be developed to improve the effectiveness of capacity building, and to address the gaps identified by



assessments of existing activities and needs. The IGM also decided that the plan should be built on two components: capacity building and training, and the national-level coordination of the environmental component of sustainable development.

Regarding capacity building and training, the IGM recommended strengthening national institutions responsible for the environment and the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements. On national-level coordination of the environmental component of sustainable development, the IGM underscored the need for developing countries to have access to financial, technological and technical resources from the international community.

**WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** The World Summit on Sustainable Development convened from 26 August to 4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Summit adopted two main documents: the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). Both documents address issues of technology support and capacity building. Paragraph 137 of the JPOI states that UNEP and other UN agencies should strengthen their contribution to sustainable development programmes and the implementation of Agenda 21 at all levels, particularly in the area of promoting capacity building.

**22ND SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL/GMEF:** The 22nd session of the UNEP Governing Council/GMEF took place from 3-7 February 2003, in Nairobi, Kenya. The GC/GMEF adopted decision GC.22/17/I, which requests UNEP's Executive Director to prepare a draft Intergovernmental Strategic Plan for Technical Support and Capacity Building (IGSP) to be presented to the eighth Special Session of the Governing Council/GMEF.

**SIXTH MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT GROUP:** The sixth meeting of the Environmental Management Group (EMG) was held on 6 February, 2004, in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting focused on the environmental aspects of capacity building in order to identify the possible contribution and added value of the EMG to the ongoing efforts of the UN. The EMG decided to establish an Issue Management Group on capacity building, with the mandate to develop a situation/needs analysis in the area of the environmental aspects of capacity building in the two pilot areas of biodiversity and chemicals.

**EIGHTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL/GMEF:** The eighth Special Session of UNEP's Governing Council/GMEF took place from 29-31 March 2004, in Jeju, Republic of Korea. Delegates considered the elements of a draft IGSP as set out in the report of the Executive Director. The Council adopted decision SS/VIII/1, which underscored the need to provide assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for the implementation of environmental goals, targets and objectives, particularly those set out in the JPOI. The decision also highlighted the urgent need to develop a strategic plan. In the decision, the Governing Council/GMEF established a High-level Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group with the mandate to prepare a draft IGSP for consideration at the 23rd session of the Governing Council/GMEF in February 2005. In the decision, the GC/GMEF also emphasized the need to receive inputs from relevant organizations and stakeholders, in particular the GEF and UNDP, as well as international financial organizations, UN agencies and the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements.

**SEVENTH MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT GROUP:** The seventh meeting of the EMG was held on 20 April 2004, in New York. The meeting discussed the IGSP and its linkages with the work of the EMG, and heard presentations on and discussed the outlines of the EMG's study on capacity building in the areas of biodiversity and chemicals management. The meeting also established a second Issue Management Group on the overall outline of UN activities on

environment-related capacity building, including all UN agencies mandates, portfolios and current activities.

**FIRST SESSION OF THE IGSP:** The first session of the IGSP took place at UN headquarters in New York on 25 June 2004. The aim of the session was to reach agreement on how the Intergovernmental Working Group would proceed, and to engage in an initial exchange of views, as an input for the preparation of a draft IGSP.

**THE 10TH SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT:** The 10th session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment was held in Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, from 29-30 June 2004. The meeting agreed to submit the capacity development component of the Action Plan of the Environment Initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development as Africa's input to the strategic plan and requested that this component be used as the basis of support for capacity building in Africa.

**LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL CONSULTATION:** The Latin America and the Caribbean regional consultation on the IGSP were held in Mexico City on 29 July 2004. The meeting adopted a resolution calling on the IGSP process to recognize the importance of regional measures and perspectives as well as existing initiatives in the region, especially the 2003 Panama Declaration of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Initiative of Latin America and the Caribbean.

**EIGHTH MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT GROUP:** The eighth meeting of the EMG was held on 1 September 2004, in Nairobi. The main focus of the meeting was on the EMG's work in the area of environment-related capacity building, including its contribution to the development of the IGSP. The EMG discussed the status and the progress of work of its Issue Management Group on the UN system's environment-related capacity-building activities and initiatives in the two pilot areas of biodiversity and chemicals management. The Group also considered the draft outline prepared by its second Issue Management Group on the overall UN activities and initiatives on environment-related capacity building, and agreed to submit the current results of the two Issue Management Groups to the second meeting of the IGSP for its information and consideration.

**SECOND SESSION OF THE IGSP:** The second session of the IGSP took place from 2-4 September 2004, in Nairobi, Kenya. Delegates considered the Chair's "building blocks" paper. The first part of the Chair's paper contained a general introduction outlining relevant international decisions that spell out UNEP's mandate for technology support and capacity building. The second part of the paper contained the framework of the strategic plan and included sections and subsections addressing the following issues: needs and gaps; objectives and functions; guiding principles and strategic considerations; contents of the plan, outlining activities at the global, regional, and national levels as well as priority areas, the JPOI, south-south cooperation, and information for decision-making: the role of science, monitoring and assessment and reporting; institutional mechanism at the intergovernmental and secretariat levels; and financial mechanism. The session explored the possible contents of the draft IGSP and engaged in initial drafting of the text.

#### **INTERSESSIONAL MEETINGS**

**INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS:** UNEP GC President Ntagazwa hosted an informal consultation in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in October 2004. At the meeting he presented a non-paper, entitled "Reflections on the outcome of the New York and Nairobi rounds and the Bali challenges." The paper emphasized consensus achieved in Nairobi on the role of UNEP in assessing needs and delivering capacity building and technology support, and suggested some issues for further consideration. It also offered compromise language, building on the previous discussion in the Intergovernmental Working Group.