



**A Strengthened UNEP and UN System on Environment: Compilation of Civil Society Responses to the Report of the High Level Panel on System Wide Coherence
Updated, 18 April 2007**

Problem Statement

As the leading environmental authority within the United Nations, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has been instrumental in the development of a wide range of international agreements and conventions on advancing protection of the world's biological diversity and the ozone layer, as well as the sound management of chemicals and persistent organic pollutants. However, for over 30 years, government and independent analysis of the UNEP's impact have regularly identified issues that beleaguer the current system. These concerns generally focus on: incoherence, inefficiency, information inadequacy, inequity, and insufficient funding.

Other areas identified as key weaknesses in the existing arrangements include: inadequate levels of integration of environmental considerations into the mainstream of decision-making; inadequate approaches to the global environmental impacts of globalization; fragmented machinery; institutional mandates and environmental agreements that predominantly follow a sectoral approach to environmental management; weak international dispute mechanisms; and lack of holistic approach to international environmental governance. At the political level, areas most signaled out for further attention include: the discrepancy between commitments and action; and the lack of a strong political base which has contributed to a failure to effectively mainstream and integrate environment into the wider macro-economic arena, and particularly within the World Trade Organization.

For the last five years, the major reform process for a strengthened UNEP has been addressed under the Cartagena Decision on International Environment Governance adopted at the seventh Special Session of the Governing Council/GMEF in 2002. While some progress has been achieved regarding UNEP's financial situation

Civil Society Responses to the Report of the High Level Panel

On 9 November 2006, the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance, and Environment released its report *Delivering As One*.

In July 2006, Stakeholder Forum (SF), the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for Environment and Development (FBOMS) and the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN NGLS) organized the only civil society discussion with the Panel on sustainable development. Building on this work, the coalition initiated a Call in November 2006 to gather further submissions from civil society.

This paper presents a range of civil society views in relation to the High Level Panel's recommendations related to UN systems' work on environment and sustainable development that is relevant to the substantive discussion on UNEP reform scheduled for the 24th session the UN Environment Programme's Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC/GMEF) to be held from 5-9 February 2007. This paper includes recommendations related to: **Strengthening UNEP; Setting Norms and Standards for the Environment; UN Environment Organization; UNEP's Location; Multilateral Environmental Agreements; An Independent Assessment of IEG; UN System Cooperation; Trade and Environment; UNEP and the World Health Organization; Environment at the Country Level; Gender and Environment; Building Local Capacity; Civil Society and Private Sector Engagement.**

In addition a compilation of civil society views of the Global Environment Facility has also been prepared for circulation at the GC/GMEF. Further compilations of civil society views will be distributed for the upcoming sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development. All civil society contributions are available at the SF website: <http://www.stakeholderforum.org>

and capacity building and technology transfer, overall many feel that the incremental reform process has not led to a fully strengthened UNEP.

In 2005, the World Summit Outcome Document identified a number of issues that need to be addressed for the implementation of more efficient environmental activities in the UN system, including: enhanced coordination; improved policy advice and guidance; strengthened scientific knowledge, assessment and cooperation; better treaty compliance, while respecting the legal autonomy of the treaties; and better integration of environmental activities in the broader sustainable development framework at the operational level, including through capacity-building. Based on these issues, the Summit agreed to “explore the possibility of a more coherent institutional framework to address this need, including a more integrated structure, building on existing institutions and internationally agreed instruments, as well as the treaty bodies and the specialized agencies.”

High Level Panel Recommendations

In its report, the High Level Panel made a number of recommendations regarding a strengthened UNEP, as well as more effective UN system approach to environment. The Panel recommended that “IEG should be strengthened and more coherent in order to improve effectiveness and targeted action of environmental activities in the United Nations system. It should be strengthened by upgrading UNEP with a renewed mandate and improved funding.” The Panel further recommended that “an upgraded UNEP should have real authority as the environment policy pillar of the UN system, backed by normative and analytical capacity and with broad responsibility to review progress towards improving the global environment. UNEP should provide substantive leadership and guidance on environmental issues.” The Panel also made recommendations regarding UNEP’s technical and scientific capacity, the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building, UNEP’s participation in UN country teams; and UNEP’s role in assisting countries in the two-step process of quantifying environmental costs and benefits and incorporating them into mainstream policymaking.” The Panel identified the need to strengthen UNEP coordination of system-wide environmental policies in order to improve cohesion and consistency, and proposed an independent assessment of IEG.

Civil Society Views

A Strengthened UNEP

“There is an urgent need for a stronger international authority on environment to safeguard the environmental pillar of sustainable development. UNEP’s present mandate and resources prevent it from achieving this. The Panel calls for an upgraded UNEP with a renewed mandate and improved funding. If UNEP’s current insufficiencies are not remedied, serious consideration should be given to whether UNEP should provide the primary focus for reform of international environmental governance. An upgraded UNEP should have a new mandate. Such a mandate should build greater coherence between environmental and social agendas, making the concept of “environment for development” a reality. It would act as a platform for both standard setting and other interaction with national, international and UN bodies. The principles of cooperation and of common but differentiated responsibilities should be reflected in the implementation of the mandate.”¹

“A number of principles should be adopted for a strengthened UNEP, namely: broad societal consensus on a long term vision for UNEP; reliable analysis of the present situation and future scenarios for UNEP; integrated planning comprising all dimensions of sustainable development; building on existing strategies and processes; increasing links between national and

¹ Reforming International Environmental Governance: Statement representing views expressed at two meetings of stakeholders held at UNEP GC 2007. It does not represent a consensus view.

local level strategies; integration into financial and budget planning; early monitoring to steer processes and track progress; and effective participation mechanisms.”

“In strengthening UNEP consideration must be given to the specific needs of developing countries and respect of the fundamental principle of ‘common but differentiated responsibilities’. Developed countries should promote technology transfer, new and additional financial resources, and capacity building for meaningful participation of developing countries in IEG. Strengthening of IEG should also occur in the context of sustainable development and should involve civil society as important stakeholder and agent of transformation².”

“Any new UN body or agency working within a reformed UN system should focus on elements such as capacity-building, assistance, consistent funding, and technical information to enable nations to fully implement all relevant existing UN treaties and agreements³.”

“There is the need to build a strong and even a stronger UNEP. A strengthened UNEP will set the platform for improving the standard of life⁴.”

“Trade Unions recognize and appreciate the role that UNEP plays in the protection of environment and believe that this role must be strengthened to allow it to contribute to coherent global sustainable development⁵.”

“We have followed with interest the ongoing building of capacity within UNEP in technical and scientific capacities, and would support its continuation. We have also been aware of UNEP’s efforts to expand their role into areas outside of the environment. This appears to create redundancies with other organizations as well as to divert resources from UNEP’s core mandate. We would also observe that existing environmental treaties already encompass the most influential and authoritative sources of policy for the areas which they cover. In our view the mandate of UNEP should explicitly include the understanding that UNEP would work in concert with these independent and authoritative legal frameworks⁶.”

“An upgraded UNEP must be adequately and predictably funded in order to be able to implement its mandate. The current financial situation for UNEP is unacceptable and must be addressed. In comparison, for example, several large environmental NGOs have significantly greater budgets than UNEP.”⁷

Setting Norms and Standards for the Environment

“The UN must renew its commitment to the primacy of standard-setting and enforcement at the national level for implementing policies and measures. The current trends at the UN of voluntary measures must be placed within a standard-setting framework. Environmental, social and labor international standards must be promoted as the key to coherence in this regard, and must form the basis for national rules for all issues. Moreover current programmes for promotion and ratification of UN Instruments through technical cooperation and financial assistance need to be given higher priority⁸.”

“UNEP’s mandate is too narrow, as it only covers a few aspects of the environment. Its mandate should be expanded to, for example, include sustainable agriculture and fisheries and

² Submission by the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and the Development to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006);

<http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/BRAZILIANFORUMOFNGOS.pdf>

³ Submission by ANPED to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006);

<http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/ANPED.pdf>

⁴ Submission by Hopelink International (January 2007)

⁵ Statement by Laura Martín Murillo, Sustainlabour Foundation, to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/Statements/SustainLabour.pdf>

⁶ Submission from the International Council on Commerce (January 2007)

⁷ Reforming International Environmental Governance: Statement representing views expressed at two meetings of stakeholders held at UNEP GC 2007. It does not represent a consensus view.

⁸ Statement by Laura Martín Murillo, Sustainlabour Foundation, to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/Statements/SustainLabour.pdf>

sustainable energy. UNEP's role in liaising with Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) should also be strengthened to give it a more coordinating role⁹.”

“The GMEF should be turned into a forum concentrating on dealing with serious threats to the environment and make this a platform for Ministers of Environment to speak out forcefully on these environmental challenges. There is a need to ensure that the normative and standard setting bodies and standards developed by the UN are not used as a ceiling reducing environmental demands and standards, nor subjecting them to trade regulations as promoted at the WTO, as well as in regional and bilateral bodies¹⁰.”

“One of the major functions of the UN is global standard setting. Work must be done to: ensure the realization of the Rio principles, and pay especial attention to the Precautionary Principle; ensure gender issues are fully integrated and understood; create incentives for increasing cooperation around and between MEAs; develop increased coherence among UN bodies on cross-cutting environmental issues; develop MEAs for areas where there are no international agreements; and develop a strong norm and policy setting UN body for the environment, which can effectively coordinate the full spectrum of UN environmental work¹¹.”

“By 2015, UN member States must ensure the creation of a strong norm and policy setting UN body for the environment, which can effectively coordinate the full spectrum of UN environmental normative and policy work and direct its implementation. By 2015, UN member States must have in place a UN system for integrating environment and development that is responsive to country needs for achieving sustainable development and includes a function of a monitoring and review mechanism to assist, monitor, review, follow-up and report on progress of the implementation and renewal of UN environmental norms, agreements and policies on sustainable development¹².”

UN Environment Organization

“The UN General Assembly should establish a UN Environment Organization (UNEO) on the basis of current status quo of UNEP and with a renewed, stronger, strengthened political authority, financial provisions, scientific, programmatic and operational bases for enabling it to perform its mandate as the UN's global agency in caring for the environment base. It is to note that our support for such a body is absolutely dependent on its central location – which should continue be at Nairobi –, its governance – which should continue be the GC/GMEF as the highest governing body and the Secretariat as the executing body – and its relationship with civil society – which should be better defined, clearer and further strengthened. A UNEO should also be established so that the more than 500 MEAs are clustered according to the thematic areas they address; their governance, the synergies among and enforcement be improved and all fall under the direction and policy guidance of a single authority body – perhaps the UN General Assembly, UN Secretariat, or the Environment Organization¹³.”

“The ongoing reform process pertaining to environment, the System Wide Coherence Panel Outcome document and the reform process on UNEP must be used to promote and keep the demands for a strong environmental agency, at a minimum on agency level, possibly as a UNEO or World Environment Organization alive and active¹⁴.”

⁹ Statement by Meena Raman, Third World Network, to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/Statements/third_world_network.pdf

¹⁰ Statement of European Regional Consultation Meeting for the 8th UNEP Global Civil Society Forum 23-25 October 2006, Geneva, Switzerland, UNEP/GC/24/INF/10/Add.3

¹¹ Submission from ANPED to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/ANPED.pdf>

¹² Submission from WWF, ANPED and Greenpeace International to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/WWFANPEDandGreenpeace.pdf>

¹³ Submission from JEA- The Ecological Youth of Angola (January 2007)

¹⁴ Statement of European Regional Consultation Meeting for the 8th UNEP Global Civil Society Forum 23-25 October 2006, Geneva, Switzerland, UNEP/GC/24/INF/10/Add.3

UNEP's Location

“There is a need for an in-depth analysis and so formulate recommendations to the UN General Assembly with the regards to the situation of current locations of UNEP's central divisions (such as the Department on Trade, Industry and Economics), branches and offices outside Nairobi – the headquarters – and its financial, programmatic and operational implications to the UN system and the performance of UNEP, particularly in environmental procurement field¹⁵.”

Multilateral Environmental Agreements

“There is the need for effective coordination of major MEAs in order to help achieve better results¹⁶.”

“The MEAs should be strengthened individually and should collaborate together among themselves and with UNEP and Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). Some of the MEAs deal with key issues like biodiversity, biosafety and climate but meet too seldom and make progress too slowly. There should be a more frequent tempo of negotiations. Then there are many areas of the environment where action is needed but lacking. The Panel should list the issues where there is this absence of action and advocate new MEAs to be established (examples include energy, sustainable consumption, sustainable production, sustainable agriculture, corporate accountability following from the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation that mandated an international framework for the same, comprehensive agreement on chemicals and heavy metals including radioactive substances and to address the shifting of toxic industries from North to South)¹⁷.”

“By 2008, UN member States could create incentives for increasing cooperation among MEAs and the scheduling of back-to-back MEA meetings on related issues. Any new UN sustainable development system must act as a facilitator by bringing together focal points and expertise in MEAs at the national level. By 2010, UN member States should ensure: the clustering of MEA Secretariats where there is considerable overlap in expertise and mandate which in turn has hindered implementation; increased coherence among UN entities on cross-cutting issues concerning, among others, trade, and transnational environment-related crime; and the adoption of MEAs in areas where there are presently no international agreements, such as on protecting important biomes including the deep sea and the global commons¹⁸.”

“There is a need for an umbrella structure for MEAs. Discussion on a centralized umbrella structure for MEAs should address: the same geographical location of programme secretaries such as UNEP and UN-Habitat in Nairobi, Kenya, is an interesting option. The parallel organization of various Conferences of the Parties may save travel costs and promote synergy in discussions and decision-making. However, with more financial and human resources in the North, there is a risk that centralization will be dominated by the stronger Northern countries¹⁹.”

“The opportunity called for by the reform process must be used to shed new light on the need to develop enforcement of compliance and dispute settlement and liability mechanisms under the MEAs as well as to re-introduce voting mechanisms on environmental decisions so as

¹⁵ Submission from JEA- The Ecological Youth of Angola (January 2007)

¹⁶ Submission from Hopelink International (January 2007)

¹⁷ Statement by Meena Raman , Third World Network to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/Statements/third_world_network.pdf

¹⁸ Submission from WWF, ANPED and Greenpeace International to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/WWFANPEDandGreenpeace.pdf>

¹⁹ Submission by the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and Development (FBOMS) to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/BRAZILIANFORUMOFNGOS.pdf>

not allow non-parties and non-complying state parties to inhibit progress, as well as further explore and develop the IEG process²⁰.”“An upgraded UNEP needs to play a role in building capacity to implement multilateral environmental agreements. The Panel recommends that efficiencies and substantive coordination should be pursued by diverse treaty bodies to support effective implementation of MEAs. In addition, there is a need for an upgraded UNEP to promote coherence and address gaps and inadequacies in the current convention regime. The case of World Health Organisation and DDT in conflict with Stockholm Convention, and the case of Canada and Kazakhstan undermining Rotterdam Annex 3 in the case of asbestos are cases in point.”²¹

An Independent Assessment of IEG

“This assessment should also include a review and recommendations for integrating all of the various planning and policy development processes that are to be done at the country level. It should make recommendations for ensuring that all of these processes are adequately focused on making a transition to full sustainability as rapidly as possible and on achieving all of the international agreements and commitments that have been made. The assessment must identify specific areas of the National Sustainable Development Strategy Plans, Sustainable Production and Consumption Frameworks, Agenda 21 Planning Processes, etc. that need to be strengthened as well as the additional funding that is needed for full implementation²².”

“The IEG assessment needs to examine the local sphere of environmental governance and identify capacity gaps which need to be addressed in order to strengthen local implementation of environmental regulation and policy²³.”

“The Assessment should aim to: develop a set concepts, tools, procedures, best practices methodology, participation mechanisms and recommendations on UNEP in international environmental governance assessments; agree on operational environment governance assessment that makes it comparable with other sources of country level responding to national needs; include important environmental governance assessment and in development programmes designed to reduce poverty; planning process international environmental governance assessment²⁴.”

“Implement existing recommendations related to IEG now, rather than commissioning an additional assessment. A plethora of consultations and reports on IEG have already been commissioned and are ready to be considered for implementation, including assessments through the Cartagena process and by IISD, among many others. Time and resources should not be wasted on additional assessments²⁵.”

“The system of international environmental governance should be strengthened and made more coherent, and that an independent and authoritative assessment of the current UN system is commissioned in that regard. This assessment should be made in an inclusive manner, taking into account the views of all stakeholders²⁶.”

“It is not clear against which benchmarks or criteria this assessment would be undertaken. To be meaningful, an assessment should also consider the context in which implementation occurs – national circumstances, other regulatory frameworks and the degree to which they enable or disable effective implementation, and the role of non-governmental stakeholders,

²⁰ Statement of European Regional Consultation Meeting for the 8th UNEP Global Civil Society Forum 23-25 October 2006, Geneva, Switzerland, UNEP/GC/24/INF/10/Add.3

²¹ Reforming International Environmental Governance: Statement representing views expressed at two meetings of stakeholders held at UNEP GC 2007. It does not represent a consensus view.

²² Submission from World Citizen (January 2007)

²³ Submission from Local Government International Bureau (January 2007)

²⁴ Submission from CAALD (January 2007)

²⁵ Draft submission from Womens Environment and Development Organization (January 2007)

²⁶ Submission from World Business Council for Sustainable Development (January 2007)

including business. Moreover, the question at hand should not be limited to efficiency, but also to effectiveness in terms of results and cost. We would call for the avoidance as far as possible of new institutional mechanisms and governance structures, believing that restructuring within the current mechanism will yield excellent results²⁷.”

Environmental Management Group and UN System Cooperation

“The UN General Assembly should abolish the UN Environment Management Group (EMG), as a separate inter-agency environmental group, and integrate its current mandate and functions into the proposed ‘UN Sustainable Development Board, so that it avoids duplication of work with the so proposed UNEO and contributes to further integration of the environment pillar of the sustainable development within the UN system-wide development activities’²⁸.”

“There is a need to ensure that UNEP plays a leading role in the UN Development Group (UNDG), in UN country teams directed by UNDP, and in the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). At the global level, the Environmental Management Group has been sidelined and ineffective in moving the poverty-environment agenda forward. Instead, UNEP should play a leading role in the UNDG. At the country level, UNEP should collaborate closely with UNDP and provide technical and normative expertise as part of UN country teams and through UNDAF²⁹.”

“There is a need to: improve coordination and dissemination of measurable information about UNEP assistance; define a more secure and permanent place for UNEP in the context of a poverty focused development agenda; integrate UNEP concerns more effectively into development strategies; encourage the increased participation of a range of government institutions in providing UNEP assistance; and support opportunities for direct NGO execution of publicity funded programmes³⁰.”

“There is an urgent need to strengthening the UN system for environment. It is a fact that to some extent, there has existed incoherence between UN funds, UN programmes and UN agencies. Unless developing countries have reached a developed stage, there seems to be no way that developing can deal successfully with multiple agencies³¹.”

“The UN should provide leadership and guidance on environmental issues and that a designated UN entity is given real authority and funding over environment policy. We recognize that there are currently many UN entities with an environment mandate (for example CBD and UNFCCC). We recommend that this policy body of the UN strongly coordinates its work program with these entities so as to avoid overlap. The simplification of entry points into the UN and strong coordinating units at the UN (for example on water), greater integration of UN standard-setting and operational activities and coherence among UN entities, Bretton Woods institutions other intergovernmental bodies including the various MEA secretariats is supported³².”

Trade and Environment

“There is a need to expand UNEP’s mandate to the level of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Environmental policies and programs are often trumped by trade priorities that have the legal and political backing of the WTO. In order to have equivalent clout, environmental priorities need to be backed by a global institution with a comparable level of

²⁷ Submission from the International Chamber of Commerce (January 2007)

²⁸ Submission from The Ecological Youth of Angola (January 2007)

²⁹ Submission from the Womens Environment and Development Organization (January 2007)

³⁰ Submission from CAALD (January 2007)

³¹ Submission from Hopelink International (January 2007)

³² Submission from the World Business Council on Sustainable Development (January 2007)

influence. Governments must provide sufficient funding to ensure UNEP's mandate is expanded³³.”

“There is a need to strengthening MEAs in the face of the WTO regime. Developed countries, instead of fulfilling their commitments made under the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, and other MEAs, have prioritized the agenda of the WTO that promotes a regime of rules that are counter-running the Rio spirit and principles. The unilateral rejection of MEAs, such as the Kyoto Protocol, by some countries is another fact that puts at risk the common and binding efforts needed to advance towards sustainable development³⁴.”

“It should fall to an independent forum outside the WTO to examine the WTO-MEA relationship, as part of a coherent approach to addressing global challenges. In our view, the International Court of Justice and the United Nation's International Law Commission are the most suitable existing fora for clarifying the WTO/MEA relationship because of their broad expertise, the transparency of their process and their independence from particular interests. The WTO agreements contain review clauses that should be used to analyze whether existing rules support and promote the development of sustainable societies, and conform with existing international law and obligations. National independent sustainability impact assessments are crucial in this regard. A complete review of the social and environmental consequences of the trade policies implemented so far is urgently required. To ensure that sustainable development is at the heart of the future governance model to be built through the process of UN reform, a clear picture of the true impacts of the multilateral trade regime is needed. The rush to further trade liberalization without first considering the complete impacts must be halted³⁵.”

“It is critical that the WTO does not have a mandate to set rules or criteria that might restrict the use or national implementation of any trade measures agreed to in MEAs. Governments must grant UNEP and the Secretariats of MEAs with trade-related provisions, objectives, or obligations permanent observer status in all relevant bodies of the WTO. The UN Conference on Trade and Development must be preserved and strengthened in the process of UN reform and given a critical role in ensuring sustainability and equity in global trade³⁶.”

“The policies of UN bodies, international financial institutions (IFIs), international trade organs and others must undergo significant appraisals as to whether they address the environmental challenges that the Earth faces today and will face in the near future. Many of these institutions currently contribute to the problems, and this situation cannot continue. There is a need to harmonize the goals and aspirations of multilateral environment and sustainable development policies with the Bretton Woods and International Financial Institutions³⁷.”

“Given the increasingly important role of international trade, a more direct linkage between UN agencies and the activities of the WTO has become imperative. Its policies must be consistent with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and broader sustainable development goals³⁸.”

“The WTO is one of the stronger proponents of globalization and is increasingly acting as a global governance organization for international trade. Under its far-reaching rules, the WTO is increasingly deciding upon issues relating to areas such as the environment and human health,

³³ Draft submission from the Womens Environment and Development Organization (January 2007)

³⁴ Submission by the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and Development (FBOMS) to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/BRAZILIANFORUMOFNGOS.pdf>

³⁵ Submission from Greenpeace International to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/Greenpeace.pdf>

³⁶ Submission by ANPED to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/ANPED.pdf>

³⁷ Statement by Gordon Shepard, WWF International, to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/fileadmin/files/WWF.pdf>

³⁸ Statement by Laura Martín Murillo, Sustainlabour Foundation, to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/Statements/SustainLabour.pdf>

thereby frustrating bodies that possess more appropriate expertise, including the MEAs. The development and enforcement of existing and new environmental legislation relating to MEAs should not be hindered by subordinating these policies to free trade and competition rules. It is critical that legislation to ensure sustainable development including environment is not overruled by trade experts, international trade panels and standard-setting bodies working in isolation from other concerns. In line with the principle of mutual supportiveness between environment and trade rules, governments must make it clear that the WTO does not have a mandate to set rules or criteria that may in any way define or restrict the national implementation of any trade measures agreed to in MEAs, independent of the WTO Members' participation in the MEA. An independent forum outside the WTO to examine the WTO-MEA relationship, as part of a coherent approach to addressing global challenges should be established. The WTO and other multilateral bodies, such as UNEP, should assess the impact of WTO rules on the promotion of sustainable development. National independent sustainability and environment impact assessments are also crucial. The UNEP Governing Council to initiate a coordination process between all multilateral environmental agreements, which will identify priority areas for synergies. In particular, we urgently call on starting a process to fill the loopholes among all multilateral environmental agreements that have allowed the toxic waste trade pollution to happen, and which permit business to continue with harmful practices³⁹.

UNEP and the World Health Organization

“There is a need to strengthening UN policies and programmes which link human health with environmental degradation by expanding cooperation between the UN Environment Programme and the World Health Organization (WHO). The WHO's emphasis on triage tends to impede their recognition of environmental factors as a cause of illness. The WHO should increase its work with UNEP on all health issues with environmental components, and we suggest that the initiative come from UNEP. Working in conjunction with UNEP, WHO could not only develop more effective overall programs for resolving or mitigating long term environmental health problems. An expanded role for increased cooperation and program harmonization between WHO and UNEP on issues of environmental health and sustainable development should further include mounting a greater effort towards coordinated chemicals management⁴⁰.”

Environment at the Country Level

“At the country level, there is very weak capacity of UN system on environment and development and in supporting the work of environment NGOs and that support the rights of local communities. The country level work of the UN should accord much greater priority to environment and sustainable development⁴¹.”

“There is a need to ensure that UN country programmes incorporate robust measures on environmental sustainability. UN country programmes should be assessed regularly against environmental sustainability mandates and indicators, and adapted accordingly. UNEP should have the authority to assess the environmental sustainability of trade-driven development initiatives. To facilitate a shift toward implementing environmental policies in developing countries, more emphasis should be placed on building policy development and implementation capacities, rather than building negotiating capacities⁴².”

“On the basis the ‘One UN at the Country level’ vision there is a need to establish UN's desks for environmental and sustainable development affairs, without necessarily establishing

³⁹ Statement of European Regional Consultation Meeting for the 8th UNEP Global Civil Society Forum 23-25 October 2006, Geneva, Switzerland, UNEP/GC/24/INF/10/Add.3

⁴⁰ Submission from World Information Transfer (January 2007)

⁴¹ Statement by Meena Raman, Third World Network to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/Statements/third_world_network.pdf

⁴² Draft submission from the Womens Environment and Development Organization (January 2007)

formal country level offices of representation of such a UN Environment Organization. At our understanding, the vision ‘One UN at Country Level’ should be like a single mechanism for registering new business proposals, in which interested entrepreneurs may have at the same time and with time/cost-effectiveness the legal registering, classification, official publishing and finally the authorization by the concerned authorities to start operations⁴³.”

“The UN should have one streamlined programme for each country and that those programmes include experts on environment and development issues and that work on setting strong norms and policy setting with a UN body for the environment has direct links to national level operational activities⁴⁴.”

“There is a need to establish a single national UN umbrella organization within each country to bring together the activities of separate UN agencies and programmes in a coherent fashion. This body should engage with local government actors as standard practice through consultation and partnership with national and regional local government associations, as well as individual authorities⁴⁵.”

“By 2010, UN member States and UN country offices must have the capacity to access sufficient expertise from MEAs, and those with environment and development specialization. UN member States should create direct channels of communication with minimal layers between the UN environmental norm and policy setting body and operational activities to facilitate implementation, and establish a swift, direct and effective reporting mechanism to review progress in implementation of environmental policies through operational activities. By 2010, member States must create direct and effective channels of communication between environment-related norm and policy setting and operational activities to monitor environment and development trends and to facilitate implementation of norms and policies on the ground and establish sufficient regulatory incentives, both nationally and internationally, to correct market shortcomings and to recognize and account for environmental services in development policy⁴⁶.”

“A key challenge to a coherent role for the UN at the country level is to link implementation of international and national sustainable development goals with the activities at the local level, as linked to local production and consumption patterns. There can be no coherence without concrete linkage to the workplace. Workplace approaches to environmental protection, for example, can improve the use of resources, deal with environmental pollution and improve the quality of life for communities, by linking occupational and public health⁴⁷.”

“The UN should continue to promote sound and predictable long-term enabling frameworks though good governance, transparency, impartiality and arbitration at country-level. It should assist governments to set local strategies and economic, environmental and poverty reduction priorities, coherent with agreed international objectives. Finally it should encourage voluntary approaches and partnerships as helpful supplements to governmental commitments and actions. UN reform should strengthen national resources and capacity building for implementation, taking into account the necessary flexibility needed to reflect different country circumstances and priorities. The UN should ensure that greater coordination of UN programmes and activities takes place at the national level and help governments implementing strong national development agendas⁴⁸.”

⁴³ Submission by the Ecological Youth of Angola (January 2007)

⁴⁴ Submission from ANPED to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/ANPED.pdf>

⁴⁵ Submission by Local Government International Bureau to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/LGIB_submission_UN_reform.pdf

⁴⁶ Submission from WWF, ANPED and Greenpeace International to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/WWFANPEDandGreenpeace.pdf>

⁴⁷ Statement by Laura Martín Murillo, Sustainlabour Foundation, to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/Statements/SustainLabour.pdf>

⁴⁸ Statement by Jacqueline Cote, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/Statements/wbcspd.pdf>

“The recommendation that the UN should deliver as one at country level as it should strengthen national resources and capacity building for implementation, taking into account the necessary flexibility needed to reflect different country circumstances and priorities is welcomed⁴⁹.”

Gender and Environment

“There is a need to integrate a gender perspective in UNDP-UNEP initiatives at the country level, including through poverty-environment initiatives, MDGs, and UNDAF. All of the major UN global agreements signal that gender equity and equality are a prerequisite to sustainable development. As with environment, gender should be a cross-cutting issue in all development work. Thus, poverty-environment and UNDAF initiatives at the country level should integrate a gender perspective from the outset, in collaboration with relevant UN, government, and civil society bodies with gender expertise⁵⁰.”

“UNEP should broaden gender perspective in the multilateral environmental laws and agreements (MEAs). UNEP should encourage involving women and gender perspectives in technological and scientific research covering various environmental sectors. The term of gender mainstreaming can not cover the diversity of gender different background and gender mainstreaming goes beyond gender parity, therefore UNEP should promote the concept of eco-gender mainstreaming instead of gender mainstreaming. UNEP should continue supporting WAVE (Women as Voice of Environment)⁵¹.”

Building Local Capacity

“There is a significant lack of environmental management capacity in many local authorities in the developing world. The Resident Coordinators Offices need to ensure sufficient in-house environmental expertise to advise and provide support for working with national and regional local government associations so that they can directly to help strengthen their individual local authority members and work towards scaling-up local environmental good practice⁵².” There is need to establish clear policy and programme dialogue with UN Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (UNACLA) and establish full observer status for the UNACLA throughout the UN – not only UN Habitat. The UN should also apply the UN-Habitat ‘Guidelines on decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities’ throughout UN programmes.”

Civil Society Engagement

“Non-governmental organizations and grassroots movements have to get involved in discussions on UN reform, system-wide coherence and IEG. Better cooperation between the UN and civil society organisations can help to make sustainable development programs and projects more effective. 54. More public participation: As a central component of IEG the implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration should be promoted and fully put in place at all levels in order to ensure public participation, access to information and to environmental justice. This has been repeatedly requested by the Global Civil Society Forum hosted by UNEP⁵³.”

⁴⁹ Submission from the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (January 2007)

⁵⁰ Draft submission from the Womens Environment and Development Organization (January 2007)

⁵¹ Asian regional civil society statement to the Global Civil Society Forum at its eighth session and the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its twenty-fourth session

⁵² Submission from Local Government International Bureau (January 2007). Submission by Local Government International Bureau to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/LGIB_submission_UN_reform.pdf

⁵³ Submission by the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and Development (FBOMS) to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/SubmissionsToThePanel/BRAZILIANFORUMOFNGOS.pdf>

“All UN institutions in sustainable development (UNEP, WHO, CSD, MEAs) must open up more to civil society participation including in the design and planning, not only in implementation of decisions⁵⁴.”

“A proper, functional and permanent position for civil society, including NGOs must be found within a reformed system, and consideration of the special concerns of civil society must be ensured, including accountability, participation and transparency. Moreover, concerns expressed by particular sectors of society, such as Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, workers, should be given special attention⁵⁵.”

“Ensure that NGOs are recognized as active and responsible players with all rights granted to NGOs under paragraph 71 of the UN Charter; and that NGOs and Major Groups as defined in Agenda 21 be permitted to participate in UNEP processes, including the IEG process and seek to further develop the UNEP national committees. Stakeholders express their concern about the problems many of them had in attending the recent GPA Conference in Beijing. They are also concerned that they were not able to attend all the sessions of the drafting group. In all UNEP-related meetings stakeholders should be able to play the same role. The Major Groups and Stakeholders branch should produce in consultation with governments and stakeholders a model for all UNEP meetings, which should then be put to the Governing Council. If UNEP is serious about its partnership with stakeholders they need to be much more proactive with governments to persuade them that the involvement of stakeholders is a critical aspect of policy development and implementation⁵⁶.”

Engagement with the Private Sector

“Business is increasingly engaged with the UN at local level and encourages the UN to more fully recognize and seize on business’ local expertise and knowledge to promote sustainable development for all. At the international level, business should have access and engagement in UN discussions and consultations, commensurate with its role in society, expertise, resources and inter-disciplinary knowledge and impact. For business to make substantive contributions in UN discussions and consultations, it must be allowed to have an early seat at the table⁵⁷.”

⁵⁴ Statement by Meena Raman, Third World Network, to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg/Statements/third_world_network.pdf

⁵⁵ Statement by Gordon Shepard, WWF International, to the Panel Consultation with Civil Society (June 2006); <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/fileadmin/files/WWF.pdf>

⁵⁶ Statement of European Regional Consultation Meeting for the 8th UNEP Global Civil Society Forum 23-25 October 2006, Geneva, Switzerland, UNEP/GC/24/INF/10/Add.3

⁵⁷ Submission from the World Business Council on Sustainable Development (January 2007)