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UNEP and the UN Foundation Partners for Sustainable Development

United Nations Environment Programme



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INTRODUCTION

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All life on Earth is interconnected. This fact is being made increasingly apparent in the current era of globalisation. Just as economic events in one part of the world can affect societies across the globe, similarly, decisions on how the environment is managed in one country can affect people worldwide. Acid rain, chemical pollution, water resource depletion and climate change do not observe national boundaries.



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The global ecosystem on which we all depend is complex, fragile and finite. As human populations grow, the pressure being put on the Earth's natural resource base is increasing. The problems caused by resource degradation and over-consumption are becoming greater and more complex. The demand for innovative, sustainable solutions is growing daily more urgent.

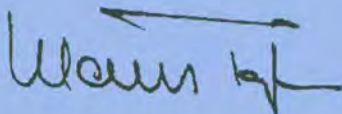
The three goals of sustainable development—social progress, economic growth and environmental protection—are interdependent. None can be achieved in isolation from the other. To realise these goals, solutions must be both global and local. Without global commitment, backed up by institutional support, local initiatives cannot thrive. But without the support and involvement of all stakeholders, little will be achieved.

An important element of the UN Foundation's support for the United Nations is that it enables a multi-stakeholder approach to sustainable development. UNEP has embraced UN Foundation support to forge new partnerships with the private sector and civil society as well as strengthen existing ones within the United

Nations system. Through these partnerships UNEP has been able to promote policy dialogue and develop and support innovative approaches that address the environmental dimension of sustainable development.

UN Foundation support has also strengthened UNEP's role as the voice for the environment within the United Nations system, not just by direct support for institutional strengthening, but by providing the springboard by which UNEP has been able to leverage counterpart funding equal to the UN Foundation's own contribution. In return, UNEP has been able to substantively contribute to the fulfilment of the UN Foundation's priority goals, not just in the field of the environment, but in promoting children's health, women's well-being and peace and security worldwide.

In little over five years, UNEP has built a portfolio of twenty-two UN Foundation-funded projects worth \$80 million. As the UN Foundation's partnership with the United Nations system enters the second half of its initial ten-year commitment, I look forward to witnessing the fruition and expansion of this varied and exciting portfolio.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Klaus Toepfer', with a horizontal line above it that has arrows at both ends pointing left and right.

Klaus Toepfer
Executive Director
United Nations Environment Programme




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UNEP AND THE UN FOUNDATION: PARTNERS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Five years ago, American philanthropist Ted Turner had the vision to establish the UN Foundation to help the United Nations to promote world stability. At the core of this ten-year, \$1 billion commitment is the concept of partnership. UN Foundation funding is enabling inter-agency collaboration within the United Nations system and partnerships between United Nations agencies, civil society and the private sector.



A sustainably managed environment is the foundation for healthy, peaceful societies.

These partnerships are essential if the United Nations goals of sustainable development and world peace are to be realised. The UN Foundation core priorities—environment, women and population, children's health, and peace, security and human rights—represent some of the world's most important issues. Solutions to the problems encapsulated by these broad headings will only be achieved by the willing cooperation of all sections of society, from governments to individuals.

The issues that the UN Foundation is addressing are closely linked. Perhaps the most significant linking factor is the environment. A healthy environment that is sustainably managed is the foundation for healthy, peaceful societies. A degraded, polluted environment causes diseases, generates conflict, and serves to maintain the servitude which so many women of the developing world continue to endure. Among the first UN Foundation projects was support for institutional strengthening in UNEP and its sister organisation Habitat—the only United

Nations agencies headquartered in the developing world—to help improve their ability to deliver innovative and long-term solutions to these most pressing issues of our age.

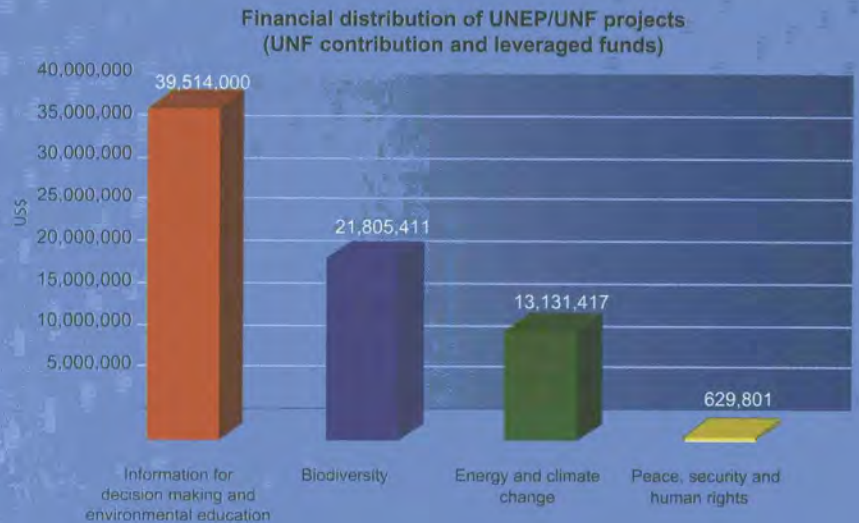


The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the voice for the environment within the United Nations system. UNEP is working with the UN Foundation, through the medium of the United Nations Fund for International Partnership (UNFIP), to address these issues. This booklet illustrates the areas where UN Foundation funds are supporting UNEP activities. UNEP has received UNFIP approval for projects in three main areas:

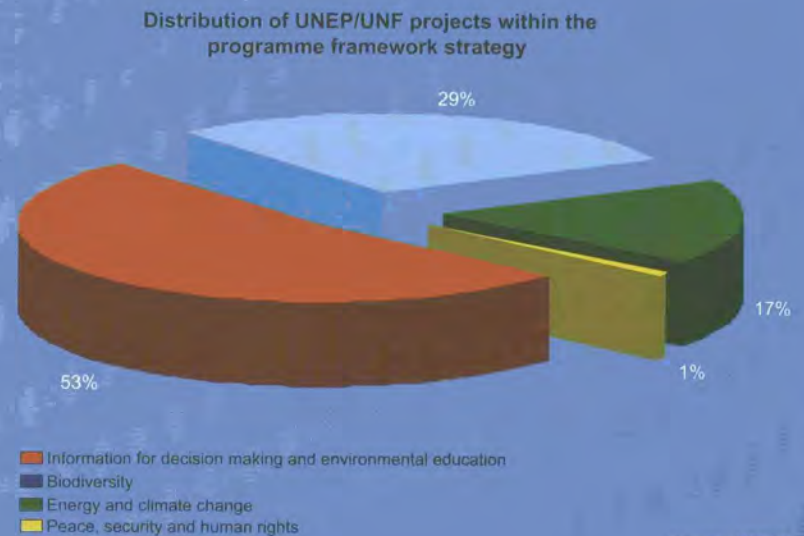
- Information for decision making.
- Biodiversity conservation.
- Strategies for promoting clean and renewable energy technologies and mitigating climate change.

Each area involves working closely with a variety of private sector and civil society partners, as well as with other United Nations agencies, and each has a bearing on the overarching issues of health, peace and security.

UN Foundation support for projects where UNEP is the lead agency have grown considerably during the Foundation's life, as has the number of projects. By mid-2002, the UNEP-UN Foundation portfolio numbered twenty-two projects, with a further five

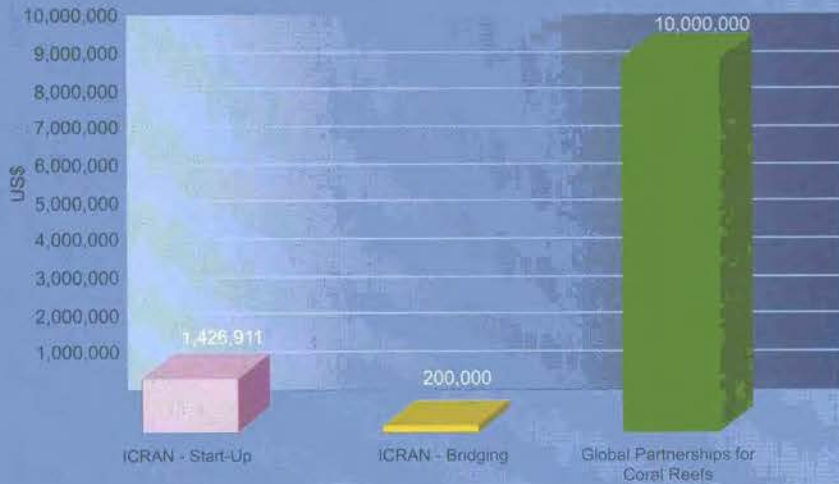


Source: UNEP



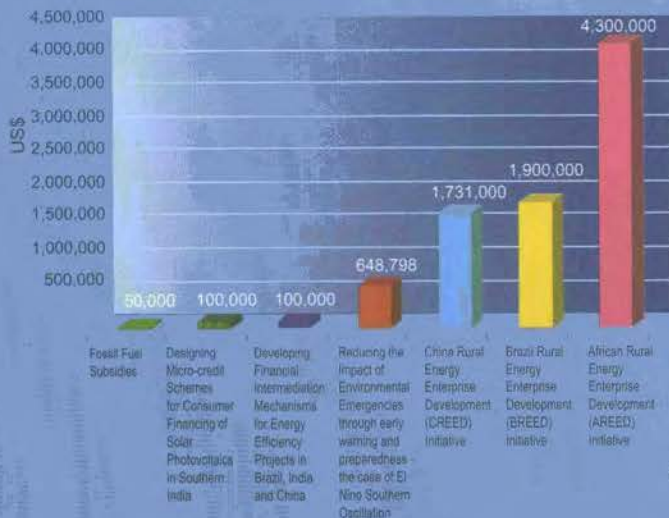
Source: UNEP

**Biodiversity (International Coral Reef Action Network)
(UNF contribution only)**



Source: UNEP

Energy and climate change (UNF contribution only)



Source: UNEP

awaiting funding. UN Foundation input to these projects now totals over \$38 million, to which UNEP has leveraged over \$41 million in counterpart and in-kind contributions.

Many of these projects are in the relatively early stages of what is a long-term process. Nevertheless, tangible social and environmental impacts are already being seen. For instance, UNEP collaboration with national partners and the non-profit energy investment company E+Co is promoting rural energy enterprise development in Africa and Brazil. As the success of these new initiatives is demonstrated and disseminated, their replication and multiplication will improve the lives of people who lack affordable and clean energy. Another example is UNEP capacity building work within the International Coral Reef Action Network. UNEP is helping communities throughout the world to sustainably manage their coastal marine resources by establishing demonstration sites and training programmes and producing educational materials, all of which are promoting the replication of local solutions across regional and cultural boundaries.

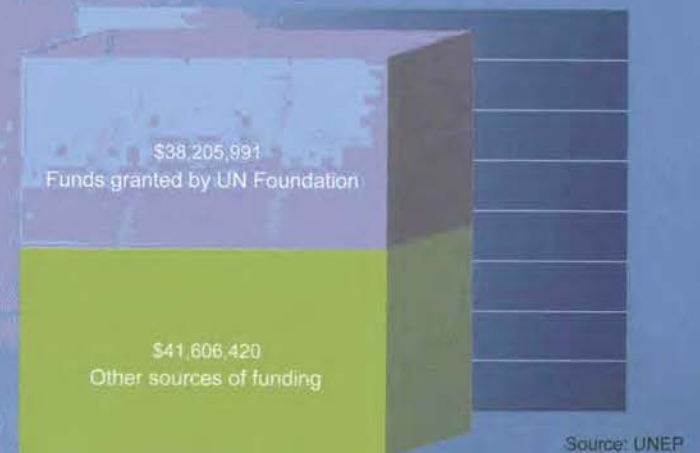
The largest proportion—nearly 50 percent—of UN Foundation and counterpart funds being utilised by UNEP is in the area of information for decision making. This is one of UNEP's core strengths, and is central to UNEP's mission to inform and inspire. The two largest information projects, representing UN Foundation funding of over \$7 million between them, are the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. The GRI is a ground-breaking voluntary initiative that is using the relatively new concept of sustainability reporting to institutionalise environmental responsibility and accountability into private sector operations. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, also in its early stages, will give policy makers state of the art scientific information on the environmental services the Earth's ecosystems provide and how their ability to supply food, clean water and other services is being affected by human activity.

Environmental assessment is a core component of UNEP's mandate. UNEP's flagship assessment is the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) process. UN Foundation funds have supported considerable

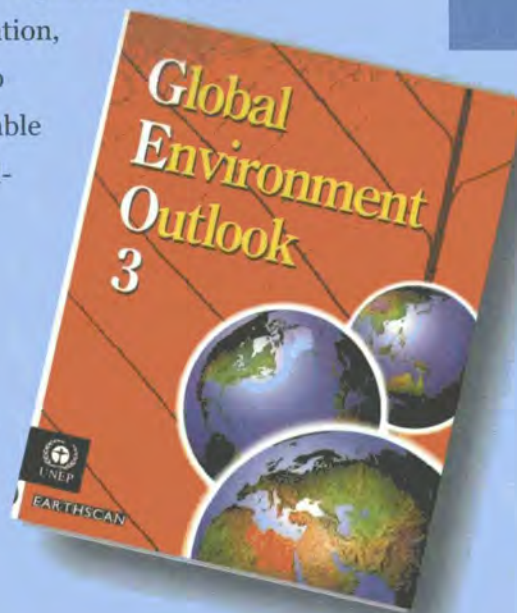
Information for decision making (UNF contribution only)



Funding summary of the UNEP/UNF portfolio
US\$ \$79,812,411



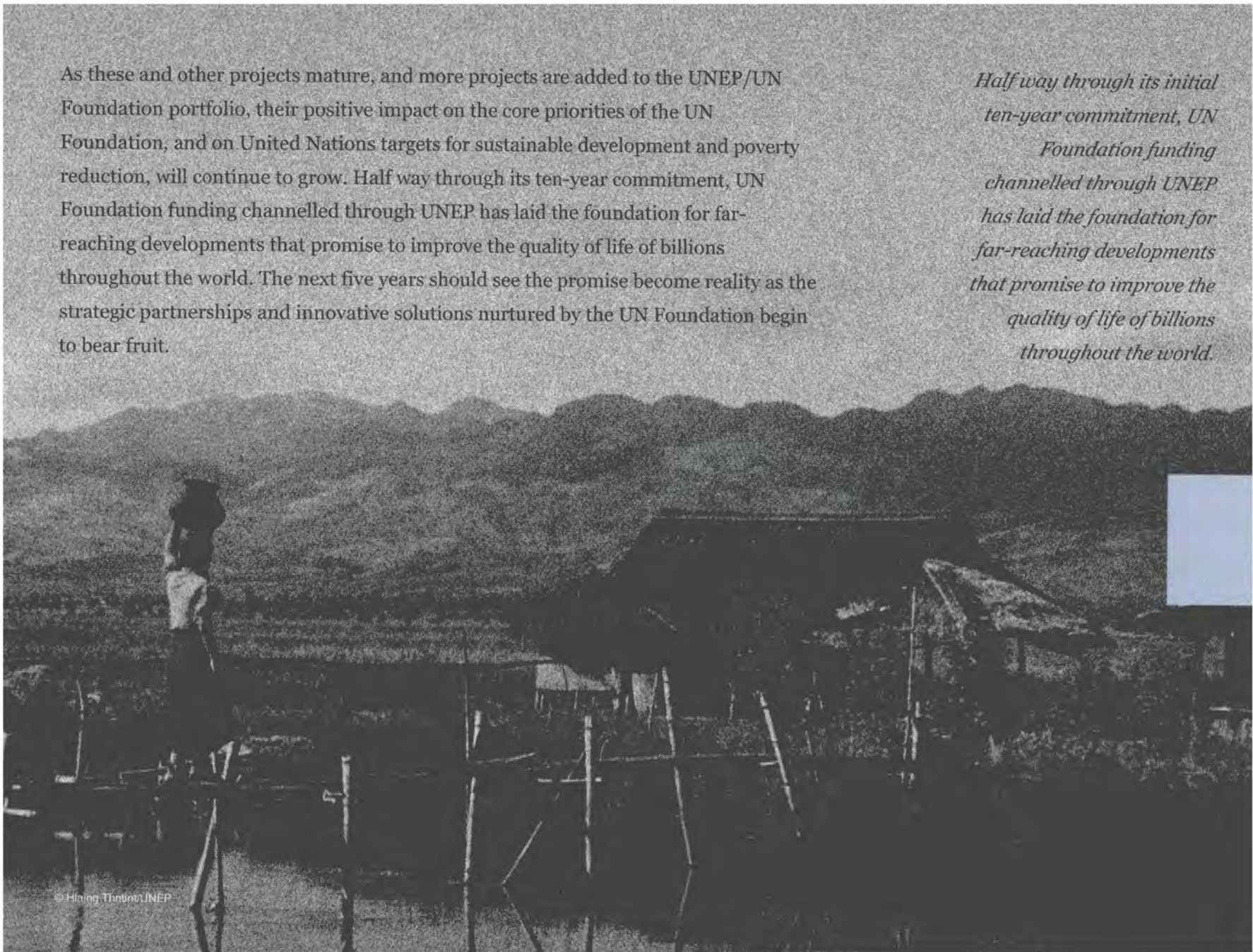
capacity building for the collaborating centres involved with UNEP in producing the third GEO assessment *GEO-3*. Professional relationships and networking have been strengthened at all levels, and products and services have improved. This has enhanced the collaborating centres' credibility and reputation, increased stakeholder satisfaction and improved access to further funding. Thus UN Foundation support helped enable *GEO-3* to present an ambitious retrospective and forward-looking cross-sectoral analysis of the state of the global environment which not only received significant global media coverage but is proving a valuable resource for decision makers. An UNFIP-funded survey of previous GEO publications found that the majority of responding ministers and senior advisors made extensive use of the reports for information and policy guidance.

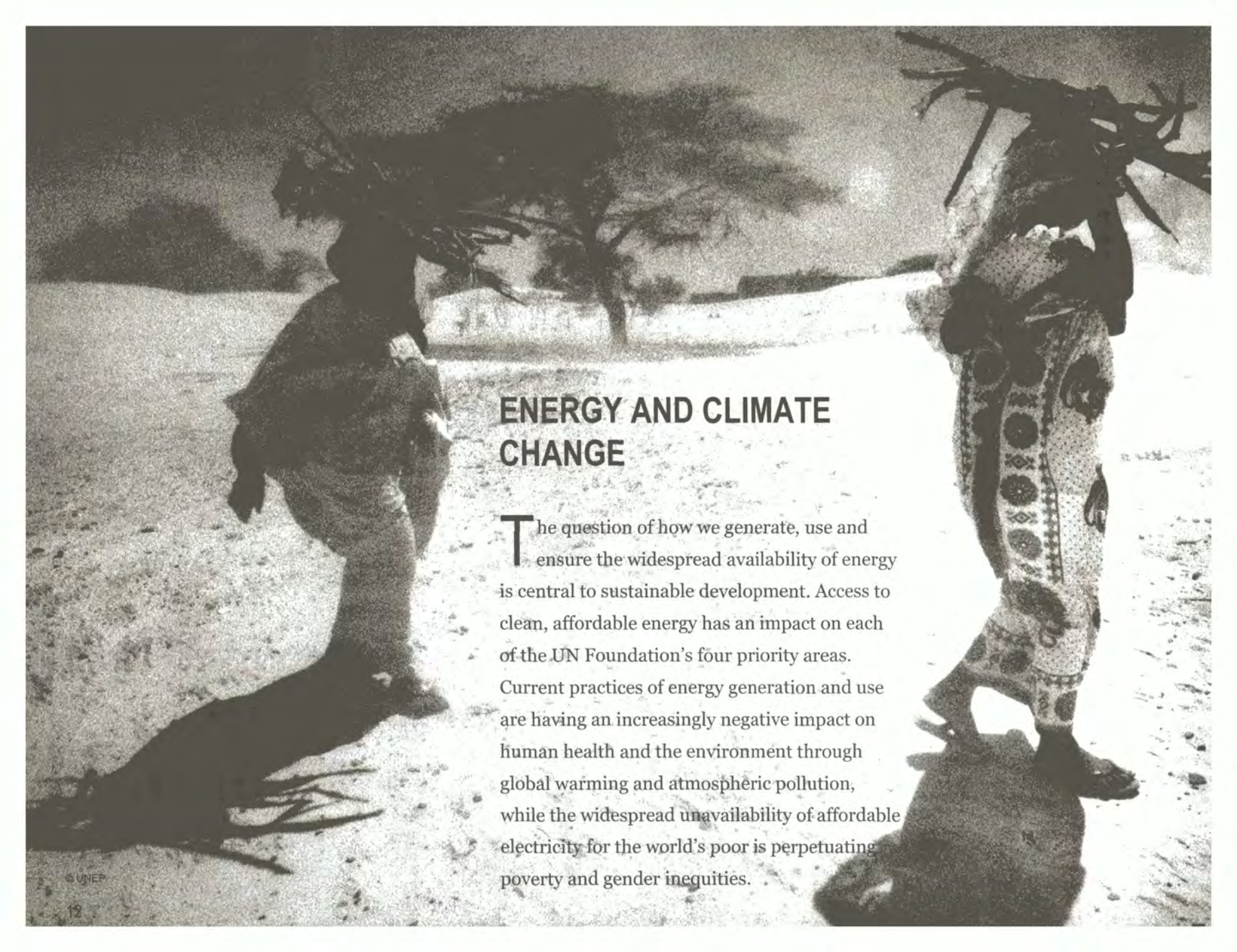


Capacity building for GEO is part of the UNEP Global Participative Observing Strategy. A major element of this strategy is the development of the environmental Internet portal UNEP.Net. UN Foundation funding for this project is directly contributing to the empowerment of communities worldwide to access the information they need to influence decisions made at the national and local level that affect their environment. UN Foundation funding is also helping UNEP reach what is perhaps the most important constituency for sustainable development, namely the world's youth. The Geo for Youth programme has successfully re-packaged the GEO reports for a young audience and provided teachers in all regions of the world with a wealth of resources for incorporating the environment into school curricula.

As these and other projects mature, and more projects are added to the UNEP/UN Foundation portfolio, their positive impact on the core priorities of the UN Foundation, and on United Nations targets for sustainable development and poverty reduction, will continue to grow. Half way through its ten-year commitment, UN Foundation funding channelled through UNEP has laid the foundation for far-reaching developments that promise to improve the quality of life of billions throughout the world. The next five years should see the promise become reality as the strategic partnerships and innovative solutions nurtured by the UN Foundation begin to bear fruit.

Half way through its initial ten-year commitment, UN Foundation funding channelled through UNEP has laid the foundation for far-reaching developments that promise to improve the quality of life of billions throughout the world.





ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The question of how we generate, use and ensure the widespread availability of energy is central to sustainable development. Access to clean, affordable energy has an impact on each of the UN Foundation's four priority areas. Current practices of energy generation and use are having an increasingly negative impact on human health and the environment through global warming and atmospheric pollution, while the widespread unavailability of affordable electricity for the world's poor is perpetuating poverty and gender inequities.



Many energy generation and utilisation practices in the developing world are harmful both to the environment and to individuals. Firewood gathering, for instance, not only contributes to land degradation, it also contributes to social problems. The health of women and children who spend large parts of each day collecting firewood is damaged by the loads they carry and the fumes from their cooking fires. Furthermore, women whose days are spent collecting firewood are unable to engage in more productive income generating activities, while their children, who often accompany them, are being denied education. All these issues could be ameliorated by the availability of cleaner and more efficient sources of energy at the rural level.

Air pollution is estimated to cause 5 per cent of the global disease burden, particularly in the form of respiratory diseases. The problem is caused not only by the extensive use of wood, dung, coal and other dirty fuels in homes throughout the developing world but by the reliance on fossil fuels for transport and electricity generation. Coal, oil and gas account for 64.5 per cent of electricity generation worldwide and 80 per cent of total global energy use. Fossil fuels also contribute most to the greenhouse emissions that are causing climate change and variability and the apparent increase of extreme weather events worldwide.

Ironically, the people who contribute least to the problem, namely the poor of the developing world, will experience the worst effects of climate change. Nearly one-third of the world's population lives without electricity. In Africa only one in ten people have electricity in the home. The energy poverty this represents is a threat to the environment, to human health and to the stability of society. If the United Nations Millennium Development goal of halving poverty by 2015 is to be realised, access to

energy for the poor is essential. The challenge is delivering energy to the world's poor without increasing greenhouse gas emissions.

The delivery of affordable, clean energy therefore represents a sizeable portion of UN Foundation projects being implemented by UNEP—20 per cent of the total value of the portfolio. The core of the UNEP/UN Foundation energy portfolio is the growing REED programme. The **Rural Energy Enterprise Development Initiative** epitomises the UN Foundation approach of forging new partnerships to provide innovative solutions to

development issues. In the case of REED, UNEP has entered into a partnership with E+Co, a US-based non-profit clean energy investor, to expand a model for bringing clean, affordable and efficient energy technologies to rural communities in the developing world.

REED addresses several of the strategic goals of the UN Foundation's renewable energy programme, including engaging the private sector and building the capacity of local institutions and entrepreneurs to create sustainable market-based businesses. The concept behind REED is simple. Start-up capital and training is provided to small-scale entrepreneurs who have identified a market niche for rural energy provision. These small businesses are often unable to obtain the necessary seed financing to get started, or cannot afford the high interests generally levied on loans in the developing world. REED projects bridge that gap, enabling rural energy enterprises to grow sustainably, attract new investment and provide the kinds of development solutions that are regularly attempted and subsequently abandoned by large-scale donor-dependent aid schemes.



The REED initiative began in Africa, and has now spread to Brazil and China. Examples of successful REED investments include a company making fuel-efficient stoves in Zambia, a wind-pump repair business in Senegal, and a programme in China to train entrepreneurs offering alternatives to wood fuel such as biogas digesters that convert human and animal waste into clean-burning methane gas. The potential benefits of projects such as these are considerable. By providing financial returns to entrepreneurs and investors they should be more sustainable than traditional donor-driven projects. In addition, they will serve as examples to other entrepreneurs and investors in the energy and other sectors, thus helping with job creation and improving rural livelihoods, as well as reducing pollution and environmental degradation.

In southern India, another UNEP/UN Foundation project is providing innovative solutions to the provision of clean affordable energy to the rural poor. Seven out of ten



The delivery of affordable, clean energy represents a sizeable portion of UN Foundation projects being implemented by UNEP—20 per cent of the total value of the portfolio.

rural households lack electricity. They rely instead on polluting and less efficient energy sources for lighting. An alternative is **decentralised solar photovoltaic (PV) electrification**. However, few rural households have either the capital or access to credit to invest in a PV system. The goal of the project is to encourage India's already well-developed rural banking infrastructure to invest in financing PV electrification at the village level. This will be accomplished by the development of a UN Foundation-supported credit facility to subsidise the risks of lending to the rural renewable energy sector until the barriers to mainstream financing—such as lack of understanding of the technological issues—have been addressed and the creditworthiness of rural solar customers has been proven.

While renewable energy technologies need to increase their share of global energy generation, their use will not supersede

conventional sources for the foreseeable future. It is therefore essential to also address the question of **energy efficiency to reduce greenhouse gas emissions**, especially in the developing world where the combination of population growth, economic expansion and the use of relatively dirty technologies is causing increasing pollution problems. The emissions of the three fastest growing developing economies—Brazil, China and India—are projected to double in the next two decades. The potential of energy efficiency projects to reduce these emissions is high, but currently finance for these projects is hard to obtain. By developing financial support mechanisms for energy efficiency projects in these three countries, UN Foundation funding will help domestic financial institutions better understand the benefits of investing in this area and enable them to provide loans to borrowers wishing to undertake energy efficiency projects.

UN Foundation funding has also supported the establishment, announced at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, of a new global clean energy network. The new **Global Network on Energy for Sustainable Development** initially comprises ten centres in ten developing and developed countries. These centres will help promote research into cleaner energy technologies and facilitate their adoption in the developing world, thus supporting the use of energy as an instrument for poverty alleviation and sustainable development.



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INFORMATION FOR DECISION MAKING

Timely and relevant information is essential for governments and the private sector so they can create policy and initiate action. In accordance with UNEP's mission to inspire and inform, information for decision making is a central UNEP priority. UN Foundation support for this process is manifested in a number of projects. For instance, UN Foundation support for a UNEP-led **analysis of the consequences of fossil fuel subsidies** will enable governments to develop viable policy packages that will address the economic and environmental consequences of removing perverse subsidies.



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It is estimated that fossil fuel subsidies worldwide total \$145 billion a year. Generally these subsidies are so entrenched that removing them is a political minefield, especially since their use has a direct bearing on the competitiveness of a wide range of economic sectors. On the other hand, fuel subsidies suppress cleaner energy initiatives and distort international trade. Removing them within a coherent policy framework should reap benefits both in terms of environmental sustainability and trade liberalisation.

Information is necessary to develop or change policy. It is also necessary for reacting to current events. For instance, while it is to be hoped that the best efforts of governments, the United Nations and the private sector will successfully address the issue of climate change, the fact remains that a combination of factors—including climate variability, environmental

degradation and population growth—is increasing society's vulnerability to weather-induced disasters. A major underlying contributor is the **El Niño Southern Oscillation** (ENSO) phenomenon. In 1997 and 1998 El Niño became a household word when the world was beset by droughts and floods attributable to the cyclic warming and expansion of the Pacific Ocean. The 2002 El Niño event appears to be wreaking comparable harm.

While individual events, such as typhoons, are hard to predict, they can be prepared for and their effects mitigated. Other consequences of El Niño and La Niña events, such as droughts, can be more reliably anticipated, and preparations, such as increasing food stockpiles, can be put in place. To assist governments to predict and prepare for ENSO-related events, UNEP embarked in 1999 on a project to review the early warning and

preparedness systems of selected countries around the Pacific Rim and in Southeast Asia, East Africa and the Caribbean. The project found that almost all governments in the tropics are poorly prepared for emergencies such as ENSO. The project's report *Reducing the Impact of Environmental Emergencies through Early Warning and Preparedness: The Case of the 1997-1998 El Niño* and a summary report *Once Burned Twice Shy: Lessons Learned from the 1997-1998 El Niño* are both useful resources for governments wishing to enhance their levels of preparedness for future emergencies.

Early warning and assessment is a UNEP priority. At its core lies the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) process, a cross-sectoral, participatory regional and global assessment involving a worldwide network of collaborating centres. The most visible outputs of the GEO process are the biennial global

assessment reports, the latest of which, *GEO-3*, was published in May 2002. The GEO process is part of the overall **UNEP Global Participative Observing and Assessment Strategy** (GPOS), which was launched in 1999, with UN Foundation support, to strengthen the reporting and analytic capacity of regional and international institutions collaborating with UNEP assessments like GEO.

The goal of GPOS is to promote innovative approaches, improve the quality and coverage of environmental observations and early warning, and develop a wider range of useful decision-support products, including a new integrated environmental information metasytem. This metasytem, named UNEP.Net, was officially launched in February 2001. UNEP.Net, which is now in transition from its pilot phase to a development phase, is a set of global environmental information portals on the Internet. It provides a single point of entry to authoritative and structured data and information covering a broad spectrum of environmental issues. UN Foundation support to GPOS has also strengthened several GEO collaborating centres. Training materials produced by the project will contribute to the replication of these capacity building exercises in other collaborating institutions.

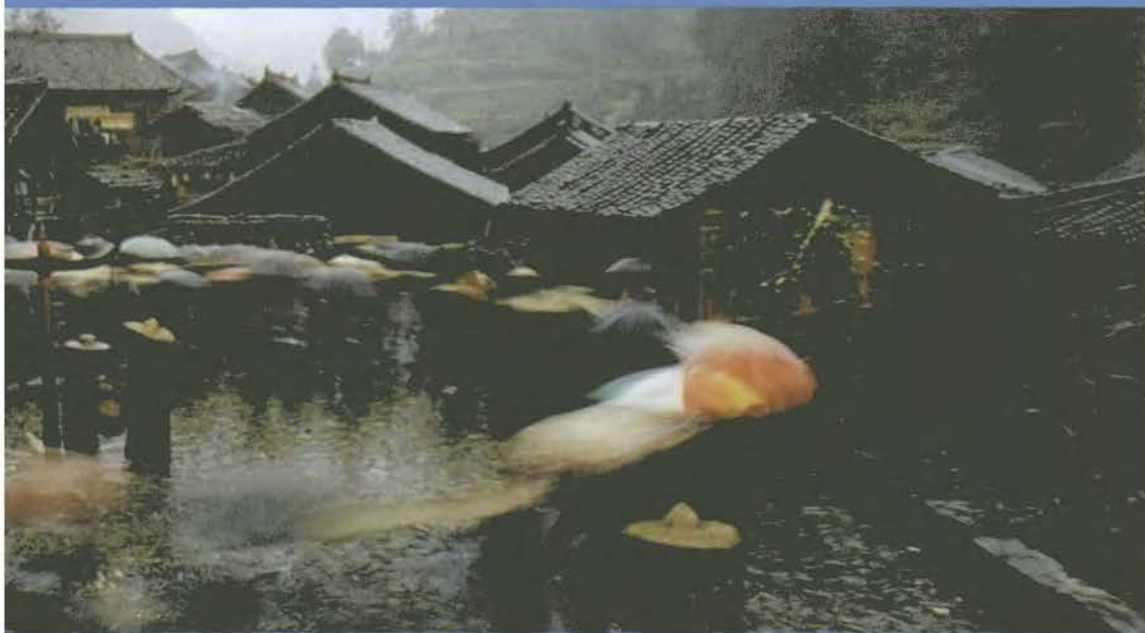
The capacity building under the pilot project which launched GPOS should also reinforce related assessment activities in which UNEP is involved. One example, where the UN Foundation has a sizeable investment, is the **Millennium Ecosystem Assessment** (MA). The MA will meet the need for scientific information on how changes in the world's ecosystem will affect decision makers' ability to meet human demands for food, health, clean water, biodiversity and other ecosystem goods and services. The four-year process, unveiled in June 2001, will help decision makers



implement the ecosystem-related conventions and undertake sound resource management at regional, national and local levels. The MA is an example of a broad partnership of collaborators working

from local communities are also represented. Responsibility for implementing the assessment is spread among the various partners in developed and developing countries.

A principal reason for supplying environmental information is to enable governments to be able to predict, prevent and mitigate disasters caused by environmental factors. For instance, it should be possible to predict not only the occurrence but the potential impacts of the cyclic El Niño phenomenon. A UN Foundation-funded project implemented by UNEP between 1999 and 2000 assessed the preparedness of tropical countries for El Niño events and, by highlighting lessons learned from the cataclysmic events of the 1998 El Niño, was able to provide guidance that should help vulnerable countries mitigate the potential environmental and societal damage of future El Niño events.



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towards a common goal. Partners include international convention secretariats, United Nations entities, NGOs and experts from academia, the private sector and governments. Stakeholders

Secretariat responsibilities are also shared, with UNEP providing coordination.

A school of butterflyfish, characterized by their dark bodies with a white stripe and a yellowish-orange patch near the tail, are swimming in a clear blue ocean. They are positioned above a coral reef, which is visible as a textured, light-colored surface at the bottom of the frame. The background is a deep, dark blue, suggesting the depth of the water.

CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY

The **Millennium Ecosystem Assessment** will be a valuable tool for helping to conserve the world's biological diversity. Every year, more is discovered about the richness of the many diverse habitats on Earth. Unfortunately, those discoveries are also revealing the accelerating loss of species in all areas.



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Among the most diverse habitats on the planet are the coral reef systems of the tropics. These systems, sometimes referred to as the rainforests of the seas, provide a number of ecological services. They are home to a staggering variety of marine species, they are invaluable nurseries for inshore fisheries, they provide shoreline protection from ocean waves and they are a vital source of tourism revenue to many coastal communities. They are also under increasing threat from pollution, destructive fishing practices, unsustainable tourism and, increasingly, from the effects of climate change.

To help counter these threats a global partnership of governments, NGOs, academic institutions and the private sector have been working together under the umbrella of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI). Recognising the need for coordinated research and management efforts to implement its recommendations, ICRI proposed the establishment of the **International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN)** in 1999. Launched in March 2001, with substantial UN Foundation funding supporting start-up, bridging and action phases, ICRAN is a strategic alliance dedicated to halting and reversing the decline in the health of the world's coral reefs. The ICRAN partners include UNEP and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, the UN Foundation, the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI), ICLARM (the World Fish Centre), the World Resources Institute, the Coral Reef Alliance and the World Wide Fund for Nature. ICRAN field activities are implemented through the various UNEP Regional Seas programmes.

ICRAN operates by sharing and building on traditional knowledge, current research and the lessons of practical experiences to strengthen reef management through peer-to-peer communication. The ICRAN strategy addresses most of the local causes of degradation of the coral reef environment and includes all stakeholders and local communities in the management

process. ICRAN's holistic approach to reef management serves not only to ensure the future of these valuable ecosystems, but also to ensure the future of the communities that the coral reefs sustain. This holistic approach includes alternative livelihoods, training, capacity building and the exchange of current scientific, economic, and social information.

Experiences can be shared between regions and replicated or modified to capture the unique characteristics of each area. Through its novel approach, with the collaboration of international partners and strong local anchoring, ICRAN encourages globally coordinated but locally relevant management of coral reefs and the sustainable use of reef resources by all stakeholders worldwide.

An example of the outputs of the ICRAN partnership is a training of trainers programme in the Caribbean. A training manual and CD-ROM on the management of marine protected areas has been developed in both English and Spanish. This comprehensive training manual for marine protected areas management includes theory, methodology, practical exercises and reference materials. It has been used to assist participating countries which are dependent on their coastal and marine resources to attract tourists, especially diving tourists, to manage their resources in a sustainable manner through marine protected areas and through co-management arrangements and participatory planning. ICRAN demonstration sites have been instrumental in encouraging sustainable management techniques and methodologies. This training manual is now in use as a guideline for marine protected areas management training at the local level throughout the region, and the success of the programme can be replicated elsewhere.

© Christophe Rouger/UNEP

In Eastern Africa an exchange programme is being established between demonstration sites through which managers can share experiences while being trained in monitoring management effectiveness and adapting management strategies according to results and in response to changes in, for example, the tourism industry. Other examples include a micro-grants scheme set up in Southeast Asia that is assisting people to initiate or improve existing small, locally owned businesses, and a programme in the South Pacific that is developing sustainable trade in aquarium fish as an alternative livelihood.

In September 2002, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), UNEP announced further funding from the UN Foundation and the United States Agency for

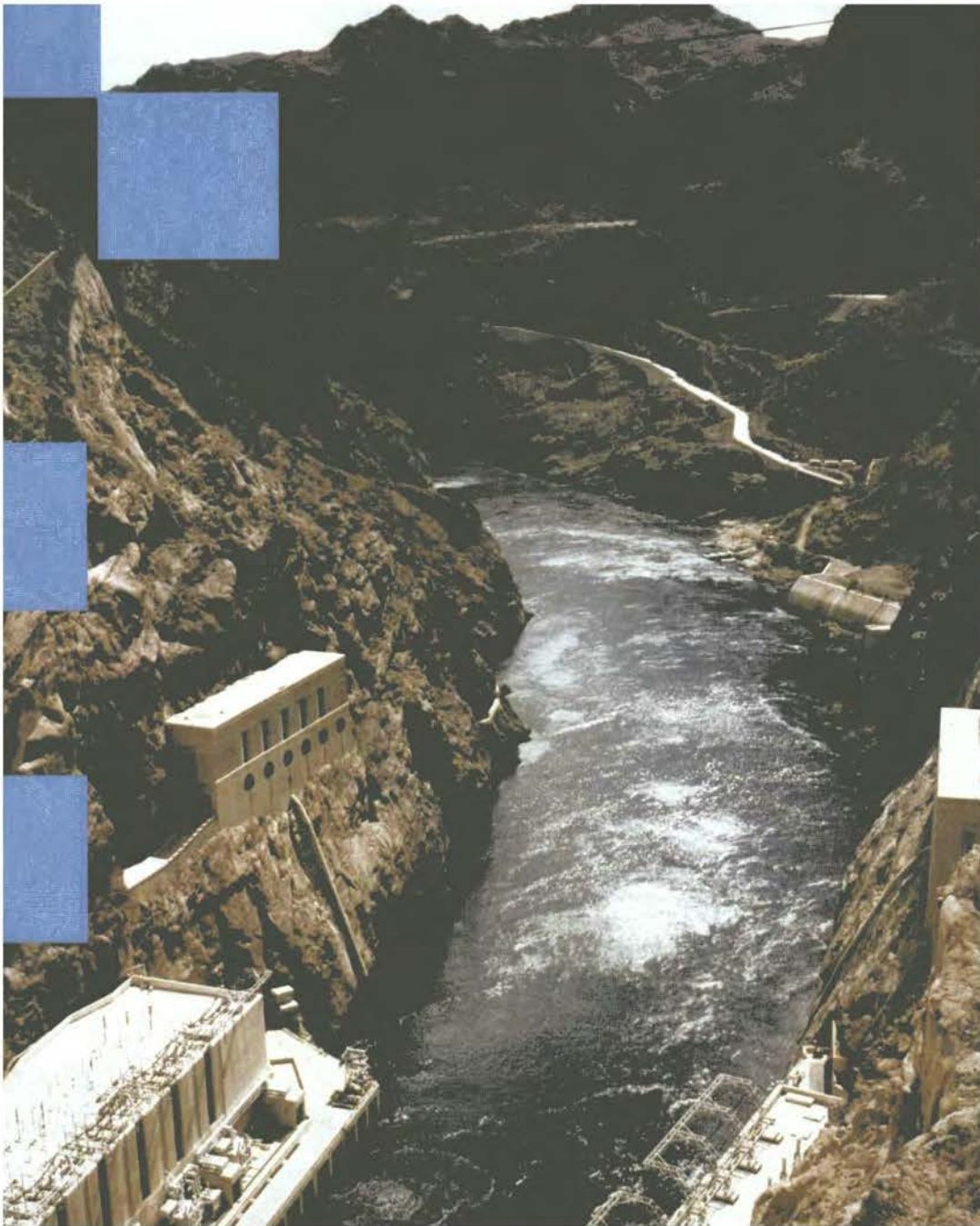
International Development to support conservation of the Mesoamerican Reef, the largest barrier reef system in the Atlantic and the second largest in the world. It was also announced that the work of ICRAN is being expanded into the South Asia and Arabian Seas regions.

Also in September 2002, UNEP released a major report that reflects on one of the keystone issues of terrestrial biodiversity: the plight of the world's remaining great apes.

The report's release coincided with the announcement of

major new funding for a UNEP-UNESCO initiative, the **Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP)**, which is a wide partnership of wildlife conservation organisations dedicated to conserving the human species' nearest relatives and the habitats on which they depend. In July 2002, in consultation with its GRASP partners and with funding from the UN Foundation, UNEP embarked on a six-month project to devise a strategy to bring cohesion to the work of the many organisations working to conserve great apes and to attract the necessary funds needed to strengthen political commitment to that end. A major thrust of the strategy, which was launched at WSSD, is advocacy, education and public awareness activities at national level. Further funding from the UN Foundation was announced at the strategy's launch, alongside new partnerships and extra funding from the government of the United Kingdom.





ENGAGING CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society, whether through organised groups or individual actors, represents a major force for environmental action and change. But in order to mobilise civil society, its actors need to be provided with relevant information, and given the encouragement—and the means—to participate in decision making. This need for including all stakeholders in decision making is being increasingly recognised across the globe. A good example of the open and participatory approach is the recently concluded **World Commission on Dams** (WCD), which was an attempt to reconcile the highly polarised opinions which exist on big dam projects and chart a sustainable way forward. While dams have played an important role in helping communities and economies harness water resources for

food production, energy generation, flood control and domestic and industrial use they have also caused considerable negative social and environmental impacts.

The outcome of the WCD process was the report *Dams and Development: A New Framework for Decision Making*. The report's recommendations were the culmination of an inclusive process that drew together diverse and often conflicting perspectives into a constructive forum. Affected and indigenous people's views were

UN Foundation funding supported UNEP's technical support to the WCD. This included independent case studies of four large dams and major river basins in Pakistan, Thailand, Brazil and the Zambezi river basin, shared between

Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. UNEP experts also produced reports on specific issues related to large dams, including options and alternatives, social and equity considerations, and environmental impacts on fresh water ecosystems and biological diversity.



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represented on the 12-member commission and community groups were empowered to participate in case study consultations and regional hearings. Through this approach, civil society was represented equally with government and private sector interests. The next phase—the UNEP Dams and Development Project—will endeavour to reinforce and implement the recommendations of the WCD, with special emphasis on translating what is a global document into local actions.

Promoting grassroots participation was also the focus of the project **Towards Earth Summit 2002**. This project was established to support stakeholder preparation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), which took place in Johannesburg, South Africa, in late August and early September 2002.

WSSD represented the focal point of a two-year work programme carried out by the Stakeholder Forum to promote the engagement of major groups in the Johannesburg Summit process.

During the summit period information resources generated by the project were widely used. Four thousand issues of a daily conference journal were distributed. The journal included contributions from many major groups on key summit issues and daily reports on the negotiating sessions, allowing all delegates to follow and better understand the process. Information was disseminated in French and English. The Forum's summit web site received over 150,000 hits. Visitors were able to access issue-based briefing documents from the web site. These were downloaded in large numbers.

UNEP also supported the Stakeholder Forum's successful pre-summit Implementation Conference, which engaged all major groups in discussions on four of what turned out to be the United Nations Secretary-General's five priority issues: water, energy, health, and food security for agriculture.

This resulted in the launching of over 25 partnership initiatives, which will provide a significant contribution to the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation over the next five years.

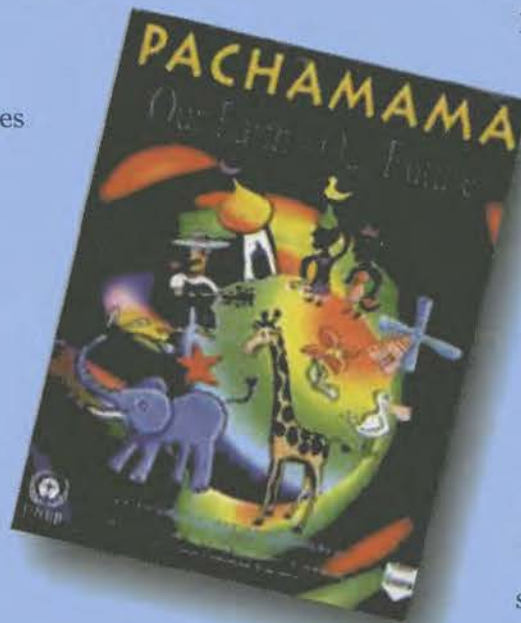
One of the most important major groups in civil society is children and youth. They are the decision makers—and consumers—of tomorrow. Therefore, as part of the UNEP Global Environment Outlook (GEO) process, it was decided to produce a special version of GEO targeted at this major group to coincide with the publication of the second GEO report *GEO-2000*. The GEO for Youth report, published in 1999 under the title *Pachamama: Our Earth - Our Future*, was produced with UN Foundation funding. The 96-page book contains information, case



studies, games and topics for classroom discussion ranging from atmospheric and fresh water problems to urbanisation and the protection of polar areas.

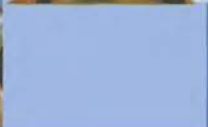
Pachamama has been published in eleven languages and is also available on the Internet and on the GEOactive CD-ROM. This CD-ROM contains complete cross-linked texts of *Pachamama* and *GEO-2000*. It also contains introductory videos on environmental themes, youth action databases with reference to youth organisations and web sites, and games and quizzes for various age groups.

Created by youth for youth, *Pachamama* has succeeded in vastly broadening the audience for UNEP's flagship environmental assessment. The impact of *Pachamama* has been reinforced by two companion products: a teacher's guide and suggestions to youth for taking action, including a 'how-to' guide for reaching political leaders. *Pachamama* has been endorsed by teachers from around the world for use in school curricula. As a



result it is being used by schools and by youth projects in countries as diverse as Hungary, Kenya, Malaysia, Peru, Philippines, Uruguay, State of Qatar and the United Kingdom.

GEO for Youth has now been successfully incorporated into the mainstream GEO process. UNEP actively involved youth representatives in its preparations for *GEO-3* and is developing a longer-term education strategy for the GEO for Youth project. Because of the success of GEO for Youth, similar initiatives are being developed in Latin America and the Caribbean and in the Asia Pacific region. UNEP-GRID Arendal and the United Nations University have also developed a prototype of a virtual university course based on *GEO-2000*.



WORKING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Sustainable development needs the active involvement and cooperation of all sectors of society, not least the private sector. Traditionally the private sector has been cast as an environmental villain, particularly by the NGO community. With globalisation, trade liberalisation and the increasing role of the private sector in global governance, that perception is deepening in many quarters. On the other hand,





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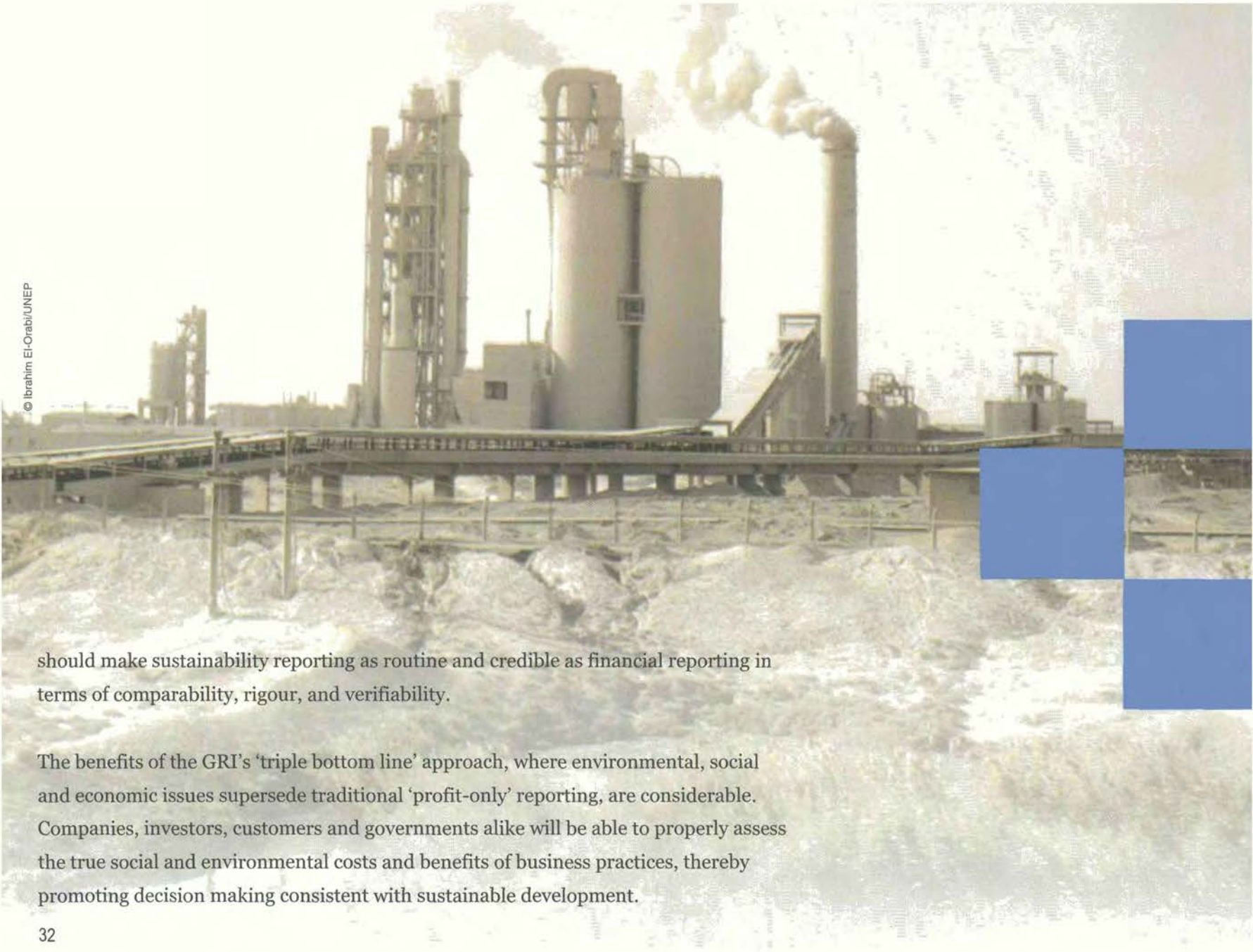
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there is increasing recognition that demonising industry is counter-productive. Two arguments support this view. First, to achieve sustainable development, it will be necessary to enrol the active cooperation of big business. Second, the private sector is capable of providing the technological and financial impetus that will drive sustainable change in crucial areas such as water, energy, agriculture, human health and biodiversity.

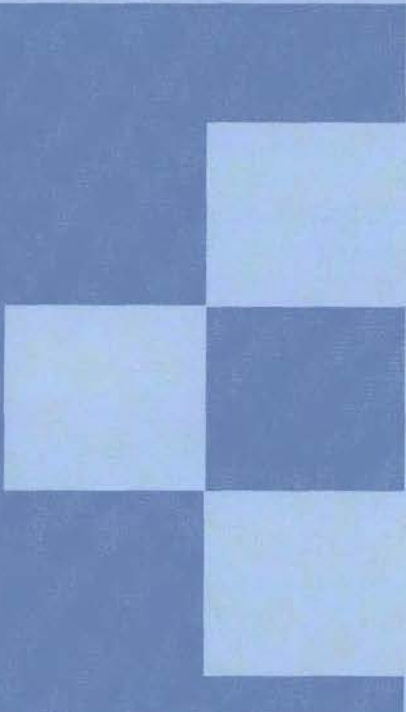
As environmental awareness grows—both within and outside the private sector—accountability has become a central issue. Consumers, communities, workers and investors are increasingly demanding economic, environmental and social accountability. To facilitate sustainability accounting, UNEP and the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES) established the **Global Reporting Initiative** (GRI) to design globally applicable guidelines for preparing reports on the environmental, social and economic impact of corporate activities. UN Foundation support has enabled UNEP to develop general sustainability reporting guidelines as well as industry-specific guidelines for the finance, tourism, automotive and telecommunication sectors. To date the GRI network includes over 1,500 stakeholders from 51 countries. Over 200 companies worldwide are using the GRI guidelines to prepare reports.

A permanent GRI institution is being created to consolidate progress in what is increasingly being recognised as one of the most critical areas for achieving sustainable development. This permanent GRI institution will be a UNEP Collaborating Centre with a 14-member board of directors representing private sector, government and labour interests from around the world. Ultimately, the GRI



should make sustainability reporting as routine and credible as financial reporting in terms of comparability, rigour, and verifiability.

The benefits of the GRI's 'triple bottom line' approach, where environmental, social and economic issues supersede traditional 'profit-only' reporting, are considerable. Companies, investors, customers and governments alike will be able to properly assess the true social and environmental costs and benefits of business practices, thereby promoting decision making consistent with sustainable development.



"Today, the private sector is the driving force behind globalisation. It is the source of most technology innovation, and increasingly is the source of public services. Governments and organisations like UNEP must work with industry to find solutions to the world's social, economic and environmental problems. To this end, public-private partnerships can contribute to solutions that address the key dual challenge of combating global poverty and the protection of our global environment."

Klaus Toepfer, UNEP Executive Director

A photograph of a person wearing a conical hat and a red long-sleeved shirt, spraying pesticides in a field. The person is walking away from the camera, and a large cloud of white mist or spray is visible behind them. The field is divided into rows, and the ground is dark and appears to be recently tilled or planted. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

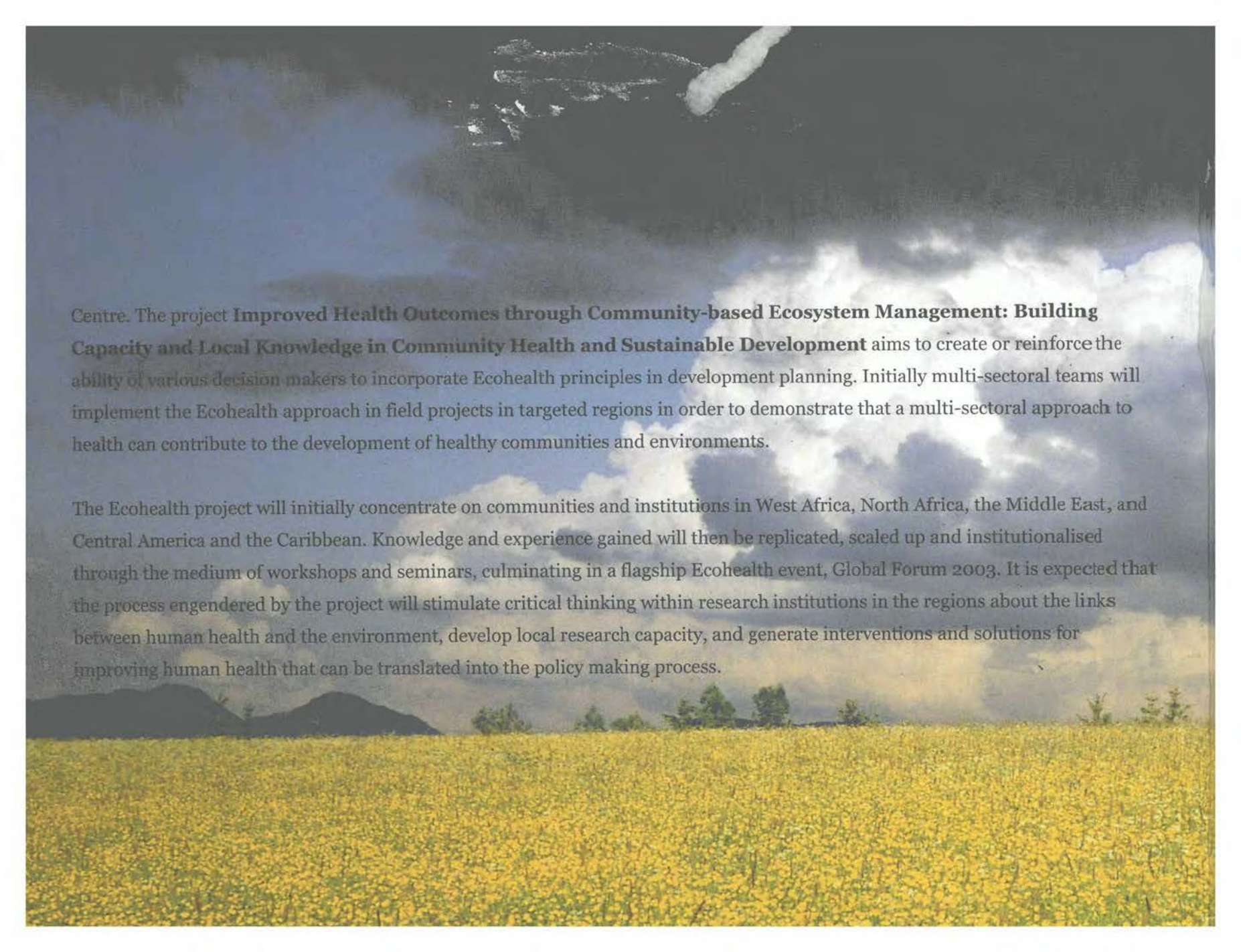
HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The first principle of the Rio Declaration states that “human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.” This principle was reinforced at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in 2002, where the WSSD Plan of Implementation acknowledges in several places the links between poverty, health and the environment, with special emphasis on the provision of clean drinking water, adequate sanitation, sustainable transport strategies and chemicals management.

Up to 25 per cent of the global burden of disease is attributable to environmental causes. This burden falls most heavily on children, who account for two-thirds of environmentally induced illnesses. Poor sanitation and the absence of clean drinking water are major killers. Up to 3 million people a year die from easily preventable water-borne diseases. Other environmentally related health hazards include pesticide poisoning among agricultural workers and consumers, the growing problem of newly emerging diseases—including, perhaps, HIV—caused by the opening up of rainforest habitats for logging and other development, and the increasing incidence of cancers caused by exposure to ultraviolet radiation as a result of the depletion of the ozone layer.

A particularly important environmental health problem is air pollution. Indoor air pollution from cooking fires alone causes nearly 2 million deaths a year. Added to that are the children whose development is being hampered by atmospheric lead concentrations and the millions suffering from respiratory diseases caused by urban air pollution. This is why UNEP and the UN Foundation place so much emphasis on schemes like **Renewable Energy Enterprise Development (REED)** and on promoting financial mechanisms to encourage clean and renewable energy investment. These initiatives will help cut down disease-causing pollution. They should also address the health problems associated with the hard labour of firewood collection, and, ultimately, the added burdens caused to humans by diseases such as malaria which are spreading due to global warming.

Paragraph 46 of the WSSD Plan of Implementation states that “the goals of sustainable development can only be achieved in the absence of a high prevalence of debilitating diseases.... There is an urgent need to address the causes of ill health, including environmental causes, and their impact on development, with particular emphasis on women and children....” An effort to address the links between human health and the environment and to promote human health through better ecosystem management is being made through a UN Foundation-funded Ecohealth programme being implemented by UNEP, the World Health Organisation and the International Development Research

A landscape photograph showing a vast field of yellow flowers in the foreground, leading to a line of trees and distant mountains under a dramatic, cloudy sky. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

Centre. The project **Improved Health Outcomes through Community-based Ecosystem Management: Building Capacity and Local Knowledge in Community Health and Sustainable Development** aims to create or reinforce the ability of various decision makers to incorporate Ecohealth principles in development planning. Initially multi-sectoral teams will implement the Ecohealth approach in field projects in targeted regions in order to demonstrate that a multi-sectoral approach to health can contribute to the development of healthy communities and environments.

The Ecohealth project will initially concentrate on communities and institutions in West Africa, North Africa, the Middle East, and Central America and the Caribbean. Knowledge and experience gained will then be replicated, scaled up and institutionalised through the medium of workshops and seminars, culminating in a flagship Ecohealth event, Global Forum 2003. It is expected that the process engendered by the project will stimulate critical thinking within research institutions in the regions about the links between human health and the environment, develop local research capacity, and generate interventions and solutions for improving human health that can be translated into the policy making process.



*Photographs on pages 28-29 are excerpted details from
UNEP's International Photographic Competitions*

www.unep.org

United Nations Environment Programme

P.O. Box 30552 Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: ++254-(0)20-62 1234

Fax: ++254-(0)20-62 3927

E-mail: cpinfo@unep.org

