

20/28. Promoting interlinkages among global environmental issues and human needs

The Governing Council,

Bearing in mind its decisions 19/1 of 7 February 1997 on the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme, and SS.V/2 of 22 May 1998, on revitalization, reform and strengthening of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Having considered the report of the Executive Director on promoting interlinkages among global environmental issues and human needs (UNEP/GC.20/40),

Mindful of the importance of the scientific and policy interlinkages among global environmental issues, and their relevance to the human needs of food, shelter, health and clean water,

Noting with appreciation the constructive collaboration between the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Bank in this initiative, as well as the financial support provided by the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration,

1. Welcomes the report Protecting Our Planet, Securing Our Future: Linkages Among Global Environmental Issues and Human Needs;
2. Urges Governments to take into consideration the conclusions and recommendations of the report in the preparation of their national environment and sustainable development strategies and plans;
3. Underscores that sustainable development depends on a healthy local, national, regional and global environment, and that the United Nations Environment Programme has a major role to play in promoting actions at all levels that are designed to sustain the continued adequate functioning of ecological systems;
4. Requests the Executive Director to continue to address global environmental issues within a more holistic and synergistic policy framework so as to improve the scientific and policy interlinkages among global environmental issues and the ways in which they influence ability of countries to meet basic human needs, taking special note of the scientific and policy linkages among global and regional environmental conventions and other relevant international agreements;
5. Requests the Executive Director to recognize that effective policy implementation that links global environmental issues and sustainable development requires:
 - (a) Scientific understanding of the nature of the links among environmental issues and their relationships to meeting human needs, to facilitate the balancing of competing needs and the identification of strategies that capture as many benefits as possible;

(b) Identification of innovative combinations of policies that are effective and cost-efficient and that encourage the public and private sectors to work together;

(c) Political will and public commitment to seriously address global environmental issues, including the setting of realistic goals the identification of creative paths for achieving them; and

(d) Improved coordination among the national and international institutions charged with developing and encouraging adoption of policies and measures to meet human needs, without undermining the environmental foundation for development;

7. Urges the World Bank and other international, regional and national organizations concerned to collaborate with the United Nations Environment Programme in this endeavour;

8. Requests the Executive Director to transmit the conclusions and recommendations of the report to the governing bodies of global environment conventions and relevant international agreements