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**Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of United
Nations summits and major intergovernmental meetings,
including the decisions of the Governing Council**

Proposed Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013

Note by the Executive Director

I. Background

1. By paragraph 13 of its decision 24/9, the Governing Council requested the Executive Director to “prepare, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives a medium-term strategy for 2010–2013 with a clearly defined vision, objectives, priorities, impact measures and a robust mechanism for review by Governments, for approval by the Governing Council at its twenty-fifth session”.
2. In accordance with that decision, the Executive Director has developed the proposed Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013 set out in the annex to the present note in full consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
3. As a part of that process, the Executive Director worked with Joint Subcommittees I and II of the Committee of Permanent Representatives:
 - (a) To develop a proposed “road map” for the development of the Medium-term Strategy, which was formally approved by the Committee at its ninety-ninth meeting on 27 June 2007;
 - (b) To establish the modalities for the Committee to work alongside the UNEP secretariat in developing the Medium-term Strategy, through a working group of the Joint Subcommittees I and II;
 - (c) To set a timetable for the Committee’s meetings with the UNEP secretariat that could be incorporated within the “road map”.
4. Four formal and one informal working group meetings were held between August and November 2007. In agreement with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, consultations have

* UNEP/GCSS/X/1.

also taken place with the secretariats of UNEP-administered multilateral environmental agreement and with representatives of civil society and the private sector.

5. The Medium-term Strategy sets out the next phase in the evolution of UNEP as it becomes a more effective, efficient and results-focused entity, meeting the expectations of its stakeholders in responding to global environmental challenges and opportunities. The Medium-term Strategy provides the high-level programmatic results framework against which the overall performance of UNEP will be judged. It sets out the vision and strategic direction for UNEP activities in the period 2010–2013, including the results to be delivered through the UNEP biennial programmes of work for 2010–2011 and 2012–2013, the UNEP Global Environment Facility portfolio for 2010–2014, and UNEP earmarked contributions.

II. Proposed action by the Governing Council

6. The Governing Council may wish to consider adopting a decision along the lines suggested below:

The Governing Council,

Recalling paragraph 13 of its decision 24/9, by which it requested the Executive Director to prepare, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, a medium-term strategy for 2010–2013 with a clearly defined vision, objectives, priorities, impact measures and a robust mechanism for review by Governments, for approval by the Governing Council at its twenty-fifth session,

Noting with appreciation the open, transparent and extensive consultation process undertaken by the Executive Director with the Committee of Permanent Representatives in developing the medium-term strategy called for in decision 24/9,

Also noting with appreciation the consultation with the multilateral environment agreement secretariats administered by the United Nations Environment Programme and with civil society and the private sector in developing the medium-term strategy,

Further noting with appreciation that the medium-term strategy developed by the Executive Director is well focused, results-based and incorporates a logical hierarchy of mutually reinforcing results and that it elaborates six cross-cutting thematic priority areas of work and various means of implementation as a way of focusing the work of the United Nations Environment Programme in the period 2010–2013,

Welcoming the medium-term strategy's particular emphasis on significantly enhancing the capacity of the United Nations Environment Programme to deliver on the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building;¹ on the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the principal United Nations body in the field of environment; on ensuring that United Nations Environment Programme interventions are founded on sound science; and on fully implementing results-based management,

Noting the time set by the United Nations secretariat in the Instructions issued for the preparation of the Strategic Framework 2010–2011 by each Fund, Programme and Department of the United Nations secretariat,²

Acknowledging that in order for the medium-term strategy developed by the Executive Director to be linked in a meaningful fashion with the strategic framework and subsequent programme of work 2010–2011 it is essential that the Governing Council should first approve the medium-term strategy at its tenth special session,

1. *Encourages* the Executive Director to continue to strengthen results-based management in the United Nations Environment Programme and, working within the approved Programme of Work 2008–2009, to use the period 2008–2009 to commence the implementation of the transition to becoming a fully results-based organization;

1 Adopted by the UNEP Governing Council in decision 23/1 I.

2 Proposed Strategic Framework for the biennium 2010–2011, Instructions, issued by the United Nations Programme Planning and Budget Division on 11 October 2007. The Instructions will be made available at <http://ppbd.un.org>.

2. *Approves* the United Nations Environment Programme Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013;³
3. *Emphasizes* that the Environment Fund must be the bedrock of United Nations Environment Programme activities, enabling the effective implementation of the Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013;
4. *Requests* the Executive Director to submit to the Governing Council, at its eleventh special session in 2012, a progress report providing a two-year review of the Medium-term Strategy, together with a report on the implementation of the programme of work 2010–2011.

3 UNEP/GCSS.X/8, annex.

Annex

**United Nations Environment Programme
Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013**

Environment for Development



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The Strategy at a glance

At the dawn of the millennium heads of State and Governments gathered at United Nations Headquarters and reaffirmed their faith in the Organization and its Charter “as indispensable foundations of **a more peaceful, prosperous and just world**” and their “collective responsibility to uphold **the principles of human dignity, equality and equity** at the global level.”⁴

Mounting scientific evidence⁵ shows that global prosperity and human well-being depend on the productivity of the world’s ecosystems and the services that they provide. As ecosystems are now under unprecedented pressure, prospects for sustainable development are under serious threat.

The UNEP publication, *Global Environment Outlook 4: environment for development (GEO-4)*, highlights the fact that ecological and social systems can reach tipping points beyond which there are abrupt, accelerating, or potentially irreversible changes. The *GEO-4* scenarios show an increasing risk of crossing such tipping points.

While current environmental challenges may sometimes seem insurmountable, they also represent opportunities for individuals, local communities and businesses and for international cooperation. New and exciting avenues to achieve sustainable development will emerge from the use of economic and regulatory instruments, new and existing technologies and the empowerment of stakeholders to establish enabling environments for innovation and creative solutions.

The current environmental challenges and opportunities will cause the environment to move from often being considered as a marginal issue at the intergovernmental and national levels to the centre of political and economic decision-making. The linkages between environmental sustainability and the economy will emerge as a key focus for public policymaking and a determinant of future markets opportunities.

In order to secure the environmental conditions for prosperity, stability and equity, the United Nations systems needs to respond to current challenges in a manner that is commensurate with their scale and the nature of the opportunities. As the environmental programme of the United Nations, UNEP is mandated to serve as a lead authority in articulating, facilitating and supporting a response to these environmental challenges and opportunities.

A number of recent directional shifts are affecting the United Nations system itself. There is renewed emphasis on the future evolution of international environmental governance, including calls for greater coherence within the United Nations system, for harmonization of aid under a new architecture, for increased focus on the role of the private sector, for national ownership of development programmes and for results-based management.

“We must spare no effort to free all of humanity, and above all our children and grandchildren, from the threat of living on a planet irredeemably spoilt by human activities, and whose resources would no longer be sufficient for their needs.”⁶

UNEP will respond proactively to these directional shifts.

Against this backdrop, UNEP has developed the Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013 in consultation with the UNEP Committee of Permanent Representatives, the secretariats of UNEP-administered multilateral environmental agreements and representatives of civil society and the private sector.

The Medium-term Strategy sets out the next phase in the evolution of UNEP as it becomes a more effective, efficient and results-focused entity, meeting the expectations of Governments and its stakeholders in responding to global environmental challenges and opportunities.

The strategic direction contained in the Medium-term Strategy provides a clear, results-based focus for UNEP programmes of work. This focus will enable UNEP to deliver on its mandate more effectively by building on its existing expertise and comparative advantage in a limited number of priority areas.

UNEP has identified six cross-cutting thematic priorities. Delivering tangible results against each of the priorities will be the focus of its efforts in the period 2010–2013. The means that UNEP will use to

4 United Nations Millennium Declaration 2000, General Assembly resolution A/55/L.2.

5 As presented in *GEO-4*, the fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2007 and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment 2003, among other publications.

6 United Nations Millennium Declaration 2000, General Assembly resolution A/55/L.2.

implement these priorities and the institutional mechanisms that will need to be put in place to deliver results in an effective and efficient manner have also been specified.

The selection of the six cross-cutting thematic priorities was guided by scientific evidence, the areas in which UNEP has a comparative advantage, the UNEP mandate, priorities emerging from global and regional forums and an assessment of where UNEP can make a transformative difference. The means of implementation have been informed by directional shifts affecting the United Nations system.

The six cross-cutting thematic priorities are, in alphabetical order:

- (a) **Climate change;**
- (b) **Disasters and conflicts;**
- (c) **Ecosystem management;**
- (d) **Environmental governance;**
- (e) **Harmful substances and hazardous waste;**
- (f) **Resource efficiency – sustainable consumption and production.**

UNEP will deliver on the six cross-cutting thematic priorities by utilizing the capacity and expertise of UNEP divisions and regional offices and will actively reach out to Governments, other United Nations entities, international institutions, secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements, civil society, the private sector and other relevant partners to support delivery of the Medium-term Strategy.

The Medium-term Strategy places strong and renewed emphasis on UNEP operating to become a more effective, efficient and results-focused entity, through:

- (a) **Significantly enhancing its capacity to deliver on the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building;**
- (b) **Further embracing its role as the environment programme of the United Nations;**
- (c) **Ensuring its interventions are founded on sound science;**
- (d) **Fully implementing results-based management.**

The **vision of UNEP** for the medium-term future is to be:

“The leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, that promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and that serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.”

I. Introduction and background

A. Purpose of the Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013

1. The world faces unprecedented environmental change, which presents both challenges and opportunities. At the same time, UNEP faces the internal challenge of becoming a more effective, efficient and results-focused entity, delivering as “One UNEP”. The Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013 has been developed to respond to both sets of challenges.⁷
2. The Medium-term Strategy constitutes the high-level programmatic results framework against which the overall performance of UNEP will be judged. Consequently, the Strategy provides the vision and direction for all UNEP activities for the period 2010–2013, including results delivered through:
 - (a) UNEP biennial programmes of work for 2010–2011 and 2012–2013;
 - (b) UNEP Global Environment Facility (GEF) portfolio for 2010–2014;
 - (c) UNEP earmarked contributions.⁸
3. The Medium-term Strategy identifies six cross-cutting thematic priorities. Each priority includes an “objective” and “expected accomplishments”, in accordance with the definitions for those terms contained in the relevant United Nations Instructions.⁹ Building on UNEP comparative advantages, responding to directional shifts and drawing from lessons learned, the Medium-term Strategy also sets out the means of implementation and institutional mechanisms necessary to achieve its objectives.
4. In order to implement results-based management fully within UNEP, the subprogrammes within the UNEP programmes of work for the duration of the Medium-term Strategy will be based on the six cross-cutting thematic priorities.
5. The Medium-term Strategy will benefit Governments and other UNEP stakeholders by creating a framework for:
 - (a) Focused, effective and efficient delivery of results;
 - (b) Clear and transparent monitoring and evaluation of performance.

B. Current state of the global environment and major trends

6. The UNEP publication, *GEO-4*, assesses environmental change and how it affects people’s security, health, social relations and material needs (human well-being) and development in general, including major atmospheric environmental issues, most notably the global challenge of climate change, and the decline in the health of ecosystems and the services that they provide.
7. *GEO-4* and other recent assessments tell a tale of unprecedented environmental change at global and regional levels, which may reach tipping points, beyond which there are abrupt, accelerating, or potentially irreversible changes. This unprecedented change is due to human activities taking place in an increasingly globalized, urbanized and industrialized world, driven by expanding flows of goods, services, capital, people, technologies, information, ideas and labour.
8. Environmental change affects human development options, with women, children and other disadvantaged groups being the most vulnerable. For example, conflicts, violence and persecution displace large civilian populations, forcing millions of people into marginal ecological areas within countries and across international boundaries. This undermines, sometimes for decades, sustainable livelihoods, economic development and the capacity of ecosystems to meet an increased demand on resources.

⁷ At its twenty-fourth session, the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum requested the Executive Director to develop a Medium-term Strategy for 2010–2013 with a “clearly defined vision, objectives, priorities, impact measures and a robust mechanism for review” (decision 24/9, paragraph 13). The Medium-term Strategy was developed in consultation with the UNEP Committee of Permanent Representatives and also reflects input from UNEP administered multilateral environmental agreement secretariats and from civil society and the private sector obtained through extensive consultations during the last half of 2007. Preparation of the Strategy was further informed by a review of the medium-term strategies of other United Nations entities, development banks and other relevant inter-governmental and civil society organizations.

⁸ See annex I to the present document.

⁹ Proposed Strategic Framework for the biennium 2010–2011, Instructions, issued by the United Nations Programme Planning and Budget Division on 11 October 2007. The Instructions will be made available at <http://ppbd.un.org>.

9. The benefits of early action to protect the environment outweigh the difficulties. Environmental action and efforts to improve resource efficiency and sustainability create significant opportunities for individuals, local communities and businesses and for international cooperation. Furthermore, knowledge about the value of, for example, ecosystem services, can facilitate the transition to sustainable development. This transition will require trade-offs, which may involve hard choices between different values and concerns in society, and support from well-governed, innovative and results-oriented institutions able to create the right conditions for change.

10. Nations and the international community must pursue the transition to sustainable development more intensively by means including capacity-building and technological support to developing countries. Timely action can be promoted by integrating prevention, mitigation and adaptation efforts into the core of decision-making through sustained efforts.

11. The environmental change described in *GEO-4* and other recent assessments such as the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, released in 2007, and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment of 2003, highlight the environmental issues that most urgently require attention. This compelling scientific evidence underpins the identification of the cross-cutting thematic priorities for UNEP for the period 2010–2013.

C. Evolution in the role and mandate of UNEP and recent directional shifts¹⁰

1. Evolution in the UNEP mandate

12. The Medium-term Strategy is based upon the UNEP mandate, which has continually evolved since the creation of UNEP in 1972.¹¹ This evolution included the creation of two new high-level bodies in 1999: the **Global Ministerial Environment Forum**, as the United Nations high-level environment policy forum, and the United Nations **Environmental Management Group** to bring about improved inter-agency policy coherence and collaboration.^{12, 13}

13. The ministers of the environment and heads of delegation attending the first session of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum in **Malmö** in 2000 noted an “alarming discrepancy between commitments and action” and “the tremendous risk of climate change” and called for a strengthened UNEP with a broader and more predictable financial base. The need for a strengthened UNEP was repeated in the “**Cartagena Package**” decision of 2002,¹⁴ by which the UNEP Governing Council called for, among other things, a strengthening of the role, authority and financial situation of UNEP; strengthening of the science base of UNEP; improved coordination and effectiveness of multilateral environmental agreements; and enhanced coordination across the United Nations system, with an emphasis on the role of the Environmental Management Group.

14. The most recent evolution in the role and mandate of UNEP occurred in February 2005 through the **Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building** (the Bali Strategic Plan), which, amongst other matters, aims at a more coherent, coordinated and effective delivery of environmental capacity-building and technical support at all levels and by all actors, including UNEP, in response to country priorities and needs.

15. The UNEP mandate continues to comprise five overall, interrelated areas:

- (a) Keeping the **world environmental situation under review**;
- (b) Catalysing and promoting **international cooperation and action**;

¹⁰ For a thorough description of the evolution in the mandate of UNEP see annex III to the present document.

¹¹ General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII).

¹² General Assembly resolution A/RES/53/242.

¹³ The Global Ministerial Environment Forum and the Environmental Management Group were created as a response to the Secretary-General's report entitled, “Renewing the United Nations: a program for reform”, which was presented to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session in 1997.

¹⁴ By its “Cartagena Package” decision on international environmental governance (SS.VII/1), the Governing Council adopted the report of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or Their Representatives on International Environmental Governance, which had been established pursuant to Governing Council decision 21/21. In that report it was suggested that “strengthening international environmental governance should be evolutionary in nature” and that “preference” be given to “making better use of existing structures”. The Open-ended Intergovernmental Group also expected the decisions of the Governing Council at its seventh special session to be “the commencement of a longer-term enterprise to develop international understanding, commitment, and resolve towards ensuring the sustainability of the global environment”.

- (c) Providing **policy advice and early warning** information, based upon **sound science and assessments**;
- (d) Facilitating the development, implementation and evolution of **norms and standards** and developing **coherent interlinkages** among international environmental conventions;
- (e) Strengthening **technology support and capacity** in line with country needs and priorities.¹⁵

2. Recent directional shifts¹⁶

16. The evolution of the mandate of UNEP has taken place in the context of wider international developments. The entire international community is striving towards sustainable development – a concept firmly established by the report of the Brundtland Commission, entitled “**Our Common Future**”,¹⁷ in 1987 and subsequently locked into the international agenda through the outcomes of the “**Earth Summit**” held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.¹⁸

17. UNEP promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development – a concept that was intended to integrate economic, environmental and social considerations as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars.

18. Annex II to the present report contains an overview of major international developments and directional shifts, including the **United Nations Millennium Declaration**,¹⁹ the **Millennium Development Goals**,²⁰ the **Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness**²¹ and **Rome Declaration on Harmonization**.²² While not all of these directional shifts are specifically related to the environment, they are still of great significance to UNEP.

19. A number of recent directional shifts are affecting the United Nations system itself. There is renewed focus on the future evolution of international environmental governance, including calls for greater coherence within the United Nations system and an increased focus on the role of the private sector, on being responsive to country level priorities, and on results-based management.

20. These directional shifts have informed the means that UNEP will use to achieve its objectives, including in relation to implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan.

21. With regard to international environmental governance, the Options Paper of the Co-Chairs of the **Informal Consultative Process on the Institutional Framework for the United Nations’ Environmental Activities**²³ gives a sense of the kind of ambitious yet incremental adjustments that could be made to the international environmental governance system to better address current demands. While there seems to be considerable agreement on the functions required of an environmental entity within the United Nations system, the debate on the appropriate form of such an entity continues.²⁴

15 Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, adopted by the UNEP Governing Council in decision 23/1 I.

16 Annex II to the present document contains an overview of recent major directional shifts.

17 Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission, 1987): *Our Common Future* (General Assembly document A/42/187, annex).

18 *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vols. I–III.

19 General Assembly resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000.

20 Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration: Report of the Secretary-General (A/56/326), annex.

21 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Ownership, Harmonization, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability, adopted on 2 March 2005 by the High-level Forum on Joint Progress toward Enhanced Aid Effectiveness.

22 Rome Declaration on Harmonization, adopted on 25 February 2003 by the High-level Forum on Harmonization.

23 The Informal Consultative Process was established pursuant to paragraph 169 of the General Assembly resolution 60/1 on the 2005 World Summit Outcome. The Co-Chairs’ Options Paper, published on 14 June 2007, constituted a follow-up to the World Summit Outcome.

24 UNEP will actively participate in the continuing international environmental governance discussions both within and outside the United Nations system, noting the repeated calls to strengthen UNEP, including its financial base, and the “evolutionary nature of strengthening international environmental governance”, recognized in the 2002 “Cartagena Package”, which UNEP will implement fully.

UNEP will take on board the conclusions of the international environmental governance debate as determined by the United Nations General Assembly.

D. Lessons learned and comparative advantage

1. Lessons learned

22. The UNEP secretariat went through an intense process of self-reflection and organizational learning during the period 2006–2007 on how to become a more effective, efficient and results-focused entity which delivers as “**One UNEP**”. This process took place through both external reviews and through internal, cross-divisional task teams. As a result, the secretariat identified a number of lessons learned, including:

- (a) The need for an increased focus on the interlinkages between the environmental pillar of sustainable development and the with the economic and social pillars;
- (b) The need to be more responsive to regional and country needs and priorities;
- (c) The importance of having a strong, credible scientific base;
- (d) The need to engage even deeper with multilateral environmental agreement secretariats in coherently addressing substantive environmental issues, as appropriate;
- (e) The need to enhance work with other United Nations entities, including working through and with United Nations country teams;
- (f) The benefits of working with civil society, the private sector and the whole range of major groups in implementing the UNEP programme of work;
- (g) The importance of articulating and demonstrating results and building a workforce able to meet programmatic needs;
- (h) The need to provide incentives in the programme of work and budget for cross-divisional work and working through the UNEP regional offices;
- (i) The need to mobilize resources around a strategy and results-based programmes;
- (j) The need to improve administrative and business processes.

23. These lessons have informed the implementation modalities and institutional mechanisms that are identified in the Medium-term Strategy as necessary to achieve the objectives and expected accomplishments of UNEP.

2. Comparative advantage

24. UNEP is able to offer a unique range of expertise and services relevant to the environment and its interface with development. Experience gained from delivering on its mandate since 1972 has allowed UNEP to develop and demonstrate **the following comparative advantages**:

- (a) UNEP provides the high-level environment policy forum within the United Nations system and is an authoritative voice for the global environment;
- (b) UNEP has strong and longstanding linkages to environment ministries, regional environmental bodies and with the business and private sector on environmental issues;
- (c) UNEP utilizes interdisciplinary approaches to address environmental issues, including the interlinkages between environmental change, development and human well-being;
- (d) UNEP has access to and is able to generate substantive expertise and knowledge on ways of addressing environmental issues and, notably, the interlinkages between them, including through its GEF portfolio;²⁵
- (e) UNEP has extensive experience and is a global environmental leader in:

²⁵ UNEP comparative advantages as a GEF implementing agency are in science, advocacy, capacity-building and technology support in the focal areas of sound chemicals management, international waters, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity, land degradation, protection of the ozone layer and cross cutting capacity-building.

- (i) Working with scientific and technical communities and at the science-policy interface, including providing integrated environmental assessments for priority setting and decision-making;
- (ii) Facilitating and supporting multi-stakeholder international environmental law and policy processes;
- (iii) Promoting regional cooperation to address emerging and transboundary environmental issues;
- (f) UNEP has strong linkages to key environmental bodies through:
 - (i) Establishing and hosting convention secretariats for multilateral environmental agreements;
 - (ii) Being one of the implementing agencies for GEF, including providing the secretariat for the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel;
 - (iii) Partnership agreements with collaborating centres of excellence and hosting the secretariat of many partnership initiatives;
 - (iv) Its network of regional offices;
- (g) UNEP has a central role in the United Nations system for dealing with the environment, and for achieving coherence, through its participation in numerous inter-agency boards, partnerships and other mechanisms;²⁶
- (h) UNEP has the convening power for addressing the full range of environmental issues and has extensive experience in establishing networks with Governments, United Nations entities, international institutions, the broad scientific community, civil society and the private sector.

II. Vision for UNEP

25. The work of UNEP will be underpinned by the fundamental values identified in the Millennium Declaration of **freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility** and recognizing, among other things, the principle of **common but differentiated responsibilities** as contained in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.²⁷ The work of UNEP will also continue to focus on contributing to the achievement of the relevant **Millennium Development Goals** and enhancing the understanding of agreed international environmental goals and targets.

26. The **vision of UNEP**²⁸ for the medium-term future is to be:

“The leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, that promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and that serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.”

27. UNEP will seek to realize its vision by focusing its efforts for 2010–2013 on the six cross-cutting thematic priorities described below in chapter three, utilizing the capacity and expertise of UNEP divisions and regional offices and the means of implementation described in chapter four, and putting in place the institutional mechanisms described in chapter five.

28. UNEP will actively reach out to Governments, other United Nations entities, international institutions, multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, civil society, the private sector and other relevant partners to implement the Medium-term Strategy.

²⁶ See chapter IV, section D, of the present document.

²⁷ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development*, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: Resolutions adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex I.

²⁸ As set out in the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of United Nations Environment Programme (Governing Council decision 19/1, annex. Adoption by the General Assembly: Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/50/25), chap. IV, annex).

III. Strategic direction: cross-cutting priorities and objectives

29. For the period 2010–2013 UNEP will focus its efforts on delivering on its mandate by exercising environmental leadership on six cross-cutting thematic priorities. They are, in alphabetical order:

- (a) Climate change;
- (b) Disasters and conflicts;
- (c) Ecosystem management;
- (d) Environmental governance;
- (e) Harmful substances and hazardous waste;
- (f) Resource efficiency – sustainable consumption and production.

30. These cross-cutting thematic priorities emerged from a review of:

- (a) The scientific evidence;
- (b) The comparative advantage and mandate of UNEP;
- (c) Priorities emerging from global and regional forums;
- (d) An assessment of where UNEP can make a transformative difference.

31. Each cross-cutting thematic priority includes an objective and expected accomplishments, as these terms are defined in relevant United Nations Instructions.²⁹ The identification of cross-cutting thematic priorities serves to focus the efforts of UNEP on its distinctive role and does not necessarily imply an overall lead role for UNEP. The means of implementation and institutional mechanisms supporting the achievement of the objectives and expected accomplishments are described in chapters four and five, which include an explanation of how UNEP will work collaboratively with other relevant actors.

32. There are many interlinkages and positive synergies between the six cross-cutting thematic priorities and achieving co-benefits will be pursued where appropriate, for example through the linkages between sustainable ecosystem management and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

A. Climate change

33. The UNEP objective is to **strengthen the ability of countries to integrate climate change responses into national development processes.**

34. Consistent with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and within the broader United Nations approach for dealing with climate change, the objectives and expected accomplishments focus on providing environmental leadership in the four areas prominent in the international response to climate change: adaptation, mitigation, technology and finance, and their interlinkages. The work of UNEP will complement other processes and the work of other institutions and will emphasize the substantial co-benefits of climate change actions and their contribution to environmental sustainability. This will include efforts to create enabling environments at national level through the promotion of national legislative, economic and institutional frameworks that are adequate to address the climate change challenges. UNEP will assist vulnerable states to adapt to a changing climate by building resilience in sectors of national priority with a special focus on national, subnational and city level assessments, ecosystems management, economic incentives, disaster preparedness and supporting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In the area of mitigation, UNEP will support countries to make a transition towards societies based on more efficient use of energy, energy conservation and utilization of cleaner energy sources, with a focus on renewable energy, and on improved land management

²⁹ See footnote 9. The Instructions state that achieving the objectives is a collective responsibility of Member States and the secretariat (page 6).

35. The UNEP **expected accomplishments** are:

- (a) That adaptation planning, financing and cost-effective preventative actions are increasingly incorporated into national development processes that are supported by scientific information, integrated climate impact assessments and local climate data;
- (b) That countries make sound policy, technology, and investment choices that lead to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and potential co-benefits, with a focus on clean and renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and energy conservation;
- (c) That improved technologies are deployed and obsolescent technologies phased out, financed through private and public sources including the Clean Development Mechanism;
- (d) That increased carbon sequestration occurs through improved land use, reduced deforestation and reduced land degradation;
- (e) That country policymakers and negotiators, civil society and the private sector have access to relevant climate change science and information for decision-making.

B. Disasters and conflicts

36. The UNEP objective is **to minimize environmental threats to human well-being arising from the environmental causes and consequences of conflicts and disasters.**

37. UNEP will play a leadership role in building national capacity to minimize threats to human well-being arising from the environmental causes and consequences of conflicts and disasters. The desire for greater coherence in the United Nations system and the Bali Strategic Plan offer an important opportunity to play this role and to develop an integrated approach to disasters and conflicts, spanning the key pillars of vulnerabilities and risk reduction, emergency response and recovery, and peacebuilding. This will contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015.³⁰ Within these pillars, UNEP will emphasize the importance of addressing environmental risks and vulnerabilities as a prerequisite to sustainable development. UNEP will seek to integrate environmental management needs within recovery plans and peacebuilding strategies of the relevant United Nations actors including the United Nations country teams, the United Nations Development Group and the Peacebuilding Commission.

38. The UNEP **expected accomplishments** are:

- (a) That States' environmental management contributes to disaster risk reduction and conflict prevention;
- (b) That acute environmental risks caused by conflicts and disasters are mitigated;
- (c) That the post-crisis assessment and recovery process contributes to improved environmental management and the sustainable use of natural resources.

C. Ecosystem management

39. The UNEP objective is **that countries utilize the ecosystem approach to enhance human well-being.**

40. Facilitating management and restoration of ecosystems in a sustainable manner for socio-economic development is a key area of work for UNEP. UNEP will continue to catalyse integrated approaches for assessment and management of freshwater, terrestrial, and coastal and marine systems, including through integrated water resources management, land degradation assessment in drylands, the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities and the Regional Seas Programme. In facilitating a more integrated approach, UNEP will draw upon its knowledge and on integrated environmental assessments for more effective management of natural systems at multiple scales and across sectors. UNEP will promote adaptive management, participatory decision-making and sustainable financing through payments for ecosystem services to address the disjointed approach to natural system management that has led to the loss of biological diversity, fragmented habitats and a decline in ecosystem services critical for human well-being. UNEP will continue to promote the strong linkages between the state of ecosystems and

³⁰ Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 2).

human well-being, including the aspects of poverty and health. These interlinkages have been clearly demonstrated through the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.

41. The UNEP **expected accomplishments** are:

- (a) That countries and regions increasingly integrate an ecosystem management approach into development and planning processes;
- (b) That countries and regions have capacity to utilize ecosystem management tools;
- (c) That countries and regions begin to realign their environmental programmes and financing to address degradation of selected priority ecosystem services.

D. Environmental governance

42. The UNEP objective is **that environmental governance at country, regional and global levels is strengthened to address agreed environmental priorities.**

43. Environmental governance at the national, regional and global levels is critical for the achievement of environmental sustainability. At the global level, UNEP will help improve coherence and cooperation among environment-related mechanisms. This will include identifying interlinkages among multilateral environmental agreements to provide an opportunity for more effective implementation at all levels and to achieve the objectives for each cross-cutting thematic priority. UNEP will, at all levels, support Governments in establishing, implementing and strengthening the necessary processes, institutions, laws, policies and programmes, to achieve sustainable development and will contribute to the evolution of norms and standards to secure the environmental basis for sustainable development. UNEP will continue to promote cooperation and action based on sound science. UNEP will work with United Nations entities, international institutions, regional and national bodies, multilateral environmental agreements, Governments, civil society and the private sector to increase the mainstreaming of environment into other sectoral processes and policies, including at the country level. UNEP will also play an active role in the ongoing governance debate at the United Nations General Assembly and through its Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, consistent with the "Cartagena Package".³¹ UNEP will continue to support and contribute to the Environmental Management Group and the United Nations Development Group.

44. The UNEP **expected accomplishments** are:

- (a) That the United Nations system demonstrates increasing coherence in international decision-making processes related to the environment, including those under multilateral environmental agreements;
- (b) That States increasingly implement their environmental obligations and achieve their environmental priority goals, targets and objectives through strengthened laws and institutions;
- (c) That national development processes and United Nations common country programming processes increasingly mainstream environmental sustainability in their implementation;
- (d) That national and international stakeholders have access to sound science and policy advice for decision-making.

E. Harmful substances and hazardous waste

45. The UNEP objective is **to minimize the impact of harmful substances and hazardous waste on the environment and human beings.**

46. As part of wider United Nations efforts to lessen the environmental and health impacts of harmful substances and hazardous waste, UNEP will continue to lead and participate in a number of partnerships to address such issues, including the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles. UNEP will focus its efforts on enhancing strategic alliances; servicing of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the implementation of its environmental component; supporting the development and evolution of internationally agreed chemical management regimes; and assisting countries in increasing their capacities for sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste, including the collection of relevant data and information, for the benefit of environment and human health. UNEP will also support initiatives related to specific chemicals, such as mercury, heavy metals,

31 See footnote 7.

chemicals covered by multilateral environmental agreements, such as ozone depleting substances, and other chemicals of global concern; and will address emerging issues.

47. The UNEP **expected accomplishments** are:

- (a) That States and other stakeholders have increased capacities and financing to assess, manage and reduce risks to human health and the environment posed by chemicals and hazardous waste;
- (b) That coherent international policy and technical advice is provided to States and other stakeholders for managing harmful chemicals and hazardous waste in a more environmentally sound manner, including through better technology and best practices;
- (c) That appropriate policy and control systems for harmful substances of global concern are developed and in place in line with States' international obligations.

F. **Resource efficiency – sustainable consumption and production**

48. The UNEP objective is **that natural resources are produced, processed and consumed in a more environmentally sustainable way.**

49. UNEP will promote the decoupling of growth in production and consumption of goods and services from resource depletion and environmental degradation, and will strengthen the scientific base for doing so. The application of environmentally sound technologies and integrated waste management will lead to the more efficient use of resources. Reforms in government policies, changes in private sector management practices and decisions, and increased consumer awareness are needed to achieve this decoupling. A mix of these approaches will be integrated to address inefficient and polluting production and consumption patterns, including through the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production under the Marrakech process. Public-private partnerships that promote more sustainable product life-cycles and supply chains will be a major focus of the work of UNEP.

50. The UNEP **expected accomplishments** are:

- (a) That resource efficiency is increased and pollution is reduced over product life cycles and along supply chains.
- (b) That investment in efficient, clean and safe industrial production methods is increased through public policies and private sector action.
- (c) That consumer choice favours more resource efficient and environmentally friendly products.

51. A matrix of the **objectives, indicators and expected accomplishments** for each cross-cutting thematic priority is contained in annex IV to the present document.

IV. **Implementing the priorities and objectives**

52. UNEP will deliver on the six cross-cutting thematic priorities through its programmes of work by utilizing the capacity and expertise of UNEP divisions and regional offices and through the means of implementation described below, working with the full range of stakeholders and partners.

A. **Sound science for decision-makers: early warning, monitoring and assessment**

53. *GEO-4* and other recent assessments highlight the interlinkages between environmental change, development and human well-being, emphasizing the strategic need for adaptive legal, institutional and market frameworks that can respond to environmental change and its impacts on development and human well-being.³²

54. *GEO-4* provides a starting point in addressing countries' needs under the six cross-cutting thematic priority areas and responding to other environmental challenges. The six cross-cutting thematic priorities of UNEP provide a strategic opportunity to achieve interlinkages in the response to the current and future environmental challenges facing humanity. Cutting edge scientific research, enhanced accessibility of timely and appropriate data and information, and policy-relevant indicators serve as a

32 See chapter I, section B, of the present document.

foundation for the Medium-term Strategy and will continue to inform UNEP programmes and policy development.

55. Integrated environmental assessments that highlight the state of the environment and trends will be used to inform decision-makers and ensure UNEP plays its lead environmental role in the United Nations system and strengthens its capacity to respond better to the global, regional and national needs of Governments, particularly in terms of capacity-building and technology support. Enhanced understanding of the interlinkages between environmental change, development and human well-being will also strengthen the ability of UNEP to leverage substantial funding resources to support further policy-relevant scientific research and provide sustainable support to Governments to respond effectively at the appropriate level. The process of producing the Global Environment Outlook reports provides the knowledge base through which UNEP will strengthen understanding of these interlinkages and bridge environment-development policy processes.

56. Keeping the environment under review through scientifically credible monitoring and assessments is a foundation upon which UNEP will build to deliver on the Medium-term Strategy's six cross-cutting thematic priorities. This approach will promote the role of science in setting priorities and informing decision-making. It will help identify data and research needs and promote initiatives to address those needs.

B. Awareness-raising, outreach and communications

57. UNEP will inspire and promote environmental action and innovation in the six cross-cutting thematic priority areas. This will be achieved through awareness-raising, outreach and communications, including education and training, all of which will be integral to delivering on the six cross-cutting thematic priorities. The activities will include the development and implementation of UNEP communication and outreach strategies and programmes, in particular the agenda for the annual World Environment Day celebrations, and in a broader sense the Special Events and Awards programme strategy, building on initiatives such as those involving children, youth and sports, and the Billion Tree Campaign.

58. The six cross-cutting thematic priorities will guide the UNEP outreach and communication outputs and products, which will provide clear messages on the issues, in particular through the media strategy of UNEP and through the UNEP corporate website, UNEP annual reports and other publications. UNEP will ensure that its outreach extends beyond environmental forums.

59. As required, special outreach products and programmes related to the cross-cutting thematic priorities will be developed to support and supplement substantive activities undertaken by UNEP divisions and regional offices. Civil society, including children and youth, and the private sector will be reached through tailor-made outreach products and campaigns that will be developed with UNEP divisions and regional offices. Civil society will also be engaged to assist with UNEP outreach efforts.

60. Generation of environmental education resources, networks and partnerships will support the implementation of the six cross-cutting thematic priorities and the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2014).

C. Capacity-building and technology support: Bali Strategic Plan

61. The Bali Strategic Plan offers UNEP an unprecedented opportunity to change the way it operates so as better to meet the needs of Governments and partners.

62. Implementing the objectives of the Bali Strategic Plan will require a sustained long-term commitment and financial support. First and foremost UNEP will ensure that **capacity-building and technology support run through the implementation of all priority areas and constitute an integral part of UNEP programmes of work.**

63. UNEP will focus on significantly enhancing delivery of the objectives of the Bali Strategic Plan. This will necessitate the deliberate involvement of strategic partners from within the United Nations family and increasingly from civil society and the private sector.

64. Enhanced implementation will be pursued through a number of processes and partnerships, including:

(a) Strengthening the regional presence of UNEP and enhancing the role of regional offices to facilitate UNEP-wide integrated support to countries;

- (b) Increasing UNEP involvement in the United Nations Development Group and endeavouring to strengthen the environmental sustainability component of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework process, post-conflict needs assessments, post-disaster needs assessments, and engagement with United Nations operations more broadly, including through developing tools and training on environmental sustainability for other United Nations entities;
- (c) Working with and through resident coordinators, United Nations country teams and relevant inter-agency groups;
- (d) Continuing training UNEP staff in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework process and its principles and having UNEP staff engage in the process in countries;
- (e) Enhancing the partnership of UNEP with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and ensuring closer cooperation between the UNEP regional offices, UNDP resource centres and UNDP country offices, including through the joint UNDP-UNEP Poverty and Environment Facility;³³
- (f) Enhancing support to countries in technology assessment, selection and implementation;
- (g) Enhancing countries' capacity to identify and access sources of sustainable financing, including through regulatory and market-based instruments;
- (h) Working with international institutions, including financial institutions, and with bilateral aid agencies;
- (i) Facilitating South-South cooperation as one of the key mechanisms for implementing capacity-building and technology support projects on the ground, which will entail engaging with a wide range of partners and organizations;
- (j) Developing a North-South programme, including engaging centres of excellence in the North with a wide range of national and regional partners and organizations in the South, especially in the areas of environmental data, information and assessment.

65. To achieve full implementation of the objectives of the Bali Strategic Plan, UNEP will take on board the findings of United Nations reform processes. The **High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment**³⁴ and the related General Assembly process have stressed the growing gap between normative and analytical work on the one hand and operational level work on the other. UNEP will play a critical role in integrating environmental concerns more fully into United Nations humanitarian assistance, crisis recovery and development activities and national economic planning processes.

66. The Bali Strategic Plan emphasizes the principle of national ownership. This will be at the core of how UNEP does business. UNEP will ensure that its activities at the country level respond to the priorities identified in the relevant United Nations Development Assistance Framework and national strategies.

67. UNEP will:

- (a) Actively engage in the United Nations country programming and implementation processes as one of the best ways of ensuring that environmental issues are addressed across United Nations operations at the country level;
- (b) Focus on strengthening the role of national environmental authorities in the United Nations and country development and economic planning processes;
- (c) Engage at the country level based upon its mandate and comparative advantage and the areas in which it can add real value to addressing country priorities and needs in the context of the United Nations efforts and within the framework of the Bali Strategic Plan;
- (d) Develop and implement with its partners practical programmes and projects which respond to identified country needs and priorities to deliver tangible results.

³³ The UNDP-UNEP Poverty and Environment Initiative is an important strategic partnership between UNDP and UNEP. The Initiative enables operational links to be established between the normative and analytical capacities of UNEP and country programmes, in partnership with a range of United Nations and external partners. The Poverty-Environment Facility will support a significant up-scaling of the Initiative and will represent the interface of a growing partnership with UNDP.

³⁴ Established by the Secretary-General in February 2006, SG/SM/10349/DEV/2567/IHA/1150.

D. Cooperation, coordination and partnerships

68. The value of working in partnership within the United Nations system and with civil society and the private sector has been continually reinforced, including through the **Earth Summit** in 1992, the **World Summit on Sustainable Development** in 2002 and the “**World Summit**”³⁵ in 2005.

69. UNEP recognizes the critical importance of engaging with United Nations entities, international institutions, multilateral environmental agreements, bilateral aid agencies, civil society and the private sector in delivering on its broad environmental mandate and seeks to be a preferred partner when dealing with environmental issues.

70. In providing broad environmental policy advice and guidance through the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum to, among other things, promote international cooperation in the field of environment, UNEP will invite officials of United Nations agencies and heads of multilateral environmental agreement secretariats and international institutions to participate and interact with ministers at meetings and promote the meaningful participation of representatives of civil society and the private sector.

1. Multilateral environmental agreements

71. UNEP recognizes the benefit of being able to concentrate on issue-specific areas and the importance of identifying synergies and linkages between various international agreements. The secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements, many of which were established by UNEP, work within the bounds of their conventions. The mandate and comparative advantage of UNEP make it distinct from multilateral environmental agreements in many respects, including through its:

- (a) Broad environmental perspective that addresses the full range of environmental issues and development concerns in an integrated manner;
- (b) Role in facilitating greater coherence and collaboration among multilateral environmental agreements to achieve greater effectiveness in dealing with environmental issues;
- (c) Global mandate for environmental action that allows UNEP to work with both developed and developing countries on normative frameworks and provide related capacity-building and technology support to developing countries;
- (d) Breadth of scientific expertise and science-based approach, which is strongly underpinned by a wide network of scientific institutions and UNEP collaborating centres;
- (e) Convening power and proven ability to catalyse multi-stakeholder processes, including with the private sector.

72. UNEP has a special relationship with multilateral environmental agreements dealing with biodiversity, chemicals and hazardous waste, migratory species, ozone depletion (including its funding mechanism), regional seas and trade in endangered species. The secretariats for these multilateral environmental agreements are hosted by UNEP, which will continue to convene their executive heads through the “UNEP multilateral environmental agreement management team” to enhance effective administration, communication and better cohesion in addressing substantive issues of common interest, recognizing the authority and autonomy of the relevant governing bodies of the respective agreements.

73. UNEP-administered multilateral environmental agreements also provide a vehicle for implementation of aspects of the Medium-term Strategy through their programmes of work, with the agreement of the relevant governing bodies, as appropriate.

74. UNEP will place particular emphasis on collaborative efforts to build developing countries’ capacity to implement multilateral environmental agreements and to provide decision-makers with a more coherent science and economic base for decision-making.

2. United Nations system and international institutions

75. As the environment programme of the United Nations, UNEP has a central role in the United Nations system in dealing with the environment, and achieving coherence, through:

³⁵ High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

- (a) Being a member of the Chief Executives Board;
- (b) Being a part of the United Nations Development Group;
- (c) Chairing the Environmental Management Group and hosting its secretariat;
- (d) Participating in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the Inter-agency Standing Committee;
- (e) Supporting United Nations country teams in the common country programming and implementation processes;
- (f) Partnering with United Nations agencies and international institutions on priority issues, such as with UNDP in the Poverty and Environment Facility.

76. Through these and other inter-agency coordination mechanisms, UNEP will seek to inform United Nations system-wide views on environmental matters; shape the integration and mainstreaming of environment into United Nations work, including at the country level; promote concrete joint action by all agencies and multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, including through the Environmental Management Group; and catalyse partnerships for implementation needs at both the global and local levels.

77. Furthermore, the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum involves officials of United Nations agencies and others in providing broad policy advice and guidance to promote international cooperation in the field of environment.

3. Civil society and the private sector

78. UNEP has a large constituency with civil society and the private sector, which it will seek to harness in delivering on the Medium-term Strategy. UNEP will further enhance its cooperation with civil society and the private sector, including through further engaging such stakeholders in its decision-making processes and in the implementation of the Medium-term Strategy, with an increasing focus on the Bali Strategic Plan, the private sector, and working with national committees.

79. UNEP will engage the full range of major groups and non-governmental actors, whether local, national, regional, or global, and whether oriented towards advocacy, research or business. UNEP will build on their respective resources, expertise and comparative advantages.

80. When working with the private sector UNEP will seek to help create an enabling environment for business to improve its own environmental performance and corporate responsibility to advance sustainable consumption and production patterns. This will include promotion of sustainable financing, more environmentally friendly products and services, technology partnerships and building capacity to support the implementation of related private and public policies.

81. UNEP will use its experience and strength in catalysing multi-stakeholder processes to bring Governments, business and civil society together to develop and improve the implementation of legislative and voluntary measures and economic incentives, such as market policies relevant to environment and corporate practices.

4. Collaborating centres of excellence

82. UNEP has recognized the value of collaborating with acclaimed centres of excellence from all parts of the world, some of which have been recognized in Governing Council decisions.³⁶ UNEP will continue to work closely with collaborating centres of excellence in delivering its programme of work, drawing upon each partner's comparative advantage. UNEP will place particular emphasis on strengthening its collaboration with centres of excellence based in developing countries.

³⁶ For example Governing Council decision 22/1 III on the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

E. Sustainable financing for the global environment

83. Mobilizing sufficient finance to meet environmental challenges, including climate change, extends well beyond global mechanisms negotiated under conventions. It will require efforts at local, national and global levels to engage with Governments and the private sector to achieve the necessary additional investment and financial flows.

84. UNEP does not seek to become a financing agency. The UNEP approach to sustainable financing for the global environment is based on the need to enhance the linkages between environmental sustainability and economic decision-making, which is emerging as a key nexus for public policymaking and market development. UNEP will work to enhance developing countries' access to equitable and sustainable financing through innovative mechanisms, such as economic instruments, within the six cross-cutting thematic priority areas. This will be done through mutually reinforcing actions to help facilitate access to both public and private sources of financing.

V. Institutional mechanisms

85. Building on its continuing efforts to become a more effective, efficient and results-focused organization, UNEP will put in place the necessary institutional mechanisms to achieve the objectives set out in chapter three.

A. Strategic presence

86. UNEP will move towards a strategic presence model, involving a significant strengthening of the UNEP regional offices. This model is based on UNEP engaging its staff and resources more effectively to respond to regional and country needs in line with the Bali Strategic Plan and Governing Council decisions on strengthening the regional offices of UNEP.³⁷ An improved strategic presence will also allow UNEP to work more effectively as part of the United Nations family and with other partners. In order to improve the delivery of its work at the regional and country level, including through United Nations country teams, the role of the regional offices will be enhanced to allow UNEP to provide integrated support to countries by working coherently across divisions and regions.

87. UNEP will continually review and adjust its current global, regional and country presence to enable greater integration into United Nations country teams and the resident coordinator system while maintaining the organization's established normative and advocacy roles at the global level. UNEP will not seek to have a universal country presence but will strengthen its presence in selected, strategic locations.

88. The regional geographical scope of assessment, advocacy, awareness-raising, policy development and programme implementation has gained increasing relevance in the execution of the mandate of UNEP. A clear definition of the role, function, capacity and structure of the strategic presence of UNEP at all levels will be developed.

89. The move towards a more strategic presence will be accompanied by shifts in the programmes of work so that additional resources are freed up to undertake activities that respond to the capacity building and technology support needs of countries, consistent with the Bali Strategic Plan.

B. Planning for results

90. Managing for results is the cornerstone of UNEP planning to deliver on the Medium-term Strategy. Chapter three presents the UNEP cross-cutting thematic priorities in results-oriented language, together with UNEP-wide objectives. Related indicators are included in annex IV to the present document. The high-level objectives and expected accomplishments will ensure that UNEP is a results-focused organization. The cross-cutting thematic priorities will guide UNEP in investing its financial and human resources.

91. The UNEP expected accomplishments will be further refined through the two biennial strategic frameworks and the programmes of work that UNEP will prepare for 2010–11 and 2012–13. The strategic frameworks will include biennial indicators of achievement and each UNEP programme of

³⁷ See Governing Council decision 19/31 on the strengthening of the regional offices of UNEP and decision 20/39 on the functioning of the regional offices and proposed measures for the strengthening of regionalization and decentralization.

work will include outputs and a budget. Collectively this will provide a logical hierarchy of **mutually reinforcing results** as is shown in annex V to the present document. UNEP, together with its partners in Government, civil society and the private sector will be guided by the hierarchy of results to achieve and monitor agreed objectives. Individual projects will be designed to deliver necessary outputs that will contribute to the realization of these objectives.

92. UNEP will be guided in its results management by the continuing discussions in the United Nations system and those of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The transition to a fully results-based programme will be an iterative process achieved over several programming cycles.

C. Institutional knowledge management

93. Knowledge is one of the key assets of UNEP. UNEP will apply its knowledge to its programme of work and make it easily accessible for its partners.

94. UNEP will make substantial investments in state-of-the-art information and communications technology to provide easy access to its knowledge base and to enable UNEP to operate in a manner that is comparable with other United Nations headquarters.

95. UNEP will create one common database, which satisfies the needs of all divisions and regional offices and provides stakeholders with key project information.

96. UNEP will cooperate with the rest of the United Nations system in establishing an interface for sharing environmental data in a consolidated way.

97. The introduction of an enterprise resource planning system by the United Nations Secretariat from 2010 onwards will make a critical contribution to the ability of UNEP to collect and document substantive and management experiences that will enable UNEP to adjust its interventions, reallocate resources, affect the behaviour of partners, and improve the likelihood of achieving positive results.

D. Gender responsiveness

98. UNEP is committed to the integration of gender equality and equity in all its policies, programmes and projects and within its institutional structures. This commitment is extended to the environment and sustainable development work that UNEP undertakes with its various partners and other United Nations agencies.

99. Ensuring that the Medium-term Strategy will be implemented in a gender responsive manner requires the full implementation of UNEP Governing Council decision 23/11 on gender equality and the environment and the draft UNEP gender policy and gender plan of action. Consequently, UNEP will strengthen the capacities of its staff and its partners with regards to gender issues and analysis to ensure that UNEP supports gender responsive environmental management. This will entail continuous support to strengthen capacity internally and to build strategic alliances with external partners.

100. At the administrative level, UNEP will continue to ensure that it abides by the United Nations Secretariat's recommended guidelines on gender-sensitive human resource management practices and implements policies that ensure that the work environment is safe and free from discriminatory practices.

E. Human resource management

101. To implement the Medium-term Strategy and create a productive, flexible and results-oriented UNEP, the organization needs to attract, foster and retain human talent that is aligned to programmatic needs. The overall aim of UNEP is to build a high-quality, multi-skilled and mobile workforce that is efficient, competent and possesses the highest degree of integrity. In doing so, UNEP will pay due regard to geographical representation and gender balance.

102. UNEP will continue its proactive and targeted recruitment efforts combined with a streamlining of existing recruitment procedures by empowering managers and making them responsible and accountable for selection decisions and recommendations. UNEP will invest in developing the management and leadership capacities of its staff at all levels and in upgrading the skills of its workforce by creating career progression, learning, training and staff development opportunities. This will happen through, for example, the implementation of the training and learning strategy and of a pilot rotation programme for UNEP and UNEP-administered multilateral environmental agreements. UNEP

will also strengthen its performance management efforts and promote an environment that recognizes and rewards results and encourages staff rotation and mobility. UNEP will provide on-the-job training opportunities for staff at all levels and across occupational groups.

F. Resource mobilization

103. Adequate and sustained financial resources will underpin implementation of the Medium-term Strategy. Without adequate financial resources UNEP will not be in a position to support the realization of results together with partners. The Medium-term Strategy provides a coherent programmatic framework for delivering results, which in turn provides a credible platform for mobilizing resources.

104. The Environment Fund will be the funding bedrock of UNEP. States have recognized that an increase in voluntary contributions to the Environment Fund is necessary for UNEP to deliver critical normative responsibilities, environmental analysis, policy advice and project design and implementation. By improving its programmatic framework and reporting on results as part of the programmes of work, UNEP will increase the attractiveness of voluntary contributions to the Environment Fund. UNEP will also explore other means of strengthening and increasing the Environment Fund's donor base.

105. The programmatic framework also ensures that individual earmarked contributions support the broader goals of UNEP and do not divert resources to isolated, lesser priority interventions. In the context of the new aid architecture, UNEP will strengthen its direct engagement with development partners in order to raise the funds necessary for the implementation of relevant projects. UNEP will raise contributions from the private sector, foundations and non-environmental funding windows by presenting more effectively the critical linkage between environment and development. Funds will also be drawn from humanitarian, crisis and peacebuilding instruments, where appropriate.

VI. Monitoring, evaluation and mechanism for review of the Medium-term Strategy

106. The Medium-term Strategy overcomes the limitation that measurable impact cannot be achieved over a two-year cycle. The Medium-term Strategy charts a course to provide consistent programmatic guidance that increases the likelihood of achieving long-term impact. Member States will approve two programmes of work that will be implemented during the duration of the Medium-term Strategy. Those programmes of work will provide operational details and will influence the sequencing and relative priority of activities under the six thematic priority areas, as well as the specific outputs needed to achieve the objectives. The diagram in annex V to the present document illustrates the relationship between the Strategy, the strategic frameworks and the programmes of work.

107. Throughout the duration of the Medium-term Strategy, UNEP will monitor progress against the objectives and expected accomplishments contained in both the Medium-term Strategy and the programmes of work and will take necessary corrective action to remedy problems with implementation as part of its management responsibility. UNEP will also continue to report progress to the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP in a results-oriented fashion on a six-monthly basis.

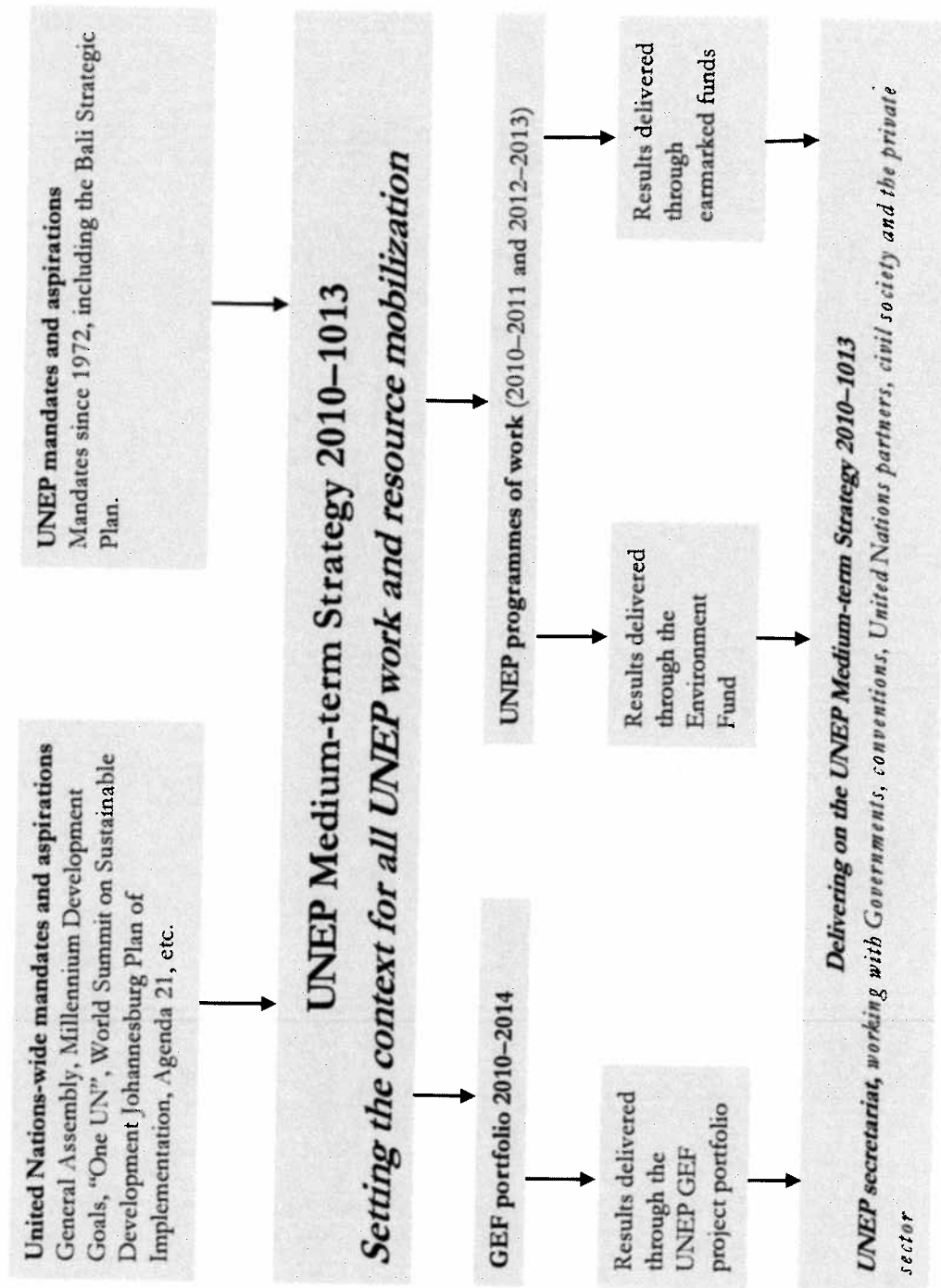
108. In order to promote increased achievement of results during subsequent programming cycles, UNEP will conduct evaluations of its programme activities. UNEP will ensure an appropriate level of independence in these evaluations. In line with current trends within the United Nations Evaluation Group, the emphasis will increasingly be on outcome evaluations that provide insights on achievement of impact. Selected mid-term and terminal evaluations of high value and strategic activities will also be conducted, however, to enable UNEP to achieve operational improvements, foster institutional learning, and anchor accountability for results.

109. UNEP will continue to conduct evaluations of its subprogrammes with special emphasis on results and impact. The approach to demonstrating accountability when investing scarce resources in assessing outcomes, influence and impact will involve the preferential selection of UNEP success stories. Thematic evaluations that demonstrate the influence of UNEP activities on global, regional and national policy processes will be a key component of a balanced portfolio of evaluations.

110. The implementation of the Medium-term Strategy will be reviewed as part of the continuing management and monitoring of the programmes of work. Lessons learned will be incorporated into the next programming cycle and will be reflected in the Programme of Work 2012–2013, which will be presented to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in early 2011.

Annex I

UNEP Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013 in context



Annex II

Recent directional shifts

Shift	Implications
United Nations-wide goals Millennium Development Goals	Primary focus on poverty eradication
United Nations-wide governance System wide coherence, as called for at the World Summit 2005 High-level Panel – “One UN” Strengthening of UNEP, as called for at the World Summit on Sustainable Development UNDP role at country level, move away from thematic area of environment, the role of the United Nations resident coordinator	Desire for better coherence in the United Nations Focus on how to deliver as “One UN” Desire to strengthen capacity and role of UNEP Strengthening United Nations resident coordinator system and UNDP role at country level, evolving role of UNDP regarding the environment
New aid architecture Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness Rome Declaration on Harmonization	Focus on Millennium Development Goals – international effort to harmonize operational policies, procedures and practices Aligning aid with partner countries’ priorities Focus on national development processes
UNEP – evolution in nature of mandate Bali Strategic Plan	Focus on capacity-building and technology support Emphasis on implementation and move away from (while not abandoning) traditional mandate Need for stronger regional focus and capacity Need to be more responsive at country level
Role of the private sector Global Compact	Need for agreed processes for engaging with the private sector
Global science base for change Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports – dominance of climate change agenda International Mechanism of Scientific Expertise on Biodiversity, etc.	Need for ecosystem-wide approach Global scientific debate won – response still debated – environment and economy linkages Need for a more coherent science base

Annex III

Evolution in the role and mandate of UNEP

The Medium-term Strategy is based upon the mandate of UNEP, which has evolved continually since the creation of UNEP in 1972.

I. Stockholm Declaration 1972: creating UNEP

Through the Stockholm Declaration in 1972, Governments acknowledged the ecological interdependence of the world and identified an “urgent need for a permanent institutional arrangement within the United Nations for the protection and improvement of the environment.”³⁸

Convinced of the need to safeguard and enhance the environment for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind, Governments decided that the United Nations system required a body dedicated to, among other things, keeping the world environmental situation under review in order to ensure that emerging environmental problems of wide international significance received appropriate and adequate consideration.³⁹

By its resolution 2997 (XXVII), the General Assembly established UNEP as the environmental programme of the United Nations and mandated the UNEP Governing Council to “promote international cooperation in the field of the environment and to recommend, as appropriate, policies to this end”, and “to provide general policy guidance for the direction and co-ordination of environmental programmes within the United Nations system”. The General Assembly also decided that the UNEP Executive Director would be entrusted with, among other things, the responsibility to “coordinate, under the guidance of the Governing Council, environmental programmes within the United Nations system, to keep their implementation under review and to assess their effectiveness”, and “to advise, as appropriate and under the guidance of the Governing Council, intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations system on the formulation and implementation of environmental programmes” and “to secure the effective co-operation of, and contribution from the relevant scientific and other professional communities in all parts of the world”.

II. Nairobi Declaration 1997: revitalizing UNEP

In 1997, the UNEP Governing Council adopted the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of UNEP.⁴⁰ The Nairobi Declaration provides that “the United Nations Environment Programme has been and should continue to be the principal United Nations body in the field of the environment”. It further states that the role of UNEP is “to be the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environment agenda, that promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and that serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment”. It provides that the “core elements of the focused mandate of the revitalized United Nations Environment Programme” should be:

“To analyse the state of the global environment and assess global and regional environmental trends, provide policy advice, early warning information on environmental threats, and to catalyse and promote international cooperation and action, based on the best scientific and technical capabilities available;

“To further the development of its international environmental law aiming at sustainable development, including the development of coherent interlinkages among existing international environmental conventions;

“To advance the implementation of agreed international norms and policies, to monitor and foster compliance with environmental principles and international agreements and stimulate cooperative action to respond to emerging environmental challenges;

38 *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, 5–16 June 1972* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.73.II.A.14 and corrigendum), chap. I.

39 GA 2997 (XXVII).

40 Governing Council decision 19/1, annex. Adoption by the General Assembly: Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/50/25), chap. IV, annex.

“To strengthen its role in the coordination of environmental activities in the United Nations system in the field of the environment, as well as its role as an Implementing Agency of the Global Environment Facility, based on its comparative advantage and scientific and technical expertise;

“To promote greater awareness and facilitate effective cooperation among all sectors of society and actors involved in the implementation of the international environmental agenda, and to serve as an effective link between the scientific community and policymakers at the national and international levels;

“To provide policy and advisory services in key areas of institution-building to Governments and other relevant institutions.”

III. Global Ministerial Environment Forum and the Environmental Management Group 1999: enhancing environmental collaboration and coordination

Further changes to the mandate of UNEP and its role within the United Nations system came as a result of the Secretary-General's report entitled, “Renewing the United Nations: a program for reform”, which was presented to the General Assembly's at its fifty-first session in 1997. The report resulted in the establishment of the United Nations Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements, which was asked to focus on inter-agency linkages and the revitalization of UNEP. This led to the creation of two new coordinating bodies: the Global Ministerial Environment Forum and the United Nations Environmental Management Group.

The Global Ministerial Environment Forum is the high-level environment policy forum of the United Nations and is convened annually to review important and emerging policy issues in the field of the environment. The Environmental Management Group aims to bring about improved inter-agency policy coherence and collaboration, by adopting a problem-solving, results-oriented approach that enables United Nations organizations, secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements, the Global Environment Facility and partners, including financial institutions, to enhance information exchange, consult on emerging environmental issues, define common solutions and priorities and develop appropriate joint action in the implementation of those priorities to achieve a more rational and cost-effective use of their resources.

IV. Malmö Declaration 2000: positioning UNEP for the new millennium

The Global Ministerial Environment Forum met for the first time at the sixth special session of the Governing Council, held in Malmö, Sweden, in May 2000. That session resulted in the Malmö Ministerial Declaration,⁴¹ by which the Governing Council expressed deep concern about the fact that “despite the many successful and continuing efforts of the international community since the Stockholm Conference, and some progress having been achieved, the environment and the natural resource base that supports life on Earth continue to deteriorate at an alarming rate”. The ministers noted the “alarming discrepancy between commitments and action” and “the tremendous risk of climate change” and called for a strengthened UNEP with a broader and more predictable financial base. Ministers concluded that notwithstanding the environmental challenges, **“we have at our disposal the human and material resources to achieve sustainable development, not as an abstract concept but as a concrete reality.”**

V. “Cartagena Package” 2002: strengthening UNEP

At the seventh special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in 2002 a decision on international environmental governance, commonly referred to as the “Cartagena Package”, was adopted. The Cartagena Package calls for:

- (a) Strengthening the role, authority and financial situation of UNEP;
- (b) Addressing universal membership of the Governing Council;
- (c) Strengthening the science base of UNEP;
- (d) Improving coordination and coherence between multilateral environmental agreements;
- (e) Supporting capacity-building, technology transfer and country-level coordination;

41 Governing Council decision SS.VI/I, annex

- (f) Enhancing coordination and cooperation across the United Nations system, including through the Environmental Management Group.

VI. Bali Strategic Plan 2005: capacity-building and technology support

Finally, the most recent evolution in the role and mandate of UNEP happened in February 2005 when the Governing Council adopted the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building. The Bali Strategic Plan requires UNEP to become increasingly responsive to country needs. The objectives of the Plan are, among other things:

- (a) To strengthen the capacity of developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
- (b) To provide systematic, targeted, long- and short-term measures for technology support and capacity-building;
- (c) To enhance delivery by UNEP of technology support and capacity-building, based on best practices from both within and outside UNEP, including by mainstreaming technology support and capacity-building throughout UNEP activities;
- (d) To strengthen cooperation among UNEP, multilateral environmental agreement secretariats and other bodies engaged in environmental capacity-building, including UNDP.

Annex IV

Results matrix – objectives, expected accomplishments and indicators

Objectives ⁴²	Expected accomplishments ⁴³	Indicators for expected accomplishments	Measurement, baseline, target
Climate change Strengthen the ability of countries to integrate climate change responses into national development processes Impact indicator: number of countries introducing regulatory and policy reforms regarding climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptation planning, financing and cost-effective preventative actions are increasingly incorporated into national development processes that are supported by scientific information, integrated climate impact assessments and local climate data Countries make sound policy, technology, and investment choices that lead to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and potential co-benefits, with a focus on clean and renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and energy conservation Improved technologies are deployed and obsolescent technologies phased out, financed through private and public sources including the Clean Development Mechanism Increased carbon sequestration occurs through improved land use, reduced deforestation and reduced land degradation Country policymakers and negotiators, civil society and the private sector have access to relevant climate change science and information for decision-making 	<p>Indicators will be detailed as part of the strategic frameworks and programmes of work</p>	<p>Measurements will be detailed as part of the programmes of work</p> <p>Baseline will be based on data available in 2009</p> <p>Targets for 2013 will be set during the approval of the programme of work 2010–2011 in early 2009</p>
External factors: these will be added as part of the strategic frameworks and programmes of work			

⁴² “Objectives” are equivalent to “goals” in OECD/Development Assistance Committee and United Nations Development Group agreed harmonized results-based management terminology. “Objectives” is, however, the term customarily used by the United Nations Secretariat.

⁴³ “Expected accomplishments” are equivalent to “outcomes” in OECD/ Development Assistance Committee and UNDP agreed harmonized results-based management terminology. “Expected accomplishment” is, however, the term customarily used by the United Nations Secretariat.

Objectives	Expected accomplishments	Indicators for expected accomplishments	Measurement, baseline, target
Disasters and conflicts	<p>Minimize environmental threats to human well-being from the environmental causes and consequences of conflicts and disasters</p> <p>Impact indicator: increase in total annual environment-relevant investment in disaster and conflict-related areas by the United Nations system and development partners</p>	<p>States' environmental management contributes to disaster risk reduction and conflict prevention</p> <p>Acute environmental risks caused by conflicts and disasters are mitigated</p> <p>The post-crisis assessment and recovery process contributes to improved environmental management and the sustainable use of natural resources</p>	<p>Measurements will be detailed as part of the programmes of work</p> <p>Baseline will be based on data available in 2009</p> <p>Targets for 2013 will be set during the approval of the programme of work 2010–2011 in early 2009</p>
External factors: these will be added as part of the strategic frameworks and programmes of work			
Ecosystem management	<p>Countries utilize the ecosystem approach to enhance human well-being</p> <p>Impact indicator: increase in environment-related budget allocated to ecosystem management</p>	<p>Countries and regions increasingly integrate an ecosystem management approach into development and planning processes.</p> <p>Countries and regions have capacity to utilize ecosystem management tools.</p> <p>Countries and regions begin to realign their environmental programmes and financing to address degradation of selected priority ecosystem services.</p>	<p>Measurements will be detailed as part of the programmes of work</p> <p>Baseline will be based on data available in 2009</p> <p>Targets for 2013 will be set during the approval of the programme of work 2010–2011 in early 2009</p>
External factors: these will be added as part of the strategic frameworks and programmes of work			

Objectives	Expected accomplishments	Indicators for expected accomplishments	Measurement, baseline, target
Environmental governance Environmental governance at country, regional and global levels is strengthened to address agreed environmental priorities Impact indicator: increase in States' budget allocated to environment; number of legal and institutional frameworks adopted that empower the environment in Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The United Nations system demonstrates increasing coherence in international decision-making processes related to the environment, including those under multilateral environmental agreements States increasingly implement their environmental obligations and achieve their environmental priority goals, targets and objectives through strengthened laws and institutions National development processes and United Nations common country programming processes increasingly mainstream environmental sustainability in their implementation National and international stakeholders have access to sound science and policy advice for decision-making 	Indicators will be detailed as part of the strategic frameworks and programmes of work	<p>Measurements will be detailed as part of the programmes of work</p> <p>Baseline will be based on data available in 2009</p> <p>Targets for 2013 will be set during the approval of the programme of work 2010–2011 in early 2009</p>
External factors: these will be added as part of the strategic frameworks and programmes of work			
Harmful substances and hazardous waste Minimize impact of harmful substances and hazardous waste on the environment and human beings. Impact indicator: increasing compliance with international regimes addressing chemical and hazardous waste-related issues; number of harmful chemicals for which production and use has been curtailed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> States and other stakeholders have increased capacities and financing to assess, manage and reduce risks to human health and the environment posed by chemicals and hazardous waste Coherent international policy and technical advice is provided to States and other stakeholders for managing harmful chemicals and hazardous waste in a more environmentally sound manner, including through better technology and best practices Appropriate policy and control systems for harmful substances of global concern are developed and in place in line with States' international obligations 	Indicators will be detailed as part of the strategic frameworks and programmes of work	<p>Measurements will be detailed as part of the programmes of work</p> <p>Baseline will be based on data available in 2009</p> <p>Targets for 2013 will be set during the approval of the programme of work 2010–2011 in early 2009</p>
External factors: these will be added as part of the strategic frameworks and programmes of work			

	Objectives	Expected accomplishments	Indicators for expected accomplishments	Measurement, baseline, target
Resource efficiency	<p>Natural resources are produced, processed and consumed in a more environmentally sustainable way</p> <p>Impact indicator: number of Governments introducing policy reforms; number of private sector initiatives leading to more efficient and less polluting use of natural resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource efficiency is increased and pollution is reduced over product life cycles and along supply chains • Investment in efficient, clean and safe industrial production methods is increased through public policies and private sector action • Consumer choice favours more resource-efficient and environmentally friendly products 	<p>Indicators will be detailed as part of the strategic frameworks and programmes of work</p>	<p>Measurements will be detailed as part of the programmes of work</p> <p>Baseline will be based on data available in 2009</p> <p>Targets for 2013 will be set during the approval of the programme of work 2010–2011 in early 2009</p>
External factors: these will be added as part of the strategic frameworks and programmes of work				

Annex V**Hierarchy of results**