



Kofi A. Annan

M. Grant/UNEP

*The 2000 Annual Report reflects the work of an organization proud of its accomplishments, yet not complacent; an organization ready to take on any of the challenges that the new Millennium - - “the Environment Millennium” - - may bring.*

No crisis in history has so clearly demonstrated the interdependence of nations as the environmental crisis. The pressures wielded by the forces of economic globalization and technological change are transforming the global environment as never before. A number of trends that characterized the last decade of the 20th century are coming to a head. They include the increasingly transboundary nature of environmental problems; the recognition of interlinkages between various environmental issues; the challenge of implementing the increasing number of multilateral environmental agreements; the growing size and number of mega-cities; the increasing role of civil society in crafting and influencing public policies; and the transition towards a knowledge-based information society.

There is no shortage of ideas on what should be done. We need only look at some of the proposals put forward in this Millennium year — in the Malmö Declaration of Environment Ministers at the First Global Environment Forum, in my Report to the Millennium Summit and in the Millennium Declaration. Nor is there a shortage of specific programmes of action, such as the Global Compact — an initiative for partnership between the UN and the private sector to encourage and promote good corporate practices and learning experiences in the areas of the environment, human rights and labour. What we need is a better understanding of how to translate our values into practice, and how to make new instruments and institutions work more effectively.

The Rio Earth Summit in 1992 sought to address this question. It looked at new ways of defining and producing the wealth of the world, and of sharing it at the global level by taking into account the great diversity of needs,

aspirations and potential among the various groups of countries. The Rio Summit will go down in history as the first example of global negotiation for a contract on global environmental wealth.

As we prepare for the 10-year review of progress made in implementing Agenda 21, there is a growing understanding of the causes and dynamics of environmental degradation. We must work towards establishing systems that are governed by people and institutions according to commonly defined rules and mechanisms. We must use these systems to ensure that all parties concerned contribute, and that they all benefit from the efficient and environmentally sound use of resources - - whether natural or man-made, whether already available or yet to be developed. We must apply universal values to safeguarding local diversity. And we must build global public awareness, so that individuals and groups all round the world can understand what is at stake, and join in the effort.

The Malmö Declaration and the Millennium Summit mapped out a strengthened role for the United Nations in the field of the environment in the 21st century. The United Nations Environment Programme has been assigned a pre-eminent role in identifying and assessing environmental issues of common concern, in working towards their resolution through international cooperation, and in providing policy guidance for the direction of environmental programmes within the UN system. In all these areas, I know UNEP will be at the forefront of our efforts. The *2000 Annual Report* reflects the work of an organization proud of its accomplishments, yet not complacent; an organization ready to take on any of the challenges that the new Millennium - - “the Environment Millennium” - - may bring.

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Antigua and Barbuda*	Comoros*	Kazakhstan*	Saudi Arabia**
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Canada*	Italy**	Republic of Moldova**	Venezuela*
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\* Members whose terms expire on 31 December 2001.

\*\* Members whose terms expire on 31 December 2003.

### GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM

In Resolution 53/242, the General Assembly of the United Nations welcomes "the proposal to institute an annual ministerial-level, global environmental forum, with the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme constituting the forum in the years that it meets in regular session and, in alternate years, with the forum taking the form of a special session of the Governing Council, in which participants can gather to review

important and emerging policy issues in the field of the environment, with due consideration for the need to ensure the effective and efficient functioning of the governance mechanisms of the United Nations Environment Programme, as well as possible financial implications, and the need to maintain the role of the Commission on Sustainable Development as the main forum for high-level policy debate on sustainable development".



Klaus Töpfer

Bernard Wainhi/UNEP

### UNEP's mission

*To provide leadership and encourage partnerships in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.*

The United Nations Environment Programme's Annual Report for the year 2000 clearly shows that the problems connected with environmental governance are now being tackled by all governments at the highest level of political responsibility. What is encouraging is that the discussions and negotiations, which take place in a number of forums inside and outside the United Nations system, are all about measures and solutions that originated over years of thorough analysis and discussions within the United Nations Environment Programme.

The "Malmö Declaration", which emanated from UNEP's First Global Ministerial Environment Forum in Sweden in May 2000, recognized that confronting environmental challenges require decision makers to give due regard to the interests of the civil society and important entities such as the regional and sub-regional organizations, as well as consider the obligations and responsibilities arising from multilateral environmental agreements.

The vision of the world in the 21st century that the Declaration articulated is compelling: *"We can decrease poverty by half by 2015 without degrading the environment, we can ensure environmental security through early warning, we can better integrate environmental consideration in economic policy, we can better coordinate legal instruments and we can realize a vision of a world without slums".*

As this Annual Report demonstrates, UNEP is assertively moving towards the achievement of this vision. UNEP is promoting a spirit of international partnership and solidarity, catalyzing decisions on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, on the protection of endangered species through CITES and on the Convention on Biological Diversity. UNEP has elucidated its water policy and encouraged linkages between multilateral environmental conventions. It has progressed in the realization of this vision by involving the private sector in a new culture of environmental accountability through the application of the polluter pays

principle, environmental performance indicators and reporting, and the establishment of a precautionary approach in investment and technology decisions. UNEP has accelerated its efforts to empower civil society through freedom of access to environmental information and broader participation in environmental decision-making.

UNEP's *Global Environment Outlook 2000* shows that environmental problems rarely disappear. As human activities continue to grow, old problems re-emerge and new ones appear. They require continuous monitoring, an increasing capacity for farsighted and integrated understanding and commitment to sustainable development. Moreover, as the human population grows, the trade-offs between the environment and economic growth are likely to become sharper and clearer. Although what happens to the environment may be the most important long-term social problem, it is rarely the most urgent one. Issues of national security, jobs and incomes remain at the top of policy agendas. In contrast, clear environmental threats that compel action are rare, making the challenge of effective and timely response all the greater.

The ten year review of the decisions of the Rio Summit in 2002 will provide an historical opportunity to the global community to reinvigorate the spirit of Rio. This Summit must address the major challenges to sustainable development, particularly the pervasive effects of poverty on a large proportion of the Earth's inhabitants, juxtaposed with excessive and wasteful consumption and inefficient resource use that perpetuates the vicious circle of environmental degradation and people's impoverishment.

One prime challenge that the Summit will face will be the possible requirement for a strengthened structure for international environmental governance, based on an assessment of future needs for an institutional architecture that has the effective capacity to address wide-ranging environmental threats in a globalizing world.

### Highlights

**January** - Expansion of the UNEP Insurance Industry Initiative to 86 international companies in more than 50 countries. UNEP coordinates meeting on tourism, Paris, France. Adoption of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in Montreal, Canada. AMCEN Expert meeting on forests.

**February** - 2nd phase of the joint UNEP/ UNCHS Balkans Task Force on detailed clean up feasibility studies at selected sites in Yugoslavia. Scientific assessment of the environmental impact of the cyanide spill from the Baia Mare gold mine in Romania, Hungary and the Yugoslavia. New UNEP policy paper on forest-related issues presented to Governments at United Nations Forum on Forests. Meeting on the Caribbean Environment Programme and the Cartagena Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, Kingston, Jamaica.

**March** - Report on the environmental impact of refugees in Guinea. 4th round of negotiations on an international legally binding treaty on persistent organic pollutants, Bonn, Germany. World Water Forum, The Hague, Netherlands. 2nd meeting of parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes. 28th International Symposium on remote sensing of Environment, Cape Town, South Africa. UNEP provides support to Ethiopia to combat forest fires.

**April** - 8th session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), Abuja, Nigeria. 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). UNEP organizes panel discussion on "multilateral environmental agreements and the World Trade Organization", alongside the 8th session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development.



Robert Dewilde/UNEP

When one year ends and a new one commences, there is both concern and elation. People are worried about the change the future will bring and yet enthusiastic about the possibility of new beginnings. And at the start of the new millennium, these feelings are magnified a thousand times.

As we begin our passage into the first century of what will be the "Environment Millennium", the prophetic words in the preamble of Agenda 21 ring true: *"Humanity stands at a defining moment in history"*.

Undoubtedly, there is a growing global consensus that the environmental harm caused by some is a threat to all. An increasing number of people understand the interrelationship between environment, national security and economics. Since Rio, the global community has shown what is possible when the nations of the world work together. But the fact remains that some of the objectives of Agenda 21 still elude us.

The update on the latest climate assessment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concludes not only that human activity is contributing substantially to the warming of the planet, but that the warming over the next century could turn out to be much worse than previously estimated. The Panel said it expects the increase in the average global temperature over the next century to be between 3 and 11

degrees celsius. A three-degree warming over the course of the century would probably be the fastest warming in the history of civilization.

This is not a disaster waiting to happen. It is already under way. The decade of the 1990s was the hottest of the last millennium. And 1998 — which raised temperatures through the El Niño phenomenon — appears to have been the hottest year ever recorded.

Seen in this context, the breakdown of the Climate Change negotiations at The Hague was a great disappointment. The global community has an obligation to address this issue quickly. Global warming is not an abstraction. It is an accelerating crisis that poses a grave threat to the younger generation around the world. Witness the devastating floods in parts of Europe, Mozambique, China, the forest fires in the United States and the continuing drought in many parts of the world.

The growing incidence of fires and floods around the globe last year underlined the need for accurate environmental data and information systems. An environmental catastrophe is not a single event. It is the result of a process of events, the effects of which impact the hardest on a population which is already vulnerable. It is possible to see these environmental catastrophes coming, to be prepared, and to save lives. As the flagship institution of the United Nations system concerned with environmental

protection, the United Nations Environment Programme is strengthening its assessment and early warning programme. This should enable access to scientific information needed by decision-makers for better environmental management. It will also assist in assessing environmental conditions and threats to alert policy-makers, facilitate development of impact reduction strategies, and identify emerging issues.

There were other environmental issues that captured international headlines: the cyanide spill in Romania, the effects of war on the environment in the Balkans and in Africa, and the issue of biosafety and health, for example the spreading incidence of 'mad cow' disease.

Amid the environmental catastrophes of 2000, there were some events which gave cause for hope. One of them was UNEP's First Global Ministerial Environment Forum in Malmö, Sweden, in May 2000. Over 500 delegates from more than 130 countries - including over 100 ministers, and representatives of IGOs and NGOs - attended the three-day forum. The purpose of the Forum was to institute a process for regaining policy coherence in the field of the environment. The "Malmö Declaration", which was the principal output of this forum, acknowledged that the central challenge is to work out how the global ambitions contained in the increasing number of international environmental agreements can be turned into concrete local action and implementation. While countries may join in the formulation and signing of ambitious global agendas, garnering support and invoking action in a domestic context is often a different story. The mobilization of domestic and international resources, including development assistance beyond current levels, is vital. The Declaration called for reinvigorated international cooperation based on common concerns and a spirit of international partnership and solidarity. It also called

for a closer partnership with civil society and the private sector in the attainment of sustainable development.

The resumed session of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Parties for the Adoption of the Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety on 29 January 2000 in Montreal. The Protocol addresses the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms that may have an effect on biodiversity with a specific focus on transboundary movements. It also contains provisions regarding information sharing, capacity building and financial resources with special attention to the situation of developing countries.

The spirit of the Cartagena Convention extended to the eleventh Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Nairobi from 10 to 20 April 2000. The decision reached on the African elephant and the rejection of proposals to downlist populations of Gray and Minke whale and the Hawksbill turtle were the triumphs of this event.

The spirit of Cartagena was captured again at the fifth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Nairobi from 15 to 26 May 2000. This meeting took far-reaching decisions on measures to protect the world's natural bounty through the ecosystem approach, access to genetic resources, biodiversity and tourism and the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation among others.

UNEP continued to work towards a legally binding agreement on certain persistent organic pollutants, which is now in its final stages. UNEP has assisted in the implementation of the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol through the development of market

**May** - Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change, Nairobi, Kenya. UNEP co-chairs United Nations inter-agency working group on sustainable water use in Africa. 5th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. 64 Governments and the European Community sign the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Millennium International Children's Conference on the Environment, Eastbourne, United Kingdom. NGO Millennium Forum. Global Ministerial Environment Forum adopts the Malmö Declaration.

**June** - World Environment Day celebrated under the theme "the environment millennium, time to act". 14 laureates receive the UNEP Global 500 award. World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought. World Oceans Day. Entry into force in the Wider Caribbean of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife.

**July** - Inauguration of the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre in Cambridge, United Kingdom. 3rd meeting of the Governing Council of the Parties to the Lusaka Agreement, Nairobi, Kenya.

**August** - 1st cleaner production and sustainable consumption roundtable for Africa, Nairobi, Kenya. 2nd workshop on strengthening the operation of the Basel Convention Regional Centres for Training and Technology Transfer worldwide, San Salvador, El Salvador. Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders and launch of UNEP and the Interfaith Partnership's book "Earth and Faith: A Book of Reflection for Action."

**September** - United Nations Millennium Summit, New York. Awards ceremony for prize winners of UNEP's International Photographic Competition on the environment "Focus on your World". Convention on Migratory Species Standing Committee, Bonn, Germany. International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer. INFOTERRA 2000, Global Conference on Facilitating Access to Environmental Information, Dublin, Ireland. UNEP/HABITAT Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP) and Urban Development Forum (UEF) meetings, Cape Town.

**October** - 1st workshop on national reporting and national inventories of hazardous wastes, Pretoria, South Africa. 6th international high-level seminar on cleaner production, Montreal, Canada. Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), Dakar, Senegal. Opening of new Regional Office for North America in Washington. Executive Director's historic visit to North Korea. 7th session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee for an international legally binding instrument for the application of the Rotterdam Convention.

**November** - 10th international painting contest "Through the eyes of children, preserve the oceans, skies and forests for the 21st century". UNEP team assesses impact of depleted uranium in Kosovo. UNEP Sasakawa Environment Prize awarded to Dr. Michel Batisse. 3rd Global meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, Monaco. 6th session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, The Hague, Netherlands.

**December** - 1st meeting of the intergovernmental committee on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, Montpellier, France. 12th meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone layer, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. 5th meeting of the intergovernmental negotiating committee for a Convention on Persistent, Organic Pollutants, Johannesburg, South Africa. International Biodiversity Day.

based mechanisms. It has strengthened its contribution to the work of the Global Environment Facility. It has sought to develop consensus on the implementation and build global awareness of the provisions of the biosafety protocol. Regional seas programmes have been brought into line with current socio-economic realities. UNEP has built strategies to improve compliance with international agreements - to ensure that those agreements yield lasting results, not just promises. UNEP has also built on the synergies and interlinkages available within various environmental conventions. It focussed on the regional element to confront pollution and the scarcity of resources in key areas - especially the water policy - where there is a dramatic increase in tensions among nations.

In an era of accelerating globalization, it is imperative that if we are to have any hope of protecting our environment, we must understand the connections between the health of

the world's economies and the health of the resources on which our economies depend. Economists, financiers, businessmen and bankers will have to recognize the hidden costs in the exploitation of the seas, the land and the air for short-term wealth.

Nations are like people. Each must choose whether to live selfishly and complacently or to act with courage and faith. Ignoring the stewardship of any of our social, economic and environmental resources could seriously undermine the wellness of our societies. On the other hand, understanding our dependence on these precious and finite resources can lead us to new insights about the meaning of security.

We cannot be secure until these resources are protected and ordinary citizens are empowered to be able to make decisions about their wise use. This must be our message for the "Environment Millennium".

## MILLENNIUM ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT

### Strengthening Capacity to Manage Ecosystems for Human Development

*"The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment is an outstanding example of the sort of international scientific and political cooperation that is needed to further the cause of sustainable development. I call on Member States to help provide the necessary financial support for the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and to become actively engaged in it."*

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, From *We the Peoples: The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century* (April 2000).

In light of growing demands for ecosystem goods and services and the vast scale of the human modification of ecosystems, it is imperative that wise choices are made in the use of these ecosystems. Both the challenges of effective management of the Earth's ecosystems and the consequences of failure will increase significantly during the 21st century. The scientific knowledge required to meet this challenge is unavailable today. A dramatic increase, or "step change", is needed in the information brought to bear on resource management decisions.

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA) is a four-year international scientific assessment of the condition of the Earth's ecosystems, the potential impacts of changes to ecosystems on their ability to meet human needs and policies, technologies, and tools to improve their management. The MEA is designed to enhance economic and environmental decisions by improving the information used by decision-makers and the public and strengthening the institutions involved in ecosystem assessments.

We, Ministers of Environment and heads of delegation meeting in Malmö, Sweden from 29 to 31 May 2000, on the occasion of the First Global Ministerial Environment Forum, held in pursuance of United Nations General Assembly resolution 53/242 of 28 July 1999 to enable the world's environment ministers to gather to review important and emerging environmental issues and to chart the course for the future,

Recalling the Stockholm Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment and the Rio Declaration of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the Barbados Declaration on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States as well as the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Deeply concerned 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,

Reaffirming the importance of the speedy implementation of the political and legal commitments entered into by the international community, in particular at the Rio Conference,

Convinced that urgent and renewed efforts are required to be undertaken by all countries in a spirit of international solidarity, and recognizing, *inter alia*, the principle of common but differentiated responsibility as contained in the Rio Principles to manage the environment so as to promote sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations,

Conscious that the root causes of global environmental degradation are embedded in social and economic problems such as pervasive poverty, unsustainable production and consumption patterns, inequity in distribution of wealth, and the debt burden,

Also conscious that success in combating environmental degradation is dependent on the full participation of all actors in society, an aware and educated population, respect for ethical and spiritual values and cultural diversity, and protection of indigenous knowledge,

Aware that the 10-year review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21 to be conducted in 2002 will provide a further opportunity for the international community to take action to implement its commitments



Pierre Mens/Photo Archives of the Oeserund/Vision

and to strengthen international cooperation urgently required to address the challenges of sustainable development in the twenty-first century,

Convinced that the Millennium Summit of the fifty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly provides a unique opportunity to address at the highest level the role of the United Nations in the field of sustainable development, and noting in this regard the proposals of the Secretary-General of the United Nations as contained in his report "We the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century", which will serve as the basis of discussion at the Summit,

Determined to contribute to this historic endeavour from an environmental perspective, and having requested the President of the Governing Council to bring the following matters to the attention of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the Millennium Assembly,

Declare that:

#### Major environmental challenges of the twenty-first century

1. The year 2000 marks a defining moment in the efforts of the international community to ensure that the growing trends of environmental degradation that threaten the sustainability of the planet are arrested and reversed. Hence there is an urgent need for reinvigorated international cooperation based on common concerns and a spirit of international partnership and solidarity.

2. There is an alarming discrepancy between commitments and action. Goals and targets agreed by the international community in relation to sustainable development, such as the adoption of national sustainable development strategies and increased support to developing countries, must be implemented in a timely fashion. The mobilization of domestic and international resources, including development assistance, far beyond current levels is vital to the success of this endeavour.
3. The evolving framework of international environmental law and the development of national law provide a sound basis for addressing the major environmental threats of the day. It must be underpinned by a more coherent and coordinated approach among international environmental instruments. We must also recognize the central importance of environmental compliance, enforcement and liability, and promote the observation of the precautionary approach as contained in the Rio Principles, and other important policy tools, as well as capacity-building.
4. The Global Environment Outlook 2000 of the United Nations Environment Programme provides a compelling assessment of the serious nature of the environmental threats faced by the international community. Special attention should be paid to unsustainable consumption patterns among the richer segments in all countries, particularly developed countries. Environmental stewardship is lagging behind economic and social development, and a rapidly growing population is placing increased pressures on the environment.
5. Environmental threats resulting from the accelerating trends of urbanization and the development of megacities, the tremendous risk of opportunities to avoid the environmentally destructive practices of the past including through clean technologies.
7. To confront the underlying causes of environmental degradation and poverty, we must integrate environmental considerations in the mainstream of decision-making. We must also intensify our efforts in developing preventive action and a concerted response, including national environmental governance and the international rule of law, awareness-raising and education, and harness the power of information technology to this end. All actors involved must work together in the interest of a sustainable future.
8. It is necessary that the environmental perspective is taken into account in both the design and the assessment of macro-economic policy-making, as well as practices of government and multilateral lending and credit institutions such as export credit agencies.
9. The trends of globalization in the world economy, with the attendant environmental risks and opportunities, require international institutions to adopt new approaches and to engage the major actors involved in globalization in new ways. We should encourage a balanced and integrated approach to trade and environment policies in pursuit of sustainable development, in accordance with the decision of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its eighth session.
10. The role and responsibility of nations based on the Rio Principles, as well as the role and responsibility of the main actors including Governments, the private sector and civil society, must be emphasized in addressing the environmental challenges of the

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