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**International environmental governance: implementation
of decisions of the seventh special session of the Governing
Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and the
World Summit on Sustainable Development on the report
of the Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or Their
Representatives on International Environmental Governance**

International environmental governance

Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building

Note by the Executive Director

The Executive Director has the honour to transmit to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, in the annex to the present note, the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, as adopted by the High-level Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on an Intergovernmental Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building at its third session, in Bali, Indonesia, on 4 December 2004.

∗   UNEP/GC.23/1.

Annex

Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building

I. Introduction

1.   The need for environment-related technology support and capacity-building in developing countries as well as in countries with economies in transition was recognized in General Assembly resolutions 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 and 3436 (XXX) of 9 December 1975, as well as in Agenda 21 and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

2.   Decision SS.VII/1 of 15 February 2002 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) concerning the strengthening of international environmental governance recognized, among other components, the urgent need to develop a strategic plan for the provision of technology support and capacity-building to developing countries as well as to countries with economies in transition. This plan has been developed pursuant to decision SS.VII/1 to meet that urgent need.

II. Objectives

3.   The objectives of the plan are:

(a)   To strengthen the capacity of Governments of developing countries as well as of countries with economies in transition, at all levels:

(i)   To implement programmatic goals set by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, in parallel to the response by UNEP to requests by Governments for targeted capacity-building within the mandate of UNEP;

(ii)   To participate fully in the development of coherent international environmental policy;

(iii)   To comply with international agreements and implement their obligations at the national level;

(iv)   To achieve their environmental goals, targets and objectives, as well as environment-related internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the outcomes of other major United Nations conferences and international agreements, thus enhancing the environmental sustainability of their countries' development;

(v)   To use and sustain the capacity or technology obtained through training or other capacity-building efforts after such efforts have been completed;

(vi)   To develop national research, monitoring and assessment capacity to support national institutions in data collection, analysis and monitoring of environmental trends and in establishing infrastructure for scientific development and environmental management, in order to ensure sustainability of capacity-building efforts;

(b)   To provide systematic, targeted, long and short-term measures for technology support and capacity-building, taking into account international agreements and based on national or regional priorities and needs;

(c)   To provide a framework for capacity-building to ensure the effective participation of developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition in negotiations concerning multilateral environmental agreements;

(d)   To endeavour to ensure that principles of transparency and accountability built on a participatory approach and with full national ownership are integrated in all activities;

(e)   To integrate specific gender-mainstreaming strategies, as well as education and training for women, in formulating relevant policies, and to promote the participation of women in environmental decision-making;

(f)   To enable collaboration with all relevant stakeholders and provide a basis for a comprehensive approach to developing partnerships, including public-private partnerships;

(g)   To emphasize the identification and dissemination of best practices and the fostering of entrepreneurship and partnerships;

(h)   To enhance delivery by UNEP of technology support and capacity-building, within its mandate, to developing countries as well as to countries with economies in transition based on best practices from both within and outside UNEP, including by mainstreaming technology support and capacity-building throughout UNEP activities;

(i)   To strengthen cooperation among UNEP, multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, taking into account their autonomous decision-making processes, and other bodies engaged in environmental capacity-building. These include the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in particular, and also bilateral donors, other United Nations bodies, regional or multilateral organizations, international financial institutions, civil society, including the private sector, universities and other relevant stakeholders;

(j)   To promote, facilitate and finance, as appropriate, access to and support of environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know-how, especially for developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition.

III. Strategic considerations

4.   The plan is intended as an intergovernmentally agreed approach to strengthen technology support and capacity-building in developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, including by reinforcing the role of UNEP for this purpose, building on areas where it has demonstrated comparative advantage and expertise. The plan should take into account activities undertaken across the United Nations system as a whole, including by multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, as well as by international financial institutions and relevant partners at the regional and subregional levels. It should also take into account activities and programmes being undertaken by other partners, including bilateral programmes, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector. The plan should support improved inter-agency coordination and cooperation based on transparent and reliable information and reporting consistent with established frameworks and with a special focus on the role that UNEP should play in enhancing an effective response to identified needs. In this regard, the plan:

Provides the basis for UNEP to play a more substantial role in the United Nations Development Group framework. To that end, cooperation between UNEP and UNDP should be enhanced in line with the memorandum of understanding between them, including at the country level;

Provides a coherent platform for internal coordination and exchange of information within UNEP, and also for enhanced coordination between UNEP and other United Nations agencies, as well as other relevant partners;

Provides a coherent approach to strengthening national and regional institutions responsible for environmental management, promoting implementation of environmental programmes and plans and enhancing their contribution to national sustainable development and poverty reduction strategies;

Promotes the integration of environmental initiatives and programmes agreed at the regional and subregional levels and supports the development, enhancement and implementation of regional and subregional environmental strategies and action plans;

Provides an effective strategy for strengthening technology support and cooperation by supporting the creation of an enabling environment for innovation and transfer through the enhancement of international cooperation conducive to innovation and the development, transfer and dissemination of technologies, with the protection of intellectual property rights, involving all relevant partners, including the private sector. Emphasis should be given to identifying and disseminating best practices and fostering entrepreneurship and partnerships;

Promotes efficiency and effectiveness in using financial and human resources through better coordination and coherence, more effective implementation at all levels and the promotion of an integrated approach to allow optimal use of resources.

5.   Furthermore, as part of the basic approach of the plan:

(a)   Efforts should build on existing capacities;

(b)   Activities under the plan must have national ownership to ensure that built capacities are sustained;

(c)   Capacity-building programmes must be tailored to individual countries based on a bottom-up needs-assessment process;

(d)   Work must be coordinated, linked with efforts already in progress and integrated with other sustainable development initiatives using existing coordinating mechanisms, such as the Environmental Management Group, the United Nations Development Group and the resident coordinator system;

(e)   Work should not duplicate that promoted and undertaken by other organizations and programmes.

6.   A significant role should be given to institutional arrangements at the regional level and regional institutions in implementing and reviewing the plan.

IV.   Implementation

7.   The plan builds upon the objectives identified in paragraph 3, above.

8.   Specific objectives, strategies and activities are identified through a bottom-up approach in order to reflect the actual needs of countries and regions. The relevant elements should be identified on the basis of inputs from Governments and a review of priorities emerging from regional ministerial forums. The views of relevant organizations and stakeholders, both governmental and non-governmental, should be considered. National ownership is essential and offers the possibility of tailoring capacity-building and technology support programmes to specific needs as identified in each country's environmental priorities.

9.   Regional UNEP offices should be strengthened to facilitate effective support for the implementation of the plan at its national, subregional and regional levels.

A.   National level

10.   Given the specific circumstances of the different countries concerned, each country should be encouraged to identify its own needs in capacity-building and technology support in order to meet its environmental priorities. As identified in chapter 34 of Agenda 21, entitled "Transfer of environmentally sound technology, cooperation and capacity-building", environmentally sound technologies and corresponding capacity-building needs encompass a broad range of issues, from which each country might identify elements suitable to its needs in achieving environmental objectives of sustainable development. The multilateral system should assist national Governments to develop practical arrangements, taking into account national and, where applicable, GEF-UNDP self assessments geared towards transforming the needs of each country into a set of strategic priorities and the means to respond to them. Close cooperation between UNEP, UNDP, GEF and the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements is important in effectively meeting this challenge.

11.   The plan will assist in developing the UNEP response to national-level needs for capacity-building on issues of relevance to its mandate. UNEP activities should complement measures implemented by GEF. There will be coordination with UNDP capacity-building activities, as outlined in Capacity 2015, the new capacity development initiative launched by UNDP. Collaboration on sectoral issues with relevant specialized agencies in the United Nations system, and also with civil society organizations, knowledge-based institutions and the private sector, should also be enhanced.

B.   Regional level

12.   The plan will be consistent with regional and subregional strategies defined by regional and subregional bodies, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) and the "Environment for Europe" process, and will support the implementation of those priority activities identified at the regional and subregional levels.

13.   The plan responds to the regional dimensions emphasized in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. It could thus take into account the experience gained in assisting Governments to prepare and finalize the action plan of the environment initiative of NEPAD, ILAC and the programme of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) and support their implementation through capacity-building. This approach is based on the following modalities:

(a)   Support for the implementation of global and regional environmental conventions and other legal instruments;

(b)   Training and enhancement of existing centres of excellence;

(c)   Promotion and support of South-South cooperation;

(d)   Exchanges of best practices and lessons learned;

(e)   Development of partnerships;

(f)   Information for decision-making;

(g)   Promotion of technology support;

(h)   Support for cleaner production centres.

14.   The plan accords special attention to strengthening the support given to regional ministerial environmental forums to enable them to play a role in the implementation and review of the plan and identification of emerging needs. In this regard, regional ministerial forums or similar bodies are encouraged to identify regional priorities to be considered by the Governing Council and taken into account by UNEP.

15.   The existing regional ministerial environmental bodies, their subsidiary bodies and other relevant entities are encouraged to consider the plan, make policy recommendations and identify priorities on a regular basis. They are also encouraged to recommend strategic approaches to the implementation of the respective components of the plan in their regions.

C.   Global level

16.   The international environmental governance mandate conferred by the Governing Council at its seventh special session in Cartagena refers to the need to implement the plan through enhanced coordination with other United Nations bodies, in particular UNDP. The memorandum of understanding between UNEP and UNDP will enhance joint capacity-building activities with a view to the development of a strategic plan, taking into account the need to develop clear operational modalities that avoid duplication and the respective competencies of the two organizations.

17.   The plan is complementary to and coordinated with activities and programmes being undertaken across the United Nations system as a whole, including the work programmes of multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, taking into account their autonomous decision-making processes, in particular through United Nations common country assessments and United Nations development assistance frameworks and in close cooperation with UNDP, through United Nations resident coordinators at the country level. The plan is based on existing intergovernmental decisions, including guidance by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, and is to be further elaborated in line with national or regional needs and priorities, including those identified at various intergovernmental forums already held at the regional and global levels.

18.   UNEP should play a more proactive role so that its technology support and capacity-building activities are more widely disseminated in the United Nations system and mainstreamed in country-specific initiatives undertaken at the field level.

19.   UNEP should develop and keep updated a database giving access to information on major existing technology support and capacity-building activities, such as those undertaken by UNEP, with links to the programmes of relevant partners. This activity should perform a clearing-house function. The database should be cost-effective, drawing on experience, and linked with existing databases. It should be designed for the exchange of practical information and should ensure improved transparency while preventing duplication.

D.   Indicative list of main areas of technology support and capacity-building activities

20.   The following is an indicative list of cross-cutting issues and thematic areas that the plan should address:

(a)   Cross-cutting issues:

(i)   Strengthening of national and regional environmental or environment-related institutions (government institutions, judiciary, enforcement);

(ii)   Development of national environmental law;

(iii)   Strengthening of cooperation with civil society and the private sector;

(iv)   Assistance for facilitating compliance with and enforcement of obligations under multilateral environmental agreements and implementation of environmental commitments;

(v)   Preparation, integration and implementation of environmental aspects of national sustainable development plans;

(vi)   Poverty and environment, including the implementation of poverty reduction strategy programmes;

(vii)   Development of national research, monitoring and assessment capacity, including training in assessment and early warning;

(viii)   Support to national and regional institutions in data collection, analysis and monitoring of environmental trends;

(ix)   Access to scientific and technological information, including information on state-of-the-art technologies;

(x)   Facilitating access to and support for environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know-how;

(xi)   Education and awareness raising, including networking among universities with programmes of excellence in the field of the environment;

(xii)   Promotion of sustainable consumption and production patterns, including support for cleaner production centres;

(xiii)   Development of gender mainstreaming strategies in environmental policies;

(b)   Thematic areas:

(i)   Biological diversity, including biosafety and the issue of invasive species;

(ii)   Climate change;

(iii)   Desertification, drought and land degradation;

(iv)   Freshwater resources;

(v)   Conservation of wetlands;

(vi)   Oceans and seas and coastal areas, including regional seas and the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities;

(vii)   Chemicals;

(viii)   Waste management;

(ix)   Pollution;

(x)   Health and environment;

(xi)   Trade and environment;

(xii)   Renewable energy;

(xiii)   Transboundary conservation and sustainable management of natural resources when agreed by the countries concerned;

(xiv)   Environmental emergency preparedness and response;

(xv)   Taxonomy;

(xvi)   Forests;

(xvii)   Post-conflict assessment;

(xviii) Sanitation;

(xix)   Food security and environment.

E.   South-South cooperation

21.   The plan underscores the importance of South-South cooperation and stresses the need to intensify efforts directed towards institutional capacity-building, including through the exchange of expertise, experiences, information and documentation between the institutions of the South in order to develop human resources and strengthen the institutions of the South, and places emphasis on the important role for economic and social development played by scientific knowledge and technology, which have a major influence on the way in which the earth's resources are used and shared among its inhabitants.

F.   Information for decision-making: the role of science, monitoring and assessment

22.   The plan supports the implementation of the relevant outcomes of the intergovernmental consultation on strengthening the scientific base of UNEP, held in Nairobi on 14 and 15 January 2004 (as described in document UNEP/GCSS.VIII/5/Add.4), which specify a number of important capacity-building needs. These include the need to strengthen national capacities for data collection, research, analysis, monitoring and integrated environmental assessment; developing institutional capacities, staff training and support for appropriate and adaptable technologies and methodologies; support for assessments of environmental issues of regional and subregional importance and for the assessment and early warning of emerging environmental issues; support for scientific exchanges and for the establishment of environmental and inter-disciplinary information networks; and promotion of coherent partnership approaches.

23.   UNEP should help reinforce the capacities of national Governments to collect and analyse environmental data for use in decision-making and for participation in broader assessment processes, including, among others, the Global Environment Outlook.

G.   Reporting, monitoring and evaluation

24.   The plan provides for reporting on its implementation to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. Such reporting should be undertaken in accordance with the process set out in paragraph 29 below, and should include the following:

(a)   Assessment by recipient Governments on the results of assistance or training received: this should be used for improving the effectiveness of assistance, and should not be used as a precondition for the provision of such assistance;

(b)   Reporting by the UNEP secretariat on the number of requests, monitoring of outcomes and measurable and qualitative results, and an assessment report on the status of financing of the plan.

25.   Each Government that is a recipient of UNEP capacity-building and technology support efforts should endeavour to use effectively the capacity or technology acquired through training or other capacity-building efforts and to sustain the capacity or technology after such efforts have been completed. Recipient Governments are encouraged to report on the results of capacity-building or technology support received. This would include evaluation of programmes and staff trained by UNEP.

V.   Coordination mechanisms

26.   UNEP should work to achieve improved and enhanced communication, cooperation, coordination and synergies with other United Nations organizations, international financial institutions, regional development banks, multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, civil society and relevant stakeholders, in order to ensure optimum use of limited financial and human resources, strengthen regional and country level activities and provide a platform for multilateral approaches and consistency in technology transfer, with the protection of intellectual property rights; taking into consideration the respective mandates and autonomous decision-making authority of all concerned entities and using existing inter-agency coordination mechanisms. All agencies in the United Nations system are encouraged to take the plan into account while planning their own technology support and capacity-building efforts.

27.   Since, under the current functional and organizational set-up of UNEP, its capacity-building activities take place within the work programmes of separate UNEP divisions, there is a need to put in place a comprehensive database, accessible to all countries and regularly updated, of technology support and capacity-building activities with references and links to relevant United Nations agencies and

multilateral environmental agreements, which should reflect, and be further developed in line with, the plan.

28.   Implementation of the plan should be guided by national and regional capacity-building priorities, and action plans where applicable, which will also require support from regional mechanisms, building on existing institutions, both at the intergovernmental level and secretariat levels.

A.   Intergovernmental level

1.   Global follow-up arrangements

29.   The Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum will regularly review and provide policy guidance for the plan, acting pursuant to its mandate to review the global environment and to promote international cooperation. The intergovernmental process at the global level will be as follows:

(a)   At each session, the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum should follow up and review, and provide guidance on, the plan, and at each regular session, it should allocate the necessary resources for the implementation of the plan;

(b)   Intersessionally, the Committee of Permanent Representatives should follow up, monitor and review the implementation and effectiveness of the plan;

(c)   The Executive Director should prepare annual reports on progress in the plan's implementation, including the mobilization of resources, the identification of regional and national needs and priorities, and assessment of the response to the requests received;

(d)   The Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum should provide oversight and direction to the capacity-building and technology support work at UNEP;

(e)   The Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum should receive, review and discuss reports on the capacity-building and technology support efforts at UNEP, reflecting resulting priorities in its decisions and in the UNEP programme of work and budget.

2.   Regional level

30.   At the regional level, both regional and subregional forums will play an important role. The existing regional ministerial environmental bodies, their subsidiary bodies and other relevant entities are encouraged regularly to consider the implementation of the plan, make policy recommendations and identify priorities. They will also recommend strategic approaches to the implementation of the respective components of the plan in their region.

B.   Secretariat level

31.   UNEP will provide secretariat services for the implementation of the plan, including in-house coordination, and undertake the following:

(a)   The secretariat should regularly inform the Committee of Permanent Representatives on the implementation of the plan;

(b)   Within UNEP, the overall responsibility for the implementation of the plan should rest with the Executive Director, who should ensure its mainstreaming throughout the organization, while avoiding the creation of any additional or new bureaucratic layers. The Executive Director should establish a dedicated focal point at UNEP headquarters to facilitate in-house coordination among the divisions and regional offices, all of which should determine entry points and a transparent process for receiving, tracking and distributing requests for technology support and capacity-building. The Executive Director should entrust each division and regional office with the task of identifying a focal point for the plan, with functional responsibility and for oversight of the specific division's capacity-building activities;

(c)   The Executive Director should ensure that the division responsible for regional coordination is sufficiently strengthened and that the UNEP network of regional offices can effectively assist regional and subregional environmental forums in facilitating the processing, implementing, reviewing of and reporting on requests for technology support and capacity-building. Efforts to promote inter-agency collaboration and coordination should be enhanced in this context;

(d)   A comprehensive, user-friendly, regularly updated database on capacity-building and technology support activities should be established by UNEP, with references and links to other relevant agencies and multilateral environmental agreements. The database should be made available and accessible to all countries, in electronic and printed formats, and should reflect and be further developed in line with the plan;

(e)   The scientific and technical capacity of UNEP should be strengthened and developed to enable an enhanced delivery of technological advice and assistance related, in particular, to environmentally sound technologies and know-how;

(f)   UNEP should designate decentralized entry points and use transparent measures to receive, circulate and process requests for capacity-building and technological assistance based on existing best available practices;

(g)   A bottom-up, country-driven approach that is responsive to Governments and to regional or subregional intergovernmental forums, and also to other United Nations bodies, while maintaining the flexibility of UNEP to evaluate and respond to requests, should be followed. Country ownership is crucial if Governments are to maintain and support the capacity that is built;

(h)   The Executive Director should establish a cross-cutting and transparent system to monitor the capacity building and technology support portfolio of UNEP and to identify and annually report on incoming requests, existing gaps and analysis of successes, weaknesses and lessons learned. The portfolio should be clearly identified in the biennial programme of work and budget. In this regard, each division should indicate in its biennial programme of work and budget its technical support and capacity-building activities and their associated costs;

(i)   UNEP should seek out and establish public-private partnerships as a complement to intergovernmental commitments in implementing capacity-building and technology support programmes.

32.   In reporting to the Governing Council on the implementation of the plan, UNEP should assess the availability of requisite technical and financial resources, as well as the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity-building efforts at the national, subregional and regional levels.

VI.   Financial mechanisms

33.   With reference to decision SS.VII/1, the plan should be implemented through a combination of voluntary financial mechanisms and options that would provide additional resources. The financial mechanisms should be transparent, accountable and consistent with the financial rules of the Environment Fund. Funding should be stable, adequate and predictable.

34.   In order to reflect the mainstreaming of technology support and capacity-building within UNEP, the Governing Council should use the Environment Fund for these activities, taking into account the evolving nature of funding requirements, including at the regional level. Resources allocated for these activities should be predictable and support other programme elements. United Nations Member States should consider increasing their contributions to the Environment Fund. In this regard they could consider various voluntary mechanisms, as envisaged in decision SS.VII/1.

35.   As called for by decision SS.VII/1, a strategic partnership between UNEP and GEF will be developed and submitted for adoption by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and the GEF Council. This partnership would contribute to furthering the goals of the plan.

36.   Implementation of the plan will also depend on the mobilization of resources from other sources, including public-private partnerships. These partnerships should complement and not replace intergovernmental commitments.

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